

A missed opportunity in Ayodhya

The Court could have used Article 142 to prohibit any further claims against other places of worship



C. RAMMANOHAR REDDY

It was never a legal dispute. It was a political dispute that became a social contestation that then landed up in the courts as a dispute over a plot of land. Yes, it was a legal dispute even in the 1880s but it became the Ram Janmabhoomi movement of the 1980s because it was all about ascendant Hinduism seeking to place its imprint on a constitutional republic.

Yet, ever since the Supreme Court in 1994 overruled the Central government’s decision to let all previous suits abate, we knew that whatever the political attempts to settle the dispute, it was the courts – ultimately the Supreme Court – that would have the last say.

The essence of the judgment

The Supreme Court then had the opportunity to deliver a landmark judgment which, even if mindful of the social forces swirling around it, would uphold constitutional principles and affirm that India is a country where all citizens, irrespective of their faith, are equal citizens. What the Supreme Court has instead done is given a legal imprimatur to the triumph of the political and social forces that claim to speak on behalf of Hinduism.

In less than 48 hours the judgment has been analysed in a threadbare fashion and its weak foundations have already been revealed (For instance, in this paper, “Unimpeded right in outer courtyard wins whole site for Hindus”, by K. Venkataramanan, November 10, 2019).

The essence of the 1,045-page judgement is that the Hindu devotees had complete right to worship in the outer courtyard of the Babri Masjid since 1858, while the Muslims’ right to pray in the inner courtyard has been contested. Therefore, possession of the entire disputed plot goes to the Hindus, for a temple to be built by a trust constituted by the government, no less.

You do not have to be a legal person to be embarrassed on reading such a ruling. True, the ruling does in its own way try to achieve a balance



“The larger project of denying that people of all faiths enjoy equal rights under the Constitution is now nearing completion.” Police officers in Ayodhya take a break on the day of the verdict. •REUTERS

and argues that, “the relief [should be] moulded in a manner which preserves the constitutional values of justice, fraternity, human dignity and the equality of religious belief.” Towards this end, the verdict says that there is no evidence that the Babri Masjid had been built by destroying a temple, that the events of 1934, 1949 and 1992 “constitute a serious violation of the law”, and awards the Muslims five acres of land (almost double, mind you, of the size of the disputed plot) elsewhere in Ayodhya to build a mosque.

Dignity irrespective of faith

But is this in keeping with constitutional values and does it ensure human dignity to all citizens, irrespective of their faith, as the Supreme Court said it must do?

At a time when the institutions of electoral democracy have been considerably weakened and when the Opposition is too weak to keep a powerful executive in check, you would expect the Supreme Court in particular to be the final custodian of constitutional values. But courts admittedly do not function in a vacuum; when there is a powerful majority in Parliament they are usually circumspect.

One would expect that in such a circumscribed setting the Supreme Court would make an extra effort to deliver an imaginative verdict that provides dignity and protection even if within a compromise resolution of a title suit. Yet, even as the court in its verdict draws on Article 142 of the Constitution, which gives it the power to deliver complete justice, it does so for minor reasons and not to give relief to the Muslim community.

If the Supreme Court was going to decide to give possession of the disputed land to a trust for constructing a Ram temple, it could have used this particular Article of the Constitution to draw a line under any other disputes over ancient mosques. That could have spared the country future communal mobilisations in Kashi and Mathura and affirmed to the Muslims that at least in the future, no vandalism of places of worship would be tolerated. This was, as reported in the press, a core clause of the settlement that most of the parties to the dispute had signed on under the Supreme Court-appointed mediation panel.

The court refused to go down that path. Ominously, a few Hindu political groups have already said that

there will not be any agitation for those sites, but only “for now”.

The Supreme Court then did not turn the title suit into an opportunity and draw on Article 142 of the Constitution to deliver a verdict that would have shown its refusal to tolerate assaults on constitutional values. It instead stuck to the title suit and there too interpreted the claims in a fashion.

For the citizen, the message of the verdict may well be that in the end lawlessness can sometimes succeed. It may take time, it may mean lives lost but ultimately if you maintain pressure and you raise tensions for a long period and politically mobilise around a demand, you will get what you want. How do we now prevent such a message from going out?

The Ram Janmabhoomi movement was at its most violent three decades ago. A weariness had since set in and many on all sides just wished that the Masjid-Mandir issue could be put behind us. The larger project of denying that people of all faiths enjoy equal rights under the Constitution is now nearing completion. The Ram Janmabhoomi was merely the late 20th century instrument for realising this project. It has served its purpose, whatever may be said of “egregious violations” of the law and court orders.

Contrary to the court’s desire to give relief in the Ayodhya verdict in a manner that preserves constitutional values, the citizen could be forgiven for feeling that the opposite has happened.

Impact on the Republic

The Supreme Court of the 1970s is now remembered for two contrasting judgments: the *Kesavananda Bharati* ruling (1973) when it decreed that Parliament could not alter the basic structure of the Constitution and the *ADM Jabalpur* ruling (1976) when the court said that during a national Emergency the citizen had no recourse to her fundamental rights. The first has given us protection against assaults on the Constitution and the second has shown what should never again happen. Fifty years from now how will we remember the Ayodhya verdict? What impact is it going to have on the Republic?

C. Rammanohar Reddy is Editor of The India Forum

The future of work

What does the relationship between platform companies and the government mean for labour unions?



ADITI SURIE

Karnataka Labour Minister S. Suresh Kumar announced on October 21 that the State government will work towards framing guidelines for workers of digital platforms like Uber, Ola, Zomato, Swiggy and UrbanClap, to ensure all relevant labour benefits for those working in the ‘gig economy’. Details of implementation are awaited but the Karnataka government is following the tone set by the Centre, which proposed a new draft code on social security this year. Active moves to bring digital labour platforms within the purview of new or existing employment and labour regulations in India have been sorely missing. The Karnataka government’s move to add benefits is welcome and can provide a degree of public welfare assistance to a significant and growing workforce in India.

Mr. Kumar said, “The government has the responsibility of ensuring social stability... while not creating hurdles for the businesses”. This move could possibly sidestep a question that remains open – i.e., whether Uber drivers, for example, are full-time employees of Uber or freelancers. It appears that this will be resolved in the courts or neglected entirely. The Ministry’s bid to provide insurance and job security can emerge only with direct acknowledgement of the role played by platforms in city job markets, and not by curbing asset light models or by regulating labour.

Creating jobs

Governments now actively acknowledge that platforms provide work to the growing demographic of youth in the country. At the moment, the manufacturing sector in India is unable to provide employment opportunities to the youth. There is thus a mismatch between education and job skills in the market. Governments have also been unable to create viable public work schemes in urban areas for those continuously migrating into cities and towns. Private tech, however, has been able to do this, and the government seems to be aware of its potential.

Why don’t platform companies have to assume responsibility for providing employment and job security? The story goes back to four years ago. MoUs signed between platform companies and various State and Central Ministries over the years show that governments have actively invited companies to create work, entrepreneurial opportuni-

ties and skill development. For example, Uber partnered with Ayushman Bharat to facilitate free healthcare for drivers and delivery partners. UrbanClap partnered with the National Urban Livelihoods Mission to generate jobs with minimum assured monthly wages for the urban poor. In cases of informal jobs where it was difficult to identify workers for whom protection was to be given, platforms became vehicles to serve this purpose.

Creating public utilities

The ecosystem of public policy, platform work, and the government together can suggest an urban ‘Jobs for All’, a financialised employment guarantee scheme. The work created by these companies could easily be regulated as public goods in the coming years because it creates mobility and facilitates the movement of goods. An increasing number of these jobs has been created through incentivised demand using cash-backs, coupons, low fares, and even free services rather than through natural demand. Platforms have created public utilities that may not have been needed before via what is often low-skilled and poor quality work, but it is work that brings in some earnings. They have given urban workers a financialised, self-driven, optional economic safety net of ‘having a job, having a gig’.

Since investment around new technology is especially attractive for developing economies, what does this mean for the state of employment in Indian cities? The strength or ability of labour regulation to push companies to deliver full formal employment in a financialised world of work seems poor. If the relationship between platform companies and national and State government continues this way, where do labour institutions and workers unions stand? Platform companies rely on city markets for their workers to populate the platform and to hopefully eventually turn a profit just as much as governments look to platforms to generate work opportunities. The Karnataka Social Welfare Department signed an MoU with Uber last year to create work opportunities for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe youth.

As we see the platform ecosystem mature and contend with having to turn a profit as demand dips and stabilises, where does this mutual dependency take the urban resident who uses these platforms to earn a living? Does it imply an even further reduced importance of ‘employment’ as a way for social security to be delivered? It could also herald a time where platforms can be asked to perform more public functions like implementing a minimum wage.

Aditi Surie is a sociologist at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements

Revoking citizenship

The Aatish Taseer case brings to focus an outdated provision in the Citizenship (Amendment) Act

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

The BJP said in its 2014 manifesto that “NRIs, PIOs and professionals settled abroad [need to be harnessed] for strengthening Brand India”. However, by revoking the Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card of writer Aatish Taseer, the BJP-led government has shown that the promise was not serious. Mr. Taseer’s card was cancelled, the government claimed, as he had attempted to “conceal information” that his father, Salman Taseer, was of Pakistani origin. The spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry said that if any OCI holder was “no longer eligible and if it fits into a certain criterion of that cancellation of an OCI card then the OCI card will be cancelled”. The government used Section 7D of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2005 to cancel Mr. Taseer’s card. The rules prohibit any person with Pakistani or Bangladeshi lineage from obtaining this status.

Launched in 2005, the OCI card was conceptualised to give a foreign citizen of Indian origin almost a citizen-like status. It enables the OCI card holder to visit India multiple times for multiple purposes. He or she is exempted from reporting to police authorities for any length of stay in India and enjoys all financial, recreational and other facilities that are available to NRIs. The card is particularly useful for professionals, businesspersons, and even politicians of Indian origin who live in the U.S., the Caribbeans, Europe, Southeast Asia, Africa, Canada, Latin America and the Pacific Islands. Except for acquisition of agricultural and plantation properties, the OCI card helps the owner in most day-to-day economic and social activities while in India. The card strengthens the bond that the holder feels for India.

A problematic decision

Mr. Taseer responded to the government’s move in an article. He wrote that he is a British citizen; was not in contact with his father, who was born in British India and became Pakistani only when the country was created, till he was 21 years old; and was brought up by his mother in India.

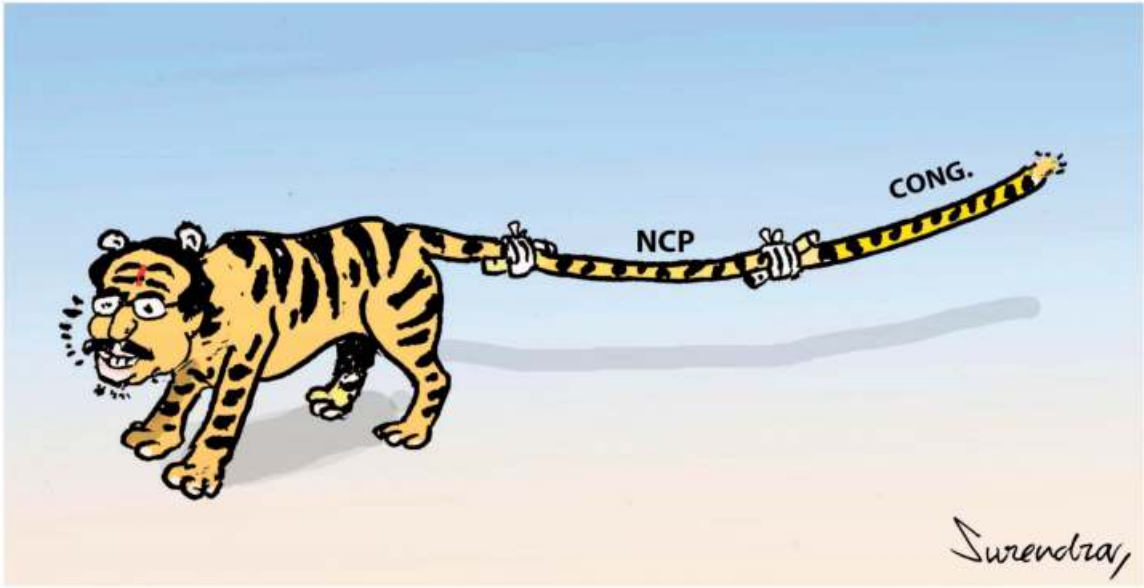
To deny Mr. Taseer the OCI card using Section 7D of the Citizenship Act is problematic. One, it opens up the possibility of similar treatment being meted out to orphans, adopted children, and children born to single mothers. The same clause of the Act could also be used against a OCI card holder who might have a child out of wedlock with a partner from a country that the Indian state does not have good relations with. Will the state then punish the infant too? And what if the OCI card holder has a parent or grandparent or some ancestry in Pakistan or Bangladesh or a country that the government suddenly decides to add to the list? Would his or her status also be in jeopardy?

Two, the government could have chosen to examine Mr. Taseer’s maternal links instead of accusing him of wilfully hiding the identity of his father, especially as former External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had argued in 2016 that the consular process should be made favourable for single mothers. Mr. Taseer pointed out that he was given only a day to respond to the notice informing him that the government was revoking his card. But there was sufficient ground to avoid even that. Swaraj had said in 2018, “As per amended rules, a single parent can apply for a Passport for the child”. If the state can grant a passport to a child based on a single mother’s application, why were Mr. Taseer’s maternal links with India not taken into consideration?

Burden of proof

In the case of the National Register of Citizens too, the burden was on the people to prove their citizenship. Neither the OCI card nor citizenship status, premised on entitlement of individuals from their states, can be so easily revoked especially when provisions exist to help them. It would be wise for the government to consider changing the rules of the antiquated law and also not attract attention to itself in such an unfavourable manner given the odd timing of the case – just months after Mr. Taseer wrote a critical article about the Modi regime in *TIME* magazine.

kallo1.b@thehindu.co.in

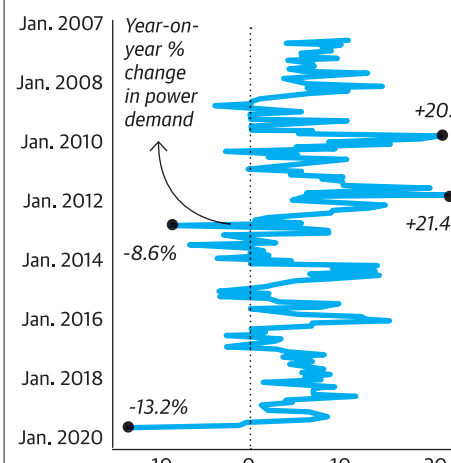


DATA POINT

In a state of shock

In an emerging economy such as India, growth is tightly tied to the demand for electricity. The deep-rooted economic slowdown experienced in the recent months had a delayed response in the country’s power demand which contracted at the fastest pace in over 12 years in October. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan and Sumant Sen

A 12-year low | India’s electricity demand fell 13.2% in October from the same month last year, registering the steepest fall in 154 months. Since January 2007 there have been only 19 months which registered a fall; October 2019’s -13.2% dwarfs the next worst of -8.6% in February 2013



Source: REUTERS, CENTRAL ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY

State-wise slowdown | Except Himachal and J&K the other States registered a fall in electricity demand in October 2019 from the same month a year before. Graph shows y-o-y % growth of electricity demand in October between 2015 and 2019. The darker the shade of blue, the higher the growth in demand. The darker the shade of red, the higher the contraction in demand

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Himachal						+6.20
J&K						+3.10
Northeast						-0.10
Delhi						-1.40
Bihar						-1.40
Kerala						-2.20
Uttarakhand						-4.00
Punjab						-4.10
Tamil Nadu						-5.20
Haryana						-5.30
U.P.						-6.90
Jharkhand						-7.70
Rajasthan						-8.90
W.B.						-9.20
Chhattisgarh						-10.60
A.P.						-16.10
Gujarat						-18.80
Karnataka						-18.90
Maharashtra						-22.40
Odisha						-23.80
Telangana						-24.70
M.P.						-25.90

In the graph, many rectangles in the previous years are coloured in deep shades of blue indicating that the demand saw high levels of growth in many States. The demand slumped across all regions in October 2019

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 12, 1969

Govt. committed to Tamil medium

The Education Minister, Mr. V.R. Nedunchezian, declared here [Madras] to-day [Nov. 11] that the State Government “stands committed” to Tamil as the medium of educational instruction “and the reasons are not far to seek.” This, however, did not mean the shutting out of English or other world languages. Presiding over the inauguration of the Federation of Private Schools, an organisation of some unrecognised English medium nursery and primary schools, the Minister observed that if power and culture were to be made universally available to the masses of the people, “their mother-tongue should be the medium of education at all levels.” The development of regional languages should be regarded as vital to the country’s progress and as an important step towards the improvement of quality in education, he said. The Minister explained that the State Government’s two-language formula was but an emphatic re-statement of the thesis that the study of English, besides the study of other subjects through one’s own mother tongue, was very important as it served in the acquisition of current knowledge in science and technology.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOV. 12, 1919.

Lightning Letter Sortes.

The post-office sorting machine is the latest ingenious invention adopted by the postal authorities in the United States. Seated in front of large packet of letters the post office clerk only has to press a button and the letters sort themselves! Let us suppose the apparatus is being used over here. The operator has a pile of letters in front of him for London, Liverpool, Manchester, Dublin, etc. He works on a sort of keyboard, on each key of which the name of a town is printed. Now, suppose the first letter is for Liverpool. He presses the key with that name on it, and the letter is seized by a little pincer, separated, lifted, and deposited in a little compartment reserved for all the Liverpool letters. All this with lightning rapidity. The operators hands works as quickly on the post-office sorting machine as those of an experienced clerk would on a typewriter. Up to now these machines have had only ninety keys; that is to say, they can only sort letters for ninety towns at a time. The constructors are however, about to perfect a model containing 296 keys. They are also confident of being able in the near future to apply this method of sorting to parcels. Will our G.P.O. kindly note?

FROM PAGE ONE

Sena denied more time, NCP’s turn now

“After receiving a letter of invitation from the Governor yesterday, we started consultations with the Congress and the NCP, which had in principle expressed support to us. We have informed the Governor that while we have the willingness, the duration given to us is less. The process needs 48 hours to complete but he has refused that time. But our claim still stays and we will continue our efforts to talk with sup-

port groups,” he said. The Shiv Sena delegation informed the Governor that it had an in-principle support of 162 MLAs, including those of the Congress and the NCP and 15 Independents. “We have the support of 160 legislators but could not produce letter of support from the Congress and NCP. We are confident of providing the numbers soon,” said Sena leader Anandrao Adsul.

IIP shrinks by 4.3% to lowest in 8 years

The consumer non-durables sector contracted by 0.4% compared with a growth of 4.1% over the same period.

‘Declining savings’ “The Indian economy is presently facing a structural growth slowdown originating from declining household savings rate, and low agricultural growth,” Mr. Pant said. “Low agricultural

growth is feeding into low agricultural and non-agricultural wage growth in rural areas, which is impacting rural demand adversely.”

India Ratings said it believes monetary authorities will continue to follow an accommodative monetary policy, and expects further rate cuts in the December 2019 monetary policy decision.

Seized antiquities left to face the elements

“Air pollution can also compound the problem with thick layers of dust and soot getting deposited over time in the outdoors, especially as the sculptures are near a car parking lot, emitting a lot of soot and particulate matter,” she added.

T. Satyamurthy, former Superintending Archaeologist of the ASI, said stone idols, pillars lose their features such as carving if they are exposed to sun and rain.

Acidity in rain “There will be acidity in the first few spells of rain and that acid will deposit over the stone. Stone is not made only of silica but also other minerals. These minerals will react to the acid and then stone idols will deteriorate fast,” he cautioned.

On wooded pieces, Dr. Sharada said wood deteriorates easily if left exposed. Alternate exposure to wet and dry conditions can lead to swelling.

Shrinkage and dryness lead to cracking and disfiguration and peeling off of painted layers especially on objects such as *vahanas*.

If wood becomes very waterlogged, it needs to be treated for drying out, with some methods such as bathing in ethanol and then in acetone and so on, she explained.

Delhi’s solution “The Archaeological Survey of India has opened an exclusive museum to display restituted and seized artefacts at Purana Quila in New Delhi. The Tamil Nadu government can do something similar for objects that cannot be immediately traced to temples,” said S. Vijaykumar, art enthusiast.

“The artefacts especially the bronzes need to be immediately assessed for potential bronze disease and remedial measures must be taken up. Further as per the submission by HR & CE Department, they have a list of temples with 1,450 stone and bronze icons reported missing from 1992. These seized idols can be distributed to those temples based on a clear list for continuance of daily pooja till the cases are eventually settled,” he suggested.



Manmohan on House panel on Finance

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has been nominated to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance in place of his party colleague Digvijaya Singh, who resigned from the committee to make way for him.

Mr. Digvijaya Singh has been nominated to the Standing Committee on Urban Development by the Chairman of the Upper House, according to a Rajya Sabha bulletin.

In August, Mr. Manmohan Singh was elected to the Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan. Initially, he was reluctant to join any panel, according to sources, but the party wanted his presence in one of the most important committees.

In his previous stint too (from September 2014 to May 2019) he was part of this committee.

Congress MLAs-elect stay put in resort

Leaders hold several rounds of meetings with them to discuss the situation and weigh the options

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

Amid high drama around the formation of a government in Maharashtra, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday briefed the Congress MLAs-elect staying at a luxury resort near here about the party’s stand and obtained their views on the latest developments. The Congress has said that it is in discussion with the Nationalist Congress Party.

Mr. Gehlot, accompanied by his Chhattisgarh counterpart, Bhupesh Baghel, reached the resort late in the evening and had a meeting for more than 30 minutes with the newly elected legislators. The MLAs were shifted to the resort on the Jaipur-Delhi National Highway, about 20 km from the city, on Friday and Saturday to thwart any “poaching attempts” during the current impasse.

The MLAs later left for Mr. Gehlot’s official residence in the Civil Lines, where a dinner



On the move: Congress MLAs-elect from Maharashtra being taken on a bus to the residence of Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday. ■ ROHIT JAIN PARAS

was hosted in honour of former President Pratibha Patil. State Medical and Health Minister Raghu Sharma, who accompanied the legislators, told presspersons outside the resort that everything was “very fine”.

According to the sources in Pradesh Congress Committee, several MLAs were willing to support a Shiv Sena-

led government. The leaders have held several rounds of meetings at the resort to discuss the situation and weigh the options since Saturday, but the MLAs were told that the final decision would be taken by the Congress high command.

Earlier in the day, senior party leaders left the resort to attend the Congress Work-

ing Committee’s meeting in Delhi. They included former Union Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde, former Chief Ministers Prithviraj Chavan and Ashok Chavan, Maharashtra Congress chief Bala-sahab Thorat and AICC general secretary Avinash Pande.

All the 44 MLAs were shifted to the Rajasthan resort in

Can court ask a secular state to construct a temple?

Ayodhya verdict raises several questions for jurists to answer

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Ayodhya judgment has raised several questions for jurists to answer. Prominent among these is whether the Supreme Court’s direction to the Central government to formulate a scheme and set up a trust to facilitate the construction of a temple on the disputed land would amount to a breach of the secular character of the state.

Can a secular state be ordered to facilitate the construction of a temple, which is an essential part of the Hindu belief? Does this not amount to a secular state fostering a particular religion?

Justice K. Chandru, former Madras High Court judge, referred to the nine-judge Bench judgment in the S.R. Bommai case of 1994 in this regard. “The Bommai decision clearly said the state should be divorced from religion,” he said.

The Bommai judgment said the concept of a secular state was essential in a democracy. “State is neither pro-particular religion nor anti-particular religion. It



stands aloof, in other words maintains neutrality in matters of religion and provides equal protection to all religions,” it observed.

‘No breach’ Eminent jurist Upendra Baxi, however, said there was no breach of constitutional secularism involved in the Centre being given the responsibility.

Agreeing with him, R. Venkata Rao, eminent constitutional expert and former Vice-Chancellor of National Law School India University, Bengaluru, said, “The inscription of the Supreme Court is *yato dharma tato jaya* [where there is dharma there is victory]. It is taken from the Bhagavad Gita. Now, it defies logic to say

Sanjay Raut undergoes angioplasty

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut underwent angioplasty at the Lilavati Hospital here on Monday. Two blocks in the heart had been detected. “We have implanted three stents... he is doing absolutely fine,” interventional cardiologist Dr. Ajit Menon said.

two phases on Friday and Saturday.

Over the past two days, they visited several tourist destinations in Jaipur and went to the famous Lord Brahma temple in Pushkar and the historic dargah in Ajmer. Some of the MLAs were reportedly accompanied by their family members.

Shiv Sena MP Sawant quits Modi Cabinet

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Shiv Sena MP Arvind Sawant resigned as the Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises on Monday.

“I have sent my resignation to the Honourable Prime Minister,” Mr. Sawant said at a press meet in New Delhi. “The BJP’s denial that there was 50:50 rotational chief minister-ship agreement between itself and the Shiv Sena sought to make a liar out of Shri. Uddhav Thackeray, which is not acceptable. I was sent to the Union Cabinet by the party, once the trust is not there, there was no point in continuing,” he said.

“When I have resigned, you can understand what it means,” Mr. Sawant said when asked if the Sena had quit the NDA. The Sena is expecting support from the NCP and the Congress to form the government in Maharashtra.

‘Allot land for mosque in acquired 67-acre area’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AYODHYA

The five acres of land to be allocated for building a mosque under the Supreme Court verdict in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute should be within the 67 acres of acquired land in Ayodhya, Iqbal Ansari, a main litigant in the case, and several other local Muslim leaders have demanded.

The Central government had acquired the land, including the disputed site, in 1991.

“If they want to give us the land, they must give us according to our convenience and only in that acquired land of 67 acres. Then we will take it. Otherwise we will reject the offer, as people are saying ‘Go out of *Chaudah Kos* and construct masjid there’.” “This is not fair,” Mr. Ansari said. Soon after the judgment, Mr. Ansari had said on Saturday that he would not file a review plea.

Maulana Jalal Ashraf, a local cleric, said Muslims can buy land on their own to build a mosque and are not dependent on the government for it.

Ayodhya verdict is disappointing: IUML

Party to decide future course of action

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOZHIKODE

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) on Monday said the Supreme Court verdict in the Ayodhya title dispute was “disappointing”.

The party, at its national Secretariat meeting held at Panakkad in Malappuram district of Kerala, decided to hold discussions with various Muslim organisations and like-minded secular organisations to decide the future course of action.

The special meeting chaired by the party’s State president, Panakkad Sayed Hyderali Shihab Thangal, appointed a committee led by the national president of the party, Khader Moideen, to hold these discussions.

‘Community pained’

Mr. Moideen said the members, after examining the verdict in detail, felt that the Muslim community was pained by it. But the party would honour the judgment of the Supreme Court, he said.

He also lauded the maturity of both communities to uphold peace and harmony in the country.

Briefing the media about the meeting, party national general secretary P.K. Kun-



Panakkad Sayed Hyderali Shihab Thangal, IUML Kerala president.

halikkutty, MP, said the Muslims felt disappointed by the verdict.

The Muslim Personal Law Board is yet to take a decision on filing a review petition.

The party said it would take into account all aspects of the judgment, including the possibility of extending support to the petitioner for moving a review petition.

E.T. Muhammed Basheer, MP, said the Supreme Court had found that the installation of idols and the demolition of mosque in Ayodhya were illegal and criminal offences.

But the entire disputed site was handed over to build the temple. Several contradictions existed in the verdict, Mr. Basheer said.

Won’t let BJP treat us in this manner, says Chirag Paswan

LJP president says party may go it alone in Jharkhand

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The Lok Janshakti Party, a key constituent of the NDA, is likely to go it alone in the Jharkhand Assembly election as the BJP is yet to respond to its demand for six seats. The LJP may contest 37 seats.

The LJP made public its dissatisfaction on a day when the BJP lost its oldest ally, the Shiv Sena.

“Yes, I wanted to contest in Jharkhand with the BJP. It has been over five weeks that I wrote letters to BJP president Amit Shah, working president J.P. Nadda and Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das, listing the six seats we want to contest. These six seats were the ones where the BJP had performed badly in the previous election,” Chirag Paswan, the newly appointed president of the LJP, told *The Hindu*. Mr. Paswan said he was willing to compromise and his party would have been ready to bring the number down to two or three.

The LJP acted after the BJP released its first list of 52 candidates on Sunday. Among these 52 seats are



This happens too often. In an alliance, it is necessary for them to give the allies clarity

CHIRAG PASWAN
LJP president

those demanded by the LJP, including Jarmundi, Panki and Latehar. In the 2014 Assembly election, the BJP had given the LJP a token seat, Sikaripara, where it did not even have a candidate. Finally, a BJP candidate fought on the LJP symbol.

‘Inconsequential seats’ “I got an indication from the BJP that this time they want to repeat what they did in 2014. They want to give us a

few inconsequential seats where we have no presence or even candidate. This time, the LJP is not ready for this kind of treatment,” Mr. Paswan said. The party’s State unit was also eager to go it alone, he said.

The LJP has not spoken to the BJP after it released the first list. On Saturday, Mr. Paswan met Om Mathur, the BJP’s in-charge for Jharkhand, but did not get any assurance.

“This happens too often. In an alliance, it is necessary for them to give the allies clarity. I have repeatedly told this to the BJP. If you delay your decision, it affects the performance of the alliance too. They are meeting out a similar treatment to the All Jharkhand Students Union Party (AJSUP),” Mr. Paswan said. The seat-sharing arrangement between the AJSUP and the BJP has not been announced yet.

Mr. Paswan lauded the Shiv Sena for walking out of its alliance with the BJP. “The Shiv Sena stood by whatever it said right from day one... It has the right to exit the NDA for its future,” he said.

‘Seshan redeemed the autonomy of EC’

‘Reminded people of power of voting’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In his six-year tenure as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in the 1990s, T.N. Seshan, who passed away in Chennai on Sunday, “redefined the very grammar of the electoral process”, fought against violence in polls and reminded citizens of the power of voting, the Election Commission of India (EC) said on Monday.

Seshan, a 1955-batch IAS officer, helmed the Election Commission from December 12, 1990 to December 11, 1996.

Poll grammar

“Shri Seshan redefined the very grammar of the electoral process. Holding the constitutional post of CEC, he enhanced the stature of the office by coming down heavily on electoral malpractices and dealing sternly even ruthlessly with violence and muscle power which were at all-time high when he took over,” the EC said in a condolence message.

The former CEC “redeemed the autonomy and authority” that the Constitution gave the EC and refused to act merely as a manager



T.N. Seshan was the 10th Chief Election Commissioner.

of monitoring of elections. He started to proactively rid elections of the use of money, liquor, muscle power and booth capturing, it noted.

Fight against corruption

“Shri Seshan was the right man, in the right place, at the right time. He became the symbol of a crusade against electoral corruption. He created an environment and consciousness whereby citizens felt that they were the main stakeholders in the elections,” it added.

The EC, including CEC Sunil Arora and Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa, held a condolence meeting here on Monday.



Day three
sees only
122 pilgrims

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

Only 122 pilgrims crossed through the newly built corridor to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan's Kartarpur on Monday, two days after the corridor was inaugurated.

Sources in the administration told *The Hindu* that confusion over requirement of passport after conflicting statements from Pakistan was one of the key reasons for the fewer than expected number of people visiting it.

The data from the Integrated Check Post (ICP) set-up at Dera Baba Nanak showed that while 148 applications were received, only 122 devotees visited the shrine on Monday.

An immigration official at the ICP said the passport and Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) were compulsory. "Neither Pakistan nor we [India] are stamping the passports but carrying passport is necessary besides the ETA," said the official requesting anonymity. He said the confusion over the passport was possibly a reason that so far a fewer number of people had come to visit.

The corridor connects the Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara with Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur district. Guru Nanak Dev had spent the last 18 years of his life in Kartarpur Sahib.

Another official said people were also facing technical problems while applying on the portal.

"Also many people have been coming here [Dera Baba Nanak] with their identification cards (Aadhaar) presuming that after paying the \$20 they can directly visit the shrine without realising that passport and registration process are compulsory. All this is causing confusion," he said.

Gurdaspur Deputy Commissioner Vipul Ujwal said, "We need to create a mass awareness drive. We have already set up help desks."

Will challenge cancellation
of OCI status: Aatish Taseer

'No govt. has questioned my possession of card in 20 years'

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Accusing the government of cancelling his Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) card "by Twitter", author Aatish Taseer says he plans to fight the government's decision.

"I have had some hesitations given the huge costs and the long delays in a legal battle. But so many people have reached out and told me that if I don't fight what the government has done, I would be letting them get away with it," he told *The Hindu* in an interview over the telephone from New York. "This may be bigger than me," he added.

After due process: govt. When asked, government officials said Mr. Taseer's case had followed "due process", and his request for a review had been dismissed by the "competent authority".

Mr. Taseer said he had sent the Union Home Ministry a detailed reply to its notice, both of which were accessed by *The Hindu*. The Ministry accused him of "concealment of material facts" and "false representation" when he applied for his original Person of Indian Origin (PIO) status in 2000, by not revealing that his bio-

Trains to run again in Valley

Services were stopped after the Centre decided to revoke J&K's special status

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Train services in Kashmir will resume on Tuesday, the Railway Ministry said here on Monday.

The services were stopped nearly three months ago, following the Union government's decision to withdraw the special status granted to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and divide the State into two Union Territories.

Safe operation

"After appropriate action and assurance by the GRP [Government Railway Police], J&K regarding safe operation of trains in Kashmir Valley between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., the Firozpur Division will commence a limited passenger service of two set of trains between Srinagar-Baramulla-Srinagar with effect from November 12," a Ministry official said.



Chugging back to normalcy: The Railways will start limited passenger services between Srinagar and Baramulla from Tuesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

The Ministry said that train no. 74619 will depart from Srinagar at 10.05 a.m. and arrive in Baramulla at 11.45 a.m., and train no.

74618 will depart from Baramulla at 11.55 a.m. and arrive in Srinagar at 1.40 p.m. Train No. 74637 will depart from Srinagar at 11.10

a.m. and arrive in Baramulla at 12.55 p.m., and train No. 74640 will depart from Baramulla at 1.05 p.m. and arrive in Srinagar at 2.45 p.m.

Article 370 created separatist mindset: govt.

Ahead of hearing, Home Ministry files affidavit in SC on 34 petitions challenging Centre's action

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The presence of Article 370 in the Constitution for over seven decades created a "separatist mindset" in the Kashmiri people, the Centre told the Supreme Court.

The 61-page counter-affidavit of the Union Home Ministry in the Supreme Court said Article 370 was "replaced" on August 5 to "fully integrate" the "erstwhile" State of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country.

A temporary provision like Article 370 was in the interest of neither the nation nor Jammu and Kashmir, the

government argued.

"The militants and separatist elements, with the support of foreign forces inimical to India, were taking advantage of the situation... the residents of the erstwhile State were denied benefits of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to all other citizens of the country," the government said.

The Ministry was replying to 34 separate petitions filed by persons from various walks of life. They have challenged the dilution of the special status under Article 370, which was the source of special rights and privileges



accorded to Kashmiris under Article 35A, and the subsequent bifurcation of the State into Union Territories.

A Constitution Bench led by Justice N.V. Ramana is

scheduled to start hearing the petitions this week.

The government said that Article 35A itself was ambiguous and a "serious obstacle" to the socio-economic development of J&K. "It prevented investments in the State, impacted job creation... the women of the erstwhile State were discriminated against if they chose to marry a non-permanent resident."

The decision to end the Article 370 regime would save lives in J&K, the affidavit said. "Since 1990 to till August 4, 2019, a total of 41,861 persons lost their lives in

Jammu and Kashmir police
stripped of 'prosecution' wing

The order has caused consternation among police officers

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

In the new Union Territory (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir, the police have been stripped of the "prosecution" wing.

Earlier, police officers could appear in magisterial courts as public prosecutors.

The arrangement stands quashed now.

The order has caused consternation among J&K police officers, who claim this was done to take away their powers, and a "middle ground" is being worked out.

On the directions of the Centre, a separate Directorate of Prosecution has been sanctioned by an order of the J&K administration on October 30 that will not include police officers.

Earlier, this wing was



Dilbag Singh

headed by an officer of the rank of Deputy Inspector-General.

The J&K police website said the wing supervised and dealt with "all the departmental litigation viz writs, appeals, civil suits, claim petitions, special leave petitions, contempt pleas, criminal prosecution, etc."

On November 6, a public

interest litigation (PIL) petition was filed before the Jammu Division Bench of the J&K High Court challenging the order.

Position in other parts

The J&K High Court has asked the Union Territory for a counter affidavit to be filed within four weeks. It also gave a direction to examine the position in other parts of the country to see if the process of appointing police officers as prosecutors existed anywhere else.

J&K Director-General of Police Dilbag Singh said the prosecution wing functioned under the Police Act, 1983. "A PIL has been filed in the J&K High Court... our officers had the mandate to appear in lower courts, we will continue to have a legal wing," he said.

Valley remains silent
on Ayodhya verdict

No reactions from Hurriyat, NC, PDP

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Known till recently for spontaneous statements from separatists and regional leaders and public protests, the Kashmir Valley has been silent on the Supreme Court verdict on the Ayodhya dispute that was delivered on Saturday.

Fida Iqbal, a retired Kashmir University Professor, was not surprised by the lack of any overt reaction to the verdict over the past three days.

"When the Babri Masjid was demolished on December 6, 1992, a shutdown was observed in Kashmir. But not on account of the demolition. Kashmir, on the call of the separatist Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, had then observed a bandh against the killing of human rights activist H.N. Wanchoo on December 5, 1992. Kashmir has mostly maintained a distance from the mainland Muslim issues. The trend continues," Mr. Iqbal said.

It is not only the street but even traditional political camps, including the separatist Hurriyat and the mainstream parties such as the National Conference (NC)



The people and political leaders have not reacted overtly to the verdict.

and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), reserved their reactions on the issue that has been part of mainstream political discourse close to 30 years and saw the BJP's surge to power in the 1990s.

Sense of fear

"What has befallen Kashmir on August 5 is of greater consequences than the Babri Masjid verdict. People are yet to react to that episode. People are living with a deep sense of fear due to the clampdown on the civil society and political leadership. Silence is not normal," said Imtiyaz Khan, a political science lecturer in Srinagar.

Capacity-building programme
for Afghan diplomats begins

Two-week intensive course is part of India-China initiative

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Indian and Chinese officials on Monday began a course to train diplomats from Afghanistan at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) here run by the External Affairs Ministry. The two-week intensive programme, launched in the presence of Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong, is designed to give the visiting diplomats exposure to Indian diplomatic practices and traditions.

Inaugurating the event, J.S. Mukul, Dean of the Foreign Service Institute, said 179 Afghan diplomats had been trained at the FSI till date, the largest number of diplomats to be trained from



The training was launched in the presence of Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong.

any country at the institute. It had emerged as an important centre of training of diplomats in South Asia.

Monday's event had an added significance as it was attended by Xu Jian, Presi-

dent of the China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU), and Wu Xiaoping, Director, Foreign Affairs Office of the CFAU. Apart from discussions on the training module for the Afghan students, Mr. Mukul held talks with Dr. Xu on the ways to strengthen intra-BRICS diplomatic training as both the FSI and the CFAU were parties to a BRICS-level MoU to train diplomats.

The joint training of Afghan diplomats is part of the outcome of the Wuhan Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Accordingly, the first joint training programme was held from October 15 to 26 in 2018.



How can the government deny me my link to India for a father I didn't even know?

logical father, former Governor of Pakistan's Punjab province Salman Taseer, had British and Pakistani citizenship.

"My parents were never married, and their relationship lasted just about until I was born, which was why his name was even on my birth certificate," Mr. Taseer said when asked about the discrepancy.

"My mother raised me entirely by herself, in India. My father was never involved in my childhood, or in financial maintenance...most importantly, he was never in my life. I wrote about all of this in several books and articles, so my behaviour was not one of concealment. How

can the government deny me my link to India for a father I didn't even know," asked Mr. Taseer, who first met his father when he was 21 years old and had already received his PIO card.

In 2016, according to government procedures that mandated converting his PIO card to an OCI card, Mr. Taseer then procured his OCI card.

"No government in these 20 years has questioned my possession of the card until now," he continued, accusing the government of only sending the notice three months after he had written an article criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a charge the government has categorically denied.

Consulate strictures

When asked what worried him most about the cancellation of the OCI status, Mr. Taseer said the Indian Consulate in New York had made it clear that he must submit his card within the next two weeks, and then would be blacklisted and barred from applying for a visa to India ever again.

"India is my reality. It's what I write about. And I definitely feel targeted personally," he said.

Morales' exit knocks Bolivia into a vacuum

Shops and properties attacked, gangs roam streets; Opposition Senator offers to be interim President

REUTERS
LA PAZ

Bolivian President Evo Morales said on Sunday he was resigning to ease violence that has gripped the South American nation since a disputed election, but he stoked fears of more unrest by saying he was the victim of a “coup”.

The departure of Bolivia's first indigenous President, one of a wave of leftists who dominated Latin America's politics at the start of the century, came when the military abandoned him amid sustained unrest over a disputed October 20 re-election.

Vice President ilvaro Garc a L nera also resigned. Foes celebrated his departure but also moved swiftly to find a temporary successor. With Mr. Morales' deputy and many allies in government gone with him, Senate second Vice-President Jeanine A  ez said she was willing to take control.

“If I have the support of



those who carried out this movement for freedom and democracy, I will take on the challenge, only to do what's necessary to call transparent elections,” said Senator A  ez, who is constitutionally next in line to assume the presidency.

Looting, fighting and roadblocks convulsed Bolivia on Monday after Mr. Morales' resignation created a power vacuum. Overnight, gangs roamed the highland capital and other cities, businesses were attacked and

properties were set on fire. Schools and shops were largely closed, while public transport halted, roads were blocked, and rival political groups clashed on the streets.

“I am afraid of what will happen, everything is a mess in the city. There are fights between neighbours,” said Patricia Paredes, a 35-year-old secretary in La Paz.

Mr. Morales, 60, flew out of La Paz and was believed to still be in Bolivia – but his whereabouts were unclear.



People celebrating the resignation of Bolivian President Evo Morales (top) in La Paz on Monday. • AFP

Some of Mr. Morales' leftist allies in Latin America decried the turn of events as a “coup,” including Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Argentine President-elect Alberto Fernandez.

Asylum offer
Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said his country would offer Mr. Morales asylum if he sought it.

Nicaragua's government also came to Mr. Morales' defence, issuing a statement that decried the situation as

a coup and a display of “fascist practices.”

Bolivia under Mr. Morales had one of the region's strongest economic growth rates and its poverty rate was cut in half, though his determination to cling to power and seek a fourth term alienated many allies, even among indigenous communities.

General Williams Kaliman, the head of Bolivia's armed forces, on Sunday said the military had asked Mr. Morales to step down to help restore peace and stability after weeks of protests over the vote.

The Organization of American States exhorted Bolivian lawmakers to meet urgently to resolve the crisis.

At a press conference, Mr. Morales' election rival Carlos Mesa asked the police and civilian groups to guarantee the arrival of legislators across the political spectrum to the central Plaza Murillo to formalise Mr. Morales' resignation and push forward new elections.

Crisis en Espa  a

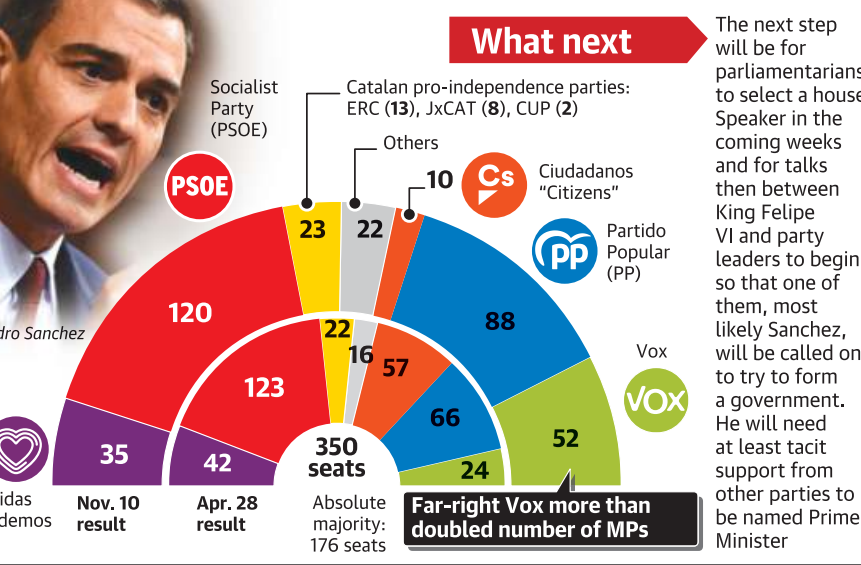
The ruling Socialist party of Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez won Sunday's election — Spain's second this year and fourth since 2015 — but once again failed to secure a majority in a vote which saw the far-right Vox party vault into third place

1 The Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) captured 120 seats — three fewer than in April election. It is still far from the absolute majority of 176 needed to form a government alone

2 The conservative People's Party (PP), which alternated in government with the Socialists for decades after Spain emerged from General Francisco Franco's dictatorship in the 1970s, recovered from a disappointing result in April to take 88 seats

3 Far-right party Vox — with its hard line against Catalan separatism, immigration and feminism — surged into third place. It won 52 seats, up from 24 in April

4 Acting Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has ruled out forming a broad coalition with the People's Party



Socialists win Spain election, but fall short of majority mark

Far-right Vox party soars, becomes third biggest party

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Spain's Socialist premier Pedro Sanchez emerged as winner but weakened from Sunday's repeat election that propelled the far-right Vox into third place in a result set to deepen years of political turmoil.

The ballot, the fourth in as many years, failed to end months of parliamentary deadlock following an inconclusive April poll.

The Socialist leader, who had called the vote to streng-

then his hand, ended up losing three seats in a poll that weakened his potential allies and strengthened the right.

The final results showed the Socialists taking 120 of the parliament's 350 seats (28% of the votes) while Vox secured 52 (15%) — more than double its mandates in the outgoing Assembly.

Vox only made its parliamentary debut in April when it won 24 mandates in the biggest showing by the far-right since Spain returned to democracy after

dictator Francisco Franco's death in 1975.

In second place was the right-wing Popular Party, which took 88 mandates (nearly 21%), up from 66 in the previous poll.

“The results will make forming a government more difficult due to the parliament's deep fragmentation and the rise of Vox,” Teneo analyst Antonio Barroso said, warning that the divisions “were so problematic” that it was impossible to rule out yet another election.

Man set on fire in day of Hong Kong fury

Police shot a masked protester, aggravating the protests that paralysed the city

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

A police officer shot a masked protester in an incident shown live on Facebook and a man was set on fire on Monday during one of the most violent days of clashes in Hong Kong since pro-democracy unrest erupted more than five months ago.

Protesters, who had already begun a city-wide day of action aimed at paralysing the international financial hub, reacted to the morning shooting in which a person was wounded, by rampaging



Uproar on the streets: People running for cover as police fire tear gas in Hong Kong on Monday • REUTERS

through train stations, barricading streets and vandalising shops throughout the day.

A masked assailant also doused a man with a flammable liquid and set him ablaze during an argument,

with the horrifying scene captured on mobile phones and posted online. Police said a protester carried out that attack and accused black-clad “rioters” of an array of other violent acts, including throwing a petrol bomb inside a train carriage.

Later, Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam held a press conference to denounce the violence and vow it would not lead to any government concessions. “I am making this statement clear and loud here, that will not happen,” Ms. Lam said.

‘Sharif still on no-fly list, his health at risk’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAHORE

The danger to Nawaz Sharif's health is increasing due to a delay in his travel abroad for treatment, his party has said, as the ailing former Pakistan Prime Minister awaits removal of his name from the no-fly list.

The 69-year-old PML-N chief agreed on Friday to go to the U.K. for the treatment. However, the government could not remove Mr. Sharif's name from the no-fly list .

Sri Lanka elections: hopes on Gotabaya run high in the South

People here see in him a strong leader, who ended war, built infrastructure

MEERA SRINIVASAN
MONARAGALA

“I brought my child along just so he can see our leader, even if from a distance,” said Sepalika Harshani, 29, carrying her toddler under an umbrella.

She was among thousands who flocked to Wellaway town in Sri Lanka's southern Monaragala district on Saturday afternoon, braving the rain. They had come for the rally of Gotabaya Rajapaksa, candidate from their favourite political clan, in the final lap of the November 16 presidential poll campaign.

“I would be very happy if someone like him becomes President of this country. He got us freedom,” Ms. Harshani said, referring to the war's end in 2009 under the Raja-

paksa administration. Mr. Gotabaya, brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa was Defence Secretary, directing the military that defeated the rebel Tigers.

Nineteen-year-old A.P.D. Seuvandi, too, was there to catch a glimpse of the leader she has decided to vote for next weekend.

“They saved the country,” the first-time voter said. She was barely nine when the war ended but has grown up listening to a popular story of its end; one quite different from what Tamils of the north and east would tell. “He will make the country safe again, develop it and improve education standards for us.” For many Sri Lankans, Safety has become a major concern after the East-

er Sunday terror attacks in April.

In the island's southern hinterland, almost every local, including those supporting Mr. Gotabaya's main opponent Sajith Premadasa, assert that “a majority here will vote for Gotabaya.” Past election results are proof enough for that sentiment. Even in 2015, an election that former President Mahinda Rajapaksa lost, most of the southern districts gave him over 60% of the vote share.

Diverse reasons

The reasons pulling voters towards Mr. Gotabaya this time go beyond war “victory”. Some of them are looking for respite from the everyday economic strain they associate with the incumbent government, or are utterly disenchanted with it, like daily-waged labourer D.M. Jayaratne. “This government



Cheering their hero: Supporters of Gotabaya Rajapaksa at a campaign rally in Neluwa village in Galle. • AP/FILE

came to power saying they would catch corrupt thieves. Nothing happened in the last five years. Instead, they robbed the Central Bank,” he said, referring to the “bond scam”, in which a former head of the apex bank was accused of manipulating bond auctions in 2015, causing a loss of millions. The scandal was a big blow to the government that rose to pow-

er months earlier on the promise of “good governance”.

Election vs. real issues

Further, Mr. Jayaratne sees Mr. Gotabaya as a strong leader who will not “give into Tamil demands” for wartime accountability and self-rule.

Many voters, across Monaragala [Uva Province] and the neighbouring Hambanto-

ta [Southern Province] district, began their poll analysis with a reading of the two main candidates. But invariably, they spoke about pressing local concerns.

They pointed to land hunger, in the wake of mega development projects in Hambantota — a Chinese-built port and an adjoining industrial zone proposed over 15,000 acres. They are worried about loss of livelihoods and falling incomes. “There are no jobs here,” was a common refrain.

Both, the Rajapaksas and Mr. Premadasa are closely associated with the southern districts — either by familial links, or their parliamentary seats.

The constant fear of further marginalisation is making some voters consider a shift towards Mr. Premadasa. While it may not dull the Rajapaksa sheen yet, it points to

Mr. Premadasa's growing base, especially in the rural areas.

For K. L. Pradeepa Priyadarshini, Mr. Premadasa's candidacy brings back the hope she felt during his father Ranasinghe Premadasa's rule in the early 1990s. “Hearing about his poverty alleviation programmes on radio, I felt here is a national leader who has finally spoken about our need for food and water,” said the Hambantota-based farmer.

Not who, but what

Supporters of Mr. Gotabaya are nostalgic about the past. Mahinda Rajapaksa ended the war, built roads and expanded rural electricity. But those drawn to Mr. Premadasa are looking at what he might do in future.

Some voters are tired of thinking about who to vote for. They'd rather think

about *what* to vote for.

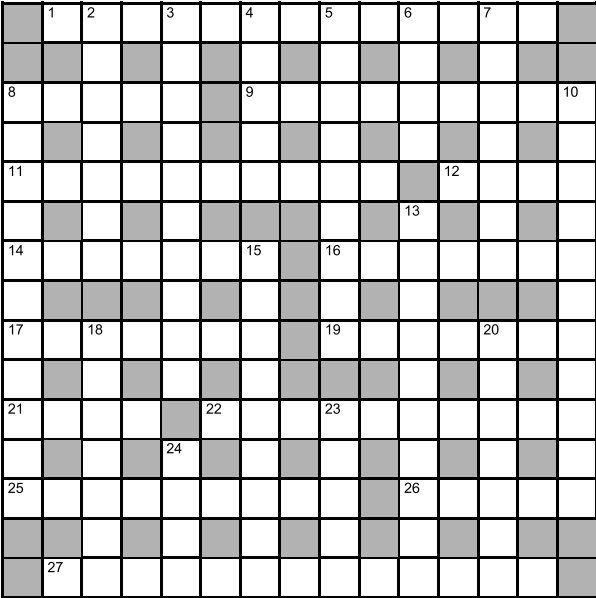
A group of women farmers in Monaragala district are basing their decision on candidates' manifestos.

“We are looking at what they have said about women, farmers, national unity, rural debt, especially microfinance-induced debt, and education policy,” said S.A. Shanathi. They also challenged the idea of “national security” that has become a chief election issue, in the wake of the Easter bombings. To ensure national security, “we don't need a strong leader. we just need sound policies.”

“Whose security are they talking about?” asked P.G. Podinona. “Seeing the number of security guards around some candidates, it's obvious who feels most insecure in this country. Whereas some of us don't even have a dog to guard us.”

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12778

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



ACROSS

- 1 Within certain limitations, like a shot putter aims to throw? (2,3,2,2,4)
- 8 Nearly get rid of revolutionary abducting leader of opposing faction (5)
- 9 Ultimate provocation when rogue starts to break rule (4,5)

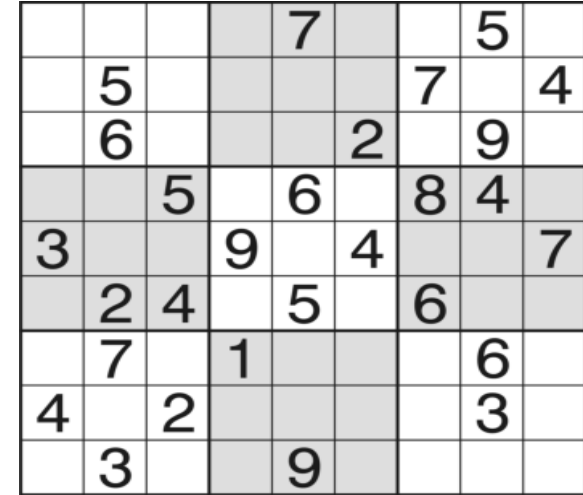
DOWN

- 2 Character smuggling heroin and ecstasy close to Cochín dock (7)

(set by Dr. X)

- 3 Sees renegade perhaps crossing border (10)
- 4 To whom Muslims pray in central Lahore (5)
- 5 Individual in pub caught with ecstasy in mouth (9)
- 6 Split with husband after mounting depression (4)
- 7 Former British nobleman losing head in row (7)
- 8 Blow up many after a large programme in desert (2,9)
- 10 Where Brexit future is being decided by formulating its new terms (11)
- 13 Agree about fixing mess in evaluation (10)
- 15 Helped to bring charges against director over slur (9)
- 18 Charge finally gone after corrosion breaks pin (7)
- 20 Hush! It's problematic to restrain primarily zestful dog (4,3)
- 23 Lot catching a little unsettling respiratory infection (5)
- 24 Champion wins money and crown (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12777

ADJUSTED AGENTS
PUXLEDITAO
TOXICEQUIVOCAL
ETUUGREHIT
STAIRCASE TROUT
TPIINSHIHU
LOSTIT STEEPED
OFSBYGOE
FREEBIE GRAZED
FLORANTH
PASTA ON AVERAGE
ICNNTNASAR
SHACKLING WOTAN
TNECEAEI
ESTATE GREYARE

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Guru Nanak's message of love, peace, equality

On the occasion of the 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji, it is pertinent to recall His teachings of love, peace, equality and brotherhood.

Guru Nanak says God is omnipresent (*sarav viapak*) in all creations and visible everywhere to the spiritually awakened. He stresses that God must be seen from “the inward eye,” or the “heart” of a human being; devotees must meditate to progress towards enlightenment. He emphasises the revelation through meditation, as its rigorous application leads to communication between God and human beings.

Maya, defined as illusion or “unreality,” is one of the core deviations from the pursuit of God and salvation: people are distracted from devotion by worldly attractions which give only elusive satisfaction. However, Guru Nanak emphasises Maya is not a reference to the unreality of the world, but of its values.

In Sikhism, the influences of ego, anger, greed, attachment, and lust — known as the Five Evils — are believed to be pernicious. The fate of people vulnerable to the Five Evils is separation from God, and the situation may be remedied only through intensive devotion.

Guru Nanak has also asked His followers to empower women. Not only did He emphasise on His ideals, He Himself followed them vigorously.

When Guru Nanak left for His heavenly abode, nine other Gurus embraced His teachings and worked to spread His message.

Surjit Singh Flora

MARKET WATCH

	11-11-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	40345	0.05
US Dollar	71.47	-0.26
Gold	38678	0.30
Brent oil	62.72	1.86

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	387.90	1.75
Asian Paints	1773.95	-20.90
Axis Bank	733.70	8.20
Bajaj Auto	3237.35	-8.20
Bajaj Finserv	8903.30	84.45
Bajaj Finance	4169.05	9.60
Bharti Airtel	371.50	2.35
BPCL	517.60	14.85
Britannia Ind.	3119.55	-38.45
Cipla	454.85	-7.65
Coal India	209.85	0.60
Dr Reddys Lab	2815.75	-6.35
Eicher Motors	21376.90	-312.75
GAIL (India)	130.35	3.30
Grasim Ind.	767.10	-6.90
HCL Tech	1145.95	-4.15
HDFC	2234.55	1.35
HDFC Bank	1264.75	9.15
Hero MotoCorp	2594.00	-52.95
Hindalco	200.15	-3.70
Hind Unilever	2081.35	-5.05
ICICI Bank	496.80	7.35
Indusind Bank	1445.05	22.25
Bharti Infratel	220.55	2.25
Infosys	704.40	-3.75
Indian OilCorp	135.60	1.55
ITC	259.45	-1.05
JSW Steel	251.90	1.90
Kotak Bank	1616.90	16.65
L&T	1417.00	-6.00
M&M	575.00	-5.00
Maruti Suzuki	7137.30	-63.25
Nestle India Ltd.	14108.45	-362.85
NTPC	118.25	0.85
ONGC	139.10	0.80
PowerGrid Corp	191.75	0.10
Reliance Ind.	1427.80	-17.70
State Bank	318.25	2.25
Sun Pharma	421.45	-0.65
Tata Motors	172.00	2.95
Tata Steel	401.45	3.50
TCS	2100.95	-29.00
Tech Mahindra	770.40	-0.95
Titan	1155.70	-1.05
UltraTech Cement	4137.05	-10.20
UPL	548.85	-7.00
Vedanta	152.70	-2.80
Wipro	256.45	0.05
YES Bank	73.00	4.05
Zee Entertainment	305.40	17.90

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on November 11

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.26	71.58
Euro	78.63	78.99
British Pound	91.78	92.20
Japanese Yen (100)	65.41	65.71
Chinese Yuan	10.16	10.21
Swiss Franc	71.68	72.01
Singapore Dollar	52.35	52.59
Canadian Dollar	53.87	54.11
Malaysian Ringgit	17.19	17.27

Source:Indian Bank

Australia still hopes India will join RCEP

India's entry into the trade bloc is dependent on the 'India-China' element, says ex-Australian secretary

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Australia still hopes to see India join the 15-nation ASEAN led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership that the government decided to quit last Monday, said former Australian secretary for foreign affairs and trade Peter Varghese, who is the author of the paper on Australia's economic strategy for India, adding he hoped that India's decision was not final.

"I don't think this is the final definitive Indian answer to RCEP, the door has been very deliberately left wide open for India and I genuinely hope that at some point, sooner rather than later, India will decide to walk through the door," Mr. Varghese told *The Hindu* on the sidelines of an event to release a draft report for India's economic strategy for Australia, organised by the Confederation of Indian In-



I don't think this is the final definitive Indian answer to RCEP. The door has been very deliberately left wide open for India and I genuinely hope that at some point, sooner rather than later, India will decide to walk through the door

PETER VARGHESE, former Australian secretary for foreign affairs and trade

dustry (CII). Mr. Varghese said ultimately, India's entry into RCEP was dependent on the 'India-China' element, as India's main concerns over flooding of imports in the market, rules of origin, etc are essentially problems with China.

In the past week, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal had said that the government could reconsider its decision to leave the RCEP grouping – seen as the world's biggest trade bloc,

and due to be signed in February 2020 – if the terms of the grouping for India were amended. Mr. Goyal also said that the focus for the moment was on other Free Trade Agreements with the European Union, U.S., existing negotiations with Australia, and a review of FTAs with ASEAN, Japan and Korea.

Speaking at the same event, MEA Additional Secretary for Economic Diplomacy P. Harish denied that India's decision to leave

RCEP would make other negotiations like the one with Australia more difficult.

"India has a trade surplus with both the EU and the U.S. and has a trade deficit with all the countries in RCEP. Our effort is to enhance our economic engagement with Australia in all aspects including in goods, services and investment in all sectors."

When asked about any movement in the India-Australia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), that has made little progress in the last five years, Mr. Varghese said that according to the strategy paper, the "India-Australia FTA or CECA should be on hold until we know where India comes out finally on RCEP."

Focus on 10 areas

"I think it must be remembered that the India-Austra-

lia trade engagement is not contingent on any bilateral or multilateral FTA, and we must keep working on ways to grow opportunities between both countries," he added, however, advocating for a focus on ten specific sectors including education, tourism, natural resources like coal imports and the Adani investment in Australia's biggest coal mine.

He also expressed the hope that Australian retirement funds would now begin to invest in Indian markets.

However, he said he was disappointed by the lack of response to his report's suggestions from big business in Australia.

"At the business level I wish I could report an enthusiastic response to the report. The big end of town doesn't seem to be taking India into account to the extent to which I think it should be," Mr. Varghese said.



Festive season sales were better than last year; we wish this continues in Nov.-Dec., says SIAM president Rajan Wadhwa

Passenger vehicle sales pick up after 11 months

New models spur utility vehicles: SIAM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Putting an end to 11 months of consecutive decline, wholesale passenger vehicle (PV) sales in the country saw a marginal increase in October, mainly on the back of some improvement in consumer sentiment during the festive season.

Sales of domestic passenger vehicles rose 0.28% to 2,85,027 units in October 2019, compared with 2,84,223 units in the year-ago month, according to data from Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers.

However, overall wholesale vehicle sales continued to decline, falling 12.76% to 21,76,136 units. All segments of the industry saw a decline during October, barring utility vehicles, passenger carriers and quadricycles.

Car sales drop 6.3%

In the passenger vehicle (PV) segment, car sales were down 6.34% to 1,73,649 units, van sales fell 35% to 1,06,53 units, while utility vehicles were up 22.22% to 1,00,725 units. The utility vehicle sales were driven by demand for new models, including Kia Motor's Seltos, MG Motor's Hector, Hyundai Motor's Venue.

The signs of reversal in sentiment has raised the industry's hope for better sales in the next couple of months. "Sales in the festive season have been better than last year, which is a good sign. We wish this continues in November and December as well," SIAM president Rajan Wadhwa said.

He added that better availability of finance, lower lending rates and new model launches helped lift sentiment. "We also expect pre-buying to take off in January-March next year."

As per SIAM data, total two-wheeler sales last month declined 14.43% to 17,57,264 units from a year ago. While motorcycle sales declined 15.88% to 11,16,970 units, scooter sales fell 9.83% to 5,80,120 units.

Sales of commercial vehicles, seen as a reflection of the economy, dipped 23.31% to 66,773 units. While sales of medium and heavy commercial vehicles dropped over 50% to 15,334 units, light commercial vehicle sales fell 8.66% to 51,439.

Mr. Wadhwa said that recent government measures, such as the package for the real estate industry, may help raise demand for commercial vehicles.

India Cements Q2 profit rises on cost reduction

Profit up despite sales volume in A.P. and Telangana halving to 1 lakh tonnes per month

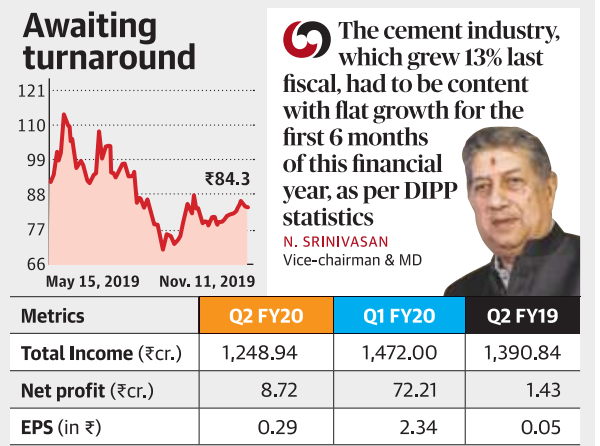
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Leading cement manufacturer The India Cements Ltd. (ICL) has posted a standalone net profit of ₹8.72 crore for the second quarter ended September 2019, due to improved realisation on sale of cement and reduction in cost of power and material, among others.

This compares with a lower ₹1.43 crore net a year ago but a significantly higher ₹72.21 crore for the quarter ended June this year.

In the recently closed quarter, the company's capacity utilisation declined to 68% from 77%. Overall, cement and clinker volume for the quarter declined to 26.67 lakh tonnes from 30.77 lakh tonnes.

India Cements' total in-



come declined to ₹1,284.94 crore from ₹1,390.84 crore due to a sharp fall in demand in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

"The cement market was languishing a bit in the

South. There was a steep fall in demand in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh," said N. Srinivasan, vice-chairman and MD, The India Cements Ltd.

He added that together, Andhra Pradesh and Telan-

gana used to witness about 2.1 lakh tonnes per month in sales but that the figure had recently plunged to 1 lakh tonnes per month.

"We are waiting for the markets to revive and will sell in places other than A.P. and Telangana. Over the next five months, we will optimise the volume to make up for what we have lost. We will get into aggressive sales when the prices are good," he said.

Asked about the next few quarters, he said ICL expected Q3 to be better than Q2, while expecting a better fourth quarter due to expected pick-up in demand for infrastructure projects.

Mr. Srinivasan said that despite the tough market conditions influenced by lower demand, ICL was able

to post a profit before tax (PBT) of ₹113 crore for the first six months of the current fiscal against ₹28.12 crore for the corresponding year-ago period.

For FY19, India Cements recorded PBT of ₹93.42 crore.

Input costs to stay muted

He added that he expected input costs to remain tempered due to the anticipated softening of fuel prices and the company's planned reduction of manpower.

As of October 2019, ICL had a non-management workforce of about 1,200, which was expected to halve by 2022 as per an understanding with the unions, he said. He added that the company planned to focus on multi-skilling of its staff.

Hindalco net falls 33% to ₹974 cr.

Revenue declines 9%; yet to see domestic orders, says Pai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Hindalco Industries reported a 33% fall in its second quarter consolidated net profit to ₹974 crore due to fall in aluminium prices.

The fall in profit was reported on a 9% decline in revenue to ₹29,657 crore.

Satish Pai, MD, Hindalco Industries, said, "Stronger operational efficiencies in upstream business and our rising share of value-added products have led to a stronger and derisked business model. Globally, consumer demand for sustainable packaging options and automotive closed-loop recycling systems continues to grow. A special call out to Novelis which has once again turned in a record performance."

When asked about falling



Satish Pai

demand in the Indian business, Mr. Pai said, "We have seen lots of announcements so far but we are not yet seeing orders coming. Post-Diwali, we are yet to see demand picking up. November to March will be a crucial time for us."

The company's EBITDA for the quarter fell by 8% to ₹3,918 crore.

The company is in talks

with two prospective European buyers to sign a definitive agreement for sale of Aleris Corp.'s Belgium plant to get approval for the \$2.6 billion deal.

"Novelis received conditional approval for the Aleris acquisition from the European Union, and a clear path forward for approval in the U.S. The company expects to close the transaction by January 21, 2020, the outside date under the merger agreement," the company said in a statement.

Hindalco's gross consolidated debt stood at ₹54,154 crore and net debt at 40,710 crore. When asked about the debt reduction, Mr. Pai said, "At current LME prices, we won't repay any debt. We will continue with our capex of ₹2,000 crore."

Policy on credit ratings for MSMEs in the offing

Move to help investors, says Gadkari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The government is in the process of formulating a policy on credit ratings for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to help investors and other players take informed decision, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Monday.

Addressing the International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge Foundation here, Mr. Gadkari said MSMEs contributed 49% of India's total exports. "We are going to start digital data based credit rating system... we are going to make the rating of the industry... it can give information about the MSMEs. That can be more easy for taking any decision because rating is now very important. So, now we are formulating the policy and we are going to make some scheme for them and that will be very useful," Mr.

Gadkari, the Minister for MSMEs said. The Minister also said that the government was using technology and innovations to boost agricultural and tribal sectors through new technologies and innovations.

He gave examples of honey and oranges being used in various products, which had resulted in increased production and market value of these products.

The government was working on backward integration to develop rural industry and create employment, he said, adding that the employment potential was high.

At the same time, innovations and skill development in the MSME industry were being carried out with the collaboration of the German government to make Indian products more competitive in the international market, he said.

Plastics exports fall 17% in Sept.

Raw materials see year-on-year decline of 33%: Plexconcil

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

India's plastic exports for September 2019 declined by 16.8% to \$649 million from \$780 million in September 2018, as per data with the Plastics Export Promotion Council (Plexconcil).

The cumulative value of plastics export from India during April 2019 to September 2019 saw a negative growth of 5.9% to \$4,324 million as against \$4,594 million during the same period last year.

In September 2019, plastic raw materials witnessed year-on-year decline of 33.0%; followed by optical items (-19.2%); stationery/office/school supply (-9.7%); and moulded and extruded goods (-8.2%). Product categories that reported positive growth include human hair products (+29.5%); other plastic items (+12.1%); plastic sheet, film, plates etc (+3.5%); and packaging materials (+2.7%), the data said.



Cumulative value of plastics export between April and September 2019 saw a negative growth of 5.9%. ■ H. VIBHU

Within plastics raw materials, exports of linear low-density polyethylene were down 64.5% y-o-y to \$20.4 million in September 2019, due to lower sales to China, Indonesia and Vietnam.

Exports of Polyethylene terephthalate, having a viscosity number of 78 ml/g or higher, fell 35.6% year-on-year to \$55.5 million in September 2019 due to lower sales to Uruguay and Algeria. India's exports of Polypropylene witnessed a negative growth of 36.9% year-on-year to \$36.7 million

in September 2019 due to lower sales to Vietnam, Italy and Nepal. Even exports of Polyethylene having a specific gravity of 0.94 or more was down 37.6% y-o-y to \$29.8 million in September 2019 due to lower sales to China. Among value-added plastics products, export of optical items from India was lower due to a decline in export of optical fibers, optical fibre bundles and cables, down 32.4% y-o-y to \$16.8 million in September 2019 to countries like France and Russian Federation.



Sajjan Jindal

Sajjan Jindal repays ₹342 cr. for pledged shares

Promoters repay ₹2,700 cr. in 2 months

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Sajjan Jindal, promoter of JSW Steel and JSW Energy, has paid ₹342 crore to release the pledged shares of the steel and energy firms in the group. On Friday, the industrialist had ₹1.26 crore of pledged shares of JSW Steel and ₹6.98 crore pledged shares of JSW Energy released.

With this, JSW Group promoters have got released about ₹2,700 crore of pledged shares of various group companies in three tranches in the last two months.

Last month, Mr. Jindal had got ₹1,200 crore worth of pledged shares released. In September, he had repaid ₹1,150 crore of loans taken against pledged shares of group companies. JSW Steel shares rose 0.74% to close at ₹251.85 in a near-flat Mumbai market on Monday,



Sajjan Jindal

while JSW Energy shares declined 3.39% to close at ₹74.05.

Rating revised

India Ratings has reaffirmed its long-term issuer rating of 'IND AA' for the non-convertible debentures programme of JSW Steel. However, the agency revised its outlook for the firm's long-term rating to 'negative' from 'stable' due to a fall in per-tonne margins and its impact on the firm's credit profile in the current fiscal.

NMDC Q2 net rises over 9% to ₹691.94 cr.

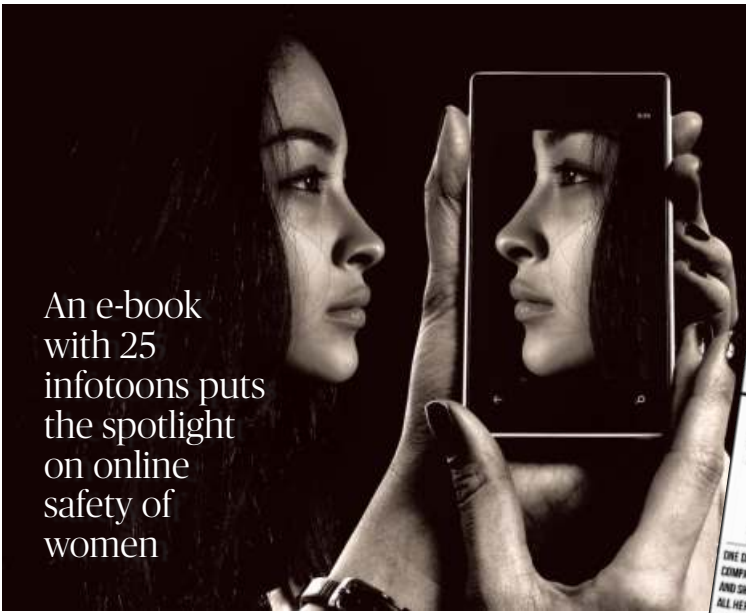
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Public sector miner NMDC has posted a consolidated net profit of ₹691.94 crore for the quarter ended September, an increase of 9.40% from the ₹632.46 crore registered in the year earlier period.

The increase came amid a decline in revenue from operations to ₹2241.76 crore (₹2,437.92 crore) and total income declining to ₹2,369.39 crore (₹2,569.05 crore).

On a sequential basis, the net profit, however, declined. The company had posted a net profit of ₹1,171.56 crore during the quarter ended June.

The net profit, on a standalone basis, increased 10.51% to ₹703.27 crore (₹636.37 crore). The company said it had provided ₹112.06 crore towards Expected Credit Loss (ECL) during the quarter.



An e-book with 25 infotoons puts the spotlight on online safety of women

Are you cybersafe, girl?

K JESHI

Why are girls vulnerable on dating websites? An infotoon on the e-booklet *Cyber Safe Girl – Beti Ko Bachao, Cyber Crime Se* (save your daughter from cyber crimes) tries to answer that question. The author of the e-booklet that puts the spotlight on online safety of girls using graphic images, Dr. Ananth Prabhu G, a cyber security expert, created the content along with entrepreneur and social activist Vivek Shetty, and under the guidance of IPS officers Sanjay Sahay, S Murugan and Ropa D. “Each infotoon has a set of nine sketches that describe situations

where women lay themselves open to exploitation. For example, when they leave their number with the vendor for recharge, anyone in the shop can gain access to the number and start harassing them,” says Ananth, who is the cyber security trainer at the Karnataka Police Academy. “There is an increase in the number of online crimes against women, especially in the last three years. We picked these 25 common crimes based on the calls from women for help. A quantum of the calls are from women whose profiles have been hacked or their pictures morphed. The experience is harrowing, but it is an avoidable one,” says Ananth.

#DELHIMOVES

GAGAN DHILLON KULLAR

There is slight nip in the air. The dewdrops glistening on the turf are smothered under the football as it rolls out on the field. There’s a pause. Sonam Taneja, 32, is waiting for her 50-year-old teammate to throw in the football. This is a common site at a commercially run AstroTurf field in Vasant Kunj. Every Saturday morning, women of all ages get together to learn football. Each game accommodates about 12 to 15 people who are coached by a licensed professional on the drills and the intricacies of one of the most popular games in the world.

Sonam, a lawyer and food safety policy professional, who was looking to spice up her fitness routine started this initiative. The aim was to learn a new skill and have some fun along the way. She first reached out to her circle on WhatsApp. “It was heart-warming to know that I wasn’t the only one looking to play. At our first game 10 women turned up,” she says. Arranging a game was easy for Sonam since her husband runs Hudle, an app that lets you curate sports events and book venues. Today, with four games in, the group functions the same way, except now it’s open to the public (look for beginners’ football coaching for women). There are no restrictions on age as long as you are over 16 years old. The amount payable per person is calculated on the basis of number of people playing. Usually it is about ₹400-500. This includes



PLAYING THE FIELD

Join this group of female footballers every Saturday for a great start to the weekend

the cost of the coach, venue booking and equipment. Each session starts with a warm-up followed by drills. The teams then play



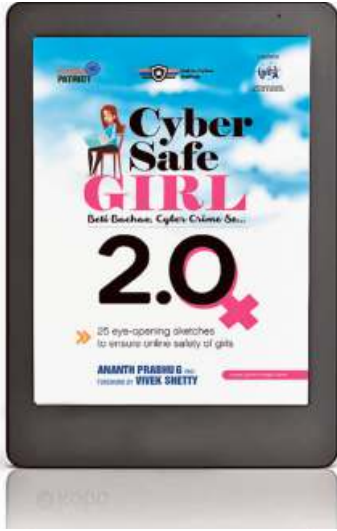
Stay safe online (below) A panel from the e-booklet, (right) Ananth ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Info you can use

- Log on to cybersafegirl.com to download the free e-booklet.
- While there, you can also enrol for an e-learning programme called ‘cyber safe campus’.
- Once you go through a module, you have to take a 30-minute online test to get a certificate that states that you are aware of staying safe from any kind of cyber crime.
- The certificate issued by Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, is valid for two years.
- The e-booklet has completed over 1.5 lakh downloads.
- They have also distributed 10,000 printed copies of the booklet at various educational institutions.

The e-booklet in the first version carried 15 infotoons. “We added 10 more infotoons in the second version and there are plans to add more in version three,” he says. There is a section called “Bonus tips” that tells one how to remain safe against cyber crimes. “We have added 39 various sections of the IT Act and the Indian Penal Code (IPC) under which the 25 crimes can be tried. There is also information on how to prevent or deal with situations where one is harassed with pornographic content.” Ananth says awareness has to begin at schools. “Most schools don’t have cyber security in their syllabus. There is the Information Technology Act, but no one bothers to learn it. One often ends up doing crimes without being aware of their actions online,” he adds. The infotoons highlight cyber stalking, camera hacking, trolling, SMS spoofing and call spoofing where anyone can become a soft target. He gives an example of how an elderly woman was spoofed to believe that her son is in trouble. “She received a call from a stranger, but from her son’s number who is working in Dubai. He told her to deposit a few lakhs of



against each other before cooling down with some stretches. “Initially players who sign up for the game are hesitant because they have never played the game before. Once they realise that everyone’s a beginner, it gets easier. People playing have come to learn. We encourage each other through the game,” says Sonam. She hopes that this women’s football group grows so that one day they can play tournaments. “I joined this group to get active again. I am a social person and group activities energize me. The fact that I get to meet



WATCH OUT

- Profile hacking:** A stalker takes over your email or social networking sites and manipulates it
- Picture morphing:** A person’s face is morphed on to a body image to intimidate her
- Online games:** Can be addictive, especially for those who have low self-esteem and/or clinical depression. People may fall prey to dangerous ones like ‘Blue Whale’, which are harmful them
- Camera hacking:** Phones with no camera guard can be exploited for such criminal activities
- Key logger:** A malicious programme that can collect all login details and other sensitive information

money in a bank account of a friend to free her son from the customs officials. She transferred the money without suspicion.” In some situations, it is one’s family reputation or social status that is at stake. “There is something called deep fakes. With the help of high-end filters, photo editors, printers, scanners, apps and other software anyone can pick your video, use your input to manipulate or blackmail. This is an advanced level of picture morphing which can have dire consequences,” he explains. “Avoid posting close-up selfies. Instead, post a low-resolution group photo. Be wary of suspicious e-mails or requests that ask you to share your photos.” He adds, “The Internet can be a ‘terrible master’ or an ‘excellent slave’. You have to be aware to choose wisely.”

PRODUCTS

Delhi spirit



Smoke Vodka is a spirit manufactured one batch at a time, going through a five-step distillation process. The vodkas are made with locally sourced grain. The Smoke Classic Vodka has a subtle creamy coconut flavour, balanced with citrus and chilly notes, says the 25-year-old NV Group, the Indian grain distillers who craft it. Their first flavoured variant is the Aniseed Vodka, which has a light licorice with sweet creamy vanilla notes, with an aftertaste of aniseed. The company operates six distilleries, in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Goa, and Maharashtra.

Available at select outlets in Delhi-NCR; details at smokevodka.in; upwards of ₹2,000

HOME

Picasso-inspired lights

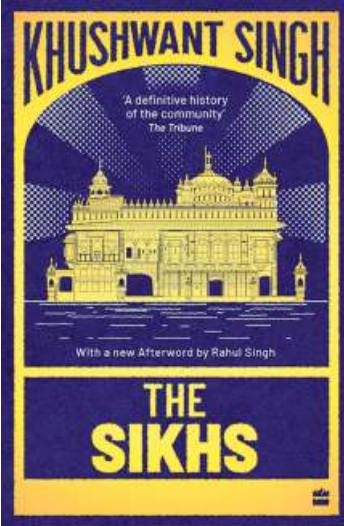


With motifs borrowed from ‘The Kitchen’ by Pablo Picasso, this collection of lights called Pabloligero is functional art. The line is designed by Reshmi Dey, the founder of Glass Sutra. Expect smokey greys, browns, and metals in three different colour finishes.

Available at Glass Sutra Studio, 19 Ambavatta Green Road, Chhatrapur Farms, DLF Farms; upwards of ₹36,000

PAGES

Kushwant Singh encore



Marking the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, Harper Collins is bringing back Kushwant Singh’s 2006 book titled *The Sikhs*, which traces the history of the followers of one of the world’s youngest religions. Starting with the life and times of Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the book talks about the nine gurus of Sikhism, and the significance of the Guru Granth

Sahib. Further, it traverses the socio-cultural role of Sikhism and its followers: the setting up of the Singh Sabha, the following of social reform, the Akali movement for Sikh shrines, the Ghadr rebellion and its relationship with Marxism, all summed up with an eye on the future of the Sikh religion.

Pre-order on Flipkart.com; releases on November 25th; ₹599

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



ART

Mixed-media
An exhibition of drawings and paintings titled Soliloquy by artist Bijoy Kumar Basak is on display at Triveni Gallery. Through this self-curated show, Bijoy uses art as a manifestation of his inner thoughts. In this show, the artist has constructed his visual narrative through textures, fragile lines and subdued colours in mixed media.
VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House
TIME: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



FOOD

Sri Lankan special
The eatery Pluck has organised a 10-day Sri Lankan cuisine festival curated by chefs Manula Gayan and Sajid Wimarshana from Movenpick Hotel Colombo. On till 16th November, it is an amalgamation of mild and spicy flavours depicting the food culture of this island nation. The menu offers Parippu, Dhal Curry, Koththu, and many other iconic dishes.
VENUE: Pullman New Delhi Aerocity
TIME: 7 p.m. onwards



GIG

Alt rock
The Piano Man Jazz Club will host Amartya Ghosh live tonight. Delhi-based singer-songwriter Ghosh came from Jamshedpur in 2013, started his career with lyric writing before becoming a solo artist in 2015. He had released his debut EP ‘Broken Compass’, a few years ago. Ghosh’s set will include musical genres spanning indie rock and alternative.
VENUE: B 6-7/22 Safdarjung Enclave Market
TIME: 9 p.m. - 11:55 p.m.



FOOD

Special salads
Lub Lub Lebanese, an informal Lebanese dining room at Gurugram has recently added a line of nutritious Mediterranean veg and non-veg salads to its menu. The salads are made of fresh, organic vegetables sourced straight from various farms. The variety of salads on offer include Chicken Salad, Fattoush Salad, Tabouleh Salad, to name a few.
VENUE: 16, Time Center, Golf Course Road
TIME: 11 a.m. - 12 midnight



THEATRE

Hindi play
Delhi-based theatre group Black Pearl Arts will stage Munshi Dil Lakhnavi’s play Laila Majnu this evening, in association with Parivartan Samookh. Directed by Zafar Sanjari, this Hindi play tells the classical epic love story of Laila and Majnu, now in Parsi style. Actor Ayaz Khan will play Majnu in this production.
VENUE: Shri Ram Centre for Performing Arts, 4, Safdar Hashmi Marg, Mandi House
TIME: 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Indian kids learning to code have come up with apps to help people with hearing impairment, to foster positive habits in children, to start a social platform exclusive to bookworms, and more



Get set, code Kids use online platforms like WhiteHat Jr (below) to come up with constructive apps
• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Contrary to the conjecture that coding is a complex subject, WhiteHat Jr's Karan says children pick it up easily. These online classes simplify coding with block-based programming. Unlike traditional coding, like Python, the programming commands are represented in graphical blocks. The children, hence, aren't required to know the entire syntax of the programming language.

Meanwhile, Venkat from Balangir is on the verge of completing an app that attempts to foster positive habits in children. He explains, a child,

Child's play

Facebook advertisement in March for WhiteHat Jr's coding classes, he signed him up for it.

"It was difficult in the beginning," says Venkat, who was introduced to concepts such as commands, sequences and code structure. "A few weeks later, I started liking it."

Platform to create

Karan Bajaj, the founder of WhiteHat Jr, says there are over 100 apps already on Google's Play Store created by students who use his platform.

Karan, the former CEO of Discovery India Network, started WhiteHat Jr in November last year to enable young people to create, rather than merely consume, technology. The live online coding classes help children aged six to 14 to design games, animations and apps. The startup claims to have over 500 teachers, conducting 1,000-plus online classes every day.

Mumbai's Hiranya Rajani, 7, has developed an application to help those with hearing impairment. When a user enters a word, the app shows the finger spelling for each letter in the word. "My brother always has to use a wheelchair. I wanted to help people like him in a way," she says. But Hiranya was intrigued by sign language. Hence, when she took up coding, she knew what she wanted to create.

Vihaan Khera, 9, from Gurugram, is a bookworm. His app Book Barter, which is soon to be released on Play Store, is a platform for meeting fellow readers and exchanging books. "It will provide access to more books to all. Exchanging the books will not only save money, but will also save the environment," he says.

WhiteHat Jr apart, there are avenues aplenty for young people in India to learn coding. CodingZen, based in New Delhi, offers courses for children, aged five to 14, and adults. Noida-based Qin1 offers spoken English classes apart from coding. Many of the teachers these companies employ are from reputed institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology.

Ain't too complex

With digital addiction fast becoming a common problem, should a parent exercise caution before enrolling their child in these online classes?

"Of course, too much of anything is bad," says Qin1's co-founder Ishan Gupta. "We live, however, in an age where children are exposed to technology. The question is: how to make it constructive." He reckons children benefit from interacting with teachers in the online classes. So far, he adds, Qin1 has had over 2,000 enrolments. In the next five years, he wants to reach over a million children in India.

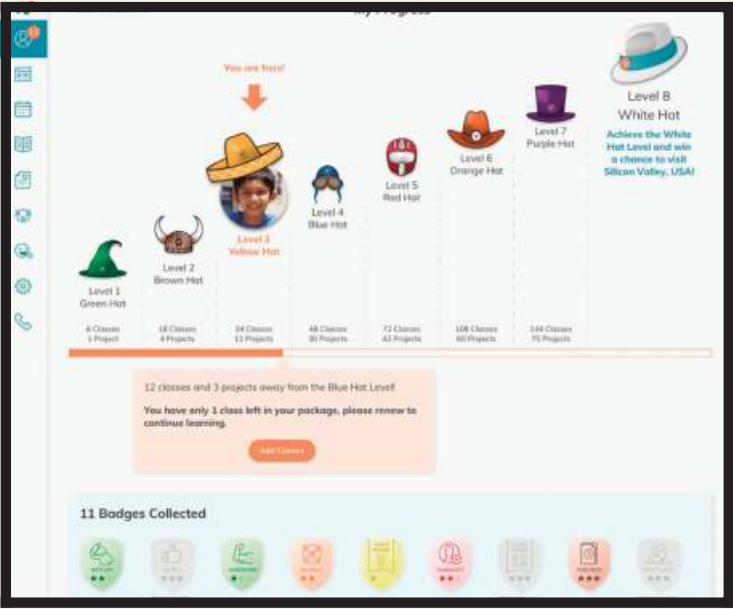
Bunny trouble

In October, Ubisoft Montreal, the developers of some of the all-time best action-adventure video games — like Prince of Persia, Assassin's Creed, Far Cry and Watch Dogs — released Rabbids Coding, a free puzzle game designed to teach coding to children. It has a bunch of crazy bunnies, 'rabbids', taking over the International Space Station. The player has to solve increasingly difficult coding problems to launch the rabbits into space before they destroy everything. With Rabbids Coding, Ubisoft joined a growing list of gaming studios promoting STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education. "If you're old enough to read, you're old enough to play Rabbids Coding," Daniel O'Connor, Ubisoft's corporate community manager wrote in a blog post. "It's Ubisoft's hope to see the game being picked up in classrooms and educational environments around the globe."

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

While returning from a trip, early one morning, with his wife and five-year-old son in Balangir last April, Kuldeep Pattnaik's car fractionally missed a speeding lorry. "Anything could have happened that day," he says. One of the first things that came to his mind, then, was his son's education. "I am from a small district in Odisha. What I had learnt in Odiya is what my son was learning at school in English. Nothing much has changed. And, that moment I realised that I wanted to give my son the best platform to learn."

Kuldeep, a digital entrepreneur, decided to home-school his son, Venkat Raman. He had an inkling that Venkat would engage with software. So when he chanced upon a



POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



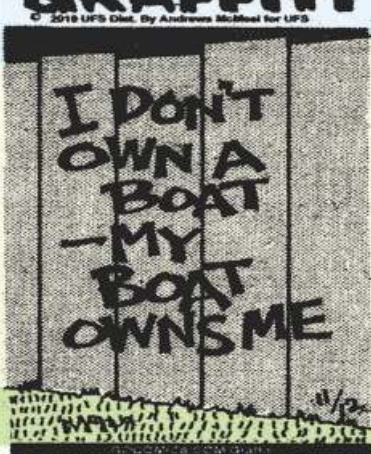
PEANUTS



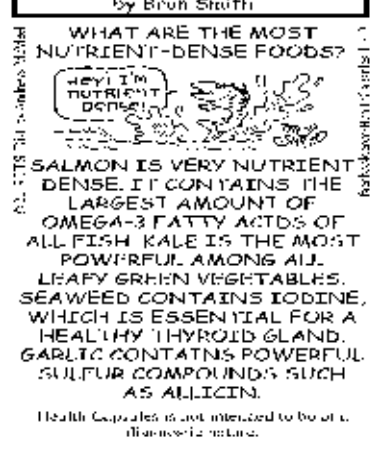
CALVIN AND HOBBS



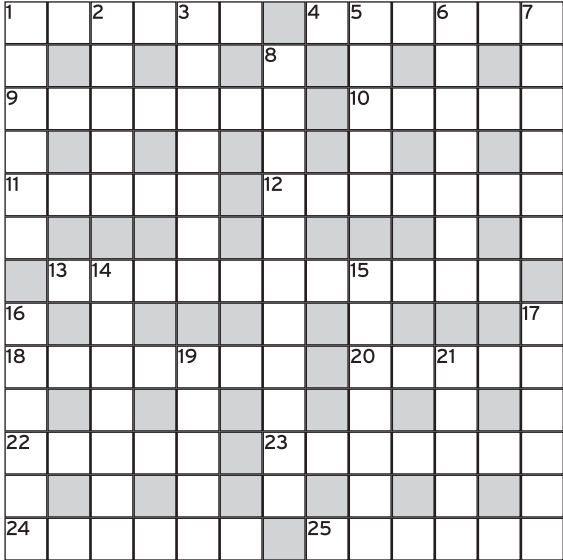
GRAFFITI



HEALTH CAPSULES



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13222



- Across
- 1 College finance officer (6)
 - 4 Saggy (6)
 - 9 Mark made under a 'c' (7)
 - 10 Rubbish — underwear (5)
 - 11 Stratum (5)
 - 12 Diamond shape (7)
 - 13 Whatever happens (4,4,3)

- 18 Brief break (7)
 - 20 Condition added to something already agreed (5)
 - 22 Confused (2,3)
 - 23 Feed (7)
 - 24 Solution (6)
 - 25 Insincerely emotional — like cheddar? (6)
- Down
- 1 Bend out of shape

- (6) 2 Rosy (5)
- 3 Free (2,5)
- 5 Highest capital city in South America (2,3)
- 6 Source of great wealth (7)
- 7 Votes in favour (6)
- 8 Take charge in making a decision (4,3,4)
- 14 Process of unconscious assimilation (7)
- 15 Via (7)
- 16 Layers (6)
- 17 In a sly manner (6)
- 19 Speak (5)
- 21 Chauffeur — force (5)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated November 13, 2019.
Solution No. 13221



A series of gains as Team India seeks T20 blueprint

Shreyas, Chahar and Dube underline the quality of talent available for the Men in Blue

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
NAGPUR

India finished the series on a high, saving its most resilient performance for the third and final T20. The most gratifying aspect of Sunday's win was that its principal architects were two bowlers with only eight previous T20 internationals between them. Deepak Chahar and Shivam Dube belied their inexperience, hauling India out of a trough on an evening when the dew made life difficult for bowlers.

Smart operator
The emergence of Chahar, who was player of the match and series, following his record-breaking spell of six for seven at the VCA Stadium, is a major positive for India. Used primarily in the PowerPlay by CSK, where he made his name in T20 cricket as a swing bowler, Chahar showed on Sunday that he was a smart, versatile operator. He bowled only one over in the PowerPlay, when he took two wickets, and was brought back at a stage when the ball was wet and India was under the cosh. "Uparwala karaata hain (God makes it happen)," he said, rather modestly, at the presentation. "You don't think you will ever take six for seven in a T20. Usually I




Way to go! India rallied from an initial setback to run out deserving winner of the series. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

bowl with the new ball. But Rohit *bhai* said he would make me bowl the crucial overs today, whenever the team needed me. I'm quite happy that responsibility was given to me." Chahar was, by a distance, the most economical of India's bowlers over the three matches, going at 5.41 runs an over. He now presents Virat Kohli a reliable pace-bowling option alongside Jasprit Bumrah and – fitness per-

mitting – Bhuvneshwar Kumar, leading into next year's T20 World Cup. Dube, whose numbers in domestic T20 contained nothing to suggest he was a match-winning bowler, was impressive too, performing when it counted. He did not exactly shine with the bat in his two innings but that is less of a worry. For now, Dube would seem to be the best understudy to Hardik Pandya, a

player for whom India has no direct replacement. India's spinners were understandably not at their best on Sunday, but Yuzvendra Chahal and Washington Sundar made a mark in the two previous fixtures. Chahal, who was omitted for the T20Is against South Africa and West Indies, served a proper reminder (if one was needed) of his abilities. Sundar was impressive yet again in the PowerPlay

overs although he will come up against teams stacked with power-hitters at the top, an area where Bangladesh was thoroughly deficient. K.L. Rahul's innings on Sunday came at what looks like a critical juncture in his career. He is a batsman capable of scoring big runs across formats; it is important that he rediscovers his touch and confidence. Shreyas Iyer, meanwhile, earned a reprieve on 0 be-



Top performers
Bangladesh's Mohammad Naim top-scored in the series with 143 runs at an average of 47.66 and Indian pacer Deepak Chahar was the leading wicket-taker with eight scalps including a hat-trick

Most runs						
Player	Mat	Runs	HS	Ave	50	4s/6s
Mohammad Naim	3	143	81	47.66	1	17/3
Shreyas Iyer	3	108	62	54.00	1	7/8
Rohit Sharma	3	96	85	32.00	1	8/6
Shikhar Dhawan	3	91	41	30.33	0	11/1
K.L. Rahul	3	75	52	37.50	1	9/0

Most wickets						
Player	Mat	Wkts	BBI	Ave	Econ	SR
Deepak Chahar	3	8	6/7	7.00	5.41	7.70
Aminul Islam	3	4	2/22	20.00	8.00	15.00
Shaful Islam	3	4	2/32	22.75	9.10	15.00
Yuzvendra Chahal	3	4	2/28	23.75	7.91	18.00
Shivam Dube	3	3	3/30	17.00	7.84	13.00

fore tearing the bowling apart. "I decided that if it is in my zone, I will not control myself," he said of his unfettered hitting. His knock made the kind of impact India has needed from a No. 4 in limited-overs cricket for some time now. After scoring two significant half-centuries in the West Indies ODIs (albeit at 5), Shreyas now has the opportunity to nail down a berth in the middle-order in white-

ball cricket. **Four for him** "It has been a really important last few series for me, to set the benchmark at the No. 4 position, which all of us are competing for at the moment," he said. "They (team management) have given me the message 'You'll be there at No. 4. Even if Kohli and Rohit get out, we need someone to finish the game and bat till the end.'"

Hope makes it 3-0 for WI

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LUCKNOW

Opener Shai Hope struck an unbeaten century as West Indies beat Afghanistan by five wickets in the third ODI to complete a 3-0 sweep on Monday. Hope made 109 and built crucial partnerships, including an unbeaten 71-run stand with Roston Chase (42 not out) to anchor West Indies' chase of 250 with eight balls to spare. Paceman Keemo Paul returned figures of 3/44 in Afghanistan's 249 for seven. **The scores:** Afghanistan 249/7 in 50 overs (Hazratullah Zazai 50, Asghar Afghan 86, Najibullah Zadran 30, Mohammad Nabi 50 n.o., Keemo Paul 3/44) lost to West Indies 253/5 in 48.4 overs (Shai Hope 109 n.o., Brandon King 39, Kieron Pollard 32, Roston Chase 42 n.o.).

Ghosal eases past Serme

SPORTS BUREAU
DOHA

Saurav Ghosal put up a superb performance to get past seasoned Frenchman Lucas Serme 11-8, 11-5, 11-5 and enter the pre-quarter-final of the PSA World men's squash championship here on Sunday. The 10th-seeded Ghosal will face the top seed Mohammed Elshorbagy of Egypt next.

'Fielding is a controllable skill'

S. DINAKAR
CHENNAI

Asked on qualities needed for close catching in Tests, R. Sridhar was quick with his answer to *The Hindu* on Monday. "Hand-eye coordination, anticipation, awareness, reaction, reflexes, and concentration." For shorter formats, you needed, "speed, agility, strength, and power." Factors such as being quick on the turn, fluid pick-up-and-throw and presence of mind near the ropes are essential, according to the Indian fielding coach. However, Sridhar, who has been influential in lifting the standards of Indian fielding, said: "The one element that connects fielding in all formats is technique. Fielding is a controllable skill, you got to develop the right mind-set." Talking about the Indian close-in catching for Tests, Sridhar said, "we had Mayank Agarwal and Hanuma Vihari at silly point and short-leg against the West Indies. Then Mayank and Rohit Sharma did the job against South Africa." He was particularly pleased with Mayank's attitude. "His intensity is very good. He is quick, has a good technique, and doesn't have the fear of getting hit." Avoiding getting hit in these positions was also an art, said Sridhar. "If the batsman plays the cut, you jump high at silly point because the cut is usually hit



Safe hands: R. Sridhar is happy with the work of close-in fielders like Rohit, Pujara and Mayank. ■ FILE PHOTO: RAJEEV BHATT

hard into the ground. The sweep shot can be very dangerous for the fielder at short-leg. He has to make himself as small as possible, shrink." Turning his attention to the slip cordon for Tests – so crucial because of India's potent pace attack – Sridhar said, "we have Cheteshwar Pujara at first slip, Rohit, who has great hands, at second, and Virat Kohli at third, the ball flies hard there and we need someone with Virat's reflexes. And Ajinkya Rahane has been outstanding at gully." The composition of the Indian team – it often plays five batsmen and a wicketkeeper-batsman plus five bowlers – deprived the team of an extra close-in fielder around the bat, he felt. Explaining this, Sridhar said: "This leaves us with only five batsmen. So we can

have three slips, a gully and just one man at either short-leg or silly point. I am not in favour of bowlers fielding in these positions. It's dangerous and they can get hurt." Coming to the volatile shorter formats of explosive speed, Sridhar was pleased with Manish Pandey. "He is a brilliant fielder, rather underrated. I would say he is only slightly behind Ravindra Jadeja, the best all-round fielder in the world, and Kohli, a sensational athlete." **Pat for Shreyas** Among the newcomers, Shreyas Iyer had caught Sridhar's attention with his mobility. "Even the pacemen are excellent fielders now, just look at Umesh Yadav's ground coverage and throw." Sridhar's next challenge is the pink ball. "It will have its own dynamics." The fielding coach is on the ball.

Deepti, Shafali and Smriti star in India's 10-wkt. win

Windies women fall to 0-2 in five-match series

INDIA IN WI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GROS ISLET

Teenager Shafali Verma scored her second consecutive half-century after off-spinner Deepti Sharma starred with the ball as India Women registered a 10-wicket win over the West Indies in the second T20 International here on Sunday. The 15-year-old Shafali scored a 69 off 35 balls and, along with Smriti Mandhana (30), powered India to a 2-0 lead in the five-match series. Shafali, who overtook Sachin Tendulkar to become the youngest Indian cricketer to score an international half-century, smashed 10 fours and two sixes. Earlier, the Indian bowlers, led by Deepti, who registered career-best figures of four for 10, managed to restrict the West Indies to 103 for seven in the stipulated 20 overs. Opting to bat, the West Indies openers struggled to get going. Pacer Shikha Pandey drew first blood for India when she dismissed Stacy-Ann King (7) in the fourth over. Shemaine Campbelle soon followed after Radha Yadav (1/20) had her stumped for a duck. Opener Hayley Mathews



Player-of-the-Match: Deepti Sharma returned career-best figures of four for 10 to restrict the West Indies. ■ FILE PHOTO

(23) and Chedean Nation (32) tried to resurrect the West Indies innings but could only manage a 32-run stand before pacer Pooja Vastrakar (1/23) dismissed the former. West Indies was unable to get any kind of momentum going as wickets kept tumbling. Deepti accounted for four wickets in the last four overs. Smriti, who had also smashed a half-century in the series-opener, played second fiddle to Shafali in guiding the team home. The 23-

year-old's innings was laced with four fours. West Indies captain Anisa Mohammed had no answer to the Indian duo and used seven bowlers, including herself, with no success. The third T20I will be played at Providence Stadium in Guyana on November 14. **The scores:** West Indies 103/7 in 20 overs (Chedean Nation 32, Deepti Sharma 4/10) lost to India 104/0 in 10.3 overs (Shafali Verma 69 n.o., Smriti Mandhana 30 n.o.).

Bengaluru Open back, Chennai misses out

Expect quality field: tournament director

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

After missing its end-of-the-season slot in 2019, the ATP Bengaluru Open Challenger tournament will return to the calendar in 2020 and will be played from February 10 to 16 at the KSLTA courts here. The Bengaluru Open will take the slot previously held by the Chennai Open Challenger (\$50,000) over the past two years. It has been learnt that Chennai will not host a Challenger tournament in 2020. The Challenger 125 category competition, boasting of a prize purse of \$162,000, will follow India's only ATP Tour level

■ The Challenger 125 category competition boasts of a prize purse of \$162,000 tournament, the Tata Open Maharashtra in Pune (February 3 to 8). The organisers' hope is that the timing will ensure the participation of a sizeable number of top-100 players alongside the cream of Indian talent. "I thank the Government of Karnataka for the unflinching support to this event in the recent editions," said Sunil Yajaman, the tournament director. "On the competition front, I expect a quality field."

Thiem gives Federer a reality check

Six-time champion at risk of crashing out early; Tsitsipas starts well

ATP FINALS

REUTERS
LONDON

Roger Federer said he had no more margin for error if he wanted to avoid an early exit at the ATP Finals after losing his opening group match to Dominic Thiem on Sunday. The 38-year-old Swiss, bidding for his seventh title at the event but his first since 2011, struggled to handle Thiem's aggressive game as he went down 7-5, 7-5. Only once in 16 previous appearances has Federer failed to survive the group phase, in 2008, and to avoid a repeat he will have to beat Italian Matteo Berrettini on Tuesday and most probably Novak Djokovic on Thursday. Djokovic, aiming to claw back the year-end number one ranking from Rafael Nadal, had destroyed debutant



Winning strategy: Thiem's aggressive game paid dividends against Federer. ■ AFP

Berrettini 6-2, 6-1 in the day's opening singles match at the O2 Arena. Thiem put constant pressure on Federer and broke at 5-5 in each set to claim his third win over the Swiss this year. "My forecast, it's a normal tournament from here

on forward," said the 20-time Grand Slam champion Federer, beaten by Djokovic in an epic Wimbledon final in July. "I've got to recover, I've got make sure I play better than today." In the first match-up in Group Andre Agassi, Stefa-

nos Tsitsipas took out the higher-seeded Daniil Medvedev 7-6(5), 6-4. **The results: Group Bjorn Borg:** Dominic Thiem bt Roger Federer 7-5, 7-5. **Group Andre Agassi:** Stefanos Tsitsipas bt Daniil Medvedev 7-6(5), 6-4.

IOA rejects draft National Sports Code

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India will incur the International Olympic Committee's wrath and may even be suspended if it goes ahead with administrative reforms suggested in the draft National Sports Code 2017, the Indian Olympic Association has warned, rejecting the proposed document completely. **Surprise** The IOA also expressed surprise with the Government's move to seek feedback on the draft after Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, on October 11, announced the formation of a committee to look into the contentious provisions such as age and tenure cap on officials, which are being opposed by National Sports Federations. Despite the announce-

Bangladesh, India arrive for first Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
INDORE

The India and Bangladesh cricket teams arrived in Indore on Monday for the first Test scheduled to start on November 14. The two squads reached the Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport by a special plane from Nagpur, where they played the third and final T20 International on Sunday, and then headed for their respective hotels, according to a Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association (MPCA) official. There is much that India has gained from this series. Rohit Sharma put it well at the presentation. "We can try a lot of things before we get on the flight to Australia," he said. "But if we keep performing the way we did today, it's going to be a big headache for Virat and the selectors."

Juventus wins but Ronaldo miffed

REUTERS
TURIN

Juventus stayed top of Serie A with a 1-0 win over AC Milan on Sunday after Cristiano Ronaldo was substituted for the second game in a row and walked straight down the tunnel, clearly unhappy at the decision. Paulo Dybala scored the only goal in the 77th minute after replacing Ronaldo in the 55th, the Portugal captain's earliest substitution since he joined Juve at the start of last season. Despite producing a lacklustre display, Ronaldo gave coach Maurizio Sarri a dirty look, muttered something under his breath and walked straight down the tunnel. Ronaldo was also replaced during Wednesday's Champions League match at Lokomotiv Moscow when he again looked unhappy at the decision. Juventus, chasing a ninth successive title, moved to 32 points, one point ahead of Inter Milan. **The results:** **La Liga:** Getafe 0 drew with Osasuna 0; Real Betis 1 (Loren 45) lost to Sevilla 2 (Ocampos 13, De Jong 55). **Serie A:** Parma 2 (Sprocati 68, Cornelius 90+3) bt Roma 0; Juventus 1 (Dybala 77) bt AC Milan 0. **Bundesliga:** Freiburg 1 (Petersen 77) bt Eintracht Frankfurt 0.

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Six (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
ATP Finals: Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

IN BRIEF



Jokic does it again in the nick of time

LOS ANGELES
Nikola Jokic nailed his second consecutive game-winning basket as Denver Nuggets outlasted Minnesota Timberwolves 100-98 in overtime in the NBA on Sunday. Jokic drained a 15-foot jump shot with three seconds left.

The results: New York Knicks 87 lost to Cleveland Cavaliers 108; LA Lakers 104 lost to Toronto Raptors 113; Orlando Magic 102 lost to Indiana Pacers 109; Philadelphia 76ers 114 bt Charlotte Hornets 106; Portland Trail Blazers 124 bt Atlanta Hawks 113; Phoenix Suns 138 bt Brooklyn Nets 112; Oklahoma City Thunder 119 lost to Milwaukee Bucks 121; Minnesota Timberwolves 98 lost to Denver Nuggets 100.



Gill set for Rally of Australia this weekend

NEW DELHI
Gaurav Gill will be back on familiar territory as he returns to the Rally of Australia, the final round of the prestigious FIA World Rally Championship this weekend. The driver donning JK Racing colours, with Glenn Macneall as his co-driver, had made his debut as a registered driver in the Rally of Turkey.

Holland and Mexico in last four

VITORIA (BRAZIL)
The Netherlands and Mexico made the semifinals of the FIFA U-17 World Cup in contrasting style on Sunday. While the European side hammered Paraguay 4-1, Mexico edged past South Korea 1-0.
The results: The Netherlands 4 (Hoever, Hansen, Braaf, Unuvar) bt Paraguay 1(Duarte); Mexico 1 (Avila) bt South Korea 0.

Jesus and Mary in last four

NEW DELHI
Jesus and Mary College defeated Hansraj College 3-1 in the quarterfinals of the Delhi University inter-college women's table tennis tournament at the Delhi University Sports Complex on Monday.
The results (quarterfinals): Jesus and Mary College bt Hansraj College 3-1; Miranda House bt Daulat Ram College 3-0; St. Stephen's College bt Sri Ramakrishna College of Arts and Science 3-0; SRCC bt Ramjas College 3-0.



'keeper Navas out for at least two weeks

PARIS
Paris Saint-Germain goalkeeper Keylor Navas has been ruled out of action for at least two weeks with a thigh injury, the Costa Rican football federation announced on Sunday. Navas pulled out of PSG's 2-1 win at Brest on Saturday after injuring himself during warm-up. The injury will rule him out of Costa Rica's upcoming CONCACAF Nations League games against Curacao and Haiti, on November 15 and 18.

Upendra calls the shots

His unbeaten 70 helps Uttar Pradesh upstage Tamil Nadu

MUSHTAQ ALI

A. VINOD
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Wicketkeeper-batsman Upendra Yadav proved to be the thorn in Tamil Nadu's flesh as he guided Uttar Pradesh to an exciting five-wicket victory, with a ball to spare, in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy on Monday.

Chasing 169, Uttar Pradesh romped home in the Group B encounter as Upendra plundered runs at will through the last three overs even as Tamil Nadu suffered its first loss in three matches. Upendra was in smashing form all day.

He effected two stumpings and took a great catch during the Tamil Nadu innings after it was asked to bat.

The innings was built on fine half-centuries from M. Vijay and Dinesh Karthik before Tamil Nadu lost its way towards the end.

The start, too, was quite bad as opener N. Jagadeesan perished after contributing only two in a first-wicket stand dominated by Vijay.

The best phase of the Tamil Nadu innings was when Vijay and Karthik were en-



In smashing form: Upendra Yadav swung it U.P.'s way with some lusty hitting at the end.

gaged in a 75-run stand for the second wicket.

No trouble
Uttar Pradesh kept itself on par as initially Akshdeep Nath and Samarth Audhendra Singh, and Upendra and Shubham Chaubey flourished without any trouble and reached the home stretch requiring 33 off the last three overs.

Upendra took 16 runs in

the 18th over off a wayward T. Natarajan, putting his team on top.

However, G. Periyasamy came up with a tight penultimate over, conceding just two runs.

Natarajan, however, was unable to stand up to the pressure in the final over as Upendra helped himself to three towering sixes and a two to take Uttar Pradesh to its first win in two matches.

SYED MUSHTAQ ALI TROPHY

THE SCORES

Group A: Services 184/7 in 20 overs (Nakul Verma 27, Ravi Chauhan 71, Anshul Gupta 30, Diwesh Pathania 25 n.o., Sarfaraz Ashraf 3/35) bt Bihar 90/9 in 20 overs.

Baroda 201/4 in 20 overs (Aditya Waghmode 32, Deepak Hooda 52, Swapnil Singh 47, Yusuf Pathan 26 n.o., Vishnu Solanki 29 n.o.) bt Uttarakhand 168 in 19.2 overs (Karanveer Kaushal 38, Saurabh Singh 70, Swapnil Singh 3/25, Rishi Arothe 3/30).

Andhra 184/5 in 20 overs (Ashwin Hebbar 61, Prasanth Kumar 79, V. Koushik 3/35) lost to Karnataka 189/5 in 18.5 overs (Krishnappa Gowtham 35, Devdutt Padikkal 122 n.o.).

Group B: Vidarbha 150/6 in 20 overs (Jitesh Sharma 73 n.o., Rushabh Rathod 25) bt Manipur 80/9 in 20 overs (Sagatpam Singh 36, Yash Thakur 4/5).

Tamil Nadu 168/7 in 20 overs (M. Vijay 51, Dinesh Karthik 61, Vijay Shankar 28) lost to Uttar Pradesh 174/5 in 19.5 overs (Akshdeep Nath 25, Upendra Yadav 70 n.o., Shubham Chaubey 35).

Kerala 191/7 in 20 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 30, Sachin Baby 58, Mohammed Azharudeen 25) bt Tripura 177/8 in 20 overs (Udian Bose 27, Tanmay Mishra 25, Milind Kumar 54, Manisankar Murasingh 27, Lalaj Saxena 4/26).

Group C: Chhattisgarh 190/6 in 20 overs (Shashank Chandrakar 82, Harpreet Singh 60, Karthik Raman 3/33) bt Railways 123 in 20 overs (Dinesh Mor 35, T. Pra-

deep 29, Shashank Singh 4/22).

Himachal 183/5 in 20 overs (Abhimanyu Rana 26, Prashant Chopra 32, Ekant Sen 38, Amit Kumar 32 n.o., Rishi Dhawan 29) bt Hyderabad 99 in 19 overs (Rishi Dhawan 3/18).

Arunachal Pradesh 148/6 in 20 overs (Rahul Dalal 30, Uvais Ahmad 70, Mukesh Choudhary 3/32) lost to Maharashtra 154/2 in 14.2 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 81, Rahul Tripathi 28, Naushad Shaikh 31 n.o.).

Chandigarh 131/5 in 20 overs (Shivam Bhambri 41, Bipul Sharma 31, Mayank Markande 3/26) lost to Punjab 132/3 in 16.3 overs (Abhishek Sharma 60 n.o., Anmolpreet Singh 28).

Group D: Pondicherry 155/7 in 20 overs (D. Rohit 39, S. Anand 42, Paras Dogra 31, Vinay Kumar 27 n.o., Sumit Lamba 3/25) bt Mizoram 124/4 in 20 overs (Taruwar Kohli 76 n.o., K.B. Pawan 26).

Bengal 207/4 in 20 overs (Shreevats Goswami 29, Vivek Singh 57, Abhimanyu Easwaran 61, Manoj Tiwary 45) bt Meghalaya 153/4 in 20 overs (Puneet Bisht 27, Dwaraka Ravi Teja 28, Sanjay Yadav 45 n.o., Mark Ingty 39 n.o.).

Assam 158/8 in 20 overs (Pallavkumar Das 43, Riyan Parag 58) lost to Haryana 159/7 in 19.4 overs (Harshal Patel 62, Chaitanya Bishnoi 32).

Madhya Pradesh 159/5 in 20 overs (Rajat Patidar 25, Parth Sahani 47, Anand Bais 31 n.o.) lost to Mumbai 165/1 in 15.5 overs (Jay Bista 68, Aditya Tare 74 n.o.).

Group E: Nagaland 75/9 in 20

overs (Pawan Negi 3/11) lost to Delhi 78/2 in 12.3 overs (Dhruv Shorey 27 n.o.).

Saurashtra 214/7 in 20 overs (Dharmendrasinh Jadeja 59, Samarth Vyas 55, Sheldon Jackson 57 n.o.) bt Gujarat 157/8 in 20 overs (Apar Patel 70 n.o., Piyush Chawla 32, Jaydev Unadkat 3/32).

Jharkhand 107 in 19.4 overs (Virat Singh 44, Ram Dayal 3/23, Umar Nazir Mir 5/17) bt Jammu & Kashmir 100 in 19.5 overs (Shubham Khajuria 38, Shubham Pundir 33, Rahul Shukla 4/10).

Sikkim 121/4 in 20 overs (Ashish Thapa 26, Yashpal Singh 63 n.o.) lost to Odisha 125/3 in 17.1 overs (Subhanshu Senapati 44 n.o., Biplal Samantray 30).

TUESDAY'S MATCHES

Group A: Andhra v Baroda; Karnataka v Services; Goa v Uttarakhand.

Group B: Kerala v Manipur; Tripura v Uttar Pradesh; Rajasthan v Vidarbha.

Group C: Arunachal Pradesh v Railways; Chhattisgarh v Maharashtra; Hyderabad v Chandigarh; Himachal v Punjab.

Group D: Mizoram v Madhya Pradesh; Assam v Meghalaya; Bengal v Haryana; Pondicherry v Mumbai.

Group E: Delhi v Saurashtra; Gujarat v Nagaland; Jammu & Kashmir v Odisha; Jharkhand v Sikkim.

Sundar defends F46 javelin title

Ajeet bags bronze; India gets three Paralympic Games quota

PARA ATHLETICS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

Sundar Singh Gurjar overcame a shoulder injury to defend his F46 javelin crown at the World Para athletics championships while securing a Tokyo Paralympic Games quota, along with the bronze winner Ajeet Singh and Rinku, here on Monday.

Sundar came up with his season's best effort of 61.22m to claim the top spot, Ajeet threw 59.46m to clinch the bronze while Rinku finished fourth.

Under International Paralympic Committee rules, the top four athletes in each of the individual medal events on the Tokyo 2020 paralympic programme (excluding Marathon) will each get one qualification slot for his/her



Well done! Ajeet Singh and Sundar Singh Gurjar made India proud.

respective country.

The 23-year-old Sundar not only defended his London Worlds 2017 title here but also became the only second Indian to have clinched two World Championships medals after Devendra Jhajharia's gold and silver in 2013 Lyon and 2015 Doha Championships.

The F46 category athletes have a single below or above the elbow amputation.

"Indian javelin throwers have always brought laurels to India.

"Today once again our players showed that they will be the ones to beat at Tokyo 2020. This also shows that we are in the right track," said Gursharan Singh, Paralympic Committee of India.

India now has two gold, one silver and a bronze from this championships.

Goveas packs off Simon; Manish, Anirudh advance

CHALLENGER

SPORTS BUREAU
PUNE

Manish Sureshkumar, Anirudh Chandrasekar and Aryan Goveas were among the Indians advancing to the second round on the opening day at the KPIT MSLTA Challenger tennis tournament at the MSLTA School of Tennis, Balewadi Sports Complex, on Monday.

Sureshkumar got past wildcard Anvit Bendre 6-2, 6-0 while Anirudh overcame Kazakhstan's Timur Khabibulin 4-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Wildcard Goveas from Mumbai, ranked 867th, won 6-4, 7-6(4) against Germany's Tobias Simon, ranked 480th,



Causing a flutter: It was a day to remember for Aryan Goveas.

in the day's best tie which lasted an hour and 19 minutes. It was the Indian's first win in three attempts as a wildcard. Goveas served 11 aces against the 15 by his rival in a fast-paced match on centre court. He saved two

breakpoints in the seventh game of the second set.

Ukrainian Danylo Kalenichenko came through a close first set to prevail 7-6(3), 6-3 against Niki Poonacha to progress to the next round. The total number of Indians in

clash.

Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) president Salim Saifullah said a formal appeal has been filed with the international body and a response was expected by November 15.

"We have pointed out that we are fully prepared to host

India for the Davis Cup tie as there is no security issue and nor should political ties between the two countries override our chance of hosting a major event," Saifullah said.

"I think our case is very strong because there is no viable argument for shifting

the tie to a neutral venue," he added.

Pakistan was earlier scheduled to host India in the Davis Cup Asia Oceania Group-I Tie on September 14-15 at the grass courts of Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad, where matches against Uzbekistan, Korea

Antil sparkles for PNB

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Naveen Antil's double enabled Punjab National Bank (PNB) to record a come-from-behind 3-1 win over Indian Navy and set up a title clash with Indian Oil in the 123rd Beighton Cup hockey tournament at the SAI Complex here on Monday.

In the semifinals, Navy drew first blood through Ajinkya Jadhav's ninth-minute goal. PNB equalised through Antil in the second quarter. The deadlock continued up to the closing stages before Sanjay found the mark and Antil completed his brace to help the bankemen ensure a spot in the final.

Arman Qureshi struck a goal apiece in the first two quarters to help Indian Oil pip Central Secretariat 2-0 in the other last-four contest.

The results:
Semifinals: Indian Oil 2 (Arman Qureshi 2) bt Central Secretariat 0; PNB 3 (Naveen Antil 2, Sanjay) bt Indian Navy 1 (Ajinkya Jadhav).

Siddesh guides India-B to victory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Siddesh Veer cracked an unbeaten 103 (102b, 17x4, 1x 6) to help India-B score a six-wicket win over India-A in the BCCI Challenger Trophy (under-19) one-day cricket championship here on Monday.

The scores:
India-A 231/9 in 50 overs (Jay Gohil 99, Arjun Murthy 36, Sameer Rizvi 44, Akash Singh 6/47) lost to India-B 235/4 in 40.5 overs (Tilak Varma 43 ret'd. hurt, Siddesh Veer 103 n.o., Divyansh Joshi 32 n.o.).

Nepal 116 in 32.1 overs lost to India-C 120/0 in 21.1 overs (Divyansh Saxena 52 n.o., Arjun Azad 67 n.o.).

UTR junior tournament

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Dreambig Events will organise a Gold Series College Exposure tennis camp along with an UTR tournament for the players in the 12-18 age group at the Siri Fort Sports Complex here from January 3 to 5. The tournament will help the players build their Universal Tennis Ranking (UTR) and also gain useful knowledge from the coaches from Brown University, Cornell University and Boston University.

"Coaches in the US schools work extremely hard, not just on individual fitness and skill levels, but also on the athlete's mental, psychological and competitive outlook to give them the best opportunity to maximise their talent and reach new heights," said Tushar Liberhan, the organiser of the event, who had been a top junior of the country.

and Thailand have taken place in 2017 and 2018.

But the ITF announced early this month that the tie would be held at a neutral venue to be chosen by Pakistan after the All India Tennis Association (AITA) requested the tie to be shifted from Islamabad.

Honest Hunter wins Soviet Star Plate

HYDERABAD: Honest Hunter (B.R. Kumar up) won the Soviet Star Plate, the main event of the races held here on Monday (Nov. 11). The winner is owned by Mr. Tatineni Raghu Ram and trained by Sk. Waseem.

1 DEMOCRACY PLATE (1,200m), 1 maiden 2-y-o only (Cat. II): ASHWA VIRRAT (Suraj Narredu) 1, Horus (Akshay Kumar) 2, Advance Guard (Robbie Downey) 3 and Melt-ing Ice (Nakhat Singh) 4, 3, 2 1/4 and 3-1/2. Im, 13.25s. ₹7 (w), 5, 6 and 5 (p), SHP: 8, FP: 8, Q: 8, Tla: 20. Favourite: Ashwa Virrat. Owner: Mr.

Ravinder Pal Singh Chouhan. Trainer: M. Srinivas Reddy.

2 SOVIET STAR PLATE (1,000m), 3-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): HONEST HUNTER (B.R. Kumar) 1, Star Envoy (Suraj Narredu) 2, Rahil (Santosh Raj) 3 and Pentagon (Afroz Khan) 4. Not run: Yours Forever. H/d, 1/2 and nk. Im, 5.92s. ₹18 (w), 6, 5 and 16 (p), SHP: 12, FP: 44, Q: 15, Tla: 567. Favourite: Star Envoy. Owner: Mr. Tatineni Raghu Ram. Trainer: Sk. Waseem.

3 SRINIVASA SADAGOPA SHARMA MEMORIAL CUP (DIV. II), (1,600m), 3-y-o & over, rated 20 to

45 (Cat. III): BEST IN SHOW (Robbie Downey) 1, Red River (Jitendra Singh) 2, Nova Scotia (Akshay Kumar) 3 and Symbol Of Star's (Afroz Khan) 4. Not run: Ice Warrior. 1/2, 3/4 and 1-1/4. Im, 40.80s. ₹16 (w), 6, 9 and 5 (p), SHP: 33, FP: 164, Q: 99, Tla: 275. Favourite: Nova Scotia. Owner: Mr. S. Pathy. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

4 KINNERASANI PLATE (1,400m), 4-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): NAYADEEP (Irvan Singh) 1, Dandy Man (Ashhad Asbar) 2, Once More (Jitender Singh) 3 and Miss Lily (Ajeeth Kumar) 4. 1-3/4, 1-1/2 and 2.

Im, 24.69s. ₹27 (w), 8, 10 and 12 (p), SHP: 36, FP: 184, Q: 98, Tla: 1,71. Favourite: One One One. Owner: Mr. Jitendra D. Parekh. Trainer: S. Sreekanth.

5 SRINIVASA SADAGOPA SHARMA MEMORIAL CUP (DIV. I), (1,600m), 3-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): MISS MARVELLOUS (Suraj Narredu) 1, Yogastha (Ajeeth Kumar) 2, Royal Style (Akshay Kumar) 3 and Barbosaella (Surya Prakash) 4. 71/4, 3 and 4. Im, 39.14s. ₹8 (w), 6, 11 and 8 (p), SHP: 29, FP: 49, Q: 51, Tla: 188. Favourite: Miss Marvellous. Owners: Mr. Srinivas

Pangam & Col. K.S. Garcha. Trainer: L. D'Silva.

6 J.S. DHARIWAL MEMORIAL PLATE (1,400m), 4-y-o & over, rated upto 25 (Cat. III): DIESIS DREAM (Akshay Kumar) 1, Halo's Princess (Gaddam) 2, Hurricane (R. Ajinkya) 3 and London Bridge (Robbie Downey) 4. Shd, 1-3/4 and 2-3/4. Im, 27.79s. ₹14 (w), 6, 12 and 7 (p), SHP: 34, FP: 121, Q: 61, Tla: 466. Favourite: London Bridge. Owner: Mr. A.K. Jaiswal. Trainer: L. D'Silva. Jkt: ₹2,600 (156 tkts.). Runner-up: 381 (456 tkts.). Mini Jkt: 573 (257 tkts.). Tr (I): 179 (179 tkts.), (II): 128 (776 tkts.).

It was a surreal experience: Rani

India skipper recalls her winning goal against USA in the FIH Olympic Qualifiers

HOCKEY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Women's hockey team skipper Rani Rampal on Monday said securing India's passage into the 2020 Olympics with her decisive goal in the qualifier was a "surreal experience".

Rani scored the all-important goal during the recent clash against USA in the FIH Olympic Qualifiers in Odisha as India narrowly beat the visitors 6-5 on aggregate.

"I managed to keep my composure during the turn and finish. It was a surreal experience when I was hugging my teammates with joy," said Rani, recalling her goal.

Sceptical

"When I was stepping onto the field with just 15 minutes remaining, I was a little sceptical because I felt like we cannot let our hard work of three years come down to this.



The decisive one: Rani Rampal scored the all-important goal to book India's ticket to Tokyo. ■ FILE PHOTO: PTI

"But when I finally got the ball inside the striking circle, I knew I had some space ahead of me, and I just focused on keeping possession and getting my basics right."

The qualification done, a podium finish at the Tokyo Games is possible consider-

ing the long strides the team has taken in the last three years, asserted Rani.

India lost the second of the two-game contest 4-1, but qualified courtesy the team's comprehensive 5-1 win in the opening encounter.

Interestingly, in 2015 when the Indian women's team qualified for the Rio Olympics after a gap of 36 years, it was Rani who had played a key role in the decisive victory against Japan.

The team, though, failed to make a mark at the com-

petition as it finished last.

However, Rani said that her team has improved vastly since Rio. "We did not have a great tournament in Rio, but we got the experience of playing at an Olympic Games.

"Currently, we have 10 players in our squad who were a part of the team that participated in Rio, and with the huge improvements that we have made to our game since then, I am really confident of targeting a podium finish in Tokyo."

Earlier this year, we took part in the Olympic Test Event and we won the tournament convincingly. But the other positive was that we got a good experience of playing in those conditions, and that should help us in preparing well for the 2020 Games," added Rani.

The Indian women's team is currently on a break and will regroup for a conditioning camp, which begins in Bengaluru from November 18.

FIH to launch two world-level tournaments

Intercontinental Cup and Hockey 5s WC on the charts

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

While deciding the hosts for the next men's and women's World Cups was top priority for the International Hockey Federation (FIH) at its recent Executive Board meeting, that was not the only major decision taken.

Backs officials

The meeting last week also saw the FIH deciding to launch two new world-level tournaments and sought to put an end to the umpiring controversies during the Olympic Qualifiers, refusing any changes to the format and reiterating full support to the umpires and officials.

The FIH put its weight behind the Hockey 5s concept – a five-a-side version of the game played on a smaller field and already part of the Youth Olympics – with the creation of a new world-level tournament.

The Hockey 5s World

■ The Intercontinental Cup would be an annual, eight-team, single-venue event for the highest-ranked teams not competing in the Pro League

Cup, with its inaugural edition in 2023, would be similar to the marquee event with 16 teams qualifying. The teams would be decided on the basis of continental Hockey 5s tournaments – also a new competition, with detailed structure to be finalised later.

But, even before that, the FIH would launch the Intercontinental Cup, starting 2021, as a second-division competition behind the Pro League.

More importantly, it would provide an avenue for teams to be part of the Pro League with the two working on a promotion-relegation format starting 2022.

The Intercontinental

Cup, the FIH said on Monday, would be an annual, eight-team, single-venue event for the highest-ranked teams not competing in the Pro League with the winner being promoted the following year, replacing the bottom-placed side from the top tier.

Like the Pro League, however, it would also be an invitational event with participation based on world rankings.

Rankings system

The new world rankings system was also discussed providing varied ranking points stipulated for all recognised international matches regardless of competition and weekly updating of rankings unlike the present system where rankings are updated at the end of major events.

The system is likely to be in place from the beginning of next year.

Pathan and Rasool meet Ganguly

Host of issues with regard to J&K cricket discussed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Sourav Ganguly has assured full support for the development of cricket in Jammu and Kashmir after a delegation comprising regular skipper Parvez Rasool, mentor Irfan Pathan and a senior official met the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president here on Monday.

It was learnt that a host of issues relating to state cricket were discussed with the BCCI president.

"The BCCI president heard their points and has assured full support for the development of cricket in the region.

"We have requested the BCCI president to provide us with better facilities," a senior JKCA official, privy to the development, said on



Irfan Pathan. ■ FILE PHOTO: VIVEK BENDRE

the condition of anonymity. It was also learnt that Ganguly was apprised of the current situation and plans of hosting home games in Jammu.

"We expect that the

home games of Jammu and Kashmir will once again be played in Jammu. "We have a college ground in Jammu and we plan to upgrade and develop the facilities there so that First Class matches can be conducted," the source added.

Crisis

The JKCA has gone through crisis in recent times and the official said they have assured the BCCI head that the situation will be clear in the next one and half month.

Pathan and Rasool however declined to make any comments.

Jammu and Kashmir is currently playing its Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy group league games in Surat. Shubham Pundir is leading the side in Rasool's absence.

The world's becoming more multicultural: Archer

England fast bowler says racist abuses occur far less in cricket than football

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

England's fast-bowling sensation Jofra Archer says cricket fans who resort to racist abuse should realise times have moved on and the world is a much more multicultural place.

The 24-year-old Barbados-born bowler has quickly become a favourite with the England fans since he became eligible to play for his adopted country earlier this year.

The Sussex star benefited from the England and Wales Cricket Board reducing the eligibility period from seven years to three so he did not have to wait till 2022.

He quickly showed his worth by bowling the decisive Super Over in the thrilling World Cup final win over New Zealand.

He then marked his Test



Thing of the past: Jofra Archer says that there are only rare incidents of racism now. ■ AFP

debut by flooring Australia's star batsman Steve Smith in the second Ashes Test at Lord's which saw him miss the following match at Headingley with concussion and

in his absence England won to level the series.

Barracked

It was in the fourth Test at Old Trafford – which Australia

won to ensure it retained the Ashes – that Archer was barracked by a couple of fans.

"I was aware what the guys were saying – something about my passport – but I

blanked them," he told *The Daily Mail*.

"It was only later that Rooty (Joe Root the England captain) said the guys got ejected. Archer, who says an elderly spectator at a county game with Kent had once queried how he was playing for Sussex, said racist incidents occurred far less in cricket than football.

"The world's changing," he said. "It's becoming more multicultural. A lot of people have accepted it for what it is. Look at the England cricket team – there's huge diversity. "It's the same with any football club in the world. I think people have to accept it. Times have changed, it's not 2007 any more."

Archer says he sees himself as a role model to young British West Indians who have aspirations to play for England.

Sindhu, Saina will look to avoid early exits again

BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HONG KONG

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will look to continue their sensational run, but the focus will be on P.V. Sindhu and Saina Nehwal as they seek to avoid another early exit at the Hong Kong Open, starting here on Tuesday.

The World No. 9 Indian pair has been simply outstanding in the last two outings, finishing runners-up at the French Open and making the China Open semifinals last week.

Expectations will be high from the Indian duo as it opens against Japan's Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi at the \$400,000 meet.

For Sindhu and Saina, it has been a tough few weeks, with the two making early exits from a series of tournaments.

Besides the French Open quarterfinal finish, Sindhu, who had won the World Championships gold in August, and Indonesia Masters champion Saina have either lost in the first or second rounds. Last week, Sindhu went down in three games against Taiwanese Pai Yu Po, while Saina lost in straight games to China's Cai Yan Yan



P.V. Sindhu. ■ FILE PHOTO

– both in the first round at China Open Super 750 tournament.

Saina will face the same opponent at Hong Kong and she will hope to set the record straight.

Sixth seed Sindhu will square off against Korea's World No. 19 Kim Ga Eun in the opening round.

In men's singles, World No. 10 K. Srikanth, who reached the India Open final and quarterfinals at Malaysia and Singapore in April, will face the unenviable task of taming World No. 1 Kento Momota in the first round.

Worlds bronze medallist B. Sai Praneeth will open against third seeded Chinese Shi Yu Qi.

Sameer Verma will lock horns with Taiwanese Wang Tzu Wei, while H.S. Prannoy will cross swords with China's Huang Yu Xiang. P. Kashyap will meet Japan's Kenta Nishimoto in the opening round.

Satwik will pair up with Ashwini Ponnappa to take on Thailand's Nipitphon Phuangphuaet and Savitree Amitrapai in mixed doubles. Ashwini and N. Sikki Reddy will lead the Indian challenge in women's doubles, while Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Sikki Reddy will fight it out in mixed doubles.



Saina Nehwal. ■ FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

Karman Kaur will be keen to make an impression

TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GWALIOR

It will be interesting to watch Karman Kaur Thandi return to the professional circuit when she takes on Zeyneo Sonmez of Turkey in the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament here.

After having retired from the first qualifying round of the big event in Miami in March, the tall and wiry Karman has been grappling with a shoulder injury.

From a career-best ranking of 196, Karman has slipped to 591 in the world. Her doubles rank had reached a high of 180, thanks to the big win in the \$125,000 event with Ankita

Raina. She is ranked 339 in doubles now.

Eye on rankings

If she is fully fit, Karman, who is supported by the Virat Kohli Foundation, should be able to briskly climb back to her best rank and beyond over the next few months.

Former National champion Riya Bhatia, who won a similar tournament in Lagos, Nigeria, recently will also be keen to do well.

In fact, it will be a good chance to compete at home in a series of five tournaments, and gather useful points for players like Rutuja Bhosale, Zeel Desai, Mahak Jain, Mihika Yadav and the newly crowned National champion Sowjanya Bavisetti.

Redesigned Delhi Golf Club course ready for action

The course is now far more challenging after relaid greens and reshaped bunkers

GOLF

ANANT KAUR
NEW DELHI

After nine months of renovation, the redesigned Delhi Golf Club course is ready. The action returns with a three-day event for the club members beginning on November 15.

With every single green relaid, several bunkers reshaped, the course presents a challenge of a different kind. Going by what seasoned campaigner Gaurav Ghei observed after shooting a round of one-under, "the course is now far more challenging. I don't want to dwell on the winning score in professional tournaments from now on. But, in short, I can

safely say, there will be far lesser number of birdies."

In nine months, the team under Theo Geertshuis, a design coordinator at Gary Player Design, pulled off a gigantic task of relaying of grass on several fairways, after setting right the drainage issues.

Mammoth exercise

Though the estimated budget was about ₹11.50 crore, the redesigning was complete within ₹9 crore. The mammoth exercise saw use of 2,30,000 cubic metres of sand. In addition, a 2000 sq. metres of home grown nursery for the greens was also completed.

"We wanted the DGC to retain its position as home of



New look: The redesigned 18th hole of the revamped Delhi Golf Club course that will be open for the members with a three-day event beginning on November 15. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the finest Championship course in India and perhaps Asia. The results have been remarkable and besides the regular players, the en-

hanced features on the course should help our Indian golfers preparing for the Olympics," said DGC president Major R. S. Bedi.

Admirably, enhanced water drainage systems have been installed to stop water accumulation. Like the DLF course in Gurugram, Kalhaar

Golf Course and Glade One course, both in Ahmedabad, the DGC, too, has adopted the Mini Verde grass technology, used for the production of high quality grass for the greens.

Ghei, the first Indian to qualify for The Open Championship in 1997, pointed out, "Now with the new revamp of the greens, you have to hit lot of good quality shots to get the ball close to the hole.

"And that's the difference. Around the green, the run-off – sloping areas which have been put in – will make the short-game interesting. You need to have vast repertoire to be able to score and play well. That's a huge asset for youngsters."