

# The politics of everyday life

Change in today's abysmal conditions can be effected only by a surge in collective protest



RAJEEV BHARGAVA

Past societies have appeared to relentlessly deprecate everyday life. At least those elites who have written extensively about the good life have always made a distinction between a life lived in pursuit of the higher good, chasing whatever in their view is of ultimate worth, and one with little worth or significance. Everyday life was always listed under the latter category, ubiquitous but insignificant, in contrast to a life of contemplation, an adventurous life of war, conquest or politics, or one in the service of high art or religion in which humans are said to fulfil those transcendent values in which they encounter 'their essential being'.

It is true, of course, that not all traditions relegate everyday life to insignificance. The life of the householder (*Grihastha*) in the Brahmanical tradition was worthy, self-fulfilling and endowed with religious, perhaps even philosophical, significance. Jain and Buddhist traders also endowed mercantile life with value as did, arguably, the European bourgeois with a Protestant ethic. However, even these traditions deemed the daily life of the majority of labouring people as possessing little or no intrinsic value.

## Features of everyday life

Now, there is a grain of truth in the idea of the apparent insignificance of everyday life. The mere fact that something is repeated everyday makes it dull, mundane and boring. It is too familiar to generate a sense of surprise or excitement. Everyday life is routine, recedes unnoticed into the background of our experience, and appears to be trivial. What excitement can be generated in brushing one's teeth, or in cleaning, cooking, washing clothes or dishes? What enjoyment can be derived from the drudgery of these chores? Indeed, even activities that give one an initial kick become tedious over time, to be avoided, something from which one needs a holiday.

With such images in mind, many



"Everyday life is routine, recedes unnoticed into the background of our experience, and appears to be trivial." A scene from Mysuru.

philosophers have observed that the everyday symbolises some of the most alienating features of human life. The repetitive nature of labour and the fatigue that ensues, the burden of housework and raising children, among other activities, led thinkers such as Martin Heidegger to designate the everyday as the domain of "inauthenticity, triviality and error". For the poor, the everyday is more than just boring and dull. It is relentlessly arduous assembly line work, sub-standard conditions at home, obligatory use of jam-packed public transport, the struggle for daily bread, not to speak of the deep inhumanity embedded in, say, manual scavenging. Such an existence could deprive anyone of imagination and reason, permanently dull the senses and the mind, if it were not for the incomprehensible, mysterious quality of the human spirit.

In places like Europe, the significance of everyday life was properly acknowledged only after the horror of the war ended. When the French state was demilitarised and ordinary people began to receive adequate supplies, everydayness emerged as an important enough category of thought. Interest in the everyday was subsequently revived after the realisation that the carnivalesque character of the student-worker's revolt of May 68 in Paris, in which everyday life was suspended for a few weeks, was ephemeral and unsustainable. However, in India, the salience of the everyday jumps to the eye almost every second. The everyday, in whatever form, is all that the people have. It

is its very inescapability, its ability to suck the majority of the people into a daily grind, to deny them virtually everything they need or want, to turn them into a bundle of frustrations that might compel them to rebel against conditions steeped in indignities. A war or revolt is not needed here to imagine the relief we might experience when released from the pain of everyday living or to dream of a better here and now.

I imagine everyday life is hellish for the destitute. But consider the life of an average middle-class person in most Indian cities. An endless wait at the bus stop for service that is late or for a three-wheeler which does not run by meter or for a train that never arrives on schedule; a tap that is perpetually dry; failing electricity that makes a hot day insufferable, and the evenings without television, the only form of entertainment; queuing up every month to pay bills; running from desk to desk to rectify a wrongly calculated tax but to no avail; getting interrupted by repair men just when reaching the climax of a thriller; being compelled to use filthy, foul-smelling public toilets; walking with supreme concentration on uneven sidewalks for fear of stepping into potholes or cow dung; suffering an anxiety-filled night as a young daughter heads back home in dimly lit streets; reconciling with children without playgrounds having to make do with accident-prone by-lanes; fearing dengue or malaria; facing unavailability of beds in hospitals; awaiting an ambulance that fails to arrive in the golden hour and if it

does, not reaching the Emergency on time; and when it rains, streams sprouting everywhere, as traffic snarls. Add to this, contaminated water and unbearably polluted air and the misery is complete. Indeed, many of these travails afflict even the upper middle class, no matter how hard it tries to buy good health, clean air or fast cars. Is not every one of the 800 million mobile users in India a potential victim of state surveillance and a continuing target of the cannibalising instincts of big corporations? Everyday life is continuously disrupted by the inefficiency or machinations of the state and MNCs, and by our own thoughtless complicity.

## Collective action

These disruptions will not disappear on their own or by the goodwill of benefactors. Individuals on their own cannot prevent them. Even daily resistance by well-meaning but isolated individuals is insufficient to undo the damage. These largely, privately enjoyed benefits can be had only with resolute collective action. How else can change in these abysmal conditions be effected except by a surge in collective protest? Only collective politics can sustain everyday life. A broad alliance cutting across regional, religious, and caste differences is required to restore the dignity of everyday life. We need a politics that seeks a transformation of life in its everyday detail, that helps us enjoy its rhythm and texture.

It seems to be inevitable that the politics of the next decades will be around people's need to have a smooth, uninterrupted, dignified everyday life - clean air, water, sanitation, better roads and public transport, uncontaminated food, a secure private life, to name a few. Politics will be around the fulfilment of basic needs, to secure a minimally decent life. We all desperately need ease of the simple business of living a life and a government that delivers it. Rather than chase utopias, politics in the near future needs to set its eyes firmly on everyday life and the woes that beset it. After all, how long can the everyday be waylaid by sensational promises of a grandiose future, by hollow but spectacular events, indeed even by the festivities of election after election?

Rajeev Bhargava is Professor, CSDS, Delhi

# Testing judicial reforms

Experimental research is necessary for the Indian judiciary to deal with issues such as high pendency rate



LEAH VERGHESE

The media has given extensive coverage to experimental research in social sciences in the recent months following the Nobel Committee's decision to award the Economics prize to Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer. The three economists' work is premised on evidence from randomised controlled trials (RCTs) designed to isolate the effect of an intervention on an outcome or event by comparing its impact on a 'treatment group' that gets the intervention with a 'control group' that does not get the intervention. Testing interventions in pilot settings thus prevents the state from pursuing ineffective courses of action.

However, there is a conspicuous lack of experimental work in the field of legal research in India. Rigorous RCTs are indeed difficult to carry out in legal settings, given the complexity of the legal system and the need to ensure that any such studies do not hinder people's access to justice. But there is a great opportunity to incorporate some of these methods from RCTs into legal policymaking. The Indian judicial system is plagued with problems of delay and backlog. Currently, 3.5 crore cases are pending across the country's high courts and district courts.

The long-term consequence of such high pendency is an erosion of faith in the institution of the judiciary. Justice delivery is the monopoly of the state but delays and the cost of litigation have led to people approaching non-judicial bodies outside the formal court system such as *khap* panchayats, religious leaders and politicians for dispute resolution. The problem of judicial delay, however, stubbornly persists.

## Increasing the number of judges

The most common solution proposed using a simplistic input-output model is to increase the number of judges. This suggestion conveniently masks the deeper systemic flaws in the judicial system that cause such high pendency. Further, despite the seriousness of the issue, there has been no empirical study on the effect of increasing the number of judges on judicial pendency. Using the experimental method will allow researchers to test a causal relationship between an independent variable (say increasing judge strength) and possibly dependent variables (say judicial pendency). Experiments such as

these will give policymakers insights into how certain interventions work at a smaller scale before deciding on large-scale implementation. One of the most famous controlled experiments in the U.S. was the Manhattan Bail Project, where accused persons applying for bail were put into a control group and a treatment group. Researchers assessed if those in the experimental group should be released without a bail bond, using factors like employment history, local family ties, and prior criminal record. Around 60% of the accused in the experimental group were released without bond, out of which only 1.6% failed to show up for subsequent trials for reasons within their control.

In a study published in 2007, researchers David S. Abrams and Albert H. Yoon studied the random assignment of government attorneys to suspects in felony cases in Las Vegas. They found that on average, those represented by Hispanic attorneys received sentences that were 26% shorter than those received by defendants represented by black or white public defenders.

## Resistance in the system

Given the importance of judicial independence, members of the judiciary are resistant to outsiders doing experimental work on their functioning. Though there is widespread acknowledgement of the problem of judicial delay, there is only limited effort within the judiciary to understand through research the nuances of the problems and motivations of the various stakeholders. An exception is the 'Zero Pendency Courts' project in Delhi. The Delhi High Court carried out a pilot project between 2017 and 2018 with the assistance of DAKSH to assess the impact of 'no backlog' on judicial pendency and to devise ideal timelines for different types of cases. Eleven judges with no backlog were compared with 11 judges with the regular backlog. The study found that since pilot courts had fewer cases listed per day, they could spend more time per hearing. On an average, pilot sessions judges dealing with murder cases took approximately 16 hours to dispose sessions cases over 6.5 months, while pilot fast-track judges (dealing with rape cases) took 4.4 hours over three months. Studies such as these provide policymakers with evidence to implement targeted and effective solutions.

Experimental research in the Indian legal system is an idea whose time has come. Judicial reforms are far too important to be implemented without the rigorous backing of such research.

Leah Verghese is with DAKSH, a nonprofit based in Bengaluru working on judicial reforms

## FACTWISE

# A law not based on religion

Refugees fleeing civil violence in Pakistan were exempt from the 1950 immigrants expulsion law

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

In a recent interview to the news agency PTI, responding to the criticism coming from members of various political parties, National General Secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Ram Madhav, claimed that the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill of 2019 was similar to a 1950 law enacted by the Jawaharlal Nehru government to expel illegal immigrants from Assam, but which was not applicable to minorities from East Pakistan.

Mr. Madhav said, "Let me remind the critics of the Citizenship Amendment Bill, the Nehru government had passed a similar Bill in 1950 for expulsion of illegal immigrants mainly from erstwhile Pakistan (Bangladesh) and had categorically said that minorities of East Pakistan wouldn't be covered under the bill."

## No explicit mention of religion

Is the statement accurate? A review of the old legislation and reports relating to its passage in Parliament in *The Hindu* shows that the Bill did not explicitly mention the religion of either those to be expelled or those exempted from it. Rather, it was applicable to all "undesirable" foreigners, while protecting refugees and those fleeing because of fear and violence in East Pakistan.

The reference is to the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act which provided for the expulsion of certain immigrants who had come to Assam and lived in different parts of India. The Central government viewed their stay as being "detrimental to the interests of the general public of India or of any section thereof or of any Scheduled Tribe in Assam". The Act replaced an Ordinance promulgated by the Central Government on January 7, 1950, and was passed after discussion in Parliament a month later.

During the discussions on the Bill, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar (in picture), who introduced it, was reported in *The Hindu* to have said that this "Bill was not intended to be applied for refugees from East Bengal and in view of the strong feeling of the House, he was prepared to make it clear in the Bill itself". There were



demands by some members, especially from Punjab and West Bengal, States that had suffered the most from Partition, to explicitly exclude "Hindu refugees" from the purview of this Bill.

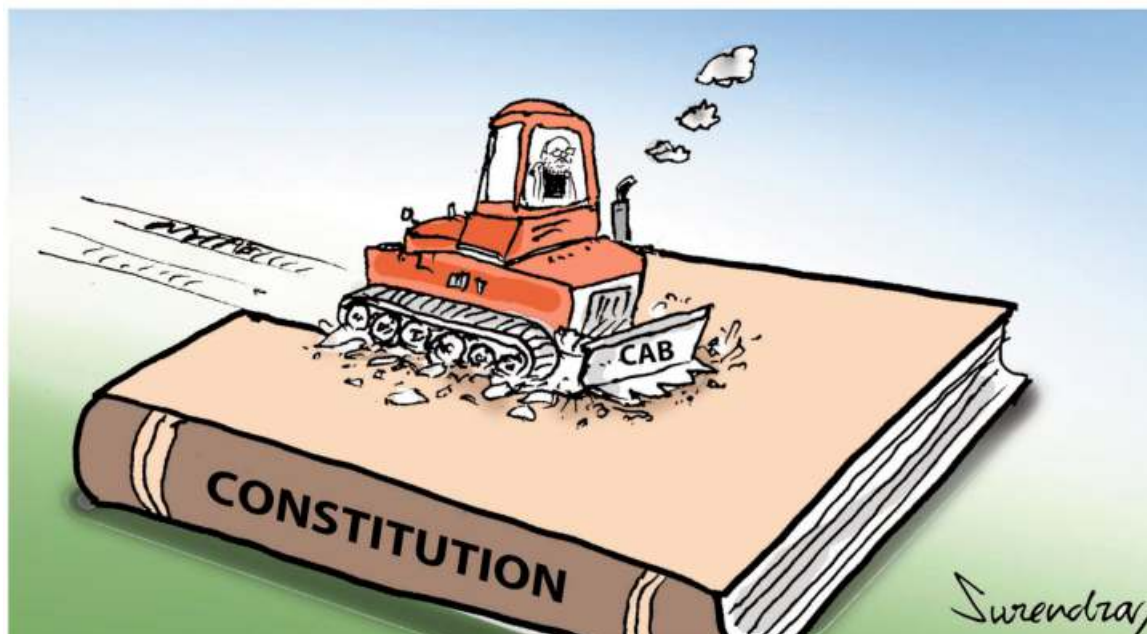
A day later, a proviso, Section 2(b), was introduced in the Bill to address these and other concerns but not on the lines of what was demanded by some members. Section 2(b) mentions that the Act would not apply to "any person who on account of civil disturbances or the fear of such disturbances in any area now forming part of Pakistan has been displaced from or left his place of residence in any such area and who has been subsequently residing in Assam".

The Act, therefore, explicitly mentioned that any person who has fled Pakistan on account of "civil disturbances or the fear of such disturbances" would be exempt, ruling out its application to refugees from the then East Pakistan and who fled the neighbouring country.

## 'Secular character not violated'

The Bill was passed in Parliament on February 13, 1950. Interestingly, Tajamul Hussain, a Member from Bihar, was quoted in *The Hindu* as saying during the deliberations that the Bill allows for illegal immigrants to be expelled not because they were Muslims, but because they were not citizens of the country and therefore "the Bill did not violate the secular character of the State".

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## DATA POINT

### States of persecution

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill provides a path for citizenship to minorities (non-Muslims) from three Muslim majority nations - Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Data show that religious minorities, including Muslims, in other neighbouring countries such as Myanmar, China and Sri Lanka also face persecution. In many countries, minority sects within the majority religions (including Islam) are also persecuted. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**2. Religious hostility** | The Pew Research Center publishes a Government Restrictions Index (GRI) and Social Hostilities Index (SHI) every year. GRI measures laws, policies and actions by officials that restrict religious beliefs and practices. SHI measures religious hostility by private individuals, organisations or groups in the society. GRI and SHI are measured in a 10-point scale. The higher the number, the more the persecution

Country	GRI		SHI	
	2007	2016	2007	2016
India	4.8	5.1	8.8	9.7
Afghanistan	5.3	6	8.5	7.1
Bangladesh	4	4.9	8.3	7.6
Bhutan	4.4	4.6	1.9	0.4
China	7.8	8.8	0.9	1.3
Sri Lanka	4	4.1	7.8	5.9
Nepal	3.4	5.2	4.2	5
Myanmar	7.9	6.9	4.9	5.1
Pakistan	5.8	6.5	8.9	6.9

Except Bhutan and Nepal, every other neighbouring country had a higher SHI or GRI or both in 2016 indicating greater persecution of minorities. India too has a high GRI and SHI

### 1. Migrant numbers

According to UN estimates, there are over 51 lakh international migrants in India as of 2019. Among them, over 2 lakh people were refugees recognised under the 1951 Convention. Most migrants in India are from Bangladesh while most refugees are from China (Tibetans)

Country	Intl. migrants in India (2019)	Refugees (2018)
Bangladesh	31,03,664	0
Pakistan	10,82,917	0
Nepal	5,33,646	0
Sri Lanka	1,52,536	60,802
China	1,08,286	1,08,008
Myanmar	49,720	20,877
Afghanistan	13,501	14,848
Bhutan	6,532	0

**3. Govt. harassment** | The Pew report also records whether there was harassment of religious/ethnic groups by government agencies. "1" indicates yes, "0" indicates no. For instance, in Myanmar, all communities including ethnic groups such as Rakhines that professed the same religion as the majority (Buddhism) faced harassment. In India and Nepal, Dalit persecution was recorded as "1" under Hinduism

Country	Christianity	Islam	Buddhism	Hinduism	Judaism
India	1	1	1	1	0
Afghanistan	0	1	0	1	0
Bangladesh	1	1	1	1	0
Bhutan	1	0	0	0	0
China	1	1	1	0	1
Sri Lanka	1	1	0	1	0
Nepal	1	1	0	1	0
Myanmar	1	1	1	1	0
Pakistan	1	1	0	1	1

## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 12, 1969

## Weakening a hurricane

United States weather scientists think they may have succeeded in weakening a hurricane by seeding it. If they are right, it would appear to be the first time this has ever been done. Government scientists began a hurricane-seeding programme with that objective in the summer of 1962. Until this past summer, however, they had no real evidence of success. Analysis of hurricane Debbie, seeded with silver iodide on August 18 and 20, strongly suggests that the storm was weakened by man's intervention. Experts believe that if hurricanes can be weakened before they hit populated shore areas, the savings might total millions of dollars and many lives every season. It is considered neither possible nor desirable to destroy a hurricane altogether, but a wind decrease of only 20 per cent or so might reduce greatly the storm's toll. Several hours after Debbie was seeded on August 18, the storm's maximum measured winds dropped about 31 per cent - from 98 knots, which is equivalent to about 113 statute miles an hour, to 68 knots, roughly 78 miles an hour. The storm was then several hundred miles northeast of Puerto Rico. There was no seeding on August 19 because the airplane crews that seeded and monitored the storm needed a rest from the gruelling experience.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 12, 1919

## University Reform.

(From an Editorial)

It is our firm conviction that no adequate or comprehensive consideration can be given in the Provinces to the far-seeing and important recommendations of the Calcutta University Commission by the present Councils, executive or legislative, and that the matter should, in public interests, be deferred till after the Reform scheme is introduced. This view is strengthened by the action taken in the Punjab where a committee appointed by the Government to discuss certain proposals of the Commission has already submitted a report which must be deemed on the whole to be unsatisfactory. That Committee was asked to confine its attention only to the question of the removal of Intermediate education from the sphere of the University to the control of a separate board on which the University would have a majority and a large extension of the teaching functions of the University, more particularly in connection with the Honours courses and with post-graduate work.



FROM PAGE ONE

## After a heated debate, RS clears Citizenship Bill

"Had they disclosed earlier they would have been arrested, lost jobs, marriages would have broken. Earlier they couldn't declare they are illegal; can't you (Opposition) hear their pain," the Home Minister said.

Strongly opposing the Bill, DMK MP Tiruchi Siva asked the government why only one religion had been excluded for according citizenship to illegal immigrants. Participating in the debate, he said the Bill was polarising and that the government was targeting only one religion.

Mr. Shah said the statements given by Congress MPs were similar to that of

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, leading to sharp retort from the party. Mr. Shah said any Muslim could apply for citizenship through the usual channels and in the past five years, 566 persons from Pakistan were granted citizenship.

**'Stop fooling minorities'**  
He said anyone could move a legal challenge to the Bill but he was confident that it will pass the test of law.

He asked Congress to stop fooling the minorities adding that during Congress regime more than 13,000 Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan became Indian citizens.

## Opposition protests against pending GST dues to States

Compensation amounting to ₹50,000 crore has not been paid since August

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Opposition MPs – especially those from the States where their parties head governments – on Wednesday raised the issue of the inability of the Centre to pay compensation to the States under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Compensation Act. The Shiv Sena had sent an adjournment motion for the same to the Lok Sabha, but it was rejected by Speaker Om Birla.

As soon as the Question Hour commenced in the Lok Sabha, Telangana Rashtra Samithi members stood up



States have been raising the issue of GST compensation with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. •PTI

with posters demanding the release of dues related to the GST. They also raised slogans. They were joined by the members of the Trinamool and the Shiv Sena.

DMK leader T.R. Baalu raised the issue during Zero Hour as well.

Some State governments

had raised concerns on compensation on the GST. They had pegged the pending dues at ₹50,000 crore. In this regard, representatives of various States held a meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman earlier this month.

When the GST was introduced on July 1, 2017, the Centre assured the States through legislation that the revenue shortfall arising from their taxes being subsumed in the new indirect tax will be compensated fully for the first five years. But the compensation has not been paid since August.

## Uddhav joins chorus for GST dues

Maharashtra CM asks Nirmala Sitharaman to release ₹15,558 crore

STAFF REPORTER  
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has written to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, requesting the Centre to release ₹15,558 crore in pending dues to the State, including GST compensation, citing that delayed release will impact development work in Maharashtra.

The State Cabinet, which met on Wednesday, also decided to provide additional share capital of ₹3,500 crore for the Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Corridor and waive stamp duty on MoUs bet-



Uddhav Thackeray

ween agencies working on this expressway project.

In his letter to the Minister, Mr. Thackeray said the dues included ₹6,946.29

crore of tax devolution and ₹8,611.76 crore towards GST compensation.

"As per the Union Budget 2019-20, the tax devolution to Maharashtra was ₹46,630.66 crore which is 11.15% more than ₹41,952.65 crore received by the State during 2018-19. But, the State has received only ₹20,254.92 crore till October 2019 which is 25.53% less compared to the budget estimate," the letter said.

"So instead of receiving an enhanced amount, the State has received less than the budgeted amount. With further slowdown of the economy during the second

quarter, it is likely that there will be a further reduction in tax devolution," the letter reads.

Mr. Thackeray underlined the slowdown in the State leading to a shortfall in GST collections compared to the benchmark growth of 14%.

The letter lays the blame in part on delays in settlement of large amounts under the Integrated GST resulting in a shortfall in the amount due to Maharashtra.

Mr. Thackeray's letter comes in the wake of a recent meeting of Finance Ministers of several States.



Students stage a protest against the Citizenship Bill in Guwahati on Wednesday. •RITU RAJ KONWAR

## Army deployed in Tripura, Assam as violence spreads

Protesters said the government had underestimated the sentiments of the people. Later in the day, government employees – mostly from the State Secretariat – joined the protests.

Podiums erected in Guwahati for the upcoming summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe, scheduled from December 15-17, were pulled down.

Hoardings and banners advertising the government's welfare schemes also pulled down and set alight before the secretariat.

At least two dozen people, including two television journalists, have been injured in the clashes.

**CM stuck**  
Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal was stuck at Guwahati's Borjhar airport for more than three hours as protesters lit bonfires of tyres, police barricades and anything else they could lay their hands on along the 25 km stretch into the city.

"This is not a protest led by any party or organisation. This is the people's protest and the government must keep the existence of the indigenous people in mind while battling for people from other countries," a protester said as the spontaneous crowds grew.

Mr. Sonowal, reiterating that misinformation about CAB was fuelling the protests, called for calm and claimed that citizenship for "less than five lakh" non-Muslims would in "no way put our community, land, hearth, heritage, culture and existence in danger".

As violence spiralled, Additional Chief Secretary (Home and Political) Kumar Sanjay Krishna issued an order suspending mobile internet service because of "probabilities" of such protests "intensifying" and following reports that the "protesters are involved in vandalism".

Several tourists were stranded in Kaziranga National Park and other tourist destinations in Assam and elsewhere in the Northeast.

(With inputs from Syed Sajjad Ali and PTI)

## New social security Bill tabled in Lok Sabha

It gives option to lower PF contribution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar on Wednesday introduced the Code on Social Security, 2019, in the Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks to amend and consolidate laws relating to the social security of employees, subsuming eight Central laws.

The eight Central Labour Acts, namely Employees' Compensation Act, 1923; Employees State Insurance Act, 1948; Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952; Maternity Benefit Act, 1961; Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972; Cine Workers Welfare Fund Act, 1981; Building and Other Construction Workers Cess Act, 1996 and Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008, are to be subsumed under the new law.

The new code will give the option for the reduction of Provident Fund contribu-



Santosh Gangwar

tion by employees in some sectors from 12% to 10%. The reduction will not apply to employers and has been done solely to increase the take-home pay of employees.

The Bill also proposes to set up a social security fund using the funds available under corporate social responsibility, to provide welfare benefits such as pensions and death and disability benefits. The Bill also has a clause to make fixed-term contract workers eligible for gratuity on a pro-rata basis.

## LS passes Bill to set up unified authority for financial services

It will be a single window for regulation, says Sitharaman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the International Financial Services Centres (IFSC) Authority Bill, 2019 which provides for the establishment of an authority to develop and regulate the financial services market.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the Lower House that the unified authority would act as a single window of regulation. She added that all the laws of land, including the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, would apply and would be audited by the CVC and the CAG.

Refuting claims that the IFSC could become a tax haven, the Minister said, "Tax holiday is given only for 10 years in the IFSC."

When questioned on the economy, the Finance Minister

### Transaction hub

- An international financial services centre (IFSC) provides jurisdiction for carrying out international financial services domestically

- The first IFSC in India was set up at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar

- The Finance Minister says there is no limit on the number of IFSCs that can be set up



ter said, "I am not undermining the challenges. A blip should not prevent us from setting up the centre." On the question of the crisis-ridden IL&FS in GIFT City, Ms. Sitharaman said the Gujarat government wanted to take over the stake in the IFSC. The Gujarat government has already appointed a new CEO replacing the IL&FS nominee.

The International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019, was introduced in the Lok Sabha after withdrawal from the Rajya Sabha. Currently, the banking, capital markets and insurance sectors in IFSC are regulated by multiple regulators. The Bill seeks to amend 14 Acts, including the SEBI Act, the IRDA Act and the PFRDA Act.

## Police against restoring bulk SMS in J&K

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

The J&K police have raised a red flag against any immediate move to restore bulk SMS or user-to-user service but allowed essential services like banks, Income-Tax (IT) departments to restart SMS to customers in the Kashmir Valley, where Internet and SMS services have remained suspended.

Official sources said telcos Airtel and Reliance Jio approached the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) earlier this month and sought intervention to restore the service in Kashmir. Top sources said the MHA had sought an assessment report from the J&K police's wings.

The J&K police, in their report, have expressed fears that any bulk or user-to-user service "may be misused by elements prying to destabilise the fragile peace in Kashmir".

## Tharoor questions LS Speaker's direction

Om Birla cancelled IT panel meeting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader and Chairman of the Parliamentary Panel on Information and Technology Shashi Tharoor questioned Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's direction to cancel a meeting of the committee scheduled for Wednesday.

Mr. Birla, according to the sources, had asked Mr. Tharoor to cancel the meeting citing inability of members to attend due to a party whip in the Rajya Sabha for the debate on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

However, three other committees met on Wednesday.

The IT panel was to take forward the discussion on Pegasus spyware breach in WhatsApp.

The last meeting of the panel on the issue saw high drama.

The BJP members had tried to stall the discussion



Shashi Tharoor

claiming that the issue was beyond its purview. The deadlock was resolved only by voting with Mr. Tharoor casting the deciding vote.

"For all who were awaiting news of the meeting of the IT Committee, the Speaker asked me this morning to postpone the meeting in view of a 3-line whip issued by BJP to its Rajya Sabha MPs which would make it impossible for them to attend. I have therefore deferred it to 13th," Mr. Tharoor said in a tweet.

## Who can recreate Constituent Assembly of J&K, SC asks Faesal

It does not exist ... it can't make recommendation: counsel

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

Who is the present day "competent authority" to bring the extinct Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir back to life, Justice Surya Kant, one of the five judges on the Supreme Court's Article 370 Bench, asked J&K leader Shah Faesal on Wednesday.

If the recommendation for abrogation of the special status of J&K has to necessarily emanate from the Constituent Assembly, who has the power to reconstitute it now, the judge repeatedly asked from the Bench led by Justice N.V. Ramana.

The Constituent Assembly ceased to exist in January 1957 with the coming into being of the J&K Constitution. Before its dissolution, it did not take a decision in favour of abrogation of Article 370, the constitutional provision which is the fountain-



Shah Faesal

head of the special status and privileges granted to J&K in accordance with the Instrument of Accession.

So, Article 370 had survived all these years until it was blunted by a President's notification on August 5, abrogating the special status and subsequently reorganising the State into two Union Territories. In fact, the proviso to Article 370 (3) required that a recommendation for any change in the special status and privileges should originally come from the Constituent Assembly.

The President could not have issued the August 5 notification, which made irreversible changes in the character of the State.

"The J&K Constituent Assembly does not exist now... So it could not make any recommendation," senior advocate Raju Ramchandran, for Mr. Faesal, submitted.

"If there is no Constituent Assembly, then what? Who should be the competent authority to form the J&K Constituent Assembly [to decide on special status to J&K]? Please enlighten us on who is the competent authority to make laws," Justice Kant asked.

Mr. Ramchandran, without offering a direct reply and leaving the question to the government to answer, said the Constitution and federalism required that the ultimate decision should have been left to the will of the Kashmiri people.

## SC to consider Ayodhya review pleas today

18 petitions to be heard in chambers

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A five-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde will on Thursday consider 18 petitions seeking a review of its November 9 verdict permitting the construction of a temple on the land where the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya stood before it was razed down on December 6, 1992 by kar sevaks.

The Ayodhya verdict declined the Muslims' claim of title over the disputed land but allowed them five acres of land elsewhere in the area as a compensation.

The judges will hear the 18 review petitions in their chambers and not in open court, at 1.40 p.m.

In case they decide to reconsider the judgment – a rare occurrence in the Supreme Court – the Bench would hear the petitions in open court.

The unanimous judg-



Ravi Shankar Prasad

The committee will have 30 members

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday referred the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, to a joint select committee of both Houses of Parliament amid Opposition protests that it breached Article 14 and freedom of expression and demands that it be referred to the Standing Committee on Information Technology headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor.

Communications and Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, while moving a resolution, said the Bill may be referred to a joint committee of the House.

### Resolution passed

The resolution was passed by voice vote. The panel will have 20 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha. The Upper House will give names of the members it wants to send to the panel.

Reading out the names, Mr. Prasad said the panel would consist of Meenakshi Lekhi, S.S. Ahluwalia, P.P. Chaudhary, Sanjay Jaiswal, Rajyavardhan Rathore, Kirit Solanki, Heena Gavit, Tejasvi Surya, Rajiv Rajan Singh, Arvind Dharmapuri and Ajay Bhatt from the Treasury side.

The panel would comprise Gaurav Gogoi, S. Jothmani, P.V. Mithun Reddy, Srikanth Shinde, B. Mehtab, Kanimozhi, Ritesh Pandey and Saugata Roy from the Opposition.

The panel is expected to

give its report before the end of the Budget session, which usually begins in the last week of January.

Trinamool floor leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay requested the Speaker to replace Saugata Roy with Mahua Moitra as Mr. Roy was busy with party work. The Speaker asked Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi to discuss the issue.

Mr. Prasad, however, said a decision could be taken by Speaker Om Birla after the member's resignation as there was a procedure that was followed for the creation of any parliamentary committee.

Some of the Opposition members demanded that the Bill be circulated in public for wider consultation.

The Congress and the Trinamool attacked the government in the Lok Sabha for a growing "snooping industry" under its watch and alleged that the Bill violated the Constitution.

Earlier in the day, Opposition parties walked out, as the House allowed the Minister to introduce the Bill.

## Bill in LS on welfare of elders, parents

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A Bill that seeks to impose six months' imprisonment or a fine of ₹10,000 or both on those who abuse parents, in-laws or senior citizens under their care was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday by Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thawar Chand Gahlot.

The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019, has provisions for the elderly to claim maintenance and for mandatory registration of senior citizens care homes and other such institutions which will have to comply with prescribed minimum standards. The Bill defines "abuse" as physical, verbal, emotional and economic abuse, neglect and abandonment, causing assault, injury, physical or mental suffering.

## SC to consider Ayodhya review pleas today

18 petitions to be heard in chambers

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A five-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde will on Thursday consider 18 petitions seeking a review of its November 9 verdict permitting the construction of a temple on the land where the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya stood before it was razed down on December 6, 1992 by kar sevaks.

The Ayodhya verdict declined the Muslims' claim of title over the disputed land but allowed them five acres of land elsewhere in the area as a compensation.

The judges will hear the 18 review petitions in their chambers and not in open court, at 1.40 p.m.

In case they decide to reconsider the judgment – a rare occurrence in the Supreme Court – the Bench would hear the petitions in open court.

The unanimous judg-



IN BRIEF



**Dark day in constitutional history of India: Sonia**

**NEW DELHI**  
Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday called the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill "a dark day in the constitutional history of India", and said it "marks the victory of narrow-minded and bigoted forces over India's pluralism".

**Bangladesh faults India on Citizenship Bill**

**DHAKA**  
Bangladesh Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen on Wednesday said the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill could weaken India's historic character as a secular nation and rejected the allegations that the minorities were facing religious persecution in his country. "India is historically a tolerant country which believes in secularism [but] their historic position will be weakened if they deviate from that," he said. **PTI**

**Protesting CAB, Maharashtra IG quits**

**MUMBAI**  
Inspector General of Police Abdur Rahman, currently posted with the State Human Rights Commission, on Wednesday announced his resignation from the service in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

**Modi-Abe summit not to be shifted from Guwahati**

**NEW DELHI**  
The turmoil in Assam is unlikely to impact the Japan-India summit that is to be held in Guwahati between December 15-17, sources said. The clarification came after reports suggested that the venue could be shifted from the Assam capital.

**Govt. diverting attention, says Ashok Gehlot**

**JAIPUR**  
Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday accused the BJP-led government at the Centre of bringing the Citizenship Amendment Bill to divert attention from the real issues such as the economic slowdown, agrarian distress and unemployment.

# Opposition speaking like Pakistan: PM

Modi asks BJP MPs to reach out to people to 'bust myths' about the Citizenship Amendment Bill

**NISTULA HEBBAR**  
**NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday accused some in the Opposition of speaking the "language of Pakistan" on the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), and said his government's move would be "written in golden letters in history".

Addressing MPs at the BJP's Parliamentary Party meeting, Mr. Modi said there was a concerted effort to spread disinformation about the Bill, and urged the party MPs to go to people to bust these "myths".

The Bill was as "historic" as the one that abrogated Article 370, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi quoted Mr. Modi as saying.

The MPs were asked to give a standing ovation on two occasions during the meet: one for the party's sweep in the Karnataka Assembly byelections, winning 12 of the 15 seats and securing a majority in the House; and second, for the passage of the CAB in the Lok Sabha



**In a huddle:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Ministers and MPs during the BJP Parliamentary Party meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday. **• SANDEEP SAXENA**

on Monday night. "People who fled religious persecution have long lived a life of uncertainty in India and will get permanent relief once the proposed law comes into effect," Mr. Joshi quoted the Prime Minister as saying. "The very same language used by Pakistan on

the Citizenship Bill is being used by some parties."

Mr. Modi's remarks were an apparent reference to the stance of parties such as the Congress and the Trinamool that the Bill discriminated against Muslims and violated the Constitution.

"The relief and joy that

the CAB has brought is immeasurable. Listen to the pain of those who will be benefited," he said.

**'Stupendous six months'**

The party MPs were given a booklet titled "Stupendous Six Months" that referred to the six-month term of the se-

cond NDA government and listed its foreign and domestic policy achievements, including nullifying Article 370.

Turning the focus on the upcoming Budget, Mr. Modi told the MPs to gather feedback from all sections of society, including farmers, traders, the poor, businessmen and industrialists, and share the inputs with the Finance Minister. "The Budget should be reflective of all these inputs," he is said to have told them.

**Ovation for Yediyurappa**

Mr. Modi asked for an ovation for Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa for the party's good performance in the byelection. He asked that sweets be distributed among the MPs before the week ended. Praising Mr. Yediyurappa as the man who built the party in Karnataka, he said that the byelection victory was significant as the BJP had won seats where it had not registered its presence before.

## Northeast MPs fear threat to indigenous identity

RS members wary of immigrant influx

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
**NEW DELHI**

Amid protests in their home States, MPs from the northeastern States raised concerns over the potential flow of immigrants into the region and a threat to the indigenous communities, during the debate on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Biswajit Daimary of the Bodoland People's Front from Assam said "the indigenous people of the northeast have apprehensions when it comes to the Bill" as they have been "marginalised".

He said the people of Assam had "lost faith" as the Centre had not fulfilled its commitment to give constitutional protection under the Assam Accord of 1985.

He asked Home Minister Amit Shah to assure the people of the region that they would remain protected under the Sixth Schedule and Article 371 of the Constitution. Mr. Daimary ended his speech with that, but quickly got up to add he supported it.

Birendra Prasad Baishya of the Asom Gana Parishad said there was a fear in Assam about "lose of language and culture". Hishey Lachungpa of the Sikkim Democratic Front said though the Home Minister had said Article 371 would not be diluted, the CAB went "against its spirit". Congress MPs from the region raised their concerns. Ronald Sapa Tlau from Mizoram questioned the "seriousness" in addressing religious persecution.

## Opposition vows to challenge Citizenship Bill in top court

This is legally untenable and morally reprehensible: Sibal

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
**NEW DELHI**

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill is unconstitutional and divisive and will be challenged legally, Opposition MPs said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Termining the Bill "divisive", Congress MP Kapil Sibal said: "It will destabilise our polity and 18 to 20 million people will not trust us. It weakens the foundation of our culture, beliefs and ethos...This is legally untenable and morally reprehensible."

Leader of the Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad asked Home Minister Amit Shah the reason for the "selective" inclusion of religious groups and countries.

Congress MP P. Chidambaram termed the Bill un-



Ghulam Nabi Azad

constitutional, and said that it would eventually go to the judiciary. "Knowing this is unconstitutional, I am afraid, this government is ramming through this Bill in order to advance its Hindutva agenda," he said.

The Shiv Sena opposed the Bill in the Rajya Sabha, with Sanjay Raut, MP, saying the party did not need a "certificate of patriotism"

from the ruling party.

Referring to a criticism of the opponents of the Bill that they were "speaking the language of Pakistan", Mr. Raut said "this is not the Assembly of Pakistan".

Trinamool MP Derek O'Brien termed the Bill unconstitutional, likening it to Nazi policy. "There is a view that the Bill from here will go 3.7 km down to another domed building - the Supreme Court. In between, there will be people's movement," he said.

Tiruchi Siva of the DMK said he opposed the Bill and that it was his duty to protect the Constitution, "my Constitution", which was "different" from the Constitution as understood by the government.



**Tackling violence:** A policeman charges at students taking part in a protest in Guwahati on Wednesday. **• RITU RAJ KONWAR**

## Rethink exclusion of Muslims, allies tell govt.

Include Sri Lankan Tamils: AIADMK

**DAMINI NATH**  
**NEW DELHI**

Asking the government to "rethink" and "revise" the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), allies of the BJP in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday sought inclusion of Muslims and those from all neighbouring countries, particularly Sri Lanka, in the Bill.

Several MPs who spoke in support of the Bill, which provides for grant of citizenship to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian migrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, raised apprehensions over the exclusions. The MPs from parties allied with the BJP asked the government to address their concerns, while reiterating their support for the Bill.

S.R. Balasubramoniyam of the AIADMK said: "What is puzzling is that certain areas have been left out. For example, Sri Lankan Tamils have been living in Tamil Nadu, but are not eligible for citizenship... I appeal to the government, to the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, to revisit and rethink."

His AIADMK colleague, Vijila Sathyanath, said there were a "few apprehensions and suggestions". Citing statements from the late AIADMK chief and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha, Ms. Sathyanath said "Ammam had demanded citizenship for Sri Lankan Tamils living in the State." She pleaded to the Home Minister to include Sri Lankan Tamils.

Balwinder Singh Bhunder

of the Shiromani Akali Dal said he welcomed the Bill, but he suggested to the Home Minister that the list of religious communities mentioned in the Bill be replaced with "minorities" and the three countries specified be changed to "neighbouring countries".

**Sikh migrants**

He also asked for a clarification on what would happen to Sikh migrants coming to India now, given that the cut-off date for grant of citizenship under the Bill is December 31, 2014.

V. Vijaisai Reddy of the YSR Congress Party said: "I, on behalf of my party, support this Bill. However, YSR Congress Party believes in respecting all religions." He said he had a suggestion that the clause of the Bill that restricts it to six minority communities in three countries "should be avoided".

He said there was persecution among minorities within Islam such as Bohras and Ahmadiyas and that the government should consider their requests for asylum.

Supporting the Bill, Janata Dal(U) MP Ram Chandra Prasad Singh said the Opposition was raising concerns over the government's planned National Register of Citizens, but, he said, the agenda would be "NRD - national register of development."

"If there is any injustice with anyone on religious lines, do you think we will stand back? No, not at all," he said.



# Poll day

British voters are heading to the polls on Thursday for the third time in less than four years, with the Conservatives and Labour seeking a fresh mandate for their respective Brexit plans

**Key issues** | Brexit was the top issue during the election campaign, with health care and the economy coming next. These are the main points from leading parties' manifestos:

**Conservatives**

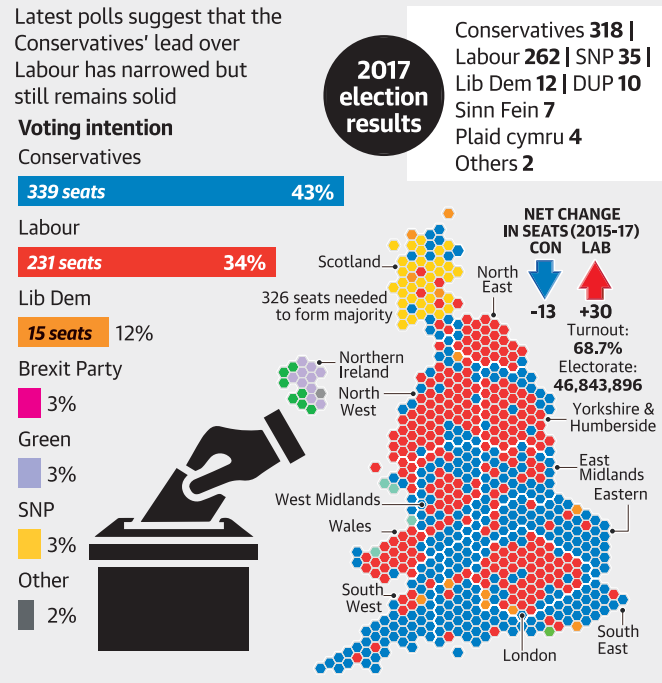
- Leave the EU under PM Boris Johnson's deal before the January 31 deadline
- Negotiate free trade agreement with EU by December 31, 2020
- Invest £2.7 billion to build new hospitals
- Borrow more to invest in infrastructure
- Won't raise taxes
- Implement points-based visa system to prioritise skilled workers

**Labour**

- Negotiate a new Brexit deal
- Put the new deal to a referendum
- Raise spending across the health sector
- Nationalise key utilities, including rail and mail
- Tax the rich more
- Immigration system to be built around human rights

**Liberal Democrats**

- Stop Brexit
- If not in power, back a second referendum on Brexit
- Introduce a wellbeing budget alongside the fiscal budget
- Raise income tax by 1 percentage point to fund health and social care
- Invest £130 billion in infrastructure
- Save EU freedom of movement



Source: YouGov, Electoral Commission, U.K.

## Boris seeks Brexit win as U.K. votes today

Possible outcomes range from a landslide victory for Tories to a hung Parliament, say pollsters

REUTERS LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson looks on course to win Thursday's election though the race has tightened markedly and he can no longer be sure of a majority, according to opinion polls published on the eve of the vote.

The December 12 election has been described by all parties as Britain's most important in memory, with Johnson calling for a big majority so he can swiftly pull Britain out of the EU next month.

The main opposition Labour Party promises a new referendum on Brexit and a renationalisation of utilities and railroads in its most left-wing platform for decades.

YouGov, which accurately predicted the outcome of the last election two years ago with an elaborate survey that

estimates the outcome in individual constituencies, cut its forecast for Mr. Johnson's likely parliamentary majority by more than half to 28 seats. Two weeks ago it had forecast a majority of 68.

Possible outcomes range from a landslide victory for Mr. Johnson to a hung Parliament with no party in control, YouGov said, given the possibility of "tactical voting" in dozens of closely fought constituencies to deny a Conservative victory.

"It could not be tighter," Mr. Johnson, the face of the Leave campaign in the 2016 referendum, said on Wednesday when asked about the opinion polls showing a tighter race. He delivered milk to voters before sunrise.

In a last minute pitch for votes, both Mr. Johnson and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn went on whistlestop tours of the country.



Labour supporters listening to their leader Jeremy Corbyn in Bristol. • AFP/FILE

Conservatives' best performance in seat terms since Margaret Thatcher's 1987 victory, YouGov said the Conservatives' tally could fall anywhere from 311 to 367.

A poll by Opinium showed Mr. Johnson's lead over Labour had narrowed to 12 percentage points from 15.

**Brexit paralysis**

Mr. Johnson called the snap election to break what he said was the paralysis of Britain's political system after more than three years of crisis over how, when or even if to quit the EU.

He has promised to "get Brexit done" by January 31 if he wins a majority. Mr. Corbyn has said he will negotiate a new Brexit deal maintaining closer trade and financial ties with the EU, and then grant a new EU referendum.

Polls open at 0700 GMT on Thursday and close at

2200 when an exit poll will give the first indication of who has won.

While there have been countless polls in the run-up to the election, YouGov's "Multilevel Regression and Post-Stratification Model" is seen as the most meaningful, offering a prediction of seats, rather than just vote share.

It crunched data from more than 1,00,000 interviews over seven days, using demographics, the specific circumstances in individual constituencies, and national statistics to come up with a projection. "We absolutely cannot rule out the 2019 election producing a hung parliament - nor can we rule out a larger Conservative majority," said Anthony Wells, YouGov's director of political research. Labour are forecast to lose 31 seats, taking them to the worst performance since 1983.

## Pak. court indicts Hafiz Saeed on terror financing charges

The anti-terrorism court adjourned the hearing till Thursday

MEHMAL SARFRAZ LAHORE

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) indicted Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed on terror financing charges on Wednesday in Lahore.

An FIR against Saeed and other JuD leaders Abdul Ghaffar, Hafiz Masood, Ameer Hamza and Malik Zafar Iqbal was registered in July on charges of terror financing.



Hafiz Saeed

Gill denied the charges pertaining to terrorism financing on their clients' behalf. Judge Bhutta ordered the prosecution to complete the evidence for a fair trial.

The court had earlier postponed the indictment due to the unavailability of one of the suspects. Indictment is a standard procedure in a criminal trial. The next hearing of the case will be held on Thursday.

Saeed is the alleged mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks that killed 166 people. He also has a bounty on his head worth \$10 million by the U.S. government.

The case against Saeed and the others was registered by the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in Gujranwala.

Saeed was brought to the court under strict security.

Court proceedings went on for over an hour in ATC-1 under Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta.

Saeed and other JuD leaders' lawyers Naseeruddin Advocate and Imran Fazal

## CPI: China is biggest jailer of journalists

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

At least 250 journalists are jailed around the world, with the largest number held in China, amid a growing crackdown by authoritarian regimes on independent media, a press watchdog group said on Wednesday.

Many of those imprisoned face "anti-state" charges or are accused of producing "false news", according to the report by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

The report also cited Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Eritrea, Vietnam, and Iran for their jailing of journalists.

## China tight-lipped on naval exercise in Indian Ocean

Iran had said it would hold a naval drill with China & Russia

ATUL ANEJA BEIJING

Chinese Foreign Ministry on Wednesday declined to confirm that China was participating in a joint military exercise with Iran and Russia, amid signals that Beijing and Tehran were considering a long term blueprint of military collaboration.

In response to question on the reported exercise in the Indian Ocean, Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying, deflected the query to the Chinese Ministry of Defence.

On December 3, Iran's naval chief Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi said during a

meeting in Tehran with Lieutenant General Shao Yuanming, deputy chief of Joint Staff Department in China's Central Military Commission, that the trilateral exercise, codenamed Marine Security Belt, will be held on December 27, Iran's semi-official Fars news agency reported.

Admiral Khanzadi further sought Chinese support to build destroyers and submarines.

Earlier, the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post*, quoting Chinese military analysts, reported that China is expected to limit its involvement in a joint naval

drill with Iran and Russia to non-combat forces to underline its desire not to be drawn into Middle East conflicts. "Participation in formal military exercise in the Persian Gulf could turn the waterway into a hotspot, and that may mean trouble for Beijing," the daily quoted Zhou Chenming.

On the same day, Mohammad Baqeri, chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, said, "Iran's Leader (Ayatollah Ali Khamenei) views Tehran-Beijing relations as strategic. The Chinese President has also similar view towards the issue," the *Tehran Times* reported.

## ELSEWHERE



Greta Thunberg is Time's 'person of the year'

NEW YORK  
Teen activist Greta Thunberg has been named *Time's* Person of the Year. Heading for home after a U.N. climate conference in Madrid, Ms. Thunberg said she wanted to dedicate the honour to all young activists. AP

## Zardari gets bail on medical grounds

ISLAMABAD  
Pakistan's former President Asif Ali Zardari was on Wednesday granted bail on medical grounds by a court here in two corruption cases, making him the second jailed senior politician in over a month to get similar relief. PTI

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12804

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles

(set by Skullduggler)

- 11 Change banking domain extension here (4)
- 12 Gratuities vaguely appealing, ultimately pointless (10)
- 13 Pretended truce I often broke (11)
- 18 Semi-fictions with altered reality in two quarters? (4-6)
- 21 Radically refined research and development leads to good hallucinogen (4)
- 22 Go on and on about graduate work (8)
- 23 Broadcast location that might be found in a school! (6)
- 24 Snack consumption interrupted by Italians (6)
- 25 Kind, loving folks with a leg up on society protected knight (6)
- 3 Hanky-panky with young woman curtailed by boss (8)
- 4 Gyrating undressed supplies rubbernecker's delight (6)
- 5 Harangue kid about expression of hesitancy (6)
- 7 Surgeon's instrument polished clean before start of transplant (6)
- 8 After gym, ran out incoherent (11)
- 14 DEA agent every so often touts disco drug (8)
- 15 Crafts for people here (8)
- 16 Old man seeming to relinquish absolute power (6)
- 17 Idiots bartered diamonds for ordinary little bits (6)
- 19 Allegiance for loose leaf tea under discussion (6)
- 20 Prone to drink tinnies on a regular basis (6)

## SUDOKU

		4	5	2	9			
		9		3				
2	7		1		3			
		1	7			9		
3	2	8			7	4	6	
	9		4		1			
	4		5			9	7	
			2			8		
8		3	6	4				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

**Solution to puzzle 12803**

I	N	C	U	R	I	O	S	I	T	Y			
A	S	E	M	R	U	H							
D	I	A	G	R	A	M	E	A	S	T	E	R	
D	L	V	A	L	P	A							
I	M	A	G	E	M	A	G	E	N	T	A		
C	D	S	B	N	C	R	S						
T	A	S	K	R	E	A	D	V	T	O	E	A	T
O	P	E	N	D	E	E	S	A	P	I	A		
N	N	A	R	E	S	L	L	I	N				
J	A	M	B	E	A	U	O	W	I	N	G		
M	Y	T	D	S	E	E							
T	O	W	H	E	I	N	T	E	R	S			
U	A	R	V	I	N	S	T						
P	R	O	T	E	S	T	A	N	T	S			

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

9	3	5	1	6	7	4	2	8
4	1	6	2	8	3	9	7	5
2	8	7	9	5	4	1	6	3
7	5	3	4	9	8	6	1	2
8	9	2	6	1	5	7	3	4
1	6	4	7	3	2	8	5	9
5	4	8	3	7	6	2	9	1
3	7	9	8	2	1	5	4	6
6	2	1	5	4	9	3	8	7

ACROSS

- 5 Fawn over people person! (6)
- 6 Mother ups and leaves with respect to relatives, as befits a daughter (6)
- 9 Ridiculous big red tie (6)
- 10 Apostate discovering religious text after chequered career (8)

DOWN

- 1 Dance with enthusiasm in pursuit of admirer and pirouette (8)
- 2 Cottage pie stuffing put away before actual breakfast (6)

To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code

## FAITH

### Saguna and Nirguna

God is seen at times as personal rather than impersonal, and to some He appears as one with form while others claim He is formless. Is one to worship the Absolute Brahman, Unchanging and Unmanifest, or the Brahman who is manifest in the entire creation and assumes many personal forms, asks Arjuna in the Gita. Krishna replies that whatever mode of worship is adopted, the aspirant should have total faith in the Lord and be engaged in constant meditation with the aim to seek Him alone. Adi Sankara too endorses this view, for he knows too well that except for a select few, Nirguna worship, though superior and ultimate, cannot be practised by a majority of the people, pointed out Swami Vidyashankara Saraswati in a discourse.

But Saguna Upasana and meditation appeals to many spiritual aspirants who may be at different levels of realisation. The only danger in this path is that the upasaka should not stop with mere worship of the deity or form but should be able to go beyond and understand the infinite, inscrutable, endless, limitless nature of the Brahman. In the Shadpatti Stotra, a work extolling the greatness of Vishnu, His incarnations, and His infinite auspicious attributes, Adi Sankara points out that the jivatma is of the essence of the Paramatma even as the waves in the ocean. While the waves belong to the ocean, the ocean can never become part of the waves.

Sri Ramakrishna says Nirguna and Saguna are only two sides of the same coin. Nirguna Brahman can be compared to an infinite ocean. Through intense cold at places water freeze into ice, the formless water appears as having form. Through intense love for devotee the formless Brahman manifests as having form and personality. But forms and aspects disappear to one who reaches the highest Samadhi.



MARKET WATCH

	11-12-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	40,413	0.43
US Dollar	70.85	0.10
Gold	38,486	-0.19
Brent oil	64	-0.04

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	369.70	2.80
Asian Paints	1738.20	25.05
Axis Bank	716.55	0.85
Bajaj Auto	3268.65	36.15
Bajaj Finserv	9079.10	151.90
Bajaj Finance	4036.80	49.95
Bharti Airtel	442.75	-4.25
BPL	482.65	-3.65
Britannia Ind	3041.00	-18.35
Cipla	449.95	-3.10
Coal India	187.15	-0.05
Dr Reddys Lab	2887.80	-9.70
Eicher Motors	21541.80	282.60
GAIL (India)	117.30	6.25
Grasim Ind	767.40	-2.80
HCL Tech	543.80	-0.65
HDFA	2321.65	26.50
HDFC Bank	1248.75	-0.75
Hero MotoCorp	2296.30	-33.70
Hindalco	196.60	-2.50
Hind Unilever	2010.45	-14.90
ICICI Bank	533.55	4.85
IndusInd Bank	1420.65	9.05
Bharti Infratel	254.60	0.50
Infosys	721.05	6.50
Indian Oil Corp	125.55	3.00
ITC	237.60	2.00
JSW Steel	249.95	-1.05
Kotak Bank	1686.55	24.15
L&T	1264.30	-14.70
M&M	507.75	2.00
Maruti Suzuki	6993.20	29.55
Nestle India Ltd.	14066.00	-25.70
NTPC	113.00	3.00
ONGC	128.00	2.80
PowerGrid Corp	181.75	-1.00
Reliance Ind	1562.40	0.45
State Bank	312.80	-0.60
Sun Pharma	429.80	2.15
Tata Motors	161.80	2.10
Tata Steel	405.55	3.50
TCS	2041.90	29.05
Tech Mahindra	757.95	13.00
Titan	1179.55	0.25
UltraTech Cement	4001.15	-37.50
UPL	561.05	3.30
Vedanta	138.50	-2.35
Wipro	240.05	1.90
YES Bank	42.80	-7.75
Zee Entertainment	283.45	12.50

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 11

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	70.64	70.96
Euro	78.29	78.65
British Pound	92.88	93.31
Japanese Yen (100)	64.98	65.29
Chinese Yuan	10.03	10.08
Swiss Franc	71.73	72.06
Singapore Dollar	51.95	52.19
Canadian Dollar	53.36	53.62
Malaysian Ringgit	16.96	17.04

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

December 11 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g)	46.6	(46.6)
22 ct gold (1g)	3597	(3597)

# Nod to ring-fence successful IBC suitors

Amendment to code will protect them from ex-promoters' offences; credit guarantee scheme tweaked

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

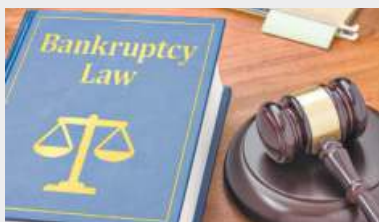
The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the proposal to make amendments in the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016, through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019. This also includes a provision to ring-fence successful resolution applicants from criminal proceedings with regard to offences committed by previous promoters of a company.

"The amendments aim to remove certain difficulties being faced during insolvency resolution process to realign the objects of the code and to further ease doing of business," the government said in a release.

The amendments aim to remove bottlenecks, streamline the corporate insolvency

## Code shield

- Amendment aims to remove bottlenecks, streamline corporate insolvency resolution process, protect last-mile funding
- Amended Act to ensure that the substratum of the business of a corporate debtor is not lost
- Licences, permits, concessions and clearances cannot be terminated or suspended or not renewed during the moratorium period



resolution process, and protect the last mile funding in order to boost investment in financially distressed sectors.

The amended Act would also ensure that the substratum of the business of a corporate debtor is not lost. It can continue as a going concern by clarifying that the licences, permits, conces-

sions, clearances etc. cannot be terminated or suspended or not renewed during the moratorium period, the release said. In a separate decision, the Union Cabinet also approved the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill to enhance the safety and security of aircraft operations. The Bill enhances the maximum limit of fine from the existing

₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore. The Cabinet also approved the 'Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme' for the purchase of high-rated pooled assets from financially sound non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs) by public sector banks.

The amount of overall guarantee will be limited to the first loss of up to 10% of fair value of assets being purchased by the banks under the Scheme, or ₹10,000 crore, whichever is lower.

The window for one-time partial credit guarantee offered by the government will remain open till June 30, 2020 or till such date by which ₹1,00,000 crore assets get purchased by the banks, whichever is earlier.

The scheme would cover NBFCs/HFCs that may have slipped into SMA-0 category

during the one year period prior to August 1, 2018, and asset pools rated "BBB+" or higher.

SMA-0 accounts are the special mention accounts (SMA) against which the principal or interest or any other amount wholly or partially is overdue between 1-30 days

**Equity support for IIFCL**  
The Union Cabinet also approved the proposal for providing additional equity support to India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited to the tune of ₹5,300 crore in financial year 2019-20 and ₹10,000 crore in financial year 2020-21.

"This will be done through regular budgetary support and/or through issue of recapitalisation bonds," the Centre said. (With PTI inputs)

# QIA to buy 25% in Adani power distribution firm

Transaction size is ₹3,200 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), the sovereign wealth fund of Qatar, has agreed to buy 25.1% stake in Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited (AEML) for ₹3,200 crore (about \$450 million).

Adani Transmission Limited (ATL), along with AEML, has signed agreements for the sale of a 25.1% stake in AEML to a subsidiary of QIA and for a shareholder subordinated debt investment by QIA in the power firm.

AEML is the licensee for an integrated power distribution, transmission and generation business that currently serves more than 3 million consumers across a licence area of approximately 400 sq. km in Mumbai. AEML's market share in



Mumbai is approximately 87% by licence area, 67% by consumers served and 55% by electricity supplied.

As part of the transaction, ATL and QIA have agreed on definitive plans to ensure that over 30% of the electricity supplied by AEML is sourced from solar and wind power plants by the year 2023. The transaction is expected to be completed in early 2020.

# Macquarie sees possibility of a PSB taking over Yes Bank

'Failure to raise funds poses danger to financial system'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

With Yes Bank unable to firm up its capital-raising plan, and in case if it fails to do so in the next six months, there is a possibility of a public sector bank (PSB) being asked to take over the lender, broking firm Macquarie wrote in a note to its clients.

"If the bank is unable to raise money in the next six months, it poses a grave danger to the financial system," Macquarie said.

## Past takeovers

The brokerage house cited the example of two private sector lenders, Global Trust



Bank and United Western Bank, which were taken over by state-run lenders Oriental Bank of Commerce and IDBI in the past.

"We need to see whether there is a run on bank deposits," it said, noting that the

bank's deposit base had declined in the last couple of quarters. Yes Bank had been scouting for an investor for some time. The bank said it had received an investment proposal worth \$2 billion from Erwin Singh Braich / SPGP Holdings, which continues to be under discussion and also a \$500 million offer from Citax Holdings and Citax Investment Group.

Yes Bank's stock tanked 15.33% on Wednesday to close at ₹42.80 on the BSE.

"It has been close to nine months since the new CEO Raveet Gill took over and they are yet to raise money," the brokerage observed.

# Retail PV sales grew 1% in Nov.: FADA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Retail passenger vehicle (PV) sales grew by a marginal 1% in November, according to data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA). "With strong spillover demand post the festive season, the month of November gave extended cheer to the dealer community with retails registering a slight growth year-on-year in all segments except commercial vehicles, where demand still continues to be quite weak," FADA president Ashish Harsharaj Kale said.

Two-wheeler sales grew by 3% in November 2019.

# Das for coordination among banks to resolve stressed assets

Current economic situation could pose challenges, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has called for co-ordination among banks for resolving stressed assets in the banking sector, at a meeting of public sector bank CEOs on Wednesday.

He noted that there has been some improvement in the banking sector and that the sector remains resilient.

However, he said, the current economic conditions could pose certain challenges. "He urged the banks to proactively tackle emerging challenges swiftly, particularly with regard to the

stressed assets resolution in a co-ordinated manner," the RBI said in a statement.

Transmission of monetary policy rates were also discussed at the meeting.

## Rate transmission

Last week, the RBI, while keeping the policy rate unchanged, said one of the reasons behind the decision was inadequate transmission of monetary policy.

In response to a repo rate reduction of 135 basis points (bps) by the RBI since February, the one-year median marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) had declined by only 49 bps.

Many banks, including State Bank of India and HDFC Bank, had lowered the MCLR this week.

The outlook on resolution of stressed assets and recovery from non-performing assets were also discussed.

The other issue was flow of credit to productive sectors, including MSMEs and NBFCs.

The Reserve Bank of India also reviewed the progress with regard to deepening digital payments through outreach activities planned by banks to make identified districts in each State/UT digitally-enabled, the statement added.

# 'Insurers may invest in debt ETFs of CPSEs'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has decided to permit insurers to invest in debt ETFs (exchange traded funds) with underlying debt securities of central public sector enterprises (CPSEs).

Announcing this and also prescribing guidelines for such investments, the regulator on Wednesday said debt ETFs with underlying debt securities of CPSEs were being permitted as an eligible class of investment. Such debt ETFs are proposed to be launched in the country. Investments in them by insurers would form part of their mutual fund exposure. IRDAI's approval for investment in debt ETFs comes ahead of the opening of the Bharat Bond ETF.

# Entering commuter bike space a failure: Mahindra

M&M sold only 4,000 units in FY19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

Anand Mahindra, the chairman of the homegrown auto group Mahindra & Mahindra, on Wednesday admitted that entering the commuter bike segment more than a decade ago was a failure on part of the group.

The group entered the two-wheeler arena after buying out Kinetic Motors in July 2008 and relaunched the 'Freedom' bikes under the label of 'Mojo', but has not been able to make a mark in the vastly entry-model driven two-wheeler space in the country even after a decade.

## Key players

The market is dominated by Hero Motocorp and Japanese major Honda which together control close to two-thirds of the over 21-million

units per annum market. Of this, Mahindra sold a paltry 4,004 units in FY19, down 73% from FY18.

The only player behind Mahindra in the market - which has a dozen original equipment manufacturers - is Kawasaki Motor, which sold 3,115 units in the year, according to SIAM data.

In the year to March 2019, the domestic two-wheeler market stood at 21.2 million units, up 4.86% from FY18.

## Premium segment entry

Terming failure a 'capital', just like financial and human capital, Mr. Mahindra said the learning from the commuter bike episode, which was a 'product failure', led to the learning and entry into the premium two-wheeler segment where he claimed the group has been successful.

# Saudi Aramco shares surge 10% on debut

REUTERS  
RIYADH/DUBAI

Saudi Aramco shares surged the maximum permitted 10% above their IPO price on their Riyadh stock market debut on Wednesday, closing in on the \$2 trillion valuation long sought by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The shares leapt to 35.2 riyal (\$9.39) each, up from the initial public offering (IPO) price of 32 riyals and at the daily limit of price moves allowed by the Tadawul exchange.

That gives the state-owned oil giant a market value of about \$1.88 trillion, comfortably making it the world's most valuable listed company, although it will have one of the smallest 'free floats' of publicly tradeable shares, at just 1.5%.

# Will be third time lucky in India: Branson

Virgin Atlantic founder says country will be its third-largest market after U.K., U.S.

LALATENDU MISHRA  
MUMBAI

Virgin Group founder Richard Branson said India would be Virgin Atlantic's third largest market after the U.K. and U.S. in 2020 and his airline has lined up expansion plans for the market after Jet Airways, its erstwhile code share partner, went bust.

He said India held a special place in his heart and Virgin Atlantic would continue to invest to tap the potential.

The Mumbai-London route has seen a 25% growth in the number of air passengers in the last five years even as capacity is down by 30-40% in the sector since Jet Airways shut operations.

"It is very sad... what is happening here. A very good airline has disappeared," he said.



Virgin Atlantic founder Richard Branson with Mahindra Group chairman Anand Mahindra in Mumbai. ■ PAUL NORONHA

Recently, the airline restarted the Mumbai-London Heathrow route which has received 'encouraging' response. This is the third time that the airline had entered the Mumbai market [first two instances being 2005-2009 and 2012-2015] as it had pulled out due to unvi-

ability of the sector. He said, "We will be third time lucky and I want to make it an advertisement campaign."

He said besides the connection to Mumbai, the airline would operate its second daily flight between Delhi and London from March 29, 2020. It is also

looking at the Bengaluru market, top executives said.

## Grandma connection

Virgin Atlantic also announced the introduction of its new Indian flying icon called Aria which will feature on the side of its aircraft from 2020. Aria is the name of Sir Richard's great great grandfather's wife, who was from Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu.

"Thirty five years ago, I started with one plane. It was founded the same year my daughter was born. I have seen Virgin Atlantic growing up and now grown up to a 35-year-old woman," he added.

He also said besides the Virgin Hyperloop One project, his new exciting venture would be the cruise business, which he would be unveiling early next year.



# Nature belongs to the beholder

Sculptor Dimpy Menon articulates our link with birds, trees, flowers and more



**Bonding with natural world** (Clockwise from left) Dimpy Menon; a work titled "To The Light"; "Wishing on a Bird II" \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

MADHUR TANKHA

Our urban spaces were once filled with a diversity of trees and birds. With the growth of megacities that prioritise brick and mortar over living in consonance with nature though, our biodiversity is upset. "Sparrows used to fly into our homes. Now they are confined to the outskirts. We have driven them away to far-flung places. At the Bengaluru airport, you hear them," says Dimpy Menon, sculptor and poet from what was once the Garden City of India. Ironically, she says people imagine the chirruping is from the sound system – we're so alienated from our natural surroundings.

Menon though, has captured our intrinsic link with nature, in 25 bronze sculptures in an exhibition titled "Through the Leaves to the Light". There's a lightness in the way she forms the connect, her theme resonating best perhaps in the sculpture



titled "To the light", where a woman standing on one leg, on her toes, reaches for a star, from off a granite sphere.

In *Wishing on a Bird*, a bronze on granite, a man standing on a similar granite sphere seems to caress a couple of birds. *Wishing on a Bird II* takes it a step further, with a woman and child sitting on granite steps, the child almost nurturing the flying birds. The sculptor uses stone and ethically-sourced wood to offset the bronze, in a few pieces.

Menon, who graduated in Fine Arts from Government College of Arts and Crafts, Chennai, and majored in sculpture, has been planting trees in her colony in Whitefield, where she says the temperature is lower by a few degrees in

summer, because of the greenery.

Here, she talks about her exhibit that she worked on for about a year and about nature itself.

**How would you describe your work?**

The performance that nature puts on inspires emotions that beg to be expressed. I try to capture them using the human form to convey both essence and experience. When one looks up at the sky with the birds gliding across or when the stars dangle, there is a calm joyfulness that fills the heart. The silent communication one has with nature is pure. One needs to know no language to enjoy nature. I try to capture the feeling of boundlessness in the works.

**What was the inspiration for these pieces?**

The inspiration was extraordinary. Individual triggers were simple yet profound. For example, a beautiful moon rising, or an early morning sky with fading stars. I have always been inspired by nature and all the bounty it bestows.



**What is our greatest need today?**

We need a harmonious relationship between human beings and nature. We need to value simple things like trees, birds, gardens. We need to have a clear sky so that we can watch stars at night. We need to treasure all this.

**How do you bring lightness to your work?**

When an idea strikes, I feel, the fact that it has entered my mind itself means that the idea can be realised. But it is never so simple. I have to work out the physics of the piece. When I am able to give

bronze the feeling of weightlessness or flight, I am very satisfied.

**Any advice for people growing up today?**

They believe that everything comes out of the box. There are artificial flowers too. However, they need to realise that for their long life it is better to have afforestation where a balance between nature and man is maintained. We have to teach them that they need to appreciate the value of green spaces.

*Gallery Art Positive, F-213/B, Old M. B. Road, Lado Sarai; on until January 5; upward of ₹1,20,000*

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

IN OUR BACKYARD

## The invader

Ironically, the pretty Rose-ringed Parakeet is one of the most illegally traded, but is also upsetting the balance of the city's bird population

The next time you see good old Mithu in a cage, know that the species is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act of India, 1972, making it a punishable offence to keep it captive or to trade in it as a 'pet'. The Rose-ringed Parakeet has long been vital to aviculture (bird breeding) and the exotic pet trade industry.

Its convenient food habits (eating locally available foods) and its ability to mimic human speech made it a desirable source of entertainment. Despite the ban on trade in all Indian wild bird species in 1990-91, hundreds of these parakeets are still collected and traded. The birds are most often taken from the wild when they are still very young, 'taming' them to sometimes be a part of a fortune-telling trade.

The Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*), a medium-sized bird, is a widespread resident (non-migratory) across the Indian subcontinent. The bird shows sexual dimorphism, where the males and females look slightly different in physical appearance.

The male proudly exhibits its vibrant dark blue-green colour, with a black chin stripe joining the rose-coloured collar, which explains how the bird has been named. The female lacks the chin stripe and the collar. The bird has a prominent red beak and is quite

vocal with its shrill *kee-oh*.

These birds have not only survived the onslaught of urbanisation, but have also thrived despite the limited resources in disturbed and varied habitats. They are known to be opportunistic granivores (grain-eating) and frugivores (fruit-eating) and primarily consume dry and fleshy fruits, seeds, buds, flowers, shoots. They are strictly herbivorous.

They breed in the cavity of trees, but can be seen, though rarely, in crevices in buildings. The females occupy the cavity long before the



egg is laid and the pair protects the cavity against predators and even other female parakeets. Only the females incubate the eggs and the males are responsible for feeding

the female during this time. Once the eggs hatch, both parents help in keeping the nest clean to keep it free of diseases.

In urban settings, these birds of-

**The great survivor** Rose-ringed Parakeet \*SHASHANK ADLAKHA

ten compete with other cavity nesters such as the Common Myna, Indian Grey Hornbill, and Spotted Owlets. Their communal roosting behaviour does often limit the other species and makes them move away from the vicinity, thus causing an imbalance. Because of this cavity-nesting behaviour and overlap in diet with some native birds, these birds may threaten or otherwise outnumber certain other native birds and bats in the vicinity.

It's not just Delhi's harsh urban conditions that the bird thrives in, it also survives low winter temperatures across the world, making it one of the most resilient birds on the planet. Farmers consider this bird most serious avian pest because of the heavy damage that they pose to agricultural crops like bajra (pearl millet), corn, rice, and sunflower. Since the 1960s, with the increase in exotic bird trade, both accidental escapes and deliberate releases have led to a swell in the population in many cities around the world. This has raised a concern for their potential involvement in native biodiversity loss.

*The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl About Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He is the Delhi-NCR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds. He formerly led a programme of WWF India.*

PEOPLE

## Golden stripes and wings

It is a dream come true for Sub Lieutenant Shivangi, the first woman pilot of the Indian Navy



Last week when a batch of three trainee officers of the 7th Dornier Conversion Course qualified as Dornier pilots and were awarded the much-coveted golden wings at INS Garuda, one of them created history. Sub Lieutenant Shivangi, 24, became the first woman pilot of the Indian Navy. From Muzaffarpur, Bihar, she was commissioned into the Navy last year. Excerpts from an email interview:

**Why did you choose the Navy?**

The idea of joining the Navy came to me in college when I saw Naval officers and a short video about the Navy. They had come for the University Entry Scheme. It was my first exposure to the defence forces. And not having the sea in Bihar does not mean we cannot like or dream of it. Goa has always been on my bucket list so you can imagine my love for the sea.

**Why aviation thereafter?**

Actually aviation has been on my mind ever since I was 10. When I came to know about the Navy, it had started induction of women pilots. Luckily for me, through the Navy I got into aviation.

**What do you have to tell women about the strength of a woman?**

Believe in yourself first. Don't think about society or your gender. You can do all the things that a man can do. Just be determined to achieve your goal.

**What were your thoughts and feelings after you were commissioned?**

That it was the first time someone from my family was joining the Defence forces. I was excited and so were my parents. They had come for my stripe shipping ceremony after my training at Ezhimala. After wearing those golden stripes, I felt all the hard work and pain was worth it.

**How was your first day flying the Dornier aircraft as an officer?**

It was different because the first stage of training was on Pilatus, a smaller aircraft compared to the Dornier. Also in the Navy, we fly over the sea so there is no reference (horizon). So it is a bit tough not to let yourself get disoriented.

**You symbolise a seminal moment in the history of the Indian Navy. What do you have to say to your significant role in history?**

I am happy that more people will now come to know about the Navy and get inspired. Also I think it will open up new opportunities for women in the Navy. I think the next step will be women on ships and fighters.

PRIYADERSHINI S

PRODUCTS

## Breaking the binary



JVAM hopes to change the concept of gendered fashion with its recently launched gender-neutral shoes in India. Founded in 2017, the brand launched in Tokyo, with minimal, understated leather products. This season has flats and kitten heels, lace-ups and slip-ons, loafers and boots, in a variety of colours.

Availability: At Vanilla Moon, DLF Emporio; upward of ₹5,000

Contact us at [delhimetro@thehindu.co.in](mailto:delhimetro@thehindu.co.in)

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE

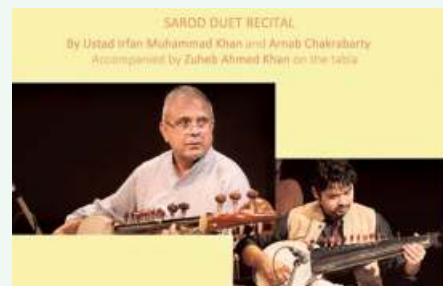


EXHIBITION

**Landscape**

*Hide and Seek*, a contemporary landscape painting show by Supriya Sathe is a reflection of her childhood memories. The artist finds inspiration in the breathtaking vistas she discovers during her travels. The collection is a documentation of the visions of the beauty of nature encapsulated on canvas.

VENUE: Gallery No. 6, Lalit Kala Akademi  
TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.



PERFORMANCE

**Sarod duet**

IIC is hosting a sarod duet by Ustad Irfan Muhammad Khan and Arnab Chakrabarty with tabla accompaniment by Zuheeb Ahmed Khan. The presentation will feature a mix of ragas rarely and commonly heard on the sarod, with a focus on gats or miniature compositions, around which raga performances are shaped.

VENUE: C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, IIC  
TIME: 6:30 p.m.



FOOD

**Coastal special**

MKT, a multi-cuisine restaurant at The Chanakya, has organised the Coastal food festival, curated by chef Sathya Prakash. On till 15th December, the dishes on offer include Kuzhi Paniyaram with coconut chutney, Palkatti Varuval, Murgh Ghee Roast coated with Mangalorean spices, crunchily baked crab in Goan spices, and more.

VENUE: Yashwant Place Commercial Complex  
TIME: 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.



MUSIC

**Dharohar utsav**

Baba Vishwanath Society for Music & Performing Arts presents Dharohar Utsav, an evening of Indian classical music. The event will feature a jugalbandi concert by Hindustani vocalists Pt. Ajay Pohankar and Pt. Vishwanath. This will be followed by Mohan veena recital by Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhat and shehani by Bhaskar Nath.

VENUE: Stejn Auditorium, India Habitat Centre  
TIME: 7 p.m.



FILM

**AND YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW ME**

Documentary on queer identity Alliance Française de Delhi will be screening *And You Thought You Knew Me*, this evening. Directed by queer feminist Pramada Menon, the film seeks to explore queer identities and lesbianism, through the life stories of five very different lesbian women. The screening will be followed by a discussion with the director.

VENUE: M. L. Bhartiya Auditorium, Lodhi Road  
TIME: 6 p.m.



# One night at the City Palace

The royals of Jaipur have thrown open the doors to their exotic Gudliya suite for tourists wanting to experience living life like a Maharajah

MADHUR TANKHA

For close to 300 years, the sprawling rooms of Jaipur's City Palace were out of bounds for people outside the royal family and their circle of friends — a list that includes Bill Clinton, Prince Charles and Princess Diana, Jackie Kennedy and Oprah Winfrey.

But now, 21-year-old Maharaja Sawai Padmanabh Singh, 'Pa-cho' to his friends, has decided to open one of the suites to people booking on Airbnb.

A memorandum of understanding gives the company exclusive rights to market the property. At an al fresco dinner that he hosted for about 50 people in the palace recently, Singh announced the tie-up, saying how much he enjoys Airbnb properties abroad. Besides international media, celebrities like Karishma Kapoor and Mandira Bedi and his family (mother Diya Kumari and cousin Raghavendra Rathore) were present.

The reason for throwing open the doors of the Gudliya suite, Singh added, was to fund Princess Diya Kumari Foundation's



work to facilitate the livelihoods of skilled craftswomen, who specialise in *gota patti* and appliqué. You can buy their work on the palace's premises, and see exactly who you are benefiting.

### The full experience

The Gudliya suite, named after a village in Rajasthan, is spread across 3,200 square feet, including the private pool area.

You enter through Chandra Mahal, a courtyard, beyond which is a garden with a fountain and preening peacocks. It sets the scene for what is to come — not the gilded walls and ornate silver pieces of the Diwan-e-Khas, but a now-meets-then rendition of what you would expect a modern maharaja to like.

The first room is in emerald green, and the royal emblem above the entrance makes for a good photo-op. It leads into the bedroom, predominantly powder blue and white, with *jaali*

work on the windows. A simple chandelier, with a repetitive design in white, hangs from the ceiling. The marble floors have minimal inlay. Furniture is sparse and not overwhelming despite the canopied bed, and so there is room to breathe in the space which was once used as a store-house for palanquins.

You then go through to a yellow room, which is sort of indoor lounge area. From here, you can either make your way into a pink room with a walk-in closet and desk or to the red bathroom beyond it, which has a pool that was once a *hammam*. There is also a sit-out area — where you can have a private cup of tea — that leads out of the main bedroom.

Like most Airbnbs and heritage hotel experiences, it is not just the suite you get. There is plenty in terms of atmosphere — a rose petal shower welcome, a butler service and a guided tour around the city. Plus, there is Rajasthan food at Baradari — a hybrid space which uses traditional masonry and craftsmanship to bring it into the here and now.

So what's the catch? Well, as you can imagine, renting a palace room does not come cheap. The Gudliya suite costs \$8,000 (approx. ₹5.6 lakh) a night. However, the price is \$1,000 (approx. ₹71,000) until end of December.

The writer was at the City Palace on the invite of Airbnb.

**Touch of class** The interiors of the Gudliya suite at City Palace in Jaipur. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### GET, SET, GO



## Fireside music fiesta

Travellers can expect a celebration of art, music, nature and wildlife at the Nahargarh Palace in Rajasthan, when it hosts the Ranthambore Music & Wildlife Festival 2019 from December 27 to 29. The festival will present a bouquet of music performances by artists from France, Germany, Israel, Bangladesh, and India. In December, when the temperature in Ranthambore ranges from 24 degrees to 10 degrees Celsius, music performances will be held by the fireside at the amphitheatre. The Palace Den Afterdark Stage will be open for those who want to dance the night away. Among the many performances, the highlights include live acts by Peter Cat Recording Co, Mame Khan, Naazy, Arko Mukhaerjee Collective, Lifafa, Rasika Shekar and others. Visitors can also experience jungle safaris, workshops such as block printing and pottery, star gazing, malt tasting and a feast of local and international cuisine. For details, [www.ranthamboremusicfestival.com](http://www.ranthamboremusicfestival.com)



## Taj opens in Tirupati

The Indian Hotels Company Ltd (IHCL) recently announced the launch of Taj's new property in Tirupati. Targeting both business and leisure travellers who head to Tirumala hills for pilgrimage, the hotel is three kilometres from the city centre, 12 kilometres from the airport, and has rooms offering hill views. Constructed following the principles of Dravidian architecture, the hotel has ample open spaces and design elements such as lit gopurams and *pushkarni* (inspired by the temple tanks). The design is an interplay of earth, light and water. Throughout the premises, one can notice the temple-inspired décor and motifs such as the brass bells at the reception. The rooms have modern amenities one expects from luxury hotels. Dining options include both regional and pan-Indian cuisines. The rooftop pool allows guests to view the hills around.



### POOCH CAFE



### PEANUTS



### HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



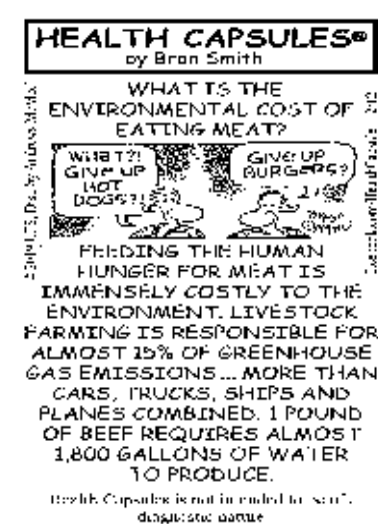
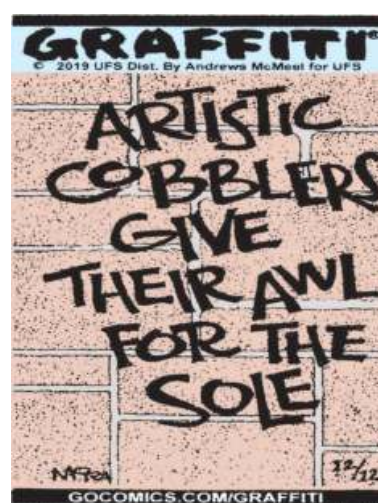
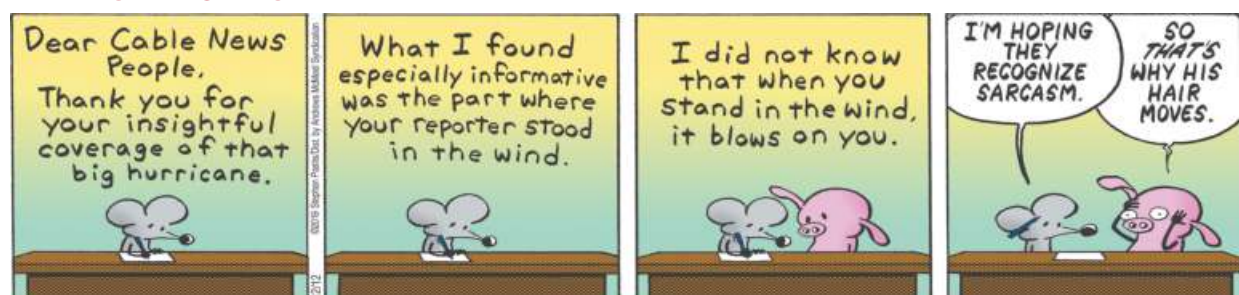
### TIGER



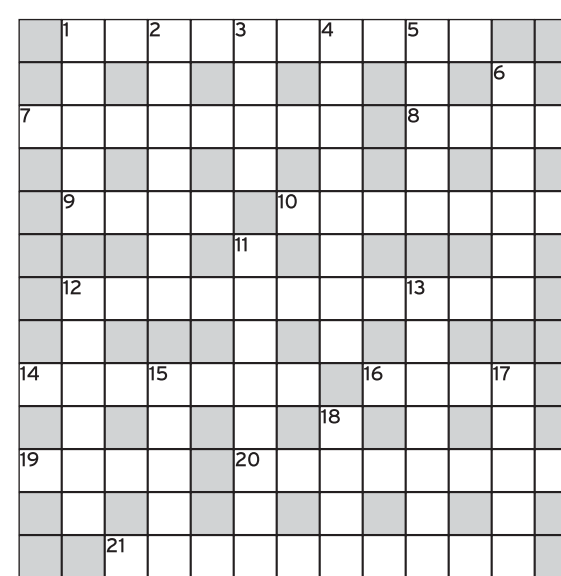
### WUMO



### PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



### THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13248



- 1 Make someone feel let down (10)
  - 7 Sumptuous and spacious (8)
  - 8 Undressed (4)
  - 9 In apple-pie order (4)
  - 10 Censure severely (7)
  - 12 Sordid gain (6,5)
  - 14 Notice carried for public display (7)
  - 16 Little lies (4)
  - 19 Mane (4)
  - 20 Hostile (8)
  - 21 Tie the knot (3,7)
- 1 Preliminary sketch (5)
  - 2 Disgraceful event (7)
  - 3 Claw (4)
  - 4 Very unpleasant place (8)
  - 5 Roman Catholic service read about 3pm (5)
  - 6 Stick (6)
  - 11 Surly (8)

B	O	D	E	P	I	D	E	M	I	C	
I	R	E	E	L							
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D	S	B	A	E	D	F					
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B	L	A	H	E	D	A					
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Solution will appear in The Hindu dated December 13, 2019.

Solution No. 13247



# India buries West Indies under an avalanche of sixes

Rahul, Rohit and Kohli put the visitors' attack to the sword, hitting 16 maximums, as the Men in Blue overpower Pollard's men to clinch series 2-1



Three musketeers: K.L. Rahul, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli came out all guns blazing as India amassed 240 in the third and final T20I to put the contest beyond West Indies' reach. ■ VIVEK BENDRE



## WI IN INDIA

**AMOL KARHADKAR**  
MUMBAI  
Quickfire start? Tick. Power-hitting problem? Tick. Setting a target? Tick.

India's star-studded batting line-up couldn't have asked for a better venue and a more important situation – the series-decider against the West Indies at the Wankhede Stadium – to overcome the recent shortcomings that have jeopardised it in the T20 format.

No wonder then that a gargantuan total of 240 for three – with Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul laying the foundation in the first half and a vociferous captain Virat Kohli going ballistic at the death –

proved too much for the West Indies.

While the Windies batsmen – opener Evin Lewis was unable to bat after being stretched off the field after hurting his leg in the field – crumbled under pressure, India's rejigged bowling combination of Mohammed Shami and Kuldeep Yadav, who came in for Ravindra Jadeja and Yuzvendra Chahal, stuck to its task and completed a convincing 67-run win.

The bowlers owed the victory to the big three of India's batting. Ten of the 20 overs in India's innings saw at least 10 runs being scored while three of them fetched 20-plus. The trio scored all of India's runs that came off the bat, plundering 19 fours and

16 sixes to rattle the West Indian bowlers

### Making merry

Rohit had a field day in his hometown while Rahul was at his wristy best after Kieron Pollard inserted India for the second consecutive match. But Kohli's finishing touch was even better than the duo's exploits in the first half of the innings.

With the openers in superlative touch – Rohit wielding his long handle at will and Rahul combining his trademark deft touches and flicks – the Windies bowling went haywire with long-hops and full-tosses being offered in plenty. To their credit, they didn't throw their wickets away till the game was vir-

tually taken away from the visitors.

The PowerPlay fetched 72 runs, thanks to the duo's severe assault on all the four bowlers that were employed. Kesrick Williams, whose duels with Kohli have been a highlight of the series so far, was welcomed by Rahul with an upper cut over third-man fence sandwiched between two elegant cover-drives.

### Raw power

Rohit then gave left-arm spinner Khary Pierre a taste of his raw power with two sixes and a four off successive balls, with the swept six overshadowing the other strokes. By the time Rohit miscued a pull off Williams in the 12th over, the duo's 135-run stand

had set the stage for an elephantine total.

Despite Pant failing to utilise promotion in the order, Rahul and Kohli ensured India continued to literally toy with the Caribbeans.

With Rahul cruising towards the three-figure mark, Kohli took charge and went after Jason Holder, in an encore of Hyderabad, in the 15th over. The over saw two sixes, one a Kohli trademark whip, to go along with two fours.

### Sizzling finish

Despite Rahul falling short of his hundred with two balls remaining, Kohli finished the innings on an ideal note – a six into the sight screen off Sheldon Cottrell.

## SCOREBOARD

**INDIA**  
Rohit Sharma c Walsh b Williams 71 (34b, 6x4, 5x6), K.L. Rahul c Pooran b Cottrell 91 (56b, 9x4, 4x6), Rishabh Pant c Holder b Pollard 0 (2b), Virat Kohli (not out) 70 (29b, 4x4, 7x6), Shreyas Iyer (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (b-1, lb-2, nb-1, w-4): 8; Total (for three wkts. in 20 overs): 240.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-135 (Rohit, 11.4 overs), 2-138 (Pant, 12.2), 3-233 (Rahul, 19.4).

**WEST INDIES BOWLING**  
Cottrell 4-0-40-1, Holder 4-0-54-0, Pierre 2-0-35-0, Williams 4-0-37-1, Walsh 4-0-38-0, Pol-

lard 2-0-33-1.

### WEST INDIES

Lendl Simmons c Shreyas b Shami 7 (11b, 1x4), Brandon King c Rahul b Bhuvneshwar 5 (4b, 1x4), Shimron Hetmyer c Rahul b Kuldeep 41 (24b, 1x4, 5x6), Nicholas Pooran c Dube b Chahal 0 (1b), Kieron Pollard c (sub) Jadeja b Bhuvneshwar 68 (39b, 5x4, 6x6), Jason Holder c (sub) Manish b Kuldeep 8 (5b, 1x4), Hayden Walsh b Shami 11 (13b, 1x4), Khary Pierre c (sub) Jadeja b Chahal 6 (12b), Kesrick Williams (not out) 13 (7b, 1x4, 1x6), Sheldon Cottrell (not out) 4 (4b, 1x4); Extras (lb-5, w-5): 10; Total (for eight wkts. in 20

overs): 173.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-12 (King, 1.5), 2-17 (Simmons, 2.6), 3-17 (Pooran, 3.1), 4-91 (Hetmyer, 9.3), 5-103 (Holder, 11.1), 6-141 (Pollard, 14.6), 7-152 (Walsh, 16.5), 8-169 (Pierre, 19.2).

### INDIA BOWLING

Chahal 4-0-20-2, Bhuvneshwar 4-0-41-2, Shami 4-0-25-2, Dube 3-0-32-0, Kuldeep 4-0-45-2, Washington 1-0-5-0.

**Toss:** West Indies.

**Man-of-the-Match:** Rahul.  
**Man-of-the-Series:** Kohli.  
India won by 67 runs to clinch three-match series 2-1.

The fate of the matches was all but sealed once the Windies were 17 for three in

the fourth over. But Pollard's power-hitting – albeit not in Mumbai Indians' blues –

gave a full house plenty to cheer before the visitors finished way off the mark.

## STAT SPHERE

1 Rohit Sharma is the first Indian batsman - and third overall - to register 400 sixes in international matches  
**Most sixes in international cricket**  
534 Gayle  
476 Afridi  
404 Rohit  
398 McCullum  
359 Dhoni

1 This is the first instance of three batsmen scoring at least 70 in a T20I innings - Rahul 91 (56), Rohit 71 (34) & Kohli 70\* (29)

2 Number of times two Indian batsmen have scored at a 200-plus strike rate while making at least 50 in the same game. In this match, it was Rohit (71, 208.82) and Kohli (70\*, 241.37). The earlier occasion was also against West Indies (Rohit & Rahul, Lauderhill, 2016)

3 India recorded its third highest T20I total, top two being the 260/5 (vs SL, Indore, 2017) and 244/4 (vs WI, Lauderhill, 2016)

7 This is India's seventh straight international series win against West Indies across formats

8/9 India has won eight out of nine deciders (with the teams locked 1-1) in a 3-match bilateral T20I series, the only loss coming against NZ (Hamilton, 2019)



## No total is enough now: Rahul

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI

In an effort to go full throttle with the series at stake, India had faltered in the T20I series-decider against South Africa two months ago and shared the honours (1-1).

On Wednesday, however, the Indian openers Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul got off the blocks in no time and ensured that the Men in Blue didn't flounder again.

Rahul said his whirlwind partnership of 135 with Rohit was a "confidence-booster" in the build-up to the T20 World Cup.

"We are looking to work on our first innings whenever we have to bat first. That's something we have been doing. We start off thinking that we want to get 200. That's T20 cricket now. No

total is enough. At times, you try to overachieve and it often happens, whether you bat first or second. You tend to fall short sometimes," said Rahul after winning the Man-of-the-Match award for this 56-ball 91.

"We try and improve every time we get to bat first and today was a big confidence-booster for all of us. We can learn from this innings and, hopefully, we can continue to do that more often."

### Not an impossible target

West Indies captain Kieron Pollard admitted that his bowling unit let India run away with the game upfront.

"I thought that we didn't execute as we wanted to. We came back (with two quick wickets) and in that scena-

rio, we again let them get away. But that's been the story of the series," said Pollard.

"The target wasn't impossible. We have chased 240-odd against South Africa and 230-odd has been chased at this ground as well. It wasn't impossible. Still, as a batting unit, we were consistent throughout the series. That's a big plus."

### Lewis doubtful

Meanwhile, Evin Lewis' participation in the ODI series will depend on the results of his MRI scan on Thursday. The opener injured his right knee badly while fielding and had to be stretchered off the field. He couldn't bat during the chase and initial scans have revealed a tissue damage to his right knee.

## Smith is CSA director

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
JOHANNESBURG

Former captain Graeme Smith was on Wednesday appointed as Cricket South Africa's (CSA) interim director.

CSA's acting CEO Jacques Faul said Smith will remain in the post until the Indian

Premier League (IPL) next year.

"I am delighted that Graeme has agreed to assist Cricket South Africa up until the IPL next year," Faul said in a statement.

Smith had earlier agreed to become CSA director only in an acting capacity.

## Sindhu loses opener

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
GUANGZHOU

P.V. Sindhu's recent run of poor form continued as she lost to Japan's Akane Yamaguchi for a dismal start to her title defence at the year-ending BWF World Tour Final on her Wednesday.

Sindhu squandered a 11-6 lead in the second game to go down 18-21, 21-18, 21-8 in

68 minutes to former World No. 1 Yamaguchi, who claimed her third successive win over the Indian. Sindhu had come into the campaign opener with a 10-6 head-to-head record against Yamaguchi.

World No. 6 Sindhu will next face China's Chen Yu Fei in her second Group A match on Thursday.

## Mayank for Dhawan in ODI squad

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI

Karnataka opener Mayank Agarwal was on Wednesday named as Shikhar Dhawan's replacement in India's ODI squad for the three-match series against the West Indies as the southpaw has not yet recovered from his knee injury.

Dhawan had suffered a deep cut on his left knee during a Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy game against Maharashtra in Surat and was ruled out of the T20I series.

India will play three ODIs against the West Indies in Chennai (December 15), Visakhapatnam (December 18) and Cuttack (December 22).

**The ODI squad:** Virat Kohli (Capt.), Rohit Sharma (Vice-Capt.), Mayank Agarwal, K.L. Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant (wk), Shivam Dube, Kedar Jadhav, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Deepak Chahar, Mohammed Shami, and Bhuvneshwar Kumar.



Mayank. ■ FILE PHOTO

Our Special Correspondent from Dindigul adds:

Mayank has been given permission by the BCCI to skip the fourth day's play in the Ranji Trophy match between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu here.

Mayank, whose batting duties in the game were over after he was run out in Karnataka's second innings, will leave for Chennai, the venue of the first ODI, on Thursday morning.

## Pakistan quicks check Lanka

Visitors lose wickets regularly after a steady beginning

### SL IN PAKISTAN

**REUTERS**  
RAWALPINDI

Pakistan's teenage fast bowler Naseem Shah led the host's recovery against Sri Lanka on a riveting opening day as Test cricket returned to the country on Wednesday for the first time since a militant attack in 2009.

Sri Lanka started strongly but Pakistan fought back through its four-pronged pace attack as the visitor reached 202 for five when bad light brought an end to the day's play. Dhananjaya de Silva (38) and Niroshan Dickwella (11) were at the crease.

In the presence of a small crowd, Sri Lanka captain Dimuth Karunaratne opted to bat. Karunaratne and opening partner Oshada Fernando gave a solid start, adding 96 for the first wicket as Pakistan's fast bowlers toiled through a wicketless first session.



Up-and-running: Skipper Karunaratne, in the company of Fernando, ensured a smooth start for Sri Lanka. ■ AFP

## SCOREBOARD

**Sri Lanka —1st innings:** Dimuth Karunaratne lbw b Afridi 59, Oshada Fernando c Sohail b Naseem 40, Kusal Mendis c Rizwan b Shinwari 10, Angelo Mathews c Shafiq b Naseem 31, Dinesh Chandimal b Abbas 2, Dhananjaya de Silva (batting) 38, Niroshan Dickwella (batting) 11; Extras (b-5, lb-3, nb-3): 11; Total (for five wkts. in 68.1 overs): 202.  
**Fall of wickets:** 1-96, 2-109, 3-120, 4-127, 5-189.  
**Pakistan bowling:** Abbas 20.1-7-50-1, Afridi 16-6-37-1, Shinwari 14-4-47-1, Naseem 16-4-51-2, Sohail 1-0-9-0, Masood 1-1-0-0.  
**Toss:** Sri Lanka.

## 2020 Sportstar ACES Awards

Readers will have a chance to pick their favourites for the 10 Popular Choice Awards. The top two contenders from each category, based on popular vote, will be sent to a jury, which will decide the winner

### THE NOMINEES

#### SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR (CRICKET)



#### SMRITI MANDHANA

Smriti became the third fastest woman to score 2,000 runs in ODI cricket when she hit a match-winning fifty against West Indies recently. Appearing for Western Storm in the Kia Super League in England and Wales, she scored 268 runs in 11 innings. Even though Smriti had a disappointing time in the T20I series against South Africa at home, she came back strongly on the tour of the Caribbean with back-to-back half-centuries



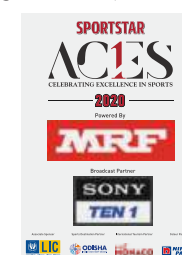
#### JEMIMAH RODRIGUES

Just 19, Jemimah is one of the most exciting batswomen in the world. While she made significant contributions in the victories against South Africa and the West Indies, Jemimah also scored 123 runs in three matches at a remarkable average of 61.50 at the Women's T20 Challenge in Jaipur and was named 'player of the tournament'



#### JHULAN GOSWAMI

A decade-and-a-half since bursting onto the scene, Jhulan, now 37, continues to be one of the pace aces of the Indian team in ODIs. In February this year, she scalped eight wickets in the series against England and then three wickets against South Africa. In the West Indies, she bagged four wickets. She is also ranked among the top-10 ODI bowlers in the ICC rankings



To vote, log on to <https://sportstar.thehindu.com/aces-awards>



TV PICKS

**NBA:** Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.  
**BWF World Tour Finals:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 8.30 a.m. & 3.30 p.m.  
**Ranji Trophy:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.  
**Pakistan v Sri Lanka:** 1st Test, Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 10 a.m.  
**Australia v New Zealand:** 1st Test, Sony Six (SD & HD), 10.30 a.m.  
**Hero I-League:** DSport, 2 p.m.  
**ISL:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.  
**Europa League:** Sony Ten 1, 2, 3, Six & ESPN (SD & HD), 11.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Win Keep Heat perfect at home

**LOS ANGELES**  
Miami Heat rallied late to beat the Atlanta Hawks 135-121 on Tuesday and remain unbeaten at home this NBA season.  
**The results:** Philadelphia 97 bt Denver 92; Miami 135 bt Atlanta 121 (OT); Portland 115 bt New York 87; Charlotte 114 bt Washington 107. AFP

It's Formidables vs Maharaja

**KOLKATA**  
Former champion Formidables from Delhi and city-based Maharaja on Wednesday entered the final of the team event in the Winter National bridge championships here.  
**The results (semifinals):** Formidables bt Railways 'A' 118-100; Maharaja bt Rampage 163-107.

For Panghal, 'Big Bout' a build-up for Olympic qualifier

**Y.B. SARANGI**  
**KOLKATA**  
World championships silver medalist Amit Panghal is using the inaugural Big Bout Indian Boxing League as a preparatory event for the Asian Olympic qualifier to be held in Wuhan, China, in February.

Even while donning the Gujarat Giants colours in Big Bout in Delhi, Panghal is focused on the bigger task at hand.

"The main aim was to treat this (Big Bout) as a training exposure and open up for the bigger competition (Olympic qualifier). I am getting different types of opponents, including a few from overseas. This kind of experience is going to be very helpful in my preparations for the Olympic qualifiers," Panghal told *The Hindu*.

Asked if he would like to turn professional at a later stage of his career, Panghal said, "Right now I have not thought about that. I will continue as an amateur boxer till the Olympics. After that, if I feel it's good, I may switch to professional boxing."

Panghal said he had been working on improving his game ahead of the Wuhan test. "I need to work on my game a little bit, especially on speed and reach (to tackle taller boxers). I focused on these areas before coming here. I have to be more than 100 per cent prepared for the Olympic qualifier. After the Big Bout, I will go back to training to fine tune these areas."

The Military World Games in Wuhan earlier this year was a rare event from where Panghal returned empty handed.

However, he looked at the brighter side. "I can't say much about the departmental games. These boxers (like the one who beat me) don't know much about technique. The opponent was not a difficult one to handle. I beat him 5-0 on an earlier occasion. I will think about it because I may meet him again in future."

# Jalaj sends Delhi into a spin

The offie's six-for effort forces the visitors to follow-on

**A. VINOD**  
**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

He has been Kerala's bowling trump card for sometime now. And, Jalaj Saxena did not disappoint as his six-wicket haul forced Delhi to surrender a huge 383-run first innings lead on the third day of the Ranji Trophy match, at the St. Xavier's Stadium, Thumba, on Wednesday.

With a day left, Delhi might have loosened the stranglehold enjoyed by the host a wee bit thanks to a fightback shaped by its openers in the final session of play, but still will have to bat through all the three sessions on Thursday to stop Kerala from registering a win, if not by an innings.

The visitors, following-on consequent to being shot out for 142, were at an identical score in their second essay with nine wickets intact.

241 in arrears

To make Kerala bat again or force a draw, Delhi will be required to wipe out the arrears of 241 runs on a wicket which offered a bit more of spin on the third day than in the first two. If it gets worse,



**Wrecker-in-chief:** Jalaj Saxena exploited the conditions to send the Delhi batsmen to their doom. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the tie could well have an interesting end.

The help from the slow-turner was enough for Jalaj to put a seed of doubt in the minds of the rival batsmen after Delhi resumed at 23 for two. Dhruv Shorey, the Delhi captain, and his deputy Nitish Rana did their best to plough back their side but in vain.

Their exit marked a virtual procession back to the pavilion as Jalaj scalped wickets in quick succession.

The spinner completed his five-for well before lunch (taken at 107 for eight) before returning to end the partnership that developed between Vikas Mishra and Navdeep Saini.

Jalaj finished with figures

of six for 63, while Sijimon Joseph had a haul of two for 7.

Forced to bat again, the sagging morale of the Delhi team was given a lift by openers Anuj Rawat and Kunal Chandela, who shared a 130-run stand, before the Kerala skipper Sachin Baby, trying his luck with the ball, struck with his third delivery by re-

moving the former. Chandela was batting on 51 along with Shorey (2) when stumps were drawn.

**The scores:**  
**Kerala — 1st innings:** 529/9 decl.

**Delhi — 1st innings:** Anuj Rawat b Jalaj 15, Kunal Chandela c Azharuddeen b Warriar 1, Dhruv Shorey c Uthappa b Jalaj 19, Nitish Rana c Uthappa b Monish 25, Jonty Sidhu c Asif b Jalaj 3, Lalit Yadav lbw b Jalaj 5, Shivam Sharma c Vinod b Joseph 11, Pradeep Sangwan c Asif b Jalaj 17, Vikas Mishra c Vinod b Jalaj 13, Navdeep Saini c Uthappa b Joseph 25, Tejas Baroka (not out) 1; Extras (lb-2, pen-5): 7. Total (in 62.4 overs): 142.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-15, 2-17, 3-59, 4-67, 5-73, 6-75, 7-101, 8-103, 9-140.

**Kerala bowling:** Warriar 10-3-26-1, Asif 9-5-16-0, Jalaj 24-4-63-6, Monish 14-4-23-1, Joseph 5-4-3-7-2.

**Delhi — 2nd innings:** Anuj Rawat c Rahul b Baby 87, Kunal Chandela (batting) 51, Dhruv Shorey (batting) 2; Extras (nb-2): 2; Total (for one wkt. in 38 overs): 142.

**Fall of wicket:** 1-130.

**Kerala bowling:** Warriar 5-1-10-0, Asif 3-0-22-0, Jalaj 16-0-35-0, Monish 8-0-44-0, Uthappa 2-0-10-0, Joseph 2-0-18-0, Baby 2-0-3-1.

RANJI TROPHY SCORES, ROUND 1, DAY 3

**GROUP A**  
Andhra 211 & 100/2 in 37 overs (C.R. Gnaneshwar 42 batting) vs Vidarbha 441 in 147.3 overs (Ganesh Satish 237, Mohit Kale 82, C.V. Stephen 5/110).  
Hyderabad 233 & 239/6 in 83 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 96, Akshath Reddy 45, B. Sandeep 41) vs Gujarat 313 in 88 overs (Manprit Juneja 94, Rujul Bhatt 65, Mehdi Hassan 4/78).  
Rajasthan 257 & 157/8 in 70 overs (Mahipal Lomror 43) vs Punjab 358 in 98.5 overs (Gurkeerat Mann 68, Mandeep

Singh 122, Anmol Malhotra 76, Shubham Sharma 4/82).

**GROUP B**  
Mumbai 431 & 409/4 decl. in 66.2 overs (Prithvi Shaw 202, Jay Bista 68, Suryakumar Yadav 102 n.o.) vs Baroda 307 in 70.1 overs (Kedar Devdhar 160 n.o., Vishnu Solanki 48, Shams Mulani 6/99) & 74/3 in 16.4 overs (Viraj Bhosale 41).  
Himachal 120 & 182 lost to Saurashtra 141 & 165/5 in 45.5 overs (Harvik Desai 46, Prerak Mankad 47 n.o.).  
**Points: Saurashtra 6, Himachal**



**O.**  
Karnataka 336 & 89/5 in 40 overs vs Tamil Nadu 307 in 109.3 overs (Abhinav Mukund 47, Dinesh Karthik 113, K. Gowtham 6/110).

Railways 253 & 270 in 76.5 overs (Dinesh Mor 102, Amit Mishra 43 n.o., Yash Dayal 4/73, Shivam Mavi 4/19) vs Uttar Pradesh 175 & 23/0 in 4.4 overs.

**GROUP C**  
Services 124 & 279 in 94.1 overs (Rajat Paliwal 89, Vikas Hathwala 51, Arup Das 5/44) vs Assam 162 & 74/5 in 31 overs.  
Chhattisgarh 134 & 78 in 36.4 overs (Ashutosh Singh 43, Rajesh Mohanty 4/19, Suryakant Pradhan 4/34) lost to Odisha 215. **Odisha 7, Chhattisgarh 0.**

**garh O.**  
Haryana 401 vs Maharashtra 247 in 96 overs (Naushad Shaikh 60, Harshal Patel 4/70) & 61/5 in 19 overs.

Tripura 289 vs Jharkhand 136 & 358/5 in 98 overs (Nazim Siddiqui 40, Saurabh Tiwary 103 batting, Ishank Jaggi 105 retd. hurt).

Jammu & Kashmir 182 & 304 bt Uttarakhand 84 & 149 in 46 overs (Dikshanshu Negi 55 n.o., Ram Dayal 5/58). **J&K 6, Uttarakhand 0.**

**PLATE**  
Bihar 173 & 196 in 71.4 overs (Vikash Ranjan 85 n.o., Vinay Kumar 4/57) lost to Pondicherry 300 & 70/0 in 11.2 overs (Paras Dogra 42 n.o.). **Pondicherry 7,**

**Bihar O.**  
Arunachal Pradesh 147 & 183 in 54.3 overs (Rahul Dalal 81, Gurinder Singh 6/50) lost to Chandigarh 503/2 decl. **Chandigarh 7, Arunachal Pradesh 0.**

Sikkim 136 & 331/8 in 98 overs (Yashpal Singh 84, Iqbal Abdulla 99 batting) vs Goa 436/6 decl.

Mizoram 65 & 290 lost to Manipur 289 & 69/4 in 17.5 overs. **Manipur 6, Mizoram 0.**

Meghalaya 285 & 142 in 48.1 overs (Imliwati Lemtur 6/54) bt Nagaland 136 & 181 in 62 overs (Aosashi Longchar 44, Sanjay Yadav 4/60). **Meghalaya 6, Nagaland 0.**

# Bagan too good for TRAU

I-LEAGUE

**Y.B. SARANGI**  
**KOLKATA**

Mohun Bagan rode on Fran Gonzalez's brace to beat a below par TRAU FC 4-0 and record its first win of the season in the I-League at the Kalyani Stadium on Wednesday.

Bagan's victory helped it jump from ninth to fourth, providing relief to coach Kibu Vicuna. Bagan applied pressure from the beginning and found the target as early as the fifth minute when Gonzalez slotted home off a goalmouth melee from a Joseba Beitia corner from the left.

Energetic Suhair

Bagan came up with some fine moves, thanks to the energetic V.P. Suhair. Gurjinder Kumar and Daniel Cy-

rus kept the rival at bay even as Ashutosh Mehta took up multiple roles on the field.

The host came close to scoring on quite a few occasions. In the 19th minute, Julien Colinas missed a sitter after getting a pass from Nongdamba Norem inside the area.

In the 38th minute, Bagan doubled the lead when Ashutosh, who received a superb long ball, crossed to Suhair who made no mistake.

Minutes after resumption, Gonzalez scored again, his right-footer catching the TRAU defence napping. Subha Ghosh completed the tally in the 90th minute.

TRAU hardly threatened the opponent in the first half and missed two golden opportunities in the second.

**The result:** Mohun Bagan 4 (Gonzalez 5 & 46, Suhair 38, Subha 90) bt TRAU FC 0.

# NEUFC-CFC match under a cloud

ISL

**AMITABHA DAS SHARMA**  
**GUWAHATI**

The rising political violence in the region has put the ISL contest, scheduled between NorthEast United FC and Chennaiyin FC here on Thursday, under a cloud.

The unrest saw the pre-match media conference on Wednesday afternoon getting cancelled.

The ISL management has preferred to watch the situation and wait for updates from the local organiser before deciding on the fate of the match.

The host practised in the morning much before the trouble started while the visitors trained in the afternoon under a security cover and also returned to the team hotel without any hassle.

After having been denied

a win by Jamshedpur FC in the previous match — the host had forced a 1-1 draw with an 89th-minute equaliser — Chennaiyin FC will be searching for its first away win of the season.

NEUFC will miss the services of Ghanaian World Cupper Asamoah Gyan, who aggravated an injury in the match against ATK. The former Sunderland forward has reportedly left the country for treatment.

Chennaiyin, looking to make a comeback under the stewardship of new Scottish coach Owen Coyle, will look to cash in on Gyan's absence. The visitors will also be keen to take a cue from the way ATK exploited the chinks in NEUFC's armour during its 3-0 win recently.

**Wednesday's result: At Pune:** Odisha 3 (Delgado 27, Hernandez 41, Guedes 71) bt Hyderabad FC 2 (Bobo 65, Rohit 89).

# Pro League second edition in January

Indian men's team to participate this time

HOCKEY

**UTHRA GANESAN**  
**NEW DELHI**

The second edition of the FIH Pro League will kick off in January.

At an interaction with select Indian mediapersons here on Tuesday, FIH CEO Thierry Weil admitted there had been teething problems, but insisted things would only get better.

Hockey India had pulled out of the 2019 edition but the men's team will participate in 2020.

"The first season was a success not only measured by FIH but by the players as well. The main feedback we received was how great it was to play against the best teams in the world at home but also how tiring all that travel had been. We have



Thierry Weil. \*FILE PHOTO

now tried to change the schedule for 2020 and cut the travel in half," Weil said.

In addition, the FIH has dropped the Grand Finale in 2020. "This is to give teams six to eight weeks to prepare for the Olympics. But we have not planned to bring it back in 2021. National associations agree it is not realistic to commit (to hosting the finale) not knowing if their

team will actually participate in the Pro League," Weil said.

Pakistan is a prime example, with the team committing to the inaugural edition only to pull out citing financial issues.

Weil insisted that all participating nations had committed to continuing in the Pro League beyond 2020, but the actual scenario would be known only later.

Asked if the Pro League, where the top nine teams play each other twice a year between January and June, would be able to draw crowds, Weil said: "The Pro League is like a quarterfinal or semifinal of a major event like the World Cup every weekend. It's now our responsibility to make people understand that these are not just friendly games," he said.

# The Hindu's Kamesh is best sports scribe



Kamesh Srinivasan, of *The Hindu*, receives the Best Sports Journalist award on Wednesday. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**SPORTS BUREAU**  
**NEW DELHI**

Kamesh Srinivasan of *The Hindu* was bestowed the Best Sports Journalist award at the FCCI India Sports Awards 2019 here on Wednesday. The awards acknowledge and recognize the contribution of sports persons and various stakeholders for the year. The jury for the awards included Justice

(Retd) Mukul Mudgal. **The awardees: Best National Sports Federation:** National Rifle Association of India. **Sports person (female):** Rani Rampal (hockey). **Sports person (male):** Saurabh Chaudhary (shooting). **Para-athlete:** Sandeep Chaudhary (javelin). **Special recognition para-athlete:** Manasi Joshi (badminton). **Breakthrough sports person:** Amit Panghal.

**Special recognition breakthrough sports person:** Esow Alben (cycling). **Coach or support staff:** Satyanarayana. **Lifetime achievement (administrator):** Govindaraj Kempareddy. **Lifetime achievement:** Pankaj Advani (cue sport). **Best State promoting sports:** Odisha. **Best sports journalist:** Kamesh Srinivasan.



# Liverpool negotiates tricky Salzburg

Shock group stage exits for Ajax and Inter Milan



**Stunner:** Mohamed Salah rounds Salzburg 'keeper Cican Stankovic and scores Liverpool's second from an impossible angle. ■ GETTY IMAGES

## Points table

	Played	Won	Draws	Lost	Points
<b>Group E</b>					
Liverpool (Q)	6	4	1	1	13
Napoli (Q)	6	3	3	0	12
Salzburg	6	2	1	3	7
Genk	6	0	1	5	1
<b>Group F</b>					
Barcelona (Q)	6	4	2	0	14
Borussia Dortmund (Q)	6	3	1	2	10
Inter Milan	6	2	1	3	7
Slavia Prague	6	0	2	4	2
<b>Group G</b>					
RB Leipzig (Q)	6	3	2	1	11
Lyon (Q)	6	2	2	2	8
Benfica	6	2	1	3	7
Zenit	6	2	1	3	7
<b>Group H</b>					
*Valencia (Q)	6	3	2	1	11
Chelsea (Q)	6	3	2	1	11
Ajax	6	3	1	2	10
Lille	6	0	1	5	1

\*Valencia tops the group on better head-to-head record against Chelsea

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PARIS

Holder Liverpool safely negotiated Tuesday's trip to Salzburg to take its place in the last 16 of this season's UEFA Champions League while Chelsea is also through, but Ajax suffered a shock group-stage exit.

Six clubs secured spots in the draw for the first knockout round in its final group games, with Ajax and Inter Milan the big names to miss out.

Jürgen Klopp's side just needed to draw in Austria to keep alive its bid to retain the European Cup, and it duly beat Salzburg 2-0 thanks to two goals in two second-half minutes, by Naby Keita and Mohamed Salah.

The result allowed Liverpool to progress as Group E winner, with Napoli going

through in second place, while Salzburg is out and drops into the Europa League instead.

"What a team," Klopp told BT Sport. "What an effort. It was a tough game."

"We scored two wonderful goals. We could have scored six or seven which is crazy. We won the group, we won the game, all good."

Napoli made sure of its progress by trouncing Genk 4-0 in Italy with Arkadiusz Milik scoring a first-half hat-trick. Dries Mertens converted another spot-kick in the second half to seal the win.

There was high drama in Group H as Valencia beat Ajax 1-0 in Amsterdam, Rodrigo Moreno's strike taking the Spaniards through to the last 16 at the expense of last season's semifinalists, and leaving their host stunned.

Chelsea progressed in second place, a point ahead of

the Dutch giant, thanks to a 2-1 victory against Lille.

Chelsea, the 2012 Champions League winner, finished level on points with Valencia but came second due to its inferior head-to-head record.

### Fati makes history

Ajax drops into the Europa League along with Inter, as Antonio Conte's team contrived to lose 2-1 at home to a makeshift Barcelona.

A win would have taken Inter through, and it was fancied to get the result it required as Barcelona left out a host of senior players.

Carles Perez gave Barcelona the lead midway through the first half, but Romelu Lukaku fired in the equaliser.

Inter then missed chances to score a second and Ansu Fati showed it the way, the substitute netting an 86th-minute winner to stun the

home side and become the youngest ever goalscorer in the Champions League at 17 years and 40 days.

That record had been held since 1997 by Ghana's Peter Ofori-Quaye. Borussia Dortmund needed to better Inter's result and it did so, beating Slavia Prague 2-1.

**The results: Group E:** Salzburg 0 lost to Liverpool 2 (Keita 57, Salah 58); Napoli 4 bt Genk 0 (Milik 3, 26, 38-pen, Mertens 75-pen).

**Group F:** Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sancho 10, Brandt 61) bt Slavia Prague 1 (Soucek 43); Inter Milan 1 (Lukaku 44) lost to Barcelona 2 (C. Perez 23, Fati 87).

**Group G:** Benfica 3 (Cervi 47, Pizzi 57-pen, Azmoun 79-og) bt Zenit Saint Petersburg 0; Lyon 2 (Aouar 50, Depay 82) drew with RB Leipzig 2 (Forsberg 9-pen, Werner 33-pen).

**Group H:** Ajax 0 lost to Valencia 1 (Rodrigo 24); Chelsea 2 (Abraham 19, Azpilicueta 35) bt Lille 1 (Ramry 78).



### Ancelotti sacked despite Napoli win

NAPLES

Carlo Ancelotti has been sacked by Napoli despite taking the Serie A side to the last 16. "Napoli has decided to relieve Carlo Ancelotti of his role as first team coach," the Italian side said in a statement. On Monday Ancelotti told reporters that "a coach's suitcase is always ready". He ruled out stepping down after Tuesday's win. "Resignation? I have never resigned in my life and I never will," he said. "My future? The team management will make its assessment. Former AC Milan manager Gennaro Gattuso is the favourite to take over. AFP

# New Zealand faces a major test

Inexperience in Australia is perhaps its greatest handicap

## NZ IN AUSTRALIA

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
PERTH

The validity and durability of New Zealand's ranking and run of success in Test cricket will be tested in the sport's most hostile environment when it meets Australia on Thursday to open a three-match series.

New Zealand has risen to No. 2 in the world Test rankings after an unbeaten string of seven consecutive series, most recently at home over England.

Those performances and the individual form of players such as captain Kane Williamson, batsmen Ross Taylor and Tom Latham and bowler Neil Wagner, have some observers describing this as the best New Zealand team of all time.

But none of the current squad has played a Test here, in Melbourne or Sydney – the venues for the series – and until they do so,



**Can't wait:** Mitchell Starc will fancy his chances with the first Test likely to be played on a fast and bouncy pitch. ■ GETTY IMAGES

and succeed, it is unlikely they will be able to wear that laurel.

New Zealand has won only one Test series in Australia – in 1985 when Richard Hadlee and Martin Crowe helped secure that historic achievement.

In one of its most important summers, New Zealand will follow the series in Australia with a home series against No. 1-ranked India. If it wins both series it will pass

India to claim the No. 1 ranking for the first time.

New Zealand's inexperience in Australian conditions is perhaps its greatest handicap.

It has had no warm-up in those conditions ahead of the first Test which will likely be played on a fast and bouncy pitch at the new Perth Stadium, and it has little recent experience of day-night cricket ahead of the pink ball series opener.

# Dar set to break Bucknor's record

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DUBAI

Pakistan's Aleem Dar will break Steve Bucknor's record of most Test matches as an umpire during the first Test between Australia and New Zealand.

The 51-year-old, who took up umpiring after a decade of playing First Class cricket in Pakistan, stands in his 129th Test match as an on-field umpire since his debut in Dhaka in 2003 during England's tour of Bangladesh.

Starting his international



Aleem Dar. ■ FILE PHOTO

career in 2000 during Pakistan's home ODI series against Sri Lanka, Dar has officiated in 207 ODIs and is only two matches shy of the record of 209 matches held by Rudi Koertzen of

South Africa. Dar has also officiated in 46 T20Is.

"This is one milestone I had never thought of when I began my umpiring career. It is a truly amazing feeling and a high point of my life when I take the field here in Australia; thousands of miles from where I started my international career at home in Gujranwala," said Dar in an ICC statement. "Steve Bucknor was my idol and it is only sinking in now that I will have officiated in more Test matches than him."

# Ravi, Sumit test positive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

World Cup medal-winning rifle shooter Ravi Kumar tested positive for propranolol during a domestic competition here. The substance is used to treat high blood pressure and is on the prohibited list of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

The 29-year-old Ravi, who has not been with the National team since the Munich World Cup last May, was a bronze winner at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and the 2014 Asian Games in 10m air rifle. "I had taken the

medicine to treat migraine inadvertently. It was after being prescribed by my doctor at home days before I was tested during the Kumar Surendra Nath Memorial Meet in May-June," said Ravi.

Former Asian silver-medallist boxer Sumit Sangwan, too, failed a dope test. He tested positive for a diuretic acetazolamide.

Indian Boxing's High Performance Director Santiago Nieva revealed that Sangwan has left the national camp in Patiala. "He has taken leave to deal with this issue," he said.

# Rijiju confident of India's good show at Tokyo

Union Sports Minister says the country has to set ambitious targets

## GENERAL

KAMESH SRINIVASAN  
NEW DELHI

Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju expressed confidence that India would come up with its best ever performance in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

In his inaugural address at the Global Sports Summit, organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) here on Wednesday, Rijiju said: "I will not be satisfied with a couple of medals in the Olympics."

He was confident that the Tokyo performance would set the tone for ambitious

targets for Indian sports in the 2024 and 2028 Olympics in Paris and Tokyo.

The minister said it was a good situation in the country that sports has become part of education, and part of life, through movements like Fit India.

### No lagging behind

As a young nation, the minister said, India cannot afford to lag behind and has to set ambitious targets.

"Not every target can be achieved, but it will not be impossible either. Olympics is the biggest and greatest event on planet earth. Nothing unites the nation like sports or sportspersons," he



Kiren Rijiju. ■ PTI

said. Putting things in perspective, the minister said the Indian sports industry had untapped potential for making the country one of the leaders of world economy. Saying it was important to

encourage indigenous sports like kabaddi and kho kho, Rijiju added that the drive would be to aim for kabaddi in Olympics and kho kho in the Asian Games.

"Everybody has to play sports. We have to change the way we look at sports. It has to become a culture, and fitness is universal."

Rijiju lauded the world-class JSW centre, apart from the ones run by Prakash Padukone and Rahul Dravid, as the best way forward.

He assured that the government would supplement all initiatives to the best extent possible as he highlighted the collaboration of corporate and government as

the way forward.

On a lighter vein but in a forceful way, the minister announced that he was using the platform to say "don't ban the politicians from running sports. Everybody must be proactive towards sports and everybody has a role to play".

### Fulcrum of growth

Odisha Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera, an IIT graduate, crisply presented the sports orientation of the state government in making sports the fulcrum of growth in the state, right from conducting a number of world-class events, apart from sustaining the infrastructure

with excellent plans despite the challenges.

Union Sports Secretary Radheyshyam Julaniya explained how muscle power had given way to machine power in the evolution of society, and how artificial intelligence would take over soon.

He stressed that it was important to capitalise on sports to "keep people occupied" with socially useful and productive work.

### Lively affair

A wide range of subjects and experts made it a lively affair through the day, presenting their vision to make India a fit and sporting power.

# Indian Oil takes the honours

## PSPB TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Sumit Nagal and Ramkumar Ramanathan guided Indian Oil to a 2-0 victory over Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in the 39th Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) inter-unit tennis final at the DLTA Complex on Wednesday.

**The results: Men: Final: Indian Oil bt ONGC 2-0** (Sumit

Nagal bt Vishnu Vardhan 6-3, 6-3; Ramkumar Ramanathan bt V.M. Ranjeet 6-3, 7-5).

**Third place: Oil India Limited bt GAIL 2-1** (Chandrashekar Mohanty lost to Saketh Myneni 2-6, 1-6; Udit Gogoi bt Jitender 6-0, 6-0; Chandrashekar Mohanty & Udit Gogoi bt Saketh Myneni & Durgesh 6-3, 6-0).

**Veterans (final): BPCL bt Oil India Limited 2-0** (Bhushan Akut bt Hakim Ali 6-1, 6-1; N. Chandrasekar bt S. Pegu 6-1, 6-2).

# Asghar back as Afghanistan captain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KABUL

The Afghanistan Cricket Board re-appointed former captain Asghar Afghan as the skipper across all formats of the game on Wednesday.

The decision taken by the ACB's top management officials, comes seven months after Asghar was stripped from captaincy across formats.

"As per the decision by ACB Top management, senior player Asghar Afghan



Asghar Afghan. ■ AFP

is reappointed as team Afghanistan's captain across formats," ACB wrote on its official site on Wednesday.