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THERE WILL BE NO EDITION OF THE NEWSPAPER ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2019.
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THE CM AND HIS ALLY

Haryana Governor Satyadeo Narain Arya (centre) with Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, who took oath in Chandigarh on Sunday. Jaipal Singh
REPORT, PAGE 5

Sena still in hunt for CM's post, BJP likely to offer Deputy CM

SHUBHANGI KHAPRE
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

UNDER PRESSURE from the Shiv Sena, which has sought "equal sharing of power" ahead of government formation, the BJP is learnt to have offered the Deputy Chief Minister's post to its ally in Maharashtra.

"Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has indicated that the party is willing to concede the Deputy Chief Minister's post to the Shiv Sena," said a highly placed source in the BJP here.

While a formal decision is likely only after Monday, the two allies have been holding back-channel discussions.

On Thursday, immediately after the results were announced, Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray had reminded the BJP about the "50:50" power-sharing formula.



Formal decision on Dy CM after Monday. File

Thackeray is reported to have told his legislators on Saturday that the party wanted the Chief Minister's chair for half of the government's five-year term, and would explore other options if the BJP didn't agree.

But a senior BJP leader said this was not acceptable to the party. "The question of 50:50 is out of question. It would matter only if the BJP and Sena had won an equal number of seats. The



BJP has got double the Sena's tally. Why would it concede the CM's post to the Sena," he said.

"Fadnavis will definitely become the Chief Minister... There is no question of conceding the CM's post to the Sena," said senior BJP leader and former finance minister Sudhir Mungantiwar.

In the 288-seat Assembly, the BJP has got 105 seats, down from 122 in 2014. The Sena won 56 seats this time, as compared to 63 in 2014. The BJP also has the support of 17 independents/rebels, taking its overall tally to 122 seats.

A BJP leader, who did not want to be named, pointed out that in 1995, the BJP had accepted a secondary role and settled for the Deputy Chief Minister's post. BJP leaders pointed out that the party accepted a secondary role even when the difference in seat tally between the two allies was not very wide.

In 1995, the Sena, with 73 seats, got the Chief Minister's post (Manohar Joshi); the BJP, with 65 seats, settled for the Deputy CM's post (Gopinath Munde).

A former Sena minister said

MILITARY RAID IN IDLIB

US forces kill IS chief Baghdadi in Syria strike

He was cornered in tunnel, blew up his suicide vest, says Trump

ROBERT BURNS, DEB RIECHMANN & ERIC TUCKER
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 27

THE SHADOWY leader of the Islamic State group who presided over its global jihad and became arguably the world's most wanted man, is dead after being targeted by a US military raid in Syria, President Donald Trump said Sunday.

"Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is dead," Trump announced at the White House, saying the US had "brought the world's number one terrorist leader to justice".

As US forces bore down on him, Trump said Baghdadi fled into a "dead-end" tunnel with three of his children and detonated a suicide vest. "He was a sick and depraved man, and now he's gone," Trump said. "He died like a dog, he died like a coward."

A US official told *The Associated Press* that Baghdadi was targeted in Syria's north-western Idlib province. No US forces were killed or injured in the raid, Trump said. He added that Baghdadi's identity was positively confirmed by a DNA test conducted onsite.

Trump on late Saturday had teased a major announcement, tweeting that "Something very big has just happened!" By the morning, he was thanking Russia, Turkey, Syria and Iraq, as well as Kurdish fighters in Syria for their support.

The killing of Baghdadi marks a significant foreign policy success for Trump, coming at one of the lowest points in his



Targeted near Turkey border, says US

EXPLAINED

Big boost in war against terror

THE KILLING of Baghdadi is a major boost for Donald Trump, whose pullback of US troops from northeast Syria raised a storm of criticism. It also comes as a relief for anti-terror operations globally — in India, the IS is yet to emerge as a key threat. Apart from large-scale attacks, Baghdadi's leadership supported "lone wolf" acts of violence that made it harder for law enforcement to prevent.

WHO IS BAGHDADI

presidency as he is mired in impeachment proceedings and facing widespread Republican condemnation for his Syria policy.

Planning for the operation began two weeks ago, Trump said, after the US gained unspecified

Education policy dilutes assurance on RTE cover up to Class 12

RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

THE HRD Ministry has tweaked the draft National Education Policy (NEP) to dilute the provision on extending the Right to Education (RTE) Act up to Class 12 and also include three years of early childhood education.

The final policy document states that the RTE Act "will be considered for extension" — as opposed to the draft, which assured extension.

The draft NEP was submitted by a group of experts, led by former ISRO chief K Kasturirangan, to the HRD Ministry in June, and uploaded online for public feedback. The government received 2 lakh suggestions and is set to seek the Cabinet's approval for the final 50-page policy.

The final NEP has also tweaked the suggestion in the draft policy on starting a National Tutors Programme (NTP) and Remedial Instructional Aides Programme (RIAP). Both were meant to strengthen basic reading and mathematics skills.

Under NTP, the best performers in each school would have been roped in for up to five hours a week as tutors during school hours for fellow students who need help. RIAP was a 10-year project to draw instructors — especially women — from local communities to help students who have fallen behind and bring them back into the fold.

The final NEP has endorsed only one-on-one peer tutoring. "Peer tutoring can be taken up as a voluntary and joyful activity for fellow students under supervision of trained teachers and by taking due care of safety aspects... it will be made far easier for trained volunteers — from both the local community and beyond — to participate in this large-scale mission of the schooling system," the final NEP states.

The draft had proposed a new three-tier institutional system for higher education under

Now, Rlys looks at 2 giant PSUs to manage its rolling stock

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

ALTERING ITS original plan to set up a mega rolling stock company to include all factories under it, the Railways plans to form two new Central Public Sector Undertakings as holding companies to control coach and engine production.

The latest proposal in the project, which is being seen as a major reform in the rail sector, will soon come up for inter-ministerial consultation. It would lead to the setting up of a new Indian Railway Motive Power Company to own and run factories like Chittaranjan Loco Works and Diesel Loco Works, Varanasi, and those in Madhepura and Marhowra in Bihar.

For now, as part of the "100 days" plan approved by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO),

the Rail ministry is gearing up to form the Indian Railway Rolling Stock Company (IRRC) to own and operate the coach-making plants — Modern Coach Factory, Rae Bareilly, to begin with — and the wheel factories.

Sources said top brass of the ministry felt that by making two companies, one dealing in coaches, which is controlled largely by the Mechanical department, and another in engines, which comes under the Electrical department, the project can be insulated from departmental rivalries.

However, some officials feel that forming a single holding company dealing in all rolling stock, like China, would serve as a more effective antidote to "departmentalism".

Officials said the private consultancy firm studying the feasibility of the project had advised

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



PM Narendra Modi with Army personnel in J&K's Rajouri district on Sunday. ANI REPORT, P5

Before Ayodhya, PM says 'dignity of judiciary' was 'honoured' in 2010

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

IN THE final days before the Supreme Court's expected verdict on the Ayodhya issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday recalled how the "government, political parties, social

organisations, civil society, representatives of all sects" prevented attempts to create fissures in 2010, when the Allahabad High Court delivered its ruling in the case.

While Modi did not mention the impending Supreme Court ruling, his reference to the issue seemed to be a veiled suggestion

to abide by the court's order. The five-judge bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi, which reserved its verdict on October 16 after conclusion of the 40-day hearing, is expected to deliver its judgment by mid-November, before the CJI retires on November 17.

"I remember that day

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

WORLD



POPE'S SYNOD CALLS TO ALLOW MARRIED PRIESTS

HONG KONG FACEOFF BETWEEN POLICE, PROTESTERS

WARNED TRUMP ON IMPEACHMENT, SAYS TOP EX-OFFICIAL

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INSIDE

PAK DENIES USE OF ITS AIRSPACE FOR PM FLIGHT TO SAUDI

PAGE 5

In Uttarakhand, new rules make it tougher to get forest label

Environmentalists object, say will open more green land to builders

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, OCTOBER 27

THE UTTARAKHAND government is all set to notify rules that will result in tighter norms for classifying land as deemed forest. However, environmentalists fear that such a move will mean vast swathes of land will not come under the protection of the Forest Conservation Act.

According to the new rules, cleared by the State Cabinet, land cannot be defined as forest if it isn't spread across a minimum of 10 hectares with a minimum canopy density of 60 per cent and doesn't have 75 per cent native trees.

Only if these parameters are met will prohibitions laid down



Echo from Mumbai: During the Aarey protest. File

for forest areas under the Forest Conservation Act be applicable in those areas. Incidentally, the recent agitation in Mumbai by residents of Aarey Colony, which isn't classified as a forest, was to prevent the felling of trees to build a Metro car shed.

"These parameters will have

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

1.2 lakh thermal wear, 100 toilets: Extra forces face Valley winter

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 27

OVER 1,20,000 items of thermal inner wear, more than 60,000 parka jackets, sleeping bags and blankets, close to 70 insulated pre-fabricated barracks with accommodation for 40 in each, more than 1,500 bukharis (traditional heaters), over 100 specially-designed toilets, hundreds of common bath spaces, thousands of litres of kerosene and miles of tin sheet.

This is how about 70,000 additional security forces deployed in the Valley, following the

August 5 abrogation of Article 370, are preparing for the long and harsh winter.

Since the Centre's decision, it has dispatched more than 700 companies of paramilitary forces drawn from the CRPF, BSF, SSB and ITBP to Kashmir to maintain law and order. These are in addition to the over 60,000 paramilitary personnel who are stationed in the Valley year-round.

With Delhi giving no signal on reduction of troops in the Valley, a senior officer of the central armed police forces said: "The last time I asked Delhi how long the additional troops were supposed to be here, I was told

not to ask this question before next April. So we have to prepare for a long winter, where we will be largely fighting the elements."

The additional troops have been living in tents, government facilities, under-construction buildings, warehouses, abandoned homes and yatri camps. "None of these are suitable for winter. A very harsh winter will set mid-November onward. So we are running against time to erect suitable accommodation and procuring winter essentials," another officer said.

Among the important acquisitions are insulated pre-fabricated barracks. "This is for the



Centre has deployed 70,000 additional troops in Valley. File

first time that we are procuring these, as earlier we have never needed them. These barracks have insulation sheets inside. The CRPF alone is procuring more than 40 of these," the officer said.

Even the concrete buildings for accommodation are being reinforced with tin sheets, sources said. "All these accommodations have to be given kerosene-fired bukharis," the officer said.

Since all additional troops have been drawn from the plains, they never had winter clothing suitable for Kashmir. "Thermals, jackets, blankets and sleeping bags are being procured

for each person," the officer said. With so many soldiers in temporary accommodation, sources said toilets have become a major issue with long queues every morning. "We do not want to create stress among forces, who are already in a difficult situation. Pit toilets have been built, but they won't work in winter," the officer said.

Specially designed toilets have been ordered, which will be connected to sewers linked to the waste management infrastructure. Adequate water supply is also being arranged to ensure hygiene is maintained, sources said.

Given the communication blockade in certain areas and lack of adequate transport, an officer said: "All procurement has to be made online, according to government rules. We had to make some procurement from Delhi — a special Internet connection had to be established in a camp office."

Given the situation in Kashmir, the material has to be fabricated in Jammu and transported to the Valley. "Private transporters are reluctant to make the journey for reasons of security. We are transporting the entire consignment in our convoys," the officer said.

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EXPRESS TECHNOLOGY

Apple CEO Tim Cook defends billion dollar deal with Google



WEB EXCLUSIVE

A WORRY FOR BJP: FROM NOT ENOUGH MEMBERS TO THE PROBLEM OF PLENTY

Besides saffron party's own, several from JJP and independents in race for ministerial berths. Having sealed a post-poll alliance with the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) and with seven Independent legislators already supporting it, the BJP was holding discussions on names

VIDEO OF THE DAY



IDEA EXCHANGE WITH ANUBHAV SINHA

Talks about the shift he made in his filmmaking

FULL COVERAGE



HARYANA SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

Khattar sworn-in as CM, Dushyant Chautala as his deputy

3 THINGS

EXPRESS AUDIO

What the BJP can learn from the Haryana and Maharashtra elections?

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JHARKHAND
Seven lynched over child-lifting rumours, but NCRB report says no such case

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, OCTOBER 27

DESPITE THE death of seven people in Jharkhand in 2017 in incidents of mob violence triggered by rumours, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report for 2017, which was released recently, states that the state saw zero incidents of circulation of "false/fake news and rumours".

This is the first time data was collected under the head of "false/fake news and rumours" on the basis of FIRs registered under IPC section 505 (Statements conducing to public mischief/with intent to create fear, panic) or IPC 505 with respect to the IT Act.

In 2017, seven people died in mob violence in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharsawan and East Singhbhum districts over rumours of child-lifting that spread through social media. Two people, including a journalist with a local news channel, were arrested for allegedly posting messages on social media cautioning people against child-lifters which, according to police, sparked panic and led to mob attacks in Seraikela-Kharsawan's Baghbera and East Singhbhum's Rajnagar on May 18, 2017.

Also, the zero figure assumes significance when seen against the backdrop of 21 deaths in the state in the past three years due to mob violence over suspicion of animal slaughter, theft, child-lifting rumours, among others. This apart, more than 90 people have died in mob violence on the suspicion of witchcraft in the state since January 2017.

After the 2017 incidents, separate FIRs were registered against people who spread the messages which police said created panic in several villages of Jaduguda, Haldipokhar, Bagbera and Ghatshila areas.

The first case under IPC sections 505, 153 A (Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, lan-

guage, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), and 34 (common intention) was registered against two persons.

The second FIR was lodged under IPC 153 (Wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot) against a local journalist who forwarded a post.

One of the accused was later granted bail by the East Singhbhum Sessions Court.

The first incident took place on the morning of May 18, 2017, when four people, Haleem, Nayeem, Sajjad and Siraj Khan, were lynched in Shobhapur and Padnamsai in Saraikele-Kharsawan district over rumours of child-lifting. The mob also attacked the policemen who went to rescue them. Two cases were registered — one for the killings and another for obstructing public servant from duty. A trial is on in the first case. In the second, a fast track court in 2018 convicted 12 people and sentenced them to four years of imprisonment for "obstructing and assaulting government officials on duty, attacking with deadly weapons, trespassing into other's house, disturbing law and order, breaking public peace".

The second incident occurred on May 18 evening. Brothers Vikas Verma and Gautam Verma, their grandmother Ram Chandra Devi and their friend Gangesh Gupta were attacked by a mob over child-lifting rumours. The brothers and their grandmother were killed in the attack.

A total of 26 people were arrested in connection with the lynchings and the cases are currently under trial. The NCRB report attributes the data to "data provided by states and UTs".

While ADG (Ops) ML Meena did not respond to calls and messages, Vimal Kumar, then DSP Law and Order and currently in the Chief Minister's security, said, "The case was registered under IPC 505 for spreading rumours and was one of the reasons which led to the lynchings. Why it was not put in the NCRB data needs to be checked."

TDP MLA quits party, House, alleges harassment by YSRCP

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 27

A TDP MLA on Sunday resigned from the party and from the Assembly, alleging harassment by YSRCP workers and government employees.

Vallabhaneni Vamsi, MLA from Gannavaram in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, said in a letter to TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu that he was quitting to protect his supporters. "I had the satisfaction of doing commendable and unparalleled public service as legislator. Now, having been elected again, me and my associates and followers are in neck-deep trouble due to the vindictive attitude of YSRCP in-charges and partisan attitude of some government employees. I sincerely feel and believe that problems will be compounded multiple times due to me at the helm of affairs (in Gannavaram)... I have decided to restrain myself and quit from politics to safeguard my followers and supporters by reducing the unnecessary friction and unwarranted animosity."

With Vamsi's resignation, TDP now has 22 MLAs in the 175-member Assembly. TDP sources said that at least six MLAs have complained to Naidu that they were being harassed by YSRCP leaders in their constituencies. These MLAs also mentioned that government employees were delaying work sanctioned by the MLAs, the sources said.

Vamsi was first elected in 2004, but lost in 2009 and was elected again in 2014 and 2019. Sources in the TDP alleged that he was being harassed by YSRCP's Gannavaram in-charge Y Venkat Rao, who lost to Vamsi in the state polls. "Rao was not allowing Vamsi to function properly as MLA. Under Rao's pressure, government employees were not cooperating with Vamsi. YSRCP workers were continuously harassing supporters of Vamsi," a TDP leader said.

Rao denied Vamsi's allegations. "When TDP was ruling, Vamsi harassed YSRCP workers and forced police to file dozens of cases. We are not being vindictive. I think he wants to join our party. We will oppose it," he said.

FROM PAGE ONE

Education policy

which, by 2030, all institutions will either become research universities or teaching universities or colleges running undergraduate programmes.

In the final NEP, the categorisation of institutions under a hierarchical structure has been given up. In its place, classification based on the main purpose of the institution — research or teaching — has been retained.

Lastly, the government has also removed the strict deadline prescribed by the Kasturirangan Committee to phase out the system of affiliated colleges. The draft suggested that, by 2032, all colleges affiliated currently must develop into autonomous degree granting colleges or merge completely with the university that they are affiliated to, or develop into a university themselves. The final document only speaks of "gradually phasing out the system of affiliated colleges".

Uttarakhand

impact on areas notified in revenue records as forest, jungle, jungle jhadi, ban, bani and other private owned area having plantation cover. It will not affect government land notified as forest in any central or state Acts," said a top official in the Forest department.

"When areas were notified as forests several decades ago, conditions like patch area and canopy density were not there. Also, any area recorded by revenue staff as forest by including words meaning forest in vernacular language such as forest, jungle, jungle jhadi, ban, bani, benaap land, civil soyam land, etc., in any of the Government records of the state ipso facto was forest irrespective of size and number of standing trees," the official said.

"Hence, conditions of Forest (Conservation) Act were applicable there and one had to obtain clearance from Forest department to do any activity in that area. Now, if any such area does not come under parameters of 10 hectares or more compact patch and 60 per cent or more canopy density and more than 75 per cent plantation of native species, that area will not be considered as forest and no clearance will be required for any activity there," official said.

Forest Minister Harak Singh Rawat was not available for comment.

The impetus for framing the new rules finds its root in a 1996 judgment of the Supreme Court directing the states to constitute expert committees to identify all 'forests', irrespective of whether they are notified, recognized or classified under any law, and irrespective of land ownership. To comply with the order, states formed 'expert committees'. Many states developed their respective criteria for considering "deemed forest".

The Uttarakhand government formulated the parameters and sent them to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on June 14 in compliance with directions from the Supreme Court in a case — Birendra Singh versus MoEF and Climate Change & Others. The ministry later clarified that the

IS chief Baghdadi killed in Syria

intelligence on Baghdadi's whereabouts. Eight military helicopters landed at the compound and were met by gunfire, Trump said.

Trump vividly described the raid and took extensive questions from reporters. He said US forces breached the walls of the building because the doors were booby-trapped and chased Baghdadi into the tunnel, which partially collapsed after Baghdadi detonated the suicide vest. Trump said a military dog was injured by the explosive blast.

Trump said he watched the operation from the White House Situation room as it played out live "as though you were watching a movie". He suggested he may order the release of the video so that the world knows Baghdadi did not die of a hero and spent his final moments "crying", "whimpering" and "screaming".

Trump said he teased the

announcement as soon as American forces landed safely in a third-country.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Syria war monitor, reported an attack carried out by a squadron of eight helicopters accompanied by a warplane belonging to the international coalition on positions of the Hurras al-Deen, an al-Qaeda-linked group, in the Barisha area north of Idlib city, after midnight on Saturday. IS operatives were believed to be hiding in the area, it said.

It said the helicopters targeted IS positions with heavy strikes for about 120 minutes, during which jihadists fired at the aircraft with heavy weapons. The Britain-based Observatory, which operates through a network of activists on the ground, documented the death of nine people as a result of the coalition helicopter attack.

Baghdadi's presence in the village, a few kilometres from the Turkish border, would come as a surprise, even if some IS leaders are believed to have fled to Idlib after losing their last sliver of territory in Syria to US-allied Kurdish forces in March.

The surrounding areas are largely controlled by an IS rival, the al-Qaeda-linked Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, or HTS, although other jihadi groups sympathetic to IS operate there. Unverified video circulated online by Syrian groups appeared to support the Observatory claim that the operation occurred in Barisha.

Trump said the death of Baghdadi shows the United States will continue pursuing other terrorist leaders and that none should rest easy. "These savage monsters will not escape their fate," he said and that the "losers" who worked for Baghdadi had "no idea

what they were getting into". Kurdish forces appeared ready to portray Baghdadi's death as a joint victory for their faltering alliance with the US, weeks after Trump ordered American forces to withdraw from northeastern Syria, all but abandoning Washington's allies to a wide-ranging Turkish assault.

Baghdadi had led IS for the last five years, presiding over its ascendancy as it cultivated a reputation for beheadings and attracted tens of thousands of followers to a sprawling and self-styled caliphate in Iraq and Syria. With a \$25 million US bounty on his head, Baghdadi was far less visible in recent years, releasing only sporadic audio recordings, including one just last month in which he called on members of the extremist group to do all they could to free IS detainees and women held in jails and camps. AP

BJP likely to offer Dy CM's post to Sena

the demand for the Chief Minister's post was part of its "strategy to get the BJP to agree to our choice of portfolios". "Ideally, the Shiv Sena would have insisted on the CM's post only if Uddhav Thackeray was ready to take charge. That possibility is ruled out. Aditya Thackeray is very new to politics and has no administrative experience. Moreover, he is young and still has no hold

over the organisation," he said.

In Maharashtra, the size of the Cabinet cannot exceed 42 members. Besides the home ministry, the revenue, finance, urban, agriculture, irrigation, health and public works departments may become sticking points. The BJP, however, is unlikely to concede the home, finance and urban departments.

Meanwhile, in his column

in Sena Sena mouthpiece Saamana, executive editor and party MP Sanjay Raut said the Sena now has the "remote control of power" in Maharashtra.

"The Sena won less seats this time, 56 compared to 63 in 2014, but it has the remote control of power," he said. "The dream that the Shiv Sena will drag itself behind the BJP is busted (after poll results). A cartoon showing a tiger (Sena's

identity) holding a lotus (BJP's symbol) in its hand tells a lot about the current scenario. Not taking anyone for granted is the message," he said.

During the first Sena-BJP government in the state, between 1995 to 1999, the term remote control was regularly used for and by the late party patriarch Bal Thackeray to explain the chain of command in the dispensation.

state doesn't need a go-ahead from the Centre as a one-size-fits-all definition was not suitable for India.

The government order reads: "(a) Forest means all the areas notified as Forest under any prevailing law applicable in the State of Uttarakhand made by State or Centre. (b) Apart from any area mentioned in para (a), only those area shall be treated as Forest, which are recorded as Forest in any revenue record of the State actually notified or mentioned as Forest area, which is a compact patch of 10 hectares or more and canopy density of which is 60% or more on measuring by Radial Densitometer."

It states: "Apart from any area mentioned in two para above, only those other area of any kind of ownership shall be treated as Forest, in which along with compact patch of 10 hectares or more, there are more than 75 per cent trees are of native species and canopy density comes to 60 per cent or more on measuring by Radial Densitometer. However, orchards/fruit plantations of any shape or species shall be kept out of the definition of Forest."

Environmentalists fear the new rules will open forests to builders and planters. The state has reported a recorded forest area of 38,000 sq km, which is 71 per cent of its geographical area, according to the Forest Survey of India.

Environmentalist Vimal Bhai of Matu Jan Sangathan said these parameters with "compact patch" and percentage of canopy density were "steps to finish forest cover".

"This will create challenges for existence of flora and fauna of Uttarakhand. These parameters will be used for industrialist and political beneficiaries," Bhai said.

Peter Smetacek, founder of Butterfly Research Centre in Bhimtal, has sent a representation to Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar objecting to the parameters set by Uttarakhand government.

In his letter, he said: "...the meaning of forest cannot be restricted as is being proposed by the Uttarakhand Forest Department since the same would open up forested areas to unhindered commercial exploitation thereby laying havoc across the state with fragile Himalayan ecosystems for which Uttarakhand is globally renowned."

The letter adds: "...needless to state, any further destruction of forests due to the proposed criteria would have an irreversible and adverse impact on the availability of water in Ganga river."

The state government says the new rules will cut down red tape and speed up construction on private land.

Principal Secretary, Forest, Anand Bardhan, said the parameters have been set following the

directives of the Environment Ministry and these parameters will be notified soon because approval of the Cabinet has been taken.

"The only difference after this notification will be that any area, which does not fulfill these parameters, will not come in the definition of forests and Forest Conservation Act will not be applicable there. And hence, no clearance will be required to hold any construction activity there," Bardhan said.

According to a senior official in the Forest department, the forest areas of different categories like Reserved Forests, Protected Forests and village forests were notified under the Indian Forest Act and other Acts in states.

Railways

the setting up of two entities. Even when divided into two, the entities in terms of size and scale will be among the biggest in the world.

A Cabinet note is to be prepared to begin the process to form IRRC and incorporate MCF Raebareli with an authorised paid-up capital of around Rs 1,700 crore. Subsequently, other large units, like RCF, Kapurthala and ICF, Chennai, and the wheel plants will be included.

For the first five years the IRRC, a Schedule A central PSU owned fully by the government, will have its top brass, such as CEO and MD,

appointed through the Rail ministry. After that, the selection process will be opened to the market and anchored by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB), sources said.

Officials said the benefit of a corporatized entity will be that India can catch up with the rest of the world in terms of modern technological advances in making railway rolling stock.

It can operate with a profit motive and join the global race of supplying to other countries. "The chief of a Schedule A PSU can, for instance, can approve new technology infusion in projects even as large as Rs 5,000 crore," said an official.

Incidentally, it took over two decades for India to process the tender for bringing in the technology and manufacturing the German-design Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches in the early 2000s.

While India's rolling stock industry missed the technology bus in the late 80s and the 90s, setting itself back by at least a decade, there will be less chance of such a repeat with professional corporate entities steering this area of industrial production and opening up the sector, officials said.

The project has met with resistance from the powerful railway unions which have alleged that this is a first step towards privatising precious assets of the government — a claim the min-

istry has denied.

Ayodhya

(September 30, 2010, when the Allahabad High Court ruled) vividly. I feel happy that the dignity of the judiciary was proudly honoured, and no allowance for any heated discourse or tension was made anywhere. These incidents should always be remembered as they impart a lot of strength. That day, that moment, instills in us a sense of duty. It is an example of how the voice of unity can bestow strength upon our country," Modi said in his Mann Ki Baat address on Sunday.

"On the one hand, the machinations went on to generate tension for week or two, but, when the decision was taken on Ram Janmabhoomi, the government, political parties, social organisations, civil society, representatives of all sects and saints gave restrained and balanced statements. There were attempts to reduce the tension in the socio-political environment," he said, referring to how calm prevailed after the order.

"Various kinds of people took to the arena. Various interest groups were playing games to take advantage of the situation... The kind of language that was spoken in order to generate tension. There was also an attempt to instill shrillness in the tone of different speakers. Some of the loudmouths and braggarts had the sole intention of hogging the spotlight. And we all know what kind of irresponsible talk was floating around," he said. "This scenario continued for five days, or seven days, or ten days, but, the delivery of the court's decision generated a pleasant and surprising change of mood in the country," he said.

Adjudicating on the Ayodhya title suit, a special bench of Allahabad High Court, in September 2010, had ruled dividing the land into three parts — one part for the mosque side (Sunni Waqf Board), and two-thirds for the two Hindu sides — Ramlalla Virajwan, the deity, and Nirmohi Akhara — in equal parts.

The parties to the title suit filed a bunch of cross-appeals in the Supreme Court against the Allahabad High Court's ruling. Though the issue came up before previous Supreme Court benches headed by then CJIs, J S Khehar and Dipak Misra, in 2017 and 2018 respectively, detailed hearings could not take place.

The matter was referred to a five-judge bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi and comprising Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S A Nazeer in January this year. The bench referred the matter for mediation by a committee headed by former Supreme Court Judge F M Ibrahim Kalifulla and comprising spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravishankar and senior advocate Sriram Panchu as its members. The panel, which was given eight weeks to complete the process, submitted its report in August this year.

With mediation proceedings not resulting in a final settlement, the bench commenced day-to-day hearings on the cross-appeals from August 6. The hearings concluded on October 16, and the bench reserved its verdict.

Year on, World Bank-funded scheme to save groundwater yet to take off

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

AIMED AT checking depletion of groundwater in the country, the World Bank-funded Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY) is still waiting for the Union Cabinet's approval more than a year after the World Bank board approved it in June 2018.

As per original plans, the ambitious scheme was to start from the 2018-19 financial year.

The Expenditure Finance Committee under the chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, cleared the proposed scheme in March 2018. The government allocated a token sum of Rs 40 lakh in 2018-19, and Rs 1 crore in 2019-20 for ABHY. Proposed as a Central sector scheme, ABHY's estimated total cost is Rs 6,000 crore, of which Rs 3,000 crore is World Bank assistance and an equal amount is to be contributed by the

Union government as Budgetary support.

According to sources in the Jal Shakti Ministry, after the World Bank board's approval last year, the then Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation circulated a Cabinet note.

"After this, the PMO made some observations about the scheme, which have been clarified. But the scheme could not get cleared by Cabinet," a source in

the ministry said. The source said, "Earlier this month, senior officers at the PMO reviewed developments related to the scheme. It is now expected to get the Cabinet's nod soon."

Sources said the initial plan was to implement ABHY in the most water-stressed 78 districts of the country for five years — from 2018-19 to 2022-23. However, one-and-a-half-years have already passed and the scheme is awaiting government approval.

India is facing a challenge to check further depletion of groundwater resources. The number of over-exploited units has increased from 839 in 2004 to 1,186 in 2017, according to official statistics. There is also a decline in groundwater level in 61 per cent of the monitoring wells.

The situation is especially grave in North India, as more than 60 per cent of the assessment units in Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan are either over-ex-

ploited or at a critical stage. Against this backdrop, the government announced its intention to start a programme for sustainable management of groundwater resources in the 2016-17 Union Budget. The government had planned to roll out ABHY as part of this in water-stressed areas of seven states.

As part of the programme, the government wants to introduce the concept of 'water user associations' and water budgeting.

3 THE CITY

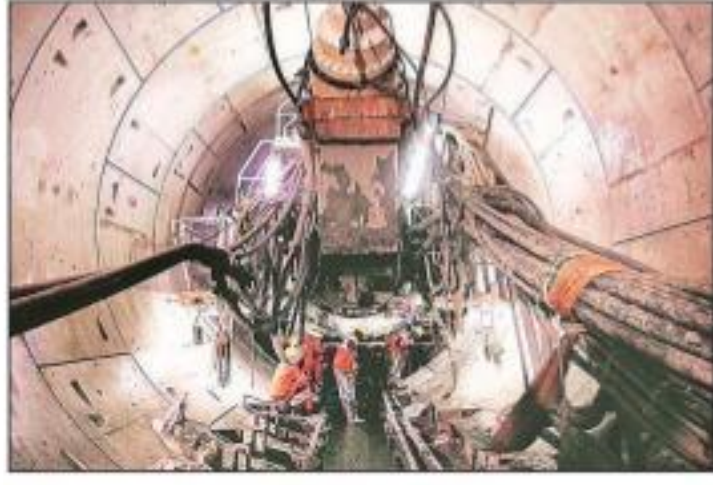
AAREY COLONY

Work on 32-storey Metro Bhavan under way

NEERAJ TIWARI
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

THE CONSTRUCTION of the 32-storey Metro Bhavan is under way in Aarey Colony, where earlier this month, several environmental activists and local residents had protested the hacking of over 2,000 trees to make way for a Metro car shed. The Metro Bhavan, which is being built on a different plot, is expected to be ready by 2021.

Earlier, 90 trees were slated to be cut to clear the plot for the Metro Bhavan. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region



The Metro Bhavan will serve as the control tower for all Metro lines. File

Development Authority (MMRDA), however, said that 20 of these trees will not face the axe as the alignment of the drainage line of the Metro Bhavan has been changed.

The 32-storey structure is coming up on a 2-hectare plot. The Metro Bhavan, which will serve as the control tower for all Metro lines, will house 7,000-8,000 employees running Metro operations.

A senior MMRDA official said that there was a delay in starting the work because of permissions required from the Aarey Milk Colony dairy department. "Currently, there are two machines deployed in Aarey Colony to start work piling and geological testing," said Dilip Kavathkar, spokesperson, MMRDA.

Another MMRDA official said, "Earlier, 90 trees were to be cut but we have changed the drainage line, so 20 fully grown trees will not be cut now."

Armed with an order of the Bombay High Court, the Mumbai Metro Rail

Corporation Limited (MMRCL), which is building the underground Metro 3, cut 2,141 trees in Aarey Colony on October 4. Angry protests followed that led to Section 144 being invoked.

सुमुख डेरी तरफ़्थी दिवाणी तथा नवा वर्षनी छार्दिक शुभ कामनाओ आपनुं नुतन वर्ष तन मन अने धनधी मछेकतु रहे...

सुमुख

डोन : २५३००८५, ५७९०२५०

BMC to beautify areas around five city forts

LAXMAN SINGH
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

THE BMC has decided to beautify areas around the five forts in the city. The decision was taken earlier this month when Municipal Commissioner Praveen Pardeshi held a meeting with ward officers to plan beautification of the periphery areas of the forts to give them an aesthetic look.

There are five forts —Worli, Sewree, Dharavi, Mahim and Sion—within the city limits. They fall under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums.

Officials said the initial plan is to beautify areas around Worli and Sewree forts. "The work will be taken up in such a way that it would match the historic look of the areas. The commissioner had instructed the chief accountant to make financial provision for the beautification work. All ward officers under whose jurisdiction these forts fall have been asked to submit a detailed plan for beautification," said a BMC official.

"Currently, all the forts are in poor condition. City-based NGO Nagar has suggested a restoration and rejuvenation plan for the forts. It has submitted a plan to the archeology department

and BMC, as the periphery of the forts comes under it. Following this, the commissioner had called the meeting," the official added.

The civic chief has directed that a provision of Rs 1 crore be made for the Worli fort. An officer from G-South ward (Worli, Mahalaxmi) said that in the meeting, the Worli fort was taken up as the first choice for beautification work. Subsequently, assistant municipal commissioner of F-South ward was asked to prepare a plan of the beautification of areas around the Sewree fort.

"We will first remove encroachment near the Worli fort. Seven to eight slums would be shifted from the fort precinct since it affects the access and view of the fort. There is one toilet, which can be seen from the Bandra-Worli Sealink, obstructing the fort's view. It will also be moved. An information board depicting the history of the fort will be erected and landscape created," said a senior official.

दिवावली शुभकामना

इश्वरने अंधकार परंत नधी तेवी रात्रीने ताराओ वी चमकावे ठे. जेभने नलजुं अंधकार परंत नधी तेओ अडीभम मजजुत अंधकार हावी सिमेवटी ठे ठे. महेता सुप परिपार टिप च्योतीना अंगल प्रलाते सोने कडीओ दिवावली शुभारंभ - साल शुभारंभ

सौराष्ट्र सिमेन्ट ली. राशावाप

हाथी सिमेन्ट

Society watchman arrested for stealing cash, valuables

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

A 23-YEAR-OLD watchman of a housing society in Goregaon (West) has been arrested for allegedly stealing cash and valuables worth Rs 2.63 lakh from residents of Manali apartment on MG Road.

After the first burglary in June, residents installed CCTV cameras at different locations in the building premises. The accused, Maqbool Hussain, was not aware of this and was caught red-handed when he walked into a flat to steal for the second time, said police.

Hussain, who was arrested on Tuesday, used to stay at Goregaon (East). "He hails from Jammu and Kashmir. The residents suspected that he would target multiples houses in the coming weeks and then flee to his native village ahead of the festive season," said an officer from Goregaon police. The complainant, resident Rajnarayan Sahu, has alleged that on June 30, while getting ready to attend a wedding, his wife found some gold ornaments missing. "They raised their concerns at a society meeting. When the members raised suspicion on Hussain, they decided to lay a trap," said the officer.

"Hussain had duplicate keys of several flats. As most of the houses were empty in the building, in the absence of the owners, he helped showed houses to people looking to rent apartments," the officer added.

On 15 October, when Hussain entered resident Priyank Premkumar's house to steal, the incident was recorded in the CCTV cameras. When the residents checked the watchman's cabin, they found Premkumar's house keys missing.

Hussain has been remanded in police custody till October 28 by a magistrate court.

The Director General of Police

Maharashtra State Police Headquarter, Shahid Bhagat Singh Marg, Colaba, Mumbai-400 001

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Sr.No.	e-Tender No.	Item Description	Deadline
1	2169	Video Spectral Comparator	08.11.2019
2	2154	Car Remote Opening Tool	

2. Tender submission will be made online. For detailed Tender documents, interested bidders may kindly visit <https://mapo.maharashtra.etenders.in/tenders>.

Sd/-
(R. S. Changan)
Desk Officer

For Director General of Police,
Maharashtra State, Mumbai.

Mumbai, Date : 25.10.2019

DGIPR/2019-2020/3416

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NOTICE Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015, Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Corporation will be held on Thursday, November 07, 2019 to consider, inter-alia, the Unaudited Financial Results of the Corporation for the Second Quarter & Half Year ended September 30, 2019.

The said notice can be accessed on the Corporation's website at <http://www.hindustanpetroleum.com>. Notice to this effect has also been given to NSE & BSE Ltd.

As communicated to the stock exchanges earlier, it is further informed that the Trading Window for dealing in securities of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited is under closure from October 01, 2019 to November 09, 2019 for all 'Insiders' as per the Insider Trading code of the Company. The Insider Trading Code is available on the Company's website www.hindustanpetroleum.com

Place : Mumbai V. Murali
Date : October 28, 2019 Company Secretary

TATA CAPITAL HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

Regd. Office:- 11th Floor, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400013, CIN No. U57199MH2008PLC187552.

Contact No. (022) 61827414, (022) 61827375

POSSESSION NOTICE

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the TATA Capital Housing Finance Limited, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated mentioned below calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

The borrowers, having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, in particular and the public, in general, that the undersigned has taken physical possession of the property described herein in view of order dated & Case no. mentioned below passed by the District Magistrate, Surat through the Mamladar and the said Mamladar handed over the physical possession to the undersigned Authorised Officer. The borrowers, in particular, and the public in general, are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the TATA Capital Housing Finance Limited, for an amount referred to below along with interest thereon and penal interest, charges, costs etc. from date of demand notice. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Loan A/c Nos.	Name of Obligor(s)/Legal Heir(s)/ Legal Representative(s)	Amount as per Demand Notice	Demand Notice Dt. Date of Possession	Order Date Case No.
10133450	Mr. Akhilesh Dhananjay Singh (Borrower) & Mrs. Renu Akhileshkumar Singh (Co-borrower)	Rs.14,53,835/- as on 31.07.2018	31.07.2018 24.10.2019	26.07.2019 191/2019

Description of Secured Assets/Immovable Properties: All the piece & parcel of Immovable property as per Site Plot No. A/304 (As per Passing Plan Flat No. A/308) on the 3RD Floor admeasuring 828.24 Sq. Fts. i.e. 76.95 Sq. Mts. Super Built Up Area, & 515.66 Sq. Fts. i.e. 47.92 Sq. Mts. Built Up Area along with 31.34 Sq. Mts. Undivided Share in the land of "Siddhanath Avenue" As per Site Building No. A of (As per Passing Plan Building "A" Type), Situated at Revenue Survey No. 130 & 143, Revenue Block No. 190 admeasuring He. 0-95-10 Sq. Mts. Paiki Eastern Side 5131 Sq. Mts. Of Mouje Village Masama, Tal. Olpad, Dist. Surat.

10233705	Mr. Arvind Balbhadrasingh (Borrower) & Mr. Kamlesh Balbhadra Singh (Co-borrower)	Rs.12,74,942/- as on 28.01.2019	28.01.2019 23.10.2019	09.09.2019 567/2019
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Description of Secured Assets/Immovable Properties: All the piece & parcel of Immovable property bearing Plot No. 38, as per site admeasuring 103 Sq. Yard, i.e. 86.15 Sq. Mts. & As per Passing Plan admeasuring 66.47 sq. Mts., along with 55.58 Sq. Mts. Undivided share in the land of Road & C.O.P. in "Shubham Residency", Situated at Revenue Survey No. 309, Block No. 349 admeasuring He. Are 0-55-89 Sq. Mts. i.e. 5589.00 Sq. Mts. & D.S.O. Record admeasuring 6065.00 Sq. Mts. Of Moje Village Jolwa, Tal. Palsana, Dist. Surat.

10020876	Mr. Kirittbhai Maganbhai Savaliya (Borrower) & Mrs. Arunabenkirittbhai Savaliya (Co-borrower)	Rs.11,71,650/- as on 15.12.2018	15.12.2018 24.10.2019	09.09.2019 579/2019
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Description of Secured Assets/Immovable Properties: All the Piece and Parcel of Immovable Property Plot No.39 Admeasuring 44.65 Sq. Mts. Along With 25.94 Sq. Mts. Undivided Share in Road & COP in "Royal Residency" Situated at Block No. 526/A/2 Admeasuring 18763 Sq. Mts. Of Moje Village Kudsad, Tal: Olpad, Dist. Surat. Bounded as follows:- East by: Society Road, West by: Plot No.56, North by: Plot No.40, South by: Plot No.38.

9975706	Mr. Nareshbhai Rathva (Borrower) & Mrs. Sumitraben Rathva (Co-borrower)	Rs.14,98,481/- as on 23.01.2019	23.01.2019 23.10.2019	09.09.2019 565/2019
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Description of Secured Assets/Immovable Properties: All the Piece & Parcel of Immovable Property Plot No.96 (As per Passing Plan Plot No. A/96) admeasuring 89 Sq.Yard, i.e. 74.42 sq.mts along with undivided share in the land of "Mansi Residency" Situate at Revenue Survey No. 194/1 & 194/2, Block No. 195 & 196 total admeasuring 50777 Sq. Mts. Of Moje Village Bagumara, Tal. Palsana Dist:Surat. Bounded as follows:- East by: Plot No.A/93, West by: Soc. Int. Road, North by: Plot No. A/95, South by: Plot No. B/97.

Date : 28.10.2019 Sd/- Authorized Officer
Place : Surat, Gujarat For Tata Capital Housing Finance Limited

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POSSESSION NOTICE

(For Immovable property) Whereas, The undersigned being the authorised officer of BANK OF INDIA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice dated 12.06.2019 calling upon the borrower Mr. Dilip Balu Vadd to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 5,75,931/- (Rupees Five Lakhs Seventy Five Thousands Nine Hundred and Thirty One) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on this the 23rd Day of October of the year 2019.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF INDIA for an amount Rs. 5,75,931/- and interest thereon.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY All that piece and parcel of the property consisting of Land and Building, Sheds and Structures standing thereon, in the name of Mr. Dilip Balu Vadd, situated at R.S.No. 925/4, GPM No. 2/42, Plot No. 24, Mouje Hupari, Taluka Hatkanangale, District Kolhapur. This Property is bounded on or towards - By East: Property of Shri. Miraso Balu Kalawant; By West: Property of Shri. Raghunath Vishnu Washikar; By South: Property of Shri. Kedamath Subrao Bhandare & By North: Road.

Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised Officer
Date : 23.10.2019

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SEXUAL ASSAULT OF MINOR BOY

Court: Even natural parents can't give consent in favour of accused's bail

SADAF MODAK
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

OBSERVING THAT in cases of child sexual abuse, even natural parents do not have the authority to give consent for grant of bail to the accused, a special court on Thursday rejected the bail plea of a 43-year-old man accused of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old boy in 2018.

The minor's mother had submitted an affidavit before the court, giving her consent to the accused being released on bail. The accused, who had been in custody since December 2018, was booked under sections 377 (unnatural sex) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

"The prosecution submitted that the applicant (accused) may cause harm to the victim if released on bail. So, considering the nature of offence and apprehension of prosecution, the filing of the affidavit for no objection to the bail by the mother of the victim cannot be accepted in such a situation," the court said.

"I am of the view that if minors are assaulted sexually, then even the natural parents do not have the authority to give con-

sent in favour of bail of the accused," the judge said.

According to the prosecution, the incident had come to light when the minor's mother read messages received on the boy's cellphone and found out that the accused had come to their home. The minor had claimed that he was sexually abused and forced to send objectionable photographs to the accused, who ran a tailoring business.

The accused had claimed before the court that no incident of assault had taken place and that both he and the minor exchanged their photographs.

The prosecution, while opposing the bail plea, submitted that as the victim was a minor, the claim of the accused that both had exchanged photographs, did not fall in the purview of consent.

The court said the victim had given a statement about the assault, which was corroborated by medical evidence. "...the minor boy is the person who was assaulted. If he sticks with his statement of undergoing such a traumatic incident, then it would not be acceptable that the mother is giving no objection, so the accused should be released," the court observed.

GEARING UP FOR CELEBRATIONS



Women deck up an idol of goddess Kali at a community puja at Sion in Mumbai on Sunday. Pradip Das

3 instances of 'communal' speeches under EC scanner

MOHAMED THAYER
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

DURING CAMPAIGNING for the state elections in Mumbai, the Election Commission (EC) prima facie has found at least three cases where candidates of political parties appeared to be giving communally-charged speeches, including one by Mumbai BJP president Mangal Prabhakar Lodha. In another instance, the EC found a man putting up content online that could possibly cause a rift between two sects in Mulund.

Of these four cases, FIRs have been registered into three instances, while the case of Lodha is still being processed by the EC. According to EC officials, three of these cases took place in Mumbai suburbs that has 26 Assembly segments.

The first incident took place at Santacruz, where AIMIM candidate Arif Shaikh allegedly

made a hate speech during a rally at Daulat Nagar. The local police lodged an FIR against Shaikh under Section 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, etc) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 125 of the Representation of the People's Act (promoting enmity between classes in connection with election). Both these sections carry a maximum punishment of three years of imprisonment.

On October 19, an FIR was registered against BJP candidate Ramesh Singh Thakur for allegedly making a communally-charged speech in Malwani constituency, which has a Muslim majority. Aslam Shaikh of the Congress went on to win the seat.

An EC official said, "He had threatened people in Malwani to vote for him, else he would destroy them. Our staff filed a complaint, on the basis of which, an

FIR was registered under sections 153 A of the IPC and 125 of the RPA."

The same day, the Mulund police had booked a person named Bhusan Patil for posting content on social media against BJP candidate Mihir Kotecha, allegedly meant to cause problems between two sects in the area. An EC official said that it was not clear if Patil was affiliated to any party.

On October 16, BJP city unit head Lodha allegedly delivered a communally-charged speech at Mumbai constituency of south Mumbai, referring to bombs and bullets being manufactured in "lanes within 5 km" from the venue of his rally that he held in support of the local Shiv Sena candidate.

Based on a report in *The Indian Express* and the video recorded by EC personnel, the Returning Officer (RO) of Mumbai (South) had issued a show-cause notice to Lodha, Sena can-

didate Pandurang Sakpal and the organiser of the meeting. While Lodha won his Malabar Hill seat in the October 21 polls with the highest vote share in the city, Sakpal lost from Mumbai West.

Lodha, in his reply to the show-cause notice, had claimed that his speech was misrepresented and taken out of context. "After perusal of the responses and the recorded speech, a report will be prepared by the RO and submitted to the district election officer for further action if it is found to be in violation of the model code of conduct," said the EC official.

The official added that a person from the EC team video records most speeches given by candidate. "It should be strong evidence to prosecute."

A senior police officer said that depending on the evidence, chargesheets would be filed in the cases.

(WITH INPUTS FROM SADAF MODAK)

NCP withdraws stir after MMRDA assurance on flyover opening

NEERAJ TIWARI
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

EVEN AS NCP workers led by the party's city chief Nawab Malik gathered on Sunday to open the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC)-Chunabatti link corridor, the protest was withdrawn after the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) assured that the road would be opened in a week.

On Sunday, around 11 am, NCP workers led by Malik gathered near BKC.

Malik told *The Indian Express*, "It was supposed to open in 2017. Now the work has been completed but MMRDA is not opening it for public."

Malik claimed that MMRDA was waiting for the new government to open it.

NCP spokesperson Clyde Crasto said, "We have spoken to MMRDA chief R A Rajeev, who promised us that it will be opened within a week."

Rajeev said, "A week's work is left. Once it is done, we will not even wait for inauguration, it will be opened for public directly."

Rajeev added that due to the late monsoon in the city the upper deck part of the elevated connector was incomplete but was recently completed. Other than that, there are works like installation of signage boards, signals, divider markings and noise barriers that need to be carried out, which will not take more



Nawab Malik

“A week's work is left. Once it is done, we will not even wait for inauguration, it will be opened for public directly”

— R A RAJEEV
MUMBAI METROPOLITAN REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CHIEF

than a week. In 2014, MMRDA planned the 1.6 km elevated flyover between BKC and Chunabatti at an estimated cost of Rs 156 crore. The aim was to give motorists direct connectivity from BKC to Eastern Express Highway.

The flyover starts from G-Block of BKC and after crossing Mithi River, LBS Marg, Central Railway tracks and V N Mankikar Road, leads to Chunabhatti railway station.

The flyover has missed several deadlines.



NCP workers protest at Chunabhatti-BKC flyover in Mumbai on Sunday. Ganesh Shirsekar

Goodwin jewellery store in Dombivali shuts shop, leaves investors in lurch

GARGI VERMA
THANE, OCTOBER 27

FOR 38-YEAR-OLD Sarita Angre, this Diwali may bring little cheer. She is one of the scores of investors hit by the PMC Bank scam. As if that wasn't bad enough, now the Goodwin jewellery store in Dombivali, in which she had invested Rs 2 lakh, has also shut shop.

On Sunday, Dombivali police registered an FIR against the owners and managers of the store for cheating over 200 customers.

"I have lost almost Rs 5 lakh in PMC Bank. I had invested about Rs 2 lakh with Goodwin, which I was supposed to get by October 21 but now I don't think I will," Angre, one of the protesters at the store's Dombivali branch, said.

The investors claimed they had put money with the jewellery store in a monthly investment scheme, police said. "Instead of paying them back, the accused seemed to have shut shop and fled," a police officer said.

According to police, an FIR of cheating has been filed against Sudhir Kumar and Sudheesh Kumar, owners of Goodwin jewellers. "We have also booked the manager of the store in Ram Nagar, Manish Kundli," an officer said.

"I had saved Rs 7 lakh with the store. We were promised either the sum or jewellery worth the money we had saved. I was going to buy my daughter's wedding jewellery from them," said Anamika Srivastava (52). Her daughter is getting married in December. "I don't know how I will arrange the money now," she said.

The investment scheme of the Goodwin jewellery store was to mature on October 21 and investors had been approaching the shop to inquire about their money. "Since it is Diwali, we had plans to use that money, so we had been checking with them," said Satyama Vera (38), another customer. "We were turned away on October 21 as the shop was shut. We were informed through a banner hung on



A store of Goodwin Jewellers that has been shut down at Dombivali in Thane. Deepak Joshi

the store that it would be shut for two days," he added.

After a week, when the store didn't open, customers gathered outside it on Saturday. Ram Nagar police were alerted, who sealed the shop. "We had saved Rs 10 lakh with the store's scheme but now it seems they have run away," Sebastian D'Souza, another customer, said.

The Dombivali police have not made any arrests yet. "As of now the shop has been sealed and we are investigating further," a senior officer said.

On Sunday, several customers gathered at the store and raised slogans against the shop and the police. "Why is it so difficult to arrest someone? Will they act after the accused leave the country," asked Angre.

The group was started in 1992 by A Mohanan and his sons, who have not been made accused by the police. According to police, the group has 14 outlets in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region and all of them have been shut since August 21. Police claimed that all three accused are on the run. Calls made to the Kumars remained unanswered.

JNU prof takes charge as MU dean of humanities

ABHA GORADIA
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU University (JNU) professor Rajesh Kharat has last week assumed charge as the dean of humanities in the University of Mumbai (MU). The dean of science and technology is also set to take charge in the first week of November.

These recruitments are part of an administrative overhaul underway at MU. The positions of dean of commerce and management and dean of interdisciplinary studies are yet to be filled. However, MU is in the process of proposing internal changes to build offices for the deans, for the first time in its history.

The restructuring at MU aims at making the university globally competitive and more receptive to the society's regional aspirations. The changes will focus on decentralising the burden on key university officials, such as the vice-chancellor and pro-V-C, and to speed up decision-making process.

A major part of the restructuring process is the introduction of full-time deans, which was earlier only an honorary position. The board of deans will undertake a majority of decisions on issues taken up by the management and academic council.

While the official circular in regard to restructuring was released on Friday, it would come into effect from November 4.

"We'll have to re-advertise the other two posts of deans. With due permission from heritage authorities, we will build offices for the four deans in the same fashion as those built in the V-C's corridor. We are also working on recruitment for 136 posts across departments that will soon be advertised," said MU Pro V-C Ravindra Kulkarni.

5 EXPRESS NETWORK



NORTH

Bodies of 3 labourers with mutilated genitals found

Pithoragarh (Uttarakhand): Bodies of three labourers from Nepal with their genitals mutilated were found from an abandoned house in a forested area of Pithoragarh district, police said on Sunday. The bodies were found on Saturday night by a woman who lives in nearby Madkharayat vil-



At a sale display ahead of Kali Puja in Kolkata on Sunday. AP

EAST

Odisha govt dismisses two state civil service officers

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government dismissed two more state civil service officers and withheld the pension of nine other officers for their alleged involvement in corruption cases, an official said. The two Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officers dismissed from service were former Tehsildar of Loisingha, Bijayani Biswal

and former Block Development Officer of Komna Block, Pradeep Kumar Behera, the official said. Both the officers were working under the Revenue and Disaster Management department, an official order said. The two dismissed OAS officers were convicted in corruption cases, the official added. PTI

WEST

2 held at Surat railway station with drug worth Rs 3.5 crore

Surat: Two people were arrested from a Mumbai-bound train at Surat railway station in Gujarat with 7.5 kg of mephedrone worth Rs 3.5 crore, a Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) official said on Sunday. A team acting on a tip-off boarded the Mumbai-bound Rajdhani Express on Saturday morning and made the seizure and ar-

rests, the DRI official added. "The contraband, weighing 7.5 kg and worth Rs 3.5 crore, was concealed in a bag. The two arrested persons hail from Haryana, had boarded the train in Delhi, and were on their way to deliver the mephedrone to a person in Mumbai," he said. The two were charged under the NDPS Act. PTI

SOUTH

Five new Kerala MLAs to take oath today

Thiruvananthapuram: The 16th session of the Kerala Legislative Assembly, beginning here on Monday, would see the swearing in of five newly-elected members who had won the October 21 by-polls. V K Prasanth, K U Jenish Kumar, T J Vinod, Shanamol Usman and MCKamaruddin, who got elected from Vattiyoorkavu, Konni,

Ernakulam, Aroor and Manjeshwaram assembly segments respectively, are the new MLAs to be sworn in on the opening day. It is for the first time that the House is being convened after the bypolls, which had seen the ruling CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front winning two seats and Congress-headed United Democratic Front three. PTI

Khattar 2.0 begins in Haryana with Dushyant as his deputy

No other minister sworn in, new allies BJP, JJP yet to reach consensus

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 27

MANOHAR LAL Khattar was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Haryana for the second consecutive term and JJP leader Dushyant Chautala took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

No other minister was sworn in on Sunday, apparently after new allies BJP and JJP failed to reach a consensus on MLAs to be included into the council of ministers. Initially, at least four MLAs — Anil Vij and Kanwarpal Gujjar from the BJP and Ishwar Singh and Ram Kumar Gautam from the JJP — were expected to be sworn-in as Cabinet ministers, but that did not happen eventually. Four vehicles meant for the Cabinet ministers that were brought to the Raj Bhavan were taken back at the last minute.

BJP sources told *The Indian Express* that there was a disagreement on the names of a few MLAs who shall be sworn in as ministers. So, nobody else was sworn in on Friday and names of those who are going to be included in the Cabinet were not disclosed. The names are now expected to be finalised next week.

Dushyant's father Ajay Chautala, who is serving 10 years of rigorous imprisonment after conviction in the JBT teachers recruitment case, was also present at the swearing-in ceremony.

After being released from Tihar jail on Sunday morning on a 14-day furlough, Ajay reached the Raj Bhavan with wife and Badhra legislator Naina Chautala and son Digvijay.

"It is the due to our party workers that we have reached here today. The alliance of the BJP and the JJP will do fantastic work and continue for the entire five-year tenure," he said.

Dushyant's brother Digvijay said, "The BJP and JJP's alliance will work for the benefit of the state. Congress is unnecessarily trying to make this alliance an issue by saying that people's mandate was



Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Deputy CM Dushyant Chautala after taking oath at Haryana Raj Bhavan in Chandigarh on Sunday. (Left) Dushyant's father Ajay Chautala, who is on a two-week furlough from Tihar jail, with wife Naina Chautala at the oath-taking function. Jaipal Singh

against BJP and we should not have entered into the alliance. The fact is that people's mandate was against Congress too. Bhupinder Singh Hooda had a misconception that we will go with him. How can we ally with Hooda who hatched a conspiracy to send my father and grandfather to jail?"

The BJP and JJP on Friday night announced an alliance after none of the parties managed to cross the majority mark in the recently held Assembly polls. While the BJP won 40 seats, the Congress won 31 seats and the JJP finished with 10 seats in the 90-member Assembly.

Around a 1,000 guests, includ-

ing newly elected MLAs and Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand Chief Ministers Jai Ram Thakur and Trivendra Singh Rawat attended the swearing-in ceremony.

Former Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and former Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Badal too attended the swearing-in ceremony. Sukhbir reached the venue, walked straight to Ajay Chautala and hugged him tight. The Chautala and Badal families have decade-old ties. Both Khattar and Dushyant touched Parkash Singh Badal's feet on the stage.

After the ceremony, Congress leader and former Haryana Chief

Minister said, "I hope this alliance works, but we shall see how they carry on because of the contradictions they have. For JJP, all I say is Vote kisi ko aur support kisi ko. What JJP has done is against the mandate of Haryana. It is just an alliance of convenience."

Speaking about the Congress' performance in the Assembly polls, he said, "Had the party high command implemented the change in the state unit earlier, the results would have definitely been different."

Naina Chautala, Dushyant's mother, however said, "The alliance will function and people will see it."



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Army personnel in Rajouri district on Sunday. ANI

PM celebrates Diwali with soldiers at Rajouri, Poonch

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, OCTOBER 27

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi celebrated Diwali on Sunday with Army troops stationed along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri and Poonch districts.

Sources said that Modi spent nearly 90 minutes with the soldiers and appreciated their valour and motivation in safeguarding the country's frontiers. He later returned to Delhi.

Earlier in the morning, the Prime Minister directly flew to Army Brigade Headquarters at Bhimber Gali in the border district to interact with the troops.

Though it was his first visit to the state to celebrate Diwali post re-volet of Article 370, he had come here to celebrate the festival on earlier two occasions since 2014.

In the last two months, LoC in Rajouri and Poonch districts have been witness to intense mortar shelling and small arms fire by Pakistani troops who have been targeting the forward Indian positions and civilians

without any provocation. On various occasions, they have even targeted schools making children remain confined within the four walls of their respective educational institutions for several hours.

Modi started the practice of interacting with troops serving in tough areas on Diwali soon after taking over as the prime minister in 2014 when he celebrated the festival of lights at Siachen in Ladakh region with the soldiers.

Sources said that four helicopters came to J&K and one landed in Rajouri and three others in Bhimber Gali. One of the helicopter was said to have been used by the Prime Minister.

In 2015, Modi's visit to the Punjab border on Diwali coincided with 50 years of 1965 Indo-Pak war. In 2018, he celebrated the festival in the icy terrain near the Indo-China border in Uttarakhand with the Army and the ITBP personnel.

Meanwhile, Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked small arms fire along the LoC in Sunderbani sector. The Indian Army retaliated.

Pak denies use of its airspace to PM Modi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD, OCTOBER 27

PAKISTAN ON Sunday said it has denied India's request to allow Prime Minister Narendra Modi's aircraft to use its airspace for his upcoming visit to Saudi Arabia, citing the alleged human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said Pakistan has decided not to allow Prime Minister Modi to use the country's airspace, state-run Radio

Pakistan reported.

He said the decision has been taken in context of the "black day" and in view of the alleged human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, it added.

Pakistan is observing black day on Sunday in support of Kashmiris.

Qureshi said the Indian High Commissioner is being informed of this decision in written form.

Modi will travel to Saudi Arabia on Monday where he will attend an international business forum and hold talks with top Saudi leadership.

In MP, private MSMEs must reserve jobs for govt sops

MILIND GHATWAI BHOPAL, OCTOBER 27

THE CONGRESS government in Madhya Pradesh has unveiled a provision for private sector Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), wherein new units seeking government benefits like cheap land must provide 70 per cent jobs to locals, and must ensure that SCs, STs and OBCs get representation.

Called the Madhya Pradesh MSME Protsahan Yojana, 2019, the 91-page document was dated October 23 but was uploaded on the website of the Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, which works under the Directorate of Industries, on Saturday.

In December, Chief Minister Kamal Nath, in his first press conference after taking charge, had said that many industries come to MP but offer employment to "outsiders", thus depriving opportunities to local residents. Though his comments touched off a storm, the CM stuck to his statement. By January, his government had amended the MSME Development Policy, 2017 to make it compulsory on units to provide 70 per cent jobs to permanent residents of the state.

The new policy unveiled on Saturday includes caste-based reservation too. SCs, STs and OBCs got 16, 20 and 13 per cent reservation respectively in Madhya Pradesh till July. However, the new provision unveiled does not mention the 10 per cent EWS quota for the general category.

Gautam Kothari of the Pithampur Industries Association said that though such policies make for good politics, the governments should avoid them. "On one hand, you talk about ease of doing business, and on the other, you introduce complex policies where industries will have to keep caste count in mind," he said.

Former IAS officer Veena Ghanekar, who contested Lok Sabha polls from Bhopal as a SAPAKS Party candidate, was critical of the policy. "This will destroy industries. Why divide workers along caste lines?" she said.

Meanwhile, the BJP did not criticise the new policy but said it was an eye wash. "There are many loopholes. The government is not serious about getting investment and coming up with such policies to divert attention," said BJP legislator Vishwas Sarang.

Hit by storms twice, man drifts from Andaman to Odisha 28 days later

SAMPAD PATNAIK BHUBANESWAR, OCTOBER 27

A 49-YEAR-OLD man who lost his usual ocean route, survived 28 days adrift before he hit the coast at Odisha's Puri district on Friday.

Amrit Kujur, a resident of Shahid Dweep at Andaman and Nicobar Islands (A&N), follows sea routes for a living and supplies passing ships with everyday items such as groceries and potable water.

On September 28, Kujur and a friend, Divyaranjan, set out for from A&N to trade with ships on the Indian Ocean.

However, a storm left them stranded, away from their regular course in a damaged boat. "We had to throw out all our cargo to lighten the boat," said Kujur to journalists. "The boat was badly damaged," he added

On September 28, Kujur and a friend, Divyaranjan, set out for from A&N to trade with ships on the Indian Ocean. However, a storm left them stranded

He said they signalled some big ships for help after being stranded but none could spot them.

Help arrived in the form of a a Burmese Navy ship which stocked the boat with 260 litres of fuel for their way back to A&N and equipped them with a compass. However, Kujur told journalists in Odisha that another storm hit them after that and they lost course once again.

After the fuel ran out, the two were stranded yet again. "I had

lost all hope, but survived drinking sea water, which I filtered by soaking and then squeezing my towel," said Kujur.

Krushnaprasad Station Police Inspector Abhimanyu Nayak told *The Indian Express* that he checked out Amrut's story. "At this point, we have determined that a person by the name of Amrit Kujur and Divyaranjan were deemed missing at sea since last month. They have family members on the island chain," he said.

Kujur's friend Divyaranjan however, could not make it. There is little chance of verifying the circumstances leading to Divyaranjan's death, which Kujur says happened because of drinking sea water over a sustained time period and hunger. "He became weaker with each passing day till he died. I had to let go of his body from the boat," Kujur said.

Globally, there are concerns regarding patients' limited access to insulin, and India has the second largest diabetes burden in the world. We employed a mixed-methods survey approach: a modified World Health Organisation (WHO)/Health Action International (HAI) standard survey, along with qualitative interviews with insulin retailers (pharmacists) and wholesalers to understand insulin availability, affordability and market dynamics in Bengaluru region," said Satheesh.

Insulin remains unaffordable in both private and public sectors and the lowest paid unskilled worker pays 1.4-9.3 days' wages for a month's supply, depending

on the type and the health sector, said the study. Interviews with wholesalers suggest that challenges constraining patients' insulin access include limited market competition, physicians' preference for non-Indian insulin products, and the ongoing transition from human to analogue insulin.

Researchers selected Bengaluru for the study as a similar one, carried out in Delhi in 2016, had also found limited market competition from Indian insulin manufacturers in the region. "We decided to replicate the study in south India and wondered if insulin access and market dynamics would be different in Bengaluru, which is also home to India's major insulin

manufacturer Biocon (a key stakeholder in global insulin access)," said Satheesh.

The study found that besides some competition from Biocon (a major Indian insulin manufacturer is based in Bengaluru), the majority of insulin products that researchers found were supplied by foreign companies. They observed that non-Indian companies such as Novo Nordisk and Eli Lilly and Company dominated Bengaluru's insulin market. In the paper, researchers have also put forth several recommendations for the Indian government, the pharmaceutical industry and the pharmacy associations on how they could improve access to insulin in India.

patients' insulin access. "Next year will mark 100 years since its discovery... but insulin remains inaccessible to millions due to poor availability and unaffordable prices," researchers said.

The increasing global burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) — including diabetes — poses a major public health challenge. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by United Nations member states, has prioritised the reduction of premature mortality due to NCDs by a third, they said.

"One way to progress towards this goal is to achieve at least 80 per cent availability of affordable essential medicines.

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS PUNE, OCTOBER 27

INSULIN, LISTED on India's 2015 Essential Medicine List, was available only in 66.7 per cent of government hospitals in Bengaluru, falling short of the World Health Organization's 80 per cent target, according to a new study.

In the study, published recently in the BMC Journal of Pharmaceutical Policy and Practice, researchers have identified a series of challenges constraining access to insulin — an essential, life-saving medicine for people with diabetes — in Bengaluru region.

Insulin availability in government hospitals was lower than the availability in private retail pharmacies (76.1 per cent) and private hospitals (93.3 per cent), the study pointed out. Among private retailers, insulin products were available in 96.7 per cent of pharmacy chains and 68.3 per cent independent pharmacies.

Researchers Gautam Satheesh and MK Unnikrishnan from the National College of Pharmacy, Kozhikode, along with Professor Abhishek Sharma from the Department of Global Health, Boston University School of Public Health, told *The Indian Express* that their study revealed complex relationships between the various components of the healthcare system in terms of

TELLING NUMBERS

Role of mountain streams in carbon cycle, newly assessed

MOUNTAINS COVER 25 per cent of the Earth's surface, and the streams draining these mountains account for more than a third of the global runoff. What had not yet been evaluated, however, was the role mountain streams play in global carbon fluxes (the carbon exchanged between various carbon pools on Earth). So far, scientists had focused mainly on streams and rivers in low-altitude tropical and boreal regions.

Now, scientists have reported the findings of the first large-scale study of the carbon dioxide emissions of mountain streams, and their role in global carbon fluxes. They described their finding as unexpected — mountain streams have a higher average carbon dioxide emission rate per square metre than streams at lower altitudes, due in part to the additional turbulence caused as water flows down slopes.

5% The proportion that mountain streams account for in the global surface area of fluvial networks.

10%-30% The likely share of mountain streams in carbon dioxide emissions from all fluvial networks.

The findings appear to indicate that the carbon dioxide comes from geological sources, said the Switzerland-based research institute École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), whose PhD student Ása Horgby led the international study, which has been published in the journal *Nature Communications*.

In a statement on the research, EPFL said the result shows how important it is to include mountain streams in assessments of the global carbon cycle.

The scientists collected big environmental data from the streams draining the world's main mountain ranges. Then they used these big data to develop a model to estimate the natural carbon dioxide emissions from more than 1.8 million mountain streams worldwide, the EPL statement said.

THIS WORD MEANS

NELLOPTODES GRETAE

A species of beetle named after Greta Thunberg. Where is it from, and what are its defining features?

BETWEEN 1964 and 1965, an entomologist called William Brock collected samples of soil from around east Africa. Inside one of these samples, taken in Kenya and stored in the British Natural History Museum until now, was a tiny species of beetle, pale yellow and gold. Measuring just 0.79 millimetres, the beetle has no eyes or wings, with a small pit between where the eyes should have been.



Nelloptodes gretae, finally named. Natural History Museum

the Museum said in a statement announcing the naming of the species.

Darby described not only the new genus and the species he named after Greta Thunberg, but eight other species of beetles, all within the same sample of soil. All the nine species belong to a family called Ptiliidae. Darby has named many species of Ptiliidae beetles earlier.

Beetles of this family are found all over the world, yet they are not particularly well known because of their size — they are so small that even some single-cell animals are larger. Many of them are, in Darby's words, smaller than a full stop.

The species has just got a name. Natural History Museum scientific associate Michael Darby, who is quoted on the Museum website as describing himself as a great fan of Greta Thunberg, has described the species and named it *Nelloptodes gretae*, after the teenage climate activist.

Biological names comprise two words, one for the genus and the second for the species. Traditionally, it is the species name that scientists coin to honour a prominent personality, and sometimes even a friend or a relative. While the species name *gretae* derives from Greta, the genus *Nelloptodes* too is new.

TIP FOR READING LIST

HISTORY OF ATTITUDES TO MENOPAUSE

THE TERM menopause is relatively new, coined in 1821 by French physician Charles-Pierre-Louis de Gardanne. In those days, menopause was viewed as a medical problem. Have these attitudes been all wrong? Yes, historian Susan Mattern argues in her book.

The Slow Moon Climbs: The Science, History, and Meaning of Menopause traces the evolution of perceptions of menopause. She writes: "Menopause only became a subject of medical interest in Europe in the eighteenth century, and its place in modern medicine rests on that recent foundation. For most of human history, people have seen menopause for what, as I argue, it really is: a developmental transition to an important stage of life; not a problem, but a solution."

Stressing the importance of life beyond fertility, Mattern examines the "Grandmother Hypothesis" that argues for

the importance of elders in the rearing of future generations, and provides other insights about menopause and the place of older people in society. *The Slow Moon Climbs* presents menopause as an essential life stage, and also as a key factor in the history of human flourishing. In its review of the book, the *Financial Times* takes note of Mattern's "empowering" message: "We become non-reproductive so that we can do other things."

"Because of a life cycle and reproductive strategy that included menopause, human populations could explode across a landscape in favourable circumstances, but also

limit the number of dependent children competing for resources and maximise the number of adult providers to young consumers. Menopause is part and parcel of an extraordinary ability to cooperate that has been critical to humans' success in the past and seems likely to be critical to our future as well," Mattern writes.

The rules for global post, and how Pak stopped mail to and from India

DIVYA GOYAL CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 26

IN A unilateral decision, Pakistan has stopped exchange of postal mails with India since August 27 (*The Indian Express*, September 28). Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has said Pakistan's decision was taken "without any prior notice" and "in direct contravention of international norms but Pakistan is Pakistan". A look at the rules governing postal exchange, and how Pakistan took the step:

Who regulates postal exchange between one country and another?

The United Nations' Universal Postal Union (UPU) frames rules for international mail exchange, and fixes rates for international postal services. The UPU has 192 member-countries and is headquartered in Bern. Constituted in 1874, the UPU has four units: the Congress, the Council of

Administration, the International Bureau, and the Postal Operations Council. It regulates 6.40 lakh postal outlets worldwide. India joined the UPU on July 1, 1876 and Pakistan on November 10, 1947.

What has mail exchange between India and Pakistan been like?

Before Pakistan's move, mailbags were being exchanged almost daily. With no regular, direct flight connectivity between the two countries, mail was being routed through the Saudi Arabia air route. In India, all international posts are handled through the 28 Foreign Post Offices, with those in Delhi and Mumbai designated to handle mails for Pakistan. "The mailbags of both countries were exchanged at airports after a customs check," a senior India Post official said.

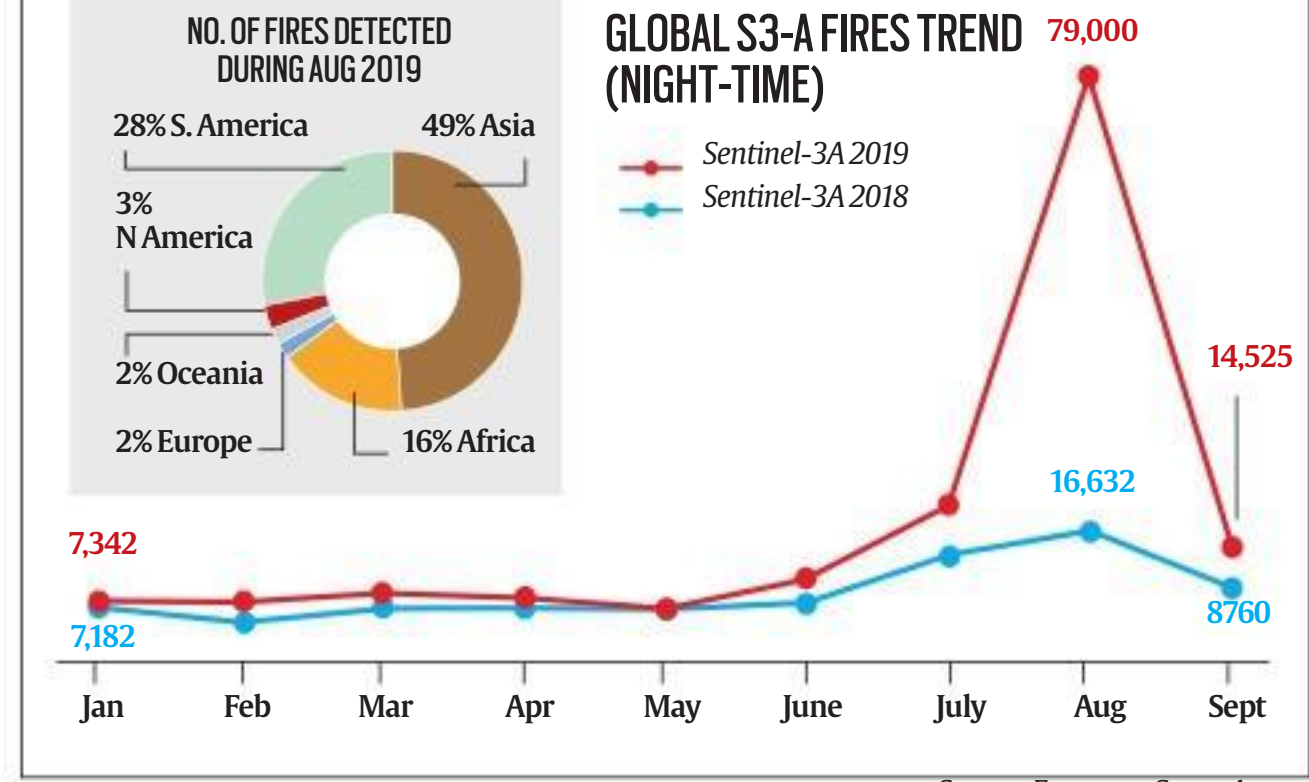
Other than the UPU, three agreements cover postal exchange between India and Pakistan — Exchange of Value Payable Article, 1948; Exchange of Postal Article, 1974; and International Speed Post Agreement, 1987.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 26

COMPARED TO August 2018, there were almost five times as many wildfires across the world in August 2019, the European Space Agency (ESA) has announced citing data from its Sentinel-3 World Fire Atlas. August and September 2019 were also the months during which fires in the Amazon rainforest were at the centre of worldwide attention. A detailed analysis of the August 2019 fires, however, shows that it was Asia that accounted for nearly half of these fires, the ESA said.

"Fires in the Amazon sparked a global outcry this summer, but fires have also been blazing in the Arctic, France, Greece, Indonesia as well as many other areas in the world," the ESA said.

PEAK & DISTRIBUTION: The ESA's Copernicus Sentinel-3 mission recorded 79,000 fires in August this year, compared to just over 16,000 fires detected during the same period last year. These figures were achieved



by using data from the Sentinel-3 World Fire Atlas Prototype, which also provided a breakdown of these fires per continent.

The data revealed that 49% of the fires were detected in Asia, around 28% were de-

tected in South America, 16% in Africa, and the remaining were recorded in North America, Europe and Oceania.

HOW THEY ARE MAPPED: The Sentinel-

3 World Fire Atlas uses a method that enables it to identify all active fires at night. The sensors on satellites measure thermal infrared radiation to take the temperature of Earth's land surfaces. This information is used to detect and monitor the heat emitted by the fires.

The Sentinel-3 World Fire Atlas uses the satellite data to plot the number of fires occurring monthly. It cannot pick up all fires due to satellite overpass constraints and cloud coverage. The ESA noted, however, that it is statistically representative from one month to the other and from one year to the other.

"We have never seen an increase of wildfires of this kind since the ATSR World Fire Atlas was created in 1995," the ESA's Olivier Arino said in the statement.

Quantifying and monitoring fires is important for the study of climate because, as the ESA pointed out, fires have a significant impact on global atmospheric emissions, with biomass burning contributing to the global budgets of greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide.

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Naga talks: long road, issues

The deadline for wrapping up peace talks arrives this week, yet some key issues remain to be resolved. A primer on the long history of the Naga struggle, the territorial demand, and the role of NSCN(I-M)

ABHISHEK SAHA GUWAHATI, OCTOBER 27

THE DEADLINE set by the Centre for wrapping up the Naga peace talks, October 31, arrives this week. While the Centre's interlocutor and now Nagaland's Governor, R N Ravi, has stressed that the government intends to meet the deadline, some key issues remain unresolved with the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah), or NSCN(I-M).

What are the Naga peace talks?

The talks seek to settle disputes that date back to colonial rule. The Nagas are not a single tribe, but an ethnic community that comprises several tribes who live in the state of Nagaland and its neighbourhood. One key demand of Naga groups has been a Greater Nagalim that would cover not only the state of Nagaland but parts of neighbouring states, and even of Myanmar.

The British had annexed Assam in 1826, in which they subsequently created the Naga Hills district and went on to extend its boundaries. The assertion of Naga nationalism, which began during British rule, has continued after Independence, and even after Nagaland became a state. Along the way, the unresolved issues gave rise to decades of insurgency that claimed thousands of lives, including of civilians.

How has the Naga assertion played out historically?

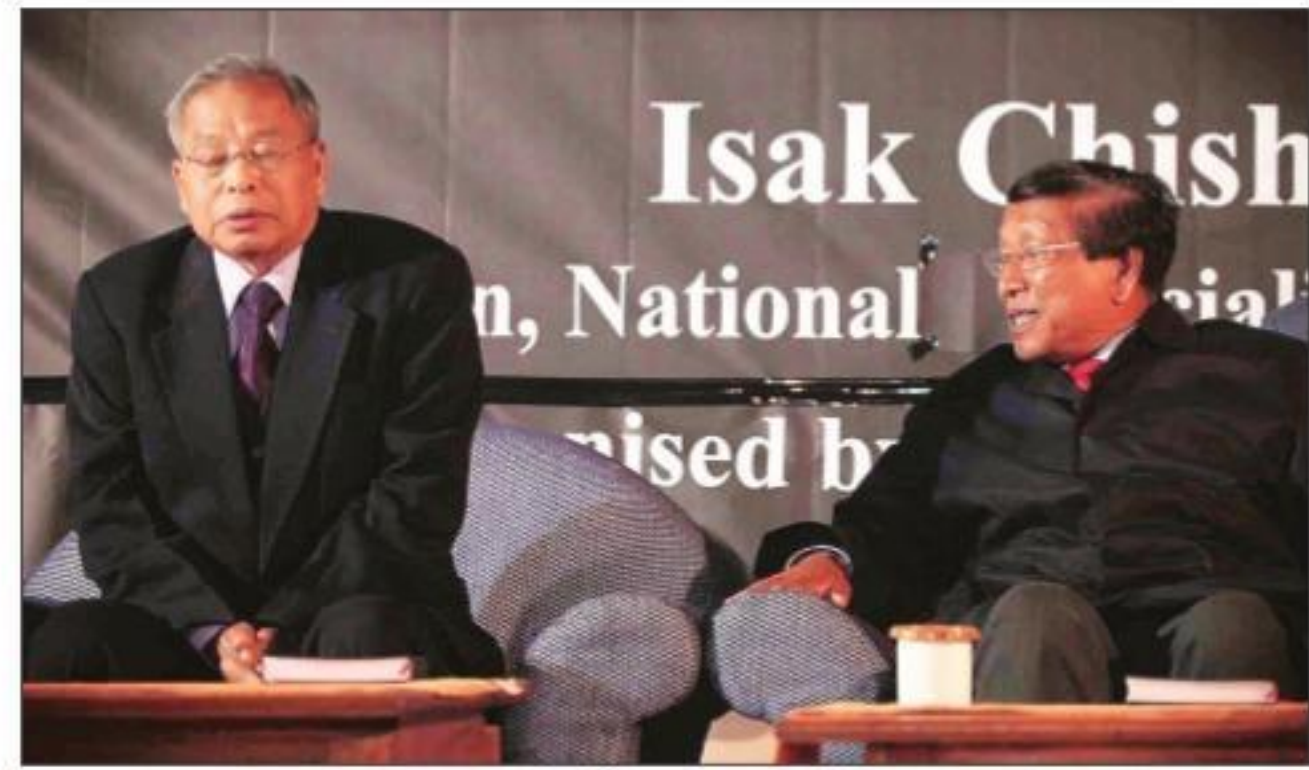
The earliest sign of Naga resistance dates back to 1918, with the formation of the Naga Club. In 1929, the Club famously told the Simon Commission "to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times".

In 1946, A Z Phizo formed the Naga National Council (NNC), which declared Naga independence on August 14, 1947, and then, in 1951, claimed to have conducted a referendum in which an overwhelming majority supported an independent Naga state.

By the early 1950s, the NNC had taken up arms and gone underground. The NNC split in 1975, the breakaway group being the NSCN, which split further in later years, most prominently into the NSCN(I-M) and NSCN (Khaplang) in 1988.

And how have the peace talks played out in recent years?

Before the ongoing talks, which followed a framework agreement in 2015, there were



NSCN(I-M) leaders Isak Chishi Swu (now deceased) and Thuingaleng Muivah at a reception in Delhi in January 2011. Express Archive

two other agreements between Naga groups and the Centre.

1975: A peace accord was signed in Shillong in which the NNC leadership agreed to give up arms. Several NNC leaders, including Isak Chishi Swu, Thuingaleng Muivah and S S Khaplang refused to accept the agreement and broke away to form the NSCN. In 1988 came another split, with Khaplang breaking away to form the NSCN(K) while Isak and Muivah headed the NSCN(I-M).

1997: The NSCN(I-M) signed a ceasefire agreement with the government in 1997, preceded by rounds of talks since 1995. The key agreement was that there would be no counter-insurgency offensive against the NSCN(I-M), who in turn would not attack Indian forces. The NSCN(I-M) had then announced to "every citizen of Nagalim wherever they may be", that a ceasefire agreement was entered into between the Government of India and the outfit "to bring about a lasting political solution to the long drawn out Indo-Naga issue".

2015: In August that year, the Centre signed a framework agreement with the NSCN(I-M). Prime Minister Narendra Modi described it as a "historic agreement" towards settling the "oldest insurgency" in India. This set the stage for the ongoing peace talks. In 2017, six other Naga armed outfits under the banner of the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) joined the talks.

Today, Muivah remains the senior-most

Naga rebel leader. Isak died in 2016. In the NSCN(K), its leader Khaplang died in 2018.

What was in the framework agreement?

The government has not yet spelt out the details in public. Following the agreement, the government had said in a press statement: "The Government of India recognised the unique history, culture and position of the Nagas and their sentiments and aspirations. The NSCN understood and appreciated the Indian political system and governance."

On the other hand, the NSCN(I-M) issued a statement earlier this year that said, "Nagaland State does and will not represent the national decision of the Naga people." The statement was in opposition to the proposal for a Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN) in the state of Nagaland.

Where does the territorial demand currently stand?

In 2018, The Indian Express reported that official sources had said that the accord being finalised "does not change the boundary of states; provides autonomous Naga territorial councils for Arunachal and Manipur; a common cultural body for Nagas across states; specific institutions for state's development, integration and rehabilitation of non-state Naga militia and the removal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act".

The map of Greater Nagalim in the NSCN(IM) vision, on the other hand, covers

a 1,20,000 sq km sprawl across the Northeast and Myanmar — the area of Nagaland state itself is only 16,527 sq km, a fraction of this vision. Amid the anxiety this has caused among citizens in neighbouring states, state governments have assured them that their respective states' territorial integrity would not be compromised.

Before the framework agreement, the Nagaland Assembly itself had endorsed the demand for "integration of all Naga-inhabited areas" as many as five times — in December 1964, August 1970, September 1994, December 2003 and on July 27, 2015.

What are the other issues?

The government and the NSCN(I-M) have failed to agree on issues relating to a separate Naga flag and a constitution. In its latest statement, the NSCN(I-M) has said it will not budge from the demand for the flag and the constitution — and that it is looking for a lasting solution.

Earlier this month, a statement from Governor Ravi's office said the government is determined to "honourably conclude" the Naga peace talks and it has reached a conclusion stage. But it noted: "Unfortunately at this auspicious juncture, the NSCN(I-M) has adopted a procrastinating attitude to delay the settlement raising the contentious symbolic issues of separate Naga national flag and constitution on which they are fully aware of the Government of India's position. They have mischievously dragged in the Framework Agreement and began imputing imaginary contents to it."

Ravi, 67, is a retired IPS officer who served in the Intelligence Bureau, including in the Northeast. He was appointed the Centre's interlocutor for the Naga peace talks in August 2014, and facilitated the signing of the framework agreement a year later.

Where could the disagreement lead to?

The statement from the Governor's office has given rise to speculation that the government is ready to sign a final peace agreement with other groups without the NSCN(I-M), the largest group, and with which the talks had begun in the first place. Civil society groups in Nagaland are divided in their opinion. Some have said the talks should be wrapped up with whatever is offered now and keep other issues open for later negotiations; others believe all issues should be settled and the NSCN(I-M) should be on board, even if it takes longer than the deadline.

7 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



AUSTRALIA
Notorious serial killer Milat dies

Sydney: Australia's most notorious serial killer Ivan Milat, whose murder of seven young backpackers in the 1990s terrified the country, has died in hospital, officials said on Sunday. Milat was serving consecutive life sentences for the brutal killing spree that took place near Sydney between 1989 and 1992. A spokeswoman for Corrective Services New South Wales said in a statement that the 74-year-old died at Long Bay Hospital at 4.07 am on Sunday. He was diagnosed with terminal stomach and oesophagus cancer in May and had been in hospital to receive pain relief since October 11, according to national broadcaster ABC.

IRAQ
Counter-terror forces to protect Baghdad buildings

Baghdad: Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service said on Sunday it had deployed in the streets of Baghdad upon Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi's orders to protect important state buildings while security forces were busy with protests. "Counter-Terrorism Service forces have been deployed in some areas of Baghdad to protect state buildings from undisciplined elements taking advantage of security forces being busy with protecting protests and protesters," it said in a statement. Two security sources had told Reuters on Saturday that the elite counter-terrorism forces had been deployed in Baghdad and had been told to "use all necessary measures" to end ongoing protests against Abdul Mahdi's government.

LEBANON
Protesters to form nationwide human chain

Beirut: Tens of thousands of Lebanese protesters were to attempt a human chain running across the entire country Sunday to symbolise newfound national unity. Demonstrators planned to join hands from Tripoli to Tyre, a 170-kilometre chain running through the main protest hub in Beirut, as part of an unprecedented cross-sectarian mobilisation. Tension has mounted in recent days between security forces and protesters, who are blocking roads and bringing the country to a standstill.

ISIS chief who left a trail of terror

Baghdadi once controlled large portions of Syria & Iraq, but even after ISIS's defeat, he was considered a major threat

AHMED RASHEED & AHMED ABouleNEIN
BAGHDAD, OCTOBER 27

ABU BAKR al-Baghdadi, the Iraqi jihadist who rose from obscurity to declare himself "caliph" of all Muslims as the leader of Islamic State, has been targeted in a US military operation in Syria.

US President Donald Trump said in a press conference that Baghdadi was killed during an operation conducted by the US special forces in northwestern Syria. According to Trump, no US personnel were lost in the operation.

Baghdadi has long been a target for US and regional security forces trying to eliminate Islamic State, even as they reclaimed most of the territory the group once held. The Islamic State or caliphate that Baghdadi declared in July 2014 over a quarter of Iraq and Syria was notable for atrocities against religious minorities and attacks on five continents in the name of a version of an ultra-fanatic Islam that horrified mainstream Muslims.

The genocide of Yazidis, adherents of one of the Middle East's oldest religions, illustrated the brutality of his rule.



Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has long been a target for security forces trying to eliminate the Islamic State. Reuters

Thousands of men were slaughtered on their ancestral Sinjar mountain in northwestern Iraq and women were killed or taken as sex slaves. Some other religious groups suffered sexual slavery, slaughter and floggings.

The group also caused global revulsion with beheadings of hostages from countries including the US, Britain and Japan.

The United States put up a \$25 million reward for his capture, the same amount as it had offered for al Qaeda leader

Osama bin Laden and his successor Ayman al-Zawahiri.

US airstrikes have killed most of Baghdadi's top lieutenants, including Abu Omar al-Shishani, Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, Abu Ali al-Anbari, Abu Sayyaf and the group's spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani. Thousands of his fighters were also killed or captured.

Born in 1971 in Samarra, Iraq, into a family that included preachers from the ultra-conservative Salafi school of Sunni

FROM AL-SAMARRAI TO AL-BAGHDADI

ABU BAKR al-Baghdadi was born Ibrahim Awad al-Samarrai in 1971 in Tobchi, a poor area near the town of Samarra, north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, whose name he took.

HIS FAMILY includes preachers from the ultra-conservative Salafi school of Sunni Islam, which sees many other branches of the faith as heretical and other religions as anathema.

HE JOINED the Salafi

jihadist insurgency in 2003, the year of the US-led invasion of Iraq, and was captured by the Americans. They released him about a year later, thinking he was a civilian agitator rather than a military threat.

IT WAS not until July 4, 2014, that he seized the world's attention, climbing the pulpit of Mosul's medieval al-Nuri mosque in black clerical garb during Friday prayers to announce the restoration of the caliphate.

Islam, Baghdadi joined the Salafi jihadist insurgency in 2003.

He seized the world's attention when he declared himself caliph of the Islamic State, in Mosul in 2014.

"God ordered us to fight his enemies," he said in a video of the occasion, which presented him as "Caliph Ibrahim, commander of the faithful".

Thousands of volunteers flocked into Iraq and Syria from around the world to become "Jund al-Khilafa"—soldiers of the

caliphate and join him in his fight against the Shia-led Iraqi government and its Western allies.

At the height of its power in 2016, Islamic State ruled over millions of people in territory running from northern Syria through towns and villages along the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys to the outskirts of Baghdad.

The group claimed or inspired attacks in dozens of cities including Paris, Nice, Orlando, Manchester, London and Berlin, and in nearby Turkey, Iran, Saudi

"We need to see ourselves reflected in the society we're living in. The fact that I have to draw attention to the fact that we are pretty absent from literature is a real problem..."

—BERNARDINE EVARISTO, winner of this year's Booker Prize, about the shortage of published literature either by, or about, black women in Britain.



Former White House chief of staff John Kelly

White House top ex-official says he warned Trump on impeachment

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 27

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump's former chief of staff, John Kelly, says he advised the president not to fill the job with someone who wouldn't be honest with him and provide a check on his impulses because he would end up being impeached.

"That was almost 11 months ago, and I have an awful lot of, to say the least, second thoughts about leaving," Kelly told the *Washington Examiner*.

"It pains me to see what's going on because I believe if I was still there, or someone like me was there, he would not be kind of, all over the place."

"I said, whatever you do — and we were still in the process of trying to find someone to take my place — I said whatever you do, don't hire a 'yes man', someone who won't tell you the truth — don't do that. Because if you do, I believe you will be impeached," Kelly said.

He said he does not believe the President would be in his current predicament if he had stayed as chief of staff.

White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said in a statement of her own Saturday: "I worked with John Kelly, and he was totally unequipped to handle the genius of our great President."

Trump pushed back on Kelly's comments in a statement: "John Kelly never said that, he never said anything like that. If he would have said that, I would have thrown him out of the office. He just wants to come back into the action like everybody else does."

The House is expected to vote on articles of impeachment by Christmas, with a trial to follow in the Senate to determine whether Trump should be removed from office.

Pope's Amazon synod proposes married priests, female leaders

NICOLE WINFIELD
VATICAN CITY, OCTOBER 27

CATHOLIC BISHOPS from across the Amazon called Saturday for the ordination of married men as priests to address the clergy shortage in the region, an historic proposal that would upend centuries of Roman Catholic tradition.

The majority of 180 bishops from nine Amazonian countries also called for the Vatican to reopen a debate on ordaining women as deacons, saying "it is urgent for the church in the Amazon to promote and confer ministries for men and women in an equitable manner."

The proposals were contained in a final document approved Saturday at the end of a three-week synod on the Amazon, which Pope Francis called in 2017 to focus attention on saving the rainforest and better ministering to its indigenous people.

If Francis accepts the proposal, it would mark a first for the Latin Rite church in a millennium.

Francis told the bishops at the end of the voting that he would indeed reopen the work of a 2016 commission that studied the issue of women deacons.

And he said he planned to take the bishops' overall recommendations and prepare a document of his own before the end of the year that will determine whether married Catholic priests eventually become a reality in the Amazon.

Some conservatives and traditionalists have warned that any papal opening to married priests or women deacons would lead the church to ruin.

They accused the synod organisers and even the pope himself of heresy for even considering flexibility on mandatory priestly celibacy.

They vented their outrage

EXPLAINED

Potential for easing norms

WHILE BISHOPS from the Amazon have called for the ordination of married men as priests only in that region, the proposal has the potential to lead to further easing of rules in the Catholic Church, Pope Francis, who had signalled his willingness to allow married priests, is likely to approve the proposal. This would upend a Catholic Church practice that is at least 1,000 years old. Once married priests are allowed in a region, it could set a precedent of allowing married priests in other remote areas, and later, possibly all over the world. Conservative critics of the move have already called it a slippery slope, but others have welcomed the Church's attempt to adopt more liberal rules.

most visibly this week when thieves stole three indigenous statues featuring a naked pregnant woman from a Vatican-area church and tossed them into the Tiber River.

The statues, which conservatives said were pagan idols, were recovered unscathed by Italy's Carabinieri police. One was on display Saturday as the synod bishops voted on the final document, which was approved with each paragraph receiving the required two-thirds majority. AP



The mother of a Vietnamese man thought to have died in the truck. Reuters

were arrested Friday on suspicion on manslaughter and conspiracy to traffic people. Irish police said another man was arrested Saturday in connection with the case.

Police said they had removed all the bodies from the truck and are awaiting autopsies. Identifying the victims is expected to be difficult and officials said very few documents were found with the

bodies. Smugglers normally take the passports of their passengers to obscure their identities, stripping them of their names and giving them new documents when they arrive at their destinations.

Police initially believed the victims were Chinese but later acknowledged that the details were still evolving. The Vietnamese government also announced Sunday its own investigation into the deaths and set up a hotline for families.

That comes after attention shifted to Vietnam Friday, when the family of a 26-year-old Vietnamese woman released



CALIFORNIA FIRE SPURS EVACUATIONS, BLACKOUT

A fire in Sonoma County, California on Saturday. AP

■ A Northern California blaze forced evacuation orders for nearly all of Sonoma County, with forecasts of winds prompting officials to start cutting electricity for 2.5 million people in a bid to prevent more fires.

■ About 90,000 were ordered to evacuate towns near the 104-square-km fire. Authorities pleaded with residents to get out immediately, citing the 24 lives lost when a fire swept through the region two years ago.

■ The city of San Francisco was not in line for a blackout amid shut-offs for most of the rest of the San Francisco Bay Area, the wine country to the north and the Sierra foothills.

Hong Kong protesters in standoff with police

JOHN GEDDIE & TOM WESTBROOK
HONG KONG, OCTOBER 27

HONG KONG police fired volleys of teargas to disperse thousands of protesters, many wearing banned face masks, who had converged on the Kowloon harbour-front tourist district on Sunday to denounce perceived police brutality over months of unrest.

There was a standoff as dusk began to fall, with protesters gathered on the pavements of the key shopping and hotel ar-



At a protest in Hong Kong on Sunday. Reuters

tery of Nathan Road, which police had earlier cleared in slow-moving cordons.

Riot police stood by outside the Chungking Mansions high-rise warren of South Asian restaur-

rants and backpacker hostels, shields and batons at the ready, as protesters shouted colourful obscenities at them in Cantonese.

The police had arrived earlier in the afternoon, warning protesters to leave the Tsim Sha Tsui district, opposite the British colonial-era Peninsula Hotel.

The number of protesters had grown by the minute, streaming down Nathan Road to the water's edge, facing the dramatic skyline of Hong Kong island opposite, but many fled after the teargas and pepper spray were fired. REUTERS

POLICE INITIALLY THOUGHT VICTIMS WERE CHINESE, BUT LATER SAID DETAILS WERE STILL EVOLVING

'I'm dying': Relatives await answers in Britain truck deaths

HAU DINH, GIAP NGUYEN & DANICA KIRKA
DO THANH (VIETNAM), OCTOBER 27

ONE FAMILY received a final text from their daughter saying she couldn't breathe and was dying. Another grieving family set up a makeshift altar for their missing daughter who paid \$10,000 in hopes of pursuing a career as a nail technician in Britain. A desperate father is searching for his son, who frequently calls home but hasn't since last week. They are some of the dozens

of families looking for any information about their loved ones following the discovery earlier this week of 39 bodies in the back of a sealed truck in southeastern England. The investigation into the gruesome case is still in the early stages, but British officials have deemed it one of the deadliest cases of people smuggling ever reported in the country.

British police charged the 25-year-old truck driver Saturday with 39 counts of manslaughter and conspiracy to traffic people. Five people are being questioned by police, including the truck driver and three people who

were arrested Friday on suspicion on manslaughter and conspiracy to traffic people. Irish police said another man was arrested Saturday in connection with the case. Police said they had removed all the bodies from the truck and are awaiting autopsies. Identifying the victims is expected to be difficult and officials said very few documents were found with the

bodies. Smugglers normally take the passports of their passengers to obscure their identities, stripping them of their names and giving them new documents when they arrive at their destinations.

Police initially believed the victims were Chinese but later acknowledged that the details were still evolving. The Vietnamese government also announced Sunday its own investigation into the deaths and set up a hotline for families.

That comes after attention shifted to Vietnam Friday, when the family of a 26-year-old Vietnamese woman released

friend in the UK told them their relative had died in the tragedy. Nhung paid an agent thousands of dollars in hopes of finding work at a nail parlour in Britain.

The father of 20-year-old Nguyen Dinh Luong fears his son is among the dead. He said he hadn't been able to reach his son since last week, when the young man told his father he planned to join a group in Paris that was trying to reach England.

Desperate families are now reaching out to the media, community organisations and acquaintances in the UK, hoping for any scrap of news. AP

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PHOENIX, OCTOBER 27

A LAWSUIT filed against Southwest Airlines by a flight attendant alleges pilots on a 2017 flight had an iPad streaming video from a hidden camera in a bathroom in one of the airline's jets.

Southwest responded on Saturday by denying it places cameras in aircraft lavatories and by calling the 2017 incident an "inappropriate attempt at humour" not condoned by the company.

The lawsuit alleges flight attendant Renee Steinkamp saw an iPad streaming video from the plane's forward bathroom when she entered the cockpit to be the required second person in the cockpit when the pilot left to use the bathroom about two-and-a-half hours into a February 27, 2017, flight to Phoenix from Pittsburgh.

According to the suit, Steinkamp saw the pilot in the streaming video on the iPad and the co-pilot "with a panicked look on his face" acknowledged that the iPad was streaming from a camera in the bathroom but asserted it was a "new security and top-secret security measure installed in all of Southwest's Boeing 737-800 planes".

The suit said Steinkamp took a cellphone photo of the iPad video, provided the photo with a report to Southwest management and was warned by a supervisor to not tell anybody about the incident. According to the suit, Steinkamp was warned, "if this got out, if this went public, no one, I mean no one, would ever fly our airline again."

Court filings by attorneys for Dallas-based Southwest and the two pilots denied the livestreaming allegations.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

SECOND WIND

In Maharashtra, BJP-Shiv Sena government must address work undone in first term on fiscal, farm and climate fronts

A NEW council of ministers is put together for the second successive BJP-Shiv Sena government in Maharashtra after a humbling victory, now is a good time for it to take another look at its own white paper presented to the state legislature in April 2015 on the health of the state's economy. Blaming the previous Congress-Nationalist Congress Party regime for leaving behind a legacy of alarming debts and deficits, it drew up a litany of fiscal sins that it later went on to embrace itself, from rank populism to rising revenue expenditure. At the moment, revenue deficit, fiscal deficit and debt stock have all grown — to Rs 14,960 crore, Rs 56,053 crore and Rs 4,14,411 crore, respectively. Revenue expenditure in 2018-19 grew to Rs 3,01,460 crore against Rs 2,41,571 crore during 2017-18. Five years ago, the government inherited a debt of over Rs 3 lakh crore, which has grown by about a third in five years, making Maharashtra one of the country's most debt-stressed states. What has worked for the government is the growing GDP, but it must return to its early fiscal vows of the first term, broken since on account of political exigencies, including increased capital expenditure, while curtailing off-budget borrowings and controlling revenue expenditure. On industrial growth, claims that Maharashtra is the top destination for investment have begun to appear hollow in the face of factory closures and poor job creation. It might be time to assess previous promises of investment instead of further tall claims of billions of dollars that remain on paper MoUs.

The other focus area will have to be agriculture and its allied issues of irrigation and climate-resilience in farming. Against a backdrop of promises to double farm incomes, the growth rate in agriculture is pegged at a miserable 0.4 per cent for 2018-19 and farmer suicides have peaked over the last five years. Obviously, this calls for urgent attention to completing pending irrigation projects and drought-proofing chronically dry regions. A water grid for Marathwada and river-linking schemes have been drawn up, but these should be assessed on parameters of sustainability before they get off the ground. It is the less glamorous projects that need the chief minister's attention, including creation of value chains in agriculture and incentivising sustainable cropping. Amid questions on exactly how effective his showcase Jaluykt Shivar scheme has been, an exhaustive and honest audit of water conservation works will be welcome.

Maharashtra is one of the states where the gravity of climate concerns is already clear and present — in August 2019, when Western Maharashtra experienced its worst ever floods that washed out hundreds of acres of standing crop, some regions continued to experience acute water scarcity from a long drought since the winter of 2018. Some climate policies were announced in the first term, including for electric vehicles, clean fuel and sustainable transport systems. In its second term, the government will do well to act on these plans.

RED FLAG AT INFOSYS

Questions of corporate governance must be urgently addressed in the interest of investors, and also the larger economy

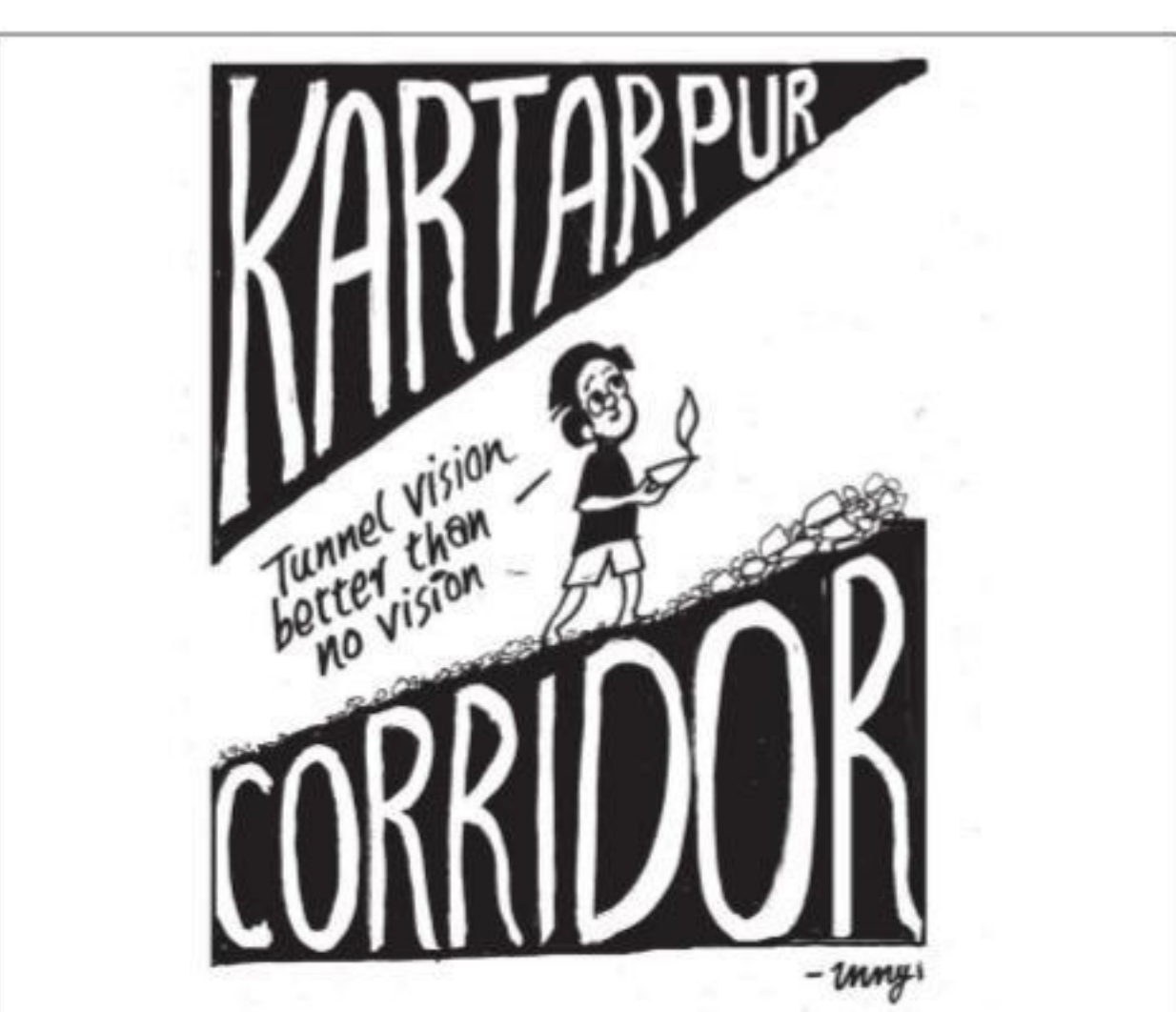
MORE THAN two years after N R Narayana Murthy, a founder of the software services firm Infosys, raised issues of transparency and disclosure and falling standards of governance which led to a conflict between him and the company's board of directors and the exit of its then CEO, Vishal Sikka, fresh governance issues have cropped up. Early this month, the company disclosed that it had received two whistleblower complaints alleging disturbing malpractices, aggressive accounting policies and provision of selective information to the board by the CEO, Salil Parekh, and the CFO, Nilanjan Roy, aimed at boosting its bottomline in the near term. The company's board has responded by bringing into play its internal and external auditors and also drafting in external legal support. That has not deterred a few US law firms from filing class-action suits in that country where Infosys American Depository Receipts or ADRs are listed and traded. The US Securities and Exchange Commission, too, plans to seek help from its Indian counterpart, Sebi, according to reports, highlighting the challenge ahead for what many investors perceive as a bellwether for a new India.

Although it is not yet clear how serious the complaints are, what is surprising is that the disclosure and a statement from the company came only some time after the whistleblower's mail was first received on September 30. That raises more questions on the core issue of disclosure standards, especially when it comes to a company that has enjoyed a governance premium for the last couple of decades, something unique in the universe of listed Indian companies. This latest issue of corporate governance featuring a storied Indian firm comes at a time of economic downturn and unravelling of scams involving both promoters and senior managements in some other firms. That could lead to not just greater scrutiny of many corporate firms and value erosion but it could also potentially further undermine investor faith and trust with its impact on capital raising and investment. It is easy to revise corporate governance codes here too like in other jurisdictions and for policymakers and regulators to step in but as long as large institutional shareholders are found wanting, and in the absence of any major outrage on the part of shareholders, it may be futile to expect insiders or the entrenched set to change.

The famed global investor, Warren Buffet, believes that the best way to get fat cat corporations to change is to embarrass them. He may be right. But as Murthy said in an interview to this paper earlier, it is the responsibility of the rich, powerful and the elite, including corporate leaders, to keep hope alive and boost growth. Infosys and corporate India owe it to not just investors and other stakeholders but also the broader economy.

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



National dishonour

We need to ask why India lags behind its neighbours in combating hunger, malnutrition



HARSH MANDER

THE ABIDING DISGRACE of new India is that despite unprecedented quantities of wealth and the vulgar ostentation which has become customary in the gaudy glitter of city life, India is unable to overcome hunger and malnourishment. This is even more unconscionable when government warehouses are overflowing with stocks of rotting rice and wheat. The 2019 Global Hunger Index (GHI) report brings sombre tidings this year: India's poorer neighbours — Bangladesh, Nepal, and even Pakistan — have overtaken India in the battle against hunger.

Hunger is the failure to access the calories that are necessary to sustain an active and healthy life. It results in intense human suffering and indignity, as parents are forced to helplessly watch their children ache as they sleep hungry, as their brains and bodies are unable to grow to full potential, and, as they fall ill too often and are snatched away too early.

This is a colossal national dishonour for two reasons. One, this suffering is entirely preventable. Given appropriate public policies — sensitively designed, adequately resourced and effectively implemented — the country has both the wealth and the food stocks many times over to end hunger entirely. The relative success of our neighbours in combating hunger — Nepal emerging from 15 years of civil war and Pakistan still torn by internal conflict — is a sobering reminder of what India has not accomplished. Two, this failure does not spur public outrage and the introspection that it should.

The GHI report ranks India at a lowly 102 out of 117 countries listed. The GHI scores are based on four indicators — undernourishment (the share of population with insufficient calorie intake); child wasting (children with low weight for height, indicating acute undernutrition); child stunting (children with low height for age, reflecting chronic undernutrition); and child mortality (death rate of children under five).

Among all the countries included in the report, India has the highest rate of child wasting (which rose from the 2008-2012 level of 16.5 per cent to 20.8 per cent). Its child stunting rate (at 37.9 per cent) also remains shockingly high.

There is an urgent requirement for a legally enforceable right to healthcare, with universal and free out-patient and hospital-based care, free diagnostics and free medicines. All of this is not unknown. Yet, India continues to fail children born in impoverished households, to homeless people and single mothers, and to oppressed castes and social groups. Our economic policy continues to be trapped in an elite capture, dominated by measures that support big businesses to the exclusion of farmers and workers.

The report is instructive as it explains why Bangladesh and Nepal have surged ahead of a much wealthier India. The Bangladesh success story is attributed to pro-poor economic growth raising household incomes as well as significant improvements in "nutrition-sensitive" sectors like education, sanitation and health. Nepal, likewise, shows increased household wealth, maternal education, sanitation, health and nutrition programmes.

What must India do better to at least keep pace with its South Asian neighbours in tackling hunger? This is the question that Dipa Sinha, Parth Shirmali and I seek to answer in our essay in the latest 2018-19 India Exclusion Report of the Centre for Equity Studies.

We observe the cruel irony of the largest population of food-insecure people being food producers — farm workers, tenants, marginal and small farmers, fish workers and forest gatherers. To end hunger, food producers must be supported to receive adequate remuneration. We recommend sound measures to protect farmer incomes, including income transfers to farmers, minimum support-price guarantees and crop insurance, and a massive expansion of farm credit. For farm workers, a refocus on land reforms is called for, and, a greatly expanded and effectively managed rural employment guarantee programme with attention to land and watershed development, small irrigation and afforestation. There must also be an urgent and comprehensive shift to sustainable agricultural technologies less dependent on irrigation, chemical fertilisers and pesticides, to reverse our agri-ecological crisis.

The other large food-vulnerable population comprises informal workers. Hunger can't be combated without addressing the burgeoning job crisis. It also entails labour reforms which protect job security, fair work conditions and social security of all workers. We also argue that the time has come for an urban employment guarantee programme, to help build basic public services and infrastructure for the urban poor — especially slum and pavement residents, and the homeless. This should also include employment in the care economy, with services for child-care, children and adults with disabili-

ty and older persons.

The Public Distribution System must be universalised (excluding income tax payees), and should distribute not just cereals but also pulses and edible oils. Further, we need to reimagine it as a decentralised system where a variety of crops are procured and distributed locally. Both pre-school feeding and school meals need adequate budgets, and the meals should be supplemented with nutrient-rich foods such as dairy products, eggs and fruits. Social protection also entails universal pension for persons not covered by formal schemes, universal maternity entitlements to enable all women in informal work to rest and breast-feed their children, a vastly expanded creche scheme, and residential schools for homeless children and child workers.

Malnourishment results not just from inadequate food intakes, but also because food is not absorbed due to frequent infections caused by bad drinking water, poor sanitation and lack of healthcare. India's nutrition failures are also because of persisting gaps in securing potable water to all citizens, and continued open defecation despite optimistic official reporting. There is an urgent requirement for a legally enforceable right to healthcare, with universal and free out-patient and hospital-based care, free diagnostics and free medicines.

All of this is not unknown. Yet, India continues to fail children born in impoverished households, to homeless people and single mothers, and to oppressed castes and social groups. Our economic policy continues to be trapped in an elite capture, dominated by measures that support big businesses to the exclusion of farmers and workers. Social rights are broken and betrayed.

At its core, the reason for India's continuing failures to end hunger and malnutrition of its millions is the indifference of people who have never known the agony of involuntary hunger. This is ultimately the result of our enormous cultural comfort with inequality, our gravest and most culpable civilisational flaw.

The writer is a human rights worker and writer

HOW DARE SHE?

In 21st century Punjab, women are still killed for a 'crime' called love



DIVYA GOYAL

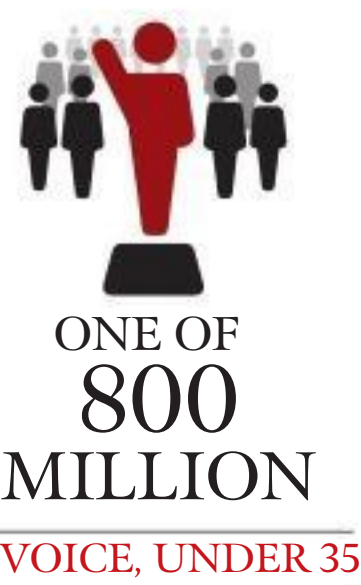
THE 24-YEAR-OLD bride had *chooda* (bangles) on her wrists, marriage documents in her hands and two security guards by her side. Yet, her voice trembled with fear. In Tarn Taran, Punjab, where another couple who solemnised a love marriage was shot dead a day before, I interviewed this young couple who feared for their lives from the girl's family who had allegedly murdered three members of the boy's family.

"How did you both meet and fall in love?" I asked her. A blush broke her tense expression, but before she could answer, a villager interrupted. "Yes, yes please tell them how and when both of you hatched this conspiracy to exterminate both the families." Tears rolled down her guilt-filled eyes.

How can two people who love each and want to live together "conspire" to finish their own families?

This is not the first time I have encountered this riddle. A few months ago, the subjects of two of my reporting assignments kept crisscrossing each other in my mind. From the 15th century to 21st, there have been striking similarities.

I could see Heer, a young woman from 15th century Punjab, in Jaswinder Kaur Sidhu, alias Jassi, a 25-year-old Punjabi woman from Canada. Jassi, a lively 21st century woman, was murdered by contract killers at the behest of her mother and un-



It is said that for a Punjabi, his *anakh* (pride or honour) is everything. But increasingly, *anakh* manifests only in honour killings. These barbaric acts are the greatest crime in the eyes of Guru Nanak.

cle, because she married her love, Mithu. Heer was poisoned by her family because she dared to confess her love for Ranjha at a time when women did not have a voice.

And now, Amanpreet of Tarn Taran. Punjab's so-called saga of progress will remain incomplete until it stops killing its daughters for a "crime" called love.

In 2019, when the world is celebrating Guru Nanak Dev's 550th birth anniversary and his teachings of tolerance and equality, the daughters of this land are still not free to love.

Ironically, Sikh gurus held women in the highest regard. Guru Nanak wrote: "From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend, through woman the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her bad? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman there would be no one at all."

The third Sikh guru, Amar Das, was against the use of veil by women (*purdah*) and also wrote against *Sati*. Sikhism also allowed remarriage of widows as a practical solution to end *Sati*. My respect for Sikhism grew manifold when I learnt that it does not bar menstruating women from entering *gurdwaras*. This practice has refused to leave Hinduism and women like me have grown

up being barred from touching holy books, idols, pickles or even sitting in the temple during *puja*. As a child, I did not argue. But now at 29, when I demand a rationale, I do not get one.

'Honour Killings in India: A Study of the Punjab State' by Satnam Singh Deol of the political science department of Guru Nanak Dev University, studied a hundred honour killings from 2005 to 2012. It found that these were most prevalent among Jat Sikhs, the dominant community. While inter-caste marriage was the reason for the crime in 44 per cent of the cases, the family of the girl simply couldn't tolerate her relationship or her marriage with a boy from the same village in 56 per cent of the cases. In 64 per cent cases, the girl's father was among the accused and in 36 per cent, her brothers.

It is said that for a Punjabi, his *anakh* (pride or honour) is everything. But increasingly, *anakh* manifests only in honour killings. These barbaric acts are the greatest crime in the eyes of Nanak, who did not approve of killing even the smallest living being.

Girls in Nanak's land are still being killed, in the wombs and outside. Inside, so that they are not born to live. And outside, so that they do not live to love.

d.goyal@expressindia.com

OCTOBER 28, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO



PARK CHUNG-HEE SHOT SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT, Park Chung-Hee, strongman ruler of South Korea for 18 years, was killed by the chief of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency during a shooting spree in the KCIA headquarters, the government announced. It said Park, 62, and five other persons were killed in a gun battle last night that erupted following an argument between the Korean CIA head, Kim Jae-Kyu, and Park's chief bodyguard, Cha Chi-Chul, at a dinner given by Kim. Cha was also killed and Kim is being questioned by military authorities, according to the broadcast announcement by the information minister, Kim Seong-Jin.

CIVILIAN RULE PAKISTAN'S GENERAL MOHAMMED Zia-ul-Haq said he would consider heading a civilian government as a means of removing the army from politics. "You can't have the Chief of Army Staff ruling the country forever. If my colleagues think I am the right man, then we will consider it," Zia told reporters who asked if he would consider leaving the army to head a civilian government.

CARIBBEAN FREEDOM THE WORLD'S NEWEST nation — a dot and several specks of land with 1,00,000 citizens — was born today in fireworks and pageantry as Britain left its last outpost in the Windward Islands of the Caribbean. The cer-

emonies, on a muddy cricket field in tropical heat, gave life to St Vincent and the Grenadines in the pomp and colour of marching bands and cannon salutes from French, British and American warships in the harbour of Kingstown.

CONG-JANATA ALLIANCE THE CONGRESS WILL possibly enter into local level seat adjustments with the Janata Party in some states. The intention of this arrangement is to offer a united challenge to the Congress (I) in the states, where the possible Congress-Janata arrangement would not upset the equations of the Congress with its alliance partners, more particularly the Lok Dal.

9 THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“Do in Rome as the Romans do’ and respecting customers are the real universal business rules. The US has shown its malformed pride and narcissism to regard respecting others as self-humiliation.”
— GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

Breathing space for secularists

Maharashtra election results bust some myths about how people now vote. But for those ranged against Hindutva politics, a long battle lies ahead



JYOTI PUNWANI

FINALLY THERE'S REASON to smile," said a human rights activist in Mumbai after the Maharashtra Assembly results were declared. Indeed, there's enough to rejoice for those who yearned to see light at the end of a seemingly endless tunnel filled with fumes of hate.

For one, three of the biggest BJP losers are those for whom the prime minister campaigned, invoking Article 370 and pouring contempt on the Congress for its "anti-national" stand on the issue. Union Home Minister Amit Shah's efforts did not help all those he campaigned for. Neither the PM's unmatched oratorical skills nor the BJP president's vitriol could sway all voters.

This in itself would have been enough to repudiate the current popular belief that the ruling party's communal politics holds sway over the majority. But Maharashtra's voters have done more than demonstrate that, sometimes, other factors matter more. They have busted another myth that has been around since before 2014.

The myth that Hindus do not vote for Muslim candidates was used by the Congress in Maharashtra in the last two decades, to deny tickets to people from the community. But this myth assumed fresh relevance after the BJP's successful use of the Hindu vote bank it created. Then, parties such as the AIMIM used this myth to convince Muslims that Muslims alone can represent the community.

Winners like the NCP's Nawab Malik and Hasan Mushrif, both former ministers, the Congress' Aslam Shaikh, who won for the third time, and the near-win of the party's five-time MLA Naseem Arif Khan (he lost by just 409 votes), have busted this myth. But perhaps the biggest invalidation of this myth comes from the victory of the Shiv Sena candidate Abdul Sattar from Sillol, with a 52 per cent vote share. A two-term Congress MLA and ex-CM Ashok Chavan's right-hand man, Sattar, angry at being denied a ticket, left the party before the recent Lok Sabha polls and worked for his close associate Raosaheb Danve, the BJP's state president. Finding no chance of a ticket from that party, he joined the Sena.

So some turncoats do win. While Sattar's opportunistic politics at least has one positive aspect to it, the victory of the five-term MLA Kalidas Kolambkar offers little comfort. The former Shiv Sainik was named in the Srikrishna Commission Report on the 1992-93 Mumbai riots as having led a morcha demanding the release of his party men arrested for burning three Muslims alive. He joined the Congress in 2005, left it in 2017 and is now with the BJP. Kolambkar's victory is only a small

pointer that the dip in the BJP-Sena's performance cannot be seen as a victory of secular politics. The only MLA to receive a notice from the EC for a communal speech, the BJP's city president Mangal Prabhut Lodha, retained his seat with a huge margin. That was expected. What wasn't expected were statements made by the former PM and current favourite of the liberals, during his Mumbai election visit. What compulsion drove Manmohan Singh to remind voters that Indira Gandhi had issued a stamp in honour of V D Savarkar, adding that the party was only against Savarkar's Hindutva creed? Did he have to clarify that the party was only against the manner in which Article 370 was abrogated and not the abrogation per se?

Then came former Congress CM Prithviraj Chavan's photograph alongside Hindutva leader Sambhaji Bhide, the man originally accused of having instigated the Bhima Koregaon violence, and then given a clean chit by the CM in the Maharashtra assembly. Did the Congress, conspicuous by its absence from the poll campaign, think all this would win it Hindu votes? One was reminded of Rajiv Gandhi's clumsy playing of the Ayodhya card at the start of his 1989 election campaign, which cost him his loyal Muslim vote without getting any Hindu votes.

Despairing at the Congress' comatose state, many had hoped that Prakash Ambedkar's alliance with Asaduddin Owaisi, who had won the Aurangabad Lok Sabha seat and received 14 per cent of the vote in the Lok Sabha elections, would be the fulfillment of an old dream: A secular alliance of the oppressed. Alas, the alliance broke off even before campaigning started.

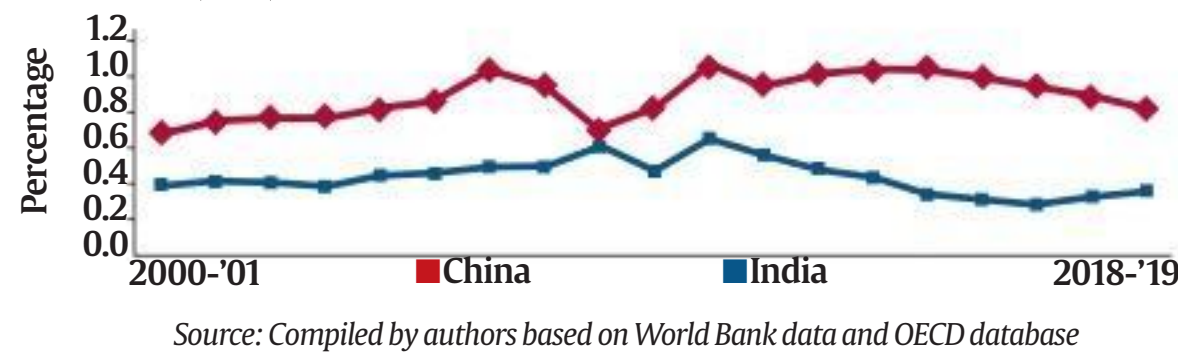
But was it wise to have expected anything from this alliance? The AIMIM's main objective since it entered Maharashtra has been to wipe out the Congress-NCP and replace it as the sole representative of Muslims. Ambedkar, who rejected an alliance with the Congress-NCP before the Lok Sabha polls to opt for the AIMIM, worked hard to defeat these parties and succeeded in costing them seven Lok Sabha seats. This time, a cursory glance at the results shows that his Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi spoil the chances of a Congress-NCP victory in at least 25 seats. So much for a "secular front" against the Hindutva forces.

The AIMIM has been wiped out from Mumbai, but, its losing MLA Waris Pathan's vote share went up. Mufti Ismail, one of the two AIMIM candidates who won, represented Malegaon on an NCP ticket earlier. These gentlemen, by all accounts, were non-performing MLAs. It seems a section of people voted for the Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi, whose every speech makes it easier for the RSS to spread its message.

There's a long long struggle ahead for those working to counter the BJP's divisive programme. All that can be said is that Maharashtra's voters have given them some breathing space.

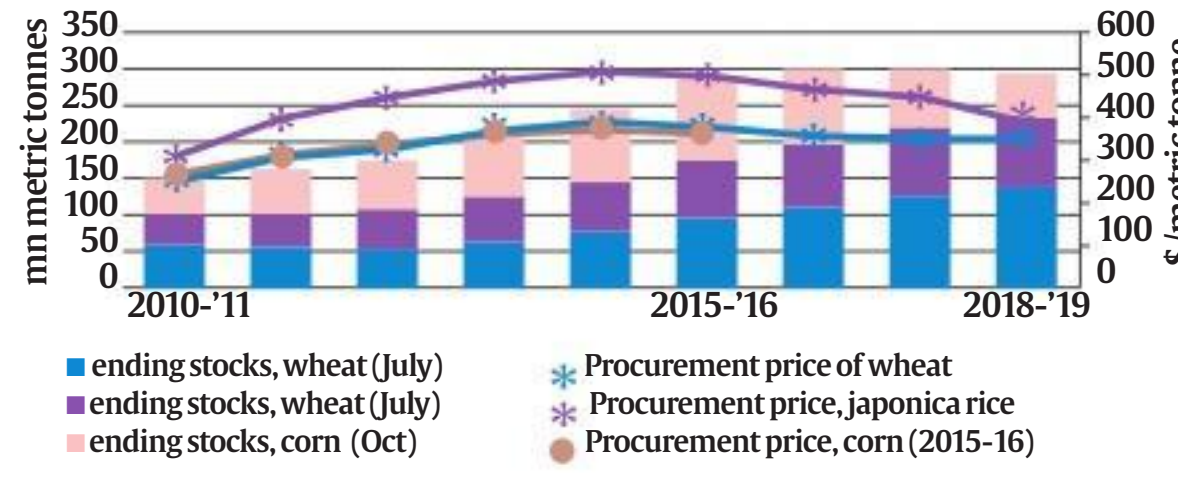
The writer is a Mumbai-based journalist

FIGURE 1: EXPENDITURE ON AGRICULTURE KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION SYSTEM (AKIS) AS A PERCENTAGE OF AGRI-GVA



Source: Compiled by authors based on World Bank data and OECD database

FIGURE 2: CHINA MSP AND ENDING STOCK



Source: Compiled by authors based on World Bank data and OECD database

C.R. Sasikumar

Farm lessons from China

Investment in R&D, market incentives and direct income support for farmers are far more effective in increasing agricultural productivity than high MSPs and subsidies on agri-inputs



FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH BY ASHOK GULATI AND SAKSHI GUPTA

INDIA AND CHINA, the world's most populous countries, have limited arable land — China has about 120 million hectares (mha) and India 156 mha. The challenge before the two countries is to produce enough food, fodder and fibre for their population. Both have adopted modern technologies in agriculture, starting with high yield variety (HYV) seeds, in the mid-1960s, increasing irrigation cover and using more chemical fertilisers to produce more food from limited land. China's irrigation cover is 41 per cent of the country's cultivated area, while India's irrigation cover is 48 per cent. China's total sown area, as a result of such irrigation, is 166 mha, compared to India's gross cropped area of 198 mha. But even though China has less land under cultivation, its agriculture output is valued at \$1,367 billion, more than three times that of India's agriculture output, \$407 billion. How has China made this possible? Are there lessons in China's experience for India?

First, China spends a lot more on agriculture knowledge and innovation system (AKIS), which includes agri R&D and extension. China invested \$7.8 billion on AKIS in 2018-19, 5.6 times the amount spent by India — \$1.4 billion. A study by Ashok Gulati and Premia Terway on the impact of investment and subsidies on agri-GDP growth and poverty alleviation revealed that the highest impact is from investments in agriculture research and education (R&E). The study estimated that for every rupee invested in R&E, agriculture GDP increases by Rs 11.2; and for every million rupees spent on agri-R&E, 328 people are brought out of poverty. Presently,

India invests just about 0.35 per cent of its agri-Gross Value Added (GVA) while China spends 0.8 per cent (expenditure by Centre only) (See figure 1). To increase total factor productivity, India needs to increase expenditure on agri-R&D, while making the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) accountable for targeted deliveries.

Better seeds that result from higher R&D expenditures generally require more fertiliser. It is worth noting that China's fertiliser consumption in 2016 was 503 kg/ha of arable area compared to just 166 kg/ha for India, as per World Bank estimates. No wonder, China's productivity in most crops is 50 to 100 per cent higher than India's.

Second, the incentive structure as measured by producer support estimates (PSEs) is much better for Chinese farmers than Indian farmers. The PSE concept adopted by 52 countries, that produce more than three-fourths of the global agri-output, measures the output prices that farmers get in a free trade scenario. It also measures the input subsidies received by them. For Chinese farmers, the PSE was 15.3 per cent of the gross farm receipts during the triennium average ending (TE) 2018-19. For the same period, Indian farmers had a PSE of negative 5.7 per cent. In a way, this reflects that Indian farmers had been taxed much more than they have been subsidised — despite high amounts of input subsidies. This negative PSE (support) is a fallout of restrictive marketing and trade policies that do not allow Indian farmers to get free trade prices for their output.

This negative market price support is so strong that it exceeds the input subsidy support the government gives to farmers through low prices of fertilisers, power, irrigation, agri-credit and crop insurance. The solution for correcting this situation is to carry out large scale agri-marketing reforms (APMC and Essential Commodities Act). But instead of doing that, the Indian government has been trying to jack up minimum support prices (MSPs) for 23 crops for farmers. Here, again, India can take a leaf out of the Chinese experience. They took that path as well. In fact, they gave procurement prices to

China has combined its major input subsidies in a single scheme which allows direct payment to farmers on per hectare basis and has spent \$20.7 billion for this purpose in 2018-19. This gives the farmers the freedom to produce any crop rather than incentivising them to produce specific crops. Inputs are priced at market prices giving right signals to farmers to use resources optimally. India, on the other hand, spent only \$3 billion under its direct income scheme, PM-KISAN in 2018-19, but the country has spent \$27 billion on heavily subsidising fertilisers, power, irrigation, insurance and credit. This leads to large inefficiency in their use and also creates environmental problems.

farmers that were much higher than international prices. The result was massive accumulation of stocks of wheat, rice and corn. In 2016, such stocks touched almost 300 million metric tonnes (MMT) in 2016-17 (See figure 2). China had to incur a large expenditure as a result. Having burnt their fingers, China dropped the price support scheme for corn and in fact, has been gradually reducing support prices of wheat and rice. India's stock situation in July 2019 was 81 MMT as against a buffer stock norm of 41 MMT. India needs to reduce the gamut of commodities under the MSP system and keep MSPs below international prices. Else, India will suffer the same problems of overflowing granaries which do not serve any purpose.

The third lesson pertains to direct income support schemes. China has combined its major input subsidies in a single scheme, which allows direct payment to farmers on per hectare basis and has spent \$20.7 billion for this purpose in 2018-19. This gives the farmers freedom to produce any crop rather than incentivising them to produce specific crops. Inputs are priced at market prices giving right signals to farmers to use resources optimally. India, on the other hand, spent only 3 billion dollars under its direct income scheme, PM-KISAN in 2018-19, but the country has spent \$27 billion on heavily subsidising fertilisers, power, irrigation, insurance and credit. This leads to large inefficiency in their use and also creates environmental problems. It may be better for India to also consolidate all its input subsidies and give them directly to farmers on per hectare basis and free up prices from all controls. This would go a long way to spur efficiency and productivity in Indian agriculture.

India can learn three lessons from China — investing more in agri-R&D and innovations, improving incentives for farmers by carrying out agri-marketing reforms, and collapsing input subsidies into direct income support on per hectare basis. This could put India's agriculture on a high growth trajectory.

Gulati is Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture and Gupta is research assistant at ICRIER

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



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

UNFREE CAMPUS

THE TORTURE AND murder of Abrar Fahad by the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has shaken the country. Violence by the BCL, the students' wing of the ruling Awami League, has assumed disturbing proportions, evidenced by the presence of "torture rooms" on campuses. While murders like Fahad's shine a spotlight on the intolerance for dissent against the government, they have also brought questions about the independence of universities, even at the level of physical space.

Writing in *The Daily Star* on October 23, Naznin Tithi brings up the issue of how universities need to have some power over their own spaces.

After Fahad's killing, and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's directive, the country's education ministry has directed that anti-ragging cells be formed. But the real issue may lie elsewhere, according to the article: "The real problem is far too complex and Abrar's murder has exposed this very well. In most public universities, the administration has completely lost control over the halls. In many cases, the hall administration has literally become non-existent. For example, in Dhaka University halls, the BCL practically plays the role of the administration when it comes to allotting seats to the

newly enrolled students."

But why have "hall administrators" ceded this power? According to Tithi, there are three factors involved: "The BCL has terrorised not only the students, but also the teachers as well as the university authorities. Secondly, in order to fulfil their political ambitions, a section of teachers are allegedly assisting the BCL in carrying out their nefarious activities on campus. Lastly, being recruited on political considerations and sharing the same ideologies, many teachers are unwilling to take action against the BCL."

DISSENT IN NEPAL

THE OCTOBER 25 editorial in *The Kathmandu Post* flags what it calls "another in a series of attacks on freedom of expression and the right to free speech". Musical artists Durgesh Thapa and Samir Ghising have been arrested by the Nepal police for "spreading messages that go against 'Nepali values' through their music".

The editorial pulls no punches and calls for the government to "check itself before it wrecks itself". Its invocation of the country's diversity, both in terms of religious and social practices, holds particular salience for India as well: "In a democratic country — especially one with such a diverse population where some espouse marijuana usage as

cultural and religious and others home-brewed liquor as integral parts of their rituals — it is hard to comprehend just whose values the authorities were referring to. More importantly, any hurt societal values notwithstanding, the constitutionally guaranteed rights to free speech and expression should be enough to deride the police's recent actions. The government and its security apparatus have been making undemocratic moves ever since it came to power, more brazenly each time."

The editorial ends with a warning for the people of Nepal, and to some extent the ruling communal regime: "The government's recent illiberal actions have the potential to set a trend, something that should worry the public. When all people protesting against the government are locked up, and when all music artists are forced to change their lyrics to suit the government's narrative, the next person they might come after is you."

DISCOMFORT IN DELHI

THE OCTOBER 24 editorial in *Dawn* presents a view on the international reaction vis a vis the change in Jammu and Kashmir's legal status and the clampdown on communications in the state. Thus far, the newspaper has lamented that there has been little admonition of India in the global community, de-

spite Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's best efforts. The recent editorial's tone, however, is more optimistic.

Three recent reactions — from the US, Turkey and Malaysia — are used to make a case that the global reaction is bothering New Delhi. First, "US Assistant Secretary of State Alice Wells reiterated Washington's position in a briefing giving to a Congressional panel, saying that the US considers the LoC a de facto line separating two parts of Kashmir." Second, "Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has stood by his criticism of India's tactics in [Kashmir] at the UN General Assembly in September. The veteran leader's forthright comments have drawn the ire of Indian trade bodies, with one concern calling for a ban on the import of Malaysian palm oil." Finally, "Turkish President Recep Erdogan's raising of the Kashmir issue — also at the UNGA — has reportedly made Narendra Modi postpone a forthcoming visit to Ankara."

According to *Dawn*, India had thus far, due to its economic heft and influence, "bully smaller and less powerful states into toeing its line". However, now stronger states are calling Delhi out. The editorial states that "all the spin in the world cannot change the situation on the ground" in Kashmir. It also asks India to engage in a dialogue with Pakistan and Kashmiris.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PAWAR STILL COUNTS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A crack, an opening' (IE, October 25). Sharad Pawar has aptly rebutted Union Home Minister Amit Shah's remark that "only Pawar will be left in the NCP". Pawar is a political stalwart who should not have been belittled. The biggest relief for impartial, politically-interested citizens is that the BJP cannot vanquish the opposition as easily as it thinks. But the Congress too needs to pull up its socks.
Jayaraman N, Mumbai

BJP'S ARROGANCE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Cracks in the edifice' (IE, October 25). Irrespective of whether the BJP is able to form the government only in Maharashtra or in Haryana as well, the outcomes of the assembly elections hold a lesson for the party. The overconfident and ambitious BJP will not publicly admit this as it exposes its vulnerability. The present party leadership considers itself invincible. The point is whether it learns a lesson, moves from its divisive and exclusive agenda or starts targeting its political opponents.
Tarsem Singh, Mahilpur

WRONG REGULATION

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Medical devices are not drugs', (IE, October 25). India is a global leader in generic drugs and the price regulatory regime in this sector might provide a short to medium-term advantage to the country's healthcare system. On the contrary,

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

India depends on imports for medical devices. Placing these devices under the drug price control regime might address the affordability and accessibility aspects, but this benefit will come at the cost of availability and quality of products.
Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

J&K REALITY

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Shadow in the mirror' (IE, October 25). The abrogation of Article 370 led to a communication clampdown in Kashmir. Just by stating that media didn't provide a fair picture doesn't clear out the clouds of doubt. In a diverse country like India, the government should take the utmost care to respect human rights.
Rutuja Dagade via e-mail

10 THE GOVERNANCE PAGE

WEST BENGAL/ ROAD SAFETY

Safe Drive, Save Life: How Kolkata made its roads less accident prone

A 2016 campaign by Kolkata Traffic Police has reduced the road accidents and fatalities by almost a third

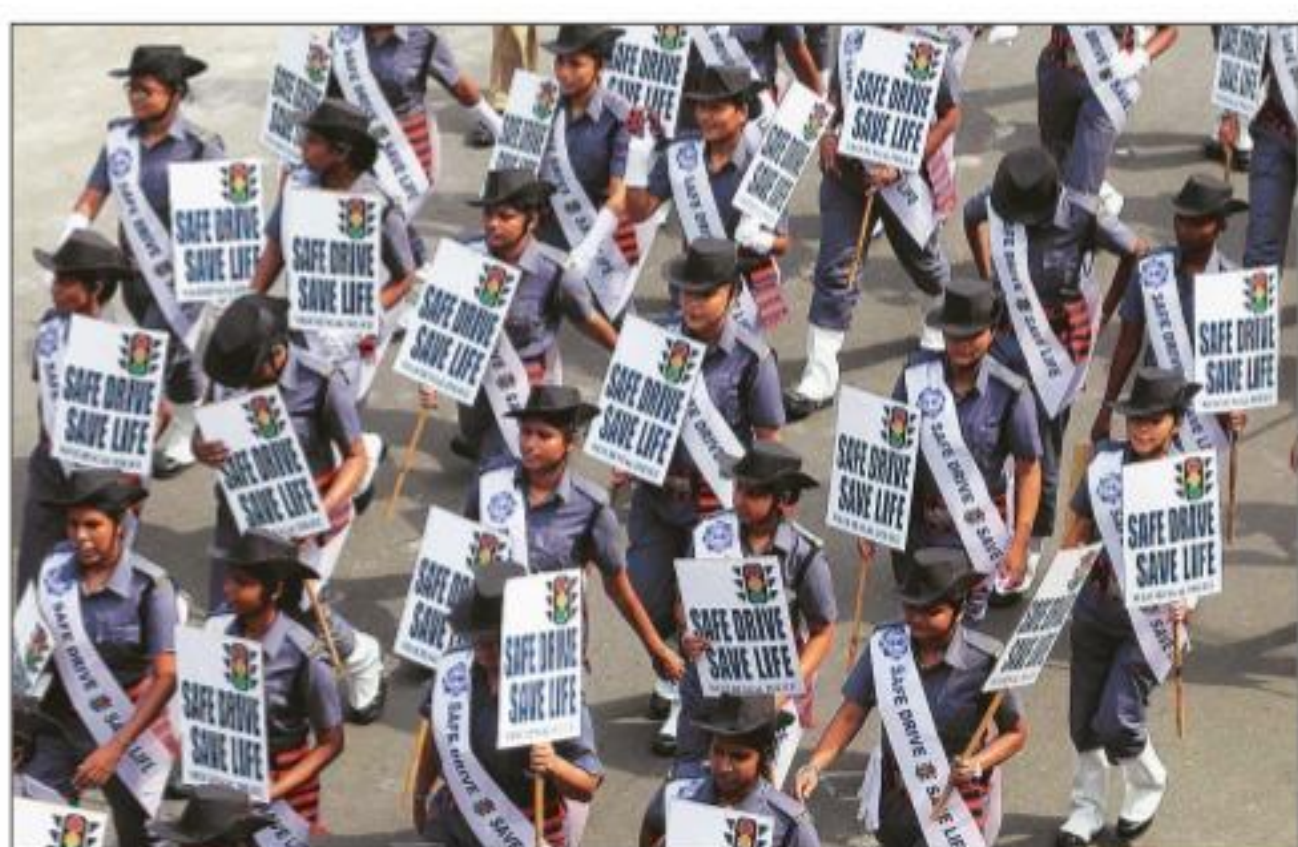
SWEETY KUMARI
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 27

ON JULY 8, 2016, the West Bengal government launched the "Safe Drive Save Life" initiative in Kolkata aimed at reducing road accidents, which were one of the leading causes of deaths and disabilities in the state. The initiative, which was the brainchild of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, is proving to be hugely impactful.

The number of road accident cases in the state capital is down by nearly 15 per cent in 2018 compared to the year before. As per the data sourced from Kolkata Traffic Police Department, in 2015, total road accident cases registered were 3739; out of these, the number of deaths was 422 in Kolkata. In 2018, the total number of cases came down to 2,456 and deaths were down to 294 — a decline of over 30 per cent on both counts. "Safe Drive Save Life" has thus emerged as one of the most successful government programmes by the West Bengal government after Kanyashree Prakalpa, seeks to improve the status and wellbeing of girls, specifically those from socio-economically disadvantaged families through conditional cash transfers.

Speaking to *The Indian Express* on the successful implementation of "Safe Drive Save Life Campaign" Kolkata Police Commissioner Anuj Sharma said, "Kolkata Traffic Police over the years has successfully established itself as a premier organisation in metropolitan traffic management. We have undertaken efforts to improve our performance by adopting new technological advancements." (see box)

The traffic department implemented the three E's — Enforcement, Education and Engineering — of traffic management to achieve success. A big part of the plan was to raise awareness about traffic safety issues. So there was a concerted campaign to have roadside hoarding that carried slogans such as "speed kills" or "always wear a helmet" etc. urging commuters to be more responsible. The government also worked social media platforms such as Twitter to extend its message to the new generation. One of the biggest successes was when the department used the image of the Beatles walking across



Raising public awareness about road safety has been a highlight Partha Paul

KOLKATA'S TOOLS FOR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- Speed laser gun at key locations to curb speeding
- Breath Analyser to detect drunken drivers
- Video analysis through CCTV to nab violators of traffic signals
- Red Light Violation Detective and Automated Number Plate Recognition
- system -- that intimate violators in real time
- A citation app that allows instant uploading of information about violators
- E-Challan for paperless prosecution
- Online payment for hassle-free and transparent payment of penalties

the zebra crossing on Abbey Road to get people to use such pedestrian crossings. This provided huge popularity for the department's Twitter handle.

The department also used shock tactics. During the initial phase of the campaign, the traffic department used to play real accident video footages at all movie theatre just before the start of the movie to get people's attention and raise awareness. Apart from these innovative methods, there were the regular modes of reaching out to the public — via radio jingles and puja pandals etc. The government also reached out to the schools. The government also put a lot of effort

in training drivers and sensitising them about the situation. One interesting approach in this regard was reverse the roles for the drivers and make them direct traffic for a few minutes at some traffic signals and make them see the whole situation from another side.

Beyond training and raising awareness, the officials also used technology and analysis of traffic patterns and accident locations to reduce fatalities. For instance, one of the first things they did was to identify 19 black spots — spots which were most accident-prone — such as Maa flyover, AJC Bose Road, EM Bypass. And then they placed CCTV cam-

EXPLAINED

E. What is 'Safe Drive, Save Life'

THE 2016 campaign employs the three Es of traffic management — Education, Engineering and Enforcement. Thus, innovative methods like asking drivers to direct traffic and letting the field officials use latest technologies such as Automated Number Plate Recognition system have been a roaring success.

era there to better monitor the area.

The government also shifted to increasingly doing things digitally. So instead of sending notices via the snail mail, they sent challans via phone messages. Field officers were given mobile apps to instantly load information about violators. Speed guns to detect speeding and the use of Automated Number Plate Recognition system to track traffic signal violators were put in place.

The traffic department also has its own central data server where all this information is stored. The officials can now study traffic and accident patterns better. Road signals can now be controlled centrally. They are now synchronised in such a manner that allows traffic police to manage traffic better by tracking the peak traffic profile of the city.

"What the Chief Minister had aspired is now visible in numbers also. This campaign has created a positive impact on the psychology of the people," State Transport Minister Suvendu Adhikari told *The Indian Express*.

But Kolkata Traffic Police is not resting on its laurels. Moreover, the Bengal government is now determined to spread this campaign across other districts in the state.

'We are making PDS more poor-friendly, efficient, while rolling back cash transfers'

ONE OF the big ideas floated by the new central government has been the plan to have a 'One Nation, One Card'. Harikishan Sharma spoke to Ram Vilas Paswan, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, to understand what this is and how will it work.



THE POLICY INTERVIEW
RAM VILAS PASWAN
Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

What is the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' scheme?

It means that a ration cardholder will be able to buy subsidised food grains under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) from any ration shop throughout the country. In the present system, a ration card holder is restricted to buy food grain from a designated shop in his locality. However, in the proposed system, if he migrates from his locality to another town or state, he will be able to buy the subsidised food grains there too. So far, 14 states have started this facility.

When will it be rolled out nationally?

It will become operational from June 1, 2020.

Is public distribution system (PDS) ready for the roll-out of such initiative?

After coming to power in 2014, the NDA government not only fully implemented the NFSA but also digitised almost all the ration cards in the country. Apart from this, we linked ration cards with the Aadhaar numbers of beneficiaries. It ensured that only genuine beneficiaries remain in the system and the bogus ones are get eliminated. Through this process, we had eliminated about 15 crore bogus beneficiaries out of the total 81 crore. So far, 89 per cent ration cards have been linked with Aadhaar.

Apart from this, PoS (point of sale) machines were provided at fair price shops. Beneficiaries are required to give thumb impression at PoS machines so that we can check that a person, who is taking subsidised food grain, is genuine or not.

Will there be a new ration card for existing beneficiaries?

No. A misconception is being created that there will a new ration card, which is not true. The present ration card will remain valid and by using it, beneficiaries can buy the subsidised food grains from any PDS shop across the country.

Who will get maximum benefits of this initiative?

It will benefit to all, particularly the poor. Suppose if a person from goes for work in the

Haryana or Punjab, he will not lose his right to cheaper food grains as he can buy food grain there also. He will no more restrict to just one ration shop.

Is there any technological challenge in the roll-out of this initiative?

So far, its roll-out in different states has been smooth. We have set the deadline for next year so that states can get more time to implement this.

What will be the additional fiscal burden on the government exchequer?

There will be no fiscal burden. In fact, it will check leakages further.

How will you ensure that people's privacy is not compromised?

There is no issue of violation of anybody's privacy. In fact, it will help people as they can buy food grains from any PDS shop from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

Was a pilot project to provide cash through DBT in place of food grains?

Yes, there was a proposal of such reform in PDS but it has not been successful. We started cash transfer through DBT in three union territories — Puducherry, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Chandigarh. But there are problems with banking and power facilities. It is not cost-effective for the poor. There are shortcomings in this system. The UTs now want to roll it back.

FROM STATES REFORMS TRACKER

UTTAR PRADESH

A blueprint for energy self-reliance



CHIEF MINISTER Yogi Adityanath has reportedly tasked senior officials to draw up a blueprint for the state's energy security. The aim is for the state to become self-reliant

in electricity generation by 2031. This would require the officials to get a clarity on the future demand as well as supply potential. A blueprint will help the state not just to determine its policies to efficiently use the power that it has but also sign new power purchase agreements with producers at reasonable prices.

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Ayush services get capital subsidy boost

LAST WEEK, the state's cabinet decided to boost the provisioning of Ayush (that is, Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy) services by improving Ayurvedic hospitals and dispensaries. The idea is, according to a government spokesperson, to raise the standard of facilities and health care at the secondary and tertiary levels. The chosen mode to give this fillip is to provide greater capital subsidy on Ayush therapy units and interest subvention on loans for setting up such units.

TAMIL NADU

Fourth Police Commission set up

THE STATE'S AIADMK government has announced setting up the fourth police commission to look into a variety of issues such as the general conditions of service and housing etc. However, the welfare of the personnel especially those that have retired is of special interest this time. The previous three commissions were set up under the DMK rule in 1956, 1969 and 1989.

Maharashtra's Sugar Commissionerate cracks the whip to make mills pay up dues

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS
PUNE, OCTOBER 27

ON JULY 31, a judgment by India's apex court jolted the Maharashtra government, especially the officials in the state's Sugar Commissionerate. The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Maharashtra State Cooperative (MSC) Bank that stated that the state government does not have a legal claim on the Rs 2,000 crore that it had given to 34 cooperative sugar mills. These 34 mills had gone defunct and when the MSC Bank sought to auction them and get back its dues, the state government wanted its dues as well. But the apex court ruled that the state government did not have its papers in order.

The background to this issue is that, in Maharashtra, governments have, since the start of the cooperative movement, invested three-times the money that promoters of a sugar cooperative mill have raised from their shareholders. But as Maharashtra's Sugar



Making the sugar mills pay up Express

Commissioner Shekhar Gaikwad realised in July, the paperwork for this investment was inadequate. A big reason for this lacunae is the heavy political interference in the way sugar mills and indeed the whole sugar economy runs. Because many politicians also own the mills, the government has historically been lax in asserting its rights as an investor. This inefficiency eventually cost the government in the MSC Bank case.

What Gaikwad also realised was that among the 102 cooperative mills that were still in operation, another Rs 3,000 was owed to the government. And he set about to get this matter sorted.

Technically, the government's investment was in the form of a loan which was supposed to be paid back after a definite period of time. But not only was the money never repaid, but it also was not even secured.

In an order Gaikwad gave in September, he laid out a timeline to get the matter sorted. By November, officials were to ascertain the government's dues. Between April and May every year, the government auditors will check the status of the repayment and update the same on the land records. Mills would be intimated of their yearly repayment amount by July every year. "Failure of the mill to adhere to the repayment schedule will see action under Land revenue codes, which will allow government to take possession and auction off the properties to recover dues," explained Gaikwad.

IN NUMBERS

STATUS OF INDIA'S HEALTH: A SNAPSHOT



GUJARAT/EASY AVAILABILITY OF DRINKING WATER

In Vadodara — the 'boon' of flowing tap water in homes

ADITI RAJA
VADODARA, OCTOBER 27

THE TEDIOUS ritual of Diwali cleaning was never so fun for 32-year-old Rekha Solanki as she enjoys the feel of water gushing out of a PVC pipe in her two-room home in Navinagri village, some 22 km away from Vadodara city. For over a decade since she married her husband Girish, who is a farm labourer, Rekha has had to walk about a kilometre to the adjoining Ghanshyampura village to draw water from a tubewell for the entire household — that's five containers of 15 litres each.

But in the last four months, her life has changed as she now has her own tap connection with "flowing water". "This water connection at home has come as a boon," says Rekha with a smile. She is not alone. All the women around her are relieved and happy because the task of running around for water was typically the headache of the women in every household.

Navinagri and Ghanshyampura are among the 95 villages in the Waghodia



A water filtration plant of Waghodia taluka of Vadodara district Bhupendra Rana

taluka that now receive 100 per cent tap connectivity of surface water for drinking purposes. The entire district of Vadodara — a total of 660 villages — will soon see similar connectivity to surface water from the Narmada and the Mahisagar rivers that flow

through the district.

The changes are part of an initiative to ensure every household in the district has doorstep tap connectivity and access to clean, surface water. A pet project of District Collector Shalini Agarwal, which has already won a na-

SUCCESS RATE TILL DATE

515 villages have 100% tap connectivity

53 villages have 90 to 95% tap connectivity

62 villages have 75 to 90% tap connectivity

tional Skoch Excellence award, it aims to complete the shift from groundwater to surface water for the entire district by 2020, with over 50 per cent districts already receiving drinking water from surface resources since the implementation of the project.

Initially, water supply schemes in Vadodara were based on groundwater sources such as handpumps, open wells, tube-wells. With the development in agricultural, industrial, residential, commercial sector, the overall exploitation of groundwater and the use of pesticides along with decreased and uncertain rainfall led to an un-

sustainable situation.

"We saw that a Regional Water Supply Scheme based on surface source (Dam/River/Canal) for drinking purpose could be a sustainable source. We began a comprehensive implementation of an integrated drinking water supply project," says Vadodara District Collector Shalini Agarwal.

Agarwal, who has played a crucial role in ensuring that the water department of the district receives clearances and permissions from all authorities concerned at war footing, says, "rural Vadodara was heavily dependent on groundwater for drinking purposes and we are all aware that groundwater is contaminated in many places... The district is surrounded by rivers like Narmada and Mahisagar and so it was only a matter of ensuring that we utilize these resources for drinking water. Our aim is to cover every village, every hamlet and every household under this scheme", she says.

The project implementation involved planning to lay of water supply network in areas where homes had not seen tap water supply to date as well as the upgrade of old drinking water supply schemes.

THE LIBERALS LIMP BACK

The chastening of Justin Trudeau

Canada's prime minister has lost his majority in Parliament and will govern a divided country



Liberal leader and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his wife Sophie Gregoire Trudeau after the federal election at the Palais des Congres in Montreal, Quebec, on October 22. Reuters

ON THE morning after election day, Justin Trudeau appeared at a metro station in his Montreal constituency of Papineau to offer hugs, kisses and selfies to commuters. Perhaps he was in need of an ego boost. Although he survived as prime minister, his Liberal Party lost its parliamentary majority and received fewer votes than the opposition Conservatives. The election exposed deep regional divisions and will compel him to seek support for his programme from rival parties. "Canadians rejected division and negativity," he declared after his victory. In fact, those principles were the basis on which many voted.

The negativity came largely from Mr Trudeau's missteps in office. He pressed his attorney-general to intervene in the prosecution for bribery of SNC-Lavalin, an engineering firm in Quebec. Parliament's ethics minister rebuked him for that. Mr Trudeau was also embarrassed by the publication during the campaign of photos of him wearing brown—and blackface as a young man. Andrew Scheer, the Conservative leader, sought to capitalise on those errors with the

taunt that Mr Trudeau is "not as advertised". It nearly worked.

Mr Trudeau would be right to claim that Canadian voters rejected one sort of division. The election did not turn on issues of immigration and identity, as some analysts had feared it might. The Conservatives did not oppose Canada's high levels of immigration. The only party that does, the populist People's Party, won no seats. Its leader and only MP, Maxime Bernier, lost his. Although the Conservatives outpolled the Liberals, most votes went to parties that prefer the redistributionist policies favoured by Mr Trudeau to the small-state philosophy of Mr Scheer.

The splits laid bare by the election are mainly regional. The Liberals lost their five seats in the western oil- and gas-producing provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Conservatives won all but one of the provinces' 48 seats. In Quebec, Canada's French-speaking province, the big winner was the Bloc Québécois, a separatist party.

Mr Trudeau's main problem will not be finding support for his policies in Parliament. Canada is accustomed to minority govern-

ment. The risk is that these policies will widen the regional chasms that the election exposed.

The Liberals' main partner is likely to be the left-wing New Democratic Party (NDP), led by Jagmeet Singh. It will be no obstacle to enacting Mr Trudeau's main legislative priorities. These include a fresh tax cut for the middle class, a ban on assault weapons and more ambitious targets for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. The two parties also agree on investing in low-rent housing. Both want a federal-government-run drug plan, but Mr Singh's ideas would probably be more expensive. He laid out other preconditions for supporting Liberal policies on election night, which would tug the government to the left if Mr Trudeau accepted them. Mr Singh wants a new "super wealth tax", for example.

The two parties' agreement on the prin-

ciple of fighting climate change (shared by the Greens and the Bloc Québécois) is bound to raise tensions with the western prairie provinces. Mr Trudeau's previous government sought to reduce them by backing the Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX), a project to expand an oil pipeline from Alberta to a terminal near Vancouver. In 2018 it bought the pipeline from a private firm. Mr Trudeau had hoped this would reconcile Alberta and Saskatchewan to his signature environmental policy: a national floor for the price of carbon emissions, which took effect this year.

As the election showed, it did not work. Alberta and Saskatchewan have long chafed at the greater power of the more populous central provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Their anger has deepened since 2014, when global oil prices slumped, causing regional

hardship. Jason Kenney, the Conservative premier of Alberta, blames the Liberals' climate-change policies for worsening the situation.

During the campaign, Mr Trudeau stoked those resentments as a way of winning votes from the NDP and the Greens. In the final party leaders' debate, he abandoned his usual talk of balancing green goals with developing natural resources. Instead, he attacked "oil interests" and provincial leaders opposed to his climate-change policies. The election has given a fillip to separatist sentiment in Alberta.

More surprisingly, it has also revived the issue of Quebec separatism, a force that threatened Canada's integrity from the 1970s to the 1990s but has lately seemed dormant. Yves-François Blanchet, the Bloc Québécois's leader, downplayed its separatist aspirations during the election campaign. The party's surprising resurgence is probably largely the result of identity politics, a more potent theme in Quebec than in other provinces. Mr Blanchet endorses a controversial law passed by Quebec's right-leaning government this year that prohibits many civil servants from

wearing religious symbols, including turbans, hijabs and kippas. The Bloc owes some of its electoral success to the collapse in support in Quebec for the ndp, whose leader, Mr Singh, is Sikh and wears a turban.

Mr Blanchet says his party will back the Trudeau government when its policies are good for Quebec and seek to thwart those that are not. It could endorse much of the Liberals' economic and environmental programme. But a clash may occur over Quebec's religious-symbols ban. Mr Trudeau is under pressure from supporters to challenge it in court.

All this means Mr Trudeau will find his second term harder than his first. The son of a former prime minister, he must hope that his fortunes follow his father's. In an election in 1972 Pierre Trudeau saw his Liberal majority government reduced to a minority. Two years later he won a new majority. He ended up governing, with a brief interruption, until 1984. His son no doubt hopes for a similar comeback.

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Trudeau would be right to claim that Canadian voters rejected one sort of division. The election did not turn on issues of immigration and identity, as some analysts had feared it might

THAILAND'S RUTHLESS KING

Beauty and the beast

King Vajiralongkorn dismisses his official mistress

INGRATITUDE, MISBEHAVIOUR and disloyalty. These were among the failings of Sineenat Wongvajirapakdi detailed in a royal statement on October 21st. Apparently the mistress of King Maha Vajiralongkorn wanted to "elevate herself to the same state as the queen". The former army nurse also dared to issue commands and show disobedience to her superiors. She has been stripped of all titles and honours.

At one level, Ms Sineenat's sudden fall from grace is stunning. It was only on the king's birthday in July that he made her Thailand's first officially designated royal mistress in almost a century. At another level, it is typical: the king has frequent, dramatic romantic bust-ups, with dire consequences for the women concerned.

The designation of an official "royal noble consort" shocked Thailand. The elaborate ceremony saw Ms Sineenat prostrate herself before the king and Queen Suthida Tidjai, a former flight-attendant whom he married in May. The silk and jewels on display were a far cry from the crop tops and fake tattoos

that king and consort have been snapped wearing before. More official photographs of Ms Sineenat in camouflage and in cockpits during the campaign of photos of him wearing brown—and blackface as a young man.

Queen Suthida is the king's fourth wife. He divorced and humiliated his first, a cousin who bore him a daughter. He has disowned four of his five children with his second wife, an actress, who fled abroad. And he imprisoned the parents and brothers of his third wife after he divorced her. She herself has disappeared from sight.

No one dares to criticise the king's viciousness or caprice. In recent days he also fired six palace officials for "extremely evil" conduct. Successive Thai governments have long fostered public adulation of the monarchy—an easier task under the king's mild-mannered father. Since King Vajiralongkorn came to the throne three years ago, he has exploited this reverence to demand sweeping formal powers. In 2017 he insisted the constitution should be changed to make it easier for him to live abroad (as he does, in Germany) with-

out appointing a regent, even though Thai voters had already approved the text in a referendum. Last year he took personal ownership of the Crown Property Bureau, an agency which has managed royal land and investments for decades. Its holdings are thought to be worth more than \$40bn. Earlier this month the government issued a decree transferring command of two army units directly to King Vajiralongkorn.

Thailand's harsh *lèse-majesté* law curbs discussion of these manoeuvres. The courts hand out long prison sentences for even vague criticism of the king or other royals. Yet this has not deterred recent grumbling on social media over the traffic caused by royal motorcades. Nor did it seem to scare those who wrote about Ms Sineenat's downfall. The hashtag #SaveKoy began trending, Koy being a nickname for the disgraced mistress. Despite the fulminating royal statement, every Thai knows that no one can beat the king himself for ingratitude, misbehaviour and disloyalty.

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Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn and General Sineenat Wongvajirapakdi, the royal consort, at the Grand Palace in Bangkok in the undated handout photo obtained August 27. Reuters

12 ECONOMY

MARKET WATCH

FPIs PUMP IN ₹3,800 CR IN OCTOBER

New Delhi: The markets witnessed a net inflow of over Rs 3,800 crore by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in October so far, on the back of steps taken by the government to revive domestic demand coupled with positive global cues. **PTI**

AS ON AUGUST 31, 2019

Credit card outstandings rise 24.4% to ₹97,650 cr against ₹78,499 cr a year ago

5.17 crore outstanding cards in 2018-19, which has increased from 4.70 crore last year

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 27

DESPITE THE slowdown in the economy and sluggish credit off-take, credit card outstandings have risen by 24.4 per cent to Rs 97,650 crore as on August 31, 2019 from Rs 78,499 crore a year ago.

According to the data available from the Reserve Bank of India, credit card outstandings have jumped by 71 per cent in the last two years from Rs 57,100 crore in August 2017. While credit card use has increased after demonetisation in November 2016 and the thrust given to digital banking in the past two years, the growth rate has come down in the past five months, according to bankers.

During the five-month period ended August 31, 2019 of the current fiscal year, card outstandings rose 10.6 per cent while the gross bank credit showed a decline of 0.9 per cent and credit off-take by the industry plunged 4.2 per cent, according to the RBI data.

However, growth in outstandings has fallen from 37.4 per cent

EXPLAINED

Despite boost to digital mode, card usage sees dip

WHILE CREDIT card use has increased after demonetisation in November 2016 and the thrust given to digital banking in the past two years, the growth rate of card usage has come down in the past five months, according to bankers.

According to RBI data, the volume of business through credit cards was Rs 6.07 lakh crore in 2019-20, with 99 per cent of the business accounted by transactions on PoS (point of sale) terminals.

in the 12-month period ended August 31, 2018 and 14.4 per cent in the five-month period of last year amid a demand slowdown in the economy.

There were 5.17 crore outstanding cards in fiscal 2018-19, up from 4.70 crore in the same period of last year. The volume of business through credit cards was Rs 6.07 lakh crore in 2019-20, with 99 per cent of the business accounted by transactions on PoS

(point of sale) terminals, the RBI data show.

"Credit cards are used by customers mostly in PoS terminals of shops and establishments. In the case of debit cards, customers use it for cash withdrawals from ATMs," said an analyst with an investment bank.

In August 2019, credit card transactions at PoS terminals were worth Rs 59,601 crore while customers withdrew only

Rs 410 crore from ATMs using credit cards.

However, debit cards were used to withdraw Rs 287,452-crore cash from ATMs while PoS transactions using debit cards were only Rs 58,040 crore in August, according to the RBI data. If the slowdown in the economy persists, growth in the card business is also expected to decline.

Increasing acceptance of digital payments and availability of better consumer credit data helped register a 22 per cent annual growth in issuance over FY2015-19.

"Credit card loans and spends have grown at a robust pace of 30-35 per cent over the same period. We expect credit card issuance and spends to sustain the growth momentum, given the low penetration levels (4 per cent) compared to debit cards (60 per cent) and savings accounts (120 per cent)," Kotak Research said in a report. Analysts say the card business is a highly profitable business with big margins, as the interest rate can go up to 40 per cent per annum.

"It has a healthy operating leverage but we acknowledge that it is a highly cyclical business. We are probably entering into a slowdown at this point and this could see an impact on growth or profitability. However, we don't think these banks would want to change their strategies for this business given the scale at which they are operating," Kotak said.

"The three frontline private banks (HDFC Bank, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank) along with SBI Cards and Payments dominate this business with 70 per cent share between them. Despite strong growth in issuances, penetration is quite low at 4 per cent, compared to 60 per cent of population for debit cards," it said.

According to the Kotak report, HDFC Bank is the market leader with a 27 per cent share, followed by SBI Card (18 per cent), ICICI Bank (14 per cent) and Axis Bank (13 per cent). Foreign players including American Express and Citi have been losing market share (25 per cent in FY2014 to 13 per cent in FY2019) owing to aggressive growth by the frontline players.

FIRMS TAKING STEPS TO MITIGATE DAMAGE

For British and EU businesses, Brexit is happening already

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, OCTOBER 27

MYLANDS PAINT, founded 135 years ago, has survived two World Wars, the Great Depression and the end of the British Empire by adapting its products and practices. So when it was faced with the economic upheaval threatened by Britain's departure from the European Union, CEO Dominic Myland wasn't going to wait for politicians to resolve the impasse that has kept the nation hanging for three years.

The firm, which made the blackout paint that obscured London bridges during World War II and supplies film and TV productions such as *Harry Potter* and *Game of Thrones*, has increased stocks of raw materials and moved extra product to a distributor in Germany in case of border checks. If delivery delays become the norm, it may have to set up a whole new company on the continent, Myland said. "We are very close to opening a depot close to the center of mainland Europe (from) which we can supply a lot of our European customers," Myland said.

Many businesses have decided they can't wait for a Brexit agreement, which now seems like it could be delayed again

Issues where information is still needed include what access British manufacturers will have to European markets, the mechanism for resolving disputes with firms based in the EU and whether companies will be able to move skilled workers between the UK and Europe. That uncertainty is making it difficult to plan. Among small businesses that believe Brexit will affect them, just 21 per cent have prepared for the fallout and 63 per cent say they are unable to prepare, according to a survey by the Federation of Small Businesses released September 27. "The Brexit clock may appear to stop from time to time, but for firms it keeps ticking," Carolyn Fairbairn, director general of the Confederation of British Industries, said last month.

"Until a deal is agreed, companies will continue to divert billions of pounds from productive investment to no-deal preparations, and international investors will continue to question if the UK is a stable, open place to do business." The toll on the British economy is becoming clear. Investment in the auto industry effectively stopped in the first half of this year as concern about a no-deal Brexit makes it harder for carmakers to respond to changes in the sector like the shift to electric vehicles.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders says firms made just 90 million pounds (\$110 million) of new investments in the six months through June, compared to an average annual total of 2.7 billion pounds (\$3.4 billion) over the previous 7 years.

More broadly, 64 per cent of manufacturers say they have taken a financial hit during the past two years as they struggle to prepare for an unknown trading environment after Brexit, according to research published last week by Make UK, and the law firm Squire Patton Boggs.

'Louis Vuitton owner offers to buy US jeweller Tiffany & Co'

GREG ROUMELIOTIS
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 27

LOUIS VUITTON owner LVMH has approached Tiffany & Co with an acquisition offer, people familiar with the matter said on Saturday, at a time when the US luxury jeweller grapples with the impact of tariffs on its exports to China.

LVMH, which has for years been looking for ways to expand in the US market, submitted a preliminary, non-binding offer to Tiffany earlier this month, one of the sources said.

Tiffany has hired advisers to review LVMH's offer but has not yet responded to it, and there is no certainty that it will negotiate a deal, one of the sources added.

The exact price that LVMH was offering to buy Tiffany, which has a market capitalisation of \$11.9 billion, could not be learned.

The sources asked not to be identified because the matter is confidential. LVMH declined to comment, while Tiffany did not immediately respond to a request for comment. *Bloomberg News* reported earlier on Saturday that LVMH was holding talks with Tiffany. LVMH, which is behind fashion brands like Christian Dior as well as the Veuve Clicquot champagne, has stood out for several years as one of the top performers in the retail industry, where not all labels are benefiting to the same degree from booming Chinese appetite for branded goods.

Tiffany, on the other hand, has not been as resilient. Beyond the tariffs that have been triggered by the trade war between the United States and China, a lower Chinese domestic sales tax has also contributed to double-digit decreases in its sales to Chinese tourists in the US and in other destinations.

High-end brands have also long relied on Hong Kong as a major shopping hub which draws visitors from mainland China in particular, and four months of pro-democracy demonstrations are starting to take their toll.

Earlier this month LVMH, which has a market capitalisation of 194 billion euros (\$215 billion), beat sales forecasts for the third quarter despite unrest in Hong Kong. In August, Tiffany reported quarterly earnings that beat analysts' expectations, thanks to a drop in marketing costs. **REUTERS**

The IMF in figures: Debtors vs creditors

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund's current debtor-creditor balance gives the United States an outsized weight in the voting, which translates into Washington holding roughly 25 times the voting power of Argentina, the bank's biggest debtor. On October 18, the Fund announced it was delaying changes to its shareholding structure to as late as December 2023.

This was a big win for the US, which was opposed to increasing the voting power of China and other emerging economies. IMF members last altered quotas in 2010, agreeing to increase China's and other emerging markets' voting power, but the changes were not implemented until 2016, in part due to approval delays by the US Congress

HERE IS HOW THE CREDITORS AND DEBTORS STACK UP

VOTING POWER

The US represents the largest voting bloc on the IMF board

The US	16.5%
Japan	6.2%
Germany	5.3%
France	4%
The UK	4%

THE BORROWERS

The IMF has a total of \$102.8 billion credit outstanding, of which by far the most is extended to Argentina

Argentina	\$43.9 billion
Egypt	\$11.8 billion
Ukraine	\$9.4 billion
Greece	\$9.2 billion
Pakistan	\$6.4 billion



The IMF, created in 1945, is an organisation of 189 countries. Its primary purpose is to ensure the stability of the international monetary system.

CRUNCH TIME

POVERTY ON THE RISE IN ARGENTINA

In Argentina, the implementation of the IMF's program has all but cost President Mauricio Macri a shot at reelection, as austerity measures are blamed for a rise in poverty

PROTESTS IN EGYPT

Egypt signed a three-year, \$12-billion deal with the Fund that ends next month. Protests last month in Cairo were sparked in part by Egyptians' anger at the government for its austerity measures

'FUEL POLITICS' IN ECUADOR

In Ecuador, days of violent protests against an IMF-backed law that cut expensive fuel subsidies forced the government to backtrack and reinstate them

IMF'S PURSE STRETCHED

The IMF's \$250 billion crisis fund, the New Arrangements to Borrow, created a decade ago, was due to expire in 2022. On October 18, the Fund said its 189 member countries had agreed to maintain its \$1 trillion in total lending resources. The move will "preserve its role at the center of the global financial safety net," said Lesetja Kganyago, IMFC chairman

EUROPE AND JAPAN HAVE NEGATIVE INTEREST RATES

Globally, central bankers look for solutions amid growing concern over negative rates

With interest rates close to or below zero, asset purchases are the main policy tool

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 27

THE WORLD'S most powerful policymakers are struggling to alleviate the pain of a slowing global economy with few levers left to pull and growing concern that one of them, negative interest rates, is creating problems of its own.

In an ideal world, elected officials would pull more of the weight with fiscal programs and structural reforms that would improve growth and allow interest rates to rise. But over three days of conversation here, the dilemma has become clear: Whether it is the US-China trade war, tightfisted spending in Germany, or the drawn-out Brexit, broader government policies are moving in the other direction - driving central bankers to mount further rescue efforts, and likely leading to even more negative yielding debt.

"We still have tools which could be used as necessary," said Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda. "I don't think the effect of monetary policy has declined significantly or materially." Still, Kuroda said that a prolonged low interest rate situation could have "side effects on the financial system. You have to be careful." Negative interest rates are now a fact of life in Europe and Japan, and multiple other countries including the United States are lowering their target policy rates.

"It is not really clear how we are going to get out of this," Stanford University economics professor John Taylor said at a meeting of the Institute of International Finance.

He spoke at a central banking panel that showed just how much the landscape has shifted in the



Negative interest rates are being used in Europe and Japan. Meanwhile, the US is lowering its target policy rates. Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda has said a prolonged low interest rate situation could have 'side effects on the financial system' and one needs to be 'careful'. **Reuters**

decade since the 2007 to 2009 financial crisis. Far from debate over whether unconventional policies are appropriate or not, the discussion is now about whether traditional central banking can even survive - or whether oddities like negative rates have become self-reinforcing, and whether central banks will need to begin overtly financing government programs to get the fiscal spending that may provide an exit from them.

"We have got to make it easier for politicians to run fiscal policy when monetary policy is essentially not operating well," said former Federal Reserve vice chair Stanley Fischer, now a senior adviser with investment management firm BlackRock. Conversation at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings this week was domi-

nated by two concerns - a global economic slowdown driven by "policy shocks" that might have been avoided, and the risks to pension funds, banks, and overall financial stability posed by the roughly \$15 trillion, estimated by the IMF, in bonds that now pay a negative interest rate.

With easier monetary policy being used to dampen the impact of the trade war and other risks, some analysts worry about the moral hazard of central bankers underwriting the very policies they feel are slowing growth.

"There is a kind of benign view that central banks are just kind of doing their best to offset the damage done by one set of policymakers in one side of the government," said Brian Coulton, chief economist at Fitch Ratings. "There is a real danger in misplaced faith in

the capacity of central banks to fix all these growth challenges." Yet they may have no choice.

IMF economists slashed their forecasts for global growth to the slowest pace since the 2008-2009 financial crisis, ahead of the conference, setting the tone for a somber mood. In a communique issued on Saturday, the IMF's steering committee said member countries should "employ all appropriate policy tools, individually and collectively, to mitigate risks."

With interest rates close to or below zero, asset purchases are now the main policy tool for some central banks. The ECB, for example, has cut its key rate to a record low of minus 0.5 per cent and launched an indefinite bond buying program that will likely keep it in the market for years to come.

"The risks surrounding the euro area growth outlook remain tilted to the downside," outgoing ECB President Mario Draghi said at the IMF meeting on Friday.

"The Governing Council continues to stand ready to adjust all of its instruments." Beyond the euro zone, the United States and Japan, other nations are also easing rates. The Russian central bank, which has been cutting rates this year as economic growth slowed and inflation waned, will be ready to act "more decisively" when cutting interest rates, Governor Elvira Nabiullina said.

Ukraine central bank Deputy Governor Kateryna Rozhokova said the bank intends to cut the key policy rate gradually. While lower rates support growth, the consequence of ultra-accommodative policy is that it can breed higher risk taking, as investors search for yield, said experts.

Despite Centre's push, 'most sugar mills can't produce ethanol'

ABBINAYAKUZHANTHAIVEL
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

ONLY 175 sugar mills can produce ethanol out of the 530 in operation across the country, according to the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA). In June 2018, the government decided to provide interest subvention on loans for new and expanded ethanol production capacities. This was done to increase ethanol production capacity in the country.

The Department of Food and Public Distribution has approved 260 ethanol projects on subsidised loans, for which the sugar factories have to tie up with banks. However, the distilleries should comply with 'zero discharge' norms, as several mills have been either fined or ordered for closure by the Central Pollution Control Board or the National Green Tribunal in the past.

The ethanol requirement for the country stands at 330 crore litres for 10 per cent blending with petrol in 2019-20 (Dec-Nov), against which the mills contracted for 245 crore litres of supplies, but have supplied only 175 crore litres till mid-October 2019 - achieving an average blending rate of 5.5 per cent for the country as a whole.

The National Biofuels Policy 2018 has allowed the production of ethanol from different raw materials, including cane juice, corn, and damaged and surplus foodgrains. The Centre has fixed remunerative prices for ethanol made from cane juice, B-heavy molasses, C-heavy molasses and damaged grains under the Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme for the forthcoming ethanol supply year, commencing December 1. Oil Marketing Companies have invited bids for a demand of 511 crore litres of ethanol.

Abinash Verma, director general at ISMA, said: "It is strongly recommended that all mills should take advantage of the opportunity and set up ethanol production capacities, as this will give them the much-needed flexibility to control surplus sugar production and divert the same towards ethanol instead. The millers then need not worry too much about fluctuating cane production, sugar prices or inventory build-up of unsold sugar."

Verma said mills have been improvising to meet the standards of the CPCB and the NGT. Despite attempts by the government to improve ethanol production, many mills are apprehensive about the huge investment required to upgrade their current facilities or set up new ones.

"In an ideal case, if all 260 projects, which have been approved for subsidised loans for new distilleries or for expansion, were operational we could expect additional ethanol production capacities worth 250 crore litres. That could help us in producing and giving 550-600 crore litres in a couple of years. We can then start looking at 15 per cent blending levels for the country, and start planning to achieve government's target of 20 per cent blending by 2030. There will be enough feedstocks for these levels, especially when we look at sugarcane juice as a viable option," said Verma.

Verma added ISMA estimates that ethanol production from all feedstocks could reach 550-600 crore litres of ethanol in next 2-3 years. With the subsidy on loans being provided by the government, mills need to respond by setting up capacities to not only start producing ethanol and improve cash flows and profitability, but also develop flexibility and reduce surplus sugar production.

'India's September oil imports at 3-yr low'

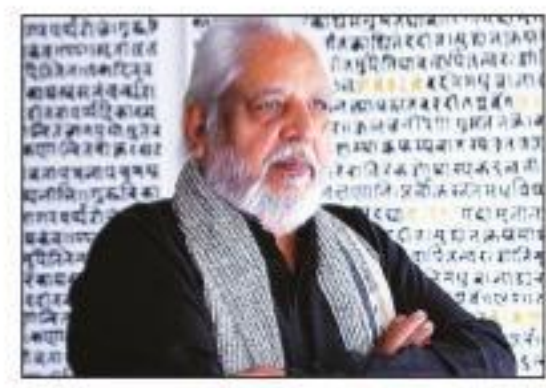
The country's oil imports fell to its lowest in more than three years in September to 3.82 million barrels per day (bpd), the data obtained from industry and shipping sources showed

- 235,000 bpd** The amount by which India's oil consumption rose on average during 2014-18, nearly a fifth of the global total
- 170,000 bpd** The amount by which the growth could moderate to in 2019, due to an economic slowdown
- 7%** The amount by which Indian refiners' crude oil processing declined in September from a year ago
- 830,500 bpd** Oil supplied by Saudi Arabia to India in September, compared with 821,000 bpd supplied by Iraq
- \$0.75/barrel** The rate by which Saudi Arabia has cut its September official selling price (OSP) for its Arab Light grade for Asia, compared to a \$0.40/barrel reduction in Iraq's Basra Light
- 13 MONTHS** The period of time after which Saudi Arabia replaced Iraq as India's top oil supplier
- OIL IMPORTS** drop below 4 million bpd for the first time since June 2016 in September 2019; about 18.7 per cent lower than in August and down 8.4 per cent from a year ago
- THE FALL** in oil imports limited India's fiscal deficit for September, but it also potentially points to a general economic and industrial slowdown
- REASON BEHIND LOWER OIL IMPORTS:**
 - Refinery turnarounds as refiners have to supply Euro VI fuels in the country from an April 1 deadline
 - Heavy rains
 - Slower industrial and construction work
- UNITED ARAB EMIRATES** The country emerged as India's third biggest supplier in September after a gap of seven months, knocking Nigeria into fourth place, a position held by Venezuela in August; it was the fifth biggest oil supplier in August

13 TALK

ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD

WEEK AHEAD



A Sacred Alphabet

CATCH THE last day of artist Charan Sharma's (pictured) exhibition at Jehangir art gallery. In 'Aksharaa', the 69-year-old Rajasthan-born artist explores each *akshara* or letter, depicted in gold. When verbalised, a different sound is created (*aksharnaad*), and from each sound, a new feeling is aroused. On October 28, at Jehangir Art Gallery, Fort, from 11am-7 pm.



Entertainment Inc

CALLING ALL Bollywood buffs! Think you know more about SRK's career, Sonam's style choices or Amitabh Bachchan's dialogues than the stars themselves? Show off your Bollywood trivia at The Mighty Indian Cinema Quiz this week. Five cities and 21 Social outlets are set to witness movie magic, featuring visual rounds, rapid fires, dance-offs and more that will win you shots and beers on the house. On October 30, at all Social outlets 8 pm onwards.



Green Scene

WITH THE FESTIVE season here, try out Smoke House Deli's new 'Goodness' menu. The first of this celebration of seasonal, locally sourced, and organic produce begins with an all-vegetarian 'Green Dot Menu', featuring dishes like the tomato bisque with moringa fritters and coconut cream, warm burrata and roasted seasonal fruits, homemade ricotta and sage malfatti. For your guilt-free sugar fix are delectable desserts like the Assamese Kaji Nemu Cheesecake, Organic Mascarpone and Chocolate Cake. Till November 15, at all Smoke House outlets, from 7 am-1 pm.



A Spooky Affair

THIS HALLOWEEN, experience the thrills and chills of this eerie holiday with a sumptuous, sinister spread and a host of haunted activities and a spectacular live performance at the Renaissance Mumbai. The dinner spread will spook you with dishes like the Blooded Curried Pumpkin Salad, Deviled Eggs, Blood Shot Eyeball Stew (Fish Ball), and Graveyard Lasagna with beverages like Poison Spritz to enhance the evening. At Lake View Cafe, Renaissance Mumbai, Powai, on October 31, 7 pm-11 pm.



Just for Kids

HALLOWEEN is here to thrill! Plate & Pint is all set for a Halloween Bash for children upto 12 years of age. They can learn how to make spooky slimes in different colours as well as play spidey games, with fun prizes in the end. The bash is priced at Rs 800 per child. At Plate and Pint, Ground Floor, Dhun Abad, 106 B, Desai Road, on October 31, 5.30 pm-7 pm.



A still from *Aise Hi* (above); Kislay

'The movie is about contradictions of the present times'

Through the story of a widow who wishes to live by herself, Kislay's *Aise Hi* explores social structures which surround us and a culture of repression

ALAKA SAHANI

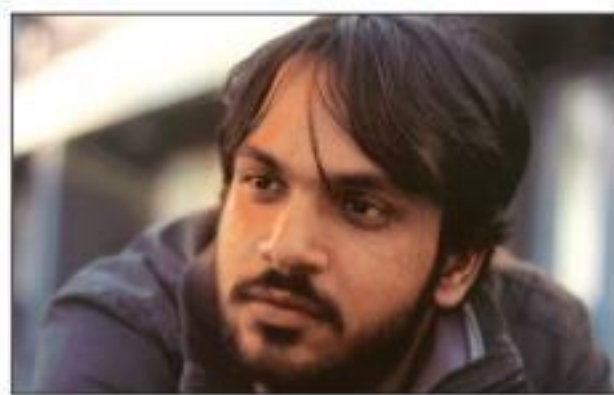
THE MOVIE about a woman re-imagining her life and discovering small joys after her husband's death in *Aise Hi* (*Just Like That*), walked away with special jury mention for Mohini Sharma for Best Actor (Female) and Film Critics Guild Award for the film during the closing ceremony of JIO MAMI 21st Mumbai Film Festival with Star. Set in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad), the movie exposes the uncomfortable social conditions and mindset when a widow chooses to live by herself. Kislay, who has written and directed the movie, talks about the idea behind it and its making. Excerpts:

How did the idea of *Aise Hi* come about?

Aise Hi developed over the years. I had finished the script back in 2017 but I was not able to find a producer. Thankfully, Shwetaabh Singh came on board as he wanted to do something different. After that, I wrote another draft last year and we started working on it. *Aise Hi* was initially written for a short film but I felt it was too long for that. When I wrote the first draft, it was entirely focused on Mrs Sharma, the protagonist. But I felt it was important to see the story from other characters' point of view too. Then, one could explore the complexity of situations and emotions.

Tell me a bit about the shooting process and the cast of the film.

We shot in Allahabad, during extreme summer in May 2018 as heat was an important part of the film's mood. After discussion with Saumyananda Sahi (cinematographer), we went ahead with the shoot. Kudos to the actors and the crew that we were able to shoot non-stop for 41 days. We were initially hesitant about how our protagonist (Mohini



The bottom-line while writing was to see the characters in their surroundings and understand their fears and anxiety. The idea was also to see them as the product of their circumstances

KISLAY

Sharma) will be able to cope with so much heat. But she took it sportingly. Casting was done by my friends Dinker Sharma and Abhishek Bhardwaj. We did it over a long period and the idea was to cast people best suited to play the characters. The cast is a curious mix of first-timers, professionals and some non-actors.

We can see the city undergoing a change. Did the script keep evolving as you were making it?

Allahabad is my hometown. So, the changes you see in the film have been happening for a decade. I'm lucky to have collaborators like Tanushree Das (editor), Sahi and Gautam Nair (sound). All of them read various drafts and gave their insights. During the shoot, we followed the script. The city's name change to Prayagraj was a late addition. I thought that like the characters, the space,

too, should have a journey of its own.

How much were you driven by the urge to explore the idea of masculinity?

The way the story shaped up, I wanted to explore masculinity. However, the bottom-line while writing was to see the characters in their surroundings and understand their fears and anxiety. The idea was also to see them as the product of their circumstances. I wanted to explore social structures which surround us including masculinity, family and a culture of repression. Not just men but even women in the film in small ways end up behaving similarly with another woman.

The movie features several long shots.

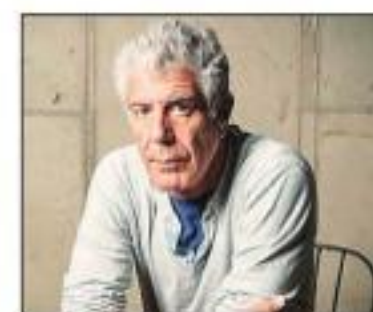
The idea was to let things happen in real time and to observe them as they happen. We did workshops with actors but long takes primarily meant a lot of takes and actors and camera person being in sync. Sahi preferred these type of shots.

Tell us a bit about you and what drew you to filmmaking.

I studied Economics at Delhi University. Before that, I spent my schooling years in Allahabad. We had a very active theatre society in college. Creating and discussing plays for long hours, formed the core of my training. Taking up filmmaking wasn't a thought-out decision. I got through to FTII and I joined it to understand cinema. I enjoyed being there immensely and maybe that made me confident that I could do this. All my team members are from there and my college.

What kind of journey do you have in mind for *Aise Hi*?

Films are chronicles of history. The movie is about contradictions of the present times and the questions that we are facing. I hope that it remains relevant in times to come.



ODE TO BOURDAIN

Oscar-winning filmmaker Morgan Neville of *20 Feet from Stardom* fame is set to direct a documentary on the late food critic and chef Anthony Bourdain, who had a successful stint with his CNN series *Anthony Bourdain Parts Unknown*, and had died last year.

Art on the Screen

A video art festival, featuring works by veteran artists like Navjot Altaf and Ranbir Kaleka, as well as young, upcoming names, will be held in Mumbai

DIPTI NAGPAUL

A MULTI-PRONGED art practitioner, Bharati Kapadia had been pondering over certain aspects of video art for a long time. She wondered what made an artist use long shots panning a certain scene, or even, say, use several frames of the same action. In an attempt to seek answers to such questions, Kapadia started to look for video art on the internet but realised that there is very little Indian work available online for those who wish to understand the medium. Realising that there must be many like her out there, the artist considered organising a video art show. "Of the 39 artists I reached out to, I received a positive response from 34, something I had not expected," she says, laughing. "That's when I cannot limit its scope to a mere show; this will have to be a festival."

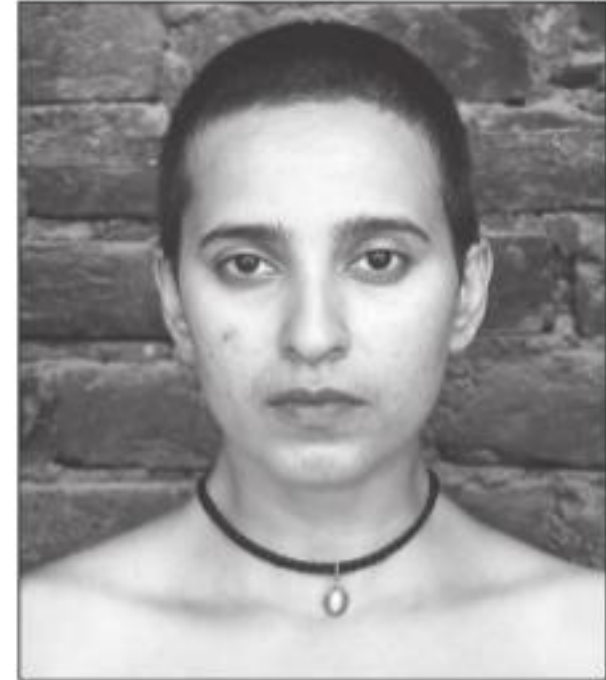
Called 'Video Art' by Indian Contemporary Artists (VAICA), the festival will feature works by a range of artists, including established names such as Navjot Altaf, Mithu Sen and Tushar Joag as well as young practitioners like Bengaluru-based Surekha and Mumbai-based Shakuntala Kulkarni.

The festival will begin on November 2 and will be held over five consecutive Saturdays all through November in Mumbai across different locations. Different films will be screened on each day of the festival. Kapadia, along with co-curator Chandita Mukherjee, has brought on board Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and Jehangir Nicholson Foundation as partners. The venues, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan Mumbai, GSA Foundation for Contemporary Culture, and Godrej India Culture Lab, have lent their space free of cost for the festival. Detailed location-wise schedule is available at vaicafilms.wordpress.com. After Mumbai, the festival is due to travel to Delhi in December.

Kapadia believes that video art is on the cusp of growth as technological advancements make video more accessible. "The medium per se is rather new in the Indian art scene. The early practitioners like Ranbir Kaleka and Nalini Malani started exploring video art only in the early 2000s. But over the last few years, more younger artists are interested in its vocabulary. It's a virtual medium and so one does not need space to exhibit it. Also, one can have it without having to pay it. But video art is mostly exhibited as an installation, as a small part of a larger exhibition, or at a biennale. But that, I believe will change with this festival," Kapadia says.

However, video art's strengths also make it "unviable" to collectors. Another apprehension is that much like abstract art, people say that they don't know how to make sense of it. "But you don't have to. One doesn't make sense of a sunset, one experiences it. Abstract art or video art are similar — one should take it in the light, beauty and colours," says Kapadia, who adds that Indian collectors are beginning to see the investment potential of the field. "Corporates, museums, organisations, galleries and private collectors are all closely watching and contributing to its growth," she points out.

With VAICA, Kapadia is also creating a distinction between art films, artistic



Navjot Altaf (top); Anuradha Upadhyay

Video art is on the cusp of growth as technological advancements make video more accessible... However, video art's strengths also make it "unviable" to collectors

documentaries and video art. One of the selection criteria is that the film be under 15 minutes. Also, the featured artists have to be video art practitioners. "The concept of time in video art is not the same as conventional visual content. Nor is there a beginning, middle and end, necessarily," she explains.

With 65 videos from 35 artists, including one of her own, Kapadia was overwhelmed when she began to curate. While some of the films are new, and will be on view for the first time at VAICA, there are also old works, some by artists such as Kaleka. The curator points out that the audience will be able to tell the difference in the visual quality — while some are grainy, the others are made using recent technology.

After watching and re-watching each work, she came upon "a certain flow", something she felt that would bind such abstract works by various artists. "Sometimes it is sound, sometimes it's colours. It's very subtle and the audience may not always be able to tell what it is, but the idea is that the sequence in which the works are screened should not be jarring," Kapadia explains. To add to the viewers' experience, she will also be throwing open the floor to the audience and share her experience of curating the festival.



Making the Shift

Talk picks out a few favourite international films at the recently-concluded 21st JIO MAMI Film Festival 2019

EXPRESS FEATURES SERVICE

FOR SAMA: A harrowing and intimate account of the siege of Aleppo by Syrian citizen-journalist Waad al-Kateeb is more than just a documentary — it is a testimony of the triumph of the human spirit, and also its apathy. While Aleppo burned and crumbled, the world watched and did nothing. Using a hand-held camera, she chronicles the beginning of the Syrian resistance against

President Bashar al-Assad in 2011, which then turns into a civil war, as well as events in her own life — her journey as an activist, falling in love in the time of war, and finally, the birth of her daughter, Sama, for whom this film has been made.

Deerskin: Georges is the funniest serial killer you'll ever meet. In Quentin Dupieux's surrealist comedy, *Le Daim* (*Deerskin*), he is played by Jean Dujardin (*The Artist*), a man who buys a cowboy-style deerskin jacket and desires to be the only man with a jacket



in the world. He's not at all surprised when his jacket informs him that he too wishes to be the only jacket in the world. What follows is a rib-tickling killing spree that gratifies and horrifies in equal measure; but Georges' charming narcissism makes murder look like so much fun.

Honey Boy: Right from the beginning, *Honey Boy* cuts right through, wasting no time in devastating the audience with its tale of a violent and emotionally abusive father-son relationship. Written by Shia LaBeouf, who based it on his childhood, and also plays father to Noah Jupe's character, the film explores all the ways in which addiction passes down generations and lingers on like a cancer that destroys every single feeling — except pain.

Marriage Story: Noah Baumbach's funny and bittersweet examination of the end of a marriage is the kind of film that stays with you long after the lights come back on — and it's mostly because of Adam Driver's lumi-

nescent performance as a theatre director and young father whose divorce to an actor, played by Scarlett Johansson, is turning out to be more absurd than he'd ever imagined.

The Kingmaker: Lauren Greenfield's documentary about the life and times of Imelda Marcos, and the rise, fall and return to political power of the Marcos family in Philippines is gripping, hilarious, and shocking all at once. It serves as a primer, a history lesson about all the ways in which politics, avarice and power work.

Port Authority: New York City's busiest bus terminal is where Wye (Leyna Bloom) and Paul (Fionn Whitehead) lock eyes for the first time, drawn to each other in ways they can't quite explain. A troubled young man, he's selling 'white boy realness' while she's carving a place for herself in the city's kiki-voguing scene with her trans brothers and sisters. This romance directed by Danielle Lessowitz is fresh, heartwarming and fabulous.



(From far left) Stills from *For Sama*; *Bacarau*; *Atlantics*

Bacarau: The film is a Brazilian stand-off between the inhabitants of the village of Bacarau and everybody else who's out to get them — whether it's the mayor, a local politician, trigger-happy Americans hunting people for sport. Combining traditional and modern storytelling, with dollops of humour and well-deserved violence, *Bacarau* is nothing short of a wild ride.

Atlantics: With the city and the sea as backdrop, Mati Diop's seductive film is part social commentary, and part ghost tale. When Ada (the absolutely stunning Mama Sané) learns that her lover Souleiman decided to leave Senegal to seek refuge in Spain, she is heartbroken; when she learns that he and his friends drowned in the sea, she is ready to give up. But somebody has seen Souleiman recently, she cannot rest now. At the heart of it, *Atlantics* is a love story, but one that tells us more about what happens when someone else's selfishness and greed tears our worlds apart.

Selectors disallowed Babar from including Hafeez, Malik

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI, OCTOBER 27

PAKISTAN'S NEW Twenty20 captain Babar Azam wanted to have senior players such as Muhammad Hafeez and Shoaib Malik in the side for the Australia tour but the PCB officials shot down the suggestion. Before the team's departure, it has emerged that head coach and chief selector Misbah-ul-Haq had discussed the selection of players with Babar and both agreed on the selection of Hafeez and Malik.

But apparently some top officials in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) advised them not to pick them, throwing open a debate on how much authority was enjoyed by the head coach and the captain.

Asked if he was consulted for team selection, Babar said, "I had given my input for selection of the squad. I felt I required some seniors but it is decision of selectors."

Babar recently said he wants to emulate captains like England's Joe Root and India's Virat Kohli but surprisingly the full video of his press conference on October 25 does not include those comments.

The video is available on the PCB's official website. Babar said though captaincy adds to pressure but with the support of his teammates, he was confident of handling it.

"I have belief in myself and my batting. Captaincy is a new responsibility and I will try to take everyone along and form a combination. It is clear that if players support you the team does well. So I want everyone to perform. I will try to keep the environment of the dressing room healthy and positive. We must enjoy playing for Pakistan and not take pressure," he said.

Babar reminded that he had captained Pakistan in the under-19 World Cup and has played in Australia before so he was aware of the conditions and pitches.

"It is a big challenge playing in Australia and beating them. The idea is to play fearless cricket and give them a good fight. Play aggressive cricket like they do."

Four PSL franchises not in favour of Misbah's involvement

Karachi: Four franchises of the Pakistan Super League don't want the national team's head coach-cum-chief selector Misbah-ul-Haq's involvement in any capacity in the fifth edition of the T20 event next year.

In a recent meeting with the six franchises to finalise the categories of players for next month's players draft, a Pakistan Cricket Board official was clearly told by at least four franchises that allowing Misbah to be part of the PSL would amount to conflict of interest.

"These franchises made it clear they don't want Misbah to take part in the PSL in any capacity either as coach or director with any franchise as it would be a major conflict of interest," a source said. He said the franchises had noted that last year also when Inzamam-ul-Haq was chief selector they had ensured he was dropped from the committee that finalised players list for draft and later also had to call off his association with a franchise.

"One franchise owner made the point that the PCB chairman Ehsan Mani himself has said that he couldn't remove Pakistan's former head coach Mickey Arthur and bowling coach Azhar Mahmood from the support staff of a franchise as they had got permission to take part in the PSL from the previous PCB chairman," the source said.

INTERVIEW: HABIBUL BASHAR

'Won't be surprised if more than 6,000 Bangladeshi fans turn up at Eden'

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 27

BANGLADESH HAS played a Test in India before, but a full tour which will be part of the World Test Championship provides an added dimension. Former skipper Habibul Bashar, now a national selector talks about the significance and the recent problems, including the short players' strike.

This is Bangladesh's first full tour of India and the two Tests are also part of the World Test Championship. As a former Bangladesh captain and current national selector, how do you look at it?

Obviously, every series is important. But this one is a little different. We started playing Tests in 2000. After 19 years, we are going for a full tour of India. We had played a one-off Test in Hyderabad two years ago. But it's the first full tour, which makes the assignment even more important from Bangladesh's perspective. We are very excited, especially for the fact that we will be playing a Test at Eden Gardens. It makes the occasion humongous. Playing a Test at Lord's is a matter of pride and prestige. The same applies to a Test at Eden Gardens. Also, we will open our World Test Championship campaign with this series against India.

How excited are the fans in Bangladesh? The Fifa World Cup qualifier between India and Bangladesh at the Salt Lake Stadium earlier this month saw a turnout of over 60,000. It's likely to be a full house at Eden also.

Fans are very excited. I'm sure a lot of fans from here (Bangladesh) will be going to Eden. For a lot of people in Bangladesh, especially those who are from Jessore and Khulna, it's easier to go to Kolkata than Dhaka, distance-wise (Kolkata is just 128 kilometres from Jessore). Obviously, there's sentiment attached as well, between Kolkata and Bangladesh. In Kolkata also, there are many people who have their ancestral roots in Bangladesh (erstwhile East Bengal). Like many people in Bangladesh consider Kolkata sort of their second home, I believe a lot of Kolkatans, too, reciprocate that feeling. A lot of my friends are planning to go for the Eden Test. I won't be surprised if more than 6,000 Bangladeshi fans turn up.

The Eden Test could be a pink-ball, day-night affair, although it hasn't been finalised yet. If the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) receives a request from the BCCI in this regard, will the BCB be agreeable to it?

I'm 100 per cent sure that the BCB will not object. Although we haven't played pink-ball cricket much, I'm sure that the BCB and the team will accept (it). It won't be a problem.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to be present for the match. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee are likely to be in attendance as well. Do you agree that given the occasion, a day-night Test against Bangladesh at Eden would offer a grand spectacle?

I'm sure it will. I believe Sourav



National selector Habibul Bashar believes the strike by the players and the falling out between Test captain Shakib and BCB was handled professionally.



(Ganguly) will take the Kolkata Test to a different level. So we are very excited. I just hope that our team performs well.

Bangladesh started the World Cup strongly but lost momentum. The short limited-overs series in Sri Lanka didn't go well either. Then they lost the one-off home Test against Afghanistan also. India, on the other hand, are the World No. 1 Test side for close to three years now. They are also fresh from back-to-back clean sweeps of West Indies and South Africa. So how well are Bangladesh prepared for the upcoming series, given that the players went on

As for the issue related to Shakib, it's not a team issue. Sometimes, such individual issues crop up. I hope it will not affect our preparations. But we will miss Tamim Iqbal, as he is not available (the opener has pulled out on personal grounds). It's a big setback for us, because he has been our best batsman (in Tests) for long."

strike and Test captain Shakib Al Hasan has fallen out with the BCB over an alleged breach of contract?

See, the strike didn't last long. The matter was resolved in two days. We didn't have any match or practice sessions during that period. The BCB handled it professionally. As for the issue related to Shakib, it's not a team issue. Sometimes, such individual issues crop up. I hope it will not affect our preparations. But we will miss Tamim Iqbal, as he is not available (the opener has pulled out on personal grounds). It's a big setback for us, because he has been our best batsman (in Tests) for long.

And like you mentioned, India are in tremendous form. They are the strongest opposition in Test cricket at this moment. So, opening our World Test Championship campaign against India is a huge challenge. We know that. It's a very tough test. At the same time, it's an opportunity for us as

well. If we perform well, Bangladesh cricket will make a rapid forward movement. But once again, it won't be easy. India probably have the best bowling attack in the world at this moment. Pace, spin – they have an all-round bowling attack. They probably also have the best top-five, batting-wise. So we have to play out of our skins.

But Shakib at loggerheads with the BCB; it might affect the team atmosphere, isn't it so?

No, I don't think so. I think players are now very happy, for whatever they demanded they got it. The problem between Shakib and the BCB is over a contract clause. It's not related to cricket. So the team (atmosphere) will not be affected.

Have you finalised the Test squad?

We have picked a preliminary squad. After the ongoing round of our first-class matches, we will finalise the squad.

Bangladesh are a good batting unit and the team also has a few very decent spinners. But they probably need a tearaway fast bowler to reach the next level. Do you agree?

Yes, fast bowling is one area where we are struggling. We don't have flat-out fast bowlers. But I'm hopeful that Taskin (Ahmed) will be fit and available for the Tests. He is currently acquiring game time in first-class cricket. If he is fit for the Tests, that will be a real positive for us. We have also brought back Al-Amin (Hossain). So

For a lot of people in Bangladesh, especially those who are from Jessore and Khulna, it's easier to go to Kolkata than Dhaka, distance-wise. There's sentiment attached as well, between Kolkata and Bangladesh. Like many people in Bangladesh consider Kolkata sort of their second home, I believe a lot of Kolkatans, too, reciprocate that feeling."

let's see.

We don't have a fast bowler like (Jasprit) Bumrah or (Mohammed) Shami. Whatever we have, Bangladesh had earned success with them in the past. And we will unearth fast bowlers in the future. At one time, India, too, had this problem (not having 140kph fast bowlers). Hopefully, we will unearth some fast bowlers soon.

One problem area in the Bangladesh batting is that even the experienced players don't usually convert their 70s and 80s into daddy hundreds. So as a national selector, what will be your message to the batsmen ahead of the tour?

I totally agree. See, in Test cricket, not every batsman will score big runs in a match. He who gets into the groove must play a big innings. If we want to do well against India, we have to convert the 60s, 70s and 80s into big hundreds.

Warner's ton flattens Sri Lanka

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ADELAIDE, OCTOBER 27

OPENING BATSMAN David Warner hit his first Twenty20 international century as Australia beat Sri Lanka by 134 runs in the first of three matches. Warner's whirlwind unbeaten 100 from 56 balls on Sunday at Adelaide Oval led Australia's 233-2 – the country's fourth-highest T20 total and best on home soil.

In reply, Sri Lanka stumbled to 99-9 as Australia took a 1-0 lead in the three-game series which continues in Brisbane on Wednesday and Melbourne on Friday.

The winning margin is, by runs, the third-largest in a T20 international between test-playing nations – Pakistan's 143-run victory against the West Indies at Karachi in April 2018 is the biggest. Warner, on his 33rd birthday and in his first home international since being banned for ball tampering in South Africa, leapt wildly into the air on reaching his milestone from the last ball of Australia's innings. And after hearing jeers during his mostly personally unsuccessful Ashes campaign in England, Warner was feeling the love from the Australian fans.

"It's always fantastic to get that... you forget how much it actually drives you when you're out there," Warner said of the crowd support. "I think they don't realize how much of an impact it has for us players." The left-hander received support from captain Aaron Finch (64 from 36 balls) and Glenn Maxwell (62 from 28). Sri Lanka fast bowler Kasun Rajitha finished with 0-75, the most runs conceded in a



David Warner's whirlwind unbeaten 100 from 56 balls led Australia to a 134-run win over Sri Lanka in Adelaide on Sunday. Reuters file

four-over spell in T20 internationals. Warner's century featured 10 fours and four sixes, surpassing his previous best T20 international score of 90 not out. Maxwell and Warner put on 107 runs and their century stand took only 52 balls. Sri Lanka's run chase was stung by the loss of early wickets as the visitors slumped to 13-3 after 22 balls. Australian pacemen Mitchell Starc (2-18) struck in the first over and Pat Cummins (2-27) took two wickets in consecutive deliveries in his first over.

Spinners Adam Zampa (3-14) and Ashton Agar (1-13) were also wicket-takers as Dasun Shanaka top-scored with 17 for Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka came in to the match on a four-game T20 winning streak, including all three matches in Pakistan and the final match on a tour of New Zealand. The Sri Lanka side in Pakistan was missing many of the country's top players due to security concerns.

Australia will host Pakistan in a three-match T20 series in early November. Next year, Australia will host the T20 World Cup. **BRIEF SCORES:** Australia 233/2 in 20 overs (Warner 100* in 56 balls with 10x4 & 4x6, Finch 64 in 36 with 8x4 & 3x6, Maxwell 62 in 28 with 7x4 & 3x6) beat Sri Lanka 99/9 in 20 overs (Zampa 3/14) by 134 runs

India's attitude towards excellence should be copied by teams: Chappell

New Delhi: AUSTRALIAN GREAT Ian Chappell says India's attitude towards achieving excellence should be copied by the ambitious cricket nations for the well-being of the Test format.

In the wake of their 3-0 whitewash of South Africa in a Test series recently, the former Australian captain called India the envy of world cricket. "If Test cricket is to be a viable part of the game's future, the standard of play needs to remain high. Whilst it's true India - with a large talent pool, unlimited finances and the IPL - has a huge advantage, it's their attitude towards achieving excellence that should be copied by any team with an ambition to be the best," Chappell wrote in his column for 'ESPNcricinfo'.

India blanked South Africa despite missing their premier pacer Jasprit Bumrah, consolidating their position at the top of the ICC Test Championship standings. He said the Indian pace attack is now equipped to shine in all conditions across the world.

"These pace spearheads, added to India's always capable spinners, give the attack a potency that not too many other countries can match," Chappell said.

The legendary batsman added, "Slot a fit seam-bowling allrounder in Hardik Pandya into that group and India are more than adequately placed to cope with any conditions they encounter." PTI

Do away with toss in Tests, suggests du Plessis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JOHANNESBURG, OCTOBER 27

SOUTH AFRICA losing three straight toss in India has frustrated Faf du Plessis, so much so that the embattled Test captain has suggested doing away with the rule in the five-day format.

India trounced South Africa 3-0 in a Test series recently and while Du Plessis admitted that his team had been outplayed and lacked mental strength, he said losing the toss in all three matches had made an already difficult task almost impossible.

"Every Test match, they bat first, they score 500, they declare when it's dark, they get three wickets when it's dark and when day three starts, you're under pressure," du Plessis said. "It was like copy and paste in every Test match."

Du Plessis believes getting rid of the toss in Test cricket would help teams compete better when they travel away from home.

"It was obvious from the way we played the last Test match. We started really well but by being put under pressure for a long period of time through the series, slowly but surely we started playing worse." Hoping for a change in fortunes, du Plessis sent Temba Bavuma for toss ahead of the third Test in Ranchi, a move that was widely criticised by the country's former players, including ex-captain Graeme Smith. Seeking clarity from

India trounced South Africa 3-0 in a Test series and while du Plessis admitted that his team had been outplayed and lacked mental strength, losing the toss three times made an already difficult task almost impossible.

Cricket South Africa on the road ahead, du Plessis highlighted the importance of the involvement of former players in the development of the team.

"The most important thing right now is clarity. Someone needs to make decisions, the director of cricket first and then filter down so that everyone else can make decisions.

"It's obvious that we need to make more use of ex-players, but it also comes with challenges. I suppose it always comes down to finance. I know for a fact that we have tried to get them involved, but the financial thing is a hurdle.

"We need experience in the team right now and that comes from ex-players," he said. The South African coaching staff and selection committee, led by Ottis Gibson, was sacked after a below-par World Cup campaign, and a new structure was put in place. However, the members were inducted into the new structure only on an interim basis.

Inter let Juve off the hook as tired Ronaldo stays home

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
MILAN, OCTOBER 27

CRISTIANO RONALDO stayed at home as Juventus battled to a 1-1 stalemate at lowly Lecce, but the defending champions still stay top in Serie A as nearest rivals Inter Milan drew 2-2 with Parma. Both goals in Lecce came from penalties with Paulo Dybala's strike from the spot after 50 minutes cancelled out by Marco Mancosu's six minutes later as the promoted southerners grabbed their first point at home this season on Saturday.

Unbeaten Juventus have 23 points from nine games, one more than Antonio Conte's Inter, who let the champions off the hook to stay second. Ronaldo, 34, did not make the trip to the heel of Italy after Tuesday's 2-1 Champions League win over Lokomotiv Moscow, and ahead of two Serie A matches in four days next week, and a reverse fixture against the Russians on November 6.

"Ronaldo was tired both physically and mentally, so it would not have helped to make this journey," said Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri. "When a player expresses his fatigue, it's only right to give him a rest. Even without him we created ten chances on goal, but weren't able to finish them off. We let ourselves be drawn into a dirty game."

It was a bruising encounter in Puglia. Argentina forward Gonzalo Higuain suffered a nasty knock to his forehead late in the game after colliding with Lecce's Brazilian goalkeeper Gabriel. The 31-year-old sat down on the pitch after the game suffering from dizziness and was stretchered off, later receiving stitches to his forehead. Miralem Pjanic and Rodrigo Bentancur also suffered knocks. Dybala, who scored both goals against the Russians last Wednesday, started up front alongside Higuain, with Federico Bernardeschi slotting in just behind the Argentine strike duo.

Sarri rang the changes giving starts to Emre Can and Danilo with Blaise Matuidi and Juan Cuadrado both named on the bench.

Morata on target again

Madrid: Diego Simeone's decision to leave out Diego Costa was vindicated as Atletico Madrid beat Athletic Bilbao and Costa's replacement Alvaro Morata scored in the 2-0 victory. Morata had been the one to sit on the bench against Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday but his winning goal as a substitute earned him a start against Bilbao and the Spaniard delivered again. "The changes were good for the team," said Simeone on Saturday. "It was a great performance."

Morata's finish in the second half at the Wanda Metropolitano, after Saul Niguez had opened the scoring, secured Atletico a comfortable win that puts them above Real Madrid in the La Liga table and level on points with Barcelona. The postponement of the Clasico due to unrest in Catalonia gave Simeone's side the chance to close the gap on the top two and sustain momentum from their gritty win in the Champions League.

Morata had rescued Atletico against Leverkusen but the decision to omit him, and now Costa, suggests Simeone feels there is a need for fresh thinking up front. Since missing the first two games of the season with a thigh injury, Costa had started all 10 thereafter, despite managing to score only two goals, one of them from the penalty spot.

It remains to be seen if Simeone will leave him out for long but Correa was the provider for both of Atletico's goals while Morata's smile after coming off late on suggested he thought his was a job well done.

Morata's finish in the second half secured Atletico a comfortable win that puts them above Real Madrid in the La Liga table and level on points with Barcelona. The postponement of the Clasico due to unrest in Catalonia gave Simeone's side the chance to close the gap on the top two

Springboks win battle of grit

South Africa set up a repeat of 2007 World Cup final against England by beating Wales 19-16 in semis



NO HOLDS BARRED

Wales' Jake Ball (L) clashes with South Africa's Faf de Klerk during the Rugby World Cup semifinal in Yokohama, Japan, on Sunday. Reuters

REUTERS

YOKOHAMA, OCTOBER 27

SPRINGBOKS FLYHALF Handre Pollard kicked a penalty four minutes from time to send South Africa into their third Rugby World Cup final with a 19-16 victory over Wales in a semi-final dogfight on Sunday.

The South Africans will return to Yokohama next weekend to bid for a third World Cup triumph against an England side who ran defending champions New Zealand out of the tournament with a breathtaking display of rugby on Saturday.

This was the other side of the game, a largely grim arm-wrestle dominated by the boot and appropriately settled by a three-pointer from the kicking tee. Pollard potted all five of his shots at goal, including three other penalties and a conversion, while centre Damian de Allende crossed for the game's first try in the 57th minute.

Wales, who will depart heartbroken at having lost a third World Cup semi-final, levelled the scores at 16-16 with 15 minutes remaining when winger Josh Adams crossed for his sixth try of the tournament. South Africa would not be denied, however, and secured their passage to the final when Pollard calmly slotted the ball through the posts from about 30 metres out wide to the left.

An chilly autumn wind had blown away the last remains of a balmy day just after kick-off but that did not deter both sides from going to the skies from the start of the gritty contest. South Africa's set piece looked the steadier but Wales were getting past the Springboks' rush defence on the left wing and looked the more likely to cross if the game was ever going to produce a try.

In the absence of any other enterprise, Pollard and Dan Biggar reprised their flyhalf penalty-kicking duel of the 2015 quarter-final with the South African coming out on top, as he did four years ago, to send his side into halftime 9-6 ahead. The Welsh suffered a double injury blow just before the break that did not augur well for an attritional chess game, however, with prop Tom Francis damaging his shoulder and winger George North pulling up clutching his hamstring strain.

Birthday cards put loss in perspective for All Blacks

Reuters: Kieran Read had a birthday to forget on Saturday as the All Blacks crashed out of the Rugby World Cup with a 19-7 loss to England, but then some reminders of home waiting for him at his hotel put everything back in perspective. Rugby was just a game after all.

"It's pretty empty. Yep, it's not what we came here for," Read said. "And it was my birthday yesterday. But I get back to the hotel room and there are cards from my kids waiting for me. It changes things and puts things in perspective," he added while blinking back tears before composing himself. "It's a rugby game and people care. We care. So you enjoy moments and, for me, I'm a dad, and that's first and foremost the thing I want to be remembered by. That's the thing."

Biggar stepped up to kick his third penalty to tie up the scores six minutes into the second half but the biggest cheer from the crowd until that point came when Springboks scrumhalf Faf de Klerk squared up to towering Wales lock Jake Ball.

The South Africans in the stadium finally had something to shout about approaching the hour mark when Pollard for once eschewed the kick and cut through the defensive line to take the Springboks deep into the Welsh 22. With the referee playing advantage, the ball came out to de Allende who brushed off two tacklers and reached over to touch down in the grasp of a third.

Wales hit straight back, however, camping on the South African line, taking a five-metre scrum when awarded a penalty then quickly moving the ball out to the wing for Adams to score. Fullback Leigh Halfpenny split the uprights from wide to level up the scores but South Africa's forwards did enough to ensure Pollard had his chance to win it.

English sporting takeover comes with a twist

ASSOCIATED PRESS

YOKOHAMA, OCTOBER 27

IT'S AN English sporting takeover with a twist.

Fuelled by the brainpower of foreign coaches, England is going through a dominant spell of success in its traditional team sports: Football, cricket and, most recently, rugby. And it has all happened in the space of six months.

It started with Liverpool and Chelsea winning two European soccer trophies - the Champions League and the Europa League, respectively - within three days. Liverpool, managed by charismatic German coach Jurgen Klopp, became European champion for the sixth time by beating Tottenham 2-0 in an all-English final in early June and could yet be crowned world champion of the club game before the year is out. The team competes in the Club World Cup in Qatar in December and will start as favorite.

A month later, England won the Cricket World Cup for the first time in unforgettable circumstances, beating New Zealand in a final that was decided after a rare "Super Over" by a tiebreaker few had even heard of: Boundary countback. The architect of that triumph? An Australian, Trevor Bayliss.

Fast forward three months and another major victory is in England's sights in the Far East, where the country's rugby team is into the final of the World Cup. England defeated the mighty All Blacks, one of the most dominant teams in the history of any sport, in the semifinals on Saturday after a masterclass in mind games and strategy by its coach, Eddie Jones. Who just happens to be, you guessed it, Australian.

Wales or South Africa awaits in the final, with England seeking to win the main global cricket and rugby world titles in the same year for the first time. That's only ever been done once before - by Australia in 1999 at the peak of the country's sporting dominance which also saw the Australians win the Davis

Cup that year.

Jones and Bayliss have transformed the fortunes of their respective adopted national teams, with England failing to get out of the group stage at the previous cricket and rugby World Cups, in 2015. It led to much introspection and soul-searching back home as the inventors of the two sports slumped embarrassing lows and reached out to coaches born overseas.

Bayliss achieved the cricketing turnaround with a relaxed, laid-back approach. He stayed very much in the shadows, giving his players freedom to express themselves. It helped England to the top of the rankings in one-day international cricket for the first time and then a first-ever world title, even if England's fortunes in test cricket have started to slide.

It remains to be seen how England gets on now Bayliss has left his post and an underdog Englishman, Chris Silverwood, is in charge. Jones, the first foreign-born coach of England's rugby team, is very much the opposite to Bayliss. Brash, outspoken and confrontational, Jones enjoys using news conferences to shape his own agenda. He relishes the psychological battle, seeing it as important as the game itself. He views it as a way of taking the heat off his players - and it worked a treat ahead of the New Zealand game.

"We will make sure the guys have the right attitude," the wily Jones said after the 19-7 win over the defending champions, "as well as the right time to relax and switch off a little bit."

With English racing driver Lewis Hamilton on the brink of winning the Formula One world title for a sixth time, these are golden days for English sport. Winning the football World Cup is still regarded as holy grail when it comes to sports in England, and that hasn't happened since 1966.

This year, at least, England's cricket and rugby teams are doing their best to pick up the slack.

Verstappen stripped of pole at Mexican GP

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MEXICO CITY, OCTOBER 27

MAX VERSTAPPEN turned in a brilliant lap to snatch a surprising pole position at the Mexican Grand Prix. Then he opened his mouth. Three hours later, the Red Bull driver was bumped down to fourth, the Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Sebastian Vettel were back at the front, and Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton was in fighting position to clinch his sixth career Formula One championship.

The changes came when Verstappen was penalised for not slowing down after Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas had a hard crash just ahead of him on his final lap of Saturday's qualifying. Verstappen seemed to be in the clear until he admitted in the post-qualifying press conference he didn't slow under a yellow flag, even though the rules require it.

"I was aware that Valtteri crashed," Verstappen said. When pressed later whether he should have backed off, Verstappen bristled. "Do we have to go there? To safety? I think we know what we are doing, otherwise we would not be driving an F1 car." Verstappen said. "It's qualifying and, yeah, you go for it. But like I said before, if they want to delete the lap, then delete the lap."

His comments prompted an investigation from race stewards and Verstappen lost more than that. The Dutch driver had expertly cut the thin air and slow corners at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez to perfection, and an earlier lap would have been good enough for his second career pole position.

But Verstappen was still on the track because the Mercedes and Ferraris were making their last runs. Bottas was rounding the final curve when he took a hard shunt into the wall and Verstappen zipped past. The crash ended qualifying and forced Ferrari to abort its final laps. Hamilton said the penalty was correct. "It's really important that (race officials) are very strict on yellow flags," Hamilton said. "There could have been marshals on the track. These volunteers put their lives on the line to make sure we are safe, and you have got people who are being careless and not abiding by the rules."

Leclerc said every driver knows to slow down under a yellow flag. Verstappen is only 22, but he's a veteran driver in his 99th Grand Prix. "On my side, the crash was yeah, so I can't judge that situation, but yeah, I think it's clear for every driver," said Leclerc, who is also 22. "It's the basics."

Ferrari is back in No. 1 for the sixth race in a row as Leclerc and Vettel hunt for the fourth team win in that span. Verstappen won the last two Mexican Grand Prix from the No. 2 spot, and the straight-line power edge of the Ferraris should give them a huge jump out of the start in the sprint to the first corner. The entire scenario gives Hamilton a better chance to close out the championship on a race track that has not been kind to him in recent years. Hamilton clinched the 2017 and 2018 championships in Mexico City but ran poor races both times. He hasn't been on the podium here since winning in 2016.

Hamilton can clinch the title with a podium finish that puts him 14 points clear of Bottas. Anything less than third for Hamilton extends the championship to next week's U.S. Grand Prix in Texas, a race he's won five times since 2012. A Hamilton podium won't be easy. Verstappen has been significantly faster than the Mercedes on this track. He'll be seething after the penalty and will want to chase the Ferraris. A sixth career championship would put Hamilton just one behind the record seven won by Michael Schumacher.

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Woods on verge of equalling PGA Tour record

REUTERS

CHIBA, OCTOBER 27

TIGER WOODS held a three-stroke lead over local favorite Hideki Matsuyama after 11 holes of the fourth round of the Zozo Championship on Sunday.

Woods, who has led from the opening round of the PGA Tour's first tournament in Japan, carded three birdies against a lone bogey when the fourth round was suspended due to darkness. Combined with the third round he played earlier, Woods played a total of 29 holes on Sunday. "Today has been a long day in the saddle, so early wake-up call tomorrow and back at it again," Woods said. "I'm gonna try to win, there is no doubt about that. I have a job to do tomorrow, start off from the 12th hole, it's not one of the easiest of holes so right out of the gate I've got one of the hardest holes on the golf course."

Woods is making his first start in his 23rd season on the PGA Tour. If he can hold onto his lead through the remaining seven holes on Monday, he will reach 82 wins and tie the career record held by Sam Snead. Tie will start at 7:30 a.m. local time on Monday.



Tiger Woods watches his tee shot on the 6th hole during the final round of the Zozo Championship in Tokyo on Sunday. AP

Matsuyama made things interesting when he finished with back-to-back birdies on Nos. 11 and 12. Before that he was five strokes back which would have put him in a difficult position on Monday. "Three strokes behind right now," Matsuyama said. "I have

a lot of ground to make up tomorrow. I need to play well to even have a chance, but I will give it a shot and do my best."

Matsuyama started the fourth round at the Accordia Golf Narashino Country Club course three strokes back of Woods after

completion of the third round earlier Sunday when Woods shot 4-under 66. In the fourth round, the Japanese star faltered with two bogeys on the front nine but made up for it with his two birdies on his final two holes.

Woods got off to a strong start to the fourth round with a birdie on the first hole. His only trouble of the day came when his tee shot on the par-4 No. 4 went into the rough. His second shot was a routine chip shot from the side of the green that was short, barely reaching the green. He then two-putted for his only bogey of the fourth round. Woods came right back with a birdie on the next hole and added another on the sixth. Torrential rain washed out play on Friday prompting the second round to be moved to Saturday. To make up for the lost day, the players started the fourth round immediately after finishing the third to get in as many holes as possible.

Gary Woodland was tied in third place at 12-under with Sungjae Im, while Rory McIlroy, the highest-ranked player in the field, was fifth at 11 under with just two holes to play. Woods last played in an official tournament in Japan in 2006 at the Dunlop Phoenix, where he lost in a playoff to Padraig Harrington.

U-23 Wrestling Worlds: Sharvan to open India's campaign

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

JUNIOR ASIAN Championship gold medalist Sharvan will open India's medal hunt on Monday as a 30-member wrestling squad left for Budapest to participate at the UWW Under-23 World Championships.

India will be looking to improve their performance from the last edition where Ravi Kumar Dahiya won the silver medal in 57kg. While freestyle exponent Sharvan (65kg) remains one of India's key medal hopes, the squad also has the likes of Greco-Roman wrestler, Sajan Bhanwal, who has three medals from the World Junior Championships in 77kg and would be looking to grab his first medal from the U-23 Worlds.

Among the women, Pinki and Reshma Mane are looking to make their mark on the world stage. On the first day of the championships, Naveen (57kg), Naveen (70kg), Virdev Gulia (79kg), and Akash Antil (97kg) will be in action, besides

Sharvan (65kg).

Based on the current form of these wrestlers, the WFI is expecting a better performance at the World Championships after the men's team and the women's team underwent 15 days of rigorous training at Sonipat and Lucknow respectively.

60 nations, 600-plus wrestlers

More than 60 teams and 600 under-23 wrestlers will be seen in action from all around the globe. The championship will be underway with men's freestyle competition on the first two days followed by women's wrestling, with the Greco-Roman competition scheduled on the final three days. The first edition of the tournament was played in 2017 in Poland where Bajrang Punia led India to three silver medals.

In the second edition, it was Ravi Kumar Dahiya who shone before going on to prove his mettle at the 2019 Senior World Championships by claiming the bronze and confirming the 57kg freestyle category berth at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.