



Annual Conference

New India: Aspiring \$5 Trillion Economy

20 December 2019, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi



"Aim is to make India a 5 trillion dollar economy in the shortest possible time."

Inaugural Address at 11.00 a.m.

Inaugural Address by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Narendra Modi

\$5 Trillion would require India's Own Growth Model

Chair: Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs • Time: 12.10hrs-13.00hrs



Anil Agarwal
Chairman, Vedanta Resources Ltd.



Gautam Adani
Chairman, Adani Group



Ajay Piramal
Chairman, Piramal Group



Sajjan Jindal
Managing Director, JSW Group



Junaid Kamal Ahmad
Country Director, World Bank

Strengthening India's Global Positioning

Chair: Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry • Time: 13.00hrs-13.45hrs



Jai Shroff
Global CEO, UPL Ltd.



Atanu Chakraborty
Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs



Deepak Bagla
MD & CEO, Invest India



Naveen Munjal
MD, Hero Electric

CNBC Roundtable with New India CEOs

Moderator: Parikshit Luthra



Bejul Somaia
Partner
Lightspeed Venture



Vidit Aatre
CEO
Meeshp



Amit Sharma
CEO
ShopX



Rahul Pandit
MD & CEO
Hanslede Living



Ashneer Grover
Co-founder & CEO
Bharatpe



Anshoo Sharma
Founder & CEO
Magopin



Amit Singh
Founder & CEO, Shufti

Driving India's Growth Engines – MSMEs and Infrastructure

Chair: Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSME • Time: 14.30hrs-15.15hrs



Ram Mohan Mishra
Special Secretary and
Development Commissioner, MSME



Shailesh Pathak
CEO, L&T-IDPL



Darshan Hiranandani
MD & CEO, H Energy



Anil K. Agarwal
Chairman, Cosmos Group

Creating a Vibrant Regulatory System for New India

Chair: Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister for Law & Justice, Comm., Electronics and IT • Time: 15.30hrs-16.30hrs



Amitabh Kant
CEO, NITI Aayog



Aruna Sundararajan
Former Secretary, Deptt. of Telecomm.



Ramkumar Ramamoorthy
Chairman & MD, Cognizant India



Dilip Modi
Chairman, Spice Group

Role of Women in New India: A Roadmap to \$5 Trillion Economy

Chair: Smriti Irani, Union Minister for Textiles and Women & Child Development • Time: 16.45hrs-17.30hrs • Moderator: Sheeren Bhan



Saroj Pandey
MP, Rajya Sabha



Navneet Ravi Rana
MP, Lok Sabha



Dipali Goenka
CEO and Jt. MD, Welspun India



Kavita Bhatia
Founder, Ogaan



Juhi Chawla
Actress



"The Industry looks forward to exchange of ideas that will help sustain India as one of the fastest growing large economies of the world."

Balkrishan Goenka, President, ASSOCHAM



Niranjan Hiranandani
Sr. Vice President, ASSOCHAM



Vineet Agarwal
Vice President, ASSOCHAM



Deepak Sood
Secretary General, ASSOCHAM

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PREP BEGINS

Air Force officers at a rehearsal for the Republic Day celebrations at Rajpath on Wednesday. Praveen Khanna

JNUTA writes to Kovind over exams on WhatsApp

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 18

THE JAWAHARLAL Nehru University Teachers' Association (JNUTA) Wednesday wrote to President Ramnath Kovind, also the Visitor of the varsity, against the administration's decision to hold exams via WhatsApp, saying it would make JNU "the laughingstock of academia the world over".
In view of the boycott of exams, JNU has decided to send question papers to students through email, to which they have to respond via email or WhatsApp.
"It may be considered shocking that a vice-chancellor of an institution of higher learning could even imagine reducing the evaluation system to something like this, which would never be acceptable as a credible exercise... We, however, keep learning there are no limits to the absurdities Prof Jagadesh Kumar can inflict on the institution he heads. By asking teachers to participate in this travesty, he wants us to join

him in destroying the JNU's hard-earned reputation for maintaining high academic standards," the JNUTA wrote.
"He is also in the process asking us to join him in violating the provisions of the JNU Act, Statutes and Ordinances that the V-C and teachers are bound by. These define the process through which the academic requirements of different courses and programmes, including the evaluation systems, are to be decided....," they added.
"JNU's teaching-learning was one of the most significant casualties of Professor M. Jagadesh Kumar's autocracy. Today he has offered the starkest evidence of this by proposing a mockery of that process as his solution to the crisis in JNU. JNU's teachers appeal to you to see that Professor M. Jagadesh Kumar's continuation in office is also doing great damage to your standing as Visitor of the University...we request you again, and through you also to the MHRD, to please act and act immediately to abort this destruction of a premier public institution," the JNUTA said.

Airhostess found dead at PG, owner booked for abetment

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, DECEMBER 18

A 23-YEAR-OLD woman who worked as an airhostess with a domestic airline allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself at her paying guest accommodation in Gurgaon Tuesday night. The owner of the PG has been booked for abetment to suicide, with her relatives alleging he was "mentally harassing" her.
Police said the woman hailed from West Bengal and had been residing at the PG in the city's DLF Phase 3 since August.
"Her father said she had spoken to him on Tuesday night, and that she sounded distressed. She confided in him that the owner of the establishment had been harassing and humiliating her for a long time," said Gurgaon Police PRO Subhash Boken.
On Wednesday morning, around 8.30 am, the woman's body was discovered hanging from the ceiling fan by the PG staff, who broke down her door when she failed to respond to repeated knocks.

Police suspect she committed suicide around 2 am, after the conversation with her father.
Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Ram Nivas, the Investigating Officer (IO) of the case, said the woman had not approached police regarding any complaints against the owner before.
"We first heard of the incident when her body was found by the staff Wednesday morning. Her parents alleged the PG owner had been troubling her for a long time, but we have no records of her approaching police about it. We did not recover any suicide note from the spot," said the IO.
An FIR of abetment to suicide was registered against the owner at Phase 3 police station on Wednesday, on the basis of the complaint submitted by relatives of the woman.
"The post-mortem of the deceased has been conducted and her body has been handed over to her parents. We are conducting investigation in the matter. The PG owner will be arrested once we find any evidence corroborating the complainants' allegations," the IO added.

2012 GANGRAPE-MURDER

Death warrants against Dec 16 convicts only after mercy pleas rejected: Court

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 18

HOURS AFTER the Supreme Court dismissed the review petition of December 16, 2012 gangrape-murder convict, Akshay Kumar Singh, a Delhi court adjourned the hearing on the death warrants against the four convicts in the case to January 7, observing that "only when their mercy petitions are rejected that death warrants may be issued".
Additional Sessions Judge Satish Kumar Arora said in his view, fresh notice must be issued to all four convicts to apprise them about their legal remedies. Delhi Prisons DG Sandeep Goel said, "We have sent notices to the convicts, which say they have seven days to apply for mercy petition."
The victim's mother broke

Delhi Prisons DG told the court notices have been issued to the four convicts, giving them seven days' time to file their mercy pleas.

down in front of the judge and asked him: "The convicts have been given one more chance. Why are their rights being considered? What about our rights?"
To which, the judge said: "I have full sympathy with you. I know someone has died, but they (convicts) also have rights. You also have your right, which is why we are here to consider it."
Later in the day, the counsel for another convict filed a petition in court, saying he was a juvenile at the time of the crime.

The lawyer, A P Singh, also informed the court that a case is pending before the Delhi High Court pertaining to the issue of juvenility of another accused, Vinay.
On Wednesday, the four convicts were produced before the court through video conferencing, where the judge informed them about the new notice. While Vinay told the judge that he was not properly represented, Mukesh asked for someone else to represent him after his lawyer failed to turn up the second time. The court urged the case's amicus curiae, Vrinda Grover, to represent the two convicts, which she accepted.
Additional Public Prosecutor Irfan Ahmad argued that nothing was stopping the court from issuing death warrants, as the convicts may file their mercy petitions later. The judge, however, said death warrants will be

issued only when mercy petitions are rejected.
When the counsel for the victim's mother said a reply on Tihar's notice was not required, the judge said: "It is the principles of natural justice, in fact the mandate is that the convicts are to be heard."
A 23-year-old physiotherapy student was raped by six men aboard a private bus on December 16, 2012. She died on December 29 at a hospital in Singapore.
Of the six accused, one was juvenile and spent three years in a correction home. One accused, Ram Singh, committed suicide in Tihar Jail.
In September 2013, a fast-track court held the four convicts guilty of 13 offences including gangrape, unnatural sexual assault, murder of the woman, and attempt to murder her male friend.

3 DU colleges 'end services of ad hoc teachers'

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 18

CLAIMING LACK of directions from the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) or the Delhi University administration, three DU colleges Wednesday issued notices, ending or suggesting the ending of services of ad hoc teachers appointed this year.
In a notice, Aryabhata College stated that services of six ad hoc teachers "will stand terminated w.e.f. 17.12.2019." Lady Shri Ram College issued a memorandum naming one ad hoc teacher, stating "her services will no longer be



At the protest by DU's ad hoc teachers. Archive

required with effect from December 16, 2019," while Keshav Mahavidyalaya stated: "...services of all ad hoc faculty members appointed July 21, 2019 onwards and renewed subsequently are subject to approval of competent authority".

In a letter from DU dated August 28, colleges were advised "fill permanent vacancies at the earliest," and appoint guest faculty in the interim "against new vacancies arising first time in 2019-20". This caused confusion over what the "new vacancies" were. As a result, several colleges did not issue appointment letters to ad hoc teachers at the time of renewal of their 120-day contracts, or released their salaries to fill these vacancies with guest teachers.
Following the teachers' protest on December 4, the letter was amended to include ad hoc teachers, saying they would be appointed to fill vacancies to en-

sure smooth academic functioning of colleges, and their appointment would continue this year till permanent appointments are made.
However, college principals told *The Indian Express* no official communication has been made to them in this regard till date. "We have only heard about it via the news and social media. As December 16 was the last day of the semester, we had to tell these teachers their services are no longer required. If the situation is clarified by DU or MHRD in the next few weeks, we shall extend their appointment in the next semester," said Aryabhata College principal Manoj Sinha.

Cold wave prevails, schools shut in NCR

New Delhi: All schools in Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad have been ordered to remain shut on Thursday and Friday due to cold weather conditions.
While temperatures in Delhi increased significantly after staying 10 degrees below normal two days in a row, parts of Uttar Pradesh remained under a dense cloud cover.
On Thursday, Delhi saw a minimum temperature of 7 degrees Celsius, a degree below normal and the least of the season so far. The maximum was recorded as 18 degrees Celsius,



The temperature is expected to rise today. Praveen Khanna

five degrees below normal. As per IMD, temperatures are expected to rise starting Thursday and a clear sky is expected during the day. ENS

LALIT KALA AKADEMI
National Academy of Art, New Delhi
Walk-in-Interview

Lalit Kala Akademi (National Academy of Art), an autonomous organisation of Ministry of Culture, Government of India, invites applications from eligible candidates for the following posts on contractual basis for a period of six months.

| Name of the Post | No. of Vacancies | Date of Interview |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Consultant (Programme) | 2 | 24.12.19 |
| Consultant (Conservation) | 1 | |

For all other details such as Qualifications, experience, eligibility criteria, application form etc. visit our website: www.lalitkala.gov.in. Interested candidates may walk in for interview on date mentioned against each post.
Secretary Incharge
Lalit Kala Akademi
davp 09105/11/0003/1920

INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS
(An Autonomous Institution of the University Grants Commission)

Requires

Name of the post : 1) Section Officer on contract basis
2) Senior Administrative Assistant on contract basis

For further details and online application, please visit our website : <http://www.lucaa.in/Opportunities.html>

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN VARIOUS DISCIPLINES

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), a Scientific Society under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) invites online applications for following Group-A positions:

| Sr. No. | Post | Pay Level | No. of Posts. | Category |
|---------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Centre Head (S&T) | 13 | 2 | UR 2 |
| | Joint/ Associate Director | 13A | | |
| 2 | Manager (HRD) | 12 | 3 | UR 2 |
| 3 | Manager (Legal) | 12 | 2 | SC 1 ST 1 EWS 1 |
| 4 | Senior HRD Officer | 11 | 2 | UR 2 |
| 5 | Senior Legal Officer | 11 | 2 | OBC 2 |
| 6 | Purchase Officer | 10 | 1 | EWS 1 |
| 7 | Finance Officer | 10 | 2 | SC 2 |

Locations: Pune, Mohali, Trivandrum, Bengaluru, Silchar & Patna
How to Apply: Interested candidates may visit "careers" page of www.cdac.in for the detailed notification and apply online on or before 12th January, 2019
Note: Addendum/further communications in this regard, if any will be notified in the C-DAC's website only. - Director (HRD)
ADVT. NO. CORP/GR. A/03/2019
davp 06132/11/0010/1920

NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DRAMA
(An Autonomous Institute under Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)
Bahawalpur House, Bhagwan Das Road, New Delhi-110001

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

National School of Drama invites tenders in sealed covers in two bid systems, technical and financial bids from experienced printing companies/press etc. for printing jobs for Posters, Invitation Cards, Tickets, Docket folders and Brochures etc. for 21st Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM), 2020 to be held in New Delhi from 1st to 21st February, 2020. Separate sealed envelopes should be used for technical and financial bid and put them in another bigger envelope.
Interested and experienced printing firms etc. fulfilling necessary eligibility criteria are required to submit their bids in separate envelopes, as per tender documents to be downloaded from NSD Website (www.nsd.gov.in) Last date for receipt of tender documents is 15 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in leading dailies. Full details are available on NSD Website.
The Director, NSD reserves the right to accept/reject any or all the tenders at any stage without assigning any reason.
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E-mail: nsd_accounts@gmail.com
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19 December 2019

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THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

FEDERALISM ISN'T ABOUT STATES' RIGHTS. IT'S ABOUT DIVIDING POWER TO BETTER PROTECT INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY. — ELIZABETH PRICE FOLEY

The Indian EXPRESS

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Discrimination, not justice

Let's hope this generation does a better job of navigating the struggle than the one that came before



PRATAP BHANU MEHTA

STATES STAND UP

When checks on the Centre are conspicuously feeble, pushback by chief ministers is invaluable

INDIA IS IN the midst of, arguably, the largest student protest since the Emergency. The ground of protest is clear: India cannot be a Republic founded on discrimination and a pervasive sense of fear. It cannot exclude or target anyone simply on the basis of their identity.

In some ways, the fight during the Emergency was simple. It was a fight for the restoration of democracy against authoritarianism, joined by all kinds of forces. At this fraught moment there are two battles. There is a battle against state authoritarianism, its attempts to exercise pervasive control.

The tactical challenge will be that they will once again consolidate majoritarian identities, produce that fog of silence in which the CAA will be excused. The moral challenge will be to find a vocabulary and positions that nudge secularism towards freedom and equality for all individuals rather than one that pits minority and majority identities in competition with each other.

The communal and institutional fissures that we are dealing with run within our families, often even within us. The streets would not have become necessary if the normal institutional channels of upholding principles had not failed so miserably.

cannot be won without ensuring these issues do not divide us.

The state has advantages in this fight. It has the power of repression. No violence can make a dent in it. Even in the moments of revolution, states usually first implode from the top.

This is a difficult challenge. Once tyranny provokes, it can provoke both reactions together — the potentially morally regenerative resistance of the students; but also of forces that will use this moment for their fantasies of disorder.

During the Seventies, in the backdrop of economic stagnation, there was still a ready-made architecture of other social movements that could join in. The labour movement, for example, was very much in the backdrop of resistance to the state.

The communal and institutional fissures that we are dealing with run within our families, often even within us. The streets would not have become necessary if the normal institutional channels of upholding principles had not failed so miserably.

While we focus on the government, it is also important to focus on the Opposition, for one practical reason. They control a significant number of states.

Violence will not help any cause. But when the state discriminates and calls it justice, when it stokes fear and calls it citizenship, and when it exercises control and calls its freedom, when it confuses prejudice with policy, it sets the seeds for disorder.

The writer is contributing editor, The Indian Express

READING THE SENTENCE

Supreme Court verdict on Musharraf is a significant moment that may not make a dent in civil-military relations

THE DEATH SENTENCE to Perviz Musharraf, Pakistan's military ruler from 1999 to 2008, marks a significant moment in that country's history. The verdict was pronounced by a special court set up to try him on the charge of treason for suspending the Constitution and declaring an Emergency in 2007 when as many as 60 members of the higher judiciary were detained.

The death sentence is unlikely to be carried out. For one, Musharraf, lives in self-exile in the UAE. For another, the security establishment will ensure this does not happen. The army has already rejected the conviction of a former army chief and declared he could "never" be a traitor.

As far as India is concerned, the improved bilateral atmosphere in Musharraf's time had more to do with the post 9/11 environment than any sincerity on the part of the architect of Kargil to make peace.

NATA SAMRAT

Shriram Lagoo was an actor par excellence. He was also more than that

SHRIRAM LAGOO, WHO passed away in Pune aged 92, was primarily an artist of the Marathi stage. But his reputation, partly gained from the character roles and cameos he essayed in Hindi cinema, extended beyond the world of theatre.

A late entrant to professional theatre, Lagoo studied medicine in Pune, specialised as an ENT surgeon in the UK and practised as a doctor in Africa, before turning a full-time actor at the age of 42.



OSAMA MANZAR

DEAR MEMBERS OF the board, Internet Society (ISOC), and Public Interest Registry (PIR), who manage the dot org domain: This is in the context of your decision to sell all the assets of PIR to a private company.

Dot Org, besides dot ngo, was one such domain that offered entities that do not work for profit, a digital identity. When I have a web address or email ID with dot org as a suffix, people immediately identify me as someone involved in not-for-profit activities.

In other words, dot org is a space that shelters communities involved in charitable activities, be it human rights, poverty alleviation or disaster mitigation.

I would like to give you a glimpse of my personal association with ISOC and PIR that has empowered millions of people and

HOMELESS ON THE INTERNET

The dot org domain offered non-profit entities a crucial digital identity

All human beings, with any activity they do, need a domain on the internet to belong or to identify with — a digital address. And dot org is a universe sheltering communities involved in charitable activities, be it human rights and poverty alleviation or disaster mitigation.

thousands of organisations. We have been working with the Internet Society for more than a decade, even though we have known each other for longer — a couple of decades, especially since 2003, when WSIS (World Summit on Information Society) was announced by the UN in Geneva.

While working directly with ISOC, my organisation, Digital Empowerment Foundation, worked on community networks to enable last mile connectivity.

And, in partnership with PIR when it was applying to get dot ngo, we conducted a massive campaign in India to bring communities, non-profits and social organisations online. DEF has a deep network of grassroots organisations in India and South Asia and, together with PIR, we influenced more than 5,000 grassroots organisations to come online with dot org domain in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and many more countries.

Most all those organisations were homeless on the world wide web prior to that. Now, they have a home, an identity, a face to be recognised as a brand. They enjoy a trust quotient which helps when it comes to issues such as funding and other support that is necessary for them to continue their work of empowerment and impact.

We also worked to get thousands of signatures from community organisations to support PIR in order to get the dot ngo domain. PIR finally got the dot ngo to offer that domain to NGOs per se.

I am particularly aghast and fail to understand why you took the decision to sell dot org. Because PIR was created by ISOC to manage dot org as a not-for-profit company and yet function as a sustainable business.

Selling a not-for-profit company to a profit making company itself is a violation of promise, ethics, trust, and breach of ownership of digital property.

The writer is founder & director of Digital Empowerment Foundation



DECEMBER 19, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIRA'S ESCAPE STORY THE POPULAR SUSPICION that Indira Gandhi planned to flee the country after her defeat in the 1977 poll has been confirmed by Mohammed Yunus, her close confidant, in his book, Persons, Passions and Politics. This was pointed out by Janata Party General Secretary Surendra Mohan. The plan misfired due to alleged "treachery" by R N Kao, then chief of the Research and Analysis Wing.

JANATA POLL PROSPECT THE JANATA PARTY general secretary, Nanaji

Deshmukh, said he was confident that his party would come back to the Lok Sabha with an absolute majority. The Janata Party would form a government at the Centre without depending on any one and there was no question of coalition government, he told reporters. His optimism was based on the on-the-spot assessment of his party's poll prospects in the southern states, Maharashtra and Bengal.

MOFATEH KILLED GUNMEN ON MOTORCYCLES assassinated Mohammad Mofateh, a close associate of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, and two of his bodyguards. Officials immediately blamed

the US. Mofateh, head of Teheran University's theology department, was believed to be the fourth religious leader assassinated since Khomeini's revolution in February. The ruling Revolutionary Council declared in a statement: "This is the work of the CIA and Savak (the deposed Shah's secret police)."

OPEC PRICES THE ORGANISATION OF Petroleum Exporting Countries' year-end conference entered its second day with a dispute over oil prices. Saudi Arabia was holding out for no increase in its current base price of \$24 dollars a barrel. Libya has suggested that the price should go as high as \$34.

TOP OF THE WORLD



BUSHFIRE REMINDER: Artist James Dive stands in front of the 'Burnt Christmas tree' that he built from charred logs and bushfire remnants, in Sydney. Reuters

CLIMATE CHANGE

Australia has its hottest day ever, more to come

Sydney: Australia this week experienced its hottest day on record and the heatwave is expected to worsen, exacerbating an already unprecedented bushfire season, authorities said on Wednesday. The average nationwide temperatures of 40.9 degrees Celsius on Tuesday beat the previous record of 40.3 degrees Celsius in January 2013, the Bureau of Meteorology said. "This heat will only intensify further today," meteorologist Diana Eadie said. The heatwave is another alarm bell about global warming in Australia, where the early and intense start to summer bushfires heaped pressure on the government to do more to tackle climate change.

AFGHANISTAN US special envoy in Kabul amid push for deal

Kabul: The US special envoy leading negotiations with the Taliban met with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in Kabul on Wednesday, an official said, amid a renewed push to reach an accord with the insurgents. US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad and Ghani discussed several topics including the need for a ceasefire, Ghani's spokesman Sediq Seddiqi said. "The President also expressed his concerns about the continued violence by the Taliban," Seddiqi said.

PANAMA 12 inmates dead in shootout in jail

Panama City: Twelve inmates were killed and about a dozen more were wounded in a gunfight Tuesday inside a prison in the capital, Panamanian authorities said. The shooting occurred in a cell block that holds inmates who belong to a single local gang. Five pistols and three rifles were found after the shooting. The weapons appeared to have been smuggled in to the La Joyita prison in Panama City. Police said such smuggling has been a longstanding problem and "there are many ways that weapons can get in".

HONG KONG Five dead in bus accident

Hong Kong: Five people were killed and dozens injured in Hong Kong on Wednesday when a double-decker bus smashed into a tree, police said. Live footage showed firefighters trying to reach victims on the vehicle's top deck, which had been turned into a tangled mess of twisted metal and shattered glass, leaving some passenger seats dangling to the side. Victims were seen being removed in body bags and placed next to a sign reading "Temporary Mortuary" at the roadside.

In a historic move, US House set to vote to impeach Trump

Voting expected to be along party lines in Democrat-controlled House; GOP seeks to stall process

DAVID MORGAN & PATRICIA ZENGERLE WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 18

THE HOUSE of Representatives began debate on Wednesday ahead of a historic vote on two articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump, charging him with abusing his office and obstructing Congress that would make him the third US president to be impeached. The vote in the Democrat-controlled House is expected to fall almost entirely along party lines, underscoring the deep divide in Congress over Trump's conduct—and the larger political schism within the nation itself. Trump would become only the third American president to be impeached, an extraordinary check on presidential power spelled out in the US Constitution for executives who commit "high crimes and misdemeanors." No president has ever been removed from office under its terms. The vote would result in a trial next month in the US Senate in which House members would act as prosecutors. That chamber is controlled by Trump's fellow Republicans, who have shown little interest in removing him from office. House Democrats accuse Trump of abusing his power by asking Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden, a former US vice president



The House Rules panel finalises the rules for the vote. NYT

TRUMP CRIES FOUL BUT DEMS HAVE NUMBERS

TRUMP LETTER Trump set the tone Tuesday for the impeachment debate, with an aggrieved six-page letter to Pelosi, accusing her of "declaring open war on American Democracy" with "an illegal, partisan attempted coup" that he called a "perversion of justice and abuse of power." He complained he was being railroaded: "More due process was afforded to those accused in the Salem Witch Trials."



HISTORY IN MAKING If the House, as expected, approves impeachment, Trump will find himself in the company of Presidents Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton, who were the other presidents impeached. President Richard Nixon resigned after the House Judiciary Committee approved articles of impeachment but before the full House could vote. NYT

and leading Democratic contender in the 2020 election. Trump is also accused of obstructing the congressional investigation into the matter. Republicans signalled as soon

as the day began that they intend to do everything possible to stall the proceedings. Representative Andy Biggs, a Republican member of the Judiciary Committee, called for the House to adjourn immediately after the morning prayer and pledge of allegiance, leading to a vote on the House floor. Trump has called the impeachment process "a total sham," and on Tuesday sent House Speaker Nancy Pelosi a lengthy letter in which he accused her of engaging in a "perversion of justice." The President has denounced the probe as an "attempted coup" and has argued Democrats are trying to undo the results of the 2016 election in which he defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton. "Can you believe that I will be impeached today by the Radical Left. Do Nothing Democrats, AND I DID NOTHING WRONG! A terrible thing," Trump tweeted early on Wednesday morning. "Say a prayer!"

On the eve of the vote, Pelosi sent a letter to all 232 Democratic members of the House, urging them to abide by the Constitution's standards. "Very sadly, the facts have made clear that the President abused his power for his own personal, political benefit and that he obstructed Congress as he demanded that he is above accountability, above the Constitution and above the American people," she wrote. REUTERS

E. The price of impeachment

WHILE THE House is likely to make Trump only the third president in US history to be impeached, he is not expected to be removed from office after a trial in the GOP-controlled Senate. So, debate has raged on about what effect this process will have on the 2020 election. Many Republicans, and some Democrats, believe it could rally Trump's base and increase their support for him as he goes through an ordeal that he has repeatedly characterised as a witch hunt. This has resulted in some moderate Democratic lawmakers, elected from states that voted for Trump in 2016, hesitating to support impeachment. However, the majority of Democrats are in support of impeachment and hope that the details unravelled during the process would convince voters to shun Trump in the next election.

Judge rules in favour of US bid to take Snowden book money



ASSOCIATED PRESS ALEXANDRIA, DECEMBER 18

FORMER NATIONAL Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden violated secrecy agreements with the US government that allow it to claim proceeds from a memoir he published earlier this year, a judge ruled Tuesday. US District Judge Liam O'Grady in Alexandria, Virginia, ruled that Snowden is liable for breach of contract with the government because he published "Permanent Record", without submitting it for a pre-publication review, in violation agreements he signed with both the NSA and the Central Intelligence Agency. In the book, Snowden explains how he viewed himself as a whistleblower by revealing details about the government's mass collection of emails, phone calls and internet activity in the name of national security. Snowden was charged under the US Espionage Act. He now lives in Russia in order to avoid arrest. O'Grady wrote that under the agreements, Snowden was required to allow the government to review anything he planned to publish "containing any mention of intelligence data or activities, or any other information or material which is...known to be classified".

Xi IN MACAU TO MARK HANDOVER AS HK SEETHES



Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan greet officials, along with the outgoing Macau Chief Executive Fernando Chui and the incoming chief Ho Iat-seng, at Macau International Airport Wednesday. Reuters

China's President Xi Jinping arrived in Macau to celebrate the 20th anniversary of its handover to China, and is expected to announce economic perks as a reward for its loyalty while protests rock nearby Hong Kong.

Security was tight in the gambling hub, especially for people arriving from Hong Kong. Among the policies Xi is expected to announce are steps to diversifying the former Portuguese colony's economic base beyond its casinos.

While protesters in Hong Kong, across the mouth of the Pearl River, are infuriated by what they see as Beijing encroaching on their freedoms, Macau has seen little dissent.

Protests are very rare in the territory with more than half of Macau's population immigrating from China in recent decades.

Japan journalist wins high-profile #MeToo case

KIYOSHI TAKENAKA & LINDA SIEG TOKYO, DECEMBER 18



"Now, I have to deal with how I live with my scars," journalist Shiori Ito said after the verdict. Reuters

JAPANESE JOURNALIST Shiori Ito on Wednesday won her civil lawsuit seeking damages from a prominent reporter who she said had raped her, a verdict welcomed by women's rights advocates in a country where sexual assault victims often stay silent. A Tokyo court ordered television journalist Noriyuki Yamaguchi to pay 3.3 million yen (\$30,375) in damages to Ito, a free-

lance journalist who has become a well-known face of Japan's

#MeToo movement, which has struggled to gain momentum. Ito fought back tears as she spoke through a megaphone to reporters and supporters outside the court after the verdict. "I'm so happy," she said, her voice breaking at times with emotion. "It's not over. Now, I have to deal with how I live with my scars." Ito, 30, had sought 11 million yen in damages for her suffering. Prosecutors had declined to indict Yamaguchi following her complaint to police that he had raped her while she was unconscious in 2015. Ito made waves in 2017 when she took the rare step of going public with allegations that Yamaguchi, a senior television journalist known for his reporting on PM Shinzo Abe, had raped her after she met him for drinks to discuss an offer to help her find a job. The court also ruled against a counter-suit by Yamaguchi, who has repeatedly denied the allegations, in which he sought 130 million yen in damages from Ito. Yamaguchi told reporters that he would appeal the verdict, saying he had done nothing illegal. REUTERS

TREASON CASE

Pak government to back Musharraf in appeal against death sentence

A-G questions 'urgency' in pronouncing judgment while Musharraf is in ICU

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD, DECEMBER 18



Musharraf was sentenced to death in absentia on Tuesday for high treason

WITH THE Pakistan Army publicly backing former president Pervez Musharraf after he was sentenced to death for treason, Prime Minister Imran Khan discussed the issue with his top party aides on Wednesday even as his government decided to support the retired General's appeal against the "unfair" verdict. The former military ruler, Musharraf, was sentenced to death in absentia on Tuesday for high treason following a six-year legal case. He has been living in Dubai since 2016 after Pakistan's Supreme Court lifted a travel ban allowing him to leave the country to seek medical treatment. A three-member special court here convicted 76-year-old Musharraf of violating the Constitution by unlawfully declaring emergency rule while he was in power, in a case that had been pending since 2013.

Khan, who returned from Geneva, convened an emergency meeting of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's core committee to discuss the sentencing of Musharraf, Geo News reported. Following Musharraf's sentencing, the Pakistan Army said that its former chief Gen (ret) Musharraf can "never be a traitor" and the verdict against him has been received with a "lot of pain and anguish" by Pakistan Armed Forces personnel. "An ex-Army Chief, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee and president of Pakistan, who has served the country for over 40 years, fought wars for the defence of the country can surely never be a traitor," Pakistan Army spokesman Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor said in a statement. Alarmed by the military's public statement, Khan quickly deployed two of his trusted aides to say that the government would defend the self-exiled, ailing ex-president during the hearing of an appeal to be filed on his behalf. "I will defend the law in the case but not any individual," said Attorney-General Anwar Mansoor Khan in a late-night press conference along with Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information, Firdous Ashiq Awan. He said Musharraf was not given the right of a fair trial and the judgment was announced in absentia without recording statement of the accused. The Attorney-General said the verdict raised questions about the "urgency in pronouncing the judgment when Mr Musharraf was in critical condition in ICU" in Dubai. "There is no question that a person who has committed treason must be punished, but in this case, the right of fair trial, guaranteed under the Constitution, was not ensured. A trial should not just be fair but also seen to be fair," he was quoted as saying by Dawn newspaper.

Indian-origin academic to chair Boris review on party's 'Islamophobia'

ADITI KHANNA LONDON, DECEMBER 18

BRITAIN'S RULING Conservative Party, led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, has appointed an Indian-origin academic to conduct an independent review into dealing with allegations of anti-Muslim prejudice as well as other issues of discrimination within the Tory party ranks. Swaran Singh, professor of Social and Community Psychiatry at the University of Warwick, will lead the inquiry aimed at improving the Conservative Party's handling of complaints of all forms of discrimination and prejudice, including Islamophobia. The issue had played out heavily in the run up to the general election earlier this month, with many British Muslims accusing the Conservatives of anti-Muslim bias and calling for an independent inquiry. "I am privileged to have been appointed to chair the independent review into improv-

ing handling of complaints of prejudice and discrimination in the Conservative Party," said Singh, who has been a Commissioner of the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission until recently. This independent review will look at how the party can improve its processes — to make sure that any instances are isolated, and that there are robust processes in place to stamp them out as and when they occur, a party statement said on Tuesday.

Chairman of the Conservative Party, James Cleverly, said: "The Conservative Party has always worked to act swiftly when allegations have been put to us, and there are a wide range of sanctions to challenge and change behaviour."

"The Conservative Party will never stand by when it comes to prejudice and discrimination of any kind and it is right to hold an independent review, so we can stamp out unacceptable abuse that is not fit for public life."

The timetable of the review will be determined by Singh as the independent chair. PTI

SOCIAL NETWORK SAYS KNOWING A USER'S GENERAL LOCATION HELPS IT TO DETECT SUSPICIOUS LOGIN BEHAVIOUR

Facebook reveals it can locate users who opt out of tracking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SAN FRANCISCO, DECEMBER 18

FACEBOOK CAN determine where users are even if they opt out of having their whereabouts tracked, the company revealed in a letter sent to US senators. In the missive, which was widely shared on social media Tuesday, Facebook explained ways it can still figure out where people are after they have selected not to share precise location data with the company.

The social network, which was responding to a request for information by two senators, contended that knowing a user's whereabouts has benefits ranging from showing ads for nearby shops to fighting hackers and battling misinformation. "There is no opting out. No control over your personal information," Republican Senator Josh Hawley said in a tweet. "That's Big Tech. And that's why Congress needs to take action." Facebook said that clues for



Facebook was responding to a request for information from two senators. Reuters

figuring out a user's location include being tagged in a photo at a specific place or a check-in at a location such as at a restaurant during a dinner with friends. People may share an address for purchases at a shopping section at Facebook, or simply include it in their profile information. Along with location information shared in posts by users, devices connecting to the internet are given IP addresses and a user's whereabouts can then be noted.

Those addresses include locations, albeit a bit imprecise when it comes to mobile devices linking through telecom services that might only note a town or city. Facebook said knowing a user's general location helps it and other internet firms protect accounts by detecting when suspicious login behaviour occurs, such as by someone in South America when a user lives in Europe. IP addresses also help companies such as Facebook battle misinformation by showing the general origin of potentially nefarious activity, such as a stream of politically oriented posts which might be aimed at a particular country. Facebook said recently that it was ready for a data privacy law that is to go into effect in its home state of California at the start of next year. The California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) will give internet users the right to see what data big tech companies collect and with whom it is shared.

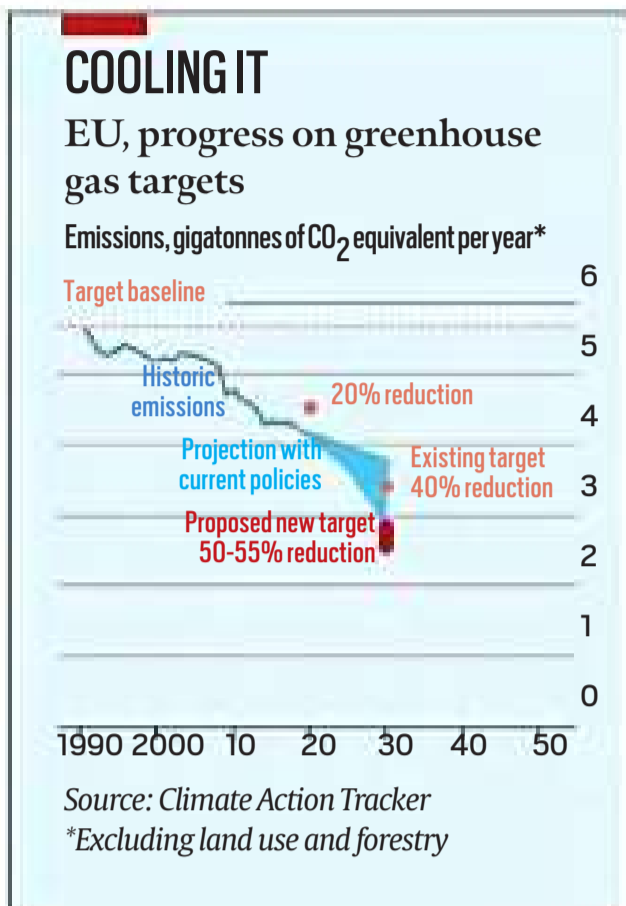
EUROPE'S PLAN FOR THE PLANET

The EU's Green Deal is full of ambition but needs more detail

Ursula von der Leyen's "man-on-the-Moon moment"



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium, on December 11. Reuters



seven years. Job losses are an unavoidable consequence of decarbonising Europe's economy; the coal industry alone employs around 250,000 people, mainly in eastern Europe. The fund will try to ease some of this pain, and the political opposition it provokes.

The Green Deal goes beyond the scope of previous climate policies. One area it enters with gusto is trade. Under the commission's proposals, the EU will simply refuse to strike new trade deals with countries that fail to comply with the Paris agreement's requirement that signatories must increase the scale of their decarbonisation pledges, known as "nationally determined contributions" or NDCs, every five years. That would mean no new deals with America while Donald Trump is president; it is set to drop out of the Paris agreement late in 2020. And, because the first round of enhanced NDCs is due next year, it would put pressure on countries that are dragging their feet on these, of which there are dozens—including China and India.

The deal also sketches out plans for a carbon border-adjustment levy. Under the EU's emission-trading scheme, large industries pay a fee of about €25 for every tonne of carbon dioxide they emit. Other regions have similar schemes with different carbon prices. A border-adjustment mechanism would level the playing field.

The Green Deal's proponents are the first to say this is only a road map for climate action. Many, many new policies and associated technical details will need to be ironed out and approved. Mrs von der Leyen declared the Green Deal "Europe's man-on-the-Moon moment". In reality, the landing is some way off yet. A more fitting analogy for this week's announcement would be President Kennedy's promise in 1961 that America would, by the end of the decade, reach that celestial body. It remains to be seen whether Mrs von der Leyen's word is as good as Kennedy's.

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THE WORLD'S CLIMATE experts, activists and officials were gathered in Madrid last week for the 25th annual UN climate talks. But the big news was unfolding far away in Brussels, where the European Commission's new president, Ursula von der Leyen, barely 11 days in office, announced her eagerly awaited Green Deal. The 24-page document reads like a list of vows to transform Europe into a living demonstration of how a vast economy can both prosper and prioritise the health of the planet. It covers everything from housing and food to biodiversity, batteries, decarbonised steel, air pollution and, crucially, how the EU will spread its vision beyond its borders to the wider world. "Our goal," declared Mrs von der Leyen, "is to reconcile the economy with the planet." Her

plan is large on ambition, but in many places frustratingly vague on detail.

Top billing goes to a pledge to make Europe carbon-neutral by 2050. That is no surprise. The goal was endorsed by the EU Parliament in November, a strategy for reaching it was published in 2018 and EU heads of state began debating it at this week's summit meeting, which was getting under way as *The Economist* went to press. Mrs von der Leyen's green opus promises to draft legislation that would enshrine the 2050 target by March 2020.

That would make the EU the world's largest economic bloc (and biggest greenhouse-gas emitter) to adopt the recommendations of climate scientists that all emissions must cease or be offset by

mid-century in order for global temperatures to rise by no more than 1.5-2°C above pre-industrial levels. It is also a considerable increase in ambition: existing policies put the EU on track to reduce emissions by a mere 60% from 1990 levels by mid-century. But long-term goals like this are easy to set, and hard to make binding.

That last point makes the Green Deal's second headline statement, regarding a nearer-term 2030 target, rather more significant. By summer 2020 the commission intends to present a plan to reduce emissions in 2030 by 50-55% from 1990 levels. This represents a step up from its existing target of cutting emissions by 40% within the same time frame (see chart), but independent analyses suggest that the 50% end of the

range will not represent much of a stretch. Current policies on renewable energy and energy efficiency, for instance, should already help to achieve 45-48% cuts by 2030. Green NGOs would like to see the EU sweat a bit more and strive for 65% cuts by 2030, which is what models suggest is needed if the bloc is to do its share to limit global warming to 1.5-2°C.

All this green ambition comes at a price. The commission estimates that an additional €175bn-€290bn (\$192bn-\$320bn) of investment will be needed each year to meet its net-zero goals. Much of this will come from private investors. One way they will be encouraged to pitch in is with new financial regulations. On December 5th EU negotiators struck a provisional agreement on what fi-

ancial products are deemed "green". Next year large European companies will be forced to disclose more information about their impacts on the environment, including carbon emissions. These measures, the thinking goes, will give clearer signals to markets and help money flow into worthy investments.

Another lever is the European Investment Bank, a development bank with about €550bn on its balance-sheet, which is to be transformed into a climate bank. Already it has pledged to phase out financing fossil fuels by 2021. By 2025 Werner Hoyer, its boss, wants 50% of its lending to go to green projects, up from 28% today, and the rest to go to investments aligned with climate-change goals. Some of that money will flow into a "just transition" fund, worth €100bn over

MAGNET FOR MAYHEM

Foreign powers are piling into Libya

Just what a failed state needs

THE WOUNDS OF Libyan militiamen defending the UN-backed "government of national accord" (GNA) in Tripoli are changing, along with the battle they are fighting. Shrapnel used to be the cause of most of the casualties around the Libyan capital. But lately the fallen have been shot through the head, says a foreign diplomat. On the other side of the fight, Russian snipers have teamed up with the self-styled Libyan National Army led by General Khalifa Haftar, who laid siege to Tripoli in April hoping to dislodge the government. The front lines are moving for the first time in months.

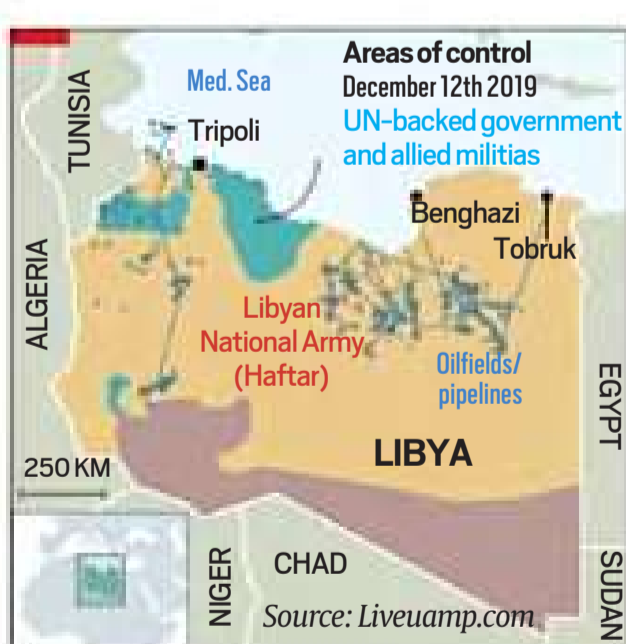
Countries such as Egypt and the United Arab Emirates have long supported Mr Haftar with guns and money. But Russia's backing is a game-changer, say Western diplomats. It has helped Mr Haftar consolidate his hold on the east and south, home to most of the country's oilfields (see map), and may tip the balance in Tripoli. But Russia's presence may also be drawing in other foreign powers. America accused Russia or its local allies of shooting down one of its drones last month. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey says he might send troops to defend the GNA, if invited.

Russia's intervention has come in the form of mercenaries from the Wagner Group, a private security firm with connections to the Kremlin. Officials in Moscow deny any involvement in Libya, but Western officials say the Wagner Group has been fly-

Russia's intervention has come in the form of mercenaries from the Wagner Group, a private security firm with connections to the Kremlin. Officials in Moscow deny any involvement in Libya, but Western officials say the Wagner Group has been flying arms, tanks and drones into Libya for almost a year. There are thought to be 1,400 Russian mercenaries in the country

ing arms, tanks and drones into Libya for almost a year. There are thought to be 1,400 Russian mercenaries in the country. "It's like a world-class coach taking over a 'b' team," says a diplomat in Tripoli, who considers the firm an unofficial arm of the Russian government.

President Vladimir Putin is trying to build on his success in Syria, where he rescued the regime of Bashar al-Assad and won a foothold in the eastern Mediterranean. Libya's coastline runs for 1,770km and sits directly across from Europe. The Wagner Group already protects most of the oil instal-



lations under Mr Haftar's control. That gives it leverage over Europe, which guzzles Libyan crude oil.

Turkey has commercial ties to the GNA and is opposed to the anti-Islamist agenda of Mr Haftar and his foreign backers. But its interest in Libya also stems from concerns over energy. Last month it signed a contentious deal with the GNA that demarcated the maritime boundaries between the countries' exclusive economic zones. Greece, Cyprus and Egypt see the move as an attempt by Turkey to gain control of contested gas-rich waters. The energy agreement was accompanied by one aimed at strengthening the defences of the GNA, which Turkey has already armed.

Mr Haftar's foreign allies say they will boost their support for him if Turkey gets more involved. In an effort to lower tensions, Mr Erdogan said he wants to speak to Mr Putin before the Russian president visits Turkey early next month. "On the Haftar issue, I don't want it to give birth to a new Syria in relations with Russia. I believe Russia will also review its existing stance over Haftar," said Mr Erdogan. "He is an outlaw, and by that same token, any support he's given is rendered illegally."

The foreign meddling makes a mockery of the arms embargo imposed by the UN in 2011, as well as its efforts to broker a peace



Khalifa Haftar (centre), the military commander who dominates eastern Libya, leaves after an international conference on Libya at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France, in May 2018. Reuters

deal. Plans for an international conference in Berlin have been postponed time and again. The GNA is increasingly seen as a hostage to its allied militias. The central bank in Tripoli maintains control over Libya's oil revenues. But Mr Haftar could renew his bid for international recognition and start selling oil himself.

Observers do not believe Tripoli's fall is imminent. In a recent offensive Mr Haftar's

forces advanced about a kilometre, then ground to a halt. Still, the city's defenders would welcome Turkish troops and air power (Mr Haftar currently controls the skies). "A lot of people on the front are getting tired," says a militiaman in Tripoli. "It's been eight months of fighting and they want to go home."

Meanwhile, residents of the capital feel the noose tightening around them. Civilian

deaths because of the war, which had averaged less than 50 a month, are climbing. The streets have become crowded with people fleeing the fighting. Mr Haftar, who controls the city's supply of power and water, could make matters worse. Whether he does or not may depend on the calculations of his foreign backers.

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19 THE RURAL TRACKING THE CHANGING INDIA IN ITS VILLAGES



Dairy farmers Amarsinh Kadam (left) of Sansar village in Pune's Indapur taluka, and Ganesh Mansuke of Katewadi village in Baramati. Partha Sarathi Biswas

PAU unveils 'processable' onion variety



RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 18

THE PUNJAB Agricultural University (PAU) here has developed a "processing-grade" white onion variety PWO-2, for commercial cultivation by farmers from the 2020-21 rabi cropping season.

"We would be transplanting the seedlings from our nursery next month in about 30 farmers' field plots, which will act as testing-cum-seed multiplication locations. The seeds from there will be supplied to other farmers for large-scale cultivation and transplanting by January 2021," said Ajmer Singh Dhatt, head of PAU's vegetable science department.

Punjab's farmers now mainly grow PRO-6 and Punjab Naroya. Both are red-coloured varieties, the former ready to harvest in 120 days after transplanting and yielding 175 quintals per acre on an average, with these at 145 days and 150 quintals, respectively, for the latter.

"The average yield of PWO-2 is 165 quintals per acre and it matures in roughly 140 days (transplanting in early-January and harvesting by late-May). But its biggest advantage is that the bulbs are processable and can be used to make de-hydrated products such as flakes, powder, rings and granules," claimed Dhatt.

The normal red onions are prone to discoloration — they turn dark brown on processing, making them less marketable relative to white powder — apart from having lower dry matter and total soluble solids (TSS) content. "The dry matter content in PRO-2 is around 25%, compared to 22% for red varieties (which means lower moisture and, hence, less time and energy requirement for dehydration). The TSS is also more, at 14-16% versus 9-10% (which translates into higher onion powder recovery)," he added.

PWO-2 was released in June 2019 by PAU, after being given the go-ahead by the state government's varietal release committee. The variety had, in 1994, released a processing-grade white onion variety called Punjab White. However, its average yield was only 135 quintals per acre and did not interest farmers.

"Punjab produces 2-2.1 lakh tonnes of onions, which meets hardly a third of the state's requirement. But we are keen to push this variety more with a view to attracting investments in food processing. And given rising onion prices, there is probably need for varieties whose bulbs can be converted and stored in processed form," noted Shailender Kaur, director of horticulture, Punjab government.

PAU has also sent the new variety to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for all-India trials. "The first year of trials in 2019 passed successfully. There would be two more years of trials, before PWO-2 will be considered fit for release at the national level," informed Dhatt.

PRODUCER VERSUS CONSUMER

When cash returns to cows

Dairy farmers hope that the recovery in milk prices after more than three years of low realisations is not derailed by imports

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS
BARAMATI/INDAPUR (MAHARASHTRA),
DECEMBER 18

AMARSINH KADAM isn't sure how long Sonai Dairy at Indapur will continue paying the Rs 29-per-litre rate for the 250-odd litres of milk that it buys daily from him. This farmer from Sansar village in Indapur taluka of Pune district feels that the government at the Centre will soon "act" to bring down the prices or, at least, stop them from rising further.

"Last December, I was getting only Rs 22 per litre (for milk with 3.5% fat and 8.5% solids-not-fat content). They started procuring at Rs 25 only from April and raised it to Rs 29 per litre from December 1," informs Kadam, who has 40 Holstein Friesian crossbred cows, of which around 25 produce milk at any given point.

The 30-year-old — who cultivates fodder maize, jowar (sorghum) and napier grass on five out of his 10-acre holding — incurs a monthly expenditure of around Rs 1.50 lakh on his 40 animals, which includes the cost of feed, veterinary medicines, labour, electricity charges, etc. At Rs 29/litre, his monthly revenue from 250 litres is just over Rs 2.15 lakh. That, net of expenses, translates into a monthly income of Rs 65,000.

"You can work out how much I earned when my milk was selling at Rs 22 per litre. It was hardly Rs 15,000. Don't I deserve to be paid at least the current rate?" asks Kadam, who also grows sugarcane on 2.5

acres and seasonal vegetables such as cauliflower and cabbage on his remaining 2.5 acres.

But he is convinced the "party" won't last. "Already, I am hearing about pressure being applied on the Central government to import SMP (skimmed milk powder). They say that there is a milk shortage and if we don't import, consumers in Delhi and Mumbai will have to pay more. We have seen what the government has done in the case of onions, where the imported produce will arrive just when the crop is being harvested. Did anybody bother when farmers were realising Rs 22/litre for milk and Rs 5-6/kg for onion last year?" he says.

For now, for dairy farmers, 2019 is promising to end on a sweet note.

On December 15, the Maharashtra Milk Producers and Processors Welfare Association — the Pune-based umbrella body of cooperative and private dairies in the state — announced a Re 1 hike in the purchase price for standard cow milk (3.5% fat and 8.5% SNF) to Rs 29 per litre. Most dairies were already paying this rate since the beginning of this month. The association — which had previously "agreed" to revise upwards the procurement price from Rs 22 to Rs 25/litre in April and Rs 28 in September — also decided to increase the maximum retail price of toned milk (with 3% fat and 8.5% SNF) sold in pouches by Rs 2/litre. Depending on the brand, consumers are now paying Rs 44-46 per litre.

Dairies are being forced to shell out more, even as their procurement volumes have registered a drop. Dashrath Mane,

chairman and managing director of Sonai Dairy (the company is called Indapur Dairy & Milk Products Ltd), admits that his current milk collection is only 17 lakh litres per day (LLPD), as against 22 LLPD a year ago. Sandeep Jagtap, chairman of the Baramati Taluka Cooperative Milk Producers Union, says that his dairy's normal procurement after October is 2.5-2.8 LLPD, "but we are right now doing just about 2.1 LLPD". The Baramati union was also offering its farmers only Rs 19 per litre in December 2018, which has since gone up to Rs 29.

The above dip in procurement alongside higher price for milk has flummoxed the dairy industry. The period from October to March is considered the "flush" season, when animals tend to produce more milk, due to enhanced fodder and water availability, besides reduced body stress on account of lower temperatures and humidity. But this time, "there has hardly been any flush and it has not commenced when we are already in December", notes Arun Narke, director of the Kolhapur District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union. His cooperative, which markets pouch milk under the 'Gokul' brand, is reporting about 2.5 LLPD less procurement compared to its normal 12 LLPD or so for this period. Industry insiders estimate total procurement by organised dairies across Maharashtra to have fallen to 110-115 LLPD, from the normal of 150-160 LLPD for October-December.

The decline in milk availability, despite the onset of winter, is being attributed mainly to an extended monsoon and rains right up to early November. "The fields

where animals graze have been water-logged. The grass cannot fully come up unless the water goes down. Even the green fodder that farmers are themselves cultivating has more moisture and less dry matter, which limits crude protein availability for milk production. That's why the flush hasn't really set in," explains R G Chandramogan, the managing director of the Chennai-based Hatsun Agro Product Ltd, India's largest private dairy company. Sonai Dairy's Mane is optimistic that the milk shortage being experienced is "temporary" and "the flush season will take off in January".

However, Rahul Kumar of Lactalis India believes that milk purchase prices shooting up 10-15% during the so-called flush period, and domestic SMP rates doubling from Rs 150 to Rs 300 per kg in the last one year, is a "red alert" with regard to availability in the coming months. "India produced 186 million tonnes of milk during 2018-19. This year, it will definitely be lower, which has never happened in the last several decades. It's high time the Centre assesses the situation on the ground and takes a quick decision on allowing imports of SMP and butter oil. Otherwise, we can expect another round of retail milk price increase by March 2020, even before the summer lean season," warns the managing director of the Indian subsidiary of the French multinational dairy products corporation Lactalis.

Others in the industry disagree, though. "The government can open up imports, but we will, then, be forced to slash procurement prices back to Rs 20 levels," says

Jagtap. According to Chandramogan, the present crisis, even if temporary, is a result of poor planning. "For the last three years or more, dairies were saddled with surplus powder stocks that they were struggling to dispose of. In 2018-19, the government provided a subsidy of Rs 50/kg to cooperatives for exporting some 50,000 tonnes of SMP, which cost Rs 250 crore. If, instead, a buffer stock had been created, through purchase of 100,000 tonnes from our dairies at the production cost of Rs 180/kg, the government would have spent Rs 1,800 crore and still booked a profit by selling at Rs 250/kg now. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail," he points out.

Meanwhile, Ganesh Mansuke, 40, has his own take on the situation.

Back in January 2018, this farmer from Katewadi — the village in Pune district's Baramati taluka to which former Union agriculture minister and Nationalist Congress Party supremo Sharad Pawar also belongs — was forced to sell 30 of his 42 cows, as he couldn't sustain continuous losses by selling up to 500 litres of milk daily at Rs 21-22/litre. "Today, my sales from 12 animals, five of them in milk, are down to 70 litres, but at least I am getting Rs 29 per litre. Would the government want me to sell my remaining cows as well? How will the consumer benefit if people like me go out of business and stop producing milk?" quips Mansuke, who also grows fodder crops of 1.5 acres and sugarcane on 2 acres of his 3.5-acre land.

With additional inputs from Harish Damodaran in New Delhi

FOOD INFLATION

The truth of onions

Abnormal weather, not lack of cold storage or processing infrastructure, is to blame for the current price volatility in the bulb



VIPUL MITTAL

RETAIL ONION prices have breached Rs 100 per kg and not budged from those levels probably for the first time in our history. But just like the humble bulb, there are many layers to this story. And many misconceptions, too.

One argument we hear from so-called experts is that the present "crisis" is due to the lack of a proper cold storage and processing infrastructure for onions. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Cold storage is not a viable alternative for Indian onions, both technically and commercially. A more feasible and eco-friendly option is upgradation of the traditional zero/low energy-consuming storage methods. The government, through schemes such as the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, has been providing subsidy on construction of storage infrastructure at the farm level. The upgraded

'Kanda Chawls' — simple raised platforms designed to prevent moisture ingress and sprouting — are being built using steel frames and bamboo meshes on the sides, which protect the onions from the rains as well as provide ventilation to keep them cool and dry. Each such structure can hold up to 50 tonnes; many farmers have multiples of these. Farmers nowadays sell roughly half of their crop just after harvesting in order to recover their production costs. The balance they keep in their Kanda Chawls and keep bringing into the market in smaller lots to gain from upward price movements. It's necessary to point out here that only the rabi onions, which farmers plant in December-January and harvest in April-May, are usually stored, for sales till September. The kharif (July-August planting and October-December harvesting) and late-kharif crops (September-October and January-March) aren't as amenable to storage due to their higher moisture content.

This year has been exceptional, wherein the kharif crop saw both lower plantings, on account of very little rains till July, and also suffered damage, because of excess rains at the time of harvesting. There's no clarity as yet on the late-kharif crop, though even in its case, plantings may have well been impacted by the rains that continued till early-November.



A typical 'Kanda Chawl' on-farm storage structure for onions. Express

As a result, we have had a marked upward trend in prices since September. But that has purely to do with crop failure — kharif and possibly late-kharif as well — and not lack of storage. In any case, there is little incentive for anyone to store onions beyond September. Which farmer or trader would take that risk, when the new kharif crop is due for arrival.

Coming now to the point about processing, the Indian consumer always likes her onions fresh. There aren't many takers — save maybe restaurants or the processed food industry — for onion paste, flakes or dried powder.

When fresh onion is anyway available in plenty round the year, why would any entrepreneur invest in a processing facility, whose viability is guaranteed only when we have too little or too much of rains? Such instances — of two out of three crops in a single year failing — are as rare as onions breaching the Rs 100/kg mark.

Equally naïve is the tendency to blame the government every time the prices of onion go up. While it is expedient for the Opposition or political analysts — who oversimplify a causal relationship between winning/losing elec-

tions and onion prices — to weave such narratives, the fact is that this government, like its predecessors, has taken every possible measure to cool market sentiment. That all these have failed spectacularly is only thanks to the vagaries of the weather. The truth is that India produces over 23 million tonnes (mt) annually and also exports 2 mt in a normal year. We are blessed with agro-climatic conditions that allow onions to be grown in multiple geographies in multiple seasons within our country. 2019-20 happens to be one of those freak years when multiple crops have failed and we may have to be prepared for a delayed rabi harvest to boot.

The core issue to address, after peeling through onion's many layers, is not about absence of storage or processing infrastructure, but managing the vagaries of the weather. We can possibly do the following to mitigate some of this impact, which may become more rampant in the future, courtesy climate change:

- Accurate weather forecasts that are made accessible to farmers: If there are sufficiently advance predictions of heavy rains or floods, farmers can prematurely harvest and save at least part of their crop that can come into the market. They can, then, also optimise the use of inputs that would otherwise get washed away, thereby saving some of their costs.

- Satellite mapping of sowing area and dissemination of this data to enable better supply-side planning: Both over-production and under-production create multiple wastages in the system. Farmers have, this time, aggressively expanded rabi crop acreages, in response to current prices. Since practically everyone has done it without considering how much others, too, have — which only aggregate data can reveal — we

are potentially staring at a New Year price crash towards March-end. Those abominably low prices would, perhaps, hit the farmer more badly than the high prices that are now hurting the consumer.

- Timely gathering and dissemination of price information to farmers, traders and other stakeholders: This is complementary to the earlier point about releasing reliable data on sowing and crop status. The absence of such publicly available information is what fuels unnecessary market speculation, which is neither in consumer nor producer interest.

- Timely policy intervention, especially in unforeseen circumstances like the present one: The government has reacted correctly to the current production shortfall by banning exports, allowing imports on government account and imposing stockholding restrictions. However, better information flow and market intelligence would have helped it act faster and more effectively. Now, it should equally know when to withdraw these extraordinary measures.

- Educating consumers on alternatives to onions: Onion is, after all, just a garnishing that adds taste and imparts pungency to our food. There are multiple alternatives even if it isn't avocados. Onion is not an essential nutritional item that we cannot do without, for a few months at the most.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that the high price of onion today is really translating into higher income for the farmer. The Kanda Chawls have made this possible, which wasn't so in the earlier times, when only the trader raked in the moolah from every price increase.

The writer is Head of Fruits & Vegetables at BigBasket.com, India's largest online grocery retailer. The views expressed are personal

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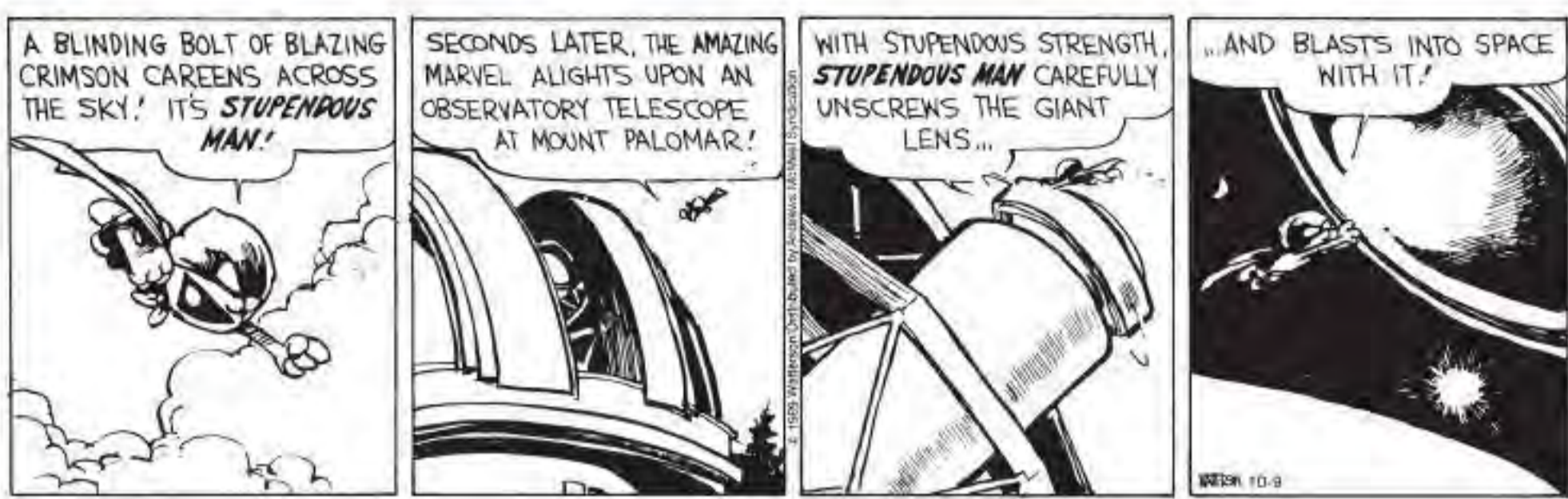
- ACROSS: 1 Perceive increase in value (10), 8 Castles in the air? (5), 9 Witty saying of an unusually prim age (7), 10 What one may do with a stipend perhaps (5,2), 11 A desire to write a letter (5), 12 There's a copy in the southeast for a writer (6), 14 Gets on the stage (6), 17 A negative in some trouble (5), 19 Issues Oriental blends? (7), 21 Comparative vacuum? (7), 22 Such work is speculative (5), 23 I represent change and the readiness to accept it (10). DOWN: 2 Daring type of blazer (7), 3 Reduced to the lowest level (5), 4 Found note in packing case (6), 5 In a giddy goat it may be musically excited (7), 6 Flier at the heart of 15 Down (5), 7 Stresses a ship seems to produce (10), 8 There's opposition since rates were changed (10), 13 It may be fixed by one at variance (7), 15 Those who have them will be sorry (7), 16 Fear to make the initial mistake (6), 18 A nice change to be with an Eastern relative (5), 20 Agree to be keen (5).

Solutions Crossword 3991: Across: 1 Disown, 4 Tiptoe, 9 Estonia, 10 Louse, 11 Gasp, 12 Descant, 13 Short-handed, 18 Peacock, 20 Wiper, 22 Alike, 23 No entry, 24 Lights, 25 Leaned. Down: 1 Dredge, 2 Sites, 3 Window, 5 Jilbis, 6 Crusade, 7 Treaty, 8 Handshaking, 14 Healing, 15 Nowhere, 16 Sprawl, 17 Frayed, 19 Overt, 21 Put on.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20) As from today, children will be an important element in your life. You may take this literally or follow a metaphorical path and understand that it is time to liberate what psychologists call 'the inner child'...

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) Children and younger relatives need a firm hand. The stars indicate a need for authority, yet in my opinion they are a mite too inflexible. You may therefore wish to be absolutely firm as regards your principles...

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) Circumstances beyond your control may be compelling you into family arrangements which are not of your choosing. If you find current developments unwelcome it would be very useful to check out any little way in which you have yourself contributed to the situation.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23) Financial affairs will soon require more thought. Among other things, this means that you must talk to partners about your spending plans. Tell them what you're doing and they'll almost certainly go along with you.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) Life is moving on day by day and week by week, and you will soon need to be an expert on everything. The more you know, the better off you'll be, so you'll have to keep the facts at your fingertips.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22) The romantic situation is looking positively rosy, although it does seem that, if one arrangement is to be confirmed, there must be a break in another.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) You needn't expect to have your usual amount of drive and determination over the next few weeks. It seems increasingly obvious that you are heading for a period which is ideal for rest, reflection and recuperation.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20) If you take on too many new engagements or projects, you may let yourself in for a number of false starts. It could be far better to stick with what you know and concentrate on building up your future security.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) It is difficult not to be totally awestruck by the truly splendid pattern which is now building up in your sign. The good news is that there is more to come, but when you are showered with opportunities, as you will soon be, you must learn to discriminate between what is worthwhile and what is not.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19) Your daily transits indicate the need to complete shopping and financial exercises first, and then discuss the relevant issues and consequences. Do yourself a favour and look for ways to make life more enjoyable.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) Astrological tradition has it that you are deeply concerned with the movement and subtle phases of Mercury. According to this planet, your mood is now to become more analytical and communicative.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) You must now convey your true feelings. It may be that you will do well if you concentrate on making the right impression, but if you are to convince family members, you must have a healthy grasp of the facts.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

Word jumble puzzle with four sets of letters: FGEIR, FHOTGU, ABINS, ABELFF. A quip is provided: 'The problem of _____ is: why is there the _____ we know?' - Walter Kaufmann (9...9) (same word twice)

SOLUTION: CREE, BASIN, FOUCHT, BARFE. Answer: The problem of suffering is: why is there the suffering we know.

SUDOKU 4064 puzzle grid and solution grid. Difficulty Level 4s. Instructions: To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4063 puzzle grid and solution grid. Difficulty Level 5s. Instructions: To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Advertisement for Uttarakhand Sahakari Chini Mills Sangh Ltd. (उत्तराखण्ड शुगरर्स) regarding the sale of shares. Includes contact information and details of the share sale.

Advertisement for IDFC FIRST Bank Limited regarding the sale of immovable properties. Includes details about the auction process and contact information for the authorized officer.

Advertisement for Punjab Water Supply & Sewerage Board regarding an e-tender notice for augmentation of water supply scheme. Includes details about the project and submission process.

Advertisement for 'SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL' regarding a missing girl named Rani, D/o Sh. Radhey Shyam R/o Jhuggi No. 121, EE Block, Jahangir Puri, Delhi.

Advertisement for 'SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED BOY' regarding a missing boy named Rahul S/o Sh. Suresh Kumar R/o H. No. L-57, Shakur Pur, JJ Colony, Delhi.

Advertisement for 'SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED' regarding a missing lady named Shiwani W/o Sh. Tilak Singh R/o WP-137, Wazirpur, Vill-Ashok Vihar, Delhi.

Advertisement for Anpara Thermal Power Project regarding the tender for cleaning/de-scaling of condenser tubes. Includes technical specifications and contact information.

Advertisement for Government of N.C.T. of Delhi (GNCTD) regarding recruitment for Child Development positions in SewaKutir Complex, Kingsway Camp, G.T.B Nagar, Delhi-110009.

Advertisement for Government of India Department of Atomic Energy Bhabha Atomic Research Centre regarding technical services division tenders for BARC Hospital and CTCRS building.

Advertisement for New Okhla Industrial Development Authority (NOIDA) regarding expression of interest for agencies for sanitary napkin refilling and ash removal services.

