

THE ASIAN AGE

NEW DELHI TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2019

TABLOID

19

Sallu urges his fans to avoid steroids & products that are 'not natural'



Vol. 26 No. 273 | 32 PAGES | ₹5.00



NATION | Politics

Cong left red faced as party ad shows Kamal Nath in poor light

3



NATION | Judiciary

SC to hear Chidambaram's bail petition in INX Media money laundering case

4

www.asianage.com

RNI No. 57290/94, Regd No: DL-SW-05/4189/15-17

WINDOWS

8 jawans swept by avalanche in Siachen Glacier

AGE CORRESPONDENTS
NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR, NOV. 18

An Indian Army's patrol party consisting of eight men was struck by an avalanche on Monday at around 20,000 feet in Northern Siachen Glacier. Army sources in Srinagar said that the jawans are reported to be buried under heaps of snow and efforts to rescue them are underway. The Siachen Glacier in the Karakoram range is known as the highest militarised zone in the world where soldiers have to battle frostbite and high winds.



Trinamul Congress MP Mimi Chakraborty arrives on the first day of the Winter Session at Parliament House in New Delhi on Monday.

— ASIAN AGE

Citizenship Bill: Naga bodies call for 18-hr bandh

Guwahati: Boggled down by the BJP's stand to push the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, the Joint Committee on Prevention of Illegal Immigrants Nagaland has called for 18 hour bandh from Tuesday, while deputy CM of Meghalaya Prestone Tynsong on Monday claimed that Union home minister Amit Shah would be visiting Shillong soon to hold a consultation with all the stakeholders. **Full report on Page 3**

COUNTERPOINT



Noise pollution inside!

WEATHER



Max: 27°C
Min: 14°C
RH: 48%
Rainfall: 10%

Forecast: Sunny

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Dakshinayana
Tithi: Kartika Bahula
Saptami till 3.32 pm
Star: Ashlesha till 9.19 pm
Variyam: 10.34 am to 12.06 pm
Durmuhurtam: 8.41 am to 9.25 am and 10.44 pm to 11.36 pm
Rahukalam: 3 pm to 4.30 pm
SUNSET TODAY 5.26 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.47 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 11.47 PM
MOONSET TODAY 12.40 AM

MAHARASHTRA IMPASSE

NCP chief meets Sonia, says will hold more talks

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 18

The deadlock in Maharashtra government formation continued on Monday as the second meeting between NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Congress president Sonia Gandhi remained inconclusive with the Maharashtra leader saying that the two parties need to hold further talks on the future course of action. However, leaders in the Congress who are in the know of developments, claim that most of the contentious issues have been sorted out but the final decision of giving letters of support will only be taken with the agreement of the NCP.

The delay in government formation has brought a sense of restlessness amongst Congress MLAs in Maharashtra with a party MLA, speaking on the condition of anonymity, saying "staking claim to form the government is inexplicable".

Addressing a press conference after meeting Mrs

Uddhav defers his Ayodhya visit

Mumbai: A day after the NCP core committee resolved to form an alternative government in Maharashtra, Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray has put off his November 24 visit to Ayodhya, a Sena leader said on Monday. **PAGE 2**



Gandhi, Mr Pawar said, "We have discussed in detail the political situation in Maharashtra. We will keep an eye on the situation in Maharashtra. Congress and NCP leaders will hold further talks on the future course of action." Senior Congress leader A.K. Antony was also present in the meeting.

On Sunday the Shiv Sena had claimed that it has the support of 170 MLAs in the 288-member Assembly. When asked **■ Turn to Page 4**

Bobde takes charge as India's 47th Chief Justice

PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, NOV. 18

Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde was on Monday sworn in as the 47th Chief Justice of India. He was administered the oath of office by President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan's Durbar Hall. Justice Bobde, 63, the 47th Chief Justice of India, will serve till April 23, 2021 — a tenure of over 17 months, or 522 days to be precise.

In a first, CJI Bobde shared the dais in courtroom number one with Chief Justice of Jamaica Bryan Sykes and senior-most judge of Bhutan's Supreme Court, Justice Kuenlay Tshering.

Seated with Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Surya Kant, CJI Bobde started holding the court at 11.30 am.

The first mentioning before the bench was for a plea for an urgent hearing on the bail of jailed former finance minister P. Chidambaram. Senior counsel Kapil Sibal made the mentioning.



Gotabaya sworn in at Buddhist temple

Colombo, Nov. 18: Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was sworn in as Sri Lanka's new President on Monday at an ancient Buddhist temple, thanked the Sinhala majority for their overwhelming support and reached out to the jittery Tamil and Muslim minorities by promising to protect them though many of them did not vote for him.

The former defence secretary, credited with helping end the long civil war against LTTE, stormed to victory on Sunday, trouncing his nearest rival Sajith Premadasa by 13 lakh votes.



Mr Rajapaksa's swearing-in ceremony took place at Ruwanwelisaya, considered sacred to Buddhists all over the world, in the ancient north central town of Anuradhapura, around 200 kms from Colombo.

In his short speech, Mr Rajapaksa said, "I knew I would win the presidency with support coming only from the Sinhala majority. I told the minorities to join me. I did not receive their support. But I will make sure that I will be President for everyone." — PTI **■ More on Page 11**

Police stops march by JNU students, lathicharges them

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, NOV. 18

Around 100 students of JNU, including the students' union president and other office bearers, were detained and some were injured when Delhi Police lathicharged them and stopped them at many places as they marched towards Parliament on

the first day of the Winter Session on Monday demanding a total rollback of the hostel fee hike.

In anticipation of the march, Section-144 had been imposed outside JNU campus on Monday morning and around 800 police personnel and 10 companies of Central Armed Police Force were deployed. **■ More on Page 13**

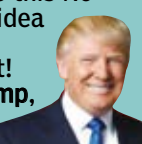
Trump: Will 'strongly consider' testifying in impeachment probe

Washington, Nov. 18: President Donald Trump on Monday said he is "strongly" considering answering a challenge from Opposition Democrats to testify in his own impeachment investigation.

After the Speaker of the Lower House, Nancy Pelosi, upped the ante by suggesting that Trump come forward to tell the "truth," the Republican President said he was keen.

Ms Pelosi suggested "that I testify about the

Even though I did nothing wrong, and don't like giving credibility to this No Due Process Hoax, I like the idea & will, in order to get Congress focused again, strongly consider it! — Donald Trump, US President



phony Impeachment Witch Hunt. She also said I could do it in writing," Mr Trump tweeted. "Even though I did nothing wrong, and don't like giving credibility to this No Due Process Hoax, I like the

idea & will, in order to get Congress focused again, strongly consider it!"

It was unclear what kind of testimony the President had in mind.

— AFP

■ More on Page 11

Opp. uproar over 'missing' Farooq as session begins

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 18

The Winter Session of Parliament began on Monday on a stormy note as a united Opposition targeted the government by raising the absence of former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah, a Lok Sabha MP, from the Lower House, and later walked out of the House over the issue.

Dr Abdullah's could not attend the House as he has been in preventive custody under J&K's Public Safety Act at his Srinagar residence after Article 370 was revoked by the Centre in August. The issue was raised on Monday by Trinamul Congress MP Saugata Roy as the members began settling into their seats.

"Sir ... Dr Farooq Abdullah yahan par nahi hain (Sir, Dr Farooq Abdullah is not here)," Mr Roy said immediately after the House assembled for the day. As Question Hour continued amid angry protests by the Opposition MPs (with many Congress members trooping into the well) and even Shiv Sena leaders protesting, in the Zero



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union ministers arrive on the first day of the Winter Session at Parliament House on Monday. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

Hour Congress' Lok Sabha leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury launched a blistering attack on the government for barring MPs from visiting J&K while allowing members of the European Parliament to visit Srinagar.

"Our leader Rahul Gandhi was not allowed to visit (J&K), several MPs were sent back... Whereas bhade ke tattu (hirelings) from Europe were taken there. Isn't it an insult to the House. **■ Turn to Page 4**

Modi praises conduct of NCP, BJD in Rajya Sabha

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 18

In a significant development, PM Narendra Modi was all praise for Sharad Pawar's NCP and Naveen Patnaik's BJD for raising points effectively but never rushing to the Well of the House.

Speaking at the land-

mark 250th session of the Rajya Sabha, where past disruptions had hindered the passage of crucial legislation, Mr Modi said Monday the Upper House was vital for checks and balances in a democracy, but a distinction must be made between "checking" and "clogging". **■ More on Page 2**

Pak testfires nuke-capable missile with 650 km range

Islamabad, Nov. 18: Pakistan on Monday successfully test-fired a nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile which is capable of delivering all types of warheads up to range of 650 kilometres, bringing a number of Indian cities under its range.

The test-firing of the Shaheen-I missile by the Pakistani military took place amidst Indo-Pak tensions over New Delhi revoking J&K's special status.

According to director general inter services public relations Major General Asif Ghafoor, the launch of Shaheen-I missile was held as part of a training exercise "aimed at testing the operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command".

The Pakistani missile test came days after India conducted the first night trial of Agni-II, its versatile surface-to-surface medium range nuclear-capable missile that has a strike range of 2,000 km. The intermediate range ballistic missile has already been inducted into the armed forces. — PTI **■ More on Page 11**



SYMBOL OF INDIA'S INDOMITABLE SPIRIT

Remembering
Indira Gandhi
on her 102nd Birth Anniversary

19th November, 1917 - 31st October, 1984



INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Sonal Mansingh's Appa Deepo Bhava: Women in Buddha's life



Sharon Lowen

dance without frontiers

■ Princess Yashodhara, Nartaki, Sujata and Amrapali each have their life stories succinctly framed in the context of the pleasures and preoccupations of their lives. Each contributes to raising important issues and understanding that further Gautama Siddhartha's path towards enlightenment and his teachings for us to follow.

Long before she earned her Padma Vibhushan and became a Rajya Sabha member, Dr Sonal Mansingh was at the forefront of classical Indian dance performing artistes motivated to engage with Buddhist themes. Similarly, her explorations of consciousness raising that expanded interpretations of iconic women whose stories inform the Indian psyche have also been pioneering.

Her recent production *Appa Deepo Bhava* weaves together the warp and weft of both these threads. Princess Yashodhara, Nartaki, Sujata and Amrapali each have their life stories succinctly framed in the context of the pleasures and preoccupations of their lives. Each contributes to raising important issues and understanding that further Gautama Siddhartha's path toward enlightenment and his teachings for us to follow.

Framed in a classic dance-drama format enriched by Sonalji's sensibilities, each story was clearly etched by her Shri Kamakhya Kalapeeth Repertory group dancers as she, naturally, appeared as Nartaki and Amrapali. In the past, I recall Sonalji's *tour de force* solo performances on such themes and here we saw her effortless elan portraying court dancers while offering her students of Bharatanatyam the opportunity to share the stage with her and the Chhau-trained artistes.

Collaborative interactions with Mayurbhanj Chhau go back several decades, so the inclusion of Chhau-trained male dancers in the concept and choreography added energy to the festivities of Princess Yashodhara and Prince Siddhartha's marriage celebrations and the other episodes. The trio of Seraikella Chhau-trained dancers were well matched while the Mayurbhanj-trained artiste took on the role of Prince Siddhartha with the added flavour of Odissi in the choreography.

From marriage to the birth of son Rahul coinciding with Siddhartha's realisation of the truth of human suffering in Samsara and his departure to seek enlightenment, we see a seamless precis of this chapter in the life of the Buddha. What made this unique



was Sonalji's introduction with the strength and understanding she conjectured Yashodha, as she contemplated the abandoned ornaments brought to her by his charioteer: "If you had confided in me before leaving on your quest, I would not have stopped you".

Each vignette was introduced elegantly through Sonalji's offstage narration, ensuring that the essential concept at the core of each episode was highlighted. Before Nartaki begins, the audience is reminded that the court dancers in the times of Lichchavi city-state republics were highly respected for their literary and philosophical knowledge as well as performance art. An observation that this Nartaki shares with her entourage is so profound in its simplicity that it inspires *sanyasi* Siddhartha to give up extremes and follow the "Middle Path".

Nartaki's entourage relaxes and plays on the banks of the river Niranjana. When Nartaki joins them and asks for her veena, the maid first over-tightens the string to the breaking point and then leaves the replaced string too loose to make a sound. Sonalji's Nartaki then tunes it herself, commenting that, "Neither too tight nor too loose, maintaining balance is the key". This happened to be within earshot of the meditating Buddha-to-be practicing extreme austerities nearby.

Sujata, the third significant woman in the life of the Buddha, the Enlightened One, then offers kheer, which is now accepted by Siddhartha, abandoning extremes to follow this Middle Path enabling him to soon reach enlightenment. Usually, we only see Sujata portrayed at the moment of offering, but here a charming backstory has been conceptualised.

A childless Sujata promises an offering of kheer to

the Spirit of the Forest if she conceives. An engaging vignette of village life depicts Sujata and her husband in their daily activities both before and after awareness of the lotus blooming and the birth of her son. Reminded of her vow, she mistakes Gautama Siddhartha for a *vana-devata* who accepts her offering. The narration goes further to share that the bowl was thrown in the river with the vow that he would achieve enlightenment in days if it floated upstream — which it did and he did!

The culminating episode of Dr Sonal Mansingh's concept, direction, narration and choreography was her portrayal of the beautiful court dancer and musician, Amrapali. As with the introduction to Nartaki, Sonalji shared the high level of respect held by such a court dancer of the time, entitled along with the Raj Guru to the right of a royal umbrella. A deeply experienced human being with a compassionate heart and power of observation, Amrapali was auspicious for the city-state republic of Vaishali.

Receptive to the advances of Ajatashatru, King of Magadh before his successful and bloody attacks on her beloved Vaishali, she rejects the victorious conqueror to have the Order of Nuns created by the Buddha in accepting her renunciation. The stark post-battle images and succinct presentation of this and earlier stories were complemented by aesthetic and frequent costume changes and an excellent musical score.

The exceptionally fine supporting music was composed by Pandit Shubhendra Rao and Saskia Rao de Haas. I was totally struck by the quality of the music before seeing their names in the credits. I asked Saskia afterwards about this col-

laborative process. Over the two-three months needed to create the music, she spoke of the valuable and beautiful experience of working with Sonalji, a masterful storyteller who could communicate the stories and ideas behind the composition in a complete form with clear images.

More than the abstract mood of a raga, the nuances of emotion to be brought out in the music required several back and forth sessions to match visions and shape details in the music. Sonalji and Saskia emphasised full commitment from both sides as this kind of production takes more collaboration than it generally would in the West where either music or dance would be created first rather than developed side by side. Their orchestration techniques produce a more melodic content, devoid of electronic instruments. The soundscapes of fire, cooking, a baby crying, et al were accompanied by minimal percussion, highlighting the awareness of every sound that was present. As this was the second time Saskia and Shubhendra have collaborated with Sonalji, I look forward to the third.

As this production travels to Bhutan next and I think Mongolia thereafter, it will serve as a fine introduction and/or reinforcement of diverse audiences' appreciation of significant women in the life of Gautama Siddhartha Buddha. *Om Mani Padme Hung.*

Sharon Lowen is a respected exponent of Odissi, Manipuri and Mayurbhanj and Seraikella Chau whose four-decade career in India was preceded by 17 years of modern dance and ballet in the US and an MA in Dance from the University of Michigan. She can be reached at sharonlowen.workshop@gmail.com

SaMaPa festival to blend styles



Shailaja Khanna

aside

Pandit Bhajan Sopori's Sopori Academy of Music and Performing Arts' (SaMaPa) eagerly awaited annual festival in Delhi will be held this week in two venues: November 19-20 at the India Habitat Centre, and November 22-24 at Kamani Auditorium. In its 15th year, the festival is primarily dedicated to classical music, but also has a dance performance. As usual, there is an eclectic mix of old and young, and some interesting artistes who have never been heard before in New Delhi. The festival commences with a tabla solo by Banaras gharana exponent Deepak Sahai: Elder son of late pandit Sharda Sahai, the lineal "khalifa" of the Banaras gharana, Deepak Sahai is rarely heard on Delhi stages. He is followed by Piu Mukherji from Kolkata singing light classical music, and the concluding concert is by the sitar duo Hafiz Bale Khan and Rais Khan, from Hubli, Karnataka; again good artistes who are rarely heard in Delhi.

Belonging to the Dharwar branch of the Kirana gharana, the family maintains the instrumental tradition of the Kirana gharana that is today largely forgotten with the profusion of the vocal tradition of the gharana. Brought into prominence by Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, and carried forward by Sawai Gandharva and his disciples Pandit Bhimsen Joshi and Vidushi Gangubai Hangal, today the Kirana gharana is popular for its vocal tradition. But an older instrumental tradition, set up by Ustad Bande Ali Khan, one of the great "beenkars" (veena players) of his time, is acknowledged as the founder of the Kirana gharana. He was born in Kirana in 1826.

The next day starts with a vocal recital by Waseem Ahmed Bhat from Kashmir. The artistes who follow are coincidentally both from Kolkata: Debasmita Bhattacharya, sarodist from the Senia Shahjahanpur gharana, and vocalist Ruchira Panda, disciple of the iconic Pandit Manas Chakraborty of the Kotali gharana. Debasmita is one of the few lady sarodists today of quality (the sarod has always been regarded as an instrument for men, though of course there have been rare well known exponents like Vidushi Sharan Rani and Zarine Daruwalla Sharma in the past). Ruchira Panda has carefully maintained a musical tradition set up two generations ago by Pandit Tarapada Chakraborty, and is a vocalist to look out for. Truly this looks like being an evening to look out for.

November 22 will feature Pandit Ajay Pohankar from Mumbai, who admitted he was "happy to sing in New Delhi, and wished there were more such opportunities for him to perform in New Delhi". He is followed by Pandit Bhajan Sopori, who the city of New Delhi is proud to call its own. A representative of an old musical lineage from Kashmir, Pandit Bhajan Sopori has worked ceaselessly to take forward his musical heritage to a younger generation.

Pandit Vishwambhar Nath Mishra is an unusual musician — currently head of the Department of Electronics Engineering, IIT (BHU), the professor is also the mahant of the famous Sankat Mochan Mandir; a hereditary position his ancestors have held for generations. (Incidentally, the Sankat Mochan Annual Festival is the only six-night, all night classical music and dance festival in the country.)

Chatting with mahantji, he shared that though his "taalim" (training) in pakhawaj from his illustrious grandfather Pandit Amar Nath Mishra was of the highest degree (Pandit Amar Nath Mishra, a highly innovative player, had even accompanied Ustad Allaudin Khan and the like), he had stopped his pakhawaj practice since 1980 after his grandfather's death. He resumed playing after some 40 years, only because he felt he should impart his knowledge to the younger generation and had started teaching pakhawaj. His first solo performance in Delhi will be on November 23, at 6.30 pm.

The next concert is by the ever-popular Vidushi Malini Awasthi, who laudably has the ability to re-invent her singing at the different stages she adorns. Her vast repertoire makes her concerts always a delight. The evening ends with Abhay Rustom Sopori, who is a very innovative musician. His modified santoor gives a much richer dimension to his concerts. The concluding day of the festival features an unusual percussion ensemble of young tabla players from six gharanas of tabla: Ajrara, Banaras, Delhi, Farrukhabad, Lucknow and Punjab. All six artistes are disciples of legendary representatives of these gharanas so the concert promises to be interesting. Sitarist Pandit Kushal Das of the Maihar gharana will be followed by the concluding performance of the festival by veteran kathak duo Vidushis Nalini and Kamalini.

What stands out in this lineup of artistes is the careful blending of different styles of music, of veterans with able younger artistes and the relatively wide range of instruments, including a rare pakhawaj solo.

Shailaja Khanna writes on music, musicians and matters of music

Maya: The yoginis of Seema Kohli at Sunder Nursery



Bharat S. Tiwari

meanwhile

"Thou who bearest the manifold world of the visible and the invisible; Who boldest the universe in Thy womb! Thou who severest the thread of the play we play upon this earth! Who lightest the lamp of wisdom; who bringest joy to the heart of S'iva, Thy Lord! O Thou, the Queen Empress of holy Kas'i! Divine Annapurna! Be gracious unto me and grant me alms."

— Shankaracharya sings to Maya, mother of the world, through his philosophical writings: "Hymn to Annapurna" (Translation by Swami Nikhilananda).

The best thing about learning and appreciating is that one can start it whenever one realises the lack of it. Art is one such element where this applies most scientifically: To both the artiste and you. Seema Kohli knows the science of art and is becoming a master, applying it in her thoughts gracefully and in

turn on canvas, inks, mixed mediums, ceramics, print-making, and her performances. Her every work — a feminine mysticism of ancient myths and mythological figures of India — is a delight for the eyes, and of course the soul of lovers of sacred feminine art. Her latest work *A Circle of Our Own* — first in 10 years in her hometown New Delhi — opened at Sunder Nursery — an amazing avatar of rejuvenation that New Delhi can't be thankful enough to Aga Khan Trust for Culture — is a body of sandstone and bronze sculptures. Building on her previous work in which she channels the divine feminine, Kohli has imagined a space to celebrate the legacy of Indic female deities revered collectively in temples from the 8th to the 12th Century CE.

The Sunder Nursery was thronging with art lovers, in a thankfully less polluted evening. When asked, "How, as an art lover, you see this show adding to the art of India?" Sanjoy K. Roy of



Teamwork Arts, said, "Seema interprets age-old concepts into a contemporary form. Her sculptures transcend time and are quintessentially Indian in form and narrative." Bhavna Kakar of Latitude 28 said, "Seema is brilliant in her oration and brought in a lot of elements from her ongoing research on the yogini cult." When this author asked about the venue, she said, "The venue is spectacular and lends itself to the artwork!"

Visiting from Mumbai, Kalpana Shah of Tao Art Gallery finds the show not just one exhibition but the embodiment of artiste Kohli's entire journey thus far. She said, "The title aptly represents the full circle



she has come, and a circle that isn't limited but is in fact eternally relevant. The forms and names may change over the ages but the energy of the female yogini will perpetually endure with her balance of softness and strength. The sculptures created show this everlasting, plural natural of the feminine divine and inspire the viewer, no matter what gender, to understand the interconnected nature of all things."

Art historian Dr Seema Bhalla found the yoginis representing every woman in flesh and blood. She said, "They are bringing them out from the realm of ritualism. The women of real world, not of stone just to be revered, but celebrated in



flesh and blood." The exhibition is open for viewing till February 16, 2020, from sunrise to sunset.

A conversation with the artiste:

What is yogini?

Yogini, to me, is energy. She is part of that omnipresent "Shakti". A whole, through which everything is expanding. For me they are the arms of Devi Durga, completing all Her tasks. They are like arms of Durga, hence fragments of a whole. Born from Shakti, the primordial goddess.

The yoginis, the collaborators, each is with her own energy, and together they manifest Shakti.



Seema Kohli

What temples did you meditate at?

The temples where I have meditated upon are Mitawali Padwali, Beraghat-Jabalpur; Ranipur Jarial, Mahadeva Pani near Bhopal, the opposite side of Assi ghat in Banaras, the Gwalior caves: Now there is no Yogini site in so many places where I have meditated, visited. They may be now totally bereft of any idols or rituals. But you can see her *khe* of the Maya, who is playing. She just wants to play. She exists. You just have to feel her energy — it's the connect and affiliation with the energy which is still around us of course in the spaces of worship but also everywhere.

I have meditated in Bhuli Bhatyari in the ridge near my house — now that's a Sufi site but I feel the same connection with that space where probably the Sufis once walked, sang and connected with the higher powers which I call Shakti. Feel this poem of mine:

"I spark of as breath Flow in your blood. Through your veins. In your soul. I exist. I am. I am all around you. I am within you. I connect with you Wind and the sound of it

Water and the touch of it I am venerable so I learn from you The jackals, tigers, dogs, dragonflies and snakes Splitting the Sahastra with a volcanic explosion Opening a thousand lotuses Not only within me but in you too

I decapitate my analytical mind Allowing the flow of intuition to enter You are the energy rendering, controlling the operating yogini.

Where should the seeker of yoginis go and what should they read?

A seeker who seeks the Shakti has to firstly have an intrinsic desire to understand Shakti, and then a desire to understand what comprises this energy. Once the desire has been fired, then you set out to visit the sacred abodes, they can be everywhere, forests or temples alike.

What is the easiest way of going through your current work?

Through my social media profile.

The writer is an interior designer with a passion for photography and Hindustani literature and culture

Ayodhya judgment: About faceless judges and the moral of Ram Katha



Sudhanshu Ranjan

Barring some dissent from expected quarters, the unanimous verdict of the five-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court on the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute has been universally hailed for putting the final lid on the centuries-old litigation, which caused tremors in Indian politics. However, it appears that some supporters of the Babri Masjid may not allow peace to have its way. Though every party to the litigation had publicly professed to abide by the verdict, they have taken a somersault. On the other hand, serious infighting is brewing among sadhu-sants claiming to represent Hindus over the management of the construction of the temple. It is hoped that Lord Ram is unshackled from the clutches of the so-called faithful and peace finally prevails.

The Supreme Court has tried its level best to cut the Gordian knot without hurting anyone. For the first time, the name of the judge who had authored the judgement has not been mentioned. Many a time it happens that a division bench dictates the order/judgment in open court and both judges sign. Thus, no particular judge is the author. But it is unprecedented so far as Constitution Benches are concerned. Thus, the judgment is unanimous as well as anonymous; the court has spoken. The author was not smitten by the virus of ambition to be remembered by posterity for penning a historic judgment and closing an acrimonious chapter of history. It serves the cause of justice better if judges are faceless.

It reminds one of the Federalist Papers written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay under the pseudonym “Publius” to canvass for the ratification of the US Constitution. Perhaps they did not reveal their identities because they had to appeal to the 13 states of the US which had to ratify the Constitution, and bylined authorship would have revealed their states and created doubts in the minds of other states that there might be some hidden agenda of the three states to which they belonged (Hamilton: British West Indies, Madison: Virginia, and Jay: New York). However, now the authorship of most of the papers has been established. Similarly, in the present judgment, it is conjectured that Justice D.Y. Chandrachud authored it, but the record is silent. In India, most of the ancient literature is *aupaurusheya* (godised) as the author is unknown. Even the Vedas are *aupaurusheya*. Writers often concealed their names. Had Kalidasa not mentioned his own name in two of his plays — *Malavikagnimitram* and *Vikramorvashtyam* — people would not have known that a playwright called Kalidasa ever existed. The protagonist tells the actress that they are going to enact Kalidasa’s play *Malavikagnimitram*. Another coruscating feature of the judgment is that after a long time the court has made a very constructive use of Article 142 of the Constitution, which gives the power to do “complete justice” to the Supreme Court in any matter or cause pending before it. In recent decades,

Many a time it happens that a division bench dictates the order/judgment in open court and both judges sign. Thus, no particular judge is the author. But it is unprecedented so far as Constitution Benches are concerned.

Article 142 has been invoked with an alarming frequency, which has been subjected to searing criticism. But in this case, it has allotted five acres of land as a recompense for the construction of a mosque, invoking this extraordinary jurisdiction. Though some Muslims have fulminated, terming it as condescension, they should appreciate the gesture. Their anguish is understandable but calm cogitation is expected at this crucial juncture.

The court has also rightly recorded that all historical wrongs cannot be redressed by the court. But so far as the Ayodhya dispute is concerned, it acquired a gargantuan proportion as the court, for long, shuffled out of the controversy. History is replete with instances of barbarism, vandalism and rankling injustices. Since ancient times, temples have been invaded to plunder wealth. Christian mobs demolished pagan temples and made off with the accumulated wealth. Edward Gibbon has written that “in almost every province of the Roman world, an army of fanatics, without authority and without discipline, invaded the peaceful inhabitants; and the ruin of the fairest structures of antiquity still displays the ravages of those barbarians...” Most of the pagan temples in the Roman empire had been destroyed by the end of the fourth century CE by the menacing Christian

crowds. The only one to go unscathed was the temple of Serapis, the presiding deity of Alexandria. Gibbon rebuts the claim that the Roman empire earlier persecuted Christians, “The learned Origen... declares in most express terms... that the number of martyrs was very inconsiderable... His authority would be alone sufficient to annihilate that formidable army of martyrs, whose relics, drawn from the most part from the catacombs of Rome, have replenished so many churches, and whose marvelous achievements have been the subject of so many volumes of holy romance... Dionysius... in the immense city of Alexandria, and under the rigorous persecution of Decius, reckons only ten men and seven women who suffered for the profession of the Christian name.” The Church branded Gibbon anti-Christian.

The Portuguese ravaged temples in Goa after they established their rule by 1520. Bishop Dume wrote to the King of Portugal on January 12, 1522 that service to God required razing temples and erecting churches in their place, and only those who convert to Christianity would be allowed to stay. All Hindu temples in Goa were demolished by June 28, 1541 by Miguel Vaz, who was blessed by Francis Xavier for carrying out the task. However, Muslim invaders targeted temples for riches. Mahmud Ghazni raided India 17 times. He broke the idols of Somnath when he could not get the desired wealth about which he had information. Temples were repositories of gold and jewels. Whenever he faced a financial crunch, he invaded to pillage. Invaders targeted mostly wealth. In 1739, Nadir Shah took back the booty that he had plundered on 700 elephants, 4,000 camels and 12,000 horses. After his return, he abolished taxes for three years in Iran.

However, there is no evidence that the temple, or whatever

structure it was, at Ayodhya, was demolished for wealth. It was an act of vandalism to subjugate. It is heartening that top leaders of both communities, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, licked people into shape. There were no victory rallies or festivities by Hindus. This is the leitmotif of the Ram Katha, which spurns hatred or ill-will for anyone. Tulidas’ *Ramcharitmanas* is totally free from any hint of communalism though his time was not free from such rancor. George Grierson, in his “Notes on Tulidas” which appeared in 1893 in the *Indian Antiquary*, extols *Ramcharitmanas* as the embodiment of Indian culture and he was mesmerised to such an extent that he wrote that even if the whole of Indian culture is destroyed and the *Ramcharitmanas* is saved, it alone will resurrect Indian culture. Vincent Smith laments that historians did not ruminate over the contributions of Tulidas and just ignored him. Tulidas talks of hunger and poverty: “The privation of the poor wretch who starves for want of food and nourishment will not be removed by drawing a picture of *Kalpataru* (the wish-fulfilling tree) or the Kamdhenu (the celestial cow with unbounded capacity to fulfill all needs) on the walls. The satisfaction of a good meal is known only to him who eats it, even if he should not say a word; but mere talk day and night about six varieties of eatables will do him no good.” The *Ramayana* has approximately 300 versions in India and abroad. Some countries other than India have more than one version. For instance, Myanmar has two versions: *Ramavattu* and *Ramathagyan*. But everywhere Ram is love, compassion, sacrifice and other virtues personified. It is not to humiliate or belittle anyone.

The writer is a senior TV journalist and author

Censorship isolates dissenters, then tries to demonise them



Huma Yusuf

Friday last week marked the Day of the Imprisoned Writer, observed annually by the writers’ association PEN International to express solidarity for writers who have been harassed, detained, prosecuted or killed for expressing their views. The day offered yet another opportunity to reflect on the growing challenge to free expression, and emphasised why this should matter to everyone — not just writers.

Each year, PEN highlights the cases of five persecuted writers. This year’s list included a Mexican investigative journalist who has been repeatedly threatened and previously detained after publishing a book on child sex trafficking; a Sri Lankan writer who published a short story about child abuse in a Buddhist temple; a Ugandan academic who was detained for “cyber harassment” after posting a poem on Facebook criticising the country’s President; a Turkish journalist who covered Army operations in the country’s Kurdish area, now facing terrorism charges; and an Egyptian poet who wrote the lyrics to a song criticising the government that went viral weeks before last year’s presidential election.

These cases are a chilling reminder of the global dimensions of the challenges to free speech and the resistance — often violent — to increased transparency. They highlight the sweep of authoritarianism and majoritarianism worldwide, and the growing ease with which dissenting voices can be tracked and silenced.

An interesting aspect of PEN’s lists is the number of writers who are dual nationals or live outside their native country (last year’s short list featured a Swedish-Eritrean journalist who has been imprisoned in Eritrea for 18 years for criticising the country’s President; the Mexican journalist on this year’s list went into self-exile for security reasons). This fuels the perception that dissenters can continue to speak out from “abroad”, lessening the urgency to protect free expression within each country’s borders.

But this is untrue. Individuals’ ideas and activism can be effectively tracked through their social media footprint or through cyber surveillance. The widespread

introduction of national identity databases enable states to link dissenting voices in exile to their nuclear or extended family members back home, and continue to apply indirect pressure. Take the PTM-linked activist whose father was arrested after she relocated to the US.

The previous sense of security afforded by foreign citizenships or dual nationalities is also evaporating as Western states clamp down on immigration and demonise asylum seekers. Western democracies that have championed free speech are consuming themselves with hate politics, and have little capacity (or moral authority) to defend the outspoken from around the world as they crack down on their own dissenters. Just think of the weak global response to journalist Jamal Khashoggi’s murder, or the sense of isolation inculcated by the UK’s denunciation of IS bride Shamima Begum — a citizen of Bangladeshi origin, promptly deemed an outsider.

Salil Tripathi, chair of PEN’s Writers in Prison Committee, wrote of imprisoned writers, “they will not be silenced, their readers will not be silenced.” Tripathi’s conflation of the silencing of writers and their readers must be more widely deployed. One challenge of denouncing censorship is that people think this is a state activity that only affects the sub-group of those who speak out, whether writers, journalists, academics or activists. Once voices of dissent are thus isolated and marginalised, they can be demonised. Those who don’t routinely speak out begin to wonder: did they deserve it? Can they be trusted? And what does it matter to me?

It’s therefore essential that censorship be recast as a way of controlling society at large. The freedom afforded to writers is merely a gauge of the power equation within a country, a hint at the nature and quality of information flows, service delivery, wealth distribution and accountability. Broader constituencies must recognise how censorship skews the public record, data, national narratives and social cohesion for generations. The world’s imprisoned writers must be a matter of distress for all of us.

By arrangement with Dawn

Time to embrace and nourish our rivers



Sadhguru

Water is a resource that has to be managed. This has been ignored in recent times. We have not really looked at how we can practice agriculture in a way that conserves water. In Tamil Nadu, we are still largely flood irrigating, which is the cruellest way of using water.

There are more efficient ways to practice agriculture today. If you put so much water in one place, the soil gets leached and all the bio-activity in the

soil is reduced. The plant may look green, but it suffers in many ways. If we change this, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka can manage their water situation.

We need to pay more attention to the Cauvery river itself. The Cauvery is maybe 40 per cent of what it was 50 years ago. Almost all our rivers are going through this, which is a disaster waiting to unfold.

I have rafted down the Cauvery from Bhagamandala to the Krishna Raja Sagara Dam and the Brindavan Gardens in Karnataka — a distance of over 160 km. In this entire distance, it is only in the first 30 to 35 km that there is any forest vegetation.

After that, there is just agriculture. How will a river flow with this? Unless there is forest, there will be no river after sometime. Our idea of a catch-



ment area is that of a 35-km valley. No, catchment should be all along the way.

People think because of water there are trees. No, because of trees there is water. All along the river, wherever the land belongs to the government, we must do afforestation immediately. Wherever it belongs to a local farmer, the government must move from agriculture to horticulture.

If you show the farmer the economics of this move, that by planting trees and having horticultural crops he will earn more than he can by ploughing the land, he will naturally take to it. If you ensure this on either side for a minimum of a kilometre — if we can do more than a kilometre it will be great — in 15 years, the Cauvery will have at least 10 to 20 per cent more water flowing.

Today, all our rivers are in danger. We have to look at how to revive these rivers. Otherwise, in a few years, we won’t be drinking from bottles, we will be bathing from bottles.

Half the nation is already in a position where they don’t start their day with a bath because there is no water. The legacy we are leaving our children is such that no matter what you have, you will not be able to live well. The choice we have now is to consciously correct this or let nature do it. If nature does it, it will do it in a very cruel way.

For thousands of years, these rivers have embraced and nourished us. The time has come when we have to embrace and nourish our rivers.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, an internationally renowned spiritual leader, is a visionary, humanitarian, author, poet and speaker. He can be contacted at www.ishafoundation.org



Robot companions

LG has deployed 25 Clou robots to Seoul National University Hospital's children's hospital to better provide medical care.

SHORT TAKES

VIVO Y19 SMARTPHONE LAUNCHED

New Delhi, Nov. 18: Smartphone brand vivo on Monday expanded its Y-series portfolio with the launch of Y19 smartphone. The smartphone, which packs a 5000mAh battery inside, is equipped with an AI Triple Rear Camera setup and macro capabilities for capturing small details in your daily life. Priced at ₹13,999, the Y19 will be available in Magnetic Black and Spring White colour variants across all offline partner outlets and online channels. The smartphone boasts of a 6.53 FHD+ Halo FullView Display with a 19.5:9 aspect ratio is powered 4 GB RAM + 128GB ROM — Agencies

MS UPDATES TERMS ON DATA PRIVACY

San Francisco, Nov. 18: Microsoft said on Monday it was updating the privacy provisions of its commercial cloud contracts after European regulators found its deals with European Union institutions failed to protect data in line with EU law. The EDPS, the EU's data watchdog, opened an investigation in April to assess whether Microsoft's contracts with the European Commission and other EU institutions met data protection rules. It raised concerns about compliance in October. In a statement on its website addressing the issue, Microsoft said: "We will increase our data protection responsibilities for a subset of processing that Microsoft engages in when we provide enterprise services." The company, the only major cloud provider to offer such terms in the European Economic Area and beyond, expects to offer the new provisions to public sector and enterprise customers in early 2020. — Reuters



AIRPODS PRO BEATS GALAXY BUDS IN AUDIO

AGE CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, NOV. 18

True Wireless earphones are all the rage as we head to the end of the decade and it seems like wired audio is on its way out. Though there are true wireless audio products available all across the price segment, don't assume the more expensive one is the better. This isn't always the case. The recently launched Apple AirPods Pro, for example, needs deeper pockets than the Galaxy Buds, but according to Consumer Reports, people prefer the latter in terms of audio quality. Though the new AirPods Pro offers better audio quality than the older AirPods, they apparently do not offer the same level of high-end audio as the Galaxy Buds. It is possible that AKG gives the Galaxy Buds an edge thanks to its decades of experience in acoustics. "The Echo Buds, Amazon's new noise-cancelling true wireless headphones, didn't score quite as well in our tests, but they're solid performers and far cheaper at \$130," Consumer Reports said. "And while the AirPods Pro sound far better than Apple's earlier models, they still don't meet the audio quality of our top pick for true wireless sound, the Samsung Galaxy Buds, which also sell for around \$130." There was still, a lot to be appreciated about the Apple AirPods Pro. The AirPods still offers above-average sound quality, combined with active noise cancellation, and a transparency mode to let ambient sound in. The AirPods also offers superb integration with other Apple products including iPhones, iPads and the Macbooks.

Adaptive gaming



Continuing from last year's Microsoft Xbox Adaptive Controller (XAC), the \$99 Logitech Adaptive Gaming Kit hopes to bring gaming accessibility to estimated 80% of special-needs gamers.


Encryption helps child predators, says Interpol

New statement aims at increasing pressure on tech firms

San Francisco, Nov. 18: The international police organization Interpol plans to condemn the spread of strong encryption in a statement Monday saying it protects child sex predators, three people briefed on the matter told Reuters. At the group's conference in Lyon, France on Friday, an Interpol official said a version of the resolution introduced by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation would be released without a formal vote by representatives of the roughly 60 countries in attendance, the sources said. Echoing a joint letter last month from the top law enforcement officials in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, the larger group will cite difficulties in catching child sexual predators as grounds for companies opening up user communications to authorities wielding court warrants. "Service providers, application developers and device manufacturers are developing and deploying products and services with encryption which effectively conceals sexual exploitation of children occurring on their platforms," a draft of the resolution seen by Reuters said. "Tech companies should

SECURITY CONCERNS

- Echoing a joint letter last month from the top law enforcement officials in the US, UK and Australia, the larger group will cite difficulties in catching child sexual predators as grounds for companies opening up user communications to authorities wielding court warrants.
- Both the UK and Australia have recently passed laws moving in that direction, though it is unclear how widely they are being wielded.



INTERPOL

include mechanisms in the design of their encrypted products and services whereby governments, acting with appropriate legal authority, can obtain access to data in a readable and useable format." Interpol did not respond to a request for comment Sunday. The FBI referred questions to Interpol. The cooperative law enforcement association is best known for helping countries assist one another in catching suspects outside their jurisdictions. The new statement will not have the force of law, but instead aim at increasing pressure on tech providers. It could provide greater political cover for more countries to pass laws or regulations barring unbreakable encryption or

requiring companies to be capable of hacking their own users, both of which are anathema to major US-based global providers including Apple and Google. Both the United Kingdom and Australia have recently passed laws moving in that direction, though it is unclear how widely they are being wielded. US skirmishes have been fought in sealed court proceedings, without major congressional action. Interpol joining the political fray is notable because the group includes Russia and other countries without rules against mass surveillance or spying on political minorities and activists. "This proposal will endanger people who rely on strong encryption to

keep them safe, including from hackers and repressive regimes," said a spokesman for Facebook, which was among the tech companies in Lyon for the conference. "It will also weaken the online security of over a billion people." Facebook, owner of WhatsApp and Instagram, moved to the front of the political fight this year by announcing plans to make its popular Messenger communication service encrypted end-to-end, so that neither Facebook nor law enforcement can view content unless they have access to one of the end-point devices. Because Messenger has been one of the most valuable sources of information about child predators, the step provoked the October joint letter from three of the "Five Eyes" intelligence alliance, which also includes Canada and New Zealand. Tech activists, pointing to past abuses of "exceptional access" for governments, have been alarmed at the political and legal trend, and that accelerated over the weekend. If an international company provides hacking capability under the legal system in one nation, they say, other countries will demand and get the same access, potentially across borders. — Reuters

Ad blocker plasters users with adverts

AGE CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, NOV. 18

It is quite common to see advertisements at regular intervals on the internet. Often people deploy an ad blocker to get rid of those annoying pesky ads. However, a fake ad blocker, which is available outside of Google Play, does the exact opposite. It bombards Android users with ads, mostly vulgar, *ArsTechnica* reports. According to the report, which cites *Malwarebytes*, the app, Ads Blocker, is quite hard to uninstall as the Adware is cleverly hidden. Among the several tricks used by the app, the first is to simply ask for usage rights to display over other apps. It then makes a connection request to "set up a VPN connection that allows it to monitor network traffic." Finally, it seeks permission to add a widget to the homescreen. In fact, approving the VPN connection — a standard requirement for some legitimate ad blockers — allows the app to run in the background at all times. Combined with the permission to display over


ADWARE ALERT

- While only 500 infections have detected so far, researchers suspect that the total number of infections is much higher.
- *VirusTotal* suggests the app is spreading in the US, most likely when people look for an ad blocker from a third-party app store.
- A simple way to remove the app is to search for an entry with storage size of 6.57 megabytes in the App Info section of the Android settings.

other apps, the app is free to plaster ads in a variety of aggressive and annoying ways. It displays full-page ads across the screen. It delivers ads in the default browser. It includes ads in notifications. And it places ads in the homescreen widget.

TOP 10 ANTI-MALWARE (BY MARKET SHARE)

Symantec	13.56%	• An OPSWAT report from January 2014 had Avast with a 13.2% market share. By June 2017, Avast had amassed a whopping 20.48% of the market, thanks to its 2016 acquisition of AVG.
ESET	12.84%	• Avast's fall in the rankings triggered a steady shift at the top. The leading spot switched hands three times in the past year, from Avast to McAfee in March 2019, then to ESET in June, and then to Symantec in August.
McAfee	12.21%	• OPSWAT said its report should not be used to make decisions "on which anti-malware vendors are the best or to compare these vendors in terms of quality or performance," but instead be used only as informational points.
Bitdefender	10.77%	
Kaspersky	7.66%	
Avast	6.98%	
Cylance	5.95%	
Webroot	5.88%	
Malwarebytes	5.8%	
Sophos	3.62%	



STADIA GETS MORE GAMES

- Attack on Titan: Final Battle 2
- Farming Simulator 2019
- Final Fantasy XV
- Football Manager 2020
- Grid 2019
- Metro Exodus
- NBA 2K20
- Rage 2
- Trials Rising
- Wolfenstein: Youngblood



TIKTOK OWNER EYES MUSIC STREAMING BIZ

Bengaluru, Nov. 18: TikTok owner Beijing ByteDance is in talks with big music labels — Universal Music, Sony Music and Warner Music — for global licensing deals to include their songs on its new music subscription service, the *Financial Times* reported on Sunday. ByteDance is looking to launch its music streaming as soon as next month, initially in emerging markets such as India, Indonesia and Brazil, before a future opening in the United States, the FT reported on.ft.com/37brU3U, citing people familiar with the matter. In addition to on-demand music, ByteDance's app will include a library of short video clips for listeners to search through and synch to songs as they listen, the report added. ByteDance has not given a name to its music app yet and pricing remains unclear, although it is expected to cost less than the \$10 a month charged by Spotify Technology SA, Apple Inc and others in the US, according to the report. The company was not immediately available for comment. — Reuters



Dai crypto seeks to change 'stablecoin' game

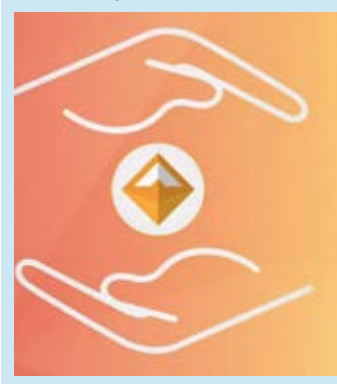
While some Argentinian savers desperate to avoid inflation are using it, Oxfam aid agency is testing it

London, Nov. 18: Some are backed by dollars. Others by gold. But this "stablecoin" isn't tied to any major asset — it's backed by another cryptocurrency. Stablecoins, such as Facebook's Libra, are a new breed of cryptocurrencies that aim to escape the wild price swings that make bitcoin unworkable for commerce. They base their value on more stable underlying assets, typically traditional currencies or commodities. But Dai, in a major divergence from others, uses a volatile digital currency — ethereum — to maintain a steady value. This might appear to defy common sense, but its advocates say the way it works — with "smart contracts," blockchain-based covenants with terms set in code — means Dai will always keep a stable value while offering transparency. Stablecoins like Libra and Tether are in global regulators' sights, partly because of concerns over how the companies behind them manage the reserves that back them. Dai, launched in 2017, seeks to dodge such concerns by giving up control of the ethereum coins its value is tied to, locking

them instead in the blockchain contracts run by algorithms. That, supporters say, offers the benefits of stablecoins — instant transactions and steady value — while avoiding governance risks. It is gaining some traction: the Oxfam aid agency is testing it for distributing aid on a Pacific island, while some Argentinian savers desperate to avoid inflation are using it. How regulators treat Dai could help shape how, and if, cryptocurrencies can evolve from speculative use to a de facto money of the internet. But their response is still unclear. *Reuters* is tracking the emergence of contenders to bitcoin — the "altcoins" — as they attract increasing attention from investors, regulators, companies and individuals. The fourth in the series looks at Dai. **HOW DOES IT WORK?** Like bitcoin, Dai hopes to power a digital economy where people can bypass banks and other financial firms to transact directly with one another. Its workings are complex. Dai is effectively pegged to the dollar, and backed

NEW CRYPTOCURRENCY

- The Cayman Islands-registered Maker Foundation, run from Copenhagen, oversees the technology.
- Mariano Conti, head of smart contracts, said he hoped the foundation could cease to exist within two to three years.
- MakerDAO says an "emergency shutdown" mechanism guards against attacks.



by ethereum cryptocurrency locked in publicly viewable contracts that are stored on the blockchain. Many stablecoins are trusted because their value is underpinned by central bank currencies. Users trust Dai, on the other hand, as the ethereum that is locked in the contracts always exceeds the value of Dai in circulation. When Dai's value strays too far from the dollar, balancing mechanisms kick in to guide it back. "With a decentralised stablecoin, you can see everything on

the blockchain," said Rune Christensen, founder of the protocol that Dai runs on, MakerDAO. "Anyone can go and do a real-time audit." **WHO'S IN CONTROL, THEN?** Dai is not yet entirely decentralised. The Cayman Islands-registered Maker Foundation, run from Copenhagen, oversees the technology. The foundation, also headed by Christensen, develops code and other projects it hopes will allow Dai and MakerDAO to be entirely controlled

by its users. Mariano Conti, head of smart contracts, said he hoped the foundation could cease to exist within two to three years. "The purpose is to bootstrap the system until it's no longer needed," said Conti, who is based in Buenos Aires. But risks exist in the governance model. Flaws in smart contracts, for instance, could leave it vulnerable to exploitation and the theft of assets stored on the blockchain, said Timothy Stranex, co-founder of Luno, a crypto exchange in London. MakerDAO says an "emergency shutdown" mechanism guards against attacks. Should users seek to take over the protocol, it says, the shutdown would be triggered to protect collateral and return funds.

HOW DO REGULATORS SEE IT? It's unclear. Cryptocurrency-backed stablecoins fell outside the scope of a G7 report last month that said their ability to keep a steady value in the medium term was questionable. United States regulators declined to comment on Dai.

Britain's Financial Conduct Authority said it did not use the term "stablecoin," given stability was purely an aspiration, and that a thorough case-by-case analysis was needed. Stablecoins like Dai present a new front for regulators as they strive to tame the fast-moving world of cryptocurrencies, experts said. "The regulators are trying to fit the existing framework onto these new technologies," said Phil Angeloff, a lawyer at Clifford Chance in Washington who has worked on stablecoins. **HOW'S IT FARED IN THE REAL WORLD?** Better than many cryptocurrencies used mainly for speculation. Oxfam has tested Dai this year for distributing aid in the Pacific island state of Vanuatu, prone to natural disasters. It gave Dai to around 200 people and 30 vendors on one of Vanuatu's 80-plus islands, building a mini Dai-based economy. "It allows us to control more, and interact economically more directly with each other — and more quickly — after a disaster," said Oxfam's Sandra Hart, speaking from Vanuatu's capital

Port Vila. Another larger version of the trial is planned in Vanuatu next year, Hart said, spread across multiple islands. Dai is also attracting attention in inflation-hit Argentina. Data is scarce, but a Telegram messaging group for Dai users in the country has doubled in size to over 450 members in recent weeks, the Maker Foundation's Conti said. Reuters spoke to five users in cities across the country, who said Dai offered a chance to protect their savings against the peso's falling value. "My mom and I started to save a part of our money in Dai," said Romina Sejas, a law student in the western city of Mendoza. "We can't save our money in pesos. Every month we have inflation. We have to be creative to survive to the decisions of our politicians." Dai's decentralisation made it an attractive alternative to other stablecoins, said Jose Villar, a software program manager in Buenos Aires. "All others, there is some entity behind that can be a bank, and we don't know who is really behind them." — Reuters

NITI mulls health care system for middle-class

Call to exempt banks from deposit cover

quick BITES

Table with 3 columns: INDICATORS, %, and values. Rows include Sensex, Nifty 50, S&P 500, Dollar, Pound Sterling, Euro, Gold, Brent crude, IN 10-Yr bond yield, and US 10-Yr T-bill yield.

Drawback rates for gold, silver jewellery raised

The government has increased duty drawback rates for gold and silver jewellery, which would make Indian exports more competitive. The drawback rates have been raised to Rs 372.9 per gram for gold jewellery from Rs 272 per gram, according to a Finance Ministry notification.

Homebuyers file over 1,800 cases under IBC

Homebuyers have filed 1,821 cases against builders under the IBC since June 2018, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Anurag Singh Thakur told the Lok Sabha. These are the number of cases pending before the NCLT as on Sept.30. He said the Centre is aware of the problem of pendency at the tribunal due to high number of cases being filed by homebuyers.

Idea Payments Bank headed for liquidation

The RBI said Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank is headed for liquidation post-application by the company for voluntarily winding up. "We advise that on a voluntarily winding up application by Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank, the Bombay High Court has passed an order on Sept. 18, 2019," RBI said. HC has appointed Vijay Kumar V. Iyer, Senior Director of Deloitte India as the liquidator.

Prestige buys 28.9% in DB's Mumbai project

Bengaluru-based Prestige Estates has bought 28.99 per cent stake in a commercial project in Mumbai of DB Realty. The deal value was not disclosed. Last month, Prestige Estates Projects Ltd on announced a joint venture with DB Group to develop a large hotel and convention centre project at Aero City in the national capital with an investment of Rs 2,000 crore.

Printed & Published by T Venkateswarlu on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at BFL Infotech Ltd, C-9 Sector 3, Noida-201301. Published at 219, N D Tiwari Bhawan, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Editor: T.Venkatram Reddy, RNI Registration number 30074/09. Air surcharge Re 1. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle © is prohibited.

Amidst rocketing prices & distress sale by farmers Over 63% of onion buffer stock rots

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV 18

While onion prices have been going through the roof and had hit Rs 100 a kg in some markets, 63 per cent of the onions kept in the government's buffer stock had to be wasted as it became unusable. This is as huge as 36,334 tonnes. In a monthly update, the Department of Consumer Affairs said that "as on October 30, 2019, 20,965 metric tonnes of onion has been disposed out of the buffer stock of 57,299 metric tonnes of onions, while the rest is unfit for human consumption/weight loss". That means, out of the buffer stock of 57,299 tonnes, 36,334 tonnes of onion were found to be unfit for human consumption. This is 63.4 per cent of the total stock. However, the ministry had claimed last week that only 25 per cent of the stock was rotten. In the first week of November, Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said that much of the onions from the buffer



stock of 57,000 tonnes has been disposed off, while 25 per cent of it has been rotten due to the short shelf life of the commodity. Still, 1,525 tonnes is left in the central buffer stock, he had said. "This is a huge quantity, especially when we have such a shortfall and price rise in onion. While we do not know how these onions became unfit for human consumption, the government should have taken steps to preserve it or dispose off before they became unusable," said an agri expert. Onions have a short shelf-life. "Even when

they are exported in containers, they lose their moisture and become unfit for consumption in two weeks," he added. Meanwhile, the government has announced its plan to import one lakh tonnes of onion to control the price rise. The onion will be imported by MMTC and supplied by Nafed across the country between November 15 and December 15. "By taking care of the buffer stock and disposing of on time, we could have lowered the import quantum considerably. Nafed could have very well dis-

tributed the buffer stock on time and brought down the prices," an expert said. Moreover, it will take around one month to distribute the imported onion and till then prices will remain high. The prices have been going up since September. While the ministry had termed that the prices had risen due to flood-triggered disruption in Maharashtra and Karnataka, several reports found that farmers in some parts of the country were dumping onions on the roads due to unsustainably low prices.

Major recovery for SBI, ICICI from Essar verdict

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, NOV. 18

The recent Supreme Court's landmark judgement on Essar Steel case will see healthy recoveries for several banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Bank of Baroda and Punjab National Bank, which would boost their Q3 earnings. Several financial creditors had a high provision cover of almost 100 per cent on their exposure to the steel company. Essar Steel has been a bad loan for the banking sector since March 2016, hence, most of the loan recovery will flow through their profit and loss provision write-backs and recoveries from written-off accounts. The Supreme Court of India (SC) had pronounced last week that the resolution of Essar Steel would proceed as per the proposed resolution plan of October 2018. The SC stated that the ultimate right of distribution of claims lies with the Committee of creditors (CoC). Essar steel was one of 12 systemically large NPAs the RBI had directed banks to refer to NCLT in August 2017. Financial creditors had an exposure of Rs 49,500 crore, while operational creditors' exposure was Rs 19,700 crore. It means that in the case of Essar Steel's exposure to

the system, secured financial creditors would have a recovery amounting to 89.8 per cent on the admitted claim of Rs 45,559 crore. "As per the October 2018 resolution plan, secured financial creditors will recover 92 per cent of their exposure of Rs 42,000 crore to Essar Steel while operational and unsecured creditors make very low recoveries of 2 to 4 per cent," said Sameer Bhise, Analyst at JM Financial. "Significant non-performing loan recoveries are to be made by ICICI, Axis, SBI and we remain constructive on these names. Healthy recoveries are also expected for Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank and Punjab National Bank," added Bhise. SBI has the highest exposure to Essar Steel and would, thus, benefit the most from this ruling. SBI's admitted claims by the Resolution Professional stood at Rs 13,220.91 crore, and the CoC allocation stood at Rs 11,872 crore, SBI which translates to 89.8 per cent recovery. Essar Steel account was fully written off by SBI. ICICI Bank's admitted claims is around Rs 2,290 crore while the CoC approved Rs 2,100 crore and assets sold to Edelweiss ARC was at Rs 1,700 crore with CoC approving Rs 1,560 crore. On the NCLT list 1, which includes Essar, the bank has made more than 90 per cent of the provisioning.

SC stays SAT order that Sebi lacks power to bar auditors

New Delhi, Nov. 18: The Supreme Court on Monday stayed an order of the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) which had held that markets watchdog Sebi does not have the power to bar auditors. A bench comprising Justices Arun Mishra and Indira Banerjee also issued notice on the appeal filed by the Securities and Exchange Board of India against the SAT's September 9 order. The SAT, in its order which set aside the ban on audit firm Price Waterhouse (PwC), had noted that the Sebi does not have the power to bar auditors. Earlier, the Sebi had challenged SAT's decision to quash a two-year ban imposed on PwC in connection with the Rs 7,800-crore Satyam fraud. On January 10, 2018, the watchdog slapped a two-year ban on Price Waterhouse (PwC), an arm of PricewaterhouseCoopers India, from auditing any listed company in connection with PwC's role in the Satyam scam. The tribunal had quashed the order but partly allowed disgorgement of the Rs 13 crore fee from the auditors concerned. —PTI

Call, data to cost more from Dec. as Voda, Airtel hike rates

New Delhi, Nov. 18: Faced with intense competition and unprecedented statutory dues, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea on Monday announced a hike in mobile phone call and data charges from December, saying the increase was warranted for viability of their business. In a statement, Vodafone Idea announced plans to raise tariffs for the first time in three years. Soon after, Airtel, too, issued a similarly worded statement. The two, however, did not quantify the increase in rates but said that the hike will be effective beginning next month. Vodafone Idea last week



reported a consolidated loss of Rs 50,921 crore—the highest ever loss posted by any Indian corporate—for the second quarter ended September 30, on account of liability arising out of the Supreme Court order in the adjusted gross revenue (AGR) case.

"To ensure that its customers continue to enjoy world class digital experiences, Vodafone Idea will suitably increase the prices of its tariffs effective December 1, 2019," Vodafone Idea said in the statement. The company at present provides monthly mobile services at a starting price of Rs 24 without data, and plans with data service starts from Rs 33 onwards. Airtel monthly plan starts at Rs 24 onwards, while a scheme with data begins from Rs 35. Vodafone Idea has last week said that its ability to continue as a going concern is dependent on obtaining relief from the

government and positive outcome of the proposed legal remedy, including a review petition before the apex court. Following the apex court judgement, Bharti Airtel too raised similar concerns. "The telecom sector is highly capital intensive with fast changing technology cycles that require continuing investments. It is, therefore, extremely important that the industry remains viable to support the vision of Digital India. Accordingly, Airtel will appropriately increase price offerings in the month beginning December," Bharti Airtel said. —PTI

Dearth of risk management professionals raises concern

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, NOV 18 As the PMC Bank debacle has fuelled a nationwide debate, the minuscule presence of qualified risk management professionals have raised concerns at India's financial institutions like banks, non-banking finance companies, and co-operative banks. The average number of risk management officials engaged in an Indian bank is estimated at less than one per cent of total payrolls against the global average of 3 per cent-plus.

The concerns come on the back of the financial turmoil at PMC Bank, followed by a few corporate defaults, which triggered a debate about the safety and soundness of the Indian financial system. Experts feel better risk management has become a pressing priority now. "Percentage of employees in the risk and compliance function in independent decision making in any Indian bank is typically less than one per cent; globally this is upwards of 3 per cent," says Nirakar Pradhan, Director & Asia

Pacific Representative, Professional Risk Managers' International Association (PRMIA). "In a competitive world where businesses are rewarded for high growth, the risk management often takes the back seat. Therefore, discussion on risk management comes to the fore at the time of a crisis, and practices in this regard should be top of the agenda for financial institutions," he added. In the financial world, risk management broadly refers to the policies, processes, tools and strate-

gies to identify, assess, manage, control and reporting on the present and forward-looking risks. "It has been observed that the board of directors is ultimately responsible for defining risk policies and strategies aligned to corporate business and goals," said a top official of a public sector bank. It may be noted that on August 30, 2019, the government has allowed the boards of public sector banks to appoint Chief Risk Officers and pay them market related salaries.

Lubricant industry faces Kodak moment from EVs

ANDREW MARC NOEL & KELLY GILBLOM NOV. 18

The \$146-billion lubricants industry is at risk of suffering the same fate as Kodak, thanks to the rise of electric vehicles. From Volkswagen AG to Nissan Motor Co., carmakers are switching to battery-powered models that use fewer greases than combustion vehicles. With demand expected to decline from 2025, lubricant makers are wary of

Eastman Kodak's demise when it failed to grasp the potential of the digital camera in the 1970s. For decades, lubricant makers have been preoccupied with squeezing more fuel efficiency from combustion engines and increasing the mileage between oil changes. EVs present a new set of challenges to their piston counterparts that typically use 40 different oils. They need a grease that can cool and lubricate the motor, while also protecting the elec-



tronics on-board and being compatible with non-metal materials like plastics. "I'm very conscious of the world changing," said Dave Hall, a 30-year industry veteran who is over-

hauling BP Plc's line-up of Castrol lubricants for the EV market. "I'd like to think we're trying to address and prevent a Kodak moment and not just lock it away in a cupboard as maybe they did." With the current crop of electric cars in circulation, attention has largely been on battery performance and design, with lubricants an afterthought. Some EVs use standard greases found in combustion engines, according to Lutz Lindemann, Chief Technology Officer at Fuchs Petrolub SE. There are signs the pressure is already poised to affect companies. Demand for automotive lubricants, which reached about 20

million tonnes last year, is supposed to be flat for the "foreseeable future" due to the impact of EVs, the growing use of synthetic lubricants and economic pressures, according to research from energy consultant Kline & Company. Other oil majors, who are fighting the effects of the push to de-carbonise on multiple fronts, have also focused on creating new products. Royal Dutch Shell Plc, the largest global supplier of finished lubricants, has developed a line

of fluids engineered specifically for the high-tech powertrains of hybrids and EVs. Total SA launched two brands of lubricants for EVs last year, while Petronas announced its own EV brand this year. Like Castrol, Fuchs has created a dedicated international team of managers and researchers solely focused on developing and marketing lubricants for EVs, Lindemann said.

—Bloomberg

NITI mulls health care system for middle-class

New Delhi, Nov. 18: NITI Aayog is mulling building up a healthcare system for the middle-class which is still not covered under any public healthcare system, the government think-tank said on Monday. The healthcare system would exclude those covered under the Ayushman Bharat scheme that mainly caters to the bottom 40 per cent population of the country.

India has low level and very fragmented risk pooling, with household out-of-pocket funding at 64 per cent of total expenses dominating the overall system financing, NITI Aayog said at the launch 'Health System for a New India: Building Blocks — Potential Pathways to Reform' report.

The report was released by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar in the presence of Bill Gates, the Co-Chairman of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

NITI Aayog Adviser Alok Kumar said the report intends to prepare the road map to build a health system in the medium- to long-term.

'Recategorise 23 more offences under cos law'

New Delhi, Nov. 18: A government-appointed high level panel has proposed recategorisation of 23 more offences under the companies law.

The committee has suggested amendments to 46 penal provisions, "so as to either remove criminality, or to restrict the punishment to only fine, or to allow rectification of defaults through alternative methods", an official release said on Monday.

The proposals are aimed at further de-clogging of the criminal justice system in the country, it added.

As per the committee's report submitted to Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, 23 out of the 66 remaining compoundable offences under the Companies Act could be recategorised.

Such offences could then be dealt with in-house adjudication framework wherein these defaults would be subject to a penalty levied by an adjudicating officer.

— PTI

'Frequent FDA visits slow down pharma exports'

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV. 18

Indian pharmaceutical companies, over the last few years, have witnessed frequent inspection from US FDA and other European regulatory bodies due to its alleged lax standards in the production facilities across the country. Now, in a stark admission, Dr. Reddy's Labs' Managing Director G.V. Prasad said that such inspections and subsequent observations not only slows down the growth of pharma exports from the country, but also hurt the companies' possibility to attract business from China due to the raging trade war between the world's largest two economies.

"It (effect of frequent inspections) is quite significant (on India pharma exports). Part of the slowdown is that. Lot of companies' approvals have stalled because of warning letters. That has affected the new product introductions and growth," he said in a press briefing on Monday.

■ AIBEA says banks waste a huge sum on this Call to exempt banks from deposit cover

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, NOV. 18

The All-India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA), the oldest and the largest bank union, has asked Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to exempt the deposits of public sector banks and commercial banks from deposit insurance cover.

Arguing its case in a letter to the finance minister, the AIBEA said that as on March 31, 2019 there were a total of 2,098 banks covered by the Deposit Insurance Scheme — 19 public sector banks, 21 private banks, 46 foreign banks, 20 payment and small finance banks, 51 regional rural banks while a whopping 1,941 co-operative banks were covered. However the premium received for FY19 from commercial banks was Rs 11,190 crore while from the premium collected from co-operative banks was Rs 850 crore. A total premium of Rs 12,404 crore was received for FY19. But there were no claims paid for commercial banks while 15 co-operative banks were paid Rs 37 crore for FY19.

C. H. Venkatachalam, General Secretary AIBEA said, "Year after year, public sector banks and all commercial banks are required to pay huge premium to

RBI plans college of supervisors: Das

Mumbai, Nov. 18: The Reserve Bank is in the process of setting up a 'college of supervisors' to augment the supervisory skills of its key personnel, governor Shaktikanta Das has said.

The development can be attributed as a response to the massive scam at Punjab & Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank, which for three years hoodwinked the regulator with cooked up books—something the annual inspection by the RBI supervisors could not notice and take preventive action.

The RBI has already created a unified department of supervision and a unified department of regulation from November 1 this year, which will strengthen the oversight of commercial banks, cooperative banks and NBFCs, Das has said.

"In view of the above we submit to the government that the deposits of public sector banks and commercial banks which are covered by Section 45 of the Banking Regulations Act be exempted from the coverage of DICGC cover," wrote AIBEA.

8,49,000 crore of which Rs 3,77,500 crore or 44 per cent are covered by deposit insurance. But in the case of 19 Public Sector Banks, the total deposits were at Rs 72 lakh crore of which only Rs 22 lakh crore or 30 per cent are covered by deposit insurance.

"Because of these reasons, as on March 31, 2019, the Deposit Insurance Fund of DICGC is Rs 97,350 crore including a surplus of Rs 87,890 crore. The claims settled so far since 1962 is only Rs 5,120 crore and that too for the co-operative banks" added Venkatachalam.

Govt takes cover in fastest growing economy theme

FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, NOV. 18

Despite reports pointing to economic slowdown gripping almost all sectors, the government on Monday put up a brave face and maintained that India remains the fastest growing economy in the world.

The government has brought in major reforms to boost investment climate in the country for becoming a \$5-trillion economy, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in Parliament on Monday.

"During the last five years, the government has implemented major reforms to build the investment climate in the country for becoming a \$5 trillion economy. Introduction of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in 2016 is a significant step towards cleaning and strengthening the financial system of the country," she said in the Lok Sabha.

The finance minister was

replying to questions in the Lok Sabha whether the government has analysed reasons for economic slowdown in the country; analysis of impact of GST and if any study has been conducted on impact of the implementation of the foreign trade agreement.

Sitharaman said India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth during 2014-19 averaged 7.5 per cent, which was the highest among G-20 countries.

"A number of steps are being taken by the government to strengthen the economy that includes merger of banks and tax concessions to industries. By 2025, India will be a five trillion dollars economy", Union Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur said earlier during the Question Hour.

"Several banks have been merged with bigger banks and ultimate aim of the government is to keep four strong banks and ensure increased economic activities," Thakur said.

NCLAT rejects Dhanuka's bid for Orchid Pharma

New Delhi, Nov. 18: The NCLAT has rejected the bid of Dhanuka Laboratories for the debt ridden Orchid Pharma, and vacated the order passed by the Chennai-bench of NCLT, which had earlier approved its resolution plan.

The appellate tribunal observed that the approved resolution value, which stood at Rs 1,146.04 crore, proposed by Dhanuka Laboratories was lower than the liquidation value of Rs 1,309 crore of the company.

"The upfront payment alleged to be less than the 'Liquidation Value' of Rs 1,309 crore," said the NCLAT-bench headed by Chairman Justice S. J. Mukhopadhyaya. Earlier, the Chennai-bench of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had approved the Resolution Plan submitted by Dhanuka Laboratories on its order dated 25 and 27 June, 2019.

Admittedly, the amount offered in favour of stakeholders including the 'Financial Creditors' and the 'Operational Creditors' is being much less than the 'Liquidation Value', such 'Plan' cannot be accepted.

— PTI

Realty space gets \$14 bn foreign PE flows in five years

RITWIK MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA, NOV. 18

Indian real estate attracted nearly \$14 bn of foreign private equity (PE) between 2015 and Q3 2019, says the latest Anarock data. As high as 63 per cent (nearly \$8.8 bn) of the total foreign investments backed commercial real estate. The residential sector attracted just \$1.5 bn of foreign PE in the same period, trailing behind even the retail sector which saw cumulative inflows of \$1.7 bn.

In stark contrast, domestic PE funds pumped nearly \$2.4 bn into Indian real estate since 2015, of which nearly 71 per cent (nearly \$1.7 bn) went to the housing sector. This was a period of considerable stress for the residential segment; domestic funds invested heavily into a sector plagued by issues like delayed/stalled units, low sales and fairly lower yields. This made exiting investments with substantial gains difficult.

The commercial real estate segment, on the other hand, delivered a comparatively stellar performance in the last five years. Steady demand and rising rentals gave foreign investors a decisive edge. Moreover, the overwhelming response to Embassy Office Parks' REIT launch — and its superlative per-

formance — saw commercial real estate segment emerge as the bigger draw for investors. Several other large developers are also keen on listing their commercial assets under REITs, said Shobhit Agarwal, MD & CEO — Anarock Capital.

An additional infusion of \$1.6 bn between 2015 and Q3 2019 was a mix of foreign private equity and funding by Indian developers or investors who collaborated either at project or entity levels. For instance, in 2018, Canada's CPPIB and India's Phoenix Group together invested nearly \$100 mn into a mall project in Bangalore.

Agarwal said that of the total \$14 bn foreign investments in Indian real estate between 2015 and Q3 2019, nearly \$8.8 bn went into commercial realty, followed by \$1.7 bn in the retail sector and \$1.5 bn into the housing sector. Logistics & warehousing drew over \$1 bn, and the remaining investments went into mixed-use developments.

The reverse played out with domestic funds — of the total \$2.4 bn they invested in this period, housing drew the lion's share of \$1.7 bn (or 71 per cent); commercial came next with approx. \$600 mn and retail drew just \$40 mn of domestic funding.

India has high incidence of mobile ad frauds



with almost a fifth of the marketers being unclear of their ad fraud budget and majority of them believing that fraudulent activities will only increase. Brand safety on mobile is the biggest concern today and this benchmark report clearly demonstrates that this needs immediate addressal. Marketers will need to be extra cautious to attacks such as ad injections, data fraud, cookie stuffing, etc. Marketers must understand the potential of technologies such as Blockchain that can help solve issues related to fraud and create security and transparency in mobile marketing ecosystem," said Moneka Khurana, Country Head, MMA India.

Marketers view blockchain as a potential technology in fighting against fraud and transparency issues. However, only 37 per cent respondents in India are aware of blockchain and its application to fraud prevention.

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, NOV. 18

Mobile ad frauds are becoming a major challenge for marketers. Among Asian countries, India leads in mobile ad frauds.

Marketers find mobile ad fraud as their biggest threat. Indian marketers spend nearly 20 per cent of their advertising budget on ad fraud, a survey by Mobile Marketing Association found.

Major types of ad frauds are cookie stuffing, adware traffic, data fraud and ad injection.

There are mainly three classes of fraud and India is at high-risk of all the three. These include, traffic frauds that seek to boost impressions, clicks or other website activity counts.

Misrepresentation frauds attempt to falsify site or ad-specific info and these include ad stacking or device hijacking, falsified device/ location/cookie-level info, domain spoofing,



leader in the country. While Mahindra has a 60

ad injection and cookie fraud.

Attribution fraud occurs when one party takes credit for conversions that it didn't influence. This includes: cookie stuffing, human-generated inflation, device hijacking etc.

Almost 95 per cent of the Indian respondents felt that lack of penalties and transparency in industry regulations were giving rise to ad fraud. Lack of data sharing and large number of middlemen are also a cause to ad fraud risks.

"In India, the awareness on ad fraud risks is very low

per cent stake in the company Classic Legends, the balance 40 per cent is held by Anupam Thareja, Founder of Classic Legends and Boman Irani, Chairman and MD at Rustomjee Group.

"We have received a good response from the market," Ashish Joshi, CEO at Classic Legends told *Financial Chronicle* without disclosing volumes.

The Jawa Perak bobber is powered by the BS6-compliant 334cc, single-cylinder, liquid-cooled, DOHC engine which develops 30hp and 31Nm of torque.

The Perak's engine is slightly larger than that of the Jawa and the Jawa 42. This increased capacity is a result of a larger bore, with the stroke remaining unchanged.

Common sense wins in India bankruptcy case

ANDY MUKHERJEE

Two-and-a-half years after the Indian central bank took the highly unusual step of directing banks to put 12 large corporate debtors into bankruptcy, the most closely watched of the "distressed dozen" cases has finally been resolved.

With the Supreme Court in New Delhi clearing the decks for the sale of Essar Steel India Ltd., the Ruia family has accepted defeat. Control of the 10 million-tonnes-a-year integrated plant in western India will pass to ArcelorMittal, which will pay banks Rs 420 billion (\$5.9 billion), or 90 per cent of their claims.

This final episode of a drawn-out legal saga, in which the Ruias made multiple attempts to hold on to their prized asset, was a nail-biter. At the last moment, the bankruptcy

tribunal's appellate authority had inexplicably jumped into the fray and ordered that more of ArcelorMittal's money be given out to unsecured operational creditors and less to secured financial lenders.

India's \$200-billion-plus bad debt mess is starting to attract serious global capital from pension and sovereign funds. Had expected recovery rates of 90 per cent shriveled to 60 per cent, private equity funds assembling this stock of patient money to take over secured lenders' exposure would have fled. Thankfully, the court restored the power of the creditors' committee to decide who gets what.

It's been a costly delay. When the Reserve Bank of India referred large cases to new bankruptcy tribunals, it was hoping to solve 25 per cent of the country's bad-loan problem in 270 days.

There was interest among potential buyers, particularly for steel plants, because global metals demand was stabilizing. But with missed deadlines, lengthy litigation and suspected fraud holding back asset sales, liquidation

has emerged as the default option, with only 15 per cent of closed insolvency cases ending in a resolution plan.

A lot has changed in India's corporate distress landscape between 2016, when India promulgated its bankruptcy law, and now. For one thing, global demand for steel — and steel assets — is starting to sag. That isn't all. With practically all sectors of India's economy facing a demand funk, there's trouble everywhere from real estate and roads to power and telecom. Each industry comes with

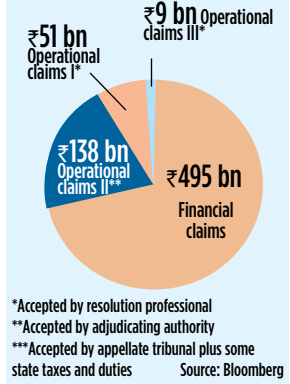
its own unique challenges. In residential real estate, it's the homeowners' interest that makes creditor coordination difficult. In telecom, the difficulty comes from exorbitant government demands for spectrum fees.

The danger of a voluntary bankruptcy filing by Vodafone Idea has everyone from investors to the government worried. The mobile operator posted a \$7.1 billion quarterly loss, the worst in India's corporate history.

A new complexity is that creditor institutions themselves — from shadow lenders to small deposit-taking banks — are becoming insolvent, prompting India to extend the bankruptcy law to nonbank lenders as well. This quick fix would further weigh on a system creaking under

Getting the distribution right

ArcelorMittal's ₹420 billion for Essar Steel were meant almost entirely for financial lenders: sharing equally with operational creditors would have meant 61% recovery for banks



Accepted by resolution professional
Accepted by adjudicating authority
Accepted by appellate tribunal plus some state taxes and duties
Source: Bloomberg

through a lengthy in-court bankruptcy by utilizing its fixed capacity. A lender has to continuously make new loans to stay in business. Without the trust of the financial markets, its enterprise value very rapidly falls to zero. Early liquidation is the best possible outcome for an insolvent lender's creditors seeking to extract value, but it's also the scenario that poses the biggest risk to stability of the existing financial system.

The current law can't solve this dichotomy. Rather than overburdening it, India must keep the bankruptcy tribunal focused on what it can actually handle. A recent example of overreach is the start of an insolvency petition against Aviva Plc's local life insurance joint venture for not paying its landlord. Such things used

Tata plans to cut jobs across European operations

BARBARA LEWIS
LONDON, NOV. 18

Tata Steel plans to cut jobs across its European operations as it wrestles with excess supply and high costs, the company said on Monday.

Following a weekend interview in the *Financial Times* with the group's European Chief Executive, Henrik Adam, Tata confirmed it was planning to announce job cuts across the European business, which employs around 20,000 people.

No numbers have been made public. Indian-owned Tata Steel, which launched a transformation program in June to strengthen its European business, has operations including steelmaking in the Netherlands and Wales and downstream operations across Europe.

There will be no plant closures but the aim is to shield the company against the "huge number of challenges" it faces, the company said.

"We are working hard on our plans to be operationally cash positive," Adam said, adding that the company was aiming for "a fundamental change". A company spokesman confirmed Adam's comments originally made to the *Financial Times*.

Steel making in Europe has come under strain from international competition and high energy costs, putting large numbers of well-paid jobs under threat.

European steelmakers blame China for the extent of a surplus in the market, but the world's biggest steelmaker says it has made its own deep cuts to capacity.

Britain last week announced that Chinese steelmaker Jingye has signed a provisional deal to buy British Steel, which went into compulsory liquidation in May.

The agreement is politically resonant ahead of British elections as job opportunities have become a major issue. If confirmed, the rescue could save thousands of jobs.

ArcelorMittal, the world's biggest steelmaker, has idled a series of plants across Europe.

In an emailed statement on Monday, Tata Steel said challenging market conditions had been made "worse by the use of Europe as a dumping ground for the world's excess capacity".

The company's European transformation program launched in June aimed to develop "a simpler and leaner organization, capable of sustainably financing high levels of investment", Tata said.

Changes will include streamlining supply chains and using technology to improve efficiency, as well as seeking to cut employment costs.

Tata's quest to boost profitability follows a European anti-trust decision to block a joint venture with Germany's Thyssenkrupp.

— Reuters



No mercy

Chilean President Sebastian Pinera vows no impunity for security forces that use excessive force and violate rights of protesters



Iran's enemies have always supported sabotage and breaches of security.

— Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
Iranian supreme leader

IN BRIEF

CA football party shooting kills 4

Fresno: Four people were killed and six more wounded when 'unknown suspects' sneaked into a backyard filled with people at a party in central California and fired into the crowd. The shooting took place about 6 pm on the Fresno's southeast side, where people were gathered to watch a football game, Fresno Police Lt. Bill Dooley said. A total of 10 people were shot, with three found dead in the backyard. A fourth person died at the hospital. Six others are expected to survive and are recovering at the hospital. All the victims were Asian men ranging from ages 25 to 35, police said.

Indonesia police link blast to IS

Jakarta: Indonesian anti-terrorism officers shot dead two suspected bomb makers during a raid on the weekend and arrested more than a dozen as authorities linked a suicide bombing last week to an Islamic State-inspired network, police said. A 24-year-old student blew himself up outside a police station in the city of Medan in North Sumatra province last Wednesday, killing himself and wounding six people. Police had initially declared the attacker to be a 'lone wolf', but a national police spokesman said the student along with 22 other suspects in the area had links to the Islamic State-inspired Jamaah Ansharut Daulah. JAD has been blamed for a series of attacks in recent years and was banned in Indonesia last year.

New elections in Bolivia uncertain

La Paz: Bolivians languished in long lines on the streets of La Paz to secure chicken, eggs and cooking fuel as supporters of ousted President Evo Morales crippled the country's highways, isolating population centers from lowland farms. Presidency minister Jerjes Justiniano said the government of interim president Jeanine Anez had established an "air bridge" to supply La Paz, using planes to bypass barricades on highways surrounding the highland capital. He said officials hoped to do the same with other cities cut off from supplies. Bolivia remained in limbo one week after Morales, a charismatic leftist and former coca farmer, resigned over allegations of vote-tampering. Lawmakers have yet to agree on a date for new elections. Morales fled to Mexico, but his supporters from largely coca-farming regions demanding that Anez resign from her post.

LEAKED CABLES SHOW IRAN'S GRIP ON IRAQ

Beirut: The *New York Times* and *The Intercept* say they have reviewed hundreds of pages of purported Iranian intelligence documents that detail Iran's massive influence in neighbouring Iraq. They say the unprecedented leak of 700 pages of Iranian intelligence cables shows Tehran's efforts to embed itself in Iraq, including paying Iraqi agents working for the United States to switch sides. Vanessa Gezari of *The Intercept* says her publication received the documents from an unknown source and that "we still don't know who they're from". Monday's article about the documents comes amid growing anti-Iran sentiment expressed by Iraqi anti-government protesters. It also comes at a time of widespread anti-government pro-tests in Iran. There was no immediate comment from Iraqi or Iranian officials. — *Agencies*

HK protesters flee campus

Relief to demonstrators as court rules face mask ban unconstitutional



Tear gas is fired by police as protesters attempt to escape the campus of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in the Hung Hom district of Hong Kong on Monday. — *AFP*

also criminals. They have to face the consequences of their acts," said Cheuk Hau-yip, the commander of Kowloon West district, where Polytechnic is located.

"Other than coming out to surrender, I don't see, at the moment, there's any viable option for them," he said.

Cheuk said police have the ability and resolve to end the standoff peacefully so protesters should not 'try their luck'.

Protesters won on a legal front when the high court struck down a mask ban imposed by the government last month. The court said it did not con-

sider anti-mask laws unconstitutional in general, but in this case, the law infringed on fundamental rights further than was reasonably necessary.

Many protesters wear masks to shield their identities from surveillance cameras that could be used to arrest and prosecute them. The ban has been widely ignored, and police have charged protesters with wearing masks.

The protests started peacefully in early June, sparked by proposed legislation that would have allowed criminal suspects to be extradited to the mainland. But by the time the bill was withdrawn,

AIRLINES SLASH FARES OF PLANES TO HONG KONG

Sydney, Nov. 18: Several Asian airlines have cut flights to Hong Kong for the coming weeks, an industry scheduling publication showed, as anti-government protests in the city grow increasingly violent and disrupt daily life.

The latest schedules showed cancellations from PT Garuda Indonesia (Persero) Tbk, India's SpiceJet Ltd, Malaysia's AirAsia Group Bhd, South Korea's JejuAir Co Ltd and Jin Air Co Ltd and the Philippines' PAL Holdings Inc and Cebu Air Inc.

The cuts come as Hong Kong police on Monday fired tear gas at protesters trying to escape a besieged university, while others armed with petrol bombs awaited an expected operation to end them.

The unrest, raging for almost six months, and an escalating Sino-US trade war has pushed the Asian financial hub into recession for the first time in a decade.

Airport Authority Hong Kong reported declines in October of 13% in passengers and 6.1% in the number of inbound and outbound flights — the steepest falls since the unrest began. It said a growing proportion of travellers were using Hong Kong as a transit point rather than a destination.

— *Reuters*

Gotabaya sworn in Lankan Prez

Colombo, Nov. 18: Former defense secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa was sworn in as Sri Lanka's president on Monday and appealed to minority Tamils and Muslims who voted against him to give their support.

Rajapaksa, who is credited with helping end the country's long civil war, comfortably won Saturday's presidential election. But minorities feared his election because of allegations of human rights violations against him dating from the war.

Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya administered the oath of office to Rajapaksa at the ancient Ruwanweli Seya Buddhist temple in north-central Sri Lanka.

"We knew from the beginning that our majority Sinhala people will be the biggest factor in our victory," Rajapaksa said in an address to the nation.

"Even though I knew I could win the presidential election with the support of the Sinhala people alone, I made a special request to Tamil and Muslim people to be partners in that victory. But their response was not to my expectation," he said.

"But as your new president I ask you again to rally around me as true Sri Lankans for the sake of the future development of our country."

Rajapaksa said he will maintain Sinhala and Buddhism as the country's primary culture and provide them with state support, but will allow



Gotabaya Rajapaksa

other groups to preserve their religious and cultural identities.

According to Sri Lankan history books, the Ruwanweli Seya temple was built by warrior King Dutu Gemunu after defeating an invading Tamil king from present-day South India.

Rajapaksa was secretary of the defense ministry in a government led by his brother, former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, and is credited with playing a crucial role in ending the separatist civil war by ethnic Tamil rebels.

Mahinda Rajapaksa was hailed as a warrior akin to Dutu Gemunu, and Gotabaya Rajapaksa addressed the nation standing before what is said to be the king's statue.

In his speech, Rajapaksa also pledged to prioritise national security following suicide attacks this past Easter Sunday that killed 269 people, and to follow a neutral foreign policy.

"We want to remain neutral in our foreign relations and stay out of conflicts among the world powers," he said. — *AP*

Pak test-fires ballistic missile

SHAFQAT ALI with agency inputs
ISLAMABAD, NOV. 18

Pakistan on Tuesday conducted training launch of Surface-to-Surface Ballistic Missile, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

In a post on social-networking website Twitter, the media wing of the armed forces stated that Shaheen-1 was capable of delivering all types of warheads up to range of 650 kilometers.

Shaheen-1 capable of delivering all types of warheads upto range of 650 KMs. Launch was aimed at testing operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC) ensuring Pakistan's credible minimum deterrence.

The launch was aimed at testing operational readiness of Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC) ensuring Pakistan's credible minimum deterrence, the ISPR added.

The Pakistani missile test came days after India conducted the first night trial of *Agni-II*, its versatile surface-to-surface medium range nuclear-capable missile.

The *Agni-II* missile has a strike range of 2,000 km and is an intermediate range ballistic missile. It has already been inducted into the armed forces.

The Pakistani missile test took place amid bilateral tensions between India and Pakistan after New Delhi abrogated the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's special status and bifurcated it into two union territories.

SINDHIS SEEK AZADI FROM PAKISTAN

Karachi, Nov. 18: Thousands of Sindhis living across Pakistan held a protest march from Gulshan-e-Hadeed to the Karachi Press Club to demand a free 'Sindhudesh' or a separate homeland.

The movement was conceived by the Sindhi political leader GM Syed, who gave a new direction to Sindhi nationalism. He founded the Jeay Sindh Mahaz in 1972 and gave the idea of 'Sindhudesh'.

The protesters on motorbikes, cars and other vehicles waived red flags of 'Sindhudesh'.

The protest was organised by Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz, a nationalist political party in the Sindh province of Pakistan, demanding a separate country called Sindhudesh.

The party was founded in 1995 post the death of GM Syed.

JSQM Chairman Sunam Qureshi and other nationalist leaders addressed the protesters and demanded their right for freedom. The protesters noted Sindh is an independent nation forcefully occupied by Punjabis of Pakistan. — *ANI*

■ The 'Sindhudesh' movement was conceived by the Sindhi political leader GM Syed, who gave a new direction to Sindhi nationalism

Rising floods threaten priceless art



Visitors walk at the sunset along Riva degli Schiavoni waterfront promenade in Venice. A week of unprecedented flooding devastated the city, submerging homes, business and cultural treasures. — *AFP*

Will consider testifying in hearing: Trump

Washington, Nov. 18: President Donald Trump said on Monday he is "strongly" considering accepting a challenge from opposition Democrats to testify in his own impeachment investigation.

After the speaker of the lower house, Nancy Pelosi, upped the ante by suggesting that Mr Trump come forward to tell the "truth," the Republican president said he was keen.

Ms Pelosi suggested "that I testify about the phony

Impeachment Witch Hunt. She also said I could do it in writing," Mr Trump tweeted.

"Even though I did nothing wrong, and don't like giving credibility to this No Due Process Hoax, I like the idea & will, in order to get Congress focused again, strongly consider it!"

It was unclear what kind of testimony the president had in mind.

His defense team would likely be highly resistant



Donald Trump

to the idea of him appearing before the House Intelligence Committee delving into the allega-

tion that Trump pressured Ukraine to dig up dirt on a political rival to help his 2020 reelection chances.

During the lengthy probe led by special prosecutor Robert Mueller into accusations that Trump worked with Russians to boost his 2016 election chances, the president had refused a face-to-face meeting and instead answered questions in written form.

Even so, his lawyers negotiated strict limits on what kind of questions could be put. In dozens of instances, Trump then said he could not "recall" the facts.

The Mueller report ultimately found that Russian agents sought to influence the US election but that there was no evidence of collusion with the Trump campaign. — *AFP*

Abe's approval rating takes a beating



Abe Shinzo

Tokyo, Nov. 18: Japan Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's approval rating has taken a hit in the past month, a media poll shows, amid opposition accusations that his office may have violated political spending laws.

Allegations that his political office sponsored a party for supporters are the latest in a string of gift-giving scandals that have brought down politicians across Japan in recent months, eroding public

sentiment. A monthly Yomiuri Shimbun poll conducted late last week showed an approval rating of 49% for Abe's cabinet, down 6 points from the October poll, and falling below 50% for the first time since February. The disapproval rating rose to 36% from 34% last month, with 45% of respondents citing "lack of trust in the prime minister" over the party-funding allegations.

Abe confirmed that 800 guests attended the dinner

reception at a five-star hotel in central Tokyo in April, which he and his wife attended, adding that attendees each paid \$46 admission fee. "Neither my office nor the party's supporters organisation contributed funding towards admission for guests or myself at the dinner event," Abe said, adding that his office held no record.

Opposition parties say that the admission price was much lower than that of other receptions held at

the Hotel New Otani, which start at 11,000 yen per head, according to the hotel's website. They say if Abe subsidised the admission, it may violate the Political Offices Election Law and Political Funds Control Law. "Abe has said that his office sponsored the reception, so it's mandatory that it keeps records of the event for bookkeeping purposes. It shows his office had no intention to keep such records," a CDP member said. — *Reuters*

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Namely:** Unknown, **S/o** Unknown **R/o** Unknown **Age :** 58 years, **Height :** 5'2", **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Wearing :** White Colour Lining shirt, Brown colour combi has been found at Footpath, near Faridabad Bus Stand, Kashmere Gate, Delhi on 09.11.2019. In this regard a case vide DD No. 27-A dated 09.11.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this found dead person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO :
P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi
North Distt., Delhi
Tel. No. 011-23968730, 23967889

DP/630/N/19



Suspended

Former Bangladesh pacer Shahadat Hossain has been suspended from the ongoing National Cricket League for assaulting teammate Arafat Sunny



It just seems to be a common trend in England to use Warner's name to spike book sales.

— Tim Paine, Aussie skipper hits out at Ben Stokes

SHORT TAKES

Oz player banned for online post

Melbourne: Australian wicket-keeper-batsman Emily Smith was Monday handed a one-year ban under cricket's anti-corruption code for posting her team line-up on Instagram an hour before its official release. Nine months of the strict penalty was suspended, meaning the Hobart Hurricanes player effectively cannot pad-up for three months, ruling her out of the rest of the season. The 24-year-old was found guilty of putting the team line-up on her personal social media account before its scheduled release for their clash against Sydney Thunder on November 2. Despite the game being washed out, she was still punished. Cricket Australia's code prohibits "disclosing inside information to any person (with or without reward) where the participant knew or might reasonably have known that such disclosure might lead to the information being used in relation to being in relation to any match or event". — AFP

PM Imran tells Sarfaraz to focus

Karachi: Prime Minister Imran Khan has advised sacked Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed to focus on domestic cricket to get back to the national team. Khan, the patron-in-chief of Pakistan Cricket Board and a former captain, also backed the appointment of Misbah-ul-Haq as head coach and chief selector. "I don't think the performance and form of a player should be judged by T20 cricket but through Test and One-day cricket. He can come back to the national team, he should focus on domestic cricket," Khan said when asked about Sarfaraz. The wicketkeeper-batsman was removed as captain and dropped from the team in all three formats by the PCB last month after Pakistan were whitewashed 0-3 in a T20 series at home by a weak Sri Lankan team. Regarding the appointment of Misbah as head coach and chief selector, Khan said, "It is a constructive move to appoint Misbah as he is an honest and unbiased personality who has loads of experience behind him. Misbah will turn out to be a good choice and Pakistan will improve." — PTI

RAJAT IS BACK AS DELHI CRICKET BOSS

New Delhi: Rajat Sharma assumed the charge of the office of president of Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) on Monday after ombudsman Justice (Retired) Badar Durrez Ahmed put his and other officials' resignations on hold and asked them to continue in their respective roles. "In deference to the orders of Hon'ble Ombudsman, I have assumed the charge of the office of President, DDCA with immediate effect. I would request you all to cooperate with me in running the affairs of the DDCA in an efficient, honest and transparent manner," Sharma said in a statement. "In the light of present developments, no meeting of the Apex Council can be convened without my concurrence. I would, therefore, urge all of you to neither convene nor hold or attend any meeting of the Apex Council which has not been convened by me or has been convened without my concurrence," it added. Sharma further added that there is no Apex Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday. "I have also learnt that notice for a meeting of the Apex Council has been sent to few select members for a meeting to be held at 7.30 pm on 19.11.2019 to discuss certain agenda items which have been rendered infructuous on account of the aforesaid order passed by Ombudsman. There is, therefore, no point in holding the said Apex Council meeting tomorrow." — ANI



An artist paints cricket-themed mural on the walls of Eden Gardens ahead of the first pink ball day-night Test between India and Bangladesh, in Kolkata. The historic Test begins on Friday. — AFP

Riot of colours

As series moves from red ball to pink, cricket experts say D/N Test will be challenging for batsmen and fun for bowlers

New Delhi, Nov. 18: Former Indian cricketer Madan Lal on Monday said that the pink ball Test between India and Bangladesh will be a challenge for the batsmen but it will be fun for the bowlers. "Pink ball test will be a challenge for batsmen but bowlers will have fun. If the ball is moving, the only thing that they will have to do is spot the area where to pitch the ball. But the batsmen might struggle. I think batsmen should go easy initially. They will have to spend time on the wicket so that they are able to adjust," Lal said. India trounced Bangladesh in the first Test by an innings and 130 runs to take a 1-0 lead in the two-match series. Lal is also very optimistic about the day-night Test as he called it a 'really good move'. "My view for the day-night test is very positive, we will have to do something for our Test cricket. Our top officials should think of the revival of Test cricket. Having a pink ball is a really good move," he said. "Australia is already playing and other countries will also start playing. So, it is good that we are also playing and it will be exciting to see the match," he added.

The former cricketer also stated that Bangladesh are not a very good team as the first Test match only lasted for three days. "We are playing against Bangladesh. They are not a very good team. The match ended in



Bangladesh players during a training session in Indore on Monday. They will be travelling to Kolkata for the second Test, a Day/Night affair, on Tuesday. — AP

three days. And I don't think that the visiting team can stand in front of India. Their batting line-up is very poor," he said. "When you are playing a Test match, you will have to stand on the wicket and it is very disappointing that this team is not showing that kind of tempera-

ment. Bangladesh have been playing Test cricket for around a decade and if you are not being able to play, then it is your weakness," Lal added.

Delhi and District Cricket Association president Rajat Sharma on Saturday resigned from the post. Soon after his res-

ignation, several other members also stepped down from their respective posts.

Reflecting on the same, Lal said: "I am very disappointed because I have played for this association and today, these kinds of things are happening. I don't understand what people



Ajinkya Rahane is already dreaming about the historic pink ball Test! — Twitter

I think batsmen should go easy initially. They will have to spend time on the wicket so that they are able to adjust. — MADAN LAL, Former India cricketer

are thinking. If there are certain points which need to be addressed, you can sit and sort it out easily but why should cricket suffer... I believe it is very easy to solve the issue."

"If a situation arises, I will see what I can do. But I know I can sort out the issues. I am confident that I can handle Delhi cricket. It is okay that they have kept me out. I love this game and I know how to do it," he added. — ANI

Smith welcomes talks around mental health

Brisbane, Nov. 18: Premier Australian batsman Steve Smith is glad that mental health of cricketers is in focus after some of his compatriots took breaks to deal with their issues, which he feels, are compounded by "hectic" playing schedules. Star all-rounder Glenn Maxwell and the lesser known Nic Maddinson and Will Pucovski announced breaks from international cricket to deal with their mental issues and got support from Cricket Australia. "It is a pretty hectic schedule nowadays," Smith was quoted as saying by *ESPNcricinfo*. "It's bloody tough to sustain it for long periods of time, particularly I think for the fast bowlers. It's extremely difficult what they put themselves through. It's great that those conversations are

It's great that those conversations are happening and we're trying to keep guys as mentally and physically fresh as they can be.

— STEVE SMITH, Aussie batsman

happening and we're trying to keep guys as mentally and physically fresh as they can be," he said. India captain Virat Kohli had also touched on the subject, lauding Maxwell for his admission and recalling the time he struggled with "end of the world" thoughts. Smith said in the Australian dressing room players are now notifying details of their sleeping patterns and

stress levels to the team management, helping in better understanding of their well being.

"We fill out daily how we're feeling, how we slept... the sleep gets a big red every now and again. We fill out a wellness thing every day. The coach and psych (psychologist) and head of team performance look at our markers daily and it's upon us to be honest in the way we go about that as well," he said.

"...if there's a change in behaviour, if you're feeling ill or not sleeping well or feeling a bit off, they're aware of it. That can sort of start a conversation. Why is your sleep bad? 'What's going on? Why are you feeling a bit off today? It's good that they do that. It's good for guys' mental health and well being as well," he added. — PTI

India women continue domination

Providence (Guyana), Nov. 18: The series already in their pocket, India women continued their domination over the West Indies women by notching up a five-run win in the rain-truncated fourth T20 International here.

India women now lead the five-match series 4-0 after sealing the series in the third game here. In the rain-marred fourth T20 International which was reduced to a nine-over-a-side affair, India women made 50 for the loss of seven wickets after being sent into bat.

Pooja Vastrakar (10) was the lone Indian to reach double digit score. Hayley Mathews (3/13) scalped three wickets for the hosts, while Afy Fletcher (2/2) and Sheneta Grimmond (2/10) picked up two wickets apiece.

The Indians then bowled and fielded with discipline to restrict the West Indies women to 45 for five in their nine overs. India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur completely relied on her spin-



India's Anuja Patil bowled a brilliant spell against West Indies in the fourth T20. — BCCI

ners and they did not disappoint her as off-spinner Anuja Patil (2/8), Deepti Sharma (1/8) and Radha Yadav (1/8) kept the Windies on a tight leash throughout to ensure the win. Mathews (11) and Chinelle

Henry (11) top-scored for the home team. The fifth and final T20 of the series will be played here on Thursday. India women had defeated West Indies women 2-1 in the three-match ODI series that preceded the T20s. — PTI

Bumrah injury is a concern for Mumbai

Mumbai, Nov. 18: Former India pacer and Mumbai Indians' Director of Cricket Zaheer Khan on Monday said concerns over fitness of Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya prompted the team to trade in Trent Boult and Dhawal Kulkarni from Delhi Capitals and Rajasthan Royals respectively.

While Pandya had a back surgery earlier this year, Bumrah too has been out of action due to issues in his back.

"This year is going to be different because we have had some challenges in terms of injuries. Hardik Pandya to start with, had a back surgery, Bumrah has been out of action with a few back issues and Jason Behrendorff has also had a back surgery," Zaheer said in a video message.

"So that was one of the concerns and the trades (Boult and Kulkarni) were reflection of what was the planning for the upcoming season. We thought that we needed more strength around the bowling department and hence the trades with Capitals and Royals," he added.

Mumbai Indians released 10 players last week while retaining 18. "In terms of domestic talent as well, the trend at MI has been of spotting domestic talent and going for it. But this is going to be the end of the cycle as well. The dynamics of the big IPL auction (2021 edition) work differently," said Zaheer. — PTI

Garg to lead India colts vs Afghanistan

New Delhi, Nov. 18: Mumbai left-hander Yashasvi Jaiswal headlined a strong India U-19 squad that will take on Afghanistan in the first two games of the five-match one day series.

The Indian team, led by Priyam Garg, is preparing for next year's U-19 World Cup and various combinations are being tried out currently. The five-match series will be played at Lucknow's Ekana Stadium on November 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30. — PTI

Squad: Yashasvi Jaiswal (MCA), Tilak Varma (Hyderabad CA), Arjun Azad (UTCA Chandigarh), Priyam Garg, Captain (UPCA), Shashwat Rawat (Baroda CA), Kumar Kushagra (wicket-keeper) (JSCA), Divyansh Joshi (CA Mizoram), Manav Sutar (RCA), Ravi Bishnoi (RCA), Kartik Tyagi (UPCA), Akash Singh (RCA), Atharva Ankolekar (MCA), Vidyardhar Patil (KSCA), CTL Rakshan (Hyderabad CA) and Kruthik Krishna (wicket-keeper) (KSCA).



Great job

Andy Murray will do a 'great job' when he continues his comeback from injury at next week's inaugural Davis Cup Finals in Madrid, British captain Leon Smith said

Sport

PAGE
15

THE ASIAN AGE

TUESDAY | 19 NOVEMBER 2019 | NEW DELHI



It's not for me to blame them, it's for them to recognise it.

— Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto on Charles Leclerc and Sebastian Vettel's collision

SHORT TAKES

Beierlorzer is new Mainz coach

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 19

Master Cristiano is favourite to win the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Cup, the feature event at the Delhi races on Tuesday. The first race will begin at 2.15 pm.

SELECTIONS

- 1st race: The First Prime Minister Plate Div-I (1200 mts)**
1. Master Becket, 2. Leaves, 3. Victorious King
- 2nd race: The First Prime Minister Plate Div-II (1200 mts)**
1. Ashwa Vijeta, 2. Warrior Thrive, 3. Actionable
- 3rd race: The Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Cup (1200 mts)**
1. Master Cristiano, 2. Go My Girl, 3. Master Jefferson
- 4th race: The Chacha Nehru Plate Div-I (1000 mts)**
1. Niche Organic, 2. He Is Sexy, 3. Delhi Queen
- 5th race: The Chacha Nehru Plate Div-II (1000 mts)**
1. Osculate, 2. Proven Right, 3. Magic Queen
- 6th race: The Bal Diwas Plate (1100 mts)**
1. Race Ka Raja, 2. Miss Zachary, 3. Truly Magestic
- Day's best:** Race Ka Raja

Dressel of US wins three races

Washington: US swim star Caeleb Dressel won two individual events and helped a relay victory Sunday for the Cali Condors in an International Swim League (ISL) meet. The 23-year-old American, who won two relay gold medals at the Rio Olympics, won a record eight medals at this year's World Championships, six of them gold, after taking seven gold medals in the 2017 worlds. The reigning world champion in the 50- and 100-meter freestyle and butterfly dominated for the second day in a row at the University of Maryland pool in suburban College Park, even though it was the Los Angeles Current that rallied for a 495-489.5 victory in the overall meet. Dressel won the 100 free in 45.69 seconds, defeating runner-up and Call teammate Kacper Majchrzak by 0.79 of a second, and took the 50 fly in 22.21, with Tom Shields of the Current second by 0.51. Dressel, Majchrzak, Mallory Comerford and Melanie Margalis won the mixed 4x100 free relay in 3:18.56, downing New York by 2.48 seconds. — *AFF*

END OF GP CAREER FOR LORENZO

Valencia: Jorge Lorenzo ended an incredible 18-year Grand Prix career with an emotional Valencia race, helping the Repsol Honda Team to clinch the Triple Crown alongside another dominating Marc Marquez win. For the third year in succession the Repsol Honda Team celebrate the end of a MotoGP season with the Triple Crown after winning the Riders, Teams and Constructors Championships. Marquez made quick work of the riders ahead of him as the lights went out on the final race of 2019, moving into second place on the third lap. With just Fabio Quartararo ahead of him, Marquez methodically cut the gap from almost a second to just two tenths in five laps. Striking at Turn 11, Marquez only needed one chance to move to the front and quickly amassed an insurmountable lead. A 12th victory signs off Marquez's 2019 season matches the number of wins he achieved in 2014 season. Earning 420 points across the 19 races of 2019, Marquez becomes the first rider in history to score more than 400 points in a single season. With his 95th premier class podium, he draws level with Mick Doohan as the second most prolific Honda podium finisher in premier class. — *Agencies*

Kings rule Boston

■ Sacramento snap Celtics' ten-game victory streak

Los Angeles, Nov. 18: Bahamian guard Buddy Hield scored a season-high 35 points and the Sacramento Kings snapped the Boston Celtics' 10-game NBA win streak with a 100-99 home triumph on Sunday.

Sacramento center Richaun Holmes sank two decisive free throws with 13 seconds remaining to give the Kings their fifth win in seven games after an 0-5 start.

"Thank God we were able to pull off this win. Definitely needed this win," Hield said.

"We've got to stay locked in and stay focused and be ready for every challenge every night."

"We know what we're doing. We're going to try to take it one game at a time and we'll be fine."

Boston fell to 10-2, having not lost since their season opener three-and-a-half weeks ago at Philadelphia.

The Celtics, led by Jaylen Brown's 18 points, saw the end of their longest win streak since taking 16 in a row early in the 2017-18 campaign.

Hield's three-pointer with 1:52 remaining gave the Kings a 96-95 lead.

Boston's Jayson Tatum answered with a jumper but Hield, who went 14-of-24 from the floor, struck again with a fadeaway only for Boston to answer on a Daniel Theis dunk, giving the Celtics a 99-98 edge with 52 seconds remaining.

Holmes was fouled going for a rebound by Boston's Marcus Smart and sank two free throws to put the Kings ahead by the final margin.

Smart missed a jumper for the win at the final buzzer and Sacramento



Boston Celtics guard Marcus Smart (left) scrambles for the ball against Sacramento Kings guard Buddy Hield (right) during the first half of an NBA game on Sunday.

— AP

had the victory.

Serbian swingman Bogdan Bogdanovic had 12 points and 10 assists for the Kings while Serbian forward Nemanja Bjelica added 12 points and 14 rebounds for Sacramento.

Boston guard Kemba Walker added 15 points and nine assists, Smart had nine assists, Brown grabbed eight rebounds, Tatum had 14 points and Theis contributed 14

points and 10 rebounds for the Celtics.

King James

Elsewhere, LeBron James scored 33 points as the Los Angeles Lakers cruised to a 122-101 win over the struggling Atlanta Hawks.

The Lakers jumped out to a 25-point lead in the first quarter and never looked back.

Rajon Rondo scored 15 points and Anthony Davis added 14 as the Lakers posted their 11th win in their last 12 games since a season-opening loss to the Los Angeles Clippers.

Trae Young scored 31 points and Cam Reddish added 13 as the Hawks lost their third straight game.

Atlanta was blown out in Los Angeles for the second night after losing by 49 points to the Clippers.

Also, Denver's Jamal Murray scored 39 points and Paul Millsap added 23 to lead the Nuggets over host Memphis 131-114 for their fifth win in six road contests. Jaren Jackson led the Grizzlies with 22 points.

Tobias Harris scored 27 points to lead six Philadelphia players in double figures as the 76ers rolled to a 114-95 triumph at Cleveland. — *AFF*

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL

Investigation of racist chants on

The Hague, Nov. 18: Dutch prosecutors said Monday they were investigating racist chants that caused a second division match to be halted.

The referee briefly suspended Sunday's game between Excelsior Rotterdam and Den Bosch and Excelsior winger Ahmad Mendes Moreira walked off the pitch.

Moreira said he heard monkey noises and songs about "Black Pete", a traditional Dutch Christmas-time character that appears in blackface and attracts accusations of racist stereotyping, Dutch media reported.

"We are working with police to see what exactly happened..."

And examine whether it can be established who were involved," the Dutch federal prosecution service for the Oost-Brabant region said on Twitter.

It was looking at "visual material" to find the culprits, it added.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the incident was "really terrible".

"There is no place for racism in this country. Well done to the referee," Rutte said.

The Dutch football association said the incident would be investigated. The chants were "down-right disgusting," Jan Bluyssen, competition affairs manager of the association, told NOS Radio.

— *AFF*

Ex-UEFA president Platini slams VAR as 'load of crap'

Rome, Nov. 18: Former UEFA president Michel Platini has slammed the use of VAR technology, the introduction of which he has always opposed, as a total nightmare, in an interview on Italian television.

"It would take half an hour to explain why it doesn't solve problems," the former France international told the "Che tempo che fa" late-night talk show on Rai on Sunday.

"It shifts them. I'm against VAR. I think it's a load of crap and unfortunately we will not go back."

The 64-year-old has always been against the use of VAR which he refused to consider after he became UEFA chief in 2007.

European football's governing body has now also introduced the use of the video replay technology in



Michel Platini

the Champions League.

Meanwhile, the former Juventus star believes he could still play a role in football after his four-year suspension from the sport ended in October.

"At 64, I have the opportunity for one last adventure, but I have no room for error and I have to think about it," he said.

A triple Ballon d'Or winner, Platini had been expected to succeed Sepp Blatter as FIFA president in 2016 but fell spectacularly from grace a few months earlier.

The former France captain was suspended by world football's governing body in 2015 over a controversial payment of two million Swiss francs (1.8 million euros, \$2 million) that he received from Blatter.

Platini has always insisted he did nothing wrong.

"At FIFA, they did not want me as president," he continued.

"I wanted to defend football and I was the only footballer who could become FIFA president."

Platini added that he no longer had any contact with either Blatter or current FIFA president Gianni Infantino. — *AFF*

NATIONAL KARTING

Mumbai's Ashi emerges supreme in Girls' Class

Hyderabad, Nov. 18: Bengaluru's Sawan Satyanarayanan, Mumbai's Ashi Hanspal and Delhi's Jashmehar Jubbal stole the honours in Round 2 of the Sodi Kart Sprint of the JK Tyre FMSCI National Karting Championship 2019, winning their respective categories in Hyderabad late on Sunday.

Sawan Satyanarayanan came up with a power-packed performance to claim the Senior Category title, taking just 9:13.764 minutes to complete the 12 laps. Adheet Prashar of Hyderabad finished second (9:16.366) while Ashwin M Nair of Cochin clocked 9:17.070 to take the last place on the podium.

All three have qualifies for the final round of the



Aashi Hanspal on top podium in Grils' Class with second placed Muskaan Jubbal, Kadambari came third.

championship to be held in Chennai in the third week of December.

Akshay Hoover, Hari Gopal Nayak and Pramili Singh, who finished with fourth, fifth and sixth, were also handed drives in the finals.

In the Girls' Class, Ashi reigned supreme, posting a time of 10:57.406 minutes to finish the race. Muskan Jubbal finished second (10:57.839) while Kadambari of Nagpur (11:04.767) came third.

— *Agencies*

AOA will launch grassroot mission

Guwahati, Nov. 18: The Assam Olympic Association (AOA) will launch a new programme called 'Grassroot Olympic — Mission Talent

Hunt' to identify the sports talent in the state and groom them, Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal said on Monday.

The decision was taken during the executive committee meeting in presence of Sonowal, who is also the President of the Association, an official release said.

A committee under the chairmanship of Vice Chairman of the Association and Minister of State for Health Pijush Hazarika was also formed during the meeting.

"The committee will interact with grassroot level sports organizations, clubs, sports organizers. The committee will pre-

pare a detailed action plan and connect with the field to spot the talented sportspersons," the statement said.

The Chief Minister underlined the need for a sporting culture in the state to promote sports among youth.

In this regard, he said AOA will organize sports events in five categories covering players from 10 years to 60 years of age in the state.

Sonowal stressed on developing a strong network of grassroot level sports organisations and suggested organising cultural performances by local artists at the launch of the field sports events.

Sonowal also suggested to discontinue the membership of office bearers, who remain absent for three consecutive executive committee meetings. — *PTI*

FORMULA ONE

Verstappen wins crazy Brazil race

Sao Paulo, Nov. 18: Max Verstappen underlined his potential as a champion of the future with a commanding victory for Red Bull in an astonishing and crash-hit Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos.

The 22-year-old Dutchman on Sunday twice passed newly-crowned six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton in a thrilling contest that had two safety car interventions and saw the Ferraris of Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc clash and retire, before clinching the eighth victory of his career.

His third win this season also made up for his disappointment in last year's race in Brazil when he looked certain to win before a late accident wrecked his hopes of victory.

He made the most of pole position and finished a dominant winner ahead of his former Red Bull team-mate Pierre Gasly now with Toro Rosso.

Podium for Sainz

Carlos Sainz's patience and determination was repaid in more ways than one on Sunday when his

A podium! A bit weird not being there after the race, but still extremely happy. Today's race was just unbelievable — the one-stop strategy was difficult, but it paid off.

— CARLOS SAINZ
McLaren driver

first podium finish was confirmed by the race stewards, more than two hours after the race.

The highly rated young Spaniard came home fourth on the road for McLaren, but was promoted to third when six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton was penalised — and then made to wait while his own race was investigated.

Finally, the stewards said he and McLaren had not contravened any regulations in the use of Drag Reduction System (DRS) under yellow flags during the race — to the delight of the team's long-suffering fans and Sainz's many admirers and supporters.

The result secured McLaren their first podium since both Jenson Button and Kevin Magnussen were classified in the top three at the 2014 Australian Grand Prix. — *AFF*



McLaren driver Carlos Sainz of Spain (third from right) holds the third place trophy.

— AP

VETTEL, LECLERC CALLED TO EXPLAIN COLLISION

Sao Paulo, Nov. 18: Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto has called drivers Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc to a clear-the-air meeting after their collision wrecked the team's hopes at the Brazilian Grand Prix.

The pair, who collided while fighting for fourth place on Sunday, were forced to retire from the race, leaving Ferrari embarrassed and pointless and the drivers arguing about who was to blame.

"There will be time (for us all) together at Maranello to understand what happened," said Binotto, in the wake of a tempestuous race won with authority by Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

"It's not for me to blame them, it's for them to recognise it."

Speaking to reporters in the aftermath of a costly race for the scarlet scuderia, Binotto said he needed time to take stock and review the crash, on lap 66 of the 71-lap race.

Both cars were damaged and forced to retire in the incident, which came after a Safety Car restart when Vettel closed the door on a challenging Leclerc. — *AFF*

Narain hopeful of racing revival

Chennai, Nov. 18: Motorsport in India has been stagnant over the past decade and country's first Formula 1 driver Narain Karthikeyan hopes the upcoming X1 Racing League provides a much needed boost to the struggling sport.

"Motorsport in India has been stagnant over the last 10-15 years. There are some one-make series which are around... This (X1) could be one of the first steps and you know there are experienced drivers

in the league and they can learn from experienced drivers before they start going international," the 42-year-old told PTI in an interview.

"...This X1 league will revolutionise motorsport the way we see it in India. And it has a mix of local and international drivers and young drivers will be exposed at a very early stage on what to expect before going abroad," said, Karthikeyan who owns the Chennai team, added.

He said if the package was right, the league could do what Formula One has not done to India.

"See...If the package is put together right, we all believe it is and what F1 has not done to India, this



Narain Karthikeyan

should be doing it.

It should help grassroot levels of motorsports grow. "Taking the sport to the masses is another objective. So...With these two in mind, the package has been created and we hope to deliver," he added.

Former F1 drivers Vitantonio Liuzzi and Alex Yoong, some women drivers including Alice Powell, Indian rally ace Gaurav Gill apart from Karthikeyan will be participating in the league which is slated to start from November 30 at the Buddh International Circuit, New Delhi.

The second leg will be held at MMRT race track near Chennai on December 7 and 8. — *PTI*



High five

Tennis star Rafael Nadal confirms as the year-end world number one for the fifth time after the ATP releases its season-closing rankings on Monday



We're through to the finals of a major tournament for an 11th straight time. You've got to believe in these players.

— Fernando Santos, Portugal coach after booking Euro 2020 finals spot

SHORT TAKE

Cash prize for Para Worlds medallists

New Delhi: Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday felicitated the medal-winning Indian para-athletes with cash awards for their best-ever performance at the recently-concluded World Para Athletics Championships in Dubai. India clinched a total of nine medals — two gold, two silver and five bronze and also secured 13 quota places at the Tokyo Paralympic. India have won a total of 23 quotas across sports for the 2020 Paralympics. Sandeep Chaudhary and Sundar Singh Gurjar, who claimed the coveted gold medal in the men's javelin F64 and F46 events respectively, were handed a cash prize of ₹20 lakhs each. Sandeep had set a new world record in F44 with a throw of 66.18m, while Sundar won his second consecutive World title with a throw of 61.22 m. Javelin thrower Sumit Antil and high jumper Sharad Kumar, who bagged silver medals in the F64 event and T63 event respectively, were given ₹14 lakhs. The five bronze winners — Vinay Kumar Lal (men's 400m T44), Yogesh Kathuniya (men's discus throw F56), Mariyappan Thangavelu (men's high jump T63), Nishad Kumar (men's high jump T47) and Ajeet Singh (men's javelin F46) were handed a cheque of ₹8 lakhs. — PTI



Shreyasi Singh poses with her gold medal on Monday.

SHREYASI TRAPS GOLD AT NATIONALS

New Delhi: Reigning Commonwealth Games champion Shreyasi Singh won the women's trap crown at the ongoing 63rd National Shooting Championship for shotgun events at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range here on Monday. Shreyasi, representing Bihar, got the better of Rajeshwari Kumari of Punjab in the top final, which also had the likes of seasoned shooters Shagun Chowdhary and Seema Tomar among others. The 28-year-old shot 42 out of 50 birds to claim the brightest medal on offer, while Rajeshwari managed 38 hits to settle for silver. "I am very happy, specially after having lost so many Trap finals. My new coach Daniel Di Spigno was behind me today and I felt that was the difference and I was feeling much stronger and confident today. Hope I can carry on this form in the days to come," said Shreyasi. This was Shreyasi's fourth individual career National title but her first in women's trap. Rajeshwari had earlier topped the qualification rounds with a score of 118 out of 125 while Shreyasi qualified fourth with a score of 112. Pragati Dubey of Madhya Pradesh who had shot 110 in qualification and had to come through a shoot-off to get through to the six-woman final, won bronze with a finals score of 31. Rajeshwari did win gold on the day though, claiming the team gold in Women's Trap along with Punjab teammates Inaya Vijay Singh and Prabsukhman Kaur. — PTI

RONALDO ROCKS

Cristiano scores 99th Portugal goal as holders seal Euro 2020 Finals spot



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (left) celebrates with teammate Diogo Jota after scoring against Luxembourg in their Euro 2020 Group B qualifying match in Luxembourg on Sunday. — AP

Paris, Nov. 18: Cristiano Ronaldo scored his 99th international goal as reigning champions Portugal secured their place at the Euro 2020 finals on Sunday with a 2-0 victory away to Luxembourg, while France ended their qualifying campaign with victory.

Bruno Fernandes struck the opening goal on 39 minutes before Ronaldo tapped in a scrappy second late on to clinch second place in Group B behind winners Ukraine, who drew 2-2 in Serbia.

Iranian striker Ali Daei holds the world record with 109 international goals scored in 149 appearances between 1993 and 2006. "All records must be broken and I will beat that record," said Ronaldo.

Portugal became the 17th nation to qualify for next year's multi-host tournament, which kicks off in Rome on June 12, joining the likes of world champions France, Spain, Italy and England.

Portugal knew they would book their place at Euro 2020 with a win or by matching Serbia's result from their game in Belgrade.

But they were made to work hard by a Luxembourg team ranked 96th in the world that notably held France to a 0-0 draw in 2018 World Cup qualifying.

FRANCE SIGN OFF WITH WIN

Later on Sunday, world champions France wrapped up top spot in Group H as goals from Corentin Tolisso and Antoine Griezmann sealed a 2-0 win over Albania in Tirana.

The French national anthem was roundly booed before kick-off as retribution for the error that saw the Andorran anthem played instead of the Albanian one when the teams met in September at the Stade de France.

THE RESULTS

Kosovo	0
England	4
(Winks 32, Kane 79, Rashford 83, Mount 90+1)	
Bulgaria	1
(Bozhikov 56)	
Czech Republic	0
Serbia	2
(Tadic 9-pen, Mitrovic 56)	
Ukraine	2
(Yaremchuk 32, Besedin 90+3)	
Luxembourg	0
Portugal	2
(Fernandes 39, Ronaldo 86)	
Moldova	1
(Milinceanu 56)	
Iceland	2
(Bjarnason 17, Sigurdsson 65)	
Andorra	0
Turkey	2
(Unal 17, 21-pen)	
Albania	0
France	2
(Tolisso 9, Griezmann 30)	

The visitors made a quick start on the pitch, though, as Bayern Munich midfielder Tolisso headed Griezmann's free-kick into the bottom corner.

The Barcelona star slotted in the second himself on the half-hour mark, before the dead rubber petered out in the second period, with Olivier Giroud going closest to a third by striking the post.

The other games in the group saw Turkey, who had also already sealed qualification, beat Andorra 2-0, while Iceland edged to a 2-1 victory at Moldova.

England rounded off an impressive campaign with a 4-0 thrashing of Kosovo. Goals from Harry Winks, Harry Kane, Marcus Rashford and Mason Mount ensured England finished at the Group A summit, having scored 37 goals in just eight matches. — AFP

I AM NOT 100 PERCENT: RON

Lisbon, Nov. 18: Cristiano Ronaldo admitted on Sunday that he is not at "100 percent" after reacting angrily to twice being substituted by Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri earlier this month. "I wasn't 100 percent and I'm still not," he said. "In the last three weeks, I have played at a slightly reduced capacity."

"But when it comes to sacrificing myself for my club and my national team, I do it with pride."

Sarri said Ronaldo had a "little knee problem" after replacing him during Juventus' 1-0 win over AC Milan last weekend, despite media reports that the five-time Ballon d'Or winner had left the stadium before the end of the match.

"I don't like to be replaced, no one does," added Ronaldo. "I tried to help Juve even when injured."

Juventus are back in action with a visit to fifth-placed Atalanta in Serie A on Saturday. — AFP

FIFA WORLD CUP | QUALIFYING

India face Oman in do-or-die game

Muscat, Nov. 18: Winless in four games so far in an increasingly disappointing campaign, the Indian football team faces higher-ranked Oman in a do-or-die World Cup qualifying round match here on Tuesday.

A first half strike from Sunil Chhetri gave India hopes of beating Oman in the first leg in Guwahati in September but it ultimately turned out to be so-near-yet-so-far as the Gulf nation struck twice in the final 10 minutes to outwit the home side.

Oman are coming into this match after an emphatic (4-1) win over Bangladesh on November 14. India, on the other hand, are struggling after an impressive goal-less draw against Asian champions Qatar as they needed late equalisers in their identical 1-1 draws against lower-ranked Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

After three draws and a defeat, India are fourth in the Group E table with three points while Oman are second with nine points from four matches. Qatar are on top with 10 points from four matches. An upset win over Oman will certainly keep Igor Stimac's side in the hunt for a next round berth but

● After three draws and a defeat, India are fourth in the Group E table with three points while Oman are second with nine points from four matches

a loss will virtually send India out of reckoning as far as the 2022 World Cup qualification is concerned.

If India lose, they will trail Oman by nine points and have only three matches — maximum nine points — left to play in this second round of the qualifiers.

Even the runner-up sides from the eight groups are not guaranteed an automatic spot in the third round of the qualifiers.

A draw against Oman will also make it difficult for India to qualify for the next round. Their last three matches — all to be played next year — are against Qatar (at home on March 26), Bangladesh (away, June 4) and Afghanistan (at home, June 9). But getting a least a point against Oman may prove crucial as it will make it easier for India to get an automatic third round berth for the 2023 Asian Cup qualifiers. — PTI

Tsitsipas beats Thiem to win ATP Finals title Greek God!

London, Nov. 18: Stefanos Tsitsipas battled back from a set down against Dominic Thiem to win the ATP Finals title on Sunday, emphatically staking his claim as the leader of the next generation of aspiring global superstars.

The Greek 21-year-old, who won, 6-7 (6/8), 6-2, 7-6 (7/4) is the youngest champion since Lleyton Hewitt in 2001 and the fourth first-time champion at the season-ending event in as many years.

It is Tsitsipas's third title of the season and comes a year after he was crowned champion at the Next Gen ATP Finals in Milan.

He has charmed the crowd at London's O2 Arena all week and earned his place in the final with an impressive straight-sets win against six-time champion Roger Federer.

"I can't sum up my emotions right now," said Tsitsipas. "It's amazing to be remembered as the 2019 champion. It is a dream come true and the best way to end this match."

"I did get nervous at some points in the match but I managed to forget about how I felt and I had momentum in the tie-break which was really tight."

"My fighting spirit and me constantly trying to push myself to do better got me there in the end."

Defeat is a bitter disappointment for Thiem, who won five titles this year, including the Indian Wells Masters, and reached a second successive French Open final.

There was little to choose between sixth-seed Tsitsipas and Austria's world number five Thiem in the first set as a total of five break points went begging.

Both players had impressed on serve during

I can't sum up my emotions right now. It's amazing to be remembered as the 2019 champion. It is a dream come true and the best way to end this match.

— STEFANOS TSITSIPAS after winning the ATP Finals

the tournament, with Tsitsipas's figures especially striking — 44 service games won out of 47 leading into the final.

In an inevitable tie-break Tsitsipas saved a set point at 5/6 but Thiem clinched his second set point with a powerful serve that the Greek returned into the net.

TSITSIPAS BREAKS

But Tsitsipas regrouped and within minutes Thiem, who beat his opponent in three sets in the Beijing final last month, was under pressure, spraying a forehand wide to concede first break of the match.

Tsitsipas held with ease and then produced a forehand down the line to break again, with Thiem threatening to unravel. Tsitsipas had won 12 out of 14 points in the set.

Thiem, who like Tsitsipas plays with a single-handed backhand, stemmed the tide but could make little impression on his opponent's serve and lost the set 6-2.

Thiem was rocking again at the start of the deciding set. He saved two break points in the first game but looked increasingly shaky and was broken to trail 1-2.

The Greek was now well on top but out of nowhere Thiem was level at 3-3 after Tsitsipas put a backhand wide. — AFP



Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas poses with the trophy after winning the men's singles final match of the ATP World Tour Finals at the O2 Arena in London on Sunday. — AFP

BOPANNA PULLS OUT OF TIE AGAINST PAK

New Delhi, Nov. 18: Senior player Rohan Bopanna pulled out of India's upcoming tie against Pakistan due to a shoulder injury, paving the way for Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan's inclusion in the playing squad. Bopanna, who underwent an MRI scan on Monday, communicated his unavailability to non-playing captain Rohit Rajpal.

The 39-year-old was expected to be paired with veteran Leander Paes for the doubles rubber of the November 29-30 tie. Left-handed Nedunchezhiyan was named as one of the three reserves in the eight-member squad announced by the AITA selection committee.

DAVIS CUP

"It's disappointing not to have Rohan in the side. But we want him to protect his shoulder. He needs shots (injection) for treatment. We have an able replacement in Jeevan. He has done well on the Tour and we will have a good left-right combination," Rajpal said.

Bopanna is country's top doubles player. Now the two best-ranked players are not available for the tie. Divij Sharan is also unavailable because of his wedding reception. Nedunchezhiyan has been knocking on the doors of the Indian Davis Cup team for some time but by consistently performing on the ATP tour. — PTI