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Jammu and Kashmir will get statehood soon, says Ram Madhav

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Travis Head's century puts Australia in command

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## NEARBY



'Solving traffic chaos key agenda for next term'

NEW DELHI  
Addressing traffic congestion and ensuring 24-hour drinking water in Delhi will be on the agenda of the AAP government in the next five years if re-elected, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Friday. AAP will release its manifesto for the upcoming Assembly polls between January 15 and 20, the Chief Minister announced.

CITY • PAGE 3

Eight-year-old girl raped and murdered in Nuh

NUH  
An eight-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in Nuh, the police said on Friday. The girl from a village in Ferozepur Jhirka had taken her goats for grazing in the forest on Thursday when she went missing. Her parents found her body on Friday morning and informed the police.

CITY • PAGE 4

Modi is lying about detention camps: Gogoi

GUWAHATI  
Senior Congress leader Tarun Gogoi on Friday called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "liar" for saying that there is no detention camp in the country. "In 2018, the Modi government had sanctioned ₹46 crore for the largest detention centre at Matia in Goalpara district of Assam for housing 3,000 illegal immigrants," Mr. Gogoi said.

EAST • PAGE 6

## Search for life



**Tardy take-off:** Rescue personnel at the site of a plane crash near the Almaty International Airport in Kazakhstan on Friday. Twelve people died when a Bek Air plane with nearly 100 passengers crashed into a building shortly after take-off. • AP (PAGE 14)

## Prove allegations on CAA, Shah dares Rahul

It only confers citizenship: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday dared Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to prove his accusation that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) will strip people, let alone Muslims, of their citizenship.

Mr. Shah, however, did not make any comment on the National Register of Citizens (NRC). "I want to tell everyone, and especially the minorities, that the Congress and company are misleading and spreading rumours that under the CAA, the citizenship of Muslim brothers is about to be taken away. I challenge Rahul Baba to please come and pre-



Amit Shah

sent any single provision in the Act that mentions that citizenship of any person will be taken away," said Mr. Shah in Shimla at a rally to commemorate the BJP's two years of power in the State.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

OUTREACH TO MUSLIMS ► PAGE 13

## Rahul equates NRC, NPR with demonetisation

Both tax the poor, says Cong. leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Friday equated the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the National Population Register (NPR) with the demonetisation of November 2016. He said both the exercises taxed the poor and if the NRC was implemented across India, the poor would suffer the most as they would have to pay bribes to correct any mistakes made during the enumeration.

"Whether NPR or NRC, it is a tax on the poor people of the country. You understand demonetisation. It was a tax on poor people.



Rahul Gandhi

Go to banks and give your money but do not withdraw money from your account. Entire money went to the pocket of 15-20 rich people. This [NPR or NRC] is the same thing," he told reporters at Raipur airport.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

## Army respects rights of adversaries: Rawat

Its rights cell will have policemen to redress complaints

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Army chief Gen. Bipin Rawat on Friday asserted that the Indian armed forces have the utmost respect for human rights and pointed out that the Human Rights Cell in the Army headquarters was being upgraded to the level of a Directorate.

His comments come a day after he said students leading crowds to carry out arson and violence is not leadership, in an apparent reference to the protests across the country against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

"The armed forces not only ensure protection of human rights of our own people but also of adversaries and deal with the prisoners of war as per the Geneva Conventions," he said, while speaking on 'Preserving Human Rights in times of War and Prisoners of War', at the National Human Rights Commission.

The human rights cell, created in 1993, was being upgraded as a Directorate, which would be headed by an Additional Director General of the rank of a Major General. It would also have police personnel to address complaints and facilitate related enquiries, he stated.

### Women inducted

Gen. Rawat said a new initiative was undertaken in October last by recruiting woman jawans in the Military Police force. The Army took along police personnel in search operations, keeping in view the concerns of women during such operations. "The Army has now decided to deploy lady jawans of its Military Police force also."



By the rulebook: Army chief Bipin Rawat addressing officers and interns of the NHRC in New Delhi on Friday • PTI

## No politics in what Army chief said, says V.K. Singh

ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL  
NEW DELHI

The Modi government came to the defence of Army chief General Bipin Rawat on Friday after he drew flak from several quarters for his remarks criticising those leading protests and guiding students to carry out arson and violence.

Speaking to ANI, Union Minister and former Army chief Gen. V.K. Singh (retd.) defended Gen. Rawat's comments and asked the Opposition not to politicise everything. There was nothing political in asking students to maintain peace while protesting, he said.

"In our great country, the Opposition can turn anything into a controversy. Ideal would have been to see the statement in the context in which Army chief has said a particular thing. Ask him what he meant. I don't see any politics in it. I tell students 'don't unnecessarily damage property', is it politics? Search your heart and ask this question," Gen. Singh said.

The Opposition had alleged that the Army chief's comments were political in nature and that he should desist from indulging in politics.

To ensure protection of human rights during counter-insurgency operations, a court of inquiry was held after every operation and all related records maintained.

Referring to the Armed Force (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), he said the Act gave almost the same powers to the Army that were exercised by the police and the

Central Reserve Police Force, in connection with search and inquiry operations. However, over the years, the Army "itself has diluted its application under the 10 commandments issued by the Chief of the Army Staff that are to be strictly adhered to by every soldier, particularly those deployed in anti-insurgency areas."



Protesters raise slogans against CAA, NRC and NPR after Friday prayers at Jama Masjid. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

## Peaceful protests held in city amid tight security

Over 300 detained at U.P. Bhawan

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Peaceful protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act were held here on Friday amid heavy deployment of security personnel.

Demonstrations were staged outside Jama Masjid in Old Delhi, Jor Bagh, Uttar Pradesh Bhawan and Seelampur after Friday prayers. At U.P. Bhawan, around 357 protesters, including 75 women, were detained for defying prohibitory orders.

Protesters at Jor Bagh started their march towards the Prime Minister's house but were stopped by the police near the Jor Bagh metro station. They staged a protest at the site for an hour and later dispersed.

In Old Delhi, the protesters gathered outside gate number 1 of Jama Masjid and raised slogans. Former Congress MLA Shoaib Iqbal and party leader Alka Lamba were among the leaders who

took part in the protest. Speaking from a raised platform outside the mosque, Mr. Iqbal and Ms. Lamba demanded that the Central government should call a joint session of Parliament and withdraw the CAA and also tell people that the National Register of Citizens will not be implemented across the country.

The protesters, many of them not associated with any political party, said their agitation will continue till the government scraps the new citizenship law and promises not to implement the NRC. At Jamia Millia Islamia, students observed a day-long hunger strike against alleged police brutality during their protests. The students demanded an impartial judicial inquiry into the deaths during the anti-CAA protests across the nation, release of illegally detained protesters and arrest of those involved in violence.

## Posters, drones keep fearful locals indoors in Firozabad

Incidents of December 20 leave residents apprehensive

HEMANI BHANDARI  
FIROZABAD

Renowned for its colourful glass bangles, Firozabad saw only red on December 20. It's been a week since six people were shot dead here, but posters, drones, and heavy police deployment have scared residents into staying indoors.

An eerie calm prevailed on the Rasulpur bypass where protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act had spilled on to from the Mohammedgunj market on December 20.

On Friday, most shops on both sides of the road and along interior streets in residential areas remained shut amid heavy police and paramilitary deployment.

The policemen wore anti-riot gear with helmets and held batons in their hands as they made sure there was no assembly before or after *Jumme ki Namaz* (Friday prayers).

At every road junction and along prominent streets, posters were seen every few metres displaying pictures of those who authorities allege threw stones during the protest on December 20. "Identify them and tell the police," read the message in Hindi.

"These are the people who are behind the violence that took place in Firozabad on December 20. These radicals committed arson, caused damage to public



Fear in the air: People in Firozabad say they are afraid of getting picked up by the police. • HEMANI BHANDARI

property and harmed people. Identify them and help the police. You just have to call. Fulfil your duty as a responsible citizen. Your identity will be kept confidential," said the poster accompanied by a collage of 10 photos. There were at least three posters at each location. Locals said they were afraid of getting picked up by the police or being stopped to be asked "unnecessary" questions and of the drones hovering over their houses taking pictures and videos.

### Big chase

Raeesa Begum, 36, a resident of Rehmat Nagar, said her four daughters and three minor sons run back inside the house as soon as they see a police car. "Bas yahi dar laga rehta hai ki police ghar ke andar na aa jaaye, ha-

mare bacchon ko le jaaye (we are scared that the police shouldn't enter our house and take our children)." She added that she had instructed the boys not to leave the house. "What if they look similar to someone who is in those posters and the police take them for interrogation," she said.

Salma (53), another resident of Rehmat Nagar, said she saw a drone hovering over her residence on December 25 evening. "Now they are taking pictures of us drying clothes also. What if they take pictures of our children in these cameras and post them too," she asked.

Friday prayers in Baghiya was marked by announcements on loud speakers from a mosque urging people to either return to work or their homes so as to ensure peace in the locality.



Protesters raise slogans against CAA and NRC on Friday outside Jama Masjid in Old Delhi. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

## Jama Masjid observes peaceful protest

Cong. leaders head stir; will continue agitation till govt. strikes down CAA: demonstrators

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Hundreds of people gathered outside Jama Masjid in Old Delhi to protest against the Citizen (Amendment) Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) on Friday.

With placards reading – “India against CAA NRC” – “Withdraw CAA” and “We Demand Equality” – the protest amid police presence was peaceful.

Former Congress MLA Shoaib Iqbal and Congress leader Alka Lamba were among those who headed the protest, though many of the protesters were people who came for namaz at the mosque.

The protesters said they will continue the agitation as

long as the government does not strike down the CAA and promise to not implement the NRC. Mr. Iqbal and Ms. Lambademand that the Centre should call a joint session of the Parliament and take back CAA, and also tell people that NRC will not be implemented.

### Identify me: Lamba

Wearing a hijab before entering the platform, Ms. Lamba said: “Since the Prime Minister said in Jharkhand that protesters can be identified by their clothes, people like me have started to change their clothes. Now identify who is a Hindu and who is a Muslim.”

A 25-year-old protester, Irshad Ahmad, who works at a shop, had come to the mos-

que to offer prayer when he came to know about the stir. “We are protesting so that our voices are heard.”

A senior citizen, Fahim Aktar, who gives tuitions for a living said: “Now that Babri Masjid issue is over and we Muslims have accepted that verdict, the BJP is looking for something else to divide people.” Mohammad Suhail, 29, who had come from Laxmi Nagar with a handmade poster that reads – India against CAA NRC – said: “Modiji has accepted refugees from six religions, then why not Muslims? We had also fought for independence.” Mr. Suhail said he had to come to Jama Masjid to protest as the police did not allow him to the same in Laxmi Nagar. When asked

whether the protest is dying down at Jama Masjid, 24-year-old DU student Mohammad Numan, said: “Police’s violence is very high. In Banaras, people were dragged out of their houses and beaten.”

“Those who failed in Class X and XII are now telling university students that they are being misled,” he added.

The protesters said compared to last Friday when there was a call for protest and people had shut their shops in Old Delhi, this time, the stir was “weaker.”

Meanwhile, 40-year-old Kurshid Ahmed, selling caps and prayer beads said: “The number of tourists has fallen by at least 70% since the protests began and the business is also affected.”

## Over 300 detained for protesting outside U.P. Bhawan against CAA

DCP says stir conducted in violation of Section 144, detainees released by 5 p.m.

SAURABH TRIVEDI  
NEW DELHI

Over 350 people were detained on Friday after they staged a demonstration outside Uttar Pradesh Bhawan here over alleged police atrocities against those protesting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the proposed pan-India National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Eish Singhal said the protest was held in violation of Section 144 of the CrPc imposed in the area.

“The protesters did not have permission and were asked not to protest but they refused to follow the directions issued by the police...357 protesters, including 75 women, were taken to Mandir Marg and Connaught Place police stations. All of them were released by 5 p.m.,” he said.

The officer said on Thursday, Badre Alam, the leader of the protesters, was told by the police to take proper permission to hold a protest at U.P. Bhawan or conduct the same at Jantar Mantar. “But he did not pay any heed to the advice of the police,” the DCP added.

The police said they had deployed adequate security personnel in and around U.P. Bhawan.

“Most of the roads leading to the Bhawan were barricaded. The police and paramilitary personnel were deployed to stop any protesters marching towards U.P. Bhawan,” said an officer.

Around 150 people marching towards U.P. Bhawan were detained at Kautiyla Marg roundabout. All of them were taken to Mandir Marg police station in buses, the police said. There was also a water



(Above) Women being detained during a protest against the CAA; students raise slogans outside U.P. Bhawan on Friday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

cannon on standby at the spot, they said.

Some of the protesters were sent back before they reached U.P. Bhawan. Udbhav Seth (19), a student of Delhi University, who was stopped nearly half-a-km away from U.P. Bhawan said: “I told them [police] that I was going to meet my parents who work nearby but they asked me to go back anyway.”

### No batons, police told

A policeman on duty at Kautiyla Marg said: “We have clear

instructions to not allow any person to go beyond the barricade. We have been instructed not to hold baton or shield while dealing with protesters.” Students of various colleges and people from various localities participated in the stir.

### Jor Bagh protest

In another protest at Jor Bagh, around 100 protesters marching towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s residence to demand the release of Bhim Army Chief Chan-

drashekhar Azad and against the CAA were stopped by the police outside Jor Bagh metro station.

Delhi Police Spokesperson M.S. Randhawa said all the protests, held across the city, ended peacefully.

“We had made elaborate security arrangements. People gathered at many places but dispersed after a peaceful protest. We had deployed drones to keep watch on anti-social elements,” he said.

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation on Friday closed the Lok Kalyan Marg metro station, for over an hour, due to demonstrations outside the U.P. Bhawan.

(With inputs from Elisha Vermani)

## Seemapuri violence: court allows test to ascertain age of accused

Police say no valid identity proof available; asked to submit report by December 30

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

A court here allowed the police on Friday to carry out a bone ossification test to ascertain the age of an accused, arrested in connection with a violent protest at Seemapuri against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and National Register of Citizens, claiming juvenility.

Metropolitan Magistrate Gita passed the directions after the police submitted that

the accused did not have any valid age proof and it needs to conduct the test. The court directed the Medical Superintendent of GTB hospital to conduct the test on December 28 and asked the police to submit the report by December 30.

### Bone ossification test

“In the opinion of the court, the ossification test of accused is necessary as no document as mentioned in the

Juvenile Justice (Care and protection of children) Act, 2015, is produced on behalf of the accused. And in the absence of any such document, bone ossification test is last resort by which age of accused can be determined,” the court said. The court was hearing a plea, filed through advocates Zakir Raza and Monis Rais, claiming that the accused was a juvenile.

During the hearing, the court noted that the docu-

ments submitted by the counsel for the accused to prove his age were not valid as they were certificates issued by a Madrasa where he studied. The police said no other identity proof was available with them and hence bone ossification should be done to ascertain his age.

Advocate Raza opposed this and said that as per the Centre’s notification, certificates from Madrasa are valid

documents to prove one’s age. The court had earlier directed the investigating officer to verify the documents submitted by the accused and file a report by today.

Meanwhile, 10 other accused arrested in the case filed bail pleas in the court.

The court had earlier sent 14 people, arrested in connection with violent protests at Seemapuri, against CAA and NRC, to 14-day judicial custody.

### IN BRIEF

#### Man killed in accidental firing in Rohini

NEW DELHI

A 22-year-old man was killed allegedly after his friend accidentally fired at him on Tuesday evening in Rohini’s Kanjhawala, the police said on Friday. The victim, identified as Ashish, was a resident of Nizampur Village, they said. His friend Gaurav (22), was arrested on Thursday from Bahadurgarh, a senior officer said. It is being investigated whether the firing was accidental or not, the police added.

### DELHI TODAY

**Dance:** The second day of IIC Winter Festival of Dance will feature a Satriya recital by Meenakshi Medhi from Delhi, a disciple of the late Guru Adhyapak Jibanjit Dutta and Adhyapak Haricharan Bhuyan Borbayan, followed by a Kuchipudi recital by Vidhya S. from Chennai, a disciple of Guru Kalaimamani Sallaja, at C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Centre (IIC), 6 p.m.

**Exhibition:** “The Homeland” an exhibition that interrogates the idea of home by Moutushi Chakraborty at Kamaladevi Complex, IIC, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

**Exhibition:** “Alekhya”, a group show of painting exhibition by Artist Nidhi and Artist Mohit Bhardwaj along with their mentors Artist Ganesh Prasad Sahu and Artist Krishna Shrestha at AIFACS, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

**Exhibition:** “India: A Mapful Story”, an exhibition of historical maps and other engravings by Anubhav Nath, Curatorial Director of Ojas Art Gallery at 1AQ, Qutab Minar Roundabout, Mehrauli Road, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

(Mail your listings for this column at cityeditordelhi@thehindu.co.in)

## If anyone tries to snatch diversity, make all efforts to stop them: Kejriwal

CM says he has tried to run the govt. on path shown by Christ

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said diversity is the “biggest quality of India” and if anyone is trying to snatch it, then people have to make all efforts to stop them.

Addressing a Christmas and New Year celebration at the Delhi Assembly, he said: “Our country’s soul is that it has different religions, castes, languages, and cul-

tures. You will not find this diversity in any other country, which is our biggest quality.”

He said the government has tried to serve the poor as shown by Jesus Christ. “Our government has completed five years and the satisfaction we have is that we have tried to run it on the path shown by Christ. For the poor, we opened Mohalla Clinics and also made schools better,”

Mr. Kejriwal said. He added if they could complete 1% of what Jesus had said then he would consider themselves lucky.

“Archbishop Anil Joseph T. Couto, Bishop Rt. Rev. Subodh C Mondal, Diocese Rt. Rev. Waris K Masih, Bishop Rt. Rev. Jacob Mar Barnabas, Bishop Karam Masiah, and MLAs present on the occasion,” an official statement said.

## Delhi Metro museum turns 11, launches exhibition on suicide prevention campaign

DMRC invites 30 girls from NGO, organises ‘nukkad natak’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The museum of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) at Patel Chowk station on Friday turned 11 and a host of activities were held at the venue, said officials.

An exhibition themed on suicide prevention campaign ‘#Nevergiveup’ was also inaugurated on the occasion. The campaign is an initiative of the DMRC launched earlier this year to spread awareness on suicide

prevention.

Established in 2008, the museum has been a special attraction for visitors and commuters of the Delhi Metro over the past decade.

The museum has also been the venue for various events and initiatives taken up for children by the DMRC. “Over 30 girl children from the NGO – Sarthak Prayas – were invited to visit the museum and take part in the anniversary celebrations,” the DMRC said in a

statement.

### Help those in distress

The children were told about the history of the Delhi Metro. A ‘nukkad natak’ by artists was also organised for them.

A pledge was administered to the children to stay positive and help those in distress. To spread the message, takeaway cards with positive messages were kept at the exhibition, which can be collected by the visitors.

# 'Will work on solving traffic congestion in next tenure'

Arvind Kejriwal says AAP will release election manifesto around mid-January

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Addressing traffic congestion and ensuring 24-hour drinking water in Delhi will be on the agenda of the Aam Aadmi Party government in the next five years, if re-elected, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Friday.

He was addressing a gathering at a town hall meeting, the second one held as part of AAP's election campaign.

"Travel for women will be free in buses and electricity will be free till 200 units as long as AAP is in power in Delhi," Mr. Kejriwal said at the Pitampura Dilli Haat.

"As long as we have our government in Delhi, we will continue to provide pe-



Arvind Kejriwal

manifesto for the Assembly elections based on consultations with people through town hall meetings.

"We discussed cleanliness on Thursday, and now we are discussing traffic congestion. We will continue to discuss and add an issue each day to ensure that all important points are covered in our manifesto, which is to be released around January 15-20, 2020," he said. The Delhi Assembly polls are likely to be held in February.

#### List of roads

Talking about traffic congestion, Mr. Kejriwal said that the government has designated a consultant to create a list of locations in Delhi where there are daily traffic jams.

"The designated consultant will provide us with a report within 9-10 months on how to solve the problem of traffic congestion in these locations," he said.

The Chief Minister added that they will then start working on resolving congestion issues on each road mentioned in the list.

"Just as we have worked on addressing issues in the fields of education, health, power, water, sewer, and drainage, etc., in the last five years, we will work on resolving traffic congestion issues in the next five years," said Mr. Kejriwal.

He added that currently 93% of Delhi receives tap water. "Our next step is to provide 24-hour water supply to the people of Delhi," he said.

## One dead after truck hits bike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old man died and his friend was injured after a truck hit their motorcycle on Signature Bridge here, the police said on Friday.

Sandeep fell from the bridge after his bike was hit by a truck as he and his friend Abhishreshth, both residents of Nathupura, were coming from Gokulpuri on Wednesday night.

The police took the duo to a nearby hospital where Sandeep, who was an electrician, was declared brought dead by doctors.

Abhishreshth, 28, is undergoing treatment. A case has been lodged at Timarpur police station.

## Big businesses have a problem with street vendors, says CM

Kejriwal says vendors should not be seen as encroachers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal met with members of the Town Vending Committees (TVCs) on Friday and urged them to facilitate a survey to resolve the issue of displacement of street vendors by authorities.

He also announced that the Delhi government would bear the cost of the survey, which is to be conducted by the municipal corporations.

"I hope that the vendors will not have to face any obstacles after the survey... industrialists and big businesses have a problem with street vendors and small-scale businesses. They have a problem with parallel businesses as they stand to lose. I promise that I will not let injustice against you [street vendors] prevail" he said.

#### Source of employment

"I believe the government must ensure employment to the people when the country



A street vendor prepares a cup of tea for a customer in Old Delhi on a cold Friday morning. ■ AFP

is suffering from major unemployment and economic slowdown. We often hear about incidents where street vendors are removed from their places by the authorities," Mr. Kejriwal said, adding: "In other countries, street vendors are encouraged as they are a source of employment."

In India, street vendors are seen as encroachers... but in other countries, the vendors have legal support of their governments... the same system

should be established in India, said the Chief Minister.

Mr. Kejriwal also sought to assure the street vendors that after the survey was conducted, vendors would be allotted a permanent space and no authority would be able to displace them.

"I want to request the civic body officials to call a meeting of the TVCs by Tuesday. The meetings will decide and finalise the agencies that will carry out the survey," said Mr. Kejriwal.

## Through the haze



A blanket of fog engulfs India Gate in New Delhi. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

## Congress picks apart AAP govt. report card

It is a bundle of lies: Subhash Chopra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Friday released a 'post-mortem report' on the '10-point report card' by the AAP government and termed it a "bundle of lies".

DPPC chief Subhash Chopra said that the reality of the Arvind Kejriwal-led government is that "it provides only dirty drinking water and polluted air to the people of Delhi".

He added that the AAP government has been promoting itself with "misleading ad campaigns" and "lies", and that Mr. Kejriwal has woken up to the reality of the welfare of the people only in the last three months of his government's tenure.

"AAP, which came to power on the issue of Lokpal and Swaraj, is now running away from both issues and the Lokayukt, which was established by the then Congress government, has been made ineffective," said Mr. Chopra.

The party further claimed that the AAP government had not spent 42% of its budget on health and that the "inflated health budget remained only on paper".

Former MP Sandeep Dikshit said that Mr. Kejriwal had promised to set up 1,000 Mohalla Clinics, but established only 189 clinics out of which 100 are not functional. He added that the clinics were opened after shutting down 500 government dispensaries.

## KVs outperformed Delhi govt. schools: think-tank

Report based on 1,000 RTI replies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A report by the BJP-linked think-tank, Public Policy Research Centre (PPRC), has claimed that Central government schools outperformed Delhi government schools in 2019.

The report, released on Friday, was compiled over three months based on around 1,000 Right to Information replies by the Aam Aadmi Party government.

#### Govt. rejects findings

The report claimed that Class 10 pass percentage in Delhi government schools came down from 95.81% in 2015 to 71.58% in 2019; pass percentage of Kendriya Vidyalayas during the same

period improved from 99.59% to 99.79%.

The Delhi government has dismissed the report stating that it was "unfair" to compare its schools with Centre-run Kendriya Vidyalayas, which admit students through entrance tests.

"Over 1.6 lakh Delhi government school students sat for Class 10 Board exam in 2019; the number in Kendriya Vidyalayas of Delhi was around 7,800," said a government official.

PPRC director and BJP MP Vinay Sahasrabudhe alleged that the Delhi government "indulged in propaganda" and published full-page advertisements but did "nothing" on the ground.

### IN BRIEF

#### Junior Engineer held for taking ₹36,000-bribe

NEW DELHI  
A Junior Engineer of the Delhi Jal Board was arrested for allegedly taking a bribe of ₹36,000 from a private firm manager, officials said on Friday. The Anti-Corruption Branch said Auragzaib Khan, a plant manager of a private firm, lodged a complaint on Thursday alleging that a JE posted at the DJB's Keshopur Sewage Treatment Plant had demanded a bribe for clearance of the firm's bills. A trap was laid and the accused was caught while taking the bribe, an ACB official said. P11

## IN BRIEF

## Fire breaks out at building in Vasant Vihar

NEW DELHI  
A major fire broke out at a residential building in south Delhi's Vasant Vihar on Friday, a fire department official said. The department got a call regarding the incident around 8.30 p.m. and four fire tenders were rushed to the spot, he said. No casualty has been reported so far, the official said, adding that the reason behind the fire is yet to be ascertained. PTI

## Thief, jeweller who bought stolen ornaments arrested

NEW DELHI  
A man has been arrested for stealing jewellery and a jeweller was nabbed for purchasing stolen ornaments from him, the police said on Friday. The alleged thief, identified as Sunil Kumar (42), a resident of Vijay Vihar, used to sell stolen articles to Rakesh (43), a jeweller in Nangloi, they said. One country-made pistol and two live cartridges were recovered from his Mr. Kumar's possession. Stolen silver weighing 4 kg and 520 gram of gold ornaments were recovered from the jeweller, they added. PTI

## CM deprived Delhiites of Centre's housing scheme benefits, says Puri

'Only State to not submit proposal under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Delhi residents have not gotten any benefit from the Centre's urban housing scheme due to the ego of a Chief Minister who does not want to implement a scheme in the name of the Prime Minister, Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Friday.

Delhi is the only State which has not submitted any proposal under the urban section of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), a flagship central scheme promising housing for all by 2022. Earlier this week, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched the Mukhya Mantri Awas Yojana for residents of the city's slum clusters and promised to provide them with *pucca* houses.

"He has prioritised his ego and the name of a scheme, and he has sacrificed the scheme for his ego... If devel-



Hardeep Singh Puri

lopment is going to be based on the nomenclature of a scheme, then you are depriving your own citizens," said Mr. Puri.

Queries to the Delhi government about the State's failure to implement the central scheme, and Mr. Puri's allegations, were not answered.

Mr. Puri claimed that the AAP-led Delhi government's decision to put on hold for more than a year a survey for in-situ slum rehabilitation under the PMAY was a classic example of "a political

approach based on a pack of lies". While the State had consented to the survey in January 2018 and accepted money to conduct the same in September, it never completed the survey, depriving the city's slum-dwellers of benefits under the central scheme, said Mr. Puri. The Centre is now implementing slum rehabilitation through the centrally run Delhi Development Agency.

"If they had a conscience, they would have made at least a proposal," he added.

PMAY (Urban) was launched in June 2015 and includes four verticals to develop urban housing, three of which require the State government to present proposals to the Centre. PMAY data shows that no such proposals have come from the State.

However, more than 16,000 people in the city have taken advantage of the

fourth vertical, which is a credit-linked scheme where individuals directly apply for interest subvention on their housing loans without any State involvement. Also, PMAY has completed more than 50,000 homes in the city which were sanctioned under the earlier central scheme, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, with proposals coming from the previous Congress government in Delhi.

In total, the PMAY has crossed the one crore milestone in terms of houses sanctioned nationwide, as against a validated demand of 1.12 crore. However, only 32 lakh houses have actually been completed so far, with another 28 lakh having reached the grounding stage. The Centre expects to sanction the entire target next year and complete construction by 2022.

## 8-year-old girl raped, killed in Nuh

Teen apprehended for assaulting toddler in a separate case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NUH

An eight-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered and a toddler was sexually assaulted in separate cases in Nuh in the past 24 hours, the police said on Friday.

A 14-year-old has been apprehended in connection with the assault on the toddler.

The eight-year-old girl from a village in Nuh district, had taken her goats for grazing in the forest with her friends on Thursday when she went missing. Her parents found her body on Friday morning and informed the police.

"When she did not return home in the evening with her friends, the family along with the villagers searched for her till late at night. They resumed the search at day-break on Friday and found her body," said Superintendent of Police, Nuh, Sangeeta Kalia.

The body had injuries suggesting rape, said Ms.



Crime spot of the first incident. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Kalia. A case of murder under the Indian Penal Code and rape under the Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences Act has been registered in this connection. The post-mortem was conducted by a medical board of Nalhar Medical College.

The body was found at an isolated spot inside the forest, she said, adding: "Even if the girl had screamed for help no one would have heard her."

She was strangled to death with her dupatta, the officer said. The suspect was spotted with the decea-

sed's goat by some villagers. "Five teams have been constituted to investigate the case. The suspect is in his early 20s," said Ms. Kalia.

## Juvenile beats victim

In the second case, a teenager took a two-year-old girl to mustard fields in Tauru while she was playing outside her home on Thursday afternoon, the police said.

Her parents were alarmed by her screams and rescued her. The juvenile in conflict with the law also beat up the child cried when he tried to rape her.

## Minimum plummets to 4.2°C, lowest this season

Met forecasts further dip in mercury

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

It was the coldest night of the season on Friday with the minimum temperature settling at 4.2 degrees Celsius in the Capital with the Met department forecasting that it may slip further in the next few days.

According to the bulletin issued by the Met department, a fresh western disturbance is very likely to affect the western Himalayan region from December 30 night onwards and under its influence, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are very likely to experience light or moderate scattered to fairly widespread precipitation between December 31 and January 3 with peak intensity on January 2.

Under its influence, light/moderate isolated to scattered rain/thunder-shower is also very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi during the same period.

The Met said that due to these prevailing meteorological conditions, cold day to severe cold day conditions will continue in Delhi till December 29.

## December cold spell

The city has been witnessing the longest December cold spell since 1997 when the mean maximum temperature was 17.3 degrees Celsius.

This year, the mean maximum temperature till Thursday was 19.85 degrees Celsius and is expected to dip to 19.15 degrees by December 31.

## The fire brigade



A group of men sit around a fire on a cold Friday evening in New Delhi. \*SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

## Air quality remains 'very poor', likely to worsen

Condition may improve by Tuesday

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The air quality of Delhi continued to be in the 'very poor' category on Friday and is expected to deteriorate and enter 'severe' category on Sunday. The air quality is likely to improve and enter 'very poor' category again by Tuesday, said government-run monitoring agency SAFAR.

The city's air quality index (AQI) on Friday was 373 (very poor), up from Thursday's 349, according to the 4 p.m. bulletin of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), which is the average of the past 24 hours.

"The AQI on Saturday is forecast to be at the higher-end of 'very poor' category with some areas entering 'severe' category. Strong near-surface inversion is

Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	373	Gurugram	292
Ghaziabad	384	Faridabad	392
Noida	396	Greater Noida	382
Legend: Good (0-50), Satisfactory (51-100), Moderate (101-200), Very poor (201-300), Severe (>401)			
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) [SOURCE: CPCB]			

predicted for Saturday and December 29 night which will make AQI further deteriorate and touch 'severe' category on December 29 and 30," SAFAR said.

On Friday, the average level of PM<sub>2.5</sub> was 200.9 ug/m<sup>3</sup> more than three times the safe limit of 60ug/m<sup>3</sup>, as per Indian standards, in Delhi-NCR at 6 p.m., the CPCB said. But the level is more than eight times the safe limit of 25 ug/m<sup>3</sup>, as set by WHO.

## Court allows man to recover ₹24 lakh loan from friend

Cheque issued by borrower was rejected by the bank

NIRNIMESH KUMAR  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has allowed a man to recover ₹24.20 lakh loan from his friend with 6% interest for the period his recovery suit was pending.

The plaintiff used to lend money to his friend as he required it for running his chit fund business. According to the complaint, the lender had lent this amount to the borrower between September 2008 and January 2009.

The plaintiff would lend money and the borrower would issue promissory notes to guarantee repayment. At the time of the repayment, the defendant would issue cheques in his favour and take back the promissory notes.

For this loan amount, the



borrower had also issued a cheque in his favour. But when the plaintiff deposited it for encashment in his bank, it was rejected with the comment that the account of the issuer of the cheque did not have sufficient money to make the payment.

Thereafter, he served a legal notice on him but he did not bother to return the money. Then, he filed a recovery suit.

In his defence, the defen-

dant submitted that the cheque the plaintiff presented to the bank was actually a stolen one.

But Additional Sessions Judge Brijesh Kumar Garg dismissed his defence, saying that though he lodged a complaint regarding the loss of the cheque, he failed to inform about it to his bank.

"The defendant has failed to produce on record any written information or instructions issued by him to his banker for stopping the payment of the missing cheques. The defendant has failed to give any such intimation or instruction to his banker till 23.02.2009 or thereafter, when the cheque was returned by his banker for insufficiency of funds," Mr. Garg said allowing the suit.

## Court acquits Delhi Police SI and constable in corruption case

Probe officers fail to recover money allegedly taken as bribe

NIRNIMESH KUMAR  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has acquitted a Delhi Police sub-inspector (SI) and a constable in a corruption case as the Central Bureau of Investigation probe officers failed to recover the money allegedly taken as bribe despite laying a trap at the police station where they were posted at that time.

## Interrogation

According to the prosecution, the SI had demanded and obtained the money as bribe through the constable at the police station. The constable was arrested and interrogated in police custody for two days, but the bribe money could not be recovered.

"Considering the totality

of facts and circumstances, I conclude that the prosecution has failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that there has been demand of bribe on the part of accused Deepak Vashist and acceptance of bribe money through co-accused

Arvind Kumar  
Additional Sessions Judge

of facts and circumstances, I conclude that the prosecution has failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that there has been demand of bribe on the part of accused Deepak Vashist and acceptance of bribe money through co-accused

Dharam Pal," Additional Sessions Judge Arvind Kumar said while acquitting the two policemen.

"Admittedly tainted amount has not been recovered. The prosecution failed to show that there was any conspiracy on the part of accused persons for commission of aforesaid offences and that the accused persons had caused disappearance of evidence of offence," the judge further said.

"Pondering over the ongoing discussion, I am of the considered opinion that prosecution has failed to bring home guilt of accused persons beyond reasonable doubt. Accordingly, I hereby acquit them of all the charges," Mr. Kumar said.

## NGT seeks report on clearance to thermal plant

Plea challenges environmental nod

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Following a plea challenging the validity of an environmental clearance granted to a thermal power plant in Bulandshahr, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi to collect relevant data and furnish a report.

A Bench headed by NGT chief Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel was hearing a plea moved by NGO Social Action for Forest and Environment (SAFE), which also sought directions to collect ambient air quality for the winter months this season.

While passing its order, the Bench said, "Let the joint committee of the CPCB and IIT-Delhi collect the da-



ta and furnish the same by February 19. The State [Uttar Pradesh] pollution control board may provide requisite logistics to the committee for the purpose."

Earlier, following a report furnished by an expert appraisal committee, the NGT had said, "A proper verified information has to be looked into..." and had directed the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to furnish an affidavit.

## Rushdie's ancestral house valued at ₹130 crore

There is a dispute over sale of the house between Rushdies and ex-Cong. leader

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Salman Rushdie's ancestral house in Civil Lines here, which the globally renowned writer's father had agreed to sell to a Congress leader in 1970 but the deal was stalled due to a dispute between the two sides, has been valued at ₹130 crore by the Delhi High Court.

The dispute had gone all the way to the Supreme Court, which on December 3, 2012, ruled in favour of former Congress leader Bhiku Ram Jain's side, di-



Salman Rushdie

recting the Rushdies to hand over the house to the Jains for the market price as on date of the order.

The apex court, however, left it to the Delhi High Court to determine the

market value of the property.

The High Court has now determined the market value of the property, as on December 3, 2012, to be ₹130 crore, since the Rushdies said they had a buyer to purchase the house at that price.

Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw said, however, that if the Jains are unable to purchase at that price, the Rushdies will have to sell the house for ₹130 crore within six months to some other buyer.

Further, if the Rushdies are unable to sell it for minimum ₹130 crore within the given time, 60 days from then, the Jains would be entitled to purchase the property for ₹75 crore which was the circle rate prevailing on December 4, 2012, the High Court said.

It said that if the Jains cannot purchase the property for ₹75 crore, the Rushdies would stand relieved of the agreement entered into by both sides in 1970 with regard to the house.

## 'Maintain vigil on operation of Gurugram plant'

Plea challenges environmental clearance granted to solid waste management unit

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Following a petition challenging the environmental clearance (EC) granted to an integrated solid waste management unit in Gurugram, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Haryana State Pollution Control Board to maintain vigil on the operation of the plant, while permitting the clearance granted.

A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel observed that waste dumps cannot be left

unattended and hence, the units are required to operate.

"Even though the data furnished by the project proponent may be open to challenge, the fact remains that there is a huge waste dump site which cannot be left unattended and such waste has to be processed and removed. In view of the above, we are unable to interfere with the grant of environmental clearance for the waste processing facility," the Bench said.

While directing the State

Pollution Control Board (SPCB) to be vigilant on the facility's functioning, the Bench said, "However, operation of waste processing facility must be subjected to appropriate vigilance by the SPCB and necessary safeguards be employed as per conditions of EC or as may be otherwise considered necessary."

## 'Eco-sensitive areas'

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a petition moved by Vivek Khamboj, who alleged

that the project was proposed to come up in eco-sensitive areas.

"Main grievance of the appellant claiming to be a resident of the area is that the project proponent has concealed material information with regard to existence of the sacred grove of Mangar Bani which is in close proximity to the project site as well as several waterbodies and eco-sensitive areas in the Aravalli landscape," the Bench also observed while noting the allegations.

## ED probe into PF money in DHFL

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has started money laundering probe into investments of the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) employees' provident fund to the tune of ₹4,100 crore in the Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL).

The ED investigation is based on the findings of the Uttar Pradesh police, which have arrested more than a dozen accused persons in its case so far.

Among them are then UPPCL Managing Director A. P. Mishra, besides two other officials, Praveen Kumar Gupta and Sudhanshu Dwivedi. The funds were invested in the DHFL between 2017-18, allegedly through brokerage firms.

# Western U.P. peaceful amid tight vigil

District administrations issue notices to those who allegedly vandalised public property last week

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

Western Uttar Pradesh, placed under an unprecedented security cover, witnessed a peaceful Friday.

Ahead of Friday prayers and apprehensive about violent protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, sensitive areas of Aligarh city were put under the lens of a web of CCTV cameras.

"We added 20-25 cameras in sensitive areas such as Shah Jamal which acted as a deterrent. There are more than 125 CCTV cameras in the Muslim-dominated Upper Court area of the city," said Abhishek, SP (City), Aligarh.

"We also reached out to maulanas and senior religious leaders as last week a rumour was spread that the water and electricity supply



Tight security in Aligarh on Friday. ■ MANOJ ALIGADI

of Muslim areas would be cut. In community meeting we made it amply clear that we are not against peaceful protest as long as law and order was not disturbed," said Mr. Abhishek.

A local requesting anonymity said every activity of

thems was being watched. "There is no privacy left," he complained.

Ashutosh Upadhyay, who works with a private company that helps the police in placing cameras and recording the footage in Kotwali, said there was no intent to

disturb people. "It is just to keep an eye on any unlawful activity. The footage gets deleted after 20 days," he said.

In Aligarh Muslim University, some non-resident students kept fast to protest against the CAA and copies of the Act were torn.

In Meerut, the police made public announcements reminding residents of areas such as Hapur Road — where violent protests erupted last week — that it was their city and maintaining public order was their responsibility.

People were not allowed to assemble at one place after the Friday prayers. Local religious leaders were roped in to make an appeal for peace.

In Ghaziabad's sensitive Loni area, posters were put up by the district adminis-

tration explaining that the CAA didn't discriminate against any particular religion.

Like Meerut, the Bijnor and Rampur district administrations have also issued notices to those who allegedly vandalised public property last Friday.

### Week's time to reply

In Rampur, the District Magistrate has issued notices to 28 people for the recovery of around ₹15 lakh. "They have been given a week to reply to the notice," said an official.

In Bijnor, locals complained that the police has arbitrarily put photos of those who allegedly destroyed public property on December 20. Official sources said people were being given time to clear their names.

## Kota hospital orders probe into infant deaths

Ten died in two days this week

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

The government-run J.K. Lon Children's Hospital in Rajasthan's Kota town has ordered an investigation into the death of 10 infants in two days earlier this week. Aged between one day and one year, six infants died on December 23 and four on December 24.

The hospital administration has appointed a three-member committee, headed by Paediatrics Department's chief Amrit Lal Bairwa, to probe into the deaths.

The State government has asked Medical Education Secretary Vaibhav Galriya to look into the matter and sent a team of doctors

from Jaipur to Kota.

The hospital has maintained that since the children are mostly referred from private hospitals in the nearby districts to the government health facility at the terminal stage of their illness, an average of one to three infants die every day.

J.K. Lon Hospital Superintendent H.L. Meena said on Friday that though the death of 10 infants in two days was high, it was "not unusual".

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot told reporters on the sidelines of a function here that he would wait for the investigation report before taking action in the matter.

## Power sector gets a boost in Rajasthan

Additional production of 946 MW

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

With the production of an additional 946 MW of electricity in the last one year, the power sector has got a boost in Rajasthan. The State government also plans to obtain solar power, produced by farmers in the plants set up in their fields, for the Grid.

Energy Minister B.D. Kalla said while inaugurating a 33 KV Grid sub-station at Padasoli village in Jaipur district earlier this week that a 660 MW unit of the Suratgarh Super Thermal Power

Plant would be dedicated to the people by March next year.

The additional 946 MW power included the electricity generated in the State and the power procured through the inter-State agreements.

### Hybrid power policy

Mr. Kalla said the hybrid policy for solar and wind power announced this year with the provisions for stamp duty and ceiling exemptions would help promote these two crucial sectors of energy.

## One dead in Himachal factory blast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SHIMLA

One person was killed and four others were injured critically due to an explosion in the furnace of a factory in Himachal Pradesh's Solan district on Friday, police said.

As per the information, the blast occurred at Siddhivinayak Saria Factory in Nangal village of Nalagarh in the district at around 7.30 a.m.

One of the injured succumbed to his injuries whereas the condition of the other four is stated to be critical, police said.

# Villagers in M.P. oppose removal of godman's shrine

Structure was encroaching upon the point of origin of the Betwa river inside the Ratapani sanctuary

SIDHARTH YADAV  
BHOPAL

Villagers damaged an earth-mover and a jeep in the Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary in Raisen district after authorities removed a shrine of a local godman encroaching upon the point of origin of the Betwa river on Friday morning, said the district Collector.

Denying reports of firing by officials, Collector Umashankar Bhargav said while a joint team of foresters, the police and revenue officials was returning from the Jhiri Baheda village, 30 km from here, after carrying out the task, villagers skulking be-



The shrine that was demolished in the Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

hind trees pelted stones on the vehicles, causing damage.

"We have removed the encroachments and freed the point of origin of the river. No

injuries were reported," he said. In the past eight years, a local godman had developed a hut, a cow shelter and a shrine on the spot.

The Kamal Nath government a month ago had launched a drive against encroachments and mafia in different regions and of varying nature.

"We were caught unawares at night," said Hridesh Singh, sarpanch of the village, home to 4,000 families. "We awoke to loud thuds of buildings being brought down."

At least the authorities should have informed and consulted villagers first, he said. "The centuries-old Hanuman temple, whose structure was built by the panchayat, is still intact. Only encroachments that cropped

up over the years around it have been brought down," he added.

### 'Tear gas used'

As villagers gathered around the blocked roads, foresters fired tear gas shells at them, claimed Mr. Singh. "Especially on Sundays, there are people from Bhopal and elsewhere who visit the spot for picnics. And residents of 20 villages around come to pray here."

Recently, a panel set up by the State government had finalised the contours of a proposed tiger reserve, the seventh for the State, to be carved out of the sanctuary.

## Missing students rescued

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

Three students, who had gone missing in Jhajjar town in Haryana, were rescued, police said on Friday. Two girls and a boy had gone missing on December 25 and 26 respectively, they said.

The parents of the girls filed a missing complaint with the police, a Haryana Police spokesman said here. "The girls had gone to a coaching centre on December 25 but did not return home," he added. The Class 8 boy went out for a morning walk on December 26 and did not return, the spokesman said.

The police traced the boy to his maternal uncle's house in Delhi, while the girls were traced from Jhajjar, the spokesman said.

### Timings

DELHI		
SATURDAY, DEC. 28		
RISE	07:13	SET 17:33
RISE	08:54	SET 19:34
SUNDAY, DEC. 29		
RISE	07:13	SET 17:34
RISE	09:39	SET 20:30
MONDAY, DEC. 30		
RISE	07:13	SET 17:34
RISE	10:19	SET 21:26

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	14	04
Safdarjang	14	04
Palam	13	04

**Delhi Palam Today**  
14°C Morning will remain chilly with moderate to dense fog.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
15°C A cold morning with dense fog is likely. A comfortable day with partly cloudy sky is expected.

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**THE HINDU**  
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## Modi lying about detention camps, says Tarun Gogoi

'The Central govt. sanctioned ₹46 cr. for one in Assam in 2018'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GUWAHATI

Senior Congress leader Tarun Gogoi on Friday called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "liar" for saying that there is no detention camp in the country and claimed that the BJP-led government at the Centre had sanctioned ₹46 crore for one in Assam's Goalpara district.

### On Gauhati HC order

Mr. Gogoi said his government in Assam had set up detention camps in the State as per a Gauhati High Court order. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had suggested such camps for illegal immigrants, he said.

"Mr. Modi is a liar," Mr. Gogoi said at a press conference here referring to a rally by the Prime Minister in the national capital in which he had said that there is no detention camp in the country.

"In 2018, the Narendra Modi government had sanctioned



Congress leaders Tarun Gogoi (right) and Harish Rawat with Assam Congress chief Ripun Bora at a press conference on CAA, at Rajiv Bhawan in Guwahati on Friday. •PTI

₹46 crore for the largest detention centre at Matia in Goalpara district of Assam for housing 3,000 illegal immigrants. Suddenly he says there is no detention camp," Mr. Gogoi said.

"Why did the BJP government in 2018 sanction ₹46 crore? This shows Mr. Modi is a liar," he added.

He said the Congress government which he helmed in the State had set up detention camps in Assam as per the di-

rections of the Gauhati High Court in 2008.

Mr. Gogoi had led three consecutive governments in the State from 2001 to 2016.

### Foreigners' Tribunal

"They (BJP) say these (detention) camps were set up by the Congress. We set them up as per the order of the High Court to detain people who were declared 'foreigners' by the Foreigners' Tribunal," he added.

## Mamata to attend Soren's swearing-in

It will be a show of strength: TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is likely to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Hemant Soren as Jharkhand Chief Minister in Ranchi on December 29, Trinamool Congress sources said.

With top Opposition leaders of the country scheduled to attend the programme, Mr. Soren's swearing-in ceremony is likely to be a "show of unity" in the wake of country-wide protests against the amended Citizenship Act and the proposed pan-India NRC.

"We share a very good relationship with Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Hemant Soren. So far, it has been decided that our party chief along with some senior leaders would attend Mr. Soren's swearing-in ceremony on December 29," a senior TMC leader said.

The ceremony will be



Mamata Banerjee.

• FILE PHOTO

more of a "show of strength and unity of Opposition leaders", he said.

"This would send out a very crucial political message in the wake of ongoing unrest across the country over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act," another TMC leader said.

Ms. Banerjee, earlier this week, had written to all Opposition leaders and the Chief Ministers to unite and fight the amended Citizenship Act and the proposed NRC.

## BJP workers attacking Left leaders: Sarkar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE  
AGARTALA

CPI(M) Polit Bureau member and former Tripura CM Manik Sarkar on Friday alleged that whenever the Left leaders and members protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens, they are attacked by BJP workers while the police stand inactive.

In a letter to the Director General of Police, Mr. Sarkar said that BJP workers attacked the Left Front leaders at Belonia and Udaipur in southern Tripura.

## LPG bottling plant inaugurated in Odisha

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BHUBANESWAR

A new LPG bottling plant of the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited was inaugurated by Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal in Bolangir district on Friday.

Prof. Lal inaugurated the plant as Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, who was scheduled to inaugurate the facility, could not reach Bolangir due to inclement weather.

The Vice-President expressed regret for not being able to attend the programme. He was also scheduled to attend the platinum jubilee celebrations of Rajendra College at Bolangir.

In a voice message, Mr. Naidu wished success for the project which was completed three months ahead of schedule. "It will help women and provide employment to the local youths," he said.

Set up at Barkhani village, the plant is spread over 23 acres and has the capacity to produce 42 lakh cylinders per year. It has been set up at a cost of ₹103 crore.

In his address, the Governor said that the plant will fulfil the needs of the people in 14 districts in the western region of Odisha. The plant is part of the Central government's 'Look East' policy, he added.

Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan said providing clean cooking fuel to the people was the main objective of the Centre.

Mr. Pradhan said there were only 13.20 crore LPG consumers in the country till 2014 and now it has crossed 27 crore.

State Agriculture Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo, Lok Sabha MP from Bolangir Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo and local MLA Narasingha Mishra were present.

## Odisha orders action against onion hoarders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has instructed all district authorities to keep a close watch on stocking of onions and potatoes by unscrupulous traders and take stringent action against them to check the rising prices.

In letters to the District Collectors, the Food and Consumer Welfare Department asked them to carry out raids on business premises to track the wholesale and retail prices by verifying bills, vouchers and stock limits.

Mentioning that the Odisha Potato and Onion (Storage Control) Amendment Order, 2019, will now be strictly enforced, the letter said that stock limit of the tuber and the bulb would be fixed for the traders.



## IN BRIEF



## Mandalam festival ends in Sabarimala

**PATHANAMTHITTA**  
The auspicious Mandalapuja, marking culmination of the 41-day annual Mandalam festival at the Lord Ayyappa temple in Sabarimala, was held with ritualistic fervour on Friday. The holy hillock of Sabarimala Sannidhanam witnessed moderate rush of pilgrims from different parts of the country who have turned up to witness the auspicious Mandalapuja held between 10 a.m. and 10.40 a.m.

## Govt. receives panel's report on Tipu lessons

**BENGALURU**  
Primary and Secondary Education Minister of Karnataka, S. Suresh Kumar, on Friday said a decision on the experts' report on whether to drop, retain or modify the lessons on Tipu Sultan in textbooks would be taken after consulting Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa. Mr. Kumar told reporters here that he received the report from the experts' committee on Thursday. "I am going through the report," he said, and added that a decision would be taken after consultation with the CM.

## CPI alleges that Sangh was behind office attack

**BENGALURU**  
Alleging that the Sangh Parivar is behind the recent attempt to set its Bengaluru office on fire, Communist Party of India (CPI) national general secretary D. Raja on Friday demanded the Karnataka Home Department to take action against those involved. The CPI State headquarters situated at Vyalakaval in the city was attacked on Wednesday by a group of men who set fire to six bikes parked on the office premises. Party posters stocked in the godown were also reduced to ashes.

## No plan to set up detention centre: Kerala

Chief Minister's Office says the move was initiated by the previous government in 2012

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOCHI**

The Kerala government has decided to stop all proceedings related to the setting up of a Foreigners' Detention Centre in view of the "present circumstances." It also maintained that the move to set up the centre "was initiated in 2012 during the term of the previous government."

Responding to a report that appeared in these columns on Friday, a communication issued by the Chief Minister's Office said no files related to the project were seen by the Ministers. The campaign that the State was planning to set up a detention centre was baseless and it had not taken any such decision as reported. A false campaign was being undertaken by some quarters in this regard, it said.

The Centre had asked all State governments in August 2012 to set up detention centres for housing foreigners who had illegally entered the country, or those who overstayed after the expiry of passport and visa documents. It was meant for those who were to be deport-

ed to their homeland after completing their punishment here. The Centre wanted the States to draw up proposals in this regard, the communication said.

Following the letter, the Home Department convened a meeting on November 4, 2015. The Social Welfare Department was entrusted with the task of setting up the centres immediately outside the police department and jail premises.

On February 29, 2016, the Director of Social Justice was asked to submit a recommendation for setting up the detention centre and a managing committee, consisting of the district social justice officer and a District Police Superintendent, was given the responsibility.

The Social Justice wing of the Secretariat sought information on the likely number of inmates from the Director of Social Justice and from the State Crimes Record Bureau. However, the SCRB did not give any information. The Centre had been sending reminders to the State departments regarding the letter that was issued, it said.



People taking out a rally to protest against the CAA, in Palakkad on Friday. \*K.K. MUSTAFAH

## Chidambaram to begin 'Save India' protest

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**  
Congress leader and former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram will inaugurate the 'Save The Constitution-Save India' campaign of the All India Congress Committee in Kerala on Saturday. AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal said the CAA discriminated against Muslim refugees and migrants seeking legal status in India. It chipped away at the secular foundation of the Constitution, which deemed all persons equal under Indian law.

## Do not implement NRC, NPR, Yechury tells KCR

**HYDERABAD**  
The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has appealed to the Telangana government not to implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) or the National Population Register (NPR) as sought by the Centre as these were aimed at discriminating against the minority communities, especially Muslims. CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said already Chief Ministers of 13 States had refused to implement the NRC.

## Ban on PFI, SDPI under study: Karnataka Minister

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU**

The government is considering banning the Popular Front of India (PFI) and the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) over the violence in Mangaluru during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act that

left two people killed in police firing.

Speaking to reporters here on Friday, Karnataka Minister for Primary and Secondary Education S. Suresh Kumar said this was due to the alleged role of the two outfits in instigating violence.

## Amjad Ali Khan upset over communication lapse, govt. proposals

Kerala's decision to include bureaucrats in governing body of international music academy irked sarod exponent

**N.J. NAIR  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

The Kerala government's lapse in officially communicating the allotment of two acres of land and the decision to constitute a society and its governing body replete with bureaucrats prompted sarod maestro Amjad Ali Khan to eschew the project for setting up an international music institute at Thiruvananthapuram.

Mr. Khan told *The Hindu* on Friday that so far he had

not received any official communication on allotment of land at Kadakampally village, near the Veli tourism village, since the decision was made on February 18, 2016.

He was also peeved at the formation of the society for managing the institute. The society's governing body comprises Mr. Khan, his wife and sons, bureaucrats and others.

This was in total contradiction of his concept about

the institute, and so he decided to opt out.

"Till date I haven't received an official letter on land allocation, but only a message to create an organisation consisting of my family members and bureaucrats, among others. If the government was keen on floating an organisation, it could have opted for Sarod Ghar, a registered organisation in Delhi," he said.

Mr. Khan had expressed his desire to settle down in

Kerala and open an institute to former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy when he was honoured with the *Swati Sangeetha Puraskaram* in 2015. Mr. Chandy had promptly consented.

## Gurukula system

"My dream was to revive the traditional gurukula system and have a guru-shishya parampara that would master and propagate Indian music, its two streams, North Indian and South Indian schools.

The guru would be the institute and his disciples would take lessons from him in a bohemian fashion. It was not just meant to be another institute for paying salary to teachers by collecting fees from the students," he said.

The subsequent decision to form the society and its governing body were all seen as a deviation from the original concept and he backed out.

Mr. Khan, who is travelling all over the world giving con-

## Now, Norwegian tourist asked to leave country

She took part in a march on Monday

**STAFF REPORTER  
KOCHI**

A Norwegian tourist visiting the city ran into trouble as the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) authorities in Kochi asked her to immediately leave the country after it emerged that she had participated in a protest march against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) in the city early this week.

Janne-Mette Johansson, 71, a Norwegian citizen settled in Sweden, was in the city since December 12, and participated in the People's Long March on Monday.

She was questioned for hours by immigration officials at the FRRO office at the Kochi airport on Thursday before they went to her hotel at Fort Kochi on Friday with a directive to immediately leave the country citing violation of visa norms.

In a Facebook post on Friday, Ms. Johansson said Bureau of Immigration officials showed up at her hotel again. "I was told to leave the country at once, or legal action would be taken. I



Janne-Mette Johansson leaving a cafe in Kochi. \*REUTERS

asked for an explanation and also something in writing. I was told that I would not get anything in writing. The officer from the bureau is not leaving me before he can see that I have a flight ticket," it read.

Shortly thereafter, she left for the Kochi airport after her friend arranged a ticket to Sharjah on an Air Arabia flight at 7.30 p.m. She was to catch a flight to Sweden from there.

At the Cochin International Airport, she was subjected to further interrogation for over two hours and her luggage was checked.

## A.P. defers decision on three capitals; panel to take call

Jagan didn't want to make a hasty announcement: Minister

**STAFF REPORTER  
VIJAYAWADA**

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet on Friday decided to tread cautiously on the proposal for three capitals for the State, by resolving to constitute a high-power committee to examine both the recommendations of a team of experts led by retired IAS officer G.N. Rao and the findings of Boston Consulting Group (BCG), expected to submit its report in the first week of January 2020, and pick the best of them.

The members of the committee have not been announced yet.

The government did not make the much-anticipated declaration of Amaravati, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool as Legislative, Executive and Judicial capital cities.

The three-capital move had been vehemently opposed by farmers who had parted with about 33,000 acres under the pooling scheme, and the Opposition parties, mainly the Telugu Desam Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party, which insisted that decentralisation of development (not administration) was the need of the hour.

"Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy did not want to make a hasty announcement because he is aware of the concerns raised by farmers in Amaravati and he is committed to doing justice to them and also elicit the opinion of all other stakeholders before going ahead with a particular plan," said Information and Public Relations and Transport (I&PR) Minister Permi Venkataramaiah.

On alleged "insider trading" in Amaravati, Mr. Venkataramaiah said the Cabinet decided to hand over the investigation to the Lokayukta, CBI or the CB-CID after taking legal advice.

He said a Cabinet subcommittee found evidence of the large-scale purchase of lands by elected representatives, individuals close to the former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, some companies in which he (Mr. Naidu) owned shares and several benami transactions a few months before Amaravati was declared as the capital in December 2014.

Details of those who resorted to insider trading and dared the government to institute an inquiry would eventually come out, he said.

## Fighting technique



Display of skills: Students performing Kalaripayattu against the backdrop of Tipu's Fort in Palakkad on Friday. Kalaripayattu is one of the oldest martial art forms that originated in Kerala and dates back to the 3rd century B.C. \*K.K. MUSTAFAH

## Belum Caves Festival in A.P. postponed

**STAFF REPORTER  
KURNOOL**

The Belum Caves Festival in Andhra Pradesh, which was to be organised on December 21 and 22, was postponed to January due to the dates clashing with Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan's visit to Kurnool district.

Joint Collector Syed Khaja Mohiuddin told *The Hindu* that alternative plans were made earlier to celebrate the festival on December 28 and 29. However, as these clashed with the dates of Visakha Utsav, the district authorities were forced to postpone the festival further, he said.

"The festival will be conducted as soon as the schedule is approved by Tourism Minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao. We expect the festival to be organised in January," he said.

## Winged visitors flock to Pulicat, with birdwatchers in tow

District authorities plan to conduct annual flamingo festival in first week of January

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NELLORE**

The annual flamingo festival in Nellore district is round the corner with the winged visitors arriving in large numbers on their annual sojourn.

District authorities, who are planning to conduct the festival in the first week of January, say they expect the number of birds to be much higher than usual thanks to copious rains this year.

More than 40,000 flamingos can be seen in action at the lake, said Sullurpeta Divisional Forest Officer M. Hima Sailaja who is overseeing arrangements for the Flamingo Festival from January 3 to 5. "Birds like Black-tailed godwit and Kentish plover, which are rare visitors, have also arrived at the lake this time," Ms. Sailaja said.



Visual treat: Birds arriving at the Pulicat lake in Nellore district. \*K. RAVIKUMAR

A variety of aquatic and terrestrial birds, including painted storks, large and little egrets, grey pelicans, grey herons, and water birds like northern pintails, black-winged stilts, northern shovellers, common teal, sea-

gulls, terns, sandpipers, and common coots have come in large numbers this time. The lake supports a rich biodiversity and high biomass of fishes, prawns, crustaceans, coelenterates and planktons. "About 75 bird species vi-

sit the sanctuary, of which 30 bird species are migratory. The other feeding migrants that can be spotted are pelicans, painted storks, open-billed storks, grey herons, cormorants, white ibises, spoonbills, egrets, reef herons, and spotbilled ducks," Ms. Sailaja said in a conversation with *The Hindu*.

Four venues - Sullurpeta, B.V. Palem, Atakanithippa and Nelapattu - have been selected for holding various cultural programmes and stepping up awareness on the brackish water ecosystem during the festival as the winged visitors make merry in the 600 sq km area covering the mandals of Tada, Sullurpeta, Doravarisatram, Chittapur and Vakadu. The department has arranged for binoculars for nature lovers

to view the birds. Educational films on snakes and birds will also be screened as part of the festival, she added.

Breeding activity is on in full swing at Nelapattu, where one could see endangered species like grey pelicans, open-billed storks, little cormorants, spoon bills, white ibises and night herons.

A wide variety of birds like egrets, terns, ducks and waders have also made it to the lake in good numbers. The rich flora at the lake makes it a botanist's delight. Invertebrates like prawns, planktons, coelenterates, annelids, molluscs and echinoderms thrive here, as do reptiles like monitor lizard, calotes, cobra, Russell's viper, and krait, and schools of fish like sable fish, white, black and silver pomfret.

## ₹10-crore for research team to set up centre of excellence

Venue of facility in health economics to be decided later

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD**

A team of researchers from L.V. Prasad Eye Institute, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and the Indian Institute of Public Health, Hyderabad, has won a grant of ₹10 crore for setting up a centre of excellence in health outcomes research and economics.

Announcing winners of the Wellcome Trust/DBT India Alliance Clinical/Public Health Research Center (CRC) grant, a release on Friday said the team included Dr. Raja Narayanan and Dr. Anthony Vipin Das of LVPEI, Dr. Chirantan Chatterjee of IIMA and Dr. Murthy of IIPH, Hyderabad.

While Hyderabad was in the reckoning to host the proposed facility, a decision with regard to location of centre would be announced subsequently, sources familiar with the development said.

The process of selection included a rigorous application submission stage, an international peer review stage and a final interview that spanned over six months.

Over the next five years, the CoE proposed to create a first-of-its-kind unit that would use big data in Indian healthcare along with Machine Learning and economic tool kits to advance the understanding of evidence-based policy making in Indian healthcare.

It proposed to recruit post-doctoral fellows, research assistants and conduct training of doctors to engage in economical, evidence-based clinical decision-making such as cost effectiveness studies with data from India through the Clinical Research Training Programme (CRTP) Fellowships embedded within the CRC grant, the release said.

An international advisory board of health economists and medical outcomes researchers, including those from Harvard and Stanford University, would be advising the team.

Dr. Narayanan is the Principal Investigator of the project and other members co-PIs.



IN BRIEF



**Actor Kushal Punjabi found dead**

**MUMBAI**  
Actor Kushal Punjabi, 42, was found dead in his Bandra residence in Mumbai on Thursday night. He left a note saying that no one should be held responsible for his extreme step, said the police. (BMC Mental Health Helpline: 022-24131212)

**IPS officer Rajeev Kumar shifted to IT Dept.**

**KOLKATA**  
The West Bengal government has posted IPS officer Rajeev Kumar as Principal Secretary of the Information Technology and Electronics Department. Mr. Kumar, who was posted as Additional Director General, CID, West Bengal Police, will replace IAS officer Debasish Sen. Mr. Kumar has held key posts in the West Bengal police and the Kolkata police.

**PMC scam: police file chargesheet against 5**

**MUMBAI**  
The Mumbai police on Friday filed a 32,000-page chargesheet in the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank scam. It has named former MD Joy Thomas, former chairman Waryam Singh, former director Surjit Singh Arora, and Housing Development and Infrastructure Limited promoters Rakesh Wadhawan and Sarang Wadhawan.

**Centre to restore pension commutation**

**NEW DELHI**  
The Labour Ministry will enforce the retirement fund body EPFO's decision to restore pension commutation from January 1, 2020 — a move which will benefit 6.3 lakh pensioners, a source said. These pensioners had opted for commutation and got a lump sum amount at the time of retirement from their pension accumulations before 2009. PTI

# MiG-27 flies into the sunset in Jodhpur

With this, the IAF's combat strength has fallen to 28 fighter squadrons, way below the authorised 42

**DINAKAR PERI**  
NEW DELHI

"She was a great teacher so long as you respected her. She would talk to you - little sounds, indications, et al. and she appreciated a thoughtful response," Sqn Ldr (ret.) Anshuman Manikar fondly recalls his experience of flying the MiG-27 swing-wing fighter jet. He was at the Jodhpur Air Force station on Friday for the ceremony of de-induction of the last squadron of the aircraft with the Indian Air Force (IAF).

This also means that the IAF's combat strength has now fallen to 28 fighter squadrons, way below the authorised strength of 42.

Sqn Ldr Manikar said his best recollection of the fighter jet was low-level, high-speed runs over range, "optimum mix of fun and watchfulness and a complete

adrenaline rush."

"Not a drawback really, but fighter trips were so much better, ergonomics-wise. But that was a small cost to pay, given the diverse variants she serviced," he told *The Hindu*.

**End of an era**

At the 'winding down' ceremony, the aircraft from the No. 29 Squadron (SCORPIOS), the only unit in the IAF operating the MiG-27 Upgrades, flew for the last time, marking the end of the variable sweep (Swing Wing) era of the IAF.

To commemorate the historic occasion, the squadron flew in a five aircraft 'Arrowhead' formation, flanked by the Sukhoi 30 aircraft.

The No. 29 Squadron was raised on March 10, 1958 at the Air Force Station Halwara with 'Ouragan' (Toofani) aircraft.



**Last flight:** The MiG-27 fighter jet at the de-induction ceremony in Jodhpur on Friday. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The squadron is now slated to be number-plated on March 31, 2020, with December 27, 2019 being its last flying day, thereby making the swing wing fleet a part of the IAF's glorious past," the IAF stated.

"MiG 27 swing-wing fighter aircraft has been the backbone of the ground attack fleet of the IAF for the past four decades," the Air Force said in a statement.

The fleet earned its glory in the historic Kargil conflict,

when it delivered rockets and bombs with accuracy on enemy positions, it added

From 1985 onwards, the IAF has flown about 165 MiG-27 fighters, licence-manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

This marks the end of another Russian MiG series in the Indian inventory. All the other MiG-variants, such as MiG-23 BN & MiG-23 MF and the pure MiG 27 have already been retired from the IAF. The upgraded MiG-21 Bissons and MiG-29s now remain in service of which the MiG-21s are scheduled to be phased out very soon.

The IAF will continue to operate three squadrons of the upgraded MiG-29UPG for sometime, while it is also negotiating for another squadron from Russia.

The Navy operates two squadrons of the MiG-29K/KUB off its aircraft carriers.

# Negatives of 'lost' 1985 Somali epic found at NFAI

'The Somali Dervish' is a masterpiece by Said Salah Ahmed and was last seen in 1985

**SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE**  
PUNE

In an event of great import to the preservation of African cinematic heritage, the negatives of an epic Somali film thought to have been lost were "discovered" in the vaults of the Pune-based National Film Archive of India (NFAI).

*The Somali Dervish*, a four-hour-long 1985 masterpiece by eminent Somali poet, playwright and filmmaker Said Salah Ahmed, chronicles the revolutionary Somali Dervish movement under the leadership of the legendary anti-colonial fighter Mohamed Abdullah Hassan.

Hassan is revered as the 'Father of Somali National



**Lost treasure:** Film-maker Said Salah Ahmed, centre, with NFAI director Prakash Magdum. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ism' and known by the sobriquet 'Mad Mullah'.

**The India connect**

It chronicles Hassan's two-decade struggle against British colonialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries till his death in 1920.

Shooting of the 280-minute film (also known as *The Somalia Dervishes*) began in 1983 and was completed in 1985. It was produced by an Indian company.

In fact, the film is believed to be the only feature-length narrative motion picture pro-

duced in the country as Somalia's cinematic heritage was buried under the ravages of a bitter civil war, which commenced in the 1980s.

"The importance of the 'discovery' of this film in the NFAI vaults is hard to overstate, given that there is precious little information on Somali film heritage," said Prakash Magdum, Director, NFAI, speaking to *The Hindu*.

Mr. Ahmed, who moved to the United States as the Somali Civil War raged across his country in the 1980s, had last seen the film in 1985 in Abu Dhabi, after which it was considered "lost".

Subsequently, he made a string of inquiries in film archives across the globe, in-

cluding the Washington-based Library of Congress and film vaults in Paris.

**Director delighted**

Mr. Ahmed was speechless on learning that the NFAI did have the negatives.

"It is like finding your own child back after so many years," said the 74-year-old Mr. Ahmed, following his visit to the NFAI on Thursday, where Mr. Magdum, along with Ujwal Nirgudkar, consultant, NFAI, handed the reels to him.

Another Somali film, an hour-long documentary titled *A future for Somalia* (1978), too, was found in the NFAI vaults during the search for *The Somali Dervish*.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18:00 HRS)

**Forecast for Saturday:** Severe cold day conditions and fog likely in most pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, north Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Dense fog likely in isolated pockets over north Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Odisha, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	3.5	18.0	14.0	Kozhikode	...	34.0	25.0
Ahmedabad	...	26.0	9.0	Kurnool	...	32.0	21.0
Aizawl	3.0	19.0	9.0	Lucknow	...	15.0	7.0
Allahabad	...	17.0	6.0	Madurai	...	32.0	21.0
Bengaluru	...	29.0	18.0	Mangaluru	...	35.0	24.0
Bhopal	...	22.0	5.0	Mumbai	...	30.0	19.0
Bhubaneswar	...	24.0	12.0	Mysuru	...	29.0	18.0
Chandigarh	...	10.0	7.0	New Delhi	...	14.0	4.0
Chennai	...	30.0	21.0	Patna	...	16.0	9.0
Coimbatore	6.5	30.0	22.0	Port Blair	...	29.0	21.0
Dehradun	...	19.0	7.0	Puducherry	...	30.0	20.0
Gangtok	...	10.0	2.0	Pune	...	28.0	18.0
Goa	...	33.0	24.0	Raipur	...	0.5	16.0
Guwahati	...	24.0	11.0	Ranchi	...	1.0	5.0
Hubballi	...	30.0	22.0	Shillong	...	14.0	6.0
Hyderabad	...	29.0	20.0	Shimla	...	13.0	3.0
Imphal	0.1	21.0	5.0	Srinagar	...	9.0	-6.0
Jaipur	...	22.0	4.0	Thiruvananthapuram	...	33.0	24.0
Kochi	...	31.0	25.0	Tiruchi	...	30.0	22.0
Kohima	...	16.0	5.0	Vijayawada	...	30.0	22.0
Kolkata	11.8	19.0	11.0	Visakhapatnam	...	29.0	23.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	55	61	27	...	...	...
Bengaluru	12	66	50	...	...	...
Chennai	58	41	20	...	...	...
Delhi	13	14	56	414	350	...
Hyderabad	-2	68	48	128	113	...
Kolkata	13	57	44	...	...	...
Lucknow	...	4	29	...	...	...
Mumbai	...	14	49	...	...	...
Pune	...	69	16	...	...	...
Visakhapatnam	10	59	45	...	...	...

In observation made at 4:00 p.m., Noida, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 496 indicating a severe level of pollution. In contrast, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 50.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**NO<sub>2</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

**PM2.5 & PM10:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease



## Fuel to the fire

The burden of proof must not be on the people to prove their citizenship

The Union Cabinet announcement on Tuesday that the National Population Register (NPR) would be updated across the country, barring Assam, at an expense of over ₹3,941.35 crore, would have been considered a routine administrative measure but for the myriad concerns among the public about the government's intentions. The announcement on the NPR came amid continuing protests against the recent Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, in many parts of the country and lingering uncertainty regarding the National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC), on which senior government functionaries have given conflicting statements. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the NRIC had not been discussed in the government, but that did not mean that it would not be taken up. His assurance that no Indian of any religion will be adversely affected by the controversial CAA rings hollow, when the government has not cleared the air in unambiguous terms that it has no plans for an elaborate plan to tabulate citizens. The NRC, as it was rolled out in Assam, puts the burden of proof on citizens to establish that they are indeed citizens. The undocumented and the poor will bear the brunt of this approach. The proposed format for enumerating the NPR only exacerbates this concern and adds a third axis to the ongoing confusion and turmoil. It is correct that the NPR is not about citizenship but only about residency. However, when additional questions such as "place of birth of father and mother", etc are being proposed for the forthcoming exercise, the concern that this may be a prelude to the NRIC is logical.

Instead of coming clean and reassuring the public on its plans, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has sought to muddle the debate further by pointing out that the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) had prepared the NPR in 2010. It is nobody's argument that the state should not enumerate the population or collect data on the people – which are all essential for providing good governance. Never in the past, including when a part of India broke away as Pakistan on the basis of religion, did the prospects of a religious test for citizenship appear even remotely in this country. In 2014, the BJP election manifesto explicitly stated that India was a natural homeland for "persecuted Hindus", and Mr. Modi made the now-familiar, and extremely problematic, distinction between "infiltrators" and "refugees". With the passage of the CAA, and the announcement of the NRIC, there is enough factual basis for doubting the government's claim that the NPR has nothing to do with the NRIC. In the current climate of panic among a significant section of the country's poor and the Muslim minorities, the government, at the highest levels must speak up to bolster their confidence in India's constitutional democracy. Equivocation, and polarising grandstanding on the CAA, the NRIC, and now the NPR, may yield political dividends for the government but at a very high cost to the nation. This is the time to douse the fire, not add fuel to it.

## Decisive shift

The Chief of Defence Staff could finally bring about unison among the armed forces

The government has acted with reasonable alacrity to create the post of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), who will head the Department of Military Affairs (DMA). It was only four months ago, on August 15, that the Prime Minister stressed the importance of creating this post, whereas two Defence Ministers came and went after Manohar Parrikar promised that this move was very much on the government's agenda. To be fair, the delay has been more a result of fears in the minds of the three services – the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force – of how such a development could impact on the role and functioning of the three arms of the armed forces, in terms of curtailing or inflating their importance. There must have been a parallel thought in the bureaucracy how such a shift would affect them too. This move will install the CDS, in the rank of a four star general, as Secretary, DMA.

There is no doubt that the job of the CDS will be exceedingly challenging, a task which is easier set than done. The job calls for total transformation of traditional military mindset. The CDS has to restructure the military commands into appropriate theatre or joint commands for which a critical prerequisite is 'jointness' – a term that envisions the various arms of the armed forces working in unison towards a goal. This is a very tall order, considering India's experience. Since Independence, the armed forces have been working separately, with no concept of jointness. The only jointness that comes into play effectively is when officers of the various services go to courses in, say, Wellington, at the Defence Services Staff College, or at the National Defence College, Delhi. All that will have to change, and change quickly, for a variety of reasons, not least the security environment in the region, with the Americans preparing to move out of Afghanistan and the restiveness consequent to the dilution of Article 370. According to the cabinet release, the new incumbent will have three years to achieve this. It flows from this urgency therefore that the name of the next CDS will have to be soon announced. It is also necessary that the first incumbent is given a term of three years so as to be able to carry the ambitious vision laid out in the cabinet note through to its conclusion. The job is strategic, requires personal supervision, and cannot be left unfinished for the successor to finish. Given the challenges and the limited time-frame within which to accomplish it, alliances will have to be made for attendant hiccups.

# In CAA narrative, finding the judiciary's lost voice

This is a watershed moment for the judiciary not to falter and for judges to undo the wrongs of the past



AJIT PRAKASH SHAH

The recent enactment of the amendments to the Citizenship Act have left many, and certainly myself, very disturbed. The legislation itself is undoubtedly problematic and is compounded by the linkages with the National Register of Citizens (NRC). I was a part of a People's Tribunal on the deployment of the NRC in Assam, and we found that even though it was conducted under the aegis of the court, it was a disastrous exercise with terrifying consequences.

The protests that have followed the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, were not surprising, but the manner in which the protesters were treated certainly is. The reaction of the law and order machinery to what were essentially student-led peaceful protests has led to incidents of violence and loss of property across the country, which is terribly unfortunate. This is a reflection of the times we live in and signals that the youth in our country have to spend the next significant amount of time battling a leadership that comes across, at once, as communal and authoritarian.

### Subdued judiciary

At such times, empathy is but a natural reaction, particularly from a generation that has lived through and seen the worst of the authoritarian regime that was the Emergency. In this context, what I personally feel worse about is that the voice of the judiciary in this narrative is either almost entirely absent or has been overwhelmed by a strong executive.

The CAA is touted as a "fast-track" means of granting citizenship by naturalisation to what it identifies as persecuted minorities (Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians) from three neighbouring countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan). Those belonging to these communities from these countries will not, as per the law, be regarded as "illegal immigrants".

### Restrictive definition

Since the Bill was proposed, and after it was eventually enacted, we have seen multiple perspectives emerge that offer frameworks of different kinds to explain the legislation and the politics surrounding it. The primary, and arguably, the most important view is that the legislation is unconstitutional. It is so for many reasons, not least that it is arbitrary and violates the right to equality before the law enshrined in Article 14 of the Indian Constitution. It deliberately marginalises Muslims as a minority community, and uses religious identity as the basis for granting citizenship. In doing so, it erodes the spirit of the Constitution. There is no legislative basis for singling out persecution of religious minorities as the basis for granting Indian citizenship, just as there is no logic in restricting "fast track" naturalisation to persons from three countries alone. Surely, persecution of any kind ought to be the sole criterion for granting citizenship to immigrants. Restricting the definition of persecution in this manner erodes the premise on the basis of which the republic of India was constructed, and ignores the historical realities of the freedom struggle (founded on principles of equality and diversity) which brought us Independence.

Alternative perspectives exist too, on the opposite side of the spectrum, fuelling a narrative that



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the CAA is not harmful at all and is intended merely to offer amnesty and a speedy route for legitimate migration. Arguably, this narrative – that the CAA is not harmful – is a more important issue than the question of constitutionality, for it tries to sweep under the carpet the grand design that this legislation forms a small part of.

### Of a religious nationalism

What is the grand design, you may well ask. On the face of it, the implications of the CAA is to isolate individuals who identify as belonging to the Muslim community. If you restrict the understanding of the law, as the government would have it, to applying it only to immigrants, then this law automatically makes Muslim immigrants second class priorities when they are on Indian soil, even though they may have made the long trek to India for the same reasons (poverty, political persecution, etc.) that drove their Hindu or Christian neighbours out. If you expand the understanding of this law, as the government has overtly done (by linking the NRC to the CAA), it has implications of making all Muslims in India second class citizens. In doing so, this law and policy subverts and even destroys fundamental constitutional principles of secularism, fraternity, and humanity.

The roots of this lie in the ideology of cultural and religious na-

ionalism propagated by Hindutva icons, i.e., Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and his ilk, with Savarkar propounding that the ideal was the "Hindu Rashtra (state), Hindu Jati (race) and Hindu Sanskriti (culture)". In the form of religious nationalism, this ideology envisages a nation under Hindu rule, a Hindu Rashtra in Akhand Bharat (a United India), premised on the belief that only Hindus can claim the territory of British India as the land of their ancestry, i.e. pitrubhumi, and the land of their religion, i.e. the punyabhumi. In this context, Muslims and Christians are viewed as foreigners who are not indigenous to the territory of India, and whose religion originated in a separate holy land.

My personal background links up with this narrative in more ways than many would imagine. My maternal grandfather was the president of the Hindu Mahasabha in the 1940s, and the first writings that I was ever exposed to in my school days were Savarkar's works. Writing in 1938, when Hitler was on the rise, Savarkar justified Hitler's policies towards the Jews and driving them away from the motherland. He said, "A nation is formed by a majority living therein. What did the Jews do in Germany? They being in minority were driven out from Germany." While absorbing what I read as a child, and admiring (even now) his poetry, I was also always questioning the Mahasabha as an institution, attempting to understand what prompted their actions. Even in those times, I was especially struck by Savarkar's obsession with Fascist dictators of the times, notably Hitler and Mussolini.

The ideological positions on marginalisation, majoritarianism, and constitutionality taken by the Hindu Mahasabha and its successors have been consistent, but in their consistency, they have also

revealed flaws in holding on to an imaginary idea of a Hindu Rashtra, and disengaging from the reality of a culturally, linguistically, and religiously diverse, modern India.

Because the CAA is immoral, a people's movement is inevitable and necessary, for otherwise the fundamental principles on which the constitutional idea of India rests will be destroyed for something that can render deep wounds forever.

### A turning point

In the wake of the CAA protests, the Chief Justice of India reportedly said that if people/protesters wanted to "take to the streets", then they need not approach the courts. Some could read this statement as a sort of warning that good behaviour was a prerequisite for obtaining justice. In any event, in a democracy, protest and a recourse to the judiciary are options that are legitimately available to the people. Indeed, to dissent or protest is the lifeline of a democracy. But, what is the judiciary supposed to do when society as a whole is protesting? In such a scenario, as is playing out now, there is no clear line that can be drawn between declaring protesters as good or bad.

Historically, Indian courts have had a chequered history in tackling circumstances where they are the final arbiter. Especially when faced with a powerful executive, courts have tended to falter, the Emergency being a case in point. This is a watershed moment for this generation of judges to undo the wrongs done by their predecessors 40 years ago to the people of India. We eagerly await these reparations.

Ajit Prakash Shah is a former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court and former Chairperson of the Law Commission of India

# How not to counter economic stagnation

The government has to garner resources and give a boost to the economy by increasing its investments



ARUN KUMAR

The Centre and the States are so short of resources that their fiscal deficit is burgeoning. The Prime Minister, at a function of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India recently, was optimistic but the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor was less positive, admitting that the country's economic problems are also structural. The government has argued that its structural reforms would pay dividends in the long run. Whether or not that happens, action is needed now. So, what should the government do?

### Impact on tax revenues

It has to give lead to the economy since the private sector, in its reaction to the slowdown, has lost confidence and is investing less, which is only aggravating the economic crisis. An RBI report suggests that business confidence, consumer confidence and capacity utilisation are down. So, there is no escaping the fact that the government has to garner resources

and give a boost to the economy by increasing its investments. But the slowdown has adversely impacted growth of tax revenues.

The government calculated tax revenues on the assumption of a 12% nominal growth. But, it has been around 9%, both last and this year. So, in 2018-19, tax revenue was short by about ₹1.5 lakh crore. But this was not reflected in the planning for the 2019-20 Budget. Therefore, given that the base for calculating tax revenue this year was wrong and the rate of growth is incorrect, the revenue shortfall for the Centre will be even larger than last year – around ₹2 lakh crore.

The States get 42% of this revenue so they will get ₹84,000 crore less. Further, the concessions in corporate taxation of ₹1.45 lakh crore will also mean ₹58,000 crore less revenue for the States. While the Centre has obtained ₹1.76 lakh crore from the RBI's reserves, no such succour is available to the States. The Centre will also get the proceeds of disinvestment but that is not shared with the States. In brief, the States will have a larger shortfall in resources than the Centre. So, what can they do?

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council met on December 18, where it was expected to help raise more indirect taxes by rais-



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ing rates. Mercifully, that did not occur. So, revenue from indirect taxes cannot fill the resource gap. The States have also been complaining that they are not getting the funds that are due to them from the Centre. The Centre has partly responded to this by transferring more, but that raises its deficit.

The Centre is required to give the States: their share of Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) and compensate them if the revenue growth of State Goods and Services Tax is less than 14%. This last is to come from the cess collected on sin goods and luxury goods. One of the big contributors to GST has been the auto sector, but with sales falling over the last 10 months collections have declined. The Centre is apparently holding back the States' share of IGST and arguing that the cess collection is inadequate to compensate the States for their shortfall.

The dilemma is that if the GST rates are increased, prices would

rise and demand would further slump, further aggravating the slowdown and shortfall in revenues. One of the suggestions has been to raise the 5% slab to 6% or 10%. It has also been suggested that taxes on petro goods and liquor for human consumption are under the purview of the States, and they can raise tax rates on these items. But these will be inflationary moves and demand would fall.

The problem is compounded by the shortfall in direct tax collections. This is both the result of corporate tax concessions and the slowing economy. Income-tax rates cannot be raised now since that would be seen as inequitable – rich corporates will pay a lower tax rate than the middle classes, who pay income-tax.

### Effect of I-T reduction

There is pressure to reduce income-tax rates to boost demand in the economy. But a cut in income-tax rates will largely benefit less than 2% of the citizens who pay a significant amount of income-tax. They are well-to-do and unlikely to increase consumption. Similarly, the cut in corporate tax rates will not boost demand since neither investment nor consumption will rise. Investment will rise only when capacity utilisation improves. Much store is being laid at the doors of multi-national corpo-

rations relocating their factories from China to India but this will be too small to arrest the current declining trend in investment in India.

### Unorganised sector missed

The problem has been that government has been in denial and delayed action till after the Budget in July 2019. Even then it catered to the corporate sector slowdown and not where the problem originated from: the unorganised sector. The concessions to the corporate sector have narrowed the fiscal space available without raising demand.

If the unorganised sector is separately accounted for, the economy is in a recession – it is not just a slowdown as official data based only on the organised sector indicates. The fiscal deficit at all levels of government is already high so a policy decision is needed on how much more it can be. If the fiscal deficit is allowed to rise further, extra resources can be used to boost incomes in the unorganised sectors through greater public investments. In the 150th year of Gandhiji, his talisman, "last person first" is the need of the hour.

Arun Kumar is Malcolm Adeshiah Chair Professor, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, and the author of 'Ground Scorching Tax'

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Army chief's remarks

It is unbecoming of an Army chief, now outgoing, to make a political statement while still in service (Page 1, "Army Chief: leading crowds for arson is not leadership", December 27). As an individual, everyone has the liberty to hold or have their opinion on everything, but one cannot claim liberty to ventilate all one's opinions while holding a responsible position in an organisation. Unfortunately, the Army's Chief's tone and tenor only strengthen the perception that such statements made at the fag end of the person's tenure are in order to seek a post-retirement posting. The government must strive to uphold the glory and the strict discipline the Indian Army is known for.  
A.G. RAJMOHAN,  
Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

With his sweeping remarks, the Army Chief has not only overstepped the much important line held in high esteem in a constitutional democracy (the division of the polity from the military and the very supremacy of civilian leadership over the military) but also done great damage to his reputation and the office he holds. His publicly expressed conviction could only add impetus to the attempts by Central government to criminalise the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.  
M. JEVARAM,  
Sholavandan, Tamil Nadu

Perhaps the Army chief is being criticised a bit too unfairly. The context was about leading people in the right direction and it would be incorrect to interpret this as interference by the Indian Army in civilian affairs. The 'democratic leaders' should

realise that the patience of the Army cannot and should not be tested through despicable acts or deeds that endanger the smooth conduct of democracy.  
B. VEERAKUMARAN THAMPI,  
Thiruvananthapuram

### Labelling protesters

It is unfortunate that the Home Minister, Amit Shah, has chosen to call those protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the National Population Register as the "tukde tukde" gang ("splintering group") 'under the leadership of the Congress and that they should be punished in the coming elections' (Page 1, December 27). The unsecular and divisive nature of the Act is very obvious in its wording. There were some who said in Parliament before the introduction of the Bill that even though the law was bound to raise a

controversy, the government did not want to procrastinate on the issue. Hence the Minister cannot claim that the protests by students and others are at the instigation of the Opposition parties. Instead of continuing to adopt a belligerent stand, the government should initiate a consultative process with all stakeholders.  
K. NATARAJAN,  
Madurai

### Confrontationist

The ruling party's unclear stance on the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the National Register of Citizens despite the clamour and uproar across the country is jarring. A civilised government always pays heed to the needs of its citizens and ensures their welfare. But the government's almost ruthless stance against the minority communities is disappointing and is

spreading an air of melancholy everywhere. It is an act that spells India's retreat from secularism. Secularism, which is deeply rooted in our Indian nationalism, now hangs on a precipice. The temporary abatement of public anger should not be taken as a seal of approval for the CAA. Instead of prolonging the agony, it is necessary that the government puts a lid on the controversy and adopts a humanitarian approach.  
R.G. ATHIRA,  
Coimbatore

### The high and the low

The Tamil Nadu government is according wide publicity to the all-India ranks announced and obtained by the State in social and economic indicators (Tamil Nadu pages, "Tamil Nadu takes the top spot in Good Governance Index", December 27). While the government feels elated

about higher ranks (within 10) in a few sectors, it should also feel ashamed about the shocking rank for commerce and industries which is responsible for contributing higher per capita income, savings and further investment. This also reflects on job generation and higher growth rate. A low rank in ease of doing business – there must be an investigation of its reasons – is a prime factor for the obstruction of investment flows to Tamil Nadu and the diversion of the course of investments to neighbouring States. Poor performance of the secondary sector is a matter of grave concern and will affect the present and future of many educated and trained youth through continued jobless growth.  
RAMEEZA A. RASHEED,  
Chennai



FROM PAGE ONE

## Prove allegations on CAA, Shah dares Rahul

"I want to tell every citizen of the country that in this Act there's no provision to take away the citizenship of anyone, not even minorities. The Act aims to give citizenship to minorities who have come from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh and not snatch it [citizenship]," he said.

"You [the Congress] please do not mislead people. Don't try to destroy the country's peace. If you have the facts, then present them before people," he said.

It was Mahatma Gandhi's desire that after Partition, all non-Muslims who did not

wish to live in Pakistan should be allowed to come to India. In 1950, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru entered into an agreement with his Pakistani counterpart, Liaquat Ali — known as the Jawahar-Liaquat accord — in which both agreed to protect the rights of minorities in both countries.

People had fled these countries to escape religious persecution and seek refuge in India. Through the CAA, citizenship was being given to them and it would not be snatched away from anyone in the country, Mr. Shah said.

## Rahul equates NRC, NPR with demonetisation

The Congress has maintained that the NPR, for which the government approved a budget last week, is a precursor to the NRC. More so after key changes were made in the questionnaire prepared by the Home Ministry for the NPR. The Congress had also started the NPR but it is claiming that its NPR was limited to enumerating 'usual residents' and didn't tackle the citizenship question, which the present NPR allegedly would, with intrusive questions.

Mr. Gandhi said, "Poor people will have to go to officers and show their documents and give bribe. They will have to give a bribe if there is a slight mistake in their names. Crores of rupees will be pulled out of the pockets of the poor and will be given to the same 15 people. This is the truth. It is an attack on people."

He also attacked the government for the economic slowdown. The rate of growth had declined from nine % to nearly four % as per the changed technique to assessing the GDP. "But if we measure the growth rate through the old method, then it will just be 2.50 %. Poor people are asking that after robbing them of their entire money, what have they got [in return]," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had failed to understand the crisis the country was going through with the ongoing violent protests, crime against women and 45-year high unemployment rates, he said. "He is merely wasting the time of the country. Apparently, he is not able to understand what

happened and how it happened."

"The money of poor people and farmers have been snatched after demonetisation. Ten to 15 people of the country had benefited with ₹3.50 lakh crore... Nobody is buying anything and factories are getting shut. It's simple economics. It seems the Prime Minister is not able to understand it," he said.

### Celebrating tribes

Earlier, speaking at the inaugural function of the three-day 'National Tribal Dance Festival, 2019' in Raipur, Mr. Gandhi said farmers and tribal people were the major drivers of the economy, and unless the marginalised and different religions were heeded and unity weaved around diversity, the economic crisis would continue and no jobs created.

"Without taking everyone along, the economy can't be revived. Every thought and voice must be included in the running of governments, and the Chhattisgarh government is doing precisely that. It has exemplified unity in diversity," Mr. Gandhi said.

The three-day festival will see performances from 1,800 dancers from across India and six nations.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said the State, which had 32% tribal population, had many unique traditions and cultures. "It's our duty to protect their cultures and we have done that. On the one hand, we have won the confidence of farmers and on the other, we have successfully won the hearts of tribal people," he added.

## Flag marches by Cong. today

Party ties its foundation day celebration with protests against citizenship law

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Congress will take out flag marches under the slogan "Save Constitution, save India" across the country on Saturday to mark its foundation day.

Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal announced on Friday that other than the usual flag-hoisting ceremonies in Congress offices in the State capitals and the Delhi headquarters, the party would hold marches and read the preamble to the Constitution in various languages at the public meetings.

The Youth Congress is planning to send copies of the preamble to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and



The PM and the Home Minister have indulged in characteristic doublespeak, and are now attempting to covertly undertake the exercise through the National Population Register

K.C. VENUGOPAL  
Congress general secretary (organisation)

The Ministers, asking them to read it and understand the spirit of the Constitution.

**Rahul's itinerary**  
Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi will join the programme in Guwahati on Saturday. Guwahati was chosen as the venue for Mr. Gandhi's speech because protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act began there.

## Compulsory renewal of OCI cards goes

No need for a certain age group to do so on renewal of their passports

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has relaxed the provisions for Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card holders that made it compulsory for those aged above 50 and below 20 to renew their cards on renewal of their passports.

Several OCI card holders were not able to travel to India due to this and many

were stopped by airlines and immigration authorities at various airports due to the mismatch.

According to a recent Home Ministry order, an OCI card holder is required to re-register each time a new passport is issued till 20 years of age and once after 50 years of age but re-issuance of OCI registration is not mandatory each time a

new passport is issued between the ages of 21 and 50.

"In order to facilitate OCI card holders, this requirement has been relaxed till 30th June 2020 as per MHA instructions dated December 17. The OCI cardholder should carry existing OCI card along with Old and New passport," the Ministry spokesperson tweeted.

OCI cardholders are given

benefits on a par with non-Resident Indians in financial, economic and educational fields, except in the acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties.

OCI cardholders are given free multiple entry and multi-purpose life-long visa to visit India and are also exempted from reporting to police authorities for any length of stay in India.

## Techies write to govt. against citizenship law

Statement posted on social media

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

In an open letter, several Indian-origin engineers, researchers, analysts, and designers working with global companies such as Google and Facebook have condemned the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The letter, issued "in solidarity with the Indian democracy", was posted through the "TechAgainst-Fascism" handle on medium.com.

It called upon technology leaders like Sundar Pichai (Alphabet), Satya Nadella (Microsoft), Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Jack Dorsey (Twitter), Dara Khosrowshahi (Uber), Mukesh Ambani (Jio), Gopal Vittal (Bharti Airtel), Kalyan Krishnamurthy (Flipkart) and Shantanu Narayen (Adobe) to take a stance and publicly denounce the "fascist acts by the Indian government".

"We call upon the leaders

to use technology as a force for good, to refuse to share user details with the government, refuse to shut off the Internet at the government's whim, provide tools for citizen mobilization, and ensure that content moderation is not skewing pro-government," it said.

The Citizenship Amendment Act, combined with the National Register for Citizens, is a deeply anti-Muslim scheme that will create statelessness and global disparity for Muslims, growing worse with India's economic decline and climate change, said the letter.

The signatories opined that the Act was political and electoral towards building a "Hindu Rashtra". Many signatories remained anonymous "in the face of recent retaliation from tech companies against protesting employees... and from the Indian government on family and loved ones..."

## All for Azad



Age no bar: Supporters of the Bhim Army Sena demanding the release of Chandrasekhar Azad during a protest against the CAA, the NRC and the NPR in New Delhi on Friday. •SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

## Personal queries directly linked to establishing citizenship: SC

It said this in 2005 order on a plea by present Assam CM

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

Questions about a person's place and date of birth, his parents' names and their place of birth are meant to ascertain citizenship, the Supreme Court has held.

The court, in a 2005 judgment on a writ petition filed by present Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, has clearly held that these personal questions are directly associated with "establishing citizenship".

"In order to establish one's citizenship, normally he may be required to give evidence of (i) his date of birth (ii) place of birth (iii) name of his parents (iv) their place of birth and citizenship," the judgment, authored by Justice G.P. Mathur for a three-judge Bench of the court, on July 12, 2005 held. Moreover, the court explained that these facts figured specially in the context of establishing citizenship because they "would necessarily be within the personal knowledge of the person concerned and not of the authorities of the



State". In case of doubts about a person's citizenship, the burden of proving that these facts were true was on the person concerned.

The government has so far denied any link between the National Population Register (NPR), which is to establish usual residency, and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), meant to establish citizenship. In fact, the NPR takes into account foreign citizens too. However, if the NPR form of 2020 carries these personal questions highlighted in the judgment, apprehensions raised in the public mind that the NPR is a stepping stone for a nationwide NRC become justified.

The 2005 judgment came just over a year after the Citi-

## J&K will get statehood soon, says Ram Madhav

'Rights of locals will be protected'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

With protests from people in the Jammu region, BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav on Friday said the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir "will be granted statehood in the near future".

"The BJP is in favour of granting statehood to J&K as early as the conditions permit. The rights of local people will be preserved in the region," said Mr. Madhav. "Delimitation will be started soon in the region."

He said Pakistan could not alter the legal status of occupied regions. "Our forces are fully equipped on the border and all the containing activities are being done as necessary," the BJP leader said.

Mr. Madhav said people from across the region had welcomed the bold step to remove Articles 370 and 35(A). "The whole region of J&K has remained most peaceful in these five months, reducing civilian casualties to almost nil. There also fewer incidents of stone-throwing this year giving an impression of a

## Mobile Internet is back in Kargil

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

Hundreds of people in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh's Kargil district were able to video call their relatives living outside the snowbound region after 145 days of Internet shutdown as the authorities restored the service but with riders.

Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai, who had served as chief executive councillor of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Kargil (LAHDC-K), said, "The lack of Internet impacted students and business community immensely."

modified mindset among the youth," he said.

"The BJP is also in favour of resumption of political activity in the region soon," he added.

Mr. Madhav also met Lieutenant-Governor Girish Chandra Murmu at the Raj Bhavan in Jammu.

## Income Tax officials pursuing Ambani money trail overseas

'Notice served on the family over hidden foreign assets'

SHARAD VYAS  
PIYUSH PANDEY  
MUMBAI

The Income Tax Department has said that it 'exchanged' information regarding "members of the Mukesh Ambani family" over alleged "undisclosed foreign income and assets" in a quarterly meet this month at Ukraine, with seven countries India has pacts with.

Under the Double Tax Avoidance Agreements and Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism pacts, the tax department can expect a response within 90 days from its counterparts in seven countries — Switzerland, St. Lucia, Mauritius, Luxembourg, the U.S., the U.K. and Belgium.

IT Department officials said even if the response shared under the common reporting system agreed upon by countries as part of the recently signed Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) pact, it may take a long time before a 'Letter Rogatory' (LR) be initiated by the department to

## Rahul is 'liar of the year', says BJP

Javadekar picks on his NPR comment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The BJP said here on Friday that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should be awarded the title of "liar of the year" for his claim that the National Population Register (NPR) was a "tax" on the poor.

Accusing the Congress of trying to fan instability in the country, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said the people were with the government on the new citizenship law and NPR.

"The NPR does not involve any monetary transaction and its data is used to identify the poor so that government welfare schemes could reach the targeted people," the BJP leader said at a press conference at the party headquarters, adding that a similar exercise had been undertaken in 2010 as well. "It's the Congress's old game of allowing illegal immigration into the country for political profit. Their own leader Kirip Chaliha had said that former Assam Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia had fostered illegal immigration to build vote banks," Mr. Javadekar said.

He called Chief Ministers Pinarayi Vijayan of Kerala and Mamata Banerjee of West Bengal for issuing notifications to suspend work



It's the Congress's old game of allowing illegal immigration

Prakash Javadekar  
I&B Minister

on the NPR in their States. "West Bengal and Kerala used NPR data collected in 2010 to identify the poor to pass on benefits. To not do so now reflects their anti-people politics. It's under Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi's government that Aadhaar-plus-NPR led to a better targeting of benefits and disbursement of nearly ₹9 lakh crore in benefits, without leakage of the scale that we saw under Congress," he said.

"When Rahul Gandhi was Congress president, he would say anything and speak lies all the time. Now he is no longer president but continues to speak lies. If there were a category of the liar of the year, he would be its recipient," Mr. Javadekar said.

We have rarely received a response from these seven countries in less than 90 days

approach authorities in old tax havens.

"We have rarely received a response from these same seven countries in less than 90 days as prescribed, and agreed upon under the two pacts. It will take a long time for us to move ahead in this particular case," said an official, referring to the overseas accounts linked to the Ambani family.

The department reportedly served a notice on March 28, 2019 to the Ambani family under the provisions of the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign In-

come and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act of 2015, regarding holdings in the Capital Investment Trust.

E-mailed queries to Mukesh Ambani's flagship firm Reliance Industries on the issue, didn't elicit a response till the time of going to press. A RIL source told *The Hindu*, "The company has not received any letter."

A media report had claimed the notice also included names of the three children of Ambani.

The report had claimed the Ambanis had failed to disclose details and holdings in the Cayman Islands-based Infrastructure Company Limited, of which they were also "ultimate beneficiaries."

The Swiss Leaks, in 2015, had named 1,195 Indian accounts, including 14 holdings connected to Capital Investment Trust, found connected to 628 Indians who had accounts in HSBC Private Bank, including the Ambanis.

The collective worth of these accounts was estimated to be ₹25,000 crore in 2006-07.

### BJP forms panel to reach out to Muslims

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Amid continuing protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), the BJP has set up an informal committee to reach out to the Muslim community and allay their doubts about the CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi held a meeting on Friday, which was attended by National Commission for Minorities Chairman Chayorul Hasan Rizvi and some key Muslim BJP leaders.

“We will be holding some programmes for dialogue with the Muslim community in the first week of January,” Mr. Naqvi told *The Hindu*.

Sources said the party’s minority wing president, Abdul Rasheed Ansari, also attended the meeting. “The idea is to demolish the misinformation campaign being carried out by some political parties on the new citizenship law, the NRC and the National Population Register,” a source said. “The situation is delicate and a dialogue is therefore important,” he said.

### ‘CAA is a glimpse of things to come’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis of the BJP on Friday said those supporting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act would take on those opposing it, until all the protests ended.

“The CAA is the glimpse of many more things to come. This is the beginning. Till those opposing CAA shut their mouths, we will continue to clash on the roads. No one can stop us,” he said at a rally organised by the BJP and the RSS affiliates here in support of the Act and the NRC.

“Hindus have never attacked anyone ever. But we have never spared those who attacked us,” he said.

Claiming that Jawaharlal Nehru University students chanted slogans during the anti-CAA protests that Hindus would be buried, he said, “The Congress and the Left stand with these people, and even the Shiv Sena has changed sides. No one can dig the grave of Hindus.”

## Friday prayers peaceful in U.P.

Internet services were suspended in 21 districts and security was tightened

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

Amid suspension of Internet services in 21 districts and tight security, Friday prayers concluded “safely” across Uttar Pradesh, a week after several cities and towns witnessed arson and vandalism during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the police said.

The number of persons arrested across the State since December 10 in connection with the violence touched 1,246, with another 5,558 persons held in preventive custody, the police said. More than 370 cases have been registered.

### Objectionable posts

The police have also arrested 125 persons and registered 95 FIRs for “objectionable posts, rumours, messages and videos” posted on the social media. Action has also been taken in respect of 20,950 posts on the social media, including 10,380 on Twitter and 10,389 on Face-



Tight security: Policemen on guard on a street in Lucknow on Friday. \*AP

book, the police headquarters said in a statement.

So far, the police have admitted to 19 deaths during the protests.

In Lucknow, the famous Teele Wali Masjid held prayers peacefully, amid a heavy presence of police and Rapid Action Force personnel outside its gates. After ‘namaz’ concluded, people

trickled out of the gate and headed home, instead of gathering outside the gate.

Director-General of Police O.P. Singh said the State was peaceful for the fourth day running and law and order was maintained, but there was a strategic deployment of forces at sensitive places which witnessed violence last week.

He said Internet services were temporarily suspended in 21 districts, including the State capital, to prevent “fake news circulating or rumours flying around”.

Several well-known activists in Lucknow and Varanasi, including retired IPS officer S.R. Darapuri and senior advocate Mohammad Shoaib, have been arrested.

## SP seeks justice for people ‘framed in fake cases’

Party team led by Akhilesh meets Gov.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW

A delegation of the Samajwadi Party led by its national president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday met Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, demanding justice for “innocent people framed in fake cases” during peaceful and democratic anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests.

“Fake cases were lodged against innocent people during peaceful and democratic anti-CAA protests on December 19. Two dozen persons were killed. Women were humiliated by police after entering their houses. Houses were ransacked and



Akhilesh Yadav. \*FILE PHOTO

atrocities are on,” the SP delegation alleged in a memorandum to Patel.

Officially, the toll in violence during protests against the amended citizenship law has been put at 19.

## ‘No NPR updation in Bengal’

Won’t allow any detention centre in State till I am alive: Mamata

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

Continuing with her opposition to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday said she would not allow detention centres to be set up in the State.

Ms. Banerjee also said that her government will not allow updation of the National Population Register (NPR).

“They are saying that there will be detention camps. We are in government here in Bengal. As long as I am alive, there will be no detention centre in the State,” Ms. Banerjee said while participating in an event in North 24 Parganas district.

Giving an assurance that the people who came to India during Partition or during the 1971 war of liberation of Bangladesh are all citizens, the Chief Minister said nobody will have to leave West Bengal or the country.

### ‘NPR process changed’

Speaking on the issue of NPR, Ms. Banerjee said earlier she had agreed to the exercise. “Later, I came to know that they have changed the entire process. Anything for which the people have to suffer, neither I, nor my government will do it,” she said. She, however, did not elaborate on what changes have been brought in the NPR exercise. A communication by the Home and Hill Af-

## Thousands turn up at Mumbai’s Azad Maidan

Indians protesting against NRC, not Muslims: Varun Grover

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Thousands of Mumbaikars turned up at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai on Friday to protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the alleged police brutalities against protesters in various States.

The protest was organised by the Joint Action Committee (JAC), which had also organised the protest at the August Kranti Maidan on December 19.

While the JAC had earlier planned a march from Jijamata Udyan in Byculla to Azad Maidan, the plan was changed because of issues with police permission.

### Recites poem

Writer and comedian Varun Grover and social activist Umar Khalid addressed the protesters.

“The NRC is being made out to be a Muslim issue. But



Vociferous group: Hundreds of people protesting at Azad Maidan in Mumbai on Friday. \*PRASHANT NAKWE

it is Indians who are protesting against it, not Muslims,” Mr. Grover said, before going on to recite his poem *Hum Kaagaz Nahi Dikhaenge* (We will not show documents).

The title, which Mr. Grover shared on social media earlier this week, has gone on to become a slogan by itself. Several protesters were seen chanting it and display-

ing it on placards.

Mr. Khalid, who was arrested by the Delhi police while protesting outside the Red Fort earlier this month, said he was proud to be standing in a State from where such inspirational figures as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Babasaheb Ambedkar and Narendra Dabholkar hailed.

## Two senior policemen transferred in M.P.

They were booked for violence during anti-CAA protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JABALPUR (M.P.)

Two senior Jabalpur police officials were transferred by the Madhya Pradesh Home department in connection with the violence that took place there on December 20 during anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests, officials said on Friday.

The State chief of a lesser-known political outfit was also booked for the violence, police said.

Jabalpur Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Rajesh Kumar Tripathi and City Superintendent of Pol-

ice (Gohalpur) Devesh Kumar Pathak were transferred by the State Home department to the police headquarters in capital Bhopal, an official said.

Areas under four police stations, namely Gohalpur, Hanumantal, Kotwali and Adhartal, witnessed violence during the anti-CAA protests on December 20, after which curfew was imposed for a few days.

In another development, Irfan Ansari, State president of Social Democratic Party of India, was booked for allegedly orchestrating the violence that took place on December 20 in Gohalpur locality, said Amit Singh, Jabalpur Superintendent of Police.

ELSEWHERE



**Musharraf challenges verdict in treason case**

**ISLAMABAD**  
Pakistan's former military dictator General Pervez Musharraf (retd.) has filed a petition against the special court's verdict convicting him of high treason and sentencing him to death, according to media reports. The petition highlighted that the "judgment contained a mix of anomalies and contradictory statements". PTI

**Indonesian Muslims rally for China's Uighurs**

**JAKARTA**  
More than a thousand Muslims marched to the heavily guarded Chinese Embassy in Indonesia's capital on Friday to protest China's treatment of its Uighur Muslims. The protesters, many wearing blue headbands reading "Save Uighurs," unfurled Indonesian and Uighur flags as they marched to the Embassy in downtown Jakarta. AP

**S. Korean court dismisses 'comfort women' plea**

**SEOUL**  
South Korea's Constitutional Court on Friday rejected a petition seeking the repeal of a 2015 deal with Japan, settling a bitter dispute over "comfort women" — Korean women enslaved for sex by the Japanese military during the Second World War.

**Brazil police probe attack on actors of film on Jesus**

**RIO DE JANEIRO**  
The Rio de Janeiro police said on Thursday they are investigating a video by a far-right group that claimed to have carried out an attack on a group of actors who had depicted Jesus as gay. The attack took place on Tuesday at the studio of the actors, whose film *Christ's First Temptation* began streaming on Netflix on December 3. AFP

# 12 killed in Kazakhstan plane crash

Nearly 100 people were on board the aircraft that came down soon after take-off and slammed into a house

REUTERS  
ALMATY

Twelve people were killed and dozens injured when a plane with nearly 100 passengers and crew on board crashed soon after take-off in Kazakhstan on Friday.

The Bek Air Fokker 100 got into trouble shortly after departing from Almaty, the Central Asian country's commercial centre, on a pre-dawn flight to the capital Nur-Sultan.

It lost altitude during take-off and broke through a concrete fence before hitting a two-storey building, Kazakhstan's Civil Aviation Committee said. It was not immediately clear what caused the crash.

"The plane tilted to the left, then to the right, then it started shaking while still trying to gain altitude," said businessman Aslan Nazaraliyev, who survived the crash. Investigators found scratch marks on the runway.

"Before crashing, the aircraft touched the runway with its tail twice, the gear was retracted," Deputy Prime Minister Roman



**Gone in seconds:** Police and rescuers working on the site of the plane crash near Almaty International Airport in Kazakhstan on Friday. \*AP

Skyar told reporters. "A commission ... will establish whether this was pilot error or technical issues. The runway was in an ideal condition."

A survivor told a news website that she heard a "terrifying sound" before the plane started losing altitude. "The plane was flying at a tilt. Everything was like in a movie: screaming, shouting, people crying," she said.

Authorities initially put the death toll at 15 or more but later revised the figure to 12. They said 49 people were in hospitals, some of them in a serious condition.

**'Breach of rules'**

The plane had been carrying 93 passengers and five crew, and the Interior Ministry said the captain was among those killed. The Ministry said it was in-

vestigating a possible breach of flight operation and safety rules, a standard legal procedure. Kazakhstan's aviation committee said it was suspending all flights by carrier Bek Air and those of Fokker 100 aircraft pending the results of the investigation.

Mr. Nazaraliyev said he had been seated next to an emergency exit in row 15 and all the rows in front of him were torn off when the plane

broke in half on impact.

"We got out through the emergency exit ... I and other men started getting people out and away from the plane. Some were trapped by concrete debris from the building. There were moans and screams and it was dark," he said.

At the airport at Nur-Sultan, relatives of the passengers — some of whom were going to join their families for the holidays — were being briefed on their fate and offered flights to Almaty.

"Those responsible will face tough punishment in accordance with the law," Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev tweeted, expressing condolences to the victims and their families. He also ordered an audit of all Kazakh airlines.

Mr. Tokayev declared December 28 a national day of mourning and appointed Prime Minister Askar Mamin to head a commission to investigate the crash.

The crashed plane was built in 1996, the government said, and its most recent flight certificate was issued in May 2019.

# Israel's Netanyahu sweeps party poll

Vows to win March general election

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
JERUSALEM

Embattled Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told supporters on Friday he would win a March general election after scoring a landslide victory in the leadership primary of his right-wing Likud party.

Israel's longest-serving premier, who faces a corruption indictment as well as a third general election in 12 months, was expected to beat rival Gideon Saar in the leadership primary.

But the convincing margin of victory — by 72.5% to 27.5% — strengthens his position in the party he has dominated for 20 years. Around 57,000 Likud members voted on Thursday — a little less than 50% of those eligible.

"Now is the time to unite and bring a tremendous victory for the Likud and the right in the election," Mr. Netanyahu told a press conference.

"Most of the people support the right and support me to lead the government." In what appeared to be a general election campaign speech, Mr. Netanyahu did not mention the defeated Saar once.

He thanked U.S. President Donald Trump, a close ally, for his support for Israel and said a Likud victory in the next election would bring more "historic achievements."

Likud and the centrist Blue and White party were deadlocked after elections in both April and September, with neither able to command a parliamentary majority under Israel's system of proportional representation.

Last month, Israel's Attorney General indicted the



Benjamin Netanyahu

prime minister for fraud, bribery and breach of trust over a series of corruption allegations he denies.

Blue and White leader Benny Gantz also used Friday's primary result as a rallying call for the general election.

He said Mr. Netanyahu's victory showed Likud members had "elected a leader facing three indictments, who is seeking to unravel the rule of law and secure personal immunity."

"These elections demand that we place a mirror in front of 'the Netanyahu party' and make the choice for unity, dignity and internal reconciliation."

**Third shot**

Ofer Zalberg, Israel analyst with the International Crisis Group think tank, said the result kickstarted the election campaign.

"Netanyahu is going for a third shot, hoping the next election will prove more successful," he said.

"This strengthens his position within the right wing who saw he is still able to achieve victories but it doesn't fundamentally change the arithmetic for the next election."

Early polls indicate that the March 2020 election could again result in stalemate.

# IS claims it executed 11 Christians in Nigeria

'The killings were in reprisal for the death of former chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his spokesman'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KANO

Jihadists aligned to the Islamic State group have released a video claiming to show the execution of 11 Christians in restive northeast Nigeria.

The footage posted online late on Thursday by the IS-linked propaganda arm Amaq showed 11 blindfolded men being shot and stabbed by jihadists from the Islamic State West African Province

(ISWAP) at an undisclosed location. "This is a message to Christians all over the world," said a masked man in the one-minute video.

He claimed the killings were in reprisal for the death of IS chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his spokesman.

IS leader Baghdadi committed suicide in October to avoid capture during a U.S. special forces raid on his hideout in northwest Syria.

In recent months, ISWAP has intensified its attacks on Christians, security personnel and aid staff, setting up roadblocks on highways and conducting searches.

**Targeting civilians**

The UN had on Tuesday condemned the "increasing practice by armed groups to set up checkpoints targeting civilians" in the northeast of Nigeria. On Sunday, the jiha-

dists killed six people and abducted five others, including two aid workers, when they intercepted vehicles on a highway on the outskirts of Maiduguri, the Borno state capital.

In a similar attack on December 5, ISWAP fighters disguised as Nigerian soldiers stopped and searched vehicles at a checkpoint near Maiduguri. The group claimed in a statement that

six soldiers and eight civilians, including two Red Cross workers, were among those abducted.

Last week, the group released a video showing 11 alleged hostages.

One of the detainees in the video who identified himself as a school teacher said all the 11 hostages were Christians and appealed to the Nigerian government to secure their release.

# 'Climate change caused 15 disasters this year'

Calamities cost \$1 bn each, says a charity

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PARIS

At least 15 natural disasters linked to climate change this year caused damage of over \$1 billion each and seven of them cost at least \$10 billion, British charity Christian Aid said on Friday.

This year is set to be the second hottest year in history and each of the disasters in the report has a link with climate change, Christian Aid said. "From Southern Africa to North America and from Australia and Asia to Europe, floods, storms and fires brought chaos and destruction," it said.

Assembling its report from official figures, estimates by NGOs and aid bo-

dies, scientific studies and media reports, the charity said the disasters displaced millions and caused widespread deaths. These included the floods that ravaged north India, typhoon Lekima in China, Hurricane Dorian in the U.S., floods in China, floods in the Midwest and southern U.S., typhoon Hagibis in Japan and the California wildfires, the costliest tragedy at \$25 billion.

The charity said the majority of deaths were caused by just two events, in India and southern Africa, which called it "a reflection of how the world's poorest people pay the heaviest price for the consequences of climate change.

# 5 al-Qaeda terrorists held in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LAHORE

Five "important" al-Qaeda operatives were arrested in a raid in Pakistan's Punjab province, averting a "major terror attack" on offices of intelligence agencies and sensitive installations in the area, officials said on Friday.

The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of the Punjab police said the operation smashed the media cell and the terrorism financing network of the Al-Qaeda Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). The CTD and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) on Thursday night arrested the terrorists from Gujranwala city, some 80 km from Lahore.

# Iranians laud protesters and vow to fight on

Many take their grievances against the govt. to cemeteries where the killed protesters are buried

FARNAZ FASSIHI

Forty days after the first protesters were killed in Iran's worst unrest in decades, Iranians took their grievances against the government to cemeteries on Thursday, marking both the end of the traditional mourning period and their determination not to back down.

Over four days of protests in November, security forces shot and killed up to 450 people, human rights organisations estimate, and in the weeks leading up to Thursday, some of their survivors called on the public to join them in yet another act of defiance: at the graveyards of their loved ones. Iran's leadership was not



**A grim picture:** A file photo of people walking near a burnt bank, after protests against increased fuel prices in Tehran. \*REUTERS

having it. Even before the end of the mourning period, the authorities began cracking down, beefing up security in cities across the country, renewing their disruption of the internet and conducting waves of pre-emptive arrests.

Then on Thursday, uniformed security forces and plainclothes militia deployed en masse across the country to keep people off the streets. They lined up on foot in riot gear at squares, and paraded through residential and commercial neighbour-

hoods in platoons of motorcycles and armoured vehicles carrying the Iranian flag and waving weapons, video shared on social media showed.

**'Total calm'**

"Tehran is under total calm and security," its chief of police Brig. Gen. Hossein Rahimi declared on Thursday. "Our enemies are constantly trying to instigate chaos and instability."

Accounts and videos that emerged from the country despite the information clampdown suggested, however, that Iranian protesters made their presence known, if generally in small groups, at cemeteries and in the streets of several cities,

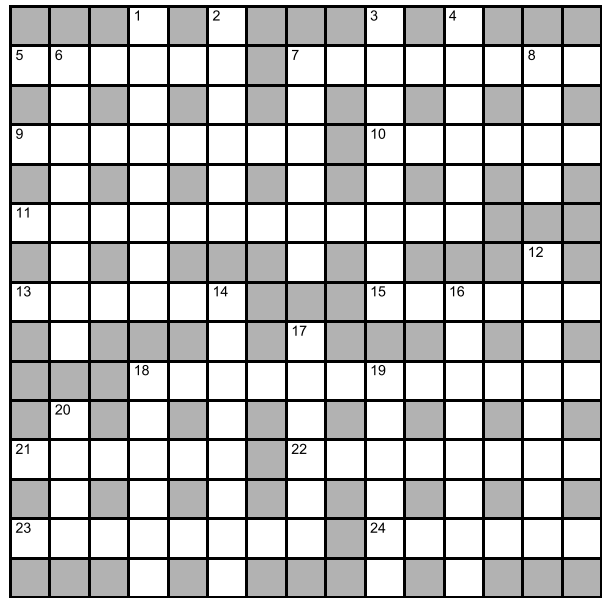
including Karaj, Isfahan, Mashhad, Behbahan, Malard, Najafabad, Yazdan Shahr and Shahriar. There were unconfirmed reports of 50 arrests. They gathered to honour the dead, and as they did so, some chanted slogans against Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, calling him a "murderer".

The protests, which began on November 15, broke out hours after the government raised gasoline prices by 200%.

Already struggling under the burden of economic sanctions imposed by the U.S., Iranians took to the streets in what became the broadest unrest seen in the country in decades. NY TIMES

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12818

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



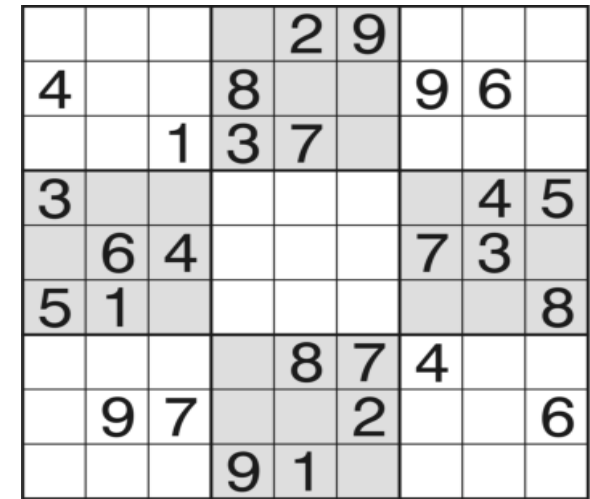
**ACROSS**

- 5 Corrupt — owning houses at residential part of city (6)
- 7 Tries to join in the middle of unrestrained leaderless practice (8)
- 9 Complete stop by noted criminal (3-2-3)
- 10 Mistakes made by God starting to take long time to cover (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 Tread of pedestrian was loud, household animals also rose up (8)
- 2 Get close to listener please... (6)
- 3 Device with silver-tip's hot, gets more glowing (8)
- 4 Quite nonchalantly, setter slipped out to chase female (6,6)
- 6 Police cruiser with air conditioner's normal to be seen around (5,3)
- 7 Spoke of Darius' organisation (6)
- 8 Loud landmark spot (4)
- 12 Unaware what I would do with a 5x5 grid? (8)
- 14 Minarets in Islamabad rising around — leaning to the left (8)
- 16 Store displaying many a set of crafts (8)
- 17 This is worn? Right! (1-5)
- 18 Long and hot cargo vessel with prow missing (6)
- 19 Job of Gates perhaps, encourage technology leaders? (6)
- 20 An immature version of North Indian boy? (4)

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

**Solution to puzzle 12817**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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



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

MARKET WATCH

	27-12-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	41,575	1.00
US Dollar	71.35	-0.05
Gold	39,731	0.11
Brent oil	67.8	0.35

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	363.70	0.05
Asian Paints	1812.25	2.65
Axis Bank	760.15	23.65
Bajaj Auto	3241.95	11.90
Bajaj Finserv	9443.15	93.05
Bajaj Finance	4252.65	65.55
Bharti Airtel	455.10	7.55
BHCL	490.95	13.75
Britannia Ind	3042.10	-20.20
Cipla	481.10	6.95
Coal India	203.50	6.20
Dr Reddys Lab	2897.60	32.00
Eicher Motors	2222.35	176.65
GAIL (India)	118.55	0.45
Grasim Ind	739.75	3.00
HCL Tech	567.55	7.05
HDFC	2444.15	30.05
HDFC Bank	1275.00	4.55
Hero MotoCorp	2442.45	3.80
Hindalco	215.45	0.45
Hind Unilever	1949.90	4.95
ICICI Bank	549.40	10.65
IndusInd Bank	1524.90	9.50
Infra Infra	255.70	-0.50
Infosys	736.95	8.00
Indian Oil Corp	127.50	2.30
ITC	236.00	0.10
JSW Steel	268.90	-0.25
Kotak Bank	1685.60	-8.65
L&T	1299.60	20.30
M&M	530.15	1.80
Maruti Suzuki	7344.90	104.00
Nestle India Ltd.	14664.15	64.90
NTPC	116.85	0.45
ONGC	128.40	0.40
PowerGrid Corp	189.05	4.20
Reliance Ind	1542.35	26.95
State Bank	337.25	7.40
Sun Pharma	426.00	3.85
Tata Motors	176.15	1.55
Tata Steel	469.50	1.60
TCS	2198.50	-3.45
Tech Mahindra	780.20	9.80
Titan	1191.45	-1.05
UltraTech Cement	4055.60	-7.15
UPL	580.25	10.80
Vedanta	151.75	1.05
Wipro	247.55	-2.75
YES Bank	48.00	-0.65
Zee Entertainment	299.00	1.70

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 27

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.16	71.48
Euro	79.30	79.66
British Pound	93.02	93.45
Japanese Yen (100)	64.98	65.27
Chinese Yuan	10.17	10.22
Swiss Franc	72.88	73.21
Singapore Dollar	52.60	52.85
Canadian Dollar	54.34	54.60
Malaysian Ringgit	17.24	17.32

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

December 27 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g)	50.2	(50.4)
22 ct gold (1g)	3714	(3697)

# Gross NPAs may rise to 9.9% by next Sept., says RBI report

Reviving twin engines of consumption and investment remains the key challenge, according to Governor Shaktikanta Das

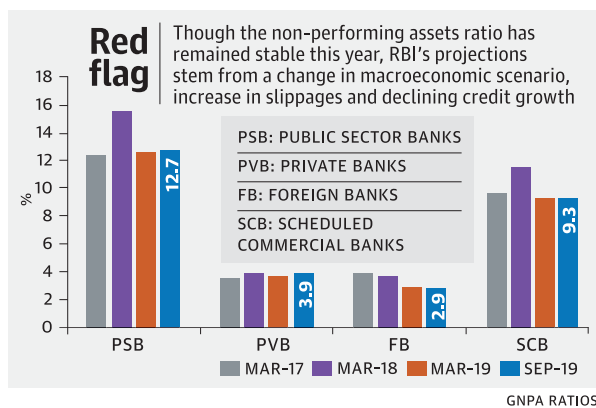
**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI**

The gross non-performing asset (GNPA) ratio of banks may increase to 9.9% by September 2020 from 9.3% in September 2019, according to an RBI report.

“Stress tests indicate that under the baseline scenario, the GNPA ratios of banks may increase to 9.9% by September 2020 due to change in macroeconomic scenario, marginal increase in slippages and the denominator effect of declining credit growth,” the RBI said in its Financial Stability Report. The baseline scenario assumed the continuation of the current economic situation in the future.

The report said state-run banks’ GNPA ratios may increase to 13.2% by September 2020 from 12.7% in September 2019, whereas for private banks it may climb to 4.2% from 3.9%, under the stress scenario. Foreign banks’ gross bad loans may increase to 3.1% from 2.9% in September 2019.

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weighted assets ratio (CRAR) improved to 15.1% in September 2019 from 14.3% in March 2019,” the report said.

The state-run banks’ CRAR improved to 13.5% from 12.2% during the same period. Bank-wise distribution of asset quality showed while 24 banks had GNPA ratios of under 5%, four banks had GNPA ratios higher than 20% in September 2019.

**Agriculture, services**

The asset quality of agriculture and services sectors, as measured by their GNPA ratios, deteriorated to 10.1% in September 2019 from about 8% in March 2019. For industry, slippages during the period declined to 3.79% from about 5% in March 2019.

The report showed that the share of large borrowers in banks’ total loan portfolios and their share in GNPA ratios was at 51.8% and 79.3%, respectively, in September 2019, lower compared to the 53% and 82.2%, respectively in March 2019. The top 100 large borrowers accounted for 16.4% of banks’ gross advances and 16.3% of GNPA ratios.

Amid rising macroeconomic worries reflected in falling growth numbers across spectrum, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das flagged corporate governance concerns across India Inc., including banks, to lift the efficiency of the economy to its full potential. He also said reviving the twin engines of consumption and investment remains the key challenge even while remaining vigilant about spillovers from global financial markets.

## Financial system stable despite slow growth

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI**

The Reserve Bank of India on Friday said the country’s financial system remains stable despite slowing economic growth. The GDP slowed to a six-year low of 4.5% in the second quarter of FY20, forcing the RBI to slash its growth forecast by 240 basis points to 5% for the fiscal in its December monetary policy review.

“India’s financial system remains stable, notwithstanding weakening domestic growth,” the RBI said in the Financial Stability Report.

The report said all major risk groups such as “global risks, risk perceptions on macroeconomic conditions, financial market risks and institutional positions” were perceived as medium risks affecting the financial system. However, the perception of risks on various fronts like domestic growth, fiscal, corporate sector and banks’ asset quality increased between April and October 2019, it said.

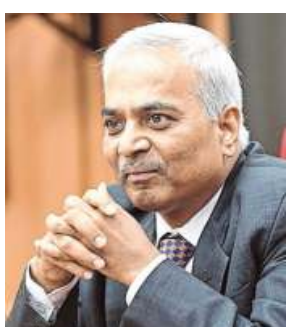
## IOB to get ₹4,360 cr. in capital, Allahabad Bank raises ₹1,500 cr.

With second tranche, Centre’s stake in IOB to cross 95%

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI**

The Centre will infuse fresh capital of ₹4,360 crore in the loss-making Indian Overseas Bank. This would be the second tranche of fund infusion from the Centre. With this, the government stake in IOB is set to cross the 95% mark, said a senior official.

The Centre now holds 94.56% stake. It rose from 92.52% after capital infusion of ₹3,857 crore in October 2019. For the second quarter, IOB had reported net loss of ₹2,253.64 crore, compared with a net loss ₹487.26 crore a year earlier, following a rise in operating expenses and provisions.



**Karnam Sekar**

₹18,876.05 crore. Karnam Sekar, MD and CEO, had said the bank was on track to come out of the RBI’s prompt corrective action framework by March 2020.

Another public sector lender, Allahabad Bank, has raised ₹1,500 crore through private placement of Basel III-compliant tier-2 bonds with a 10-year tenor.

In an earlier statement, Allahabad Bank had said the Centre had agreed to infuse ₹2,153 crore via preferential allotment of equity shares by the bank during financial year 2019-20. The fresh capital would help the bank in regulatory compliance.

## In H1, bank frauds rise to ₹1.13 lakh cr.

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI**

Frauds reported by banks during the first half of the current fiscal touched an all-time high of ₹1.13 lakh crore, owing to delay in detection by lenders, according to RBI’s FSR report. This involved 4,412 fraud cases of ₹1 lakh and above, as per the report.

In FY19, banks had reported 6,801 cases of fraud involving ₹71,543 crore. “An analysis of the vintage of frauds reported during the FY19 and H1 FY20 shows a significant time-lag between the date of occurrence of a fraud and its detection,” RBI’s Financial Stability Report said.

## Falling revenue risks fiscal parameters: RBI

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI**

The RBI has flagged falling government revenue as a threat to the overall fiscal numbers, with tax and non-tax revenues way behind targets. This, along with weaker private consumption and investment, could prove to be a challenge, RBI’s FSR said.

The warning assumes importance with revenue mop-up falling and budgeted expenditure crossing 107% as of November, putting a big question mark on the government’s ability to meet the 3.3% fiscal deficit target.

GST collections, the

## Co-op banks to report large exposures

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directed large cooperative banks to report all exposures of ₹5 crore and more to the Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC), a move aimed at early recognition of financial distress.

Separately, non-banking financial companies saw stress in asset quality in the first half of the current fiscal, with gross NPA ratio rising to 6.3% in September 2019 from 6.1% in March, RBI’s FSR report said. However, net NPA ratio remained steady at 3.4% between end-March 2019 and end-September 2019.

## ‘Credit growth may plunge to 58-year low’

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI**

As the GDP growth has plunged to an over six-year low of 4.5% in the second quarter of the ongoing fiscal, credit expansion may plummet to a six-decade low of 6.5-7% in FY20, says a report. Credit growth was a high 13.3% in the previous fiscal, says rating agency ICRA in a report.

This could well be the lowest credit growth in 58 years. The figure stood at a low 5.4% in FY62, according to RBI’s annual credit growth data.

Till end-November, credit growth had been at under 8%. “Factors such as muted economic growth, lower working capital requirements and risk-aversion among lenders will compress the incremental credit growth in FY20,” the report said.

## Vistara fliers can soon access mobile data

**YUTHIKA BHARGAVA NEW DELHI**

Passengers flying over Indian territory on Vistara will soon be able to access mobile data services on board. The airlines has become the first in the country to secure necessary approvals from the Department of Telecom (DoT).

Vistara, which has partnered Tata Group company Nelco for inflight data services, is likely to be the first domestic carrier to provide the service within India.

“Vistara has tied up with Nelco and they have taken transponder space from ISRO... they had come to us for spectrum allocation, which we have done. And they will be launching these services soon,” Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash said.

When contacted, a Vistara spokesperson said: “We



have not finalised [any plan] yet.”

Mr. Prakash said for the time being, Vistara will offer only data services. “However, since people will be able to make Internet-based voice calls, it should not be an issue... There can also be voice but voice is not happening right now.” On tariffs for such services, he said, these were not regulated by the government. “It is for them to decide what tariff they will charge,” he added.

(With inputs from Jagriti Chandra)

## Adani Logistics to buy stake in Snowman

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI**

Adani Logistics Limited (ALL) has signed definitive agreements to acquire 40.25% stake in Snowman Logistics Ltd. (SLL) from Gateway Distriparks Ltd. for ₹296 crore.

“The purchase price of ₹44 per share represents an 8% premium to the market price of December 27, 2019. Adani Logistics will make a mandatory open offer for 26% of the public shareholding in the company,” said a statement.

Karan Adani, CEO and whole time director of AP-SEZ, said: “Cold chain is a key product in the customer gate strategy given India’s consumer driven demand. We will double the capacity in the next 5 years. This vertical will help further improve returns in the business.”

## Investment advisers must do client risk profiling: SEBI

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI**

To strengthen the conduct of investment advisers, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Friday asked them to do proper risk profiling of clients and obtain their consent on the same before providing any advice to such investors.

The capital markets regulator also restrained investment advisers from providing free trial for any product and service.

The measures, aimed at further strengthening the conduct of investment advisers while providing investment advice and to protect the interests of investors seeking their advice, will come into effect from January 1, 2020, SEBI said in a circular.

## Commercial trial runs begin on freight corridor

Goods movement to be faster once work is completed

**YUTHIKA BHARGAVA AJMER**

The Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Ltd. (DFCCIL) on Friday opened the more than 300-km section between Rewari, Haryana to Madar, Rajasthan, for commercial trial runs. This is the first section to be opened on the under-construction 1,500-km western freight corridor.

The newly opened section – covering a total of 664 track km – has been constructed at a cost of almost ₹4,000 crore (excluding land charges). “The opening of this stretch will benefit various industries in Rewari, Manesar, Narnaul, Phulera and Kishangarh areas of Rajasthan and Haryana. In addition, Concor’s container depot at Kathuwas will also



**Anurag Sachan**

come on the DFC map and get advantage in terms of faster throughput,” said Anurag Sachan, MD, DFCCIL.

Mr. Sachan added that by March 2020, over 650 km of the section between Rewari and Palanpur in Gujarat will be opened for commercial operations. “This will result in immediate relief for both freight and passenger movements via Indian Railways. We are on track to open the corridor from Rewari to Palanpur section by March, 2020... this will provide connectivity to three ports in Gujarat – Kandla, Mundra and Pipavav.”

Once the section is opened for commercial operations, about 80% of the freight train movements will be shifted to the dedicated corridor, resulting in a much faster movement of goods trains, vacating track space for passenger trains. “With dedicated corridor and advanced wagons, one train will be able to carry a load of about 13,000 tonnes, which is equal to what 1,300 trucks would carry,” he said.

(The writer was in Rajasthan at the invitation of the DFCCIL)

**Holy Trinity scored half a century**

The Khans hit the golden jubilee in 2015; Aamir in March, Shah Rukh in November and Salman in December. Aamir didn't just consolidate his sway in India with biggies like *PK*, *Dangal*, *Dhoom 3* and *Secret Superstar* but won over China as well. With *Dabangg* at the start of the decade, the massy Salman managed to reach out to the multiplex audiences and even found critical acclaim with the pacifist politics of *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*. SRK started with a bang with *My Name is Khan* but has been floundering in the latter half of the decade, despite some well-intentioned experiments like *Fan* and *Raees*.

**Decade's child**

Ranveer Singh made an electric debut as the likeable, endearing Bittoo in *Band Baaja Baaraat* in 2010 and at the close of the decade hit it out of the park as rapper Murad in *Gully Boy*. In between there have been *Lootera*, *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela*, *Dil Dhadakne Do*, *Bajirao Mastani*, *Padmaavat* and much talk of his quirky sense of fashion and styling. The next decade is promising to start with a bang with him becoming Kapil Dev in *83*.

**Akshay Kumar's patriot act**

From *Padman* to *Mission Mangal* via *Kesari* and not to forget the omniscient No Smoking ad, Kumar emerged as shining India's Neo Mr Bharat. The long interview — about mangoes and little else — with Narendra Modi, in the run up to the elections, also showcased him as the one with the mightiest political clout in Bollywood, his Canadian visa notwithstanding.

**Badass ladies**

They may not have been dealing in as many multiples of crores as their male colleagues, but they had a better spread of films and roles. In the largely male-skewed universe, this decade saw a far bigger chunk of women-led and focussed films than ever before, be it Vidya Balan in *The Dirty Picture* and *Kahaani*, Sridevi in *English Vinglish*, Kangana Ranaut in *Queen* and *Tanu Weds Manu*, Rani Mukherji in *Mardaani 1* and *2*, Deepika Padukone in *Piku*, Priyanka Chopra in *Mary Kom* or Alia Bhatt in *Raazi*. Most of these films grew steadily successful, through word of mouth, than bringing all the bums to the seats on the first weekend itself.

The ₹100 crore club, women-led films and the rise of OTT. We track cinematic milestones over the last decade

**BOLLYWOOD: 2010 2020**

NAMRATA JOSHI

The past decade marked a century in Indian cinema (Dadasaheb Phalke's *Raja Harishchandra*, released in 1913). This slice of history aside, the decade has had several turning points of its own: the Baahubalisation of Bollywood, with the Hindi dubbed version of the Telugu-Tamil bilingual, *Baahubali 2*, beating it in its home turf, Ranveer Singh taking centre stage and the #MeToo movement. We look at these and other big and small mileposts in this ten-year journey...

**BMKJ (Bharat Mata Ki Jai) cinema**

From vigilante dramas to story lines that take off on government schemes ('Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' became the theme for *Toilet: Ek Prem Katha*) to the rise of the new, aggressive, nationalist hero who wears his patriotism on his sleeve, as portrayed by Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgn, John Abraham and Vicky Kaushal, the on-screen notion of patriotism took on a life of its own and peaked with the compelling propaganda and celebration of the "surgical strikes" and "New India" in *Uri*. The Modi make-over was complete before the elections with Vivek Oberoi playing him in *PM Narendra Modi*.

**#MeToo**

As the #MeToo movement swept the nation in 2018, 10 men from the Hindi film industry were accused by women of sexual misconduct. Even as Bollywood women took a lead — it started with Tanushree Dutta's 10-year-old sexual harassment claims against Nana Patekar — a misogynistic hero in *Kabir Singh* became the favourite of the masses. Others who made headlines for all the wrong reasons included Sajid Khan, Vikas Bahl, Alok Nath, Subhash Ghai, Rajat Kapoor, Anu Malik, Kailash Kher, Soumik Sen and Raj Kumar Hirani.

**Director's chair**

Women filmmakers like Meghna Gulzar and Zoya Akhtar breached the much-coveted ₹100 crore tag at the turnstiles. Vikramaditya Motwane debuted with *Udaan* in 2010 and has kept the viewers satiated with an eclectic set of films: *Lootera*, *Trapped*, *Bhavesh Joshi Superhero*. Nitesh Tiwari kicked off with *Chillar Party* in 2011 and now has two of the biggest blockbusters of the decade to his credit — *Dangal* and *Chhichhore*.

**Getting noticed**

Showstoppers who rocked on the side included Pankaj Tripathi, Mohd Zeeshan Ayyub, Vineet Singh, Neena Gupta, Gajraj Rao, Surekha Sikri, Manoj and Seema Pahwa, Vikrant Massey, Ratna Pathak Shah, Swara Bhaskar, Vijay Varma... Right casting became the buzzword and casting directors came into their own.

**Embracing the rainbow...**

Has only just begun in the mainstream, uneasily and gingerly at that, with *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha To Aisa Laga*, *Kapoor and Sons* and Karan Johar's short in *Bombay Talkies*. And we are not even talking about the relatively offbeat *I Am and Margarita with a Straw* here... Delhi Sultanate ruler Alauddin Khilji (Ranveer Singh) in the bathtub with his *ghulam* (slave) Malik Kafur (Jim Sarbh) in *Padmaavat* and Tiger Shroff looking longingly at Hrithik Roshan in *War*. Male bonding got a homoerotic touch. There was pathbreaking bromance in *Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweeti* with the grandfather (Alok Nath) almost joined at the hip with his bachelor buddy (Virendra Saxena) while the grandmother just couldn't be bothered. A same sex love story with Ayushmann Khurrana — *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* — early in 2020 might hopefully push the envelope further in the right direction.

**Polarisation and spirit of resistance**

As with the rest of the world, Bollywood has been heavily polarised when it comes to politics. As we close the decade the industry is divided on the politics of protest. While Anubhav Sinha, Anurag Kashyap, Sushant Singh, Richa Chaddha and Huma Qureshi are vehemently opposing CAA-NRC, even joining the rallies, Vivek Agnihotri and Ashok Pandit have been expectedly favouring it. The royalty has maintained an uneasy silence and others like Ayushmann and Vicky are being diplomatic in their templated statements.

**Buttons up**

Péro takes a deep-dive into its decade-long history, with this humble detail that holds it all together

ANAHITA PANICKER

In a year of 'designer' anniversaries, Péro has kept it simple. To celebrate 10 years of her label, Aneetha Arora recently showcased 50 limited-edition jackets from their past 20 seasons. However, what has captured hearts is their Instagram recap, which details how the individuality of their garments is mirrored even in the tiniest of details — from pins and tassels to detailed trims.

The young label has been meticulously documenting and sharing the ways they've built their fun vocabulary, and this includes their 1,043 varieties of buttons. "I think we've crossed 2,000 now," says Delhi-based Arora, 36, over a phone call, counting the ones that will be displayed next year. Each post is ac-

companied by engaging details and anecdotes, like why Péro has horizontal buttonholes.

Turns out, their first handcrafted buttons were so tiny they'd slip out of a vertical buttonhole. Maker videos — of Afghani women crocheting buttons, for instance — have the most engagement, often raking up over 26,000 views. Looking back at the journey, Arora picks five hand-made buttons that stand out.

■ **The basic Péro button:** "With two holes, and [the word] Péro debossed on the surface, this silver button was developed for our first season [2010]. The garments were all white with red stitching, and the buttons were a humble colour [against the fabric]," says Arora, who sought out a jeweller in Udaipur's Old City to make the tiny, ir-



regularly-shaped, hand-beaten drops of silver. Since then, she's begun using white metal — "because silver is costly and turns black with time" — and has also developed "brass buttons to use against warmer colours".

■ **Heart buttons:** These are rooted in the label's tradition of embroi-

dering hearts into their clothes. "We realised not everybody likes a [prominent] heart on their garments. So, with this, we ensure there's a subtle variation present," she explains.

■ **Crochet buttons:** "We made crochet buttons in collaboration with Afghan refugees," she shares,

adding that the story behind the designs makes them special to the brand. "The women made borders and laces for us. For [a particular] season we didn't use it, but they were dependent on us for work. So we developed these buttons."

■ **Enamel buttons:** For their 2015 Autumn/Winter collection, Péro was inspired by military uniforms. "We tried to simulate the insignia of military badges on buttons, and used *meenakari* techniques," says Arora, "The enamel-style buttons are very impactful because of their graphic quality."

■ **Millefiori:** The brand is currently crafting buttons out of polymer using *millefiori* (meaning "a thousand flowers" in Italian), a technique also used to embellish luxury watches. "You inlay a pattern using polymer clay and cut it," and then arrange the slices together to multiply the pattern. These buttons are being designed for the upcoming season, where the clothes are inspired by florals. "We've used a variety of flowers, such as woven flowers from Banaras, and printed and embroidered flowers of various kinds," she concludes.

**PRODUCTS****Save the day**

Illustrations, self-care suggestions and DIY pages — planners and calendars get more personal this year

**Indian Women in Science**

Have you heard of Dr Asima Chatterjee, an organic chemist whose work resulted in many anti-epileptic drugs? Or Suniti Solomon, who pioneered HIV-AIDS treatment and research in India? These inspiring women in science feature in a wall calendar with artwork by Sci Illustrate, a Munich-based scientific design consultancy, founded by Dr Radhika Patna. The box set of postcards has stories of 30 inspiring 'Women in Science', through art.

Approximately ₹3,900, on *Sci-illustrate.com*.

**The Ink Bucket**

Vidhi Khandelwal's botanical illustrations live on the cover of this 'Live your Dream' planner. Her artwork makes its presence felt in between the pages as well, highlighting spaces for monthly reflections, weekly affirmations and daily reminders.

₹1,799, on *Theinkbucket.in*.

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

**5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE****PERFORMANCE****Kathak dance**

This Sunday, IHC is hosting Saheb-e-Aalam... Touching The Soul, a Kathak presentation by Gurmeet Malhotra Productions. The show seeks spread the message of faith and togetherness in society. Performing artists include Raghav Monga, Megha Sharma, Sanjam Malhotra, Archana Diwedi, and Ashish Bharadwaj.  
**VENUE:** Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre  
**TIME:** 7 p.m.

**ART****Mixed-media**

An ongoing exhibition titled Maraasim, showcases paintings and drawing by Saumya S. Vaishnav and Vipin Singh Rajput. Saumya's paintings are related to the elements of nature and explore the dynamics of landscape. Vipin creates mixed-media artworks, which try to engage with a wide variety of subjects.  
**VENUE:** Triveni Kala Sangam, Mandi House  
**TIME:** 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

**FOOD****Festive menu**

An ongoing exhibition titled Maraasim, showcases paintings and drawing by Saumya S. Vaishnav and Vipin Singh Rajput. Saumya's paintings are related to the elements of nature and explore the dynamics of landscape. Vipin creates mixed-media artworks, which try to engage with a wide variety of subjects.  
**VENUE:** Khan Market & Cyber Hub outlets  
**TIME:** 11 a.m. - 12 midnight

**AWARENESS****Education and employment**

Aawaaz Education Services, a company that works towards bettering classroom learning, is hosting an educational event called Aawaaz Conclave. Organised with the aim to help students transition into a new phase of their lives, it will feature sessions on emerging sectors of employment.  
**VENUE:** India International Centre, Lodhi Road  
**TIME:** 8:30 a.m. onwards

**CARNIVAL****Pet show**

The sixth edition of the annual pet festival, Pet Fed Delhi, a carnival for pets and pet lovers begins today. This two-day festival will feature pet-adoption camps, as well as activities like a Police Dog Show, Cat Show and Fashion Show. More than 400 products and services from the pet care sector will also be exhibited.  
**VENUE:** NSIC Ground, Okhla  
**TIME:** 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.







# Kohli a complete batsman, but Richards the greatest ever

Brian Lara also thinks he hasn't 'seen a pace attack like the Indians have at present — in my time or even before my time'

RAKESH RAO

Brian Lara is best remembered for the numbers he stacked up. Knocks of 375 and 400 not out came 10 years apart and saw him set, and regain, the world record for the highest Test score. He remains the only batsman to score 500 runs in a First Class innings. But here comes a contradiction. Lara never looked at numbers. The evidence lies in the fact that he retired from international cricket when just 47 short of 12,000 Test runs and after having played 299 One-Day Internationals! In this interview, the legendary left-hander, now 50, reflects on various aspects of cricket, past and present. Excerpts:

First of all, Brian, how did you manage to bat on and on?

I remember when I scored my first hundred in Australia, there was a rain-break and I came off the field. My coach at the time was Rohan Kanhai and he said to me, "Set your score." And I asked,

was dropped. The guy who dropped me was wicketkeeper Chris Scott. Easy catch dropped! And one of the fielders said, "Gosh! Now he is going to score a hundred." And I scored 500!

What was your secret to succeeding on difficult pitches?

Batting a lot at the non-striker's end (laughs). But on a serious note, I learnt that from Desmond Haynes. When I first got an opportunity to open the batting with him, he was the main batsman. So when I asked him this same question, he said, you know, Brian, try to spend a lot of time at the non-striker's end, run singles. In any sort of situation, good or bad pitches, you have to have great respect for the bowler. You have to understand what he's doing. You have to appreciate that there's not just a skill war. There is a mental war going on. And sometimes if you win the mental war, you know, you sort of win the battle. Some guys crumble under the pressure. So, I feel for me, whenever I went to bat, I tried to win that war. I felt I was vulnerable at the very beginning, but as time went on, I played better.

How did you deal with a bad

phase or a loss of form?

For me, when I was succeeding, I wanted to make that period as long as possible. When I wasn't doing well, I truly tried to minimise it... [but] I would always appreciate the fact that things are not going to go well all the time. And I was definitely no Bradman, but I felt that I needed to keep a level head. My favourite saying is from Rudyard Kipling: *If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster/ And treat those two impostors just the same.* I love this because they are impostors. When you succeed, you can get swell-headed or you can be failing and then you are all down in the doldrums. So, I try, as much as possible, to keep an even keel.

And was it difficult being Brian Lara?

The problem is the fact that I grew up in an invincible West Indies era of the 1970s and the 1980s. Thereafter, things, sort of, went on the decline. I spent most of my career on the losing side when playing against Australia, against England, against India. And that was much more hurtful than actually playing the game when I got out there to play the game. But I was always having fun. I was always in a place where I wanted to be.

You were just 47 short of 12,000 Test runs and you called it

a day. Did you not look at the numbers at any point?

Never looked at the numbers. People said I looked at the numbers. People felt that I targeted 400, I targeted 500. That's all nonsense. It didn't matter to me when I retired after 299 One-day Internationals. I just felt it was the right time to do so.

From your playing days, how much has international cricket changed?

Obviously, there is a push towards the shortest version of the game. And you have to appreciate the fact that even sponsors are willing to dive into a cricket game for three hours, instead of five days. And so do the spectators. We've created through T20 a lot of new spectators. Now, Test cricket has got a boost in terms of creating a league. I always felt that, you know, whenever I played Test cricket and jumped from country to country, you rack up the numbers and you win a series or lose a series, there was nothing really added onto it. So having something that culminates in a Test Championship, I think is amazing.

Any changes that you suggest?

I think that the

ICC will have to do a little bit of brushing up. After all, it's the first year of the cycle. I think, you can't play two Test matches, have 120 points available and play five Test matches and still have 120 points!

And I also believe that in any league that you play, you know, all the participants play an equal amount of games. So they must find a way of doing so. Maybe, if England is playing Australia in a series, you pick three of the Tests that carry points. That should even out a few things.

Is it fair to say that the bowling standards have declined in international cricket?

I think it's a seesaw. In some countries, yes. In some countries, no. I think I've never seen a pace attack like the Indians have at present — in my time or even before my time.

Also, nothing can take anything away from the young West Indies bowlers. I know they try their best. But how difficult is it to fill the shoes of a Joel Garner, a Malcolm Marshall or a Courtney Walsh? So, I think, in some scenarios, it has sort of weakened, but in other scenarios, it has strengthened. Saying that cricket was tougher long ago, I don't buy into that all the time. I don't think it's fair to say that to the present-day cricketers. I think that they have their challenges.

What do you think of private leagues mushrooming in the cricketing world?

It is a bit worrying because, you know, a player can play five, six different leagues around the world and have no care about playing for

his country. I don't know what position the ICC is in. And I would be wrong to have a major opinion on it, but it is worrying. That's what I would say.

Do you think money has helped the game grow?

It has trickled down. It does trickle down to the players, which is great. But money in sport is very good. You get to develop infrastructure, you get to develop young talent when you have the funds to do so. I think it's done India very well, Australia very well and maybe England to a lesser extent.

My favourite saying is from Rudyard Kipling: *If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster/ And treat those two impostors just the same.* I love this because they are impostors. So, I try, as much as possible, to keep an even keel

Before we wind up, your take on Virat Kohli's versatility in all three forms?

It's unbelievable. He's cricket's version of Cristiano Ronaldo. I think he's taken fitness to another level. When you see guys in the '70s and the fun that they were having, the fitness level wasn't that great. In 2019, fitness is a major part of the game and Kohli is leading the charge, not just in India but around the world. His mental strength is unbelievable.

Finally, just curious to know if there ever was, or is, a complete batsman in your view.

Yes. Virat Kohli. And if you ask me the greatest batsman ever, it's Viv Richards.

Kohli is cricket's version of Cristiano Ronaldo. I think he's taken fitness to another level. He is leading the charge, not just in India but around the world. His mental strength is unbelievable

"What do you mean by that?" And he said, "Your next innings starts at zero." So what he meant was, he wanted me to make full use of the opportunity, when I was out there, while I was in form, the bowling team was tired. So, I fell in love with playing the big innings. I never felt 50 or 100 were enough. I wanted to bat, as they say in the West Indies, till the cows come home!

While on the subject of scoring lots of runs, anything you recall about the unbeaten knock of 501?

Well, that was 25 years ago, in 1994. I remember [playing for Warwickshire against Durham at Birmingham], when I was on 18, I

## GAME THEORY

### The winter leaders

While the Premier League's fixtures pile up, the Spanish, Italian and German top divisions take time off as the year ends. A look at the footballers leading the attacking charts in these three leagues, heading into the winter break:

#### MOST GOALS

Player	Goals	Per 90 min
Lionel Messi (Barcelona)	13	1.08
Karim Benzema (Real Madrid)	12	0.73
Luis Suarez (Barcelona)	10	0.76

#### MOST ASSISTS

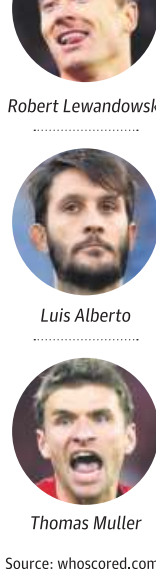
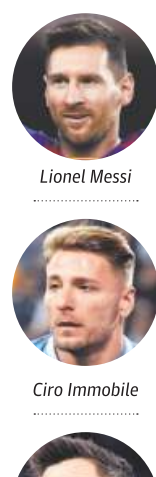
Player	Assists	Per 90 min
Lionel Messi (Barcelona)	6	0.50
Rodrigo Moreno (Valencia)	6	0.47
Luis Suarez (Barcelona)	6	0.45
Ever Banega (Sevilla)	6	0.38

Player	Goals	Per 90 min
Ciro Immobile (Lazio)	17	1.18
Romelu Lukaku (Inter)	12	0.75
Joao Pedro (Cagliari)	11	0.63

Player	Assists	Per 90 min
Luis Alberto (Lazio)	11	0.71
Dejan Kulusevski (Parma)	7	0.44
Lorenzo Pellegrini (Roma)	6	0.57
Alejandro Gomez (Atalanta)	6	0.43

Player	Goals	Per 90 min
Robert Lewandowski (Bayern)	19	1.14
Timo Werner (Leipzig)	18	1.14
Rouven Hennings (Dusseldorf)	11	0.74

Player	Assists	Per 90 min
Thomas Muller (Bayern)	11	1.03
Jadon Sancho (Dortmund)	9	0.69
Christopher Nkunku (Leipzig)	7	0.74
Thorgan Hazard (Dortmund)	7	0.54



#### MOST DRIBBLES PER GAME

Player	Dribbles
Lionel Messi (Barcelona)	5.5
Nabil Fekir (Real Betis)	3.5
Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa (Villarreal)	2.9

Player	Assists
Jeremie Boga (Sassuolo)	4.1
Gaetano Castrovilli (Fiorentina)	3.4
Ismael Bennacer (Milan)	2.6
Filip Kostic (Frankfurt)	3.4
Kingsley Coman (Bayern)	3.3
Alphonso Davies (Bayern)	3

## STACKING UP

### ATP TOUR

Rank	Player	Points
1	Rafael Nadal	9,985
2	Novak Djokovic	9,145
3	Roger Federer	6,590
4	Dominic Thiem	5,825
5	Daniil Medvedev	5,705
6	Stefanos Tsitsipas	5,300
7	Alexander Zverev	3,345
8	Matteo Berrettini	2,870
9	Roberto Bautista Agut	2,540
10	Gael Monfils	2,530
11	David Goffin	2,335
12	Fabio Fognini	2,290
13	Kei Nishikori	2,180
14	Diego Schwartzman	2,125
15	Denis Shapovalov	2,050

### Top Indians

Prajesh Gunneswaran	Rank 124	▲ No change
Sumit Nagal	Rank 130	▲ No change

### WTA

Rank	Player	Points
1	Ashleigh Barty	7,851
2	Karolina Pliskova	5,940
3	Naomi Osaka	5,496
4	Simona Halep	5,462
5	Bianca Andreescu	5,133
6	Elina Svitolina	5,075
7	Petra Kvitova	4,776
8	Belinda Bencic	4,685
9	Kiki Bertens	4,245
10	Serena Williams	3,935
11	Aryna Sabalenka	3,120
12	Johanna Konta	2,879
13	Madison Keys	2,767
14	Sofia Kenin	2,740
15	Petra Martic	2,617

### Top Indians

Ankita Raina	Rank 180	▲ 1 spot
Riya Bhatia	Rank 379	▼ 1 spot

### Premier League

Rank	Team	Points
1	Liverpool	46
2	Leicester	41
3	Man. City	40
4	Chelsea	37
5	Tottenham	34
6	Sheffield	27
7	Man. United	23
8	Wolves	22
9	Crystal Palace	17
10	Newcastle	18
11	Arsenal	15
12	Burnley	13
13	Everton	11
14	Southampton	10
15	Brighton	9
16	Bournemouth	6
17	West Ham	5
18	Aston Villa	3
19	Watford	2
20	Norwich City	1

### LaLiga

Rank	Team	Points
1	Barcelona	47
2	Real Madrid	33
3	Sevilla	23
4	Atletico Madrid	20
5	Real Sociedad	18
6	Getafe	16
7	Athletic Bilbao	12
8	Valencia	11
9	Levante	10
10	Villarreal	7
11	Granada	6
12	Osasuna	5
13	Real Betis	5
14	Real Valladolid	4
15	Alaves	4
16	Eibar	4
17	Real Mallorca	3
18	Celta Vigo	3
19	Leganes	3
20	Espanyol	2

### Serie A

Rank	Team	Points
1	Inter Milan	36
2	Juventus	31
3	Lazio	28
4	Roma	23
5	Atalanta	23
6	Cagliari	22
7	Parma	20
8	Napoli	17
9	Bologna	17
10	Torino	16
11	AC Milan	16
12	Verona	15
13	Sassuolo	15
14	Udinese	13
15	Fiorentina	12
16	Lecce	11
17	Sampdoria	10
18	Brescia	10
19	Spal	10
20	Genoa	10

### Bundesliga

Rank	Team	Points
1	RB Leipzig	48
2	M'gladbach	35
3	Bayern Munich	24
4	Dortmund	24
5	Schalke	21
6	Leverkusen	21
7	Hoffenheim	20
8	SC Freiburg	17
9	Wolfsburg	18
10	FC Augsburg	18
11	Union Berlin	17
12	Hertha Berlin	17
13	Frankfurt	17
14	Mainz	17
15	Cologne	17
16	Dusseldorf	17
17	Werder Bremen	17
18	Paderborn	17

# Head's century puts Australia in command

New Zealand in a spot of bother after losing two wickets

## NZ IN AUSTRALIA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MELBOURNE

Australia snatched two early wickets on Friday to leave New Zealand facing an uphill battle to stay in the second Test as it chased the home team's 467, built on the back of a gritty 114 from Travis Head.

At the close on day two, the Black Caps were 44 for two with Tom Latham not out nine and Ross Taylor on two as a series defeat looms.

### Quick blows

Captain Kane Williamson lasted only 14 balls, skying a James Pattinson delivery to wicketkeeper Tim Paine on nine, while Tom Blundell, called up for the out-of-form Jeet Raval, was out to Pat Cummins for 15.

The visitors need to win to square the three-match series after crashing by 296 runs in the opening day-night clash in Perth.

Australia looked in complete control at tea on 431 for five, but then collapsed to 467 all out within nine overs of the re-start.

Skipper Paine departed



**Patient knock:** Travis Head silenced critics with his second Test century. •AFP

for 79 seven balls after tea, with Mitchell Starc gone soon after for one. Head, Cummins and Nathan Lyon rapidly followed with Neil Wagner and Tim Southee doing the damage.

Australia started the day at

257 for four with Steve Smith on 77 and Head 25.

Head came into the match under pressure after a lean spell, but silenced his critics with his second Test century, reaching three figures off 222 balls.

"It's very nice to contribute. It's pretty cool to score a Boxing Day hundred, nice to get my opportunity," said Head, adding that Paine counter-attacking when he came in helped.

It was a patient innings

from the 25-year-old, who scored his only other century (161) against Sri Lanka in Canberra.

After reaching his ten he began hitting out and finally fell to a Wagner full toss, slicing it to Mitchell Santner.

## It pays to know the 'bloke in the truck'

ANI  
MELBOURNE

After New Zealand's Ross Taylor was handed a lifeline by the decision review system (DRS) in the Boxing Day Test, Australia skipper Tim Paine came up with the best possible way to sledge the batsman.

"Maybe, he knows the bloke (person in charge of ball-tracking)," was Paine's

comment. In the 14th over of the Kiwi innings, James Pattinson had Taylor adjudged lbw by the on-field umpire, but Taylor chose to review the call, and ball-tracking showed the delivery missing leg-stump.

Cricknet.com.au's official handle tweeted the video of the incident and captioned the post as "He

knows the bloke in the truck".

"That's twice I have seen him out plumb in front, but not given.

"I saw him being struck on the pad in New Zealand, that was absolutely hitting the stumps, he knows the bloke in the truck," Paine says from behind the stumps.

He was ably supported by the impressive Paine, who played an array of shots to notch up his seventh Test half-century off just 72 balls.

The 35-year-old had a golden opportunity to score a maiden ton, but he blew it, out lbw to Wagner after a review.

That brought Starc to the crease, but he lasted just three balls before spooning a Southee delivery to Williamson at mid-off. Cummins and Lyon managed just one run between them with Pattinson left not out 14.

## SCOREBOARD

**Australia — 1st innings:** D. Warner c Southee b Wagner 41, J. Burns b Boulton 0, M. Labuschagne b de Grandhomme 63, S. Smith c Nicholls b Wagner 85, M. Wade c Watling b de Grandhomme 38, T. Head c Santner b Wagner 114, T. Paine lbw b Wagner 79, M. Starc c Williamson b Southee 1, J. Pattinson (not out) 14, P. Cummins c Latham b Southee 0, N. Lyon c Wagner b Southee 1; Extras (lb-22, b-5, w-4): 31. Total (in 155.1 overs): 467.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-1, 2-61, 3-144, 4-216, 5-284, 6-434, 7-435, 8-

458, 9-463.  
**New Zealand bowling:** Boulton 31-3-91-1, Southee 33.1-6-103-3, de Grandhomme 30-5-68-2, Wagner 38-11-83-4, Santner 20-1-82-0, Blundell 3-0-13-0.  
**New Zealand — 1st innings:** T. Latham (batting) 9, T. Blundell c Paine b Cummins 15, K. Williamson c Paine b Pattinson 9, R. Taylor (batting) 2; Extras (lb-3, b-4, w-1, nb-1): 9. Total (for two wickets in 18 overs): 44.  
**Fall of wickets:** 1-23, 2-39.  
**Australia bowling:** Starc 4-0-18-0, Cummins 7-3-8-1, Pattinson 5-1-9-1, Lyon 2-0-2-0.

## BCCI honour for Srikanth and Anjum



K. Srikanth. •FILE PHOTO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former India captain K. Srikanth will be conferred the Life Time Achievement Award during the BCCI Awards Nite in Mumbai on January 12.

The Life Time Award 2019 for women will be bestowed on Anjum Chopra, also a former captain.

The award function will be held ahead of the first ODI against Australia on January 14.

# England fights back after Philander and Rabada restrict the visitors

de Kock equals South African Test record by holding six catches as the home team takes a 103-run first innings lead

## ENGLAND IN SA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
CENTURION

Vernon Philander led a relentless South African bowling performance before England fought back on the second day of the first Test at Centurion's SuperSport Park on Friday.

Philander took four for 16 in 14.2 overs as South Africa appeared to have taken control by bowling out England

for 181, a first innings lead of 103.

But England struck hard at the start of the second innings. South Africa was 72 for four at the close, an overall lead of 175 on a pitch which has proved difficult for batsmen throughout.

### Master class

Philander, 34, who has announced he will retire from international cricket at the end of the four-Test series,

produced a master class of control to complement the strike power of fast bowlers Kagiso Rabada (three for 68) and Anrich Nortje (two for 47).

Wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock equalled the South African Test record by holding six catches, a feat which had been accomplished six times before — on four occasions by new head coach Mark Boucher.

Joe Denly hit a half-centu-

ry for England after a shaky start. Denly was dropped on debut and took 28 balls to score his first run as Philander had an opening spell of one wicket for no runs in five overs.

### Maiden wicket

England collapsed, however, after Denly was caught behind off an inside edge to give all-rounder Dwaine Pretorius his first Test wicket.

Fast bowler Anrich Nortje

bowled Jonny Bairstow for one in the next over and then claimed the key wicket of Stokes when he switched to bowling around the wicket and induced a loose drive which presented de Kock with his fifth catch of the innings.

From a promising position at 142 for three, England lost its last seven wickets for 39 runs.

But wickets continued to fall when South Africa batted

again. James Anderson, who dismissed Dean Elgar with the first ball of the match on Thursday, again claimed a wicket in his first over when Aiden Markram played around his pads and was leg before wicket.

Zubayr Hamza was caught by wicketkeeper Jos Buttler down the leg side before Elgar was caught behind for 22 off Jofra Archer's second ball to reduce South Africa to 29 for three.

## SCOREBOARD

**South Africa — 1st innings:** D. Elgar c Buttler b Anderson 0, A. Markram c Bairstow b Curran 20, Z. Hamza c Stokes b Broad 39, F. du Plessis c Root b Broad 29, H. van der Dussen c Root b Curran 6, Q. de Kock c Buttler b Curran 95, D. Pretorius c Root b Curran 33, V. Philander c Buttler b Broad 35, K. Maharaj c Stokes b Archer 6, K. Rabada b Broad 12, A. Nortje (not out) 0; Extras (lb-4, nb-2, w-3): 9; Total (in 84.3 overs): 284.  
**Fall of wickets:** 1-0, 2-32, 3-71, 4-97, 5-111, 6-198, 7-245, 8-252, 9-277.  
**England bowling:** Anderson 20-4-69-1, Broad 18.3-4-58-4, Curran 20-5-58-4, Archer 19-4-

65-1, Root 4-0-26-0, Denly 3-0-4-0.  
**England — 1st innings:** R. Burns c de Kock b Philander 9, D. Sibble c de Kock b Rabada 4, J. Denly c de Kock b Pretorius 50, J. Root c de Kock b Philander 29, B. Stokes c de Kock b Nortje 35, J. Bairstow b Nortje 1, J. Buttler c de Kock b Philander 12, S. Curran c Hamza b Rabada 20, J. Archer b Philander 3, S. Broad c Elgar b Rabada 2, J. Anderson (not out) 0; Extras (b-4, lb-5, nb-2, w-5): 16; Total (in 53.2 overs): 181.  
**Fall of wickets:** 1-11, 2-15, 3-70, 4-142, 5-143, 6-150, 7-176, 8-176, 9-181.  
**South Africa bowling:** Rabada

15-1-68-3, Philander 14.2-8-16-4, Pretorius 8-2-23-1, Nortje 12-2-47-2, Maharaj 4-1-18-0.  
**South Africa — 2nd innings:** A. Markram lbw b Anderson 2, D. Elgar c Buttler b Archer 22, Z. Hamza c Buttler b Broad 4, F. du Plessis c Curran b Archer 20, H. van der Dussen (batting) 17; A. Nortje (batting) 4; Extras (b-1, lb-1, nb-1): 3; Total (for four wickets in 20 overs): 72.  
**Fall of wickets:** 1-2, 2-25, 3-29, 4-62.  
**England bowling:** Anderson 4-0-19-1, Broad 5-2-6-1, Archer 6-1-37-2, Curran 4-2-8-0, Stokes 1-1-0-0.



**On the ball:** An acrobatic Quinton de Kock pouches the offering from Jos Buttler off Vernon Philander. •REUTERS

## Big win for India U-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
EAST LONDON

India under-19 team produced an impressive all-round performance to begin its tour of South Africa with a comfortable nine-wicket win in the first Youth ODI at the Buffalo Park here on Thursday.

Batting first, South Africa under-19 team folded for 187 in 48.3 overs. In reply, India overhauled the target in 42.3 overs.

For India, Ravi Bishnoi scalped three wickets, while Kartik Tyagi, Shubhang Hegde and Atharva Ankelekar picked up two wickets each.

Chasing the target, openers Divyaansh Saxena and N. Tilak Varma shared a 127-run stand to take the game away from South Africa. Once Varma was dismissed by Achille Cloete, Saxena, and Kumar Kushagra took India home.

**The scores:** South Africa U-19 187 in 48.3 overs (Luke Beaufort 64, Jack Lees 27, Ravi Bishnoi 3/36) lost to India U-19 190/1 in 42.3 overs (Divyaansh Saxena 86, N. Tilak Varma 59).

# Liverpool embarrasses Leicester

Manchester United runs riot against Newcastle

## PREMIER LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Liverpool stretched its Premier League lead to 13 points by outclassing second-placed Leicester in a 4-0 win on Boxing Day while Manchester United overturned a poor start to thrash Newcastle 4-1.

Liverpool's trip to its closest challenger was the top billing of a busy Thursday card and the newly-crowned World club champion showed its class.

### Scant reward

Roberto Firmino's header was scant reward for a dominant first half display as Sa-

lah wasted big chances.

However, three goals in seven minutes in the final quarter ensured the scoreline reflected Liverpool's control.

James Milner doubled the visitors' lead before Firmino's classy finish made it 3-0. Trent Alexander-Arnold, who helped set up all the first three goals, rounded off a stunning individual display by drilling home the fourth.

United had been beaten 2-0 at Watford on Sunday and another frustrating evening seemingly beckoned when Newcastle's Matty Longstaff scored his second Premier League goal — both of which have come against the Red Devils.

However, unlike when the Magpies beat Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's men 1-0 in October, the response from United was emphatic.

Martial fired in at the near post with the help of Newcastle 'keeper Martin Dubravka before a thundering finish from Mason Greenwood and Marcus Rashford's header made it 3-1 before the break.

Another defensive error then teed up Martial to dink over Dubravka for the fourth early in the second half.

**The results:** Leicester 0 lost to Liverpool 4 (Firmino 31, 74; Milner 71-pen, Alexander-Arnold 78); Manchester United 4 (Martial 24, 51, Greenwood 36, Rashford 41) bt Newcastle 1 (M Longstaff 17).



**Opening strike:** Roberto Firmino, second from left, heads in the first of his two goals against Leicester City. •GETTY IMAGES

# Nikhat Zareen to take on Mary Kom

## BOXING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

M.C. Mary Kom and Nikhat Zareen stayed on course for a showdown and a ticket to the Olympic Qualifiers on Friday, winning their respective bouts during the selection trials at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

While Nikhat won against Jyoti Gulia, Mary out-punched Ritu Grewal in the opening bouts of the 51kg, both registering unanimous victories from the huge 10-judge panel.

The final bout will decide who will represent India at the Olympic Qualifiers in Wuhan, China, in February.

These were two of the five bouts that were unanimously awarded to the winner with the other five bouts registering split decisions.

### Big surprises

The big surprises were former World Championships medallist Saweety Boora, expected to give a tough fight to Pooja Rani in the final trials but going down 1-9 to Nupur in the 75kg and youth World champion Sakshi Chaudhary getting past Asian Championships bronze medallist Manisha Moun in the

57kg 7-3.

The 2016 World Championships silver medallist Sonia Lather got the better of her namesake and runner-up at the 2018 edition, Sonia Chahal by an identical margin.

"There is no pressure to win or anything. For a long time I have been fighting to have this bout and now it will happen tomorrow so I am just waiting for it and looking forward to giving my 100 percent to it," Nikhat said after her bout.

"There is no plan but I will try not to repeat mistakes from the India Open. Whatever the decision is tomorrow, I am well-prepared for it.

"I will only try to avoid too much of clinching like it happened in Mary didi's bout today and there is clean, fair and beautiful boxing," the 23-year old added.  
**The results:** 52kg: Nikhat zareen bt Jyoti Gulia 10-0, Mary Kom bt Ritu Grewal 10-0; 57kg: Sakshi Chaudhary bt Manisha Moun 7-3, Sonia Lather bt Sonia Chahal 7-3. 60kg: Simranjit Kaur bt Pavitra 10-0, Sarita Devi bt Shashi Chopra 9-1. 69kg: Lalita bt Meena Rani 9-1, Lovlina Borgohain bt Anjali 10-0. 75kg: Pooja Rani bt Indraj 10-0, Nupur bt Saweety Boora 9-1.

# 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 (RACQUET SPORTS)



**P. V. SINDHU (BADMINTON)**

Since December 2018, Sindhu has won two of the biggest titles in the game — the \$1.5 million BWF World Tour Finals and the 2019 World Championships. After finishing second best at the 2016 Olympics, 2018 World Championships, 2018 Asian Games, 2018 Commonwealth Games and 2019 National Championships, her play at the Worlds this year made the badminton world take note of her unseen capabilities. She beat Nozomi Okuhara to become the first Indian to win gold in the competition.



**ARCHANA KAMATH (TABLE TENNIS)**

Archana won her maiden National singles title in January. This major triumph in the senior ranks came after she upstaged favourite Manika Batra in the semifinal and Kritika Sinha Roy in the final. At the Commonwealth Championships in Cuttack, Kamath added the mixed doubles gold medal in the company of G. Sathiyan. Earlier, she was also a part of the gold-winning Indian team. At 19, Archana has the game to rattle the bigger names



**JOSHNA CHINAPPA (SQUASH)**

Joshna retained the Women's Asian Individual Squash Championships crown, in May, this year, beating Hong Kong's Annie Au at the National Squash Centre in Kuala Lumpur. She also reached the semifinals of the Oracle Netsuite Open, a PSA World Tour Gold event, in San Francisco and the Macau Open (PSA World Tour Bronze event). Additionally, she also made the quarterfinals of the CIB Black Ball Open in Cairo

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

# Tanmay, Mehdi lead Hyderabad's fightback

Delhi requires another 60 runs to complete an outright win

RAKESH RAO  
NEW DELHI

Skipper Tanmay Agarwal and Mehdi Hasan led Hyderabad's fightback to restore some pride and make Delhi bat again. However, the result of the visitor's Ranji Trophy match remains tilted in favour of the host.

Tanmay scored a century and Mehdi, coming in at No. 8 contributed a fighting unbeaten 71, as Hyderabad lifted itself from 97 for six to 298 on Friday. This left Delhi a target of 84 for its first win of the season.

## Bad light stops play

When bad light stopped play 76 minutes before the scheduled close, Delhi was 24 for no loss and stayed in the hunt for a bonus point.

The story of the third day was how Hyderabad's last four wickets added 201 runs and ensured the team lived to fight another day.

Delhi, ahead by 215 runs on the first innings, was eyeing an innings victory after reducing Hyderabad to 97 for six. But what followed was Hyderabad's finest phase in the match.

Tanmay batted much like his opposite number and opener Shikhar Dhawan did in Delhi's first innings. He instilled confidence in the incoming batsmen en route to a century.

His patient knock, including a six and 13 boundaries, frustrated Delhi no end.

## Useful partnerships

With Tanay Thyagarajan, Tanmay added 93 runs for the seventh wicket, and another 60 with Mehdi for the eighth, before being run out.

Mehdi, a handy late-order batsman, was far more flamboyant in his approach. His



**Captain's knock:** Tanmay Agarwal's century helped Hyderabad avoid an innings defeat against Delhi. •SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

unbeaten knock was studied with four sixes, seven boundaries and came off just 62 deliveries.

Tanmay and Mehdi exposed the inadequacy of the Delhi attack that had the services of just two specialist fast bowlers – Ishant Sharma and Simarjeet Singh.

Groin-injury to Pawan Suyal, who left the field during Hyderabad's first innings, further exposed Delhi's limited bowling options.

## Ishant scalps four

Like in the first innings, Ishant took four wickets and Simarjeet scalped three.

The host needs to win by 10 wickets to get seven points, including the bonus point.

## The scores:

**Delhi – 1st innings:** 284.

**Hyderabad – 1st innings:** 69.

**Hyderabad – 2nd innings:** Tanmay Agarwal run out 103, Akshath Reddy c Rawat b Bidhuri 2, Chaitanya Reddy b Bidhuri O. Himalay Agarwal lbw b Ishant 11, B. Sandeep b Ishant 8, K. Sumanth c Lalit b Simarjeet 32, C.V. Milind lbw b Simarjeet O, Tanay Thyagarajan lbw b Ishant 34, Mehdi Hasan (not out) 71, Ravi Kiran lbw b Ishant 12, Mohammed Siraj c Lalit b Simarjeet 10; Extras (b-5, lb-10): 15; Total (in 70.2 overs): 298.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-10, 2-12, 3-29, 4-43, 5-97, 6-97, 7-190, 8-250, 9-284.

**Delhi bowling:** Ishant 19-1-89-4, Simarjeet 19.2-2-80-3, Bidhuri 14-3-48-2, Rana 10-3-24-0, Lalit Yadav 8-1-42-0.

**Delhi – 2nd innings:** Kunal Chandela (batting) 6, Shikhar Dhawan (batting) 15; Extras (lb-3): 3; Total (for no loss in seven overs): 24.

**Hyderabad bowling:** Siraj 4-1-12-0, Ravi Kiran 3-0-9-0.

## RANJI TROPHY SCORES: ROUND 3, DAY 3

### GROUP A

**Kolkata:** Bengal 289 vs Andhra 110/7 in 46 overs (C.R. Gnaneswar 45 batting).

**New Delhi:** Delhi 284 & 24/0 in 7 overs vs Hyderabad 69 & 298 in 70.2 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 103, Mehdi Hasan 71 n.o., Ishant Sharma 4/89).

**Surat:** Gujarat 127 & 210 bt Kerala 70 & 177 in 50.3 overs (Sanju Samson 78, Axar Patel 4/50). Points: **Gujarat 6, Kerala 0.**

**Nagpur:** Vidarbha 338 in 118.2 overs (Ganesh Satish 145, Aditya Sarwate 48) vs Punjab 132/0 in 40.1 overs (Sanvir Singh 56 batting, Shubman Gill 70 batting).

### GROUP B

**Mysore:** Karnataka 166 & 191/3 in 67 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 69 batting, Karun Nair 62 batting) vs Himachal 280 in 107.4

overs (Priyanshu Khanduri 69, Nikhil Gangta 46, Rishi Dhawan 93, V. Koushik 4/59).

**Indore:** Tamil Nadu 149 & 177/4 in 67 overs (N. Jagadeesan 54, J. Kousik 66 batting) vs Madhya Pradesh 333 in 97.3 overs (Rameez Khan 87, Venkatesh Iyer 88, Mihir Hirwani 71, T. Natarajan 5/106).

**Mumbai:** Mumbai 114 & 198 in 63 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 65, Himanshu Sangwan 5/60) lost to Railways 266 & 47/0 in 11.4 overs. **Railways 7, Mumbai 0.**

**Rajkot:** Saurashtra 331 vs Uttar Pradesh 523 in 167.2 overs (Aryan Juyal 52, Akshdeep Nath 95, Mohammad Saif 165, Rinku Singh 71).

### GROUP C

**Jammu:** Jammu & Kashmir 460/5 decl. in 94 overs (Suryansh Raina 73, Shubham Kha-

juria 138, Henan Nazir 66, Abdul Samad 103 n.o.) vs Assam 22/0 in 8 overs.

**Jamshedpur:** Haryana 371 in 113.4 overs (Ankit Kumar 53, Chaitanya Bishnoi 107, Shivam Chauhan 53, Harshal Patel 65, Ashish Kumar 4/69) vs Jharkhand 194/2 in 57 overs (Kumar Deobrat 97 batting, Utkarsh Singh 48).

**Pune:** Maharashtra 289 & 39/1 in 13 overs vs Chhattisgarh 286 in 111 overs (Harpreet Singh 90, Amandeep Khare 40).

**Cuttack:** Uttarakhand 117 & 54/4 in 22 overs vs Odisha 253 in 83.5 overs (Shantanu Mishra 110).

**New Delhi:** Tripura 126 & 84 in 43.5 overs (Poonam Poonia 5/26, incl. a hat-trick) lost to Services 173 & 41/2 in 11.1 overs. **Services 6, Tripura 0.**

### PLATE

**Dibrugarh:** Manipur 196 & 215 in 75 overs (Sagatpam Singh 60, K. Priyogit 60 n.o., Tech Neri 5/28, incl. a hat-trick) vs Arunachal Pradesh 143 & 137/7 in 49.5 overs (Rahul Dalal 45 batting, Rex Singh 5/36).

**Patna:** Bihar 326 vs Goa 386/6 in 110 overs (Aditya Kaushik 73, Amulya Pandrekar 42, Amit Verma 89, Suyash Prabhudessai 108 batting).

**Kolkata:** Mizoram 73 & 30/4 in 11 overs vs Pondicherry 458/5 decl.

**Bhubaneswar:** Sikkim 269 vs Nagaland 71/3 in 21 overs.

**Mangaldoi (Assam): Day 2:** Chandigarh 455/9 decl. in 121.1 overs (Manan Vohra 90, Raman Bishnoi 126, Ankit Kaushik 148 n.o.) vs Meghalaya 15/1 in 11 overs.

## DDCA members object to 'autocratic' functioning

VIJAY LOKAPALLY  
NEW DELHI

Some key members of the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) Apex Council have sought immediate intervention from Ombudsman Justice (Retd.) Badar Durrez Ahmed on the "autocratic" decisions taken in recent times. In fact, one of the directors, Sudhir Kumar Agarwal, has shot off a mail to the Ombudsman and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) highlighting the irregularities related to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) scheduled for December 29.

## No notice

"As per Section 101 (3) of Companies Act, 2013, Notice should have been given to every Director of the Company. I must have received the Notice of the AGM 21 days before (the AGM) but there was no intimation of the same.

"In absence of proper compliance of the law the forthcoming AGM should be postponed," Agarwal wrote in his complaint, which has been marked to the Registrar of Companies and BCCI.

According to a member of the Apex Council, "Things have gone out of control at the DDCA where the left hand doesn't know what the right is doing. Selectors and coaches are being appointed in an arbitrary manner. Support staff is being increased without any justification and proper process of appointment.

"Strange things are happening. A left-arm spinner has been handed the responsibility of an opening batsman."

DDCA joint-secretary Rajan Manchanda conceded all was not well with Delhi cricket. "I have made repeated complaints to the Ombudsman on the functioning of the DDCA," he said.

In another unpleasant development, connected with the Delhi (under-23) team, two players were sent back from Kolkata on disciplinary grounds ahead of the CK Nayudu Trophy match against Bengal that commenced on Friday. "We were neither informed of the incident nor the process followed for picking the replacements," said an Apex Council member.

## Attorney General looks good for a repeat

BENGALURU: Attorney General, who maintains form, may score an encore in the Stewards Cup (1,200m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Saturday (Dec. 28). False rails (width about 8.5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

**1. BUGS BUNNY PLATE (1,200m),** maiden 2-y-o only, (Terms), 1-45 p.m.: 1. Al Buraq (4) A. Vishwanath 55, 2. Gallie (6) Srinath 55, 3. Golden Oaks (3) Nathan Evans 55, 4. Stone House (1) Vaibhav 55, 5. Capital Gain (8) Darshan 53.5, 6. Drusilla (5) I. Chisty 53.5, 7. Forest Flame (7) David Egan 53.5 and 8. Livililla (2) T.S. Jodha 53.5.

**1. FOREST FLAME,** 2. GALLIE, 3. GOLDEN OAKS

**2. AMATHOS PLATE (DIV. II),** (1,100m), rated 15 to 35, 2-15: 1. Smile Around (5) M. Naveen 60, 2. Cadillac Sky (9) A. Velu 59.5, 3. Anakin (12) Bhanu Singh 58.5, 4. Bella Mamma (11) A. Vishwanath 58.5, 5. Country's Spirit (7) Nazerul 58.5, 6. Orogenesis (10) Chetan K 58.5, 7. Radiant Beauty (6) Chetan G 58.5, 8. Temple Dancer (3) Nathan Evans 58.5, 9. Up Front (4) S. Shareef 58.5, 10. Santorini Secret (1) Khurshan Alam 58, 11. Zafrina (2) Irvan 57.5 and 12. Mayurana (8) R. Manish 55.

**1. TEMPLE DANCER,** 2. ANAKIN, 3. OROGENESIS

**3. AGUMBE PLATE (1,200m),** rated 00 to 20, 2-45: 1. Daring Sweetheart (7) Chetan K 60, 2. Desert Gilt (8) K. Raghu 60, 3. Above The Rest (6) Chandrashekar 59, 4. Bazinga (9) I. Chisty 58.5, 5. Rancho (4) Ar-

shad 57, 6. Kanthaka (1) Sai Kiran 55, 7. Show Girl (3) Vaibhav 55, 8. Emerald Green (3) Rayan 54, 9. Turf Prospector (10) Darshan 52.5 and 10. High Tide (2) Irvan 50.

**1. DARING SWEETHEART,** 2. TURF PROSPECTOR, 3. BAZINGA

**4. KUNIGAL STUD PLATE** (1,400m), rated 45 to 65, 4-y-o & over, 3-15: 1. Blue Moon (4) I. Chisty 60, 2. Bernardini (8) C. Umesh 59.5, 3. Sahara (7) A. Imran 59.5, 4. Excellent Sorrento (11) Chetan K 58.5, 5. Allsetgo (6) Arvind Kumar 57, 6. Sun Power (5) T.S. Jodha 57, 7. Constantinople (1) R. Marshall 55.5, 8. Angels Kiss (9) Ankit Yadav 54.5, 9. Colonel Harty (12) R. Anand 54.5, 10. Gypsy (10) Rayan 54.5, 11. Poseidon (2) Jagadeesh 54 and 12. Reccai (3) Arshad 54.

**1. BLUE MOON,** 2. SAHARA, 3. BERNARDINI

**5. S. RANGARAJAN MEMORIAL TROPHY (2,000m),** rated 30 to 50, 3-45: 1. Game Changer (4) A. Imran 60, 2. Crack Of Dawn (1) Nathan Evans 59.5, 3. Ozark (3) David Egan 57.5, 4. Flirting Eyes (2) I. Chisty 56.5 and 5. Mighty Red (5) Donoghue 55.5.

**1. CRACK OF DAWN,** 2. OZARK

**6. STEWARDS CUP (1,200m),** rated 60 & above, 4-15: 1. Louisiana (1) S. Shareef 60, 2. Life Awaits (6) Rayan 58.5, 3. Regal Music (8) R. Manish 58.5, 4. Cerise Noir (2) Indrajeet Singh 57, 5. Side Winder (7) Arvind Kumar 57, 6. Attorney General (4) Srinath 56.5, 7. Depth Charge (5) Sai Kiran 54 and 8. Mulholland (3)

## Railways, Kerala in final

SPORTS BUREAU  
LUDDHIANA

Defending champion Railways will take on Kerala in the women's final of the 70th National senior basketball championship here on Sunday.

In Saturday's semifinals-Railways eased past Madhya Pradesh 106-37, while Kerala fought hard to down Punjab 73-62.

Meanwhile Punjab defeated Uttarakhand 79-67 and entered the men's final.

Later, Tamil Nadu defeated Railways 65-63 and entered the men's final.

Chetan K 54.

**1. ATTORNEY GENERAL,** 2. CERISE NOIR, 3. LOUISIANA

**7. NATIVE CHIEFTAN PLATE** (1,400m), rated 15 to 35, 4-y-o & over, 4-45: 1. Zhu Zhu Zest (2) J.H. Arul 60, 2. Dreams United (9) Rayan 59, 3. Whizzo (7) C. Umesh 58, 4. Amazing Angel (1) Chetan K 56, 5. Azeemki Princess (8) Arvind Kumar 55.5, 6. Hidden Soldier (3) R. Anand 55.5, 7. Unifier (10) S. Shareef 55, 8. Smile Of Peace (5) Naveen Kumar 53.5, 9. Turf Spirit (4) Nazerul 53.5 and 10. Fierce Fighter (6) Arshad 53.

**1. ZHU ZHU ZEST,** 2. WHIZZO, 3. UNIFIER

**8. AMATHOS PLATE (DIV. I),** (1,100m), rated 15 to 35, 5-15: 1. Dragon Mountain (5) M. Naveen 60, 2. Dallas (8) Arvind Kumar 59, 3. Sadaqat (10) Vinod Shinde 57.5, 4. Altair (1) Irvan 57, 5. Bahurupah (6) S.K. Paswan 57, 6. Flt Captain (7) C. Umesh 57, 7. It's My Country (4) Darshan 57, 8. Sandarina (2) J.H. Arul 57, 9. Star Citizen (9) Chetan G 57, 10. Tazamour (12) I. Chisty 57, 11. The Preacher (3) R. Pradeep 57 and 12. Bold Runner (1) A. Ramu 56.5.

**1. SANDARINA,** 2. DRAGON MOUNTAIN, 3. SADAQAT

Day's best: CRACK OF DAWN  
Double: FOREST FLAME – TEMPLE DANCER  
Jkt: 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8; Tr (i): 3, 4 and 5; (ii): 6, 7 and 8.