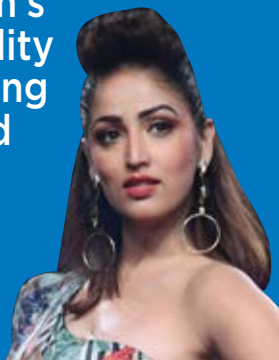


THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2019

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JMM's Hemant Soren
says allies are deserting
BJP as a 'sinking ship'

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In setback for Prez Trump,
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WINDOWS



Former Australian PM Tony Abbott pays his respects at the Golden Temple in Amritsar on Sunday.

— AFP

Soldier killed in IED blast near LoC in Akhnoor

Jammu: A soldier was killed and two more were injured in a suspected IED blast near the Line of Control in Akhnoor sector here on Sunday, a defence spokesperson said. The explosion took place when an Army team was on a routine patrolling duty in the Pallanwalla area, he said. The official identified the deceased soldier as Havaladar Santosh Kumar, a resident of Pura Bhadauria village near Agra.

Full report on Page 4

Sharif will leave for UK tomorrow

Islamabad: Former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will leave for the United Kingdom on Tuesday, days after the Lahore high court ordered to remove his name from the travel ban list. Sharif would depart to London via an air ambulance of Qatar Airlines on Tuesday.

Aramco declares \$1.71tn valuation

Riyadh: Saudi Arabia on Sunday put a value of up to \$1.71 trillion on energy giant Aramco in what could be the world's biggest IPO, but missed Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's initial target of \$2 trillion.

Full report on Page 9

COUNTERPOINT



Forget stocks... now horse trading is in full swing!

WEATHER



Max: 29°C
Min: 16°C
RH: 45%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Strong winds

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Kartika Bahula Shasti till 5.06 pm
Star: Pushyami till 10.17 pm
Varjyam: 6.43 am to 8.16 am
Durmuhurtam: 12.23 pm to 1.08 pm and 2.37 pm to 3.22 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am

SUNSET TODAY 5.27 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.46 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 9.41 PM
MOONSET TODAY 11.52 AM

■ Citizenship Bill to be moved ■ Let Farooq, PC attend: Opp.

Opp. will corner govt on slowdown, farm issues

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

With the Opposition preparing to corner the government over the economic slowdown, joblessness and farmers' distress, among other issues, Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged on the eve of the Winter Session starting Monday that the government was ready to discuss all issues on the floor of the House. Also, the Rajya Sabha will be celebrating its 250th session.

A series of meetings took place on Sunday, which also included an all-party meeting called by the government and a meeting of the ruling NDA, that the PM hailed as an alliance representing "India's diversity and the aspirations of 130 crore Indians". The BJP's oldest ally, the Shiv Sena, was incidentally missing from the NDA meet as the two parted ways over the chief minister's post in Maharashtra.

The Winter Session, starting two weeks after the Supreme Court's landmark judgment on the centuries-old Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, is likely to see the government's managers trying to push through some key bills, including the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

"Attended the all-party meeting earlier today. This time, we mark the 250th session of the Rajya Sabha. In both Houses, we shall have constructive debates on ways to empower citizens and further India's development," the PM tweeted on Sunday.

At the all-party meeting convened by the govern-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, parliamentary affairs minister Prahlad Joshi and home minister Amit Shah during an all-party meeting in New Delhi on Sunday.

— PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

WINTER SESSION STARTS TODAY

27 bills listed in session, 2 to replace ordinances

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

The controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and the law prohibiting electronic cigarettes are among the 27 new bills that the government plans to bring in the Winter Session of Parliament which begins on Monday.

In addition, the government will try to get passed 13 bills that are pending in the two Houses.

Parliamentary affairs minister Prahlad Joshi said on Sunday that while 27 bills will be taken up for introduc-

tion, consideration and passing, two bills are pending in the Lok Sabha and 10 in the Rajya Sabha. Besides, one financial item relating to the first batch of supplementary demands for grants for 2019-20 too will be discussed and passed during the session.

Out of the new bills, two will replace existing ordinances on the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes and Taxation of Law (Amendment) on corporate tax rate cuts. Both have to be passed during the Winter Session.

■ More on Page 3

ment on Sunday morning, Mr Modi said the most important job of the House was to discuss and debate and this session should also be as productive as the last one. He also emphasised that the 250th session of the Upper House "provided a unique opportunity for highlighting the unique strengths of the Indian Parliament

as well as the Indian Constitution, in providing an overarching framework of governance institutions for a diverse country like India". He also said the session was being held as India was celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

However, some Opposition MPs demand-

Sena MPs to sit with Opp. after walking out of NDA

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

The separation between the BJP and the Shiv Sena has now reached the Parliament. Shiv Sena MPs are being allotted seats on the Opposition side in both Houses of Parliament as its minister has resigned and the party is working out an alliance with the Congress and NCP to form government in Maharashtra, parliamentary affairs minister Prahlad Joshi said on Sunday.

Mr Patel said, "Shiv Sena's minister has resigned from the NDA government. They are not attending today's NDA meeting and working out an alliance with the Congress and the NCP. So it is natural that they will be allotted seats on the Opposition side." Shiv Sena's lone minister in the Modi government, Arvind Sawant, had resigned on November 11.

■ More on Page 3

Gotabaya elected as new Sri Lanka Prez

To take oath today ■ PM Ranil is likely to quit

AMAL JAYASINGHE
COLOMBO, NOV. 17

Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who spearheaded the brutal crushing of the Tamil Tigers a decade ago, stormed to power on Sunday but promised to be a President for all Sri Lanka's races and religions after a divisive election.

Seven months after Islamist extremist attacks that killed 269 people, Mr Rajapaksa was elected Saturday on the back of a nationalist campaign promising security and to crush religious extremism in the Buddhist-majority country. This also marks the return of the powerful Rajapaksa dynasty known for its pro-China tilt.

Mr Rajapaksa's triumph will alarm Sri Lanka's Tamil and Muslim minorities as well as activists, journalists and possibly some in the international community following the 2005-15 presidency of his



Sri Lanka's President-elect Gotabaya Rajapaksa waves at supporters as he leaves the election commission office in Colombo on Sunday.

— AFP

PAGE 4

► Lanka will work closely on security: Prez-elect to India

older brother Mahinda Rajapaksa. On Sunday Gotabaya Rajapaksa, 70, thanked all voters in an election that heightened ethnic and religious tensions in a country that only a decade ago emerged from a brutal civil war that cost 100,000

lives. "I am conscious that I am also the President of those who voted against me," he said as he was formally declared the hands-down winner with 52.25 per cent of the vote.

"It is my duty to serve all Sri Lankans without race or religious discrimination," he said. "I promise to discharge my duties in a fair manner."

Mr Premadasa, 52, of the ruling party, ■ Turn to Page 4

Delhi's air improves, Centre calls meet today

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Delhiites got some respite from pollution on Sunday as the air quality in the city improved to "poor" category from the "severe." The Air Quality Index (AQI) in Delhi at 9 am on Sunday stood at 254 against an AQI of 412 at the same time on Saturday. Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday asserted that there is a "very strong correlation" between stubble burning and pollution in north India as he attributed the improvement in air quality to dip in cases of setting crop residue afire.

Meanwhile, the Union environment ministry will hold a high-level meeting on Monday over the alarming pollution levels in Delhi and nearby areas with officials of the states in the region. Environment secretary C.K. Mishra will chair the meet.

— PTI

■ More on Page 13

Muslim bodies seek review of Ayodhya ruling

Won't accept 5 acres for mosque

S.A. ISHAQUI
HYDERABAD, NOV. 17

The All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on Sunday decided that it would move the Supreme Court seeking a review of its verdict on the Ayodhya matter. The executive committee of the board, which met in Lucknow on Sunday, also decided not to accept the grant of five acres of land for building a new mosque at an alternative site since it was against the tenets of Islam.

While the meeting was to be held at Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama (DUNU), the board's headquarters, it was shifted to the nearby Mumtaz Degree College, which the organisers claimed was due to the "efforts of the district administration to stall the meeting".

Zafaryab Jilani, senior member of AIMPLB and convener of the All-India Babri Masjid Action Committee (AIBMAC),

► The All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIM-PLB) to move Supreme Court seeking a review of its Ayodhya verdict

claimed the case had been filed in court on behalf of all Muslims, and the board, representing the sentiments of the community, wanted to exercise its constitutional right to file a review petition. Mr Jilani, in reply to a question, said that Mr Rajiv Dhawan, senior lawyer, would continue as their lawyer and would try to file a review petition within 30 days of the judgment, that will be December 9.

Arshad Madani, president, Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, who attended the board meeting, told reporters that he fully approved of the decision to file a review petition. "Though we do not have much hope and know that

■ Turn to Page 4



A man pushing a cart in a flooded street near Rialto bridge in Venice during "acqua alta", or high water, of 160 centimetres (over five feet), on Sunday. Venice was braced on Sunday for an unprecedented third major flooding in less than a week, with sea water due to swamp the already devastated historic city where authorities have declared a state of emergency.

— AFP

HK cop hit by arrow fired by protester

Hong Kong, Nov. 17: A police officer was struck by an arrow fired by a Hong Kong protester on Sunday, as fierce clashes raged around a campus which has turned into a base for a pro-democracy movement whose unrelenting protests have plunged the city into turmoil.

Protests have tremored through the financial hub since June with many in the city of 7.5 million venting fury at eroding freedoms under Chinese rule. — AFP

■ More on Page 11

Riots erupt in Iran, lead to deaths after fuel price hikes

AMIR HAVASI
TEHRAN, NOV. 17

President Hassan Rouhani warned Sunday that riot-hit Iran could not allow "insecurity" after two days of unrest killed two people and saw authorities arrest dozens and restrict Internet access.

"Protesting is the people's right, but protesting is different from rioting. We should not allow insecurity in the society," he said. Mr Rouhani defended the controversial petrol price hike that triggered the protests — a project which the government says will finance

6 Protesting is the people's right, but protesting is different from rioting. We should not allow insecurity in the society

— Hassan Rouhani

Iran Prez



social welfare spending amid a sharp economic downturn. The unrest erupted on Friday, hours after it was announced the price of petrol would

rise to 15,000 rials per litre (12 US cents) from 10,000 for the first 60 litres, and to 30,000 rials for any extra fuel bought after that each month. It is a rise many consumers can ill afford, given that Iran's economy has been battered since May last year when President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the US from a 2015 nuclear agreement and reimposed crippling sanctions. The petrol plan is expected to generate 300 trillion rials (\$2.55 billion) per annum, from which the government says about 60 million needy would receive payments.

— AFP

The anti defection law, Tenth Schedule, the jurisdiction of the Speaker... Karnataka politics set off an intense discussion on all three aspects as the Supreme Court weighed in and gave the go-ahead to the 17 MLAs, disqualified by then speaker Ramesh Kumar, to contest the December 5 assembly bypolls. The BJP is elated as it can look to their support — if they win the bypolls — to shore up their numbers. The Opposition Congress and JD(S) will be straining every sinew to wreck their poll prospects. DC taps eminent political and legal experts on this momentous verdict, as our elected representatives across the country look to the main chance with the winning party.

A win FOR BJP AND the disqualified, really?

The Supreme Court stand on the status of the 17 disqualified Karnataka MLAs was on expected lines. While the Court upheld their disqualification it has lifted the ban on their contesting elections during the term of the current Assembly. This implies that they would be free to contest the by-elections due next month.

The verdict of the Supreme Court opens up a 'world of possibilities', which merit detailed attention.

In the first place, the 17 disqualified MLAs now being eligible to contest the by-elections would immediately place pressure on the BJP to accommodate those who are keen to enter the electoral fray. If the Supreme Court had upheld the Speaker's decision, the BJP would have had a convenient excuse not to nominate them by taking shelter in the ban on their contesting. Now with that 'pretext' not available, the BJP would find it very difficult to deny them their 'reward' for helping bring down the Congress-JDS coalition government and come to power! Further, with these disqualified former MLAs likely to openly join the BJP, the factors that motivated their decision to invite disqualification become patently transparent. Will those disqualified be formally adopted and endorsed by the central leadership of the party or leave it to the state leadership to nurture and care for the new entrant will be an interesting to watch and see.

Secondly, the internal contradictions within the BJP would now clearly come out in the open. Many of those from the BJP who were defeated

■ THIS SET OF BY-ELECTIONS WILL ALSO HELP GAUGE THE PUBLIC MOOD ON ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES SWITCHING POLITICAL SIDES. THE RECENT SATARA LOK SABHA BY-POLL IN MAHARASHTRA SHOWED THAT VOTERS DO NOT TAKE KINDLY TO PARTY SWITCHING BY THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES. WOULD THAT TREND BE REPEATED IN KARNATAKA OR WOULD THOSE WHO SWITCHED POLITICAL SIDES BE ABLE TO CONVINCE THE VOTERS OF THE RATIONALE BEHIND THEIR DECISION.

by the 17 disqualified MLAs have already been appeased and accommodated by being given plum posts by the BJP government. This of course does not guarantee that they would participate actively in the by-poll campaign of those who defeated them less than a year and a half ago. Many others have not yet been rewarded and continue to put pressure for the BJP ticket in the constituencies going to the by-polls.

Thirdly, all the 17 seats that face by-polls were seats held by the Congress/JDS. Some of them were won by these parties by quite impressive margins. Many of those seats had not seen a strong BJP presence in previous elections. The by-elections would indicate whether the personality of the disqualified MLAs can actually swing the seat towards the BJP or did they win the last time around, simply because of the support that the party enjoyed in that constituency.

Fourthly, this set of by-elections will also help gauge the public mood on elected representatives switching political sides. The recent Satara Lok Sabha by-poll in Maharashtra showed that voters do not take kindly to party switching by their elected representatives. Would that trend be repeated in Karnataka or would those who switched political sides be able to convince the voters of the rationale behind their decision.

Finally, if past political history is any indication, the developments after the BJP came to power in the state in 2008 seems to be coming back to haunt the party. A decade ago, the BJP managed to hold on to power thanks to 'Operation Kamala' and the support of 'new converts' to the party. Will the same trend be repeated? Will the BJP retain its majority in the state on account of those who switched sides or will their presence be the factor that causes both internal turmoil within the party and push the party to a minority status? The by-elections — the choice of candidates, the cut and thrust of the campaign as well as the direction of the results will help address all these questions.



SANDEEP SHASTRI
PRO VICE CHANCELLOR,
JAIN UNIVERSITY

How does the BJP reconcile the claims of the old 'loyalists' with the new 'converts' will be keenly watched.

AGE DEBATE

Today's Supreme Court Order says the obvious. That, when the Speaker disqualifies a legislator under the Tenth Schedule, the disqualified legislator is only disqualified for the time being; he could contest the upcoming by-poll and should he win, he could simply return to the balance term of the House from which he was disqualified. This case was unique in many ways and so, the Supreme Court must have found it easier to reach a decision.

For instance, in this case, the legislators had submitted their resignation and were keen to get out of the House. They were instead, disqualified by the Speaker and thrown out. In either scenario, they were out of the House. In most other cases, the MLAs had wanted to stick to their membership of the House while here, the disqualified MLAs were not legally aggrieved except by the differences between a resignation and disqualification. By the time this matter came up for judgment today, the bypoll itself was announced and scheduled

and so, the Supreme Court did not find much of a complication once they saw that the Tenth Schedule does not impose disqualification for the rest of the term of the House. So, the Speaker's Order to the effect that the disqualification will run until 2023 has been set aside.

Also, the Supreme Court has observed that the Speaker had enough material with him to find that those MLAs had indulged in anti-party activity and so, were covered by the clause 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule — 'voluntarily giving up membership of the House'. Though the Speaker gave lesser time to these MLAs to give their response, the Supreme Court has held that that alone is not a reason to interfere with the Speaker's Order. Also, the Supreme Court has held that if a person is liable to be disqualified, he cannot escape it by simply submitting his resignation. Though the Supreme Court has said nothing at all about the Yediyurappa tapes that were submitted to it at the fag end, it appears that the Supreme Court was very strongly influenced by it. Yediyurappa is the Chief Minister of Karnataka; he is not some low-ranking politician gossiping in the corridors, he spoke in a closed-room public gathering of his party men and, he was, of course, the biggest beneficiary of those 17 MLAs defection. His own admission of the BJP party engineering and managing the defection could not have gone unnoticed by the Supreme Court.

At this stage, it is reasonable for the public and concerned citizens to be disappointed with the fact that a MLA that is thrown out of the House for indulging in anti-party activity is given a fresh opportunity to contest in the by-poll and if elected, to go back to the same term of the House from which he was thrown out. That disappointment should not be directed towards the Supreme Court but should be directed towards the Parliament that did not express itself clearly while bringing in the Tenth

Schedule. There are several other disqualifications under both the Constitution and the Representation of People Act, 1951 and they all specify the term of disqualification. Also, whereas the Tenth Schedule doesn't specify the term, the Parliament is free to amend the Tenth Schedule if it wishes to.

Finally, soon after the Supreme Court's judgment came out, most of the 17 MLAs greeted the judgment on Television and that alone would tell you that they are unbelievably foolish and God alone knows why such foolish people — who cannot even distinguish between winning or losing a critical case in the Court — are elected as our representatives. The Supreme Court had just said that the Speaker's assessment that those MLAs have indulged in anti-party activity is based on sufficient material and yet, those very MLAs thought they were given a victory by the Supreme Court.

At this point, those MLAs are undoubtedly free to contest the polls as 'damaged goods' and whether the public will reward or shun them is to be seen now. At any rate, unlike a typical by-poll, these by-polls are equivalent to a general election itself, as the outcome in these by-polls will decide upon who forms or continues to run the State Government. Needless to say, the Speaker did what no other Speaker in India had done so far — expressly specify the end of the term as the period of disqualification. He overstepped his authority and it is good that the Supreme Court has set aside that part of his Order.



K.V. DHANAJAY
SUPREME COURT
ADVOCATE

■ IT IS REASONABLE FOR THE PUBLIC AND CONCERNED CITIZENS TO BE DISAPPOINTED WITH THE FACT THAT A MLA THAT IS THROWN OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR INDULGING IN ANTI-PARTY ACTIVITY IS GIVEN A FRESH OPPORTUNITY TO CONTEST IN THE BY-POLL AND IF ELECTED, TO GO BACK TO THE SAME TERM OF THE HOUSE FROM WHICH HE WAS THROWN OUT. THAT DISAPPOINTMENT SHOULD NOT BE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE SUPREME COURT BUT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE PARLIAMENT THAT DID NOT EXPRESS ITSELF CLEARLY WHILE BRINGING IN THE TENTH SCHEDULE.

Did our judges miss a chance to stem the rot in the system?



RAJEEV GOWDA
RAJYA SABHA MP

In their judgment on the Karnataka MLAs disqualification case, the three judge bench of the Supreme Court comprising of Justices Ramana, Sanjeev Khanna, and Krishna Murari observed: "horse-trading and corrupt practices associated with defection and change of loyalty for lure of office or wrong reasons have not abated. Thereby the citizens are denied stable governments. In these circumstances, there is need to consider strengthening certain aspects, so that such undemocratic practices are discouraged and checked."

Unfortunately, the learned judges missed out on a precious opportunity to discourage and put a check on such undemocratic practices. They agreed with the Speaker's decision to disqualify the MLAs but did not validate his

decision to disqualify the MLAs from contesting further elections to the Karnataka Legislative Assembly in its current term. However, if they had accepted this decision of then-Speaker Ramesh Kumar, they would have strengthened the Anti-Defection Law and fulfilled their stated goal.

Clearly, the Speaker was innovating when he extended the MLAs disqualification till the end of the tenure of the Assembly. Such a provision is not provided under Article 191 (2) of the Constitution which contemplates removal of members of a State Legislature when disqualified under the 10th Schedule. But, in the light of the realpolitik of defections in India, this was an innovation that would have achieved the goals of the Anti-Defection law in letter and spirit.

Prof. Rajeev Gowda The purpose of the anti-defection law is to prevent the MLA from negating the voter's faith. When a voter casts a vote for an MLA candidate, that vote is both for the person and for the party. We are not in a position to separate the two. When the Speaker, acting in a quasi-judicial

■ Any resignation by an MLA in the absence of cogent and lawful reasons violates that social contract. Elected representatives will have no incentive to honour their part of the contract if the punishment is not punitive enough. Allowing a disqualified MLA to immediately seek re-election does little to deter defections aimed at blackmailing or toppling governments.

capacity, determines that an elected candidate has left a party because of inducements rather than a point of principle, then a suitable penalty needs to be devised. In this instance, the Yediyurappa tapes have revealed horse trading, and he is the inventor of the infamous "Operation Kamala." Judicial activism would have helped counter these egregious violations of democratic verdicts. In other contexts, the Supreme Court has framed rules to strengthen laws. It could have done the same here as well.

After all, the Speaker is the custodian of the propriety of the House and should be entrusted with powers which can allow him to effectively discharge his duties. An election is a social contract between the voters and the elected representative. The voters elect an individual to be their representative for five years. Any resignation by an MLA in the absence of cogent and lawful reasons violates that social contract. Elected representatives will have no incentive to honour their part of the contract if the punishment is not punitive enough. Allowing a disqualified MLA to immediately seek re-election does little to deter defections aimed at blackmailing or toppling governments.

Thus, the Speaker, who already has tremendous power under the Anti Defection Law, must be empowered to take necessary actions where constitutional and moral violations have taken place, as per his discretion. Such was the need of the hour. Clearly, in this instance, the learned judges have missed out an opportunity to stem the continuing rot in the domain of electoral politics.

Sabarimala: Stairway to heaven or to women's empowerment?



By
invitation

Maidhily Varrier

The Lord Ayyappa shrine at Sabarimala is now open for the two-month-long Mandala pilgrimage. In the context where The Supreme Court of India deferred the verdict on the Sabarimala issue of entry of women of all age groups to offer prayers at the shrine, it is apt to look into the intricacies of the entry restriction that is imposed on the of women of specific age group.

Every set of beliefs are human made and our traditions come from a set of beliefs. The tradition of Sabarimala prohibits women of age group 10-50 inside the temple. This custom of Sabarimala temple has been prevalent

since the inception, which is admitted for the past several centuries. Though these are prescriptions, there are other dimensions to be understood that has nothing to do with gender inequality or exploitation or discrimination.

Hinduism is a religion or a way of life that has always worshipped the Supreme through a multitude of gods and goddesses rather than a monolithic and a presumed male identity. The Hindu traditions and customs place women in the forefront and for women, these rituals are a great source of pride and empowerment, giving a sense of control and command over the happenings of their lives. The current emphasis on gender equality and rational thinking is not appropriate to the question of why women of age group 10-50 are not allowed inside the Sabarimala temple. There are temples in India which do not allow Men to enter either on all days or during special occasions.

The entry of women of age group 10-50 inside the Sabarimala temple is limited with the view to preserve the character, Naishtika Brahmachari



(Perpetual celibate) of the deity. The usage and practice is primary to preserve the sacred form and character of the deity. There are many other temples dedicated to the worship of Lord Ayyappa, where the deity is not in the form of a 'Naishtika Brahmachari'. In those temples, the mode and manner of worship differs from Sabarimala Temple, since the deity has manifest-

ed himself in a different form. Except Sabarimala, there is no similar restriction on the entry of women in the other Temples of Lord Ayyappa, where women of all ages can worship the deity. It is believed and practiced that young women should not offer worship in the Sabarimala temple so that even the slightest deviation from celibacy and austerity observed by the

deity is not caused. In Srimad Ayyappa Bhagavatham, one of the major scriptures in Malayalam about Lord Ayyappa, it is mentioned that Lord himself undertook the 41-day Vratam or austerity before he went to Sabarimala temple.

The whole process of the pilgrimage observing a 41-day Vratam before embarking on the temple pilgrimage is to replicate the journey of Lord Ayyappa. Women in the mentioned age group will not be able to take the 41-day Vratam, owing to the physiological reasons. It is also a practice that the Sabarimala Temple is open to every devotee who can take the 41-day vow of celibacy and discipline, irrespective of faith, the deep devotion they profess to the deity.

Sabarimala temple is located in the middle of the forest and women during the period of physiological attention, that is again specifically attributable to women of the prescribed age category would have difficulty to trek mountainous terrain in the dense forest that too for several days. One could argue that women have even conquered most of the things or more

than what men could do. But people who understood uniqueness behind Sabarimala pilgrimage holistically would prefer to stick to their beliefs that are followed as a practice, as this subject cannot be thought from only one dimension.

The matter of entry to a temple is only for the certain age of women, not women as a class due to the above three reasons. This practice belongs to a completely different domain of spiritual science. Sabarimala is a unique pilgrimage. It is not a question of blind faith of a society or making women inferior. In my view, the restrictions kept for women in Sabarimala need to be understood in the right context.

The writer — Maidhily Varrier is a teacher of Hindu religious scriptures. She is an Engineer by profession. She has co-authored "Prabodh"-an introductory book for Children to understand the basic concepts of Hinduism. She is also the daughter of Sri. Thrayakshara Chaithanya, author of Srimad Ayyappa Bhagavatham



Raising issue

RS Chairman Venkaiah Naidu expresses concern over absenteeism of members in parliamentary standing committees



Turncoats will be taken back into National Congress Party only on merit

— Jayant Patil,

NCP's Maharashtra unit chief

SHORT TAKES

Woman presumed dead wakes up

Bhubaneswar: A 44-year-old woman presumed dead woke up at the cremation ground in Kaniapali village under Polsara block of Ganjam district. She was then taken to the Polsara Community Health Centre where doctors declared her dead. Dukhi's family members examined her condition and presumed her to be dead. They took her to the cremation ground and prepared the funeral pyre. Minutes before putting Dukhi on the pyre, one of her relatives noticed some movement in her hands. Later Dukhi was rushed to the Polsara Community Health Centre in an ambulance. After examining the woman, doctors declared her dead.

Dacoit carrying cash reward held

Satna (MP): A 21-year-old woman dacoit, who was carrying cash rewards on her head, was arrested on Sunday from a forest area near here, police said. The dacoit, Sadhana Patel, was wanted by the police in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Both the states had announced ₹10,000 each cash reward on her, police said. "Patel was the kingpin of a gang of male dacoits. They had committed robberies and kidnapping for ransom," Satna Superintendent of Police Riyaz Iqbal told reporters. "Based on a tip-off, we arrested her from Kadian jungle," he added.

Youths opt tech to produce pearl

Balasure: Two youths — Arun Kumar and Jagannath Parik of Gunapur village in Odisha's Balasure district — have turned models for their locals by adopting a new aquaculture technique to produce pearls in fresh water-bodies like ponds and creeks. Normally, pearls are collected from mussels living in saline water bodies, especially seas and oceans. According to reports, Arun and Jagannath came to know about the new aquaculture technology from some technicians who are engaged pearl polishing work. A piece of pearl is sold at ₹500 – ₹600 in market.

BILL GATES HAILS BIHAR FOR FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

Patna: Bill Gates, billionaire philanthropist and Microsoft co-founder, on Sunday praised Bihar government's progress in fighting poverty and disease in the last 20 years, saying only few places have been able to surpass the achievements made by the state. The co chair and trustee of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, who is on a visit to Bihar, said this at a meeting with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar here.



"Over the past 20 years, few places have made more progress against poverty and disease than Bihar. Compared to her mother born two decades ago, a child born today in Bihar is twice more likely to reach her fifth birthday," a press release quoted Bill Gates as saying. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was committed to working with the state government to ensure health and education for all children, the release said. "Now, we have to make sure that all children are able to grow up healthy and get a good education. And our foundation remains committed to working with the state government to make that happen," the release said. —PTI

Govt seeks nod for 27 new bills

Citizenship (Amendment) Bill expected to see major uproar

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

► **The Personal Data Protection Bill, The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, The Insolvency & Bankruptcy (Second) Amendment Bill is also expected to be taken up during the session.**

Controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and legislation prohibiting electronic cigarettes are among the 27 new Bills that the government is planning to bring in the Winter Session of Parliament that begins on Monday. In addition to this, the government will try to get clearance for 13 pending Bills.

Union minister for parliamentary affairs, coal and mines, Pralhad Joshi said on Sunday that while 27 Bills will be taken up for introduction, consideration and passing, 2 Bills are pending in Lok Sabha and 10 in Rajya Sabha for clearance. Besides, one financial item relating to the first batch of supplementary demands for grants for 2019-20, too, will be discussed and passed during the Session.

Out of the new Bills, two will replace existing Ordinances on the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes and the Taxation of Law (Amendment) on corporate tax rate cuts. Both are required to be passed during the ensuing Winter Session.

The government had in September banned e-cigarettes to "protect the population, especially the youth and children, from the risk of addiction". In a bid to check economic slowdown, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman

had also announced cut in corporate tax rate from 30 per cent to 22 per cent for existing companies, and 25 per cent to 15 per cent for new manufacturing companies.

However, it is the Bill to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 that is expected to see major uproar in both Houses.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019 seeks to allow Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian illegal migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, eligible for Indian citizenship. The proposed Bill in a way excludes Muslims from the three neighbouring countries from acquiring Indian citizenship.

Besides, The Personal Data Protection Bill, The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, The Insolvency & Bankruptcy (Second) Amendment Bill is also expected to be taken up during the session that will see 20 sittings spread over 26 days.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Union home minister Amit Shah and others at Parliament Library Building in New Delhi on Sunday after attending an all-party meeting ahead of the Winter Session. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

Sena MPs being allotted seats on Opp. side: Joshi

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

The separation between the BJP and Shiv Sena has now reached the Parliament. Shiv Sena MPs are being allotted seats on the Opposition side in both houses of parliament as its minister has resigned and the party is "working out" an alliance with the Congress and NCP to form government in Maharashtra, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Sunday.

After the all-party meeting, Mr Patel said, "Shiv Sena's minister has

resigned from the NDA government. They are not attending today's NDA meeting and working out an alliance with the Congress and the NCP. So it is natural that they will be allotted seats on the Opposition side in both houses."

Shiv Sena had said on Saturday that it would not attend a meeting of NDA constituents on the eve of the winter session of Parliament, making clear that its exit from the national-level BJP-led alliance was almost certain.

Shiv Sena's lone minister in the Narendra Modi

government, Arvind Sawant, resigned on November 11. "I have learnt that the meeting (of NDA constituents) is being held on November 17. We had already decided against attending the meeting considering the developments in Maharashtra...our minister resigning from the Central government," Shiv Sena MP Mr Sanjay Raut said.

According to sources, all the three Shiv Sena MPs in the Rajya Sabha have been allocated seats on the opposition side, while in the Lok Sabha it is yet to be done.

'Abrogation of Art. 370 right step for Ladakh'

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the Narendra Modi government is committed to bring all round development to the newly created Union Territory of Ladakh and abrogation of Article 370 was the right step in this direction.

The home minister said new hydro electric and solar power projects planned for Ladakh at a cost of ₹50,000 crore will produce 7,500 MW power and will be completed in the next four years. Shah made the comments as he launched, through video conference, a special winter-grade diesel for the high altitude region which faces sub-zero temperatures during the winter months.

"The NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to bring the Leh-Ladakh region, which was neglected for the last 70 years, at par with the rest of the country," he said.

The home minister said that when the abrogation of Article 370 was announced, the Prime Minister had said it was a right step to accelerate development in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Mr Shah said by bringing change in the status of Ladakh and enhancing the budget allocation, all-round development of the region has been ensured. —PTI

Rajnath holds talks with US defence secy Esper

Bangkok, Nov. 17: Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday held talks with US Defence Secretary Mark T. Esper here on a range of strategic issues including situation in the Indo-Pacific region and ways to further bolster bilateral security cooperation.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), a platform comprising ASEAN and its eight dialogue partners including India.

The defence minister also held separate bilateral meetings with his Japanese counterpart



Taro Kono, Australian counterpart Linda Reynolds, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Gen-eral Prawit Wongsuwan and New Zealand's Defence Minister Ron Mark.

The broad focus of the meetings was to add further momentum to bilateral defence cooperation. In the meeting with Esper, Singh reaffirmed New Delhi's vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region based on a rules-based order and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. —PTI

Opp. CM candidate says Jharkhand elections will be fought on state issues

BJP allies deserting sinking ship: Soren

New Delhi, Nov. 17: With the BJP facing alliance trouble in Jharkhand ahead of the assembly polls, the JMM-led opposition coalition's chief ministerial candidate Hemant Soren said on Sunday the allies of the saffron party are deserting the "sinking ship" as they know which way the wind is blowing.

Mr Soren, a former chief minister and the working president of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), accused the BJP of raising emotive issues like nationalism to divert attention from their "misrule", asserting that the election will be fought on state issues such as land acquisition and unemployment.

"This is not Lok Sabha election, this is a state election. Central issues dominate in Lok Sabha polls, which have happened and for which the mandate has been given. Now, state elections will be fought on issues of the states," he told PTI in an interview.

"We can't talk of the Chotanagpur Tenancy and the Santhal Pargana Tenancy Acts in Jammu and Kashmir or in Gujarat. We can't talk of forest rights elsewhere. So if not in state polls, where will state issues be raised? If everywhere nationalism will be talked about, then where will the problems of the state be taken up?" Mr Soren asked.



They sense defeat. AJSU is the B-team of the BJP. They enjoyed power for five years and now they see which way the wind is blowing.

— Hemant Soren, JMM president

He is leading the opposition alliance comprising the JMM, the Congress

and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD).

According to the alliance's seat-sharing arrangement, the JMM will contest 43 seats, Congress 31 and RJD in seven constituencies. Asked if the Supreme Court's Ayodhya verdict could have an impact on the polls, Soren said the matter is old and now it is over.

"It has no relevance to the state polls. The court has given its verdict and it is not right to make this a political issue. The issue has been solved and everyone has to abide by it," the 44-year-old leader said.

Asserting that the people of Jharkhand will no

longer be "duped" by the Raghuraj Das-led government and they will vote for change, Soren pointed to the alliance trouble the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is facing in the state.

"Look at the condition of their alliances. The All Jharkhand Students Union, which was in power with the BJP, has fielded its candidates against the BJP. The JD(U) is fighting separately, so is the LJP," he said. "They sense defeat. AJSU is the B-team of the BJP. They enjoyed power for five years and now they see which way the wind is blowing. The allies are deserting the sinking ship of the BJP," Mr Soren said. —PTI

Uddhav pays tribute to Sena patriarch



Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray along with his wife Rashmi pays tribute at the memorial of Shiv Sena founder Balasaheb Thackeray on his 7th death anniversary in Mumbai on Sunday. — PTI

Fadnavis heckled at Bal Thackeray event

AGE CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, NOV. 17

Former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday faced the wrath of Shiv Sena supporters when he visited Shivaji Park to pay respect to Sena patriarch Bal Thackeray on his seventh death anniversary on Sunday.

Sena supporters shouted, *mi punha yein* (I will be back), mocking the slogan he had made during a campaign for the Vidhan Sabha polls.

Some workers of the Shiv Sena, which recently snapped ties with the BJP, standing close to the former CM's convoy

shouted in Marathi Fadnavis' assembly poll campaign slogan: 'I will be back (as CM)' along with the Sena's traditional 'Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj ki ja' war cry.

Other BJP leaders, including Vinod Tawde and Pankaja Munde, accompanied Mr Fadnavis on this occasion.

He, however, left the venue without reacting to the jeers. Mr Fadnavis also did not speak to the media.

There were no Sena leaders, except Uddhav Thackeray's PA Milind Narvekar, when he arrived at the Shivaji Park.

Prof. Zhang is part of a team of Chinese academicians visiting India

'China's structure doesn't allow US-like wars'

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

Due to the principle of "collective leadership", it is "inconceivable" that China can launch wars like the United States did during the presidency of George W. Bush, a senior Chinese academician has said.

Interacting with reporters in New Delhi in the presence of diplomats from the Chinese Embassy, senior Chinese academician Prof. Zhang Weiwei — currently the Director of the China Institute at the Fudan University — said, "China has collective lead-

ership. It is inconceivable in China's political system to have a leader like George W. Bush who launched two wars, two silly wars, the Afghan war and the Iraq war... at tremendous cost to the United States. The political structure (in China) will not allow this. It is a collective decision."

George W. Bush was the President of the US from 2001 to 2008, and the Afghan and Iraq wars were launched by the US in his first tenure in power from 2001 to 2004.

Prof. Zhang is part of a team of Chinese academicians visiting India and

► **George W. Bush who launched two wars, two silly wars, the Afghan war and the Iraq war... at tremendous cost to the United States, Prof. Zhang Weiwei said**

their views are being seen as significant even though it is not being officially regarded as the views of the Chinese Government.

As reported earlier, another academician from the team Prof. Lin Minwang — of the Institute of International

Studies at China's Fudan University — had also articulated his reservations on the concept of "Indo-Pacific" as well as four-nation "Quad" in the region — comprising the United States, India, Japan and Australia.

Foreign policy observers point out that it is well-known that China prefers the term "Asia-Pacific" for the region rather than "Indo-Pacific".

Prof. Lin had raised questions on the inclusiveness of the Quad and questioned why other nations like South Korea or the ASEAN nations were not invited by the US to join it.

The Quad, short for "Quadrilateral" refers to the four-nation informal grouping that stands for freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Meanwhile, Prof. Zhang's views on the maturity and restraint of the Chinese leadership are also being seen as significant, given the bouts of military tension between China and its neighbours in the past two years.

China and India had been involved in a military face-off at Doklam in Bhutanese territory two years ago following which matters were resolved and both sides pulled back.

NDA allies bat for improved coordination

New Delhi, Nov. 17: The shadow of an imminent divorce between the BJP and the Shiv Sena loomed large over an NDA meeting on Sunday ahead of the Parliament session, with allies pitching for a mechanism to improve coordination and Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing the ruling alliance as "one big family".

In his introductory remarks at the meeting, not attended by the Sena, Mr Modi said NDA allies may have different ideologies but they are like one big family and should not get unsettled by small differences.

Later he tweeted, "Had a very good NDA meeting. Our alliance represents India's diversity and the aspirations of 130 crore Indians. Together, we will leave no stone unturned in ushering a qualitative change in the lives of our farmers, youngsters, Nari Shakti and the poorest of the poor."

The meeting, also attended by Union home minister Amit Shah and BJP's working president J.P. Nadda, was called for better floor management and coordination during the winter session, beginning on

I personally felt the absence of Shiv Sena in the meeting today, it was one of the oldest allies of NDA.

— Chirag Paswan, LJP president

Monday. Various NDA allies, including newly appointed LJP president Chirag Paswan, desired to have a convener or coordination committee to sort out differences.

"I personally felt the absence of Shiv Sena in the meeting today, it was one of the oldest allies of NDA. It's a matter of concern that the Telugu Desam Party left the alliance first and then the Rashtriya Lok Samata Party," Mr Paswan said.

He said what happened between the BJP and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra could have been avoided if there would have been better coordination among NDA allies. "But all of us (allies) will work together in the upcoming session and more such meetings should happen," he said. —PTI

AYODHYA ISSUE

Persuaded board to file review plea, says Owaisi

AGE CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 17



Asaduddin Owaisi, president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), and Lok Sabha member from Hyderabad on Sunday said that he had persuaded the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) to file a review petition on the Supreme Court's Ayodhya verdict. Mr Owaisi had flown to Lucknow to participate in the AIMPLB meeting.

On the day of the verdict, November 9, Mr Owaisi had said that he would certainly persuade the Muslim Personal Law Board to seek a review of the verdict.

A senior leader of the MIM told this newspaper, "Mr Owaisi is always at the forefront to provide help to Muslim Personal Law Board. He not only provides his valuable advice, but is also generously helping the Board with funds.

After the judgment of the Allahabad High Court on the Ayodhya dispute, the board had decided to challenge the judgment in the apex court, but it had not funds to bear the expenses of advocates' fees and other expenses, as it has no source of income."



Indefinite sit-in

Narmada Bachao Andolan leader Medha Patkar launches indefinite sit-in, seeks relief for those displaced by the Saradar Sarovar Dam

THE ASIAN AGE

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Give ₹2,500 per acre to Haryana farmers for not burning stubble
— Bhopinder Singh Hooda, Former Haryana CM

SHORT TAKES

3 of family, 2 kin die in MP mishap

Barwani, MP: A couple, their two-year-old daughter and two relatives were killed after their car was hit by a truck at Tejgati village near here on Sunday, the police said. Another minor daughter of the couple was injured in the mishap that occurred on Mandwada Road, around 26 km from here, the police said. "The victims were going to Khargone district from Anjad area of Barwani district when the truck coming from the opposite direction rammed into their vehicle, killing them on the spot," sub-divisional officer of police A.S. Jamra said. The driver of the truck fled from the spot, he said. — PTI

Minor girl raped by uncle in bus

Jaipur: A minor was allegedly raped by her uncle in a sleeper bus when she was on her way to Jaipur along with her mother and a few relatives, the police said on Sunday. The girl, a student of Class 5, narrated the incident to her mother, who filed a complaint with the police on Saturday, station house officer said. She was returning home from Madhya Pradesh, along with her mother and the relatives, when the incident took place in Jawahar Circle area here on Friday, the SHO said. A medical examination of the girl has been done and a probe is underway, the officer said. — PTI

No jumbo safari in Dudhwa this season

Lakhimpur Khiri, UP: Tourists visiting the Dudhwa National Park will not be able to enjoy elephant safari this season as most trained jumbos have been deployed in patrolling duties, the park administration said on Sunday. According to park deputy director Manoj Sonkar, another major reason to put restrictions on the safari is the aggressive nature of male elephants, which may pose a serious threat to the safety of riders. Mr Sonkar said the decision in this regard was taken after several incidents of elephants chasing their mahouts and attendants came to fore. — PTI

UAE CITIZENS CAN NOW GET INDIAN VISA ON ARRIVAL

New Delhi: India has granted visa-on-arrival facility to the citizens of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with an aim to enhance people-to-people contacts and trade relations, officials said on Sunday. The visa-on-arrival facility for the nationals of the UAE came into effect from Saturday. It will be available for a period of up to 60 days with double entry for business, tourism, conference and medical purposes, a government official said. This facility is aimed at further strengthening people to people contacts and trade relations as well as strategic ties between the two countries. The international airports where the facility will be available are in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The visa-on-arrival will be available only to those UAE nationals who have earlier obtained an e-Visa or a normal paper visa for India, irrespective of whether the person actually visited India or not. Those UAE nationals visiting India for the first time are advised to apply for e-visa or a normal paper visa, another official said. For detailed information, one can visit <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/visa-on-arrival>. — PTI

Lanka will work closely on security: New Prez to India

PM Modi congratulates Gotabaya Rajapaksa, invites him to India

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, NOV. 17



to prevent it despite advance intelligence warnings from New Delhi. But

the other interesting aspect is New Delhi's security concerns, particularly regarding the issue of earlier movement of Chinese submarines in Sri Lankan waters. It may be recalled that during the presidency of Mr Gotabaya Rajapaksa's brother Mahinda Rajapaksa a few years ago, Chinese submarines were found moving in Sri Lankan waters then and India had expressed its concerns at that time. The Rajapaksa brothers were often seen earlier as having a pronounced pro-

China tilt which had caused some anxiety to New Delhi but India is hoping that its policy of active engagement with Sri Lanka will address this issue effectively. New Delhi has also been undertaking development projects in the island nation which is also India's maritime southern neighbour. Meanwhile, in a statement, the MEA said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated President-elect of Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa over telephone on his electoral victory in the presidential elections held in Sri Lanka on Saturday. Conveying the good wishes on behalf of the people of India and on his own behalf, the Prime Minister expressed confidence that under the able

leadership of Mr Rajapaksa the people of Sri Lanka will progress further on the path of peace and prosperity and fraternal, cultural, historical and civilisational ties between India and Sri Lanka will be further strengthened. The Prime Minister reiterated India's commitment to continue to work with the Government of Sri Lanka to these ends." "Mr Rajapaksa thanked the Prime Minister for his good wishes. He also expressed his readiness to work with India very closely to ensure development and security. The Prime Minister extended an invitation to Mr. Rajapaksa to visit India at his early convenience. The invitation was accepted," the MEA added.

Justice Bobde will take oath as 47th CJI today

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde, who would take oath as the 47th Chief Justice of India on Monday, has decided several key cases and was part of the recent historic verdict that cleared the way for the construction of a Ram Temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya. Justice Bobde, 63, who would succeed CJI Ranjan Gogoi, would prefer a conservative approach on the issue of disclosing the collegium's entire deliberations on rejection of names for appointment in the higher judiciary.

The CJI-designate, in an interview to PTI, had said that people's reputation cannot be sacrificed just to satisfy the desire of citizens to know.

On the issue of huge vacancies of judges in courts across the country and lack of judicial infrastructure, Justice Bobde wishes to take to the "logi-



cal end" the steps taken by his predecessor CJI Gogoi. Justice Gogoi had taken note

of vacancies and lack of infrastructure in courts and has been monitoring them by issuing directions to all states and respective high courts to do the needful.

A five-judge Constitution Bench, of which Justice Bobde was also a part, rendered a unanimous verdict to put the curtains down on the vexatious Ayodhya land dispute which was pending in courts since 1950.

A nine-judge bench of the apex court headed by the then CJI J.S. Khehar and which included Justice Bobde held unanimously in August 2017 that the Right to Privacy was a constitutionally

protected fundamental right in India.

Justice Bobde will have a tenure of over 17 months as the CJI and is due to retire on April 23, 2021.

Hailing from a family of lawyers from Maharashtra, he is the son of eminent senior advocate Arvind Shrinivas Bobde.

Justice Bobde has been chosen following the rule of seniority and his name was recommended by Justice Gogoi in a letter to the Centre.

His "Warrant of Appointment" was signed by President Ram Nath Kovind following which the law ministry issued a notification naming the judge as the next head of the Indian judiciary.

Justice Bobde also headed a three-member in-house committee which gave a clean chit to CJI Gogoi on a sexual harassment complaint against him by a former apex court staffer. — PTI



Indian cricket team's head coach Ravi Shastri offers rituals at Shri Mahakaleshwar temple in Ujjain on Sunday. — PTI

In a first, Naxals use drones over CRPF camp in Bastar

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Shoot-at-sight orders have been issued to security forces deployed across LWE affected states after a "serious and new" threat of possession and operation of drones by Maoist cadres came to light recently, officials said on Sunday.

The latest directive by a unified command of security and intelligence agencies at the Centre comes in the wake of a maiden incident where drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were seen hovering over a strategically important CRPF camp in the worst Naxal-violence affected district of Sukma in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar region.

As per official communication shared by ground forces, official sources said, "Small red and white light emitting drones" were seen flying near the CRPF camp in Kistaram and Palloodi last month at least four times in three days.

The drones emitted a "low whizzing sound" that drew attention of camp guards after which offensive position was taken by troops and an alert sounded across all the nearby camps anticipating possible trouble by Naxals.

However, sources said, the mini-UAVs soon disappeared from the sky above the CRPF camps even before they could be aimed at and shot.

The development rang alarm bells in the security establishment leading intelligence agencies to a vendor in Mumbai who is suspected to have sold the drones to some unidentified persons, possibly Naxal cadres. Inquiries in this context are ongoing, sources added.

Agencies are particularly concerned as the two camps where these drones were spotted are located deep inside the Naxal hotbed, do not have proper road connectivity and witness regular movements of armed Maoist cadres as the area shares border with Odisha, Maharashtra and leads to the jungle corridor of Andhra Pradesh. — PTI

Soldier killed in blast near LoC

Jammu, Nov. 17: A soldier was killed and two more were injured in a suspected IED blast near the Line of Control in Akhnor sector here on Sunday, a defence spokesperson said.

The explosion took place when an Army team was on a routine patrolling duty in the Pallanwalla area, he said.

The official identified the deceased soldier as Havaladar Santosh Kumar, a resident of Pura Bhadauria village of Agra in Uttar Pradesh.

Both the injured were rushed to the hospital, he said.

Officials said the blast happened near the border fencing in the Indian territory.

The improvised explosive device (IED) is believed to have been planted from across the border and detonated when some Army personnel were moving towards a forward post, they said, adding that the condition of one of the injured was stated to be "serious".

Meanwhile, rail services in the Kashmir Valley resumed fully on Sunday — over three months after being suspended due to security reasons — as the train chugged from Srinagar to Banihal through the restive south Kashmir, officials said.

The train passes through Srinagar station and the stations in south Kashmir before reaching Banihal. — PTI

'Tipsy' woman creates ruckus at police station

Hyderabad, Nov. 17: A "tipsy" woman from Nagaland allegedly tried to bite a policewoman after being detained based on a complaint that she was semi-clad, drunk and created a ruckus in public.

A video of the incident, which happened on Saturday night and has since gone viral, showed the woman trying to "bite" one policewoman and roughing up the others while being brought under the control at the

Banjara Hills station. In the video, the accused in her 30s was purportedly heard threatening the policewomen. The woman claimed she works in a software firm in the city, though she did not produce any document in this regard, the police said.

She was brought to the station after residents of Zaheera Nagar informed the police that a drunken, half-clad woman was creating a nuisance in the area. — PTI

Notice to ED on Puri bail plea over copter scam

New Delhi, Nov. 17: A Delhi court has sought response from the Enforcement Directorate



on the bail plea of Ratul Puri, nephew of Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath, in a money laundering case related to the VVIP chopper scam.

Special Judge Arvind Kumar issued notice to the ED and directed it to file a reply by November 22, when the court will next hear the matter.

Mr Puri moved the bail plea through advocate Vijay Agarwal on Saturday, saying he was not required for further investigation and no purpose will be served by keeping him in custody.

The Enforcement Directorate recently filed a supplementary prosecution complaint against Ratul Puri and Jaspreet Ahuja in the ₹3,600-crore Augusta-Westland VVIP chopper deal case.

In January 2014, India had scrapped a contract with Finmeccanica's British subsidiary, AugustaWestland, for supplying 12 VVIP choppers to the Indian Air Force, over alleged breach of contractual obligations and charges of kickbacks worth ₹423 crore being paid to secure the deal. — PTI

Opp. to corner govt on slowdown, farm issues

■ Continued from Page 1
Abdullah was detained under the Public Safety Act in September.

"The Prime Minister, while responding to specific issues raised by the representatives of various political parties, said that the government would work together with all parties in a constructive manner to address pending legislation and frame policy solutions for specific issues on the environment and pollution, the economy, the agriculture sector and farmers," the parliamentary affairs ministry said in a statement. Mr Modi also told MPs at the all party-meeting that constructive discussions in Parliament also keeps the bureaucracy alert.

After the meeting, senior Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad said the government takes a different stand when it comes to taking up issues such as unemployment, the economic slowdown, the condition of farmers in the House. National Conference's Hasnain

Masoodi said they raised the issue of Farooq Abdullah's detention at the meeting and stressed that the government was under a constitutional obligation to ensure his participation in the Parliament session. Mr Azad also sought to know how an MP can be detained illegally and also demanded that former finance minister and senior Congress leader P. Chidambaram be allowed to attend Parliament. The LoP said there had been instances in the past when in similar cases MPs have been allowed in the House.

The all-party meeting was also attended by BJP president and Union home minister Amit Shah, Union minister Thawarchand Gehlot and several senior Opposition leaders like Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Ghulam Nabi Azad and deputy Congress leader in the Rajya Sabha Anand Sharma. TMC's Derek O'Brien, LJP's Chirag Paswan, Samajwadi Party's Ram Gopal Yadav, TDP's Jayadev Galla and YSR Congress' V. Vijaysai Reddy also attended the

meeting. The meeting was moderated by parliamentary affairs minister Pralhad Joshi and his MoS Arjun Meghwal.

The PM also attended the NDA leaders' meet, where the Shiv Sena had no representation. The BJP and the Shiv Sena have parted ways over the Maharashtra CM's post.

After the NDA meeting, LJP chief Chirag Paswan said an NDA convener should be appointed to ensure better coordination among the alliance partners.

Earlier, the BJP parliamentary party executive also met, also attended by the PM, party president Amit Shah and working president J.P. Nadda.

After the NDA meeting, Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu held a meeting of the floor leaders of various parties to discuss events to mark the "historic 250th session" of the Upper House beginning Monday. He also voiced concern over the absenteeism of members in parliamentary standing committee meetings, saying that "we must not let their standards drop".

Groups warn of stir

■ Continued from Page 1
BJP being motivated by the RSS, was conspiring to uproot the Assamese community, its language and culture. "To achieve this, the BJP is trying to outnumber the indigenous Assamese people by providing citizenship to Hindu Bengalis who infiltrated into Assam from erstwhile East Pakistan," said Mr Phukan, who also said the BJP's sole objective was to marginalise the Assamese in their own land.

The Morcha leader, seeking an united movement to block the passage of the bill, also regretted that if the Congress returns to power, they (Congress) would advocate granting citizenship to Muslims again on

"humanitarian grounds". Mr Phukan added: "We are forced to struggle for survival in our own land; and we are betrayed by our own leaders. They are neither vocal for the interests of the Assamese, neither in Dispur nor in Delhi. Their intention is only to remain in power and follow the dictates of the RSS."

The bill, posted on the official website of Lok Sabha, seeks to "amend the definition of illegal migrant, reduction in the number of years of residency period to obtain Indian citizenship through naturalisation and empower the Central government to cancel the registration of Overseas Citizen of India card in case of any violation".

Bodies seek review

■ Continued from Page 1
the petition would be dismissed, we would still file a review petition. It is our right," he said.

Reacting to the Babri Masjid case plaintiff Iqbal Ansari's refusal to file a review petition, Mr Jilani said the board was exercising its constitutional right and there was no politics in the issue. He claimed Mr Ansari was "probably being pressured by the district administration to not file a review petition".

Referring to the need for a change of venue of the meeting, Mr Jilani alleged officials from the district administration had tried to stop the meeting at DUNU, so the venue had to be changed. Members who

arrived at the original venue were taken to the new venue and the media was not informed, he alleged.

The Muslim Personal Law Board spokespersons said the Supreme Court verdict was "self-contradictory, and added: "The court has accepted the fact that namaz was offered on site and that idols were forcibly placed at the site on the night on December 22-23, 1949. The judges ignored the fact that under waqf rules, a mosque cannot be shifted. There was also no proof of any temple under the domes of the demolished mosque."

They also said that they had not contested the case to secure an alternative piece of land.

Gotabaya elected as Lanka's new Prez

■ Continued from Page 1
conceded the race and congratulated Mr Rajapaksa and urged him to implement his manifesto promising tax cuts, free food rations and subsidies to farmers.

Mr Rajapaksa, who will succeed President Maithripala Sirisena for a five-year term, will be sworn in as the seventh

executive President of Sri Lanka on Monday at the ancient north-central Buddhist pilgrim town of Anuradhapura.

The turnout in Saturday's vote was 83.7 per cent.

The election results showed that minority Tamil and Muslim communities had overwhelmingly voted for ruling

party candidate Sajith Premadasa, who came a distant second with 41.99 per cent of the vote.

Mahinda Rajapaksa, with Gotabaya — nicknamed the "Terminator" by his own family — effectively running the security forces, ended a 37-year civil war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. His decade

in power was also marked by alleged rights abuses, murky extra-judicial killings and closer ties with China.

"I didn't sleep all night," said student Devni, 22, one of around 30 people who gathered outside Mr Rajapaksa's Colombo residence. "I am so excited, he is the President we need." — AFP

50 YEARS AGO IN
DECCAN
Chronicle
Indira govt survives
censure motion

New Delhi: The Indira Gandhi Government today survived a censure motion on Rabat in the Lok Sabha today by an overwhelming majority of 306 votes to 140. The motion moved by Mr. Piloo Mody (Swa.) sought to arraign the Government for the failure of its foreign policy, specially in regard to the Rabat episode. The voting pattern showed that even leaving out 43 members of the two Communist parties, the Government could secure the support of a majority in the House with the help of Independents and other parties. The tally worked out to 263 members excluding the Communists out of a total strength of 518 in the Lok Sabha and 448 members present and voting on the motion today. There were two abstentions. The result was received with loud thumping of tables by members of the ruling Congress. The voting results falls short of the Syndicate's expectations though it had not expected the Government to be defeated on the issue. The five-and-a-half hour debate witnessed a hard-hitting intervention by External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh who maintained that the Government's decision to attend the Rabat Islamic summit was no departure from the late Mr. Nehru's policy. Mr. Singh said this question was considered in depth during Mr. Nehru's time in 1955 and it was decided that India should not normally participate in religious conferences. But if political conferences were held under religious label, India should participate in them.

ODDLY ENOUGH
Pigeon offers reminder of WW1 anniversary
Melbourne: A pigeon has been pinching poppies from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Australia's national war memorial in Canberra and using them to build a colourful nest in the lead-up to Remembrance Day commemorations. The day is marked on Nov. 11 each year. — Reuters

Bangladeshi women steal a march over Pakistanis, and Indians too!



Archana Datta

focus

India has remained for years a top performing country in South Asia in terms of annual GDP growth and is aspiring to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024. Yet in terms of gender parity, it has miles to go, while a comparatively young nation like Bangladesh has fuelled its economic growth on the strength of human resources, women in particular.

India's slipping to the 102nd position of 117 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2019, down from the rank of 95 in the 2018 index, perhaps raised many eyebrows. Moreover, Bangladesh and Pakistan, once part of a unified Indian polity, have left India behind, by being at 88 and Pakistan at 94 respectively, though all the three are still in the category of "serious" hunger, according to the report. Now, how have India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, who share a common history, chartered the destinies of people, women in particular, within their respective geographical limits? In the UNDP's human development indicators (HDI), 2018, India is ahead at the 130th position in the overall ranking, while Bangladesh is at 136 and Pakistan at 150, among the 189 countries evaluated. But, in several key dimensions of human well-being, Bangladesh has shown better outcomes than India and of course, Pakistan, the country of its immediate origin. Bangladesh has registered an increase of 75.1 per cent in HDI value from 1990 to 2017, while it was 50 per cent for India and 39 per cent for Pakistan during the same period. Even the loss in HDI value due to existing inequalities is lesser for Bangladesh, which is about 24.1 per cent, while it is 26.8 per cent for India, and 31 per cent for Pakistan, which is higher than the South Asian average of 26.1 per cent. In terms of life expectancy at birth, a crucial indicator of overall health status, it was 74.6 years for females and 71.2 years for males in Bangladesh in 2017, and it had surpassed the South Asian average of 70.9 years for females and 67.8 years for males. Both



Bangladeshi garment factory workers

— PTI

India and Pakistan remain below the South Asian average with 70.4 years for females and 67.3 years for males and 67.7 years for females and 65.6 years for males respectively. Bangladesh has also gained longevity nearly by 14.4 years, India by 11 years, and Pakistan 6.5 years during the last three decades. A newborn in Bangladesh is more likely to see her fifth birthday than her Indian or Pakistani counterparts. In under-five mortality rates, India, now matches the global average of 39 deaths per 1,000 live births, and also could reduce the gender gap in mortality by 2.5 per cent, but Bangladesh has already gone much ahead by reducing the death rates to 32 per 1,000 live births, while Pakistan is lagging behind with 61.2 deaths per 1,000 live births. Today Bangladesh's school-age children can expect to stay in school 5.8 years longer, while, it is 4.7 years in India, and in Pakistan 4 years. However, in case of girl children, the expected years of schooling in India is slightly better, which is 12.9 years for girls and 11.9 years for

boys, while it is 11.7 years for girls and 11.3 years for boys in Bangladesh. In Pakistan, for a girl, it is 7.8 years and 9.3 years for a boy. In women's education at the secondary level, Bangladesh has the highest performance of 44 per cent in South Asia, and both India and Pakistan with 39 per cent and 27 per cent respectively remain below the South Asian average of 39.8 per cent. Notwithstanding India's whopping jump of 266.6 per cent in Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (between 1990-2017), there is a huge gender gap in India in per capita income, which is ₹2,722 for a female and ₹9,729 for a male. The gap is further wide in Pakistan with ₹1,642 for a female and ₹8,786 for a male. But Bangladesh could narrow down the gap considerably, having GNI per capita at ₹2,041 for females and ₹5,285 for males. Women in the political sphere, both in Bangladesh and Pakistan, however, have gone ahead

with higher representation in Parliament, with 20.7 per cent and 20.2 per cent respectively, and India could improve its tally only marginally to 14.36 per cent in the 2019 election from 11.6 per cent in 2014. In the Gender Development Index or GDI, 2017, a "gender-sensitive extension of the HDI", Bangladesh achieved a higher GDI value of 0.881, while it is 0.841 for India and 0.750 for Pakistan. It also managed well with regard to women's participation in labour, accounting for 33 per cent, which is 27.2 per cent for India and 24.9 per cent for Pakistan as per the UNDP report, 2018. In case of India, what is worrying is that the recent NSSO-conducted periodic labour force survey (PLFS) data indicated that the female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) has fallen to a historic low of 23.3 per cent in 2017-18,

possibly due to the rise in the rates of higher education enrolment. In case of Pakistan, a 2016 Asian Development Bank (ADB) report said that "low female participation in formal employment is due to several restrictions on physical mobility due to the factors of safety and crime, availability of transport, etc, apart from other socio-cultural and religious norms...". Bangladesh, for the third consecutive year, remained at the 47th rank among 144 nations as per the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI), 2017, and topped the South Asian countries in gender equality, while India's position nosedived from 87th to 108th, and Pakistan figured at the 143rd position, being the last, but one country. Former Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, P.K. Chakravarty, while commenting on women's better performance in Bangladesh, said that "large scale women's employment in the ready-made garment sector led to their emancipation from patriarchal social practices and also contri-

butions of thousands of NGOs helped in achieving better health and education and financial inclusion at the grassroots, apart from the government incentives to girl child education". Commenting on Pakistan's lopsided gender representation, Sushant Sareen, senior fellow, Observer Research Foundation, said that "it is the deeply-rooted patriarchy that hindered the progress of ordinary women, and only a few elite-class women could make some headway...". Now, India has remained for years a top performing country in South Asia in terms of annual GDP growth and also is aspiring to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024, yet in terms of gender parity, it has miles to go, while a comparatively young nation like Bangladesh has fuelled its economic growth on the strength of human resources, women in particular.

The writer is a former director-general of Doordarshan and All India Radio and a former press secretary to the President of India

Beijing watches as Taiwan led by assertive Tsai heads for Jan polls

Sridhar Kumaraswami
meanwhile



President Tsai Ing-wen (left) will be facing off against Kuomintang's Han Kuo-yu



● The defeat of the KMT candidate in elections in 2016 brought to power Tsai Ing-wen, the 'first-ever lady president' in the island from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) who has not hesitated to challenge Beijing, unlike her predecessor, Ma Ying-jeou

Taipei: Relations between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland remain rocky in the run-up to Taiwan's elections in January, with Taiwan's "assertive lady president" Tsai Ing-wen set to challenge Beijing by pressing for Taiwan's participation in various world bodies affiliated to the United Nations. In order to break out of its perceived international isolation due to the One China policy followed by most countries including India, Taiwan — under her stewardship — has embarked on an ambitious New Southbound Policy since 2016 that focuses on boosting trade ties with 18 nations that include the 10 Asean (southeast Asian) nations and six south Asian nations including India, besides Australia and New Zealand. The next show of strength from Taiwan is expected to take place soon in the Spanish Capital Madrid which will play host to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) from December 2 to December 13. "Although not a signatory party to the convention, Taiwan will still send a delegation to the Madrid Summit," Taiwan announced recently. Taiwan's "environmental protection administration minister" Chang Tzi-chin said, "As a result of the current political situation, Taiwan has been barred from participating in the UNFCCC whose 25th session of the COP will be held in December. Nevertheless we continue to pursue means of making contributions to the inter-

national community." But this is not the only occasion. In September this year, Taiwan had strongly pushed for its participation in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The Chinese Government has blocked Taiwan's participation, referring to the One-China Principle and arguing that only sovereign nations can participate in activities of UN-affiliated agencies. Taiwan had also in May this year accused the Chinese government of using its political clout to force the UN not to invite it (Taiwan) to the forthcoming session of the World Health Assembly (WHA), the decision-making body of the UN's World Health Organisation (WHO), in Geneva, Switzerland. Cross-straits ties, the term used to describe the complex relationship between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan, has mostly been frosty, if

not downright hostile through the decades. Exactly 70 years ago, the then Kuomintang (KMT) chief Gen. Chiang Kai-shek had retreated to the island of Taiwan off the coast of mainland China after losing the civil war to chairman Mao Tse-Tung's communists. Taiwan somehow managed to survive as a de facto separate entity due to the United States which has extended enormous support to it through the decades. Just four years ago, the cross-straits ties appeared headed for better times. In November 2015, Taiwan's then "president" Ma Ying-jeou — who belonged to the KMT — held a famous meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Singapore, the first cross-straits meeting at the highest level since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949. But the defeat of the KMT candidate in elec-

tions in 2016 brought to power Tsai Ing-wen, the "first-ever lady president" in the island from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) who has not hesitated to challenge Beijing, unlike her predecessor. Referring to the success of the "New Southbound Policy" launched by Ms Tsai, Taiwan said it has generated some impressive numbers in "just two years". Taiwan recently announced that trade between Taiwan and these 18 nations "amounted to US\$ 117 billion in 2018, a 22 per cent increase from 2016". It is, therefore, with much interest that the elections in Taiwan in January will be watched globally when Ms Tsai will battle a challenger from the KMT which ironically now is seen as soft on mainland China. Speaking to this newspaper in Taipei recently, international relations expert Dale Jieh felt there is a need to improve the cross-straits relationship and bring about a balance in ties between Taiwan and mainland China on the one hand and with the 18 nations with which Taiwan is boosting trade ties as part of the New Southbound Policy on the other. It is an election that Beijing too will be closely watching.

Poison in the air? Keep your skin safe



Shahnaz Husain

aside

Pollutants in the air are making our cities increasingly hostile to our good health and well-being. Respiratory and lung ailments have become common health hazards. Among the other organs of the body, the skin is one of the first to bear the brunt of air pollutants, which not only attack the skin surface, but also lead to an accumulation of toxins. In fact, they are potent skin irritants. There are both long- and short-term effects of pollutants. Chemical pollutants hasten visible ageing signs and also disrupt the normal balances of the skin and scalp, leading to problems like dryness, sensitivity, rashes, acne, irritation or allergic reactions. All of us who live and work in urban areas need protective beauty care. For working women, the job may involve traveling long distances to work. The skin is thus more exposed to the pollutants in the air. Cleansing of the skin assumes more importance in order to get rid of the impurities and pollutants that are deposited on the skin. If you have a

dry skin, use a cleansing cream or gel. For oily skins, cleansing milk or face wash may be used. For oily skin, also use a facial scrub after cleansing. Look out for products with ingredients like sandalwood, eucalyptus, mint, neem, tulsi, aloe vera, and so on, when you buy cleansers. The anti-toxic and tonic properties of such ingredients have helped in clearing the skin congestion and eruptions that result from exposure to chemical pollutants. Aloe vera, for example, is also a powerful moisturizer and an anti-oxidant. So are ingredients like apricot kernel oil, carrot seed, wheat germ oil, and so on. After cleansing, wipe the skin with rose water mixed with witch hazel in equal quantities, using cotton wool. This completes the cleansing process and refreshes the skin. Soak cotton wool in chilled rose water and tone the skin with it, patting briskly. It also improves blood circulation to the skin surface and adds a glow. Green tea also makes a good skin toner. If there is a rash or eruptions, add a

little rose water to sandalwood paste and apply on the face. Wash off with plain water after 15 minutes. Nowadays, activated charcoal is used to detoxify the skin. It may be available at a chemist shop. Mix activated charcoal with aloe vera gel and rose water. Apply a thin layer on the face, avoiding the lips and area around eyes. Wash off after 20 minutes. Use a scrub twice a week. Take sesame seeds (til), dried mint (pudina) leaves and honey. Crush the sesame seeds coarsely and powder the dried mint leaves. Mix them with a little honey and apply on the skin. Leave on for 5 minutes. Rub gently and wash off with water. Sesame seeds actually have sun protective properties and also soothe the skin. Mint has antiseptic properties and prevents rashes caused by pollutants. Cover creams form a barrier between the skin and pollutants. A cover cream containing sandalwood would be ideal, as it would form a transparent protective cover, very much like foundation. Sandalwood soothes the skin and protects it from skin irritation and eruptive conditions. It suits all skin types.

The writer is a pioneering herbal beauty entrepreneur who has taken the herbal heritage of Ayurveda worldwide

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The truth about Ladakh's Shaksgam: Correcting historical wrongs in J&K



Claude Arpi

Soon after India reorganised the former state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) into the new Union territories (UT) of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, China went ballistic.

Geng Shuang, a spokesman of China's ministry of foreign affairs, told the media: "China deplores and firmly opposes this. This is unlawful and void and this is not effective in any way and will not change the fact that the area is under Chinese actual control". He urged India to "earnestly respect Chinese territorial sovereignty and uphold peace and tranquillity in the border areas".

China's territorial "integrity" refers not only to Beijing's claims over the Aksai Chin and some other places up to (and in some cases beyond) the Line of Actual Control (LAC), but to the areas illegally ceded by Pakistan to China in 1963.

India's external affairs ministry answered sharply: "We do not expect other countries, including China, to comment on matters that are internal to India, just as India refrains from commenting on the internal issues of other countries," declared the ministry's spokesman. Referring to the Shaksgam Valley, he pointed out that China had "illegally" acquired Indian territories.

One understands why the new maps released by the government irritate China, as this virtually opens up another sector to be negotiated along the Indo-Chinese disputed boundary.

In the new maps, the Leh district of Ladakh includes the districts of Gilgit, Gilgit Wazarat, Chilhas and Tribal Territory of 1947, in addition to the known areas of Leh and of course the Aksai Chin, occupied by China since the mid-1950s.

Why is the mention of Shaksgam an issue for Beijing?

An agreement was signed on March 2, 1963 between Pakistan and China about portions of Kashmir's boundary with Xinjiang.

A secret note prepared by the MEA's historical division mentioned that "any such agreement will be *ab initio* illegal and invalid and will not bind India in any respect". The note observed that the preamble states that the parties have agreed to formally delimit and demarcate the boundary between Xinjiang and the contiguous areas of Pakistan; the latter based her right on the fact that these areas were under her "actual control".

However, as the Indian note explained: "Under international law, the right of entering into treaties and agreements is an attribute of sovereignty. Furthermore, a sovereign cannot presume to exercise sovereign functions in respect of territory other than its own. Having regard to the UN resolutions of January 17, 1948 and August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949 (UNCIP Resolutions) it is clear that Pakistan cannot (and does not) claim to exercise sovereignty in respect of J&K."

The 1963 MEA note clarified that

Why is the mention of Shaksgam an issue for Beijing? An agreement was signed in 1963 between Pakistan and China about portions of Kashmir's boundary with Xinjiang. A secret note prepared by the MEA's historical division mentioned that 'any such agreement will be illegal'.

according to the terms of the UN Resolutions, "Pakistan cannot purport to exercise even 'actual control' over the defence of these areas".

It quoted a statement of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP): "The Commission did not ignore India's claim to the right to safeguard the security of the State, nor did it put into question the legality of the Jammu and Kashmir Government" (UN Doc S/1430). In other words, the UN acknowledged the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh.

The legal conclusion was that "Pakistan's claim to 'actual control' ... can only mean that she has had recourse to a line of action which is illegal and inconsistent with the UN Resolutions, [it was] reaffirmed by her as late as May 2, 1962." Occupying a land by force or war does not give the titles of that land to the occupiers.

The historical division commented further on Pakistan's mala fides: "The conclusion of this 'agreement' amounts to compromising the sovereignty of the state of J&K, which Pakistan has no business to do; even though Article 6 of the agreement includes provision for its renegotiation after the final settlement of the Kashmir question."

It is strange that the governments of China and Pakistan announced

the agreement on the eve of important Indo-Pak talks on Kashmir.

On March 5, 1963, speaking about China during a Calling Attention Motion in the Lok Sabha, the Indian Prime Minister stated: "If one goes by these maps, Pakistan has obviously surrendered over 13,000 square miles of territory."

Nehru rightly remarked: "The agreement claims to be provisional, and yet so much haste has been shown in concluding it. It is significant that it is not subject to ratification. Thus, the National Assembly, the press and the public of Pakistan have been given and will be given no opportunity to examine the terms of this agreement."

About China, he added that: "In spite of its professions that it has never involved itself in the dispute over Kashmir or its absurd claim that the boundary negotiations have promoted friendship between the Chinese and Pakistani people and are in the interests of Asia and world peace, it is directly interfering in Indo-Pakistan relations. By doing this, China, is seeking to exploit differences between India and Pakistan ... to further its own expansionist policy."

Unfortunately, India did not have the wisdom to break the negotiations with Pakistan at that time, though the note pointed out that Delhi objected to Article 1 which said that the boundary in this region "has never been formally limited"; already on May 10, 1962, Delhi had clarified that "the international boundary alignment in the sector west of the Karakoram Pass of the boundary of J&K state of India follows well-known natural features — has been recognised in history for all these years."

Interestingly, the joint China-Pakistan survey of the "donated" areas was conducted in 1987 only, 24 years after the territory was offered to China; it means that in 1963,

Pakistan did not even know the exact magnitude of her gift.

The traditional boundary runs along the watershed dividing the tributaries of the Yarkand river and that of the Hunza river; then it continues to the Kilik, Mintaka, Karchanai, Parpi and Khunjerab passes. It later crossed the Shaksgam river and after passing the Aghil mountains, it follows the Aghil, Marpo and Shaksgam passes up to the Karakoram Pass.

It was observed that no Chinese authority had ever reached these areas, "the Mir of Hunza (in Kashmir) exercised authority in this region and maintained posts and collected revenue".

The conclusion was that Pakistan, by her own admission as well as by the UN resolutions, "has no right to act on behalf of any part of J&K. The UNCIP has clearly recognised the legality of the J&K government and the right of India to safeguard the security of the state;" it was just an attempt by Pakistan to formally legalise her control over the northern areas of J&K. Sir Owen Dixon, who in 1950 had been nominated by the UN as the official mediator between India and Pakistan for Kashmir, had termed Pakistan's action as "inconsistent with international law".

The historical division concluded: "Since the basis of her claim to control over these areas has itself originated in illegalities, it is clear that she cannot use this illegal basis in order to substantiate her claims to negotiate on behalf of these areas."

It is this historical wrong that the new maps published by the government are trying to rectify ... at least on paper.

The writer is based in South India for the past 42 years. He writes on India, China, Tibet and Indo-French relations.

The cruelty in Pakistan over Sharif's health



Irfan Husain

Some cruel little boys torment insects by pulling out their wings. Once a video went viral showing a young French Algerian torturing a cat. He was arrested and jailed. Occasionally, these nasty tendencies remain part of a person's character, and inflicting suffering gives him a perverse pleasure. Others think this viciousness is part of their job of controlling those in their power.

It is this last attitude that had probably motivated the government into preventing Nawaz Sharif from seeking medical treatment abroad. The whole business of demanding an outrageous surety bond of ₹7 billion reeks of ransom.

Just as we have a duopoly of power between a seemingly elected government and the security establishment, the government appears to share authority with the judiciary. Thus, even though the legal process to enable Sharif to leave the country has been completed, he has run into a tangle of red tape spun by NAB and the Cabinet. Nobody appears to accept responsibility for his release and travel abroad. Clearly, this case is a hot potato, but somebody needs to step up as Sharif is far too ill to be treated like a political football. (The Lahore high court on November 16 ordered the Imran Khan government to remove Nawaz Sharif's name from the Exit Control List.)

Many in the government and the so-called punditry pooch-pooch Sharif's medical condition as minor, and as a ploy to escape the many legal cases he faces. I just hope they never suffer from this ailment. Although I'm no doctor, I, too, have a low platelet count (though mercifully not as low as Sharif's), and can attest to the fatigue and energy loss this causes.

While we sink deeper into the hole we have dug for ourselves, the establishment remains the elephant in the room. But despite our many reservations about this controversial institution, it remains an essential bond that's holding the country together.

There remains no consensus on our direction and goals, and no effort at building one. This government, with its narrow agenda of vendetta and vindictiveness, seems incapable of addressing the huge problems that face the country. A leader with an open mind and a big heart would have been more generous to his political rivals to bring them closer. But Imran Khan's arrogant and perpetually angry temperament excludes such a possibility.

A depressing sign of his intolerance is evident in the ongoing crackdown on the media. His comment that our media is freer than its British counterpart would have been laughable had it not been so ridiculous. TV interviews are pulled off the air in midstream, and some anchors banned.

Welcome to the New Pakistan.

By arrangement with Dawn

Desire: The main cause of mental disturbance



Sadguru Rameshji

As wind is the cause for waves in the ocean, desire is the cause for waves (disturbance) in the mind. The desireless mind is peaceful, calm and relaxed but desires (including unfulfilled past desires) disturb this calmness. Unfulfilled desires irritate and frustrate the mind and fulfilled desires generate new desires causing expectations, anxiety and worries. And out of new desires, only few get fulfilled and others remain unfulfilled and we get caught in this vicious cycle of fulfilled and unfulfilled desires.

However, everyone needs some basic amenities in life such as a house, money to buy food and clothing, a personal vehicle and bit of entertainment plus savings to take

care of future exigencies. But the confusion is how to differentiate between desire and necessity and strike a balance between them.

Necessity is out of compulsion to live, desire is out of competition. Desire springs up from the ever-active unsatisfied senses and mental comparison with what others have and what we don't have. Desire is never constant but ever increasing. Running behind desire is like that deer which runs after an illusory desert mirage wherein upon arriving at the identified spot it finds nothing and the mirage is visible further away at another spot.

There lived a rich man in a villa and in the opposite side lived a poor man in a hut. The rich man's wife used to observe the peace at which the poor man and his wife lived but that peace she never felt neither in herself nor in her husband. Once when her guru (spiritual master) visited her house, she sought to know as to why is it that even though they eat rich and healthy food, yet they fall sick and the poor couple hardly ate anything yet remained healthy, they slept in air conditioned bedrooms yet got sleep with



difficulty but the poor couple slept like logs of wood even in the hut, their future was well secured, yet they always lived in some unknown fear and the poor couple look fearless as if they are highly secured.

To answer the question, the master asked the rich lady to put some gold coins in a bag and ordered it to be kept quietly in the poor man's hut in the night. Next day he left while saying that she should observe the poor man for the next two months. A couple of days later, she noticed that the poor man, who used to come back home early evening, had started coming back late in the night. Occasionally, she started hearing some quarrels between the poor man and his wife. She observed falling health and wrinkles of tension on the poor man's face.

The rich man's wife was amused at these developments as she thought that after getting gold coins the poor couple will look even more happier and healthier but the reverse of that had happened. Upon enquiry she came to know that the poor man after finding those gold coins in his house desired to

add some more to them so as to secure his future, buy a house and other luxuries to enjoy. And towards this he started working double-shift, cutting down on his food and started consuming alcoholic drinks to overcome his stress. He also forced his wife to work and earn so as to save more money.

This changed attitude brought a lot of stress on the poor couple. They had no time for each other. They forgot what they had and started getting bothered for what others have and they don't have.

They forgot to live in the present and started living in the future, thus losing the secured zone of contentment, losing their gratitude to God and getting entangled in illusory competition and eventually losing peace.

This is why it is often said by saints and scriptures, that desire is the main cause of mental disturbance!

Sadguru Rameshji is a modern age spiritual guru and the force behind Poorna Ananda, a Hyderabad-based centre for spiritual evolution and joyful living. He can be contacted at www.poornaananda.org



Links in bios

TikTok has begun a limited test of a feature that lets users add links to their bios and posts, which can direct audiences to products or services

SHORT TAKES



GALAXY S11 MAY RECORD VIDEOS AT 8K

New Delhi, Nov. 17: While Samsung is expected to launch the Galaxy S11 smartphone during the fog end of February, the rumour mill is abuzz with speculations about the smartphone's features. Now, XDA Developers seems to have discovered support for 8K videos in Samsung's own camera app. Among other revelation, the report said that the app also has references to 108MP photos. Samsung, which officially unveiled the 108MP mobile camera sensor earlier this year, till date, hasn't used the sensor on any of its own phones. However, this new revelation has further excited the Galaxy fanbase. Another bit of code inside the Samsung Camera app makes reference to a 20:9 aspect ratio display, which is possibly a reference to the displays of upcoming Samsung Galaxy phones. It's worth emphasizing that finding something buried in the code of an app isn't exactly official confirmation - it's not clear which handsets these code snippets are referring too, and Samsung could change its plans. — Agencies



USERS CAN NOW PROGRAM SONY'S AIBO

New Delhi, Nov. 17: In the world of personal companions, Sony's robot dog, Aibo, ranks quite high. However, most people are quite wary to spend \$2,900 for such a vanity item. Now, Sony, which seems to have heard complaints about Aibo's uselessness, has rolled out a 2.50 update that enables, among other things a web-based interface for programming actions. While beginners can use a visual programming kit that uses blocks to create actions, seasoned programmers can participate in a developer program. However, the update won't allow users to entirely modify the personality of Aibo. It can be used to 'train' the robot dog to do some specific actions. — Agencies

COD: MOBILE TO GET ZOMBIES MODE SOON

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Move aside, PUBG. Call of Duty is here to rule the mobile scene also. After smashing all download records, the COD Mobile's official Twitter account, recently announced that the fan favourite Zombies mode will finally be making its way to the game on November 22. For those unfamiliar, Zombies is a game mode where up to four players are required to survive waves of attacking zombies in a certain location where they can also build or repair barriers to slow down the invasion. Killing zombies and repairing barriers will award players with points, which could be used to purchase better weapons, character perks, and to unlock new areas of the map. Traditionally, the Zombies mode offers an unlimited number of rounds which will only end when all players are eliminated. Aside from its release date, the developers did not released any additional details on what content is to be expected. — Agencies

Android phones come with bugs

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, NOV. 17

Last week, security firm Kryptowire, in a gargantuan disclosure, revealed 146 vulnerabilities in pre-installed software across 29 Android smartphone makers, *Wired* reports. According to the report, most smartphones makers install their own UI over the vanilla Android as well as their own apps. However, some of this bloatware have their own vulnerabilities and thus puts the users at risk. While most of the 29 companies operate mainly in Asia, heavyweights such as Samsung, Asus, Sony and Xiaomi were also named. Among the Indian smartphone makers, Lava had the dubious distinction along with widely-used brands such as Infinix, Tecno and Coolpad. While the bugs vary in severity and scope — and in some cases, the manufacturers dispute that they're a threat at all — they illustrate an endemic problem for Android, one that Google has acknowledged. The vulnerabilities Kryptowire turned up, in research funded by the Department of Homeland Security, encompass everything from unauthorized audio recording to command execution to the ability to modify system properties and wireless settings. What makes them so pernicious, though, is how they get on

Brands such as Xiaomi, Infinix, Tecno, Coolpad and Lava are widely used in India.

Bigger players such as Sony, Asus and Samsung have also been named in the list

Google said, "We appreciate the work of the research community"

phones, and how hard they are to remove. "We wanted to understand how easy it is for someone to be able to penetrate the device without the user downloading an application," says Kryptowire CEO Angelos Stavrou. "If the problem lies within the device, that means the user has no options. Because the code is deeply buried in the system, in most cases the user cannot do anything to remove the offending functionality." Many of the vulnerabilities Kryptowire found enable apps to do things like change settings without your knowledge or consent. "We believe that if you are a vendor you should not trust anybody else to have the same level of permissions as you within the system," says Stavrou. "This should not be an automatic thing."

STOP USING PUBLIC USB PORTS TO CHARGE YOUR PHONE

- You might want to rethink plugging in your phone to one of the public USB power charging stations.
- The issue is that public USB ports can potentially be hacked so that they install data-stealing malware onto your phone while you charge up. Called "juice-jacking," the hack could result in scammers getting access to your passwords, personal information and more.
- If you do use one of the ports (don't!), make sure you're not agreeing to give the port access to data on your device.
- Depending on your device, you might see a pop up when you connect asking if you trust the device. You do not.
- A better option is always to simply plug your phone or tablet into an AC outlet instead.
- Things like portable batteries can also be your friend and can help provide a little juice even when you're out in the world away from outlets as a whole.
- According to Bruce Schneier, a security technologist and Fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, you could also purchase a USB condom, a device that prevents data exchange through a USB cable by cutting off data pins and only allowing power pins to connect through.



New spyware targets WhatsApp

Disguised as videos, the spyware, threatens both Android and iOS users

AGE CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, NOV. 17

WhatsApp, the messaging service that pretty much every android and iOS user uses as their primary text-based communication tool has been facing issues currently. The brand, now owned by Facebook came under the crosshairs when a recent scandal came to light in India. Now there is yet another threat from the app that targets both Android and iOS users at large. A bug discovered by a

security researcher last month allowed attackers to use malicious GIF files to possibly access user content. The GIF sent by the attacker once downloaded on your phone, could access the gallery and send back images to the attacker. Now Facebook has confirmed another vulnerability. The company describes it this way – "a stack-based buffer overflow could be triggered in WhatsApp by sending a specially crafted MP4 file to a WhatsApp user." This means that when such



malware is sent to your phone from an attacker, disguised as a video file, the file itself could trigger remote access which the attacker could use to con-

trol your device remotely. The attacker may also use the file to simply eavesdrop on your communications, in which case you wouldn't even notice something is wrong until it is too late. The best way to currently make sure that you are not targeted by any such vulnerabilities that pop up time and time again is to always stay updated to the latest version of WhatsApp, which ensures that the app version you have is up-to-speed with fixes and patches for all

such bugs out there. A good practice to follow is to keep automatic-downloading turned off. Since malware can now be disguised as both pictures and videos, not having these files in your phone's local storage is the ultimate precaution you can take. Download images, videos and recordings only from trusted sources. Beware of forwarded messages that often come with accompanying clickbait messages that will try to lure you into downloading these files.

Google enters battle for cloud gaming mart

Stadia out to liberate games from console shackles

San Francisco, Nov. 17:

Ever-expanding Google becomes a gaming company Tuesday with the launch of its Stadia cloud service that lets people play console-quality video games on a web browser or smartphone. The internet giant hopes to break into the global video game industry expected to top \$150 billion this year, with cloud technology that could broaden audiences attracted by rich new features as well as ease of access with no more need for consoles. But analysts say Stadia's outlook is uncertain as its faces rivals such as PlayStation Now in an emerging and highly-competitive market. Stadia plays into a trend in which content — ranging from blockbuster films to work projects — lives in the cloud and is accessible from any device. "All of these new services are merely pointing out that we don't need sophisticated hardware in the home to access entertainment," said Webdush Securities equity research managing director Michael Pachter. Google last month sold out of "Founder's Edition" kits, which are priced at \$129. Each kit contains a Stadia controller and a pendant-shaped Chromecast Ultra wireless connection device that plugs into television sets. Stadia games are playable using Google Chrome web browser software on computers. It also works with Google-made Pixel smartphones from the second-generation onward, and on televisions. Stadia Pro subscriptions, priced at \$10 a month in the US, will be available in 14 countries in North America and Europe.

ALL IN THE GAME But analysts say Stadia could wind up as another "bet" that Google walks away from if it fails to live up to expectations. "Stadia will live or die by its content," said Ovum senior analyst George Jijiashvili. "The announced 12 launch titles are underwhelming." Subscribers will be able to buy games that will be hosted at Google data-centers, but some free games will be available to subscribers, starting with "Destiny 2: The Collection." Stadia on smartphones will work with WiFi connections rather than rely on mobile telecom services. Being able to play without lags or interruptions is paramount to gamers, and flawed internet connections could cause frustration. Internet speed will also determine how rich in-game graphics can be. Some promised features such as integration with YouTube will not be in place at launch. "Stadia appears to be rushed out the door before fully ready and, worryingly, Google is risking falling short on its promises," Jijiashvili said. "These shortcomings however would be easily overlooked if Google can deliver a very reliable and high-quality game streaming service." Google appears committed to doing just that, according to Ubisoft senior vice president of partnerships Chris Early. The French video game giant has been working with Google and its games are among titles coming to the service. "From what I have seen, their plans are too deep; they are too good, and they are too invested," Early said. "They are not calling it quits any time soon." He expects a long launch period during which Google will beef up Stadia. "If there is a one-day problem at launch, it isn't the end of the world; it isn't even close," he said, stressing the potential for Stadia to let people play without investing in consoles. But Pachter questioned whether subscriptions were the right approach. "The right model is pay as you go or pay for the game and play unlimited without a subscription," Pachter said. "Amazon will try one of those and will win the streaming wars." Amazon has game studios but no online game service.

ALL STUFF STADIA WON'T HAVE AT LAUNCH

IN AN AMA ON REDDIT, GOOGLE'S REPRESENTATIVES CONFIRMED THE FEATURES THAT WON'T BE PRESENT AT THE LAUNCH OF THE VIDEO GAME STREAMING SERVICE

STREAM CONNECT, STATE SHARE, AND CROWD PLAY

- The main features that allow players to join in one another's games and make Stadia more than just glorified remote play.

STADIA'S ACHIEVEMENT SYSTEM

- The service will still record when you hit various milestones in games, but you won't actually get notifications for them or see them displayed anywhere until "shortly after launch."

SUPPORT FOR EXISTING CHROMECAST ULTRAS

- At launch, only the Chromecast Ultras that ship with Stadia controllers will have the updated firmware required to stream games.

FAMILY SHARING

- While parents will be able to control what their kids can access on their accounts, multiple people in the same house won't be able to share games on the service until later on.

BUDDY PASSES

- Founders Editions of Stadia are supposed to come with "buddy passes" so that people can give a friend a three-month Stadia subscription to play games with them, but those passes won't actually be sent out until weeks after launch.

STADIA CONTROLLER

- Everyone who pre-ordered Stadia will get their codes to sign onto the service starting November 19 and will be able to play on their phones or Chrome desktop browser with a keyboard and mouse. However, the packages containing the controllers and Chromecasts will have staggered shipping, sent out in the order pre-orders were received.

BATTLE BREWING US technology veteran Microsoft has been testing a Project xCloud online game platform. "Next year, we'll bring Project xCloud to Windows PCs, and are collaborating with a broad set of partners to make

game streaming available on other devices as well," Microsoft corporate vice president Kareem Choudhry said in an online post. Sony Interactive Entertainment last month slashed the price of its PlayStation Now cloud video game service by about half in the US to \$10 monthly. Japan-based Sony also boosted the library of games that PlayStation Now users can access through its consoles or on personal computers powered by Windows software. Sony and Microsoft are also poised to release next-generation video game consoles next year. "While we expect dedicated consoles to eventually lose relevance in the face of cloud gaming services, there's no guarantee that it will be Google's service — rather than Sony and Microsoft's — that catalyzes this trend," said Ovum senior analyst Matthew Bailey. — AFP

IT'S TIME TO BID FAREWELL TO CORTANA Microsoft's Cortana Voice Assistant is about to be shut down for many major markets across the globe including the UK, Canada and Australia for the iOS and Android interface. The app will still be present on Windows machines. The news comes after various support posts in the above-mentioned countries confirmed the same. While the standalone app will cease to exist, Cortana will be integrated deeper in the Microsoft 365 office apps which would leave the standalone app without much use of its own. Any content in Cortana's database will still be accessible on Microsoft Windows but not in the app, which will soon be gone and in Microsoft Launcher either. Post-January 31st, Microsoft Launcher will have a new version that will function without the Cortana app. The name 'Cortana' was adapted from the Halo video-game series where Cortana is an artificial intelligence with the same voice as its window's counterpart.

Hacked Disney+ accounts are already up for sale

Disney Plus content would be made available in India after next year's IPL via Hotstar

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, NOV. 17

While we may have entered the era of subscription, the problem of hijacked accounts is only set to increase as our digital subscriptions grow in number. Now, Disney+, which was recently launched, have after the initial hiccups have a new problem in hand as hackers have wasted no time to hijack

thousand of accounts that are now being offered for free on hacking forums, Zdnet reports. According to the report, while some of these accounts are being offered for free, others are being sold for as high as \$11. The video streaming service, which was launched on November 12, is currently available only in the US, Canada, and the Netherlands. However, it was marred by

technical issues. Many users reported being unable to stream their favorite movies and shows. But hidden in the flood of complaints about technical issues was a smaller stream of users reporting losing access to their accounts. Many users reported that hackers were accessing their accounts, logging them out of all devices, and then changing the account's email and password, effectively taking over the account and locking the previous owner out. Complaints like the ones above flooded social networks like Twitter and Reddit. UP FOR SALE! The speed at which hackers have mobilized to monetize Disney+ accounts is astounding. Accounts were put up for

sale on hacking forums within hours after the service's launch. As of this article's writing, hacking forums have been flooded with Disney+ accounts, with ads offering access to thousands of account credentials. Prices vary from \$3 per account to as much as \$11 — which, by the way, is more than what a legitimate Disney+ account costs from Disney, which is \$7.

On an unrelated note, Disney Plus is set to launch in India after next year's IPL. However, the catch is the Disney Plus content would be made available via Hotstar and not as a standalone app, according to a report on TechCrunch. The report further said that Hotstar, which has over 300 million subscribers, may increase the subscription charges to ₹2,000 from ₹999.

Unused travel allowance is taxable

Know if you are financially complacent



Money

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,356.69	+0.17
Nifty 50	11,895.45	+0.20
S&P 500	3,120.46	+0.77
Dollar (₹)	71.78	-0.26
Pound Sterling (₹)	92.43	-0.27
Euro (₹)	79.14	-0.20
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	38,875.149	-0.38
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	63.30	+1.64
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.519	+0.061
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	1.845	+1.653

* As of 9:30 pm IST

Jaypee: NBCC offers more land & flats to lenders

NBCC sweetened its bid for Jaypee Infratech, by offering lenders 1,426-acre land and also providing half of 3,000 benami flats, sources said. NBCC, which submitted its resolution plan on Sunday, also offered 75 per cent of 858 acres that is expected to be transferred back to Jaypee Infra from Jaiprakash Associates. It would also sell Rs 1,750 crore worth unsold Jaypee Infra flats.

FPIs infuse over ₹14,400 cr into stocks this month



Foreign portfolio investors pumped in a net sum of Rs 19,203 crore into the domestic capital markets in the first half of November amid encouraging domestic and global factors. FPIs infused a net Rs 14,435.6 crore into equities and Rs 4,767.18 crore into the debt segment during November 1-15, taking the total net investment to Rs 19,202.7 crore.

MF investment in equities halves to ₹56K cr in Jan-Oct

Mutual fund investment in stocks halved to Rs 55,700 crore in the first 10 months of 2019 because of lower retail participation. Fund managers had bought shares worth Rs 1.12 lakh crore during Jan-Oct 2018, Sebi data shows. Vidya Bala, of Prime-investor, said, "Despite markets moving to new highs...retail investors have not seen any positive impact on their wealth."

Draft Ind. policy targets \$1 tn value addition in mfg

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has prepared an initial draft industrial policy, which targets to raise value addition in the manufacturing sector to \$1 trillion by 2025, an official said. The policy envisions to create globally competitive business enterprises. The initial draft policy is being circulated to seek views of different ministries and departments.

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■ Overseas sales down 8.8% in April-October

Textile exports continue slide

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 17

Apart from handicraft products and jute products, all the other textile-related products continued their downward slide in exports in the month of October. However, the industry expects that with the easing of trade tensions between the US and China, exports would see a positive growth by the end of the fiscal.

Cotton yarn, made-ups and handloom products were down by 6 per cent in October and by 12.5 per cent between April and October. Man-made yarn, fabrics and made-ups were marginally down for the month and declined 5.69 per cent during the seven-month period.

Textiles and apparels were down by 3.21 per cent and of this textile exports slid 4.15 per cent. For the seven-month period, textile exports were down 8.84 per cent. Though apparel exports were down in October, during the seven-month period it was marginally up over last year.



Production of textiles and clothing in September also was down by 2.6 per cent and almost flat for the 6-month period.

"The exports are still sluggish, but the drop has been lesser compared to earlier months. The trade tension between the US and China are easing and this has improved the Chinese imports, especially yarn. The GST refunds are also taking a longer time to reach the exporters," said Sidharth Rajagopal, Executive Director, Texprocil.

Carpets witnessed the steepest decline in percentage terms — 16.87 percent. A saving grace was handicraft exports,

which grew by 7.66 per cent. Jute product exports also went up by 9.75 per cent.

The industry expects that the exports will improve in the coming months and that it might see a positive growth by the end of the fiscal.

"If the US-China trade issues settle down, the demand would improve. Once the exporters receive refunds, their cash flow and bottomline will improve. They will be able to price products more competitively. If the cotton prices also remain range-bound, by the end of the fiscal we might see positive growth in exports," he said.

Royalty payment on tech transfer may be capped

New Delhi, Nov. 17: The government is considering to re-introduce restrictions on royalty payments for technology transfer in view of excessive outflow of such funds to overseas companies, sources said.

A proposal in this regard will soon be circulated by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) for inter-ministerial consultation, sources said.

According to the proposal, limits could be imposed on royalty payments in case of technology transfer or collaboration involving foreign entities either directly or indirectly.

A similar proposal was mooted by the department last year. That time it had proposed that royalty should be capped at 4 per cent of domestic sales and 7 per cent of exports for the first four years; and for the next three years it should be 3 per cent of local sales and 6 per cent of exports.

But the Finance Ministry had raised objections over the proposal saying it could send a negative signal to foreign investors.

The increase in outflow of these payments started after the government liberalised the FDI policy in 2009. It had removed the cap and permitted Indian companies to pay a royalty

to their technical collaborators without seeking prior government approval. Royalty is paid to a foreign collaborator for the transfer of technology, usage of brand or trademarks.

In April 2017, a surge in royalty outflow prompted the government to set up an inter-ministerial group to analyse payment norms and see whether there is excessive payout by Indian companies to foreign collaborators. Proposing these restrictions, the department had argued that the curbs would help increase the profits of domestic companies, mainly in the automobile sector; prevent depletion of foreign exchange reserves; protect the interest of minority shareholders and increase revenue for the government.

Before 2009, royalty payments were regulated by the government and capped at 8 per cent of exports and 5 per cent of domestic sales in the case of technology transfer collaborations. They were fixed at 2 per cent of exports and 1 per cent of domestic sales for use of trademark or brand name.

Auto major Maruti Suzuki pays an average royalty of around 5.5 per cent of its net sales to its parent Suzuki.

— PTI

MATTHEW MARTIN & JAVIER BLAS NOV. 17

Saudi Arabia put a valuation on state-owned oil giant Aramco of between \$1.6 trillion and \$1.71 trillion, well below the \$2 trillion target sought by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman since he first mooted an initial public offering in 2016.

Aramco will sell just 1.5 per cent of its shares on the local stock exchange, the Tadawul, somewhat less than expected. At the lower end of the price range, the offer would fall short of a record, coming in just below the \$25 billion raised. Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.'s in 2014.

While the target valuation will make Aramco the world's biggest public company by some distance, overtaking Apple Inc., the plans are a long way from Prince Mohammed's initial aims: a local and international listing to raise as much as \$100 billion for the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund.

In a sign Aramco will rely heavily on local investors after receiving a tepid response from international money managers, the shares won't be marketed in the US and Canada as originally planned. Japan's also off the list.

Kolkata start-up develops plant-based thalassemia cure

RITWIK MUKHERJEE KOLKATA, NOV. 17

Kolkata's homegrown clinical research start-up Clinimed Lifesciences claims to have come up with a patented natural product—basically a wheat plant-based compound—to cure thalassemia, a blood disorder. The trial is nearly complete and the commercial launch is expected in the next two-to-three months, said Dr. Swati Dasgupta, Co-Founder and Joint Director (Clinical Operation), Clinimen Lifesciences.

She said her contract research organisation (CRO) that provides clinical research services on a global scale had done successful trial tests on mice and then human bodies.

Dr. Dasgupta said the final approval from the Ayush Ministry for the product's commercial launch is expected any day now, though approval from the United States Food and Drug Administration could take up to eight months. Since the product is derived from a wheat compound, Clinimen can



launch the product in India once the go-ahead comes from the Ayush Ministry, she said.

Interestingly, Clinimed has also conducted Phase-1 clinical study of metastatic colorectal cancer and it has screened 58 per cent patients—among them 76 per cent are randomized—in a global scale and became the highest recruiter from India for the study. The results have been submitted to the US FDA. She said Clinimed, being a global scale CRO, ensures that a

global trial will move faster to market. Clinimen, she said, has a record of 'screen failures' of below 3.5 per cent on an average.

Dr. Dasgupta said the company is continuously testing new anti-microbial activities of new drugs and analysing different microbiological activities of molecules by various techniques. The main objective is to develop new therapeutic drugs for threatened diseases such as cancer.

"We have a different

'apoptotic pathway' for establishment of new drugs by Invitro Cell Culture method and we practise Invio Mice Model to study the exact immunological status and toxicity level of a particular drug on animal body. Currently, we are developing monoclonal antibodies which target various proteins that influence cell activity such as receptors or other proteins present on the surface of normal/cancer cells, which will help create a new era of treatment strategy," said Dr. Dasgupta.

Clinimen is currently preparing a new drug as a syrup for iron overloaded patients, applying aurvedic procedure, which will be a large-scale production of its own, said Dr. Priyabrata Das, Joint Director (Clinical Operation).

The research company has recently been listed among the top 20 CRO companies by BioSpectrum, an Asia-Pacific publisher, for 2019 and has also tied up with Netaji Subash Chandra Bose Cancer Hospital's research laboratory for testing of new molecules.

Bharti Airtel withdraws bid for RCom assets citing unfair, biased conduct

New Delhi, Nov 17: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel has withdrawn its bid to purchase assets of Reliance Communications (RCom) after terming the move of committee of creditors to extend the bid submission deadline on the request of Reliance Jio as "extremely unfair" and "biased".

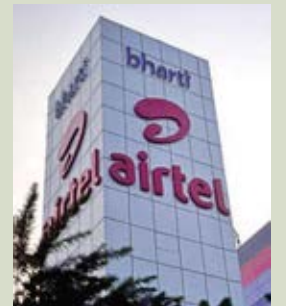
Without naming Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel Director (Finance) Harjeet Kohli in a letter to resolution professional Anish Niranjani Nanavaty said his company's request to extend the deadline was turned down by the committee of creditors (CoC) of RCom but surprisingly, the dates have been extended to accommodate submission by a bidder.

"Given the complexities involved in the proposed transaction, vide our letter dated October 31, 2019, we requested for an extension of time to submit the resolution plan from November 11, 2019, till December 1, 2019... Disappointingly, our request for extension was rejected by CoC," Kohli said.

Bharti Airtel, Bharti Infratel and private equity firm Varde Partners have already submitted their bids for assets of Reliance Communications, while Reliance Jio has sought extension of the asset sale deal deadline by another 10 days. Airtel has placed conditional bid to buy RCom's spectrum, while Bharti Infratel has submitted bids for mobile towers.

The CoC extended the deadline by 10 days and has decided to open the bid now on November 25. "To our utter shock, we have learnt that the CoC has now decided to extend the submission timeline to November 25, 2019, until 1200 hours, solely based on the request of another potential bidder," Kohli said.

He said that since Bharti Airtel's request was formally declined by the CoC, the company was constrained to submit the bids under due haste without the benefit of sufficient time to complete



the resolution plan within the set deadline.

"We find this conduct, inequitable, questionable and against the spirit of what should be a highly transparent process. To say the least, it is extremely unfair and rather biased...We hereby formally withdraw our resolution plans while reserving all rights, including the right to submit our resolution plan afresh within the new deadline communicated now," Kohli said.

RCom tried to sell assets to various companies, including Reliance Jio, to clear debt but the deals did not crystallise. Reliance Jio cancelled agreement to buy RCom assets, including spectrum, as it did not want to bear the past liabilities of the debt-ridden firm.

Later, the insolvency proceedings against RCom started on a plea filed by Swedish telecom gear maker Ericsson after the company failed to clear its dues.

RCom Chairman Anil Ambani has tendered his resignation on Saturday after the firm posted a consolidated loss of Rs 30,142 crore for the September quarter due to provisioning for liabilities after the apex court ruling on statutory dues.

This was the second-highest loss posted by any Indian corporate till date. The National Company Law Tribunal has handed over the control of the company to an insolvency resolution professional.

Sources estimate that RCom Group's total secured debt is around Rs 33,000 crore. Lenders have submitted claim of around Rs 49,000 crore in August.

— PTI



Commodity Compass

highest level of a pesticide residue that is legally tolerated in or on food or feed when pesticides are applied correctly. While 34 different varieties of chemicals, used in pesticides and for treating the tea leaves are permitted, chemicals like DDT and

Lindane are banned in the US. The licence permitting Endosulfan has also expired and is not likely to be renewed. Tea, having chemicals like Ethion, Tetradifon and Triazophos, are denied entry into the US as well.

The Tlabs chain of research laboratories, operated by the Tea Research Association (TRA) has been strictly monitoring tea quality and pesticides residue level under the Foods Safety Standards Authority of India (Fssai). The TRA also got Fssai accreditation to do that. These Tlabs operate on both ends to investigate quality of tea according to pesticides parameters in one lab and quality parameters in the other lab. Various quality

parameters being monitored by Fssai include pesticide residues, presence of heavy metals, iron fillings and toxic substances.

Tlabs also has collaboration with various industry bodies across the world that deal with tea including Tea & Herbal Infusions Europe, UK, the Iran Tea Association. Significantly, both the UK and Iran are large importers of Indian tea. Indian tea exporters are currently worried over increasingly erratic payments from Iran owing to the banking sanctions imposed by the United States. However, these worries and anxieties notwithstanding, India exported 41 mn kg of tea to Iran in the first eight months of 2019, up from 18 mn kg exported in the first eight months of 2018.

Brokers
BYTES

Aurobindo has
15 days to reply
to FDA notice

Aurobindo's Unit IV plant has received 14 observations from the USFDA in a recent inspection. This is the company's key injectable formulations plant and has around 47 pending filings, which makes up 30 per cent of overall filings. Although we do not know the nature of observations yet, the sheer number is on the higher side and likely to keep investors nervous until details emerge. The company believes none of the observations are related to data integrity. The company has around 15 days to respond to the observations, which will be subsequently followed up by a classification of the inspection. Any escalation of 483, if at all, can impact future growth meaningfully. Currently, over 50 per cent filings for ARBP are from Unit I, IV, IX, XI, which are under the USFDA scanner. In addition, ARBP has slowing growth concerns from FY22 due to a large US base after the Sandoz acquisition. The next key monitorables are classification of Unit VII and Unit IV observations. The broking house maintains hold on the stock with a target price of ₹500.

Broking firm: Emkay
Rating: Hold
Closing price: ₹410.05

Worst appears
to be over for
Ashok Leyland

Ashok Leyland is focusing on retaining profitability and preserving cash over the short term, on reducing volatility and growing business over the long term. The company is BS6-ready with differentiated solutions offering lowest total cost of ownership (TCO) for its customers. The modular platform is likely to provide it with a competitive advantage by facilitating better TCO and return on investment to customers. Light Commercial Vehicles (LCA) business appears set to expand in the addressable market by filling product gaps. Domestic M&HCV volumes appear to have bottomed out, and systemic inventory is now very comfortable. Green shoots are visible, although it is difficult to ascertain the timing of a sustainable volumes recovery. Although the worst appears to be over for the commercial vehicle industry, volumes are likely to remain volatile due to the upcoming BS6 transition. The broking house maintains its buy rating for the stock with a target price of ₹95.

Broking firm: Motilal Oswal
Rating: Buy
Closing price: ₹79.50

HDFC Life plans
to increase its
market reach

HDFC Life Insurance Company Ltd is one of the leading players in the domestic life insurance sector with a strong presence across India. As on September 30, 2019, it had 40 individual and 11 group products in its portfolio, along with eight optional rider benefits. The company has consistently grown over the years with a diverse and innovative product mix and multi distribution channel including agency, direct and bancassurance. During FY 2019, total premium was ₹29,186 crore, registering a solid growth of 24 per cent year-on-year, on the back of healthy new business and increased renewal premium. Profit after tax (PAT) stood at ₹1,280 crore in FY 2019, reflecting a growth of 15 per cent year-on-year basis. In effort to seize market opportunities, HDFC Life looks to drive growth on the back of several initiatives. In terms of macro scenario, the domestic life industry has plenty upside as India remains significantly under-insured, both in terms of penetration and density. The broking house reiterates buy rating on the stock with a target price of ₹710 per share.

Broking firm: Anandratni
Rating: Buy
Closing price: ₹577.65

Know if you are
financially
complacent

■ Money talk
Adhil Shetty

Financial planning involves visualising the future. In what ways will the world change in 30 years? How much should you save for retirement? In which city should you buy a house? It's important to keep seeking answers to these questions. The future's an unpredictable place. You don't want an unexpected turn of events to take you by surprise and catch you financially unprepared. You must, therefore, guard against complacency. The going may be smooth for you now, but it may not be so forever. Complacency can hurt you financially. Let's look at some ways in which you can get complacent with your money.

NOT SETTING FINANCIAL GOALS
Financial goals help you find focus in your financial

life. These goals tell you how much and by when you would require money at any life stage. For example, you have calculated that if you retire in 30 years' time, you'll require a retirement fund of ₹5 crore to maintain your current lifestyle. Similarly, you may be able to calculate that you need ₹30 lakh in 10 years to put your child through college. Without goals, you wouldn't be able to find financial direction, save taxes, make profitable investments, or be able to find funds right when you need them. So go ahead — set the goals that will define your life.

LIVING WITHOUT A BUDGET
Financial goals are ends. Your income provides the means. But without a budget, you can't use the means to get to the ends. Budgets help you map what you earn, spend, save, and invest. They also tell you much you need to borrow or where you need to cut back. Your domestic budget is the 30,000-foot perspective of your financial life you

must have in order to manage your money better. Without the perspective, the goals, or the discipline, you will struggle to manage your money well.

NOT KEEPING A TAB ON YOUR BILLS

The budget provides you a big picture view of your financial life. But it's also important to keep track of the tinier details. Your bill payments must ideally be automated so that they're settled before the due date, freeing you up from the hassles of bill tracking. However, this doesn't mean that you should forgo looking at your bills altogether. Always read through your utility bills, credit card and bank statements, and any other statements to ascertain that what you're paying is as per your expectations, and no charges have been slipped in without your consent. Complacency about your bills would mean you may end up being exploited by your service provider in some way.

STICKING TO THE SAME JOB WITHOUT ANY GROWTH

Sticking to a job that is financially rewarding is a good idea. However, not seeking opportunities to learn and not seeking growth is not a great idea. In a world where technological leaps happen every few months, it is absolutely impor-

tant to keep updating your knowledge and skillset to remain competitive in the workforce. Not doing so would lead to stagnation and eventually when your skills become outdated, your finances would be impacted.

NOT REVIEWING YOUR INVESTMENTS

Investments should be reviewed periodically — at least once a quarter. Every year, as your income increases, you must step up your investment contributions. This will help you accelerate towards your financial goals and also avoid spending the additional income. You must track your investments for their rate of return, various risks from stock markets, inflation, interest rate fluctuations, currency volatility and so on. Whenever there is a problem and your investment isn't performing as per expectations, you must step in to take corrective actions. Continuing on a bad investment plan could have several, terrible consequences such as losing your money, getting a poor rate of return, and not being able to redeem the investment in your time of need.

Last but not least, it is sheer financial complacency when you know that insurance is important to protect your loved ones from future eventualities, but you still don't buy coverage. Having health insurance is among your financial priorities, and so is owning term insurance if you have dependents. You can keep financial complacency away by being aware of your financial priorities, acknowledging your risks, and working towards overcoming them.

— The writer is CEO, BankBazaar.com

■ Tax matters
Kamal Rathi

Unused travel
allowance taxable

I am a retired officer drawing a pension of ₹31,000 per month. Presently, I am working as a consultant in a private firm. They have agreed to pay ₹43,000 as consultancy fees and ₹4,000 towards conveyance charges towards my travelling expenses from my home to the office by my own car. Please suggest how to calculate the income-tax on pension, consultancy fees and conveyance charges for the financial year 2019-2020.

NARESH GOPAL
Via email

A) The consultancy fees received by you as a consultant will be taxed under the head "Profits & Gains from Business or Profession". You will be eligible to claim any expenditure incurred wholly and exclusively for the purpose of carrying out your business or profession. However, the excess of conveyance amount to the extent not incurred also needs to be included in your total income since the amount is already claimed as expenditure by the concerned firm. The pension amount received will be taxed under the head "salaries" and you are eligible to claim a standard deduction of ₹50,000 under Section 16(ia) from the income for the financial year 2019-20 as against ₹40,000 earlier. You need to calculate your income-tax liability after claiming deductions under Chapter VI A — under Section 80C, 80D, 80G etc. The total income arrived after claiming the above deductions will be taxed depending on the threshold limit applicable to you for the relevant financial year.

My company has made arrangements for a group mediclaim insurance with National Insurance Company. As a result, there is a substantial reduction in the premium which is paid by the company and recovered from our salary. The insurance company issues the receipt in the name of the company. Will it be possible for me to claim deduction in respect of the premium that is recovered from me under Section 80D of the Income-Tax Act? Can the employer take cognizance of the same in deducting tax at source?

GARWESHWAR
Via email

A) Section 80D of the Income-Tax Act allows deduction in respect of medical insurance premium paid by an assessee by cheque in the previous year out of his income chargeable to tax. This insurance premium should have been paid to effect or to keep in force an insurance on the health of the assessee or his family where such assessee is an individual. There should be no difficulty in claiming a deduction in respect of the premium paid by the employer to the National Insurance Company and recovered from the employee so long as the employer has made the said payment by cheque. Since the premium is recovered from the employee's salary, it can definitely be said that the premium is paid out of the income chargeable to tax of the employee. The employer can also consider the same as a deduction while computing the tax that is to be deducted at source. For the purposes of this section, the term "family" includes the spouse or parents or dependent children of the assessee.

I returned to India in September, 2014, after staying in the US for 15 years. During my stay abroad, I had invested in mutual funds out of my income earned in dollars. These investments in mutual funds were made in the US which I am holding even now. What will be the implications if I sell these units now and repatriate this money into India? I have also taken an insurance policy in the US which is likely to mature shortly. What will be tax implications if the maturity proceeds are also repatriated?

RAVI RANJAN
Via email

A) Your residential status as per Section 6 of the Income-Tax Act will be that of a "resident and ordinarily resident" (R&OR) in India. Accordingly, your gain, if any, from the sale of units of mutual fund held in the US will be taxable in India. However, you will be eligible to take credit for any taxes paid in US on such gain, for computing your tax payable in India. The credit that could be taken will be the lower of the tax payable on such income in the US or in India. As regards the maturity proceeds of life insurance policy, normally it will be exempt under Section 10(10D) of the Income-Tax Act, subject to certain exceptions provided in that section. (The writer is a chartered accountant. He can be reached at info@rathiandmalanis.com)

INTEREST RATES ON PERSONAL LOAN

FOR TOP 10 BANKS BY MARKET CAPITALISATION
EMI ON LOAN UP TO ₹1,00,000 FOR 4-YEAR TENURE

Lender's Name	Floating Rate (%)	EMI (In ₹)
HDFC Bank	10.75 - 21.3	2,572 - 3,113
ICICI Bank	11.25 - 22.0	2,597 - 3,151
Kotak Bank	11.5 - 24.0	2,609 - 3,260
SBI	10.55 - 14.95	2,563 - 2,781
Axis Bank	12.0 - 24.0	2,633 - 3,260
Punjab National Bank	9.95 - 14.50	2,534 - 2,758
IDBI Bank	9.65 - 14.0	2,519 - 2,733
Bank Of India	10.5 - 13.5	2,560 - 2,708
Union Bank	10.10-13.2	2,541 - 2,693
Canara Bank	11.6 - 15.3	2,614 - 2,798

The EMI range is indicative and has been calculated on the basis of interest rate range as provided in the table. The actual EMI could include other fees and charges as per the bank's terms and conditions. The interest rates are based on the profile of salaried individual and pensioners for unsecured personal loan.

—Compiled by BankBazaar.com
via respective bank's website as
on Oct. 30, 2019.



■ Financial planning
By L. Ravindran

SATISH, 45 years
PROFESSION: Private employee
DEPENDENTS: Two

WHILE PLANNING IS CRITICAL TO OUR FINANCIAL WELL-BEING, IT HAS BECOME INEVITABLE IN THE UNCERTAIN TIMES WE NOW LIVE IN. DR RAVINDRAN ANALYSES YOUR FINANCIALS AND LAYS OUT A ROADMAP FOR ACHIEVING FINANCIAL GOALS.

FUNDS REQUIRED TO MEET GOALS

₹5.3 CR



ASSUMPTIONS

(L. Ravindran is a certified financial planner and managing director of Wealthmax Enterprises Management Pvt Ltd. Readers can send their queries to ravind0099@gmail.com)

WHERE DOES SHE
STAND NOW?

Income ₹24 lakh
Expenses: ₹14 lakh
(includes household expenses)
Net disposable income ₹10 lakh

NET WORTH

Asset	Value
Savings	₹80 lakh
PF	₹33 lakh
House	₹160 lakh
Car	₹27 lakh
TOTAL	₹300 LAKH

FINANCIAL GOALS (AT CURRENT COSTS):

Expenses	At cost
Post-retirement expenses	₹4.80 crore
Child's education and marriage	₹0.50 crore

(I) LONGEVITY HAS BEEN PROJECTED AT 85 YEARS; (II) THE RETIREMENT IS PLANNED AT AGE 60; (III) COST OF LIVING GROWS AT 8% PER ANNUM, WHILE EARNINGS ON SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS GROW AT 10 PER CENT PER ANNUM (III) INCOME IS ASSUMED TO BE GROWING AT 8% IN LINE WITH INFLATION.

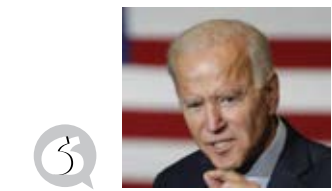
PLAN OF ACTION

Retirement is 20 years from now. Health insurance is not taken care off by employer. The disposable surplus of ₹10 lakh can be invested in the following manner every year for the next 15 years: ■ Term assurance of ₹1 crore may be taken for about 20 years which shall cost about ₹25,000 per year. ■ Contribute ₹1.5 lakh per year in PPF in the name of his son for the next 15 years which shall be valued at ₹44.37 lakh growing at 8.1 per cent at maturity. ■ Unit linked pension plan may be undertaken so as to gain on an upside, with a 15 years horizon. A sum of about ₹1.05 lakh per year over 15 years will yield a future value of ₹30.79 lakh with eight per cent a year growth. ■ Invest in an SIP of balanced (equity and debt) of ₹75,000 per month aggregating to ₹9 lakh over the next 15 years. This shall help create a corpus of ₹1.35 crore at cost (₹2.64 crore) in value terms if growth is aimed at eight per cent a year. This will help him to build up the retirement corpus fully. ■ The PPF and pension plan can be used to buy an immediate pension policy at retirement. ■ Bank deposits may be converted into a tax free bond upto an extent of ₹50 lakh immediately, maturing 12 years from date.



Call for rules

European Union and non-European Union immigrants will face the same rules after Brexit, says British prime minister, Boris Johnson



As long as Trump is president, the security and future of the US is at risk

— Joe Biden
Former Vice President, US

BRIEF

US & South Korea postpone joint drill

Bangkok: The US and South Korea will postpone joint air drills in an act of goodwill towards the nuclear-armed North, US defence secretary Mark Esper said here on Sunday. North Korea has long protested joint military drills, which it condemns as preparations for military invasion, and has set Washington an end-of-year deadline to come up with a new offer in deadlocked negotiations on its weapons programmes.

EU to help Pak for FATF action plan

Islamabad: The European Union has offered technical assistance to Pakistan for the implementation of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) action plan by the country, according to a media report. A joint press release issued at the conclusion of the 10th session of the European Union-Pakistan Joint Commission in Brussels on Friday said the two sides emphasised the importance of the implementation of FATF action plan by Pakistan, the Dawn reported. Global terror financing watchdog FATF last month retained Pakistan on its Grey List till February next year for its failure to take action against money laundering.

Threat to shut airways in SA

Johannesburg: South African unions on Sunday called on all aviation workers to join striking South African Airways (SAA) staff after the cash-strapped airline failed to meet their demands. The country's embattled flag carrier has been losing 52 million rand (\$3.5 million) per day since more than 3,000 workers started an open-ended strike on Friday forcing the airline to cancel hundreds of flights. Talks with unions ended without resolution on Saturday, prompting threats of further action. "In response to this deliberate provocation by the SAA board and its executive management, (the) NUMSA (metalworkers' union) is in the process of consulting workers for a secondary strike in aviation," NUMSA spokeswoman Phakamile Hlubi-Majola told reporters in front of the SAA headquarters in Johannesburg. Unions first threatened to strike after SAA announced this week that almost 1,000 employees could lose their jobs as part of a restructuring process. Talks with management deadlocked after they failed to agree on wage hikes.

GAS PIPELINE EXPLOSION IN B'DESH: 7 DEAD

Dhaka: At least seven people were killed and eight others injured in a gas pipeline explosion at a house in southeastern Bangladesh on Sunday, police said. The explosion occurred on the ground floor of a five-storey building in Patharghata of Chattogram city at around 8:30am, a police officer told bdnews24.com. Pedestrians also suffered injuries after the outer walls of the building collapsed during the explosion. A shop just across from the building was also damaged in the blast, the report said. It was not immediately clear what caused the explosion. The gas riser of the building was located beside the boundary wall at the bottom of the structure where the explosion occurred, police said. Maybe there was a problem with the gas riser. The explosion might have been triggered by cooking activities in the morning or from a discarded cigarette butt, he was quoted as saying. — PTI

Gearing up for exceptional tide



A man sits on a boat in a flooded St. Mark Square in Venice, Italy, on Sunday. Venetians are bracing for another exceptional tide in a season that is setting new records. Officials are forecasting a 1.6m surge of water on Sunday through the lagoon city.

John Bel Edwards wins with 51.3 per cent of the vote Blow to Trump, Louisiana re-elects Democratic gov

Washington, Nov. 17: Louisiana re-elected its Democratic governor Saturday in a fresh blow to US President Donald Trump, who campaigned heavily in the state amid the ongoing impeachment investigation into his conduct as president.

The setback comes during one of the most fraught weeks in Trump's presidency as the House of Representatives staged the probe's first public hearings. It also follows President Trump's three visits to the state to stump for Republican challenger Eddie Rispone, a Louisiana businessman. US media declared incumbent Governor John Bel Edwards the winner by a narrow margin, with 51.3 percent of the vote. Rispone ended the night with 48.7 percent, according to the *New York Times*.

For Trump, who won Louisiana by 20 percentage points in 2016, Rispone's defeat marks an embarrassing drubbing, especially for a president who has frequently boasted that his star power is enough to propel Republicans to victory around the country. A similar campaign on behalf of Kentucky's Republican Governor Matt Bevin flopped last week, with Democrat Andy Beshear winning the polls after a nail-biting contest.

Edwards said in his victory speech that "our shared love for Louisiana is always more important than the partisan differences that sometimes divide us." "And as for the president: God bless his heart," he said, drawing cheers and laughter.

Trump, who is battling impeachment in Congress, described the

Don aide restricted Ukraine call access

Washington, Nov. 17: A top US official restricted access to the summary of Donald Trump's Ukraine call that triggered an impeachment probe, fearing it would damage the president, testimony released on Saturday showed.

White House Ukraine expert Timothy Morrison told House investigators he knew immediately how sensitive the call was when he heard Trump press Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky to investigate former US vice president Joe Biden.

Morrison said in his October 31 deposition that he had asked National Security Council lawyers to review the call because he thought it would be "damaging" if it leaked. "I recommended to them that we restrict access to the package... that we did not need quite so many people to have access to the package," said Morrison, who left the NSC a day before testifying.

The conversation, which took place on July 25 while the White House was withholding military aid to Ukraine, is central

to the House impeachment inquiry into Trump. Democrats leading the probe say the call summary shows the president abused his office by bullying a vulnerable ally into interfering on his behalf in the 2020 US election.

The investigation threatens to make Trump the third US president to be impeached, although the Republican-controlled Senate would need to convict him to remove him from office.

Morrison said however the summary had been placed on a highly classified system.

City last Thursday, Trump railed against his Democratic opponents as "maniacs" and a "bunch of mad people," stating that Louisiana is "not going to let them destroy our country and rob your children of their future."

On Saturday evening, Rispone conceded the governor's race.

— AFP



Donald Trump

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— AFP

Cops warn of 'live fire' if they face deadly weapons

Hong Kong police officer hit by arrow as protesters dig in at campus; fires rage around besieged institution

Hong Kong, Nov. 17: The Hong Kong police on Monday warned for the first time that they may use "live rounds" after pro-democracy protesters fired arrows and threw petrol bombs at officers at a besieged university campus, as the crisis engulfing the city veered deeper into danger.

Protests have tremored through the global financial hub since June, with many in the city of 7.5 million people venting fury at eroding freedoms under Chinese rule.

China has repeatedly warned that it will not tol-

erate the dissent, and there have been concerns that Beijing could send in troops to put an end to the spiralling unrest.

Three protesters have been shot by armed police in the unrelenting months of protests. But all in scuffles as chaotic street clashes played out — and without such warnings being given.

A day of intense clashes, which saw a police officer struck in the leg by an arrow and protesters meet police tear gas with volleys of petrol bombs, intensified as night fell.

Clashes rolled across



Protesters react as police personnel fire teargas near Hong Kong Polytechnic University on Sunday.

Kowloon, with the epicentre around the Hong Kong Polytechnic University

(PolyU), where scores of defiant demonstrators set large fires to prevent

police from conducting a threatened raid on the campus.

They hunkered down under umbrellas from occasional fire from water cannon and hurled molotov cocktails at an armoured police vehicle, leaving it ablaze on a fly-over near the campus.

The police declared the campus a "riot" scene — a rioting conviction carries up to 10 years in jail — and blocked exits as spokesman Louis Lau issued a stark warning in a Facebook live broadcast. "I hereby warn rioters not to use petrol bombs,

arrows, cars or any deadly weapons to attack police officers," he said.

"If they continue such dangerous actions, we would have no choice but to use the minimum force necessary, including live rounds, to fire back."

The police said they fired at a car late Sunday that had driven at a line of officers near the campus — but the vehicle reversed and escaped.

Protesters at the campus appeared resolute — a twist in tactics by a leaderless movement so far defined by its fluid, unpredictable nature.

— AFP

— AFP

St. Mark's shut as water again invades Venice

Venice, Nov. 17: Venice's iconic St. Mark's Square was ordered closed on Sunday as the historic city suffered its third major flooding in less than a week, while rain lashing the rest of Italy prompted warnings in Florence and Pisa.

Venice's latest "acqua alta", or high water, hit 150 cm on Sunday, lower than Tuesday's 187 cm — the highest level in half a century — but still dangerous.

"The water has stopped rising," tweeted mayor Luigi Brugnaro, who has estimated damage so far from the invading salt water at over one billion euros.

"High of 150 cm... Venice is working to restart," Mr Brugnaro said after the sea water swamped the already devastated city where authorities have declared a state of emergency.

High tides were forecast to reach a maximum of 110 cm for the coming days, giving the authorities and citizens the

opportunity to assess the damage as shops and Saint Mark's Square reopened late Sunday.

To the south, Tuscany president Enrico Rossi tweeted a warning of a "flood wave" on the Arno and said boards were being installed on the swollen river's banks in Pisa "as a precautionary measure".

The Italian army tweeted photos of paratroopers helping to bolster river defences in Pisa, with authorities monitoring the same river in Florence after heavy rain made it rise dramatically overnight.

Flooding from the Arno devastated Renaissance jewel Florence in 1966, killing around 100 people. On Sunday, civil protection units in Florence advised citizens "not to stand near the Arno's riverbanks".

Firefighters tweeted footage of a hovercraft being deployed to rescue stranded citizens in southern Tuscany's Grossetano province.

— AFP

Leaked China papers reveal 'no mercy' in Xinjiang: NYT

Beijing, Nov. 17: A rare and huge leak of Chinese government documents has shed new light on a security crackdown on Muslims in China's Xinjiang region, where President Xi Jinping ordered officials to act with "absolutely no mercy" against separatism and extremism, *The New York Times* reported.

Human rights groups and outside experts say more than one million Uighurs and other mostly Muslim minorities have been rounded up in a network of internment camps across the far-western region.

The 403 pages of internal papers obtained by the *Times* provide an unprecedented look into the highly-secretive Communist Party's con-

troversial crackdown, which has come under increasing international criticism, especially from the United States.

The documents include previously unpublished speeches by Xi as well as directives and reports on the surveillance and control of the Uighur population, the newspaper said on the weekend.

The leak also suggests that there has been some discontent within the party about the crackdown. The documents were leaked by an unnamed member of the Chinese political establishment who expressed hope that the disclosure would prevent the leadership, including Xi, from "escaping culpability for the mass detentions", the *Times* said.

In a 2014 speech to offi-

cials made after militants from the Uighur minority killed 31 people in a train station in southwestern China, Xi called for an all-out "struggle against terrorism, infiltration and separatism" using the "organs of dictatorship," and showing "absolutely no mercy", according to the daily. The internment camps expanded rapidly following the appointment in 2016 of a new party chief in Xinjiang, Chen Quanguo.

Chen, according to the *Times*, distributed Xi's speeches to justify the crackdown and urged officials to "round up everyone who should be rounded up". The trove of leaked documents included a guide to answering questions from students who had returned home to Xinjiang.

— AFP

RUSSIAN STRIKES KILL 9 IN SYRIA, CLAIMS MONITOR

Beirut, Nov. 17: Air strikes by Syrian regime ally Russia on Sunday killed nine civilians in the jihadist-run enclave of Idlib in the northwest of the country, a war monitor said.

Five of the victims died in the village of Al-Malaja in southern Idlib province while the other four were killed in raids on the town of Sarageb in the east, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

A number of people were wounded, some seriously, the monitor's head Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP, though he was unable to say how many.

The Idlib region, home to around three million people including many displaced by Syria's eight-year civil war, is controlled by the country's former Al-Qaeda affiliate.

The Hayat Tahrir al-Sham jihadist alliance also controls parts of neighbouring Aleppo and Latakia provinces.

The region is one of the last holdouts of opposition to forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

A ceasefire announced by Russia has largely held since late August.

But the Observatory says 48 civilians — including 16 children — have been killed in Russian air strikes on the region since the start of November.

The Britain-based monitor, which relies on sources inside Syria, says it determines who carries out an air strike according to flight patterns.

— AFP



Sharing secrets

Kristen Bell admits sharing *Frozen 2* secrets with her kids ahead of the release but warned them that their teeth would fall out if they revealed to anyone



No one should use steroids. People misuse them which is bad for health.

— Salman Khan, Actor

IN BRIEF

Cheshire Crossing gets movie adaption

Los Angeles: Andy Weir's graphic novel *Cheshire Crossing* is getting a film adaptation. Amblin Partners has picked up the movie rights to the book, with Erin Cressida Wilson attached to write the script. According to the *Hollywood Reporter*, Michael De Luca is producing the adaptation. The story revolves around Dorothy from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Alice of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*'s Wendy, who meet in boarding school for troubled young ladies. — PTI

'Wasn't raised to be centre of attention'

London: *Black Panther* star Chadwick Boseman says he never imagined acting on stage or in front of the camera as he wasn't "raised to be the centre of attention". The actor, who became a global star with his Marvel stint as *Black Panther* aka T'Challa, the king and protector of Wakanda, said he always had a story or a song playing in his head but he never thought of pursuing career in the entertainment industry. "I didn't see myself on stage, or in front of camera." — PTI



Theron 'will not change to find love'

London: Hollywood star Charlize Theron says she wants to fall in love, but will not compromise to be in a relationship. Theron said in her 20s she thought it was okay to modulate herself depending on her partner but, now in her 40s, the actor doesn't dream of a "perfect" equation. "I'd love to meet somebody and that is something I even think can happen. I'm just not willing to compromise if something doesn't feel right. That's something that has definitely changed for me after I got to my forties." — PTI

KANYE WEST PERFORMS IN HOUSTON JAILS

Los Angeles: Rapper-turned-gospel singer Kanye West performed songs from his new album *Jesus is King* for hundreds of inmates at two jails in Houston, Texas. West and his troop performed for more than 200 male inmates at one jail facility and then held a concert for a smaller crowd of female inmates in another prison. According to the *Hollywood Reporter*, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said West's representatives asked jail officials about doing secret shows. West shook hands with a number of the inmates during his visit. Many inmates were moved to tears during the performances. The musician reportedly used a secret tunnel to reach the facility where the female inmates are being held. Texas governor Greg Abbott tweeted on Saturday that it would be "great if other artists followed Kanye's lead." "What Kanye West does to inspire the incarcerated is transformative," Abbott said. "Saving one soul at a time. Inmates who turn to God may get released earlier [because] of good behavior & may be less likely to commit future crimes." The concerts were reminiscent of jailhouse gigs by Johnny Cash. — PTI



Kanye West

Arctic Ocean acidification may emit harmful gases

Lead to increase in nitrous oxide, an ozone-depleting gas

Geneva: The gradual acidification of the subarctic region of the Pacific ocean, is causing a significant increase in the production of nitrous oxide, an ozone-depleting greenhouse gas, according to a study.

The researchers, including those from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne in Switzerland, studied the production of nitrous oxide near the Hokkaido and the Kuril Islands — disputed territories between Japan and Russia in the northern Pacific ocean.

The rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere due to human activities increases the acidity of the ocean, according to the researchers.

The study, published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, revealed that if Ph — which has a scale from zero (most acidic) to 14 (most alkaline) — keeps falling at the current rate of 0.0051 units per year, the nitrous oxide produced in this Pacific region may rise by 185 per cent to 491 per cent by 2100.



Study says if Ph — which has a scale from zero to 14 — keeps falling at the current rate of 0.0051 units per year, the nitrous oxide produced in this Pacific region may rise by 185% to 491% by 2100

The researchers added that the greenhouse effect of nitrous oxide, forming in these regions, is 298 times greater than that of carbon dioxide.

As part of the study, they collected samples at five different sites off the coast of Japan, from the subarctic region to the subtropical region.

When they lowered the samples' pH levels, it triggered a natural process in which microbes in the water converted ammonium into nitrate and nitrous oxide.

"Our study provides additional proof that rising carbon dioxide emissions are disrupting natu-

ral biogeochemical cycles, which are highly sensitive to changes in the environment. However, our conclusions are valid only for the part of the Pacific that we examined," said study senior author Florian Breider from EPFL.

Breider said additional research is needed to ascertain whether the same process is occurring in other parts of the world. Developing models of this process, taking all environmental variables into account, may help scientists obtain critical information for predicting future climate. — PTI

Botulism likely led to death of birds at Sambhar salt lake

Jaipur: Thousands of birds have died at India's largest inland saltwater lake from suspected botulism, officials said Sunday.

The 8,000 carcasses were found over the last few days in and around Rajasthan state's Sambhar Lake, about 80 kilometres from the capital Jaipur.

"Veterinary experts from the Rajasthan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences have indicated that the deaths occurred due to botulism," state forest department's principal secretary, Sreyya Guha said.

Avian botulism, a naturally occurring neurotoxin activated in warm weather by bacteria in silt, is passed along to

waterbirds through infected bugs, causing paralysis or death. It is not contagious to humans.

The government is awaiting a detailed analysis of the dead birds from the Indian Veterinary Research Institute as well as a report from a southern India laboratory on the water's heavy metal toxicity. Officials suspect the birds had been feeding on maggot-infested carcasses, contributing to their death.

Thousands of carcasses have been fished out of the water and buried but there are fears more could be lying on the bed of the lake. A 70-member team had been formed to recover and dispose of the birds. — AFP



A cosplayer at the Comic Con Colombia 2019 in Medellin on Saturday. — AFP

Alex Kapranos, of Franz Ferdinand, at the Corona Capital music festival in Mexico City on Saturday. — AP

Black Eyed Peas star accuses Qantas attendant of racism

Sydney: Black Eyed Peas musician Will.i.am has accused a flight attendant from Australia's national carrier Qantas of being racist and rude to him on a flight.

The musician said he was met by police at Sydney Airport on Saturday after an incident with an "overly aggressive flight attendant" who he says was upset with him because he couldn't hear her through his



Will.i.am

noise-cancelling headphones.

He tweeted a photo of a police officer and said: "This is how you greeted

when you land from Brisbane to Sydney flying @qantas with a #RacistFlightattendant." Qantas rejected the allegation saying that the incident had nothing to do with race. "There was a misunderstanding on board, which seems to have been exacerbated by will.i.am wearing noise cancelling headphones and not being able to hear instructions from crew," airline said. — AP



Elephants are forced to perform a battle re-enactment during the annual Surin Elephant Round-up festival in Surin, Thailand, on Sunday. — AFP



Hot-air balloons during the XVIII International Balloon Festival at the Metropolitan Park in Leon, Mexico, on Saturday. — AFP



Emily Ratajkowski (left) and Paris Hilton at the 13th Annual Go Gala at NeueHouse Hollywood in Los Angeles on Saturday. — AP

After India visit, Charles on NZ trip

Wellington: Britain's Prince Charles and his wife Camilla arrived in New Zealand on Sunday for a weeklong trip, during which they plan to visit the city of Christchurch and the historic treaty grounds at Waitangi, where the nation's founding document was signed.

It is the couple's third joint visit to New Zealand and their first in four years.

Their plane had landed in Auckland on Sunday afternoon. Their public duties were due to begin Monday when they planned to lay a wreath at the Mount Roskill War Memorial. The couple is due to meet with PM Jacinda Ardern on Tuesday. — AP



Charles



Camilla

NEWS NUGGETS

'LICHENS MAY HAVE EVOLVED AFTER PLANTS'

New York: Lichens, composite organisms in which algae and fungi live together as one life form, may have come into existence much later in the Earth's history than previously thought, according to a study which suggests they evolved millions of years after plants colonised land.

The study, published in the journal *Geobiology*, noted that until now scientists thought lichens were some of the first organisms to start moving to land from aquatic habitats — changing the planet's atmosphere and helping form the terrain for modern plants.

The researchers said the specific questions of when lichens evolved, and how many times fungi evolved the ability to form symbiotic relationships with algae remained contentious until now. — PTI

PHOTOGRAPHER OF SWINGING 60s TERRY O'NEILL DIES AT 81

London: Terry O'Neill, the photographer who rose to fame in the 1960s as a chronicler of the celebrities and public figures who defined the era, has died at the age of 81.



He was known for his pictures of musicians, models and actors, from the Beatles and the Rolling Stones to Brigitte Bardot and Sean Connery.

O'Neill, who was awarded a CBE last month for services to photography, died at home on Saturday night after a long illness, the *Guardian* reported.

He later photographed Amy Winehouse, Nicole Kidman and Nelson Mandela as well as the Queen. — Agencies

2 U.S. CHEMISTRY PROFESSORS ARRESTED FOR MAKING METH

Arkadelphia, US: Two Arkansas chemistry professors have been arrested and accused of making methamphetamine, according to the Clark county sheriff's department, CNN reported. Terry David Bateman, 45, and Bradley Allen Rowland, 40, both associate professors of chemistry at

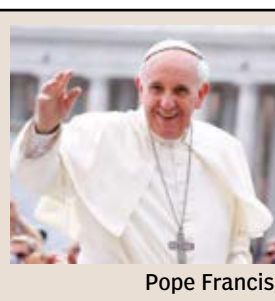
Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, were taken into custody Friday afternoon. They face charges of manufacturing methamphetamine and using drug paraphernalia. Both professors have been on administrative leave that started October 11. — Agencies

With nukes, martyrs and reunion on platter, Pope Asian agenda both personal & pastoral

Vatican City: Pope Francis has agendas both pastoral and personal for his trip to Asia, where he'll appeal for global nuclear disarmament at the sites of the atomic bomb and minister to two tiny Catholic communities that have suffered gruesome periods of persecution.

Emphasising the dignity of life is also on Francis' to-do list for his trip to Thailand and Japan that begins Wednesday, given the scourge of human trafficking in Thailand and Japan's use of capital punishment and high suicide rate.

As a young Jesuit, Francis dreamed of being a missionary in Japan, inspired by the courage of Japan's Hidden Christians, who braved two centuries of persecution to keep their faith



Pope Francis

Emphasising the dignity of life is also on Francis' to-do list for his trip to Thailand and Japan that begins Wed, given human trafficking in Thailand and Japan's use of capital punishment and high suicide rate

alive. "In some way, this is the fulfilment of his dream," said the Rev. Bernardo Cervellera, editor of *AsiaNews*, a Vatican-affiliated news service.

In Thailand, Francis will also be reunited with his second cousin, Sister Ana Rose Sivori, an Argentine nun who has lived in Thailand since 1966 and will serve as Francis' official translator there. Here are some highlights

of Francis' pilgrimage, his fourth to Asia and one that could also touch on the Vatican's delicate relations with China.

One of the highlights of the trip will be Francis' prayer at the memorial of the 26 Nagasaki Martyrs, who were crucified in 1597 at the start of a two-century wave of anti-Christian persecution by Japanese rulers. Francis' own Jesuit order had introduced Christianity to

Japan with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier on the archipelago in 1549. After converting more than a quarter-million Japanese, missionaries were banned at the start of the 17th century. Japanese Christians were forced to renounce their faith, suffer tortuous deaths or go underground.

Francis will greet some descendants of these Hidden Christians, whose story was recounted in the 2016 Martin Scorsese film *Silence*.

Francis will also honour Thailand's World War II-era martyrs, who were victims of anti-Christian persecution by Thais who viewed Christianity as foreign and associated with French colonial powers.

Francis will pray at the sanctuary for Thailand's first martyred priest, Nicolas Bunkerd Kitbamrung. — AP

DELHI SPECIAL

NEW DELHI MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2019

DELHI AGE

Matinee

'Role in Marjaavaan was powerful'

25



SPORT | Cricket

Prithvi slams 50 on return from doping ban

14

SPORT | Football

Ivory Coast need two penalties to beat Niger

15

GUIDE TO FORTUNE

Tick the answer and check them below.

1 Between 1997 and 2004, Barack Obama served three terms in the Senate of which US state?

- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana

2 What was invented in Britain by Sampson Mordan and Gabriel Riddle in 1822?

- Fountain pen
- Propelling pencil
- Kaleidoscope

3 How many hearts does an earthworm have?

- 0
- 5
- 1

SHORT TAKES



Pandit Birju Maharaj presenting the 'Sumitra Charat Ram Award' for lifetime achievement to dancer Sonal Mansingh in New Delhi on Sunday.

— BIPLAB BANERJEE

4 held with pistols, knife & 7 mobiles

New Delhi: With the arrest of four armed criminals, the Delhi Police has recovered two country made pistols with three live cartridges, a button operated knife, seven mobile phones and a stolen two-wheeler from their possession. The accused were identified as Vinay (23), Deepak (27), Gourav and Ajay (24). Vinay was previously involved in a case while Gourav was involved in two cases and Ajay in four, said DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur. The staff of PS Sangam Vihar arrested Gourav and Ajay with the weapon and five mobiles. In the second incident, the staff of PS Maidan Garhi arrested Vinay and Deepak during checking and recovered a pistol, knife and two mobiles, the DCP added.

Minor reunited with family

New Delhi: A 13-year-old boy, who ran from his house in Bihar and reached Delhi due to his poor performance in studies, was reunited with his family. DCP (PCR) Sharat Kumar Sinha said that on late Thursday night the newly launched Prakar vehicle staff saw a distressed minor boy near Jhandewalan mandir. The staff consoled the victim after which he disclosed that he is a resident of Bhagalpur, Bihar and he had run away from his village after his father had shown unhappiness over his poor performance in exams. Local police was informed about the incident and the relatives were also informed. After proper verification, the boy was handed over to his local guardian in presence of local police.

Handiwork of AAP, alleges close aide 'Missing' posters of BJP MP Gambhir surface

New Delhi, Nov. 17: "Missing" posters of Bharatiya Janata Party lawmaker Gautam Gambhir, who drew criticism for skipping a crucial meeting two days ago on pollution, purportedly surfaced across Delhi on Sunday.

"Missing. Have you seen this person? He was last seen eating 'jalebis' in Indore. The entire Delhi is looking for him," the message on the posters stated along with a picture of Gambhir, the Lok Sabha MP from East Delhi.

These posters cropped up after the cricketer-turned-politician skipped a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on urban development on Friday over air pollution in the National Capital Region.

Pictures of Gambhir, who appears on sports channels for cricket commentary, enjoying 'jalebis' in Indore on the same day also surfaced on social media.

Only four MPs of a 28-member parliamentary



Posters of BJP MP Gautam Gambhir put up after he failed to attend a key meeting on pollution called by a parliamentary panel in New Delhi on Sunday.

— PTI

panel attended the key meeting to discuss the air pollution crisis in the National Capital Region. The meeting was ultimately called off as lawmakers and bureaucrats were absent.

Meanwhile, a close aide of the BJP MP alleged that the posters were a handiwork of the AAP that "has not been able to digest the humiliating defeat of its candidate, Atishi, at the hands of Gautam Gambhir in the Lok Sabha election.

According to Gaurav Arora, Gambhir was in his constituency till last Wednesday. He inaugurated two schools of the East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) and attended other programmes before leaving for his fixed assignment. "The AAP and its leaders are baffled by the work done by Gambhir in a short span of five months in East Delhi after winning the election," Arora added.

— PTI

Fake call centre busted, 32 held

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

The Delhi police has busted a fake call centre allegedly involved in duping foreign nationals by posing as Canadian police officials and has arrested 32 people from Moti Nagar area in connection with the scam, the police said on Sunday.

Fifty-five computers, 35 mobile phones, and illegal software along with other equipments have also been seized, it said.

On November 15, the police said it received inputs about some fraudsters who posed as Canadian police officials over the phone and duped foreign nationals on the pretext of saving them from social insurance number (SIN) violations.

SIN is a nine digit number that is required to work in Canada or to have access to government programmes and benefits, the police said.

A complaint was also received in this regard by one of the Canadian nationals, Elvis Henry, against the fraudsters who allegedly duped him of \$13,500 through the SIN scam, it added.

The police, along with a team of the department of telecommunications (DoT) officials, raided the call centre set up at West

► During interrogation, the supervisors disclosed that they impersonated as Canadian police officials and targeted Canadian nationals through voice over internet protocol (VoIP) calls

Delhi's Moti Nagar, where in one Jasjit Singh, Sarabjit Singh, and Sagar Jain were found supervising the activities of the callers who were engaged in making and receiving international calls, said additional deputy commissioner of police (West) Sameer Sharma.

During sustained interrogation, the supervisors disclosed that they impersonated as Canadian police officials and targeted Canadian nationals through voice over internet protocol (VoIP) calls, he said. Victims were asked to hand over the money, either through Bitcoin, ATMs, and gift cards including those offered by credit card companies.

Raids are being conducted to nab the other accused, including the owners of the call centre Raja, Sushil, Naveen, Bunny Arora, and Pankaj, the police said.

Nirbhaya case: Court admits parents' plea

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

A Delhi court has admitted a plea filed by the parents of the 2012-gangrape victim, seeking transfer of the case to another judge.

The victim's parents have sought the court's direction to the Tihar Jail authorities to expedite the execution of the rape convicts.

The court will hear the matter on November 25. They moved the application since the earlier two judges hearing the matter got transferred and the matter is getting adjourned continuously, the plea said.

The special fast track court—set up to hear cases of sexual harassment cases exclusively—of the Patiala House court, is currently vacant and no judge has been appointed till now.

The application said that the victim's parents approached the court since the convicts have exhausted all legal remedies.

In December last year, the parents of Nirbhaya, the 23-year-old paramedic who was gangraped in December 2012, approached the court to fast-track the procedure to hang all the four convicts in the case.

Man charred to death in Narela shoe factory fire

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

A 32-year-old man was charred to death after a fire broke out at a shoe factory in Outer Delhi's Narela, officials said. The body was beyond recognition and it was suspected to be of security guard Mangal Mandal, a resident of Bihar, they said.

Chief fire officer Atul Garg said 24 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. The fire-fighters started dousing the fire first on the ground floor and then broke the windows for the smoke to come out. The fire was brought under control within an hour and was followed by the cooling operation," he said.

Around 4.45 pm, Mandal's body was found near the stairs on the top floor of the factory, the official said, adding that the floor's gate was locked from inside.

"The factory owner, Praveen Kumar, told the police that it was a holiday on Saturday and only Mandal was supposed to be inside the factory," said DCP (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma. Mandal had been working in Delhi for the past 10 years.

Air quality improves due to strong winds, but still 'poor'

Correlation between stubble burning and spike in pollution: Kejri

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

Delhiites got some respite from pollution on Sunday as the air quality in the city improved to "poor" category from the "severe" category.

The national capital witnessed a dip in pollution levels on Saturday morning even as the air quality in the city remained in the "severe" category.

The air quality index (AQI) in Delhi at 9 am on Sunday stood at 254 against an AQI of 412 at the same time on Saturday. The AQI in Faridabad was 228, Ghaziabad 241, Greater Noida 192, Noida 224 and Gurgaon 193.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday asserted that there is a "very strong correlation" between stubble burning and pollution in north India as he attributed the improvement in air quality to dip in cases of setting crop residue afire.

Mr Kejriwal and the ruling AAP have been at the forefront of blaming stubble burning in neighbouring Punjab and Haryana as one of the major reasons for high levels of air pollution during winters in Delhi. "A very strong correlation can be seen between stubble burning and the spike in air pollution in North India. As soon as stubble burning began in the first week of Oct, the AQI started rising. Now that burning is coming to an end, air quality is also improving," the chief minister tweeted.

In another tweet, the chief minister said, "The stubble burning has



BJP MP Vijay Goel with supporters during a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Sunday.

— ASIAN AGE

stopped and with it, the air quality in Delhi has improved. "A few people say that stubble burning contributes only 5 per cent to air pollution in Delhi. So with reduction of only 5 per cent, has the air quality index improved from over 500 to 200? Rather than doing politics on pollution, there is a need to address the issue together with good intentions".

The BJP has been hitting out at Arvind Kejriwal government for "not doing anything" to control air pollution in the past five years and bringing in odd-even road rationing scheme as Assembly polls are approaching.

Senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Vijay Goel said if the Kejriwal government thinks stubble burning is the main reason for harmful air quality in Delhi then why

74% parents want annual 'smog break' in schools

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

Over 70 per cent parents in Delhi and NCR believe there should be a scheduled "smog break" in schools from November 1-20 every year, according to a new survey.

The survey, with nearly 10,000 respondents from Delhi-NCR region, has also found that parents want that leaves of the smog break be compen-

sated with reduction of leaves from the summer, winter, and spring breaks combined to ensure the study calendar is not affected.

"From Delhi, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Noida, and Gurgaon, 74 per cent parents want that there should be a scheduled smog break from November 1-20 every year when the air quality is at its worse," says the findings of the survey.

did it resort to the Odd-Even scheme.

The Delhi government will take a final call on Monday whether or not to

extend the scheme, which was implemented from November 4-15, considering the current situation of air pollution.

Protest march to Parliament today JNUSU appeals students of other varsities to join strike

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

The Jawaharlal Nehru Students' Union (JNUSU) has appealed to students of other universities to join its march to Parliament on Monday, to protest against hostel fee hike and other issues affecting higher education.

The students' union will be marching from the JNU towards Parliament on Monday, when the winter session will begin.

"At a time when fee hikes are rampant across the country, students have emerged as the first line of defence for inclusive education. We invite all students of Delhi, to join us as we march on foot from JNU to Parliament on the first day of the winter session of Parliament," the

► JNUSU also appealed to students outside Delhi to organise agitations on Monday to mark a national day of protest

JNUSU said.

It also appealed to students outside Delhi to organise agitations on Monday to mark a national day of protest, "to safeguard education as a right, and oppose its transformation into a commodity".

Police said they have made adequate security arrangements along the route of the march. Police personnel will be deployed at all entry points leading towards

Parliament from all possible routes starting from southwest district, a senior police official said.

The Delhi Police has registered an FIR in connection with the "vandalism" off administration block of JNU last week, officials said on Sunday.

A section of JNU teachers on Sunday said the JNU administration was open to dialogue with elected hostel representatives but not with the "non-notified" students' union to end the standoff by students over the hike in hostel fees. Umesh Kadam, the dean of students, said he has not yet notified the students' union.

JNU Vice Chancellor M Jagadeesh Kumar has urged students to end the protest.

3 held for for duping finance company

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

With the arrest of three persons, the Delhi Police claimed to have busted a gang of cheats who had procured 28 Honda scooters on 'hire-purchase' basis after getting loan from Hinduja Leyland Finance Limited on the basis of forged papers.

Six vehicles have been recovered from their possession.

The trio was identified as Sunil Kumar (25), Harish Dhingra (40) and Mohd. Sualheeh (28). Sunil worked as a market-

ing agent of Hinduja Leyland Finance Limited. Harish worked as a share broker but later turned into a cheat after losses and Sualheeh is a dealer of old tyres in Jama Masjid area.

A complaint was received that Sunil along with his associates had obtained loan after providing fake documents of customers of various showrooms of Honda Activa. During interrogation, Sunil told the name of his associates who were also nabbed.

It was revealed that Harish was the mastermind behind the fraud

► The trio was identified as Sunil Kumar (25), Harish Dhingra (40) and Mohd. Sualheeh (28). Sunil worked as a marketing agent

who would lure marketing agents of finance companies who used to work in automobile showrooms and facilitate loans for the prospective buyers.

The gang would sell out the vehicles to buyers who want to use the vehicles in inner colony roads

only and don't go outside their boundary so that they are not checked and chances of recovery of vehicle by the finance companies became very less.

Harish would give Sunil ₹25,000 out of which ₹10,000 was deposited as cash down payment and remaining money was the profit share of Sunil.

Harish used to charge ₹35,000 from Sualheeh for each vehicle who in turn sells the same for around ₹40,000-45,000.

Thus the end user would get a new Honda Activa costing around ₹75,000 for a throwaway price.

AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, NOV. 17

A 19-year-old physiotherapy student died when his speeding car overturned after hitting a kerb and ramming into a water tanker in south-east Delhi in the early hours of Sunday, police said.

Ansh Girdhar, a resident of Kalkaji Extension, was returning home when the incident occurred on the Okhla Estate Road, police said, adding that they were informed about it around 3.29 am.

According to preliminary investigation, Girdhar was driving his Baleno car at high speed and lost control in order to save his vehicle from a tree trunk lying on the road. The car hit the pavement and then a water tanker parked on the roadside, following which it overturned, an officer said.

The teenager was rushed to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences where he succumbed to his injuries, deputy commissioner of police (Southeast) Chinmoy Biswal said, adding that the car was found in a severely damaged condition at the accident site.

Girdhar was pursuing a physiotherapy course from an institute at Vasant Kunj. A case has been registered at the Govindpuri and the body has been handed over to the family.

THE ANSWERS TO TODAY'S GUIDE TO FORTUNE

- 5
- Propelling pencil
- Illinois



Record deal

Chris Green has signed the longest deal in BBL history after Sydney Thunder signed the off-spinner for a further six seasons

Comeback Shaw



A good balance and committed footwork is the key to success in Australia.

— Mickey Arthur, former Pakistan coach

SHORT TAKES



James Pattinson

'Abusive' Pattinson banned for a Test

Sydney: Australia fast bowler James Pattinson was suspended on Sunday for player abuse, ruling him out of the first Test against Pakistan this week with skipper Tim Paine saying he had let down the team. The paceman was found guilty of breaching Cricket Australia's code of conduct during Victoria's Sheffield Shield game against Queensland last week. It was not clear what he said, but the governing body characterised it as "personal abuse of a player while fielding". The Australian and the Sydney Daily Telegraph said it allegedly involved a homophobic slur.

— AFP

T10 is not good for cricket: Doshi

Mumbai: Former India left-arm spinner Dilip Doshi on Sunday expressed his disapproval for T10 cricket, saying anything beyond T20 will have an adverse affect on the sport. The 71-year-old Doshi, who played 33 Tests and 15 ODIs, was speaking on the sidelines of 'Tata Literature Live' here in the presence of former Australian umpire Simon Taufel and commentator Ashis Ray. When a participant asked about the T10 format, Doshi said, "T20 is the lowest ceiling in my view or maintaining still some of the aesthetics of the game. Once you go lower than that, you will have to make huge compromise and I think the game would suffer from that compromise," Doshi said. Taking a dig at the T20-driven shorter formats of the game, he said players with incomplete or bad action are winning Man-of-the-Match awards these days.

— AFP

Mumbai, Nov. 17: Returning to competitive cricket with a bang after serving a doping suspension, young Prithvi Shaw says he is now completely focussed on letting his bat do the talking to force his way back into the Indian team.

"Now I will focus on scoring as many runs as possible and win games for the team," said Shaw, who played his first game after serving a back-dated eight-month suspension by the BCCI for failing a dope test. In his comeback match, Shaw made a stroke-filled 39-ball 63 to help Mumbai thrash Assam by 83 runs in a Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy game.

"I will just keep scoring runs. It is all about the selectors and what they think. My job is to score runs and win games for the team," the 20-year-old opening batsman said when asked about his return to the national team. Shaw, who made a dream Test debut with a century and a fifty in the two matches he has played so far, has no other option but to pile up tons of runs to reclaim his Test spot as Rohit Sharma and Mayank Agarwal have grabbed their chances in his absence.

Shaw was banned from all forms of cricket by the BCCI for a (retrospective) period of eight months in July after failing a dope test during the Mushtaq Ali Trophy in March and his ban ended on Friday. Talking about the ban period, Shaw said the episode was definitely "hard and upsetting" but it is a thing of the past now. "I had never thought that something like this would happen. I was obviously upset. For the first 20-25 days after I was banned, I was not able to understand how did it happen," he said. "Time passed by. I went to London and chilled out there as I was not allowed to practice till September 15. After that I sta-

bilised myself and kept myself mentally stronger by telling myself these three months would pass. But each day was hard, it was getting longer. It's all past now."

Shaw said that former skipper Rahul David, who is the head of cricket in Bangalore's National Cricket Academy, helped him in his comeback. "There was nothing in my mind. I couldn't have done anything about the ban. After returning from London, Rahul (Dravid) sir called me to the NCA for training. There I went through a series of fitness tests like yo-yo," he said.

"Under Rahul sir a lot of focus was on fitness. I had to clear all my fitness tests. What also helped was that during the nets good bowlers were available like Kuldeep Yadav, Bhuvu (Bhuvneshwar Kumar) and Varun Aaron. Besides, Rahul sir was always there for guidance and mental issues."

He said apart from his father Pankaj, a lot of cricketers and coaches supported him during his hard days.

"There obviously was a period when I was not feeling too well. But then as the day of return came closer, I started to get my acts together."

"If I had gone into a shell at that point of time (ban) I would have felt pressure. But whatever happens it's for good."

— PTI

Prithvi slams fifty on return from doping ban, says focus is on scoring runs



Prithvi Shaw en route to his fifty against Assam in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy in Mumbai on Sunday.

— PTI

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Mayank Agarwal's attacking game in Tests could open the door for his selection in India's limited overs squads for the assignments against West Indies next month.

There is a school of thought that Agarwal could be an option, preferably for the three-match ODI series against the West Indies in December, in case vice-captain Rohit Sharma takes a break to rejuvenate himself ahead of the big away tour of New Zealand early next year.

Rohit has been continuously playing for a while now and the only break he got was the two Test matches in the West Indies. The Indian vice-captain will be integral to the team's plans across formats during the New Zealand tour when it will play five T20 Internationals, three ODIs and two Tests.

For the limited overs matches against West Indies, it will only be fair if the selectors think of giving Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri with another option in Agarwal, who has a fantastic List A record of 13 hundreds at a 50-plus average and 100-plus strike-rate. One more factor that could go in Agarwal's favour is Shikhar Dhawan's prolonged bad patch and the need to have another back-up option, apart from KL Rahul, ready.

Agarwal was sent as a late replacement for Vijay Shankar during the World Cup and though he didn't get a game in the United Kingdom, the move was an

indicator that the Karnataka batsman, for his attacking game, is also in the selectors' white ball scheme of things.

Many feel that Agarwal could be seen as a long-term option keeping in mind the 2023 ODI World Cup in India, as Dhawan, given his deteriorating form, might not be around then.

Former India player and cricket analyst Deep Dasgupta sees no harm in trying out Agarwal in the shorter formats, and the bilateral series against the West Indies could be the right platform.

"It would be a great thing if the Indian team management has Mayank in mind as an opening option. In fact, he is a natural white ball player, who has wonderfully transformed and adapted to the needs of red ball cricket," Dasgupta said.

"If you look at Mayank, his talent was never questioned. He always had the range of strokes from drives to the horizontal bat shots. It was just that in the earlier part he was getting out playing cameos, but not anymore," he added.

Agarwal had had a dream start to his Test career with two double hundreds in his kitty even before completing 10 Test matches. However, what has caught everyone's attention is the eight huge sixes that he hit during his 243 against

Bangladesh in the opening Test in Indore.

So can Agarwal be tried in the T20s too, keeping the World T20 in mind, those in the know of things feel that it could be KL Rahul and Rohit Sharma, who look the best fit for the tournament Down Under next year. Many also believe that things could change for Agarwal if he is able to have a good IPL. But for now, it's the 50-over game that awaits.

— PTI

There obviously was a period when I was not feeling too well. But then as the day of return came closer, I started to get my acts together. "If I had gone into a shell at that point of time (ban) I would have felt pressure. But whatever happens it's for good."

— PRITHVI SHAW



Mayank Agarwal

Countdown begins for D/N Test as Kolkata turns pink

Kolkata, Nov. 17: The Countdown for India's first-ever Day/Night Test began on Sunday with the City of Joy turning pink and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly unveiling 'Pinku-Tinku', the much-awaited event's official mascots.

Ganguly was seen posing with the match ticket and the mascots at the Eden Gardens, making it a big hit among kids ahead of the historic Test against Bangladesh. A giant pink balloon was also released at the Eden Gardens and it will be seen floating in the sky till the end of the historic India-Bangladesh Test.

City's important landmarks — the Shahid Minar, the tallest building '42' and some Kolkata Municipality Corporation Parks — also were illuminated with pink lights. A ferry with pink ball illumination was also seen playing on the Hooghly and it will keep making trips between the iconic Howrah bridge and Vidyasagar Setu every evening till the match day



Captain Kohli, Rohit and pace trio skip training under lights in Indore

Indore, Nov. 17: Skipper Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and the much-vaunted pace trio skipped training while some of the remaining team members practised under lights on the centre wicket of Holkar Stadium here on Sunday, gearing up for India's first Day/Night Test.

Besides Kohli and Rohit, the trio of Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma and

Umesh Yadav were also given a break after accounting for 14 of the 19 Bangladesh wickets in the opening Test here, which India won by an innings and 130 runs.

Also giving the training a miss were first Test double centurion Mayank Agarwal and wicketkeeper Saha, Pujara, R.Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja.

— PTI

on November 22.

The Tata Steel building will have 3D Mapping from November 20, while the Measurers' Club has already turned pink at night and others are set to do the same. Besides this, a dozen billboards across the city, six LED boards and branded buses will also be seen from Monday onwards to further increase awareness and interest about the Test that has already got a mindboggling response, a Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) statement

said.

CAB has joined hands with Kolkata-based creative agency Creocraft to create vignettes of cricket on the inside walls of the Eden Gardens, which will say the story behind every cricketer. Over 20 artists studying at Indian Art College are working day and night to paint this idea on the walls. With the two teams arriving here in the next 48 hours, all roads in the 'City of Joy' lead to the Eden.

— PTI

The way we saw the variation of pace bowling by (Mohammed) Shami, Ishant (Sharma) and (Umesh) Yadav, they will get a lot of advantage with this pink ball. Wherever you play, you get that extra breeze in the evening. India will take a lot of advantage of that.

— AMINUL ISLAM, former Bangladesh captain

Shami & Mayank rise to career best rankings in Test

Dubai, Nov. 17: Speedster Mohammed Shami and opener Mayank Agarwal on Sunday achieved their career-best positions in the latest ICC Test Rankings after contributing in India's innings and 130-run victory over Bangladesh in the first Test in Indore.

Shami's bowling figures of 3 for 27 and 4 for 31 lifted him eight places to seventh position. His 790 rating points are the third best for an India pace bowler with only Kapil Dev (877) and Jasprit Bumrah (832) having recorded more points. Double centurion Agarwal, meanwhile, climbed to the 11th spot after his player-of-the-match effort of 243 in India's only innings.

— PTI

TEST BATTING RANKINGS

Pos	Player	Rating
1	Steve Smith (Aus)	937
2	Virat Kohli (Ind)	912
3	K. Williamson (NZ)	878
4	C.Pujara (Ind)	790
5	A. Rahane (Ind)	759

TEST BOWLING RANKINGS

Pos	Player	Rating
1	P. Cummins (Aus)	908
2	K. Rabada (SA)	839
3	Jason Holder (WI)	814
4	J. Bumrah (Ind)	802
5	J. Anderson (Eng)	798

Indian attack gives no leeway



Hemant Kenkre
Silly Point

The Indian 'seam' team gave the world of cricket a reality check once again. Their role in India's innings and 130-run victory against Bangladesh has given cricket analysts food for thought the way they have bowled on good batting pitches. To tackle three fast bowlers on sub-continental pitches would never have been a problem for any international batting team in the past and it was never a point to ponder, forget worry about.

The decimation of South Africa and Bangladesh in the last two months, by big margins has put the case for Team India very high when it comes to rankings in the World Championship of Test cricket. The successful effort in the four home Tests does have it's genesis in the equal balance that team India possesses and what the management has worked towards.

The batting has been simply phenomenal with Mayank Agarwal, Rohit Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane coming tops with cameos by others including Virat Kohli and

to wrap up and come on top. There were two obstacles, the mental toughness to keep up the pressure on the opposition and the twenty-wicket barrier. When Nathan Lyon nicked Ishant Sharma into the gloves of Rishabh Pant at Melbourne Cricket Ground, India not just created history of beating the Aussies in a Test series for the first time but earned themselves tremendous self belief.

Coming back to India as heroes having won the mace of the number one team in the International Cricket Council Test rankings, the biggest ask facing the team and its management was to maintain their position. Particularly as they were also to begin the World Championship of Test cricket. From campaigns on fast bouncer and seaming pitches in South Africa, England and Australia, their 2019 campaign would be mostly on flatter surfaces in the sub continent barring a tour of the Caribbean.

The team balance, on these slower surfaces would be based on the right combination of spin and pace. What has stood out as far as the Indian bowling is concerned their complete focus on the right areas to bowl to batsmen and the concentrated effort at being consistent. Many years ago, in a conversation with Karsan Ghavri who was then the bowling coach with the National Cricket Academy, the former Indian pacer had mentioned that we did have the arsenal but were firing the same in the

wrong direction.

"The day our bowlers bowl the correct line and length with consistency, you will see the difference," he had said. Ghavri, who was an attacking bowler with a never-say-die attitude, was prophetic and confident that the day, we are seeing now, was just around the corner. The biggest value-add one has seen in the four Tests (against the Proteas and Bangladesh) so far is that the Indian attack keeps going for the jugular not allowing the opposition any leeway. A much needed attribute that was missing from the Indian teams of the past.

In a post match interview after the Indore Test, the three Indian pacers were complimenting one another, giving due credit to each other for the victory. The take home of that was that this Indian team has a very different approach, one of attack and strategic planning. For the first ball to be bowled by a spinner coming in the 24th over just shows the dominance of the Indian new-ball attack. That too on an Indian pitch.

The way the absence of Jasprit Bumrah has not been felt and the how the spinners, R. Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, have complemented the pacers shows India is now ready to wrap the current series and take on tougher opponents in their den. The forthcoming tour to New Zealand would be a great indicator of India's real challenge in the Test championship.



Mohammed Shami



Resigned

Conor O'Shea has resigned from his role as Italy head coach with immediate effect. The Irishman's contract had been due to run through to the end of May 2020

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THE ASIAN AGE

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Just hit it well. Iron game was on. Wedge game was on and I got hot with the putter.

— US professional golfer Harris English in USPGA Mexico event

SHORT TAKES

Coach sacked for ruthless 27-0 win

Milan: The coach of an Italian junior league team was sacked on Saturday for inflicting a humiliating 27-0 defeat on their opponents. Paolo Brogelli, president of Invictasaurio, a team based in Grosseto, Tuscany, slammed his team's win over rivals Marina Calcio as "disrespectful". "We learned with amazement and regret the score of the match in which our junior team scored 27 goals," Brogelli said in a statement reported in the Italian press. "The values of youth team football are antithetical to such a thing. "The opponent must always be respected and today it has not happened. As president I sincerely apologise to the Marina team. Our board has decided, unanimously, to sack (coach) Mr. Riccini. "Our coaches have a duty to train and, above all, to educate children. This has not happened today."

— AFP

Mexico stun US to secure spot

Tokyo: Mexico edged the United States 3-2 after 10 innings on Sunday to take third place at the WBSC Premier 12 baseball tournament and qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Matthew Clark's solo homer for Mexico at the bottom of the ninth tied the bronze medal match 2-2, sending it to extra innings. Efrén Navarro's single to centrefield at the bottom of the 10th drove home the winning run to seal the central American country's Olympic berth. Hosts Japan, with a 4-1 win-loss record in six-nation Super Round, and South Korea (3-2) will face off in the final later of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Premier 12 tournament. One Olympic place for the Americas and one for Asia were up for grabs, meaning South Korea have also secured their berth by virtue of Japan already being qualified as hosts. Taiwan finished fifth in the standings with Australia sixth.

— AFP

KAEPERNICK 'READY TO PLAY' IN NFL

Washington: Former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick, whose kneeling protest during the national anthem became a major controversy, displayed strong passing skills at a Saturday workout and vowed he's "ready to play" after nearly three years out of the league. The 32-year-old former San Francisco 49ers star ditched the NFL's planned private workout for a throwing session at an Atlanta-area high school, showing top-level accuracy and arm strength while making his case for a comeback before scouts from eight NFL clubs. "I appreciate you all coming out. It means a lot to me," Kaepernick said. "My biggest thing with everything today is making sure we had transparency with what went on. We weren't getting that elsewhere so we came out here." The NFL planned a closed session for Kaepernick at the Atlanta Falcons training facility with scouts from 25 NFL teams attending and plans to send a video of the drills to all 32 NFL clubs. But Kaepernick switched plans about 30 minutes before the scheduled start, saying he had concerns over a liability waiver the league wanted him to sign as well as not having a public workout. Kaepernick's representatives plan to send a video of the workout to every NFL club. Eric Reid, a former 49ers teammate who has supported him through his forced absence, tweeted: "There's no way we would allow the NFL to control the narrative of Colin's workout," and added, "We already knew Colin's arm talent was elite. Some doubted and now you have roof." Kaepernick took no questions but thanked scouts from several teams who attended his session. — AFP

Hawks fall prey

Clippers post 49-point win over struggling Atlanta

Los Angeles, Nov. 17: Paul George delivered 37 points in his home debut as the Los Angeles Clippers scored the second most points in franchise history with a 150-101 rout of the short-handed Atlanta Hawks on Saturday.

This was expected to be the first game together for Kawhi Leonard and George, who was making his much anticipated home debut with his new team, but Leonard sat out with a nagging knee problem.

George, who scored 25 points in the first half, converted 10 of 17 shots from the field overall, including six of 11 three-pointers in the wire-towire victory in front of a crowd of 19,000 at Staples Center Arena. He also made all 11 of his free throws in just 20 minutes of playing time.

George scored 33 points in his season debut Thursday in a loss to the New Orleans Pelicans.

George, who missed the initial 11 games rehabbing from offseason surgery on both his shoulders, is 21 of 21 from the line in two games.

"It means everything," said George, who grew up in Palmdale, California, 100 kilometres northeast of Los Angeles. "I couldn't wait to get in front of this crowd."

"I couldn't wait to be home," Lou Williams, who made 15 of 15 free throws, had 25 points off the bench for the Clippers, who bounced back after losing their previous two matches.

The Clippers led throughout, including a 12-point cushion at the half. They seized command in the third quarter by outscoring the Hawks 38-20 and their biggest lead of the game was 52 points.

Trae Young scored 20 points for Hawks who have been besieged by discipline and injury problems this season.



Atlanta Hawks guard Trae Young (front) goes up for a shot past Los Angeles Clippers center Ivica Zubac during the first half of an NBA game in Los Angeles. — AP

In Minneapolis, James Harden scored 49 points on a career-high 41 shot attempts as the Houston Rockets won their seventh straight game with a 125-105 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves. Harden shot eight of 22 from three-point range and the team shot 19 of 49

on three overall. He added six assists and five rebounds in 39 minutes of playing time for his fifth 40-plus game during the current win streak.

"We wanted to come here and win this game and we showed it," Harden said. Point guard Ben McLemore carried over

the momentum of his season-high 21 point performance on Friday by scoring 20 against the Timberwolves.

McLemore nailed a pair of free throws with 1:29 remaining in the third to give Houston their first double-digit lead of the contest, 89-79

ASIAN TOUR GOLF

Korean teen pips Shiv, Chikka

Nuh (Haryana), Nov. 17: A double-bogey on the last hole proved costly as Indian golfer Shiv Kapur signed off tied second along with compatriot S Chikkarangappa at the Panasonic Open India here on Sunday.

Kapur (70), who lost out in a playoff at the Thailand Open last week, was again denied victory this week as he conceded a one-shot lead to 17-year-old Korean sensation Joohyung Kim, who fired a seven-under 65 to bag the top honours with a total of 13-under-203.

Kapur and Chikkarangappa (67) ended with a total of 12-under 204 at the Classic Golf and Country Club here. Indians Vikrant Chopra (10-under-206) and Veer Ahlawat (eight-under-208) claimed



Joohyung Kim of Korea plays a shot during the weather-affected final round of the Panasonic Open. — AFP

career-best finishes of tied fifth and tied eighth respectively.

Kim, who earned his Asian Tour card for the remainder of the 2019 season after claiming three wins on the Asian Development Tour (ADT)

this year, continued his hot streak in India with rounds of 70, 68 and 65 at the USD 400,000 event which was contested over 54 holes.

"I'm really speechless. It has been a dream of mine to play on the Asian Tour

ever since I was young. It's really wonderful to come here, be in contention and win," said the Korean, who became the second youngest Asian Tour winner.

Kapur (67-67-70), who was in a three-way lead after the penultimate round, mixed five birdies with a bogey and a double-bogey on Sunday. Kapur, the 2017 Panasonic Open India champion, was leading by one shot till he hit his tee shot out of bounds on the 18th.

The Dubai-based golfer finally missed a 20-foot bogey putt that would've taken him into a playoff with Kim.

Chikkarangappa (69-68-67) produced his best round on Sunday to secure the joint runner-up position, his best for the season.

— PTT

AFRICAN CUP QUALIFIERS

Ivory Coast need two penalties to beat Niger

Johannesburg, Nov. 17: Ivory Coast needed two penalties to defeat Niger 1-0 Saturday in the last matchday one qualifier for the 2021 Africa Cup of Nations in Cameroon.

Max-Alain Gradel missed the first spot-kick during the opening half after grabbing the ball from Arsenal forward Nicolas Pepe, who won the penalty and wanted to take it. Out-of-favour AC Milan midfielder Franck Kessie was entrusted with the second spot-kick, awarded for handball midway through the second half.

Niger goalkeeper Kassaly Daouda, who had brilliantly foiled Gradel, could not do it again, going the wrong way as Kessie planted the ball in the left corner.

It was an unconvincing performance by the 1992

and 2015 African champions, given they are ranked 56th in the world, 51 places above Niger.

Niger were playing for the first time under Frenchman Jean-Guy Wallemme who was only appointed last week.

The 52-year-old former defender previously coached Congo Brazzaville, three Algerian clubs and one in Morocco.

Ivory Coast share first place in Group K with Madagascar, who beat Ethiopia 1-0 in Antananarivo thanks to a first half goal from Rayan Raveloson.

Stunning Nigeria

The Malagasy team were the surprise package of the 2019 Cup of Nations in Egypt, stunning Nigeria

and surprising the Democratic Republic of Congo before losing to Tunisia in the quarter-finals.

Coach Nicolas Dupuis, who combines coaching Madagascar with managing a French lower league club, was rewarded with a new four-year contract.

He was satisfied with the tentative performance against Ethiopia given the poor state of the national stadium pitch and limited preparations.

"We need a new venue because the pitch we used today was unplayable," said the 51-year-old who rose from obscurity to worldwide recognition during the 2019 tournament.

"Now we face a difficult trip before playing Niger Tuesday. We must manage fatigue," he added. — AFP

FORMULA ONE

Verstappen's pole a 'big statement'

Sao Paulo, Nov. 17: (AFP) Max Verstappen made a "big statement" by beating both Ferrari and Mercedes to qualify on pole position for Sunday's Brazilian Grand Prix, according to his former Red Bull team-mate Daniel Ricciardo.

Ricciardo, now with Renault, was knocked out in Saturday's Q2 session and was left to watch the final shootout from the paddock where he told reporters how impressed he was with the Dutchman's scintillating lap.

"Not too bad, huh?" he said. "That's fun! I'm still a fan of the sport so watching here it's exciting. I want to be out there, but if I can't be out there, I'm going to be a fan for 10 minutes."

"It's never perfect, but it looked clean. They showed a bit of his on-board in the second sector and it looked clean."

"It's a big statement for them to do it here in Brazil. I know he more or less won the race last year, but on one lap that's a big performance."

Verstappen, who had suggested Ferrari's recent decline in qualifying pace may have been due to 'cheating' to gain power,

It's a big statement for them to do it here in Brazil. I know he (Max Verstappen) more or less won the race last year, but on one lap that's a big performance.

— DANIEL RICCIARDO
Red Bull driver

topped all three qualifying sessions. After Saturday's session, Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, who starts second, hit back by pointedly noting Red Bull had shown exceptional straight-line speed.

Ferrari had reeled off six consecutive pole positions before the United States Grand Prix, though in Mexico, was courtesy of Verstappen penalty.

Fast straights

On Friday, at Interlagos, Ferrari were again very fast on the straights, but this was diminished on Saturday, a curiosity that re-focused attention on the Italian team and led to Mercedes technical director James Allison observed Verstappen and Red Bull had "done a better job" to take pole position on a day when newly-crowned six-time champion Lewis Hamilton qualified third. — AFP



Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands gives a thumbs up after taking pole position on Saturday. — AP

English grabs one-stroke lead after Rd 2 in Mexico

Mexico City, Nov. 17: Harris English closed with back-to-back birdies, the last of them a 25-foot chip-in to seize a one-stroke lead after the second round of the USPGA Mayakoba Classic.

English on Saturday fired a bogey-free seven-under par 64 at Playa del Carmen, Mexico, to stand on 13-under 129 after 36 holes with Vaughn Taylor second on 130 and Brendon Todd another stroke adrift.

"Might have missed two greens today," English said.

"Just hit it well. Iron game was on. Wedge game was on and I got hot with the putter a little bit. It was awesome."

"I feel like if I keep playing like this, I'm in a good spot."

All play Thursday was

● **English fired a bogey-free 7-under par 64 to stand on 13-under 129**

● **He seeks third tour title and first since he won the 2013 Mayakoba Classic**

washed out by rain so those making the cut will try to complete 36 holes on Sunday but are faced with a likely Monday finish.

English seeks his third tour title and the first since he won the 2013 Mayakoba Classic by four strokes over compatriot Brian Stuard.

The American has produced three top-six finishes in four starts during the beginning of the 2019-20 USPGA campaign, sharing

third at the Greenbrier and sixth at the Sanderson Farms Championship in September and fourth at last month's Houston Open.

English made three birdies in a row between the second and fourth holes, added another at the sixth and began the back nine with another at the par-3 10th.

That set the stage for his closing birdies at 17 and 18, the latter from just off the green.

"I was just trying to shove it up there close and it went in," English said. "When you get one to go in like that, it's icing on the cake."

New Zealand's Danny Lee, who opened with a 62 for the 18-hole lead, was sharing fourth on 132 with Adam Long and Robby Shelton. — AFP



Ivory Coast's Serge Aurier (left) and Mahamane Cisse (centre) vie for the ball with Niger's Kourouma Fatoukouma during the African Cup of Nations 2021 qualifier. — AFP



Adios Berdych

Former Wimbledon runner-up Tomas Berdych has announced his retirement from tennis



I'm frustrated, I couldn't play better. I threw it away. He played better today. — Roger Federer after his 3-6, 4-6 loss to Stefanos Tsitsipas in the semifinal of the ATP Finals

SHORT TAKES

Indian boxers win 7 medals at Asian

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: It rained gold for India at the Asian Youth Boxing Championship as all five of the country's women finalists emerged victorious while two men signed off with silver medals here on Sunday. Naorem Chanu (51kg), Vinka (64kg) Sanamacha Chanu (75kg), Poonam (54kg) and Sushma (81kg) fetched the yellow metal for the country in a phenomenal sweep. Among the men, Selay Soy (49kg) and Ankit Narwal (60kg) settled for the second place after going down in their respective summit clashes. India signed off with 12 medals in the event with bronze coming from Arundhati Choudhury (69kg), Komalpreet Kaur (+81kg), Jaismine (57kg), Satender Singh (91kg) and Aman (+91kg). Poonam defeated China's Weiqi Cai to open India's gold account, to which Sushma added one by going past Kazakhstan's Bakytzhankyzy. Naorem Chanu got the better of another Kazakh Anel Barkyah. — PTI

Paddler Harmeet wins in Indonesia

Mumbai: Experienced Indian paddler Harmeet Desai continued his good run in the international circuit as he staved off a strong challenge from his compatriot Amalraj Anthony to win the gold medal at the ITTF Challenge Indonesia Open 2019 played in Batam, Indonesia on Sunday. In an all-Indian Men's Singles final which saw two of India's most prominent players go up against each other, it was Harmeet who started on the front-foot winning the opening game 11-9 before losing the next game 9-11 allowing Amalraj to draw level. Ranked 104 in the world, Harmeet, however took control of the proceedings and won the next two games by an identical margin of 11-9 to go 3-1 up in the match. Amalraj reduced the lead by winning the next game 12-10, but the reigning Commonwealth TT Champion did not make any further mistake and won the 6th game 11-9 to seal the match 4-2 and win his second international title of the year.

JAMES BEATS RAMKUMAR IN PUNE EVENT

Pune: Indian challenge in the singles competition ended after sixth seed Ramkumar Ramanathan went down to second seed James Duckworth of Australia in the semifinal of the KPIT MSLTA Challenger event here on Saturday. Duckworth, who is making a comeback after four operations, will meet fifth seed Jay Clarke of Britain in the final. It will be an all Indian affair in the doubles final after local boy Arjun Kadhe made it to his maiden final pairing Saketh Myneni. They will meet the top seeds, Ramanathan and Purav Raja. In the singles semifinal, Duckworth defeated Ramanathan 7-6 (7/8), 6-2 in an 1 hour 35 minute encounter. In the other semifinal, 21-year-old from Derby in England, Jay Clarke, ousted Roberto Ortega of Spain 6-3, 6-2 in an hour and 17 minutes to enter his second Challenger final of the year. Ramanathan broke in the first game but Duckworth broke back in the sixth to level scores at 3-3. Both held serves in a close match to force a tie break. The Indian had a set point at 6-5 in the tiebreak but missed a low volley. He another low volley to go down a match point at 7-8 but Duckworth served a double fault to make it 8-8. An unforced error on the backhand saw Ramanathan go down another set point at 8-9 before a uberb forehand cross court saw Duckworth seal the tiebreak. — PTI

Germans Kroos

Toni nets brace to take side into Euro finals

Paris, Nov. 17: The Netherlands, Germany and World Cup finalists Croatia expanded a list of big hitters to qualify for Euro 2020 on Saturday as the trio booked their places at next summer's finals. Austria also made it through to the multi-host tournament, which kicks off in Rome on June 12, with 16 sides now ensured of a spot at the 24-team event and only four places remaining from the main qualifying route. They join other big names such as world champions France, Spain, Italy and England, with European champions Portugal one win away from qualification. Ronald Koeman's resurgent Dutch needed a point to qualify for their first major tournament since coming third at the 2014 World Cup and got what they needed in a scrappy goalless draw with Northern Ireland in Belfast. However they were far from the flamboyant outfit that has so often thrilled in Group 'C', and survived a huge scare when Steven Davis smashed a first-half penalty high over the bar. The Dutch dominated possession and stopped the hosts from having a single shot on target but failed to create much themselves. Davis' spot-kick blunder left Michael O'Neill's side third and hoping for a way into the tournament via the playoffs. The draw allowed fierce rivals Germany to move top in the group as Toni Kroos hit a brace in a simple 4-0 win over Belarus in Moenchengladbach which saw them qualify for the Euros for the 13th time in a row. A deft back-heeled goal from defender Matthias Ginter just before the break and impressive finishing by Leon Goretzka and Kroos gave the Germans a comfortable three-goal lead early in the second half. Manuel Neuer produced a superb save to keep out Belarus' Igor Stasevich's penalty before Kroos dribbled through the defence to claim his second goal seven minutes from time.

CROATIA RALLY PAST SLOVAKIA FOR A WIN

Croatia survived a scare to secure their place in the Euros after coming from behind beat Slovakia 3-1 in Rijeka. The World Cup runners up needed just a point to ensure qualification from Group 'E' but Robert Bozenik stunned the home crowd when he tapped the away side ahead in the 32nd minute. However it was one-way traffic in the second half and Croatia's qualification was never in doubt once Nikola Vlasic drilled home the leveller. Bruno Petkovic headed the hosts in front and Ivan Perisic sealed the three points with a thumping finish with 16 minutes left. — AFP

Lee claims Hong Open tournament

Hong Kong, Nov. 17: Home favourite Lee Cheuk-yiu battled to victory over Indonesia's Anthony Ginting to secure a shock Hong Kong Open win as the city's pro-democracy protests raged nearby on Sunday. Lee, 23, came from a game behind and then saw off championship point in a thrilling decider before winning 16-21, 21-10, 22-20 to lift his first major trophy. Lee's title run, which includes wins over Viktor Axelsen and Kidambi Srikanth, comes after he appeared to show support for the protesters. Meanwhile, Chen Yufei fought to a hard-won 21-18, 13-21, 21-13 win over Ratchanok Intanon to win the women's singles title. — AFP



Germany's Toni Kroos (left) kicks the ball past Stanislav Dragun of Belarus during their UEFA Euro 2020 Group 'C' qualification match in Moenchengladbach on Saturday. Germany won 4-0. — AFP

CR7 chases 100th goal milestone

Lisbon, Nov. 17: Cristiano Ronaldo travels to Luxembourg on Sunday with the objective of helping reigning champions Portugal qualify for Euro 2020 and the 100-goal mark for his country within his reach. The former Real Madrid star is also eager to prove he is not a player in decline after his angry reaction to being substituted by Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri in the past two games. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner, who turns 35 years in February, responded in typically defiant fashion with a hat-trick in Portugal's 6-0 win over Lithuania on Thursday. It brought his tally to 98 goals in 163 games, to close in on Iranian striker Ali Daei's world record of 109 international goals scored between 1993 and 2006. "I hope that tomorrow (Sunday) he'll score the most goals in his career," Portugal coach Fernando Santos told Saturday's pre-match press conference. The symbolic century remains within arm's reach of the striker who despite the passing years has lost none of his lethal firepower. — AFP



Belgium's Eden Hazard celebrates after scoring a goal during their Euro 2020 Group 'I' qualification match against Russia at the Gazprom Arena in Saint Petersburg on Saturday. Belgium won 4-1. — AFP

Shagun grabs pole position

New Delhi, Nov. 17: Shagun Chowdhary shot two rounds of 25 to grab the pole position on day one of the women's trap qualifiers at the 63rd National Shotgun Shooting Championship here on Sunday. The seasoned Shagun, representing ONGC, shot the same score of 71 as Punjab's Rajeshwari Kumari, but two perfect rounds of 25 including the third and final round of the day, saw her claim the top honours at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range. Intense competition is building up as the finals beckon after two more qualifying rounds on Monday, with Bihar's Shreyasi Singh closely following on 70 and the likes of India's only World Cup medallist Seema Tomar also in the top six with a score of 67. Defending champion



Seema Tomar (left) and Shagun Chowdhary are all smiles after their women's trap qualification at the 63rd National Shotgun Shooting Championship. Varsha Varman, however, was way behind in the 52-strong field with a 57. In the junior women's trap, Shefali Rajak of Madhya Pradesh was on top of the chart with a 65, while Haryana's Suhanya Singh, who shot 64, was close behind. — PTI

Thiem tames champ Zverev

London, Nov. 17: Dominic Thiem beat defending champion Alexander Zverev to join Roger Federer's conqueror Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the ATP Finals in London. The Austrian fifth seed saw off the big-serving German 7-5, 6-3 on Saturday after Greece's Tsitsipas, making his debut at the tournament, had earlier beaten Federer 6-3, 6-4. Thiem is playing in his fourth ATP Finals but during his first three trips to the season finale, he won only three matches and never advanced out of the group stage. Zverev landed 75 per cent of his first serves but Thiem was tougher in the big moments, breaking in the 12th game of the opening set and in the sixth game of the second set. The Austrian saved four break points on his serve. The seventh seed, 22, regrouped and settled back into his serving rhythm at the beginning of the second set but was broken again to trail 2-4. Thiem unflustered, fended off a couple of break points and served out to take the match. "This is a big, big dream coming true for me, it is one of the biggest and most prestigious tournaments of the whole year and I'm getting the chance to play the final," said Thiem.

TSITSIPAS HUMBLER FEDERER

Earlier, Tsitsipas, 17 years younger than Federer, ended the 38-year-old's hopes of securing a seventh year-end title. Federer was unrecognisable from the player who dominated Djokovic in his final round-robin match, struggling on serve and hitting a total of 26 unforced errors. But Tsitsipas belied his years with a performance full of confidence and grit, saving 11 out of 12 break points during the match. Tsitsipas, ignoring loud support for Federer, broke the Swiss at the first time of asking, taking advantage of two missed over-heads. The Greek was forced to dig deep in a dramatic 13-minute final game of the first set in which he saved two break points and needed seven set points to close it out 6-3. At 4-5 down in the second, Federer knew he had to break Tsitsipas for only the second time in the match. The Greek slipped to 15-40 down but Federer again could not take advantage and Tsitsipas won. — AP



This is a big, big dream coming true for me, it is one of the biggest and most prestigious tournaments of the whole year and I'm getting the chance to play the final. — DOMINIC THIEM after his 7-5, 6-3 win over Alexander Zverev

I will decide when to quit: Karim

Madrid, Nov. 17: Real Madrid striker Karim Benzema has told French Football Federation president Noel Le Graet he and he alone will decide when the time to end his international retirement has come. After Real coach Zinedine Zidane called for Benzema's four-year France exile, caused by his alleged part in an attempt to blackmail Mathieu Valbuena, to end this week, Le Graet told French radio Benzema's adventure with the French team was finished. "Noel, I thought you didn't interfere with the decisions of the France coach," said Benzema on Twitter. "Please understand that I and I alone will call an end to my international career." Benzema, who is of Algerian origin, added that Le Graet should "let me play for one of the countries for which I'm eligible" if he thinks the 31-year-old is done. Benzema has not played for France since 2015. Coach Didier Deschamps has maintained Benzema's omission is in the best interests of the French squad, who won last year's World Cup without him. — AFP



Stefanos Tsitsipas kicks the ball as he celebrates his 6-3, 6-4 win over Roger Federer in their ATP World Tour Finals semifinal match at the O2 Arena in London on Saturday. — AP

NEXT GEN CAN BEAT US IN 2020, SAYS FEDERER

London, Nov. 17: After dominating the tennis world for so long, Roger Federer thinks the sport's Big Three could face their toughest challenge yet from a new generation in 2020. Federer's 2019 season ended with a semifinal loss to Stefanos Tsitsipas on Saturday at the ATP Finals, having seen Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal eliminated in the group stage of the tournament this week. Tsitsipas, a 21-year-old Greek who is playing at the ATP Finals for the first time, is among those who may finally end the unprecedented era of dominance by that trio. Federer added. — AP

Other youngsters at the season-ending tournament include Alexander Zverev and Daniil Medvedev at 23. However, it's not the first time that the 38-year-old Federer has faced talk about a talented crop of youngsters. "It's the same question every year at the end of the year," Federer said about the new generation. "But does it feel like this year might be the best year yet? Possibly. But then I look at the list of who finished World No.1 who has been World No.1 all these years, and it's just crazy that it's always one of us. But we are not getting younger," Federer added. — AP