

A virtual boundary on
a geographic region

A social media post with text, images, or video
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DECCAN CHRONICLE

FRIDAY | 22 NOVEMBER 2019 | HYDERABAD

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Ayodhya: Seek compromise, don't stoke fires



Saeed Naqvi

Wide Angle

*"Has the tumult of the Day of Judgment ended?
I half opened my eyes from the sleep of death.
But I found the tumult was still continuing.
I went back to sleep."
— Shah Sarmad*

After the Supreme Court verdict, its merits or demerits notwithstanding, one imagined that the tumult would subside. But lawyers and sundry busybodies clustered around the clergy have obviously got accustomed to the limelight which, in their case, will only last as long as the tumult does. So they are busy stoking the

fires. "We shall appeal, we shall appeal."

The mandir-masjid dispute was a clear case of politics exploiting faith. In other words it was for Hindutva "the bird that lays the golden egg". The Sangh Parivar, it would follow, would like to keep the "bird" alive until its larger purpose had been served. The Ayodhya verdict is only a brick in the larger architecture. Leaders whom Muslims would listen to were duty bound to explain the "politics" of it to the community. They did not. Religious leaders and lawyers took over.

A great deal of forethought and strategy had gone into building up the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. "Shila puja" or the "consecration of bricks" for the Ram temple was brilliant market-

ing, never mind if it generated anti-Muslim hate all along the route from even the most far flung villages all the way to Ayodhya. The Bhagalpur anti-Muslim pogrom was one of the many eruptions the "shila" processions of 1989 provoked. So seamlessly had religious faith been amalgamated with political purpose that a critical mass of Hindus were over a period of time firm in their belief that Ram was born on the "disputed" plot. All the brownie points of these Hindus went to the BJP.

Watching its Hindu vote haemorrhage consistently, the Congress too began to weakly raise its voice for Ram Rajya. While the Muslims ran helter skelter in search of alternate political protection, the clergy and their gang pitched it on pure religion — shariah, shariah. They don't know how the National Register of Citizenship will plague them, but let the Uniform Civil Code come up, and a frenetic chant will rent the air. "Shariah, shariah".

Whatever the archaeological evidence, a large number of Hindus had expressed their faith that the mosque stood on

The march towards the Hindu Rashtira has quickened, but sensible folk have not given up... The ailing cleric, Saiyid Kalbe Sadiq has repeatedly said, 'Muslims should gift the land for the temple even if they win the case'.

Ram's birthplace. In such a situation, protection of a medieval mosque, one of the thousands in the country, was not tenable. After all, Muslims were not claiming it as a place associated with revered figures in Islam. Trust the myopic religious leaders to have misled the community so comprehensively. Nothing has harmed the Muslim cause more than continuous harping on Shah Bano, Salman Rushdie and Babri Masjid.

In my disgust, I generally revert to poetry: "Beautiful Aheliya, who had turned to stone because of a curse, came back to her gorgeous self when, you, O'Lord, touched the stone;

you transformed one from the animal kingdom into your most trusted, Hanuman; you humanised a demon. I have no attributes that you have to undo. When will you ever bestow your boon on me?" The one seeking a boon from Ram is, a pious Muslim, Abdul Rahim Khan e-Khana (1556-1627), one of Mughal Emperor Akbar's most powerful courtiers and a contemporary of Tulsidas, author of the *Ramayana*. What is more, this shloka by Rahim is in Sanskrit. The two were in correspondence on subjects of common interest, including a poetic metre, much favoured by Tulsī — Barvai chhand. There is an abundance of poetry on Ayodhya.

How would Rahim, a remarkable poet in Awadhi and Sanskrit, have contemplated the events of December 6, 1992, or the Ayodhya verdict? Indeed, what would have been the reaction of my late mother, who accompanied me to Ayodhya in 1989 to watch the shilanyas, or brick-laying ceremony, ordered by Rajiv Gandhi? She found Ayodhya a temple town where a mosque on the ground claimed by

Hindus as the birthplace of Ram was an "incongruity".

According to her, a Muslim could spread out his prayer mat in the direction of Mecca anywhere and say his "namaz". A Hindu consecrates his "idol", which then "lives" in the temple eternally. Muslims must withdraw from a "*masjid e fitna*", or a mosque of conflict. Likewise, the Gyanvapi Masjid in Kashi and Shahi Idgah in Mathura.

If any Muslim accompanied me to Varanasi, he would require minimal sensitivity to see that the Gyanvapi Masjid insults the Hindu. It sits on the shoulder of one of Hinduism's most important shrines — Kashi Vishwanath Mandir.

The temple lights must have cast a spell on Urdu's finest poet, Mirza Ghalib. He wrote his longest poem "*Chiragh e dair*", "*Mandir ka diya*", or the Lamp in the Temple. He wrote: "*Ibadat khana e naqoosian ast Hama na kaabay e Hindostan ast*"

(This is the place of worship for those who make music from conch shells
This, truly is the Kaaba of Hindustan)

The march towards the Hindu

Rashtra has quickened, but sensible folk have not given up. They are still talking of compromises. The ailing cleric, Saiyid Kalbe Sadiq has repeatedly said, "Muslims should gift the land for the temple even if they win the case". This mood of generosity and compromise should be encapsulated for the opinion poll on which my friend, pollster Ranjit Chib, is working. The basic question Muslims should be asked is simple. Does the Supreme Court judgment, good or bad, enable you to move on and focus on real bread and butter issues — jobs, education, women's upliftment, recruitment in services? Or would you rather keep fighting for a mosque which can never be built and, in the process, lose all else?

Can anyone spot a chink of light?

"Bada maza us milap mein hai Jo sulah ho jaaye jung ho kar." (There is exceptional pleasure when warring sides, compromise and embrace each other.)

The writer is a senior journalist and commentator based in New Delhi

Venexit: Result of referendum on Dec. 1 could save Venice or sink it

Manfred Manera

Some of Venice's problems are well known: the challenge of conserving her famous buildings, the dangers of poorly managed mass tourism — not to mention the fact that the city might well simply drown, a threat made all the more obvious by last week's floods, the worst in 50 years. Since 1987 billions have been spent on the Mose project, a still unfinished and controversial system of underwater dams intended to protect the city from flooding. The authorities have repeatedly shifted the completion date: 1995, 2012, 2016 and now 2021. Venetians suspect these delays were just attempts to hide serious faults. They view the most recent floods as a clear sign of a major dysfunction in the way the city is politically managed.

But while the devastation of the floods may have caught the attention of the global media, less known to the outside world is the existential threat of depopulation, which may well soon extinguish Venice as a living city. No mayor of Venice has ever effectively attempted to reverse this fatal trend. Over the past 50 years the population has fallen from 150,000 to about 50,000 today, while the number of people living on the city's mainland suburbs around Mestre has risen to 180,000. Mainlanders now outnumber Venetians by three to one, leading to what the UK-based charity Venice In Peril flagged as "a

democratic emergency".

Venice is no longer under the control of its inhabitants and it lacks an institution which could really defend it. For this reason, it's holding its own referendum on separating from its mainland annexe on December 1 — and this is why the result of the "Venexit" vote is so very important.

I was born in Venice and I can tell you how very different it is to the mainland. It might seem to a casual tourist like any other historic district, but this small city occupies a different reality to its neighbours. Mestre is like any provincial Italian town; Venice is extraordinary. It needs its own administration because it has such separate problems.

The islands of Venice ran their own affairs until 1926, when the fascist regime lumped them together with Mestre and Marghera — then fast-developing industrial areas on the mainland. At the beginning it wasn't a problem since the majority of inhabitants still lived on the islands. But during the post-war economic boom, the population of the mainland grew until it was first double and then triple the size of Venice's. The result is that the mayor of Venice now has to respond to the interests of the majority of his electorate, who live on the mainland. And in practice, what this has meant is that for decades a lot of the money collected in the name of saving Venice has actually been diverted to projects in Mestre.

There have been four pre-

Over the past 50 years the population has fallen from 150,000 to about 50,000 today, while the number of people living on the city's mainland suburbs around Mestre has risen to 180,000

vious Venexit referendums, but they've all failed. Of course they have. There are just too many vested interests. The present mayor, Luigi Brugnaro, promised in a written document before local elections that he would support the referendum, but after getting elected he not only didn't promote it but even started several legal actions to stop it. Only after years of legal battles has the highest court in Rome finally given the green light to the referendum.

The trouble is that Venice's vast tourist industry — 20 million visitors a year — is a major cash cow. All large speculators and their political cronies would prefer Venice to have no inhabitants at all since they're just a nuisance, an obstacle to the flow of business. But Venice needs to be governed by its own citizens, who understand and care about its own particular problems.

Take the mega cruise ships which, despite protests, still pass in front of St Mark's Square and occasionally crash into the fragile wharfs (it's happened twice in the past year). Most people are not aware that the administration of Venice has no authority over the waters in front of the Doge's Palace — they are under national

jurisdiction. It is like the mayor of London having no say over what happens in Trafalgar Square.

Or look at the way in which Chinese capital has infiltrated the commercial tissue of the city. More and more bars and shops — entire streets — are being taken over by Chinese businesses. To keep a low profile, they often maintain an Italian front of house staff, but their focus is on mass tourism without any thought for the underlying fabric of the place.

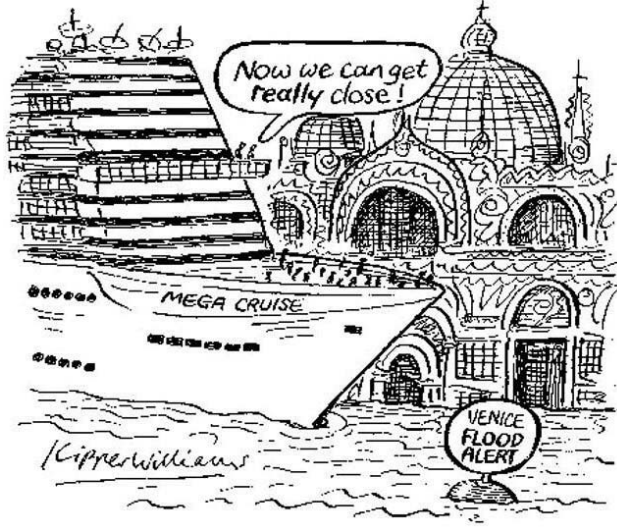
Chinese companies such as the Plateno Group are opening new hotels in Mestre to cater to the kind of tourist trade which is already seriously clogging the small streets of Venice. I have often encountered unfortunate foreigners who thought they had booked a lovely canal-side room only to find themselves in a grey bunker on the mainland. As long as

Mestre goes under the official name of "Venice", this is inevitable.

Anna Somers Cocks, founding editor of the *Art Newspaper* and former chairman of Venice In Peril, recently told me that "this referendum might be the start of a possible reversal of these negative trends, the possibility for a change, so that Venice could become a city again and not be reduced to an empty shell, the historic tourist centre of a larger Mestre". I hope so.

In the past, cities have died two ways: either by violent conquest and destruction or by simple progressive oblivion by its own citizens. The fate of Venice is now in the hands of the last Venetians. They must vote on December 1, or else their city is lost.

By arrangement with the Spectator



Mind is the human body's software



Swami Tejomayananda

The faculty of thinking, the mind, is a continuous flow of various kinds thoughts like desire, will, intention, imagination, ideas and so on. While the body is the vehicle through which we transact with the world outside, the mind is the instrument of our experiences. It is the mind alone that performs all actions. For example, when the mind is dormant as in deep sleep or in a coma, we are incapable of any conscious action or interaction. The body is similar to the hard-

ware and the mind is like the software of a computer.

Since the mind is the most sophisticated and delicate instrument, it should be handled with great care and caution. It is much better to understand its functioning rather than fight a losing battle with it. Always in search of happiness, the mind follows the senses into the world of objects and enjoys various experiences — TV shows, a

dance or just window-shopping!

But, does happiness lie in the objects of the world? To gain happiness we contact and acquire objects through the senses. What happens when we enjoy objects? When a certain desire is fulfilled, the mind temporarily becomes calm, which results in manifestation of happiness within.

Unaware that the joy experienced was from within; we superimpose feelings of delight on the object. We are convinced the object made us happy and become attached to it. Dependence is sorrow. We feel we cannot live without the objects. Having imagined happiness in them, we remain bound by the rope of attachment, like

an animal leashed to a post.

How do we become free from attachments? Since the mind cannot remain without holding on to something, it is impossible to unhook it from objects without giving it a greater source of happiness. The mind usually pursues objects because of its likes and dislikes. The choiceless performance of one's duties as worship of God frees it from their grip.

To such a purified mind absorbed in God, one's divine nature is revealed. The person then is happy, liberated and fulfilled.

Swami Tejomayananda is from Chinmaya Mission.

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A women's 'caliphate' on the Syrian-Iraq border that would otherwise not exist



Rafia Zakaria

By all accounts, the conditions in the Al-Hawl internment camp, which is located on the Syrian-Iraq border, are terrible. The camp is now home to over 70,000 people, most of whom are women and children. Everyone lives a haphazard and precarious existence in ragged tents and the occasional shipping container. Sanitation is nearly non-existent and disease prevails and takes away children every day. NGOs provide some food and some assistance, but it is usually too meagre to mean much, let alone lift the occupants of this camp from a hapless existence.

A month or so ago, an unusual development came to light. A woman whose identity is unknown has proclaimed the creation of a new so-called caliphate inside the camp. The new female leader of Al Hawl has decided to impose a set of complex rules and laws that must be followed by the women in the camp. In exchange, they receive some small level of protection.

Among the structures that have been set up by the new "caliphate" in Al Hawl are secret court systems that adjudicate disputes (which are constant and unrelenting) and mete out punishments, including death sentences. Three other brigades of women fulfil other functions: one patrols the streets enforcing strict face veiling and good moral behaviour such as prayers, etc; another brigade functions as informants, watching and reporting the location and intentions of the guards of the camp; finally, one brigade actually carries out the sentences meted out by the courts, with the worst offenders killed for their "crimes".

It is quite likely that the last month and a half has created only more tumult in the camp. After the Turkish invasion, most of the Kurdish guards who were in charge of guarding the camp, enforcing rules and maintaining order in the camp have left for the front lines. According to one report from the Spanish newspaper *El Pais*, only 300 of the 800 guards remain on duty. Other personnel such as those who provided medical help to camp inmates, particularly the babies (of which there are many) have also left for staff hospitals on the front lines.

All of this has magnified the already existing power vacuum in the camp. It is no surprise then that a matriarchal system, a women's "caliphate" of sorts, has emerged as a powerful force, while the "international" members of the camp, the women and children from Western countries, are housed in a separate area of the camp. Despite this, the women have used their "imprisonment" in the camp as a means of developing contacts and connections with other women. Ironically, the women, now without any of the men of the militant Islamic State (IS) group present, are free to meet each other and to develop their own system of governance.

This system appears to be based on a caliphate. The leader is wanted by Kurdish and Turkish authorities and allegedly sleeps in

a different tent every night in order to escape arrest. In addition to the brigades of informants and thugs, she has also permitted the development of religious schools to educate girls and women about Islam in general. No other educational material is permitted in these schools.

Camps, particularly internment camps housing mostly if not all women and children (only five per cent of the camp's inmates are men), are places of vulnerability. A strong female presence makes them ideal places for human traffickers to obtain women that can then be bought and sold. Without means to support themselves, and with the guards having no incentives to actually improve the lives of inmates, there is huge pressure on women to turn to prostitution to support their families. Then again there is the threat of men infiltrating the camp and committing sexual assaults on the female inmates of the camp.

There are also issues of citizenship. As we saw earlier this year, Western countries such as the UK have refused to take back women who left the country to go to Syria and join IS. The most well-known of these women was Shamima Begum who appealed to the UK government to permit her and her newborn son to return to the UK so she could be reunited with her family. The UK refused to take her back, saying that she should return to Bangladesh, a country from which her parents had migrated and that she had never visited. Nor is she alone: more than 40 countries are at this point refusing to take back women or even young children who are being held at the camp.

With all this lawlessness and uncertainty, and the world's turn towards treating all such women and children as "contaminated", it is perhaps inevitable that these former-IS women would turn back to the ideology that brought them to Syria and to IS in the first place. Amid the brutality of camp life, where murders and beatings supposedly occur every day, some order — even repressive order — may seem like a panacea against the otherwise existing lawlessness. The creation of the "matriarchal caliphate" seems to have little to do with matters of actual religious dogma such as the fact that a female "caliph" is against the views of many Islamic scholars.

Instead, in the desert on the border, is the sort of women-led movement that would otherwise never exist. The needs of the camp inmates, the power vacuum that exists, the lack of service provision and security and the unwillingness of home countries seem to have precipitated the creation of this all-women, religiously inspired domain and the so-called ordination of the first woman caliph. With it has come the brash and oppressive order typical of neo-jihadist movements — but repressive and cruel order, galvanised by fear and terror, may, for those held in the camp, be better than no order at all.

By arrangement with Dawn



Word of caution

Former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger warned that an armed conflict could break out between the US and China if they fail to resolve their trade war

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Harris is unfortunately continuing to traffic in lies and smears and innuendos.

— Tulsi Gabbard
Congresswoman

IN BRIEF

Time is not right for Asean: Kim

Seoul: North Korea rejected an invitation for leader Kim Jong Un to attend a planned summit in South Korea next week with Southeast Asian nations, saying it would be “pointless” due to strained ties with Seoul. South Korean President Moon Jae-in sent a letter of invitation to Kim on Nov. 5, with an offer for an envoy to attend if he was unable to participate. Moon has said Kim might join when he hosts leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the South Korean port city of Busan next week to celebrate the 30th anniversary of their partnership.

Quake rattles Thai-Laos border

Bangkok: A strong earthquake struck on Thursday near the border of Thailand and Laos, setting high-rise buildings swaying in Bangkok, and prompting at least one power plant in Laos to suspend operations for precautionary checks. There were no reports of casualties or major damage from the quake, which had a magnitude of 6.1, the United States Geological Survey said, and hit at a depth of 10 km, about 92 km northeast of Muang Nan. The quake was felt across northern Thailand and by people in tall buildings as far away as the capital. Residents near the epicentre felt several aftershocks. In Laos, the Hongsa Thermal Power Plant suspended operations.

Genocide: Suu Kyi to defend Burma

Yangon: Myanmar said its leader Aung San Suu Kyi will head the legal team contesting a genocide case filed against it in the International Court of Justice over the crackdown on Rohingya Muslims two years ago that set off their exodus to Bangladesh. Myanmar’s military has been accused of carrying out mass rapes, killings and arsons against Rohingya during a counterinsurgency campaign initiated in western Myanmar in August 2017 after rebel attacks. Myanmar’s population is overwhelmingly Buddhist, and the country has long denied citizenship and other rights to the Rohingya. Gambia filed the genocide case on behalf of the OIC, and the court would hold public hearings in December. The head of a UN fact-finding mission warned last month that “there is a serious risk of genocide recurring.”

NETANYAHU INDICTED OVER CORRUPTION

Jerusalem, Nov. 21: Israel’s attorney general indicted Benjamin Netanyahu on a range of corruption charges Thursday, the justice ministry announced, potentially spelling an end to the Prime Minister’s decades-long political career.

Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit “decided to file charges against the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for offences of receiving a bribe, fraud, and breach of trust”, a ministry statement said.

Mr Netanyahu, who strongly denies all the charges, becomes the first Israeli Prime Minister to be indicted while in office. Rightwinger Netanyahu, who has been in power since 2009, is Israel’s longest-serving PM and dominates the country’s political scene. The indictment comes as Israel faces a potential third election in a year, with neither Netanyahu nor his main rival able to form a government.

— AFP

Witness slams fictional narrative about Ukraine

Hill won’t promote falsehoods that help Russia’s interest

Washington, Nov. 21: A former White House Russia analyst on Thursday denounced as “fictional” the contention from some Republicans that Ukraine interfered in the 2016 election and warned lawmakers not to advance a politically motivated narrative helpful to Russia as they defend President Donald Trump in the impeachment probe.

“I would ask that you please not promote politically driven falsehoods that so clearly advance Russian interests,” says Fiona Hill in prepared opening remarks to the House intelligence committee.

Hill was an aide to national security adviser John Bolton and stressed that she is “nonpartisan” and has worked under Republican and Democratic presidents.

“I have no interest in advancing the outcome of your inquiry in any particular direction, except toward the truth,” Hill said.

But she said the conclusion by US intelligence



Fiona Hill

agencies that Russia meddled in the election “is beyond dispute.”

She said the assertion by some Republicans that Ukraine interfered in the election “is a fictional narrative that has been perpetrated and propagated by the Russian security services themselves.”

“I refuse to be part of an effort to legitimise an alternative narrative that the Ukrainian government is a US adversary, and that Ukraine — not Russia — attacked us in 2016,” she said.

Hill said US support for Ukraine, “which continues to face armed Russian aggression, has been politicised.” — AP

How holding up US aid worried Ukraine

Avdiivka, Nov. 21: US-made medical equipment, night-vision devices and countermortar radar make a difference for Ukrainian troops fighting Kremlin-backed separatists on the front line of the standoff between Russia and the West. Sometimes, it’s the difference between life and death.

So when \$400 million in US military aid to Kyiv was held up this year, Ukrainians got nervous.

Every little bit of assistance helps in the World War I-style trenches of Avdiivka, where conscripts and volunteer soldiers use shovels to shore up mud walls, chop wood for makeshift stoves, and cook their own food from local vegetables and canned supplies.

As impeachment hearings play out in Washington, Ukrainian troops at the front

described their hopes and fears in the five-year conflict that has taken 13,000 lives and still simmers on, sporadic gunfire punctuating the autumn calm.

The holdup in aid wasn’t something palpable that immediately affected the Ukrainian troops in action; it had more of a psychological impact, raising fears here that the US was turning its back on Ukraine. The aid was later released, but the scandal has effectively frozen US-Ukrainian relations and thrown long-term US backing into doubt.

While the US aid helped fill some of the gaps in Ukraine’s military capability, with countermortar radars being one highly welcome addition, its army continues to rely on aging Soviet-era weapons and often lacks essential supplies. — AP



Gotabaya Rajapaksa

COURT LIFTS TRAVEL BAN ON PRESIDENT

Colombo, Nov. 21: Sri Lanka’s newly-elected President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was on Thursday absolved of all corruption charges linked to the embezzlement of nearly USD 1,85,000 by a high court which also lifted the overseas travel ban on him and released his impounded passport.

Rajapaksa, 70, stormed to victory on Sunday in the presidential election, trouncing his nearest rival Sajith Premadasa by a margin of over 13 lakh votes — 52.25 per cent of votes polled against 41.99 per cent.

The former defence secretary, who is credited with helping end the island nation’s long civil war against the LTTE is the seventh Sri Lankan President.

The Western province-based Permanent High Court Trial at Bar ordered the lifting of overseas travel ban imposed on Rajapaksa and told the court registrar to release the President’s impounded passport. President Rajapaksa will embark on his first foreign tour with a visit to India on November 29 at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The special High Court last year imposed a travel ban on Rajapaksa, the younger brother of former Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa, and six others in a corruption case. — PTI

Promoting religious peace



Pope Francis greets Thailand’s Supreme Buddhist Patriarch at Wat Ratchabophit temple in Bangkok. Pope called for women and children to be protected from exploitation, abuse and enslavement.

— AFP

EU urges Iran to show restraint, end violence

Brussels, Nov. 21: The European Union on Thursday urged Iran to show ‘maximum restraint’ in handling protests that have rocked the country in recent days, leaving several people dead, urging an end to violence.

Demonstrations erupted in sanctions-hit Iran, hours after the price of petrol was raised by as much as 200 per cent and unrest spread to at least 40 urban centres, with officials confirming five deaths.

A EU official expressed condolences to the families of the dead and called for dialogue to resolve the tensions.

“We expect Iran’s security forces to exercise maximum restraint in handling the protests and for protesters to demonstrate peacefully. Any violence is unacceptable,” Maja Kocijanec said in a statement.

“The rights to freedom of expression and assembly must be guaranteed,” she added that the EU expects the Iranian authorities to restore communications and end a near-total internet blackout in place since the weekend.

Amnesty International said more than 100 demonstrators were believed to have been killed, and that the real toll could be as high as 200. Iran’s economy has been battered since May last year when President

Saudi asks Iran to quit expansionism

Riyadh, Nov. 21: Saudi Arabia’s King Salman urged arch-rival Iran to abandon an expansionist ideology that has “harmed” its own people, following violent street protests in the Islamic republic.

A wave of demonstrations erupted in the sanctions-hit country. “We hope the Iranian regime chooses the side of wisdom and realises there is no way to overcome the international position that rejects its practises, without abandoning its expansionist and destructive thinking that has harmed its own people,” the king said.

The region’s leading Shiite and Sunni powers have no diplomatic ties and are at odds over a range of issues, including the wars in Syria and Yemen.

“The kingdom has suffered from the policies and practises of the Iranian regime and its proxies,” King Salman said, reiterating that Riyadh does not seek war but is ready to defend its people. Saudi leaders regularly accuse Iran of stirring conflicts by supporting Shiite movements in the region. Tehran denies the charges and in turn says Riyadh supports radical Islamist groups.

Separately, the Saudi foreign ministry said it welcomed a US decision this week to halt sanctions waivers for Iran’s Fordow plant, which ended a key part of a landmark nuclear deal after Tehran said it had resumed enrichment activities. — AFP



Salman bin Abdulaziz

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Separately, the Saudi foreign ministry said it welcomed a US decision this week to halt sanctions waivers for Iran’s Fordow plant, which ended a key part of a landmark nuclear deal after Tehran said it had resumed enrichment activities. — AFP

Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the US from a 2015 nuclear agreement and reimposed sanctions.

European efforts to ensure Iran can keep trading in spite of the sanctions have had little impact. — AFP

‘Explain uranium particles’

Vienna, Nov. 21: The UN nuclear watchdog on Thursday urged Iran to explain the presence of uranium particles at an undeclared site, as a landmark deal aimed at curbing Tehran’s atomic activities threatens to collapse.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in a report that its inspectors had “detected natural uranium particles of anthropogenic origin at a location in Iran not declared to the agency.”

The agency’s acting “The matter remains unresolved. It is essential that Iran works with the agency to resolve this matter promptly,” he said at a meeting of the agency’s board of



Iran has failed to sufficiently address this issue for close to a year is wholly unacceptable. The matter, which has occupied the IAEA since January, is ‘profoundly concerning’

— JACKIE WOLCOTT
US envoy to IAEA

governors. A diplomatic source said that the IAEA would send a high-ranking technical delegation to Iran next week.

The particles are understood to be the product of uranium which has been mined and undergone initial processing, but not enriched.

US ambassador to the IAEA Jackie Wolcott

called the matter, which has occupied the IAEA since January, ‘profoundly concerning’. “That Iran has failed to sufficiently address this issue for close to a year is wholly unacceptable,” she said in her statement to the board.

The 2015 deal between Iran and world powers has been faltering since last year. — AFP

HOPELESS | LIVES

■ Farmers in Northern cape struggle to keep families, animals alive after debt piles up

Africa’s deadly drought leaves millions hungry

Vosburg, Nov. 21: Residents call this drought-stricken community a “forgotten town.”

The flat, dusty roads to Vosburg are surrounded by withered fields. The streams feeding the community of a few thousand people have gone dry. Signs warn drivers of wandering cattle and sheep but there are none in sight.

The months-long drought is affecting most of southern Africa. The United Nations estimates that more than 11 million people now face crisis levels of food insecurity in places like Zimbabwe and Mozambique, where two



■ The UN estimates that more than 11 million people now face crisis levels of food insecurity in places like Zimbabwe and Mozambique, where two cyclones wiped out crops earlier this year

cyclones wiped out crops earlier this year.

Among the hardest hit areas is South Africa’s Northern Cape province, where many farmers are struggling to keep their families and animals alive while revenue falls and

debt piles up. Commercial sheep farmer Louis van der Merwe, 64, broke down as he described losing more than 400 sheep and 450 springboks in the past two years because of the worst drought he has seen in 45 years of farming.

Some animals died of hunger. Others were sent prematurely to the slaughterhouse to reduce the number to feed. With tears running down his face, Van der Merwe said he now relies on donations of animal feed so the rest can survive.

Two of his fellow farmers have killed themselves due to the stress, Van der Merwe said. Northern Cape province will need over \$28 million in drought relief over the next three months to assist 15,500 affected farms. So far, South Africa’s government has pledged \$2 million. The World Food Programme says southern

Africa has received normal rainfall in just one of the past five growing seasons, with small-scale farmers feeling it most.

Some like 55-year-old Gertruida Buffel, have resorted to sharing their own food with their animals. For two weeks she had fed two tiny lambs a mixture of maize meal and water after their mother starved to death. At Vosburg’s only school, Delta Primary School, scores of children line up every morning for what becomes both breakfast and lunch: usually corn meal, vegetables and soup.

While the school food programme began before

the drought, teachers say it has become increasingly vital for the town’s struggling families. “It’s very hard for the parents to actually feed their children at home,” said one teacher, Xolile Ngxathu.

In the regional centre of Kimberley a few hours’ drive away, government officials spend their days trying to allocate money from the \$2 million provincial disaster relief fund. It is a daunting task as some farmers in far-flung areas cannot be reached easily.

“The drought is having devastating impact on the people emotionally and spiritually because financially, all is almost lost,”

Rev. Jaco Heymans said. “Many people have already cancelled their insurance policies and their medical aid in order to just survive. Primary concern is to keep the animals alive, so everything that is spared goes into feeding sheep.”

The end is not yet in sight. Christien Engelbrecht, a meteorologist at the South African Weather Service, said below normal rainfall is predicted for the country region over the next three months. “It is clear that southern African farmers, water managers and government entities need to prepare,” he said. — AP

Germany fines carmakers over steel buying cartel

App to display carbon footprint in shopping bag

Overleaf

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,575.17	-0.19
Nifty 50	11,968.40	-0.26
S&P 500	3,099.48	-0.29
Dollar (₹)	72.00	-0.06
Pound Sterling (₹)	66.06	-0.34
Euro (₹)	79.46	+0.01
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	38,036▼119	-0.31
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	\$63.40	+1.00
IN 10-Yr bond yield	+6.505	+0.047
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	+1.764	+0.026

* As of 9:30 pm IST

PSBs disburse ₹2.5-lakh cr loans in October

Public sector banks disbursed a record Rs 2.5 lakh crore of loans during October. Of the Rs 2,52,589 crore of loans disbursed, Rs 1,05, 599 crore was given towards new term loans while Rs 46,800 crore was disbursed as new working capital loans, the Department of Financial Services said. So fresh lending was 60 per cent of the total disbursement, it said.

\$5-trn GDP target out of question: Rangarajan



Stating that the economy is in bad shape, former Reserve Bank governor C. Rangarajan has said at the current growth rate, reaching the USD 5-trillion GDP target by 2025 is “simply out of question”. The Modi government soon after assuming office for the second term has set a target of taking the economy to \$5 trillion over the next five years.

India, Japan inks pact for speedy grant of patents

The patent offices of India and Japan have inked an agreement for expeditious grant of patents to Indian entities and individuals, the Commerce and Industry Ministry said. The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal for Bilateral Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) programme between the Indian Patent Office and patent offices of other interested countries.

AbhiBus signs deal with BSRTC for tickets

Online marketplace for bus ticketing, AbhiBus.com, on Wednesday, signed a deal with the Bihar State Road Corporation collaboration. Effectively customers can now have access to seek information or book their tickets on BSRTC routes both within Bihar as well those routes that connect Bihar & UP to Delhi NCR region. The UP+ Bihar route is estimated to cover 300 million commuters.

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■ Will ₹16.5K-cr import substitution project move to pvt hands? BPCL: Kochi Refinery fate hangs in balance

K.P. SETHUNATH
KOCHI, NOV. 21

The Union government's decision to divest its entire stake in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has created apprehensions over the fate of the nearly Rs 16,500-crore projects for import substitution petrochemical products, having huge potential for manufacturing a slew of downstream products, by Kochi Refinery coming under the PSU.

The petrochemical products from the company are expected to save foreign exchange to the tune of Rs 13,000 crore a year.

The BPCL-Kochi Refinery, the largest public sector undertaking in Kerala, has already commenced the trial run of its Rs 5,246-crore propylene petrochemical plant before its formal commissioning by December. The refinery is also moving ahead with the Rs 11,300-crore polyol project, with the target of commissioning in 2023.

The refinery has made a foray into petrochemicals as part of the Integrated Refinery Expansion Project (IREP) to enhance the refining capacity to 15.5 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) from the levels of 9 MTPA and make it the largest PSU refinery in the country.

The Centre's decision late Wednesday has also raised a question mark on the fate of an ambitious project by the state government to set up a petrochemical park in Kochi. The petrochemical park has been envisaged based on the availability of import-substitution raw materials for manufacturing a large number of



Govt may not let other PSUs to buy into BPCL

FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, NOV 21

A day after the Centre announced its plans to divest its majority stake in BPCL, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday reiterated his earlier statement that the government has no business to be in business, hinting that other public sector oil companies, including Indian Oil Corporation, may not be allowed to bid for buying the government stake in BPCL.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCA) had on Wednesday

cleared to sell the government's entire 53.29 per cent stake in the country's second-largest state refiner along with other four PSUs, including country's largest shipping company Shipping Corporation of India. The government expects to garner Rs 90,000 crore from the BPCL sale.

At the current trading price of BPCL, the government's stake is valued at a shade less than Rs 62,000 crore. On top of this, the acquirer will have to make an open offer to buy an additional 26 per cent stake from minority shareholders for about Rs 30,000 crore.

“Since 2014, we have a clear vision that the government has no business to be in business,” Pradhan told reporters, adding that nitty-gritty and details of the disinvestment process will have to be worked out.

BPCL will give buyers ready access to 14 per cent of India's oil refining capacity and about one-fourth of the fuel-market infrastructure in the world's fastest-growing energy market. It, however, will be sold after carving out Numaligarh Refinery from its portfolio and given to a public sector unit.

products having wide use in industries such as paints, water treatment, super absorbent polymer, detergent, adhesives, solvents and plasticisers.

The petrochemical complex of the Kochi Refinery is located in 170 acres bought by the company from the Fertilizers and

Chemicals Travancore Ltd (FACT). The state government is also setting up a park dedicated for petrochemical products in 470 acres.

Many political leaders in the state have opposed the Centre's decision to sell off BPCL while the state government has written to

the Centre on the matter. Congress MPs Benny Behanan and Hibi Eden from Kochi have asked the Union government to withdraw the decision while members cutting across political parties in the state Assembly opposed the move a few days ago.

Sony in talks to buy stake in Ambani's Network18

BAIJU KALESH, ANTO
ANTONY & P. R. SANJAI
MUMBAI, NOV. 21

Sony Corp. is in talks to acquire a stake in the television network controlled by Mukesh Ambani, as the Japanese giant seeks to tap booming demand for content in India, according to people familiar with the matter.

The Tokyo-based company is currently conducting due diligence on Ambani's Network18 Media & Investments Ltd, the people said, asking not to be named as the information is not public.

Sony is considering several potential deal structures, including a bid for the company or a merger of its own Indian business with Network-18's entertainment channels, one of the people said. Talks are at a preliminary stage and may not result in a transaction, the people said.

Shares of Network18 surged as much as 19 per cent on Thursday, while TV18 Broadcast Ltd jumped 9.7 per cent. While a successful deal may help Sony bolster its local offerings and take on upstart rivals such as Netflix Inc, it will give Ambani access to international content.

Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd, has spent almost \$50 billion in the past few years on its network and has been luring users by offering local and overseas programming.

“Our company evaluates various opportunities on an ongoing basis,” a spokesman for Reliance Industries Ltd, said in an email, declining to comment further.

— Bloomberg

Viscose yarn imports soar on dumping

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, NOV. 21

Import of viscose yarn has shot up close to 200 per cent since May as China and Indonesia are dumping cheaper yarn into the Indian market. The industry is in a catch-22 situation while demanding increase in duties to check heightened imports, as it would work against the competitiveness in the downstream segments.

Between May and September this year, the country has imported 14,510,000 kg of viscose yarn, 195 per cent higher than 4,920,000 kg imported in the same period last year. Since May, imports have been drastically going up, with July witnessing a 342 per cent growth in imports and August seeing an 816 per cent rise.

“Since the US-China trade war started slowing down the demand for viscose yarn globally, India has been increasingly witnessing dumping of viscose yarn. China and Indonesia have been dumping cheaper yarn into the country, thus affecting the spinning industry severely,” said Sanjay Jain, former chairman of the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI).

According to Rakesh Mehra, Convenor, CITI's Sub-Committee on Man-Made Fibre & Yarn, the inverted duty structure in viscose yarn and fibre also has led to the situation. “For viscose fibre, India levies import duty as well as anti-dumping duty, which leads to a total tax incidence of around 20 per cent, whereas yarn attracts only 5.5 per cent import duty. This makes



importing yarn cheaper than getting domestically produced costlier fibre,” he said.

India is self-sufficient in yarn and it does not need imports. “While most of the spinning mills are running on lower capacity, some smaller mills in south India are facing a tough time,” he said. Availability of cheaper viscose yarn will also affect cotton yarn demand as fabric-makers will use more viscose than cotton in their products.

The industry has requested the government to levy anti-dumping duty on yarn as well. “We want the total tax incidence to be 15 per cent or at least 10 per cent on yarn to deter increasing imports,” said Jain.

But this has put the industry in a difficult situation. If the yarn duties are increased, either fabric imports will go up or the entire value chain will become costlier, affecting the competitiveness of Indian products in the global market. But if the duties remain the same, imports will continue to impact the domestic spinning industry.

“Ideally, there should not be anti-dumping duty in any segment to keep the prices under check down the value chain,” said Mehra.

Micro-lenders face a crisis in Assam

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, NOV 21

The micro-finance sector is witnessing yet another crisis, this time in Assam. Borrowers in a few districts have been protesting against micro-lenders and this has brought down collection efficiencies down to 70 per cent. Around 30 to 35 lender entities are facing a tough time in the North-eastern state.

Since the third week of October, several micro-finance borrowers in five-six districts of Assam have stopped repayment of their loans. The collection efficiency that stood at 98-99 per cent has now dropped to 70 per cent.

These five-six districts account for 15 to 20 per cent

of the total customer base of the state, which stands at 27 lakh. These districts also account for 10 per cent of the state's total loan portfolio outstanding of Rs 1,300-Rs 1,400 crore.

According to Manoj Nambiar, Chairperson of Micro Finance Institutions Network (MFIN), over-exposure per borrower is the main reason behind the current crisis.

“The customers of these districts have an exposure that is one-third higher than the national average. Apart from NBFC-MFIs, all other lending entities, including banks, small finance banks, NBFCs and unorganised lenders, have been active in the market. Among them only NBFC-MFIs are highly regulated

by the RBI. Hence the per borrower exposure in some cases have gone up more Rs 1.5 lakh,” he said.

When some of the borrowers found loan exposure higher than their incomes, they started defaulting. They also received support from local student unions and other groups. The groups allege the micro-lenders are charging higher interest rates and are following tough recovery methods. They have been demanding waiver. Around 30 to 35 micro-lenders are active in these districts. They are talking to the district administration to solve the

issue. Micro-lenders have suggested a Special Grievance Redressal Mechanism for the defaulters.

Financial Chronicle had earlier written about the industry's concern about steady growth in average ticket size and exposure per borrower in the sector and the fast pace at which micro-finance has

grown in the eastern states. Eastern region increased its share of the total loan portfolio of NBFC-MFIs from 16 per cent to 36 per cent in the past two years to become the top region in terms of loan outstanding. Industry watchers were worried

that the loan exposure was going up above the income levels for many borrowers.

Micro-finance has gone through a similar situation after demonetisation. In five states—Maharashtra, MP, UP, Uttarakhand and Karnataka—vested interests with political aspirations started spreading rumours and the loanes were made to believe that the Centre would waive the micro-loans hence there was no need to pay back the loans. This increased the delinquencies and eventually several lenders wrote off part of their stressed assets. After this crisis, micro-lenders had started focusing on the eastern states, which had low levels of exposure and no history of delinquencies.

India fares well in attitude towards women leaders

RITWIK MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA, NOV. 21

Canada and France are countries with the most equal attitudes towards women and men in leadership, while India and Brazil are more or less on equal ranks with advanced European countries like Germany and Italy on this score. Surprisingly, the US and the UK, two proponents of gender equality, are showing regression in attitudes.

That is what Women Political Leaders (WPL), the global network of female politicians, and Kantar, the world's leading data, insights and consulting firm, have found out.

The mission of WPL is to increase both the number and the influence of women in political leadership positions and current-

ly WPL members comprise women in political office—Presidents, Prime Ministers, Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliaments.

The Reykjavik Index for Leadership, as they call it, measures the extent to which society is comfortable with women in leadership positions as compared to men. Interestingly, Brazil (66) and India (67) show Index scores similar to Germany (69) and Italy (68). India shows relatively high scores in Education (76) and Media/Entertainment (78).

Significantly, the 2019 index has been extended this year to also measure Brazil, China, India and Russia.

The findings from the second Reykjavik Index for Leadership also show regression in attitudes in



Silvana Koch-Mehrin

the US and the UK while Japan, Germany and Italy have seen improvements in how equal they perceive women and men to be as leaders.

“The launch of the Index in 2018 enabled conversations not just on the where and how women aren't

viewed equally—but on the why. With the continuation of the evidence provided by the Reykjavik Index and a global community of purpose, both public policy and the private sector can further progress to equality in leadership,” said Silvana Koch-Mehrin, President and Founder of Women Political Leaders.

Dr Michelle Harrison, Global CEO, Public Division, Kantar, on his part, said “Evidence is a crucial tool to measure our social norms. Without evidence we cannot hold ourselves, our leaders or our actions to account. The inclusion this year of Brazil, Russia, India and China advances the conversation. This year's study reveals that in every country studied, there are significant prejudices against women and that we have a

long way to go until equality is the social norm. The Reykjavik Index for Leadership will measure our progress on the journey ahead of us.”

The UK drops down the index, because of worsening male perceptions as women's views have remained the same as 2018—the number of men who say that men and women are equally suitable to lead has fallen by eight points. There is also a widening gap (11 points this year, three points in 2018) between the views of men and women.

In the US, several sectors have seen a regression in scores, including: government and politics (77, -5 vs 2018), judiciary (80, -5 vs 2018), foreign affairs and diplomacy (74, -5), economics and political science (81, -5).

Germany's Nord opens third plant

MICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, NOV. 21

Nord Drivesystems, the Indian arm of the Getriebebau Nord, the Euro 699 million German global leader in developing and manufacturing drive technology, which opened its third factory in Pune on Thursday is targeting 11 per cent growth to Rs 200 crore in its topline in December 2019 calendar year.

"We will touch Rs 200 crore sales turnover this calendar year ending December 2019 despite slowdown challenges," PL Muthusekhar, Managing Director at Nord Drivesystems India told *Financial Chronicle*. Last year it had clocked revenues of Rs 171 crore. He said despite headwinds in some sectors, the demand for our drive systems has been growing. "In order to meet this demand and future demand, we have opened our third factory in Pune with an investment of 2 million euros or Rs 18 crore," Muthusekhar said. The company has an installed capacity to produce 42,000 geared motors per annum.

Kiran settles insider trading case

New Delhi, Nov. 21: Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, lead independent director of Infosys, has settled with Sebi a case of alleged delay in making disclosure regarding change in her shareholding in the IT company by paying over Rs 3 lakh as settlement charge.

Mazumdar-Shaw, who is also chairman of Biocon, was alleged to have violated provisions of the Prohibition of Insider Trading (PIT) regulations.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India had conducted an examination in the matter of Infosys and observed that Mazumdar-Shaw had delayed making the requisite disclosures with respect to change in her shareholding in the company. However, before proceeding further and initiating proceedings against her, the regulator sent notice of settlement to her, intimating that the proceedings may be settled and disposed of upon filing of an application settlement mechanism.

—PTI

Plastic exports to remain flat on slowdown

Mumbai, Nov 21: The plastics exports are likely to remain flat this year following the global economic downturn and a decline in raw material prices, however, the government has set a target to triple exports to \$1 trillion in five years, the exporters body said on Thursday.

"Plastic exports have been growing since the last two years. It grew by 17 per cent in 2017-18 at \$8.85 billion and 24 per cent in 2018-19 at \$10.89 billion. However, it declined by 3.9 per cent in the first half of this year and is expected to recover in second half finish the year flat compared to last year, the Plastics Export Promotion Council (Plexconcil) ED Sribhash Dashmohapatra said here.

The main reason for the slowdown in exports is the economic downturn in the export markets and a decline in raw materials prices, he said. However, he said, there has been 6.6 per cent growth in exports of value-added plastics and the due to the trade war the shipments grew by 13 per cent to the US in the first half.

—PTI

■ BMW, Daimler & Volkswagen to pay 100 mn euros in penalty

Germany fines carmakers over steel buying cartel

Frankfurt Am Main, Nov. 21: Germany's competition watchdog said on Thursday it would fine carmakers BMW, Daimler and Volkswagen a total of 100 million euros (\$111 million) for "anticompetitive practices" in buying so-called "long steel".

Representatives from the car companies and steel producers met twice a year "between 2004 and the end of 2013" and "discussed" prices for the vital raw material, used for building items like crank shafts, piston rods and cogs, the Bundeskartellamt said in a statement.

"Where there was no further individual negotiation with the suppliers following these conversations, competition was prevented" on some elements of the price, the authority said.

The companies had acknowledged their participation in the talks and accepted the fine, it added.

Thursday's fine is separate from a competition probe by the European

GM sues Fiat Chrysler over bribes to auto union

New York, Nov 21: General Motors is suing Fiat Chrysler, alleging its rival benefitted from bribes to auto union officials that gave FCA an unfair benefit in labour talks, GM announced on Wednesday. The lawsuit references guilty pleas by former FCA officials, who bribed former United Auto Workers officials, in a long-running case involving a UAW employee training program, that has tarnished the union's image.

The suit comes only weeks after the UAW ended a lengthy strike at GM. The union is currently immer-

sed in labor talks with FCA, the last of Detroit's "Big Three" to negotiate after workers ratified contracts with GM and Ford.

"FCA was the clear sponsor of pervasive wrongdoing, paying millions of dollars in bribes to obtain benefits, concessions, and advantages in the negotiation, implementation, and administration of labor agreements over time," GM said in its announcement. It alleges FCA's actions "corrupted the implementation of the 2009 collective bargaining agreement" as well as "the negotiation, implementation, and

"flat steel", where several producers including Thyssenkrupp are suspected.

German media reported that the total fine in the last case could amount to 500 million euros, spread among around a dozen pro-

ducers accused of agreeing on prices.

The Bundeskartellamt has recently mounted several probes into the steel industry, levying a 205 million euro fine against six stainless steel producers in July 2018.

—AFP

App to display carbon footprint in shopping bag

KATI POHJANPALO
NOV. 21

Shoppers will soon be able to work out the true carbon footprint of their purchases thanks to an app from one of the most digitally savvy nations in the world.

Unlike other carbon-footprint calculators already on the market, the application developed by Enfuze Financial Services Oy, a Finnish pay-ment services provider, does not rely on users inputting the data manually. Instead, it combines data from credit cards and banks with purchase data from retailers to provide real-time calculations of how a given product affects the climate.

With an estimated 70 per cent of carbon emissions globally attributed to end users, Enfuze Chairman and Co-founder Monika Liikamaa says the app will help people adapt their lifestyles and make them compatible with the goal of keeping global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius. "There's a huge change that needs to occur," Liikamaa said.

The average Finn needs to reduce emissions from about 10.4 tons of CO2 a year to about 2 tons, according to lifestyle carbon footprint research by D-mat Oy. That requires getting accurate information on "how their behavior impacts the climate," she said in an interview.

The home of Nokia and Angry Birds provides fertile ground for these kind of applications. Finland consumes the most mobile data per capita in the world and has reduced its cash use by a fifth since 2014. An estimated 10 million payment cards are in



use in Finland, a country of just 5.5 million people.

After the initial set up and opt-in, the app will calculate a carbon footprint based on the user's purchases—to the level of individual steaks or tomatoes. It will then propose actions to reduce their carbon impact. Typical suggestions may include taking a shorter shower, hopping on the bus instead of the car, turning down the thermostat and going vegan for a week.

The app is a side project for Enfuze, which already handles sensitive payments data securely. Its core business is to run credit card systems for clients that do not require owning expensive computer servers.

Enfuze is in talks with three major banks and is already working with Mastercard Inc. and Amazon.com Inc.'s cloud-server unit. No vendor will have exclusive rights to the system, which should be available by March, the company said.

Alandsbanken Abp, a Finnish bank, on Wednesday unveiled a similar initiative aimed at banks and financial institutions. The upgrade to its 2016 Aland Index is based on categories, though, rather than itemised shopping data.

Enfuze on Thursday said it had secured 10 million euros (\$11 million) of funding.

—Bloomberg

India leads in mobile payments

FC BUREAU
CHENNAI, NOV. 21

India's usage of mobile for commerce and payments is much higher than the global average, finds a study. Both consumers and merchants prefer making payments through mobile devices.

The study by PayPal and IPSOS found that 88 per cent consumer respondents in India use mobile devices for purchases or payments online, way above than the global average of 71 per cent.

The survey was conducted across 11 countries, including the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Australia, India, Japan, the USA, Mexico and Brazil.

Almost 70 per cent of Indian consumers prefer mobile-optimised experiences against the global average of 43 per cent. Also, 81 per cent of Indian merchants are optimized to accept mobile payments to meet the growing demand and responding to consumer preferences against the global average of 63 per



cent. Moreover, 45 per cent of Indian businesses have listed down mobile optimization as a priority.

Apps are a popular way of transacting wherein 98 per cent of Indian mobile shoppers pay via apps against 90 per cent of the global aver-

CSB Bank IPO: Analysts say give it a miss

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, NOV. 21

CSB Bank, formerly known as Catholic Syrian Bank, is set to launch its IPO on Friday, and will close on November 26. The Bank is going for the IPO mainly to meet the Reserve Bank of India's requirement of listing the bank.

The IPO size will be about Rs 410 crore, including fresh sale of Rs 24 crore and the balance being offer for sale of Rs 385 crore, at a price range of Rs 193-195 by existing investors.

However, the key strategic-investor-cum-promoter Fairfax India Holdings—Mauritius (FHIM) that holds a 50.1 per cent stake remains committed and is not tendering any shares in the IPO although it will have to reduce stake to 15 per cent from 50.1 per cent over 15 years.

CSB in its old avatar was plagued with issues relating to unions, weak asset quality and sub-par capital position, pushing the bank to near-PCA like restrictions by the RBI. However, it has seen a major trans-

formation after the appointment of incumbent MD&CEO C.V. Rajendran, a veteran banker. The bank has seen steady decline in GNPA ratio to 2.9 per cent from a high of 7.9 per cent in FY18, mainly due to heavy write-offs. Within the corporate book, it has increased the share of A-rated and above portfolio to 77 per cent from 35 in FY17. While financials improved, risks remain.

For instance, the RBI restrictions on opening new branches remain, though the regulator May 13, 2019 granted it permission to open 10 branch offices. Secondly, the bank has regional concentration in southern India.

"Overall the SMA pool stands at 1.6 per cent of loans. However, we remain concerned about its corporate/SME portfolio, particularly in the current stressed environment and its sub-par non-technical provision coverage ratio of 32 per cent, which will keep credit cost higher and thus remain a drag on Return on assets," says Anand Dama, Analyst at Emkay Global.

Sundaram opens feeder FoF of Global Advantage Fund

FC BUREAU
MUMBAI, NOV. 21

Sundaram Mutual Fund announced opening of Sundaram Global Brand Fund from Nov 21 by repositioning existing Sundaram Global Advantage Fund.

"This is a Fund of Fund scheme, which will invest as a Feeder Fund into the Sundaram Global Brand Fund, Singapore, launched and managed since June 2015 by Sundaram Asset Management Singapore, a 100 per cent subsidiary of Sundaram Asset Management Company," Sundaram Mutual said while announcing the new fund.

The current asset under management of Sundaram

Global Brand Fund is \$11 million.

Sundaram Global Brand Fund, Singapore has a 30-stock portfolio and the current top 10 holdings are Apple, Amazon, McDonalds, Walt Disney, Coca Cola, Procter & Gamble, Microsoft, Alphabet, IBM and Toyota Motor Corp.

Commenting on the re-branded fund, Sunil Subramaniam, MD, Sundaram Mutual said, "The fund invests in leading global brands that we use every day, companies characterised by strong financials and solid business models that have stood the test of time...the fund is an opportunity for investors to benefit from their growth."

LVMH raises Tiffany bid by over \$1 bn to \$16 bn



New York, nov. 21: French luxury group LVMH has raised its bid to acquire US jewelers Tiffany by over one billion dollars, two sources close to the matter told AFP on Wednesday.

LVMH, the owner of Louis Vuitton, Dior and Moet & Chandon increased its bid for the storied New York-based company to around \$130 per share from \$120 per share, the sources said.

The move lifts the overall value for Tiffany to around \$16 billion from \$14.5 billion. Neither LVMH nor Tiffany immediately responded to a request for comment.

LVMH, which is led by billionaire Bernard Arnault, has sought to acquire Tiffany as a means to boost its presence in the US market.

The transaction has also been seen as way forward for Tiffany, which has not matched some rivals in terms of sales growth in recent years.

Some analysts have predicted a price hike would seal the transaction.

—AFP

OPENING
BELL
PROJECTION FOR TODAY

Stock market enters a consolidation phase

The market closed marginally lower on Thursday amid profit booking, even as the Union cabinet approved the government's mega divestment exercise.

The Sensex shed 76.47 points or 0.19 per cent to close at 40,575.17, while the Nifty fell 30.70 points or 0.26 per cent to close at 11,968.40.

According to analysts, the market is closely awaiting the GDP data, due on 29 November, before making the decisive move. The GDP data is likely to indicate that the slowdown in the economy was deepening.

The BSE Midcap and Smallcap fell 0.73 per cent and 0.43 per cent respectively. The market breadth was negative. On the BSE, 1,101 shares rose and 1,454 shares fell. A total of 206 shares were unchanged. On the Nifty, 14 stocks advanced while 36 stocks declined.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Metal was the biggest laggard, ending down 2.23 per cent, followed by BSE Oil&Gas with 2.14 per cent lower. The BSE Realty gained 0.45 per cent.

Technical view

"The consolidation phase below 12K continues. The region around previous all-time highs of 12,100 is witnessing some profit booking. It's not at all unexpected to witness some retracement near all-time highs. Broader structure continues to remain positive and the uptrend is intact. Near term corrections towards the support zone should be utilized to build long positions," said Manav Chopra, CMT, Head Research Equity, Indiabulls Ventures Ltd.

The state owned company stocks were in focus today as the government kicked off a blockbuster disinvestment plan on Wednesday, lining up the sale of five public sector units (PSUs), including majority stakes in bluechip oil company BPCL and Shipping Corporation of India. BPCL was the top loser on NSE closing 6 per cent lower at Rs 512.10, while SCI slumped over 6 per cent to Rs 64.05 on BSE.

Market view

"We strongly feel that market is set for profit taking or consolidation prior to further rise. Traders should limit their naked leveraged trades in the index and book profits on every rise. In case of decline, 11,800-11,850 zone would act as a cushion in Nifty. Stocks, on the other hand, would continue to see movement on both sides thus maintain extra caution in the stock selection," said Ajit Mishra Vice President, Research, Religare Broking.

— Ashwin J Punnen

US Fed members unanimously reject negative rates: Minutes

DOUGLAS GILLISON
WASHINGTON, NOV. 21

US central bankers last month dismissed the idea of taking interest rates into negative territory, something President Donald Trump has called for many times, according to meeting minutes released Wednesday.

Evidence for the benefits of negative interest rates — lenders must pay borrowers rather than the other way around—has proven "mixed" in countries where it has been tried, according to members of the Fed's rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee.

Federal Reserve policymakers

also said at the October 29-30 meeting that the world's largest economy has "proven resilient" in the face of persistent global difficulties but risks remain "elevated," including from Trump's trade war.

But the minutes also confirmed Fed members believe further rate cuts should be unnecessary in the near term, barring major changes to the outlook.

The Fed cut the benchmark lending rate last month for the third time this year, bringing it down to a range of 1.5-1.75 per cent.

Trump has relentlessly attacked the central bank, demanding lower and even nega-



Jerome Powell, Chairman, US Fed

tive interest rates, claiming that relatively higher US interest rates put the country at a disadvantage against weaker economies in Europe and Asia.

During an appearance in New York last week, Trump said the Fed was blocking America from

the kinds of stimulus other countries enjoyed.

"Give me some of that money. I want some of that money," Trump said of negative rates.

"Our Federal Reserve doesn't let us do it." The minutes of the Fed deliberations made clear that under the current circumstances US central bankers have all but shut the door.

"All participants judged that negative interest rates currently did not appear to be an attractive monetary policy tool in the United States," the minutes said.

There is "limited scope" to adopt such a policy, which has not clearly benefited other countries and could have untold consequences

for bank lending and household spending, the minutes said.

And negative rates would introduce "significant complexity and distortions" into the US financial system, Fed members said.

However, they "did not rule out" that circumstances could arise that would cause them to change their position.

Meanwhile, in general, the American economy appears to be doing well, with the risk of recession lessening in recent weeks.

But, while job markets and consumer spending remain strong, Fed members generally felt businesses will remain skittish about investing and exports will remain weak due to "trade uncertainty

and sluggish global growth."

The Fed this year has reversed most of last year's four increases to bolster a slowing economy and provide "insurance" against looming dangers, including Trump's trade wars.

After three straight rate cuts, current interest rate levels are "well calibrated" to support growth and "likely would remain so" as long as the outlook remains broadly the same.

Efforts to end the trade wars, however, appear to be stumbling, with a partial deal announced last month sliding out of view as Trump threatens to jack up tariffs to pressure Beijing to cooperate.

— AFP



Bangla Boss

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will witness the opening day's play of India's maiden Day-Night Test match in Kolkata on Friday

Cricket

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

FRIDAY | 22 NOVEMBER 2019 | HYDERABAD



Captains will now need to use their fast bowlers differently.

— Gautam Gambhir, former Indian cricketer, on pacers being more effective under lights

TEST CORNER

STARC LEADS AUSTRALIAN ROUT OF PAK

Brisbane: Australia seized the advantage on the opening day of the first Test when they bowled Pakistan out for 240 just before stumps at the Gabba in Brisbane on Thursday. After the visitors resisted stubbornly in the first session, reaching 57 for no wicket at lunch, pace trio Mitchell Starc (4/52), Josh Hazlewood (2/46) and Pat Cummins (3/60) tore through the Pakistan batting order to put the home side in charge at the close of play. Australia seized the initiative after lunch when they reduced Pakistan from 75 for none to 78 for four, then 94 for five. Pakistan were rescued from disaster by Asad Shafiq, who played a lone hand, scoring 76 well-made runs. Shafiq came to the crease with his side 75 for two, then saw Haris Sohail (1) and Baba Azar (1) fall for the addition of only two runs.

But good partnerships of 49 between Shafiq and Mohammed Rizwan, who made 37, and then 84 with Yasir Shah (26) enabled the visitors to achieve a respectable score.

Rizwan, who was counter-attacking fearlessly, fell controversially with Cummins appearing to have just overstepped the mark, only for TV umpire Michael Gough to give the benefit of the doubt to the bowler. The visitors had frustrated the Australian pace attack in the first session, going into lunch at 57-0 with openers Azhar Ali and Shan Masood unbeaten on 28 and 21 respectively. Pakistan had caused a major surprise when they left out experienced seamer Mohammad Abbas, for pacemen Shaheen Afridi, Imran Khan and 16-year-old Naseem Shah — **AFP**

Brief scores: Pakistan 240 (Shafiq 76, Azhar 39, Rizwan 37, Starc 4/52, Cummins 3/60, Hazlewood 2/46) **vs Australia**

STOKES KEEPS ENGLISH HOPES ALIVE

Mount Maunganui, New Zealand: New Zealand targeted the wicket of “freak” Ben Stokes on Thursday as they battle to get back into the first Test against England at Mount Maunganui. The honours were even when the New Zealand-born Stokes went to the middle just before tea on day one with England 120 for three.

But by stumps, with Stokes in imperious form, the score had doubled and England will resume on Friday on 241 for four, with the 28-year-old all-rounder unbeaten on 67. “He’s a special talent. He’s a bit of a freak at times,” New Zealand short-ball specialist Neil Wagner said after Stokes clubbed his bouncers four times to the boundary. “Everyone wants to get him out because you know what an important wicket it is... but that’s my thing, we always try and strive to get the good players out,” he added.

Stokes has tormented New Zealand this year after he played a key role in England’s nail-biting victory on boundary countback in the 50-over World Cup final in July. As well as dispatching Wagner’s short stuff, he also showed a liking for the fuller delivery when he took four boundaries off successive balls from Trent Boult, including one that burst through the hands of the usually reliable Ross Taylor at first slip.

It was a drop that frustrated the New Zealanders who had earlier seen opener Rory Burns survive three chances including a waist-high edge that went between Taylor and Tom Latham in the slip cordon. — **AFP**

Brief scores: England 241 for 4 in 90 overs (R.J. Burns 52, J.L. Denly 74, Stokes 67 n.o., Pope 18 n.o., C Grandhomme 2/28) **vs New Zealand.**



Virat Kohli goes for a catch during a training session on Thursday, eve of the first pink-ball Day/Night Test match against Bangladesh at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata. — PTI

PINK BALL AT EDEN

Kohli and his men gear up for night party in Kolkata

Kolkata, Nov. 21: Indian cricket will finally embrace the pink revolution after initial reluctance when Virat Kohli’s seemingly infallible galacticos lock horns with a deflated Bangladesh in their maiden Day/Night Test starting here on Friday. It took India a new BCCI regime under maverick former captain Sourav Ganguly to take the pink ball plunge, a good seven years after the International Cricket Council approved the format to revive interest in Tests.

Ganguly convinced the Bangladesh Cricket Board to agree to a Day/Night Test just a few days before their team was to land in India.

So far, 11 Day/Night Tests have been played worldwide since Australia set the ball rolling against their Trans-Tasmanian rivals New Zealand four years ago in Adelaide.

Australia had proposed a Day/Night Test at the same venue against India last year but the wary tourists didn’t agree to the proposal.

Live on TV

SECOND TEST

India vs Bangladesh
from 1 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

At home too, the Indians were not open to the idea until Ganguly stepped into the picture within a week of taking charge of the BCCI. The bone of contention was the SG pink ball, which many still believe is difficult to sight after sunset. Add to it the dew factor, which players believe aggravates the bowlers’ problems.

But Ganguly found Kohli on the same page and the current Indian captain took just “three seconds” to agree to the Board President’s idea.

So far, the build-up to the Test has been smooth. A sellout crowd for the first four days has been managed, something that has been the primary goal of playing the traditional format under lights.

Amid all the hype, there is also the small matter of India bracing

up for a 12th successive home series victory.

The challenge for the players would be when the dew comes in to play after the sun sets early and it remains to be seen how both the teams and the groundsmen cope with the pink ball.

The Cricket Association of Bengal has made all efforts to turn the match into a carnival for fans with several gimmicks. So, there are pink-ball mascots, Army paratroopers to deliver the match ball and a galaxy of sports and political dignitaries, including Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, are also expected at the venue.

The menacing pace attack of Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma and Umesh Yadav wrapped up the Indore Test inside three days with an innings and 130 runs victory — the 10th innings win for India.

The pace attack along with the blazing form of the new-found opening duo — Rohit Sharma and Mayank Agarwal — has been the story of the season in Indian cricket.

— PTI



Imagine the boost our bowlers have standing at the mark with some 80,000 (67,000) fans cheering for them. I am expecting very exciting cricket in the first hour because the energy level will be very high.

— Virat Kohli
Indian Captain

INDIA, SEVENTH COUNTRY TO HOST DAY/NIGHT TEST

When India take on Bangladesh in their second Test of the series, they will become the seventh country to host a Day/Night Test. Australia (five), United Arab Emirates (two), England (one), South Africa (one), New Zealand (one) and West Indies (one) are the other counties to have hosted Day/Night Tests. The Kolkata Test will also be the first Day/Night Test match for both the teams. So far eight teams have played at least one Day/Night Test.

BEST BOWLING IN A INNINGS

- 8-49** Devendra Bishoo (West Indies) vs Pakistan at Dubai 2016-17
- 6-23** Pat Cummins (Australia) vs Sri Lanka at Brisbane 2018-19
- 6-32** Trent Boult (New Zealand) vs England at Auckland 2017-18

BEST BOWLING IN A MATCH

10-62 Pat Cummins (Australia) vs Sri Lanka at Brisbane 2018-19

10-174 Devendra Bishoo (West Indies) vs Pakistan at Dubai 2016-17

9-60 Jason Holder (West Indies) vs Sri Lanka at Bridgetown 2018

DAY/NIGHT TEST MATCHES

PLAYING RECORD OF EACH TEAM

TEAM	P	W	L	SUCCESS%
Australia	5	5	—	100.00
Sri Lanka	3	2	1	66.66
New Zealand	2	1	1	50.00
South Africa	2	1	1	50.00
Pakistan	3	1	2	33.33
England	3	1	2	33.33
West Indies	3	—	3	00.00
Zimbabwe	1	—	1	00.00



The scoreboard at Eden Gardens is all pink for the Test.

LOWEST INNINGS TOTALS

58 England vs New Zealand at Auckland 2017-18	68 Zimbabwe vs South Africa at Port Elizabeth 2017-18
93 West Indies vs Sri Lanka at Bridgetown 2018	

HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS

579-3 decl. Pakistan vs West Indies at Dubai 2016-17	514-8 decl. England vs West Indies at Birmingham 2017
482 Sri Lanka vs Pakistan at Dubai 2017-18	

HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES

302* Azhar Ali (Pakistan) vs West Indies at Dubai 2016-17	243 Alastair Cook (England) vs West Indies at Birmingham 2017
196 Dimuth Karunaratne (Sri Lanka) vs Pakistan at Dubai 2017-18	

Stats: S. PERVEZ QAISER

HAQUE RUES NOT GETTING A D/N WARM-UP MATCH

Kolkata, Nov. 21: Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque rued that his team didn’t even get a practice game to prepare before taking on the formidable India.

It was only two days before embarking on their tour to India that BCCI president Sourav Ganguly convinced the Bangladesh Cricket Board to play a ‘Pink Ball Test’. “We did not get any opportunity to play a practice match and at that moment (when it was decided) we could not do anything. The only way to prepare for us was by preparing mentally. But definitely, if you play any Test match with the pink ball, you have to play practice matches,” Mominul said on the eve of the Test.

The current Bangladesh team have no pink ball experience even at the domestic level. — PTI

It’s hard and heavy as hockey ball: Virat

Kolkata, Nov. 21: The pink ball feels like a “heavy hockey ball” to Virat Kohli, who is extremely wary of the challenges its weight, hardness and colour could pose while fielding.

Indian cricket will finally embrace the pink revolution when Kohli’s formidable team lock horns with a deflated Bangladesh in their maiden Day/Night Test starting here on Friday.

“One thing that surprised me was the fielding sessions. In the slips balls hit so hard it almost felt like a heavy hockey ball, all those synthetic ball that we’re used to play with in the younger days,” Kohli said on the eve of the match.

“It’s purely because of the extra glaze on the ball, it is definitely much more harder. For some reason it felt heavy and even the throws took a lot more effort than the red colour to reach the wicketkeeper,” the skipper said.

India had their first brush with the SG pink ball after they wrapped up the opening Test inside three days in Indore. “I think during the day, high catches will be very difficult. With the red or white ball you have the idea of when the ball reaches you but with the pink ball if you don’t look at it your palms are gone. “Fielding session for me was far more challenging. People are going to be surprised how challenging it can be,” he added.

Visibility in twilight has also been cited as one of the biggest challenges. “Not having a great visibility and the ability to pick that colour makes it even more difficult. The decision making has to be very precise like the idea of off stumps. Even when we practised yesterday we felt as if the ball is far but it hits you very quickly. The extra glaze of the ball is making it travel faster. It hits the hand hard,” Kohli said. — PTI

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Asked whether spinners will have to be effective with the pink ball on a grassy pitch, the cricket icon straightway pointed out the Perth Test last year where Nathan Lyon returned with a match-winning eight-wicket haul to seal Australia’s 146-run win.

“Generally, people feel spinners cannot do much on hard and grassy surfaces. But if you see, last year when India went to Australia, on the Perth pitch (new Stadium), which was helping pacers, Nathan Lyon did well.”

The SG pink ball is yet to be used in a D/N match in India as Duleep Trophy was played with kookaburra.

“I think if you’re trying out new things and there always be a first time,” he said. — PTI

“It’s a good thing. We’ve shown that we also as a nation want to move forward and try out new things. We try and then we see whether it’s successful or not. Success should not be just measured by the number of people inside the stadium. I think that is just one aspect,” he said.

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Quality of Test shouldn’t be compromised, says Sachin

Kolkata, Nov. 21: Sachin Tendulkar is all for the buzz and eyeballs that India’s first ever Day/Night Test has generated but at the same time would like the stakeholders to ensure that quality of cricket is not compromised at any level.

India are the last among top Test playing nations to join the ‘pink ball bandwagon’ as they take on Bangladesh in Kolkata from Friday but the cricket icon would like to wait and watch as how things pan out.

“The whole thing is to bring in more people in the stadium adds a new element to Test

cricket. That is important but at the same time, I feel we should also evaluate after the game, how much dew was there and whether cricket — the standard of play — was compromised there,” the cricket legend said.

Tendulkar, who had earlier voiced his concern about tackling the dew factor, said the Indian cricket think-tank should do a postmortem after the match gets over.

“I think there are two sides to it. One is to bring more spectators, but also at the same time, not compromising the standard of play. If the ball starts getting

One is to bring more spectators but if the ball starts getting wet and if the game starts getting affected, then I think we need to sit back and decide what we want to do. If these two things come together, I think it’s a win-win story.

— SACHIN TENDULKAR
on Day/Night Test

wet and if the game starts getting affected, then I think we need to sit back and decide what we want to do. If both these things come together then I think it’s a win-win story,” the maestro said.

“But if there’s going to be some dew and if those elements don’t allow you to produce good

cricket, then there could be a meeting where they can discuss and do a post-mortem on how the event was.”

Tendulkar is headlining a list of dignitaries who will be present for India’s first ever pink ball experiment, four years after Australia set the ball rolling against New Zealand at

the Adelaide Oval.

“It’s a good thing. We’ve shown that we also as a nation want to move forward and try out new things. We try and then we see whether it’s successful or not. Success should not be just measured by the number of people inside the stadium. I think that is just one aspect,” he said.

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Italy calling?

According to reports, Italian giants AC Milan have offered Sweden star Zlatan Ibrahimovic a six-month deal

Games

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

FRIDAY | 22 NOVEMBER 2019 | HYDERABAD



It's been another day of incredible drama.

— Leon Smith, Britain's Davis Cup captain, after Andy Murray rallied from a 1-4 deficit in the deciding set to win 6-7(7/9) 6-4 7-6(7/5)

WOMEN'S CRICKET

India beat Windies, win series 5-0

Providence, Guyana: The Indian women's cricket team completed a 5-0 series whitewash over the West Indies after half centuries from Veda Krishnamurthy and Jemimah Rodrigues, complemented by the bowlers' clinical show, steered the side to a 61-run triumph in the fifth and final T20 International here. Rodrigues (50) and Krishnamurthy (57 n.o.) shared 117 runs for the third wicket as India Women posted 134 for 3. In the second innings, the Indian bowlers restricted the hosts to 73 for 7 in their stipulated 20 overs. — **PTI**
India Women: 134/3 in 20 overs (Jemimah Rodrigues 50, Veda Krishnamurthy 57 not out; Hayley Matthews 1/23) **at West Indies Women: 73/7 in 20 overs** (Kishona Knight 22; Anuja Patil 2/5).

Jemimah, Radha in top-10 rankings

Dubai: India's Jemimah Rodrigues on Thursday jumped to the fourth position in the batting chart, while slow left-arm spinner Radha Yadav is placed second among bowlers in the latest ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings. Besides Rodrigues, young Shafali Verma also made significant progress in the just-released T20I Player Rankings, after playing stellar roles in a stunning 5-0 series sweep over the West Indies. Rodrigues moved up three places to fourth position and teen sensation Verma gained 57 slots to reach 30th position as India leapfrogged the West Indies to fourth position in the ICC Women's T20I Team Rankings after the 5-0 victory over the former T20 World champions. — **PTI**

BHUVI, KOHLI BACK IN ODIs, DUBE IN SIDE

Kolkata, Nov. 21: A fit-again Bhuvneshwar Kumar on Thursday made a comeback to the Indian teams for the upcoming ODI and T20 series against the West Indies while captain Virat Kohli returned after skipping the T20s against Bangladesh. Allrounder Shivam Dube earned his maiden ODI call-up weeks after making his T20 debut against Bangladesh. Mohammed Shami was also back in the T20 squad in place of Khaleel Ahmed, while Kuldeep Yadav came back in place of Krunal Pandya. Pacer Bhuvneshwar has been nursing a hamstring and sides train since the team's tour of the West Indies in August. The Indian team is scheduled to play three Twenty 20 Internationals against the West Indies with the series-opener in Mumbai on December 6 followed by matches in Thiruvananthapuram and Hyderabad. The three ODIs will be played in Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Cuttack. **ODI Squad:** Virat Kohli (C), Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant, Manish Pandey, Kedar Jadhav, Shreyas Iyer, Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Deepak Chahar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar. **T20I Squad:** Virat Kohli (C), Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant, Manish Pandey, Shreyas Iyer, Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Deepak Chahar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Washington Sundar. — **PTI**



Manu Bhaker (from left) Divyansh Singh Panwar and Elavenil Valarivan pose with their World Cup Final gold medals on Thursday.

SHOOTING STARS

Manu, Elavenil, Divyansh win maiden World Cup Final golds in China event

Putian (China), Nov. 21: India's young shooters touched another sensational high with Manu Bhaker, Elavenil Valarivan and Divyansh Panwar winning gold medals in their respective events for the country's best-ever show in the ISSF World Cup Finals here on Thursday.

The 17-year-old Manu fired her way to the gold with a junior world record in the women's 10m air pistol event, while the 20-year-old Elavenil claimed the top honours in the women's 10m air rifle competition.

Later, another teen sensation Divyansh, who is all of 17, finished on top in the men's 10m air rifle competition with a final score of 250.1. India are currently top of the table with three gold medals, followed by China (two gold, one silver, one bronze). Manu shot 244.7 to notch up the top prize in the prestigious season-ending tournament of International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF). The Haryana girl beat a classy field for her maiden WCF gold. In the same event,

JUNGSHER JOINS KYNAN AT THE TOP IN NATIONALS

New Delhi, Nov. 21: Young Jungsher Virk joined Olympian Kynan Chenai at the top on the second day of qualification in the 63rd National Shooting Championship Competitions for Shotgun events here on Thursday. Two perfect rounds of 25, put Virk right on top with one more round of qualification to go at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range on Friday. Hyderabad's Kynan followed up his perfect score of 50 on Day One with another round of 25, but ended with a 23

to be tied with Virk on 98.

Manavjit Singh Sandhu also had two perfect rounds on Thursday, which has put him well in contention to make another Nationals final — his four rounds yielding 96 out of 100 hits so far. Among other prominent names, Prithviraj Tondaiman and Zoravar Singh Sandhu were also in contention with 96. So was the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) President Raninder Singh, who has a score of 93 so far for his efforts. — **PTI**

Yashaswini Singh Deswal, finished sixth in the final. Serbia's Zorana Arunovic won the silver with 241.9, while Quian Wang of China bagged the bronze of 221.8. Elavenil shot a score of 250.8 to edge past Taiwan's Lin Ying-Shin (250.7). Romania's Laura-Georgeta Coman finished third with a score of 229.

Divyansh then ensured that women didn't hog the limelight completely with his stellar performance. He qualified third for the final with a score of 627.1. In the final he steered ahead of Hungary's Istvan Peni (250) and Slovakia's Patrik Jany (228.4) to clinch the top prize. — **PTI**

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