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SC ruling in Ayodhya land dispute today

Presently, the Centre, under the Ayodhya Act of 1993, is holding the acquired land, which includes the disputed area, as a non-partisan, statutory receiver. The judgment will come after a marathon 40-day hearing.

The five judges took less than a month to deliver the judgment. The Bench, other than Chief Justice Gogoi, comprised Justices S.A. Bobde, D.Y. Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S. Abdul Nazeer. CJI Gogoi is retiring on November 17.

Though the deadline was October 18, the lawyers wrapped up arguments early and the Bench reserved verdict on October 16.

The main argument of the Hindu side was that faith and belief that Lord Ram was born exactly under what was the central dome of the Babri Masjid – before it was demolished by kar sevaks on December 6, 1992 – was consistent across centu-

ries. Travelogues, writings and the Skanda Purana mentioned Ramjanmabhoomi as a place of special religious significance to the Hindus. They said Mughal Emperor Babur had demolished the temple to build the mosque.

Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan argued that the Muslims had exclusive title over the land, and the Hindus were given only prescriptive rights to enter and pray at Ram Chabutra. They sought restoration of the property to what it was prior to December 1992.

Mr. Dhavan said the idols were placed surreptitiously by Hindus in the intervening night of December 22-23, 1949. No direct evidence was there to show that the disputed land was the birthplace of Lord Ram. The findings of the archaeological excavations did not show one structure but several constructions.

CJI meets U.P. Chief Secretary, DGP

The Supreme Court has consistently held that the duty of a judge is to deliver judgments and leave the law and order concerns to the State and police machinery. An example of the Supreme Court's firm position that judges should deliver judgments, unmindful of the "consequences" of their verdict, is found in the annals of the Ayodhya case itself.

September 2010 event

The event dates back to September 2010, and concerns a petition filed by Ramesh Chandra Tripathi to defer the scheduled pronouncement of the Ayodhya judgment by the Allahabad High Court at 3.30 p.m. on September 24. Mr. Tripathi had claimed the judgment would lead to communal tensions. He had sought a

stay on the High Court's pronouncement and let mediation take over. The petition found the Supreme Court in two minds initially.

A split verdict saw Justice R.V. Raveendran favour the pronouncement of the judgment as per schedule. He reasoned that "people of the country are not so immature as to not accept a judgment". But his colleague on the Bench, Justice H.L. Gokhale, was apprehensive that the judgment would lead to "consequences" and ordinary people may suffer. Justice Gokhale felt the apex court would be blamed if "passions rise" after the verdict. Faced with a split verdict, the Bench stayed the pronouncement of the judgment on September 24 and referred the case to a larger Bench.

Government ends SPG protection for Gandhis

Ms Vadra refused to take the security for the other 78 visits. On most such tours, she shared her travel plan at the 11th hour, rendering it impossible for the SPG to depute officers for her security," the official said.

Since May 2014, she had levelled allegations against SPG officers that they were collecting her personal and confidential information and sharing with unauthorised persons. "She even threatened the top officials of the SPG to drag them into legal action. The SPG has, from time to time, countered such allegations by clarifying that it confines its work to strictly the official charter," the official said.

The SPG was set up in 1985 after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Former Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee continued to have SPG cover from 2004 when he demitted office till his death in 2018.

During his tenure that began in 1999, Prime Minister Vajpayee's government conducted a major review of the SPG's operations, and decided to withdraw SPG protection to former Prime Ministers P.V. Narasimha Rao, H.D. Deve Gowda, and I.K. Gujral. Last month, the Centre replaced SPG cover for former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with the CRPF.

Moody's lowers India outlook to 'negative'

The agency further said while the government's steps to support the economy should help reduce the depth and duration of the growth slowdown, a prolonged financial stress among rural households, weak job creation, and a credit crunch among non-banking financial institutions, had increased the probability of a more entrenched slowdown.

"Moreover, the prospects of further reforms that would support business investment and growth at high levels, and significantly broaden the narrow tax base, have diminished," it added.

IMF support

In its rebuttal to Moody's downgrade, the government statement said it re-

mains one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world, something reaffirmed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"Government of India has noted that the Moody's Investors Service has today changed the outlook on the Government of India's ratings to 'negative' from 'stable' while keeping the foreign-currency and local-currency long-term issuer ratings unchanged at Baa2," the government statement said. "However, India continues to be among the fastest growing major economies in the world, India's relative standing remains unaffected," it added.

The government added that the fundamentals of the economy remain robust, with inflation under check and bond yields low.

Congress won't let nation forget note ban: Sonia

'PM and his colleagues never took responsibility for the faux pas'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

On the third anniversary of demonetisation on Friday, Congress president Sonia Gandhi made a scathing attack on the Centre and said the party would ensure that "the nation never forgets or forgives the Tughlaqi blunder". Her son and former Congress chief, Rahul Gandhi, described it as a "terror attack" that destroyed the Indian economy.

In a statement, Ms. Gandhi said the Prime Minister and his colleagues had never taken responsibility for the "faux pas" that claimed over 120 lives, took away livelihoods and proved a death knell for India's medium and small businesses.

'Short-sighted move'

"No matter how much the Modi government may try and evade responsibility for this ludicrous and short-

sighted measure, the nation and its people will ensure that they are held accountable," Ms. Gandhi said.

"The Prime Minister and his colleagues have stopped speaking about demonetisation since 2017, hoping that the nation will forget. Unfortunately for them, the Congress will ensure that neither the nation nor history, forgives or forgets. Because unlike the BJP, we serve in the 'National Interest'."

"Demonetisation is perhaps the single most appropriate metaphor for the BJP's ill-conceived governance model," said the Congress chief and claimed that the note ban neither brought out black money, lowered militant attacks or put an end to counterfeit currency.

"What it did instead, was to wipe out over one crore jobs from the economy (and still counting), take the unemployment rate to a 45-



Youth Congress members protesting outside the Reserve Bank of India in New Delhi on Friday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

year high, shave two full percentage points off GDP growth and ensure that India's international rating moved from 'stable' to 'negative'."

'Herculean blunder'

"It is now widely acknowledged as a herculean blunder by independent economists and taught across the world as a cautionary tale of

'what governments should not do,' she said.

"It's 3 years since the Demonetisation terror attack that devastated the Indian economy, taking many lives, wiping out lakhs of small businesses & leaving millions of Indians unemployed. Those behind this vicious attack have yet to be brought to justice," Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

Uddhav slams BJP on power sharing

Regret going with wrong people, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray on Friday slammed the BJP for trying to prove him a liar and said he regretted going with the wrong people. Though he did not call off the alliance, Mr. Thackeray asked if lying was acceptable in Hindutva and demanded to know how the BJP would form the government in the State now.

The Sena chief spoke soon after CM Devendra Fadnavis submitted his resignation and addressed the press. Speaking at the Shiv Sena Bhavan, Mr. Thackeray countered Mr. Fadnavis in detail.

'Accused of lying'

"I was hurt because this is the first time Balasaheb's son (himself) has been accused of lying. Maharashtra knows what Thackeray family is. Devendra Fadnavis has accused me of lying. Even if Amit Shah and company accuses me of lying, people know who is lying and who tells the truth," he said, while mentioning BJP would

'Sena has no time to talk to us'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Maharashtra caretaker CM Devendra Fadnavis on Friday said the BJP was shocked at Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray's claim that all options to form a government were open.

Blaming the Shiv Sena for the ongoing crisis, Mr. Fadnavis said he had called Mr. Thackeray to sort out the deadlock, but the Sena chief

did not receive his calls. "While they (Sena) had no time to talk to us, they were talking to the Congress and NCP thrice a day," he said.

Meanwhile, the Congress has moved more than half of its newly-elected MLAs to Jaipur, alleging poaching attempts by the BJP. Senior Congress leader Vijay Vadtivar alleged that ₹25 crore to ₹50 crore had been offered to the party MLAs.

including CM post. He (Shah) agreed and said both parties will adjust when the other's CM is in chair. I agreed to that. Then Amit Shah came to Matoshree and Devendraji was conveyed this decision. But he (Fadnavis) said I will face problems in my party if I say right now that CM post will be shared. That is why he did wordplay and used the words, 'sharing of posts and responsibilities.' It was definitely decided to share CM post."

He further said, "I consider Devendra Fadnavis my friend. That's why I supported him but did not expect this from him... I can't be seen as someone who lies."

Gandhis' lives put in danger, says Congress

'PM, Shah driven by political vendetta'

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday accused the Centre of endangering the lives of Congress president Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul Gandhi and daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah of being "blinded by personal revenge and political vendetta" to remove the security cover provided by the Special Protection Group (SPG) to the Gandhi family.

Senior leaders of the party indicated to *The Hindu* that all options were open, including moving court against the Centre's move.

The Centre replaced the SPG cover at Rahul Gandhi's 12, Tughlaq Lane residence with the Central Reserve Police Force and sent another CRPF team to Sonia Gandhi's 10, Janpath residence to work out modalities. Mr. Gandhi, however, reacted to the development by thanking the SPG that was in-charge of their security for the past 28 years.

Rahul thanks SPG

"A big thank you to all my brothers & sisters in the SPG who worked tirelessly to protect me & my family over the years. Thank you for your dedication, your constant support & for a journey filled with affection &

The then Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Akhilesh Yadav had provided financial help to the family, projecting the birth of the boy under stressed conditions as the human consequence of the decision to suddenly demonetise high value notes by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"It's not like notebandi (demonetisation) did only bad things. Notebandi gave a chance to a boy to be born in a bank. Such a big accomplishment," Mr. Yadav said in a sarcastic dig at the government.

BSP supremo and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati also targeted the central government on the third anniversary of demonetization, tweeting that the ill-effects of the "hurriedly taken" decision had been unveiled in various forms over the past three years.

Low conviction rate hinders bonded labour elimination

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

From lack of awareness among workers and employers to low conviction rates, the Central and State governments' efforts for eliminating bonded labour are facing many challenges, according to government officials who attended the National Human Rights Commission's seminar on bonded labour here on Friday.

While inaugurating the one-day seminar, Union Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar asked why, when social evils like sati could be abolished in the country, bonded labour couldn't. He said that the increasing cases of bonded labour needed serious attention.

Discussing the impact of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, NHRC member Justice P.C. Pant said implementation was the real problem.

NHRC Registrar (law) Surajit Dey said: "One of the basic bottlenecks is with regard to conviction."



Sonia Gandhi

learning. It has been a privilege. All the best for a great future," he tweeted.

At a press conference, Congress communication chief Randeep Surjewala said until August 29 this year, there were as many as four written communications from the SPG to Mr. Gandhi about possible threats to him from terrorists groups like the Khalistani groups, Islamist terror outfits and Naxals. "What has happened in the past 60 days for the SPG cover to be removed?" he asked.

"Mr. Modi and Mr. Amit Shah are blinded by personal revenge and political vendetta in withdrawing the SPG cover," party general secretary K.C. Venugopal alleged.

Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs Anand Sharma told *The Hindu* the decision puts the Gandhis at risk.

Ayodhya verdict: Modi appeals for calm, unity

'SC ruling should be accepted by all'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday appealed for calm and unity on the eve of the verdict of the Ayodhya land dispute case and said the judgement should not be seen either as victory or defeat for anyone.

The Supreme Court has listed the Ayodhya judgement for Saturday morning at 10.30 a.m. Following the announcement, Mr. Modi put out a series of tweets addressing the fact that the verdict was due. He appreciated the fact that the SC had, in the past few months, heard the matter everyday, noting that people were anxiously awaiting the verdict. He also said all parties to the case, civil society and socio-cultural organisations had in the last few days said the SC verdict should be respected and accepted with calm.

"All also appealed for peace and unity, which is a sentiment that should predominate once the verdict is out," said the Prime Minister.

Ahead of the verdict, the Congress Working Committee meeting has been rescheduled to Saturday instead of Sunday.

The party's highest decision making body is expected to adopt a resolution on the verdict. So far, the party's official position has been that all the concerned parties should respect the verdict of the country highest court.

Schools shut in U.P.

Amid enhanced security, schools have been declared closed in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Rajasthan on Saturday. Colleges, educational institutions and training centres will be closed in Uttar Pradesh will be shut till Monday, the government said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday evening appealed to the people not to view the Ayodhya verdict as a matter of "victory or defeat."

Calling for peace and harmony, Mr. Adityanath asked people to not pay heed to rumours.

'Sidhu-Imran friendship was the key'

Visitors praise former cricketers for shrine link

VIJAITA SINGH
DERA BABA NANAK

The Nijjars, a doctor couple from Batala in Punjab cannot thank enough the friendship of two former cricketers – Sidhu and Imran – which according to them has made possible the opening of a corridor linking revered Sikh shrines in India and Pakistan.

Dr. S.S. Nijjar had come with his wife Dr. Satinder Nijjar to catch a glimpse of the facilities at Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur district. It is here that a grand passenger terminal building is coming up as part of the Kartarpur corridor, a project that has withstood animosity and tensions between the two nations.

"This dream project to connect the two Sikh shrines has been pending for decades. 99% this became possible due to the friendship between Navjot Singh Sidhu and Imran Khan," Dr. Nijjar said.

Mr. Sidhu was a special invitee on August 18, 2018, to the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Pakistan's Army Chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa had told Mr. Sidhu that Pakistan hoped to build the corridor. After initially rejecting the offer, the NDA government in India set the ball rolling,

Entry fee waived on two days

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
MEHMAL SARFRAZ
NEW DELHI/LAHORE

India and Pakistan continued to spar over procedural issues, hours before the inauguration of the Kartarpur corridor while Pakistan's Foreign Minister in a last-minute gesture declared a waiver of entry fees for two days for the Indian pilgrims.

Speaking to a group of Indian media persons, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan explained that the \$20 entry fees to be paid by every Indian pilgrim would be utilised in maintaining the infrastructure in and around the famed Gurudwara at Kartarpur.

and a memorandum of understanding was signed between the two countries for visa-free access to pilgrims.

Similar sentiments were echoed by other visitors. "Only Sidhu made this possible, this was in the works for several years, now they should allow us to visit Nankana Sahib in Pakistan also," said Ravinder Kaur.

Passport concerns

Surender Singh, 65, a farmer from Sri Ganganagar in Rajasthan, doesn't have a passport. He came to Dera Baba



A decorated gate ahead of the inauguration of Kartarpur Sahib corridor in Gurdaspur. ■ ANI

"It's a reasonable amount. This is not to generate a fund but to maintain the facility. There will be services provided and for that there will be some funds required," Mr. Qureshi told reporters, while announcing that there will

be no requirement for the entry fees on November 9 and 12. Mr. Qureshi told reporters that India revoking the special status of Kashmir on August 5 was unfortunate. He referred to the decision as the "annexation of Kashmir".

Nanak to catch a glimpse of Kartarpur Sahib, around 3.5 km from the zero point at the border.

"They should allow us to visit on Aadhaar card, I am a poor farmer, I neither have a passport nor \$20 to give as permit fee," he said.

As per the MoU, the passport is the requisite document for travel and India has protested the \$20 permit fee being charged by Pakistan.

Dara Singh, who sells tea in the vicinity, said the land price had sky-rocketed in the past year.

"People are buying land to build hotels and guest houses, keeping in mind the tourist flow in the coming days. The land here is selling at an extremely high rate," the tea seller said.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will flag off the first delegation to Gurudwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan.

The delegation led by Punjab CM Capt. Amarinder Singh includes former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

IN BRIEF



Naga outfits dismantle offices ahead of accord

GUWAHATI
Dismantling of offices and messes of extremist groups has started in Nagaland ahead of the signing of the final Naga accord, which is expected soon. On Thursday, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Union (NSCN-IM) closed down its office and messes at Athibung in Peren district in the presence of village elders, civil administration officials and police and Assam Rifles officers.

Indian family to be deported from Israel

JERUSALEM
Four members of an Indian family, including two children, detained in Israel for staying illegally are likely to be deported soon after the completion of formalities, officials said, amid a crackdown on illegal migrants. Tina and Minin Lopez and their two minor children were arrested on Thursday, according to a report.

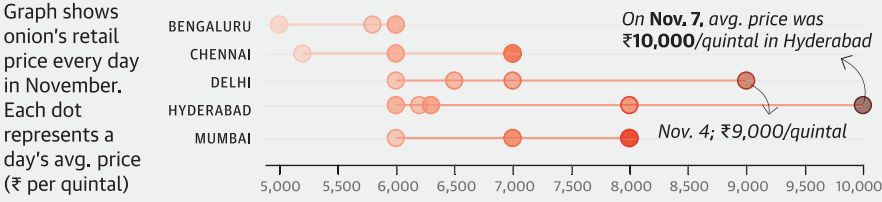
Too hot to handle

Onion prices usually rise in the last months of every year and 2019 is no exception. A look at the bulb's price trend



Costly in November: Graph shows onion's retail price every day in November. Each dot represents a day's avg. price (₹ per quintal)

Month	Bengaluru	Chennai	Delhi	Hyderabad	Mumbai
Jan.	1,586	1,965	2,050	1,938	1,000
Feb.	1,035	1,774	2,000	1,875	1,000
Mar.	1,217	1,819	2,324	1,521	1,052
Apr.	1,405	2,017	2,522	2,157	1,433
May	1,513	2,222	2,523	3,070	1,957
June	1,900	2,808	2,938	4,104	2,130
July	1,859	3,830	2,767	4,048	2,062
Aug.	2,625	3,229	3,338	4,575	2,595
Sept.	3,978	4,925	5,167	6,643	4,881
Oct.	3,825	4,967	5,625	6,284	4,708



Compiled by Vignesh Radhakrishnan. Source: National Horticulture Board

Norms eased for onion imports

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

The decision to immediately import a “substantial amount” of onions was taken at a meeting chaired by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on Friday.

The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) had a 55,000-tonne buffer stock. The continued high prices have resulted in this

buffer dwindling to 1,500 tonnes, officials said.

The tight supply was caused mostly by late rains destroying the early kharif harvest and disrupting storage and transport, even as last season's rabi stocks ran out. The Centre's efforts to increase the supply by banning exports and setting stock limits for retailers and traders failed to tame prices.

The mandatory time for

issuing import tenders was relaxed, a statement said.

“Officials of MMTC, NAFED, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Consumer Affairs have been directed to visit Turkey and Egypt on an urgent basis to take stock of the supplies and facilitate imports,” it said. Until November 30, the phytosanitary and fumigation norms have also been liberalised.

Aatish Taseer, mother term OCI revocation plan an act of reprisal

BJP leader denies charge that action was born out of a desire for revenge

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Writer Aatish Taseer has called the plan of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to revoke his Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) status an act of “reprisal” for an essay he had written criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In an article in the U.S.-based *Time* magazine, published on Friday, Mr. Taseer said that in sending him into “exile”, the government was reacting to an article, also in the same magazine in May 2019, which had referred to Mr. Modi as the “Divider in Chief” of India.

Mr. Modi had subsequently dismissed the criticism, saying, “*Time* magazine is foreign, the writer has also said he comes from a Pakistani political family. That is enough for his credibility.”

Mr. Taseer wrote in the latest article: “I had expected a reprisal, but not a severing. While the government



I had expected a reprisal, but not a severing. While the government did not initially reveal their motivations behind this action, they have now stated their reasons for removing my OCI..

AATISH TASEER, WRITER

did not initially reveal their motivations behind this action, they have now stated their reasons for removing my OCI: ‘concealed the fact that his late father was of Pakistani origin.’ But it is hard not to feel, given the timing, that I was being punished for what I had written.”

BJP's foreign affairs department chief Vijay Chauthaiwale, who has traded barbs with Mr. Taseer on Twitter for the last few days, denied the accusation that the government's action came from a desire for revenge. “What Aatish Taseer has not admitted that he has

not disclosed in his OCI application that one [of] his parents is Pakistani, which disqualifies him from getting the OCI card, irrespective of whether he wrote an anti-Modi article in the *Time* magazine,” he tweeted on Friday.

Tavleen Singh sees a link

Mr. Taseer's mother and senior journalist Tavleen Singh, who raised Mr. Taseer single-handedly, and had not been legally married to his father, the half-Pakistani and half-British Punjab (Pakistan) governor Salman Taseer, also drew a link between

her son's article and the MHA's decision. “Aatish's mother has also always been an Indian citizen. And, his right to live here was never questioned until he wrote an article that the Home Minister [Amit Shah] did not like,” Ms. Singh tweeted.

‘Concealed fact’

According to the records, Mr. Taseer, a British passport holder, was granted a Person of Indian Origin (PIO) card in 2000 and then granted OCI in 2016 after PIO cards were phased out.

The government has said he concealed the fact that his biological father, who was a British passport holder, was also Pakistani, which disqualified him.

In 2016, the Modi government amended passport rules so that single mothers could apply for their children without reference to biological fathers, but has not extended that to OCI requirements yet.

Finance Secretary, CEA admit to slowdown

They were grilled by House panel

**SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI**

Finance Secretary Rajiv Kumar and Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian conceded to a parliamentary panel on finance, headed by BJP MP and former Minister of State for Finance Jayant Sinha, that the country is going through an “economic slowdown”. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has so far avoided the use of word ‘slowdown’.

Mr. Subramanian made a presentation, in which he said all is well with the economy and it is growing at around 5%, which is far better than many other countries. According to multiple sources, the presentation drew sharp questions from MPs across parties. Mr. Sinha, the chairperson, told Mr. Subramanian not to give “simplistic explanations”. The MPs pointed out that it was wrong to blame the global downturn entirely because there were patches in global economy which were still doing well.

‘Pushed hard’

“They were not willing to accept that there is a crisis in the Indian economy. They were pushed very hard by the committee members. Finally, when they were asked point blank whether there is a crisis or not. Mr. Rajiv Kumar and Mr. Subramanian conceded that, yes, there is a slowdown,” an Opposition MP, who was present at the meeting, told *The Hindu*. At



Krishnamurthy Subramanian

least two other panel members from different parties confirmed the exchange.

Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia, Disinvestment Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Expenditure Secretary Ajay Narayan Jha and NITI Ayog CEO Amitabh Kant attended the day-long meeting.

In the post-lunch session, Mr. Kant made a presentation on the way ahead to reach the government's goal of a \$5 trillion economy by 2025. “Significantly his presentation highlighted the pitfalls that the government faces to reach the target. While he did not concede that the target is unrealistic, what we understood from the presentation is that the government has many miles to go before it reaches anywhere close to the goal,” another Opposition MP said. Mr. Kant said the Indian agriculture is practically stagnant, growing at 1% and it needs to grow at 4% for the target.

Finance Ministry officials also acknowledged the impact of demonetisation on the economy and the lag effect of the GST.

Goyal lays out nuts and bolts of RCEP decision

At a briefing for Union Cabinet, he denied that India tried to scuttle the pact

**NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI**

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has briefed the Union Council of Ministers on the country's decision not to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

On Wednesday, while he did go into the political aspects of the decision, it was also to make his colleagues aware of the minute technical issues behind the action.

Long-standing reasons

Mr. Goyal has emphatically denied that India had put in any last minute deal breakers to scuttle the pact. Instead, the reasons were said to be of long-standing and had been consistently on the negotiating table. Among the

reasons are some that are already in the public domain - like the threat of circumvention of Rules of Origin due to tariff differentials, where countries take advantage of tariff differentials given to another country, and not of

NEWS ANALYSIS

ferred to it. Also, a long-standing request of India that the base rate of customs duty be changed from 2014 to 2019, as the RCEP, even if signed in 2019, would be ratified only by 2022, which means that the 2014 base rate would be hugely outdated even for the take-off point of the agreement.

A request was also made for tariff lines to be on an au-

to-trigger safeguard mechanism along with a review clause at a periodicity of three, as India's experience with free trade agreements (FTAs) has been that it often leads to huge import surges that impair the domestic industry due to dumping.

MFN issue

Most significantly, an exclusion of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) obligations was sought in the investment chapter, i.e., India has given MFN status looking at its strategic interests.

“It cannot be anyone's case that what India gives to its strategic allies or for geopolitical reasons will be handed out to all RCEP countries, including those with whom India has border dis-

putes,” said a government source. Plainly what this means is that without adequate safeguards, the RCEP could end up being an FTA with China through the back door with a huge trade deficit on the Indian side.

The effort was, say government sources, to ask the RCEP to consider the Indian position, and when that was not on, with other member-countries going ahead with signing, Prime Minister Narendra Modi felt there was no option but to keep out of the agreement.

The government will go ahead with individual FTA negotiations with the U.S. and the European Union, but, clearly, these efforts would be informed by the RCEP experience.

Jharkhand Opposition announces alliance

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA**

After several meetings, the Opposition parties in Jharkhand on Friday formally announced an alliance for the Assembly elections to 81 seats.

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) will contest in 43 constituencies, the Congress in 31 and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in seven. Congress's State in-charge R.P.N. Singh made the announcement at a briefing, along with JMM leader Hemant Soren. However, no RJD leader was present.

Asked about the absence of a RJD representative, Mr. Soren said, “Some questions of the RJD remain to be addressed and they will be done soon. It is very difficult to meet imprisoned RJD leader Lalu Prasad ji often but we'll sort out those issues amicably.”

Manjhi to go it alone

Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) president and former Bihar Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi said his party would contest the 2020 Assembly election in Bihar alone as the allies, RJD and Congress, were taking decisions in the grand alliance on their own.

Earlier, he had said his party would contest the Jharkhand Assembly election independently.

Brazil braces for release of ex-President

Death of student triggers outrage in Hong Kong

Lula may be freed after SC overturns rule requiring convicted criminals to go to jail after losing first appeal

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
CURITIBA

Lawyers for Brazilian leftist icon Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Friday filed a request for his release from prison following a Supreme Court ruling that threatens to deepen political divisions.

Dozens of supporters outside the federal police headquarters in the southern city of Curitiba where Mr. Lula has been held since April 2018 cheered and waved “Free Lula” signs as lawyer Cristiano Zanin exited the facility after speaking to the popular ex-President.

Mr. Lula is among several thousand convicts who could be freed after the Supreme Court’s decision late on Thursday to overturn a rule requiring convicted criminals to go to jail after losing their first appeal. They would remain free until they had exhausted their rights to appeal their conviction – a process critics say could take



Bursting with joy: Supporters of jailed former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva celebrating outside the Supreme Court in Brasilia on Thursday. •AP

years in cases involving people able to afford expensive lawyers.

Many of those affected by the 6-5 ruling are political and business leaders caught up in a massive corruption probe dubbed the ‘Car Wash’ that began in 2014.

“We have already filed the

request and we will speak to (federal judge) Carolina Leb-bos,” Mr. Zanin told reporters, adding he hoped their request could be expedited.

Mr. Lula was “very serene” and the Supreme Court ruling had given him “hope that there could be justice,” he said. “Our judi-

cial battle continues, our focus is to get the legal case nullified.”

Mr. Lula, who led Brazil through a historic boom from 2003 to 2010, earning him the gratitude of millions of Brazilians for redistributing wealth to haul them out of poverty, is serving eight

years and 10 months for corruption. He was sentenced to almost 13 years in jail in February in a separate corruption case and still faces another half dozen corruption trials.

Mr. Lula, 74, has denied all the charges, arguing they were politically motivated to keep him out of the 2018 presidential election that was won by far-right President Jair Bolsonaro.

“I’m coming for you, wait for me!” Lula’s girlfriend, Rosangela da Silva, tweeted after the Supreme Court announced its decision.

If he is freed, Mr. Lula’s criminal record will prevent him from resuming his political career. He was the founder of the Workers Party (PT). That could change, however, if the Supreme Court were to decide in a separate case that Justice Minister Sergio Moro, who convicted Mr. Lula when he was a judge in 2017, had been biased.

Protesters blame police, hold vigil for 22-year-old

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

Thousands in Hong Kong held vigils on Friday night for a student who died from a fall during recent clashes with the police, triggering fresh outrage from the pro-democracy movement.

Although the precise chain of events leading to 22-year-old Alex Chow’s fall last weekend is unclear and disputed, his death on Friday morning was the first student fatality during the five months of demonstrations.

Protesters have made alleged police brutality one of their movement’s rallying cries and have seized on the death. At the spot where Mr. Chow fell, thousands queued for hours to lay flowers, light candles and write condolence messages. “Today we mourn the loss of a



Protesters offering prayers at the car park where Alex Chow was found unconscious. •AP

freedom fighter in Hong Kong,” Joshua Wong, a prominent pro-democracy campaigner, said on Twitter.

“The atmosphere in Hong Kong is like a ticking bomb,” added Lo Kin-hei, a local pro-democracy councillor and activist. “HKers don’t trust the police will give us the truth.”

The police have repeatedly denied any allegations of

wrongdoing in relation to Mr. Chow’s death. The lead officer in the case, Superintendent Ewing Wu, again insisted on Friday that the police were not at fault.

“As for the allegations that police chased the deceased or that we pushed him and caused him to fall, the police hereby make a solemn statement again that nothing of the kind happened,” Mr. Wu told reporters. “At this stage, we are investigating the cause of Chow’s death instead of investigating police officers,” Mr. Wu said.

The Hong Kong government expressed “great sorrow and regret” on Friday over the incident. In Beijing, the Foreign Affairs Ministry declined to comment directly but said “eliminating disorder” was Hong Kong’s most urgent task.

IN BRIEF



Iran earthquake kills five, leaves 300 injured

TEHRAN

An earthquake rocked northwestern Iran before dawn on Friday, killing at least five people and injuring more than 300 in crumbling and collapsed buildings. The 5.9-magnitude quake struck about 120 km southeast of the city of Tabriz, the Iranian Seismological Centre said. Some 40 homes were levelled by the quake and over 200 head of cattle killed. AFP

No agreement on China tariff rollback, says U.S. President

Trump contradicts Beijing’s claim from earlier this week

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that he has not agreed to rollback tariffs on Chinese imports, dampening recent optimism for a major de-escalation in the U.S.-China trade war.

Mr. Trump’s remarks appeared to push back against Beijing’s claims this week that the two sides had agreed to remove tariffs in stages as part of a partial deal announced last month.



Donald Trump

“They would like to have a rollback. I haven’t agreed to anything,” he told reporters at the White House. “China would like to get somewhat of a rollback, not a

complete rollback, because they know I won’t do it.”

Chinese Commerce Ministry spokesman Gao Feng announced on Thursday that U.S. and Chinese officials had “agreed to rollback the additional tariffs in stages, as progress is made towards a (final) agreement.”

“They would like to make a deal much more than I do,” Mr. Trump said, adding that the initial agreement will be signed “in our country,” possibly in Iowa.

Trump asked to pay \$2 mn in damages

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

A New York judge on Thursday ordered Donald Trump to pay \$2 million for using his former charity to further his political and business interests.

Justice Saliann Scarpulla of the New York Supreme Court told him to pay the damages to a group of non-profit organisations. The civil law suit accused Mr. Trump of using the Trump Foundation funds to settle lawsuits, promote his Trump-branded hotels, and for personal spending.

Mauritius elects incumbent Prime Minister for 5-year term

Will continue to work toward progress: Jugnauth

REUTERS
PORT LOUIS

Mauritius’ ruling Militant Socialist Movement (MSM) has won more than half of the seats in Parliament, securing incumbent Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth a five-year term, the final election results showed on Friday.

Thursday’s vote was dominated by calls for fairer distribution of wealth on the



Pravind Kumar Jugnauth

prosperous Indian Ocean island of 1.3 million people.

MSM won 38 of the 62 seats up for grabs while its rivals, the Labour Party and the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM), garnered 13

and 9 seats respectively, the election commission said.

Two seats on the island of Rodrigues were won by the Organisation of the People of Rodrigues (OPR) party.

Mr. Jugnauth, 57, became Prime Minister in 2017 when his father stepped down from the post, and has already introduced a minimum wage to try and improve wealth distribution. “I have obtained a clear mandate to continue to work towards progress and development in this country,” he told his supporters after the count in his constituency.

In Presidential election, local is the national in Sri Lanka’s east

Voters are viewing the poll under two lenses — their suffering during the civil war years and soon after, and the local, communal contradiction

MEERA SRINIVASAN
BATTICALOA

Hardly any election-related poster is visible in Batticaloa town, much like the rest of Sri Lanka, since the Election Commission banned banners and cut-outs last month. All the same, voters appear all set for the November 16 presidential poll, going by the many pocket meetings here, where voters are thrashing out positions.

Residents of Batticaloa district, and those in neighbouring Trincomalee and Ampara - which together form Sri Lanka’s scenic Eastern Province along the east coast - consider this election crucial. Not only because they get to choose a new national leader, but also because the poll’s outcome might impact the delicate lo-

cal dynamic of this multi-ethnic district.

Ties within the community were complex to start with, as Tamils (mostly Hindus and Christians) and Tamil-speaking Muslims – the two identify as separate ethnic groups in Sri Lanka – in the province compete for limited local administrative powers and resources.

And then, when Batticaloa suffered a suicide bombing in the serial blasts that shook Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday this April, local relations faced a risk of serious deterioration, especially since investigators traced the attacks to Zahran Hashim, an Islamist radical from Kattankudy town here. It led to an instant perpetrator-victim binary in the district, since almost all the victims at the Zion

church blast were Tamils. “Thankfully, the tensions didn’t spiral into violence. While things appear calmer on the surface, the mutual suspicion between Tamils and Muslims is very much there,” said Kanthavel Kandeean, a social worker in Batticaloa town.

Conversations with many residents indicated that voters are using two predominant lenses this poll season.

One, based on their suffering during the civil war years and soon after. For many voters, there is a lingering discomfort with prominent candidate Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a war-time Defence Secretary and brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa. They are likely to back his main opponent in the race, Sajith Premadasa, fielded by



For many voters, there is a lingering discomfort with Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

the incumbent government.

The other, is the lens of the local, communal contradiction. A few local Tamil politicians, including renegade LTTE-members ex-Chief Minister Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan or ‘Pillayan’- said to command some local support - and Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan or ‘Karuna Amman’, are

backing Mr. Rajapaksa.

According to locals, this camp has been trying to tap on the Tamil-Muslim hostility, with an openly anti-Muslim rhetoric and assurances of more powers to Tamils. “Whether it is Tamils or the small Sinhalese community here, there are many who can’t stand the Muslims. They tend to be drawn to that sort of message,” said a private sector employee in Trincomalee, requesting anonymity. “But they are a minority. Most people who stand for democratic rights are backing Sajith,” he said.

Muslim votes

Sri Lanka’s two main Muslim parties have aligned with Mr. Premadasa this election, but for residents of the predominantly-Muslim town of Kat-

tankudy, the choice is not all that straightforward.

Partly because a former governor of the province A.L.A.M. Hizbullah, said to have considerable local support, is running for President. Moreover, many Muslims are disillusioned with the Rajapaksas – associated with hardliners behind the anti-Muslim violence in the past few years – as well as the current government that neither prevented the Easter blasts nor tackled the subsequent orchestrated attacks that targeted Muslims.

“It is time to think of a leader who will be good for the whole country, not just us,” said A.L.M. Sabeel, secretary of the Kattankudy Mosques’ Federation and a member of the local urban council. And that is why

some like him are backing Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the leftist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), knowing well that his chances in this contest are slim.

While voters think about retaining democratic space or building an alternative force, they also emphasise the need for a more fundamental shift in the long-term. A local inter-religious group has held at least 12 pocket meetings in the run-up to the poll.

“We don’t name any candidate but encourage participants to vote for the leader who might give us some space and freedom to dissent or agitate...we have to consolidate democratic forces with urgency,” said Fr. Rajan Rohan, of the local St. John’s church.

Iran claims it shot down ‘foreign’ drone

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TEHRAN

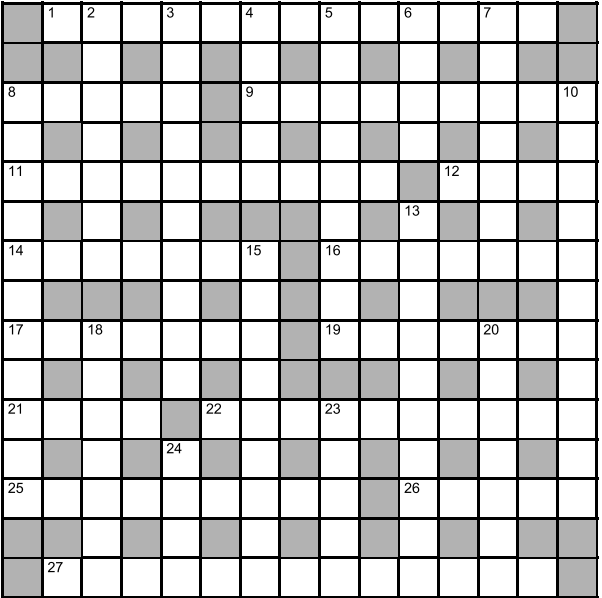
Iran shot down an unidentified drone that “infiltrated” near Bandar-e-Mahshahr port on the Gulf coast on Friday, Iranian media reported. *IRIB*, a state broadcaster, aired a six-second video purporting to show the interception of the drone by an Iranian anti-missile battery.

Units acted “in response to a violation of our airspace by a drone (that) infiltrated”, *IRIBNEWS* said, citing Brig. General Alireza Sabahi Fard, commander-in-chief of aerial defence.

IRNA quoted provincial governor Gholamreza Shariati: “Unknown drone... (belonged) without doubt to a foreign country.”

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12776

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



(set by Dr. X)

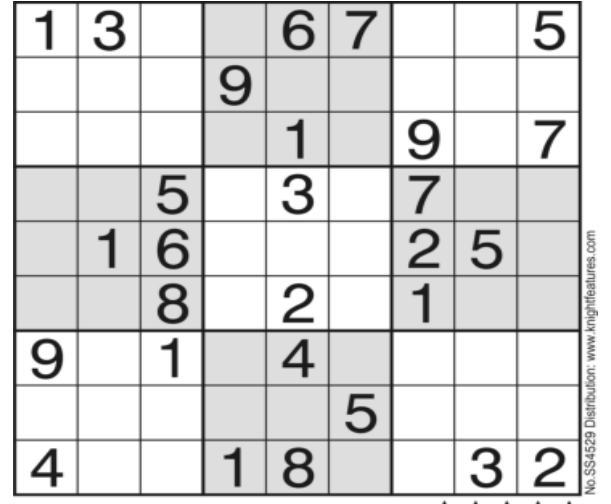
- 12 Split resulting from losing head in rage (4)
- 14 Guesses temperature in Eskimos (7)
- 16 Following mess, Conservative leader quits leading to speculation (7)
- 17 Nazi police in horrific tapes break spirit (7)
- 19 Terrible colic, a suffering essentially relating to the abdomen (7)
- 21 Love to get married? Outstanding (4)
- 22 Trouble after scoundrel’s arrested by angry English cop for misdemeanour (10)
- 25 Principal shot in aisle brutally (9)
- 26 Sighed and concluded love’s lost (5)
- 27 Violation of duty by authority frequently beginning to result in raid (6,2,5)

- 4 Beastly sound is near, inspiring dread in the heart (5)
- 5 Poor sci-fi novel is sleep-inducing (9)
- 6 Succulent plant given by a miss needs sun (4)
- 7 Friend pulled up strap to show safety feature in vehicle (3,4)
- 8 Passing fancy or on intimate terms (4,2,5)
- 10 Where raindrops might be viewed with distrust (5,1,5)
- 13 Marvellous description of criminal mastermind? (5-5)
- 15 Marine predator shifts slyly to trap individual (9)
- 18 Writes in brief recess about English poet (7)
- 20 Archipelagos where one finds beaches surrounding a little lagoon (7)
- 23 Islamic religious leader found in Mecca, lifeless (5)
- 24 Old South American in mountain camp (4)

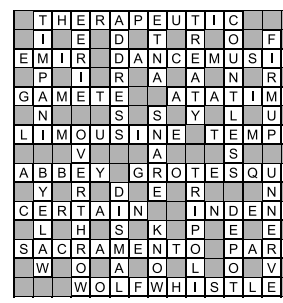
DOWN

- 2 Apprehension shown by essentially diffident son in darkness (7)
- 3 Concerning current vote for largely outrageous gangster (10)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12775



Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku



FAITH

Fall from power

Nammazhvar, in his Thiruvaimozhi, urges us to surrender to the Lord. His oru nayakamai verse shows us the need to surrender at once. We must not keep postponing surrender, said Kidambi Narayanan in a discourse. Nammazhvar gives the example of a king who loses a war and, as a consequence, his kingdom. He loses all his wealth and takes to begging. His only possession now is a begging bowl. Ashamed to be seen begging during the day, the king goes out to beg at night. One night, he struggles to find his way around because of the darkness. He steps on a stray dog lying in his path and falls. The begging bowl rolls away. Hearing the commotion, many people gather round him. They recognise him as the former king. They pity him for his fall from power, and their pity is even more humiliating than his loss of power.

Nammazhvar gives this as an example to make us realise the importance of surrendering at the Lord’s feet. We must not be enamoured of power and wealth, for we will lose them just as the king did. Nampillai, in his commentary, says the fate of this king is very similar to Ravana’s.

Ravana is a king who is finally killed in battle by Rama. His wife Mandodari comes to see him and laments thus: “Even Indra, the chief of the celestials, was afraid of Ravana, and yet here he lies, killed by a human being. You lived in an inaccessible place and you could assume any form you wanted. How is it you have been killed by Rama? When your brother Khara was killed, it was clear that Rama was no ordinary man. Hanuman entered your city, which even devas could not. A bridge was built across the ocean and I was certain that Rama was more than a mere mortal. You allowed your senses to overpower you and you have paid for it.”



ACROSS

- 1 Exhibit signs of anxiety and tension! Be distressed by troubles (4,4,5)
- 8 Husband, worthless, abandons wife in hurry (5)
- 9 One-man concert put up without preparation (9)
- 11 Naughtily thirsting about hot garment worn in bed (10)

MARKET WATCH		
	08-11-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	40,324	-0.81
US Dollar	71.28	-0.44
Gold	38,706	-0.50
Brent oil	61.57	0.08

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	386.15	-4.30
Asian Paints	1794.85	-32.10
Axis Bank	725.50	-9.25
Bajaj Auto	3245.55	-20.30
Bajaj Finserv	8818.85	-14.05
Bajaj Finance	4159.45	-66.40
Bharti Airtel	369.15	-2.60
BPCL	502.75	-10.45
Britannia Ind	3158.00	-65.80
Cipla	462.50	-9.35
Coal India	209.25	-3.25
Dr Reddys Lab	2822.10	-48.95
Eicher Motors	21689.65	265.70
GAIL (India)	127.05	-5.05
Grasim Ind	774.00	-3.85
HCL Tech	1150.10	1.65
HDFC	2233.20	-17.80
HDFC Bank	1255.60	-8.10
Hero MotoCorp	2646.95	-13.90
Hindalco	203.85	-1.35
Hind Unilever	2086.40	-51.85
ICICI Bank	489.45	10.90
IndusInd Bank	1422.80	40.90
Bharti Infratel	218.30	-11.15
Infosys	708.15	-11.95
Indian OilCorp	134.05	-1.80
ITC	260.50	-5.35
JSW Steel	250.00	-2.65
Kotak Bank	1600.25	16.25
L&T	1423.00	-12.05
M&M	580.00	-0.35
Maruti Suzuki	7200.55	-86.60
Nestle India Ltd.	14471.30	-239.95
NTPC	117.40	-2.15
ONGC	138.30	-3.75
PowerGrid Corp	191.65	-2.55
Reliance Ind	1445.50	-13.10
State Bank	316.00	-2.15
Sun Pharma	422.10	-18.50
Tata Motors	169.05	-2.45
Tata Steel	397.95	-5.15
TCS	2129.95	-55.40
Tech Mahindra	771.35	1.65
Titan	1156.75	-10.45
UltraTech Cement	4147.25	-40.15
UPL	555.85	-21.85
Vedanta	155.50	-5.45
Wipro	256.40	-3.25
YES Bank	68.95	2.50
Zee Entertainment	287.50	1.75

EXCHANGE RATES			
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on November 08			
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL	
US Dollar	71.09	71.41	
Euro	78.41	78.76	
British Pound	91.05	91.46	
Japanese Yen (100)	64.96	65.25	
Chinese Yuan	10.18	10.22	
Swiss Franc	71.30	71.62	
Singapore Dollar	52.30	52.54	
Canadian Dollar	53.88	54.13	
Malaysian Ringitt	17.19	17.27	
Source:Indian Bank			

BULLION RATES CHENNAI		
November 08 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g)	47.7	(49.2)
22 ct gold (1 g)	3633	(3658)

Bank of Baroda Q2 net jumps 73%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Bank of Baroda reported a 73.2% jump in its net profit to ₹736.68 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, compared to ₹425.38 crore a year ago. Asset quality improved with gross non-performing asset (NPAs) ratio falling to 10.25% or ₹69,968.95 crore at the end of September 2019, from 11.78% or ₹55,121.37 crore a year ago. Provisions for bad loans and contingencies rose to ₹4,209.16 crore for the quarter, from ₹2,429.54 crore a year ago. Fresh slip-page was at ₹6,001 crore and provision for NPAs was at ₹3,425 crore. The bank said it had received ₹7,000 crore towards preferential allotment of equity shares from the government during the quarter.

M&M profit skids 26.5% to ₹1,213 crore

Company says liquidity crunch coupled with high rates impacting demand

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. (M&M), which declares its financial results along with its 100% subsidiary Mahindra Vehicles Manufacturers Ltd., reported a 26.5% drop in its standalone net profit to ₹1,213 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2019 compared with a net profit of ₹1,649 crore in the year-earlier period. Revenue from operations dropped by 15% to ₹11,076 crore from ₹12,989 crore. Total number of vehicles sold stood at 1,10,824 during the quarter against 1,41,163, down 21%. Tractor sales dropped by 6% to 68,359 units against 73,012 units. Exports slumped 21% to 10,540 units from 13,377 units. Pawan Goenka, MD, M&M said, “Under the current circumstances, when the entire industry is affected, we have

SEBI pulls up PSUs on public holding

Increase liquidity in market, have more of public listing, Tyagi tells firms that don't meet 25% mandate

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Nearly half of the government-owned listed companies are yet to comply with the minimum public shareholding norms that stipulate that at least 25% stake should be held by the public, said Ajay Tyagi, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). “Out of 91 listed PSUs (public sector undertakings), 45 PSUs don't meet the 25% minimum public shareholding norms so they actually need to come forward and increase the liquidity in the market and have more of public listing,” Mr. Tyagi said while addressing a capital market seminar organised by industry body CII.

“This is something which can be done and I think



Nilesh Shah, MD, Kotak Mahindra AMC (left) and SEBI chairman Ajay Tyagi at a CII event on Friday. *PAUL NORONHA

should be done. We have conveyed to the government also,” he added. This assumes significance as the government, in the Union Budget early this year, proposed increasing the minimum public holding in all listed entities to 35% from

the current 25% limit. Incidentally, the capital markets regulator mandated the current 25% minimum public shareholding norm way back in 2010, with which nearly half of the PSUs are not yet compliant. According to the SEBI

chairman, there are public issues cumulatively worth ₹25,000 crore in the pipeline, but lack of confidence in the market is acting as a deterrent for companies to go ahead and launch the initial public offer (IPO). “My view is that this has to be kick-started with some bit of confidence building and this I feel that the government divestment of PSUs in the remaining part of this year... should come in a big way in the market,” Mr. Tyagi said.

‘Infosys probe on’ The SEBI chairman said that a regulatory probe is on in the Infosys matter while making light of the recent statement by Infosys Chairman Nandan Nilekani that even God could not change

the numbers at the firm. “You have to ask him or you can ask God,” Mr. Tyagi told reporters on the sidelines of the conference. “Investors should draw their own conclusions. Whatever we have to do, we are doing. Whatever is the outcome, you would know,” he added. On Wednesday, Mr. Nilekani had said that the software services company operates with the highest integrity, and that “even God can't change the numbers of this company.” Interestingly, the statement from the Infosys chairman came even as the company is yet to receive the report by an external law firm that has been appointed to look into the allegations made by the whistle-blower.

Rupee, stocks fall after Moody's changes outlook to negative

Economists expect more rate cuts to help tackle slowdown

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The rupee and equities markets came under pressure after rating agency Moody's revised the country's rating outlook to negative. While revising the outlook, Moody's has affirmed India's sovereign rating at Baa2. After opening weak against the dollar, the rupee depreciated 33 paise, or 0.46%, against the dollar, to close at 71.28, the lowest closing level for the Indian unit since October 16. The rupee, now at three-week low, has fallen 47 paise against the dollar this week. The weakness of the currency market slipped over to

equities also, with benchmark indices losing nearly 1% each. The 30-share Sensex, which touched an intra-day high of 40,749, closed at 40,323.61, shedding 0.81%. The broader Nifty ended at 11,908.15, down 0.86%. “The news that Moody's lowered India's outlook to ‘negative’ from ‘stable’ not only capped upside but also triggered sharp decline in the benchmark in the latter half,” said Ajit Mishra, vice president, Research, Religare Broking, adding that further profit taking is likely to be witnessed in the coming sessions. Sensex heavyweights like

Sun Pharmaceutical, Vedanta, ONGC, TCS, HUL and ITC all lost more than 2% each on Friday. Foreign portfolio investors continued to buy Indian shares and were net buyers on Friday at ₹932 crore. Economists at Bank of America Merrill Lynch said more interest rate cuts by the RBI was the only way to address the slowdown. Pointing out that the present slowdown was cyclical rather than structural, the economists said with the Reserve Bank of India and Finance Ministry taking multiple measures, a shallow recovery is expected in early 2020.

Moody's downgrades outlook for oil PSUs, financial institutions

Global borrowing costs may rise: BPCL

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Credit rating agency Moody's has downgraded the ratings outlook for top oil PSUs – Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC), Oil India Limited (OIL) and Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) – besides IT majors Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services to ‘negative’ from ‘stable’. This, after it changed the outlook on India's Baa2 sovereign rating to negative from stable.

“Ratings of IOCL, BPCL and OIL incorporate our expectation of support from the Indian government. Therefore, a downgrade of the rating of the sovereign to Baa3 from Baa2 will result in downgrade of the respective Baa2 ratings of these companies,” Vikas Halan, a Moody's senior vice-president said.

BPCL Director-Finance N. Vijayagopal told *The Hindu*, “This may lead to a marginal increase in our borrowing costs from the global markets. We are not planning to raise any funds from international markets soon.” “Although the Baal rating of ONGC does not incorporate any uplift because of support from the Indian government, it is constrained at no higher than one notch above the sovereign rating. Therefore, a downgrade of the sovereign rating will also result in downgrade of the rating of ONGC. Further, the rating of HPCL, which also



incorporates expectation of support from the Government of India, through ONGC, will also be downgraded if we downgrade the rating of ONGC and the sovereign,” said Mr. Halan, lead analyst for Indian oil and gas firms at Moody's. According to Kaustubh Chaula, Moody's Vice President – Senior Credit Officer, “Ratings for Infosys and TCS are constrained to no more than two notches above the sovereign rating. Therefore a sovereign rating downgrade will also result in downgrade of the A3 ratings of Infosys and TCS.”

SBI, HDFC Bank Moody's also revised the rating outlook for six financial institutions, including State Bank of India and HDFC Bank following the change in outlook of the sovereign ratings. EXIM India, HUDCO, IRFC and Hero Fincorp are the other four financial institutions which also saw change in outlook to ‘negative’. The rating outlooks for Bank of India, Canara Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Syndicate Bank and Union Bank of India were maintained ‘at stable’.

RBI ups limit on borrowings from MFIs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday increased the household income limits for borrowers of NBFC-MFIs from ₹1 lakh to ₹1.25 lakh for the rural areas, with an aim to strengthen credit to those in the bottom of the economic pyramid. Similarly, the limit has been increased from ₹1.6 lakh for urban or semi-urban areas to ₹2 lakh, the RBI said in a circular. The limit has been increased after taking into consideration the important role played by microfinance institutions (MFIs) in delivering credit to those in the bottom of the economic pyramid and to enable them play their assigned role in a growing economy, it said.

IDBI Bank Q2 net loss narrows to ₹3,459 crore

Provision coverage improves to 91.25%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

IDBI Bank on Friday reported a loss of ₹3,459 crore for the second quarter ended September 30 as provisions for bad loans stayed elevated. This compares with a loss of ₹3,602 crore a year earlier. The bank – which is under the prompt corrective framework of RBI – has made a provision of ₹3,544.93 crore for bad loans in the reporting period compared with ₹5,481.64 crore a year ago. Gross NPA ratio improved to 29.43% for the quarter from 31.78% a year ago, and 29.12% as on June 30, 2019. Fresh slippages stood at ₹2,059 crore while recoveries and upgrades were to the tune of Rs 1,759 crore. Net interest income for



period grew by 25% to ₹1,631 crore, while net interest margin improved by 53 basis points to 2.33% for the second quarter as compared to 1.8% a year ago. The bank's management attributed the losses to accelerated provisions to the tune of ₹3,425 crore, which helped the lender to improve provision coverage ratio to 91.25% from 68.72% from a year ago.

Rough terrain			
Metrics	Q2 FY20	Q2 FY19	Growth (%)
Revenue from operations (₹ cr)	11,076.06	12,988.57	(14.72)
Profit after tax (₹ cr)	1,212.60	1,649.46	(26.48)
Basic EPS (₹)	10.17	13.86	

Under the current circumstances, when the entire industry is affected, we have done well. During the quarter, we had a market share growth in every segment

PAWAN GOENKA, MD, M&M

done well. During the quarter, we had a market share growth in every segment. Though the overall profit was down, we maintained the operating margin. Compared to the industry, we have done well in terms of market share, top-line and bottomline.” For the quarter, the company reported consolidated

revenue from operations of ₹23,936 crore compared with ₹25,431 crore, down 6%. Profit after tax was down to ₹368 crore compared with ₹1,709 crore, down 78%. The company said the Indian economy continued to cope with suppressed consumer sentiment and a continuing liquidity crunch which, coupled with high

consumer finance rates due to non-transmission of repo rate reduction, was impacting demand. “The Indian auto industry, in particular, is undergoing a challenging period with all industry segments declining for two consecutive quarters for the first time in the last 15 years. Despite such a challenging environment leading to a volume drop in both its segments, the company, with strong emphasis on cost management, ensured the EBITDA drop was in line with the revenue decline,” it said. Commenting on the results, Reliance Securities said, “Looking ahead, we expect M&M to face tough business situations in near term on account of turbulence in BS VI transition, competitive environment in domestic SUV space and slowdown in tractor industry.”

Ashok Leyland net dips

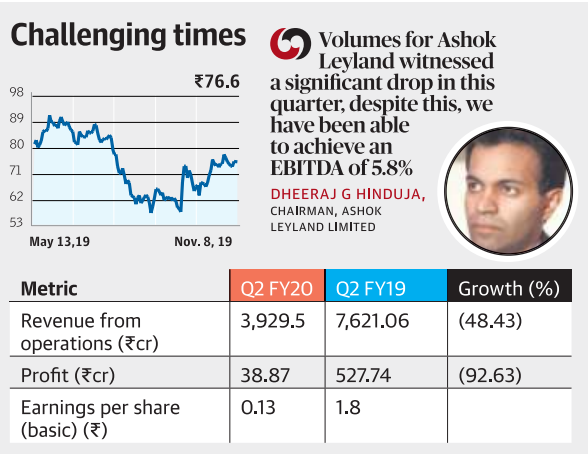
Profit plummets 93%; auto sector slump hits performance

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Commercial vehicle manufacturer Ashok Leyland Ltd. reported a 92.6% dip in standalone net profit to ₹38.87 crore for the second quarter ended September 2019, from ₹527.74 crore a year earlier.

Revenue from operations slumped 48.43% to ₹3,929.50 crore due to a drop in total industry volume.

“The industry has witnessed a 53% decline in volumes. Volumes for Ashok Leyland also witnessed a significant drop in this quarter; despite this, we have been able to achieve an EBITDA (earnings before tax, depreciation and amortisation) margin of 5.8%,” said Dheeraj G. Hinduja, chairman, Ashok Leyland Ltd. “Some of the cost management pro-



grammes initiated early this year have yielded benefits and are reflected in the results,” Mr. Hinduja added.

Focus on cost reduction “We commenced our productivity drive and cost reduction programme well in advance,” said Gopal Maha-

devan, whole time director and chief financial officer, Ashok Leyland Ltd.

“These initiatives have gained momentum and have helped us achieve a sizeable reduction in costs. We are closely watching the developments in the industry,” Mr. Mahadevan added.

MRF to raise ₹102 crore via debenture route

Board declares interim dividend

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Tyre major MRF Ltd. has decided to raise ₹102 crore by issuing non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on a private placement basis, in one or more tranches.

The board of directors, at its meeting held on Friday, have approved raising of funds by way of issuance of NCDs on private placement basis, aggregating to an amount not exceeding ₹102 crore in one or more tranches, said the company in a regulatory filing.

During the second quarter, the standalone net profit of the company for the second quarter ended September 2019 dipped by

16.22% to ₹220.36 crore. Total income increased to ₹4,042 crore from ₹4,005 crore. The board has declared an interim dividend of ₹3 per equity share.

In a note, the company said corporate assessees were given the option to apply for lower income tax rate with effect from April, 1 2019. MRF was in the process of evaluating the impact of availing the said option and accordingly, no effect in this regard has presently been considered in the measurement of tax expense for the quarter, the company said in the note.

Shares of MRF gained 1.49% to close at ₹64,422.25 on the BSE on Friday.

Tea industry looks to start-ups for marketing

Entrepreneurs share tricks of trade

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Close on the heels of the Tea Board of India hosting a meeting of young tea entrepreneurs to hear their success stories, the Tea Association of India broke new ground by inviting a tea start-up to its annual general meeting, to learn new ways of marketing the age-old brew.

Speaking as a guest of honour, Kausshal Dugarr, founder and CEO of Tea Box, said that the Indian tea industry was facing the challenge of rising costs amid stagnant values.

Pointing out that value-realisation was not difficult

Mutual fund AUM rises 7.4% to ₹26.33 lakh crore

Inflows into equity, liquid funds robust

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Mutual funds’ asset base increased to ₹26.33 lakh crore at October-end, a rise of 7.4% compared with the preceding month, on the back of robust inflows into equity and liquid schemes.

The 44-player industry logged an assets under management (AUM) of ₹24.5 lakh crore in September-end, according to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI).

Mutual funds witnessed an overall inflow of ₹1.33 lakh crore last month after witnessing a redemption of ₹1.52 lakh crore in September. Of these, liquid funds alone witnessed an impressive over ₹93,200 crore last month.

Fund managers attributed growth in the asset base

to higher retail participation and robust inflows in equity schemes and liquid funds.

Open-ended equity schemes witnessed an infusion of ₹6,026 crore, while there was a small outflow of ₹11 crore in close-ended equity plans, taking total equity inflows to ₹6,015 crore last month. In September, net inflow in such schemes stood at ₹6,489 crore.

Himanshu Srivastava, senior analyst manager, research, Morningstar Investment Adviser India, said, “A series of steps taken by the government in the recent times to boost domestic economy had improved sentiments and helped the markets to surge.

“This has helped investors slowly gain confidence and get back to investing.”

Infosys applies to RoC in ex-CFO matter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

IT firm Infosys on Friday said it along with some current and former executives has submitted applications with the Registrar of Companies (ROC) in the matter related to severance agreement with former CFO Rajiv Bansal.

“The company (along with certain current and former key managerial personnel) have submitted applications with RoC, Karnataka... for compounding of certain alleged offences that pertain to matters relating to the severance agreement executed with the former CFO of the company in October 2015,” Infosys said in a filing.



Kausshal Dugarr

SUBHA RAO

Last October, singer and voice artiste Chinmayi Sripada shared a video on Telangana's Gollabhama saris, which are known for their intricate weaves and everyday motifs – of milkmaids (*gollabomma*) carrying pots on their heads or playing *kolaatam*. The 11-minute YouTube short, which has since racked up over 49,500 views, explored a weaving cluster in Siddipet, one of the places where the “Telangana government has been pushing the cause of handloom”. “Less than 90 km from Hyderabad, it was like entering a time capsule [women at *charkhas*, men on looms, and silks and cottons in multi-hued piles],” she says.

There's not only a demand to buy the products, but also to hear its story, see its place of origin, and meet the people who create it. Catering to this burgeoning market now are a slew of textile walks. Once undertaken by design students who wanted hands-on experience, designers looking to source material, or families wedding shopping, today these have evolved into curated weaving holidays. The South, with its rich history of handloom, which changes every 100 kilometres, offers an intricate map.

Down country roads

“[Weaving] clusters are small villages in the interiors. They are green and serene, and on a walk, all you hear is the sound of the shuttles from pit looms,” shares Sashikant Naidu. The Hyderabad-based designer, who works extensively with weavers, says he began his career thanks to such walks. “I went off on my own and discovered talented clusters about 10 years ago, in Ilavaram, Peteru, Rajolu and Bhattiprolu of Guntur district [in Andhra Pradesh], well-known for the thickly-woven, seven-yard Guntur saris, in the counts of 60s and 80s.”

Today, from day trips to short packages, the tours, led by lovers of handloom, explore the ethos of weaving, in conjunction with the local culture, food and sources of inspiration, such as architecture. For example, a trip to Kanchipuram would also feature temple tours (to draw a parallel between the *mankolam* motif and the sacred mango tree at the Ekambaranathar temple or the lions that stride down sari borders and along the walls of the Vaikunta Perumal temple).

A numbers game

One of the challenges (to reconnect with our tradition) is the dwindling number of clusters. Deborah Thiagarajan, founder of DakshinaChitra, the living history museum, remembers putting together a trail in which designer Ritu Kumar also took part.

“It was a research trip, and we drew up an itinerary that began in Madras and included Kanchipuram, Kalahasti, Salem, Rasipuram, Karur, Bhavani and Erode. It was a vibrant scene two de-



WEAVING holidays aren't just for the HANDLOOM hunter

In a year that's been about sustainable fashion and nurturing craft, why not consider going back to the source? Textile warriors make a case for immersive experiences and rediscovering the loom

acades ago,” she says. “But if I wanted to do one now, I'd probably find more powerlooms than handlooms.” Recalling a recent trip to Dharwad and Belgaum in Karnataka, she laments that there weren't many looms remaining, and the only people wearing the traditional *ilkal* saris were the elderly women in the bazaar. We speak with designers and textile warriors who've gone on these trips, and those who organise them.

Ritu Kumar, designer

The design maven, renowned for her use of handloom, still remembers a 10-day textile trail she did with Deborah Thiagarajan, to Chirala and Machilipatnam. “I remember waking up before dawn and watching the printers roll out fabrics soaked in myrobalan liquid and draping it over rice roots to dry – the start of *kalamkari*'s three-week printing, painting and dyeing process, and one of the most recognised printing schools from India. The long process of Machilipatnam *kalamkari* was an eye



opener, and made us appreciate the genius of that area and its control over vegetable dyeing,” she reminisces. “Go on a textile trip. See its roots, where it comes from, who makes it.”



Vijayalakshmi

Malani Nachiar, Ethicus

The co-founder of the Pollachi-based organic cotton brand was drawn to textile trails after she did one in Bengal (2016) and Kutch (2017). Today, she organises customised outings at her weaving centre. “We just had a group of children come in from a nearby school. This was the youngest batch we've hosted, so we kept things really basic. They touched the cotton, learnt its texture, and even sang a handloom song. Design students and textile enthusiasts get a more in-depth one, with details of the warp and weft, the organic farming process, the cleaning and spinning of cotton, along with a short trip to the village to see where it all begins.” Among those who've been part of the trail is New York-based fashion designer Donna Karan. ₹2,000 per day, including lunch; Ethicus.in

Sreemathy Mohan, textile researcher

Last year, Mohan did a 12-week field work project for DakshinaChitra, Revisiting Real Madras Handkerchief. As part of it, she visited the artisans in Chirala to

understand their issues first-hand. “I've so far led two trips [of 10 people each] to Kanchipuram, and several individual ones. Every time, I include a weaving component. I also make it a point to visit some of the temples nearby, because that gives people an idea about the motifs [from *gopurams* to the *kodi visiri* (creeper)].” For instance, a trip to Thiruvananthapuram will help you understand the practise of *kattichaayam*, where they dye the sari differently, after tying portions of it. “When you go on these holidays, you get to meet the people who weave your garments, and see how, in just three rooms, they create such a rich tapestry on fabric, while leading a hand-to-mouth existence. Despite this, they are so generous [offering food and drink],” says Mohan. “If the group is deeply passionate about textiles, I also take them to the state-run *zari* making unit in Orikkai, near Kanchipuram.” Approximately ₹2,000 for a day trip, with lunch; Facebook.com/textiletrails

TN Venkatesh, Co-optex

The Tamil Nadu Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Society is on a revival and innovation path. “Whenever there is a

group of 10-12 interested people, we organise a two-three day tour of weaving clusters,” says the managing director. “We've done several trips (Salem-Rasipuram-Vanavasi or Puttapaka-Pochampally-Koyyelagudem, home to Andhra's single and double *ikats*) where we've introduced weaving, *sungudi*-knotting and Athangudi tile making. If Kanchipuram is the preferred place for silk, we take them to Kumbakonam and Thiruvananthapuram for cottons. Trails are such a great way to learn about what you wear. Despite my background in textiles, there is so much knowledge gathering. For example, the commonality in usage of motifs and patterns, like how Kanchipuram and Bishnupur use similar representations of the fish and horse.” Co-optex organises such tours on request. ₹2,500 to ₹3,000 a day, inclusive of transportation and food; Cooptex@cooptex.com.

Sreejith Jeevan, Rouka

Since the 2018 floods decimated weaving clusters in Kerala, Jeevan has been working closely with those in Chendamangalam. “In Kerala, the fabric is simple, but what goes into it is complex. A lot of people are keen to see the origin and process after seeing our materials. So, I take them to the clusters from where I source; they look around, observe, and buy from the weavers,” says the designer, who just launched a line of saris and separates that reinterpret Kerala's *kasavu* sari, woven by the women of the Society: 648 cluster. “These trips are eye-openers. Many believe that weaving is about the loom; they don't know the pre-weaving processes – the washing and starching, where people work between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m. Not many know that one *mundu* comes into being after six people have worked on it. Even in a documentary, you don't get to see weavers for the living, breathing people they are.”

Ramesh Menon, Save the Loom

Combining fashion, art, craft and textiles, Menon's STL Tours (under the umbrella of Save the Loom, the non-profit that had rallied to weavers' help in the aftermath of last year's Kerala floods) brings in a mix of fun and education. “Weaving tourism not only brings sensitivity to an urban population – about the craft, its people and where it originates – but also supports the village economy.” Menon organises two holidays. The first is curated around Kerala's five main centres: Balamapuram (rich silks and *kasavu*), Chendamangalam (fine cottons), Kuthampully (with a Tamil influence, seen in its bright colours and motifs, like checks), Kasargod (a Mysuru tradition brought down by the Saliyar community) and Kannur (export-quality linens). The second is to Kanchipuram, with visits to the looms of national-award winners, and a detour to Pudukcherry. From ₹25,000 onwards (airport to airport); Savatheloom.org – With inputs from Surya Praphulla Kumar

Scatting through an alaapana

Mumbai-based Carnatic-Jazz singer Aditi Ramesh will perform in Delhi tonight

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

Like many of us who are pushed to learn an extra curricular when in school, Aditi Ramesh was nudged into Carnatic classical music during her growing up years in the U.S.

Later, just as many of us leave these skills behind when high school and college pressures mount, Aditi too let music go for a degree from NALSAR University of Law. She was working as a lawyer, until one day she realised there was a gradual build up of “a feeling of frustration of losing all that learning”. She wanted to slow down, and find a way to keep a day job while revisiting music and practising it every day.



“At the end of 2016 is when I was quitting law. I started going to jazz jams [in Mumbai], where people could go jam with the house-bands. I tried a few times, and embarrassed myself, but I loved it. It made me start listening to [jazz] and teaching it to myself,” Aditi, who will be performing at the IAQ's Under the Banyan Tree series of monthly concerts, recalls.

How she brought this in, into her decades-old practice in Carnatic

singing is evident in even just the four tracks in her latest EP *Leftovers*. The songs were written at different points of time since the end of 2017 upto as late as June this year. “The first song, “Origin”, is a tribute to my Carnatic roots, telling people not to forget their roots,” Aditi says. She starts off with a foot-tapping alaapana, but easily transforms that into scat singing – as the lyrics emerge, it's Swaminatha Paripalaya, a Muthuswami Dikshitar composition in Adi that she's singing.

She's quick to clarify that she's not entirely comfortable with terming this fusion. “I have nothing against the word, but I think that it's perhaps overused and comes with a certain tag. My music takes inspiration from different styles that organically flow into each other,” she says.

The next two tracks, “Folders” and “Don't Be Rude” are more personal everyday experiences – the former of explaining to a flatmate

how she used to compartmentalise the different facets of her life as a musician and lawyer, while the latter was a reaction to life in a busy city. The outro however, is a little bit of a surprise. A passage from the Bhagavat Gita, it talks about the idea of cooking and sharing the food, “and that those who cook for themselves only are fed with sin,” she explains.

Initially, the EP was supposed to be a three-track compilation only. A technical pre-requisite while uploading, meant she needed a fourth track. After initial panic, Aditi stumbled upon this passage, which says summed up the very title of *Leftovers* well. The album art too shows the four members of her band eating a meal together. After all, it's something they do before each practice, and before each gig.

Aditi Ramesh and city-based musical multimedia outfit Dastaan Live will perform at Gallery IAQ tonight, 7 p.m. onwards; tickets on Insider.in at ₹1,500

PEOPLE

Meditative rock

Punjabi Sufi-folk musician Rabbi Shergill is all set to perform in the city tonight

MADHUR TANKHA

Strumming his guitar thoughtfully as he walked through deserts and glides along on a boat, Rabbi Shergill, in his music video from 2005 became the heartbeat of the subcontinent with “Bullah Ki Jaana”. As an independent musician and urban balladeer, he is happy to return to his home city's neighbouring Gurugram as he performs live at DLF Cyberhub's sixth anniversary. The artist, known for his appearances at different seasons of MTV Unplugged will perform his hit tracks Bulla ki Jaana, Tere Bin, Challa, Bulleya. He does a quick chat with us.

You were one of the pioneers of the Sufi-rock blend...

I cannot say that I pioneered it. I think noteworthy names like Lucky Ali, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Sufi rock Junoon the Pakistani band, and Colonial Cousins had made their presence in this kind of music.



Pick one artist you really admire.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. I like his rich collection of songs and how he performed them before the audience. I can rattle off a long list of singers who have inspired me: Abida Parveen, whose song Mann Laga, is one.

Your own guru?

Rock does not have the *guru-shishya parampara*...this traditional teacher-disciple concept seen in our Hindustani classical music. So whatever I have imbibed is through my own initiative – listening to the radio, playing the guitar. I learnt songs on my own. Those who I looked up to also include Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan.

Your link with Delhi?

I am a typical Dilliwalla. I grew up in the city. Wherever I go to in the city seems so familiar. Even its ugliness is something I am so used to seeing. What bothers me is how the pollution level has increased drastically. I wear a mask whenever I have to move around.

The Amphitheatre, DLF Cyberhub, Gurugram, 7 p.m.w onwards

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH-YOUR-WHILE



DANCE

Arangetram

Shubhanu Nrithyakshetram, a dance institute which provides Bharatanatyam training in Thanjavur style is hosting two dance arangetrams this afternoon. Arushi Gulati and Janya Goel, both disciples of Aparna Rajaraman Balaji will be presenting their debut on-stage Bharatanatyam performance.

VENUE: C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, IIC
TIME: 2 p.m.



ART

Mixed-media

Veteran theatre director Ebrahim Alkazi's early art works titled *Opening Lines: The Artworks of E. Alkazi* is on display at Shridharani Gallery. Curated by Ranjit Hoskote, the show presents a considerable body of Alkazi's paintings and drawings in several media, which have never been on public view.

VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House
TIME: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.



CUISINE

Rampuri special

Veteran theatre director Ebrahim Alkazi's early art works titled *Opening Lines: The Artworks of E. Alkazi* is on display at Shridharani Gallery. Curated by Ranjit Hoskote, the show presents a considerable body of Alkazi's paintings and drawings in several media, which have never been on public view.

VENUE: Eros Hotel, Nehru Place
TIME: 12 noon-3 p.m. and 7 p.m.-11 p.m.



CARNIVAL

Africa festival

Hauz Khas Social in collaboration with P(article) Collective is hosting the Spirit of Africa festival, a two-day cultural event. The festival, which begins today, is all about introducing African culture: dance, music, literature, curios, clothing and other artefacts and cuisine, through curated events, to Delhi-ites.

VENUE: Social, Hauz Khas Village
TIME: 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.



FILM

Classic weekend

This weekend, Sunset Cinema Club is all set to launch a rooftop cinema experience at Select Citywalk, with a string of popular Hollywood classic movies. This evening, the club will screen *Pretty Woman*, directed by Garry Marshall. Tomorrow's film is *Pulp Fiction*, directed by Quentin Tarantino.

VENUE: Second Floor, Select Citywalk, Saket
TIME: 7:30 p.m.

FILM REVIEWS

NAMRATA JOSHI

Whenever you spot Henry Golding and Michelle Yeoh together in a film you can't help but think of *Crazy Rich Asians*. That hangover looms for a bit over *Last Christmas* as well but by and large, the season's spirit takes over, as it is very consciously meant to. The Paul Feig outing, for which Emma Thompson shares credits for story and screenplay, has got very little by way of surprise and everything you'd expect in a conventional holiday film.

The way-too-early-for-Christmas seasonal offering comes with a familiar but entirely forgettable feel-good message, that however broken you might be, you will mend in the end. That hope and healing is all. So Kate (Emilia Clarke), who can't seem to get anything right in life, becomes a bumbling elf of a saleswoman in Santa's (Yeoh) Covent Garden store during Christmas. A chance meeting there with the personable young Tom (Golding) helps her find her personal salvation and get a grip on herself.

Then there's Kate's larger Yugoslav refugee family in London, with mom Emma Thompson putting on a very obvious, practised, thick accent. Here, no one gets along with anyone. There's anxiety, anger, depression, panic attacks, fights and arguments. It's about these damaged souls, their lost dreams and dented relationships that eventually do get repaired.

A parallel, autumnal romance involving Santa (Yeoh) unfurls as well. It gives the film its one and only one original, genuinely funny moment when Kate describes Santa's brief romantic interlude in the store as a Scandinavian short film. Then, in tune with the title, there is George Michael bringing along the requisite dose of nostalgia with all these stories playing along his popular, and some unheard, songs that appear to have been randomly and meaninglessly strung together as the background score. Why Wham

You gotta have faith

Last Christmas offers a familiar but forgettable feel-good message with unpalatable saccharine sweetness



Winter wonderland There is barely any chemistry or fire between the two protagonists

and Michael when it could have been anybody else? Despite the likeable leads – the charm of Golding and warm, open smile of Clarke – the film's repartee just refuses to sparkle. There is barely

Last Christmas
DIRECTOR: Paul Feig
STARRING: Emilia Clarke, Henry Golding, Michelle Yeoh, Emma Thompson
STORYLINE: Kate, who can't seem to get anything right in life, becomes a bumbling elf of a saleswoman in Santa's store during Christmas. A chance meeting there with the personable young Tom helps her find her salvation and get a grip on herself

any chemistry and fire between the two. It gets too cheesy and saccharine sweet for comfort, at least for my own consumption. Specially when it comes to some manipulated moments and seemingly profound but decidedly shallow talk of how being special is overrated and being human is very hard. And dialogue which reads like Shekhar Kapur's faux philosophical tweets of yore: how one must be good to one's self because no one else has the power to make us happy. Alright! There's a deliberate attempt to bring in immigrant politics, Brexit, the poor and the homeless into the picture but things can't rise above the

facile and the film feels deliberately 'woke', for the heck of it. Worst is the lead up to the climax. The narrative device used is embarrassingly juvenile, in the same league as a blind Nirupa Roy in *Amar Akbar Anthony* suddenly finding her vision all over again thanks to Sai Baba. At least Manmohan Desai could pull off the silly to some sublime effect with sheer chutzpah. With Feig the quick, magical resolution gets plain bland and boring and eminently laughable. As does the entire film. No wonder *Last Christmas* hasn't stayed on with me even for a day after having watched it, when December 25 is still more than a month away.

KENNITH ROSARIO

Bala wants to be as contemporary, relevant and commentative as possible. References in the film are as recent as Gully Boy (2019) in popular culture, keto in dietary fads and TikTok in social media obsessions. The details are highly amusing and perceptive of a rapidly changing small-town India. Yet, if you take a step back and look at the larger picture, the film falls into the same old traps of predictable character arcs, pseudo and shallow gender representation (or advocacy, if the film insists), and a stretched out, didactic climax. If the film can sidestep clichés in its details, it's only fair to expect more from the bigger narrative choices, in which case the film falls short by a mile.

Bala details how hair loss, like other physical appearances that do not align with conventional and marketable beauty, can have an overpowering effect on people's lives and self-esteem. It's one thing to preach 'love yourself' to others but a whole different task to eternalise it. With male pattern baldness, you could be both a victim as well as cushioned by patriarchy. But women, one could argue, have it worse, whether it is their skin colour, size or hair loss. Bala tries to juxtapose these two scenarios. Balmukund or Bala (Ayushmann Khurrana), the once cocky teen with a head full of hair, is putting up a ferocious fight against premature balding at 25.

Latika (Bhumi Pednekar), a strong-willed lawyer, has always been comfortable in her dark skin, even as she was bullied by Bala in school. While Bala's insecurities and discrimination comes from his own sense of vanity, Latika has to toughen up to grapple with societal judgement. Despite Bala being this obnoxious and deceitful chap, the film lays the red carpet for him to eventually come-of-age but is least interested in Latika's journey or struggles. She becomes a mere yardstick for morality and determination, and ultimately a prop to make a point. With the characters' one-tracked worldviews, it's clear that the film wants to actively comment and eventually preaching on a stage (literally, as is the case with Ayushmann Khurrana's brand of public interest cinema), while pretending to get into the complexities of vanity.

Tiktok celebrity Pari Mishra (Yami Gautam), is yet another one-



Belying expectations Ayushmann Khurrana in the film

Hollow film combed over with humour

While nailing the linguistic details, Bala falls into the old traps of predictable character arcs and shallow 'woke' arguments

tracked embodiment of a worldview. Her character's purpose is to convey: beauty does not guarantee happiness/looking good is not all fun and games/we all have insecurities/there's a reason why people are shallow. When all of this is condensed in one scene and not something you slowly glean as a character study throughout, that's an indicator of what kind of film Bala is – one where most of the film is reserved for silly humour and lessons come as 'moral of the story'.

On the opposite end of Pari's character is Latika. The film could have either done away with her or

bothered to include her holistically. She only comes in to preach and make a point. It doesn't help that Pednekar's cosmetically darkened skin keeps changing in tone through the film, almost as a constant reminder that it's not her natural skin colour. Pednekar, by no means, is irreplaceable for the character of Latika. Apart from observational details, Kanpuriya Hindi, lingo and one-liners, and amusing pop culture references, the film's appeal lies in its supporting cast including Saurabh Shukla, Seema Pahwa, Sunita Rajwar, Dheerendra Kumar Gautam and Abhishek Banerjee. Every balding man has a funny (or embarrassing) anecdote or two, but when you pit it against other discrimination and insecurities, as the film does, hair loss pales in comparison. If you wish to make a film rooted in intersections, you cannot abandon other perspectives. That's more like hiding behind a comb-over than accepting your baldness.

Bala

DIRECTOR: Amar Kaushik

CAST: Ayushmann Khurrana, Bhumi Pednekar, Yami Gautam, Javed Jaffrey and Saurabh Shukla

STORYLINE: Bala tries every remedy possible to fight premature balding until a wig changes his life

POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



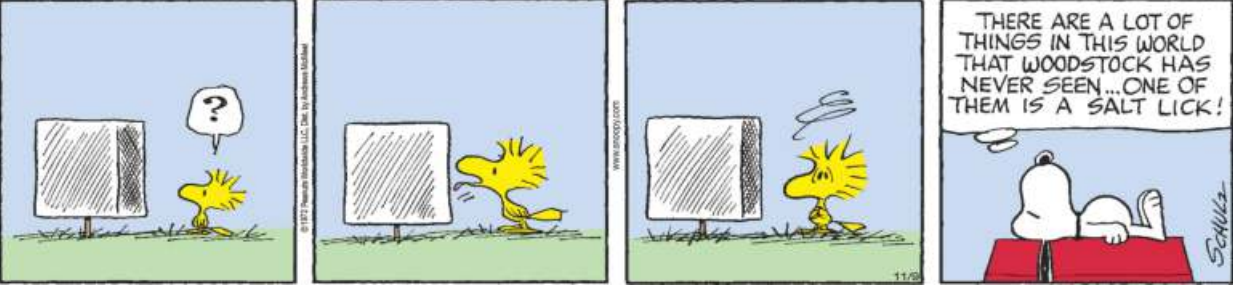
WUMO



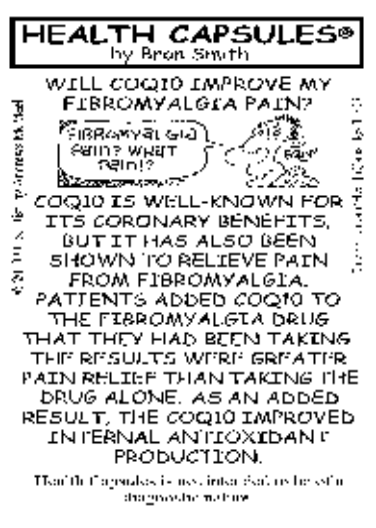
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



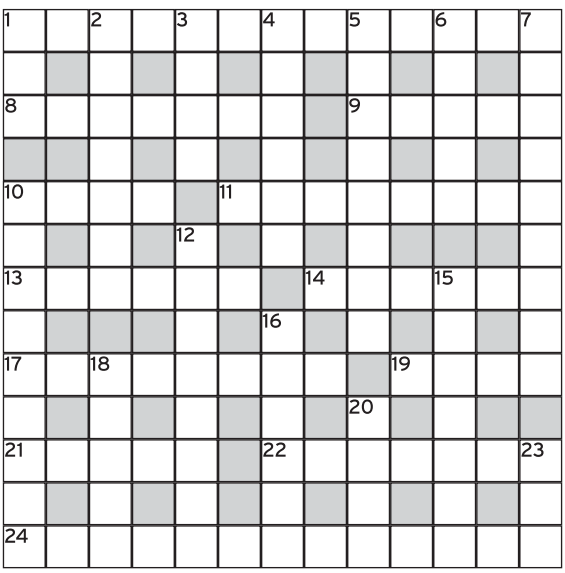
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13220

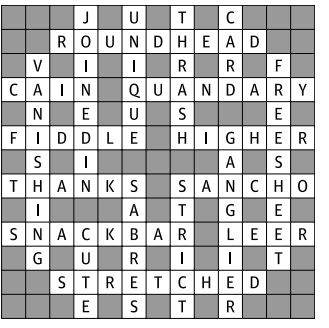


- Across
1 Perimeter (13)
8 Oarsmen (anag) – Italian Riviera resort (7)
9 Fragment (5)
10 Audibly (or visually) obtrusive (4)
11 Over (8)
13 Writer (6)
14 Inborn (6)
17 Misadventure (8)
19 Storage space

- under a roof (4)
21 Cause annoyance (5)
22 Rectangles (7)
24 In a safe location (3,2,5,3)
■ Down
1 Type of lettuce (3)
2 French car manufacturer (7)
3 Functions (4)
4 Gambol (6)
5 Muscovites etc – as

- in USSR (anag) (8)
6 Compass bearing (5)
7 Means to an end (9)
10 Tibetan breed of dog (5,4)
12 Thin sheet of precious metal (4,4)
15 At present – from this moment onwards (2,2,3)
16 Breed of goat or rabbit (6)
18 Top of a wave (5)
20 Morose (4)
23 Sneaky (3)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated November 11, 2019.
Solution No. 13219



Title plot set to thicken in
Anfield blockbuster

Liverpool can open up a nine-point lead over Manchester City on Sunday, but the reigning champion will be keen to claw its way back into the picture

PREVIEW PACK

Form guide (Premier League)
Liverpool WWWWDWW
City WWLWWWD

HEAD TO HEAD (Premier League)
Overall: Liverpool 19 | City 9 | Draws 16
Last five games: Liverpool 1 | City 2 | Draws 2
At Anfield: Liverpool 15 | City 1 | Draws 6

HEAD TO HEAD (Managers)
Overall: Klopp 8 | Guardiola 7 | Draws 2
Last five games: Klopp 2 | Guardiola 2 | Draws 1
Premier League: Klopp 2 | Guardiola 2 | Draws 2

STATS THIS SEASON (after 11 PL games)
Points: Liverpool 31 (10 wins) | City 25 (8 wins)
Goals per game: Liverpool 2.27 | City 3.09
Shots per game: Liverpool 17 | City 22
Chances created per game: Liverpool 2.82 | City 4
Goals conceded per game: Liverpool 0.82 | City 0.91
Shots conceded per game: Liverpool 9 | City 6.9
Clean sheets: Liverpool 2 | City 5

MOST GOALS THIS SEASON (PL)
Liverpool: Mane 6 | Salah 5 | Firmino 3
City: Aguero 9 | Sterling 7 | B. Silva 4

MOST ASSISTS THIS SEASON (PL)
Liverpool: Firmino 3 | Salah 3 | Robertson 3
City: De Bruyne 9 | D. Silva 4 | Mahrez 3

Trendspotting
Liverpool is undefeated in its last 43 home Premier League games and has scored at least 2 goals in its last 12 home PL fixtures
Manchester City has won 22 of its last 25 Premier League games, but hasn't won in the league at Anfield since 2003

SOURCE: PREMIER LEAGUE, WHOSCORED.COM



High intensity: Expect scenes like this — Manchester City's Raheem Sterling driving into the penalty area under pressure from Liverpool's Joe Gomez at Anfield last year — on Sunday.

Liverpool has the opportunity to damage Manchester City's ambitions of winning a third successive Premier League title when the sides meet in a hotly anticipated top-of-the-table clash at Anfield on Sunday.

City has something of an injury crisis and hasn't tasted victory in a league fixture at Anfield since 2003 — a loss this weekend would concede a nine-point advantage to Liverpool after 12 rounds, a gap some experts think is as good as unbridgeable.

Mountain to climb

"With a deficit like that — even in mid-November — Pep Guardiola knows he would have a mountain to climb," former England striker and BBC pundit Alan Shearer said.

But the two clubs have been here before, as recently as in January this year. Liverpool was in a similar position of strength. Victory at the Etihad Stadium then would have shot it 10 points clear. The Reds lost a frenetic clash 2-1, however, and City relentlessly reeled them in to win an epic title

race, 98 points to 97.

This time, Liverpool is at home, and it feels like an opportunity the side can't afford to pass up as it seeks a first league title since 1990. If it does fluff its lines, talk of what happened last season will begin to do the rounds — and doubts about

I think they are worried about us, we have players to hurt them. But they have players to hurt us [too].

GEORGINIO WIJNALDUM
LIVERPOOL MIDFIELDER

the Merseyside club's ability to withstand the pressure of being the favourite will resurface.

In addition to the home advantage, Liverpool has the benefit of being in better shape. Not only have Jurgen Klopp's men had an extra day to recover after Champions League action, forwards Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane had the relative luxury of starting on the bench against Genk.

City, on the other hand, has a plethora of injury issues. The defence, which will be interrogated by Liverpool's electric front three, will continue to miss Aymeric Laporte. Influential goalkeeper Ederson, who picked up a muscular injury against Atalanta, is set to be replaced by Claudio Bravo. David Silva, captain and midfield linchpin, is an injury doubt with a muscle problem.

Guardiola's troubles

With left-back Oleksandr Zinchenko, winger Leroy Sane, and midfielder Rodri spending significant time out, Guardiola's troubles have increased. He could also have to deal with the pressure of fighting from underneath: his side could be fourth come kickoff if Leicester beats Arsenal and Chelsea beats Crystal Palace on Saturday.

Liverpool and City haven't quite been at their best of late, relying on the never-say-die attitude that has become as important a weapon as their fearsome forward lines. Both clawed back 1-0 deficits with late goals to claim 2-1 victories last weekend.

There will be a fair bit of needle in the contest, after Guardiola's claim this week that Mane was prone to diving and Klopp's retaliation that City had perfected 'tactical fouling'. The talking will stop on Sunday, however, when England's finest two sides do battle. "I think they are worried about us, we have players to hurt them," Liverpool midfielder Georginio Wijnaldum said. "But they have players to hurt us [too]."

SPORTS BUREAU & REUTERS

TALKING TACTICS

Why Klopp has been Guardiola's nemesis

Of all managers who have faced Pep Guardiola at least thrice, Jurgen Klopp is the only one with a winning record (eight wins, seven losses, two draws). We take a look at why Klopp causes Guardiola so many headaches:

Pressing traps and counter-pressing schemes

Both tactical masterminds get their players to press (systematically close down the opponent in possession in order to win the ball) and counter-press (press the press i.e. systematically close down the player who has won the ball in order to get it back).

But they use it for different purposes, as Marti Perarnau, author of Pep Confidential, writes. Guardiola's sides win the ball, use a low-risk pass backwards and restart the build-up. Klopp's sides attack, aiming to capitalise on nicking the ball high up. This causes Guardiola trouble — because his sides spread wide in possession to stretch the opposition, they are vulnerable to being caught out after losing the ball.

Klopp has found success with two ploys in particular. One involves harrying the opposition defence in central areas, simultaneously blocking the wide passing lanes. The intent is to force a turn-over and attack the space behind the defence. Another ploy is to spray the ball long from the back, bypassing Guardiola's midfield, to an area where Klopp's side outnumbers the opposition. The idea is not to win the header, but press and, if needed, counter-press the defence as it tries to secure the ball.

Speed of transition

Winning the ball in advanced areas is useful, but the key to transforming it into a shot on goal is the speed of transition: the offensive actions, once the ball has been won (after pressing) or won back (after counter-pressing), should not permit the defence time to recover and reorganise.

This requires foot-speed (which Liverpool's forwards have in plenty) and rapid decision-making and combination play (which Klopp drills on the training ground).

Against Guardiola's sides, Klopp sets his team up to play even more directly: a Sky Sports report found that Liverpool averages 2.68 passes per passage against City in the Premier League, compared with 4.13 passes per passage against others. But it advances the ball farther despite the shorter passing sequence — 15 metres on average per passage against City, compared with 10 metres against others.

Also, Liverpool had 36% of the ball in one of these games but spent 56% of its time in the City half. Clearly, it does more with less and does it at a disconcerting pace.

Isolation play

Klopp has disrupted Guardiola's plans by isolating essential City players in various ways. Fernandinho, crucial in the build-up as the deepest midfielder, has often found himself the subject of an ambush: when City plays out from the back, Liverpool leaves Fernandinho open but blocks other passing lanes. His receiving the ball is a trigger for a central midfielder to pressure him before he can turn. Unstable touches and mislaid passes can ensue. Fernandinho's safest option — a pass back to the 'keeper — is also not without risk, because of the number of Liverpool players in proximity. Kevin De Bruyne, on the other hand, has had to deal with being man-marked. In December 2016, Jordan Henderson dogged him so closely that the Belgian failed to create a single chance from open play.

Pep's responses

So, what solutions has Guardiola found? In the 5-0 home win in 2017, he switched from a 4-3-3/4-1-4-1 to a 3-5-2 — three at the back "to control [Liverpool's] counter-attacks", with marauding wing-backs Kyle Walker and Benjamin Mendy tasked with pumping in crosses.

Guardiola has also devised other ways of having a spare man at the back to deal with Liverpool's offensive transitions — he has used asymmetric full-backs, with one advancing and the other staying behind to form a back three with the centre-backs.

Indeed, he has benefited from a more conservative approach away from home: in games where City's possession has ranged from 57 to 66% on the road against Liverpool, it has lost; when it has had between 47 and 51% of the ball, it has drawn (winning the Community Shield on penalties). Sitting deeper in compact lines, City has tried to limit Liverpool's opportunities to attack the space behind it.

City has also borrowed from Liverpool's playbook, using long balls to bypass the Reds midfield, forcing them to progress from the back. City's dribblers have been encouraged to take opponents on one-on-one, with support behind to counter-press Liverpool and spring quick transitions of their own.

In short, Guardiola, in recent away matches, has been content with dominating moments; he hasn't sought to dominate the ball like he usually does.

Many of these themes will be reprised on Sunday — and there could be a few new ones, too. It promises to be another fascinating battle.



KLOPP



GUARDIOLA



SALAH



AGUERO

GAME THEORY

London calling

Eight of the world's best tennis players will contest the season-ending ATP Finals from Sunday. A quick guide to the tournament, the fifth-most prestigious event of the year after the Majors, and the contenders for the title:

TOURNAMENT FILE

First held: 1970

Most titles: Roger Federer (6)

2019 venue: London

2019 surface: Indoor hard

Dates: Nov. 10-17

Format: The players are split into two groups of four. The group stage is a round-robin league, each competitor playing the other three in the group. The top two advance to the semifinals (group winner plays the other group's runner-up). The winners of the semifinals meet in the championship match.

Group Andre Agassi: Rafael Nadal, Daniil Medvedev, Stefanos Tsitsipas, Alexander Zverev.

Group Bjorn Borg: Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer, Dominic Thiem, Matteo Berrettini.

If Nadal (recovering from an abdominal injury) pulls out, Roberto Bautista Agut will replace him



Rafael Nadal
World No. 1

Age: 33
2019 win-loss: 51-6 (89.5%)
Titles: 4 (French Open, US Open, Montreal, Rome)
Runner-up: 1 (Australian Open)
Career H2H: v Djokovic 26-28 | v Federer 24-16 | v Medvedev 2-0 | v Thiem 9-4 | v Tsitsipas 4-1 | v Zverev 5-0 | v Berrettini 1-0
Best Finals performance: Runner-up (2010, 2013)
Key stat: Nadal's win-rate of 89.5% this season leads the Tour. He has won 92.6% of his matches on hard courts — the best this season on the surface and better than his 87.5% on his favoured clay



Dominic Thiem
World No. 5

Age: 26
2019 win-loss: 46-17 (73%)
Titles: 5 (Indian Wells, Barcelona, Kitzbuhel, Beijing, Vienna)
Runner-up: 1 (French Open)
Career H2H: v Nadal 4-9 | v Djokovic 3-6 | v Federer 4-2 | v Medvedev 2-1 | v Tsitsipas 4-2 | v Zverev 5-2 | v Berrettini 2-1
Best Finals performance: Group stage
Key stat: Thiem has the joint-best record in finals this season (83.3% win-rate). He's seen as the second-best player on clay, but three of his five titles have come on hard-courts, including one indoors



Novak Djokovic
World No. 2

Age: 32
2019 win-loss: 53-9 (85.5%)
Titles: 5 (Australian Open, Wimbledon, Madrid, Paris, Tokyo)
Runner-up: 1 (Rome)
Career H2H: v Nadal 28-26 | v Federer 26-22 | v Medvedev 3-2 | v Thiem 6-3 | v Tsitsipas 2-2 | v Zverev 3-2 | v Berrettini 0-0
Best Finals performance: Champion (2008, 2012-15)
Key stat: No player this season has a better break-point conversion rate than Djokovic's 48.6%. He is also among the best three for % of return points won (41.7%) and % of return games won (31.8%)



Stefanos Tsitsipas
World No. 6

Age: 21
2019 win-loss: 50-24 (67.6%)
Titles: 2 (Marseille, Estoril)
Runner-up: 3 (Madrid, Dubai, Beijing)
Career H2H: v Nadal 1-4 | v Djokovic 2-2 | v Federer 1-2 | v Medvedev 0-5 | v Thiem 2-4 | v Zverev 3-1 | v Berrettini 1-0
Best Finals performance: First appearance
Key stat: Although Tsitsipas has lost more matches in 2019 than anyone currently in the top 10, he is also one of only two players — Thiem, the other — to have beaten Nadal, Djokovic and Federer this season



Roger Federer
World No. 3

Age: 38
2019 win-loss: 51-8 (86.4%)
Titles: 4 (Miami, Dubai, Halle, Basel)
Runner-up: 1 (Wimbledon)
Career H2H: v Nadal 16-24 | v Djokovic 22-26 | v Medvedev 3-0 | v Thiem 2-4 | v Tsitsipas 2-1 | v Zverev 3-4 | v Berrettini 1-0
Best Finals performance: Champion (2003-04, 06-07, 10-11)
Key stat: Federer has won the highest % of points (70.4%) in service games when his serve has been returned. He is among the best three at winning service games (91.3%) and service points (71.7%)



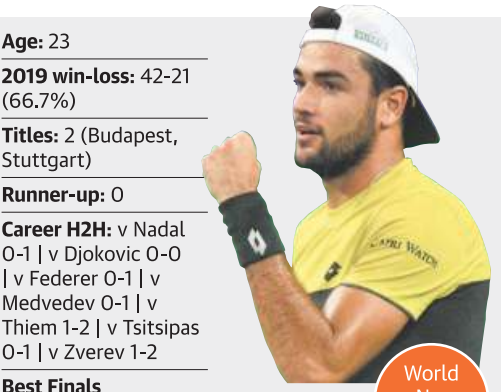
Alexander Zverev
World No. 7

Age: 22
2019 win-loss: 42-23 (64.6%)
Titles: 1 (Geneva)
Runner-up: 2 (Shanghai, Acapulco)
Career H2H: v Nadal 0-5 | v Djokovic 2-3 | v Federer 4-3 | v Thiem 2-5 | v Tsitsipas 1-3 | v Berrettini 2-1
Best Finals performance: Champion (2018)
Key stat: Zverev has the best ace-rate (13.5%) of those ranked in the top 10, but the worst double-fault rate (7.1%) in the top 10 and worst % of second serve points won (44.5%) in the top 50



Daniil Medvedev
World No. 4

Age: 23
2019 win-loss: 59-18 (76.6%)
Titles: 4 (Cincinnati, Shanghai, Sofia, St. Petersburg)
Runner-up: 4 (US Open, Montreal, Barcelona, Washington)
Career H2H: v Nadal 0-2 | v Djokovic 2-3 | v Federer 0-3 | v Thiem 1-2 | v Tsitsipas 5-0 | v Zverev 1-4 | v Berrettini 1-0
Best Finals performance: First appearance
Key stat: No one has won more matches than Medvedev this season. He isn't among the best 15 at holding serve, but is among the best four at winning return points (40.5%) and return games (28.7%)



Matteo Berrettini
World No. 8

Age: 23
2019 win-loss: 42-21 (66.7%)
Titles: 2 (Budapest, Stuttgart)
Runner-up: 0
Career H2H: v Nadal 0-1 | v Djokovic 0-0 | v Federer 0-1 | v Medvedev 0-1 | v Thiem 1-2 | v Tsitsipas 0-1 | v Zverev 1-2
Best Finals performance: First appearance
Key stat: Berrettini is among the best four at saving break-points (70.1%), the best eight at winning service points (69%), and the best eight at winning service games (88%)

Chinki Yadav clinches India’s second Olympic quota

Indian team added 11 more medals on the day, including six gold

ASIAN SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU
QATAR
Chinki Yadav won India’s second Olympic quota in style, as she qualified for the 25-metre sports pistol event with 588, two short of the eventual gold medallist Naphaswan Yangpaiboon of Thailand, in the Asian shooting championship in Doha, Qatar, on Friday.

Even though she eventually placed sixth in the final, qualifying for the final was itself enough for Chinki to bag one of the four Olympic quota places on offer in the event, as two Chinese and two Koreans had already won the quota.

Impressive progress

It was a culmination of impressive progress through the season for Chinki, as she had shot 580, 570, 571 and 584 in the four World Cups in Delhi, Beijing,

Munich and Rio respectively.

After shooting 292 overnight in the precision stage, Chinki shot 296 out of 300 in the rapid fire section to secure the 11th Olympic quota for India for Tokyo 2020. It was the second in the event behind the Asian Games gold medallist Rahi Sarnobat.

The health of the Indian team was evident as Rahi and Manu Bhaker, competing in the MQS section, shot 589 and 584 respectively.

Gold in men’s 25-metre

In men’s 25-metre standard pistol, Udhayveer Sidhu bagged the silver, and together with brother Vijayveer and Olympic Gurpreet Singh, clinched the team gold as well.

The juniors continued to excel, as the Indian team added 11 more medals on the day, including six gold, to take the tally to 35 so far.

The results:
Mixed trap: 1. Kuwait 34 (147 AR); 2. China-A 32 (144); 3. Chinese Taipei-A 42 (141); 4. Kazakhstan-A 39 (143); 10. India-A (Rajeshwari Kumari, Kynan Chenai 74) 138; 16. India (Kirti Gupta, Manavjit Singh Sandhu) 135.

Men: 25m standard pistol: 1. Yao Zhaonan 578; 2. Udhayveer Sidhu 577; 3. Han Daeyoon (Kor) 572; 4. Vijayveer Sidhu 572; 15. Gurpreet Singh 561.

Team: 1. India 1710; 2. China 1709; 3. Korea 1705.

50m rifle prone: 1. Konstantin Malinovskiy (Kaz) 625.1; 2. Lliu Gang (Chn) 623.8; 3. Lli Xinniao (Chn) 623.6; 5. Subhankar Pramanick 622.5; 7. Tarun Yadav 621.5; 10. Sanjeev Rajput 621.1.

Team: 1. China 1868.9; 2. India 1865.1; 3. Korea 1860.5.

Women: 25m sports pistol: 1. Naphaswan Yangpaiboon (Tha) 36 (590); 2. Gundegmaa Otryad (Mgl) 33 (587); 3. Zhang Jingjing (Chn) 28 (585); 6. Chinki Yadav 16 (588); 21. Annu Raj Singh 575; 27. Neeraj Kaur 572.

MQS: Rahi Sarnobat 589; Manu Bhaker 584.

Team: 1. Korea 1751; 2. China 1751; 3. Thailand 1748; 5. India 1735.

50m rifle prone: 1. Wan Xiangyan (Chn) 627.2; 2. Lee Eunseo (Kor) 625.1; 3. Nur Suryani Mohamed Taibi (Mas); 4. Tejaswini Sawant 621.9; 5. Anjum Moudgil 621.6; 6. Kajal Saini 621.3.

Team: 1. India 1864.8; 2. China 1862.4; 3. Korea 1855.5.

Junior men: 25m standard pistol: 1. Nikita Chiryukin (Kaz) 568; 2. Lee Gunhyeok (Kor) 567; 3. Harsh Gupta 565; 5. Dilshaan Kelley 562; 9. Harshwardhan Yadav 553.

Team: 1. Korea 1690; 2. India 1680; 3. China 1663.

Youth men: 10m air rifle: 1. Rudrakksh Patil 249.0 (620.7); 2. Srijay Ranjanbabu 248.8 (624.7); 3. Liu Xiyang (Chn) 225.7 (621.1); 7. Paarth Makhija 141.7 (625.6).

Team: 1. India 1871.0; 2. China 1858.0; 3. Thailand 1806.6.

10m air pistol: 1. Naveen 241.2 (578); 2. Kim Junhyun (Kor) 238.2 (572); 3. Yang Shuqiang (Chn) 220.1 (564); 4. Monu Kumar 198.2 (573); 10. Naved Chaudhary 559.

Team: 1. India 1710; 2. Thailand 1691; 3. China 1685.



Making it count: Chinki Yadav, who won the Olympic quota in women’s sports pistol.

Garud passes away

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Sports journalist Yogesh Garud, 45, passed away here on Thursday night. He is survived by his wife and a daughter. He worked with Kannada daily *Prajavani* before moving to *Vijaya Karnataka* as Sports Editor. Later he became a freelance journalist. He was also a part of various television panel discussions.

Garud also served the Sports Writers Association of Bangalore (SWAB) and was



Yogesh Garud.

its former secretary. SWAB and the Press Club of Bangalore condoled Garud’s demise.

Dominant South Zone retains JK Bose Trophy

SJAM takes all titles in table tennis

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NAGPUR

South Zone bagged its fourth straight title, with a nine-wicket win over East Zone, on the last day of the JK Bose Trophy cricket tournament here on Friday.

South remained unbeaten in the four-team league, defeating West, North and finally East. South’s Ashwin Achal was adjudged the man-of-the-series.

Sports Journalists Association of Mumbai (SJAM) swept the table tennis event, winning the team, singles and doubles titles. SJAM’s Amol Karhadkar emerged the best player clinching the singles gold, winning the doubles with Ashwin Ferro and playing a crucial part in the team triumph.

The scores/results: Cricket: JK Bose Trophy: East 64 in 16.3 overs (Hardik Worah 3/11) lost to South 68/1 in 7.2 overs (Ashwin



We are the best! The South Zone cricket team is a happy bunch after winning all its matches to claim the JK Bose Trophy for the fourth straight time. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Achal 31 n.o.); North 45 in 15.3 overs lost to West 46/3 in 6.4 overs.

Table tennis (all finals): AC Bali Trophy: Team: SJAM-A bt SWAB-A 2-0 (Amol Kardhakar bt Ashwin Achal 11-3, 11-6, 11-7;

Amol & Ashwin Ferro bt R. Kaushik & Karthik Lakshmanan 11-5, 11-7, 8-11, 11-8). **Singles:** Amol Karhadkar (SJAM) bt K. Keerthivasan (TNSJA) 11-4, 10-12, 11-4, 13-11; Doubles: Amol & Ferro bt Kaushik & Anand Vasu

12-10, 11-4, 11-7.

Golf: Putting: 1. Sports Writers Association of Bangalore (SWAB-B) (Ramesh Kote, Vijeth Kumar, Hardik Worah); 2. TNSJA-A (C. Santhosh Kumar, Dipak Ragav & Krishna Kanta Chakraborty).

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 & 3 (SD & HD), 9 a.m.
Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9 a.m.
China Open badminton: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 10.30 a.m.
Afghanistan v Wl: 2nd T20i, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 2 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 6 p.m. onwards
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m. onwards
Bundesliga: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 8 p.m. onwards

Aldridge on song in Spurs’ victory

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES

San Antonio Spurs defeated Oklahoma City Thunder 121-112 in the NBA on Thursday behind 39 points from LaMarcus Aldridge, who connected on 19 of his 23 shots from the floor.

In Phoenix, Miami Heat’s Jimmy Butler scored 30 of his 34 points in the first half and Goran Dragic added 20 in the second half to fashion a pulled off a 124-108 victory over Phoenix Suns. Celtics notched a win over Hornets

The results: Charlotte Hornets 87 lost to Boston Celtics 108; LA Clippers 107 bt Portland Trail Blazers 101; San Antonio Spurs 121 bt Oklahoma City Thunder 112; Phoenix Suns 108 lost to Miami Heat 124.

Ridhima Dilawari wins fourth title of season

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NOIDA

Ridhima Dilawari claimed the fourth title of the season when she won the 14th leg of the Hero Women’s Pro Golf Tour at the Noida Golf Course on Friday.

Dilawari, who carded a one-over 73 for a total of three-under 213, was six shots ahead of Tvesa Malik and Amadeep Drali, who were tied second. PTI

Spin is a dying art: Dilip Doshi

Former India spinner says T20 faces competition from The 100 ball cricket

ANANT KAUR
NEW DELHI

When Dilip Doshi, with an experience of 238 First Class matches, says spin bowling faces extinction, the cricket world ought to take notice. “Spin is a dying art. You have slow bowlers but few orthodox spinners. The advent of T20 has put a fear among the spin bowlers. Grounds have become smaller, bats have become heavier and this is creating fear in the minds of the bowlers who want to flight the ball.

“Kuldeep Yadav is a spinner and unless he spins the balls he cannot stay in the game,” said Doshi, speaking at an event to launch *Wizards – The Story of Indian Spin Bowling*, a book authored by Anindya Dutta. The T20 format may have become popular with the modern audience, but Doshi said it faced competition



Dilip Doshi with author Anindya Dutta. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

from The 100 ball cricket. “It’s going to be adding more to the same stuff being dished out in the limited-overs cricket. I know it will bring sponsorship but I am not sure if it will improve the game though it has come to stay. Both cannot exist. Eventually one will drag the

other out.” Doshi, who played 33 Tests and 15 ODIs, also feared for the future of Tests. “Only Test cricket brings out great players. Their technique is proper and there is some grace. In limited overs cricket, it is sledge hammering from the first ball till the last. That is not good for the game. Test cricket is proper meal and limited-overs is street food.” Giving credit to Sourav Ganguly for backing players outside his zone, Doshi said, “Nowadays it is more about the 11 best players being picked, irrespective of the State they are from. In our time it wasn’t there.

“M.S. Dhoni wouldn’t have featured in the team when I was playing. A player from Jharkhand or Bihar never would have made it. The first captain to bring Indianness in the team was Ganguly after Tiger Pataudi.”

Sindhu to skip Syed Modi tourney

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Like last year, World champion P.V. Sindhu will be the notable absentee when the main draw action of the Syed Modi International badminton championship opens at Lucknow on November 27.

In Sindhu’s absence, last year’s runner-up Saina Nehwal will be the only worthy home challenger to the women’s singles title.

Saina, struggling with form and fitness, is seeded third behind China’s He Bingjiao and Canada’s Li Michelle.

Also in the hunt is the Olympic champion Carolina Marin, seeded four and defending champion Han Yu, seeded six.

Among the men, the Indian challenge is much stronger in the presence of K. Srikanth, B. Sai Praneeth and defending champion Sameer Verma, seeded three to five. China’s Shi Yuqi is the top seed, followed by Hong Kong’s Ng Ka Long Angus.

The in-form men’s doubles combination of World No. 9 Satwiksaijraj Rankiredy and Chirag Shetty are seeded second behind China’s Han Cheng Hai and Zhou Hao Dong.

In women’s doubles, where the top three seeds are from China, Ashwini Ponnappa and N. Sikki Reddy are seeded eighth. In mixed doubles, Indians are not seeded.

Ramkumar, Purav in doubles final

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU
KOBE, JAPAN

Second seed Yuichi Sugita proved a hard nut to crack for Ramkumar Ramanathan as the Japanese cruised to a 6-3, 6-2 victory in the quarterfinals of the \$54,160 Challenger tennis tournament in Kobe, Japan, on Friday.

Ramkumar, who collected 15 ATP points and \$1460 for the quarterfinal entry, made the doubles final with Purav Raja.

In the ITF men’s Futures in Kuwait, Adil Kalyanpur lost singles quarterfinals easily, but made the doubles final with Kai Wehnelt of Germany.

The results: **\$54,160 Challenger, Knoxville, US: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Marcos Giron & Alex Lawson (US) bt Sriram Balaji & Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan 7-5, 6-4.

\$54,160 Challenger, Kobe, Japan: Singles (quarterfinals): Yuichi Sugita (Jpn) bt Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-2, 6-3. **Doubles (semifinals):** Purav Raja & Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Toshihide Matsui & Yosuke Watanuki (Jpn) 6-3, 6-4.

\$15,000 ITF men, Meshref, Kuwait: Singles (quarterfinals): Valentin Royer (Fra) bt Adil Kalyanpur 6-1, 6-0.

Doubles (semifinals): Kai Wehnelt (Ger) & Adil Kalyanpur bt Soichiro Moritani & Kento Takeuchi (Jpn) 1-6, 6-4, [10-3]; Quarterfinals: Kai Wehnelt & Adil Kalyanpur bt Hong Kit Wong & Pak Long Yeung (Hkg) 6-4, 3-6, [11-9].

\$15,000 ITF men, Maputo, Mozambique:

Doubles (semifinals): Benjamin Lock & Courtney John Lock (Zim) bt SD Prajwal Dev & Rishi Reddy 6-4, 7-6(5).

\$15,000 ITF women, Cancun, Mexico: Singles (pre-quarterfinals): Chisa Hosonuma (Jpn) bt Ramya Natarajan 2-6, 7-5, 6-1.

Vaishnavi bags a double

SPORTS BUREAU
CHANDIGARH

Vaishnavi Adkar won the under-18 and 16 girls’ titles in the AITA Super series junior tennis tournament here on Friday. In the boys’ section, Sushant Dabas took the under-18 title, while Deep Munim was crowned the under-16 champion.

The results (finals): Boys: Under-18: Sushant Dabas bt Krishan Hooda 6-4, 6-2. **Under-16:** Deep Munim bt Sukhpreet Singh Jhoje 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Girls: Under-18: Vaishnavi Adkar bt Vanshika Choudhary 7-5, 6-2. **Under-16:** Vaishnavi Adkar bt Sanvi Ahluwalia 7-5, 6-3.

Anjan Mitra no more

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Former Mohun Bagan secretary Anjan Mitra passed away early on Friday here following a bout of illness. He was 72 and is survived by his wife and daughter.

Bagan called off its practice session on Friday as a mark of respect for Mitra, who served as the club secretary for more than two decades.

The club won several prominent titles, including three National Football League crowns and the I-League, during his tenure as secretary.

“It is one of the saddest days of my life. We remained friends for life. He was like a younger brother to me,” said the present secretary S.S. Bose.

SYED MUSHTAQ ALI TROPHY SCORES AND SCHEDULE

Group A Uttarakhand 132/6 in 20 overs (Tanmay Srivastava 39, Saurabh Singh 26) lost to Karnataka 133/1 in 15.4 overs (Rohan Kadam 67 n.o., Devdutt Padikkal 53 n.o.). Bihar 97/7 in 20 overs (MD Rahmatullah 44 n.o., K.V. Sasi-kanth 3/20) lost to Andhra 98/0 in 11.5 overs (Hanuma Vihari 46 n.o., Ashwin Hebbur 52 n.o.). Baroda 149/9 in 20 overs (Deepak Hooda 34, Swapnil Singh 50, Vishnu Solanki 25) lost to Goa 152/6 in 19.4 overs (Aditya Kaushik 36, Suyash Prabhu-dessai 60 n.o., Darshan Misal 27, Atit Sheth 3/29).	Group B Tamil Nadu 174/5 in 20 overs (B. Aparajith 35 retd. hurt, Din-esh Karthik 33, Vijay Shankar 25, Shahrulkh Khan 28, M. Mo-hammed 34 n.o., Basil Thampi 3/
49) bt Kerala 137/8 in 20 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 34, Sachin Baby 32, T. Natarajan 3/25, G. Periyasamy 3/36). Tripura 102/8 in 20 overs (Saurabh Das 30 n.o., Darshan Nalkande 3/25) lost to Vidarbha 103/1 in 12.3 overs (Faiz Fazal 54, Akshay Kolhar 45 n.o.). Rajasthan 171/4 in 20 overs (Manender Singh 77, Ankit Lam-ba 49, Mahipal Lomror 25, Sul-tan Karim 3/33) bt Manipur 74/9 in 20 overs (Priyot Singh 55 n.o., Tanveer Ul-Haq 4/7).	Hyderabad 149/7 in 20 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 42, Ambati Rayudu 34, Akshath Reddy 47, Sandeep Sharma 3/11, Siddarth Kaul 3/44) bt Punjab 97/4 in 14
Group C Arunachal Pradesh 47/4 in 6 overs lost to Chhattisgarh 52/1 in 4.5 overs (Shashank Chandra-kar 32 n.o.).	
Group D Haryana v Meghalaya. <i>Match abandoned.</i>	

overs (Shubman Gill 48). Hyde-rabad won by 2 runs via VJD Method. Chandigarh 167/5 in 20 overs (Shivam Bhambri 106) bt Himachal 84/4 in 11.3 overs (Prashant Chopra 40, Amit Kumar 28). Chandigarh won by 9 runs via VJD Method. Maharashtra 104/6 in 15 overs (Kedar Jadhav 27, Azim Kazi 44, Krishnakant Upadhyay 3/12) bt Railways 96/8 in 15 overs (Harsh Tyagi 28 n.o., T. Pradeep 27).	overs v Pondicherry. <i>Match abandoned.</i> Group E: Nagaland 69/6 in 16 overs lost to Saurashtra 73/1 in 10.2 overs. Delhi v Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir v Sikkim, Jharkhand v Odisha. <i>Matches abandoned.</i> Saturday’s Matches: Group A: Baroda v Karnataka; Bihar v Goa; Services v Uttarakhand. Group B: Manipur v Tripura; Rajasthan v Tamil Nadu; Uttar Pradesh v Vidarbha. Group C: Arunachal Pradesh v Punjab; Chhattisgarh v Himachal; Chandigarh v Maharashtra; Hyderabad v Railways. Group D: Assam v Madhya Pradesh; Meghalaya v Pondicherry; Bengal v Mizoram; Haryana v Mumbai. Group E: Delhi v Odisha; Gujarat v Jammu & Kashmir; Jharkhand v Saurashtra; Nagaland v Sikkim.
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Abhishek, Naveen do the ‘trick for PNB

KOLKATA: Abhishek Singh and Naveen Antil struck three goals apiece in Punjab National Bank’s comprehensive 11-0 victory over Naval Tata Hockey Academy in a Pool C match of the 123rd Beighton Cup hockey tournament at the SAI Complex here on Friday. **The results: Pool A:** Indian Oil 6 (Gurjinder Singh-2, Karaj-winder Singh, Roshan Minz, Arman Qureshi, Bharat Chik-kara) bt B.N. Recreational Club 2 (Amarjeet Ekka-2); **Pool B:** Canara Bank 9 (Prad-han Somanna-3, Nikkin Chan-dana-2, Manjeet-2, K.P.D. Kai-bulira, Pruthviraj Gowda) bt Bishalakh Sports Academy 1 (Sanjib Saha); **Pool C:** Punjab National Bank 11 (Abhishek Singh-3, Naveen Antil-3, Ga-gandeep Singh-2, Shamsher Singh, Sumit Toppo, Sukhjeet Singh) bt Naval Tata Hockey Academy 0.

Mackenzie slots five in Sona Polo’s win

NEW DELHI: Chris Mackenzie scored five goals in driving Sona Polo to a 11-5 win over Cavalry-Krishna in the semifinals of the Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh Cup 14-goal polo tournament at the Jaipur Polo ground on Friday. In the other semifinal, Jindal Panther beat Sahara Warriors 7-6. The final will be played at the Jaipur Polo ground at 2.30 p.m. on Sunday. **The results (semifinals):** Jindal Panther 7 (Daniel Otamendi 3, Simran Shergill 2, Salim Azmi, Naveen Jindal) bt Sahara Warriors 6 (Chris Mackenzie 5, Satinder Gar-cha). Sona Polo 11 (Gerardo Mazzini 5, Abhimanyu Pathak 3, Padmanabh Singh 2, Sunjay Kapur) bt Cavalry-Krishna 5 (Ravi Rathore 2, Vishal Chauhan 2, Angad Kalaan).

Set-pieces: the element of thrill

ISL
NANDAKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

Set-piece goals often bring an element of thrill in winning matches. FC Goa coach Sergio Lobera credited assistant coach and fellow Spaniard Jesus Tato for his players acquiring this art. “Our assistant coach, Tato, is very good with these situations and helps us during the match,” he said. Both Tato and Lobera were part of the coaching set-up at FCG last season as well. The former, in fact, started his ISL career as a player in FC Pune City in 2016 as a striker, apart from an earlier stint outside Spain for Morocco club Moghreb Tetouan. Three out of four goals scored by the orange jerseys

on Thursday against Mumbai City FC came from corner-kicks. Lenny Rodrigues adjusted to trap the ball bouncing near off a corner-kick from Brandon Fernandes for the first goal, trapping and firing home on the turn with his right before the defenders could close in. Amrinder Singh in goal could only hope to cover the angles during the next two FCG set-piece executions. Mourtaada Fall at the far post and away from defenders headed a free-kick towards the other post for Hugo Bou-mos to nod home strongly. **Clever tap-in** Carlos Pena’s goal, the fourth, was a clever tap-in from a narrow angle to guide a curling Edu Bedia free-kick from near the corner flag. “We worked on defending

set pieces. My players knew what to do but still, they did not. If you do not do as I say, then I need to change you. I will not close my eyes (to mistakes),” reacted a furious Jorge Costa, the MCFC coach. Mumbai City netted twice in the second half, one from a corner-kick taken by Mohammed Larbi. The ball was floated way beyond the range of FCG defence bunched in front of the goal-mouth towards defender Sarthak Golui, whose reaction was precise and planned, a looping header into the net near the far post, over a flummoxed goalkeeper Mohammed Nawaz. More goals from free-kicks and corner-kicks in the ISL games ahead will force defenders to be more careful during clearances.