

Are fears over the CAA misplaced?

To reassure Indian Muslims, the PM needs to state that the govt. will not conduct an exercise like NRC



G. SAMPATH

A day after asserting at an election rally that those “creating a storm” against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) can be “identified by their clothes itself”, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that “no Indian has anything to worry regarding this Act”. It is unfair to dismiss without careful consideration the government’s claim that Indians have nothing to fear from the CAA. Not even its critics can deny that all that the CAA does is to offer a benefit: citizenship. It does not take away anything from anyone. And, it offers the benefits of citizenship to persecuted religious minorities from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

True, it doesn’t offer this benefit to persecuted Ahmadiyyas or Shias from these countries. It is discriminatory towards persecuted non-Indians who are Muslims. But what has that got to do with Indians, or Indian Muslims, for that matter? As has been pointed out umpteen times by Home Minister Amit Shah, the CAA doesn’t even refer to Muslims. So why is it being said that this law targets Indian Muslims?

No CAA without NRIC

For an answer, we don’t need to look beyond the Home Minister’s own statements. Mr. Shah has repeatedly underscored two things: one, he will implement the National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC), extending the NRC exercise conducted in Assam to the rest of India; and two, the sequence is all-important: he will implement the CAA first, and only after that, the NRIC.

Put simply, the CAA is a safety net that will ensure, and insure, the citizenship of all Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis – not just the lakhs of Hindus classed as “illegal migrants” by the Assam NRC, but also others all over India who might be categorised as “foreigners” when the NRIC is implemented. The citizenship of all of them will first be secured through the CAA, and only then, after all non-Muslims are protected with requisite



A protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act in Bengaluru. Anti-CAA protesters believe that a section of Indian Muslims could lose citizenship. •PTI

citizenship-related documentation, will the all-India NRC or NRIC be implemented. If there is no NRIC, there would be no need for the CAA either. The NRIC’s objective is to divide the people domiciled in India into two categories: citizens and “illegal migrants”. The CAA’s objective is to preemptively rescue, prior to the NRIC exercise, the citizenship of all Indians except those whose religion finds no mention in the CAA.

Threat of omission

It’s simple arithmetic: add all the religious groups under threat of exclusion by the NRIC (Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Christians, Parsis). Subtract from this set all the religious groups secured by the CAA (Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Christians, Parsis). We are left only with Muslims as the remainder. They will be the only community excluded from the ‘legislative benevolence’ of

the Indian state as incarnated in the CAA. Ready to be scooped up, like so many gasping fish, by the NRIC net.

Every Indian who is puzzled by the intensity of the anti-CAA protests sweeping the country needs to answer a few simple questions: What happens when, after Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian residents of India who are excluded by the NRIC are granted citizenship, thanks to the CAA, only Muslim “non-citizens” remain? Will these stateless people be sent to detention camps? Or will they be accorded an inferior status in a hierarchy of citizenship where non-Muslims occupy a higher position?

Even if the government were to announce that it won’t implement the CAA, the very existence of this legislation is a danger to the social fabric of the country, for it is a tremendous enabler of hate speech. The world’s foremost experts on Genocide Pre-

vention consider hate speech the prime harbinger of genocide. “The Holocaust did not start with the gas chambers. It started long before with hate speech,” observed Adama Dieng, the UN Secretary General’s Special Adviser on Prevention of Hate Speech, on Prevent Genocide Day this month. As a political tool, the CAB-NRIC combo has the potential to encourage hate speech, especially at election time. As an administrative tool, it weakens constitutional safeguards against genocidal machinations, which could prove deadly in the unlikely event of the world’s largest democracy mutating into a majoritarian state sympathetic to such machinations.

Exclusionary precedents

There is ample historical precedent for exclusionary citizenship laws and the ends they served. The Reich Citizenship Law of 1935 stripped German Jews of their citizenship, and everyone knows what came after. Closer home, the 1982 Citizenship Law in Myanmar rendered Rohingya Muslims stateless, despite the fact that they were indigenous to the Arakan region. Myanmar is currently facing charges of genocide at the International Court of Justice.

Assurances by the government that “no Indian will lose citizenship” are to be welcomed. But anti-CAA protesters are convinced that under the CAA-NRIC regime, sections of Muslims will cease to be “Indians” anyway. Once they lose their citizenship, the government can still claim that no “Indian” has lost citizenship, for it is the government which decides who is an Indian and who isn’t.

If it is indeed the case that all fears about the CAA are misplaced, and it is only “vested interests” that are misleading the nation, then it is easy for the Prime Minister to dispel such misapprehensions. Instead of blandly insisting that “not a single Indian will lose citizenship”, he only needs to declare categorically that the government will never, ever conduct anything like the NRIC. And he must repeat this assurance in every election rally, tweet it out, and reiterate it in his radio address. Can he do so? If he cannot, or will not, then what does that say of the intent behind the CAA?

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Calling the U.S.’s bluff in 1971

Bold power play by India and Russia held off Pakistan’s benefactors in those crucial days in December 1971



ZORAWAR DAULET SINGH

As we remember the liberation of Bangladesh this week more than four decades ago, it is worth recalling the geopolitics that made it possible. By 1969, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her advisers were aware that the U.S.’s feelers to China could potentially come at a cost to India’s security. The Sino-Soviet split meant that Moscow had looked at geopolitical developments with a similar perspective. By July 1971, the veil had been lifted. Pakistan had served as a middleman in the U.S.-China detente. By December 1971, it was crunch time as the fate of their ally hung in the balance. The U.S. aircraft carrier ‘Enterprise’ was dispatched to the Indian Ocean as a gambit to raise Pakistan’s morale.

At a meeting chaired by Mrs. Gandhi to assess the implications of the Seventh Fleet’s presence in the Bay of Bengal, her adviser D.P. Dhar urged India to leverage the special understanding that had been formalised in August, “What is the point of India having signed the Indo-Soviet treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, if India cannot call this bluff?” Then, on December 14, Mrs. Gandhi’s confidant P.N. Haksar cabled Dhar in Moscow saying it was necessary “to make a public announcement carrying the seal of the highest authorities in the Soviet Union that involvement or interference by third countries... cannot but aggravate the situation”. Shortly thereafter, the Soviets “sent a top-secret message to Nixon” warning the U.S. “against involvement or interference”.

Entry of Soviet naval vessels

Naval units from the Soviet Pacific Fleet had already been dispatched. The U.S. was aware that the Soviet Navy had entered the Indian Ocean on December 5 and by December 7 was “approximately 500 nautical miles east of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)”. On December 8, U.S. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger admitted that given the Russia factor, “I must warn you, Mr. President, if our bluff is called, we’ll be in trouble... we’ll lose.” On December 11, Kissinger briefed President Richard Nixon, “16 Soviet naval units are now in the Indian Ocean area, including three space support ships. Communications intelligence indicates that most of the ships are near Ceylon and Socotra.” The vessels were armed with anti-ship cruise missiles capable of destroying U.S. warships and escorted by nuclear submarines. There was no longer any

ambiguity about what the Indo-Soviet Treaty meant in the unfolding situation.

The White House had also been hoping for some sort of a Chinese move to complicate India’s military operations. On the same day, Nixon told Kissinger, “a movement of even some Chinese toward that border could scare those goddamn Indians to death.”

China doesn’t take the bait

On December 10, in a secret meeting in New York, Kissinger told Huang Hua, China’s official at the UN, that the U.S. was “moving a number of naval ships in the West Pacific toward the Indian Ocean: an aircraft carrier accompanied by four destroyers and a tanker, and a helicopter carrier and two destroyers.” Kissinger also offered to provide “tactical intelligence” on “the disposition of Soviet forces” on China’s borders, and added, if the Chinese “were to consider the situation on the Indian subcontinent a threat to its security, and if it took measures to protect its security, the U.S. would oppose the efforts of others to interfere with the People’s Republic.”

The move was aimed to kill several birds with a single stone. But China didn’t bite. Beijing feared that even limited coercive actions against India would invite immediate reprisals from Moscow. In the light of Russia’s dramatic military escalation to Chinese provocations in their 1969 border crisis, Chairman Mao Zedong was not going to take a chance again. Indeed, a few months earlier, Soviet Defence Minister Andrei Grechko had plainly told Dhar, “the Chinese were aware of the superiority of Soviet forces on the Eastern borders and this ‘had downed their tail’.” For China to “invite a conflict” after the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty would be tantamount to “courting a disaster”. Later, during the Nixon-Mao summit in 1972, Zhou Enlai told Kissinger that the U.S. bluff had been called by the Soviets. On December 13, the Soviet Ambassador to India, Nikolai Pegov, reassured New Delhi that Moscow would counteract any moves by the U.S. or China. And, if Beijing decided to intervene in Ladakh, Moscow “would open a diversionary action in Xinjiang.” Three days later, the Pakistan Army surrendered.

Looking back, we can see that Indian policymakers achieved something remarkable in managing the geopolitical contradictions. They crafted a partnership with the Soviets to offset what was a formidable U.S.-Pakistan-China front. The nuggets also reveal how seriously China and the U.S. took Indian countermeasures and Moscow’s resolve to ensure that its ally emerged victorious.

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The rhetoric and reality of capital punishment

It provides neither justice nor deterrence

PRASHANT SINGH

Following the Supreme Court’s dismissal of review petitions by all four convicts in the Nirbhaya rape and murder case, the four have moved one step closer to the gallows. In the light of this, and the repeated demands to punish all rape convicts with the death penalty, it becomes important to examine empirical evidence on the topic.

If the experience of the past century is taken as a guide, it is clear that death penalty as a measure to end sexual violence has completely failed. In 1965, only 23 nations had abolished the death penalty. But, subsequently, criminal justice systems across the world lost confidence in this mode of punishment. Today, over two-thirds of countries have given up on capital punishment either in law or in practice. The standards by which nations conduct themselves have evolved. But, in India, we continue to go against the tide.

Against natural justice

In the system of criminal justice worldwide, including in India, underpinning the element of sentencing is the ‘Theory of Punishment’. This is classical law, proved so by having stood the test of time for centuries. It stipulates that there should be four elements of a systematic punishment imposed by the state: the protection of society; the deterrence of criminality; the rehabilitation and reform of the criminal; and the retributive effect for the victims and society. Capital punishment, in its very essence, goes against the spirit of the ‘Theory of Punishment’, and by extension, natural justice.

The first element, ‘protection of society’, is not served by imposing the death sentence any better than by incarceration. This has been proven time and again as inmates have spent decades on death row, harming no one, but being brutalised by the inhuman punishment meted out to them. Second, there are several factors which effect criminal activity and deterrence is only one of them. In a UN survey, it was concluded that

“capital punishment deters murder to a marginally greater extent than the threat of life imprisonment.” The report of the Justice J.S. Verma Committee said that capital punishment is a regressive step and may not provide deterrence. The committee recommended the life sentence for the most grievous of crimes.

It is not just statistics that prove the case against deterrence, so does logic. A reasonable man is deterred not by the gravity of the sentence but by the detectability of the crime.

Third, the facet of ‘reform and rehabilitation of the criminal’ is immediately nullified by the prospect of capital punishment, *ad oculos*.

This leaves only the final element – ‘the retributive effect’. Killing should never be carried out based on the primal and emotive desire among human beings for revenge. Revenge is a personalised and emotional form of retribution, which often loses sight of proportionality.

A comparative study of death row conflicts shows that the jurisprudence in this regard is skewed against the weaker sections. Justice P.N. Bhagwati, said that “death penalty in its actual operation is discriminatory for it strikes mostly against the poor and deprived”. The reasons include lack of adequate legal assistance to the marginalised. The Death Penalty Project has conclusively shown the manner in which wrongful capital sentencing is carried out. In the United States alone, over 350 people have reportedly been wrongfully sentenced in the last century.

Hence, in the light of the recent incidents of heinous violence perpetrated against women, it becomes imperative for the judiciary not give in to the public clamour for making capital punishment mandatory for rape convicts. Public angst and emotions cannot be an alternative to reason and logic. There needs to be better enforcement of law in response to valid questions on justice but death penalty holds no answers.

Prashant Singh is a Supreme Court advocate



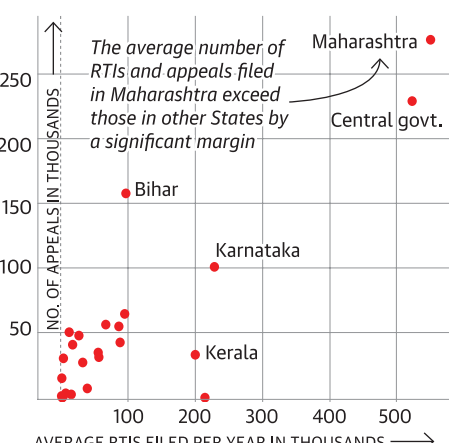
DATA POINT

Acting on the RTI

Chief Justice S.A. Bobde recently observed that the RTI Act was being abused, and spoke about the Maharashtra administration being “paralysed”. He argued for filtering requests based on locus standi. Data show that the highest number of RTIs are filed in Maharashtra but, as in other States, backlogs are due to low level of voluntary dissemination by public authorities and because of Information Commission vacancies. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan

1. High volume State

Graph shows the average number of RTIs filed per year and the absolute number of appeals/complaints filed, between 2005 and 2016 for all States. Maharashtra received more RTIs per year than the Central government in the period



3. Vacancies aplenty

Also, not filling up vacancies on time has led to piling up of backlogs. The list shows vacancies in various Information Commissions which were not filled on time as of Oct. 2019

State	Duration
A.P.	For 17 months (May '17 to Oct. '18)
Tripura	For 7 months (since April '19)
Rajasthan	For 12 months (since Dec. '18)
Tamil Nadu	For 6 months (since May '19)

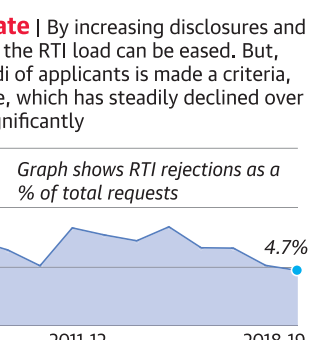
2. Poor disclosures

RTI act mandates Public Authorities (PA) to *suo motu* disclose information. Such disclosures will decrease citizen requests as they will not seek information already available. A transparency audit by the govt. found poor levels of such disclosures among 2092 central PAs. In fact, nearly 60% of the PAs did not respond to the audit

Grade achieved in the audit	For voluntary disclosure	Overall performance
A (90-100%)	217	158
B (80-89%)	5	157
C (70-79%)	91	118
D (60-69%)	10	113
E (< 60%)	515	292
No response	-	1,254

4. Rejection rate

By increasing disclosures and filling vacancies, the RTI load can be eased. But, if the locus standi of applicants is made a criteria, the rejection rate, which has steadily declined over time, will rise significantly



SOURCE: RTI ANNUAL REPORT (2018-19), SATARK NAGRIK SANGATHAN REPORT (OCT. 2019), CIC TRANSPARENCY AUDIT (NOV. 2018)

The Hindia

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 19, 1969

The dog had its day

The three commentators at the Eden Gardens Test functioned well together as a team and they have apparently laid down some ground rules for their work. Neither Berry Sarbadikari, Pearson Surita nor Devaraj Puri made any reference, as far as I could see, to the excitement outside the ground in which six were killed. The atmosphere of the Fourth Test was quite well captured otherwise. The shouting intended to greet Chappell’s century, which turned into a tremendous roar when Wadekar caught him out at 99, will remain in memory. The misery of the start of the Indian first innings was evident in the commentary which, however, was not partisan. But the gay dog which insisted on conferring with India’s captain when he was fielding on Sunday quite stole the show for several minutes. “I wish we had TV”, said Pearson Surita, describing this charming incident. It took all the friendly persuasion of a policeman to lead this happy tailwagger out. When Australia’s manager, Fred Bennett, spoke over the air late in an afternoon he took special care to tell the families of his players that all was well with them. Apparently a tour of India is now-a-days considered quite risky.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 19, 1919

The League of Indian Youth.

Mr. V.S. Divekar, Prov. Secy., writes: The war has thrown new responsibilities on the youth of every nation. The youth of India have got a still greater responsibility towards their Motherland placed as she is to-day. Mother India has every right to expect much of its youths. She has every right to expect that every true son of India will not only be great himself but will help her to rise to the great unequalled position which once proudly belonged to India among the great nations of the world. Up to this moment the life of Indian youth has been mostly passive, subordinate to others’ will and leadership. From now the youth must be self-confident, self-directed and self-respecting. The League of Indian Youth is coming into existence to achieve this end. The League will help to bring the young men in uniform activity in politics – politics not in its restricted sense but in its broad sense. The promoters want to have the Youth powerful and active in politics. The League proposes not only to put the Youth into public affairs but also to give them an opportunity for political study. For this purpose there shall be lectures, pamphlets, meetings, courses of study and Annual Conferences.

FROM PAGE ONE

Tribunal reinstates Mistry as chairman

Following the verdict, Mr. Mistry in a statement said, "The outcome of the appeal is a vindication of my stand taken when the then board of Tata Sons, without warning or reason removed me, first as the executive chairman, and subsequently as a director of Tata Sons".

The ruling came on a plea by Mr. Mistry challenging his sudden removal from the post of 'Executive Chairman' pursuant to a decision of the 'Board of Directors' of the 'Tata Sons Limited'.

Mr. Mistry had contended that Tata Sons Chairman Emeritus Ratan N. Tata and N.A. Soonwala kept "interfering in the affairs of the company and demonstrating their insecurity about their legacy being undermined instead of looking to what is in the best interests of the company."

"Over a period of time this turned to insisting that it is the will of the majority shareholder i.e. the 'Tata Group' that should prevail," he had argued.

No stay on Citizenship Act implementation: SC

But lawyers continued to fervently urge the Bench, also comprising Justices B.R. Gavai and Surya Kant, to stay the Act even after the court called the next case.

"We are not going to hear this case today!" Justice Bobde said emphatically.

Mr. Venugopal said there were at least four judgments of the court, which said an Act once notified as law cannot be stayed.

"The Act has not come into existence. Its Rules are yet to be notified," senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, for a petitioner, countered.

During a brief but tense hearing, both the CJJ objected to how several lawyers shouting at the same time to be heard by the Bench created

an atmosphere of ruckus not befitting the court's decorum.

"I went to the Pakistan Supreme Court. They have a lecture where only one lawyer addresses the Bench... We should have something like that here," Mr. Venugopal said.

The petitions argue that the law welcomes "illegal migrants" into India selectively on the basis of their religion and pointedly excludes Muslims. It has an "unholy nexus" with the National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise and is against the principles of secularism, right to equality and dignity of life enshrined in the Basic Structure of the Constitution.

Council votes for 28% GST on all lotteries

The Council ultimately decided the issue needed further study and discussion before any decision is taken. There have been widespread concerns about the shortfall in tax revenue at a time of economic slowdown and lower consumption. In the first eight months of this financial year, only about 50% of GST collection targets and 60% of compensation cess collection targets have been achieved.

Speaking to journalists as he left the meeting, West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra said that the Centre's revenue projections indicated that it would run out of money to compensate States by February 2020.

He also worried that social sector spending would be cut as a result.

According to sources present in the meeting, Delhi Finance Minister Manish Sisodia also took the Centre to task during the meeting, asking how the State is expected to govern when compensation cess payments are delayed.

"I have heard the concerns of States," said Ms. Sitharaman.

"In the Council and in the Rajya Sabha, I have explained in detail about how we remain committed to cooperative federalism and also to honour the promises given on GST."

With regard to lotteries, there is a dual rate regime at present, with state-run lotteries taxed at 12%, while state-authorised lotteries (run by private players) face a 28% tax rate.

"There was an extended debate on the topic. Every at-

tempt was made to keep that set tradition [of decisions by consensus] alive, every attempt was made to convince based on the opinion-making in the house," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told journalists after the meeting. "But eventually, the Council was reminded that the rules allow [voting] and that tradition is not part of the rulebook, and the rules should govern the running of the Council."

She added that the vote had been taken "on a request of one member". Several people present in the meeting confirmed that it was Kerala Finance Minister Thomas Isaac who pushed for the vote.

Maharashtra and Puducherry were among the States who opposed the proposal along with Kerala, concerned about losses to State revenue, sources said. However, the vote went in favour of the proposal and a uniform 28% tax rate on lotteries will come into effect from March 1, 2020.

The Council decided to waive the late fee for GST-R1 taxpayers who have not filed returns from July 2017 to November 2019 if all the returns are filed by January 10, 2020. If this deadline is missed, then e-way bills will be blocked for defaulters, said Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey.

In view of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the northeastern States, the tax filing deadline for November has been extended to the end of the year in those areas. Other measures have been taken to check the menace of fake invoices.

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Left parties plan Bihar bandh today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PATNA

Left parties in Bihar will observe a State-wide bandh on Thursday to protest the Citizenship Amendment Act and plans for a pan-India National Register of Citizens. Leaders of the Mahagathbandhan, barring the RJD, met in Patna on Wednesday and declared their support for the Left's proposed bandh.

Bangladesh gives river panel meet a miss

We don't have knowledge of delegation's plans, says Bangladesh High Commission

KALLOL BHATTACHARJEE NEW DELHI

Bangladesh has not sent a delegation for the Joint River Commission (JRC) meeting with India that was scheduled to be held here on Wednesday. This has cast a shadow over the agreement to share the waters of the Feni river that was taken up during the October visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India.

Sources in the Bangladesh

Jharkhand voters keep parties guessing

No clear signal from the ground for BJP and Congress-led Opposition alliance as campaign ends

SATYASUNDAR BARIK RANCHI

As the campaign for the Jharkhand Assembly election came to an end on Wednesday, the unpredictable voter mood is keeping both the BJP and the Opposition alliance, comprising the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the Congress, on tenterhooks.

The two major opponents have channelled all energies into getting the major chunk of 16 seats in Santhal Pargana in the final phase on December 20, with no clear pattern emerging from the previous four phases.

From the BJP's preference for a five-phase election in a small State, it became evident that the saffron party wanted to use all resources at its disposal and its strong cadre base to negate the anti-incumbency factor. The party began its campaign on the plank of development including industrialisation, benefits of central schemes and



Reaching out: Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra being greeted by party workers during an election rally at Pakur in Jharkhand on Wednesday. •PTI

job creation. However, the issues did not resonate enough with voters leaving the electoral battlefield wide open.

Ties with AJSU

The woes of the BJP worsened as some of the candidates who had joined the party just before the election were found short of expectations. In at least 15 Assembly

segments where the Kurmi community has a sizeable population, the BJP's prospects are said to have taken a hit following the break-up with its former alliance partner, the All Jharkhand Students' Union (AJSU). The regional party has a good support base among Kurmis.

Moreover, the image of Raghubar Das, the first Chief Minister to complete the full

five-year term in Jharkhand, reportedly did not augur well for the saffron party.

"Since its formation Jharkhand had always seen a tribal leader assuming CM's charge till Mr. Das's ascent to the top post. He was seen as an outsider. Many did not like the way Mr. Das conducted himself in public. His straight talking and treating subordinates with disdain

sent a wrong signal to voters," said Professor V.P. Sharan, a political analyst.

Rebellion against CM

The Chief Minister faced rebellion in his home turf with his former Cabinet colleague Saryu Rai challenging him in the East Jharkhand seat. Party insiders said the third and fourth phase had not gone well for the party.

The alliance of the JMM, Congress and RJD took time to recover from the crushing defeat it received in the Lok Sabha election. If there was a silver lining, it was the coming together of the JMM and the Congress who had fought the 2014 Assembly election separately. Unlike in the last Parliament election, the JMM and the Congress coalition appeared to have worked more cohesively this time. JMM executive president Hemant Soren, who had been holding an average six meetings a day, said he was hopeful of outperforming the BJP.

Centre cautious on framing CAA rules

Intelligence Bureau monitoring and compiling details of all agitations

VIJAITA SINGH NEW DELHI

A committee to frame rules for the implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 is yet to be formalised and it will include the Secretaries of the Ministries of Home and Law and Justice, a senior government official said.

Amid strong protests across the country after the CAA was passed last week by Parliament, the government has decided to act cautiously while framing the rules.

The Intelligence Bureau is monitoring and compiling the details of all the protests related to the CAA. It apprised the government on Wednesday of eight major protests in Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Delhi.

The CAA allows citizenship on the basis of religion to undocumented non-Muslim communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India on or before December 31, 2014.

On edge

After widespread protests, the Centre is taking a cautious approach to framing rules for the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)

- A committee to implement the CAA will include Secretaries from the Home Ministry and the Law and Justice Ministry, an official said
- The committee is yet to be formalised and the rules are still being drafted
- A timeline to file citizenship claims is being worked on



There are apprehensions and fear that the Act, followed by a country-wide National Register of Citizens (NRC), will benefit non-Muslims excluded from the citizens' register, while excluded Muslims will have to prove their citizenship.

"The rules are still under construction, and we have decided not to rush things through. Any decision on how much time the applicants will get to file citizenship claims under the CAA is being worked out," the official said.

On Tuesday's violence in the Seelampur-Jaffrabad area in Delhi, an official said that some social media accounts that were spreading misinformation had been identified and efforts were on to initiate action against them. A number of suspects involved in the violence in the northeast district of Delhi were identified and action would be taken against them after an assessment of the video footage received from drone cameras. Eight people had been arrested so far for their alleged involvement in

the violence and three FIRs registered, the official said, adding that no protest was taking place in any of the 42 Central universities.

'No judicial probe'

A senior Human Resource Development Ministry official said the government had not ordered any judicial inquiry into the police violence against students of Jamia Millia Islamia, as the matter was *sub judice*.

"We have not taken a decision to order a judicial enquiry into the violence at JMI as the matter is in court. First a petition was filed before the Supreme Court, which has asked the High Court concerned to look into the matter. We will wait for the court's decision before ordering any enquiry," the official said.

Jamia Vice Chancellor Najma Akhtar had condemned the police action and a resolution was passed by the Executive Council to initiate judicial enquiry.

No threat to any Indian Muslim or others: Naqvi

'Myths around CAA must be busted'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Wednesday said there was no "question mark" on, or threat to, the citizenship of any Indian Muslim or any other citizen due to the Citizenship Amendment Act.

"The CAA is to provide citizenship and not to take away citizenship of any person," he said at an event to mark Minorities Day in New Delhi. He said there were many myths around the CAA that needed to be busted. "When you speak to people, there is a refrain that 'We will get thrown out [of the country]'. That is absolutely untrue, why would anyone throw anyone out and why," he said.

"The Congress and other parties are spreading this lie that after the CAA, there would be no place for Muslims in this country. That myth should be combated," he said.



Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi

After the event, Mr. Naqvi told *The Hindu* that the CAA was only for refugees fleeing religious persecution from three countries in India's neighbourhood.

When asked about apprehensions over the National Register of Citizens exercise Mr. Naqvi said, "The NRC will be for the whole country, why is it being made out that it's only for Muslims. Currently, the NRC is on in Assam under a court ordered process, and that process is still on. The protests against CAA are under false illusions," he said.

Act has nothing to do with Indian citizens: Naveen Patnaik

But BJD does not support NRC, says Odisha Chief Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday broke his silence on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens, saying the CAA had nothing to do with Indian citizens but his party, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), did not support the NRC.

He appealed to the people to let peace prevail and not indulge in spreading rumours.

Mr. Patnaik's clarification on the issue came before he left for Delhi on a four-day trip.

"The Citizenship (Amendment) Act has nothing to do with Indian citizens. It only deals with foreigners. The Biju Janata Dal MPs, both in



Naveen Patnaik

the Lok Sabha and in the Rajya Sabha, have made it clear that we do not support the NRC. I would appeal to our citizens to let peace prevail and not to indulge in rumour-mongering," he said.

On Tuesday, hundreds of Muslims staged a peaceful protest against the CAA and the NRC in Bhubaneswar, and urged Mr. Patnaik to

clarify his government's stand on the issue. The protesters demanded that both the CAA and the NRC should not be implemented in Odisha.

A delegation of Muslims, which met the Chief Minister on December 13, had claimed that Mr. Patnaik had assured them that there was no need to panic over the CAA or the NRC.

Muslims, who comprise only 2.2% of Odisha's population as per the 2011 census, had been apprehensive since the BJD MPs supported the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in both Houses of Parliament.

BJD MPs Sarmistha Sethi and Sasmit Patra had claimed that the CAB had nothing to do with the NRC.

BSP team submits memo to President

Seeks probe into action on students

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

A Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) delegation on Wednesday called on President Ram Nath Kovind to petition him for the withdrawal of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and for a judicial inquiry into the police action on students of Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University.

Unconstitutional law

"It is against the very spirit of the Constitution framed by B.R. Ambedkar. We have requested the President to withdraw the law," BSP Rajya Sabha member Satish Chandra Mishra told presspersons.

In its memorandum signed by its 10 Lok Sabha and four Rajya Sabha members, the party said the Pre-

sident should withdraw the "unconstitutional, illegal and divisive" law.

The BSP described the Delhi police action on students as "illegal". "As an alumnus of Jamia Millia Islamia and a board member of the AMU, I requested Rashtrapati to initiate a judicial probe. He is the Visitor of both the institutions," BSP leader Danish Ali told *The Hindu*.

The delegation's visit comes a day after 12 Opposition parties jointly submitted a memorandum to the President on the CAA and the Jamia incident.

Asked about a separate delegation, Mr. Ali said: "Every party has its own political agenda and our leader Mayawati had opposed CAA the day the Cabinet approved."

Oxford students declare solidarity with protests

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

At least 430 students and research scholars in the University of Oxford have expressed "extreme concern" over the crackdown on university students in India.

A Solidarity Statement issued by the collective called for an immediate end to the police action on peaceful protests. "Over the last week, we have seen peaceful protests across India

against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. The Act stipulates preferential treatment to minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan in the process of acquiring Indian citizenship, while excluding Muslims from its purview. This exclusion of Muslims from citizenship upends the fundamental ideals of equality, liberty, pluralism and secularism enshrined in the Constitution."

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday described the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as "unconstitutional, unethical and illegal", as she took to the streets for the third consecutive day against the Act and targeted Union Home Minister Amit Shah for his "firm like a rock" comment.

"If you are like a rock... we are like little rats, we will nibble through it," Ms. Banerjee said. She said the BJP leadership should not commit the mistake of "underestimating" her.

INTERVIEW | JAIRAM RAMESH

'NRC places an intolerable burden on the poor and vulnerable sections'

Government is trying to divert attention from economic woes through the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens, says Congress leader

SOBHANA K. NAIR

Congress leader **Jairam Ramesh** speaks about the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens while discussing his latest book *A Chequered Brilliance: The many lives of V.K. Krishna Menon*.

The Citizenship Amendment Act has been in the making for the past four years. Isn't the Congress too late to begin the protests now?

■ It's not quite true. A few months ago, Congress president Sonia Gandhi understood the gravity of the situation; she set up a group. I was a member of that group. We visited the northeastern States and submitted a report. It's true that the first time the legislation came up in the Lok Sabha, we walked out. I think the walkout was largely because we were unsure. We had not formulated a unified position till then. Because, even within the Assam Congress, there were divisions. This time, we didn't walk out. We actually voted against the Bill, in both Houses of Parliament.

What was the feedback from your party in the Northeast specifically on the issue of NRC?

■ There was a historical background for the NRC in Assam. The current NRC was launched in 2005 after a tripartite meeting between Dr. Manmohan Singh, Tarun Gogoi and the AASU. But we have seen the dislocation the NRC causes and we've also seen the bogy of the BJP completely demolished. They were claiming 40 lakh illegal migrants. The NRC finally comes up with a figure of something like 19 lakh of which a substantial number are non-Muslims. Now they are trying to discredit the NRC process in Assam because their propaganda was debunked.

But what was the feedback?

■ Let me tell you. In Tripura it's very interesting in the tribal areas. The tribal leaders want the NRC and it's the non-tribal leaders who are deeply sceptical because they will know they don't have the papers. The Chief Minister of Tripura himself was on record as having said that if the NRC is implemented in Tripura, he would not be part of it. So there were different views on the NRC. All the States unanimously opposed the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) but on the NRC it was a nuanced view... we must have an NRC. Who can be opposed to documenting illegal migrants, nobody. The Congress party is certainly not opposed to the documentation of the illegal migrants. The problem is the way you do it.

So what is the Congress's final stand on a nationwide NRC?

■ Given the Assam expe-



rience, where we saw, the NRC places an intolerable burden on the poor and vulnerable sections of society, the Congress party's position is that we need a far greater homework on the administrative modalities of the NRC. We need to create a proper environment in which the NRC has to be implemented. The Citizenship Amendment Act and the NRC are two sides of the same coin.

Personally, I think this is a diversionary tactic. Six quarters of declining GDP growth. India now facing

from the economic discourse.

The Congress had announced protests against the economic crisis almost two months ago and it kept postponing it till we saw a rally this Saturday when economic issues got caught in the CAA currents. Are your party's political instincts getting blunt?

■ We had a rally planned earlier, but many other issues came up, and that rally had to be postponed. And finally, a very successful rally was held, but by that time, the economic slowdown had been overtaken by the issues of the Citizenship Amendment Act and the NRC. But the economic issue is not going to go away. It's now very clear that the economic malaise is not cyclical it's structural. It's also very clear now that we have the monster of inflation coming up. We thought that inflationary expectations had been controlled but that's clearly not.

And this is inflation, not driven by oil prices as it was during the UPA regime, but this is inflation being driven by rising food prices. So this is a dangerous combination.

Coming to your book *A Chequered Brilliance: The many lives of V.K. Krishna Menon* you bring out the many contradictions of a very controversial character. You write in your book that many believed that he would succeed Nehru. Could it have been the reality had the 1962 India-China War not happened?

■ I think he was a consequential personality and a compelling personality, but he was also a contradictory and controversial personality. Like all great men he had monumental achievements, both before 1947, and after 1947. But like all great men, he made gigantic mistakes. When I started writing this book it was not to make him into a hero or a villain, but

try to understand this 'pheno-Menon'. He was the arch priest of the Left. But ultimately, would he have been Prime Minister, I am doubtful.

You make startling claims in your book that General K.S. Thimayya, then Army chief, openly aired his frustrations about Krishna Menon in his conversations with Nehru and with U.K. High Commissioner Malcolm MacDonald! How did the Indian intelligence not know about it?

■ If this sort of thing happened today the General would have been sacked! It's unacceptable. I was aghast when I read the records. He had gone to the extent of telling MacDonald that Krishna Menon wanted to make himself the master of the armed forces so that he might one day have their support to achieve his political ambition to take Nehru's place either after or even before Nehru's withdrawal from public life.

Rajbongshis oppose CAA, but back NRC

SUVOJIT BAGCHI
KOLKATA

The Rajbongshis are all set to shut down parts of north Bengal from January in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

With a population of 3.5 million in 2001 that is estimated to have swelled to about 5 million, the Rajbongshis constitute the largest SC group in West Bengal. A few more millions are estimated to reside in western Assam and parts of east Bihar.

Two political outfits representing the Rajbongshis — the Kamtapur People's Party (KPP) and the Greater Cooch Behar People's Association (GCPA) — plan to take to the streets in at least two districts of north Bengal, Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri, in January.

KPP president Atul Roy, who had earlier backed a separate democratic homeland movement, said the new law posed a threat to the community. "Bangladeshi Hindus have taken over our land in north Bengal," said Mr. Roy.

Bangshi Badan Barman, the general secretary of the GCPA, said: "CAA should be revoked and National Register of Citizens (NRC) be implemented in north Bengal."

The two groups were ready to accept March 25, 1971, as the cut-off date for the NRC, he added.

Assam govt. employees stay off work in protest

Police arrest PFI State unit president for 'inciting violence'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Offices of the Assam government wore a deserted look on Wednesday as members of the Sadou Asom Karmachari Parishad, the apex employees' organisation, ceased work in protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Central government offices, banks and other establishments functioned normally, while schools remained closed and mobile Internet services suspended for the eighth day.

Officials said educational institutions were likely to open on December 23.

With people unable to access social media, protesters used walls in urban areas for anti-CAA graffiti as hundreds gathered at Guwahati's Lata-sil Field on the third and final day of the "mass satyagraha" organised by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU). The protesters chanted anti-CAA slogans besides slamming the Narendra Modi government for "planning to dump Bangladeshis in Assam".

The police arrested Aminul Haque, State unit president of the Popular Front of India (PFI), for allegedly inciting the violence and arson that claimed six lives last week. The police also raided



No let up: All Assam Student Union members and locals staging a 'Satyagraha' rally in Tezpur on Wednesday. •PTI

the PFI office in Guwahati and seized laptops and other materials. Assam Finance and Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday said the government had video evidence of PFI and Congress members orchestrating the violence.

Cong. complaint to DGP
A Congress delegation on Wednesday met State DGP Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta and complained that the Sarbananda Sonowal government was selectively targeting party workers.

"The injured being treated at the Guwahati Medical College Hospital belong to different communities but

this government is singling out one community besides selectively arresting our party workers," said Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, a member of the delegation.

Meanwhile, after popular Assamese artistes, a major cog in the anti-CAA wheel, called for a demonstration at Guwahati's Chandmari Field on Thursday, the BJP-led State government announced a grant of ₹50,000 each to 2,000 artistes and technicians. The government also said 55,000 vacant posts would be filled up. The AASU welcomed the move but said the sops would not mute the voices of protest in the State.

'CAA violates international convention'

Citizenship law will affect ties with friendly neighbours, says Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday claimed that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act not only "violates" provisions of the Constitution but also falls afoul of an international convention to which India is a signatory.

Addressing a press conference, Congress MP and lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi said India was a signatory to the international convention on torture that talks about "providing shelter to people who face torture in another



Abhishek Manu Singhvi

country". "India is bound by the principle of *jus cogens* that ensures human rights to those who are tortured and persecuted," Mr. Singhvi told mediapersons.

He also pointed out that this law would have serious implications in terms of international relations, especially with friendly neighbours such as Bangladesh.

The Congress leader also reiterated the party's contention that the new law violated regional agreements like the Assam Accord and the one signed with the former rebels in Tripura.

Mr. Singhvi also clarified that the petitions filed by Congress leaders never sought a "stay" from the Supreme Court but only asked

that a "show cause" notice be issued to the Union government.

Interestingly, former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, a trained lawyer, also donned his lawyer's robe after three-and-a-half decades to assist senior counsel and party colleague, P. Chidambaram in the top court.

In another development, the Congress has decided to hold 'Save India, Save Constitution' marches with flags across the country to protest against the new citizenship law.

Protests can lead to an anti-BJP front, says Pawar

'There have been no talks yet between the parties'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NAGPUR

The protest by political parties, coupled with demonstrations against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act by citizens and students across the country has the potential for a national front against the BJP, said Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar in Nagpur on Wednesday.

"All political parties have met the President against the Act. Some States have already clarified they will not implement the Act. The meeting with the President was an indication that the process of all political parties coming together has begun. Though there have not been any talks between the parties, everything points towards this," said Mr. Pawar in an interaction with mediapersons.

"The Centre did not expect the protests that erupted across the country. There have been protests not only in the States which would be impacted but also in regions which may be largely unaffected. In addition, the support is coming from all communities. This shows that the movement has the potential to build into an anti-BJP movement," he said.

"The BJP may have won the Parli-



Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray and NCP president Sharad Pawar at a function in Nagpur to felicitate former President Pratibha Patil. •S. SUDARSHAN

mentary election but every State election has put up a strong opposition, while some have ensured that BJP loses. It is the question of equivalent opposition and every State is throwing up one," he said.

Asked whether he has held talks with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, or others, Mr. Pawar said no such talks have taken place yet. Referring to Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's statement comparing the police action in Jamia Millia Islamia with the Jalianwala Bagh incident, Mr. Pawar said this indicates that the anti-BJP front is getting stronger.

Act indifferent to Sri Lankan Tamils: DMK

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), the main Opposition party in Tamil Nadu, has moved the Supreme Court against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, saying it is a deliberate ploy to "demonise and marginalise" Muslims and distract public attention from the "extreme administrative incompetence" of the government.

The writ petition, among the 59 the top court agreed to hear, said the Act is indifferent to Tamils who had fled Sri Lanka and have been staying in India for decades. "There was no reason to keep them out of the benefits derived from the Act," it contended.

"The Act is a classic example of spewing venom against one section of the human race by targeting the Muslim community and letting down Tamils who have come from a neighbouring country as refugees," the petition said.

House set to vote to impeach Trump

President says he did nothing wrong, denounces the probe as an 'attempted coup'

REUTERS WASHINGTON
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 U.S. President to be impeached.

The vote in the Democratic-controlled House is expected to fall almost entirely along party lines, underscoring the deep divide in Congress over Mr. Trump's conduct — and the larger political schism within the nation itself.

Mr. Trump would become only the third American President to be impeached, an extraordinary check on presidential power spelled out in the U.S. 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 U.S. Senate, in which House members would act as prosecutors. That chamber is controlled by Mr. Trump's fellow Republicans, who have shown little interest in removing him from office.

House Democrats accuse Mr. Trump of abusing his power by asking Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden, a former U.S. Vice-President and leading Democratic contender in the 2020 election. Mr. 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 ad-

journal immediately after the morning prayer and pledge of allegiance, leading to a vote on the House floor.

Mr. 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. "Can you believe that I will be impeached today by the Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats, AND I DID NOTHING WRONG! A terrible thing," Mr. Trump tweeted early on Wednesday morning. "Say a prayer!"

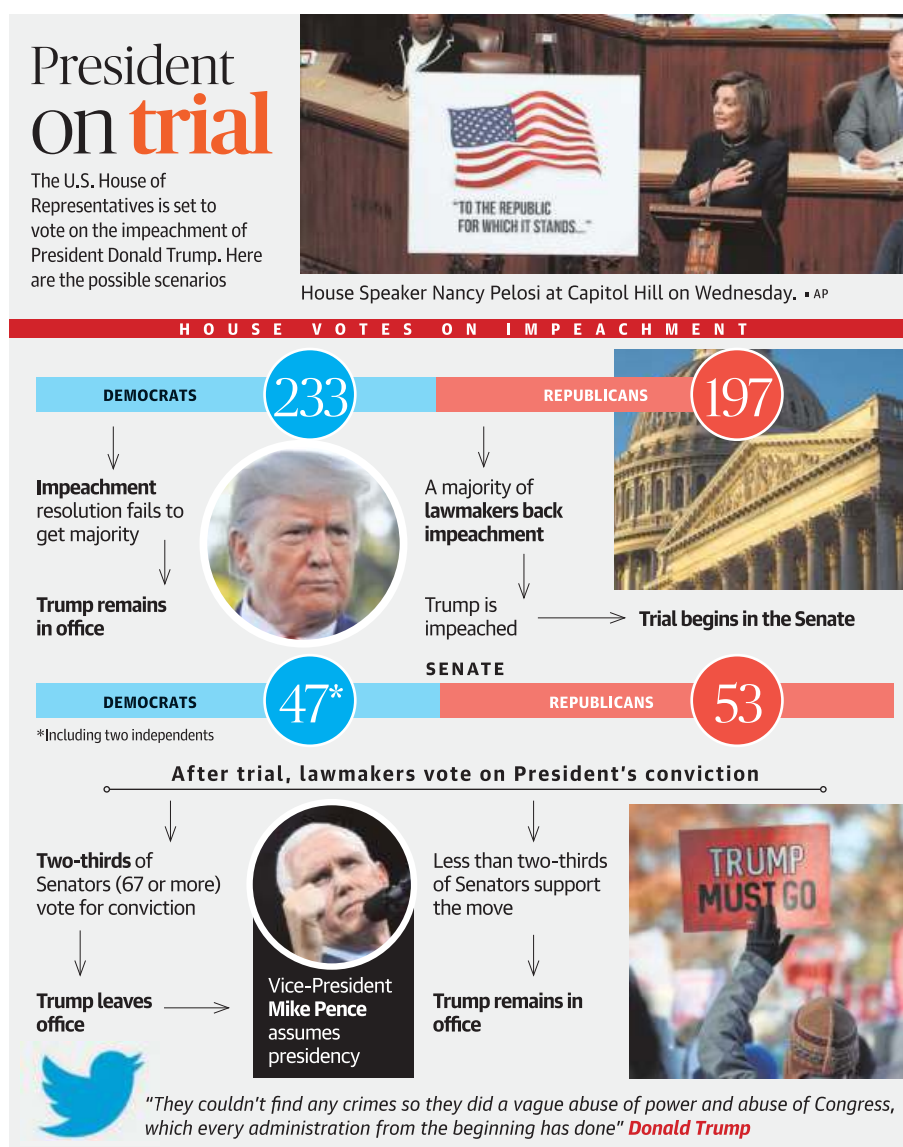
With Mr. Trump seeking a second term next year, impeachment has cleaved the public, with most Democratic voters supporting it and most Republicans opposed.

Republicans contend that a "yea" vote on impeachment could cost some moderate House Democrats their seats in next year's congressional elections. Still, several Democrats who represent districts that backed Mr. Trump in 2016 have said in recent days they will vote to impeach him.

'Violated Constitution'

As the debate unfolded, Ms. Pelosi called Mr. Trump an ongoing threat to American democracy. "If we do not act now, we would be derelict in our duty. It is tragic that the President's reckless actions make impeachment necessary," she said.

"He gave us no choice. What we are discussing today is the established fact that the President violated the Constitution. It is a matter of fact that the President is an ongoing threat to our



national security and the integrity of our elections — the basis of our democracy," she added.

Fearful of the political backlash, Democrats were long resistant to an impeachment inquiry, even after Special Counsel Robert Mueller outlined potential episodes of Mr. Trump obstructing justice in his report on Russian interference in the 2016 election. But after a whistleblower brought to light a July phone call in which Mr.

Trump pressed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to investigate Mr. Biden, House Democrats moved swiftly to take testimony from current and former administration officials.

Two articles

Democrats accuse Mr. Trump of freezing nearly \$400 million in U.S. security aid to Ukraine and offering a possible White House meeting to Mr. Zelenskyy to get him to publicly announce in-

vestigations of Mr. Biden and his son Hunter, who was on the board of a Ukrainian firm.

The first article of impeachment details the Democrats' account of Mr. Trump's dealings with Ukraine. The second article accuses Mr. Trump of obstruction of justice by directing administration officials and agencies not to comply with lawful House subpoenas for testimony and documents related to impeachment.

Sri Lanka Supreme Court rules against custodial death

It orders police and state to pay LKR 2 mn in compensation

MEERA SRINIVASAN COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled against a case of custodial death, ordering seven police personnel and the state to pay a total compensation of LKR 2 million (about ₹8 lakh) to the victim's family.

"It is the State's responsibility to protect every citizen of this country. In the instant case, I find that the State has failed its responsibility and has violated the Fundamental Rights of the deceased," Justice S. Thuraireja ruled, with the other two judges on the bench — L.T.B. Dehideniya and Murdu N.B. Fernando — agreeing.

The order pertains to a fundamental rights petition filed by a resident of Embilipitiya town in Sri Lanka's southern Sabaragamuwa Province that her husband had been arrested and "killed" by the police who thereafter "fabricated a version to justify the killing".

Almost a decade ago, in September 2010, police arrested the petitioner's husband over his suspected involvement in a murder in the area. Days after the suspect's arrest, the family was informed that he "was shot



The order pertains to a plea by a woman whose husband died in police custody.

and taken to the Embilipitiya Hospital", where he was declared dead.

Counsels representing the police officers, named as respondents in the case, had submitted that the suspect was taken out of the police station at night "to recover a weapon" hidden in his plantation grove. On the way, the man "had struggled" with a policeman "to snatch his rifle and he was killed as a result of a single shot that went off", they claimed.

Police failure

In a strongly-worded ruling, the Supreme Court judge observed that if the deceased were a person involved in grave crimes, as claimed by the police, then the police should have been more careful in handling him. Adding that the police side failed to "satisfactorily explain" why the man was taken out at

night without handcuffs with only three officers and the driver, close to a police officer with a readily loaded and unprotected (unlocked) weapon, in a faulty van without a door. "In these circumstances, I find the respondents' submissions to be highly untenable," Justice Thuraireja noted.

The judge cited a 1974 U.S. Supreme Court judgment, that said: "[A] prisoner is not wholly stripped of constitutional protections when he is imprisoned for crime. There is no iron curtain drawn between the Constitution and the prisons.."

Commenting on Monday's ruling, Saliya Peiris, a President's Counsel who appeared for the petitioner, told *The Hindu*: "This judgment is welcome. It was a classic case of a death in police custody. It sends out a strong message to the police that even in cases where a suspect is allegedly involved in a heinous crime, the suspect's fundamental rights must be protected."

The judgment is especially significant since such police action against suspects is sometimes popular among the public, depending on the crime, he added.

Germany bans gay 'conversion therapy'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BERLIN

The German government on Wednesday signed off on a new law banning "conversion therapies" designed to force homosexuality on homosexuals.

The legislation, set to be introduced next year, would see the practice made punishable with up to a year in

prison and fines of up to €30,000 (\$33,000). "Homosexuality is not an illness, so the word 'therapy' is misleading," said Health Minister Jens Spahn, the architect of the law.

Once it is approved, Germany would be only the second European country with such a ban after Malta passed similar legislation in

2016. Mr. Spahn said that he wanted the ban to be as far-reaching as possible, adding that the so-called therapies often caused "severe physical and psychological damage".

It could also potentially make parents and teachers liable if they are ruled to have neglected their duty of care.

Pak. PM calls emergency meet to discuss Musharraf verdict

Court has sentenced the former Army chief to death

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday summoned an emergency meeting of his party's core committee to discuss the conviction of former military dictator Pervez Musharraf, a day after the powerful Army said the verdict caused "pain and anguish" in the armed forces.

The meeting will also discuss matters related to legislation regarding the extension of services of the Army chief and the appointment of a Chief Election Commissioner and other members of the electoral body.



Imran Khan

Sources in the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf said that Mr. Khan would take senior party leader on board on the policy regarding the conviction of Mr. Musharraf.

Interestingly, Mr. Khan while in opposition support-

ed prosecution of Musharraf in the treason case.

Mr. Khan was in Geneva on Tuesday to attend the 'Global Refugee Forum' when a bench of a special court, headed by Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Waqar Ahmad Seth, on Tuesday found the ailing 76-year-old former Army chief, now living in Dubai on self-exile, guilty of high treason and handed him the death sentence.

Mr. Musharraf's sentencing angered the Army, which said that the verdict caused "pain and anguish" in the rank and file of armed forces.

2 policemen with Pak. polio team killed

ASSOCIATED PRESS PESHAWAR

Gunmen in Pakistan shot and killed two policemen on Wednesday who were part of a recent anti-polio drive in the country's rugged and volatile north-west, officials said.

The gunmen opened fire as the policemen were heading on foot to the town of Lower Dir in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, said police official Saeedur Rehman. He said the attackers fled the scene and a search was underway to find them.

The policemen were to escort a team of medics dog house-to-house to vaccinate children against the crippling disease.

Dozens injured as Shia parties clash with police in Beirut

Video of man insulting sacred symbols sparks violence

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BEIRUT

Dozens of people were wounded in overnight clashes between security forces and supporters of Lebanon's two main Shia political parties, the civil defence said on Tuesday.

It was the latest incident of violence in what have been largely peaceful protests since October 17 against a political class deemed inept and corrupt.

The movement pushed the Prime Minister to step down on October 29, but the country's bitterly divided political parties have failed to agree on a successor.



Supporters of Hezbollah and Amal staging a protest in Beirut. • AFP

Shortly before midnight on Monday, young supporters of Shia political parties Hezbollah and Amal tried to attack the main anti-government protest camp in central Beirut, an AFP photographer reported.

The young men arrived on foot and scooters, apparently fired up by a video of a Lebanese man living abroad in which he insults the sacred symbols of Shias.

They lobbed stones and fire-works at the police trying to prevent them from entering the main square.

The counter-demonstrators also torched several cars. The security forces responded with teargas and a water cannon.

Civil defence said 23 people were taken to hospital, while 43 were treated at the scene.

Security forces said 25 of its members were wounded.

ELSEWHERE



Revolutionary socialism led to defeat, says Blair

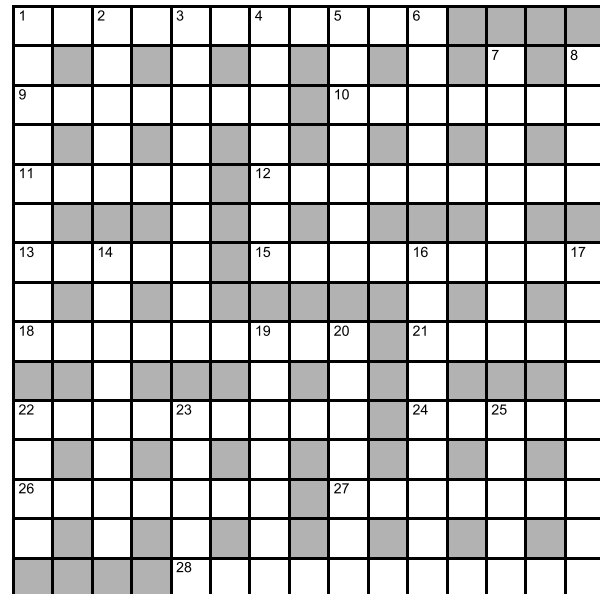
LONDON
Former British PM Tony Blair urged his Labour party on Wednesday to abandon "quasi-revolutionary socialism" as it seeks a new leader after its worst election defeat since the 1930s. Party leader Jeremy Corbyn has promised to step down. • AFP

Xi lands in Macau for handover anniversary

MACAU
Chinese president Xi Jinping arrived in Macau on Wednesday on a three-day visit as the city prepares to mark 20 years since the former Portuguese colony was returned. • AFP

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12810

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



ACROSS

- 1 Topical pain? Spread on lotion (11)
- 9 Complain against pressure and routine taking endless time (7)
- 10 Some settle abroad eastern part of Denver (7)
- 11 Pay for fun (5)

- (set by Afterdark)
- 12 Dare to reform killers essentially imprisoned (9)
 - 13 Theme of desktop icons... (5)
 - 15 ...to show sites, blah blah (9)
 - 18 Consumed soup first, to relish greedily in essence (9)
 - 21 Country in quarrel, fighting to liberate England in the absence of Queen (5)
 - 22 Often plays games with permits, say (9)
 - 24 Husband had small grudges... (5)
 - 26 ...unbecoming of an engineer, smart and primarily hospitable (7)
 - 27 Concerned with Alderman bowling tail out (7)
 - 28 Once media takes a side, firstly stokes emotions (11)
 - 4 Perhaps, a recital botched up... (7)
 - 5 ...in stage finishing early before time in a moment (7)
 - 6 New verse used in Christmas (5)
 - 7 Border row leading to battlefield's cut short earlier (8)
 - 8 Ball used regularly becomes dirty (4)
 - 14 Artist is overwhelmed by constant chant of cheering (8)
 - 16 Dirty bash organised for annual events (9)
 - 17 At Rome, 502 shells exploded on slopes (9)
 - 19 Woman given choice to start sermon and joint prayer (7)
 - 20 Ailment due to side strain; dog dies in dosage maladministration (7)
 - 22 Bars break up empty bottles (4)
 - 23 Venue is said to be quite large and excellent (5)
 - 25 German auto company to persuade Tesla to cancel order (5)

DOWN

- 1 Desires a quiet pet, it's tense every now and then (9)
- 2 Check pressure range (5)
- 3 Side loses opener; losing heart next one gets caught — a little alike (9)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12809

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Deserving of punishment

While Sugreeva and Vali are engaged in combat, Rama shoots an arrow, and hits Vali, as He had promised Sugreeva. Vali falls to the ground. Vali then asks Rama why He had attacked him (Vali). Rama was known to be righteous. He was from a famous dynasty. Was it right to hit a person who was engaged in fighting someone else? Was it right to catch him unaware, the way Rama had done? Vali regrets that he had not paid heed to his wife Tara's warnings. Moreover, what was Rama's grouse against Vali? Vali was not a citizen of Rama's country. He was only a monkey living in the jungle and subsisting on whatever was available there. Vali says that Rama had gone against all the rules of a proper fight, for He had hit Vali from behind.

Rama justifies His action, said Akkarakkani Srinidhi in a discourse. Rama says that the Ikshvaku clan to which He (Rama) belongs has authority over mountains and jungles and therefore, He has the right to punish wrongdoing wherever it is found. The virtuous Bharata, known for his honesty and for enforcing rules, is the king. Every citizen of the land ruled by Bharata has a duty to enforce the rules. Rama, as a dutiful citizen, has only done what He should. Rama tells Vali that he had taken his brother Sugriva's wife as his own, and this was unforgivable. Besides one's biological father, two other persons must be seen as fatherly figures — one's elder brother and one's teacher. And an elder brother or a teacher should see a younger brother or a student as a son.

So, it becomes clear that the wife of a younger brother or a student becomes the daughter-in-law of an elder brother or teacher. Vali, therefore, had committed a great sin by having improper desires towards his brother Sugriva's wife, and so he deserved to be killed, says Rama.



October 2016: Cyrus Mistry ousted as Tata Sons chairman. Ratan Tata named as interim chairman

December 2016: Two Mistry family-backed firms move NCLT Mumbai, challenge Mr. Mistry's removal

January 2017: Tata Sons names

N. Chandrasekaran as chairman

February 2017: Mr. Mistry removed as director on board of Tata Sons

March 2017: NCLT Mumbai sets aside plea of the investment firms

April 2017: The investment firms move NCLAT, challenging NCLT order



September 2017: NCLAT allows pleas by the two investment firms, seeking waiver in filing a case of oppression and mismanagement against Tata Sons, directs Mumbai-bench of the NCLT to proceed in the matter.

July 2018: NCLT Mumbai dismisses pleas of Mr. Mistry,

challenging his removal as Tata Sons chairman

August 2018: The two investment firms approach the NCLAT against NCLT order

May 2019: NCLAT reserves order

December 2019: NCLAT restores Mr. Mistry as executive chairman of Tata Sons



Tatas may move SC against NCLAT order

Order appears to even go beyond the specific reliefs sought by the appellant, says Tata Sons general counsel

PIYUSH PANDEY
MUMBAI

The Tata Group is likely to move the Supreme Court against National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT's) order to restore Cyrus Mistry as the executive chairman of Tata Sons Ltd. and director on the board of other Tata companies for the rest of the tenure.

The group is studying the order to decide on the future course of action.

"It is not clear as to how the NCLAT order seeks to overrule the decisions taken by shareholders of Tata Sons and listed Tata companies at validly constituted shareholder meetings.

"The order appears to even go beyond the specific

reliefs sought by the appellant. Tata Sons strongly believes in the strength of its case and will take appropriate legal recourse," said Shuva Mandal, group general counsel, Tata Sons.

The NCLAT said the sixth meeting of the board of directors of Tata Sons held on October 24, 2016, so far as it relates to removal and other actions taken against Mr. Mistry, is declared illegal and is set aside.

"Today's judgment is not a personal victory for me, but is a victory for the principles of good governance and minority shareholder rights. For over 50 years, the Mistry family, as the significant minority shareholder of Tata Sons, has always endeavoured to play the role of a responsible guardian of an institution that the entire nation is proud of," said Mr. Mistry in statement.

The NCLAT, at the request on Tata Sons counsel Abhishhek Manu Singhvi, has sus-



In happier times: Today's judgment is a victory for minority shareholder rights, Mr. Cyrus Mistry said.

pending a part of the judgment relating to replacement of the present executive chairman N. Chandrasekaran and reinstatement of Mr. Mistry as executive chairman of Tata Sons for a period of four weeks, meaning Tata

Group can approach the Supreme Court to appeal against the NCLAT order.

However, the other directions, including the one ordering reinstatement of Mr. Mistry as director of Tata Sons and of three Tata companies shall be complied forthwith.

"The outcome of the appeal is a vindication of my stand taken when the then board of Tata Sons, without warning or reason removed me, first as the executive chairman, and subsequently as a director of Tata Sons," said Mr. Mistry.

Stand vindicated

"[The] Tatas now need to offer seat to Mr. Mistry on the board of Tata Sons and other companies of Tata Group. Our stand is vindicated by the NCLAT order," Somasekhar Sundaresan, counsel for Mr. Mistry told *The Hindu*.

"Tata Sons assures its stakeholders that it [always] acted in accordance with the law and will continue to do so," Mr. Mandal added.

According to Mr. Mistry, for the Tata Group to prosper as an institution, it is important that the management of individual companies, their boards, the management of Tata Sons, the board of Tata Sons and the shareholders of Tata Sons, all work harmoniously within a robust governance framework, that in substance and form, protects the rights of all stakeholders, including shareholders, investors and the Tata Group employees who represent the strongest asset of the group.

"I believe it is now time that all of us work together for sustainable growth and development of the Tata Group, an institution that we all cherish," said Mr. Mistry.

Losing ground

Tata Global Beverages was the worst-hit with the stock shedding more than 4%.

Company	Tuesday's CMP	Intraday high	CMP*
TCS	2,165.65	2,203.60	2,167.25
Tata Steel	439.50	454.70	444.60
Tata Motors	180.20	184.50	174.70
Tata Chemicals	654.10	661.00	643.30
Tata Power	56.05	56.25	55.50
Tata Global Beverages	325.25	327.40	311.80
Tata Coffee	95.30	95.00	91.60

*CMP: CLOSING MARKET PRICE SOURCE: BSE

Tata stocks slide in last minutes of trading

TCS fell by about 1.65% from day's high

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The impact of the ruling by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was clearly visible on Tata Group stocks on Wednesday as shares of all group entities came off the day's highs during the fog end of the trading session when the order details emerged in public domain.

Further, most of the group stocks ended the day in the red even as the benchmark Sensex gained 206.40 points to close at a new record high of 41,558.57.

"If one notices, shares fell significantly from their ruling prices, hit new lows for the day and then recovered marginally," said Arun Kejriwal of Kejrival Research & Investment Services.

"Going forward, one would expect Tatas moving Supreme Court in the matter.

"Meanwhile, stocks should stage a recovery but the recovery could be a little muted considering the matter now becomes legal," added Mr. Kejriwal.

TCS, the biggest listed entity of the Tata Group in

Most of the group stocks ended the day in the red even as Sensex gained 206.40 points

terms of market capitalisation, fell about 1.65% from the day's high to touch a low of ₹2,152.35. The stock, however, managed to recoup its losses partially to close at ₹2,167.25.

However, Tata Motors, Tata Chemicals, Tata Power Company, Tata Global Beverages and Tata Coffee all ended the day in the red.

Tata Global Beverages, which boasts of brands like Tata Tea, Tetley, Good Earth and Himalayan, among others, was the worst-hit with the stock shedding more than 4%.

During the day it lost nearly 5% to touch a low of ₹305.05, before closing at ₹311.80. Tata Coffee also lost nearly 4% while Tata Motors was down by over 3%, after shedding more than 5% during intraday trades.

Interestingly, Tata Steel managed to buck the negative trend among the group stocks and ended the day with a gain of over 1%.

Big win for Mistry, uncertain times ahead for Tata Group

Time for saner counsel on both sides, but prospects appear bleak going by Tatas' reaction to the judgment

RAGHUVIR SRINIVASAN

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's (NCLAT) decision in the Mistry vs Tata Sons case is a big victory for Cyrus Mistry.

His plaint about being oppressed has been upheld; the proceedings of the board meeting on October 24, 2016 in so far as it relates to his removal as Executive Chairman of Tata Sons has been held as illegal; he has been restored to his original position as Executive Chairman; the conversion of Tata Sons from a public limited company to a private limited company has been held to be illegal and set aside and most

importantly, Tata Sons now cannot invoke a contentious article in its Articles of Association that would have enabled the majority shareholders to force the minority shareholders to sell their shares.

The icing on Mr. Mistry's cake is that Justice S. J. Mukhopadhyaya, Chairperson of the NCLAT, who delivered the judgement, has ticked off the earlier judgment by the National Company Law Tribunal in the case which has personal observations on Mr. Mistry, unrelated to the case.

The comments will now be expunged from the earlier judgment. NCLAT's decision is, however, bad news for the

Tata group which finds itself plunged into uncertainty that may extend over several months, unless if saner counsel prevails on both sides.

But that saner counsel appears a far cry now going by the first response of the Tatas saying that it will take

NEWS ANALYSIS

"appropriate legal recourse" which means that this case will now head to the Supreme Court.

That will prolong the uncertainty and shackle the top management of Tata Sons and all the group companies from taking major decisions.

The appointment of N. Chandrasekaran as Executive Chairman has been held as illegal which raises the question of what happens to the decisions that he has taken since his appointment?

And what frame of mind will Mr. Chandrasekaran be in going forward when he has to decide on major proposals for the group? If Tata Sons is shrouded in uncertainty what will be the signal for the group companies?

How will investors, especially foreign ones, react to this? There was a sharp markdown in some Tata group shares soon after the NCLAT judgment became public but that could be an

initial, kneejerk reaction.

The main part of the judgment – restoration of Mr. Mistry as Executive Chairman – has been stayed for four weeks but the direction to appoint him a director in Tata Sons and three other group companies – Tata Industries, Tata Consultancy Services and Tata Teleservices – will have to be complied with immediately.

So, will Mr. Mistry return as a director in these companies?

It appears unlikely as Mr. Mistry has always held that this is a fight for principles and governance and not for his position. But these things can never be said with cer-

tainty. The best course of action now would be for the two parties to settle their differences out of court and move on. Mr. Mistry has got what he wanted.

The Tatas may have lost but they should now look forward rather than backward. Prolonged uncertainty will affect the functioning of their companies.

Remember, the Tatas, as majority owners of the group, owe a fiduciary responsibility to the other shareholders, many of them common investors in their listed companies.

This should be kept in mind as they discuss the next course of action.

Chandrasekaran writes to Tata Sons employees

Tells them to stay focused on business

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran, in a letter to employees, said that though the NCLAT ruling which, apart from other things, had raised issues on his appointment as executive chairman of Tata Sons, the company firmly believed in the strength of its case and will pursue the appropriate legal recourse.

He said he was asked to take up the role and responsibilities of executive chairman in February 2017 and since then, his efforts have been primarily focused on restoring stability and moving decisively towards a healthier financial position and conducting the busi-

nesses with the highest ethical standards, which the group has been known for, for over 150 years.

Also, "honouring our commitments to all stakeholders and resolving outstanding issues; driving growth and transforming our businesses for the future." "Going forward, I assure you that we have set ourselves on a course that will make the Tata Group stronger and more vibrant than it has ever been before," he said. "I urge all employees to stay focused on their businesses and the welfare of our stakeholders.

"We will continue to work towards deepening the legacy of this unique institution," he said.

A setback for Tata Group

Experts say he can still be removed by shareholders

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

The NCLAT order restoring Cyrus Mistry as Tata Sons' chairman is a major setback for the Tata Group and its former chairman Ratan Tata unless the Supreme Court reverses this judgment, according to legal and company law experts.

They also said though Mr. Mistry had been reinstated, he can still be removed by the shareholders by following the due process of law.

Hurried process

"It is surprising that the NCLT's order has been completely turned around by the NCLAT. We have been saying from the very beginning that though the Tata Sons' board had all the rights to remove Mr. Mistry, the process to re-

move him was hurried and not proper," said J.N. Gupta, co-founder and MD, Stakeholders Empowerment Services, a proxy advisory firm.

"The manner in which he was removed could be debatable but shareholders have every right to remove an executive chairman, there should not be any confusion on this. So, even if Mr. Mistry is reinstated, it will be a short-lived one because, he can still be removed by shareholders by following the due process of law," said Mr. Gupta, a former SEBI ED.

He said one had to read the full judgment to comment properly.

Vaibhav Bhure, advocate, Bombay High Court, said, "[The] NCLAT order has certainly brought huge respite to Mr. Mistry.

"Under the Companies Act, majority has power to remove any director in accordance with the articles of association. The board is under no statutory obligation to provide any reason for the removal," said Mr. Bhure.

"Thus, the NCLAT decision to declare removal of Mr. Mistry as illegal and consequently restoring him to the position of executive chairman of Tata Sons Ltd. has to clear the litmus test before the apex court. In all likelihood, the said direction will be stayed by the apex court pending the appeal. Equally, the other direction to reinstate Mr. Mistry as director of the three Tata companies forthwith would be unsustainable as he himself resigned from other group companies," he added.

Infosys to settle visa violation case in California for \$800,000

Its employees had worked there on B-1 visas rather than H-1B

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Tech major Infosys will pay California a sum of \$800,000 to settle visa related allegations.

Attorney General, State of California Department of Justice, Xavier Becerra said an \$800,000 settlement was announced against Infosys and its BPM (business process management) subsidiary. Some 500 Infosys employees were working in the state on Infosys-sponsored B-1 visas rather than H-1B visas between 2006 and 2017,

as per an official post available on the website of State of California.

Avoided taxes

This misclassification resulted in Infosys avoiding California payroll taxes such as the unemployment insurance, disability insurance, and employment training taxes. H-1B visas also require employers to pay workers at the local prevailing wage, the post said.

"Today's settlement shows that attempting to evade California law doesn't

pay," said Attorney General Becerra. "Infosys brought in workers on the wrong visas in order to underpay them and avoid paying taxes. With this settlement, California has been made whole."

Responding to the settlement announcement, Infosys said, "Infosys' agreement concludes the California Attorney General's investigation into allegations related to the payment of state payroll taxes for some employees travelling on B-1 visas dating back to 2006."

'Bank mergers may pose cybersecurity risks'

CBS versions in use are different; security solutions, controls divergent: RBI ex-ED

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Former executive director of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) G. Padmanabhan on Wednesday cautioned that public sector bank mergers were likely to pose security challenges as divergent security solutions and controls get amalgamated.

Technology integration is the toughest, the senior banker, who is non-executive chairman of the Bank of India, said, speaking on cybersecurity challenges in the financial sector, at the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) here.



G. Padmanabhan

together all such systems over 2-3 years retaining and rebuilding adequate security solutions and processes is a tough task," he said.

Pointing out the process of merger was complex, he said the banks ought to be conscious of the security challenges. "Banks have started discussions... but they should focus on security as much as on functionalities or user interfaces," he said, adding skill set availability on security will be a greater challenge.

Mr. Padmanabhan, who was inaugurating the 15th international conference on Information Systems Security

(ICISS) 2019 at IDRBT, also sought to flag linkages with third-party partners.

"There is a lot of dependency on service providers. There is a significant cybersecurity risk in that a lot of data is going back and forth and held by third parties," he said, asking "will a merger of different versions of CBS enhance the challenge?"

Another challenge would be merging of SOC operations of the banks.

Different banks may have different set of controls and until these are fully merged the weakest link threat needs to be carefully monitored and controlled, he said.

MARKET WATCH

	18-12-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	41,559	0.50
US Dollar	70.97	0.01
Gold	38,828	0.02
Brent oil	66.38	1.02

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	374.50	3.25
Asian Paints	1778.45	33.05
Axis Bank	741.85	-3.80
Bajaj Auto	3213.65	14.55
Bajaj Finserv	9362.60	-0.85
Bajaj Finance	4119.35	-16.40
Bharti Airtel	438.30	-1.65
BPCIL	489.25	-6.80
Britannia Ind	3099.20	27.25
Cipla	467.80	3.85
Coal India	197.75	1.55
Dr Reddys Lab	2873.45	46.55
Eicher Motors	21735.85	30.90
GAIL (India)	117.35	-2.45
Grasim Ind	754.20	-14.60
HCL Tech	564.70	6.95
HDFC	2445.15	15.05
HDFC Bank	1292.35	21.25
Hero MotoCorp	2311.95	7.90
ICI Bank	213.65	-0.05
Unilever	1928.55	-32.80
ICICI Bank	541.40	0.25
IndusInd Bank	1500.80	8.05
Bharti Infratel	250.30	2.10
Infosys	732.45	2.75
Indian Oil Corp	126.05	0.40
ITC	245.15	4.10
JSW Steel	264.40	5.45
Kotak Bank	1724.35	11.05
L&T	1319.35	1.40
M&M	522.65	16.80
Maruti Suzuki	7240.65	45.50
Nestle India Ltd.	14191.10	41.95
NTPC	114.15	-1.40
ONGC	125.10	-0.20
PowerGrid Corp	187.20	-0.85
Reliance Ind	1575.85	13.15
State Bank	323.95	-5.95
Sun Pharma	439.75	10.70
Tata Motors	174.80	-5.40
Tata Steel	444.75	5.35
TCS	2167.75	2.80
Tech Mahindra	786.65	9.30
Titan	1159.10	1.75
UltraTech Cement	4065.40	-54.15
UPL	566.25	2.15
Vedanta	152.80	0.45
Wipro	248.30	3.55
YES Bank	46.75	-0.85
Zee Entertainment	279.50	-0.25

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 18

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	70.77	71.09
Euro	78.76	79.11
British Pound	92.69	93.14
Japanese Yen (100)	64.63	64.93
Chinese Yuan	10.11	10.16
Swiss Franc	72.15	72.48
Singapore Dollar	52.20	52.44
Canadian Dollar	53.84	54.09
Malaysian Ringgit	17.10	17.18

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

December 18 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g)	47.7	(47.7)
22 ct gold (1g)	3634	(3627)

The boisterous Mr Haldane

Samanth Subramanian's latest biography, *A Dominant Character*, captures the British-Indian scientist's thoughts on how science and politics play off each other

PREETI ZACHARIAH

When British-Indian scientist John Burdon Sanderson (JBS) Haldane moved to India with his wife, Helen, he had carried along with him a dozen jars of live fish in the cabin hold. The fluctuating temperature in the baggage hold would kill them, he had explained to an ISI official, also assuring him that "they will be sealed up and will not smell."

In many ways, this was typical of the British-Indian scientist best known for his work in physiology, genetics, evolutionary biology and statistics – he bent the rules and defied authority consistently.

"He had a lack of tolerance for idiots," agrees journalist and writer Samanth Subramanian, whose latest book, a biography of Haldane, titled *A Dominant Character: The Radical Science and Restless Politics of JBS Haldane*, is peppered with incidents such as this one.

Written in evocative prose that makes a reader cringe, laugh out loud, and get emotionally invested in the life of this layered, complex man, the book focusses on what Haldane "thought about science and politics and how they would play off each other."

A dominant character

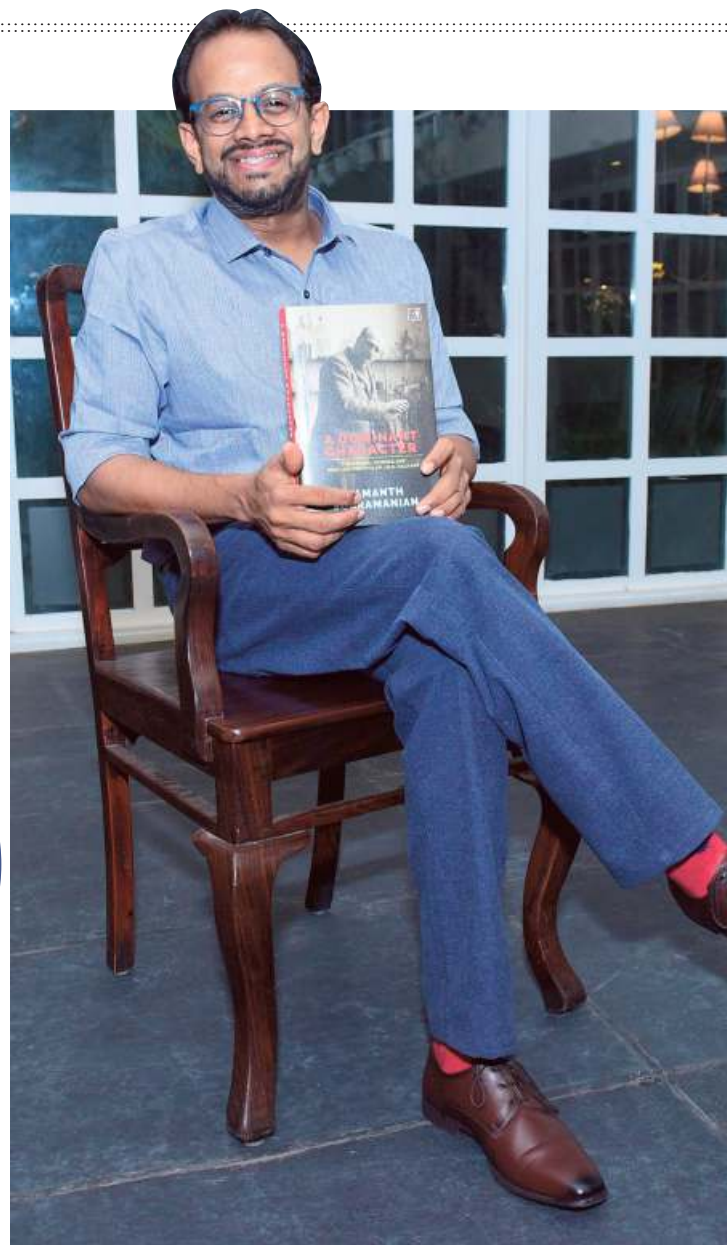
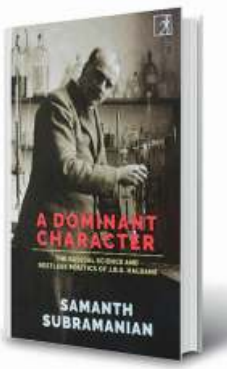
"I knew him first as a British biologist who moved to India, and that in itself was intriguing," says Subramanian. "There were all these little witty things that would come up in my

Haldane was 100% engaged with the world. It is important for scientists to resume that role of a public intellectual

reading," says Subramanian of the "instantly quotable" man.

The title of the book – *A Dominant Character* – is both a nod to Haldane's personality and the science he loved (dominant and recessive inheritance patterns are essential to Mendelian genetics).

Haldane was indeed a Renaissance man, a polymath of vast and



New craft This is Samanth Subramanian's first attempt at writing a biography • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

varied interests. He wrote cutting opinion pieces on politics, his own boisterous life, his views on government and philosophy, history and literature. And science, always science: "columns that unpicked the convolutions of science for the inexpert reader," writes Subramanian, going on to quote Arthur C Clarke who described Haldane as "the most brilliant scientific populariser of his generation."

A life well lived

Haldane's life – lived not in an ivory tower of scientific research, but in

the real world – had all the elements of a great story.

He fought in the First World War and Spanish Civil War. His first wife was a much-married woman, his second he met when he was still married to his first. Then there was the tragic irony of never being able to have children, despite being obsessed with genes. And the moral dilemma of the Lysenko affair, which pitted his politics and science against each other.

"That was his one misstep," says Subramanian. A deviation, almost, from all the values he had es-

poused; he was against imperialism, rampant capitalism, racism or eugenics.

Throw in his personal evolution. A diary, written when he was ten, for instance, may have echoed his mother's conservative, empire-lauding politics. But he left Britain for India, at 65, because he thought that the country's involvement in the Suez Affair made it a "criminal state". And add a dash of acerbic wit. "One of my reasons for settling in India was to avoid wearing socks."

This is Subramanian's first stab at a biography; his previous two books, *Following Fish* and *This Divided Island: Stories from the Sri Lankan War*, were a travelogue and a narrative history of post-war Sri Lanka respectively.

"I first thought of it as an expansion of a long-form profile," he says. But he soon discovered there was a different craft to it. "I had to learn from scratch. But playing with form is something I'm fond of," he says.

Unlike his previous books, where he had the luxury of the first-person experience to enliven his narrative, Subramanian cobbled together Haldane's story from archives mostly. "I spoke to only three people in this book, but consulted 18 archives across the world," he says.

One of his most significant sources of information was Haldane's own writing – detailed and illustrative if a trifle illegible. ("His handwriting resembled ants somersaulting through snow"). Thankfully, his writing was mostly typed up by his secretary.

"Haldane was 100% engaged with the world. That isn't common now," says Subramanian. In the age of genetic manipulation and designer babies, questions raised around these things aren't just scientific; they are political and ethical, he says. "It is important for scientists to resume that role of a public intellectual."

IN OUR BACKYARD

The confusing caller

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

The crow family, called Corvids, is often seen as a harbinger of bad luck. Perhaps it is because they are the most intelligent birds studied, with skills possessed only by humans and a few other higher order mammals. For instance, they have strong organisation and community building traits (partner and group bonds), which keeps them in groups and helps them join mixed hunting parties of birds.

A part of the family is the Rufous Treepie (*Dendrocitta vagabunda*) that proudly displays its slate-grey hood, red-brown mantle, and long black-tipped silver-grey tail as it sits on trees. When it takes off, with a jerky, flapping motion that soon turns into a glide, you'll see its dull orange to light brown underparts and pale grey and black wings.

The Corvids – crows, ravens, rooks, jackdaws, magpies, treepies, choughs and nutcrackers – are the largest passerine birds (with three toes pointing forward and one

The Rufous Treepie is a russet-coloured bird from the Crow family that likes to sing

backward, helping the bird to perch). They're spread out across Southeast Asia, though surprisingly haven't been sighted in Sri Lanka.

Rufous Treepies are strongly arboreal in nature (mostly found on trees) but they do not shy away from occasionally coming to the ground to feed. Although they have adapted well to urbanisation, they are fewer in number compared to crows that dominate several parts of the city with their superior adaptation skills. They are natural omnivores and you may see the stout hooked silver-black beak pecking on invertebrates, fruits, sometimes the nectar of the Semal (red cotton)



Natural omnivore The Rufous Treepie with its silver-black beak

• ABHISHEK GULSHAN

tree, juveniles of birds, small reptiles and rodents (they're natural pest controllers). Like crows, they are also hoarders of food.

In cities, they often resort to scavenging. These birds are often found feeding on scraps disposed by humans (such as bread, chapatti, unwanted meat leftovers, cooked food). The increasing reliance on humans for food and the abundance of such food is alarming

and could adversely affect the populations of smaller birds in the vicinity.

Rufous Treepies are aggressive and territorial when it comes to breeding and protecting their territory from other creatures. They have a wide variety of calls: metallic fluty (*ko-ki-la*), meowing notes (a long-drawn mee-ao is said to be associated to breeding), often mixed with rattling cries to ward these

Protocooperation

Two species interact with each other beneficially. The Rufous Treepie has been observed riding the Sambar Deer and Spotted Deer to feed on ectoparasites (an organism like a flea living on a host). This gives them a symbiotic relationship, with the deer positioning itself to enable these birds to examine specific parts on their body for the cleaning process. You may see this in Rajasthan.

other animals off. There's also squawking, loud *ter-ko-ko* and *quay-ka-ka-ka-ka*. The birds sometimes confuse birdwatchers by their varied calls. This is also why birdwatchers find the activity more challenging and fascinating.

Breeding time is primarily from April to June, but sometimes may start as early as March and end as late as September. This season is perfect to raise young ones due to the abundance of food. For all its prettiness, it makes the most ugly nests, usually a platform of twigs, built on trees that can house a clutch of about three to five eggs.

When it's not in the built up part of the city's garden and avenues, the bird likes open-wooded country, dry and deciduous forests, light wooded habitats.

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.

PRODUCT

The East's own gin

Roku, a two-year-old Japanese premium gin, has just been launched in India



The spotlight on gin in India hasn't yet stopped shining. On Tuesday, Beam Suntory, the global spirits brand launched their parent Japanese brand House of Suntory's premium "craft" gin into the country. Called Roku, the gin was launched at the Trident in Gurugram, along with three whiskies: Beam Suntory's Oaksmith, as well as The House of Suntory's Yamazaki and Hibiki.

Master blender Shinji Fukuyo, who creates these whiskies and then ages them in American oak barrels, was present at the launch, as was George Kumekawa, from the House of Suntory.

Kumekawa has been overseeing the growth of Roku since its launch in 2017 in Japan and select countries in South East Asia and Europe. Roku has top notes of Yuzu, a Japanese citrus fruit and a sweet aroma courtesy cherry blossom and green tea. The complex flavours leave you with a hint of spice in the end, given the presence of the Japanese Sansho pepper.

Ahead of the India launch, he talks about why he's excited for Indian bartenders to work with Roku, and why the brand considers this a craft gin. Edited excerpts:

You're using six botanicals for Roku...

Yes, *roku* means six – we are using six Japanese botanicals, all of which are sourced from different areas in Japan, through different seasons. The Sakura tea and Sakura flower are only harvested in spring; the Sencha tea and

Gyokuro tea are sourced in different places and through different seasons; and we also have the Sansho pepper and Yuzu peel that come from different areas in the country. We then distil immediately to extract the best flavours. This requires a lot of time and effort, which is why we call it a craft gin. There's no definition of this, but it's more about how much we care about and invest in the process, and the fact that we source everything locally.

Outside of these six, we also use eight traditional botanicals including juniper berries. These are sourced outside of Japan. But to differentiate ourselves, we distillate the juniper berry twice. The reason is that the berry is sometimes too strong and we don't want that – we want it to match perfectly with the six Japanese botanicals.

The world has been focusing on gin now for a while. How do you see your presence in the Indian context now, at the end of 2019?

In addition to this [gin trend], I think that the education level of the bartenders here is growing rapidly. The way they serve and create their cocktails is getting better – some Indian bartenders are getting popular outside of India too. For instance, in Hong Kong, the 8 1/2 Otto E Mezzo Bombana is a premium Italian place with a good bar. A bartender called Devender Kumar has been running it for a couple of years now, and he has elevated the bar. It's been placed in the Asia's 50 Best Bars consistently. The level of the industry [in India] is growing now too. We want to place Roku in India in the mid- to high-end category. I think it's the right time that we started the gin here, along with the launch of the House of Suntory whiskies.

Do you plan to produce outside of Japan too, given the rapid expansion in the past few years?

Roku is produced in Osaka, in one of Suntory's oldest production plants. We don't have plans for sure to produce outside of this.

Available across bars and stores in Karnataka, Haryana, Maharashtra, Telangana; upwards of ₹5,500 for a 700 ml bottle

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



PERFORMANCE

Kathak recital

India Habitat Centre is hosting a Kathak solo by Mukesh Gangani this evening. Hailing from the Jaipur gharana of Kathakars, Mukesh has rendered several solo performances on national and international stages. The event will also feature a performance by the Kathak Disha Repertory.

VENUE: The Stein Auditorium, IHC
TIME: 7 p.m.



EXHIBITION

Ceramics

An ongoing solo show titled Alchemy of Porcelain, is an exhibition of contemporary ceramics by Ted Secombe. He is regarded as one of Australia's most significant and accomplished ceramic artists. Ted constantly experiments and develops his glazes, some of which are reminiscent of ancient Chinese glazes.

VENUE: Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House
TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.



FOOD

Winter menu

AnnaMaya, the restaurant at Andaz Delhi has introduced an all new winter menu. This offering will have winter favourites like saag paneer, makkai ki roti, prawn linguini with black garlic, pork kolhapuri, baked sweet potato with spinach, dal muradabadi with naan, and rogan josh millet khichdi, among others.

VENUE: Asset No.1, Aerocity
TIME: 24 hours



EXHIBITION

Mixed media

Visible - Invisible, an exhibition of prints, lithography, etching, aqua-tint, sugar lift etching by Delhi-based artist Sangeeta Pathak is currently on display at India International Centre. This collection of her works are mainly inspired by human visages, gestures, pains, sufferings and their hardships.

VENUE: Annexe Art Gallery, IIC
TIME: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.



GIG

Folk-rock

Farzi Cafe is hosting Swaraag, a folk-rock and Sufi fusion band. The band has Asif Khan as the lead singer, Arif Khan on the zitar (a sitar and guitar combination), Sajid Khan on the drums, Wahid Khan on the tabla, and Hansraj on the morchang. They will play Rajasthani folk fusion and Bollywood mashups.

VENUE: Worldmark 3, Aerocity, IGI Airport
TIME: 8:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

After the Rohit-Rahul show, Kuldeep spins a web around WI

The openers slam centuries to propel India to a massive total of 387 before the chinaman bowler performs a hat-trick for the second time in ODIs



Three cheers! Rohit Sharma sends one into the stands during his whirlwind knock while Kuldeep Yadav is mobbed by teammates after his feat. It was a memorable day for K.L. Rahul, too, as he made his maiden ODI century at home. — K.R. DEEPAK

WI IN INDIA

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
VISAKHAPATNAM
Wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav's hat-trick proved the icing on the cake after openers Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul's brilliant centuries as India scripted a 107-run win against the West Indies in the second ODI at the Dr. YSR-ACA-VDC Stadium here on Wednesday.

Pulling level
The victory helped Kohli's men pull level and take the series to the decider at Cuttack on December 22.
A superb piece of fielding by Shreyas Iyer from the

deep to run out Shimron Hetmyer and a beauty from left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja to castle Roston Chase turned the contest on its head. Pacer Shardul Thakur had struck the first blow, inducing a false shot from opener Evin Lewis who skied to deep midwicket.

Lucky Hope
Lewis' partner Shai Hope, who was dropped on zero at second slip by Rahul off seamer Deepak Chahar, put on a 106-run stand for the fourth wicket with a belligerent Nicholas Pooran.

The left-hander, too, earned a reprieve on 22 when fielder Chahar grassed

him off Jadeja. However, once pacer Mohammed Shami sent back Pooran, who pulled straight to the deep fielder, and dismissed Kieron Pollard for a first-ball duck — the West Indies skipper had earlier removed Virat Kohli for a golden duck — the chase unravelled.

Kuldeep, who had taken a hat-trick in an ODI against Australia in 2017 in Kolkata, sent back Hope, Jason Holder and Alzarri Joseph off successive deliveries to become the first Indian to claim two hat-tricks in ODIs.

In a remarkable coincidence, the chinaman bowler had performed the feat against the Aussies in the

33rd over too!
When India was asked to bat first, Rohit served another reminder that he is more dangerous when he's slow off the blocks.

After a cautious start, he went on to score his 28th ODI century, outscoring Rahul who had begun more aggressively. For Rahul, this was his third ODI hundred, and the first at home.

The two put on 227 for the opening wicket, dashing Pollard's hopes of making early inroads on a pitch which offered little for the bowlers.

In top gear
Rahul blazed away at the start, the six over point of Ja-

son Holder the pick of the shots. He also smashed debutant left-arm spinner Khary Pierre over long-on for a six.
Rohit, who was dropped on 70, pulled pacer Joseph nonchalantly over fine-leg for a six and then hit a stunning shot over cover off Holder, even falling in the process.

Rahul, who reached his century with a half-pull off Joseph, soon perished to the same bowler.

Gone in no time
Skipper Kohli arrived to a thunderous roar at the venue where he has scored three ODI centuries, but there was a deafening silence soon as

STAT SPHERE



1 Hope has taken the fewest innings (65) to register eight ODI centuries for the West Indies, followed by Richards (75), Greenidge (86) and Haynes (86)
1 The first instance in which both captains were dismissed for a golden duck in the same ODI, and 12th overall, when both skippers bagged a duck in an ODI
2 This is Kuldeep's second ODI hat-trick after the one against Australia (Kolkata, 2017). In a re-

markable coincidence, both came in the 33rd over of the innings.

Bowlers with multiple ODI hat-tricks
3: Malinga, **2:** Akram, Saqlain, Vaas, Boult & Kuldeep

7 Number of consecutive years Rohit has recorded the highest individual score by an Indian in ODIs

2013: 209, **2014:** 264, **2015:** 150, **2016:** 171*, **2017:** 208*, **2018:** 162, **2019:** 159

7 Number of centuries by Rohit in 2019 (26 inns). He has joined Ganguly (2000, 32 inns) and Warner (2016, 23) in the second position. Only Tendulkar (9 from 33, 1998) has more

Most 150+ scores in ODIs

8 Rohit
6 Warner

5 Tendulkar & Gayle
31 Runs scored by Shreyas and Pant off Roston Chase is the most in an over by India in ODIs

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
Rohit Sharma c Hope b Cottrell 159 (138b, 17x4, 5x6), K.L. Rahul c Chase b Joseph 102 (104b, 8x4, 3x6), Virat Kohli c Chase b Pollard 0 (1b), Shreyas Iyer c Hope b Cottrell 53 (32b, 3x4, 4x6), Rishabh Pant c Pooran b Paul 39 (16b, 3x4, 4x6), Kedar Jadhav (not out) 16 (10b, 3x4), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (b-1, lb-3, nb-1, w-13): 18; Total (for five wkts. in 50 overs): 387.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-227 (Rahul, 36.6 overs), 2-232 (Kohli, 37.3), 3-292 (Rohit, 43.3), 4-365 (Pant, 47.3), 5-373 (Shreyas, 48.6).

WEST INDIES BOWLING
Cottrell 9-0-83-2, Holder 9-0-45-0, Pierre 9-0-62-0, Paul 7-0-57-1, Joseph 9-1-68-1, Chase 5-0-48-0, Pollard 2-0-20-1.

WEST INDIES
Evin Lewis c Shreyas b Shardul 30 (35b, 5x4), Shai Hope c Kohli b Kuldeep 78 (85b, 7x4, 3x6), Shimron Hetmyer run out 4 (7b), Roston Chase b Jadeja 4 (9b), Nicholas Pooran c Kuldeep b Shami 75 (47b, 6x4, 6x6), Kieron Pollard c Pant b Shami 0 (1b), Jason Holder st Pant b Kuldeep 11 (13b, 1x6), Keemo Paul b Shami 46 (42b, 4x4, 3x6), Alzarri Joseph c Jadhav b Kuldeep 0 (1b), Khary Pierre c Kohli b Jadeja 21 (18b, 3x4), Sheldon Cottrell (not out) 0 (3b); Extras (b-1, lb-2, w-8): 11; Total (in 43.3 overs): 280.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-61 (Lewis, 10.6 overs), 2-73 (Hetmyer 13.1), 3-86 (Chase, 15.6), 4-192 (Pooran, 29.2), 5-192 (Pollard, 29.3), 6-210 (Hope, 32.4), 7-210 (Holder, 32.5), 8-210 (Joseph, 32.6), 9-260 (Pierre, 40.5).

INDIA BOWLING
Chahar 7-1-44-0, Shardul 8-0-55-1, Shami 7-3-0-39-3, Jadeja 10-0-74-2, Kuldeep 10-0-52-3, Shreyas 1-0-13-0.

Toss: West Indies
Man-of-the-Match: Rohit Sharma.

India won by 107 runs to level three-match series 1-1.
Third ODI: December 22 (Sunday), Cuttack.

Pacers set for a field day

There will be 338 players in the fray

IPL

AMOL KARHADKAR
KOLKATA
T20 is often perceived as a batsman's game but come Thursday, the pacers are set to have a field day during the Player Auction for the Indian Premier League (IPL)'s 13th edition.

There's no doubt that the likes of Glenn Maxwell, Shimron Hetmyer and Alex Carey will attract the highest bids during the mini-auction with 338 players going under the hammer for a maximum of 73 slots. However, the pace bowlers could match the big-hitters in the price war.

Six players — Vinay Kumar, Ashoke Dinda, Mathew Wade, Sanjay Yadav, Robin Bisht and Jake Weatherald — were added to the auction list on Wednesday.

Need of the hour

One of the main reasons for the emphasis on speedsters is the fact that at least six of the eight franchises are in need of at least one reliable fast bowler. The Australian duo of Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood will be on the radar of many.

Similarly, England's Chris Woakes and the West Indies pair of Keshav Williams and Sheldon Cottrell are expected to sign a big cheque along with Jaydev Unadkat, who will be hoping to emerge as the highest earning Indian cricketer for the third consecutive time.

Possible tussle

Many franchises could also go for Dale Steyn, Mohit Sharma and Tim Southee along with

promising domestic pacers Ishan Porel of Bengal, Mumbai's Tushar Deshpande and Kartik Tyagi of Uttar Pradesh. Despite it being a mini-auction, Thursday will give a glimpse into the mindset of the rejigged support staff of five franchises. Barring Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals, all the others have a new head coach.

It will be interesting to see how the new support staff approach the auction. The task will be made even more difficult considering the uncertainties surrounding the 2021 IPL.

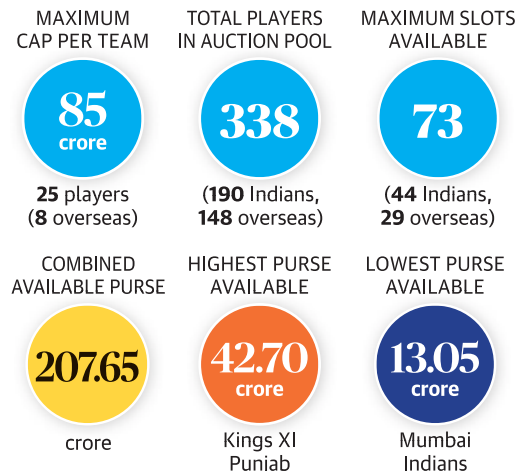
The league could see the addition of one team next year, effectively meaning that the dynamics of a full auction could become even more complicated.

Besides the big-ticket overseas players, focus will be on the interest the Indian players generate. While the under-19 trio of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Priyam Garg and Ravi Bishnoi may find many takers, it will be curious to see the response for Robin Uthappa and Piyush Chawla, formerly with KKR.

One more shot
Cheteshwar Pujara and Manoj Tiwary will also be hoping to attract a bid after going unsold during the previous auction.

Both the seasoned batsmen feature among the top 85 names who will be called at the start of the auction. That will be followed by an accelerated auction, which will see only the players shortlisted by the franchises during a break being called out.

The Auction gameplan



Available slots: 5 (overseas)
Available purse: 35.65 crore

■ KKR have conventionally preferred a smaller squad. That means head coach Brendon McCullum can afford to spend big on some of its shortlisted players. The team is in need of an overseas opener and a quality spinner. And there is no dearth of options for both

Available slots: 2 (overseas)
Available purse: 13.05 crore

■ Just like CSK, the four-time champion has a well-settled starting combination. It needs a solid back-up for veteran Lasith Malinga and could also possibly look to invest in domestic cricketers, especially Mumbai youngster Yashasvi Jaiswal

Available slots: 4 (overseas)
Available purse: 28.90 crore

■ Royals have a penchant for investing in and optimising lesser-known talent. Carey, the wicketkeeper-batsman, fits the bill in this respect. The captain-coach combo of Steve Smith and Andrew McDonald will be aware of the fellow Aussies' potential pretty well. Besides, they will be hoping to buy a few domestic cricketers too

Available slots: 4 (overseas)
Available purse: 42.70 crore

■ With more than half its purse left, don't be surprised if Kings XI walks away with the biggest catch on Thursday. It would be interesting to see what strategy its newly appointed head coach and director of cricket Anil Kumble employs. Kumble is making a comeback to the IPL after a successful stint as a support staff with Mumbai Indians earlier

Available slots: 2 (overseas)
Available purse: 17 crore

■ Sunrisers has, of late, struggled to find a reliable finisher. It would possibly be looking at Colin de Grandhomme, James Neesham and Chris Morris for the role. Besides, it would also be hoping to strengthen its domestic player-pool, having released Deepak Hooda

Available slots: 6 (overseas)
Available purse: 27.90 crore

■ For long, RCB has been trying to get a reliable match-winner to ease the pressure on Virat Kohli and A.B. de Villiers. Considering that it has the most available slots - total and overseas - it will be a big challenge for the new team management of Mike Hesson and Simon Katich to not overspend and yet get the best combination

HOT PICKS

AMOL KARHADKAR & SHAYAN ACHARYA

A look at 10 players who are expected to trigger a bidding war

OVERSEAS

Alex Carey (Aus)
Base price: ₹50 lakh
Carey could well emerge the surprise package this time. The wicketkeeper-batsman proved his mettle in the 50-over World Cup in England, finishing with an impressive tally of 375 in 10 matches at an average of 62.50.

Glenn Maxwell (Aus)
Base price: ₹2 crore
The Australian is returning to mainstream cricket after taking a break to focus on his mental health. The 31-year-old all-rounder will be the hottest property auctioneer Hugh Edmeades will sell.

Pat Cummins (Aus)
Base price: ₹2 crore
The last time the Australian pace spearhead featured in the IPL, in 2017, he claimed 15 wickets for Delhi Daredevils. Having missed the last two editions, the top-ranked Test bowler is set for a fat purse yet again.

Chris Morris (SA)
Base price: ₹1 crore
The South African was not retained by Capitals after his poor show in the previous edition. However, being a dependable bowler at the death and a strong finisher with the bat, he will be in the limelight again.

Shimron Hetmyer (WI)
Base price: ₹50 lakh
He may have failed to live up to his big pay-cheque last year and been released by RCB, but the West Indies batsman has made a strong case for himself during the ongoing tour of India. His century in the Chennai ODI has surely put him in the top bracket.

INDIANS

Jaydev Unadkat
Base price: ₹1 crore
The highest-paid Indian at the 2018 and '19 auctions, the Saurashtra left-arm pacer will go for a hat-trick. Given the fact that there will be a thrust on domestic speedsters, he could well go big again.

Robin Uthappa
Base price: ₹1.50 crore
The veteran is the Indian with the highest base price. He had a mediocre 2019 IPL, forcing KKR to release him. He will hope to attract a bid upfront rather have the franchises wait and watch for him and go for him in the second round.

Piyush Chawla
Base price: ₹1 crore
Uthappa's KKR teammate also finds himself in the auction pool after a long time. But the leg-spinner — one of only four bowlers with 150 IPL wickets — will be keeping his fingers crossed.

Yashasvi Jaiswal
Base price: ₹20 lakh
Ever since uncapped Indian players were included in the IPL auction in 2014, every season has thrown up crorepatris. He could well be the latest addition to that list.

Ishan Porel
Base price: ₹20 lakh
Porel impressed during India under-19's triumphant campaign in 2018. The Bengal pacer is expected to join the crorepatris' club too.

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m.
Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
Pakistan vs Sri Lanka: 2nd Test, Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 10.30 a.m.
Big Bash League: Sony Six (SD & HD), 1.40 p.m.
IPL 2020 Auction: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 2.30 p.m.
Big Bout League: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Bundesliga: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 12 a.m. (Friday).

IN BRIEF



Pacers snap Lakers' 14-game streak

LOS ANGELES
A determined Indiana fightback and last-minute heroics by Malcolm Brogdon and Domantas Sabonis led the Pacers to a dramatic 105-102 upset of the NBA-best Los Angeles Lakers on Tuesday.
The results: Charlotte Hornets 110 bt Sacramento Kings 102; Indiana Pacers 105 bt Los Angeles Lakers 102; New York Knicks 143 bt Atlanta Hawks 120; Brooklyn Nets 108 bt New Orleans Pelicans 101 (OT); Utah Jazz 109 bt Orlando Magic 102; Los Angeles Clippers 120 bt Phoenix Suns 99. AGENCIES

Dhananjay stuns Sammr

SPORTS BUREAU CHANDIGARH
Qualifier Dhananjay Singh of Himachal Pradesh knocked out second seed Sammr Raina of Delhi 6-4, 6-0 in the under-18 boys' quarterfinals of the St. Stephen's School AITA Super series junior tennis tournament at the CLTA Complex on Wednesday.

Krishan Hooda, Sukhpreet Singh Jhoje and Shashikant Rajput were the others to make the semifinals.
The results (quarterfinals): **Boys: Under-18:** Krishan Hooda bt Ajay Singh 6-4, 7-6(1); Sukhpreet Singh Jhoje bt Bhupendra Dahiya 6-2, 3-6, 6-2; Shashikant Rajput bt Torus Rawat 6-4, 6-0; Dhananjay Singh bt Sammr Raina 6-4, 6-0.

Under-16: Daksh Prasad bt Sarthak Gandhi 6-7(5), 6-3, 6-3; Sukhpreet Singh Jhoje bt Adhith Awal 6-4, 6-3; Aryan Thakur bt Gaurav Kumar 7-6 (6), 3-6, 6-4; Jitin Kumar Chetry bt Ajay Singh 7-5, 6-2.

Girls: Under-18: Ruma Gaikawari bt Harnoor Kaur Sidhu 7-5, 6-0; Sai Bhojar bt Hannah Nagpal 6-0, 6-1; Anjali Rathi bt Radhika Vasudeva 6-2, 6-2; Lakshmi Prabha Arunkumar bt Simran Pritam 6-4, 6-1.

Under-16: Lakshmi Prabha bt Hitakanya Singh Narwal 6-4, 6-2; Sai hoyar bt Madhurima Sawant 6-2, 6-2; Tanushri Pandey bt Kavaya Khirwar 4-6, 6-3, 6-1; Anjali Rathi bt Ruma Gaikawari 6-1, 6-1.

Giants favourite to beat Bullets

NEW DELHI: The Amit Panghal-led Gujarat Giants will start favourite against Bombay Bullets in the semifinals of the Big Bout India Boxing League at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium Complex on Thursday. In the other semifinal on Friday, NE Rhinos will meet Punjab Panthers.

Bullets had beaten Gujarat Giants 4-3 when the teams squared up in the league stage but the latter was without Panghal and former women's world champion Sarita Devi.

The other semifinal would be a grudge contest for Punjab Panthers which had lost 3-4 to NE Rhinos. The Panthers will hope that M.C. Mary Kom, who missed the last league match owing to bad back, will be able to take the ring against Nikhat Zareen.

Abhishek Raman's century frustrates Kerala

Bengal on the threshold of taking the first innings lead



Well-deserved: Abhishek Raman showed loads of patience and the right technique on a dicey surface. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

M.R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
A defiant century by opener Abhishek Raman (110) brought Bengal on the threshold of taking the first innings lead against Kerala at the end of the second day in the Ranji Trophy Elite Group A & B match at the KCA-St. Xavier's College ground here on Wednesday.

Bengal, in reply to Kerala's first innings total of 239, was 236 for six at stumps with Shahbaz Ahmed (25 batting) and Arnab Nandi (seven batting) negotiating a difficult half-an-hour's play in the final session.

Abhishek grafted his way to a well-deserved century after showing loads of patience and technique on a dicey surface which was still helping the spinners.

Early blows
Kerala delt early blows, re-

ducing Bengal to 25 for two but Abhishek found an ideal ally in former captain Manoj Tiwary (51) to rebuild the innings with a 99-run third-wicket stand.

Tiwary, who was dropped by Robin Uthappa in the slips off Monish on eight, made Kerala pay dearly. He targeted Jalaj Saxena and played forceful shots against the off-spinner.

Abhishek, on the other hand, punished the loose deliveries as the partnership prospered. However, Tiwary's impetuosity cost him his wicket. The batsman, after lifting Jalaj for a six over extra cover, repeated the stroke and was caught at the fence by Uthappa.

Leg-spinner S. Midhun, who was surprisingly introduced late, scalped Sudip Chatterjee in his first over as Kerala enjoyed a rare success in the second session.

But Abhishek figured in two partnerships — 48 for the fifth wicket with Shreevats Goswami (24) and 41 for the sixth wicket with Shahbaz — that brought his team closer to Kerala's total. At the fag end of the day, Basil Thampi ended Abhishek's vigil when the batsman feathered a catch to Monish at first slip.

Earlier, the Bengal medium pacers needed just 1.2 overs to wrap up the Kerala innings. It added just four runs to its overnight total before being dismissed for 239. The impressive Ishan Porel finished with three wickets.

The scores:
Kerala — 1st Innings: P. Rahul c Shreevats b Porel 5, Jalaj Saxena c Shreevats b Mukesh 9, Sanju V. Samson lbw Shahbaz 116, Sachin Baby b Dinda 10, Robin Uthappa c Shahbaz b Nandi 50, Vishnu Vinod c Shreevats b Nandi 0, Salman Nizar b Shahbaz 19, K. Monish c Shreevats b

Porel 14, S. Midhun lbw b Mukesh 0, Basil Thampi b Porel 0, Sandeep Warriar (not out) 0, Extras (b-9, lb-7): 16; Total (in 84.2 overs): 239.

Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-15, 3-53, 4-191, 5-191, 6-225, 7-227, 8-239, 9-239.

Bengal bowling: Dinda 13.5-4-29-1, Porel 19-3-56-3, Mukesh 18.3-5-37-2, Shahbaz 21-8-55-2, Nandi 12-3-46-2.

Bengal — 1st Innings: Abhishek Raman c Monish b Thampi 110, Abhimanyu Easwaran lbw b Thampi 4, Koushik Ghosh c Sanju b Monish 11, Manoj Tiwary c Uthappa b Jalaj 51, Sudip Chatterjee c Vishnu b Midhun 1, Shreevats Goswami c Rahul b Monish 24, Shahbaz Ahmed (batting) 25, Arnab Nandi (batting) 7, Extras (b-3): 3; Total (for six wickets in 86 overs): 236.

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-26, 3-125, 4-138, 5-186, 6-227.

Kerala bowling: Warriar 16-3-34-0, Thampi 13-2-35-2, Monish 14-0-52-2, Jalaj 29-6-75-1, Midhun 12-0-31-1, Baby 4-0-6-0.

RANJI SCORES, ROUND 2, DAY 2

GROUP A
At Ongole: Delhi 215 vs Andhra 249/6 in 87 overs (Manish Golamaru 42, Ricky Bhui 70 batting, Karan Shinde 48).
Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala 239 in 84.2 overs (Sanju Samson 116, Robin Uthappa 50) vs Bengal 236/6 in 86 overs (Abhishek Raman 110, Manoj Tiwary 51).
Patiala: Hyderabad 242 vs Punjab 167/4 in 51 overs (Mandeep Singh 65 batting, Anmolpreet Singh 54).
Nagpur: Vidarbha 510/8 decl. in 153.1 overs (Faiz Fazal 136, Wasim Jaffer 60, Ganesh Satish 43, Mohit Kale 138, Akshay Wadkar 111, Tanveer Ul-Haq 4/87) vs Rajasthan 45/1 in 19 overs.

GROUP B
Hubballi: Uttar Pradesh 281 in 111.2 overs (Aryan Juyal 109, Mohammad Saif 80, Abhimanyu Mithun 6/60) vs Karnataka 168/4 in 59 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 74).

Indore: Madhya Pradesh 125 & 118/3 in 48 overs (Rameez Khan 44, Anand Bais 45) vs Baroda 222 in 55.1 overs (Krunal Pandya 64, Yusuf Pathan 76 n.o., Avesh Khan 4/69, Mihir Hirwani 4/21).
Visakhapatnam: Railways 248 in 92 overs (Pratham Singh 98, Karn Sharma 52, Jaydev Unadkat 4/56) vs Saurashtra 211/3 in 69 overs (Harvik Desai 44, Snell Patel 46, Cheteshwar Pujara 69 batting, Sheldon Jackson 41).
Natham: Himachal 158 & 133/7 in 46 overs vs Tamil Nadu 96 in 39 overs.

GROUP C
Ranchi: Assam 162 v Jharkhand 397/8 in 94.2 overs (Kumar

Deobrat 44, Nazim Siddiqui 173, Utkarsh Singh 58).
Raipur: Uttarakhand 120 vs Chhattisgarh 462/6 in 122 overs (Ajandeep Khare 166 batting, Ajay Mandal 209 batting).
Lahli: Tripura 68 & 49 in 16.3 overs (Harshal Patel 5/24, Ashish Hooda 5/21) lost to Haryana 242 in 63.2 overs (Chaitanya Bishnoi 67, Shivam Chauhan 56, Harshal Patel 45, Manisankar Murasingh 5/64).
Points: Haryana 7, Tripura 0, Pune: Jammu & Kashmir 209 & 155/4 in 50 overs (Suryansh Raina 79 batting, Fazil Rashid 43) vs Maharashtra 109 in 41.1 overs (Umar Nazir 5/30).
Cuttack: Services 271 vs Odisha 280/6 in 104 overs (Debasish Samantray 96 batting, Biplab Samantray 73).

PLATE
Puducherry: Arunachal Pradesh 343 in 92 overs (Kamsha Yangfo 56, Rahul Dalal 178, Bobby Zothansanga 4/62) vs Mizoram 368/2 in 86 overs

(Lalhruizelia 124, Taruwar Kohli 158 batting, K.B. Pawan 68 batting).

Chandigarh: Chandigarh 420 in 116.5 overs (Arslan Khan 51, Manan Vohra 41, Ankit Kaushik 117, Bipul Sharma 65, Gurinder Singh 67, Ashutosh Aman 5/71) vs Bihar 6/1 in 3 overs.

Porvorim: Meghalaya 203 vs Goa 314/5 in 108 overs (Sumiran Amonkar 129, Snehal Kauthankar 105 batting).

Kolkata: Manipur 116 & 84/3 in 31 overs vs Nagaland 400 in 95.2 overs (Rongsen Jonathn 79, Shrikant Mundhe 148, Imliwati Lemtur 52, Tahmeed Rahman 42).

Puducherry: Sikkim 65 & 112/9 in 42.4 overs vs Pondicherry 446/8 decl. in 88.4 overs (K.B. Arun Karthick 112, Paras Dogra 117, Fabid Ahmed 53 n.o., Sagar Trivedi 40, Vinay Kumar 54, Ishwar Chaudhary 5/145).

Ricky Bhui takes Andhra past Delhi



Guiding force: Ricky Bhui revived the Andhra innings in the company of Karan Shinde. *FILE PHOTO: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SPORTS TRUST OF INDIA ONGOLE

Ricky Bhui's unbeaten 70 guided Andhra to 249 for six against Delhi at stumps on day two of their Group A Ranji Trophy match here on Wednesday.

Resuming at 16 for two, Andhra rode on Bhui's 164-ball innings and useful contributions from Manish Golamaru (42), skipper Hanuma Vihari (38) and Karan Shinde (48) to take a lead of 34.

For Delhi, pacer Navdeep Saini claimed two wickets to take his tally to three. Pawan Suyal scalped two wickets and Simarjeet Singh (1/69)

took one.
The scores: Delhi — 1st innings: 215.

Andhra — 1st innings: C.R. Gnaneswar b Saini 9, D.B. Prashanth Kumar lbw b Suyal 0, Manish Golamaru c Sidhu b Saini 42, Hanuma Vihari c Anuj b Saini 38, Ricky Bhui (batting) 70, K.S. Bharat lbw b Simarjeet 1, Karan Shinde b Suyal 48, Girinath Reddy (batting) 11; Extras (b-9, lb-16, nb-4, w-1): 30; Total (for six wickets in 87 overs): 249.

Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-12, 3-94, 4-109, 5-111, 6-233.

Delhi bowling: Saini 31-12-77-3, Suyal 17-3-44-2, Simarjeet 22-3-69-1, Rana 4-2-5-0, Bidhuri 3-1-4-0, Vikas 5-0-14-0, Lalit 5-0-11-0.

DDCA drama continues

Two senior selectors and entire junior selection team sacked

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) added another messy chapter to its administrative history when it sacked two senior selectors and the entire junior selection committee on Wednesday.

The decision was taken by the hurriedly-formed Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC). The two members who took the decision were Robin Singh (Jr) and Parwinder Awana, who, incidentally,

had served as coaches in the junior category this season. The third member, Sumit Narwal, who held a unique position of Observer, Cricket Operations, did not attend the meeting, which was convened by Sanjay Bhardwaj.

The selectors who lost their positions were Atul Wissan and Vineet Jain, the former because he was hardly available and the latter because he was an outsider. Their replacements will be Bantu Singh, who was not considered initially because

he did not meet the qualification norms, having served five years as selector in the past, and Chetnya Nanda, who is also a former selector.

The junior selection committee will consist of Ashu Dani, Pradeep Chawla and Karan Dubey, the last named an outsider going by the Apex Council argument.

The DDCA Ombudsman Justice (Retd) Badar Durrez Ahmed had ruled recently that no selector should be changed until the season was over. Considering the

developments at the DDCA, Government Nominee Rajan Tewari shot off a protest letter to highlight the "anarchy" in Delhi cricket and the "illegal" acts by the members of the Apex Council.

"I have sought immediate intervention by the Ombudsman since the Apex Council has decided to defy him," said Tewari.

The new selection committees: **Senior:** Bantu Singh, Chetnya Nanda and Anil Bhardwaj. **Junior:** Ashu Dani, Karan Dubey and Pradeep Chawla.

Multifaceted may score an encore

BENGALURU: Multifaceted, who maintains form, may score an encore in the Mr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy Memorial Trophy (1,200m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Thursday (Dec. 19). False rails (width about 7.5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1. KOKKAREBELLUR PLATE (1,200m), maiden 2-y-o only, (Terms), 2-45 p.m.: 1. Cavallini (8) Vaibhav 55, 2. Johnny Bravo (1) Trevor 55, 3. Max Mueller (9) I. Chisty 55, 4. Stormy Knight (6) Jagadeesh 55, 5. Welcome Surprise (4) Arshad 55, 6. Anne Boleyn (2) P.S. Chouhan 53.5, 7. Classic Charm (7) Darshan 53.5, 8. Eminence Grise (5) Leigh Roche 53.5 and 9. Ultimate Choice (3) Kiran Rai 53.5.

1. CAVALLINI, 2. EMINENCE GRISE, 3. ANNE BOLEYN

2. LINGANAMAKKI PLATE (1,400m), rated 00 to 20, 5-y-o & over, 3-15: 1. Winx (4) Darshan 60, 2. All By Myself (3) Chetan G 58.5, 3. Bazinga (2) K. Raghu 58, 4. Indian Brahmos (9) T.S. Jodha 58, 5. Good Word (12) S. Shareef 57, 6. Noble Splendor (1) A. Imran 57, 7. Purity (8) Ankit Yadav 55.5, 8. El Matador (7) A. Vishwanath 54.5, 9. South Bell (10) Arshad 54.5, 10. Proudwith (5) Irvan 53.5, 11. All Said And Done (11) Chandrashekar 53 and 12. High Tide (6) I. Chisty 51.5.

1. PROUDWITH, 2. HIGH TIDE, 3. SOUTH BELL

3. NILGIRIS PLATE (2,000m), rated 15 to 35, 3-45: 1. Star And Garter (6) S. John 60, 2. Mighty Red (1) Darshan 59.5, 3. Track Striker (5) Antony 57, 4. Chantelle (3) Trevor 56.5, 5. Aferpi (2) P.S. Chouhan 56 and 6. My Vision (4) T.S. Jodha 56.

1. STAR AND GARTER, 2. MIGHTY RED

4. MR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,200m), rated 75 & above, 4-15: 1. Into The Spotlight (6) S. John 60, 2. Silver Ikon (8) Kiran Rai 60, 3. Diamond Rays (4) P.S. Chouhan 59.5, 4. Saint Petersburg (2) Trevor 58, 5. Ultimate Warrior (5) S. Shareef 57.5, 6. Star Carnation (9) Darshan 57, 7. Merlot (7) Antony 55, 8. Air Command (1) Ankit Yadav 54.5 and 9. Multifaceted (3) I. Chisty 54.5.

1. MULTIFACETED, 2. INTO THE SPOTLIGHT, 3. SILVER IKON

5. SECRETARIAT TROPHY (1,400m), rated 30 to 50, 4-45: 1. Winning Heart (5) Md. Asif Khan 60, 2. Magic Stream (6) I. Chisty 58, 3. Ideological (4) Antony 56.5, 4. Yerwazan (3) Tauseef 56.5, 5. Cuban (1) Trevor 54.5, 6. Cuban Pete (7) Leigh Roche 54, 7. Mohican (2) Nazerul 54 and 8. Shivallik Kiss (8) Arshad 54.

1. CUBAN PETE, 2. SHIVALLIK KISS, 3. MAGIC STREAM

6. LONGCHAMP PLATE (1,100m), rated 15 to 35, 4-y-o & over, 5-15: 1. Propine (1) S. John 60, 2. Aceros (7) J.H. Arul 58, 3. Florencia (9) Arvind Kumar 58, 4. Revan Star (4) R. Pradeep 58, 5. Songkran (11) Md. Asif Khan 58, 6. Mischief Flyer (10) I. Chisty 57, 7. Hidden Soldier (5) R. Anand 56.5, 8. Winning Force (6) S. Hussain 55.5, 9. Perfectgoldenera (8) M. Kumar 55, 10. Flicka (3) Darshan 54.5, 11. Premier Premises (2) Irvan 52.5 and 12. Zehnaseeb (12) Kiran Rai 51.5.

1. ACEROS, 2. PROPINE, 3. WINNING FORCE

Day's best: **MULTIFACETED**

Double: **STAR AND GARTER — CUBAN PETE**

Jkt: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
Tr (0): 1, 2 and 3; (ii): 4, 5 and 6.

Rahi Sarnobat and Manu Bhaker do well

NATL. SHOOTING

SPORTS BUREAU BHOPAL

Asian Games gold medallist Rahi Sarnobat and young sensation Manu Bhaker asserted themselves as two of the best in women's 25-metre sports pistol, even as Olympic quota winner Chinki Yadav looked to have lost her grip in the event, in the 63rd National shooting championship on Wednesday.

While Rahi dominated both in qualification and the final to win the gold nine points ahead of Manu Bhaker, the latter was able to add the junior gold to the women's silver.

Chinki misfired and placed 24th with a total of 567. The 22-year-old had 285 in the precision stage and 282 in the rapid fire section. She missed the final by seven points, following a below par 88 on the last card.

Pushpanjali Rana missed the final on the same score as Shreya Gawande, 574, by virtue of having lesser number of inner-10s, 10 to 14.

Abhidnya Patil did well to win the bronze ahead of Olympian Annu Raj Singh and the former national champion Anisa Sayeed.

In men's 50-metre rifle 3-position event, Olympian Sanjeev Rajput was a class act, as he beat Olympian Chain Singh by 5.1 points for the gold, after having topped qualification with 1176.

Rahul Poonia won the bronze, ahead of Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar who recovered his composure to clinch the junior gold.

The results:
50m rifle 3-position: Men: 1. Sanjeev Rajput 459.6 (1176); 2. Chain Singh 454.5 (1163); 3. Rahul Poonia 442.3 (1164).

Team: 1. Madhya Pradesh 3487 (157x); 2. Navy 3487 (151x); 3. Army Marksmanship Unit 3481.

Juniors: 1. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar 455.0 (1175); 2. Rishi Gireesh 454.9 (1166); 3. Sartaj Singh Tiwana 440.4 (1158).

Team: 1. Madhya Pradesh 3480; 2. Punjab 3412; 3. Uttar Pradesh 3371.

25m sports pistol: Women: 1. Rahi Sarnobat 41 (589); 2. Manu Bhaker 32 (582); 3. Abhidnya Patil 27 (575).

Team: 1. Maharashtra 1738; 2. Haryana 1709; 3. Punjab 1704.

Juniors: 1. Manu Bhaker 37 (582); 2. Neha 32 (577); 3. Tejaswani 27 (569).

Team: 1. Haryana 1709; 2. Punjab 1699; 3. Uttar Pradesh 1673.

Karnataka meets Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

A dominant Karnataka beat West Bengal by 10 wickets to set up a title clash with Odisha in the women's National T20 tournament for the blind here on Wednesday. Karnataka qualified for the final with nine points in Group A. Odisha topped Group B.

The scores: Jharkhand 179/6 in 20 overs (Marsa Hess 67, Geeta Mahto 66) bt Delhi 168/4 in 20 overs (Ankita 48, Namita 45).

West Bengal 101/3 in 20 overs lost to Karnataka 102/0 in 10.3 overs (Renuka Rajput 50 n.o., Deepika 34 n.o.).

Odisha 242/0 in 20 overs (Muni Purty 89 n.o., Basanti Hasda 71 n.o.) bt Maharashtra 132/2 in 20 overs (Prajakta Ude 51 n.o., Ganga Kadam 31).

Leipzig holds Dortmund

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BERLIN

RB Leipzig drew 3-3 draw at Borussia Dortmund to top the Bundesliga on Tuesday.

The results: Borussia Dortmund 3 (Weigl 23, Brandt 34, Sancho 55) drew with RB Leipzig 3 (Werner 47, 53, Schick 78).

Flamengo beats Al Hilal the hard way

Comes back from a first half deficit to make the final

CLUB WORLD CUP

AYON SENGUPTA
DOHA

Flamengo's run to FIFA Club World Cup final was not as easy as its canter to the Brazilian Serie A title, which it won by a 16-point margin – the highest in recent times. The South American side had to overcome a first-half deficit to inflict a 3-1 loss on Asian champion Al Hilal.

Former Benfica coach Jorge Jesus with the help of a string of veteran Brazilians with European experience has tried creating a modern team – valuing the ethos of pressing football – unlike the pragmatic approach of coaches like Luiz Felipe Scolari and Dunga, which has long been prevalent in Brazilian club football.

While the new methods have offered grand success at home, Flamengo has found it hard to deal with teams from outside the country as was evident during its laborious Copa Libertadores final win over Argentina's River Plate.



Heading ahead: Bruno Henrique puts Flamengo in front against Al Hilal with this strike on Tuesday. • AP

Here, too, the Brazilians started listlessly with too many mispasses in the middle as Al Hilal looked happy to concede possession and hit its more illustrious opponent on the counter, using the pace of Salem Aldawsari,

who played on the left of a midfield three, and his fellow Saudi Arabian international Mohammed Alburayk, operating as a right-wing back.

Former Italian international Sebastian Giovinco, too, orchestrated some fine

move with his guile and turn, exploiting the space opened up by the burly forward Bafetimbi Gomis, who did well to hold the ball and draw defenders his way.

The Saudi side, cheered on by pockets of faithfuls,

took the lead in the 18th minute when Aldawsari sneaked inside the box to connect a strong right-footer past a diving Diego Alves – left flat-footed following a deflection off Pablo Mari – after Alburayk had run into space on the right before playing a teasing ground pass towards his team-mate.

Asserting dominance
Flamengo had to wait till the break to assert its dominance and almost immediately after the restart Giorgian De Arrascaeta equalised with an easy tap-in.

With the Asian side showing signs of fatigue, Flamengo took control of the game and found the lead when Bruno Henrique, running into the box, was left unmarked and placed his header on the back of the net after a curling cross from the right by De Arrascaeta in the 78th minute.

More misfortunes were to come Al Hilal's way as Ali Al-Bulayhi conceded an own goal four minutes later as a shot from Henrique caused

panic near the goalmouth.

The Brazilian champion's ploy to exert more pressure in the second half on its tiring opponent finally bore fruit, offering the team a way out from a difficult situation.

Summing up the contrasting nature of the two halves, Henrique said: "In the first half we were not playing that bad.

"However, we knew that they (Al Hilal) did not have the physical strength to play with the same intensity for 90 minutes and we were able to create more opportunities in the second session, playing as a team."

With a chance now to collect the world title, manager Jesus called the final to be the "most important match of his career".

"I am always impressed with European football. I know Liverpool is favourite, but it has to win the next match. We have reached the final and it will be one of the most important matches of my professional career. Winning this trophy will be a great honour," he said.

I-League: Kolkata derby postponed

New date will be announced later

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The I-League match featuring the two city giants Mohun Bagan and East Bengal has been postponed owing to the fragile political situation in the state.

The match was scheduled to be held on Sunday. According to a release from host Mohun Bagan, the police authority responsible for the security match advised of allowing a restricted number of spectators.

With the Kolkata Derby attracting more than 50,000 spectators on average, the Mohun Bagan management did not agree to the advice of restricting the number of fans and approached the organiser, All India Football Federation, seeking a fresh date. The new date will be

announced later.

"After a detailed discussion, the Police Authorities informed us that the match should be organised on a limited scale and that sale of tickets should be restricted. Subsequently, we wrote to AIFF to apprise them of the situation and told them that the derby is the flagship match of the League.

"Football lovers look up to this match and to restrict this capacity would be to deprive the thousands of football crazy people from seeing the match. The AIFF taking stock of the situation and considering the importance of the Derby Match in the larger interest of the game have granted our request to postpone the match to a later date," the Bagan release said.

Bengaluru FC regains its rhythm

Goes to the top of the standings with win over NEUFC

ISL

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
GUWAHATI

Bengaluru FC pumped in two late goals against host NorthEast United FC to regain its winning rhythm, at the Indira Gandhi Stadium here on Wednesday.

This was a nice comeback for the defending champion, which seemed to have slipped a bit after suffering its first loss of the tournament in the previous match at home against Mumbai City FC.

Captain Sunil Chhetri opened the account midway through the second half through a penalty before Spanish defender Albert Serran moved up to find the insurance goal in the final quarter of the action.

With the tournament about to reach the half-way stage, the win took the holder to the top of the standings with 16 points from nine outings.

The game saw a nice con-



Over the moon: BFC defender Albert Serran celebrates after scoring the second goal against NEUFC. • RITU RAJ KONWAR

test in the midfield in the opening half with NorthEast dominating the first quarter but as the action wore on Bengaluru started asserting itself with Ashique Kruniyan excelling from the left.

Sure chance missed
Kuman Udanta Singh missed

a sure chance to bring up the lead in the 32nd minute when Kuruniyan set him up with a nice lob that had just to be nodded home.

With the NorthEast goalkeeper Subhasish Roy Chowdhury caught completely off position, Udanta connected his header to the

crosspiece instead of finding net. Subhasish did a nice job in the 39th minute cutting off a Rahul Bheke header to keep the scoreline unchanged.

The host missed the services of injured Ghanaian Wold Cupper Asamoah Gyan and struggled to get its feet in the striking zone.

Bengaluru FC enjoyed more space upfront after the change of ends and it was a matter of time before it found the break.

This happened in the 67th minute when NorthEast defender Reagan Singh was hauled up for handling the ball inside its own box while trying to clear an Udanta Singh cross.

Chhetri made no mistake from the spot. Bengaluru took the game beyond the reach of the host on an 81st minute counter-attack as Albert Serran nodded home a cross from Erik Partalu.

The result:
NorthEast United FC 0 lost to Bengaluru FC 2 (Sunil Chhetri 68-pen, Albert Serran 81).

Yet another learning opportunity

India under-17 girls take on Sweden in final

FOOTBALL

NANDAKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

One goal after two league matches (against Sweden, Thailand back-to-back) does not speak much about the India under-17 girls' finishing capacity.

Three goals conceded (all scored by Sweden) is no embarrassment either to the collective defensive work by the home side so far. The final face-off against the Swedes at the Mumbai Football Arena on Thursday evening can be

viewed as an opportunity for the Shilky Devi-captained squad to show how far they can learn from mistakes, when in possession of the ball approaching the goalmouth, besides continuation of impressive work in the backline, supported by goalkeeper Manju Ganju.

The U-17 women's football tournament, supported by AFC Assist and conducted by the All India Football Federation, is only the first of a series of competitive experiences designed to gear up the girls for next year's big one – the FIFA women U-17

World Cup at venues across the nation.

Chief coach Thomas Dennerby is fortunate to have the raw material to work with straightaway. Stout and intelligent defenders, hard-working midfielders, tearaway wingers and a no-frills goalkeeper. Football talent is ready and willing to be moulded into a crack combination by November 2020 when the curtain goes up.

The display over two matches by the Indian probables was a mix of endurance and elegance, speed and skill. The deciding tie against

Sweden will offer the third and final chance for the home team performers. Maverick strikers like Lynda Kom, Sumati Kumari, Sunita Munda to name a few first-choice probables, no longer carry the surprise element.

India's lightning counter-attacks from almost the centreline deep into rival territory is a thrilling spectacle. Ruthless finishing which convert all the ball possession by the players into goals will be celebrated by fans.

The final will be streamed live on Facebook from 5.30 p.m. onwards.

Kallis to be SA batting consultant



Jacques Kallis. • AP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JOHANNESBURG

Jacques Kallis was on Wednesday appointed as South Africa's batting consultant for the entire duration of its home summer.

"Former Standard Bank Proteas all-rounder, @jacqueskallis75 has been named as the team's batting consultant for the duration of the summer. He will join the squad for their camp starting in Pretoria today (Wednesday)," CSA announced. Kallis, 44, played a combined 519 international matches for South Africa with 25,534 runs and 577 wickets across formats. He featured in 166 Tests, 328 ODIs and 25 T20Is.

IANS adds from Dhaka:
Charl Langeveldt is set to work with the South African team after his resignation as the fast bowling coach of Bangladesh was accepted by the BCB. "Langeveldt said he has offer to work in South Africa's senior side, which is why he requested the BCB to let him go," ESPNcricinfo quoted Akram Khan of BCB as telling Bengali daily *Prothom Alo* on Tuesday.

Azhar predicts a close contest

Says he would step aside from captaincy if he is unable to score

LANKA IN PAKISTAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI

Pakistan's Test captain Azhar Ali on Wednesday said he will "step aside" from the role if he is unable to contribute substantially to the team's cause, candidly admitting his run-drought.

"I am going through a bad patch but I am not out of form. I am middling the ball well. It is a matter of one good innings and I know I can get back into form," Azhar told reporters here.

"But yes if I feel things are not working out for me and I am not contributing to the team, I would prefer to step aside myself," he added.

Azhar also predicted a close second Test at the Na-



Needed, change of luck: Pakistan's Azhar Ali admitted his run-drought. • AFP

tional Stadium.

"In Rawalpindi the weather had a role to play but here I think it is a good balanced Test wicket for bat and ball and I think we will have a good, close game here. Obviously both teams would

want to win here," he said.

Azhar indicated that leg-spinner Yasir Shah would be making a comeback after being dropped for the first Test, but there will still be no place for middle-order batsman, Fawad Alam.

Tokyo Olympics ticket lottery: 1M offered, 23M sought

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TOKYO

The Tokyo's Olympics tickets continue to be very hard to find, particularly in Japan.

Organisers on Wednesday said there were 23 million tickets requested in the latest lottery for Japan residents only. The bad news is that only 1 million tickets were available. Which means almost everybody went back empty handed.

Next summer's Olympics

have generated unprecedented demand. Organisers said 3.57 million tickets had been awarded to Japan residents in previous lotteries. Organisers confirmed for the first time the demand was almost 20 times over supply – about 60 million tickets requested.

And now Japan residents are running out of chances.

The next ticket offering in Japan will be early next year, but will be open to Japan

and non-Japan residents on a first-come, first-served basis.

Overall, organisers say about 7.8 million tickets are available for all events and at least 70% of the tickets will go to Japan residents. Large blocks also go to sponsors, international sports federations, national Olympic committees, and the IOC.

Millions are also sold outside Japan by official Olympic tickets resellers.