

MARKET WATCH

	07-11-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	40,654	0.45
US Dollar	70.97	0.00
Gold	38,930	-0.18
Brent oil	62.52	-0.53

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	390.45	-0.55
Asian Paints	1826.95	29.35
Axis Bank	734.75	-12.50
Bajaj Auto	3265.85	17.55
Bajaj Finserv	8832.90	60.05
Bajaj Finance	4225.85	37.70
Bharti Airtel	371.75	0.30
BPCL	513.20	-10.70
Britannia Ind	3223.80	-4.05
Cipla	471.85	-9.00
Coal India	212.50	0.10
Dr Reddys Lab	2871.05	8.35
Eicher Motors	21423.95	-181.60
GAIL (India)	132.10	-4.60
Grasim Ind	777.85	4.60
HCL Tech	1148.45	0.10
HDFC	2251.00	30.40
HDFC Bank	1263.70	7.05
Hero MotoCorp	2660.85	-17.50
Hindalco	205.20	3.70
Hind Unilever	2138.25	-41.20
ICI Bank	478.55	-2.15
IndusInd Bank	1381.90	38.90
Bharti Infratel	229.45	8.30
Infosys	720.10	7.80
Indian OilCorp	135.85	0.25
ITC	265.85	4.50
JSW Steel	252.65	4.40
Kotak Bank	1584.00	12.95
L&T	1435.05	-18.00
M&M	580.35	0.55
Maurit Suzuki	7287.15	-24.00
Nestle India Ltd.	14711.25	61.60
NTPC	119.55	-1.10
ONGC	142.05	-2.60
PowerGrid Corp	194.20	-0.90
Reliance Ind	1458.60	23.70
State Bank	318.15	0.60
Sun Pharma	440.60	12.70
Tata Motors	171.50	-3.00
Tata Steel	403.10	-1.35
TCS	2185.35	-3.15
Tech Mahindra	769.70	-2.20
Titan	1167.20	11.10
UltraTech Cement	4187.40	51.75
UPL	577.70	-28.90
Vedanta	160.95	3.00
Wipro	259.65	2.80
YES Bank	66.45	-2.25
Zee Entertainment	285.75	-0.05

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on November 07

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	70.75	71.08
Euro	78.34	78.69
British Pound	90.66	91.07
Japanese Yen (100)	64.83	65.12
Chinese Yuan	10.14	10.19
Swiss Franc	71.24	71.57
Singapore Dollar	52.12	52.36
Canadian Dollar	53.74	53.98
Malaysian Ringgit	17.15	17.24

Source:Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

November 07 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g)	49.2	(49.1)
22 ct gold (1 g)	3658	(3658)

IRDAI cracks down on Reliance Health

Regulator asks health insurer to stop selling policies over solvency worries

N. RAVI KUMAR
HYDERABAD

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has directed Reliance Health Insurance Company (RHICL) to stop selling new policies.

It also directed the insurer to transfer the entire policyholders' liabilities along with financial assets to Reliance General Insurance Co. (RGICL) with effect from November 15.

Below level

IRDAI's direction follows the Anil Ambani group entity's solvency margin falling below the control level of 150% for some months now.

The regulator said in its order that the solvency ratio reported by RHICL for the quarter ended June was 106%.

"There was further deterioration in solvency between June and August 2019,

Low pulse

- In August, IRDAI directed the insurer to restore the required solvency margin level in a month
- Despite many follow ups, this was not carried out, leading to a show-cause notice
- Even then, there was no improvement, but only a deterioration in the firm's financial position
- Reliance Health Insurance had commenced operations in October 2018
- The insurer has not been able to maintain the required solvency margin since June 2019

from 106% to 77%," the order said. RHICL's solvency ratio declined to 63% as on September 30, 2019.

IRDAI said, it had, in August, issued a direction to the health insurer to restore the required level of solvency margin within one month.

"Despite repeated follow up, this has not been carried out so far. Thereafter, the in-

surer was issued a show-cause notice and given another opportunity to present its case."

As there had been no improvement, but only deterioration in the financial position of RHICL, a decision was taken to direct the insurer to stop selling new policies and transfer the entire policyholders' liabilities along with fi-

nancial assets to RGICL with effect from November 15.

"Till that time, RHICL had been prohibited from using its assets for any payment other than claim settlement. It is estimated that the underlying assets are sufficient to meet the claims of the existing policyholders that may arise in future," IRDAI said.

Reliance General Insurance Co. had been directed to service the claims of the RHICL policyholders promptly and efficiently with effect from November 15.

"IRDAI will be closely monitoring the situation to ensure smooth transfer of the portfolio, settlement of claims and protection of the interest of the policyholders," a statement said.

The regulator said it would like to assure RHICL policyholders that "all their interests have been adequately protected and all ge-

nuine claims will continue to be duly honoured."

However, Reliance Capital, the promoter of Reliance Health, said it had proposed transfer of the health portfolio to Reliance General.

"As proposed by Reliance Capital, the promoter company of Reliance Health Insurance (RHI) and Reliance General Insurance (RGI), RHI will transfer its health insurance portfolio covering all financial assets and policyholder liabilities to RGI. This process is being undertaken in consultation with IRDAI and has been approved by the regulator," a Reliance Capital spokesperson said.

Sources said Reliance General Insurance and Reliance Health Insurance would be merged and the proposal was tabled by Reliance Capital about two weeks ago.

(With inputs from Manojit Saha in Mumbai)

HDFC Bank slashes lending rate

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

HDFC Bank has reduced the marginal cost of funds based lending rate (MCLR) by 5-10 basis points (bps) across various tenures with effect from Thursday.

While the overnight, one month and three month MCLR rates have been kept unchanged, the six-month MCLR has been reduced by 5 bps to 8.1% and one-year MCLR reduced by 5 bps to 8.3%.

The three-year MCLR has been reduced by 10 bps to 8.5%. Last month, RBI reduced the repo rate by 25 bps to 5.15% which has prompted some lenders to reduce interest rates.



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman with RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, left, and Finance Secretary Rajiv Kumar. •PTI

Govt. mulling changes to laws to address inter-regulatory issues

FM discusses economy at FSDC meet

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman held a review meeting on Thursday with the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) during which she discussed the state of the economy in detail.

"The Council reviewed the current global and domestic macro-economic situation and financial stability and vulnerabilities issues, including... those concerning NBFCs and credit rating agencies," the government said in a release.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that the government was looking into making specific legislative amendments to address inter-regulatory issues, including to the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002.

"The state of the economy was discussed in detail and there were some inter-regulatory issues that were discussed," Mr. Das said. "We also discussed cybersecurity issues and going forward, from the point of view of the macro requirements, what kind of approach the regulators would take, particularly where there is inter-regulatory overlap."

"With regard to streng-

thening the regulatory mechanism, there is a need for certain amendments in the relevant Act that governs the multi-State cooperative societies and there the process of amending certain provisions of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act is being taken forward by the government in consultation with the RBI," Mr. Das added.

'NBFCs doing well'

The RBI Governor said that the current state of NBFCs was discussed and there were many NBFCs that were performing well.

"Today, both the banks and the markets are differentiating between the good NBFCs and the not-so-good NBFCs," Mr. Das said. "Even today, we have a good number of NBFCs that are well-functioning, which are able to access funds from the market and loans from the banks, and in fact some of them have got overseas funding also."

He said that the RBI was monitoring the top 50 NBFCs, which represented roughly 75% of the asset size of the NBFC sector, and held regular interactions with them. However, he did acknowledge that there were some NBFCs that were still in trouble.

Qatar Airways says keen on stake in IndiGo

QA enters into codeshare agreement with the budget airline, says not interested in Air India

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

IndiGo and Qatar Airways (QA) on Friday entered into a one-way codeshare, which will allow the Doha-headquartered airline to place its code on IndiGo flights to Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

This is not just any codeshare, but a warming of ties between India's market leader and one of the world's biggest airlines, which has long wanted a foothold in India.

QA Group chief executive Akbar Al Baker, who has long pursued IndiGo for a share in the airline as well as had plans to set up an airline in India, said he continued to be "very keen on a stake in IndiGo," adding he was not interested in Air India at all.

The FDI policy, which requires substantial ownership and effective control (SOEC) to rest with an Indian, has proved to be a roadblock for Qatar to have its own subsidiary here.



IndiGo CEO Ronojoy Dutta, left, and Qatar Airways CEO Akbar Al Baker, in New Delhi on Thursday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

"India has one of the most restrictive regimes in the world. It is time (to relax the norms) for the sake of economic growth, tourism and employment. "Aviation is a market that will serve all these purposes very well," Mr. Al Baker told the media.

The tie-up gives QA greater access to India over and above the 24,000 seats per week it can operate under

the bilateral seat-sharing arrangement between the two countries, and seamless connectivity to its passengers from Europe and U.S. destined for India.

"It (the international market) is a cold, dark, hostile world and we need friends. And one thing you learn from British history is that you need to choose your friends carefully," IndiGo

CEO Ronojoy Dutta said about the tie-up. In choosing its partner, IndiGo has not only focussed on network compatibility but also "strategic thinking and company culture," Mr. Dutta explained, adding it planned to have "a long and binding relationship with Qatar" and the codeshare was only a 'baby step.'

Aggressive expansion

The partnership comes at a time when IndiGo has been aggressively expanding overseas – it has added 12 destinations in the past one year and its international network accounts for 24% of its total capacity deployment.

"This is probably a test to see how international connectivity is through a hub, as you will be able to see from the sales where the demand is coming from and get an indication of what are the top markets into Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad from Europe

and the rest of Qatar's network," explains Lewis Burroughs, an aviation analyst at global consultancy ICF.

IndiGo also has plans to provide non-stop connectivity to Europe with A321 XLRs.

An industry expert, on the condition of anonymity, said the allusion to British history could be a hint of IndiGo trying to join International Airlines Group (IAG) – a multinational airlines company headquartered in London where Qatar has a primary ownership.

This way, IndiGo can save on its partnership costs for joining global airline's grouping such as OneWorld or Star Alliance and still benefit from the loyalty programme of IAG.

To a question on whether the codeshare with QA would impact a similar agreement with Turkish Airlines, Mr. Dutta said the two were not in conflict in any way.

Cognizant to hire 23,000 students

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

IT firm Cognizant will be hiring over 23,000 students in India in calendar year 2020, a top official said.

"We will be hiring over 23,000 students and this does not include BPO operations," said Ramkumar Ramamoorthy, chairman and MD, Cognizant India. "Our plan is to hire students from STEM discipline and primarily, engineering," he added.

He said in the last five years, Cognizant's net addition had been growing. "From 2014 to 2018, we had a net headcount addition of 66,000 in India. For the first nine months of this year, we have added 9,000 employees," he said.

City Union Bank profit up 15% on business growth

Lender reports fresh slippages of ₹190 cr.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Private sector lender City Union Bank Ltd. (CUB) has posted a 15.21% increase in its standalone net profit for the second quarter ended September 2019 to ₹168 crore on 'strong business growth'.

During the period under review, the bank's net interest income (NII) rose 3.4% to ₹411.55 crore and net interest margin by 3.91%. The bank's capital adequacy metrics stood above the regulatory requirement of 15%.

Advances grew to ₹33,279 crore from ₹29,785 crore and deposits to ₹40,451 crore from ₹34,534 crore. CASA deposits grew by 22%,

and accounted for 25% of total deposits.

Briefing the media, CUB MD and CEO N. Kamakodi said the bank recorded an overall steady growth in business and profitability. In asset quality too, the bank had maintained stable performance, he said.

According to him, fresh slippages during the period stood at ₹190 crore and total recovery at ₹115-₹120 crore.

Gross non-performing assets as a percentage of gross advances grew to 3.41% representing ₹1,135.44 crore, from 2.85% or ₹847.88 crore.

Net NPAs increased to ₹624 crore (1.9%) from ₹497.78 crore (1.69%).

Sun Pharma logs ₹1,064 cr. in Q2 profit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. reported a net profit of ₹1,064 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2019, compared with a net loss of ₹269 crore in the same period last year.

Sales income from operations saw a growth of 16% to ₹7,949 crore over ₹6,846 crore.

India sales stood at ₹2,515 crore, up 35%. The finished dosage sales in the U.S. market at \$339 million remained flat over Q2 last year.

'Emerging markets' sales, at \$201 million, were up by 3% while 'rest of world' sales at \$161 million grew 49% over Q2 last year.

Raymond to demerge lifestyle unit

Move will simplify group structure, says the company

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Raymond Ltd. has announced the demerger of its lifestyle business into a separate entity that will be listed through a mirror shareholding structure, the company said on Thursday.

Every shareholder of Raymond Ltd. will be issued shares of the new company in the ratio of 1:1. The move will create a clear demarcation of lifestyle and other businesses leading to the simplification of the group structure, the firm said.

The new company will have the businesses of branded textiles, branded apparel and garmenting while the existing company will retain real estate projects, Thane land bank, B2B



Gautam Hari Singhania

shirting business, engineering businesses of auto components and tools and hardware, denim and FMCG businesses.

Ahead of the announcement, the firm's shares closed with a gain of 6.94% at ₹673.70 on the BSE.

Raymond Ltd. also announced the allotment of equity shares and compulso-

rily convertible preference shares (CCPS) worth ₹225 crore and ₹125 crore respectively to JK Investo Trade (India) Ltd (JKIT), an associate company, against the infusion of net proceeds of JKIT land sale that was announced in October 2019. The allotment was done at ₹674 per equity share.

The total of ₹350 crore will be used to repay debt thus deleveraging the balance sheet of Raymond Ltd.

Gautam Hari Singhania, CMD, Raymond Ltd., said, "As we continue to build capacities for enhanced performance, demerging the core lifestyle business is an affirmative step towards that direction and this will also simplify the group structure."

Fuji Electric eyes ₹1,500 cr. India revenue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Power electronics company Fuji Electric expects to increase its India revenue to ₹1,500 crore by 2023 from ₹660 crore in FY18-19.

The company has also unveiled a 2.0 strategy for India.

"The 2.0 plan involves integration of business in India, including Consul Newoatt [which was acquired this year], Fuji Electric India and Fuji Gemco, to ensure all Fuji electric customers in India have the same and consistent pre-sales and post sales experience," Kenzo Sugai, executive vice-president and elected corporate director, Fuji Electric, said.

Root of the MATTER

Chefs are turning to starchy roots and tubers, not just because they are nutritional powerhouses, but also for their versatility, colour, crunch and earthy flavours

MINI RIBEIRO

Think parsnip and fennel sauce with roasted pumpkin, or oven-roasted root vegetables with polenta. In the last few years, tubers have acquired a new meaning and an upscale image – and not just potatoes and carrots which have been getting all the attention for a while. Chefs are now experimenting with less popular parsnips, taro, turnips, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, yam, Jerusalem artichoke, celeriac and kohlrabi (also called German turnip).
Kohlrabi, the bulbous vegetable with stiff leaves, has taken the food world by storm. Steamed, sautéed, roasted, stuffed, creamed, in soup or stew, chefs use it in many ways. Rutabagas are being served as tacos. The supple, nutty and sweetish flavour of the Jerusalem artichoke, too, is often seen in kitchens – at ITC Grand Chola in Chennai, it is served as a hearty soup with gorgonzola and dark chocolate.

Yam and sweet potato have also received makeovers. When grilled over an open flame, they develop a crusty exterior, their starches become sweet, and their interiors tender. Chefs are using this to the optimum. Another approach is that of Ajit Bangera, senior executive chef,



ITC Grand Chola, Chennai – he prefers a yam *edamame keema* preparation.
Sweet potato is adaptable and can be mashed, roasted, braised. Sweet potato falafel, lasagne, and baked sweet potato are inventive dishes, yet, Prasad Metrani, executive chef, Fairmont Jaipur, goes a step further and serves sweet potato waffles for breakfast. Chef Amit Dash, executive chef, The Westin Pune Koregaon

Park, prefers sweet potato pancakes.
Mix and mash
Roots are not restricted to completely vegetarian dishes. Bangera opines, “Root vegetables can either be used as accompaniments to protein or seafood, or as binding agents. These are perfect for stews and slow-cooked gravies, and add immense value in nutrition and taste.”
Vikram Arora, chef and founder

of Tamak, Mumbai, cautions, “Cooking with root vegetables is challenging. Most root vegetables are heavy and have a hard outer layer that makes them difficult to cook. Each type needs to be cooked differently, and they all need to be cooked before being diced or cubed.”
It is their unique texture that makes them exciting to work with. Chef Bangera concurs, “Most root vegetables are high on fibre, natural-



ly sweet and easy to hold together while cooking. Hence, the final look is fabulous, with a good mouth-feel and the natural taste of the vegetable.”

Chef Metrani prefers to step out of the ordinary. “It is fun to use these in more interesting ways, like roasted parsnips with pistachio and lemon, purple potatoes with rosemary, whole baby caramelised onions with balsamic, roasted yam, salt baked beetroot,” he says.

Healthy root vegetable gratin, beet noodles with yoghurt and dill and parmesan garlic parsnip french fries are innovative dishes that Chef Dash serves at The Westin Pune. Yet, it is not as if root vegetables only denote the Western and Continental. They are used extensively in Indian cuisine, with dishes like beetroot *poriyal*, kebabs, yam *ke shammi*, sweet potato *chaat* and more.

Chef Vikram feels their unique textures and flavours, are apt for Indian cuisine. *Shalgam gosht*, *shalgam ka bharta*, *zimikand anjeer ke kebab*, *tandoori shakarkandi ki chaat*, are some of his creations.

At Royal Vega, ITC Grand Chola, *madhura tikiya* – crisp, fried patties

of clove smoked beetroot stuffed with spiced hung curd, sprinkled with homemade *pudina masala*, is popular.

Chefs are also using root vegetables to push the culinary boundaries of desserts, experimenting with their natural sweetness and reducing added sugars. Carrot cakes are just the beginning – carrot sorbet served with parsnip cake is also finding space on menus today, as chefs expose diners to unknown facets of the familiar vegetable. Beets are apt for cakes and brownies, especially when paired with chocolate. It provides a vibrant colour, too. Chefs are also substituting pumpkin with sweet potato puree, for pie.

Western desserts apart, beetroot, sweet potato and turnips are perfect for Indian desserts like *halwas* and *barfis*, as more and more diners are turning away from cloyingly sweet items.

The health factor

Chef Dash attributes the popularity of root vegetables to healthy lifestyle choices. “These days, people like to eat healthy. Customers focus on plant-based diets, seeking alternatives to traditional proteins to meet their nutritional needs. Roots are some of the most nutrient-dense vegetables.”

Chef Bangera sums it up succinctly, “Root vegetables have always been popular and used traditionally in grandmothers’ kitchens. These have been the essence of good stews and gravies. I guess it’s just like wayfarers coming back into vogue – whether it is called a *chukandar tikki* at home or ‘slow-cooked organic beet and feta’ at a fancy restaurant.”

FOOD SPOT



RAHUL VERMA

I have a soft spot for South Indian thalis. It started with Andhra Bhavan, where, many years ago, I had the most delicious food served on a thali. At Sagar, again, my preferred dish was the thali. Then, when Saravana Bhavan opened its first branch in Delhi, I went there often, mainly for the platter, though I must confess the ghee roast dosa sometimes edged the thali out.

I am not sure what explains my fondness for thalis, but I suppose it is the small portions that come in compartments on a well laden steel plate. And then, of course, there is the promise of those dockets being filled by the servers who can always spot an empty plate from a distance.

That’s why, when I heard that my old favourite, Carnatic Café, had opened a branch in Meharchand Market I decided I had to visit the place. A friend had enjoyed a thali at its Gurugram outlet, and it reminded me that I had eaten some nice stuff at the New Friends’ Colony Market branch, but I had actually never had the thali. ‘Must do something about this,’ I told myself, and landed up at Meharchand Market earlier this week.

The outlet opened its doors on Monday. I

Plate tectonics

Much like a fine dining restaurant, at a thaali place, you simply don’t have to gesture to the waiter



Wholesome A tempting thali • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

went there a day later and found the place squeaky clean and the servers all raring to go. I had a look at the menu (for academic interest), and then told them that I wanted the thali. My co-diner was urged to try out a spe-

cial dosa, which she did. I thought we’d end with some Bengaluru ice cream (manufactured by their own sister company, Jaatre Ice Cream) but we were so full after the thali that we didn’t venture near the desserts.

The menu is not as expansive as it is in, say, Saravana Bhavan, but it has a very nice mix and variety of dishes. There are, for instance, various kinds of dosas (plain, masala, Mysore plain, rawa plain, butter, paper plain, rawa coconut, ragi masala, podi dosa and so on, with costs that range between ₹125 and ₹195). It has akki roti (rice flour, onion and chillies, ₹225), and Ragi roti (ragi, onion, chillies, ₹225). There are different kinds of utthapams (₹150-180) and rice dishes (lemon rice, tamarind rice, bisi bele bhaat, wangi bhaat and masala rice, ₹180).

We had asked for the Malleshwaram 18th Cross dosa - which was described well (“thick fluffy and crispy smeared with chutney podi and white butter”). But somehow it was a bit too thick, and smeared too heavily with podi, we thought. It came with a nice assortment of chutneys, and a very tasty bowl of sambar, though.

But my thali- aah! –was delightful. The Patravali Oota thali (₹255) comes with the salad of the day, seasonal vegetables, saar, kut, a special rice, gojju, plain rice, curd, papad, a sweet dish and buttermilk.

The saar, a spicy yet light rasam-like dish, was superb, as was the kut - a mix of veggies. I loved the salad – sprouted mung dal with coconut – and the gojju, a pachari type of dish.

The mixed veggies tasted good, and the tamarind rice was tangy and sharp. The papad was hijacked by the co-diner, who also had a portion of rice with her sambar. And the dessert-kesari bhaat – was sublime: sweet, nutty and grainy.

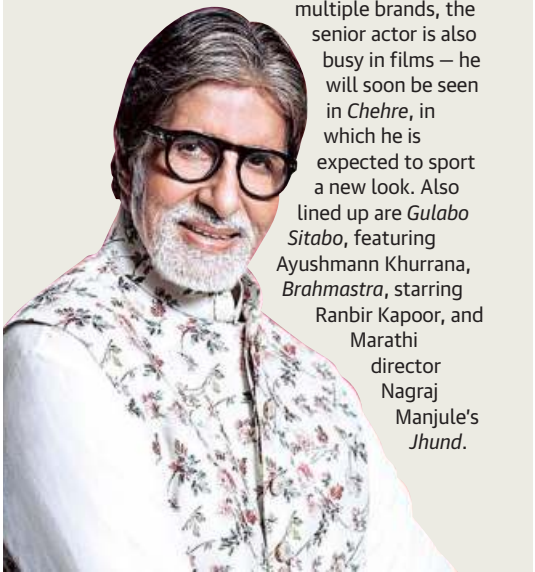
It’s good to know that my warm and friendly relationship with thalis is as strong as ever. I left with a satisfied burp.

The writer is a seasoned food critic

PEOPLE

Big B goes traditional

Amitabh Bachchan has hit a half century in his acting career – he began his tryst with films fifty years ago, in November 1969, with *Saat Hindustani*. Even as the actor continues to be much sought-after in Bollywood for a variety of roles, he is also much in demand in advertising circles. The latest on that front is that Indian-wear brand Manyavar has roped him in as their brand ambassador. As a part of the association, Amitabh Bachchan will be seen donning the brand’s latest collection through a slew of commercials spread across TV, digital and social media. In a press statement, Amitabh said, “It is Manyavar’s belief in Indian culture and tradition that I totally appreciate. It resonates with my beliefs and sense of belongingness with the timeless Indian tradition.” Even as he continues to be associated with



multiple brands, the senior actor is also busy in films – he will soon be seen in *Chehre*, in which he is expected to sport a new look. Also lined up are *Gulabo Sitabo*, featuring Ayushmann Khurrana, *Brahmastra*, starring Ranbir Kapoor, and Marathi director Nagraj Manjule’s *Jhund*.

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE

TALK

Music appreciation

Westland Publications and May Day Bookstore are jointly organising a book reading session. Saba Dewan, author of *Tawaifnama*, and Namita Devidayal, author of *The Sixth String of Vilayat Khan*, will read from their work and also interact with the audience. The session will be moderated by Prof. Ashwini Deshpande.
VENUE: May Day Bookstore, Shadipur
TIME: 5:30 p.m.

CARNIVAL

North East festival

The seventh edition of North East Festival, which will showcase the diversities of the north-eastern region begins today. Organised to promote entrepreneurship and tourism of this region, this three-day festival will feature workshop on tribal language, food courts, dance performances and handicraft products for sale.
VENUE: Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts
TIME: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

CUISINE

New Menu

Mei Kun at The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel has now relaunched itself as a specialty fine dine Chinese restaurant, with menu curated by chef Hsiung Chan Khyage. Apart from a range of regular dishes, the new menu offers Crystal Chicken, Xiao Long Bao, Prawn Sui Mai, Gyoza Prawn, Sichuan Boiled Fish, and more.
VENUE: Maharaja Surajmal Road, Vivek Vihar,
TIME: 12-3 p.m. and 7 p.m.-11:30 p.m.

PAINTINGS

Pop art

An ongoing solo showcase titled *Ethereal Harmony* features the modern age paintings of artist Tanu Yadav. Curated by Mohan Singh, the collections are inspired by the Tanu’s favourite pop art artists, Andy Warhol and David Hockney. It depicts social landscape, human living spaces and emotions in bright colours.
VENUE: Triveni Gallery, Mandi House
TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

DANCE

Odissi dance

Nrityashilp, a dance institution founded to propagate the unique Odissi dance style, is hosting its annual programme Kalika Utsav. This evening. Disciples of Guru Pratibha Jena Singh and Jaya Mehta will be presenting an Odissi dance performance, based on the compositions of the late Guru Surendra Nath Jena.
VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, 205 Tansen Marg
TIME: 6:30 p.m.



Black belt pride Sai Deepak B is elated at the opportunity to make India proud •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

‘I would Idie for martial arts’

Multi-Guinness World Record-holder in Taekwondo, Hyderabad Sai Deepak B is headed to the United Kingdom and the United States for world championships

All that bling

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

- TAEKWONDO HAS TAKEN DEEPAK TO REPUTED COMPETITIONS SUCH AS:**
- 58th Under-19 State Taekwondo Championship 2012-13: **bronze medal**
 - Nepal International Taekwondo Championship 2017: **gold medal**
 - Indian International Taekwondo Championship-2017: **fifth place**
 - Malaysia Open Taekwondo Championship in 2018: **bronze medal**
 - Indo-Koren Taekwondo Championship 2018: **gold medal**

As a child, when Sai Deepak used to watch the Bruce Lee-starrer *Enter The Dragon* and Jackie Chan's *Snake in the Eagle's Shadow* with his father, he was totally entranced by the energetic martial arts routines in them. The little kid, gazing up at the television had no clue that, as a 23-year-old, he'd be the country's youngest person to hold three individual Guinness World Records.

The fascination of this Taekwondo artist with Guinness World Records started two years ago. On November 26, 2017, Sai Deepak was awarded a record for 'most full-



contact elbow strikes with alternate elbows in one minute' at a count of 142. The next record on December 24 2017 was 'most full-contact knee strikes in three minutes' at a count of 175. The most recent one awarded on August 30 2019, is 'most one leg full-contact knee strikes wearing five-kilogram ankle weights in three minutes' and the count there is 87. He adds, "I dedicated this record to the slain soldiers and to also promote Fit India Movement."

One would assume the Taekwondo community would be more introverted and not too enthralled about Guinness World Records but Sai Deepak says otherwise. "When I got my certification at Kukkiwon, they were very impressed with how I've been promoting the sport as well. That moment meant a lot to me... I mean, I would die for martial arts!"

Sai Deepak has had quite the journey to get to this point. "In II std, I started with karate. Then in 2008, I saw Abhinav Bhindra getting a gold medal for India at the Beijing Olympics for professional shooting. I actually didn't know that Taekwondo is the only martial arts at the Olympics until my B.Tech counselling. My previous certificates in karate were rejected by the counsellors. They only took my State bronze medal into account. That's when I started doing Taekwondo, really," he recalls.

Compared to other forms of martial arts, Sai Deepak realised that the discipline in Taekwondo - which originates in Korea - is in a field of its own, largely because of *poomsae*, a defined pattern of defense-and-attack motions which requires intense amounts of focus and dedication. "After undergoing a good and thorough training, the ferocity in you will actually make you calm and centred."

He chuckles sheepishly be-

fore adding, "I used to be very notorious back in the day. So the training had a very personal effect on me." Practise for Sai Deepak is predictably everyday with two or three hours in the mornings, with much of it dedicated to *poomsae*.

How do Sai Deepak's family and friends feel about his route into martial arts professionally? While his friends think it is incredibly cool, his family are not entirely happy because of the injuries that are natural with the sport.

"You can just watch videos of the knockouts in the sport so it is scary for loved ones," he admits. He has, of course, sustained injuries including dislocated shoulders and knees.

Forever thankful

He is grateful to his Grandmaster M Jayanth Reddy of five years, who has 29 Guinness World Records and was also awarded five Presidential Sports Awards by George Bush Sr and Bill Clinton. Sai Deepak is also thankful to Master Moinuddin and his mentor Ashish Taneja who runs Infinio Taekwondo World, the Taekwondo academy where Sai Deepak trains.

But talk international role models and he mentions Jordanian athlete Ahmad Abughaush, who won the gold medal in the 68-kilogram category at the 2016 Olympics.

Sai Deepak got a 'black belt Dan 2' in March 2017 which is a requirement to enter international competitions. He also earned his official certificate at Kukkiwon (World Taekwondo Headquarters, Korea).

In fact, later this month Sai Deepak will be heading to the British Open Taekwondo Championship in Manchester, England and in February, he'll be competing at the US World Open Taekwondo Championship in Oregon. At the moment, Sai Deepak is on the lookout for sponsors who will back him on his journey to the Olympics.

‘Speak to them in their idiom’

The biggest issue in Kashmir is still the alienation of its people, finds the State's former Chief Secretary through his memoirs

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

Having spent 35 years as a civil servant, including many as Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir decades ago, author Moosa Raza strongly believes that poetry can create human bonds.

"[When posted in the State,] I discovered that poetry is part of everyday conversations in Kashmir. The ordinary Kashmiri would come up with couplets at the drop of a hat," he tells his audience during a Madras Book Club discussion of his latest book *Kashmir: Land of Regrets* (Westland).

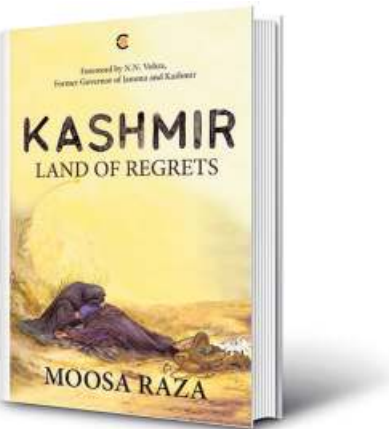
"I have spent a lifetime reading Ghalib, Iqbal, Thiruvalluvar... it helped me connect with people spontaneously," he adds.

Mirroring the times

The Chennai-based author is a Padma Bhushan awardee with three other books to his credit, and the crowd listens intently as he recounts memories from his posting in the pre-AFSPA days, following them up with what he has seen in recent visits. His book, much like his conversation with the evening's host, author Krupa Ge, is a memoir sprinkled liberally with opinion and analysis. Unsurprisingly, one of the first questions is the very necessity of the book, particularly in these times.

"I was not aware of this Government's plan to abrogate Section 370 and Section 35A," replies Raza, "Since they did, I thought to put the whole history of Kashmir into perspective: how militancy happened, what forces came together to keep the State boiling, why Section 370 had to come about in the first place. I have been mulling over it for some time, talking to everyone including *shikara* boatmen and taxi drivers, and getting inputs."

Much of what Raza has to say about the State and its people stems from his personal experience and conversations. The evening only had time enough to skim over deep and complex topics. The book, on the other hand, includes other, more historic elements, like letters written by Jawaharlal Nehru about Sheikh Abdullah and the latter's long



imprisonment.

Raza says his account also looks at the State's election, the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and a number of other contentions. There is plenty to study over the decades - from pellet guns to continuous shutdowns at the cost of everyday life and education. Raza unfailingly looks at multiple perspectives each time.

A major point of emphasis during the evening is the distinction that the civil servant draws between "the Kashmir dispute" and "the Kashmir problem".

As he explains it, "The dispute is the technical, legal one between India and Pakistan, that has been brought to the attention of the United Nations. The Kashmir problem, is the alienation of its people."

This, he says, is the aspect that has been ignored for decades. "By 2014, Section 370 had already been eroded substantially. What the locals are worried about now, is their land, their jobs."

Kashmir: Land Of Regrets is available on Amazon.in and major bookstores.



A page from the Valley Moosa Raza and his book • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

POOCH CAFE



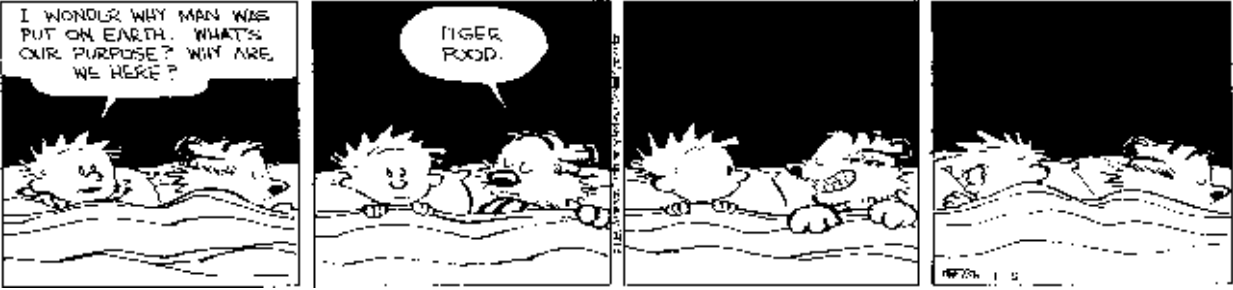
PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



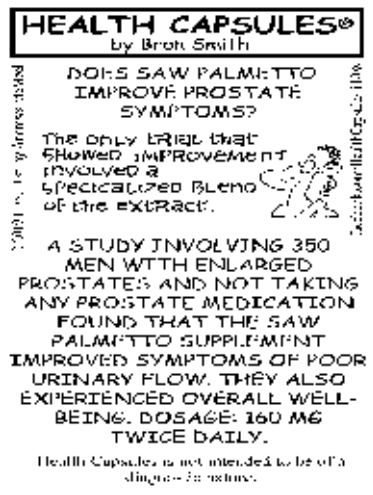
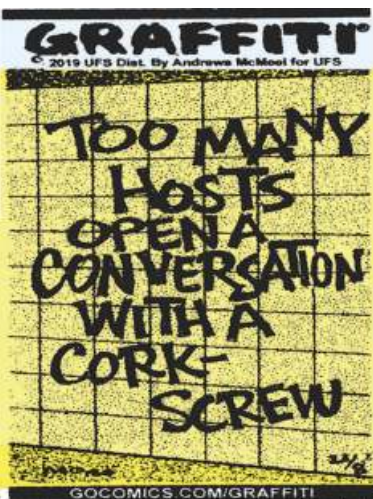
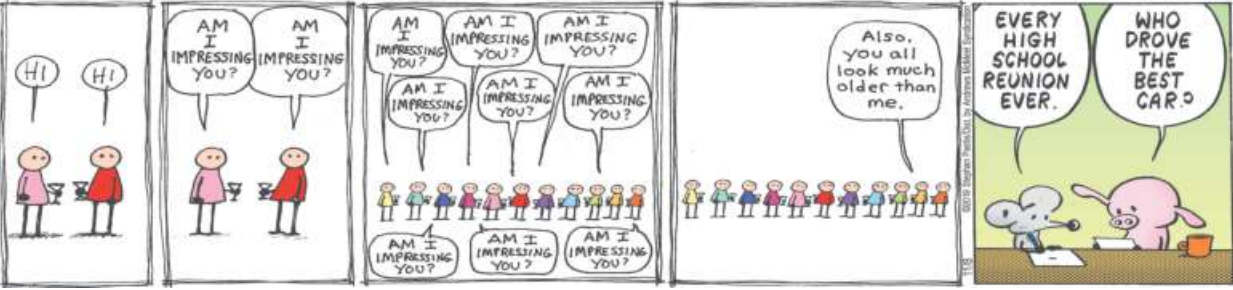
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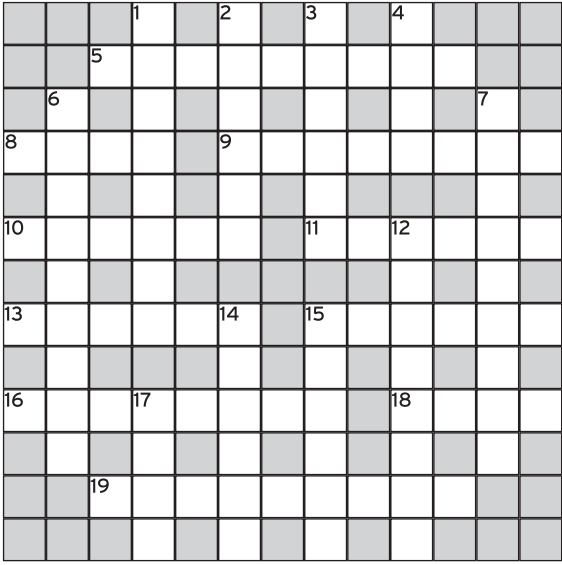
WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13219



- Across
- 5 Cavalier's foe (9)
- 8 Abel's brother (4)
- 9 Predicament (8)
- 10 Scam - musical instrument (6)
- 11 Further up (6)
- 13 Gratitude (6)
- 15 Don Quixote's squire, ___ Panza (6)
- 16 Where light meals may be bought (5,3)
- 18 Sneering look (4)
- 19 Elongated (9)
- Down
- 1 Took part (6,2)
- 2 Unlike anything else (6)
- 3 Beat soundly (6)
- 4 Stiff paper (4)
- 6 Disappearing (9)
- 7 Priceless newspaper (9)
- 12 Taller and thinner

- (8) Curved cavalry swords (6)
- 15 Allowing no deviation (6)
- 17 Appealing - cunning (4)



Solution will appear in The Hindu dated November 9, 2019.
Solution No. 13218

Rohit storm flattens Bangladesh, helps India get back on its feet

The skipper makes it a memorable 100th T20I with a brilliant knock as the host chases down a target of 154 with ease

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
RAJKOT

The Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium escaped the fury of Cyclone Maha on Thursday, but a storm of a very different nature made landfall. In what was his 100th T20 international, Rohit Sharma hammered a savage 43-ball-85 to wipe Bangladesh out. Set 154 for victory in the second T20I here, India strolled home in 15.4 overs, with eight wickets in hand.

It was as if Rohit had had enough of all the slipping up, enough of all the talk of a series defeat, enough of the doubts around India's competence in T20 cricket. He took all that angst and walloped it into the night sky high above Rajkot.

Any possibility of the run-chase being a close affair melted away as Rohit took off. Mustafizur Rahman was thumped for 15 in the fourth over, a crunching cover-drive followed by a six into the sight-screen. Al-Amin Hossain was twice steered to the boundary behind square, Rohit placing the ball wherever he pleased. Shafiu Islam bowled what he thought was a decent delivery; Rohit lunged out of the crease and deposited him over long-off.

The off-spinner Afif Hossain was brought on; his first ball was put into orbit, as Rohit raced to an 18th T20I fifty off 23 balls. Mahmudullah gave young Mosaddek Hossain a try; Rohit clobbered his first three balls for six. India's 100 arrived in 9.2 overs; Bangladesh was yet to take a wicket. Rohit eventually fell 15 short of what would have



Hitman: Rohit Sharma did as he pleased, toying with the Bangladesh bowlers. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

been a fifth T20I hundred, caught at deep mid-wicket. Shreyas Iyer then applied the finishing touches as India levelled the series 1-1. The third and final T20I will be played at Nagpur on Sunday.

There was no sign of the rain that had lashed the ground on match-eve as India won the toss and put Bangladesh in. Liton Das and Mohammad Naim started

briskly as Khaleel Ahmed suffered, leaking 24 runs from his first two overs.

Yuzvendra Chahal came on in the sixth, and struck at once. Or so he thought. Liton had been beaten after charging a long way out of his crease, and Rishabh Pant had whipped the balls off. The third umpire, however, ruled that the wicket-keeper had gathered the ball in front

of the stumps. Liton was on 17 then.

A little later, he was put down at square leg by Rohit, who had a lot of ground to cover to complete a high catch. Liton was finally run out for 29, after some smart work from Pant, breaking an opening stand of 60.

Mushfiqur Rahim and Soumya Sarkar, two of Bangladesh's senior players, had

STAT SPHERE



1 India (41) now has the most number of successful chases in T20Is, eclipsing Australia (40)

41 India (61 matches)

40 Australia (69)

36 Pakistan (67)

1 Rohit was unbeaten on 79 after 10 overs, the highest by a batsman in a T20I chase, bettering Gayle's 75*

79* Rohit (Ind vs Ban, 2019)

75* Gayle (WI vs SA, 2015)

74* Shahzad (Afg vs UAE, 2015)

74* Paul Stirling (Ire vs Zim, 2019)

73* Roy (Eng vs NZ, 2016)

1 This is Rohit's 320th T20 match, the most by an Indian, surpassing Raina (319)

2 Rohit is the second batsman to feature in 100 matches in T20Is, after Shoaib Malik

Most T20I games played

111 Shoaib Malik

100 Rohit

99 Afridi

98 Dhoni

4 Number of century partnerships for the opening wicket between Rohit and Dhawan, the most by any pair in T20Is

Most 100-plus stands for the first wicket

4 Rohit-Dhawan

3 Warner-Watson

3 Guptill-Williamson

3 Rohit-Kohli

3 Guptill-Munro

First Indian to play...

100 Tests: Gavaskar (1984)

100 ODIs: Kapil (1987)

100 T20Is: Rohit (2019)

SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH

Liton Das run out 29 (21b, 4x4), Mohammad Naim c Shreyas b Washington 36 (31b, 5x4), Soumya Sarkar st. Pant b Chahal 30 (20b, 2x4, 1x6), Mushfiqur Rahim c Krunal b Chahal 4 (6b), Mahmudullah c Dube b Deepak Chahar 30 (27b, 4x4), Afif Hossain c Rohit b Khaleel 6 (8b), Mosaddek Hossain (not out) 7 (9b), Aminul Islam (not out) 5 (5b, 1x4); Extras (b-2, nb-1, w-3); 6; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 153.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-60 (Liton, 7.2 overs), 2-83 (Naim, 10.3), 3-97 (Mushfiqur, 12.1), 4-103 (Sarkar, 12.6), 5-128 (Afif, 16.3), 6-142 (Mahmudullah, 18.3).

INDIA BOWLING

Deepak Chahar 4-0-25-1, Khaleel 4-0-44-1, Washington 4-0-25-1, Chahal 4-0-28-2,

Dube 2-0-12-0, Krunal 2-0-17-0.

INDIA

Aminul 85 (43b, 6x4, 6x6), Shikhar Dhawan b Aminul 31 (27b, 4x4), K.L. Rahul (not out) 8 (11b), Shreyas Iyer (not out) 24 (13b, 3x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-1, w-5); 6; Total (for two wkts. in 15.4 overs): 154.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-118 (Dhawan, 10.5 overs), 2-125 (Rohit, 12.2).

BANGLADESH BOWLING

Mustafizur 3-4-0-35-0, Shafiu 2-0-23-0, Al-Amin 4-0-32-0, Aminul 4-0-29-2, Afif 1-0-13-0, Mosaddek 1-0-21-0.

Toss: India.

Man-of-the-Match: Rohit.

India won by eight wickets with 26 balls remaining to level series 1-1.

The conditions perfect for hitting, says Rohit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
RAJKOT

Bangladesh captain Mahmudullah admitted that there was little he could have done to stop Rohit Sharma.

"If Rohit is having a good time, it's really hard to stop him," he said.

Washington Sundar enjoyed watching Rohit's innings. "Honestly, I had the best seat in the ground," he said. "If he bats like this, it's a treat for anyone in the stadium. Certain boundaries he hit were unbelievable. I also think from a bowler's point of view. There were a few balls they executed really well but Rohit as usual, was

on song today."

Rohit himself was pleased with his knock. "I knew conditions were perfect so all I had to do was stay still and tonk (sic) the ball," he said at the presentation ceremony.

India had the upper hand going into the series decider, felt Washington. "Definitely. We've just lost one game and that was also a close game. A couple of things our way and we would have won that as well.

"This game we won very very convincingly; and we can expect a similar track and boundaries (big) in Nagpur as well and we will look to win there too," he said.

Smriti, Jemimah power India to series win

INDIA IN WINDIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NORTH SOUND

Comeback-girl Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues hit contrasting half-centuries to lead the Indian women's team to a 2-1 series victory over the West Indies with a comfortable six-wicket win in the deciding third ODI, here.

Smriti, who missed the first two matches due to a toe injury, smashed a 63-ball 74 and raised a match-winning 141-run partnership with fellow opener Jemimah (69 off 92) on Wednesday night.

A solid foundation in place, India cruised to the 195-run target in 42.1 overs after the Indian bowlers did a commendable job of bowling out the host for a sub-par 194 in 50 overs.

Fastest Indian to 2000

During the course of her innings, Smriti became the fastest Indian woman to score 2,000 ODI runs. The 23-year-



Having the last laugh: The Indian team rallied from a 1-0 deficit to clinch the ODI series 2-1. ■ COURTESY BCCI TWITTER

old reached the milestone in her 51st innings.

Seasoned pacer Jhulan Goswami and leg-spinner Poonam Yadav shared four wickets between them, troubling the middle-order after the West Indies elected to bat.

Stafanie Taylor kept fight-

ing for the host with a combative 79-run knock but ran short of partners as other West Indies batters struggled to negotiate India's attack.

Apart from Taylor only Atacy-Ann King showed some stomach for a fight with a 45-ball 38.

The two teams will now

play a five-match Twenty20 series, beginning Sunday at Gros Islet.

The scores: West Indies 194 in 50 overs (Stafanie Taylor 79, Stacy-Ann King 38; Jhulan Goswami 2/30) lost to India 195/4 in 42.1 overs (Smriti Mandhana 74, Jemimah Rodrigues 69; Hayley Mathews 3/27).

Palpable distress and angst

Gautam and Kazi's arrest shocks cricketing fraternity

KPL SPOT-FIXING

N. SUDARSHAN
BENGALURU

There was sense of deep anguish in the Karnataka cricketing circles over the arrest of senior cricketer C.M. Gautam and Abrar Kazi in connection with the match-fixing and betting scam in the Karnataka Premier League.

The people *The Hindu* spoke to — players, both former and active, seasoned coaches and officials — understandably chose to remain anonymous, but distress and angst was palpable.

The Ballari Tuskers players *The Hindu* reached out to express their shock at the developments. During the KPL final, they had not had any reason to suspect anything was amiss, they said.

A former Karnataka coach expressed a similar sentiment. "I'm really shocked; I'm feeling absolutely low," he said. "It is impossible to

Money is not everything. It is important, but not at the cost of everything else

FORMER KARNATAKA COACH

When I was playing, I didn't even think such [scams] could be possible here

FORMER KARNATAKA CRICKETER

even imagine. I never thought such big names would be involved. It's not as if they are some young, gullible players."

He added: "Players need to be mentored; they need moral values. The most important thing in life is self-respect and how you have lived. Money is not everything. It is important, but not at the cost of everything else."

A former seasoned Karnataka cricketer, who had also captained a side in the KPL, termed the fiasco damaging for the State's reputation. "I

always thought that big cricketers generally don't get involved in such things. Why do they need to? But this is very very surprising," he said.

"If you see the reputation Karnataka cricket enjoys, this comes as a huge shock. Forget this controversy, we don't even have simple friendly fights and arguments on the field! That's how good Karnataka cricket is. When I was playing, I didn't even think such [scams] could be possible here."

A top KSCA official said the administrative and cricketing fraternity was left deeply disappointed. "I do not think any level of player should get involved in such things. It is very unfortunate and disappointing that big players are involved. Now depending on where the investigations go, we may even consider life bans."

(With inputs from Shreedutta Chidananda)

Goa bests Mumbai in goal fest

ISL

NANDAKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

FC Goa's goalscoring ability came to the fore during its 4-2 win over Mumbai City FC in their Hero-ISL contest at the Mumbai Football Arena on Thursday. Six goals and a few misses kept the fans enthralled, the visitors scoring twice in each half to douse the home team's fightback after the breather.

Goalkeepers were in the line of fire at both ends. Amrinder Singh, under the MCFC bar, was left shaking his head in anger at the pace of his defenders as Goa struck a goal following a slick passing bout. Hugo Boumous threaded the ball to Seriton who tapped back and into the path of Corominas before the Spaniard finished with a cool tap into the net.

Amrinder could only watch from the goalline as the visitors scored off a set-piece to go up 3-2. Off a free-kick, the ball was directed towards tall defender Mouratada Fall who headed to teammate Boumous who nodded it in.



In the thick of it: Lenny Rodrigues opened the scoring for FC Goa in the 27th minute. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

Mohammed Nawaz, under the Goa bar, too faced anxious moments early on in the first half, but Mumbai did not take advantage of its corners and free-kicks. Goa went ahead in the 27th minute through Rodrigues who lent the finishing touch with a shot on the turn after the ball landed within range off a deflection following a Brandon Fernandes corner-kick.

Crossing over with a two-goal cushion, Goa saw a spirited fightback from the

hosts. Nawaz was first tested by striker Amine Chermiti, before getting beaten by a looping header from Sartak Golui.

Mumbai pulled level through a stunning strike from Sauvik Chakravarti, the defender connecting powerfully after the ball was nodded towards him by Rayner Fernandes. However, it was Goa which had the final say.

The result: Mumbai City FC 2 (Golui 49, Sauvik 55) lost to FC Goa 4 (Rodrigues 27, Corominas 45, Boumous 59, Pena 89).

BCCI invites Anand for day-night Test

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

The BCCI has invited chess legend Vishwanathan Anand for the pink-ball day-night Test between India and Bangladesh at the Eden Gardens here from November 22.

Anand will be in the city, participating in the Tata Steel rapid and blitz tournament, during that period.

"The BCCI has invited Anand for day-night Test," said one of the organisers of the chess event.

The BCCI and the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) are also trying to add more colour to the Test by trying to have current World chess champion Magnus Carlsen.

"They are planning to invite Anand and Carlsen to jointly ring the bell at the Eden Gardens to mark the start of a day's play," said the organiser.

Juventus, Bayern in knockouts

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Douglas Costa scored a dramatic injury-time winner to send Juventus into the Champions League knockout stages after a 2-1 win at Lokomotiv Moscow on Wednesday, while Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich joined the Italian champion in the last 16.

Mauro Icardi's first-half goal was enough for PSG to edge past Club Brugge 1-0 at the Parc des Princes, as Bayern laboured to a 2-0 victory over Olympiakos.

Manchester City missed the chance to progress from Group C after a dramatic 1-1 draw at Atalanta which saw right-back Kyle Walker end the game in goal.

Juventus knew three points in Russia would be enough to secure its passage to the knockout rounds, and took a fourth-minute lead through Aaron Ramsey.

Cristiano Ronaldo's free-kick bounced in front of Lokomotiv goalkeeper Guilherme, who inexplicably al-



In the nick of time: Juventus' Douglas Costa, centre, beats Lokomotiv goalkeeper Guilherme for the winner. ■ AP

lowed the ball to squirm through his legs, with Ramsey prodding in from on the goalline.

Aleksei Miranchuk quickly levelled for the host by tapping in the rebound after his own header had struck the post, with Maurizio Sarri's Juve then struggling to break.

But Brazilian winger Costa came off the bench and netted a magnificent 93rd-minute winner, slipping the ball through the hapless Guilherme's legs after a mazy run.

The results: Group A: Paris Saint-Germain 1 (Icardi 22) bt Club Brugge 0;

Real Madrid 6 (Rodrygo 4, 7, 90+2, Ramos 14-pen, Benzema 45, 81) bt Galatasaray 0.

Group B: Bayern Munich 2 (Lewandowski 69, Perisic 89) bt Olympiakos 0; Red Star Belgrade 0 lost to Tottenham Hotspur 4 (Lo Celso 34, Son 57, 61, Eriksen 85).

Group C: Dinamo Zagreb 3 (Petkovic 25, Ivanusec 83, Ademir 89) drew with Shakhtar Donetsk 3 (Patrick 13, Moraes 90+3, Tete 90+8-pen); Atalanta 1 (Pasalic 49) drew with Manchester City 1 (Sterling 7).

Group D: Lokomotiv Moscow 1 (Al. Miranchuk 12) lost to Juventus 2 (Ramsey 4, Costa 90+3); Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Partey 41-og, Volland 55) bt Atletico Madrid 1 (Morata 90+4).

Goa terminates contract

Goa Cricket Association has terminated C.M. Gautam's contract.

"As soon as we came to know about the incident, we terminated his contract. We have also informed the BCCI," said GCA secretary Vipul Phadke. — Shayan Acharya

Ashwin moves to Delhi Capitals

SHAYAN ACHARYA
MUMBAI

Kings XI Punjab has decided to trade off Ravichandran Ashwin to Delhi Capitals. As per the deal, the Punjab franchise will be trading Ashwin with another spinner, Jagadeesha Suchith, and will also get a sum of ₹1.5 crore.

Ashwin is expected to be paid around ₹7.6 crore — his auction value — by Delhi Capitals.

Anand in second spot

SPORTS BUREAU
BUCHAREST

Viswanathan Anand started his campaign in the Grand Chess Tour Superbet rapid and blitz tournament with a resounding 37-move victory with black pieces over Russia's Vladislav Artemiev here on Wednesday.

Anand drew the next two rounds with USA's Wesley So and Azerbaijan's Shakhriyar Mamedyarov to aggregate two points and share the second spot with Armenia's Levon Aronian and Ukraine's Anton Korobov.

The results (rapid format): Third round: Viswanathan Anand (2) drew with Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze, 1.5); Sergey Karjakin (Rus, 1) lost to Anish Giri (Ned, 2.5); Fabiano Caruana (USA, 1.5) bt Wesley So (USA, 0.5); Le Quang Liem (Vie, 1.5) drew with Levon Aronian (Arm, 2); Vladislav Artemiev (Rus, 0.5) lost to Anton Korobov (Ukr, 2). **Second round:** So drew with Anand; Giri drew with Caruana; Aronian drew with Karjakin; Korobov drew with Le Quang Liem; Mamedyarov drew with Artemiev.

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m. & 1.30 p.m.
Badminton: China Open, Star Sports 3, 9.30 a.m.
New Zealand vs England: 4th T20I, Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 10.30 a.m.
Australia vs Pakistan: 3rd T20I, Sony Six (SD & HD), 2 p.m.
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Premier League: Star Sports Select 1 (SD & HD), 1 a.m. (Saturday)
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 1 a.m. (Saturday)
Bundesliga: Star Sports Select 2 (SD & HD), 1 a.m. (Saturday).

IN BRIEF



Shakera Selman returns to West Indies T20I squad

NORTH SOUND
All-rounder Shakera Selman returned to the West Indies' 14-member squad for the five-match T20 series against India women beginning on Saturday in St. Lucia.
The squad: Stafanie Taylor (Capt.), Anisa Mohammed (Vice-capt.), Aaliyah Alleyne, Afy Fletcher, Shakera Selman, Hayley Matthews, Chedean Nation, Chinelle Henry, Stacey-Ann King, Kyshona Knight, Natasha McLean, Shabika Gajrani, Shermaine Campbelle and Sheneta Grimmond. **PTI**

South Africa cricket in a very bad state: Boucher

JOHANNESBURG
Former Proteas wicketkeeper-batsman Mark Boucher believes South Africa cricket is in dire straits at the moment. "There might be quite a few people saying we're sugar-coating the actual situation we are in at the moment. We've got ourselves into a pretty bad state. Hopefully there are some clever heads to try and turn things around," he said. **IANIS**



Harden leads Warriors rout

LOS ANGELES
Houston Rockets rolled over the injury-riddled Golden State Warriors 129-112, sending last season's finalist to a sixth defeat in eight games. James Harden finished with 36 points and 13 assists and shot six of 16 from beyond the arc for Rockets.
The results: Detroit Pistons 122 bt New York Knicks 102; Indiana Pacers 121 bt Washington Wizards 106; Chicago Bulls 113 bt Atlanta Hawks 93; Toronto Raptors 124 bt Sacramento Kings 120; Houston Rockets 129 bt Golden State Warriors 112; Memphis Grizzlies 137 bt Minnesota Timberwolves 121; Dallas Mavericks 107 bt Orlando Magic 106; Utah Jazz 106 bt Philadelphia 76ers 104; Milwaukee Bucks 129 bt Los Angeles Clippers 124. **AGENCIES**

Vaishnavi in two finals

SPORTS BUREAU CHANDIGARH
Vaishnavi Adkar made it to the finals in both the girls under-18 and 16 sections of the AITA Super series junior tennis tournament here on Thursday. Vaishnavi beat Deepalakshmi Vanaraja in the u-18 event for the loss of one game and blanked Suryanshi Tanwar in the u-16 semifinals.
The results (semifinals): Boys, u-18: Krishan Hooda bt Deep Munim 6-1, 6-2; Sushant Dabas bt Divanshu Hooda 6-0, 6-0.
U-16: Deep Munim bt Khush Sharma 6-1, 6-4; Sukhpreet Singh Jhoje bt Jitin Kumar Chhetry 6-7(2), 6-4, 6-3.
Girls, u-18: Vaishnavi Adkar bt Deepalakshmi Vanaraja 6-1, 6-0; Vanshika Choudhary bt Kavya Khirwar 6-1, 6-1.
U-16: Vaishnavi Adkar bt Suryanshi Tanwar 6-0, 6-0; Sanvi Ahluwalia bt Janani Ramesh 6-4, 6-1.

Time to unearth new Twenty20 talent



Phenomenal find: Six seasons ago, Mumbai Indians' IPL scout John Wright identified Jasprit Bumrah as exceptionally talented. **FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK**

The tournament offers a chance for players to catch the eye

MUSHTAQ ALI

G. VISWANATH MUMBAI
The stage is all set for some of the gifted cricketers, who have been plying their trade in the BCCI domestic tournaments, to dream big.
The Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Twenty20 tournament gets underway from Friday and will try to evoke the interest of fans, who otherwise would be riveted on the T20 series between India and Bangladesh.
The tournament offers a launch pad for the fearless to make an impact and catch the attention of the selectors and most importantly of the many scouts the IPL franchisees employ.

Exceptions

It is not that the inter-State T20 tournament, that has been in existence for almost dozen years, has thrown a bright prospect every year. There have been exceptions, and the remarkable one has

The Mushtaq Ali Trophy Guide

Group A:	FRIDAY'S MATCHES
Andhra, Baroda, Goa, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Bihar, and Services	Group A: Karnataka vs Uttarakhand; Andhra vs Bihar; Baroda vs Goa
Group B: Kerala, Rajasthan, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Vidarbha, Manipur, and Uttar Pradesh	Group B: Kerala vs Tamil Nadu; Tripura vs Vidarbha; Manipur vs Rajasthan
Group C: Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Hyderabad, Maharashtra, Punjab, Railways, and Arunachal Pradesh	Group C: Arunachal Pradesh vs Chhattisgarh; Hyderabad vs Punjab; Himachal vs Chandigarh; Maharashtra vs Railways
Group D: Assam, Bengal, Mumbai, Haryana, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Pondicherry, and Mizoram	Group D: Haryana vs Meghalaya; Mizoram vs Mumbai; Assam vs Bengal; Pondicherry vs Madhya Pradesh
Group E: Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Odisha, Saurashtra, Sikkim, and Nagaland	Group E: Delhi vs Gujarat; Jammu & Kashmir vs Sikkim; Jharkhand vs Odisha; Nagaland vs Saurashtra

been Gujarat's Jasprit Bumrah who was discovered by Mumbai Indians' scout John Wright six seasons ago.

The IPL has paved the way for cricketers to come into the limelight, and with the Season 13 auction to be held in Kolkata on December 19,

there could be a few players from the 38 teams, placed in five groups, to get the nod.

The chances of coming into contention as an India probable for next year's ICC T20 World Cup may be slim for a raw hand, but an exceptional display throughout the

A colossal conundrum

IANIS LUCKNOW

His height has always made heads turn, but for Sher Khan it was a problem of a different kind in the Uttar Pradesh capital.

Here to watch the ODI series between Afghanistan and the West Indies, Sher Khan, who stands at eight feet two inches, was not able to find suitable accommodation.

Hotel staff refused to give him a room and some even indicated they found him 'suspicious'. Sher Khan finally



Sher Khan at the Ekana Stadium. **PTI**

approached the Naka Police, who, after verifying

his credentials, took him to Hotel Rajdhani on Tuesday night.

Sher Khan found the room 'uncomfortable'. The bed was short and he had to sleep with his legs hanging out, the washroom was 'inconvenient' and so were the chairs.

As soon as news of the 'tall man' spread in the area, scores of people came to the hotel to gape at Sher Khan. Finally he had to be escorted by the police to the Ekana Stadium, where, again, he was the bigger attraction.

Ramkumar and Adil in quarterfinals

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU KOBE

Ramkumar Ramanathan outplayed eighth seed Jay Clarke of Britain 6-3, 6-3 in the pre-quarterfinals of the \$54,160 Challenger tennis tournament on Thursday.

Ramkumar made the doubles semifinals in partnership with Purav Raja, as the duo beat the Koreans, Nam Ji Sung and Song Min-Kyu, 10-7 in the super tie-break.

The results: \$54,160 Challenger, Kobe: Pre-quarterfinals: Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Jay

Clarke (GBR) 6-3, 6-3. **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Purav Raja & Ramkumar bt Nam Ji Sungh & Song Min-Kyu (Kor) 7-5, 2-6, [10-7]; Andre Goransson (Swe) & Christopher Rungkat (Ina) bt Enrique Lopez Perez (Esp) & Arjun Kadhe 6-4, 7-6(4).

\$15,000 ITF men, Sharm El Sheikh: Pre-quarterfinals: Jesper De Jong (Ned) bt Haadin Bava 6-4, 7-6(4).

\$15,000 ITF men, Meshref, Kuwait: Pre-quarterfinals: Adil Kalyanpur bt Aziz Dougaz (Tun) 7-6(3), 6-4. **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Iana Adamson (US) & Simon Freund (Swe) bt Daisuke Sumizawa (Jpn) & Kunal Anand 7-5, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF men, Maputo, Mozambique: Pre-quarterfinals: Benjamin Lock (Zim) bt Prithvi Sekhar 6-2, 6-2; Hamid Reza Nadaf (IRI) bt Jatin Dahiya 7-6 (5), 6-2; Takanyi Garanganga (Zim) bt Rishab Agarwal 6-4, 6-2.

Doubles: Quarterfinals: S.D. Prajwal Dev & Rishi Reddy bt Aziz Ouakaa (Tun) & Rishab Agarwal 7-6(6), 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: First round: Lucrezia Stefanini (Ita) bt Humera Shaik 6-4, 6-4. **Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals:** Iana Tishchenko (Mda) & Camila Zanolini (Ita) bt Mey Ayari (Tun) & Humera Shaik 6-3, 7-5.

AITA sticks to its guns

DAVIS CUP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Two days after Mahesh Bhupathi slammed the AITA for what he termed the "mis-handling" of the Indian Davis Cup captaincy issue for the away tie against Pakistan, the tennis governing body sought to clarify its stand.

Bhupathi's seat was temporarily offered to Rohit Rajpal for the Pakistan fixture after he expressed reservations about travelling to Pakistan.

But the AITA announced that Rajpal would continue as the skipper even after the ITF moved the match out of Pakistan.

It was also peeved by the comments made by senior player Rohan Bopanna and about being projected eternally "unprofessional" in public perception.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, Akhouri Bishwadeep,

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the AITA, stated that the national federation had the "utmost regard for Mahesh Bhupathi and other players", and that the AITA had to take certain decisions because of "many uncertainties".

The AITA said it would

not be right to dump the players who had expressed their willingness to travel to Pakistan. But, in an interesting twist, Rajpal, who is also the chairman of the selection committee, categorically mentioned that all efforts would be made to field the "best team" for the tie. It now remains to be seen who forms a part of that team.

Tricky question

But the AITA couldn't provide an answer to the tricky question as to why the erstwhile captain Mahesh Bhupathi could not be treated the same way and be considered for selection following the change of venue.

Players like Saketh Myneni, Jeevan Nedundchezhiyan, Arjun Kadhe, Vijay Sundar Prashanth, Sriram Balaji, Manish Sureshkumar and Sidharth Rawat had expressed their consent to go to Pakistan.

The AITA confirmed that it also sought the services of Olympic medallist and 18-time Grand Slam champion Leander Paes, who readily agreed.

It was also mentioned that the AITA chose to stick to the pattern of having a non-playing captain rather than burden Paes with the task, as he was expected to play.

ASIAN SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU DOHA

Vivaan Kapoor and Esha Singh came up with dominant performances in winning the junior men's trap and junior women's air pistol gold medals in the Asian shooting championship on Thursday.

On a day when Chinki Yadav kept herself in the race for the Olympic quota in women's 25-metre sports pistol event, with a half way score of 292, two points behind the leader, it was the juniors who swelled the collection for India with 10 medals including five gold.

Vivaan was all class as he won gold by beating compatriot Bhowneesh Mendiratta 45-42, after having topped qualification with 120 out of 125. Along with Manavadiya Rathore, the Indian trio won the team gold with a score of 347, eight points better than China.

Esha, who had swept the women's, junior and youth gold medals in the last National championship in Kerala as a 13-year-old, proved too good as she beat Jeong Hyo of Korea by 4.9 points for the gold. Along with Priya Raghav who won the bronze and Yuvika Tomar, Esha also clinched the team

gold. Bhakti Bhaskar Khamkar won the junior women's rifle 3-position gold, but the team had to be content with the silver.

The results: Junior men: 50m rifle 3-position: 1. Yu Hao (Chn) 459.5 (WRJ) 1166; 2. Niraj Kumar 455.7 (1166); 3. Sheng Lihao (Chn) 442.5 (1163); 6. Harshrajsinhji Gohil 406.9 (1158); 8. Nitish Kumar 395.7 (1156). **MQS:** Sartaj Singh Tiwana 1164. **Team:** 1. China 3495; 2. India 3480; 3. Korea 3451.

Trap: 1. Vivaan Kapoor 45 (120); 2. Bhowneesh Mendiratta 42 (118); 3. Li Siwei (Chn) 33 (117); 8. Manavadiya Singh Rathore 109. **Team:** 1. India 347; 2. China 339; 3. Kuwait 311.

Junior women: 10m air pistol: 1. Esha Singh 242.2 (579); 2. Jeong Hyo (Kor) 237.3 (568); 3. Priya Raghav 217.6 (574); 7. Yuvika Tomar 133.7 (568). **Team:** 1. India 1721 (WRJ); 2. China 1702; 3. Chinese Taipei 1687.

50m rifle 3-position: 1. Bhakti Bhaskar Khamkar 453.1 (1159); 2. Yu Jianuan (Chn) 448.7 (1159); 3. Ma Yuting (Chn) 439.6 (1161); 7. Ayushi Podder 397.9 (1159); 11. Nischal 1142. **MQS:** Vanshika Shahi 1140. **Team:** 1. China 3477; 2. India 3460; 3. Korea 3457.

Trap: 1. Zhang Ting (Chn) 41 (114); 2. Yang Haiyan (Chn) 38 (108); 3. Lea Korban (Lbn) 29 (110); 4. Manisha Keer 23 (107); 8. Preeti Rajak 102; 9. Aadya Tripathi 92. **Team:** 1. China 325; 2. India 301.



The prize: AICF secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan, GM Dibyendu Barua and Chanakya Chaudhary of Tata Steel at the unveiling of the trophy. **Y.B. SARANGI**

the two remaining spots.

"The prize money is thrice that of last year. It's great to be part of the prestigious GCT, which is broadcast all over the world," said Chanakya Chaudhary of Tata Steel at the event launch here on Thursday.

The knight-shaped trophy – crafted by Madhusudan

campaign that will end with the knock-out may do the trick.

While the tournament can be deemed as a countdown primarily for IPL selection, the teams equipped with all-round wherewithal would aim to win the trophy.

Last season, Karnataka put up an outstanding display in the group and the knockout stages in Indore, won 12 matches in a row to clinch the title.

Two teams from each of the five groups will advance to the knockout stage.

The sheer unpredictable nature of the game can produce an upset or two, but teams like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Mumbai, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi would fancy their chances.

On Wednesday, the Mizoram team which will play Mumbai here on Friday, had to come to terms with losing its captain Abrar Kazi, who was arrested in connection with malpractices in the Karnataka Premier League.

Tanwar wins mixed doubles silver

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Jagdish Tanwar of Rajasthan who works with the Goods and Services Tax Council (GST) won the mixed doubles silver with Barbara Mulej of Slovenia in the over-45 section of the World seniors tennis championship in Miami.
The results: Over-45 mixed doubles: Final: Patricia Rogulski & Petr Kovacka (Svk) bt Jagdish Tanwar & Barbara Mulej (Slo) 7-5, 7-6(4).
Semifinals: bt Dominika Gorecka (Por) & Thiemo Maier (Aut) 7-6(5), 3-6, [10-3].



Jagdish Tanwar and Barbara Mulej.

Dillip and Jyoti fashion CPT SC's win

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

Dillip Lakra and Jyoti Lakra scored a brace each as Calcutta Port Trust Sports Club rallied to beat Bhubaneswar Sports Hostel 4-3 in a thrilling Pool 'D' engagement of the I23rd Beighton Cup hockey tournament at the SAI Complex here on Thursday.

Following two goalless quarters, Bhubaneswar went ahead through Sibren Lakra. The port team hit back with goals from Dillip and Jyoti before Nilam Xess drew parity in the closing moments of the third period.

In the action-packed final quarter, Jyoti found the mark again to put the local side in the lead but Xess converted a penalty corner within two minutes. Dillip's 58th minute short corner conversion sealed the contest in the Calcutta team's favour.
The results: Pool A: B.N. Recreation Club 1 (John Herenj) bt Tamil Nadu XI 0; **Pool C:** Eastern Railway Sports Association 4 (A.M. Tirkey, Deepak Kullu, Abhishek Pratap Singh, Mohammed Riyazuddin) bt Naval Tata Hockey Academy 2 (Atish Dodrai, Budu Mundu); **Pool D:** Calcutta Port Trust Sports Club 4 (Dillip Lakra-2, Jyoti Lakra-2) bt Bhubaneswar Sports Hostel 3 (Nilam Xess-2, Sibren Lakra).

Satwik-Chirag duo in last-eight stage

Sai Praneeth, Kashyap and Satwik-Ashwini pair bow out

CHINA OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA FUZHOU (CHINA)

India's men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty stunned sixth-seeded Hiroyuki Endo and Yuta Watanabe of Japan to enter the quarterfinals of the China Open here on Thursday.

Satwik and Chirag played their hearts out to win 21-18, 21-23, 21-11 a pulsating second-round contest that lasted an hour and six minutes. They will face Li Jun Hui and Liu Yu Chen of China in the quarterfinals.

They were the lone Indians left in the tournament after P. Kashyap and B. Sai Praneeth in singles and the mixed pair of Satwik and Ashwini Ponappa were ousted in the second round.

Praneeth fought for one hour 24 minutes against fourth seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark, but lost 20-22, 22-20, 21-16.

Earlier, Kashyap, ranked 25 in the world, ran out of steam after a decent start against seventh seed Victor Axelsen and went down 21-13, 21-19 in a match that lasted 43 minutes.

Satwik and Ashwini Ponappa lost 23-21, 21-16 to the



Hard-fought win: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, right, and Chirag Shetty played their hearts out against Hiroyuki Endo and Yuta Watanabe of Japan. **FILE PHOTO**

fifth-seeded South Korean combine of Seo Seung Jae and Chae Yujung.

The results (second round):

Men: Anders Antonsen (Den) bt B. Sai Praneeth 20-22, 22-20, 21-16; Victor Axelsen (Den) bt P. Kashyap 21-13, 21-19. **Dou-**

bles: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Hiroyuki Endo & Yuta Watanabe (Jpn) 21-18, 21-23, 21-11.

Mixed doubles: Seo Seung Jae & Chae Yujung (Kor) bt Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Ashwini Ponnappa 23-21, 21-16.

‘EAT-Lancet diet too costly for 1.58 billion people’

Researchers say that at \$2.84 per day, meal expenses would exceed daily per capita income in many low-income nations

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

A diet meant to improve both human and planetary health would be unaffordable for at least 1.58 billion people, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, estimates a new study from researchers at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University in the U.S.

Earlier this year, the EAT-Lancet Commission on Food, Planet, Health published recommendations for a universal diet that addresses both human and planetary health. The Commission suggested that adherence to this diet could ensure that our future food systems can sustainably and nutritiously feed the estimated population of 10 billion people in 2050.

The new study, titled ‘Affordability of the EAT-Lancet reference diet: a global analysis’ and published on Thursday in *The Lancet Global Health*, sought to address what many felt was one of the main components lacking in the creation of the recommended diet, namely affordability.

“When formulating this pioneering benchmark diet



A diet of mostly fruits, vegetables and nuts can be unaffordable, says study. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

— addressing individual health outcomes as well as the health of the planet — the Commission deliberately did not take its cost into account,” said senior author William Masters, an economist at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at the Tufts University.

The research team also found that the EAT-Lancet diet was 64% more costly than the lowest-cost combination of foods that would provide a balanced mix of 20 essential nutrients. The EAT-Lancet diet has higher quantities of animal-source foods

and fruits and vegetables than the minimum required for nutrient adequacy, and much higher quantities than are now consumed in low-income countries.

“We found that the global median of the proposed diet would cost \$2.84 per day (₹200). In low-income countries, that amounts to 89.1% of a household’s daily per capita income, which is more than what people can actually spend on food. In high-income countries, we found that the EAT-Lancet reference diet would cost 6.1% of per-capita income, which

is often less than what people now spend on food,” said Kalle Hirvonen, lead author and development economist in Ethiopia at the International Food Policy Research Institute.

In sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 57% of people earn less than the local cost of the EAT-Lancet diet, in South Asia that figure is 38.4%, in West Asia and North Africa 19.4%, in East Asia and the Pacific 15%, in Latin America and the Caribbean 11.6%, in Europe and Central Asia 1.7% and in North America 1.2%.

The EAT-Lancet Commis-

sion diet consists of a large amount of vegetables, fruits, whole grain, legumes, nuts and unsaturated oils, some seafood and poultry. It has little to no red meat, processed meat, added sugar, refined grains and starchy vegetables.

Varying prices

Fruits, vegetables and animal-source foods are often the most expensive components of a healthy diet, but prices vary widely around the world, report the researchers.

To compute the affordability of an EAT-Lancet diet in each country, the researchers drew on retail prices for standardised items obtained through the International Comparison Program, a collaboration between the World Bank and country statistical agencies. They used prices for 744 food items in 159 countries, from which they could identify the lowest-cost combination of items in each country to meet EAT-Lancet criteria. They then did the same for nutrient requirements and compared the cost of food in each country to survey data on household expenditure and income per capita from

the World Bank’s PovcalNet system.

“Though 1.58 billion is a lot of people, it is actually a conservative lower limit on the total number who cannot afford the diet recommended by the EAT-Lancet Commission. The cost of food preparation and of non-food necessities ensure that an even larger number of people cannot afford that kind of healthy diet,” said Mr. Masters.

“Even if many poor consumers were to aspire to consume healthier and more environmentally sustainable foods, income and price constraints frequently render this diet unaffordable. Increased earnings and safety-net transfers, as well as systemic changes to lower food prices, are needed to bring healthy and sustainable diets within the reach of the world’s poor,” said Mr. Hirvonen.

Limitations to the study include the aspect that the models count only the least expensive items in each country, so other research would be needed to address the additional costs and barriers to food use imposed by time constraints, tastes and preferences.

Eminent Bengali writer Nabanita Deb Sen is dead

She was also a beloved teacher

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Award-winning poet, writer and acclaimed teacher Nabanita Deb Sen passed away in her south Kolkata residence on Thursday night after prolonged illness. She was 81.

A Sahitya Akademi and Padma Shri awardee, Ms. Deb Sen will be best remembered for her feminist take on the *Ramayana*, which she has analysed from the perspective of Sita. Her book, *Sitayana*, was translated into many languages and read across the world, establishing her as a formidable feminist writer.

Her parents, both poets, were associated with Rabin-dranath Tagore and thus Ms. Deb Sen often said she knew that “one of the signatures of growing up is to write poetry”. Her first collection of poems came out in 1959, the year she was married to economist Amartya Sen. The couple had two daughters and separated later.

She taught for many years in the Comparative Literature department of the Jadavpur University and was a favourite among students.



Nabanita Deb Sen

Her travelogue, *Truckb-hone McMahon* [*On a Truck Alone to McMahon*], provides an entertaining and delicate description of Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. Ms. Deb Sen, in her early twenties, hitchhiked up to Tawang in an Army truck to write the all-time bestseller of Bengali literature.

Condolences pour in

Lamenting her demise, writer Shirshendu Mukherjee said Ms. Deb Sen had a “huge pool of material” which could not be used due to her ill health. “Besides losing a friend, I would say I will be missing her writings,” Mr. Mukherjee said. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said “her absence will be felt by her myriad students and well-wishers”.

China cracks down on gaming

Those under 18 cannot play online from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China has imposed a curfew to limit the time spent by children playing games online, in the latest part of a government crackdown on youth gaming addiction.

The regulations will mean those under 18 cannot play games online between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m., and for only

90 minutes at a time during the daytime.

In addition, the guidelines will reduce the amount of money minors can spend online playing games to 200 RMB (\$28) per month, rising to 400 RMB for those between 16 and 18 years old.

The new rules will also require all gamers to use a real-name registration and

details such a WeChat account, phone number or ID number to sign up.

The government also calls for games producers to “modify the game content, functions or rules” to avoid causing addiction in young players. A hashtag about the new rules was one of the most discussed on Weibo on Thursday.

FRIDAY REVIEW

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Master Musician

Ahead of Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary, a look at how classical ragas are integral to the Sikh tradition **Pages 4 & 5**

INSIDE

Tribute to teachers



Ragini Chandrasekhar's performance was a garland of fragrant choreographies strung together with love and commitment **P2**

Universal appeal



Guru Nanak used music to take his message of peace and harmony to the masses **P5**

'We need stars to sell a play'



Vijay Kenkre regrets not having done enough experimental and parallel productions **P6**

A 'genuine' poet



A bridge between Hindi and Urdu, Shamsheer Bahadur Singh's poetry has many dimensions **P7**

Brewing classical music in Chandigarh

The 42nd Chandigarh Sangeet Sammelan saw inspired performances from the emerging stars of classical music

MANJARI SINHA

Chandigarh is a cosmopolitan city, with citizens having diverse interests. One hardly expected a faithful clientele for classical music there. However, it was heartening to see a sizeable turnout of culturally and musically literate audiences in the widest sense, on all three days of the 42nd Chandigarh Sangeet Sammelan organised by the Indian National Theatre in collaboration with the Durgadas Foundation at the Newton Hall of the Strawberry-fields High School, Chandigarh.

The Indian National Theatre (INT), established more than half-a-century ago, was inaugurated by Prithviraj Kapoor way back in the year 1968. Navjeevan Khosla, the 97 year young founding member and the present president of INT, shares "the Chandigarh Sangeet Sammelan started in 1978 and nearly all the stalwarts of the bygone era have performed here. He vividly remembers the compelling concerts of Ud. Vilayat Khan, Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, Gangubai Hangal, Dhondutai Kulkarni and Kumar Gandharva to name just a few. The Sammelan was started with a shoe-string budget because no one talked about money in those days. We have abandoned big names now, except rare artistes like Ashwini Bhide who would come and perform for sheer love of music, accepting whatever we could offer."

Most welcome and a surprising fact remains that the Sammelan has maintained its high standards without compromising on quality. Both Khosla and the honorary secretary, Vinita Gupta take the trouble to listen to hundreds of young artists with potential and select those who could meet the benchmark of the festival.

Shalmali Joshi, for instance, who reached the festival to its climax with her seasoned voice, consummate musicianship and exhaustive repertoire, was totally a new name for many. Accompanied on tabla by her son Tejovrish Joshi and on harmonium by Paromita Mukherjee, Shalmali gave a riveting performance of uncommon varieties of Bilawal. The concert not just entertained but also had substance.

Introducing each variety rendered, she opened with Yamani-Bilawal, first demonstrating Yaman then Bilawal and then the combination of both, before elaborating the Jod-raga with a bada khayal, "Prem galiyan mein...", set to Bilambit Teentala and



Winsome performance Shalmali Joshi

a Tarana composed by her husband Sunil Joshi. The unhurried pace of rendering the khayal traversed the interior crevices of the raga during the aalap-barhat followed by the bol-vistar and the umpteen varieties of taans, executed with effortless ease. The exquisite Tarana also got first rate treatment with short spells of Layakari.

The Kukubh-Bilawal next, a combination of Nat and Bilawal, and the following Sarparda Bilawal, a combination of Bihag, Yaman and Bilawal were introduced likewise for the benefit of lay listeners. Paromita on harmonium and Tejovrish on tabla provided the most inspiring accompaniment to the vibrant vocalist. The ragas were rare and challenging but Shalmali took the audience along, encouraging even the two young tanpura players, Monica and Divyashri, to try their voices. This spoke about her compassionate nature that mirrored in her music too. Shalmali concluded with an alluring Alhaiya Bilawal and got standing ovation.

Seasoned voice

The inaugural evening had vocal recitals by Sawani Mudgal and Ravindra Parchure. Sawani's Shyam-Kalyan was followed by a rare tap-Khayal, a combination of tappa and khayal, in raga Shahana, a dadra in Mishra Gara, and concluding with a bhajan. Ravindra Parchure presented raga Bhupali with a nom tom aalap of Agra gaayaki as a preface to the khayals. Parchure has a seasoned voice and technical mastery but needs to focus on content, avoiding repetition.

Raghunandan Panshikar, a dedicated disciple of Vidushi Kishori Amonkar, presented raga Yaman at length, followed by Nayaki Kanhada. Shyam Kalyan was repeated on sarod by Chandrima Majumdar but the timeless compositions of Abdullah Khan, Pt. Radhika Mohan Moitra and Murad Ali Khan were a treat.

Tribute to teachers

RANEE KUMAR

It was a pleasure to watch a slice of antiquity come alive. Ragini Chandrasekhar's tribute to her gurus, including her mother, Jamuna Krishnan, was a garland of fragrant choreographies strung together with love and commitment. Each piece of the margam (stage repertoire) blossomed with excellence of old-time tradition and the artiste did full justice to it with her energetic nritta (footwork) and her expressive abhinaya. The most delightful-to-hear ragas like Nalinikantha, Charukesi, Kamas, Sindhuhairavi and Tilang enriched the performance with a live orchestra.

From the opening Pushpanjali with its varied hashta mudras and intricate rhythmic patterns as she seamlessly shifted the beat (nada) from Khanda (five) to Chaturasra (four) to laghu and drutha (tala beat) respectively. Despite the linearity of this art form, Ragini brought in an innate elegance to her movements be it in nritta or in expressive dance.

At the very outset, it deserves to be mentioned that her performance made a lasting impression on the viewer as she danced from her soul which was so evident by the way her eyes worked in tandem with footwork (nritta) and gestures in the absence of a song. The varnam established her stamina to say the least. The long-drawn Charukesi composition of Lalgudi Jayaram prefaced by an (invocatory verse (viruttam) from the Mukundamala, was an acid test to the prowess of this dancer and she came out with flying colours. Her footwork to swar (bhol) was complimentary to the rhapsodic raga and vice-versa. Every verse had its exposition done with perfection: emotive element intact, precision and accuracy in execution of the most intricate jati (footwork) patterns, clarity in hashta mudra (gesticulations). Ragini's strength is her natural, uncontrived fa-



Ragini Chandrasekhar's performance was a garland of fragrant choreographies strung together with love and commitment

Balancing act Ragini Chandrasekhar ■ INNI SINGH

cial expression while undertaking complex, lengthy footwork delineations, experiencing her own dance with a sense of joy.

The metaphor of the honey bee hovering and flitting from flower to flower was a very suggestive way of conveying Krsna's dallying personality done with élan. Her abhinaya and sanchari to the lines, *kuzhaloodum azagha kanna* (melodic beauty of Kanha's flute). The muralidhar mudra and the nritta therein was very impressive. Her 'mugha nayika' (guileless maiden) portrayal for the Kamas javali was a combination of complex feelings and expressions of amorous desire, defiance, delightful passion - all overcrowding the nubile maiden torn between love with her lord Venkateswara and wise and cautious counsel of an experienced senior maiden.

While the other pieces

were those of her old gurus, the one from Vidyapathi's poem was her mother's choreography - the pining of Krsna for a glimpse of his Radha who left him in a huff. The dancer brought out the emotional situation quite convincingly but the depiction of his valour that also forms part of the song, disturbed the sensitivity of this theme. The concluding tillana was again pure dance with verve and vigour, which, by now, seemed to be the trademark of this fine artiste, who should continue to explore her forte in ancient dance style.

Raghavendra Prasath's violin that prefaced each piece was melodic to the core. Sharanya Chandran on nattuvangam was compelling as was Chandrasekhar on the percussion. Venkateswaran's vocal support complimented the performance held at India International Centre.

In Brief

Capturing Garhwal on canvas

Portraying the beauty of Garhwal on canvas, "Glimpses of Garhwal", an exhibition of 50 paintings by 16 artists will be held at AIFACS Art Gallery, from November 8th to 14.

The participating artists attended a camp organised dur-

ing the summer of 2019, at Ratura Village of Karnaprayag Tehsil. Swayambhu Social Foundation conducted the camp with the aim to revive the near-lost art, craft and cultural heritage of Uttarakhand.

During the seven-day camp

from April 4 to 10, artists lapped up the sights, sounds and smells of summer. The artists include Ramahari Jena, Biswajit Mondal, Gauranga Bariki, Subuddha Ghosh, Sanghamitra Das, Bipin Kumar, Aswini Kumar Panda.

Stories of social contradictions

A three-day theatre festival in Delhi presented an optimistic scenario of the work of young playwrights in Hindi

DIWAN SINGH BAJELI

Stage directors often lament the dearth of significant plays in Hindi. Some of the directors resort to evolving their own script in collaboration of their cast which they call devised script. The three-day Sanhita Manch Natya Mahotsav, organised by Being Association at India Habitat Centre, recently presented an optimistic scenario of the work of young playwrights in Hindi.

These plays are selected out of a playwright competition by a six-member distinguished jury which had seasoned theatre practitioners such as Ranjeet Kapoor, Satish Alekar, and Atul Tiwari. These plays reveal the grasp of dramatic technique and keen insight into contemporary social contradictions. The organisers deserve praise for their sincere search for new plays and providing the awarded plays stage to be directed by young and talented directors.

In fact, Sahitya Kala Parishad, Delhi has been consistently following this process of discovering new plays in Hindi. Now considered a contemporary classic, "Court Martial" by Swadesh Deepak was selected by SKP through their playwriting competition. Senior director Arvind Gaur and Ujjain-based director Sharad Sharma have presented more than 100 shows of this celebrated play.

Delhi's leading theatre group Flying Feathers Art Association presented "Kabab" written by Rahul Rai. The play reveals human rapaciousness and cruelty against the backdrop of communal riots. The young playwright has intricately woven incidents of betrayal, cruelty, and revenge. As the action unfolds, the play explores the inner lives of characters and their motives. There is a strong element of suspense that leads to a stage that shocks the audience.

The play is directed by Rajesh Singh, a Sangeet Natak Akademi's Bismillah Khan Award 2017 recipient.



Reflecting the anguish A scene from "Kabab"

pient.

A highly qualified professional, he, along with his cast, created tense emotional atmosphere on the stage which enable the performers to reveal their complex psyche. The main dramatis personae are Raunak, the owner of kiln, his wife Janani, Sakina, the widow of Abdul. In a fit of rage, Raunak shoves Abdul and his son into a furnace. Now wearing the mask of a benevolent employer, he visits Sakina, bringing household material in a bag in a mournful expression on his face, insisting her to accept the heavy bag. His wife Janani comes daily to the house of Sakina, consoling her, expressing her husband's emotional cruelty, persuading Sakina to have a life partner. Raunak and his wife have no child and are desperate to have a heir. His ulterior motive is to make Sakina a surrogate mother and resorts to clever tactics to seduce her. The vulnerable Sakina surrenders and gives birth to a male baby.

The act of seduction is enacted in a subtle manner

and the way Raunak bares his inner wolf has a strong element of terror. The climactic sequence, where the daughter of Sakina is revealed the truth about the death of her father and brother, is stunningly horrifying. The grotesque image of a man in trance is a metaphor for human cruelty. The lighting effect by Soupti Chakravorty heightens the visual impact.

Amit Saxena as Raunak, Nidhi Mishra as Sakina, Nalini R. Joshi as Janani, Shiv Prashad Gour as Adavasi give compelling performances. Shradha Vasdev as the daughter of Raunak and Sabina creates a portrait that symbolises blind fury of humanity obsessed with revenge and hate.

Human dilemmas

Mumbai-based, Being Association presented "Radhey", written by Amit Sharma. Radhey is directed by Rasika Agashe, a graduate from the National School of Drama.

Inspired by Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's "Rashmirathi", the playwright has

interpreted the last day of the 18-day war between the Pandavas and Kauravas with confrontation between characters. The playwright has brought into focus the agony of Radhey, the foster mother of Karna on one hand and on the other Karna's biological mother Kunti's dilemma. It also defines that war is basically fought between the owning classes to monopolise the state apparatus. The marginalised people are merely made pawns in the hand of warring forces.

There are sequences which depict the feelings of fraternity between Karna and his low cast attendant because Kshatriya clan disdainfully considers Karna as the one who belongs to the low caste. The play also illustrates that the Mahabharat war was not fought to establish rule of Dharma but to establish the supremacy of Krishna and the Pandavas.

The director has skilfully harmonised various ideological strands into an artistic whole. The performances are marked by professional brilliance.

Written by Swapnil Jain, "Romeo Juliet in Smart Cities of Contemporary India" is directed by Saurabh Anant and presented by Vihan Drama Works. Structurally, the play as well as its production style is innovative. The essence of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" is that there is no place for love in a cruel world. Jain's "Romeo Juliet" explores this thematic content in the contemporary Indian context plagued by violence, hatred and intolerance. Love is defiled in such an atmosphere. Enacted in the format of tragic-comedy, the humour and tragedy are alternated through fluidity of group compositions.

Towards the close, the play raises the question whether the lovers will meet the same fate as Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet met or they would fight against the enemy of love. The performances are marked by spontaneity.

Six plays, one performance

Ajit Chitturi's "The Journey" portrays a gamut of human emotions and frailties

Raising the bar Ajit Chitturi as 'Macbeth'

S. RAVI

Those who braved the Delhi pollution this weekend to watch English theatre group thespian en's "The Journey" at Akshara Theatre, were well rewarded for their effort. Celebrating the group's 25th anniversary, aptly, the play is a creative compilation of monodrama acts from six works of noted playwrights, staged by thespian en. "The idea is to relive the group's history on stage," observes Ajit Chitturi, who has adapted and performed the play.

The works brought to fore myriad characters, plots and situations, covering a wide spectrum of emotions, providing the audience an assorted fare. The adaptation was good, as the concise versions highlighted the basic plot, without diluting the finer nuances of the original. "Condensing the gist of the mega plays and transforming dialogue-based scripts into monologues was the real test," avers Chitturi.

The performance starts with William Shakespeare's "Macbeth", bringing out the turmoil, guilt and paranoia of the Scottish general who assassinates his king, Duncan to usurp the throne. Chitturi's well-delivered dialogues bring out the angst and complexes Macbeth undergoes.

Setting the tempo, "Macbeth", is followed by Chetan Shah's "Belle Curv". Donning a dark suit and glasses, Chitturi plays the Don, a fixer of cricket matches, who in a matter-of-fact style expounds on why and how the illegal act came into being. Confidently seated on a chair, Chitturi's voice and hand and finger gestures, give the audience a sense of history and evolution of rigging and betting and how it denigrated the gentleman's game.

Continuing with the theme of cheating, Jean Paul Sartre's "Nekrasov" sees Chitturi posing as a Soviet Interior Minister.

The accent and the slow and deliberate gestures and gait create an air of suspicion and secrecy (like looking for hidden tape recorders and mics) while emphatically stressing that the swindler is a top shot official with vital information, including a list of those to be executed. Meeting directors, Chitturi's bending forward to catch a name or repeating the surname, all convey effectually presence of other characters.

In Shree Kumar Varma's "Five", Chitturi becomes a kingmaker. Nursing a glass of whisky, he gradually builds the image of man's anguish on being side-lined, who stages a comeback later by creating a crisis and elaborates on his vision of a grand change in the nation.

Sartre's "Kean", provides Chitturi an entire gamut of emotions to portray as he essays the role of a great actor of late 1600s and early 1700s, Edmund Kean. He effectively brings out the anguish of a performer who is adored by all yet not treated as an equal by the society, not allowed to love the woman he is fond of, and is always subject to close public scrutiny. For this, Chitturi adroitly uses dramatic pauses and voice modulation, making the audience empathise with the character.

Playing the strong and violent Arjun in Timeri Murari's "Hey, Hero!", Chitturi depicts his struggle to mend his ways. Guided by a co-prisoner, Krishna, he asks himself, "Who am I?" The sentiments of initial disbelief by Arjun, later followed by understanding the profundity of the question, are well conveyed through a fine control of voice pitch and facial gestures.

"The Journey" ends with a fine rendering of the Roman Emperor Caligula's character in Albert Camus play by the same name.

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Creative journeys of the Divine Word

Senior artists tell us how they draw from the teachings and experiences of Guru Nanak

NAVINA JAJA

As a faculty at the Santiniketan, film actor Balraj Sahni once asked Guru Rabin-dranath Tagore to write an anthem for the world. Tagore replied that the 15th century Guru Nanak has already composed a world anthem echoing the ethos of humanitarianism, and the idea of inclusivity of all living beings under the sky.

Tagore alluded to the incident when Guru Nanak was denied entry for the aarti at the Jagannath Temple in Puri, Odisha. The Guru, as resistance, is believed to have stood outside the temple and sang an aarti. Instead of a plate with lighted lamps, he created an allegory of the sky as a plate with lighted stars and celestial bodies - “the sky presents an invocatory platter (Gagan Thaal) that includes all living beings. A sky that holds a variety of jewelled celestial bodies and scented air... the destroyer of fear... The sound of your name is subtle goes unheard, resounds endlessly.” The aarti, in raga Dhanasri, without the plate and oil lamps is sung every evening in all gurudwaras.

Like a bridge over troubled waters, the celebrations for Guru Nanak’s 550th anniversary opens with the inauguration of the Kartarpur corridor between India and Pakistan. The ceremony



Spiritual canvas “Gagan Mein Thaal” by designer Amardeep Behl at Virasat-e-Khalsa in Anandpur Sahib; musicians at Sultanpur Lodhi ■ SPECIAL ARRANGMENT

ies that began on 1st November end on the full moon of the Hindu Month of Kartik - 12th November, marking the birthday of Guru Nanak. Five hundred fifty musicians opened the cultural programme at Sultanpur Lodhi, the city where the Guru lived and attained enlightenment.

The story of the enlightenment suggests the journey of Gu-

ru Nanak when he disappeared for three days in a river only to return with a describable experience of the formless truth. His first words - ‘There is no Hindu and no Musalman!’ was followed by a verse (Ik Onkar) - the central philosophy of the Sikh religion. Ik Onkar is the opening of the first composition of Guru Nanak. This seminal verse (mul mantra) is at the beginning of Japji Sahib, the prayer at the beginning of the holy scripture of Sikhs. It approximately translates as: “There is one reality for all. It is infinite, all-pervasive. The name of which is Truth, immortality and eternity. It is energy, the power for all creation. It is formless, fearless, all-inclusive represents love for all. It is timeless and formless, self-sustained, self-contained, self-evolved. The Guru is the supreme light that dispels ignorance. It is through the Guru that one acquires grace and blessings of that One.”

The word ‘Sikh’ comes from *shishya* or disciple who commits to engage with the word of the Guru. Noted designer Amardeep Behl, the creator of the museum Virasat-e-Khalsa (Anandpur Sahib), says, “Sikhism is a way of life, a journey of the divine word!” The sojourn is one of perpetual learning by hearing, reading, singing and reflecting the word (*Shabad*). The word speaks

of existential comprehension, compassion, inclusion, and truth. The word which was poetically spoken, and sung by Baba Guru Nanak Devji is later given an alphabetical form ‘Gurumukhi’. The script as poetic verses composed in classical melodies (raga) and rhythmic cycles (tala) reflect the wisdom of all the ten Sikh gurus and other wise men. They are compiled in the supreme teacher - the book - “Guru Granth Sahib”.

The historical trajectory of the ecology of ‘The Word’ - Gurbani (guru’s voice) transcends artificial human divisions. Its history is reflective of tears, ravages of Partition and miserable solace for the marginalised human communities. It symbolises multiple streams and has sociological implications. It inspires journeymen of creative expressions. The *Nirakar* (formless) becomes the sounds of percussion of instrumental music.

Fullness in the void

For several decades, Guru Nanak, the poet, and singer, with his fellow Muslim companion and musician Bhai Mardana travelled length and breadth of the subcontinent. They questioned social norms, explored metaphorical spheres by conversing with a large number of people. “The raga (melodic arrange-

ment) Ramkali is frequently used in the Granth Sahib. The early morning melody evokes the mood of sweetness and wonder. As they converse with mendicants, the Guru and Bhai Mardana are in constant wonder *vismaad*,” says Bhai Baldeep Singh, a descendant of the Bhai Sadharan one of the important disciples of Guru Nanak. Baldeep’s engagement with the ‘word’ is an in-depth journey in reviving the Sikh musical heritage.

“I searched, spoke, learned and documented several elders - the tradition bearers of instruments, and musical genres. I handcrafted the string instruments of the rabab, the taus, and revived the percussion traditions such as that of the pakhawaj. Bhai Gurdas (the scribe who wrote the Granth Sahib) mentions that in the time of the Guru, Nanak Ji’s poetry resonated in every home in the accompaniment of the percussion *mridang* and the rabab. My journey is similar to the verse by Guru Nanak that says - plough the soul within before sowing the seed of the ‘word’ and nurture the seed with the water from the river of Truth,” adds Baldeep Singh.

The string instrument rabab played by Mardana is a metaphor for the idea of the journey. The instrument travelled from Central Asia, Afghanistan. Polymath

scholar and senior artist Madan Gopal Singh explains, “the sound-wave length of the rabab is short and serves to highlight the essence of the poetic verse. Once the sound of rabab ends, the verse aligns itself to a rhythmic cycle. The word and the music symbolise the process of becoming. The sung word gradually moves in the silence the story of the reflective word.”

Women’s engagement

Madan Gopal critiques that the ‘word’ has yielded various categories of Sikh musical traditions. “There is the continuous classical music tradition linked with the formal space of the gurudwaras. The category of the folk balladic traditions, and then the tradition of women’s engagement with the singing of the divine word away from the male gaze. As a child, I recall the early hours of the morning (Amrit Vela), hearing the meditative rhythmic chanting by my mother and grandmother. The hummed blended incantation closest to the breath represented cosmic proximity that formed a spiritual cocoon and granted an iconic stature to the women.”

All over Punjab, it was a common sight in the afternoon, when household chores concluded, women got together to spin on the charkha and sing.

This ceremony called *Trijan* cut across religion, spoke of daily life such as rites of passage. The Shabad soon followed. “Earlier, the melodies were simple, later percussion (dholak) and khartal (castanets) became part of the women community singing which could be seen as a space of their expressional empowerment. Another modality is when women groups gather to sing 40-50 Shabad verses as relay singing.” Ah! Nanak’s poetic verse says, “In the realm of grace, spiritual power prevail...there are powerful warriors and heroes with Ram inscribed in their heart, there dwells Sita wedded to the Divine word.” (*Japji Sahib, pauni 37*)

In the post-Partition India, the Divine word psychologically provided solace to the millions swept in the violence of fractured communities. Special gatherings called diwans in Gurudwaras had Ragis (specialists of sacred Sikh music) come to perform.

Idea of contemplation

Tarundeep Singh, noted environmentalist, and musician, says, “My engagement with the divine word addresses environmental issues under my organisation Fateh - ‘Fraternity of Active citizens Tending Environment Holistically’ I work to create community ownership of ‘Green Amritsar’ using Baba Nanak’s poetry like ‘Pawan Guru, Pani pita. Mata Dharat mahat... the air is the guru, water the father and earth, the mother of all...”

The journey becomes an image in the paintings of seasoned artist Arpana Caur. “The brush

creates the word on canvas in silence with colour and images. Nanak’s poetry asserts the unified world within. My work titled ‘Gagan thaal’ (sky as a platter) has Guru Nanak above the clouds. The idea of contemplation augmented by the prayer beads in his hand. Abstract map of lines, pearls, and stars mark the journey conveying evolving consciousness.”

Behl, known for hi-tech storytelling in the basement of the Golden Temple plaza, says, “As a designer, I work to recreate the ‘word’ in spatial and metaphoric representation that will embrace the visitor in an immersive and sensory experience of an inward journey. For instance, I designed the drum building as a meditative space for visitors to become one with the essence of Ek Onkar. The delicate crystals hung by fiber optics reflect the guiding light of the faith and the programmed LED lights enhance calmness that offers a holistic experience. Creating the multi-sensory experiential design of the ‘Gagan Mein Thaal’ involved dramatic visuals and stirring audio effects.”

The award-winning sound designer Kanwaljit Singh Sawhney (KJ Singh) worked with Behl, both in Anandpur Sahib and Amritsar. He used articulatory phonetics to create the soundscape of the word as an aural world with the effects of sonic textures and an array of creative-technical skills. Referring to the sound-design of Gagan Thaal, KJ says, “The first internalisation of the divine word led to an ode to the vastness of the universe that is played in the sacred vicinity of the Shri Harmandir Sahib. The Brahmand (universe) comprises the khartal (castanets) variety of percussion and string instruments like the rabab and the dilruba that reverberates in the accompaniment of human chorus voices creating a sense of community.”

The sung poetry of Baba Guru Nanak and the music of Bhai Mardana provides for artists layered experiences of existence, nature, and humanity. The creative community is stimulated with hope to bridge fractured imaginations. Each artistic impulse recalls Nanak’s verse on ‘Vismaad’ or wonder: “Wonderful is the sound current of the Naad, wonderful is the knowledge of the Vedas. Wonderful are the beings, wonderful is the species. Wonderful are the forms, wonderful are the colours.Wonderful is His Praise, wonderful is His adoration. Wonderful is the wilderness and wonderful is the path.”



As a child, I recall the early hours of the morning (Amrit Vela), hearing the meditative rhythmic chanting by my mother and grandmother Madan Gopal Singh

Universal appeal

Guru Nanak used music to take his message of peace and harmony to the masses

SHAILAJA KHANNA

As the founder of the Sikh faith, and as a guru who attained self-realisation, Guru Nanak’s extraordinary musicianship often gets forgotten. He was a musician par excellence and used music to convey the most sublime teaching. His way was followed by all the nine Gurus who succeeded him, all of whom articulated their teachings in a raga. Leading kirtankar Bhai Manohar Singh, grandson of the erudite Bhai Santa Singh and son of the universally popular Bhai Mangal Singh opines, “Guru sahib perhaps felt that dry teaching may not have such a universal appeal so he added the music to make it more popular. This great tradition was carried on for nearly 250 years, a truly unique history. One can compare the “thaali” Guru sahib gave us as being the music (sangeet), the food on the thaali was his “bani” (his sayings); one cannot separate music from the Guru’s teachings.”

Following the tradition of the time, handed down since the Vedic times, the “mool mantra” of Guru Nanak, “Japji” comprising 38 verses was never to be sung, only recited, as per the Vedic tradition. Everything else that he composed, including his description of Heaven that he experienced during his Self Realisation (“sodar” in raga Asa), was set in ragas.

Guru Nanak’s entire teaching recorded in the Guru Granth Sahib is in 19 authentic ragas. These are, by and large, known and are popular even today, including Shri, Bhairav, Basant, Tilang, Bilawal, Sarang, Ramkali, Gurjari, Gauri, Manjh. Of course, one cannot be certain the ragas, as we know them today, were rendered in the same form then, some 500 years ago, as the Guru Granth neither gives note notation, nor the ‘tala’ in which they were to be sung. Dhanashri, we are told, is a raga that is depicted differently today. Some ragas including Tukhari and Vadhans are considered rare today, raga Asa is confined, by and large, to musicians with a Punjab connection. Sadly, the tradition of singing Gurmukh kirtan initiated by him

Without a doubt, his mas-



The ber (Ziziphus) tree at Sultanpur Lodhi under which Guru Nanak used to sit and meditate ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

tery as a musician was unchallenged as he chose “jor ragas” like Prabhati Vibhas, Basant Hindol, Maru Kafi and Suhi Kafi too, to compose and sing in.

Guru Nanak is said to have travelled all over the world for 37 years. Before he set out on his travels, Dr Alankar Singh, a classical musician and scholar says the Guru procured a fine rabab for his Muslim disciple Mardana from Bhai Firanda from Dharoana, near Sultanpur Lodhi, so that he could accompany him.

In fact, this spot is commemorated though Gurudwara Rababsar that exists even today, underlying the importance of the accompaniment Guru sahib received. Dr Alankar recalled Guru Nanak as saying “Chher Mardaniya rabab, baani aayee ai” (play the rabab Mardana, I am inspired to preach).

Sadly, while around 100 years ago there were still many compositions that had been handed down the generations in the form in which they were originally sung, today these are rare. The magnificent musical heritage inherited over more than five centuries is largely lost and is in the safekeeping of just a few rare repositories. The Namdhari Sikhs are one such

group, with their huge centre at Bhaini sahib, near Ludhiana.

Today, “kirtankars” of the old tradition have re-invented the tunes in which they sing “shabads”. Bhai Manohar Singh laments, “Today, there is too much of a trend to use only popular tunes for Gurmatsangeet. It is easier, one doesn’t need to train properly. But it’s important to remember what our elders sang and sing the same things.” Daler Mehndi, who also trained originally in the shabad kirtan tradition, agrees, and recalls hearing the special aarti, “Gagan Mein Thaal”, sung in raga Malkauns at the Patna Sahib Gurudwara in his early years “I haven’t heard this being sung for so long now, and maybe will record it one day,” Mehndi gushes.

Dr Singh adds, “One has to try out new things too as the knowledge of authentic compositions is so sketchy. I am often told to sing the old things, but who has these now.” He feels more intensive research in the music of the Guru Granth Sahib needs to be done. “The pioneering work by Prof Tara Singh, done some 50 years ago, still remains the only authentic research on the music of the Gurus,” he said.



Raag Taal Gharana

It goes by the clock

‘8 Prahar’ explores the time-raag link in Hindustani music

CHITRA SWAMINATHAN

As the clock ticks through the day, Hindustani music takes on different hues. Since the raags have been set based on time, musicians structured concerts accordingly. Raags sung at the time specified is said to have an added impact on the listeners.

Over the years, this connect between time and raag have lost its relevance as concerts are held usually in the evenings. ‘8 Prahar’, an annual classical event that features concerts through the day, at different *prahars* (time divisions of day), has been trying to introduce contemporary audience to this traditional link.

“It is one of the longest classical music festival that is presented as per tradition,” says Durga Jasraj, who has conceptualised ‘8 Prahar’.

Thirty four musicians, participating in this event, will showcase the uniqueness of each *prahar* through raags associated with it.

Rich aural treat

The formidable line-up of vocalists include Ulhas Kashalkar, Kalapini Komkali, Rattan Mohan Sharma, Parveen Sultana, Venkatesh Kumar, Sanjeev Chimmalg, Shubha Mudgal, Pandit Jasraj, Gundecha Brothers, Ashwini Bhide Deshpande, and Jayateerth Mevundi.

“The entire structure of music in India is based on the time frame – divided into two parts – from sunrise to sunset and from sunset to sunrise. Each part is then divided into four further sub-parts called a ‘prahar’, comprising three hours each. Based on the division of ‘prahars’, in Hindustani music every raga is designed to be performed during a particular ‘prahar’. The perfor-

mance of a particular raga at a particular time enhances its aesthetic effects, creating a positive impact on the mind and soul,” says Shashi Vyas, director and founder of Pan-cham Nishad Creatives that has been presenting the event since its inception.

Venkatesh Kumar, a Hindustani stalwart from Dharwad, stresses on both the learners and listeners knowing what makes up a raag. “Though we do not now realise the importance time plays in the making of a raag, but when you sing or listen to it at the specified hour you will definitely experience it,” says the senior vocalist.

“We need to have classical music festivals that focuses on old-world values. The next generation of learners have to be made aware of how these values are integral in internalising an art form,” he points out.

Rattan Mohan Sharma, a front-ranking vocalist of the Mewati Gharana and Pt. Jasraj’s nephew, feels it is important to make the audience aware of the traditional nuances that make up the classical music system. “With cross-genre exercises becoming the order of the day, we seem to be losing touch with authentic expressions. Since I have grown up listening to Sangeet Martand Pt. Jasraj and have trained under him, I know what it means to not deviate from one’s artistic roots. Why do you think at the age of 90 he is still a celebrated musician? Because he has been pursuing the art in all its purity. I am excited about performing in ‘8 Prahar’ since it is an effort to highlight a significant aspect of Hindustani music,” says Sharma.

‘8 Prahar’ will be held on November 10 at the Shanmukhananda Chandrasekandra Saraswathi Auditorium, Mumbai.



Rattan Mohan Sharma and Venkatesh Kumar

Theatre Talk

‘We need stars to sell a play’

Vijay Kenkre regrets not having done enough experimental and parallel productions

DEEPA GAHLOT



Vijay Kenkre grew up in a home surrounded by theatre as his parents Damu and Lalita Kenkre and aunt Sudha Karmarkar were stalwarts of Marathi theatre. “Which is why,” he says, “I decided I would not do theatre. I wanted to be a chartered accountant, and I also played cricket. I got into theatre by accident. I was sitting outside my college, when I was called in to read a play. They said, ‘he is good, take him’. Some of the inter-collegiate plays I did, won awards. But when I came into professional theatre, six of my plays flopped, till I did *Karti Premat Padli*, an adaptation of PG Wodehouse’s *The Small Bachelor*.”

Kenkre’s last few plays – like *A Perfect Murder* and *Maharathi* – have been thrillers, and before that he directed a dozen comedies. “But I still haven’t done a classic whodunit and I want to do one; I plan on directing plays based on Agatha Christie’s *Murder Is Announced* and *Unexpected Guest*. I also want to do *Night Watch* (by Lucille Fletcher) in Hindi. I think thrillers are becoming popular on the Marathi stage, because the audience has started watching web series, and is now interested in a genre they were not so keen on before. With *A Perfect Murder*, I found that younger people and non-Maharashtrians were coming to see it, because they had heard of, or seen, the Hitchcock film. At the same time, they are exposed to too much comedy on TV and the web, so they no longer want to see regular slapstick comedy plays. Even the mainstream audience wants something different.

“Right now,” he continues, “there is a French playwright Florian Zeller, whose style I find very interesting – and I want to do all five of his plays, *Father, Mother, Son, Truth* and *Lie*. These plays were suggested to me by Paresh Rawal. I know Naseerbhay (Shah) has done *Father* and *Truth*, but I want to do *Truth* and *Lie* together in Marathi.”

About his decision to do adaptations, he says that there is a shortage of playwrights in Marathi theatre. “They write, but more for television. On TV, an episode lasts for 20 minutes and the tracks keeps changing. To write for theatre you need substance; because of TV writing that is missing. The earlier generation of playwrights wrote such memorable characters that we still remember their names. There is talent, but over the years, there has been a major



shift – the younger mainstream directors are more into visuals than excellent literature. Theatre may be about performance, but literature is also important. A reason why revivals of old classics do so well, but then, the audience is 50 plus. These days, I hear there are directors who start without even a complete script, they just have an idea, and improvise, so theatre, from being an actor’s medium, has become a director’s medium.”

Hunt for venues

Kenkre also believes that the lack of auditoriums in Mumbai has killed the experimental play. “I don’t mean content wise – that is still there – but in terms of sensibility. In experimental theatre, they should have a licence to fail. But they are forced to perform at proscenium theatres and get no concessions in rentals or newspaper ad rates. So they have to either hunt for new venues, or stage their plays at conventional venues, which hampers the content.”

Talking about opportunities, he feels that if an actor does one good role in an inter-collegiate play competition, he or she right away gets a lead role in a TV serial. “But careers on TV are short-lived; after the serial ends, the actor vanishes. When we were younger, there were hardly any training institutes, now there is awareness that this field also requires training. But most people come out of these institutes and get straight into television or film. Earlier, we used to do 60 shows a month of a play, now we can have shows only on weekends. It’s a vicious circle, because there are shows only on weekends, they need stars. To become stars, the actors have to go to television, which means they can’t do theatre continuously or comfortably. I un-

derstand there are economic compulsions. But if you go to a producer with an idea, the first thing they ask is ‘who’s in it?’”

Kenkre did *Othello* and several other Shakespearean plays early on in his career, also plays by Tom Stoppard, Luigi Piradello, Vijay Tendulkar, and wanted to continue on that track. “When I entered mainstream theatre I realised that somebody is putting in money with the intention of recovering it. There have to be compromises and the need to do popular plays. I did direct some offbeat plays like *Dhol Tashe*, *Music System* and *Raaste* by GP Deshpande, and acted in Satyadev Dubey’s *Inshallah*, but my focus was on mainstream theatre, which I didn’t really want to do. When I sit and think about it, I wish I could have done more experimental and parallel plays.”

He does get to do his kind of work when he directs productions with university students in Mumbai and Pune or with the Goa Repertory, where he does plays in his mother tongue, Konkani.

“With the students, I do plays like *Medea*, *Viraasat* (Hindi version of Marathi masterpiece *Wada Chirebandi*), *Cherry Orchard*, *Hiroshima*. A positive trend I see is the increase in the number of female playwrights. After Sai Paranjpye, there are now a few women like Irawati Karnik, Manaswini Lata Ravindra, Kalyani Pathare and Shweta Pendse. If they keep doing original work, they will make a difference.”

After directing 85 plays, that he admits he does not particularly like, “I regret not being trained and not getting to do a political play. I did *Dhol Tashe* (a satire about religious practices), which provoked people, but now GP Deshpande is no longer there to write one.”

Hindi Belt

A 'genuine' poet

A bridge between Hindi and Urdu, Shamsher Bahadur Singh's poetry has many dimensions

KULDEEP KUMAR

He was called "a poet of poets" because his poetry had raised the bar of the art form so high that it seemed rather difficult to match it or to take it to any higher point. He was one of those few poets who successfully achieved the ideal of setting new aesthetic standards while also giving full expression to their political ideology and world view.

One can have some idea of his place in the Hindi poetry of the 20th century from the fact that when Shamsher Bahadur Singh turned 60, his fellow poets and publisher got together to bring out a collection of his poems, extracts from his diaries and articles of critical appreciation written by them. This slim 144-page commemorative volume was simply titled *Shamsher* and contained full-length articles on his oeuvre penned by the likes of Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh, Vijay Dev Narayan Sahi, Malayaj, Ramvilas Sharma and Dr. Raghuvansh. Raghuvir Sahay too contributed a short piece that analysed and explained "Tooti Hui, Bikhari Hui" (Broken, Scattered), perhaps the most celebrated love poem in modern Hindi poetry. Surprisingly, the book did not carry the name of its editor.

One does not know if Shamsher possessed an ego as a poet but one can say with absolute certainty that he did not have any ego as an individual.

It was difficult to find a more unassuming, self-effacing and humble man than him. I met him for the first time in early 1974 when he was living in Dayanand Colony in South Delhi with poet-journalist Ajay Singh, his wife Shobha and their little daughter Bhasha. My poet friend Pankaj Singh, whose untimely death nearly four years ago shook us all, had taken



me along to meet the celebrated poet. I met Shamsher several times in the next seven-eight years but our interactions remained rather formal although his warmth and childlike simplicity always touched me.

Influence of surrealism

Shamsher was born in Dehradun in an educated middle-class Jat family of western Uttar Pradesh on January 3, 1911. Initially named Kuldeep Singh, he received early education in Gonda and Dehradun in Urdu, Hindi and English. He started writing poetry at an early age but also became deeply interested in drawing and painting and studied art for some time at Ukil's school. He came under the influence of surrealism and his early poems offer a glimpse of this. Like his ideal poet Nirala, he too led a widower's life, struggled a lot to earn his living, and despite facing unfair criticism from some well-known left wing critics, managed to write sublimely beautiful yet complex

poetry.

Shamsher worked in Sumitranandan Pant's literary magazine "Roopabh", Sripat Rai's "Kahani" and other popular magazines like "Maya" and "Manohar Kahaniyan".

A committed Marxist, he lived in party commune in Bombay (now Mumbai) during 1945-46 and wrote his famous poem "Vam vam vam disha, samay samyavadi" (The direction is left... left... left – these are communist times). His personality could be summed up in these words from another of his famous poem: "Baat bolegi, ham nahi / Bhed kholegi baat hi" (I will not speak, my words will. Only they will reveal the secret.)

Shamsher was a bridge between Hindi and Urdu and his prose was considered to be the ideal specimen of Hindustani. Renowned critic Ramvilas Sharma wrote a full-length article on his prose. He was one of those very few Hindi poets who were familiar with the traditions Urdu literature and could write a ghazal – not the so-called Hindi ghazal –

that would meet the literary requirements of this great poetic form. His ghazal on the death of Muktibodh readily comes to mind in this context.

To commemorate his birth centenary, literary journal "Udbhavna" brought out a special number running into more than 610 pages. It was ably edited by eminent poet-critic-film expert Vishnu Khare whose death over a year ago left a void in the Hindi world. Besides offering Shamsher's poetry, prose and sketches, this volume also contains a large number of excellent articles on his personality and work, penned by the likes of Harivansh Rai 'Bachchan', Harishankar Parsai, Namwar Singh, Ashok Vajpeyi, Shrikant Verma, Kunwar Narain, Rajesh Joshi, Mohammad Hasan and Janaki Prasad Sharma. One finds five interviews of Shamsher that throw more light on his personal as well as literary life.

Need for critical appraisal

In his editorial, Vishnu Khare makes a plea for bringing out complete works of Shamsher so that a comprehensive critical appraisal could become possible. He also warns against turning him into an idol, underlining the fact that as he was a multi-dimensional man, his poetry too has many dimensions and in this respect, he comes closer to great poets like Nirala, Lorca and Neruda. Namwar Singh's article "Shamsher ki Shamsheriya" (The Shamsherness of Shamsher) draws attention to the intense yet sublime sensuousness that permeates his poetry.

How did Shamsher view himself? What was his own estimation of his self-worth? Nothing can be truer than his own words about himself: "Perhaps I have not been able to become a very successful poet but I can probably call myself a genuine poet."

The writer is senior literary critic

TELLING VOICES

On writing biographies

Edmund Morris explains why writers have to inhabit other lives so that they can come up with their best work

SUDHAMAH REGUNATHAN

"Writers like to inhabit other lives, other dimensions, other cultures. If you are born in a colony, particularly one as young as Kenya was, I grew up feeling deprived of the culture of the 'mattering' world. All around me was Africa...no radio, no influence of the outside world. The place where books were written, where movies were made, where symphonies were composed was elsewhere...in a world elsewhere...I grew up longing for that world. I discovered the adventures of Tom Sawyer at the age of ten and identified completely with Tom! So, it was with no sense of strangeness that I felt I had arrived when I came to London, a culture I could write about," says Edmund Morris author of the new biography of Thomas Edison.



Morris, who is also known as the biographer of Ronald Reagan and Theodore Roosevelt, passed away before he saw his new book in print. On writing biographies, Morris says, "You have a feeling that your subject is in flight and you have to pursue him. Any biography has to consist of one or two or more strands which you eventually resolves."

Morris who speaks disparagingly of "colonies" and their backwardness, moved to the United States in 1968 after which his biographies rolled out along with prizes beginning with the Pulitzer prize for his biography of Roosevelt. "Oddly enough at the same time when I met Tom Sawyer, I also met Roosevelt. Nairobi had brought a little book with many famous people who were visiting at that time. One of them was the former president of the United States, Roosevelt. There was something about the photograph...his teeth...that caught my attention. Whenever I see his teeth I think of this line from Somerset Maugham, 'He had rather more teeth than seemed necessary for any practical purpose...The picture impregnated in my mind, I guess, but I had forgotten him. I went back to learn about him when I heard a passage he had written on the death of his young wife. ...I was browsing at a bookstore and quite by chance picked up the Guinness Book of World Records. I opened it up and it said, 'On January 1st 1907, Theodore Roosevelt shook more hands than anybody else in history...' I decided to investigate that day...anybody could visit the White House and shake hands with the president. I wrote a prologue where the readers can go through the White House and shake hands with the President. The book grew out of that..." Morris has written three volumes on Roosevelt.

Morris reflects, "What is it about some people that makes one develop this vast curiosity? I don't know. There are only some characters like that... Napoleon, Beethoven... Theodore also...over the writing of biographies, I learnt to eliminate the author...only the subject remained."

Morris's wife, Sylvia, also a biographer, wrote on Edith Roosevelt while Morris was writing on Theodore. "She is verbal and likes to read what she has written. I cannot talk about what I write...our method and style are very different."

...six plays, one performance

Continued from page 3

Challenging General Chereva, who has hatched a plot to kill him, Chitturi efficaciously depicts how Caligula challenges the General to a logical debate, convinc-

ing him to go ahead with the assassination. The actor's sudden change from a serious demeanour to loud laughter, are well timed and show rigorous practice. Playing so many roles was tough for Chit-

turi. "The task of shifting in and out of one character after the other and then shift in the accents, (British, India, South Indian, etc) was challenging."

The production was marked by efficient change of sets and stage lighting which enhanced the experience.

Quick Five: Neil Nitin Mukesh

Being Johnny

ATIF KHAN

Thriller seems to be the most promising genre for Neil Nitin Mukesh, who has had a roller coaster ride in the film industry. But that does not deter him from trying to create his space in the competitive world. "If I was not a good performer, people would have been forgotten me as I am sure there are many good looking people in the industry. Amitabh Bachchan remains an inspiration and I like Rishi Kapoor a lot. I think he is the only actor who was able to blend different nuances of life in acting," says Nitin, before he opens up on his latest work "Bypass Road". In the realm whodunit, interestingly, it is written by Neil and is directed by his brother Naman Nitin Mukesh.

Excerpts:-

How was your experience of working in "Bypass Road"?

I think this is the genre I belong to. I started off with 'Johnny Gaddar'. I have gone back to this genre many times and I find it not many filmmakers are doing it. So my constant approach is to find filmmakers who are making films in the crime thriller space. Having written the film and the fact that it is directed by my younger brother, it was a big high on the creative level as it feels great when you realise your vision. I went all out in its performance, writing, and I am sure that the murder mystery in this film will get people hooked as it is a completely original work. Consciously or unconsciously, in terms of writing, I was inspired by the genre itself, apart from the great masters of thrillers such as Alfred Hitchcock, Agatha Christie, and Sriram Raghavan.

How do you see your career after so many years in the industry?

I consider myself to be very lucky to work with people from whom I learnt a lot. One thing I am sure of is that I have earned a good amount of goodwill.

I believe in one thing very strongly that the learning process in an industry like this is never-ending. Everyday technology, platforms, content are changing and I am very happy that I am not stagnant. I am constantly working with people who are teaching me a lot and I think that is very important. The last 12 years were full of success, failures, comebacks, mega big-budget films and everything was great.

Does your approach differ with the budget of the film?

I am very happy with the phase which we are in right now. Here content films are working fantastically. Today if your film has something interesting in it, I am sure people will grab it. It is no more a star-driven industry. It just boils down to how good or bad your film is. I started with a small budget film 'Johnny Gaddar' but from there I did 'New York'. I have balanced my career in a very



Dashing presence Neil Nitin Mukesh in "Bypass Road" ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

smart way and mixing both sets of films was a conscious decision. I want my fans to enjoy every kind of cinema we produce. The actor in me never compares films in terms of money and scale.

You are always applauded for your skills as an actor rather than a good looking megastar. Do you think the idea of Hindi film hero is fading or changing?

I would say it's changing. I was one of the actors in the young generation who had seen this change coming about. I always came up as a character in my films. If I was shy and wanted to project myself only as a hero, I don't think I would have done many of the films I have done including 'Johnny Gaddar', 'Saat Khoon Maaf', 'Jail', etc. People are now saying they are doing something different; I have been doing it since the start of my career.

I am sure new actors are aware of the change too and that is why they are honing their acting skills than concentrating on certain mannequins or looks. You just need to have conviction as an actor and that is why I never projected myself as a star. For me, looks are always secondary and have to be supported by performance..

Does your process change with different directors?

I like to follow my director's instruction as at the end of the day, it is his baby. But I have enough knowledge about acting to lend my voice without imposing it. As an actor, I know filmmaking is not only about you; it is a collaborative process.

Looking Back

No longer lonely

Director-actor Tirlok Malik loves to explore issues of the Indian diaspora in the US

MURTAZA ALI KHAN

New York Emmy Award-nominated Indian-American filmmaker and actor Tirlok Malik is best known for making films about Indian immigrants in the US. It all started with his 1990 film "Lonely in America" which he wrote and produced and also acted in it. The film was shown in over 70 countries and screened at several leading festivals all across the globe. Since then he has made several other films about issues pertaining to the Indian diaspora such as "Love Lust and Marriage", "Khushiyaan", and "On Golden Years". Malik, who is in India on a short visit, is currently developing the script for the last part of "Lonely in America".

Excerpts:

What prompted you to make "Lonely in America"?

I wrote the story because I wanted to make the film in America about immigrant Indians. I was determined that I will never show India in a bad light. 'Lonely in America' is a story about how the Indian immigrants want their children to fulfil their dreams and aspirations while living in America but when it comes to marriage they want them to get settled with an Indian. That creates a conflict. How can you be a part of a culture and not be a part of it at the same time? Assimilation is very important, if you want to feel at home because as an immigrant you are always looking for an anchor but a lot of them don't have that anchor. The film explores all this and more.

How did the success of "Lonely in America" help shape up your career?

Well, I wrote the story, developed the screenplay, and even produced the film. And the journey was quite successful. The film made a lot of money for my distributors. It also received good reviews. And that film today has achieved a cult status. It's more than 25 years now and people still talk about it. Spike Lee gave a cameo in the film. The film's success helped me in making more films on the immigrant themes and basically paved the way for a long and successful career as an actor as well as a filmmaker.



Cultural connection Tirlok Malik ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tell us about your second production venture "Love, Lust, and Marriage".

"Love, Lust, and Marriage" tells the story of an Indian-American doctor's inability to balance his work and life. I star opposite Deepti Naval in the film. It is an exploration of what Freud described as 'Madonna-whore complex'. It essentially examines whether love and lust can coexist in a marriage. I believe that it was a film ahead of its time. Interestingly, a girl named Samia Shoaib whom I gave break in the film went on to star in films like "The Sixth Sense", "Requiem for a Dream", and "Pi".

How has the situation changed for filmmakers who want to tell stories about Indian immigrants?

When I made "Lonely in America" there were hardly any films about Indian immigrants. But the film's success opened up new horizons for young filmmakers who too

wanted to touch upon similar issues. Fortunately, the situation has greatly improved over the years. We now have many more films that focus on the stories of Indian-Americans. Also, the audiences are more open to new ideas and fresh themes, thereby allowing filmmakers to tell stories that they have always wanted to tell.

What are you doing next?

I like to see myself as a filmmaker and a healer. Right now, my major focus is on a new educational platform that I have developed for healthy and happy living. It is called 'Happy Life Yoga'. India has been a spiritual teacher for the whole world and I firmly believe that the Indian philosophy holds the key to living a healthy and fulfilling life.

My platform endeavours to provide a holistic approach towards life by leveraging upon the combined power of Yoga, Ayurveda, and Indian Philosophy at large. It was launched in New York on the occasion of International Yoga Day 2019.

As far as my film work is concerned, I am trying to develop the script for a film which is the last part of "Lonely in America". So, basically, it will be the fifth in the series on Indian immigrants.



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