



Amit Shah to hold meetings on Citizenship Bill
 page 12



Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA government to face floor test today
 page 13



London police shoot one suspect dead after 'terrorist stabbings'
 page 14

Ramkumar & Nagal give India a 2-0 lead against Pakistan in Davis Cup
 page 19



PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

NEARBY

Swiss firm to develop Jewar airport
 NOIDA
 Zurich Airport International AG will develop the Jewar airport on the outskirts of Delhi, officials said after the Swiss company on Friday outbid competitors like Adani and DIAL for what is billed to be the biggest airport in the country. The airport in Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar district will be the third in the National Capital Region.

BUSINESS ▶ PAGE 15

We Delivered 77 Os in Prelims 2019
 Now its Turn for 2020
PT TOPPERS' PACK
 (10-Red Books + Complete Test Series
 Fee-₹14500/-)
crack IAS
 NO NEED TO READ ANYTHING ELSE
921-7070707

New Delhi announces \$450 mn to Colombo

Sri Lanka to get \$50 million to fight terror threats

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
 NEW DELHI

India and Sri Lanka agreed to cooperate on counter-terrorism during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and visiting President Gotabaya Rajapaksa here on Friday. As part of this common strategy, India announced a special Line of Credit of \$50 million for strengthening Sri Lanka's abilities to counter terror threats.

This was in addition to the \$400 million Line of Credit that India announced for infrastructure development in

the island nation.

"On the occasion of Easter this year, terrorists in Sri Lanka launched brutal attacks on the diversity of mankind and the valuable heritage of symbiosis. I went to Sri Lanka immediately after the elections in India to express India's unwavering support in the Sri Lankan fight against terrorist and extremist forces. Sri Lankan police officers in major Indian institutions are already receiving the benefit of counter terrorist training," said Prime Minister Modi.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12



PM Narendra Modi with Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in New Delhi on Friday. • V.V. KRISHNAN

GDP growth plunges to 4.5%, lowest since 2012

Official says fundamentals are strong, numbers will pick up

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

Growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) in the July-September quarter hit a 25-quarter low of 4.5%, the government announced on Friday.

The lowest GDP growth in six years and three months comes as Parliament has been holding day-long discussions on the economic slowdown, with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman assuring the Rajya Sabha that the country is not in a recession and may not ever be in one.

GVA dips to 4.3%

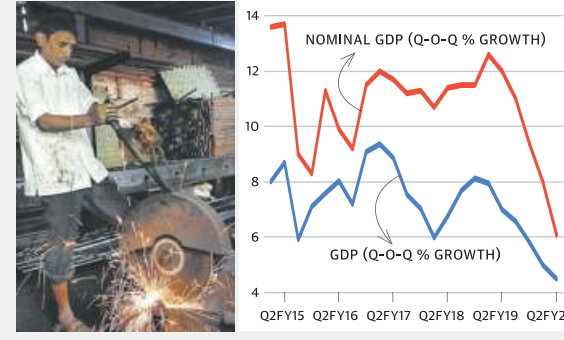
Growth in gross value added (GVA) also dipped to 4.3% in Q2 of 2019-20 from 4.9% in Q1, and 6.9% in the Q2 of last year.

According to the data released on Friday, the manufacturing sector contracted 1% in the second quarter of the current financial year, compared with a robust growth of 6.9% in the same quarter of the previous year. The manufacturing sector saw an overall contraction of 0.2% in the first half (April to September) of the current financial year compared to a growth of 9.4% in the first half of last year.

"We take note of announcement of the rate of GDP

In slump mode

In the July to September 2019 quarter, both the nominal GDP (which includes inflation) and the real GDP grew at the slowest-ever pace since 2014



■ GDP growth rate fell for the sixth consecutive quarter ■ Manufacturing sector contracted by 1% in the latest quarter

Unacceptable, says Manmohan

Reacting to the GDP growth rate for the July-September quarter at 4.5%, a six-year low, announced on Friday, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said the figures were "completely unacceptable", and pointed to a "palpable

climate of fear" leading to this state of the economy. He was delivering the valedictory address at National Economy Conclave, organised by the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies.

▶ PAGE 12

growth," Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty told the media following the data release. "The fundamentals of the Indian economy remain strong and GDP growth is expected to pick up from the third quarter of FY 2019-20."

He further highlighted the fact that the International Monetary Fund has projected India's GDP growth at 6.1% in financial year 2019-20 and 7% in 2020-21 in its October 2019 report.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Four arrested for vet's rape and murder in Hyderabad

STAFF REPORTER
 HYDERABAD

A woman veterinarian, whose charred body was found in Hyderabad on Thursday, was raped and killed, the police said.

A truck driver and three cleaners have been arrested. They planned to sexually assault her when they saw her parking her two-wheeler at Tondupally toll plaza on Wednesday evening. When she left for Gachibowli in a cab, they deflated a tyre of her scooter.

When she returned at 9.18 p.m., she noticed the flat tyre. Minutes later, driver Mohammed alias Areef, 26, offered to get the vehicle repaired and sent cleaner Jollu Shiva, 20, with it, Cyberabad Commissioner of Police V.C. Sajjanar said here on Friday.

Shiva returned without fixing the bike and said the shop was closed. Minutes later, he again took the vehicle away. "As she was waiting for the scooter, Areef and other cleaners Jollu Naveen, 20, and Chintakunta Chennakeshavulu, 20, dragged her to a plot and raped her," he said.

Meanwhile, an unidentified woman, aged around 30, was found burnt to death in Cyberabad on Friday.

(With PTI inputs)
DIED OF SUFFOCATION ▶ PAGE 8

On safe shores



Perilous journey: Nine Indian fishermen who escaped from Yemen following 'inhuman treatment' by their sponsor, being escorted by the Coast Guard at Fort Kochi on Friday. They set sail on November 19 after stocking up on supplies. • THULASI KAKKAT (REPORT ON PAGE 8)

Kejriwal appoints panel for lawyers' welfare scheme

In 10 days, the committee will suggest ways to utilise ₹50-crore fund

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday announced the formation of a 13-member committee tasked with submitting recommendations for the utilisation of the ₹50-crore Chief Minister's Advocates' Welfare Scheme. The committee, headed by Rakesh Kumar Khanna, senior advocate and president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, will submit the recommendations within 10 days, he said.

"This is good news for the community of advocates in



Arvind Kejriwal

Delhi. The committee will submit its report within 10 days. We had allocated ₹50 crore under the scheme for the welfare of advocates in the current budget, as re-

quested by various advocates' organisations," said Mr. Kejriwal.

Poll promise

The Chief Minister said that the Delhi government recognises the invaluable contributions of advocates to society and that an exclusive scheme for their welfare was a long-standing demand of various lawyers' organisations. "Advocates' bodies had approached us before the last elections. It was one of the poll promises we had made. It has been materialised now," he said.

The scheme, Mr. Kejriwal claimed, is unique as no such scheme for the welfare of advocates has been initiated so far in the country. "The Delhi government has made another model initiative in this regard," he said.

The Khanna-led panel would identify specific areas of welfare for the amount to be spent.

According to the order issued on Friday, Bar Council of Delhi chairman K.C. Mittal and Delhi High Court Bar Association president Mohit Mathur are among other members of the committee.

FASTag deadline extended

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 GURUGRAM

The government on Friday extended till December 15 the deadline for making FASTag mandatory for toll payments on national highways.

Earlier, all lanes, except one on each side, at all NHAI toll plazas were to be declared as dedicated FASTag lanes from December 1.

The National Highways Authority of India, in a statement, said many citizens had not enabled their vehicles with FASTags due to which the decision was deferred till December 15.

It was earlier decided that any motorist entering the dedicated FASTag lane without the tag would be charged double the toll fee from December 1, but the NHAI made it clear that the "charging of double fee will start from December 15".

Godse remark: Pragya offers apology twice

She read out from a written statement following an uproar

SANDEEP PHUKAN
 NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party MP Pragya Singh Thakur on Friday apologised in the Lok Sabha twice but maintained that she didn't name Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse on the floor of the House.

Ms. Thakur read out from a written statement following an uproar over her first apology in which she hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for calling her a "terrorist" in a tweet.



Pragya Singh Thakur

The statement was prepared at Speaker Om Birla's chamber after a meeting of floor leaders to end the impasse in the Lower House.

Mr. Birla was forced to call the meeting after the BJP MP's initial regret created a fresh logjam. "On November 27, during discussion on SPG (Amendment) Bill, I did not call Nathuram Godse a patriot (desh bhakt), I did not even take his name. Still if someone is hurt, I express my regret and apologise," said the Bhopal MP around 3 p.m., after the Speaker asked her to stick to the prepared statement.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

At these wedding processions, it's yesterday once more

Old gems score over new-age Bollywood songs among revellers in western Uttar Pradesh

ANUJ KUMAR
 GHAZIABAD

On a dark stretch in Anupshahr, a quiet town on the banks of Ganges in western Uttar Pradesh, Manish Kumar, the 25-year-old lead vocalist of Anil Band, is making a group of young wedding revellers dance to *Pallu Latke*. The all-male procession swaying to the Kishore Kumar-Asha Bhosle song from *Nauker* (1979) had no clue it was pictured on Sanjeev Kumar-Jaya Bhaduri, but they all agree it is meant for the "occasion".

New-age Bollywood is yet to make it to wedding procession playlists in this part of the world. They are still swooning to *Baharon Phool Barsao* (Suraj, 1966)

and *Saara Zamana Haseenon Ka Deewana* (Yaarana, 1981) and, of course, *Mere Yaar Ki Shaadi Hai* (Aadmi Sadak Ka, 1977). For them, "new" are songs from the neighbouring Haryana, pictured on dancer Sapna Chaudhary. The hot favourite is *Teri Ankhion Ka Yo Kajal*, a number sung by a little-known Ragini-singer D.C. Madana in 2013 which soared when Chaudhary danced to it in 2017.

Manish says he loves to sing *sadabahar* (timeless) songs, a quality he feels new Bollywood numbers lack. The cut-off decade for him is the 1990s, particularly Nadeem-Shravan songs. "It is safe to sing old gems rather than investing in



A wedding procession in Anupshahr. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

learning a new tune and then being stopped midway by a *baarati* because he could not relate to it," says Anil Kumar, the proprietor of the band.

Tough times for bands
 Anil says these are tough times for small bands spread across the region. "More than 20 weddings are

solemnised on any given day during the short wedding season but we could not take more than one booking. Pandits should spread it through the season," he laughs. DJs are also cutting into their business, he says, though the Allahabad High Court order barring them from playing songs above prescribed decibel and time limits is music to his ears.

Waseem Ahmed of Popular Band in Muzaffarnagar tells a similar story. "Earlier we used to bring trained artists from Allahabad and Jaipur. It is hard to find and retain good percussionists nowadays," he rues.

Critic Ajay Brahmattmaj says songs also endure

because of their association with stars. "These days such association is not there because songs mostly play in the background," he says.

"Bollywood lately has also been banking on remixes of the hits of the 1990s. It is the simple melodic structure of these songs that keep them in circulation. Complex orchestration can't work in a wedding procession," points out Raj Shekhar of *Sadi Gali* (Tanu Weds Manu, 2011) fame.

Meanwhile, Manish ushers the procession into the banquet hall with *Jaanevalon Zara Hoshiyar, Yahan Ke Hum Hain Raj Kumar* from the 1964 Shamma Kapoor-starrer *Rajkumar*.