

Periyar, the hero of Vaikom

On his death anniversary, remembering a leader who gave new life to a sagging movement



PAZHA. ATHIYAMAN

To people in Kerala, Vaikom is associated with the name of the great Malayalam writer, Muhammad Basheer. The historically minded would associate it with an important satyagraha during the freedom struggle. In Tamil Nadu, it conjures up the bearded figure of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy (September 17, 1879-December 24, 1973). Vaikom is a metaphor for social justice — when scores of satyagrahis from the Tamil country joined hands with their brethren in a heroic struggle.

Vaikom was then in the princely state of Travancore. The four streets surrounding the temple of the presiding deity, Lord Mahadeva, were out of bounds for Ezhavas and other castes counted as ritually lower. In 1924, a satyagraha was launched against this injustice by T.K. Madhavan. It lasted for 18 months. In the initial stages, K.P. Kesava Menon and George Joseph led the struggle. Other prominent figures included Kurur Neelakanthan Nambodiri and Mannathu Padmanabhan. Towards the end, M.K. Gandhi reached Vaikom and gave it the finishing flourish.

Leadership at a critical juncture
The satyagraha began on March 30 with the active support of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee. But within a week all its leaders were behind bars. While George Joseph sought directions from Gandhi and C. Rajagopalachari, he wrote to Periyar pleading with him to lead the satyagraha. Periyar was in the midst of political work when Joseph's missive reached him. As he was then the president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, Periyar handed over temporary charge to Rajaji before reaching Vaikom on April 13, 1924. From that date to the day of the victory celebrations, November 29, 1925, he was in the thick of the struggle giving it leadership at a critical juncture.

Periyar presided over the satyagraha in the face of untold violence and indignity inflicted by the orthodox and the repression of the police.



"Periyar was in the forefront of every aspect of the Vaikom struggle." A view of the Vaikom Mahadeva Temple. • VIPIN CHANDRAN

To mobilise support, he visited villages in and around Vaikom and delivered public speeches in several towns. His campaign tour stretched to Thiruvananthapuram and even further to Nagercoil.

When the Kerala leaders asked for Gandhi's permission to make the satyagraha an all-India affair, Gandhi refused saying that volunteers from Tamil Nadu would keep it alive. The Mahatma was not wrong. As the British Resident said in his report to the government of Madras: "In fact, the movement would have collapsed long ago but for the support it has received from outside Travancore..." Historian T.K. Ravindran observes that Periyar's arrival gave "a new life to the movement".

What was Periyar's role in the satyagraha? He made a cogent and compelling case for it. He used his wit and folk logic to punch holes in the argument of the orthodox. The speeches reported by the secret police and the press make for interesting reading nearly a century later. As his campaign met with an enthusiastic response, the government imposed prohibitory orders on him. He was then from Kottayam district and then Kollam. Unmindful, he continued his campaign. An angry administration arrested him on May 21. Periyar refused to cooperate with the court saying that the trial was no more than an eyewash and braved the magistrate to inflict any punishment. On May 22, he was awarded a month's simple imprisonment which he spent at Arookutty jail.

On his release, Periyar went to Vaikom rather than to his home town of

Erode much to the chagrin of the district magistrate who chided the police superintendent for this. As Periyar showed no sign of slackening, he was arrested 27 days later, on July 18. This time he was sentenced to four months of rigorous imprisonment and lodged in Thiruvananthapuram central jail. While fellow satyagrahis were treated as political prisoners, Periyar was denied this status. Rajaji wrote in a letter to *The Hindu* that Periyar was condemned to "rigorous imprisonment and irons and jail clothing and to deprive him of all society to which other satyagraha prisoners were rightly deemed entitled totally unjustifiable". Infuriated by this discriminatory treatment, fellow prisoner Kesava Menon wrote to the government expressing objection but to no avail. The indignities continued until all the satyagrahis were released when the minor king Chithira Tirunal ascended the throne.

Periyar continued his campaign in Vaikom apart from Nedunganda and Nagercoil. On September 10, he returned to Erode where he was again arrested — but this time by the British Indian police for a seditious speech delivered earlier. It was but a ploy to keep him away from Vaikom.

At the forefront
Periyar was in the forefront of every aspect of the struggle. As president of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee he arranged for a contribution of ₹1,000. He was part of every consultative meeting, peace committee, campaign party, etc., including the eight-member deputation constituted to meet the Diwan. Every major

personality who came to Vaikom met with Periyar. This included Swami Shradhdhananda of the Arya Samaj. Rajaji met Periyar in prison before proceeding to Vaikom. Gandhi too consulted him during his visit. Periyar had received Gandhi at Erode (March 8, 1925) on his way to Vaikom, joining him later at Varkala on March 12. The police superintendent records that Periyar was present in the small closed door meeting of Gandhi with Sree Narayana Guru. Periyar recalled on many occasions that Gandhi had consulted him before his all-important meeting with Maharani Regent. It should be added that his wife Nagammal and his sister S.R. Kannammal were with him for much of the agitation, apart from offering satyagraha themselves.

When, following an agreement between Gandhi and the police, the prohibition order against Periyar which had been in place for over a year was withdrawn, Gandhi wrote in *Young India* (April 23, 1925): "The reader will be glad to learn that the Travancore Government have... withdrawn the prohibition order against Sjt. Ramaswamy Naicker..."

The satyagraha ended in partial victory in November 1925: three out of four streets were thrown open. Nevertheless, it was an important step. Final victory came 11 years later with the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936. By that time not only had Periyar become a bitter critic of Gandhi, but even his views on satyagraha changed.

Periyar had arrived at Vaikom, on invitation, and had given a new life to a sagging movement. He was jailed twice, and was the only person to be sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. From available evidence we know that he visited Vaikom seven times. Of the 114 days that he devoted to the struggle he languished in prison for 74 days. Apart from being the only leader from outside the State to be invited to the victory celebrations, he was even asked to preside over it.

No wonder, Thiru.Vi. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, the great journalist and labour leader, called him the Vaikom Veerar, the hero of Vaikom, even at the time of the struggle.

This essay draws from the author's full-length Tamil book Vaikom Porattam (Kalachuvadu Pathippagam). Translated by A.R. Venkatachalapathy

A decision without forethought

The government's decision to implement the CAA has thrown the Northeast into turmoil and shaken investor confidence



JAIVEER SHERGILL

Every cause has an effect and that is why every government decision must be preceded by careful thought about its potential repercussions. The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019 has had huge consequences on both the domestic and foreign policy front. In India, widespread protests that began in the Northeast are now raging across the country. On the international front, soon after the protests broke out, two Bangladesh ministers cancelled their visit to India, the Japanese Prime Minister postponed his visit to the country and the annual India-Japan summit was cancelled. From the perspective of India's ambitious development plans and strategic diplomacy, the question that arises is whether the Central government factored in the ramifications of the CAA on India's East Policy and its potential side effects on the country's relationship with foreign stakeholders heavily invested in the Northeast.

Repercussions on various fronts

Apart from being the unique region that links India with ASEAN nations, the Northeast is also the springboard for India's engagement with Southeast Asia. This is precisely why New Delhi roped in Tokyo to fulfill its ambitious plan of expanding its global footprints via development in the Northeast. As part of its Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy, Japan has been investing in the Northeast in a big way. Recently Tokyo decided to invest ₹13,000 crore in different projects in the Northeast. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is actively engaged in building Northeast road network connectivity, water supply projects and economic modernisation of the region. It will be financing the construction of India's longest bridge between Dhubri in Assam and Phulbari in Meghalaya. Japan has contributed official development assistance loans for the North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project. Private Japanese organisations are also financing a host of developmental projects in the region. It is but natural that the CAA protests and Internet shutdowns in the region would have come as a huge shock to Japan and its investment plans in the region which hinge on stability and a business-friendly environment conducive. Given these considerations, the government could have done well to analyse how

such a decision would affect the economic development of the Northeast.

Second, in case Japan has a rethink on these development projects, will it do so keeping in mind only the Northeast or the rest of India too? JICA is involved in various big-ticket infrastructure projects in Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Odisha, etc. Third, the volatility of the Northeast can possibly be a setback to the collaborative efforts between India and Japan in providing an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative. Fourth, besides being a development partner, Japan is also a member of the Quad, which came into existence to counter Chinese economic prowess and unlock India's potential in the Indo-Pacific. Last and most importantly, when Kashmir is already volatile, can India afford to open another frontier of vulnerability in the Northeast?

Clearly, the government did not take various stakeholders into confidence while taking this decision. The proof of messy diplomatic pudding is in the eating as the UN has described the CAA as "fundamentally discriminatory". The U.S., the U.K., Canada and others have issued travel advisories to those visiting the Northeast. Why did the government not utilise diplomatic channels to put forth its views before the stakeholders in the international community? Had it done this, it could have avoided the embarrassment it is facing today. It is high time that decision-makers of the BJP learnt the basic difference between raw muscularity and successful diplomacy before taking such measures.

Viewed with suspicion

The blunders of the BJP government are straining and staining India's foreign policy. India has been described as the "Internet shutdown capital of the world". Senior political leaders are under detention, Parliament is passing laws to grant religion-based citizenship to migrants of selected countries, and the youth of the country is out on the streets protesting. Will all this not shake investors' confidence and dent the ease of doing business in India? The Indian economy is already going through a rough phase and the loss of investor confidence will only add to our woes. At the global level, India has always been respected for its diversity and inclusive character. It is because of parochial decisions like the CAA that India will now join the rank of nations which are viewed with suspicion because of their political and economic climate. Instead of being on an expansion mode, thanks to the government India will now be on an explanatory mode.

Jaiveer Shergill is a Supreme Court lawyer and national spokesperson, INC. Views are personal

EXPLAINER

A hard Brexit?

Breaking down the key features of the revised withdrawal agreement bill

GARIMELLA SUBRAMANIAM

More than 40 months after the June 2016 referendum vote to leave the European Union, Britain will exit the EU on January 31. But nearly a fortnight since Prime Minister Boris Johnson's landslide general election victory, Downing Street has scotched all speculation about a smooth transition out of the bloc a year hence. On Friday, the House of Commons voted 358-234 for the Withdrawal Agreement Bill. The new version of the Bill has several key changes, of which three are particularly significant.

First, a new clause outlaws an extension to the standstill transition period that would expire on December 31, 2020. The contentious step fulfils the Conservative Party's election promise, and precludes the possibility of seeking any further extension beyond December 2020. Following the announcement, the pound slid 1.1% against the dollar relative to the gains after the election results, reviving market anxiety.

The hostile stance on an extension is rooted partly in the Tories' resentment going all the way back to Margaret Thatcher's premiership, against the country's EU membership contributions. Besides the €33 billion settlement contained in the withdrawal deal, any extension after next December would entail additionally about €10 billion a year. The resistance also carries echoes of the Tory Eurosceptic stance in the previous Parliament. Eliminating the threat of leaving without an agreement, the party had argued, would diminish the government's negotiating position vis-à-vis the EU.

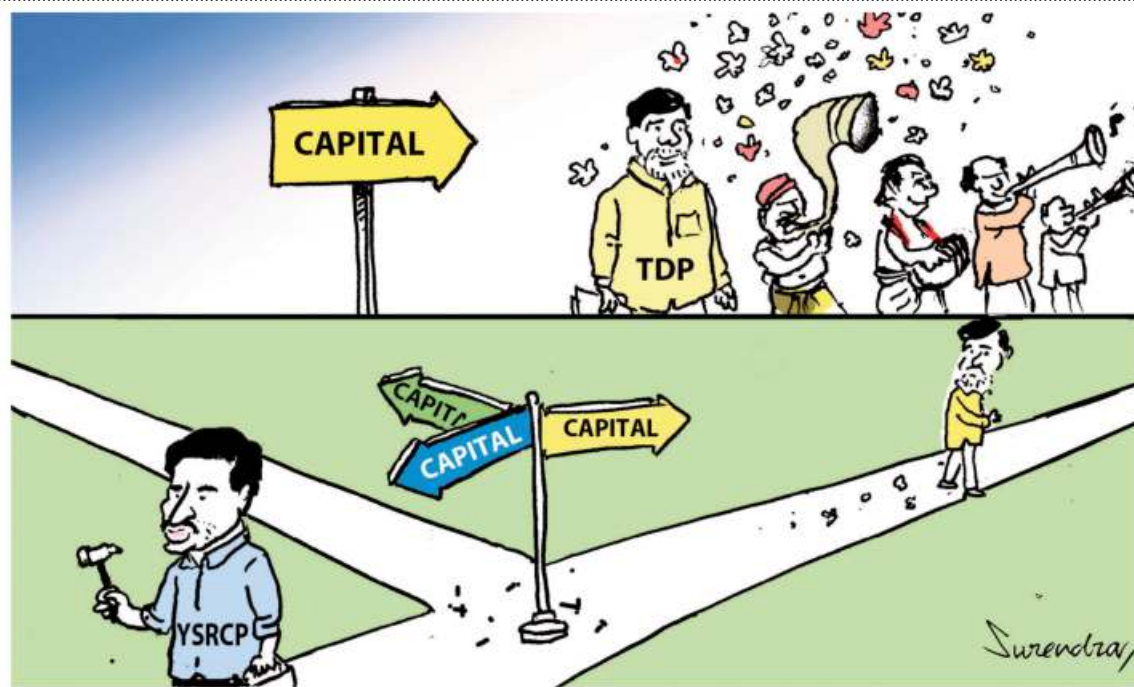
Second, the bill dispenses with the need for parliamentary approval, for the government's negotiating mandate as well as the final agreement on the country's future relationship with the bloc. The blueprint is to be ready by the end of February and the defining post-transition agreement by November. The provision risks sidestepping normal democratic channels for industries and trade unions to influence the shape of their future trading relations with the EU, worth an estimated £90 billion.

Third, guarantees on labour rights previously included in the withdrawal bill have been removed. This vindicates sceptics' fears about a drift to a low-tax low-regulation U.K. economy after Brexit. EU leaders have described Mr. Johnson's cramped timetable as highly problematic to finalise a zero-tariffs, zero-quotas free trade agreement. Brussels is wary of granting these concessions to a major economy such as Britain. In exchange for any flexibility, the EU insists on a close regulatory alignment and a level playing field on state subsidies, competition policy, and labour and environmental rights to safeguard its single market. Such demands are at odds with the Eurosceptic vision of Britain wresting control of its laws and borders. In any case, a narrow 'goods only' deal excluding the large services sector from any agreement would deprive Britain of the benefits from its pre-eminence in financial and digital services. If no agreement is within sight by this time next year, a cliff-edge exit on WTO terms is a very real possibility.

Challenges ahead

Under the terms of withdrawal, Northern Ireland will continue to remain within the EU jurisdiction after Brexit. The government will enforce customs checks for goods traded across the Irish Sea to the rest of the U.K., increasing costs for the bulk of small enterprises. The regulatory divergence within U.K. territory is the compromise London has conceded to protect the EU's single market. The arrangement would maintain the existing soft border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which has underpinned the region's tenuous peace since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. The new scenario could strengthen demands in Belfast for unification with Dublin, potentially imperilling the U.K.'s constitutional integrity. Brexit has strengthened calls for a second referendum on independence by the Scottish National Party, which won a big majority in the UK elections. Mr. Johnson faces challenges on many fronts.

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DATA POINT

Juggernaut halted

While the BJP-led NDA won resoundingly in the 2019 Lok Sabha election, it has lost power in five major State assemblies since December 2018. The NDA still remains the strongest in terms of the number of States where it is in power, share of the total population and the share of the area of the country, but their lead over the UPA is narrowing. By **Srinivasan Ramani**

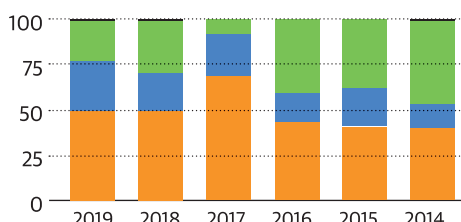
States in control | From 12 in 2014, the number of States/ UTs ruled by the NDA peaked at 18 in 2017 and has come down marginally to 17 at the end of 2019

Coalition	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
NDA	17	16	18	14	13	12
UPA	7	6	5	8	10	10
Others*	7	9	8	9	9	9

■ NDA ■ UPA ■ Others ■ President's rule

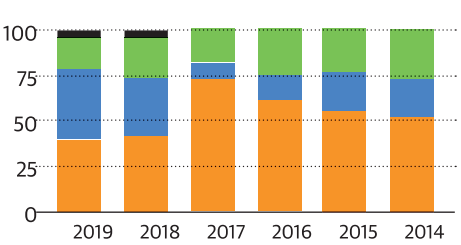
People under NDA rule

From 39.8% in 2014 to a peak of 67.8% in 2017, the percentage of population* under NDA rule has come down to 48.57% at the end of 2019

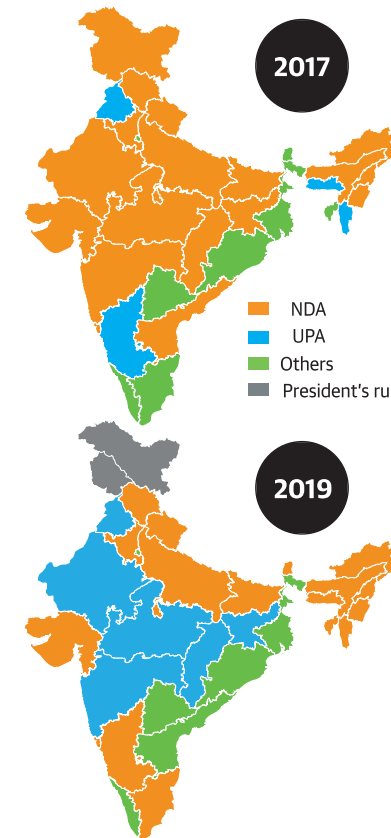


UPA closes in on NDA in area terms

The share of area under NDA rule also peaked at 73.9% in 2017 and has come down to 40% at the end of 2019. The corresponding number for the UPA has peaked in 2019 - 38.5%



* Population figures were based on unadjusted 2011 Census data



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 24, 1969

PoK 'Ministers' on strike

Ministers in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir have been virtually on a pen-down strike since last month, according to a report recently published in the well-informed daily *Nawae-Waqt* of Lahore. The so-called Cabinet of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, appointed two months ago, is yet without a "proper secretariat" with "Ministers" having no authority or responsibility. The "Ministers" have refused to work "in such conditions." The report disclosed that during the first month of their appointment "no portfolios were allotted to them". This was supposed to have been done by the recently-appointed tenth "provisional president" of Pak-occupied Kashmir. After the appointment of Brig. Abdul Redman, a retired military officer from the Muzaffarabad area, an attempt was made to placate some of the political groups in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir who had been agitating for a democratic form of Government. Consequently, six Ministers representing three political organisations of the area were sworn in.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 24, 1919.

Babu Bepin Chandra Pal's Address.

A largely attended public meeting was held on Sunday evening at the College Square to hear Babu Bepin Chandra Pal on the present world situation. Owing to Babu Srish Chatterjee of Dacca (who was to preside) not having turned up in time, Babu Jitendra Lal Banerjee took the Chair and introduced the subject of discourse in a brief speech. In their study of the world he wanted to emphasise three main factors, viz., first, that the late war had not made the Great Powers less greedy, less rapacious, or less fond of self-aggrandisement than before; secondly, that England crushed by the burden of her huge war debt, distracted by strife between capital and labour and thus handicapped in the production of wealth was financially in a critical almost in a bankrupt condition; and thirdly, that this financial stringency coupled with whetted appetite for self-aggrandisement would be an incentive to the English capitalist classes who are also the English governing classes to exploit for their own purposes India's abundance of raw materials and her abundance of cheap labour. Mr. Banerjee concluded by urging the audience to bear these cardinal factors as a clue with which to read the present world situation, specially as bearing upon themselves.

FROM PAGE ONE

JMM coalition wrests Jharkhand from BJP

After submitting his resignation, Mr. Das said, "The result was not as per our expectations. The way the JMM, the Congress and the RJD fought in alliance, we wanted to do like that. But it did not happen."

The Opposition alliance posted big wins in the Santal Pargana region, a JMM stronghold, despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah holding a number of meetings there.

Crucial seats

Of the 18 crucial seats, the JMM bagged nine, followed by the Congress with four. The JMM has also performed well in the Kolhan region comprising the districts of East Singhbhum, Seraikella-Kharsawan and West Singhbhum.

All eyes were on Jamshedpur East where Mr. Das was defeated by his former Cabinet colleague Saryu Roy.

Jharkhand BJP president Laxman Gilua and Speaker of the outgoing Assembly Dinesh Oraon also lost their seats.

From the Opposition, Jharkhand Congress president Rameswar Oraon won the Lohardaga seat. Jharkhand's first Chief Minister Babul Marandi and president of the All Jharkhand Students Union Sudesh Kumar Mahto ended their losing streaks by winning the Dhanwar and Silli constituencies respectively.

The chief ministerial candidate for the Opposition alliance, Mr Henant Soren, is credited with ensuring the convincing victory. JMM sources said he had conducted 165 rallies in 28 days, covering each constituency at least twice. He also held numerous informal meetings with civil society organisations, activists, government employees and other associations.

Opposition steps up stir against citizenship law

Protests continued in Assam, too, with former Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, founder of the Asom Gana Parishad, an alliance partner of the ruling BJP in the State, joining a sit-in at a memorial for Mahatma Gandhi atop the Sarania Hills in Guwahati.

Top Congress leaders, including party chief Sonia Gandhi, former prime minister Manmohan Singh, former party chief Rahul Gandhi and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, participated in the 'satyagrah' at Rajghat to "show solidarity" with students agitating against the amended Citizenship Act and all those "suffering due to the bad policies of the government."

Ms. Gandhi, Dr. Singh and Mr. Gandhi read out the

Preamble to the Constitution and the party members observed a one-minute silence.

The situation was peaceful in Uttar Pradesh, where 18 people had died in clashes during protests last week, with the police saying they have arrested the State head of the Islamic outfit Popular Front of India (PFI), Wasim, and two others for allegedly masterminding the December 19 violence in Lucknow.

In Karnataka, curfew was lifted in the morning from Mangaluru and the city remained largely peaceful. Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa said his government has decided to conduct both CID and magisterial inquiries into the protests against the CAA in Mangaluru that had resulted in two deaths.

Uddhav, Jagan rule out NRC in their States

Senior leaders from the Muslim community met the Chief Minister, Home Minister Eknath Shinde, Industry Minister Subhash Desai, and Mumbai Police Commissioner Sanjay Barve at Varsha, the Chief Minister's residence. "The Chief Minister assured that no decision has been taken regarding the CAA/the NRC in Maharashtra. Even if it is ever implemented, the government will ensure Muslims are made part of it, he told us," said South Mumbai MLA Amin Patel.

Besides Mr. Patel, the delegations included MLAs Nawab Malik and Abu Azmi, community leader Maulana Mahmood Daryabadi of the All India Ulema Council, and maulanas, and representatives from Badi Masjid of Madanpura.

The delegations were informed that the government had taken no step towards construction of a detention

centre for the stateless. A lot of misinformation was being spread about a centre coming up near Mumbai, the Chief Minister said. But that was being planned for drug smugglers, including foreigners, 38 of whom were in jail for the past several years.

Congress leader and Cabinet Minister Balasaheb Thorat said the Maha Vikas Aghadi government would not implement the CAA/the NRC in the State.

The Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister said his Cabinet colleague and Deputy Chief Minister Azmath Basha Shaik Bepari had consulted him before publicly opposing the NRC. The government would stick to the stand and oppose the implementation of the NRC, Mr. Reddy said. His YSR Congress Party MPs had backed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

SC may hear Rohingya pleas on Jan. 10

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is expected to take up on January 10, 2020, a batch of petitions filed by Rohingya immigrants about their living conditions and the Centre's statement over two years ago to deport 40,000 of them to Myanmar.

On November 21, a Bench had also ordered the listing of a separate petition for the identification of "illegal migrants," particularly from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Envoy to U.S. Shringla is next Foreign Secretary

The career diplomat is known for his expertise of India's neighbourhood

SUHASINI HAIDAR
KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

The government has appointed India's Ambassador to the United States Harsh Vardhan Shringla, an expert in India's neighbourhood, as the next Foreign Secretary.

According to a notification from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, Mr. Shringla will take over from Vijay Gokhale on January 29 for a two-year tenure. "I look forward to performing my duties to the best of my abilities under the guidance of our leadership," Mr. Shringla said, speaking

Detention centre rules not new

Minister told Lok Sabha that manual on 'model' centres was issued to States in Jan.

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs has been instructing the State governments since 2009 to set up detention centres to "restrict the movements of foreign nationals staying illegally so that they are physically available at all times for expeditious repatriation", according to the government response in the Lok Sabha.

Going by a reply of Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai on July 2, such instructions were issued to all the States and Union Territories from time to time in 2009, 2012, 2014 and 2018.

Mr. Rai also said a detailed manual on 'model detention centres' was circulated to all the States on January 9.

Addressing a rally in Delhi on December 22, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "These rumours of deten-

These rumours of detention centres being spread by the Congress and Urban Naxals are completely false... The Muslims of the country are neither being sent to detention centres nor is there a detention centre in India, this is a white lie

PM MODI, AT A RALLY ON SUNDAY



tion centres being spread by the Congress and Urban Naxals are completely false... The Muslims of the country are neither being sent to detention centres nor is there a detention centre in India, this is a white lie."

The 11-page manual was prepared in the aftermath of a petition filed by activist Harsh Mander on September 20, 2018, in the Supreme Court, highlighting the plight of families languishing in six detention centres in Assam where members of

the families, who were declared foreigners, were put in camps separated from each other. It was argued that the State did not make any distinction between "jails and detention centres" and thus between "detainees and ordinary inmates" and the camps were being governed as per the Assam jail manual.

When this lacunae was highlighted in the court, the Ministry informed the court on November 5, 2018, that it was framing guidelines for

keeping illegal foreign nationals in detention centres across the country.

No approval needed

The manual says the States require "no specific approval" from the Ministry to set up "detention centres/holding centres/camps". It lays down that these centres should be set up outside the jail premises and their numbers and size should be decided by the States keeping in view the actual number of foreigners to be housed as well as the progress in deportation proceedings.

Assam has six detention centres, the highest among the States. Ten more are expected to come up in the near future in the wake of the final publication of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) on August 31 that excluded 19 lakh out of the 3.29 crore applicants.

PM muzzling India's voice: Rahul

Congress observes 'Satyagraha for Unity' at Rajghat against CAA and NRC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "suppressing Bharat Mata's [Mother India's] voice and being number one in spreading hate" as the Congress held a five-hour 'Satyagraha for Unity' at Rajghat to express solidarity with the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed pan-India National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Led by party president Sonia Gandhi, the Satyagraha asserted the primacy of the Constitution and demanded that the rights of people be protected.

At the end of the protest, Mr. Gandhi alleged that the Prime Minister was trying hard to do what the country's enemies had not succeeded so far: to destroy India's development and silence the voice of her people. "Narendra Modi, when you put pressure on the judiciary, then you are hurting India's voice. When you unleash lathis and bullets on students, you are trying to



For constitutional rights: Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other leaders at Rajghat on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

pacify the country's voice. When you pressure journalists, you are trying to calm the country's voice," Mr. Gandhi said. "Narendra Modi, don't be under a false notion that you are fighting the Congress. This is the country's voice. I want to tell you and your friend Amit Shah that this is Bharat Mata's voice."

Earlier, Ms. Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Mr. Gandhi and general secretary Priyanka

Gandhi Vadra read out the Preamble to the Constitution.

"In the name of Bijnor's 22-year-old Anas, who used to earn money for his family through a coffee-vending machine and had recently gotten married. In the name of 21-year-old Suleiman, who was studying for the UPSC exam and used to take tuition. In the names of all the children who have been martyred in this movement. In the name of Bijnor's Om-

raj Saini, whose five children are waiting for him, and he is in the hospital, injured. In their names, we resolve today that we will protect the Constitution and will not allow it to be destroyed," Ms. Vadra said.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his Madhya Pradesh counterpart Kamal Nath said their governments would not implement the CAA, saying it went against the basic principles of the Constitution.

Left parties pick holes in PM's speech

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Left parties on Monday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of trying to mislead people with a "bunch of lies" on the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and said he was rattled by the intensity of the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

In a fact-check sheet, the CPI(M) sought to counter Mr. Modi's claim that there was no discussion at all on a pan-India National Register of Citizens (NRC) and assured the Muslims that they need not worry about the CAA.

Nadda leads BJP rally for CAA in Kolkata

Mamata writes to Opposition Chief Ministers, says people are in the grip of fear

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

On the day the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) organised a rally in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) in Kolkata, Trinamool Congress chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday wrote to the Chief Ministers of the Opposition-ruled States, saying people of different sections, including minorities, were in fear and panic over the CAA.

BJP working president J.P. Nadda, who led the 'abhinandan yatra' from Hind Cinema to Shyambazar in north Kolkata, said Ms. Banerjee had always put more emphasis on "vote-bank politics than on national interest".



Counter-offensive: BJP working president J.P. Nadda at a rally in support of the NRC and the CAA in Kolkata. ■ RAJEEV BHATT

"The citizens of the country, irrespective of caste and creed, particularly the women and children, farmers, workers and members of the

Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, OBC and minorities, are in the grip of fear and panic over the CAA and the proposed pan-India NRC. The situation is very serious," Ms. Banerjee said.

'Peaceful protests are safety valves for people to vent anger'

RLD leader says fear over CAA-NRC real

ANUJ KUMAR
GHAZIABAD

"It's turning out to be like a Bollywood potboiler where nobody knows who is firing the bullets," remarked Jayant Chaudhary, vice president of the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), on the law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh. Spiralling protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act across the State have led to more than a dozen deaths by gunshot injuries.

Reacting to an alleged audio clip of the Bijnor Superintendent of Police in which he is purportedly saying no one could protest against a law enacted by Parliament, Mr. Chaudhary said this was not how democracy worked.

'Dynamic process'

"It is a dynamic process where laws change when the Parliament responds to people's demands. And peaceful protests are safety valves that allow people to vent their anger," he said.

"People were reacting to the statements made by the government in Parliament regarding the CAA-NRC. It was not a figment of somebody's imagination. The fear was real," he added.

Mr. Chaudhary said that in certain places violence did happen and the protesters took the form of a mob, but argued that it didn't give the government freedom to paint the entire protest in "one colour" and use "oppression as a state goal".

"It is an opportunity for the government to introspect into the protocol, training, and attitude of the police. Right now, people are losing faith in the system. There are enough videos and photographs that indicate the excessive use of force to control violence that was sporadic and could have been handled by better policing," he said. "I suggest that designated spaces, like Jantar Mantar in Delhi, should be created in smaller towns and cities as well where people could protest."

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Kisan Diwas, the birth anniversary of former Prime Mi-



People are losing faith in the system. There are enough videos and photographs that indicate the excessive use of force to control violence could have been handled by better policing

JAYANT CHAUDHARY
Vice president, Rashtriya Lok Dal

nister and his grandfather Chaudhary Charan Singh, he said, "Those who have worked with or are influenced by Chaudhary Sahab don't carry even an iota of communalism in their DNA."

He said the government was creating fear to create a wedge between communities. "We will go and meet the victims of the protests in Muzaffarnagar and Meerut and would provide all possible relief to them," he said. He condemned the sealing of shops of Muslim businessmen in Meenakshi Chowk area of Muzaffarnagar.

"The investigation works on evidence, not on somebody's perception that criminalises a large section of a community to harm its interests," he remarked.

Mr. Chaudhary said the closely fought Lok Sabha election in Muzaffarnagar and Bagpat proved that the area was no longer "polarised". "We could see green shoots of the composite culture that defined these areas for centuries before the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013 snapped the ties."

On the farmer getting coloured by the Hindutva wave, he said one could not discount the "political identity" of the farmer. "It will re-emerge in a flash," he hoped.

IN BRIEF



Filmmaker Debalina Majumdar assaulted

An award-winning filmmaker and rights activist Debalina Majumdar was assaulted by a group in south Kolkata late on Sunday night. Ms. Majumdar said she and her friends organised a "peace rally", with a few friends, against the citizenship law at Baghajatin in south Kolkata on Sunday. Three of the eight accused were arrested and produced in court. Two of them got bail on Monday.

'CAA, NRC will lead to persecution of Muslims'

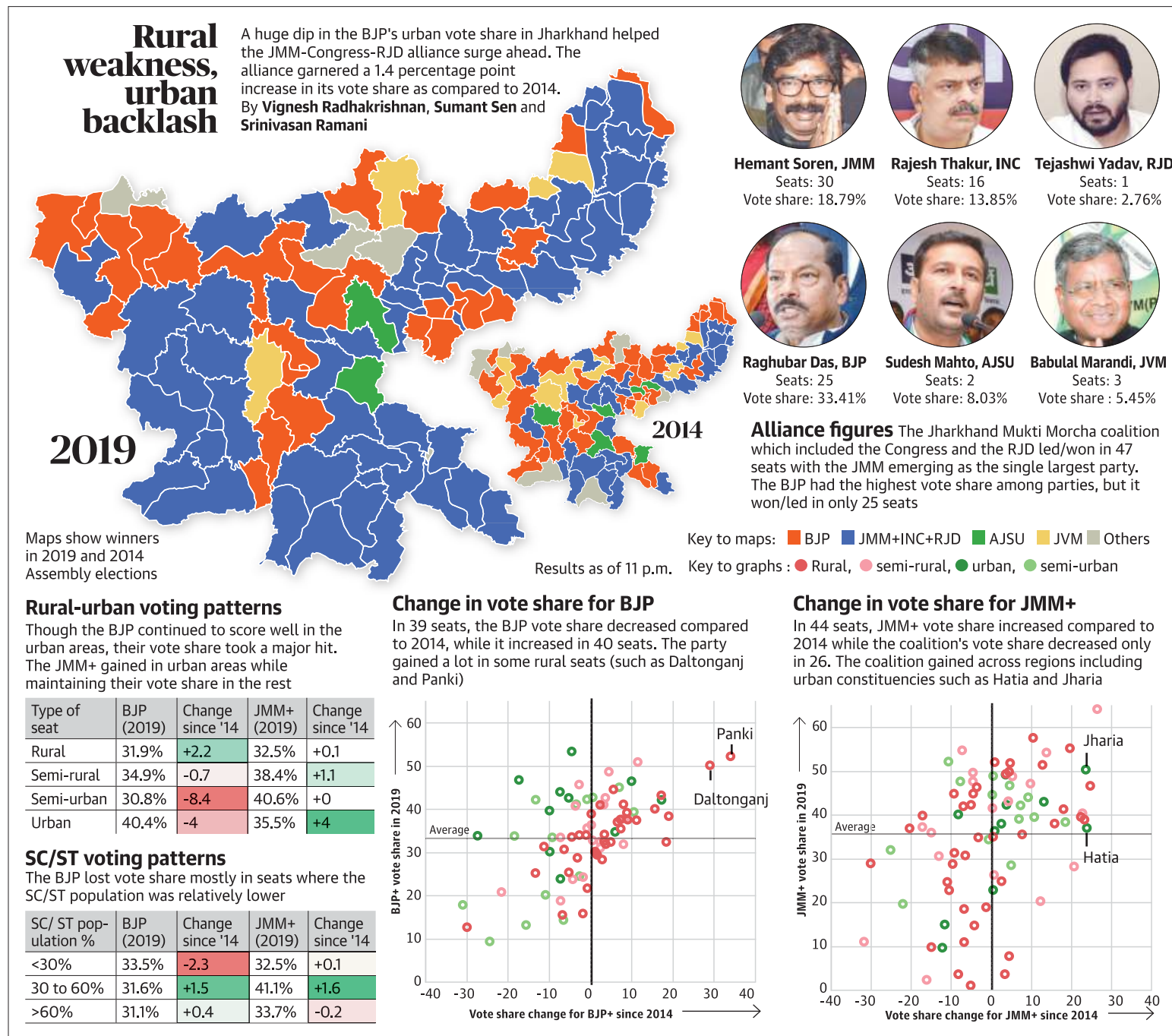
NEW DELHI
Over 500 members of the legal fraternity, who are alumni of the National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata, have issued a statement opposing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, saying the CAA, coupled with the National Citizens Register (NRC), would lead to the persecution of several segments of the population, most notably the Muslims excluded from the new law.

Violence in hospitals is unacceptable: IMA

NEW DELHI
The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has condemned the alleged forcible entry by the police into hospitals to crack down on those protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and denial of access to medical care to those injured. It said violence inside hospitals was unacceptable.

Jharkhand result extends Assembly election jinx of BJP

Party loses power in the fifth State within a year despite thundering win in Lok Sabha polls; leaders blame lack of allies, unpopular Chief Minister and local issues



NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

The BJP has lost power in five States since last year as an alliance of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, the Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal crossed the half-way mark when votes of the Jharkhand Assembly election were counted on Monday.

BJP leaders went into a huddle after the results showed that the party would not be returning to power. Much of the initial assessment of the loss centred on its internal problems and rebellion against outgoing Chief Minister Raghubar Das, the lack of allies against a strong Opposition alliance and the now-routine under-performance of the State units in the Assembly elections compared with the Lok Sabha polls.

Quite in the manner of Maharashtra, Mr. Das had his way with the candidate list, ensuring that 13 of the 37 sitting MLAs were dropped, inducting many turncoats and setting off factional confrontations before the polls. When the results came in, Mr. Das, too, lost his seat — Jharkhand East — to Saryu Rai, his erstwhile Cabinet colleague. “His personal unpopularity and inability to take the [State] unit along cost us dear,” a senior BJP leader said.

It was, however, ill-advised attempts by Jharkhand's first non-tribal Chief Minister to change the land acquisition policy by amending the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act and the Santhal Parga-

In national polls, it's Prime Minister Modi versus the rest. In the States, Opposition parties have realised that Mr. Modi cannot be made the face

RAHUL VERMA
Political scientist

na Tenancy Act that polarised tribal people and others in the State, and gave the Opposition a big issue.

“The amendments were opposed with such ferocity that Governor Draupadi Murmu sent it back to the government and the Bills were withdrawn. That started the build-up of an atmosphere that led to the voting out of the current Chief Minister,” the BJP leader said.

The Opposition got an issue, and despite the washout in the Lok Sabha polls, stuck to local issues in the Assembly election to romp home.

Losing allies

The BJP's failure to tie up with its ally, the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU), has also come at a significant cost — in at least 10 seats, the combined votes of the BJP and AJSU candidates were more than the number polled by the winning candidate.

The logic given for not finalising a seat-sharing arrangement was a supposed assessment by the BJP that going it alone would be more beneficial than tying up with the AJSU. It was pointed out that in Maharashtra, the alliance with the Shiv Sena had

angered some BJP hopefuls who were eyeing seats handed over to the ally.

The large number of rebel candidates in Maharashtra and its effect on the BJP's final tally were cited as examples in Jharkhand. In the final event, however, the rebellion sparked by Mr. Das's dropping of sitting MLAs negated any such advantage.

Modi 'Yes', Das 'No'

With the loss in Jharkhand, the BJP has lost its fifth recent Assembly election, though it won an extraordinarily strong mandate in the Lok Sabha election during the period.

The question that arises is why did the party do well in the Lok Sabha election but not in the Assembly elections. Political scientist Rahul Verma said, “Prime Minister Modi as an extraordinary vote aggregator is an advantage that the State units do not have.”

“In national polls, it's Prime Minister Modi versus the rest. In the States, Opposition parties have realised that Mr. Modi cannot be made the face; the local unit is the face of the BJP and can be taken on more easily especially with alliances,” he said.

Mr. Verma said that while national issues had been on the back burner in Jharkhand, the handling of the economy, shutting down of industries and resultant unemployment were a factor. “That is a hint the BJP would do well to heed,” he added.

Things look up for RJD, Lalu Prasad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

The Opposition alliance's win in Jharkhand is a boost for Bihar's principal Opposition party, the Rashtriya Janata Dal. RJD chief Lalu Prasad is in Ranchi's Birs Munda Central jail and is under treatment in a government hospital in the city. “Yes, we do hope that our party chief would now get the best medical facility, wherever he wants,” said a senior party leader. Lalu Prasad's sons Tej Pratap and Tejashwi Yadav congratulated Mr. Soren.

'Dented in Haryana, denied in Maharashtra, defeated in Jharkhand'

Opposition leaders see victory as a verdict on BJP's arrogance and against controversial laws such as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Congratulations poured in from across the political spectrum for Jharkhand Mukti Morcha president Hemant Soren, who led the JMM-Congress-RJD alliance to victory in the Assembly election, with political leaders calling it a verdict on the arrogance of the BJP and against controversial legislation such as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The Congress headquarters at 24 Akbar Road saw celebrations with party workers bursting crackers and

beating drums. Amid the din, party general secretary Ghulam Nabi Azad said the result was a defeat of all the diversionary tactics used by the BJP government.

“For the past six years, BJP and PM Narendra Modi especially have tried to mislead the people. They brought in controversial laws to divert the attention of people from critical livelihood issues. They have failed to deliver any of their promises. The black money is yet to return, the farmers' suicides continue and the economy is in a shambles,” Mr. Azad said.



Colour returns: Congress workers celebrating the Jharkhand victory in Patna on Monday. ■ RAJJEET KUMAR

Congress president Sonia Gandhi has thanked the people of Jharkhand for expressing faith in the “people-cent-

ric” Congress-JMM-RJD alliance. She congratulated Mr. Hemant Soren, all alliance partners and Congress

leaders and workers on the victory.

“The victory is special and of extreme contemporary importance, and the people of Jharkhand deserve special gratitude and congratulations for summarily defeating the BJP and its divisive agenda,” she said. “With this mandate, the people have defeated the BJP's attempts to divide society on caste and religious lines.”

Rajya Sabha member P. Chidambaram, in a tweet, said the Jharkhand results showed the need for non-BJP parties to unite against the

Modi-Shah regime. “Dented in Haryana, denied in Maharashtra, defeated in Jharkhand. That is the story of the BJP in 2019. All non-BJP parties must raise their sights and rally around the Congress to save the Constitution of India,” the former Union Minister said.

The Shiv Sena, which recently cut ties with the BJP, also expressed satisfaction at the results, with the party's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut calling the results a rejection of the Amit Shah-led BJP.

West Bengal Chief Minis-

ter and Trinamool leader Mamata Banerjee also congratulated Mr. Soren, and underlined that the Opposition's victory came at a time of protests against the amended Citizenship Act.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said the results came despite the desperate campaigning by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who tried to make the CAA and other divisive issues the talking point. “Jharkhand reports the highest number of lynching incidents. This is a rejection of the BJP's policies to felicitate the lynchers,” he said.

It's payback time for Hemant Soren

JMM leader used his years in the Opposition to emerge as a pro-people leader

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
RANCHI

Hemant Soren, executive president of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), is all set to take over as the 11th Chief Minister by term of the mineral-rich, largely tribal State.

Mr. Soren, 44, the second son of JMM patriarch and tribal leader Shibu Soren, is currently Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly. The State has seen six leaders, including him, as Chief Minister since it was carved out of Bihar in 2000.

Mr. Soren had dropped out of a B.Tech. course at BITS, Mesra, to pursue politics. He began his political journey at a young age in the



On a roll: JMM executive president Hemant Soren riding a bicycle at his Ranchi residence on Monday. His father Shibu Soren and mother Ripu are seen. ■ PTI

shadow of his father and elder brother Durga. In 2005, he plunged into electoral politics by contesting from Dumka, but lost to Stephen Marandi, a senior JMM leader, who had fought as an In-

dependent candidate. In 2009, he became a member of the Rajya Sabha.

However, after the death of his elder brother later that year, he took centre stage, guiding the regional party.

Following a brief stint in the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Soren returned in 2010 to become Deputy Chief Minister in the Arjun Munda government.

In 2013, he became Chief Minister and led the alliance with the Congress for 18 months. In 2014, however, the alliance was swept aside by the BJP.

In the past five years, Mr. Soren has reinvented himself. And even as a perception of Chief Minister Raghubar Das as an arrogant leader grew, Mr. Soren won a people-friendly image, coming across as a progressive leader, using social media to put forth his views on crucial issues such as mob-lynching deaths in Jharkhand.

Cautious welcome for Afghan results

Results of U.S. talks with Taliban could upset President Ghani's return to power

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

India welcomed the preliminary results in the Afghanistan presidential election but stopped short of congratulating President Ashraf Ghani directly for winning a second term, along with his vice-presidential running mate, former intelligence chief and interior minister Amrullah Saleh.

According to the Independent Election Commission (IEC) results announced on

Sunday evening, Mr. Ghani had won a majority of 50.64% of the votes, with his closest rival and former chief executive Abdullah Abdullah getting 39.52% of the 1.9 million votes counted. However, a final result is still awaited, pending the resolution of election appeals filed by Mr. Abdullah.

“We welcome the announcement of the preliminary results of the Presidential election of Afghanistan... and commend all the leaders

and institutions for their hard work to preserve and strengthen democracy in the country... India remains committed to work with the people and Government of Afghanistan,” MEA spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said on Monday.

'Short-lived win'

Diplomats also say while the preliminary result in favour of Mr. Ghani is important, it may be a short-lived win given the progress, after a

three-month break, of the U.S.-Taliban talks being led by President Trump's special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad.

“It is a razor thin majority, and we have to wait for final results. If the intra-Afghan dialogue process starts, the equations may change, as the Taliban would like to be integrated into a new government structure,” said former Ambassador to Afghanistan and National Security Advisory Board member Amar Sinha.

5 sentenced to death for killing Khashoggi

Three more get jail, while two senior Saudi figures are let off; murder 'not premeditated', says prosecutor

REUTERS
RIYADH

Saudi Arabia on Monday sentenced five people to death and three more to jail for the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year and said the killing was not premeditated, a verdict criticised by a UN investigator as a "mockery" of justice.

The court dismissed charges against the remaining three of the 11 people that had been on trial, finding them not guilty, Saudi deputy public prosecutor and spokesman Shalaan al-Shalaan said. None of the defendants' names was immediately released.

"The investigation showed that the killing was not premeditated... The decision was taken at the spur of the moment," Mr. Shalaan said, a position contradicting the findings of a United Nations-led investigation.

Khashoggi was a U.S. resident and critic of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler. He was last seen at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2, 2018, where he had gone to obtain documents for his impending wedding. His body was reportedly dismembered and removed from the building, and his remains have not been found.

Eleven Saudi suspects were put on trial over his death in secretive proceedings in the capital Riyadh.

Khashoggi's murder caused a global uproar, tarnishing the crown prince's image. The CIA and some Western governments have said they believe Prince Mohammed, also known as MBS, ordered the killing.

Saudi officials say he had no role, though in September MBS for the first time indicated some personal accountability, saying "it

Crime and punishment

A look at the profiles of some of those who have been held or investigated in Saudi Arabia in the Khashoggi case. The Saudi public prosecutor did not name or investigate the sentenced individuals on Monday

Those facing death sentences:

Maher Abdulaziz Mutreb



The General was an aide to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's former right-hand man

Salah Mohammed Tubayq



He is a forensic expert at the Saudi Interior Ministry's Criminal Evidence Department.

In the Istanbul operation, he was supposed to remove evidence such as fingerprints or proof of the use of force. He was specifically recruited to dispose of the body

Fahad Shabib al-Balawi and Waleed Abdullah al-Shehri, both members of the Saudi Royal Guard, and **Turki Muserref al-Shehri**, an intelligence officer

Source: Reuters, AFP

OTHERS ON TRIAL:

Ahmed Mohammed al-Assiri

The former deputy head of general intelligence was among those sacked by King Salman. The prosecutor said he ordered the operation to repatriate - but not kill - Khashoggi. He was acquitted for insufficient evidence

Mustafa Mohammed al-Madani

Brigadier General Madani led the intelligence efforts of the 15-man team in Istanbul. He donned Khashoggi's clothes, eyeglasses and Apple watch and left through the back door of the Istanbul consulate in an attempt to make it look like the journalist had walked out of the building

ALSO ON TRIAL:

Mohammed Saad al-Zahrani, Saif Saad al-Qahthani, Mansour Othman Abahusain, and Muflih Shaya al-Muslih

NOT ON TRIAL

Saud al-Qahtani

Qahtani, seen as the right-hand man of Prince Mohammed, was removed as a royal court adviser and is the highest-profile figure implicated



in the incident. Qahtani, said to be in his 40s, steered social media propaganda campaigns against the kingdom's adversaries, including Qatar and Iran. Qahtani had tried to lure Khashoggi back to Saudi Arabia after he moved to Washington

Mohammed al-Otaibi

He was the Istanbul Consul General at the time of Khashoggi's murder. The UN rapporteur's report recorded conversations Otaibi had with other Saudi officials days before Khashoggi's murder, in which he discussed "a top secret mission". Otaibi left Istanbul and has not been heard from since. On Monday, the Saudi deputy public prosecutor said Otaibi had been released after being questioned



Jamal Khashoggi

Mr. Shalaan also said the Saudi Consul General to Turkey at the time, Mohammed al-Otaibi, had been freed after Turkish witnesses said he was with them on the day of the crime.

Sources said last year that Maher Mutreb, the lead negotiator, and Salah al-Tubayq, a forensic expert specialising in autopsies, were also on trial for the murder and could face the death penalty.

Mr. Shalaan said that when the Saudi team that entered the consulate saw it would not be possible to transfer Khashoggi to a safe place to continue negotiating, they decided to kill him.

"It was agreed, in consultation between the head of the negotiating team and the culprits, to kill Jamal Khashoggi inside the consulate," Mr. Shalaan said.

31 people investigated

Noting the verdict, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stressed the need for "an independent and impartial investigation into the murder", a spokesman said.

Turkey said on Monday the trial outcome was far from serving justice and repeated its call for better Saudi judicial cooperation.

Human rights group Amnesty International criticised the closed trial, branding the verdict a "whitewash" that it said failed to address the Saudi authorities' involvement or the location of Khashoggi's remains.

However, one of Khashoggi's sons - who weeks after the murder appealed for the return of his father's body - said the verdicts had been fair to his children. "We affirm our confidence in the judiciary at all levels, that it has been fair to us and that justice has been achieved," Salah Khashoggi said on Twitter.

Amid thousands of complaints, Afghan election runoff likely

Preliminary results had given Ashraf Ghani a narrow victory

REUTERS
KABUL

Afghanistan's Electoral Complaints Commission said on Monday the election might go to a second round as it begins reviewing thousands of complaints a day after the preliminary result handed incumbent President Ashraf Ghani a narrow victory.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) announced on Sunday a much delayed preliminary result of the September 28 presidential vote which was marred by allegations of massive fraud, technical problems with biometric devices used for voting, attacks and irregularities.

The IEC said the total turnout was over 1.8 million, with Mr. Ghani securing 50.64% to win the first round of voting, beating his main rival Abdullah Abdullah, who currently shares



Ashraf Ghani

power with him in a unity government. However, if a review by the complaints commission reduces Mr. Ghani's vote share to below 50% and no other candidate has a majority, a second round will be held between the two top contenders.

Deen Mohammad Azimi, deputy head of the Electoral Complaints Commission, said there is a "strong possibility" the election would go to the second round.

"Looking at the scope of complaints and objections that needs a thorough re-

view, there could be a runoff," he said. The review might take five weeks, he said, adding that thousands of complaints from candidates had already been filed.

According to the tally released by the IEC, the total turnout was 18,24,401 with Mr. Ghani winning 9,23,868 votes and Mr. Abdullah second with 7,20,099 (39.52%).

"President Ghani avoided a run-off just by over 11,000 votes and the complaints commission might invalidate tens of thousands of votes from all candidates," another election official said on condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to speak to the media.

Mr. Ghani welcomed the IEC decision and said the country was on the right path towards prosperity but Mr. Abdullah dismissed the result as fraudulent as he called for a full review.

House Speaker Pelosi 'not ready' to name team for Trump Senate trial

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

House speaker Nancy Pelosi said Monday that she was not yet ready to name her team for President Donald Trump's trial in the U.S. Senate on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

"The House cannot choose our impeachment managers until we know what sort of trial the Senate will conduct," the Democratic Speaker of the House of Representatives said on Twitter.

House managers will prosecute the case against Mr. Trump before the Republican majority Senate in a trial expected to begin in January.

Ms. Pelosi has not yet sent the impeachment articles passed by the House over to the Senate amid a standoff with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell over the form the trial will take.

Democrats have been pushing for four current and former White House aides with direct knowledge of Mr. Trump's Ukraine dealings to

testify in the Senate. Mr. Trump blocked all four from testifying in the House.

"President Trump blocked his own witnesses and documents from the House, and from the American people, on phony complaints about the House process," Ms. Pelosi said. "What is his excuse now?"

Mr. McConnell, speaking on a TV show on Monday, said Mr. Pelosi "apparently believes that she can tell us how to run the trial." "We haven't ruled out witnesses," he added.

IN BRIEF



Continue restraint on Hong Kong, Abe urges Xi

Hong Kong should "continue to be free and open", Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told the Chinese President on Monday. Mr. Abe met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing ahead of flying to the city of Chengdu to join a trilateral meeting on Tuesday, which will also be attended by South Korean President Moon Jae-in. In a press briefing after the Xi-Abe meeting, Otaka Masato, spokesman for the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, said Mr. Abe "urged China to continue its self-restraint" over Hong Kong. AFP

Boeing replaces CEO as Max crisis deepens

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

Boeing on Monday replaced its embattled chief executive Dennis Muilenburg, saying a change was necessary as it attempts to restore its reputation amid the protracted 737 MAX crisis.

Boeing named board chairman David Calhoun as chief executive and president, saying the company needed to "restore confidence" and "repair relationships with regulators, customers and all other stakeholders."

The company pledged to "operate with a renewed commitment to full transparency, including effective and proactive communication with the FAA, other global regulators and its cus-



Dennis Muilenburg

tomers." The aerospace giant's financial picture remains clouded following the global grounding of the MAX in March after two deadly crashes.

The move comes a week after Boeing took the monumental step of temporarily shutting down MAX production because of the crisis, which has pushed the aircraft's return to the skies into 2020.

Beijing attacks Washington for 'weaponisation' of outer space

President Trump had recently unveiled a 'Space Force'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

Beijing warned on Monday that the U.S. was turning the cosmos into a "battlefield", after Washington announced a new military arm called the Space Force.

Following concerns that China and Russia are challenging its position in space, U.S. President Donald Trump signed the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act on Friday - which created a new branch of the U.S. military.

Beijing responded by accusing the U.S. of "pursuing the weaponisation of outer space". "These actions from



Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang

the U.S. strongly violate the international consensus of the peaceful use of outer space... posing a direct threat to outer space, peace, and security," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng

Shuang at a regular press briefing.

'Responsible attitude'

Mr. Geng called for the international community to "adopt a prudent and responsible attitude to prevent outer space from becoming a new battlefield".

The Space Force will be the sixth formal force of the U.S. military, after the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard. "Going to be a lot of things happening in space, because space is the world's newest warfighting domain," Mr. Trump told members of the military gathered for the signing.

Two dead, over 65,000 hit by rain in Sri Lanka

Gotabaya reviews relief measures

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

At least two persons died and more than 65,000 people have been affected in the recent spells of heavy rain in Sri Lanka, the Disaster Management Centre has said.

According to a 'situation report' released by the Centre on Monday, two persons from the North Western Province died in the incessant rain lashing several parts of the country.

More showers

Authorities have forecast showers or thunder showers on Tuesday, in the northern, north-central and southern regions of the island. So far, more than

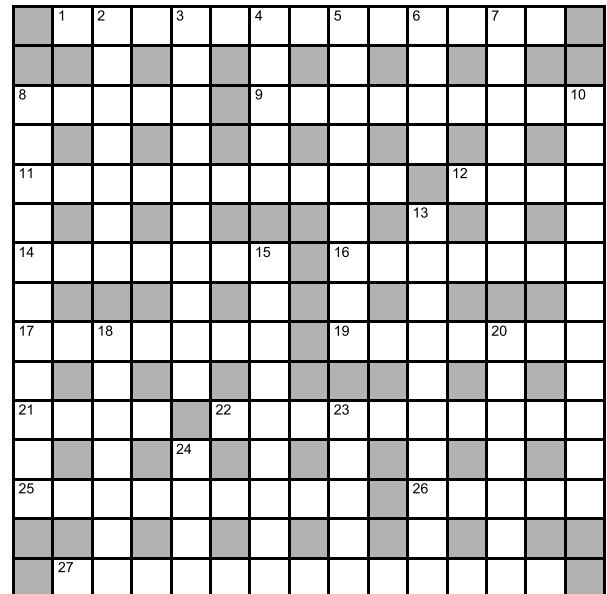
17,000 people have been displaced from their flooded homes and are seeking shelter in safer locations.

On Monday, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa visited Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa districts in the North Central Province that were among the badly-affected areas. He chaired a special discussion with officials to review response and relief measures, his office said in a statement.

Citing the over-75 mm rainfall recorded in the past 24 hours, the Disaster Management Centre issued an early warning for possible landslips in hilly areas and urged residents to exercise caution.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12814

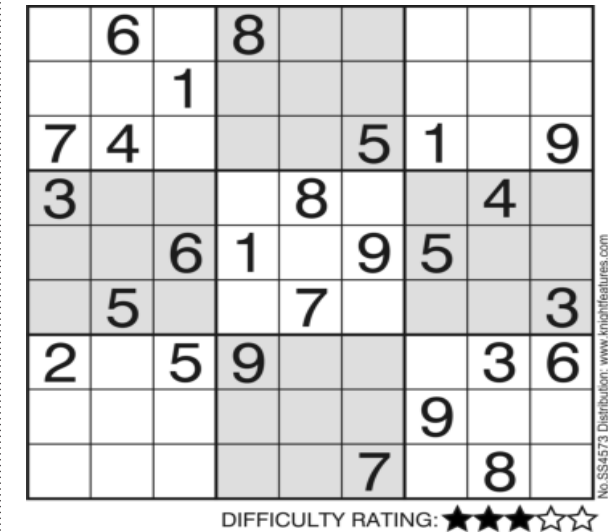
Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



ACROSS
1 Takes the blame and moves to prison (7,3,3)
8 What botanists study in seminars about origin of life? (5)
9 Begs Congress to reorganize after absorbing results at Centre (9)
11 She drives with purpose, pursuing essentially drunk

- (set by Dr. X)
- fellow in anger (10)
 - 12 One pursuing drug dealers sprinted around club (4)
 - 14 Craving alcoholic spirit for a period of five years (7)
 - 16 Criminal in detention after killing wife with oriental poison (7)
 - 17 Fool about to tackle girl beginning to exercise in that place (7)
 - 19 Smoke a cigarette and become happy (5,2)
 - 21 Drags husband away from ruffians (4)
 - 22 A commotion by good maiden grabbed by bare film star (7,3)
 - 25 Ross happily enters to consume sponge cake (5,4)
 - 26 Set fire to rubbish around church (5)
 - 27 Joke that's expressed casually - not what a fisherman might do? (9,4)
 - DOWN**
 - 2 Open declarations of war primarily embodied by firing a salvo (7)
 - 3 Feared criminal controlling syndicate testified again (10)
 - 4 Scoring runs, secure result (5)
 - 5 Escapes from trouble after revolution on street (5,4)
 - 6 Item useful to trap birds (4)
 - 7 Neighbour's good husband held by a fiend with knife at Centre (7)
 - 8 Assists one drunk American model encircled by mugs (11)
 - 10 Cock-up! He's run out scoring zero - an unexpected blow (6,5)
 - 13 Incurable cheat, cheerful after ensnaring model (10)
 - 15 Drunkard stabbing men in a sozzled state in America (9)
 - 18 Hot single naughtily shows tongue (7)
 - 20 South American monkey in a train angrily bites man (7)
 - 23 Greek character beginning to dance, knocking back drink around bar (5)
 - 24 Old wife leaves uninteresting city in Europe (4)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12813

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Service to the guru

Ignorance of the eternal and everlasting Truth is the bane of human existence and stands as the greatest hindrance to spiritual attainment. Sastras reiterate that this ignorance prevails in beings owing to individual bad prarabdha karma and is removed only by the grace of God and the grace of the Guru. This grace is automatically obtained when one studies under a guru, follows his teachings with faith and commitment, and serves him in a selfless manner, says Krishna in the Uddhava Gita, pointed out Swamini Satyavratanda in a lecture. The Upanishads reflect the traditional method of instruction when transmission of knowledge from guru to sishya takes place in a unique way.

The disciple is expected to cultivate humble reverence, inquiry and devoted service along with the bhava that his guru is equal to God. The simple and austere way of life in the Gurukula trains him to be self-disciplined and patient when he serves the guru. The student is rid of fear and confusion. The Katopanishad says that many might have heard of the Self as most wonderful but may not fully understand the deep import of it. But this esoteric truth shines as a living experience in the disciple's inner consciousness when taught by a good teacher. In the Manu Smriti, there is famous verse that explains how an ardent student can get the best from the ocean of knowledge that the guru exemplifies by his obedient and patient bhava even as a man uses a spade to dig water from the earth. The Mundaka says that a student has to humbly approach the guru devoted to Brahman to imbibe the essence of eternal truth.

To a disciple who approaches reverently, the guru who has the experience of God gives that knowledge faithfully by which is known the truly existing, the changeless self.

MARKET WATCH

	23-12-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	41,643	-0.09
US Dollar	71.18	-0.08
Gold	39,053	0.48
Brent oil	65.99	-0.54

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	366.90	-5.40
Asian Paints	1807.55	8.30
Axis Bank	743.15	3.30
Bajaj Auto	3219.50	15.75
Bajaj Finserv	9304.05	24.00
Bajaj Finance	4160.00	24.40
Bharti Airtel	454.80	1.00
BPL	493.00	5.20
Britannia Ind	3091.80	-30.45
Cipla	467.85	2.10
Coal India	197.25	-3.55
Dr Reddys Lab	2908.40	45.05
Eicher Motors	22176.15	-45.00
GAIL (India)	120.60	1.05
Grasim Ind	742.35	-3.25
HCL Tech	570.95	1.05
HDFC	2422.65	18.55
HDFC Bank	1302.40	5.70
Hero MotoCorp	2420.10	26.90
Hindalco	215.15	-0.35
Hind Unilever	1950.40	7.30
ICICI Bank	541.30	-4.80
Indusind Bank	1496.30	8.35
Bharti Infratel	254.60	1.35
Infosys	736.00	4.45
Indian Oil Corp	126.45	-0.95
ITC	238.90	-2.25
JSW Steel	263.70	-1.00
Kotak Bank	1704.90	12.20
L&T	1311.25	-0.30
M&M	525.90	-4.70
Maruti Suzuki	7360.90	99.40
Nestle India Ltd.	14532.50	-325.75
NTPC	114.60	-0.10
ONGC	124.65	-0.50
PowerGrid Corp	185.80	-0.30
Reliance Ind	1571.40	-27.70
State Bank	332.40	-5.45
Sun Pharma	428.40	-1.90
Tata Motors	176.05	0.10
Tata Steel	462.15	1.15
TCS	2231.70	8.80
Tech Mahindra	775.95	-7.40
Titan	1209.10	7.20
UltraTech Cement	4081.90	-38.55
UPL	577.65	-0.50
Vedanta	147.75	3.50
Wipro	253.85	2.05
YES Bank	49.65	-1.75
Zee Entertainment	294.80	10.75

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 23

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	70.98	71.30
Euro	78.62	78.98
British Pound	92.11	92.52
Japanese Yen (100)	64.87	65.17
Chinese Yuan	10.12	10.17
Swiss Franc	72.35	72.68
Singapore Dollar	52.36	52.59
Canadian Dollar	53.97	54.22
Malaysian Ringgit	17.13	17.21

Source: Indian Bank

Airlines may fly into a \$600-mn loss: CAPA

Carriers added capacity to capture coveted airport slots owned by Jet, leading to a drop in fares

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Aviation consultancy CAPA estimates a full-year loss of \$500-600 million for Indian carriers primarily due to a sharp fall in airfares on some of the most profitable routes as the airlines mounted additional capacity in a bid to capture coveted airport slots owned by the now defunct Jet Airways.

Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) said that the latest estimate for India's domestic market was its sharpest downward revision from one quarter to the next in 16 years. It had earlier predicted a profit of \$500-700 million for Indian airlines.

During the first nine months of financial year 2020, the sector also witnessed a moderation in

A plummeting nosedive

- Loss estimate is CAPA's sharpest downward revision from one quarter to the next in 16 years
- Profit of \$500-700 million previously predicted for Indian airlines
- Domestic and international traffic volumes remained flat in first 9 months of FY20
- Air India set to post loss of \$500 mn in FY20, following a loss of \$1.2 bn last year
- IndiGo may clock profit of only \$70-\$90 mn; it was earlier expected to achieve \$400-500 mn
- SpiceJet may break-even or clock moderate loss from the previously estimated record profit



growth with both domestic and international traffic volumes being flat as capacity expansion by different carriers went towards replacing the seats lost in the sector

due to the collapse of Jet Airways.

In February, CAPA had estimated a full-year profit of \$400-500 million for IndiGo which has now been slashed to a sixth, at \$70-90 million, primarily due to a new accounting standard adopted by the airline as well as an increase in maintenance costs towards its older A320neo.

Similarly, a prediction of a record profit for competitor SpiceJet has been revised to break-even or a moderate loss.

Different configuration

The primary challenge before the airline has been the complexity of operations due to the induction of Jet Airways' aircraft configured differently from its own to include business class.

Moreover, there was also a

significant cost increase as these were older planes which required more maintenance.

Further, a lack of financial support for Air India from the government has resulted in as many as 26 of its planes being grounded due to a shortage of funds to replace engines as well as buy spare parts.

CAPA estimates Air India to post a loss of \$500 million in FY 2020 after posting a net loss of \$1.2 billion in the last fiscal.

The consultancy recommends that the government review the challenges before the sector following the demise of Jet Airways and subject airlines to an annual review where they may be required to prove that they have sufficient cash reserves to continue flying.



Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi, centre, addressing the media on Monday. ■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

Aadhaar to be made mandatory for GST

Bid to curb malpractices: Sushil Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

With 66.79 lakh new dealers registered under the Goods and Service Tax contributing just 15% of the total revenue under the tax regime, the GST Network has decided to make Aadhaar authentication or physical verification mandatory for new dealers from January 1, 2020, to check malpractices.

Briefing about the decisions taken at the GST meeting here, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi, who heads the Group of Ministers on Integrated Goods and Services Tax, told the media here that 66.79 lakh new registered dealers were paying just 15% of the taxes, constituting about ₹10,000 crore in monthly collections.

Monthly collections had crossed the ₹1 lakh-crore mark in six out of eight months during April-November, 2019, he said.

The number of registrations under GST stood at 1.21 crore and of this, 55.04 lakh dealers had migrated from the pre-GST regime and 66.79 lakh were new registrations since the launch of GST. He said dealers who migrated to the GST contri-

buted 85% of the total revenue.

"Aadhaar authentication will be made mandatory for new dealers for registration. We have noticed in two years that a large number of operators are registering themselves as GST dealers. They make fake invoices also." He said those who declined to give their Aadhaar numbers would have to undergo physical verification.

A total 24.86 lakh fake or bogus registered dealers had been weeded out from the GST.

Mr. Modi ruled out any hike in GST rates in the near future. He said the Centre and States were not ready to raise tax rates as the economy was in a slowdown, affecting revenue mobilisation.

For ensuring smooth compliance by taxpayers and transparency, he said it was decided to launch the new GST returns filing system from April 1, 2020. Noting that "it will be a game-changer," Mr. Modi said the new system envisaged the concept of regular invoice upload and proposed to be fully automated involving the reconciliation of invoices before proceeding with input tax credit claims.

RIL shares dip on legal tussle with govt.

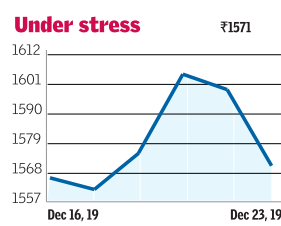
Centre avers deal with Aramco can't proceed till Indian major clears \$3.5 bn dues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Shares of index heavyweight Reliance Industries (RIL) were the second worst performer among Sensex stocks on Monday as a possible legal battle with the government threatens to disturb the company's stake sale plans with Saudi Aramco, which is also the world's largest listed entity.

On the BSE, RIL shares lost nearly 3% in intraday trade to touch a low of ₹1,555 on Monday. However, the counter managed to partially recoup losses to close at ₹1,571, down 1.78% or ₹28.40 over Friday's close.

Given its weightage in the Sensex, RIL was the biggest drag on the benchmark on



Monday when the index lost 39 points to end at 41,642.66.

Market participants attributed the fall to reports that the listed entity and the government are headed towards a bitter battle in the courts after the latter said that the RIL-Aramco deal cannot go ahead till the Indian company clears pending dues amounting to \$3.5 billion related to Panna-Mukta and Tapti oil and gas

fields. RIL, however, is strongly contesting the claims and has said that "the petition is an abuse of process as no arbitration award has fixed any final liability of dues on the company."

"... it portrays that a sum of money is due and payable under the final award and purports to compute the money payable on a basis neither found in the arbitration award nor disclosed in the petition," RIL stated in its affidavit.

An international arbitration tribunal issued a partial award in October 2016 in the dispute between the Indian government, BG Exploration & Production India Ltd (BG) and RIL on the contracts.

While the tribunal in its

2016 award determined certain issues of principles, it did not award any monetary sum pending determination of all issues before it.

BG and RIL challenged the 2016 award before an English court which decided some parts of the challenge in favour of the duo and directed the arbitration tribunal to reconsider those parts of the 2016 award.

The tribunal, having reconsidered, issued another partial award in December 2018 in favour of BG and RIL. RIL's contention is that while this challenge was pending in the English court, the Indian government had 'unilaterally' calculated certain amounts.

(With inputs from PTI)

PM chairs first meet on investment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The newly-formed Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth (CCIG) held its first meeting on Monday as the government looks to boost spending to bring back a sputtering economy on track.

Sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the meeting of the CCIG. No details of the decisions taken at the meeting were immediately known. The panel has four other members - Home Minister Amit Shah, Highways and MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Commerce & Railways Minister Piyush Goyal.

RBI holds open market operations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

The RBI has purchased ₹10,000-crore worth long-term government securities and sold ₹6,825 crore of short-term securities through open market operations (OMOs). Last week, the RBI had announced simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities under OMOs for ₹10,000 crore each.

The RBI also said to protect consumer interest, on a peer-to-peer lending (P2P) platform, the exposure of a lender to all borrowers must not exceed ₹50 lakh at any given point.

A lender investing over ₹10 lakh across P2P platforms will produce a certificate to P2P platforms from a chartered accountant certifying a minimum net worth of ₹50 lakh.

M&M makes more top-level changes

Appointments seen in auto, farm units

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. (M&M) has made several changes in the group corporate office (GCO) and auto and farm sectors (AFS).

The changes will be effective April 1, 2020, the company said.

This follows the changes announced on December 20.

In the GCO, S. Durgashankar, currently president, group M&A, corporate accounts and group secretary, will have an enhanced role as group controller of finance and accounts.

He will report to Anish Shah who will be elevated to the M&M board as deputy MD and Group CFO.

In AFS, since Rajan Wadhwa will retire and step down from his role as presi-

dent, auto sector, Hemant Sikka, currently president, CPO, power and spares business, has been named to head the farm equipment sector.

Auto division

Veejay Nakra, currently head of sales and marketing in the auto division, will be appointed CEO of the auto division. He will have operating responsibility for passenger vehicles and the entire commercial vehicles business with profit and loss accountability, except for product development process. "These appointments are designed to maintain continuity in change, while ensuring a smooth transition and maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance," M&M said in a statement.

Power auction cancelled on poor response

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Power Ministry has scrapped the auction to procure 2,500MW electricity for the medium term (three years) under a scheme to provide relief to thermal power plants plagued by short coal supplies, state-run NHPC said on Monday.

According to sources, lack of interest from State power utilities due to a higher tariff of ₹4.41 per unit discovered through the reverse auction process led to the cancellation of the auction. The Ministry has now advised nodal agency PFC Consultancy to call for bids again. PFCCCL had appointed NHPC as 'Aggregator' (in March) under Pilot Scheme-II for procurement of aggregated power of 2,500 MW.

Tata ruling: govt. seeks amendment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Corporate Affairs Ministry on Monday moved the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) seeking certain modification in its order in the Tata Sons matter.

The Registrar of Companies (RoC) on Monday moved the NCLAT requesting to amend its order and remove the word "illegal" with respect to the conversion of Tata Sons from a public company to private company, as it had authorised the conversion 'only as per the provisions' of the Companies Act.

It has also asked NCLAT to "delete the aspersion made regarding any hurried help accorded by RoC Mumbai to Tata Sons except what was statutorily required by RoC Mumbai."

With \$8.7 bn in 'severely' stressed realty loans, Mumbai tops the list

Prospects for loan recovery extremely poor, says report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Mumbai region has topped the list of Indian cities with the highest level of stressed assets in the real estate sector.

Of a total of \$35 billion loans advanced to developers in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), almost \$8.7 billion (or 25%) is currently under 'severe' stress, according to a report.

This is about double the total stressed loan amount in the National Capital Region (NCR) estimated at \$4.3 billion, a research report by Anarock has showed. The NCR real estate market has so far received total loans worth \$23 billion from banks and NBFCs/HFCs.

However, for Bengaluru, a mere 1% (\$160 million) of the



total of \$16 billion of real estate loans in the city are in the 'red alert' category.

"The liquidity crunch in MMR and NCR is unrelenting. Both markets collectively have loans worth \$13 billion under 'severe' stress with extremely poor prospects of recovery from the borrowing developers," said Shobhit Agarwal, MD and CEO, Anarock Capital.

"Previously, many developers engaged in high leveraging and also in fund diversions.

"To compound the problem, housing sales have remained tepid over the last few years, resulting in depleted cash reserves," Mr. Agarwal said.

'Better' stress level

As per the report, Bengaluru has a much better stress-level readings with over 70% (of the total \$16 billion loans) completely stress-free.

NCR and MMR have a 91% share of severely stressed loans totalling \$13.2 billion. Hyderabad and Kolkata hardly have any stress. Chennai received loan advances worth \$2.8 billion, of which only \$310 million is under severe stress.

HARINI NAGENDRA AND SEEMA MUNDOLI

The popular narrative around cities needs to be changed. It is with this in mind that we wrote *Cities and Canopies: Trees in Indian Cities* earlier this year.

From 80-year-olds to eight-year-olds, our readership has been far more diverse than we imagined. We heard delightful tales from grandmothers about how they climbed trees as young girls, and stole fruits while hiding from disapproving mothers and mothers-in-law. And poignant stories from 10-year-olds who spoke sadly of how the neighbourhoods they live in have lost trees in their lifetime. So young, and they have already faced experiences of loss.

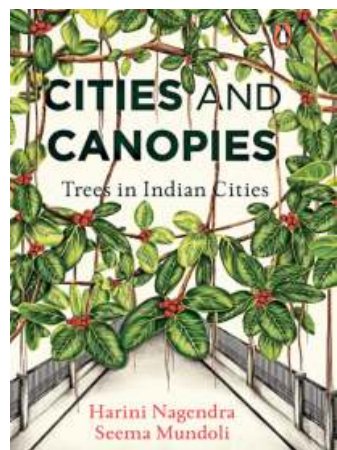
The only way to counter this narrative of loss is to replace it with one of hope. We need to reconnect with the trees around us. And there are many ways to do so. Here are a few ideas from workshops and discussions we have had with fellow tree fanatics in many cities.

This winter, try some of these with your kids, parents, friends and neighbours. Perhaps you can convert a tree agnostic into a true believer?

Cooking with trees

We have all snacked on mango, jackfruit and jamun. But do you know how to roast jackfruit seeds, make tamarind leaf chutney, peepal leaf bhaaji, jamun kala khatta, gulmohar flower pakodas and neem flower gojju?

Along with your grandparents, visit neighbours from different parts of India to collect recipes. Cook and eat together in a large group.



Something for the holidays

How to tackle Tree Deficit Disorder and help a new generation make its own memories that involve fruits, seeds and leaves

Memory finder

A fun activity (and an excellent alternative to smart phone entertainment) for dull winter evenings: when dinner is done, and everyone is too tired to play, but too charged up to go to sleep. Sit around in a circle, and write down your favourite memories of trees, or a story of a memorable encounter with a tree. Fold up your paper and toss it into the middle of the circle. Once everyone has finished writing down their memories, each person selects a paper at random, opens it out, and reads from it.

Take turns to guess who wrote this particular memory. You will be surprised at the stories of mischief that come from strict-looking grandparents and parents!

Counting petals, tracing veins

Nature is obsessed with symmetry. Some trees have flower petals arranged in multiples of three (trimerous), others in sets of five (pentamerous).

Collect different types of flowers and count the petals. Use a botany

book, or your favourite internet browser to learn how scientists use the number of petals to classify trees and plants into different groups. Or sketch the veins in different types of leaves. Do they branch at the base, or from the middle? Do the veins end before they reach the leaf margin, or do they loop and interconnect with each other at the margin?

Each of these characteristics or traits have evolved to help the leaf, flower and tree thrive in its environment. Use these explorations as starting points to learn more about evolution.

The physics of seed dispersal

Take a silk cotton pod and open it to collect the seeds. Pile them up in a heap, and blow - tiny seeds, attached to parachutes of silk threads, will drift away in different directions (it is great fun to chase after and recapture them). The wind disperses silk cotton seeds - the "silk" we use was created to help the seeds move easily through the air. Other seeds have thorns,



Perfect stress buster (clockwise from above) authors Harini Nagendra and Seema Mundoli; the cover of their book; walk along a tree-lined street
*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

which help them attach to animal fur - they then hitch a ride to a new location where they can germinate into a tree.

Tamarind seeds are dispersed by animals, which eat the tasty pulp and then distribute the seeds through their poop. Play uffangali, where you blow hard on a mound of tamarind seeds to separate them - each person gets to capture and keep the seeds she manages to blow away from the pile. Blowing heavy tamarind seeds is much

harder than silk cotton.

There is physics involved - if you blow from the side, the seeds scatter much more easily than if you blow from the top. Why is that? A simple question such as this can lead to a real-life physics lesson into the relationship between force, distance and angle.

In Cities and Canopies: Trees in Indian Cities, Harini Nagendra and Seema Mundoli map the ecological and cultural histories of trees in cities and in our lives.

PEOPLE

Secret chord

The German Ambassador to India, to perform in Munich



If you're going to be in Munich tomorrow, catch up with Walter J. Lindner, the German Ambassador to India, who will be playing a few tracks from his album *Baroque Masters*, at the St Maria Thalkirchen Christmas mass. The album, released last year, consists of a double CD that features 21 tracks of pure classical symphonic music and 23 tracks of chamber music (harpsichord, cello and flute). There are a few tracks featuring a choir with vocals in Latin. "Baroque music is associated with Christmas in Europe," says the ambassador.

He took about a year to put the whole thing together in his studio. "The process is not simple: I play each instrument separately and record it in my studio, and then layer each one over the others, starting with lower instruments and making my way to higher instruments. So, I start with playing the harpsichord, then the cello, followed by the viola. The process is quite complicated really, because you have to know how to play each instrument and play them in sync. The end result is a whole orchestra playing, though it's actually done by one person," he says.

In India, he often records with Indian musicians at his studio in the residence. His favourite show is *Under the Banyan Tree* that takes place on a full moon night every month. His favourite performance was by the qawwals Qutbi Brothers at the event.

Available on Amazon.com, YouTube, Apple Music, Spotify

PRODUCTS

Angels on the table



Klove Studio, the lighting company, has a 15-piece limited edition collection of handcrafted angels out. All in their signature blown-glass style, the Totem Angel's wings are embossed metal with antique brass finishing; the Tropical Angel has green metal wings with jade glass beads; and The City Angel comes in a rose-gold hue.

On display at The Chankaya mall; available at the Klove Studio, J-2 Green Park (Main); upwards of ₹1 lakh

Natural for pets

Petveda, a brand started by entrepreneurs Kamakshi and Dhruv Kumar, makes grooming products for pets. These, they say, are free from sulfates and other harsh chemicals, and are made with essential oils. The range includes soothing balms, odour control mists, tear-stain removers, and flea-repellent shampoos and conditioners. Petveda is a ISO 9001:2015, WHO-GMP certified company.



Available on Petveda.com and Amazon.in; upwards of ₹185

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

#DELHIMOVES

Running into the new year

Three Delhi-ites head to Tokyo to ring in 2020 with a very long run

SUNALINI MATHEW

On December 30 this year, Abhishek Mishra, Vipin Sharma, and Naresh Bhati will start a 120 km run from Tokyo to Mt Fuji. They'll finish on New Year's Eve, and celebrate with the group they're going with. Organised by Abhishek and Milind Soman, nine people will make it to the event. "We did our first New Year's Eve run in December 2014," says Abhishek, when they ran from Mumbai to Pune, about 150 km.

Thereafter, every year the duo has been doing an ultra run (anything above 42 km, the distance of a full marathon). "We did Bengaluru-Mysuru the next year,

then Goa to Gokarna (Karnataka), Una to Dharamshala," says Abhishek. Last year they did Colombo to Unawatuna, their first international celebration.

This isn't competitive, it's meant to enjoy the route and bring in the new year without a hangover from alcohol. They organise a crew car, a support team, refreshment stations along the way, and stay with all meals.

Abhishek, 36, who started running in his 20s, graduated as an engineer and went on to do an MBA. After working for a few years, he started a company Tabono Sports that organises races across North India, concentrating on small cities. He



says he began running ultras in 2013, because after a few years of participating in competitive races, the charm wears out, and it's the experience that counts. He documents his journey in book *Run to Realise*. Vipin, 35, who now heads community building

and engagement, works for Supplement, a start-up in the nutrition supplement space. He began running to lose weight, and took up ultra running in 2013. Naresh, 35, an engineer who works with an automobile parts company too started for health reasons. He read about Abhishek taking part in the Ultraman (10 km open ocean swim, 42 km cross-country bike ride, 84 km ultra marathon run), and enrolled for the Millennium City Marathon that Tabono organises.

There are four stages to an ultra, says Vipin, who has done about 18 of them so far: "The first is of physical pain, at between 40 and 50 km.

You want to quit, but you tell yourself you're not going to. The second stage is when your mind gives you a lot of chatter, telling you everyone has a bad day, and it's okay to quit sometimes."

He says the third phase is of emotional pain: "It's why you see many ultra runner crying and running. Your body becomes so weak and you become extremely humble." The final phase is when "suddenly running becomes easy and you're in a zone when you're just cruising along. You know the blood and blisters are real but it doesn't affect you. It feels like you've transcended over the body."



Transcending over the body (Clockwise from right) Abhishek Mishra, Naresh Kumar, Vipin Sharma
*R. V. MOORTHY, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



EXHIBITION

Architecture
An ongoing exhibition, titled *Structuring Form: The Innovative Rigour of Mahendra Raj*, showcases the architect who just turned 95. Conceptualised by Rohit Raj Mehndiratta and Vandini Mehta, of Studio Vanro in the city, the show depicts seven projects out of Mahendra Raj's work of close to 250.
VENUE: Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, Saket
TIME: 10:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.



FOOD

X-mas buffet
India Grill, a multi-cuisine restaurant, has organised a two-day Christmas buffet, curated by chef Vineet Bahuguna of Hilton Garden Inn, New Delhi. The buffet includes turkey roast with new baby potatoes served with cranberry sauce, kaffir lime and lemongrass scented lamb ball, grilled fish with leeks, and more.
VENUE: DLF Place, Saket District Centre
TIME: 7:30 p.m. onwards



FESTIVAL

Christmas hampers
European eatery Caara has introduced four varieties of Christmas hampers, which come with seasonal dishes. This includes a range of their signature items such as, Brandy Butter, Christmas Pudding, Mince Pies, Shortbread Fingers, and Basil Pesto, to name a few.
VENUE: Ogaan, Dharam Marg, Kriti Nagar, Malcha and NicoCaara, Chanakypuri
TIME: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.



F&B

Festive special
Social, a chain of cafes, has launched its Christmas special menu with nine new dishes. On until 31st December, the menu offers dishes like Pumpkin Paratha with Vindaloo sausage fry; Risottoogood, a smoked cranberry and malai tikka risotto; Cinnamon Carol, a bourbon cocktail with pumpkin syrup; and Christmas Plum Cake.
VENUE: All its Delhi outlets
TIME: 11 a.m. - 12 midnight



GIG

Bollywood hits
On Christmas eve, Imperfecto Shor Club will host an all-night-long live session with DJ Sumit Sethi. A music composer and performer, Sumit is best known for his Bollywood superhits like *Gaddi Mashook Jatt Di, Jai Deva*. He specialises in different music genres including Bollywood, Hip Hop, and House.
VENUE: Hotel Pride Plaza, Aerocity
TIME: 10 p.m. onwards



Offline is not the answer

Gautam Kumawat, professional hacker and cybersecurity expert in Mumbai

One really needs to know the URL of the sites they visit. Sometimes, for example, what we may recognise as Flipkart's website may not be Flipkart at all. It could be spelled 'Flipcart' or the URL could be 'Flipkart.shop.in.' Always read the links because once you make transactions on these phishing websites, your financial data can be severely compromised. You can even get locked out of your own bank account! Does having no data connection mean you can be immune from cybercrime? Not necessarily, especially in the times we are in now. Most of what we do requires a data connection. The only option here is to make sure you have strong firewalls set up, passwords changed every two weeks, up-to-date anti-virus protections and even cyber-insurance which I'm seeing more people invest in.

As told to Divya Kala Bhavani, Hyderabad

Have a merry (and safe) vacation

Shashank Sai, Superintendent of Police at Cyber Crimes Division in Chennai

During the holiday season, there is a general spurt in online bookings, people visiting travel websites, making hotel reservations... So the chances of people being cheated also increase. Once you make a travel reservation, check how the payment is being processed. The website takes you to a payment gateway - make sure that it says 'https', as opposed to just 'http'. The green padlock next to it means your communication is encrypted. There are also online applications, such as Norton Safe Web, Kaspersky, Avast and McAfee that run on your browser and tell you whether a website is safe or not.

Make a policy of not sharing your OTP with any third party. Some agents request you to share OTP to make a payment on your behalf; do not allow this to happen. It is also generally advised to not let any app talk to your messaging service. After a reservation is made, call the travel website or the hotel and confirm. If it is not confirmed, call your bank and ask them to block the transaction, and report it as fraud.

There is always a window of 30 to 45 minutes for the transaction to be authenticated. Once you report the fraud, the onus is on the bank to keep the money safe.

In case you miss that window, inform your bank nevertheless. Though the money might have been credited into the account through which the transaction has been routed, it might not have been withdrawn. Bank-to-bank communication will make sure that the transaction is kept in abeyance and the money is not withdrawn. At the same time, communicate to the police as well, so there is always the second channel of the police talking to the banks, and freezing the account. Some credit card companies offer fraud insurance, check if yours does. Always cap your credit card's spending limit.

While on a holiday, avoid using public/free wifi - even in airports, hotels, and cafés.

As told to Sweta Akundi, Chennai

Deck the halls with firewalls

FEATURES TEAM

Online shopping, holiday-themed social media posts, last-minute getaway bookings, backing up data to the cloud - at this time of the year, online activity reaches a peak, and with this surge in activity come massive exchanges of personal and financial data over countless networks. Data has become more than binary information flowing through IT systems, it is a deeply personal asset holding information many people would not share with even their closest friends. So when that data, financial or otherwise, gets compromised, we often go to local cybercrime divisions to solve the situation and to tighten all our systems.

For a bit of perspective, according to a December 10 survey titled 'A Christmas Carol: Scam Edition' by McAfee, 28.6% of Indians have lost between ₹15,000 to ₹20,000, all as a result of fake online retail sites. Further, 56.1% Indians have fallen victim to discount scams, by clicking on links that took them to sketchy websites.

These numbers alone prove we need to up our digital IQ, not just for the holiday season but for the foreseeable future. Here are notes from of some of the country's cybercrime experts on what they recommend:

Whether you are booking your next vacation, or indulging in holiday sales and offers, this season sees a surge in online activity. We speak to cybercrime experts around the country who bust common misconceptions, and give tips on basic digital hygiene

Spread the discourse

Pavan Duggal, advocate at the Supreme Court of India, and a leading expert in cyberlaw

Cybersecurity is now a societal, legal, and mindset issue. This is ultimately a human issue, because it is not just the security of your data and networks, but it is intrinsically linked to your personal self. If your personal data is insecure, then digital-present and -future can all be compromised. It needs to be given far more significance than it is being given now. We also need to have a radical shift in how we educate our children on cybersecurity - we need to start talking about it from Class I, especially since we are giving children devices from a very young age, without exposing them to the details and nuances of security online, cyber-criminals, and both state as well as non-state actors. Insurance against cybercrimes is a very nascent phenomenon in India, mostly because the method of risk calculation for cybersecurity in

the Indian context hasn't yet been well-developed. Under the new Data Protection Bill 2019, companies will now be exposed to compensation of ₹15 crores in case they are found negligent while processing and storing personal data. [Consequently] I see a far bigger fillip for the growth of cyber-insurance.



Otherwise, it is being seen more as a luxury and not as a necessity. Some tips for cloud data storage? The cloud isn't permanent. It's a bad plan if you blindly upload your data to the cloud without local backups. You should also be sensitive to put only certain kinds of data on the cloud. No trade secrets, personal photos of intimate moments, for instance. Always re-visit what you have on the cloud. Your primary mantra should be that these should only be things that are relevant for day-to-day use.

Incoming in 2020

People seem to have forgotten about ransomware since the [WannaCry] 2017 attack [during which Microsoft Windows-equipped computers were targeted by encrypting data and demanding ransom payments in the Bitcoin cryptocurrency]... It is coming back in a big way in 2020. One estimate suggests that in 2020, [ransomware] is going to be quadrupled in the health and medical sectors.

Experts are also saying that passwords are going to be passé with advancements in quantum computing. This new decade will be the most life- and game-changing decade of human civilisation in the sense that the developments that this decade will see will outstrip anything that has happened earlier. Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things, and Blockchain will all change the way we think, perceive, and do business online. AI's rapid pace, along with Big Data and data mining, will mark a sea-change.

As told to Vangmayi Parakala, Delhi

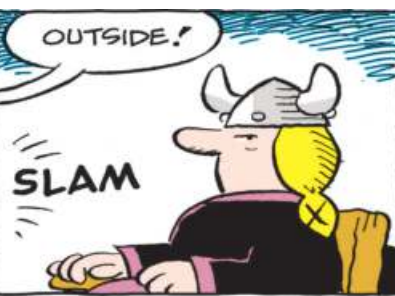
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PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



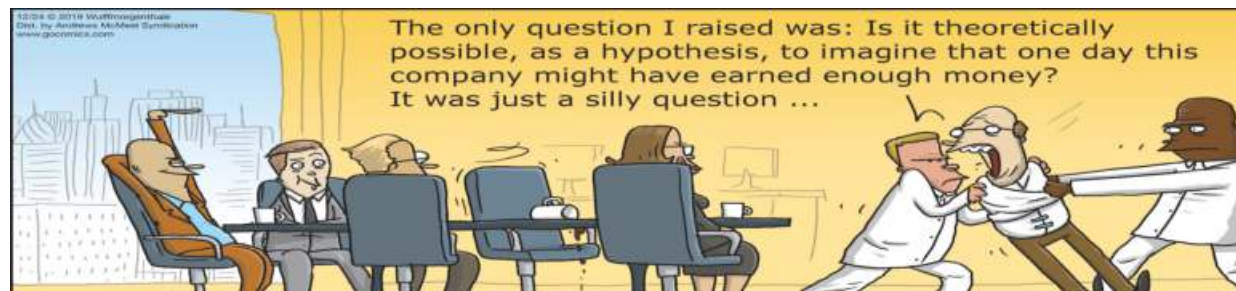
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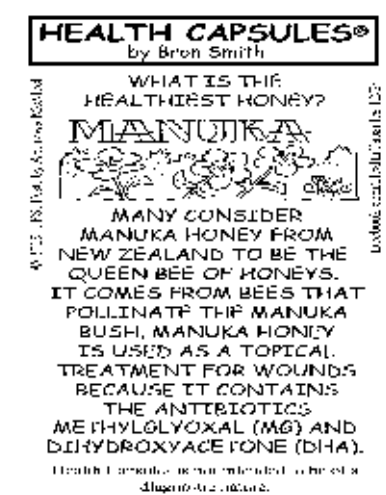
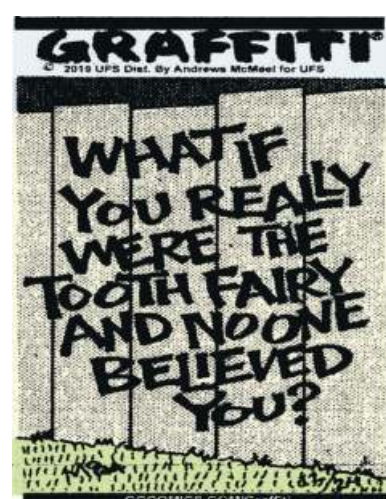
TIGER



WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13258

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9				10		
11				12		
	13	14		15		
16						17
18			19		20	21
22				23		
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- Across**
- 1 Eat greedily (like a turkey?) (6)
- 4 Backhanders (6)
- 9 Endeavour (7)
- 10 Interior layout and furnishings (5)
- 11 Dull persistent pains (5)
- 12 Capital of Madeira (7)
- 13 Everyday (11)
- 18 Poison, As (7)
- 20 Deep ravine (5)
- 22 Shout of approval (5)
- 23 Hug (7)
- 24 Endured (6)
- 25 Closely joined (6)
- Down**
- 1 Leave (2,4)
- 2 Markedly masculine (5)
- 3 Amount of money

- paid all at once (4,3)
- 5 Sculptor of The Thinker (5)
- 6 Relating to the Greek god of wine (7)
- 7 High-pitched and piercing (6)
- 8 Arrogantly obstinate (5-6)
- 14 Edible bivalve molluscs (7)
- 15 Able to be read (7)
- 16 17th century French mathematician - SI unit of pressure (6)
- 17 Saw (6)
- 19 Scandinavian (5)
- 21 Dahl or Amundsen? (5)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated December 25, 2019. Solution No. 13257

A	N	N	A	L	D	U	V	E	T			
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Rohit Sharma — oozing class and chutzpah

Opener makes batting a treat to watch and has forged a great understanding with Dhawan and Rahul

WI IN INDIA

Y.B. SARANGI
CUTTACK

With his effortless batting, Rohit Sharma offers cricket lovers a sit-back-and-enjoy show. His performance is easy on the eye, yet high on effectiveness.

In 2019, he performed plenty of such shows. Especially in the 50-over format, where he gathered 1490 runs in 27 innings at an average of 57.30 and end up as the highest run-getter ahead of captain Virat Kohli (1377).

"Personally I have enjoyed batting, but there is no way I am stopping," said Rohit Sharma, the Man-of-the-Series in India's 2-1 win over West Indies, during the post-match presentation at the Barabati Stadium here on Sunday night.

This demonstrates how Rohit relishes his moment in the middle. It has helped him score seven hundreds and six fifties in the last 12 months.

Boy next door

At a time when hunks have replaced common men as heroes in Indian movies, Rohit, with his lazy elegance, is like a superstar from a bygone era who has found acceptance and appeal even today. While batsmen with bulging muscles have made

Power-packed performances

The India-West Indies ODI series went down to the wire before the hosts clinched it in a thrilling finish at Cuttack on Sunday



BATTING		Name	I	R	H	Avg.	S/R	50/100s
		Rohit Sharma	3	258	159	86.00	100.38	1/1
		Shai Hope	3	222	102*	111.00	77.62	1/1
		Nicholas Pooran	3	193	89	96.50	144.02	2/0
		K.L. Rahul	3	185	102	61.66	88.94	1/1
		Shimron Hetmyer	3	180	139	60.00	123.28	0/1
		Shreyas Iyer	3	130	70	43.33	102.36	2/0



BOWLING		Name	M	W	BBI	Avg.	Econ.	4/SW
		Keemo Paul	3	6	3/59	26.00	6.59	0/0
		Mohammed Shami	3	5	3/39	32.40	6.11	0/0
		Sheldon Cottrell	3	5	2/46	40.60	7.00	0/0
		Alzarri Joseph	3	4	2/45	41.50	6.38	0/0
		Kuldeep Yadav	3	3	3/52	54.66	5.46	0/0
		Ravindra Jadeja	3	3	2/74	62.00	6.20	0/0



COMPILED BY G. PRASAD

the thrashing of the leather ball a trend in T20 cricket, Rohit, the boy next door, sends the white ball flying to the boundary without much toil.

Rohit, who closed the year with a 63-ball 63 and contributed significantly in India's big run chase in the third and final ODI here, has scored the most number of boundary shots — 146 fours and 36 sixes — this year.

Only Eoin Morgan has hit more sixes — 41 — while Aaron Finch has the same number. Nevertheless, they are

far behind on number of fours.

"I understand my batting really well. I want to play within my limits. Knowing the game plan you want to execute is very important," said the 32-year-old, providing an insight into his uncluttered mind and mature thinking.

The other important facet of Rohit's batting is making his partner feel good in his company. After his fine run with opening partner and good friend Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit has forged an en-

able rapport with the talented K.L. Rahul. The result is for everyone to see.

In just 10 innings this year, Rohit and Rahul have developed a special bond which has yielded 923 runs, including five century stands, at a whopping average of 92.30. They have defied the popular theory of left-right combination with sheer class.

Rapid strides

Rohit and Rahul's 227-run stand in Visakhapatnam has already established itself as the best Indian opening asso-

Rohit in numbers

■ In 2019, he has totalled 1490 runs in 27 ODI innings at an average of 57.30.

■ Rohit is the highest run-getter ahead of captain Virat Kohli (1377).

■ This includes seven hundreds and six fifties in the last 12 months.

■ Rohit has scored the most number of boundary shots — 146 fours and 36 sixes — this year.

■ In just 10 innings this year, Rohit and Rahul have scored 923 runs, including five century stands, at a whopping average of 92.30.

ciation against the Windies. Their combined average is unmatched by a mile and the two, in their prime, promise to make rapid strides on the all-time list of successful opening partners.

Rohit, who went past Sri Lankan Sanath Jayasuriya's 22-year-old record of scoring the most runs by an opener in international cricket during his knock here, wants to replicate his white-ball cricket success in red-ball matches too.

He has already shown signs of it after being promoted as an opener in Tests and is eagerly looking forward to achieving greater glory.



On song: While other burly batsmen prefer to bludgeon the bowlers, Rohit Sharma is all touch and timing without compromising on the scoring rate. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

Bumrah and Dhawan back in Indian squad

Rohit and Shami rested for the T20Is against Sri Lanka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Jasprit Bumrah and Shikhar Dhawan have been picked to the Indian teams, for the Twenty20 Internationals against Sri Lanka and the One-Day Internationals against Australia, to be played in January.

However, in-form opener and vice-captain Rohit Sharma and Mohammed Shami have been rested for the three-match series against Sri Lanka, beginning on January 5.

Bumrah, who had suffered a stress fracture, is reportedly fit enough to test his recovery in Gujarat's forthcoming Ranji Trophy match.

According to selection committee chairman M.S.K. Prasad, "Sanju Samson will be the back-up opener in the T20 series. Against Australia,

The squads and dates

T20IS VS SRI LANKA

Virat Kohli (Capt.), Shikhar Dhawan, K.L. Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur, Manish Pandey, Washington Sundar and Sanju Samson

January 5, **Guwahati**
January 7, **Indore**
January 10, **Pune**

ODIS VS AUSTRALIA

Virat Kohli (Capt.), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, K.L. Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant, Kedar Jadhav, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Shami, Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur, and Jasprit Bumrah

Jan. 14, **Mumbai** | Jan. 17, **Rajkot** | Jan. 19, **Bengaluru**

lia, we have all three openers in the team — Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul." Seamers Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Deepak Chahar

Sanju Samson will be the back-up opener in the T20I series

M.S.K. PRASAD

are out of the reckoning on account of injuries.

"Deepak, who did well in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, aggravated his back injury in the second ODI in Visakhapatnam," said Prasad. "On the availability of all-rounder Hardik Pandya, the chief selector said they would test him in the third week of January for a possible chance to figure in the series against New Zealand from January 24.

Shardul Thakur, Navdeep Saini, who will be the 16th member for the ODI series against Australia, and Khaleel Ahmed will continue to be in the scheme of things for the season.

VIJAY LOKAPALLY
NEW DELHI

M.S.K. Prasad wants Rishabh Pant to work with a specialist wicket-keeping coach and former Test stumper Kiran More is willing to offer his services.

Chief selector Prasad rates Pant as a special talent. "He has done well and we have seen glimpses of some good batting recently. He batted exceptionally well in Tests (in England and Australia). Pant is a work in progress and I would suggest he can benefit if he gets to work with More. There is no problem with Pant's batting but he surely needs to work on his wicketkeeper. As a wicketkeeper he has to be good enough to command his place," Prasad told *The Hindu*.

When asked if he would help Pant, More responded,



Under scrutiny: Rishabh Pant, who has had a rash of wicketkeeping gaffes, needs to up his game. ■ R. RAJU

"Any time. I will be too happy to work with Pant. I did work with him for two days (last year) but then I would need to spend more time with him. A ten-day stint one-on-one with Pant would be a good idea to start with. He has a fantastic cricket sense and there are a few technical things to be sorted out. He is young and needs

some guidance. Putting pressure is not going to help at all. I must tell you he is mentally very strong."

As Prasad pointed out, "The desire to work on his wicketkeeping has to come from within. We are studying his work and are all ready to help him. Ideally he needs to improve in certain areas. It is not fair to talk of Pant in the

same breath as (Wridhiman) Saha or M.S. (Dhoni). Please remember Pant did not play much of domestic cricket before he got into the Indian team like say Parthiv (Patel) or (Dinesh) Karthik. Had he played a good three-four seasons of hard grind in domestic cricket he would not have faced some of these issues."

Would Pant find a place purely as a batsman? "Possible. But then it would depend on what kind of combination the team wants. It would also mean that Pant would need to develop as a fielder in some specialist position. It is not easy. Look at K.L. (Rahul) finding it tough to get a place in the Test team. Pant is being guided. I keep talking to him. He has lost weight and is working hard on his keeping skills. We will back him."

Dhoni's 15 years in India colours

Took the team to the pinnacle of glory in all formats



Living legend: Mahendra Singh Dhoni has brought joy to the Indian fans with his exploits as a player and captain. ■ AFP

	M	Inns	N.O.	Runs	HS	Avg	SR	100s	50s	Ct/St
Tests	90	144	16	4876	224	38.09	59.11	6	33	256/38
ODIs	350	297	84	10773	183*	50.57	87.56	10	73	321/123
T20Is	98	85	42	1617	56	37.6	126.13	0	2	57/34

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Two-time World Cup-winning former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Monday completed 15 years in international cricket, a milestone that has come at a time when he is on a sabbatical from the game.

The dasher from Ranchi, who made his debut against Bangladesh under Sourav Ganguly's captaincy in 2004, has been one of the

most impactful Indian cricketers with 17,266 runs across all formats for India.

The 38-year-old wicket-keeper has turned up for the country in 350 ODIs, 90 Tests and 98 T20 Internationals while affecting a staggering 829 dismissals behind the stumps.

His career is studded with several milestones including leading India to victory in the 2011 World Cup where he finished the final with a

six to help the 'Men in Blue' lift the coveted trophy.

Under Dhoni, India transformed into one of the most successful limited-overs sides in world cricket and he is the only Indian captain to have won all the three major ICC trophies — World Twenty20 in 2007, ICC World Cup in 2011 and Champions Trophy in 2013.

He also led Team India to the No.1 spot in ICC rankings in both Tests and ODIs.

Harmanpreet, Smriti and Veda to lead teams

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana and Veda Krishnamurthy will lead India-A, B and C teams in the women's T20 Challenger Trophy to be played at Cuttack from January 4 to 11.

The squads: India-A: Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Taniya Bhatia (wk), Shivali Shinde (wk), Jasia Akhtar, Priya Puniya, Deepti Sharma, Devika Vaidya, Sneha Rana, Mansi Joshi, Meghna Singh, Komal Jhanjhad, Meenu Mani, Radha Yadav, and Bharati Fulmali.

Shaw in India-A squad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The in-form Prithvi Shaw on Monday took another step towards an India comeback after being named in the 'A' squad for the tour of New Zealand.

The India-A squads:
For two tour matches and three one-day games: Shubman Gill (Capt.), Prithvi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Suryakumar Yadav, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan (wk), Hardik Pandya, Krunal Pandya, Axar Patel, Rahul Chahar, Sandeep Warrier, Ishan Porel, Khaleel Ahmed, and Mohd. Siraj.
For first four-day game: Hanuma Vihari (Capt.), Prithvi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, Priyanka Panchal, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Shubman Gill, K.S. Bharat

India-B: Smriti Mandhana (Capt.), Sushma Verma (wk), R. Kalpana (wk), V.R. Vanitha, Jemimah Rodrigues, Anuja Patil, Poonam Yadav, Pooja Vastrakar, Shikha Pandey, Renuka Singh, Anjali Sarvani, Sushri Dityadarshini, T.P. Kanwar, and Richa Ghosh.

India-C: Veda Krishnamurthy (Capt.), Nuzhat Parween (wk), Shafali Verma (wk), Yastika Bhatiya, D. Hemalatha, Harleen Deol, Manali Dakshini, Jincy George, Arundhati Reddy, Monica Patel, Vrushiha Bhagat, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Tanushree Sarkar, and Madhuri Mehta.

(wk), Shivam Dube, Shahbaz Nadeem, Rahul Chahar, Sandeep Warrier, Avesh Khan, Mohd. Siraj, Ishan Porel, and Ishan Kishan.

For second four-day game: Hanuma Vihari (Capt.) Prithvi Shaw, Mayank Agarwal, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), K.S. Bharat (wk), Shivam Dube, R. Ashwin, Shahbaz Nadeem, Sandeep Warrier, Avesh Khan, Mohd. Siraj, and Ishan Porel.

The schedule:
Tour games: Jan. 17 & 19, Lincoln.
One-dayers: Jan. 22 (Lincoln), Jan. 24 & 26 (Christchurch).

Four-day matches: Jan. 30-Feb. 2 (Christchurch) and Feb. 7 to 10 (Lincoln).

2020 Sportstar ACES Awards

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

THE NOMINEES
SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR (TEAM SPORTS)



BALA DEVI (FOOTBALL)

Playing for Manipur Police SC, Bala Devi was the highest goal-scorer in the Indian Women's League (IWL) this year with 26 goals in seven matches. Aged 29, she was also the top-scorer at the senior women's national football championship held in Arunachal Pradesh, netting 21 goals in five matches, including the all-important winner in the final as Manipur beat Railways to win its 20th national title. Recently, Bala Devi also emerged as the star of the South Asian Games where she slotted home twice to guide India to a comfortable 2-0 victory over Nepal in the final.



DEEP GRACE EKKKA (HOCKEY)

Deep Grace has been one of the core members who have laid the foundation for the Indian women's hockey team's growing success in the international arena. A natural leader in the defence and gifted with a tactical understanding of the game, Deep Grace has contributed heavily to India's Test tour victories in Ireland, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan. Her calmness in the final minutes of the Olympic qualifiers tie in November, helped India hold the US at bay to secure back-to-back Olympic appearances for the first time in history.



LALREMSIAM (HOCKEY)

At the age of 19, Mizoram forward Lalremisiami already has 64 international caps for India, including a World Cup quarterfinals appearance and an Asian Games silver medal. Her telepathic understanding with fellow forwards and ability to create chances have played a big part in the women's team's improved scoring record on foreign soil in the past year. As the Indian women's team prepares for its third Olympics next year, Lalremisiami will have a bigger role to play at Tokyo alongside her experienced teammates.

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

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 8.30 a.m.
Big Bash League: Sony Six (SD & HD), 9.15 a.m.

IN BRIEF



Lowry leads Raptors' incredible rally

LOS ANGELES
Defending champion Toronto Raptors made the greatest comeback in club history, rallying from a 30-point deficit to defeat visiting Dallas Mavericks 110-107. Kyle Lowry scored 20 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter and also passed off 10 assists while Chris Boucher had a career-high 21 points to spark the Raptors' comeback victory.

The results: Toronto Raptors 110 bt Dallas Mavericks 107; Boston Celtics 119 bt Charlotte Hornets 93; Milwaukee Bucks 117 bt Indiana Pacers 89; Oklahoma City Thunder 118 bt LA Clippers 112; Denver Nuggets 128 bt LA Lakers 104. **AFP**



Lifter Rakhi sets two National records

DOHA
Indian weightlifter Rakhi Halder created two National records on way to a bronze medal in the women's 64kg category at the Qatar International Cup on Sunday. The Commonwealth championship gold medalist obliterated the senior National record in snatch and total with a personal best of 218kg (95 snatch, 123 clean and jerk). India ended the Olympic qualifying event with three medals. Mirabai Chanu had won gold, while Jeremy Lalrinnunga claimed silver. **PTI**



Leclerc extends Ferrari deal until 2024

MILAN
Monegasque driver Charles Leclerc confirmed on Monday he had extended his contract with Ferrari until 2024. "Extremely happy to announce that I will be staying with Scuderia Ferrari for five more years," the 22-year-old said on Twitter. The 22-year-old, who joined Ferrari in 2016, has impressed in his first season alongside four-time World champion Sebastian Vettel. Leclerc had seven poles and two wins at the Belgian and Italian GP. **AFP**



Clijsters sets return for March in Mexico

BRUSSELS
Belgian tennis star Kim Clijsters, who retired for a second time in 2011, confirmed on Monday she was making a comeback starting in Mexico (Monterrey, March 2-8). "A few more weeks of patience and I'll be ready to go," the four-time Major winner said in a video posted on social media. The 36-year-old originally planned to return in time to play at the Australian Open, but was held up by a knee injury. **AFP**

We have talent, it should be groomed in right way: Raman

Sports should be made compulsory in the school curriculum, says Ashwin

PANEL DISCUSSION

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

Chief National badminton coach P. Gopi Chand feels winning only a few medals may not necessarily mean India will be a super power in sports.

"Only when every kid explores the boundaries when we ensure their basic needs are addressed so that they can enjoy and love any sport, we will achieve our objective," Gopi said at a panel discussion on Roadmap for India to become a super power in sports, organised by Gaudium Sportopia Centre of Excellence, which aims at integrated approach to sports

and academics.

"The kind of badminton courts the Gaudium Centre here has, I have not seen them anywhere in India. This kind of infrastructure in academics and sports should be provide in schools," Gopi said.

Renowned chess coach R.B. Ramesh, whose trainees include GM R. Praggnanandhaa, said parents push their kids far in their anxiety to see them become stars overnight.

"There is a strong need to balance that point in grooming young talent."

Former National table tennis champion S. Raman feels the country badly needs infrastructure which can ensure excellence in academics

and sports and that's the reason Gaudium is one of the best things to have happened.

"Yes we have talent, it is only a question of grooming it in the right manner," he added.

India cricketer R. Ashwin felt no student studies mathematics to be a genius like the great Ramanujan or science to go to space.

"Since there is no option, they study these subjects.

"I feel sports should be made compulsory in the school curriculum as a subject to unearth talent," Ashwin said.

Passion
NBA Basketball Schools India technical director Leo Bruno

felt there is passion everywhere but sports needs to be embedded in the education system like in the US to produce champions.

Sean Jamison of Wanderers Sports Medical Centre (South Africa), which will be involved with Gaudium, said in his home country, sports unites people of different races and cultures like in India.

Mangipudi Prasad, co-founder of Sportzlive which organised the PBL, anchored the debate.

Kirthi Reddy, Director & Founder of Gaudium Sportopia, hoped that with the involvement of these illustrious sportspersons, her dream of producing Olympic medallists will be realised.



Elite gathering: S. Raman, R.B. Ramesh, Kirthi Reddy, Director and Founder of Gaudium Sportopia Centre of Excellence, chairman Nityananda Reddy, P. Gopi Chand, R. Ashwin, Mangipudi Prasad, co-founder of Sportzlive, Leo Bruno, technical director of NBA Basketball Schools India, and Sean Jamison of Wanderers Sports Medical Centre (South Africa) at the panel discussion. • V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

Karthik, Adithya finish on top

Former wins senior section and the latter the junior class

MOTORSPORTS

SPORTS BUREAU
CHENNAI

Bengaluru's Karthik Muthusamy and Hyderabad's Adithya Raja held their nerve to emerge victorious in their respective categories in the grand finale of the JK Tyre FMSCI National karting championship at the ECR Speedway here.

The results (championship): Sodi Kart 4-stroke junior class: 1. Adithya Raja (Hyderabad); 2. Jasmehar Jubbil (Delhi); 3. Muskaan Jubbil (Delhi).

Sodi Kart 4-stroke senior class: 1. Karthik Muthusamy (Bengaluru); 2. Mohammed Ridhaf (Cochin); 3. Pratham Kumar (Lucknow).

JK Tyre 4-stroke ladies class open: 1. Tapasya Sudershan (Coimbatore); 2. Aashi Hanspal (Mumbai); 3. Isha Sharma (Ahmedabad).



On the podium: Karthik, centre, flanked by Ridhaf, left, and Pratham. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

RACING

Beyond Limits wins main event

HYDERABAD: M/s. Ahmed Alam Khan & Barkath Alam Khan's Beyond Limits (Ashhad Asbar up) won the G.V. Rao Memorial Cup, the main event of the races held here on Monday (Dec. 23). Laxman Singh trains the winner.

1 WISFUL THINKING PLATE (DIV. I) (1,100m), maiden 2-y-o fillies only (Cat. II), (Terms): LOMBARDY (Nathan Evans) 1, Aintree (Akshay Kumar) 2, Royal Romance (A.A. Vikrant) 3 and Mirana (Kuldeep Singh) 4. 3-1/2, 3-1/4 and 3/4. Im. 5.42s. ₹7 (w), 6, 5 and 8 (p), SHP: 12, FP: 13, Q: 8, Tla: 61. Favourite: Lombardy. Owners: M/s. Vijay Rac. & Farms P.L. rep. by M/s. Vijay Kumar Gupta & Susheel Kumar Gupta, M/s. Poonawalla Rac. & Br. P. L. rep. by Ms. Simone Z. Poonawalla & Mr. Rishad N. Pandole & Mr. Aditya P. Tharkey. Trainer: Deshmukh.

2 SANGAM PLATE (1,400m), 5-y-o & over, rated upto 25 (Cat. III): ROYAL DANCER (Akshay Kumar) 1, All Star General (Irvan Singh) 2, Recumbentibus (Kuldeep Singh) 3 and Ultimate Risk (Ajit Singh) 4. 1-1/4, 2 and 1-1/2. Im. 28.23s. ₹14 (w), 6, 5 and 8 (p), SHP: 18, FP: 34, Q: 15, Tla: 94. Favourite: All Star General. Owner: Mr. Md. Junaid Ali Khan. Trainer: Ravinder Singh.

3 CYNDY PLATE (DIV. II), (1,600m), maiden 3-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): MAHASHAKTI (Ashhad Asbar) 1, Gazebo (Nakhat Singh) 2, Minelli (Gopal Singh) 3 and Exclusive Art (Akshay Kumar) 4. 1-1/4, 3-1/4 and nk. Im. 39.57s. ₹18 (w), 7, 7 and 7 (p), SHP: 21, FP: 97, Q: 58, Tla: 490. Favourite: Exclusive Art. Owners: M/s. Rakesh R. Jhunjhunwala, Berjis Minoo Desai & Ashok Kumar Gupta. Trainer: M. Srinivas Reddy.

4 STEP ASIDE PLATE (1,800m), 3-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): KESARIYA BALAM (Akshay Kumar) 1, Royal Treat (Nakhat Singh) 2, Lancashire (Irvan Singh) 3 and Glendale (Ashhad Asbar) 4. 5, 3/4 and 1. Im. 53s. ₹7 (w), 6, 6 and 10 (p), SHP: 12, FP: 15, Q: 12, Tla: 41. Favourite: Kesariya

Balam. Owner: Mr. Ravender Reddy Male. Trainer: R.H. Sequeira.

5 STARRY SCENE PLATE (DIV. II), (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): SHANDAAR (Surya Prakash) 1, Top Contender (I. Chisty) 2, Prince Caspian (Jitendra Singh) 3 and Heaven Can Wait (Afroz Khan) 4. 3/4, 3-3/4 and 1/2. Im. 12.09s. ₹17 (w), 7, 6 and 18 (p), SHP: 17, FP: 46, Q: 22, Tla: 673. Favourite: Top Contender. Owner: Mr. Junaid Ali Khan. Trainer: Ravinder Singh.

6 G.V. RAO MEMORIAL CUP (2,000m), 3-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): BEYOND LIMITS (Ashhad Asbar) 1, Artistry (Irvan Singh) 2, Mind Reader (Nakhat Singh) 3 and Pentagon (Abhay Singh) 4. 4-1/2, 2 and hd. 2m, 6.84s. ₹9 (w), 6 and 12 (p), SHP: 22, FP: 47, Q: 34, Tla: 74. Favourite: Beyond Limits. Owners M/s. Ahmed Alam Khan & Barkath Alam Khan. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

7 STARRY SCENE PLATE (DIV. I), (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): ASHKA ASHKA (Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Marina Del Rey (Akshay Kumar) 2, Vancouver (A.A. Vikrant) 3 and Digger (Mukesh Kumar) 4. 2, 1-1/4 and 1-1/2. Im. 11.69s. ₹17 (w), 7, 8 and 9 (p), SHP: 16, FP: 57, Q: 22, Tla: 108. Favourite: Marina Del Rey. Owner: Mr. Pamulapati Srinivas Rao. Trainer: Robin Reddy.

8 HARIDWAR PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): MR. SHANGHAI (Rohit Kumar) 1, Sublime (Gaddam) 2, His Excellency (Surya Prakash) 3 and Darshish (Abhay Singh) 4. Shd. 3/4 and 3/4. Im. 12.93s. ₹14 (w), 7, 7 and 9 (p), SHP: 18, FP: 47, Q: 28, Tla: 173. Favourite: Mr. Shanghai. Owners: Mr. Ravinder Reddy Male & Sardar Jivtesh Singh. Trainer: Satyanarayana.
Jkt: ₹1,293 (403 tkts.), Runner-up: 101 (2,201 tkts.), Mini Jkt: 1,228 (51 tkts.), Tr (i): 110 (361 tkts.), (ii): 185 (237 tkts.), (iii): 244 (347 tkts.).

Karnataka men defeat Uttarakhand

SPORTS BUREAU
LUDHIANA

Karnataka men stunned Uttarakhand 81-57 in a Group 'A' league match of the 70th National basketball championship here on Monday.

This was a setback for Uttarakhand, which had earlier beaten Haryana and Delhi comfortably.

The results (league):

Men: Karnataka 81 (Anil Kumar 23, Issac Thomas 16, Jee-tendra Singh 11, Aravind Arumugam 10) bt Uttarakhand 57 (Vishesh Bhriuguvanshi 26); Haryana 79 (Yudhveer 24, Abhishek 20, Vikash 12) bt Delhi 71 (K. Prachit 20, K. Vishal 17).

Services 101 (Mahipal Singh 21, Nikhil Kumar 18, Joginder Singh 12, Lalit 12) bt Rajasthan 64 (Gaurav Chandel 15, Sharad Dahich 12).

Uttarakhand 75 (Vishesh Bhriuguvanshi 29, Prashanth Singh 10) bt Haryana 53 (Abhijith 26, Yudhvir Singh 14, Abhishek 11); Punjab 84 (Arshpreet Singh Bhullar 22, Amjot Singh 19) bt Delhi 63 (G. Ohlan 14, Vishal 12).

Kerala 80 (P.S. Jeena 25, P.G. Anjana 20, Stephy Nixon 18) bt Tamil Nadu 53 (Iswarya 16, Nishanthi 12).

Madhya Pradesh 66 (Nima Doma 28, Namrata 15, D. Anjali 14) bt Karnataka 55 (Varsha Nandini 25, Lopamudra 12).

Real cedes ground to Barcelona

Left to rue a slew of missed chances; Atletico back in business

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Real Madrid was left to rue a series of near misses on Sunday as it stumbled to a 0-0 home draw against Athletic Bilbao, dropping two points below Barcelona in a tight Spanish title race.

Real also drew 0-0 in mid-week at Barcelona but Sunday's result leaves Madrid on 37 points at the half-way stage of the season, two points off Barcelona which tops the table on 39.

Toni Kroos hit the bar, Karim Benzema saw an effort cleared off the line with a back-heel and both Rodrygo and Vincius Junior forced snap saves on a frustrating night for Madrid.

Real defender Eder Militao was forced off after being poked in the eye and his re-

placement Nacho Fernandez also hit the woodwork.

Coach Zinedine Zidane brought on Gareth Bale and Luka Jovic, but Madrid failed to find a winner.

"It was neither bad luck nor complacency," Zidane said after the game. "There's

no reason to get depressed about this, we need to keep calm and keep our heads up. We created lots of chances and if we keep going then they'll start going in.

"I feel sorry for the players. It would have been nice for them to get more;

three points from three games isn't great."

Nerby finish

For Bilbao, Kenan Kodro's thunderbolt was ruled out for off-side in the first half while the Santiago Bernabeu lived on its nerves when Athletic flooded forward deep into added time with Asier Villalibre almost scoring a winner at the death.

Earlier, Angel Correa came off the bench to score one and make another as Atletico Madrid climbed back into the top four with a 2-1 win at Real Betis.

The results:

La Liga: Real Madrid 0 drew with Athletic Bilbao 0; Levante 3 (Marti 60, 70, Mayoral 90+) bt Celta Vigo 1 (Aspas 12); Real Betis 1 (Bartra 90+3) lost to Atletico Madrid 2 (Correa 58, Morata 84).

Serie A: Sassuolo 1 (Traore 29) lost to Napoli 2 (Allan 57, Elmas 90+4).



Crucial intervention: Athletic Bilbao's Unai Nunez clears the ball from the goal line against Real Madrid. •REUTERS

Peter Siddle treated for smoke inhalation

SYDNEY: Australia and Adelaide Strikers bowler Peter Siddle was treated for smoke inhalation after a Big Bash League match in Canberra was abandoned at the weekend because of toxic bushfire haze.

Thick smoke enveloped the field during Strikers' match against Sydney Thunder, forcing the players off the field.

Siddle was among the few people who needed treatment. **AFP**

Memorable day for Pakistan

Sri Lanka falls to huge defeat, concedes series 1-0

SL IN PAKISTAN

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KARACHI

Teenager Naseem Shah became the youngest fast bowler to take a five-wicket haul in Test history as Pakistan completed a winning comeback to Tests on home soil with a 1-0 series victory over Sri Lanka on Monday.

The 16-year-old quick took two of the last three wickets to fall in the final day's 15 minutes of play to end with five for 31 from 12.5 overs as Pakistan sealed a comprehensive 263-run win.

The two-Test series was the first played in Pakistan since a terrorist attack on a bus carrying the Sri Lankan team in Lahore in 2006.

At 16 years and 31 days, Naseem very nearly beat the all-time mark for the youngest player to claim a five-wicket haul.

Fellow Pakistani Nasim-ul-Ghani, a left-arm spinner, was 16 years and 303 days when he claimed the honour against the West Indies in 1958.

The fifth day of the Test resumed with Sri Lanka reeling at 212 for seven chasing 476. It took less than three overs for Pakistan to wrap up the innings.

Having dismissed Dilruwan Perera with the last ball bowled on Sunday, Naseem removed Lasith Embuldeni-



Into the record books: Naseem Shah, centre, became the youngest fast bowler to take a five-wicket haul in Test history on Monday. ■ AP

ya for a golden duck with Monday's first ball.

While Naseem missed his hat-trick, century-maker Oshada Fernando fell in the next over, nicking a catch to first slip off leg-spinner Yasir Shah without adding to his overnight 102.

Naseem, playing in only his third Test, trapped Vishwa Fernando lbw for a duck in the following over to wrap up the match.

"We definitely needed that performance," said Pakistan's Azhar Ali, celebrat-

ing his first Test win as captain. "Special thanks to Sri

SCOREBOARD

Pakistan – 1st innings: 191.

Sri Lanka – 1st innings: 271.

Pakistan – 2nd innings: 555/3 decl.

Sri Lanka – 2nd innings:

Dimuth Karunaratne c Rizwan b

Abbas 16, Oshada Fernando c

Shafiq b Yasir 102, Kusal

Mendis c Azam b Naseem 0,

Angelo Mathews c Rizwan b

Shaheen 19, Dinesh Chandimal

lbw b Naseem 2, Dhananjaya de

Silva b Yasir 0, Niroshan Dick-

wella b Sohail 65, Dilruwan Per-

Lanka from the bottom of

our hearts," he said.

era c Rizwan b Naseem 5, Lasith

Embuldeniya c Rizwan b

Naseem 0, Vishwa Fernando

lbw b Naseem 0, Lahiru Kumara

(not out) 0; Extras (lb-3): 3.

Total (in 62.5 overs): 212.

Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-40, 3-

70, 4-96, 5-97, 6-201, 7-212, 8-

212, 9-212.

Pakistan bowling: Shaheen 14-

3-51-1, Abbas 12-2-33-1,

Naseem 12.5-4-31-5, Yasir 20-

3-84-2, Sohail 4-0-10-1.

Pakistan won by 263 runs.

SL skipper declares Pakistan '200% safe'

Other countries should follow suit, says Karunaratne

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KARACHI

Sri Lanka may have lost the series but signed off satisfied with safety and security measures in Pakistan after the country's first home Test series in 10 years.

Captain Dimuth Karunaratne called the security for the two-Test series "200 percent" and promised to return.

Significant

The series held major significance for a host nation deprived of all forms of international cricket for almost a decade.

Pakistan had been forced to play its home series outside the country, mostly in the United Arab Emirates, since 2009, when the bus carrying the Sri Lankan team was attacked by terrorists in Lahore.



On full alert: The comprehensive security cover during the tour earned fulsome praise from the visiting Sri Lankans. ■ AFP

Six policemen and a driver escorting match officials were killed. No Sri Lankan players or officials died.

Pakistan had hosted brief Twenty20 and One-Day International engagements in the past two years, but this

first Test series required a longer stay for the Sri Lankan team, of around 15 days.

"It was 200 percent," said Karunaratne.

"The security was really good. They kept talking to us and they were right behind us all the time. We felt safe and secure. The Pakistan fans were also really good – they kept supporting us."

He said other cricketing countries could confidently tour Pakistan, he said. "What I can say is that it's really safe... it's safe to play in Pakistan."

Pakistan captain Azhar Ali was overjoyed.

"It's a great occasion for happiness for all of us that we won the series," said Azhar. "It carried great importance and was very significant because we were playing at home after a long time."

India stars for match against Hyderabad

RANJI TROPHY

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Shikhar Dhawan, Ishant Sharma and Navdeep Saini will be available for Delhi's match against Hyderabad to be played here from December 25.

The three will, however, play just this match since Dhawan and Saini will join the Indian team for the T20 series against Sri Lanka which begins on January 3.

Hiten Dalal, Shivang Vashisht, Shivam Sharma and Simarjeet Singh have been dropped from the team that was picked for the first two matches. Off-spinner Shivam has found himself sidelined even without playing a match. Pradeep Sangwan was ruled out on account of fitness.

The team was picked by the new selection committee of Bantu Singh (chairman), Chetnya Nanda and Anil Bhardwaj.

The team: Shikhar Dhawan (capt.), Dhruv Shorey, Nitish Rana, Kunal Chaudhary, Jonty Sidhu, Anuj Rawat, Lalit Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Navdeep Saini, Tejas Baroka, Pawan Suyal, Vikas Mishra, Kunwar Bhiduri, Kshitiz Sharma and Manojt Kalra.



Ishant Sharma. ■ AFP

Philander to call it quits

South African speedster will hang up his boots after the England Test series

REUTERS
PRETORIA

South Africa seamer Vernon Philander has announced he will retire from all forms of international cricket after the four-match Test series against England starting on Thursday.

Philander, 34, was part of the South African side who reached the No.1 position in all three formats in 2012 and had been the mainstay of the Test attack since he burst on to the scene in 2011.

'Amazing journey'

"I feel that it is the appropriate time to conclude what has been an amazing journey," Philander said in a statement on Monday.

"It has been an honour and privilege to have played alongside the very best in the game as well as being part of the best test team for a number of years.

"My entire focus and energy at this time is to help the Proteas beat England which I am really looking forward to."

Philander made his debut against Australia at Newlands and took five for 15 as the tourists were bowled out for 47 in their second



Philander. ■ AP

innings.

He claimed a record 51 wickets in his first seven Tests, was named South African Cricketer of the Year in 2012 and has taken 216 wickets at an average of 22.16 in his 60 matches.

He also played in 30 ODIs and seven T20I.

Praise from Smith

"Vernon has been an outstanding performer in the time that he has represented

It has been an honour and privilege to have played alongside the very best in the game as well as being part of the best test team for a number of years.

his country, especially in the Test format," said his former captain Graeme Smith, who is now South Africa's acting director of cricket.

Huge impact

"He has made a huge impact for the Proteas and has been at the frontline with the ball for most of his time in the set-up.

"He has given his best in every appearance and I think that how he has turned himself into an all-rounder has been particularly pleasing to watch.

"One of the many things that have stood out for me with Vern is his character, his determination and the way that he has always been up for a fight and a challenge has shown the heart of the man."

Philander reached No. 2 in the world Test bowling rankings in 2013.

Olympics on Mbappe's wish list

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Kylian Mbappe is putting himself forward for the French team at next summer's Tokyo Olympics, while adding that he would not want to fight his club Paris Saint-Germain over participation.

"Playing in the Olympics, I don't control everything," he told *France Football* magazine in an interview to be published on Tuesday. "Of course I want to go, but if my club, which is my employer, doesn't want me to go, I won't force a clash. We'll soon talk about it," said the 21-year-old, who already has a World Cup winner's medal.

Mbappe had dropped an Olympic hint when he responded to the French team's qualification in June with a "TOKYO 2020" tweet accompanied by a flashing emoticon and a French flag.

Olympic football runs from July 22 to August 8, also the scheduled start of the French season. Mbappe will also play for France at the Euros which run from June 12 to July 12.

Broad and Archer go at full tilt

Coach Silverwood says they will be considered for selection

ENG IN SA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BENONI

England speedsters Stuart Broad and Jofra Archer bowled at full pace in the nets on Monday, raising hopes that they would both be fit for the first Test against South Africa, starting at SuperSport Park on Thursday.

"They're exactly where we hoped they would be," said England coach Chris Silverwood, who said both the bowlers would be considered for selection if they continued to make progress.

Broad, Archer and left-arm spinner Jack Leach have yet to bowl in a match situation on the tour after falling ill and missing both the touring team's warm-up match.

Leach also bowled in the nets but may miss out on selection if England decides to field an all-seam attack on a ground which has not been receptive to spin in recent years.

Broad and Archer both bowled five overs at full pace in an optional practice attended by the three recovering bowlers as well as Craig Overton and Dom Bess, who arrived in South Africa on



Humming again: Jofra Archer and Stuart Broad's return is welcome news for England. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Saturday to be on standby in case the originally-selected players were not fit.

Silverwood said he did not believe it would be a gamble to pick Broad and Archer, provided they came through the next two days in good health.

"If Broady tells me he's fit I'll believe him," said Silverwood. "He's got a lot of experience, he knows his body and he knows what he needs to do during the Test match. Jofra, too. He's had two good days and as long as his pace is up and he feels good and gets the practice he needs he'll be a serious contender."

Silverwood confirmed that there was a possibility that England would not pick a spinner. "You look at what is effective on this ground. We're not definitely going all-seam but we'll discuss it over the next few days."

Encouraging signs

The England coach said the three-day match against South Africa-A, which ended in a draw on Sunday, had been encouraging despite the absence of the three frontline bowlers. "The opposition we faced was a really good side. I think both teams came away with something really positive."

Ramkumar to the fore for Supersmashers

Will face off against Sapphires, which was well served by Jeevan

PRO TENNIS LEAGUE

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

Ramkumar Ramanathan was in robust form as he won his singles and doubles, dropping two games in all, to power Proveri Supersmashers into the final with a 30-15 victory over DMG Delhi Crusaders in the Pro Tennis League at the RK Khanna Stadium on Monday.

Ramkumar outplayed former National champion Dalwinder Singh, and later partnered Arjun Kadhe to outgun Dalwinder and Siddhant Banthia, in affixing his mark of class on the tie.

Mastermind

In the final, Supersmashers will be challenged by Haryana Sapphires which craftily got past ARA Avengers 28-24, thanks mainly to Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan masterminding the mixed doubles with Sowjanya Bavisetti and the men's doubles with Vijay Sundar Prashanth, dropping



Crucial performance: Ashish Sinha was adjudged Player-of-the-Match in Proveri Supersmashers' semifinal victory over Delhi Crusaders. ■ KAMESH SRINIVASAN

one game in all.

Supersmashers got off to an unexpectedly good start, as Ashish Sinha tamed Kabir Hans 6-3.

The young Ashish, who does not have an AITA ranking or an ITF junior ranking, got selected for the event when he won an open tournament in a draw of 32. He played an energetic all court game to beat one of the best

juniors in the country.

Daria Mishina consolidated on the start and beat Mahak Jain 6-3. She also combined with Arjun Kadhe to win the mixed doubles against Mahak and Siddhant Banthia, albeit in the tie-break. Thereafter, Ramkumar exploded into the opposition so much, that the teams decided not to play the inconsequential last rub-

ber, a doubles match featuring a former professional and a junior.

Better contested

The other tie was a lot better contested, as Nishant Dabas put Avengers ahead, and Sowjanya beat Riya Bhatia to even the score for Haryana. Thereafter, Jeevan played too good, even though Avengers stayed in the race by

winning the men's singles through Sidharth Rawat against Vijay Sundar.

Haryana did well to take an unbeatable 26-18 lead before the last rubber, in which Saurabh Singh and Suvrat Mall were the overwhelming favourites for Avengers. With two of the best teams making the final, it should be a lively affair on Tuesday afternoon.

The results (semifinals): Haryana Sapphires bt ARA Avengers 28-24 (Udayvir Singh lost to Nishant Dabas 5-6(4); Sowjanya Bavisetti bt Riya Bhatia 6-5 (2); Sowjanya & Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan bt Riya & Niki Poonacha 6-0; Vijay Sundar Prashanth lost to Sidharth Rawat 3-6; Jeevan & Vijay Sundar bt Poonacha & Rawat 6-1; Arjun Uppal & Garvit Gupta lost to Saurabh Singh & Suvrat Mall 2-6).

Proveri Supersmashers bt DMG Delhi Crusaders 30-15 (Ashish Sinha bt Kabir Hans 6-3; Daria Mishina bt Mahak Jain 6-3; Daria & Arjun Kadhe bt Mahak & Siddhant Banthia 6-5(5); Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Dalwinder Singh 6-1; Ramkumar & Kadhe bt Dalwinder & Banthia 6-1).