

COLDEST DAY SINCE 1901

9.4°C
Maximum temperature on Monday in Delhi

2.6°C
Minimum temperature

RAIN
and thunderstorm likely Jan 1 night

5298 MW
record peak power demand in winter

(Right) In New Delhi, Monday. *Amit Mehra*



REPORTS, PAGE 4

43-STRONG MINISTRY

Uddhav gets his son, Pawar his nephew in Maharashtra Cabinet



Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Aaditya Thackeray and Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari in Mumbai on Monday. *Ganesh Shirsekar*

Gen Rawat retires as Army Chief, begins as Chief of Defence Staff

SUSHANT SINGH
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

A DAY before his retirement as Army Chief, the government Monday appointed General Bipin Rawat as the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), a post meant to enhance the quality of military advice to the political leadership through integration of service inputs.

General Rawat will take over the duties of CDS from December 31, his last day in office as Army Chief. The official press release does not specify a time-bound tenure for General Rawat, stating that he will continue "until further orders and extension in service... with effect from 31.12.2019 and till such period he holds the office of CDS".

On Saturday, government had notified that the age of retirement for the CDS will be 65 years; General Rawat will turn 65 in March 2023 — if he continues till then, it will be a tenure of 3 years and 3 months.

General Rawat, who took



He takes charge today as the first CDS

over as Army Chief on December 31, 2016 after superseding two officers senior to him, was widely tipped to be the first appointee to the post of CDS after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the creation of the post during his Independence Day speech from Red Fort on August 15. He will act as the Principal Military Adviser to the Defence Minister on tri-services matters, but will not exercise any military command, including over the three service chiefs.

On December 24, the Union Cabinet had given sanction to creation of the post of CDS, and his role and charter in the government. He will be an officer of four-star rank at par with the three service chiefs. He would be responsible for achieving

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Protest damage notices: UP goes where no state has gone before

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

FOLLOWING DAMAGE to public property in the anti-CAA-NRC protests, the Uttar Pradesh government has slapped notices on 372 people (out of 478 identified) to recover damages. It has cited a set of Supreme Court recommendations from 2007 and a 2011 Allahabad High Court order to justify this after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath declared "badla"



AKHILESH YADAV
SAMAJWADI PARTY PRESIDENT

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

'INFIGHTING IN BJP, SO CM GAVE POLICE FREE HAND'

(revenge) on rioters. An analysis of protests and consequent action taken by administrations of at least six states — including Uttar Pradesh — in the past shows that the Yogi Adityanath government's move to recover damages is unprecedented, at least in scale.

"This is the first time we are

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SDG goals: Kerala retains No. 1 slot, Bihar at bottom, UP is highest gainer

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

KERALA RETAINED the top slot while Bihar came out as the worst performer in NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2019, which assesses each state and Union Territory's achievement regarding sustainable development goals (SDG) such as good health, quality education, gender equal-

ity, clean water and sanitation, reduction in hunger and poverty, among others.

Kerala had the top rank among states with a score of 70, while Bihar has lowest score of 50.

In terms of progress, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the biggest gainer followed by Odisha. While UP saw an improvement in its overall score from 42 in 2018 to 55 in 2019, Odisha increased its overall score

by 7 points.

As per the SDG India Index 2019, the composite score for each state/UT is computed by aggregating their performance across the goals, and then by taking the arithmetic mean of individual goal scores. A score of 100 implies that the State/UT has achieved targets set for 2030; a score of 0 implies that the particular State/UT is at the bottom

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APPOINTMENT OF CDS A KEY STEP

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TALIBAN SAY NO PLANS FOR TRUCE

CHINA CONVICTS 3 RESEARCHERS INVOLVED IN GENE-EDITED BABIES
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All telecom players, including Huawei, can join 5G trials: Prasad

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE GOVERNMENT has decided to give all telecom operators and equipment manufacturers, including Chinese giant Huawei, clearance to start trials for 5G services in the country.

Speaking at an event Monday, Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said: "We have taken the decision to give 5G spectrum for trial to all the players. The in-principle decision has been taken."

Later, asked specifically on the sidelines of the event whether Huawei would be allowed to take part in the trials, the Minister said: "Yes, all have been allowed."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

All eyes on Huawei

THE IN-PRINCIPLE approval for participating in trials does not mean final approval for Huawei to function as a 5G equipment-maker in the country. While the spectrum sale will be concluded in April 2020, the service rollout is likely to take another six months.

Forest cover up but large tracts of dense forest have turned non-forest

JAY MAZOOMDAAR & ESHA ROY
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE BIENNIAL State of Forest Report (SFR), released Monday by Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar, announced an overall gain of 3,976 sq km of forests in India since 2017. But hidden in the not-so-fine print of the report is a loss of 2,145 sq km of dense forests that have become non-forests in those two years.

What largely offset this loss is the conversion of 1,858 sq km of non-forest areas to dense forests since 2017. Dense forests are defined by canopy cover: over 70% is considered very dense and 40-70% medium dense. Unlike natural forests,



Prakash Javadekar released the report. *Prem Nath Pandey*

commercial plantations grow rapidly and show up as dense cover in satellite images. A monoculture, however, cannot substitute natural forests in biodiversity or ecological services.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

New New Delhi: Triangular Parliament with spires, Rashtrapati Bhavan biodiversity park

North and South Block will be museums — one showcasing India until 1857, the other since

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

A NEW Parliament building with a triangular edifice with three spires, an underground shuttle service to connect all offices, a new home for the Prime Minister, an iconic installation to mark India at 75 — these are



Ten state-of-the-art office buildings for all ministries. *File*

some of the features of the Central government's ambitious redevelopment project of the Central Vista in New Delhi.

On September 13, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) announced the "PM's dream project," and architectural firms deposited bids.

In October, Gujarat-based HCP Design, Planning & Management Pvt Ltd, headed by Dr Bimal Patel, beat five bidders and bagged the project, which is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

19 is tally of Ministers who are dynasts, Congress tops with 8

SANDEEP ASHAR
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

OVER A month after inducting seven Cabinet ministers, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray Monday expanded his ministerial team to 43 in a glittering oath-taking ceremony inside Vidhan Bhavan. With this exercise, the state's new council of ministers — 33 cabinet and 10 state — has hit the maximum limit, capped at 15 per cent of the Vidhan Sabha strength of 288.

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar returned as Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister a little over a month after he had broken ranks to ally with the BJP. Many of the 14 NCP ministers sworn-in on Monday

are seen as close aides of Ajit Pawar. The induction of Thackeray's son, Aaditya, closely held till the last minute, is the first time in state history where a father-son duo will be part of the same cabinet. Uddhav's father and Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray had always stayed away from positions of power

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

ZEESHAN SHAIKH
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

CHIEF MINISTER Uddhav Thackeray and his son Aaditya Thackeray are not the only political dynasts in the Maharashtra Cabinet of 43. There are 17 others on the list topped by the Congress, with eight of the party's Ministers related to political leaders.

According to the ruling coalition's arrangement, the Shiv Sena's quota is 15, including the Chief Minister, the NCP's 16 and the Congress's 12.

The NCP has seven dynasts as Ministers, including Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, followed by the Shiv Sena with three.

In the previous BJP-Shiv Sena government, there were at least eight dynasts in the Cabinet.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



They included Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, whose father Gangadhar Fadnis was a BJP MLC, and Pankaja Munde, whose father, the late Gopinath Munde, was a senior BJP leader who had served as a Minister in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

There is always a need for a larger umbrella



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BEST BOLLYWOOD FILMS OF THE DECADE Udaan, Lunchbox, Vicky Donor, Masaan, Queen, Mulk are some of the films that made it to the list of Shubhra Gupta's favourites from the decade. VIDEO OF THE DAY 2019 ROUNDUP Statements that made headlines MOVIE REVIEW MARRIAGE STORY A heart-shaped goodbye

EXPRESS AUDIO How politics and the economy in India shaped up in 2019 NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY Our reporters detail major political and economic events that changed India in 2019, and what to expect in 2020.

FROM PAGE ONE

Dynasts in

the state and central governments. Apart from the family of Sena founder, the late Bal Thackeray, and Ajit Pawar, who is the nephew of NCP chief Sharad Pawar, the list of dynasts in the Cabinet include: Ashok Chavan, Cong: Son of the late Shankarrao Chavan, former Maharashtra Chief Minister. Amit Deshmukh, Cong: Son of the late Vilasrao Deshmukh, former Maharashtra Chief Minister. Yashomati Thakur, Cong: Daughter of the late Bhayyasaheb Thakur, a former Congress MLA. Sunil Kedar, Cong: Son of Chhatrapal Kedar, a former Congress MLA and Minister. Varsha Gaikwad, Cong: Daughter of Eknath Gaikwad, a former Congress MP. Vishwajeet Kadam, Cong: Son of the late Patangrao Kadam, a former Congress Minister. Satej Patil, Cong: Son of D Y Patil, a Congress leader and former Bihar Governor. Balasaheb Thorat, Cong: Son of Bhausaheb Thorat, a former Congress MLA. Dhananjay Munde, NCP: Nephew of the late Gopinath Munde, senior BJP leader and former state and central Minister. Rajesh Tope, NCP: Son of the late Ankush Tope, who was a senior party leader. Balasaheb Shamrao Patil, NCP: Son of Pandurang Patil, who was a Congress (Urs) MLA. Aditi Tatkare, NCP: Daughter of Sunil Tatkare, one of the party's Lok Sabha MPs. Prajakt Tanpure, NCP: Son of Prasad Tanpure, former party MP, and nephew of Jayant Patil, former party state president. Jayant Patil, NCP: Son of the late Rajaram Patil, who was a Congress leader and former Minister. Shambhuraje Desai, Shiv Sena: Grandson of Balasaheb Desai, a former Congress Minister. Shankarrao Gadakh, Krantikari Shetkari Paksha: Accommodated in the Sena's quota, he is the son of Yashwantrao Gadakh, a former Congress MP.

Uddhav gets his son, Pawar his nephew

Monday's cabinet expansion also marked the return of former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan, who had been kept out of government by the Congress when in power after he had stepped down from the Chief Minister's post, following allegations against him in the Adarsh housing society scam. In many ways, the cabinet expansion also marks the return of the power elite of the state. Out of 43 ministers who are now a part of Team Uddhav, 19 have already held ministerial positions in the past, 17 are co-operative barons, and 19 belong to established political families. Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari briefly lost his cool when Congress's KC Padavi deviated from the format and tried to invoke the "environment" while taking oath. Koshyari ensured that Padavi took the oath a second time. He had similarly stepped in when Varsha Gaikwad fumbled while taking the oath. As per the power sharing formula arrived at between the three parties, the Shiv Sena, with 56 MLAs, will hold the Chief Minister's post for the full term of this government besides retaining 14 other ministerial berths. The NCP, with 54 MLAs, has bagged the Deputy Chief Minister's position and 16 ministerial berths in all, while the Congress, with 44 MLAs, will hold the Assembly Speaker's post, and bag 12 ministerial positions. While Thackeray and two ministers from each party were sworn-in in November, Monday saw 12 Shiv Sena (eight cabinet, four

SDG goals: Kerala retains No.1 slot

of the table. Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim have shown maximum improvement, as per the report for second year released by NITI Aayog on Monday. This first such report was released in 2018. Himachal Pradesh took the second spot with a score of 69 while Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana shared the third spot with each state scoring 67 on the Index. Chandigarh too maintained its top spot among the UTs with a score of 70. Bihar, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh are the worst performing states in this year's index. "India is making impressive progress in SDG implementation through well-designed programmes of the Government of India such as Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission), Aayushman Bharat (National Health Protection Scheme), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Care for the Girl Child) and Aspirational Districts Programme," NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar said. "The Index has reinforced the spirit of competitive good governance among the States and Union Territories, which are ranked on the basis of their achievements on the SDGs and their targets," he said. "The United Nations' SDG target of 2030 can never be met without India... We are fully committed to achieving UN's SDG target," NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said at the launch of the report. The report measures a total of 16 goals and then arrives at a composite SDG for each state and UT. In 2018 index, only three states, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, were placed in the category of front runners — with a score in the range of 65-99. In 2019, five more States joined this league — Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Sikkim and Goa, taking the total tally to eight. India's composite score improved from 57 in 2018 to 60 in 2019 with major success in water and sanitation, power and industry. However, nutrition and gender continue to be problem areas for India, requiring more focused approach from the government. With regard to poverty reduction, states which have done well include Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Sikkim. On zero hunger parameters, Goa, Mizoram, Kerala, Nagaland and Manipur were the front runners, according to the report. The SDG India Index, launched last year by NITI Aayog with the help of United Nations took into account 16 out of 17 goals specified by the United Nations as SDGs. There has been variation in improvement levels among states. Uttar Pradesh, for example, has improved its overall score from 42 in 2018 to 55 in 2019, and is the highest gainer. The biggest improvement has been on the front of affordable and clean energy, where the jump has been by 40 points. Scores in clean water and sanitation and on industry, innovation, and infrastructure, have climbed by 39 and 34 points, respectively, for the state. Odisha stands second in overall improvement, with an increase of 7 points, from 51 to 58. The goal relating to industry, innovation, and infrastructure has contributed highest to the rise with a jump of 40 points. Sikkim is the third best state in overall improvement: from a score of 58 to that of 65, indicating an increase by 7 points. In goal of affordable and clean energy, the state recorded an increase by 55 points. In goal of industry, innovation and infra, Sikkim has made a jump of 26 points. Performance in goal relating to sustainable cities and communities, has been by 18 points, which is the third biggest contributor to Sikkim's improvement. The improvement in clean water and sanitation is driven by the success of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan in eliminating open defecation, the report said. The year 2020 will be the fifth anniversary of the adoption of SDGs by 193 countries at the UN General Assembly. The SDGs, constituted through an unprecedented consultative process, have 17 goals and 169 related targets to be achieved by 2030. The Index has been developed by NITI Aayog in coordination with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, United Nations in India and Global Green Growth Institute. UN Resident Coordinator Renata Dessalines said the world is entering final decade for achieving the SDGs — the Decade for Action. The SDG India Index 2.0 and the dashboard enables India to both track and encourage accelerated progress to meet the SDGs across all its states and UTs, she said at the launch of the report.

PARAMETERS AND THE TOPPERS. Table with 2 columns: GOAL, TOP PERFORMING STATES. Rows include NO POVERTY, QUALITY EDUCATION, INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, REDUCED INEQUALITY, SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION, PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS.

Notably, there is no law laid down for recovery of damage from protesters. Most of the sporadic actions that various state governments have taken in the past for recovery of damages from protesters have been based on an SC order of 2007 and subsequent high court orders in some states. In 2007, the Supreme Court appointed two committees headed by retired SC judge Justice K T Thomas, and eminent jurist Fali S Nariman. The Thomas Committee recommended that the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act be amended to include a provision that would make leaders of the agitating group "which has called for 'direct action' guilty of abetment of the offence". The Nariman Committee said the Supreme Court should evolve a principle of liability for vandalism and rioting leading to destruction of public and private property. This punitive liability should be borne by the "actual perpetrators of the crime as well as organisers of the event to be shared as finally determined by the High Court or Supreme Court." The recommendations of both committees were accepted on April 16, 2009. In 2016, hearing a plea related to the Patidar agitation in Gujarat, the Supreme Court observed that protesters must be made to pay for the damage they had caused. As far back as 2002, Kerala High Court had given directions to the state on the recovery of damage caused by participants in a strike. On the basis of the Thomas Committee report, the Centre invited, in 2015, suggestions from the public on the proposed amendments in PDPPA. The Bill is yet to be tabled in Parliament. Based on SC's 2007 orders, the Allahabad HC too had in 2011 passed orders for recovery of damages from protesters. Asked why this time, a senior UP officer said: "The move is not communally motivated. It is based on SC and HC orders. The administration had to take a call on implementing it at some time. Question us if we do not do this if the next time Bajrang Dal damages public property." — WITH INPUTS FROM VARINDER BHATIA; ENS, PUNE, RAJASTHAN AND DELHI Gen Rawat "jointness in operation, logistics, transport, training, support serv-

Huawei

The decision to permit Huawei to participate in the trials assumes significance in the face of global scrutiny that the telecom equipment maker faces for security-related threats. Telecom companies and equipment makers are scheduled to meet Department of Telecom (DoT) officials Tuesday to discuss terms of the trial, government sources said. The discussion will also include circles and population areas the trials could cover. Other than Huawei, Nokia, Ericsson, Zte and Samsung had sought permission to participate in the 5G trials, officials had said. The US was among the first major nations to ban Huawei. President Donald Trump had asked US companies to not use Huawei, alleging that it was a tool of Chinese intelligence agencies. Huawei India's CEO had said in June that the company was ready to sign a "no backdoor" agreement with the government, vouching that it did not gain access to any Indian customer's equipment.

Forest cover

Dr Subhash Ashutosh, Director General, Forest Survey of India, told The Indian Express: "Some of these are fast-growing species such as bamboo in the north-eastern region. Also rubber and coconut plantations in the southern states. We need more time and resources if we are to identify and classify plantations through ground-truthing in the biennial report." Since 2003 when this data was first made available, 18,065 sq km — more than one third of Punjab's landmass — of dense forests have become non-forests in the country. Nearly half of this — 8,552 sq km — since 2015. On paper, much of this destruction of quality natural forests was compensated by plantations — 10,227 sq km of non-forests became dense forests in successive two-year windows since 2003. Again, more than half of this — 5,458 sq km — since 2015. Leading ecologist Dr Madhav Gadgil said: "It is not possible to reconcile such matrix unless the FSI shares the spatial data. With so much advancement in science, the government should make its grid data public for open scrutiny and value addition." Dr Ashutosh said: "Anyone can access the forest data for a nominal fee. I have proposed that access should be made free in the future. But we do not share raw data unless it is a collaborative research with the FSI." The SFR 2019 data underlines the scale of forest loss on what is forestland on government records. The FSI has identified 728,520 sq km as recorded forest area in the country. Of this, 2,15,084 sq km — nearly 30% — recorded no forest cover. In other words, forestland roughly the combined area of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal holds no forests at all. There has been no recovery since 2017 as forest cover on forestland has shrunk by 330 sq km in the last two years. "There is no denial that the gain in forest cover is outside forestland. A proposal to continue with the biennial reports while conducting a more comprehensive study, may be every five years, is in place. There is no decision on that yet," said Dr Ashutosh. One silver lining in the SFR 2019 is a gain of 301 sq km of dense forest on forestland since 2017. Overall, though, less than 45% — only 3,26,546 sq km — of India's forestland is densely forested. The 2019 report also recorded an increase of 1,212 sq km in tree cover. The 3,976 sq km increase reported in forest cover was largely achieved through a net gain of 3,661 sq km of open forests in non-forest areas since 2017. The 2017 report had claimed a gain of 6,778 sq km in forest cover and 1,243 sq km in tree cover over 2015. Releasing the report, Javadekar said India is among the top ten countries in the world to maintain and increase its forest and tree cover. "This is very encouraging for us as it means that we are on the right track to achieve our Paris Agreement commitment of 2.5-3 billion carbon sinks. The top five states to have shown an increase in forest cover include Karnataka (1,025 sq km), Andhra Pradesh (990 sq km), Kerala (823 sq km), J&K (371 sq km) and Himachal Pradesh (334 sq km)," he said. The total forest cover of the country is 712,249 sq km which is 21.67% of the geographical area of the country. The tree cover of the country is estimated as 95,027 sq km which is 2.89% of the geographical area. Area wise Madhya Pradesh has the largest forest cover in the country followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra. In terms of forest cover as percentage of total geographical area, the top five states include Mizoram (85.41%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.63%), Meghalaya (76.33%), Manipur (75.46%) and Nagaland (75.31%). Central Vista expected to be completed by 2024. As part of the redevelopment, a senior official told The Indian Express, North and South Blocks will be turned into museums. While details are being worked out, one idea, sources said, is to showcase the history of India before 1857 in one and from 1857 to now in the other. A senior official said that no existing heritage structures will be demolished. The PM's new home will be next to Rashtrapati Bhawan and so will be the Vice-President's residence. The revamp project also envisages extending the Central Vista to the Yamuna river. The official said, "We will build an icon to mark India at 75 and there will be a design competition for that." The area the Rashtrapati Bhawan to the Ridge will be turned into a "national biodiversity arboretum and will be open to public." The arboretum will showcase India's biological diversity, an official said. Important elements of the design include an extension to the National Archives, expanding public spaces and providing amenities for Delhi's residents and tourists around India Gate, and reducing energy usage to enhance sustainability. About the new Parliament that will be built, the official said, "It will be a triangular Parliament with state-of-the-art acoustics and three spires which will reflect the spirit of democracy. Each window in this new Parliament will be unique to reflect the diversity of India. The goal is to have the 75th anniversary session (2022) inside the new Parliament." The new Parliament, situated next to the current one, will have a Lok Sabha with a capacity of 900-1,000, a Rajya Sabha, and a common lounge in place of the current central Hall. It will also include offices for all the MPs. Shastri Bhawan and Nirman Bhawan will give way to a set of at least 10 state-of-the-art office buildings. Said an official: "There is very poor use of precious land as of now and most office buildings are stressed, outdated and inadequate. The outer facade of all new buildings will be very similar in tone to that of Parliament and North and South Blocks but inside there will be steel and glass. Each office building will have an atrium and seating arrangement." FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com

SEEK APPOINTMENT OF CLAIMS COMMISSIONER

Anti-CAA protests: To estimate damages, Delhi police move HC

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

DELHI POLICE has moved an application before the Delhi High Court requesting that a "Claims Commissioner" be appointed to estimate damages caused during protests against the new citizenship law in the capital, and fixing liability of damages.

This comes after the Uttar Pradesh administration had started proceedings to identify and seal properties of those involved in violent protests in the state. "The Delhi Police legal department moved an application last week, after discussions with Delhi Police Commissioner Amulya Patnaik and taking opinion from legal experts," said a senior officer.

An officer told *The Indian Express* that several instances of arson and riots were reported in the capital during protests against the new citizenship law. "There was extensive damage to public and private property, including public transportation, which caused huge loss to the government."

"Four DTC buses, 100 private vehicles and 10 police bikes were damaged during violence at Jamia. While a private car was set on fire in Central Delhi's Darya Ganj, two buses, four police vehicles, two bikes, a public toilet, and a police post were damaged during violence in Seelampur," said a senior officer.

The letter sent on December 28 to the registrar general of the Delhi High Court states, "The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has dealt with damage to public

and private property and recovery from perpetrators vide its judgment in W.P.(C) no, 77/2007, Destruction of public and private property vs State of A.P and Ors, April 16, 2009. After passing guidelines, the Hon'ble Court said that in the absence of legislation, the guidelines are to be adopted to assess damages... Wherever mass destruction to property takes place due to protests or thereof, the High Court may issue suo motu action and set up a machinery to investigate damage caused and to award compensation..."

The legal department has quoted all 10 points of the guidelines in the letter. "... The Hon'ble Court has said, in one of the guidelines, that in each case, the High Court or Supreme Court... appoint a sitting or retired HC Judge or a sitting or retired district

judge as a Claims Commissioner to estimate damages and investigate liability. The liability will be borne by actual perpetrators of the crime, as well as organisers of the event..." it further states.

Meanwhile, a Special Investigation Team was constituted to probe 10 cases of rioting registered during recent protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act. The SIT will go into cases of violence in Jamia, Darya Ganj and Seelampur. It will be headed by the Additional CP (Crime Branch) and was constituted following Patnaik's directives to conduct a fair probe into the cases.

"Apart from Crime Branch officials, several police personnel from the district concerned have been appointed to the SIT to get help from their local intelligence," an officer said.

AAP LS candidate Guggan Singh jumps ship to return to BJP: Felt suffocated

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

GUGGAN SINGH, AAP's Lok Sabha candidate from North West Delhi constituency, joined the BJP Monday and is likely to contest the upcoming Assembly polls from Bawana.

Singh, a prominent Dalit face of the saffron party in Outer Delhi, had quit the BJP in 2017 after he was denied a ticket in the Bawana bypoll and joined AAP. He was defeated by BJP's Hans Raj Hans by over 5.9 lakh votes in the Lok Sabha elections.

"After I joined AAP, I found that the head of AAP has no respect for his MLAs. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal called his MLAs *tuchhe vidhayak* (lowly MLAs). So I decided to return to the BJP. I was feeling suffocated in AAP. I was not able to face my family members. I appeal to oth-



(From left) BJP leaders Pravesh Verma, Manoj Tiwari, Guggan Singh, Union Minister Prakash Javadekar and MP Vijay Goel, Monday. Praveen Khanna

ers that the mistake I have committed should not be repeated by them," said Singh, who joined the party in the presence of Union Minister Prakash Javadekar and other senior leaders at its Pant Marg office.

According to party sources, West Delhi MP Parvesh Verma and BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vijay Goel played an instrumental role in bringing Singh back to the

party. Though Singh maintained that he joined the party conditionally, sources said he would be the party's candidate from Bawana.

Singh won from Bawana in the 2013 Assembly elections. In the 2015 Assembly polls, he lost to AAP legislator Ved Prakash — a former BJP leader who switched sides ahead of the Assembly polls, and went back

to the BJP in 2017.

"BJP would have won the 2017 Bawana bypoll if we would have given the ticket to Guggan. I had always maintained that we should never have allowed him (Singh) to go. We have a cadre vote which is fixed. But when people like Singh join the party, a floating voter base also comes in... which, many times, decides the winners and losers," said a senior BJP leader.

According to AAP sources, Singh was being considered for a ticket but was not assured one.

"His actions over the past few days, including speaking against a few MLAs, was perceived as a problem," a party leader said.

Asked about his departure from the party, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said people keep joining and leaving political parties during the election season for tickets.

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Shri M R Kumar, Chairman, LIC of India presented the cheque of Rs 2610.74 Crore to Ms Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs as the Govt. of India's share of the surplus arising out of LIC's actuarial valuation as at 31.03.2019. Shri Rajiv Kumar, Secretary (Finance) and Shri Debashish Panda, Special Secretary (Insurance & FI) were present along with officials from Life Insurance Corporation of India, Shri T C Suseel Kumar, MD, Shri Vipin Anand, MD, Shri Mukesh Kumar Gupta, MD and Shri Raj Kumar, MD.

Total Valuation Surplus for 2018-19 : ₹ 53214.41 Crore, Highest Ever

(As on 31.03.2019)

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Total Assets ₹ 31.12 Lakh Crore

First Year Premium ₹ 1,42,191.69 Crore

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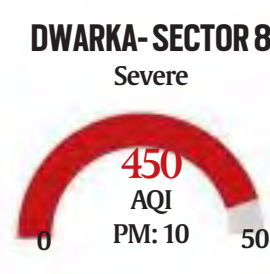
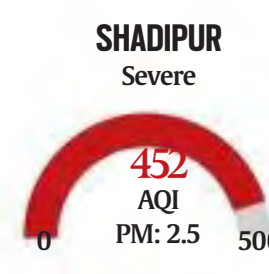
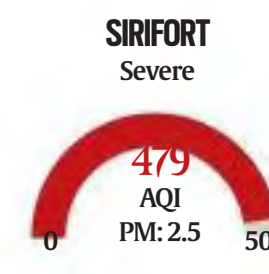
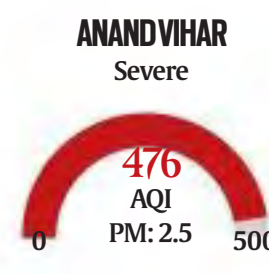
Number of Claims Paid : 2 Crore 59Lakh with an amount of ₹1.63 Lakh Crore

Market Share as on 30.11.2019 - Policies : 76.28%, FYP : 71.00%

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51-100 Satisfactory

101-200 Moderate

201-300 Poor

301-400 Very poor

MAXIMUM TEMP AT 9.4°C

450 FLIGHTS, 30 TRAINS DELAYED

WINTER POWER DEMAND PEAKS

Coldest day in a century

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

A RECORD-BREAKING moment Monday saw the city record its coldest day in 119 years as the maximum temperature dropped to 9.4 degrees celsius, while a dense fog covered the capital and led to the cancellation of around 40 flights. Delhi's air quality index was also in the 'severe' category for a third day in a row Monday, with a reading of 446.

The maximum temperature Monday, which was 11.4 degrees celsius below normal, was the lowest in every winter and all months since 1901 of which data is available, India Meteorological Department (IMD) officials said. The minimum temperature Monday was 2.6 degrees celsius.

Previously, the record for the coldest day between 1951 and 2019 was on January 2, 2013, when the maximum temperature was 9.8 degrees celsius.

According to IMD officials, this December could also be second coldest since 1901. The coldest December on record is 1997 when the average maximum temperature was 17.35 degrees celsius, whereas this month, as of Monday, it has been 18.61 degrees celsius.

On Monday, the mercury dipped even lower in other parts of the capital. The lowest minimum temperature was recorded in Pusa at 1.6 degrees, while Mungeshpur recorded the lowest maximum temperature at 7.7 degrees celsius.

Kuldeep Srivastava, scientist at the IMD, said, "There are two reasons that are causing the dip in the temperature. One is the low cloud cover over the city, the other is cold easterly winds from Uttar Pradesh and cold north-westerly winds from the mountains up north."

He added, "Usually easterly winds from UP are warmer, but this time the region is colder than usual and has been witnessing a number of severely cold days with maximum temperatures as low as 10 degrees."

Srivastava added that the low cloud cover has persisted over the city for a number of days, along with the fog, because of which sunlight has not been able to break through and reach the surface to warm it.

A Western Disturbance that



This winter, power demand breaks 118-year-old record

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE CAPITAL recorded the highest peak winter demand of 5,298 MW this December, breaking a 118-year-old record, BSES and Tata Power-DDL (TPDDL) said in statements Monday. Last year's peak demand on the day was 4,472 MW, said the BSES. Delhi is witnessing the second coldest December since 1901.

TPDDL's peak winter demand also peaked at 1,541 MW, and BSES's at 3,297 MW. Previously, Delhi's peak demand was 4,800 MW — and 1,433 MW in TPDDL areas — in January 2019.

As per the statement, 1,700 MW of power is available from long-term sources with the company, which will enable it to meet the demand.

Both discoms use advanced techniques and avenues such as 'banking', 'reserve shutdown', 'power exchange' and ensure sufficient 'spinning reserves' to dis-

pose of surplus power.

In case of any unforeseeable contingency, they will buy short-term power from the exchange, which is available at economical rates ranging from Rs 1-4 crore during winter months, said the statements.

"At Tata Power-DDL we are fully committed to ensure warm and safe winters to our consumers, we have made surplus power arrangements over and above the expected peak demand to cater to contingencies. Besides this, we are using a mix of technologies such as hotline washing using water jets and also techniques such as AI & Machine Learning for better load forecasting to provide reliable power supply," said Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO, Tata Power-DDL.

A BSES spokesperson said, "Domain expertise provided by IMD-POSCO also helps. These help discoms build advanced models, which leads to high accuracy planning and saving of man-hours and cost."

CAPITAL SHIVERS AS MERCURY DROPS

MONDAY

Max temp **9.4**
Min temp **2.6**

Coldest day in Delhi in 119 years

TEMPERATURE OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS IN DELHI

| DAY | MIN | MAX |
|--------|-----|------|
| Dec 26 | 5.8 | 13.4 |
| Dec 27 | 4.2 | 14.4 |
| Dec 28 | 2.4 | 13.3 |
| Dec 29 | 3.4 | 15.8 |

Source: IMD

■ This December is slated to be the second coldest in 119 years

■ 1997 holds record for coldest December since 1901

TEMPERATURE RECORDED MONDAY

| PLACE | MIN | MAX |
|------------------|------|------|
| Safdarjung | 2.6 | 9.4 |
| Palam | 02.9 | 10.0 |
| Lodhi Road | 02.2 | 9.3 |
| Ayanagar | 02.5 | 8.3 |
| Delhi University | 04.7 | 8.9 |
| Jafarpur | 02.5 | 8.2 |
| Mungeshpur | 03.5 | 7.7 |
| Pusa | 01.6 | 8.7 |
| Sports Complex | 04.9 | 9.3 |

THE WEEK AHEAD

| Day | Min | Max | Forecast |
|--------|-----|------|---|
| Dec 31 | 3.0 | 11.0 | Cold day |
| Jan 1 | 5.0 | 14.0 | Generally cloudy sky with light rain or drizzle |
| Jan 2 | 8.0 | 14.0 | Thunderstorm with hail |
| Jan 3 | 8.0 | 12.0 | Generally cloudy sky with light rain or drizzle |
| Jan 4 | 7.0 | 13.0 | Fog |
| Jan 5 | 7.0 | 14.0 | Fog |

All figures in °C

DELHI'S AIR QUALITY INDEX

| | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Dec 30 | 446 (severe) |
| Dec 29 | 431 (severe) |
| Dec 28 | 409 (severe) |
| Dec 27 | 373 (very poor) |

Source: CPCB

This December could also be second coldest since 1901, said IMD officials. Amit Mehra

days were recorded.

The season's "worst dense fog spell" was also recorded across the city Monday, IMD officials said, with a visibility of 0-200 metres from 2.30 am to 12 pm.

"Shallow to moderate fog then covered the city throughout the day. This fog cover is the main cause for Monday's record-breaking lowest day maximum temperature," IMD officials said.

The IMD has forecast that cold wave and dense fog conditions are likely to prevail over the city Tuesday with a marginal improvement. An approaching Western Disturbance is likely to cause one or two spells of light rain or drizzle, and thunderstorms, from the night of January 1 to 3, IMD officials said, after which cold wave and dense fog conditions are expected to abate.

On the air quality, the Centre-run SAFAR air and weather monitoring agency has forecast that it may improve to the higher-end of 'poor' range Tuesday as wind speed was expected to pick up.

Dense fog leaves many stranded at airport, rly stations

ANKITA YADAV & AYILYA THAMPURAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

HUNDREDS OF passengers were stranded, with New Year plans of many in jeopardy, as dense fog enveloped Delhi Monday.

More than 450 flights were delayed, 21 diverted and 40 cancelled as visibility was recorded in the range of 0 to 200 metres between 2.30 am and noon.

People travelling for business trips and family vacations found themselves stranded outside the airport, struggling to book other flights and making alternate arrangements to stay.

A family headed to Jammu to celebrate New Year's Eve had their flight cancelled just as they were about to board. Divij, who was with his family, said, "... Since no other flights are available, we are now rushing to get train tickets to Jammu."

A group of people from South Africa, working at RA mines in Bhilwara, Rajasthan, waited hours for their travel agent to rebook the tickets after their earlier flight to Jaipur got cancelled.

An Israeli businessman travelling from Tel Aviv to India for the first time arrived in Delhi after being redirected to Mumbai for six hours. He struggled to enter the airport after his Air India



Over 300 flights were delayed; (above) outside New Delhi Railway Station

flight to Vizag was cancelled. He said, "The Air India counter is too crowded, with not enough officials to attend to passengers. People from Vizag are helping me with the situation." (The writers are interns with The Indian Express)

6 of family killed after car plunges into canal in Greater Noida

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GREATER NOIDA, DEC 30

SIX MEMBERS of a family died after the Maruti Ertiga they were travelling in plunged into a canal in Dankaur area of Greater Noida Sunday night, allegedly due to the fog, said police.

According to police, there were 11 people in the car, with some more members of their family following them in another Ertiga. The family was visiting a relative's place in Badarpur.

SHO Dankaur Farmood Ali

said, "There were 11 people in the car, of whom five survived."

Hetram (45), who was in the other Ertiga, said, "We were driving 1-2 km behind the first car. At around 11 pm, we got a call from them saying that they had been in an accident. Due to the dense fog and poor visibility, the car ended up falling into a canal. The ones sitting in the rear managed to call us."

Manoj Tyagi, a police officer from Bilaspur who oversaw the rescue operations, said, "We were on rounds when we saw two women by the road side, trying to call police. The car they



Due to dense fog and poor visibility, the car ended up falling into a canal. Express

Why night shelters are not the first option for many in winters

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

A MAN sips on a cup of steaming tea, adjusts a pillow, pulls the blanket closer and rubs his tired eyes. This could very well be a December evening drawing to a close at any average Delhi household. Except, the scene captured above plays out on a pavement outside Central Delhi's Laxmi Narayan building, where tandoor operator Amar Singh has taken refuge for the night.

Singh has witnessed two extreme weather events thus far — the deluge of 1978, when he had arrived in the city, and the December of 2019, the coldest since 1901.

His words and a ground check shatter the conventional perception that the homeless

don't go to night shelters to avoid missing out on charity drives.

"We are aware that night shelters are meant for our safety. I've tried staying in them in the past. But spending one night there results in extreme skin irritation due to lice. I don't beg for a living nor do I hanker after charity," says Singh, who hails from Uttarakhand.

Two blocks away, night shelter 176, located off Asaf Ali Road, is packed. With a capacity for 290 people, the shelter — housed in a permanent building — has 326 people under its roof. It has a separate room for the differently abled. The toilets are soiled, window panes broken. Two makeshift tents, also fully occupied, are pitched in the courtyard.

The Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) runs 221 night shelters — 78 in



At a DUSIB shelter in Yamuna Pushta. Abhinav Saha

permanent buildings, 115 out of porta cabins and 28 in tents — with a sanctioned capacity to shelter 17,960 people. On

December 29, the night time occupancy was 9,793.

Numbers reveal that inadequacy of space alone does not ac-

count for the rows of homeless, faceless men, women and children spending sleepless nights in the open, across the country's

national capital. The factors are many and varied.

Spending the night under a tarpaulin sheet outside the Nizamuddin Dargah are Salma and her girls aged five and seven.

"The other day, a woman was driven out of a night shelter meant for women when her five-year-old son urinated on the bed. Caretakers often target such vulnerable women; other inmates also harass them. It is better for us to avoid shelters and sleep on the pavement," she says.

But doing so is a business fraught with deadly risks — something no one will know better than Salma. On the night of June 21, a speeding car driven by a man, who was found to be drunk, ran over four pavement dwellers — including Salma's husband — near Nizamuddin flyover. "I'll still manage here. But

all I want is to put my two girls in a hostel. They are not safe in this environment," she says.

Night shelter 539, especially earmarked for families near the dargah, meanwhile lies largely vacant. Only two of its 15 beds are occupied, while the adjoining shelter meant for men has far exceeded its capacity of 45.

"Our attempts to bring in pavement dwellers are greeted with abuse... We now plan to convert the shelter meant for families to a male-only one. What is the point of beds going unoccupied?" says Nihal, one of the three caretakers at the shelter who puts in eight-hour shifts.

DUSIB has, for the first time, made pillows available at each shelter, along with mattresses. The porta cabins are equipped with TVs and water filters.

Every person also gets up to

two blankets, based on demand. On Sunday, shelter 235 had run out of 79 sets of mattresses and pillows by 12.30 am, forcing entrants to make do with two sets of slender blankets each and a worn out carpet to sleep on.

"Durrries and blankets were changed three years ago. Naturally, there are complaints of lice. Also, there are only 18 lockers here, while the number of people taking shelter exceed 80. So there are petty thefts," says the caretaker of a shelter at Sarai Kale Khan, on condition of anonymity.

At another Sarai Kale Khan shelter, two men have lined up to escape the cold. Caretaker Maha Chand asks for their ID cards, a pre-requisite under the laid down norms. The men don't have any. But they aren't turned back. Shelter 235 is their home for the long, cold night.



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Safeguarding farmer interest

HIL (India) Limited is the only government of India enterprise to produce and supply quality agrochemicals at most reasonable rates to farmers across India



S P Mohanty, Chairman and MD HIL (India) Limited

HIL (India) Limited formerly known as Hindustan Insecticides Limited was incorporated in 1954 to manufacture DDT at its unit at Delhi for domestic health care and for export. Later on, two more manufacturing plants were setup at Udhoygmandal (Kerela) in 1957 and Rasayani (Maharashtra) in 1977. The Delhi manufacture unit was also relocated at Bathinda (Punjab) in 2003.

The company diversified its activities from manufacture of DDT in production & supply of quality agrochemicals for crop protection in early 80's. In order to serve the farming community and provide all the key agricultural input under one umbrella, the company further entered in the area of production and supply of quality seeds in 2012 and distribution of fertilisers in 2016 across India. Thus, it has become a brand name among the farmers for supply of quality seeds, fertilisers & agrochemicals on most reasonable rates to the farmers. Recently, the company has also entered in the area of manufacture & supply of Long Lasting Insecticides Net (LLIN), which has a long life to protect from mosquitoes in the mosquitoes prone areas and at border for the Paramilitary Forces.

HIL (India) Limited is the only government of India enterprise to produce and supply quality agrochemicals at most reasonable rates to farmers across India. It is manufacturing all sorts of agrochemicals required by farmers. Further, it keeps in controls prices of agrochemicals being the government company over the private sector. As per a study got conducted by FICCI and TATA Strategic Management Group, there is a entry of spuri-

ous pesticides in the market, which is worth Rs 3,000-3,500 crore per annum in a pesticides market of Rs 12,000-14,000 crore in India. The spurious pesticides are not only ineffective to protect the crops but also increases the cost of production to the farmers and as a result of this about 240 farmers committed suicide in Maharashtra and Punjab in last 2-3 years due to their crops failure and unsafe use of agrochemicals as they could not get the benefit of crop protection. This was a serious threat to the farmers / farm workers, where HIL (India) Limited took a lead in the country and launched a massive training campaign to educate the farmers on safe and judicious use of agrichemicals. These trainings / awareness campaigns were conducted in 24 states, and large numbers of farmer were educated as to how they can procure the quality agro chemicals, use need base right doses and appropriate time of spray / dusting with safety measures to be adopted at the time of pesticides spray / dusting by them.

Apart from creating awareness among the farmers and farm workers who are exposed to the hazards unsafe use of pesticides, they were also educated to manage the crops protection with least doses of agrochemicals by simultaneously adopting Integrated Pest Management Practices (IPM). By doing so, not only precious life of farmers / farm workers can be saved but, these trainings and awareness campaign also helped in reducing the pesticides residues in food grains, fruits and vegetables. The pesticides residues are not only injurious harmful to the human being, they also pollutes the underground water, water bodies, livestock, birds and contaminates environment. For this noble cause for the welfare of the farmers, the efforts of HIL (India)

Limited have been loudly appreciated by the Parliamentary Committee on Ministry of Chemicals & Petrochemicals. Further, this Corporate Social Responsibility also got Prestigious Greentech Foundation CSR Award' 2018 to HIL (India) Limited.

In so far as production and distribution of seeds are concerned, HIL (India) Limited is recognised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, a national level seed agency at par with National Seeds Corporation. It is producing and supplying the seeds of latest high yielding varieties to the farmers by participating in important schemes of Ministry of Agriculture like National Food Security Mission (NFSM), National Mission on Oilseeds & Oil-Palm (NMOOP), Mission on Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) etc. Presently, the company is producing and supplying foundation and certified seeds of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, vegetables etc., which are of the latest varieties and are duly certified by the State Seed Certification Agency, which is a third party guarantee to the farmers that they are getting quality seeds from HIL (India) Limited. In order to spread the latest high yielding varieties among the farmers, so that they may be adopted for increasing the crops productivity in their field, HIL (India) Limited is supplying about three lakh seed minikits of such latest varieties to the farmers of different states as per the allocation made by the Ministry of Agriculture to HIL (India) Limited. This is important step to popularise new varieties amount the farmers.

It is a matter of pleasure for me to apprise that we were also able to conduct two international trainings of 30 days duration for capacity building of about 30 senior officers each from Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in

last two years. These trainings were attended by the policy makers and others officers from different discipline such as seed production, seed certification, associating of farmers in the seed production program to increase the seed quantity under PPP mode.

In the fertiliser segment, HIL (India) Limited

is distributing all type of fertilisers like urea, DAP, MOP etc. and it is also manufacturing soluble fertilisers with brand name in its own factory in HIL (India) Limited and marketing on large scale, which has gained popularity among the farmers being cost effective with better results.

Future vision

I am happy to share that many corrective measures have been taken recently in the company like shading of the surplus manpower, redeployment of some of the officers & staff, imparting mangier trainings on regular basis to all discipline staff, adopting austerity measures as a result company is regularly posting profit. My ambition is to increase the turnover of the company to Rs 2,500 crore in the next five years by increasing the seed production volume, bringing new molecules in agrochemicals and increasing their quantity and supply, and running the existing capacity of factories to optimum level. Further, HIL (India) Limited has to become leading name in pesticides and seeds.



Lab to Land: developing farming in India

Shri V K Jhaver, Founder Chairman, Tropical Agrosystem (India) Pvt Ltd

SHRI V K JHAVER is an industry leader and visionary in the field of sustainable agriculture. He is the Founder Chairman of Tropical Agrosystem (India) Pvt. Ltd, one of the leaders in the Indian crop protection and pest management industry with a significant presence in biological and residue free farming.

Tropical Agrosystem is in the forefront of developing several unique, indigenous and cost-effective technologies in the field of sustainable farming in India which are tailor-made for multiplying the farmer's income, thereby playing a stellar role in providing the food security to the nation. With several global organic certifications to its credit such as IMO control, OMRI etc., the company is fully poised for ushering in the new age crop nutrition and pest management in India.

Tropical has been a harbinger of several successful public-private partnerships in research and development of sustainable agriculture by participating in several projects with Indian Council of Research (Agricultural Universities), public sector companies such as the Hindustan Insecticides Ltd. etc.

Tropical is also in the forefront of developing a biological solution for the dreaded 'Fall Army Worm' infestation on maize.

Further, for the successful abatement of air pollution in Delhi from the perennial

burning of farm residue in North Indian states of Punjab and Haryana, Tropical is offering a cost effective farm stubble decomposer solution based on bacterial fermentation which is very convenient and cost effective for farmers to use.

As advocated by our honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, nurturing native time-tested organic farming practices in rural India form the back bone of Tropical's "Lab to Land" strategy of development of sustainable farming model in India. Tropical is a fully vertically integrated biological products company offering tailor made nutrition and plant protection solutions to farmers, right from seed coating to harvesting and beyond. It is in the threshold of entering another sunrise area of agriculture, namely the niche post-harvest treatment segment of fruits in India — another first by an Indian company.

In recognition of his untiring contribution to the farming community, Shri V K Jhaver has been a recipient of several renowned awards such as the Global Agriculture Leadership Award, Institute of Excellence Award etc. He has produced two full length films on organic agriculture namely *Jai Jawan Jai Jaivik Kissan* and *Jiyo Aur Jeene Do*, which highlight the perils of indiscriminate use of chemicals and the increasing role of biological products in sustainable farming in India.

The firm is developing cost-effective technologies for sustainable farming

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We offer biodegradable farm waste management solutions to all growers. Our products are certified by leading global organic certification agencies such as IMO.

HIL (India) Limited

Formerly Hindustan Insecticides Limited

(A Government of India Enterprise)

An ISO 9001:2008 Company & Star Export House

Sustain Agriculture Sustain Growth

Participating in National Economic Growth

BRIEFLY

Seelampur violence: Notice to Mandoli jail

New Delhi: A Delhi court Monday issued a notice to Mandoli jail to explain the reason for not furnishing medical reports of two of the 14 people arrested in connection with violent protests against the new citizenship law in Seelampur. Meanwhile, a 24-year-old man was arrested for allegedly pelting stones, rioting and damaging public property outside Jamia Millia Islamia on December 15. The accused was identified through "videography" or technical surveillance, said a police officer.

Two cops booked under SC/ST Act

New Delhi: Months after a 37-year-old man allegedly committed suicide at Nihal Vihar police station by setting himself ablaze, police have registered two cases against two policemen for abetment to suicide and under the SC/ST Act. On the day of the incident on July 3, the man allegedly recorded a Facebook Live, where he alleged the police officers didn't help him with a case where he was beaten up by two men. The policemen allegedly harassed him too.

Father-son duo arrested for killing man

New Delhi: A 46-year-old man and his 18-year-old son have been arrested by police for allegedly killing a man in outer Delhi's Bawana Friday. Vijay Kataria, the accused, got into a fight with a man outside his house. When the victim tried to intervene, the man called his son, who then shot the victim. They were arrested on Saturday.

North MCD declared open defecation free

New Delhi: The North MCD has been declared Open Defecation Free Saturday after receiving clearances in an inspection carried out by a third party. The South and East MCDs received certificates a year ago.

Gurgaon police prepare for New Year

Gurgaon: Ahead of New Year's eve, Gurgaon Police have imposed restrictions on traffic movement between 6 pm and 2 am in Sector 29. ENS

MCDs INSTALLED STREETLIGHTS

Over 4,000 dark spots lit up in three years, finds audit

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

DARK STRETCHES of roads, lack of transit options and poorly maintained footpaths continue to keep a large part of Delhi unsafe for women, resulting in low female presence in the city's public spaces after sunset, a Delhi government-commissioned audit has found.

The audit — conducted by the NGO Safetipin between January and May 2019 — also revealed that the departments concerned of MCDs have put up streetlights in the last three years, on being prodded by the Delhi government, bringing down the number of dark stretches from 7,438 to 2,768. "On submitting the report to the Delhi government, the departments concerned of all MCDs carried out work for improvement. This included fixing non-operational streetlights and installing new street lights, wherever dark spots were identified. In some areas where illumination was insufficient, additional street lights were installed," the report said.

Chief Minister Arvind



FOR SAFER SPACES

- Darkspots identified in 2016 - 7,438 In 2019 - 2,768
- Delhi's safety score - 2.5/5 (average)
- Lighting parameter - 1.9/3 (average)
- Visibility rated 0.8/3 (poor)
- Public transport is 1.3/3 (Average)
- Gender usage at most bus stops rated poor

Kejriwal shared some of the basic findings of the report in a press conference. Later, the Delhi gov-

ernment launched its scheme to install 2.1 lakh additional streetlights, which will draw power from individual households and commercial establishments.

The state government will reimburse consumers whose connections will be used to power the lights. By the end of January, 50,000 new street lights will be installed across Delhi, while the entire project will be completed within four months, Kejriwal said. "The biggest problem we faced in eliminating dark spots was the lack of approval from MCDs in installing poles and streetlights on their streets. This innovative scheme bypasses the

role of MCDs and provides a direct solution," the CM said, referring to the Mukhyamantri Streetlight Yojana.

The Safetipin survey, which covered the entire city including streets, transport hubs, markets, public toilets, parks and other public spaces, gave a rating of 2.5 out of 5 (average) to Delhi. While lighting and public transport were rated average, visibility was rated poor, making it the least rated parameter in terms of physical infrastructure. "Gender usage at most of the bus stops has been rated poor, indicating low presence of girls and women, especially after evening hours."

To solve math problem, Delhi government to conduct special classes in 342 schools

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

SPECIAL MATHEMATICS classes will be conducted by external agencies in January for around 30,000 class X students of Delhi government schools. The move is aimed at improving the pass percentage of schools in the upcoming board examination.

The initiative has been in the works for the last few months and the proposal was approved by the Delhi Cabinet Monday.

A total of 342 "low-performing" government schools have been shortlisted for the initiative.

These schools had recorded a pass percentage of less than 55% in the class X mathematics board exam last year, with the lowest pass percentage in a school recorded at 7.02%.

A total of 30,497 students from these 342 schools had appeared for the exam last year, and the cumulative pass percentage between them was just 41.98%.

The *Indian Express* in October had reported on how the Delhi government was making a concerted effort to improve the class X pass percentage in its schools, with a targeted focus on mathematics which has been identified as a problem area.

Around 1.66 lakh students from Delhi government schools had appeared for last year's board exams, of which 37,073 failed in mathematics. Only 75% students had passed in mathematics, while more than 95% had failed in languages and social sciences.

Under this initiative, students in these "low-performing" schools will be tutored for 100 hours until the exam. They will be taught in batches of 30 for two hours at a time every day.

A government spokesperson said, "The job of the external agencies will be to customise the content to help students prepare for the board exam. The package is

proposed to be of 100 hours, covering important topics to be completed before the exam. Practice material will also be provided by the external agencies. These external resource persons will work in close coordination with the existing teachers so that both can complement each other."

Shailendra Sharma, advisor to the education minister, had told *The Indian Express* that the government was turning to private parties for assistance due to lack of teachers. "Even when we send out notifications of vacancies for regular maths teachers, we receive very few candidates...," he had said.

JNU students may not have to pay service charge in new session

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

STUDENTS REGISTERING for the forthcoming semester at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) will not have to pay service or utility charges as part of their hostel fee "as of now", the Registrar said Monday. However, the increased room rent and additional "medical fee" will have to be paid by students.

In light of the examination boycott by students, the administration has also decided to extend the date for completion of "academic requirements", while maintaining that registration for the next semester would start on January 1. "With reference to the approval of the Executive Council (EC)...the Revised Hostel Manual will be implemented from

January 1, with deletion of Clause 2.6.1 (Norms Governing Hostel Life) and Clause 3.6.2 (Dining Hall)," the assistant registrar (IHA) said in a circular Monday.

The new fee would include room rent of Rs 3,600 per semester for all students except BPL students, who have to pay Rs 1,800 per semester. For a double-seater room, the fee is halved in both cases. In addition to this, students also need to pay medical fee of Rs 500 per semester.

"Students shall submit copy of BPL certificate to the hostel office while claiming concession for BPL category. In case the students are unable to submit the BPL certificate, they may produce it later in a month's time to claim the refund," the circular stated, adding that BPL students "having JRF, SRF or any other equivalent scholarship/fellowship are not

entitled for concession".

Registrar Pramod Kumar said, "In a meeting of students with the MHRD, the latter had said the UGC would pay for the utility and service charges. Keeping that as the basis, we have decided not to charge it during registration." Asked whether it could be levied later, Kumar said, "That will depend on whether UGC pays or not."

In a separate circular, Kumar said registration for the winter semester would be held from January 1-5. JNUSU, which held a meeting with the Registrar and Rectors Monday, said it would decide on the future course of action. "We will hold a Council meeting and see how to respond to these circulars which have been put out even as our discussions are on," said JNUSU VP Saket Moon.

Will make capital pollution-free if re-elected: Kejriwal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

DELHI CHIEF Minister Arvind Kejriwal Monday that if AAP is brought back to power, Delhi will be pollution-free in five years. He added that the government will look into making bus travel free for students in the next term.

Speaking at his third town hall meeting at West Jyothi Nagar, Kejriwal said that the number of steps taken by the Delhi government over the past five years have resulted in a decrease of 25% in air pollution. "If re-elected, I will make Delhi pollution-free in the next five years," he said.

Talking about the steps the government had taken to curb pollution, Kejriwal said: "The first step was providing 24-hour electricity which reduced the use of generators and pollution caused by them... We also led tree plantation drives. Thirdly, the Central government constructed East-West Peripheral Highway on the outskirts of Delhi, which has reduced the number of trucks and goods carriers bypassing Delhi. Through your support, we aim to make Delhi pollution-free in the next five years."

Asked whether the govern-

Minor fire at PM's residence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

A MINOR fire broke out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residential complex in Lok Nayak Marg Monday. However, the PM's office or house was not damaged in the fire, said the Prime Minister's office.

The fire broke out due to short circuit near the reception area and was doused within an hour, said officials.

In a statement, the PMO said: "There was a minor fire at 9, Lok Kalyan Marg caused by a short circuit. This was not in PM's residential or office area, but in the Special Protection Group reception area of the complex. The fire is very much under control now."

The SPG reception is the Special Protection Group area for the security of the Prime Minister. The residential complex of Prime Minister houses an SPG office, where the incident took place around 7.30 pm.

Atul Garg, Director of DFS, said, "Eight fire tenders were rushed along with senior officers to the site, but didn't enter the complex as the internal security staff had doused the fire. The call was given as a precautionary measure."



CM at third town hall meet

ment will make bus rides free for students, he said it will bring passes for students as well. Referring to the chargesheet released by the BJP, Kejriwal said the AAP was open to criticism: "AAP is always open to positive criticism and suggestions, therefore, we will study the chargesheet filed by the BJP against the AAP government and take positive suggestions. We also invite BJP leaders to give us feedback..."

Taking on the Centre over the issue of regularisation of unauthorised colonies, Kejriwal said that the Centre and BJP were only making statements. Earlier, he said that it was worrisome that the Centre was trying to fool the people as the Act will only give ownership rights to those who own property in these areas.

Accused of stealing motor, man beaten to death by 4

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

A 30-YEAR-OLD man was beaten to death inside his house allegedly by four men, who suspected he stole a water motor. Police said the accused men, Nadeem, Sajid, Arjun and Rishi, fled after committing the crime. DCP (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said two of the accused, have been arrested.

The incident took place in Outer Delhi's Narela Industrial Area on December 26. The victim was identified as Allahrakha. He lived alone in his apartment, where his body was found by police. Eyewitnesses alleged the victim was tied to the window and tortured by the accused for an hour. Police said they are yet to confirm these allegations.

Amaan (19), a student who lives next door to the victim, alleged, "I woke up to screams outside my house at 6.20 am. I went outside and saw that four men



Two of the accused have been arrested, said police

had tied the victim to the window grill and were thrashing him. They had sticks and threatened to beat me up. I went inside and told my family and our neighbours."

Mohd Tariqul, another eyewitness, said he intervened in the fight. He said the four men left after he threatened to call the police. "They told me that Allahrakha had stolen their water motor... I didn't see any motor inside his house. I thought the fight was over and went back to sleep," he said.

Around 7.30 am, neighbours

claimed they once again heard screams from the victim's house.

Amaan claimed the four men had returned and were dragging Allahrakha near his house and beating him again. "We tried to stop them but they didn't listen. The victim was injured and couldn't speak; he was lying on the floor with his hands tied. They kept on beating him. We had to leave because they were threatening us. We went to his relative's house and called police. We went back to his house and found him unconscious..."

A senior police officer said they received a call from Tariqul. They went to the spot and rushed the victim to the hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

Police suspect the victim was targeted because he was standing outside his house when the four accused went looking for their motor, adding that the initial probe showed the accused were involved in cases of assault and theft.

Stalled for three years, construction work on Metro Phase IV kicks off

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

NEW DELHI: After a delay of over three years, the Delhi's Metro's Phase IV project got off the ground Monday with the launch of the construction work of Janakpuri West-RK Ashram corridor.

The 28.9-km corridor is among the three corridors proposed to be built under Phase IV. The other two lines will be Aerocity-Tughlaqabad and Maujpur-Majlis Park. Today, the DMRC commenced work on the fourth phase of construction,



46 new stations will come up under Phase IV

comprising three corridors covering 61.67 kilometres at

Capital's green cover increased by 19 sq km in 2 yrs: Report

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

NEW DELHI: Green cover in the capital increased by over 19 square kilometers between 2017 and 2019 to become 21.88% of the capital's geographical area, according to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) released Monday.

Forest cover in Delhi has increased by 3.03 sq km since the previous assessment in 2017 and tree cover has increased by 16 sq km, as per the report by the Forest Survey of India. Forest cover in the city has increased to 195.44 sq km, or 13.18%, from 192.41 in 2017.

Ishwar Singh, the principal chief conservator of forests in Delhi, said, "It's a substantial increase in the city's green cover and the credit goes to greening agencies and people of the city..." ENS

| GREENER | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------|
| 2015: | 299.77 sq km, | | 20.22% |
| 2017: | 305.41 sq km, | | 20.59% |
| 2019: | 324.44 sq km, | | 21.88% |
| In 2019 | | | |
| Very dense forest: | | 6.72 sq km | |
| Moderately dense forest: | | 56.42 sq km | |
| Open forest: | | 132.30 sq km | |
| In 2017 | | | |
| Very dense forest: | | 6.72 sq km | |
| Moderately dense forest: | | 56.24 sq km | |
| Open forest: | | 129.45 sq km | |

5 kids among 6 dead in Ghaziabad fire

Ghaziabad: Six persons, including five children, suffocated to death after a fire broke out in their apartment late Sunday night in Ghaziabad, said police. All victims were sleeping on the first floor of the building.

According to police, the fire broke out due to a short circuit inside the house. "We received information around 9.30 am that a fire had erupted in a house in Uttaranchal Vihar colony. Fire tenders were rushed to the spot and by the time medical

aid could be provided, six people had died. Prima-facie it appears that due to a short circuit, several electronic appliances caught fire and the victims died in their sleep," said a police officer.

According to police, the minors Fatima, Sahima, Rukaiya, Abdul Azeem and Abdul Ahad, all aged between 5 and 12, were sleeping with their aunt Parveen (35) as their parents were travelling to Meerut to attend a wedding function. ENS

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E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE TO GENERAL PUBLIC UNDER RULE 8 & 9 OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF MOVABLE/IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Movable/Immovable Assets under the "Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower (s), mortgagor(s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable/immovable property(ies) mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic/physical (details mentioned as below) possession of which has been taken by the Authorized officer of Punjab National Bank, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 18.01.2020. (assets wise details mentioned below) for recovery of amount, as mentioned below due to the Punjab National Bank Secured Creditor from below Named borrower(s), mortgagor(s) and Guarantor (s). The amount of Reserve price and amount of earnest money of each assets is mentioned as under. A short description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any, are mentioned as under.

* It is open to the Bank to appoint a representative and to make self-bid and participate in the auction when auction has failed once and bank is going in for auction second time

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS

| S. No. | NAME OF THE BANK BRANCH & BORROWER/GUARANTOR | DATE OF DEMAND NOTICE AND OUTSTANDING AMOUNT MENTIONED THEREIN | Description of Property | STATUS OF POSSESSION (Physical or Symbolic) | RESERVE PRICE | | LAST DATE OF DEPOSIT OF EMD | DETAILS OF ACCOUNT IN WHICH EMD IS TO BE DEPOSITED THROUGH RTGS/NEFT & IFSC CODE | DATE & TIME OF AUCTION | |
|--------|--|--|--|---|------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------|
| | | | | | EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (EMD AMOUNT) | INCREMENTAL BID AMOUNT | | | | |
| 1. | BRANCH: TILAK ROAD, DEHRADUN Borrower/Mortgagor: M/s Bhupesh Kumar Shikshan Evam Vikas Sansthan President, Sh Bhupesh Kumar S/o Sh Shila Nath, Address: 1- Luccent International School, Manduwalla, (Kothari), Suchowala, VIA Prem Nagar, Dehradun-248007, Uttarakhand Address: 2- Gurukul Tunal & Hostels Sewa Kalan, Majra Chowk, West Canal Road Dehradun 248001, Address 3- Road no 138, Rajender Nagar, Patna 800016. Address: 4- Agyas-pur P.O. Tehwara, P.S. Singhwara District Dharbhanga (Bihar). Guarantors: Sh. Umesh Dubey S/o Sh Mahvir Dubey Address: Village Madhopur P.O. Jakauli P.S. Bahera, Darbhanga, Bihar 800016 2. Sh Lalit Kumar S/o Shri Thakur Lal Address: Village Madhopur P.O. Jakauli P.S. Bahera, Darbhanga, Bihar 800016 | 25.03.2019 | Property No. 1: Land and property at khasra no 1053 measuring 0.401 Hec, 1056 measuring 0.445 Hec, 1057 measuring 0.308 Hec, 1967 measuring 0.531 Hec & 1968 measuring 0.426 Hec (New Khazra No 629, 629, 719 Ka 530, 631, 719, & 720) Consisting of school building hostel campus guard room etc at Mauza Kanswall Kohli Pargana Pachwa Doon Tahsil Vikas Nagar District Dehradun at book No 01 vol 633 page 129 ADP book no 01 volume 1376, pages 257 to 272 at serial no 2917 dated 04.05.2010. Butted & Bounded as under: North : Property of others, South: Property of others, East: Road, West: Property of others | SYMBOLIC | Rs. 930.00 Lakh | Rs. 93.00 Lakh | 17.01.2020 up to 05:00 PM | PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK A/c- 1087003171160 IFSC- PUNB0108700 | 18.01.2020 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM | |
| | | | | | Property No. 2 | Rs. 246.00 Lakh | Rs. 24.60 Lakh | 17.01.2020 up to 05:00 PM | PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK A/c- 1087003171160 IFSC- PUNB0108700 | 18.01.2020 03:00 PM to 04:00 PM |
| | | | | | Property No. 3 | Rs. 176.00 Lakh | Rs. 17.60 Lakh | 17.01.2020 up to 05:00 PM | PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK A/c- 1087003171160 IFSC- PUNB0108700 | 18.01.2020 04:00 PM to 05:00 PM |

This notice is also to be treated as 15 days statutory notice to Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s), Mortgagor (s) under Rule 8(6) Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE: For detailed Terms and conditions please visit web site www.pnbindia.biz, www.pnbindia.in or www.tenders.gov.in Copy of Terms and conditions can be obtained from our office on any working day.

The borrowers/guarantors are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto date interest and ancillary expenses before date of auction failing which the property will be auctioned /sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost.

Date: 30.12.2019 Place: Dehradun Authorised Officer

MAJOR STEPS TOWARDS WOMEN'S SAFETY

1.4 LAKH CCTV CAMERAS INSTALLED, NOW INSTALLATION OF 2 LAKH STREETLIGHTS BEGINS



SALIENT FEATURES OF MUKHYAMANTRI STREET LIGHT SCHEME

- Power distribution companies are installing streetlights as part of this scheme.
- With the permission of home owners, streetlights are being installed on the walls of homes, to provide lighting for dark spots.
- Electricity for streetlights is being drawn from the concerned home. Electricity bills for lights are being paid directly to the power distribution companies by the government. This has been done along the same lines as the CCTV Camera policy, and no financial burden shall be placed on the home owners.
- These are modern streetlights with light sensors, switching on and off automatically in the evening and morning.

“ There are many dark spots in different parts of Delhi, where women are unsafe. We have identified every such dark spot, and have begun installing more than 2 lakh streetlights, so that women feel safe in this city. ”

- Arvind Kejriwal
Chief Minister, Delhi



To get a streetlight installed in your area, please contact your area MLA

8 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



REACHING OUT

WITH THE new citizenship law having brought out protesters across the country, the BJP has planned a massive campaign targeting each community. While the party is set to organise a national programme to allay fears among Muslims, it has formed a two-member group to "convince" Christians that the new law is not against any particular community living in the country. The party has assigned Tom Vadakkan, a former Congress spokesperson who joined the BJP ahead of Lok Sabha elections, and BJYM national secretary Anoop Kaippalli to meet archbishops, bishops and other community leaders across the country to talk about the CAA. Vadakkan and Kaippalli will visit community leaders and hold small meetings in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kerala and Ranchi from the first week of 2020.

APPOINTMENT PUZZLE

AS THE trimming of the Railway Board and merger of cadres, as per a recent Cabinet decision, will take some time, there is confusion in some quarters on whether Member posts getting vacant immediately will be filled. Member Staff retires on Tuesday and Vigilance clearance of the next eligible officer was done sometime ago. Now, his service association has written to Piyush Goyal requesting that the eligible officer be posted until the restructuring takes effect. Amid protests from civil servants over the decision, a video is doing the rounds of Railway Board Chairman V K Yadav speaking to employees, asking officers to discuss grievances internally before seeking redress from the PM and airing views on social media. He is seen saying that "all doors are open to everyone" and "officers should trust the organisation".

POLL POSTING

THE APPOINTMENTS Committee of the Cabinet on Monday appointed Umesh Sinha as Deputy Election Commissioner for one year on contract basis. Sinha, a UP-cadre IAS officer of 1986 batch, would have retired at the secretary rank this month. His re-employment on contract basis is unusual since officers on deputation as deputy election commissioner normally do not retire at secretary level (they move on after promotion to this rank). Also, there are few examples of an IAS officer being retained as Deputy Election Commissioner after retirement. Sinha's re-employment, it is learned, was done at the Commission's request, given Sinha's experience in election planning and as he is coordinating the nine working groups that have been asked to submit recommendations based on the experience of conducting the Lok Sabha polls.

Jharkhand Principal Secy to CM moved, A-G offers to quit

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, DECEMBER 30

A DAY after Hemant Soren was sworn in as Jharkhand Chief Minister, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Sunil Kumar Barnwal was on Monday transferred to the Department of Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Rajbhasha. Advocate General (AG) Ajit Kumar, meanwhile, has resigned from the additional post of chairman, Jharkhand State Bar Council, citing personal reasons, and has also offered to quit as A-G.

Barnwal, who also held the post of Secretary, Information and Public Relations Department, has been relieved from both posts. A notification regarding his transfer was issued Monday.

BJP opposes move to withdraw all Pithalgadi cases

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, DECEMBER 30

A DAY after Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's cabinet ordered withdrawal of all cases registered during the Pithalgadi movement, the state BJP said it "strongly opposes" the decision.

In a statement issued by Jharkhand BJP spokesperson Pratul Shaddeo, the party said it "welcomes the decision" to withdraw cases against people who were "innocent and were tricked to be part of the protest". "But we strongly oppose the same order against the people who were the masterminds, conspirators who misled people regarding Pithalgadi and protested against India and its Constitution."

Assam education dept warns staff against criticising govt

ABHISHEK SAHA GUWAHATI, DECEMBER 30

The Assam government's Higher Education Department on Monday warned its employees against criticising the government, days after the Elementary Education Department ordered disciplinary action against employees posting "political" posts on social media.

Monday's order, issued by the director of the Higher Education Department, said, "It is brought to the notice of all concerned that under Rule 7 of the Assam Civil Service (Conduct) Rules, 1965, a government servant shall not make any statement of fact or opinion criticising the government. If the government servant is found

criticising the government, he/she will [be] held responsible for violation of Rule 3 and Rule 7 of Assam Civil Service (Conduct) Rules, 1965 which will attract the appropriate provision of the Assam Service (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1964. All Principals of Government/Provincialised Colleges in the state of Assam are therefore requested to ensure strict compliance of the above rules."

The orders come even as educational institutions across the state have come out strongly in protest against the new citizenship law. Government employees have too shown solidarity with the protests, and on December 18 government employees across the state had boycotted work as a symbolic

'300 MLAs upset with him... Yogi gave free hand to cops to save chair'

SAMAJWADI PARTY president AKHILESH YADAV speaks to ASAD REHMAN and RAVISH TIWARI on the ongoing protests against the new citizenship law and argues that the SP is at the forefront of the agitation. Excerpts:

It has been more than two weeks of protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC). How do you see these protests?

People are angry over the political situation...As for UP, even today, if you go to villages and ask about the election results, they say it is beyond comprehension that the (Opposition) alliance lost... After the BJP government was formed (at the Centre)...decisions have been taken with an eye on 20 crore population...Public is angry because the government assures the decisions are in their interest. Noteban was a decision, its outcomes are before everyone. GST was a big decision...its impacts are before us...Now even big economists have started talking about a major economic crisis...Banking system is collapsing, NPAs have risen...No one is ready to take credit from banks...What is left of the economy? How are you going to get out of this *chakravalyu*?

What do you mean when you say BJP has taken decisions with an eye on a 20-crore population?

BJP's target is to erect walls within the society, create hatred and maintain fear.

If you were the CM, how would you have dealt with these protests?

We never stopped (protests). I remember Muzaffarnagar, barring few exceptions, I did not stop any leader from visiting Muzaffarnagar. I had even said I will welcome any suggestion for welfare of those poor people...Accepting the Opposition's suggestion is a healthy thing in democracy.

The Prime Minister recently remarked that protesters can be identified by their clothes..

...*Agar kapde se logon ko pehchan sakte hain toh Pradhan Mantriji apne bagal ke logon ko nahin pehchan sake. Agar kapdon se hi pehchan sakte hain toh kaise nahin pehchan paye ki hamare Mukhyamantri ji ki vichardhara kya kehti hai* (If people could be identified by clothes, then Prime Minister could not identify the people next to him, if people could be identified by clothes, then how could he not identify our Chief Minister's mindset?)...I think PM has said this for the CM and deputy CM.

The BJP leadership is alleging that these protests are instigated by political parties and people with vested interests

I have heard of how people came out on their own during the JP movement or when Lohia gave a call. But I have seen for the first time how public is coming out on its own now...These are people who love Bharat Mata...who feel our Constitution and its preamble is being played with...People from every caste and religion



have come out, Indians have come out, the BJP can't identify them.

The PM and other BJP leaders are alleging that Opposition is spreading lies, creating confusion

Even during the days of Karl Marx, when he wanted to take his ideas to the public, the government of the day had cracked down on the press...during the period of Hitler, his trusted advisor Goebbels had taken control of radio stations...Isn't a similar thing happening today?

The largest number of protesters have been killed in UP. UP Police is not admitting that bullets killed them, except one

Look at the number of NHRC notices to UP government...UP has got the largest number of notices for custodial deaths, fake encounters... You should listen to our CM's language. This state has

seen great chief ministers, but none of them would have said "thok do" on the House floor...*Mukhyamantriji ne aisi bhasha Ka istemal isliye kya aur police ko khuli chhoot isliye di kyonki unse 200 se zyada vidhayak naaraj the... Apni kursi bachane ke liye unhone khuli chhoot* (The CM used such language and gave a free hand to police because over 200 MLAs were upset with him...he gave a free hand to save his chair...)

This is an allegation...

...I am telling the truth. Socialists don't make false allegations...Didn't 200 MLAs sit on protest? Add 100 more angry with him, that makes it 300 who are upset with him. There were talks of his replacement...After this episode, do you think BJP can dare remove him?...People in the government are happy that no one is going to ask about investments in the next six months...We want to know how



Deputy CM Ajit Pawar with MP Supriya Sule at the swearing-in ceremony. Ganesh Shirsekar

Of 36 ministers who took oath, 16 have links with sugar mills

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS PUNE, DECEMBER 30

AFTER BEING sidelined for the last five years, sugar barons are back in the corridors of power in Maharashtra. Of the 36 ministers who took oath in the first cabinet expansion of the Uddhav Thackeray government on Monday, 16 have direct connections with sugar mills — either cooperative or private.

This is a four-time rise compared to the just four ministers in the previous Devendra Fadnavis

government. The NCP has rewarded the largest number of sugar barons, with eight making it to the state cabinet, including Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and Jayant Patil.

Meanwhile, the Congress has rewarded old veterans like Ashok Chavan, Amit Deshmukh and Balasaheb Thorat, and two Independent MLAs — Shankarrao Gadak and NCP rebel Rajendra Patil Yadavkar — were also sworn in Monday.

The lone sugar baron from Shiv Sena who took oath is Sambhuraje Desai.

EXPLAINED

E Loyalty rewarded

TRADITIONALLY, SUGAR barons have been either from Congress or NCP. Prior to the state elections, both parties saw an exodus, with cooperative sugar barons leading the march. The sugar barons who remained and got elected have been rewarded for their loyalty.

Muslim party by the BJP?

BJP is full of intellectuals indulging in conspiracies. They will not contest elections on Expressway. We distributed laptops, they gave toilets. People are discussing toilets and not laptops. Country needs laptops or toilets today? Samajwadi Party is bearing the brunt of lathis...Our party is not behind in any agitation. We are at the front.

Do you think all 19 have been killed by police bullets?

Most of them have died by police bullets. As per what people have told me, 18 of the 19 have been possibly killed by police bullets.

In the Unnao case, you came forward to help victims. There have been 19 deaths and no help seems to be forthcoming from your side now

We have helped people many times. We did it even during noteban...Samajwadi Party always comes out to help and we will do it again...people have been killed in police firing, but the government is not making post-mortem reports available. I fear the government will tamper with the reports. My information is that they had started managing post-mortem reports from the first day.

Priyanka Gandhi says the Opposition in UP is very frightened

Bahut darre hue hain... that's why I went all the way to Lakhimpur (in violation of Section 144) and returned.

FULL INTERVIEW ON www.indianexpress.com

Kishor mounts pressure on BJP, says JD(U) should be senior alliance partner

SANTOSH SINGH PATNA, DECEMBER 30

WITH THE JD(U) having said no to the NRC and NPR, the party's national vice-president Prashant Kishor has mounted further pressure on the BJP by saying that his party should contest more number of seats than the saffron party as a senior alliance partner in the 2020 Bihar elections.

JD(U) and BJP had contested an equal number of seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Kishor on Sunday said, "JD(U) should contest on more number of seats than BJP as a senior alliance partner. The situation in Assembly elections is different than in Lok Sabha." He said if the "JD(U) would contest 14 seats, the BJP should contest 10".

Kishor, who has taken on the BJP over its stand on the NRC and CAA, has been engaged in posturing over seat-sharing for the Assembly polls amid speculation that the saffron party will ask for an equal number of seats.

However, state BJP president Dr Sanjay Jaiswal said, "Is Prashant Kishor the top leadership of JD(U)? It is top leaders of both parties which would take a final call on seat-sharing."

Giriraj backs Meerut SP's 'go to Pak' remark

New Delhi: Union minister Giriraj Singh on Monday backed Meerut SP Akhilesh Narayan Singh for his "go to Pakistan" remark made to people protesting against the new citizenship law.

"The SP did what police should do, what a patriot should do.... Those who live in India but abuse it and hail Pakistan have no right to stay here," Giriraj Singh leader said. "I urge those speaking against the SP to look at the entire incident or people of the country will ask questions from them."

Giriraj Singh's statement also came a day after Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said that peace and not provocation should be the priority, and called for action should be taken against the SP if the video of the officer making those remarks was true. **ENS**

PM Modi launches social media campaign in support of CAA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE RULING BJP on Monday launched a social media campaign to highlight the features of the new citizenship law, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi posting a video of spiritual leader Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev backing the legislation and the Twitter handle of Modi's personal website urging people to support the hashtag of "IndiaSupportsCAA".



PM Narendra Modi

"Do hear this lucid explanation of aspects relating to CAA and more by Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. He provides historical context, brilliantly highlights our culture of brotherhood. He also calls out the misinformation by vested interest groups."

hashtag in Your Voice section of Volunteer module on NaMo App for content, graphics, videos & more. Share & show your support for CAA."

This comes at a time when the BJP is accusing opposition parties of misleading the country over the new law amid nationwide protests against the Act which, according to critics, discriminates on the basis of religion. The BJP has maintained that the law is meant for minorities persecuted because of their faith in three neighbouring countries of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Other leaders also joined the campaign. Senior BJP leader and Union minister Prakash Javadekar tweeted, "Spread Facts Not Myth: In the last 6 years,

2830 Pakistani, 912 Afghani & 172 Bangladeshi citizens have been given Indian citizenship. Many of them are from majority community of these countries." He also posted several tweets, highlighting key aspects of the amended law, and quoted Modi's comments that it will not affect any Indian citizen adversely.

BJP vice president and spokesperson Baijayant Jay Panda tweeted, "Here's why #IndiaSupportsCAA. does not have any impact on any Indian citizen of any religion. It is humanitarian, fast-tracks rehabilitation of persecuted religious minorities from neighboring theistic nations. It's a post-partition obligation acknowledged by Gandhi ji."

9 EXPRESS NETWORK

PROTEST WATCH

PUNJAB No CAA in Punjab at any cost, says Amarinder



Punjab CM Captain Amarinder Singh with other Congress leaders at a protest in Ludhiana. Gurmeet Singh

Ludhiana: Leading a protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act near Mahatma Gandhi statue at Mata Rani Chowk in old city area of Ludhiana Monday, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh said that the CAA will not be implemented in Punjab at any cost.

MAHARASHTRA

CAA, NRC against the poor, oppressed: activists

Mumbai: Several activists assembled under the banner of 'We The People' in Mumbai on Monday and condemned the Centre over the citizenship law and the proposed NRC, which they said was divisive and against the poor and oppressed.



A protest against the CAA, NRC and NPR in Mumbai. Amit Chakravarty

Mumbai, with local residents in Kurla gathering at the Gandhi Maidan. Another protest was organised near Panvel station on Sunday evening.

MADHYA PRADESH

Several protests in Indore

Mumbai: Several areas in Indore in Madhya Pradesh witnessed protests against the CAA and NRC on Monday. Carrying placards and shouting slogans, protesters, including religious heads of different communities, demanded that the Union government scrap CAA and drop plans to have the NRC exercise countrywide.

ASSAM

AASU slams Himanta

Morigaon: The All Assam Students Union on Monday mocked Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for taking out "peace rallies" in the state with police protection and wondered whether he was vying for the Nobel Peace Prize.

TAMIL NADU

In solidarity, 'kolam' outside Stalin's residence



'Kolam' against CAA and NRC outside the residence of the late DMK chief M Karunanidhi, in Chennai. PTI

Chennai: Expressing solidarity with 'kolam' protesters against the CAA, the entrance of DMK president M K Stalin's house here sported a traditional rangoli saying no to the contentious law. Police had on Sunday detained eight people for making kolams against CAA.

No place for violence, revenge in country: Priyanka to Yogi

CM hits back: Those interrupting a sanyasi's public welfare efforts will be punished

MAULSHREE SETH LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 30

SLAMMING YOGI Adityanath for his warning that rioters damaging public property will have to pay, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday sought to remind the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister that there is no place for vengeance, violence or revenge in Hindu religion.

Priyanka's remarks prompted a counter from Adityanath in the evening, stating that anyone interrupting a sanyasi's "relentless efforts for public welfare" will be "punished".

In successive tweets, the CM's official Twitter handle stated that Adityanath has taken to "bhagwa (saffron)", and represents it, to work for public welfare after sacrificing everything. Without naming Priyanka, the second tweet stated, "Sanyasi ki lok sewa aur jan kalyan ke niranantar jaari yagna mein jo bhi baad-haa utpanna karega ussey dandit hona hi padega."

"This for the first time in the country that a Chief Minister has talked about revenge, and it ap-



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra with Congress UP chief Ajay Kumar Lallu in Lucknow. Vishal Srivastav

peared through various incidents that the administration and police are working on the lines of his statement," she said.

Priyanka said: "The UP CM wears saffron clothes of a Yogi, but this saffron does not belong to him. This saffron is India's religious, spiritual tradition; a symbol of Hinduism. Imbibe that religion. There is no place for anger, revenge and violence in that religion."

The Congress leader also gave details of people arrested as part of protests against the CAA and NRC, such as retired IPS officer S R Darapuri, Congress worker and social activist Sadaf Jafar, and activist Deepak Kabir.

conference, Uttar Pradesh Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma addressed the media and said, "It appears (from Priyanka's remarks) that saffron has become the symbol of violence and the reason for starting a fight. It appears that a saffron-clad Chief Minister is a follower of some wrong religion. At a time when there is peace in the state, Akhilesh (Yadav, Samajwadi Party leader), Priyanka, or sometimes (Congress's) Rahul Gandhi are spreading misinformation to disturb that peace."

Sharma said the way followers of one particular religion are being targeted by the Congress leader, it appears Priyanka has not been taught about "Hindu dharma" properly at home.

A Congress delegation led by its state president Ajay Kumar Lallu met Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and handed her a memorandum, detailing those arrested, and sought her intervention to stop attachment of properties of alleged protesters without following legal procedures.

Meanwhile, the CRPF in a statement said there was no breach in Priyanka's security during her recent trip to Lucknow, blaming her for "violations" for riding pillion on a scooter.

After Rs 6 lakh DD, Bulandshahr DM says notices would have been sent otherwise

SUKRITA BARUAH BULANDSHAHR, DECEMBER 30

THREE DAYS after a group of Muslim residents of Bulandshahr handed over a draft of Rs 6.27 lakh to the administration for damage caused to public property in violence during protests against the citizenship law and NRC, District Magistrate Ravindra Kumar on Monday said the administration had estimated the amount for losses incurred, and recovery notices would have started going out had this initiative not come from "some good citizens".

On the assessment of damage, DM Kumar said, "I constituted a committee comprising members of the district administration, police, PWD and traffic officials. One

police vehicle — a Tata Sumo — had been damaged, along with one walkie-talkie set and minor damages to the road. They estimated this figure after proper deliberation."

He said, "Some good citizens came forward to compensate the assessed damages. If it wouldn't have been the case, we would have had to recover it from those found responsible, as announced by the Chief Minister."

That the FIR after the violence on December 20 mentions 1,050 "unknown" people also led to the initiative, residents indicated.

"There is widespread fear that anyone might be picked up, arrested, and asked to pay damages. Our message is that the Muslim samaj is cooperating with the administration, and we hope the ad-

Days before CAB tabled in House, inter-ministry meet discussed strategy

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

ABOUT TWO weeks before the government brought in the citizenship Bill in Parliament, an inter-ministerial meeting took place in New Delhi to discuss the strategy to deal with the fallout of the then-proposed law, sources have told The Indian Express.

The meeting was held in November-end when the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), sources said, was "looped in", and a strategy was devised to deal with the international dimensions.

After the Bill was passed, sources said the MEA asked Indian ambassadors in about 120 embassies across the world to go and brief the foreign governments, in case they were "interested".

Every Indian ambassador was sent all facts about the law and the rationale behind the legislation. This strategy was different from the one adopted from the previous occasions.

Throughout 2019, the government had held several briefings for the diplomatic community on various issues it had described as "domestic":

Pulwama attack, Balakot airstrike, revocation of Article 370 in J&K, and the Ayodhya verdict.

But they were not briefed even once on CAA and its ramifications. "This time, we felt India's ambassadors will be able to do the job well, and they can respond to all the questions," a source in the government said.

Sources said the government felt the matter was "domestic" in nature, and the Bill had gone through the legislative process and debate in Parliament. "The two Houses of Parliament debated the matter for two full days, and the Home Minister (Amit Shah) replied to all points of concern raised by MPs," a source said.

Sources cited the example of India's ambassador to the US, Harsh Vardhan Shringla — now Foreign Secretary-designate — who had briefed key interlocutors in Washington. "Similarly, if there was any need felt by any ambassador, he or she was armed with facts and material to explain the law to governments (abroad)," the source said.

Diplomats said some written material, mostly in the form of FAQs on CAA, have been shared with embassies.

ISOLATE BJP: MAMATA

West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee leads a rally to protest against CAA and NRC in Purulia district of West Bengal. Slamming the BJP-led government at the Centre for "trying to strip the country's genuine citizens of their citizenship", Banerjee urged political parties and civil society groups to join hands and isolate the saffron party.

Kerala House to discuss new citizenship law today

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DECEMBER 30

THE KERALA Assembly will on Tuesday discuss the Citizenship (Amendment) Act which has been cleared by both Houses of Parliament.

Several times in the past, the Assembly has passed resolutions against policies of successive Union governments on issues such as disinvestment and nuclear deal. But, the Assembly debating a resolution against a legislation cleared by Parliament is rare. In 2006, the Assembly passed a resolution against an amendment in the Finance Act, which brought transactions of the state's cooperative banking sector under the gambit of income tax.

On Sunday, at an all-party meeting held to chart out the next course of agitation against the Act, representatives of various political parties had suggested a special Assembly session to discuss the issue. Both the ruling LDF and the Opposition Congress-led UDF had agreed on the special session.

The one-day session was originally scheduled for ratifying a resolution which is related to extending the reservation of SC/ST communities in Lok Sabha and the Assembly for another 10 years. Following the all-party meeting, the government decided to include the resolution on the citizenship Act for discussion.

According to sources, both the government and the Opposition have given notices to move separate resolutions on the issue.

Rlys to recover damage worth Rs 80 crore

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

INDIAN RAILWAYS will try to recover the value of the property damaged in arson and violence during recent protests by identifying those responsible through video footage from CCTV cameras and other means.

V K Yadav, Chairman of Railway Board, said that railway property worth Rs 80 crore was damaged in protests against the

amended citizenship law. "There has been damage of railway property worth Rs 80 crore during anti-CAA protests. Of this, the Eastern Railway suffered damage worth Rs 70 crore and the damage suffered by the Northeast Frontier Railway was Rs 10 crore. The damage will be recovered from those found involved in arson and violence. This, however, is a preliminary estimate and the figure could go up after the final analysis," Yadav told reporters Monday.

PUBLIC NOTICE Before the Estate Officer, HUDA Name of Urban Estate Gurugram Sub: Transfer of ownership in respect of Plot No. 389 Sector 45, Gurugram consequent upon the intestate death of allottee, Sh. Sd. Jaspinder Singh. Sh. Sd. Jaspinder Singh who was the allottee of the subject cited property as per record has died on 28.07.2018 and has no registered will, leaving behind legal heirs...

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD. Employment Notification No.: CO/P-R/3C/2019 KRCL invites applications for one post of Deputy Chief Engineer / Fabrication on Contract basis to Work for USBRL Project and Other Projects of KRCL. Candidates should see the detailed notification, eligibility criteria, on the KRCL's website www.konkanrailway.com at the link - Recruitment - Current Notification and may apply accordingly.

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

National School of Drama (NSD), an Institute under Ministry of Culture is organizing International Theatre Festival of India, 20th Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM) from 1st February to 21st February, 2020 in New Delhi. Sealed tenders are invited for hiring of Logistics Support from the reputed Firms /Agencies. Interested firms may submit their sealed tenders in two bid systems, as per Terms and Conditions of the Tender document. The Tender Document may be downloaded from our website: www.nsd.gov.in. Last date for submission of bids is 14.01.2020 by 03:00 p.m.

No. A.11016/03/2019 EPW GOVERNMENT OF INDIA /BHARAT SARKAR MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE NEW DELHI

RECRUITMENT FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR GENERAL & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ON DEPUTATION BASIS

Applications are invited for the post of Director General & Chief Executive Officer, on deputation basis in Level 14 (Pay Band -4; Rs. 37400-67000 plus Grade Pay Rs. 10000) by Deputation at Central Medical Services Society (CMSS), New Delhi an Autonomous Body under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Society is engaged in procurement of medicines and medical equipments.

davp 17102/11/0013/1920

ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE) (A Statutory Body of the Govt. of India) Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070 Website: www.aicte-india.org, Phone: 011-26131576-78, 80 Advt. No. DIPSAR/AICTE/QIP/2019 RIFD Bureau (AICTE) Announces Admissions Under Quality Improvement Programme (QIP) For Teachers of Pharmacy Colleges

DIP/Shabadarth/1201/19-20



NORTH

14 more infants dead in 5 days, Kota hospital toll now 91

Kota: Fourteen more infants have died at J K Lone hospital at Kota, Rajasthan, in the last five days, taking the number of deaths at the facility this month to 91, officials said Monday.

EAST

Bengal: 3 held for vandalism at East Midnapore church

Kolkata: Three people suspected to be BJP supporters were arrested Monday for allegedly vandalising a church in West Bengal's East Midnapore district, said police sources.

WEST

Third death at Sunburn festival in Goa

Panaji: A Bengaluru resident, 24-year-old Sandip Kotta, collapsed at the Sunburn Klassique music festival, making it the third death during the two-day festival, which concluded Sunday night.

SOUTH

8,000 march at night for cause of women's safety

Kochi: Thousands of women across Kerala took to the streets on Sunday night — the 7th death anniversary of the December 16, 2012 gangrape victim — to drive home the importance of making public places safer for women.

Gehlot suffering from short-term memory loss: Rajasthan BJP chief

LAUNCHING A personal attack on Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, state BJP president Satish Poonia on Monday said he is suffering from "short-term memory loss" and "depression".

GUN LICENSING 'FRAUD' CBI searches 17 locations, premises of two IAS officers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30 They said the searches were carried out at three places in Kashmir, 11 places in Jammu and one each in Gurgaon (Haryana), Mohali (Punjab) and Noida (Uttar Pradesh).



A frozen Dal Lake in Srinagar on Monday. Shuaib Masoodi

Coldest night in Jammu in five years, flights cancelled, trains delayed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, DECEMBER 30 ALL MORNING flights from Jammu were cancelled on Monday due to dense fog as the cold wave tightened its grip across Jammu and Kashmir.

Four dead as blast in methanol tank sparks fire at Kandla port

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, DECEMBER 30 FOUR PEOPLE were killed on Monday in a fire triggered by an explosion inside a methanol storage tank of Deen Dayal Port, also known as Kandla port, in Gujarat's Kutch district, police said.



Firefighters try to douse a fire at a chemical godown in Kandla port in Kutch. PTI

The dead have been identified as Sanjay Wagh, an employee of IMC terminal and labourers Darsan Rai, Omprakash Raigar and Sanjay Sahu. They were conducting an inspection of the storage tank when the blast took place.

5 Kashmir politicians released from detention

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 30 leaders came after a recent security review meeting in New Delhi which was chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Subsequently, the J&K DGP after arriving in Srinagar conducted a meeting at Srinagar's Police Control Room.

Post-Art 370, J&K opens up jobs as HC calls for applications from across India

ARUN SHARMA JAMMU, DECEMBER 30 IN A first after the removal of Article 370 and bifurcation of the state into Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, the J&K High Court has invited applications from across the country for recruitment of 33 non-gazetted vacancies in districts courts of the two UTs, triggering an Opposition outcry against the opening of employment in the erstwhile state to all Indians.

Ruling BJP's dilemma

THE ADVERTISEMENT comes in the wake of assurances by Union ministers and BJP leaders that interests of local people for jobs and land in both UTs will be protected after scrapping J&K's special status under Articles 370 and 35A. The administration is learnt to be considering a 15-year residency clause to allay fears of local residents in matters of employment and land in both UTs.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE JAMMU, DECEMBER 30 president Devender Rana demanded protection of government jobs for local residents in J&K and said unemployment has grown alarmingly in recent years.

CHANDAN HAYGUNDE PUNE, DECEMBER 30 area with his team and will be on duty at the site till January 1. Lakhs of people, mainly from Dalit Ambedkarite community, are expected to gather at Jaystambh in Perne village for the 202nd anniversary of the Battle of Koregaon Bhima on the day.

U.P. RAJKIYA NIRMAN NIGAM LTD. (ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company) Visheshwaraiya Bhawan Gomtinagar, Lucknow

Cop on duty at site of violence which killed brother

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LUCKNOW SMART CITY LIMITED (G.S.T. ID: 09AADG366E1Z1) (CIN: U74999UP2015SG0085631)

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Payment for destruction of property: what High Court order said

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

IN ITS crackdown on protesters against the Citizenship Amendment Act, the Uttar Pradesh government has directed district administrations to serve notices on persons allegedly involved in arson and damage of public property, and direct them to pay a penalty. The quantum of the penalty is being determined according to the total cost of the damaged property, according to the FIR lodged by the police.

While issuing these notices, the administration has said it derives such powers on the basis of an Allahabad High Court order of December 2, 2010 in *Mohammad Shujauddin vs State of Uttar Pradesh*. It has said the police are empowered to take penal action under The Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984. The High Court order, due to lacunae in the 1984 Act, has also empowered the civil administration to take action against the accused.

What was the High Court case about?

The order, passed by Justice Sudhir

Agarwal, relates to a scuffle between two persons from different political parties that had resulted in injuries and loss of public property. Justice Agarwal asked the state government to file an affidavit on the number of cases filed by the police under the 1984 Act. The police replied that in 26 years, only 585 cases had been filed, and only 11 cases had been disposed of.

"It appears that everybody believes that public property has no custodian. It is like orphan. It is the birthright to destruct and damage it in a manner they like without any sense of responsibility... What is more disturbing is that law enforcement machinery mostly is a silent spectator watching destruction of public property," Justice Agarwal observed.

The High Court then referred to a 2009 judgment of the Supreme Court relating to the destruction of public and private properties. The Supreme Court had issued guidelines on the basis of recommendations made by two committees, headed by former Supreme Court Justice KT Thomas and senior advocate Fali Nariman. In particular, the Nariman Committee's recommendations had dealt with extracting damages for de-



Anti-CAA protesters in Lucknow on December 19. Vishal Srivastav

struction. Accepting the recommendations, the Supreme Court had said that the rioters would be made strictly liable for the damage, and compensation would be collected to "make good" the damage.

"Where persons, whether jointly or otherwise, are part of a protest which turns violent, results in damage to private or public property, the persons who have caused the damage, or were part of the protest or who have organized it will be deemed to be strictly liable for the damage so caused, which may be assessed by the ordinary courts or by any special procedure created to enforce the right," the Supreme Court said.

What directions did the HC issue?

On the basis of the Supreme Court observations, the High Court directed that:

- As and when any incident of damage of public property takes place, if such agitation has been called at the "invitation of a political party or a sitting or former people's representative", a "report" shall be registered by the police against the political party/person by name.
- A "concerned department, local body,

public corporation" — that is, the owner of the property — would assess the damage and shall file a claim for realization of such amount before a "competent authority". The competent authority will be nominated by the government, and claims have to be filed within seven days after the nomination.

- "Any person" belonging to the area where the public property is damaged can also approach the competent authority. However, when the money is awarded, it has to be furnished only to the concerned department to whom the property belongs.
- There will be an "opportunity of hearing" against whom the claims is filed; and the competent authority is mandated to pass the "appropriate order" with a month after the hearing is complete.

- If the person is found guilty by the competent authority (an official of the rank of Additional District Magistrate will be responsible for collecting the amount), and if the guilty is unable to pay the entire amount in a single instalment, the district magistrate has to issue a certificate, by which the person is made to pay in arrears under the relevant provisions of the the Revenue Recovery Act.

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

What next in Afghanistan?

Preliminary poll results have returned President Ghani to power but have been challenged by his rival. What questions does it raise over the next government's stability, with or without US-Taliban talks?

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

SINCE DECEMBER 22, Afghanistan has been debating the preliminary results of its election. Amid this uncertainty, the Taliban were reported to have agreed on Sunday to a temporary ceasefire in Afghanistan, before they denied these reports on Monday. A look at the controversial election, and what a Taliban ceasefire and US withdrawal — if that happens — could mean for Afghanistan:

Why is there uncertainty about the results of the election?

The results announced on December 22 gave President Ashraf Ghani 50.64 per cent of the 18,24,401 votes counted (which means a second round runoff would not be required); he managed to cross the halfway mark by fewer than 12,000 votes. His main rival, Abdullah Abdullah, polled 7,20,990 votes or 39.52 per cent, and was in second place.

But these are "preliminary" results. The elections were held on September 28. The preliminary results were scheduled to be declared on October 18, and the final results on November 7. The schedule could not be kept as the Independent Election Commission (IEC) of Afghanistan undertook an "audit and recount" process in 8,255 polling stations, later increased to 8,494 polling stations, for the following reasons: a discrepancy between votes cast on the basis of Biometric Voter Verification, and the paper trail at these polling stations; missing paper trail or "result sheets"; and other irregularities.

The recount and audit went slowly. Abdullah wanted 3 lakh votes invalidated (including over 1 lakh cast after polling hours and nearly 1.5 lakh set aside initially because of various suspected irregularities) and 2,423 polling stations excluded from the count. His supporters led street protests in many provinces and succeeded in getting the process suspended for a few days in November. The IEC has been accused of siding with Ghani.

Abdullah has declared that he does not accept the "fraudulent result" declared without excluding the 3 lakh "unclean" votes. He has equated the damage caused by the result to that caused by a suicide bombing.

Other candidates, including Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, have also opposed the result. Hekmatyar, the head of Hizb-e-Islami, who got 70,247 votes (3.85 per cent), has denounced the results as "false" and accused the IEC of "stealing" votes cast for him.

So what happens now?

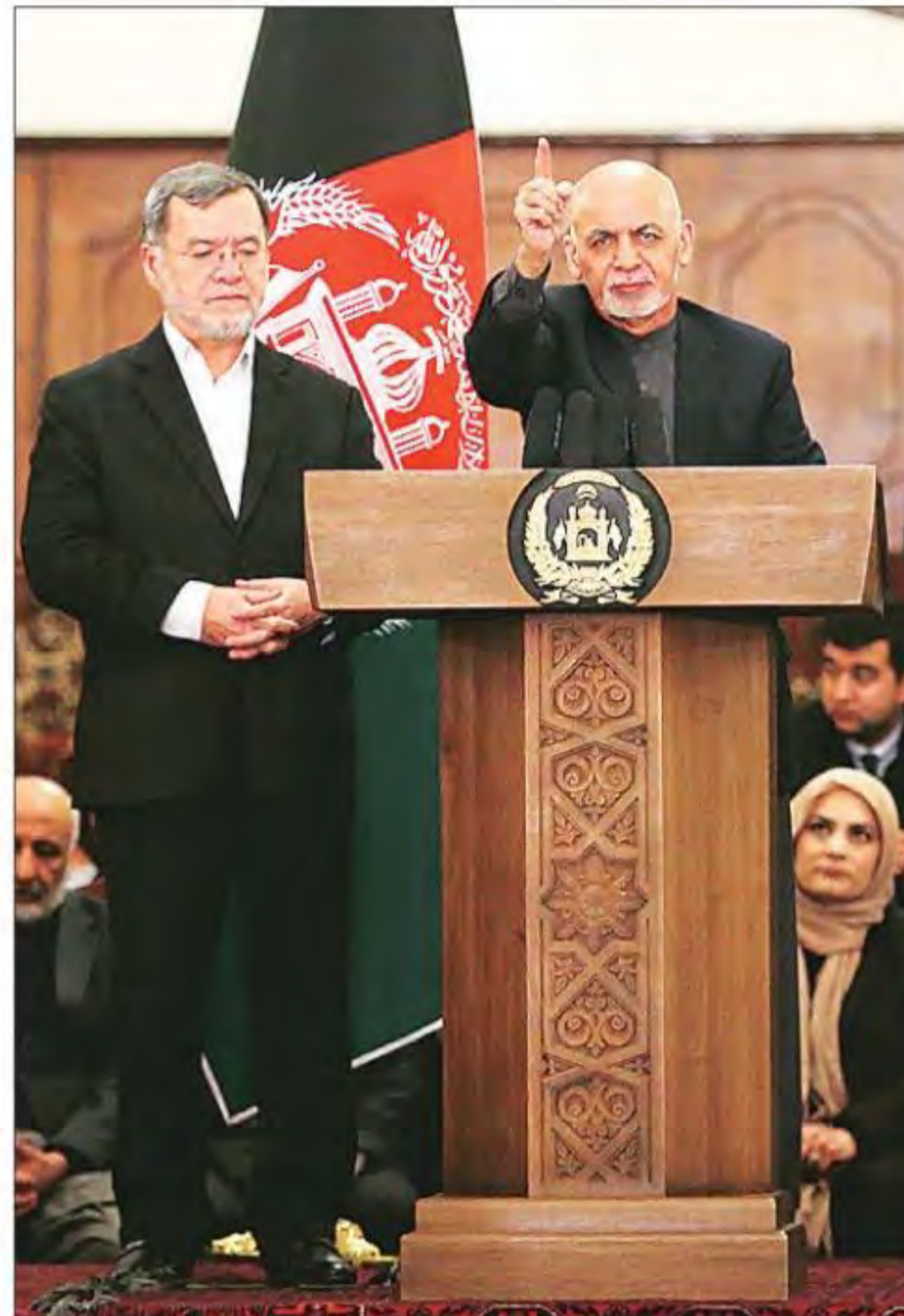
The final results may be declared only towards the end of January. The Election Complaints Commission has received 16,500 complaints, of which 8,000 are from the Abdullah camp. Ghani's side has filed 3,000 complaints. If Abdullah's complaints are rejected, Ghani will be declared the winner.

If the Commission takes on board Abdullah's concerns, especially about the invalidity of a large chunk of votes, it would bring down Ghani's vote count and pave the way for a second round runoff between the top two contenders — a runoff takes place when no candidate secures a simple majority. Neither scenario promises the formation of a stable government.

Why will the government not be stable?

Abdullah has already pledged that he will not allow "rootless fraudsters to rule over Afghanistan". This is *deja vu* — in 2014 a contested result after the second round had to be resolved by then US Secretary of State John Kerry, who flew in to hold talks with both Ghani and Abdullah. The two men then came together in a National Unity Government. Ghani became President and Abdullah was given the newly created role of Chief Executive.

Both Ghani and Abdullah have rejected



President Ashraf Ghani (left) won just over half the votes in "preliminary" results; the camp of his main rival Abdullah Abdullah (above) has filed several complaints. Reuters & AP

the talks began, the Taliban carried out another deadly attack, this time on a security post in Kunduz, killing 11 Afghan soldiers. There were several other bombings and other violent attacks during the rest of December that killed civilians, Afghan soldiers and militants.

There have been no formal talks since. On Monday, the Taliban denied reports that they were ready to call a ceasefire in preparation for an agreement with the US on withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan. "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (the name by which the Taliban call themselves) has no ceasefire plans", the Taliban said in a statement. The Taliban's refusal to commit themselves to a ceasefire has been the main reason why President Ghani, other politicians and Afghan civil society have been filled with disquiet and dread about the US-Taliban talks.

Is there a chance that the new government will be included in the US-Taliban process?

It is unlikely. The Taliban have said they do not recognise the elections and have denounced all governments in Kabul as "puppets" of the US. The US kept the previous government out of the talks that ended in September, in deference to the Taliban's wishes. There isn't a new government in Kabul yet. Going by Khalilzad's statements during the pre-September talks, dialogue between the Taliban and Afghan "representatives" (not government), would follow a US-Taliban agreement, and it would be for this "intra-Afghan" dialogue to discuss the roadmap ahead, including perhaps a ceasefire. Back in September, the imminent US-Taliban agreement had cast uncertainty on the election itself. There was a view that the election would serve no purpose, and that instead, the "intra-Afghan dialogue" should negotiate the setting up of an interim government that would include Taliban representatives.

The cancellation of the US-Taliban process meant there was no more talk about not holding the election. Ghani, who had been determined from the start that the democratic exercise should not be disrupted, hoped he would return with a strong mandate, which in turn would help him face the Taliban with a better hand. But his slender majority from a low turnout, and the contested result may not help. If the election goes into a second round, a new government would potentially take months to form, raising the possibility that the US-Taliban talks may even conclude in an agreement before that, presenting the new dispensation with a changed ground situation in which its own role may be reshaped by circumstances outside its control.

TELLING NUMBERS

How the states, UTs scored on various goals in SDG Index

TOP 12, THE STATES

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Kerala | 70 |
| Himachal | 69 |
| Andhra | 67 |
| Tamil Nadu | 67 |
| Telangana | 67 |
| Karnataka | 66 |
| Goa | 65 |
| Sikkim | 65 |
| Gujarat | 64 |
| Maharashtra | 64 |
| Uttarakhand | 64 |
| Punjab | 62 |

BOTTOM 5, THE STATES

| | |
|-----------|----|
| Bihar | 50 |
| Jharkhand | 53 |
| Arunachal | 53 |
| Meghalaya | 54 |
| UP, Assam | 55 |

TOP 5, THE UTs

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Chandigarh | 70 |
| Puducherry | 66 |
| Dadra & NH | 63 |
| Lakshadweep | 63 |
| Delhi, A & N Islands, Daman & Diu | 61 |

GOAL BY GOAL, THE STATES

| Sustainable development goal | Top score | 2nd place | Bottom rank |
|--|---|---------------|----------------|
| SDG 1: No poverty | Tamil Nadu (72) | Tripura (70) | Jharkhand (28) |
| SDG 2: Zero hunger | Goa (76) | Mizoram (75) | Jharkhand (22) |
| SDG 3: Good health | Kerala (82) | Andhra (76) | Nagaland (29) |
| SDG 4: Quality education | Himachal (81) | Kerala (74) | Bihar (19) |
| SDG 5: Gender equality | Himachal (52) | Kerala (51) | Telangana (26) |
| SDG 6: Clean water & sanitation | Andhra (96) | UP (94) | Tripura (69) |
| SDG 7: Affordable & clean energy | Sikkim (97) | Goa (95) | Odisha (50) |
| SDG 8: Decent work & economic growth | Telanganaga (82) | Andhra (78) | Manipur (27) |
| SDG 9: Industry, innovation, infrastructure | Gujarat (88) | Kerala (88) | Mizoram (8) |
| SDG 10: Reduced inequalities | Telangana (94) | Manipur (81) | Goa (19) |
| SDG 11: Sustainable cities & communities | Goa (79) | Himachal (79) | Meghalaya (22) |
| SDG 12: Sustainable consumption & production | Nagaland (100) | Tripura (92) | Rajasthan (30) |
| SDG 13: Climate action | Karnataka (71) | Andhra (70) | Jharkhand (27) |
| SDG 14: Marine ecosystems | Coastal states only, not counted in overall SDG | | |
| SDG 15: Life & land | Manipur (100) | Sikkim (100) | Haryana (40) |
| SDG 16: Peace, justice & strong institutions | Andhra (86) | Gujarat (86) | Assam (52) |

High-performing Union Territories

| Sustainable development goal | High UT scores |
|--|---|
| SDG 4: Quality education | Chandigarh (80) |
| SDG 5: Gender equality | J&K (53), Ladakh (53) |
| SDG 6: Clean water & sanitation | Chandigarh (100), Daman & Diu (96) |
| SDG 7: Affordable & clean energy | Puducherry (97), Delhi (96) |
| SDG 9: Industry, innovation, infrastructure | Dadra & NH (100), Daman & Diu (100), Delhi (100) |
| SDG 10: Reduced inequalities | A & N Islands (94), Lakshadweep (93), Puducherry (92) |
| SDG 11: Sustainable cities & communities | Chandigarh (83) |
| SDG 13: Climate action | Lakshadweep (100), A & N Islands (72) |
| SDG 15: Life & land | Dadara & NH 100, Lakshadweep 100 |
| SDG 16: Peace, justice & strong institutions | Puducherry 96, Chandigarh 89 |

NITI Aayog has released its latest SDG India Index 2019, which assesses each state and Union Territory's achievement on 16 sustainable development goals (SDG). Kerala is in the top slot with a score of 70, while Bihar is at the bottom with 50.

Each of the 16 SDGs — ranging from good health to quality education, gender equality, and climate action — comprise several indicators, with the number of these varying from SDG to SDG. Scores are given for a state or UT on each SDG. The composite score for each state or UT is computed by aggregating their performance across these goals, and then by taking the arithmetic mean of individual goal scores. A score of 100 implies that the state/UT has achieved targets set for 2030.

Among the 16 SDGs, marine ecosystems is for coastal states only, and scores on this one were not counted in the composite total. In the other SDGs, the best performers were Tamil Nadu for 'no poverty'; Goa for 'zero hunger'; Kerala for 'good health'; Himachal Pradesh for

'quality education'; Himachal again for 'gender equality'; Andhra Pradesh for 'clean water and sanitation'; Sikkim for 'affordable and clean energy'; Telanganaga for 'decent work & economic growth'; Gujarat for 'industry, innovation and infrastructure'; Telanganaga for 'reduced inequalities'; Goa for 'sustainable cities and communities'; Nagaland for 'sustainable consumption and production'; Karnataka for 'climate action'; Manipur for 'life and land'; and Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat for 'peace, justice, strong institutions'.

Following Kerala's composite score of 70, Himachal Pradesh took the second spot with a score of 69 while Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telanganaga shared the third spot with each scoring 67. There are eight states in the highest bracket, called frontrunners, with scores in the range 65-99. Behind Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telanganaga, the other states in this category are Karnataka (66), Sikkim (65) and Goa (65). Two UTs, Chandigarh and Puducherry, scored in this range.



OF CHESS, IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT LIFE IS NOT LONG ENOUGH FOR IT, BUT THAT IS THE FAULT OF LIFE, NOT CHESS. — WILLIAM NAPIER

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

FREEDOM FROM 3Cs

Finance Minister does well to reach out to bankers, but government needs a roadmap to boost their confidence

IT IS A reflection of the state of the Indian banking industry today, specially state-owned banks which dominate the landscape and are marked by a virtual freeze in lending, that the country's finance minister had to reach out to bankers to assure them that they need not fear the three dreaded Cs — Central Bureau of Investigation, Central Vigilance Commission and Comptroller and Auditor General. At a meeting with bankers over the weekend, Nirmala Sitharaman while conceding that decision-making in banks was getting impacted because of the fear of the 3Cs attempted to assuage the apprehensions, saying that the government and its investigative agencies have put in place measures to address their concerns. Notably, Sitharaman's predecessor, Arun Jaitley, in early 2019, had cautioned against the overzealousness of state agencies, warning of the dangers of the banking system grinding to a halt.

The Indian Banks Association, too, had protested a while ago after senior officials of the Bank of Maharashtra were arrested by the state police and following several cases dating back a decade or more being filed by agencies. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has blamed what he termed as the "malafide unless proven otherwise" doctrine of governance of the NDA Government for the breakdown of trust between institutions and the government. Bankers may tend to agree, especially when basic questions such as the definition of a bonafide decision and who should sit in judgement on loan approvals granted by banks years ago remain unclear even now. Little will be achieved through incremental moves. An enduring solution requires a significant lowering of state holding by the government in scores of banks — well below the threshold of 51 per cent — to free bankers from the purview of the three Cs, or privatisation.

A government with a strong mandate like the Modi-led NDA 2 hasn't signalled so far that it has the desire or the appetite to go down that road. The second best but sub-optimal solution would be to empower bankers and professional bank boards to decide on whether a decision to approve a loan was bonafide or malafide. It is a fact that the seeds of the current mess in Indian banking were sown during UPA 2 but that doesn't absolve the Modi government which was late in addressing the crisis during its first term. The perceived morality play reflected in punishing so-called rogue bankers and businessmen — a political response to Rahul Gandhi's suit boot sarkar jibe — has already hurt banking and industry. With India set to end the fiscal with a multi-decade low in bank credit, the longer the government takes to unveil a roadmap and walk the talk to boost the confidence of bankers, the more elusive will be the economic recovery.

VENGEFUL STATE

UP government's decision to demand compensation from protesters, arbitrarily targeting one community, is a new low

ON DECEMBER 19, soon after protests broke out across Uttar Pradesh against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath promised, or threatened, that his government would take "badla (revenge)" against the protesters and "auction off their properties". Last week, people across the state were served notices demanding monetary damages for alleged acts of vandalism of public property. In Sambhal, as reported by this newspaper, civil society leaders, educationists and political workers are among the 59 people who have been issued notices by the UP government for the payment of Rs 15.35 lakh. The UP government's message of revenge has, in fact, gone out unambiguously from Adityanath's official Twitter handle, which exults: "Every rioter is shocked. Every demonstrator is shocked. Everyone has been silenced after seeing Yogi Adityanath government's stern intentions... Every violent protester will cry now because there is a Yogi government in Uttar Pradesh."

Two things are clear in Sambhal: First, civil society leaders who happen to be Muslim have been targeted. Second, it appears that there is little or no evidence of their involvement in the destruction of public property. The notices will, of course, be challenged in the courts. But the UP government's "stern intention" to ensure that "every protester will cry out" will have been fulfilled by the tedium and cost of the legal process itself. Damage to public property must, of course, be condemned, but the current protests are not the first, even in recent times, where such damage has taken place. But there are no instances of compensation being demanded from the protesters. While protest must not descend into violence, and efforts must be made to prevent them from doing so, and there must be some penalties when they do, UP is witnessing a more dangerous phenomenon — the state is pitting itself against those who express dissent.

In UP, especially in the Adityanath regime, law and order has been flawed in its implementation, and fraught for the political ends it is apparently made to serve. Who can and cannot register an FIR has long been a barometer of which communities have a dominant voice in government — the police chowki is the most visible and immediate face of the state in the remotest parts. But even by UP's poor standards, the Adityanath government has touched new lows — from "anti-romeo squads" to the celebration of "encounters". Now, the chief minister seeks to style the law and order machinery as an agent of revenge. For the government to fulfill its role, law must not be selectively used, or weaponised.

SHE THE CHAMPION

Koneru Humpy gets the moves right. Her best is yet to be

FOR THE FIRST two months after returning from a two-year maternity break, Koneru Humpy was struggling for concentration. Not that she had drifted from the game during the layoff — she kept reading about the games and talking to her close friends on the circuit — but she realised she was too slow in deciding her moves. Her apprehensions were vindicated when she endured a torrid set of games in her comeback tournament at the Olympiad in Georgia at the end of last year. Another setback followed — a second-round exit in the World Championship. But just when she felt lost, her idol Judit Polgar soothed her: "Don't worry, just a play a few more games, you will regain your speed. Your best years are yet to be".

The Hungarian chess icon's words came true as Humpy not only dusted up her form but also went on to become the world rapid champion in a breathtaking play-off final. On the morning of the final day, all she wanted was to be in the top three. But then followed a sequence of favourable circumstances, not least her opponent in the final, Lei Tingjie, losing a round to Ekaterina Atalik, while Humpy pushed and gambled for an unlikely victory over Tang Zhongyi. Buoyed, she went for the kill against Tingjie, still recovering from the shock defeat to Atalik. There was more drama, as she lost the first round, but then restored parity, and eventually forced her Chinese opponent to settle for a draw, thus becoming the second Indian to clinch a World Rapid Championship after Viswanathan Anand.

Humpy, too, first made her name in the rapid format, where she used to beat her father, a state-level chess player himself, and his friends, when she was barely five. But gradually, as her focus shifted to the classical versions, participation in rapid games became a mere pastime. But the instincts remained. A world title was the dream that fuelled her during the break, and it should gratify her now that it came in a format where quick-thinking is the most fundamental principle. Now that it has arrived, her best years are yet to be.



SUJAN R CHINOY

The first chief

Appointment of CDS is a crucial step towards achieving seamless coordination in higher defence management

THE APPOINTMENT OF General Bipin Rawat, the current Chief of Army Staff, as India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) comes quick on the heels of the historic decision taken by India's Cabinet Committee on Security on December 24 on the appointment of a CDS, bringing to fruition a matter that has been hanging fire for close to two decades.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced on August 15 the creation of the CDS. He had cautioned that "India should not have a fragmented approach" in regard to the three services. He was referring to the fundamental principle of jointness and integration of the armed forces and the need to ensure that India keeps abreast of global trends in military strategies and is capable of facing new threats and challenges in the multi-dimensional hybrid war scenarios of the 21st century.

The decision to appoint a CDS is a huge step towards achieving seamless coordination and greater effectiveness in higher defence management structures by creating an enabling architecture that permits fuller expression on the part of our professional armed forces. The Kargil War in 1999 may have been a victory for India, thanks to the valour of our armed forces, but it came at a steep cost due to lack of jointness and integration. The Kargil Review Committee's report in 2000 and the Group of Ministers' Report of 2001 had recommended that serious steps be taken towards integration of our armed forces.

The momentous decision involves the creation of a new post of CDS in the rank of a four-star general (or equivalent) with salary and perquisites equivalent to that of a service chief. This is the first time in the history of independent India that a uniformed individual will head a government department. The CDS is not a ministerial position. He will be empowered under the Allocation of Business Rules to run his department. The highest form of supervisory mandate that can be delegated to him is at the level of a secretary. The defence secretary and the three chiefs occupy important positions in the government's pantheon. This will not change when a fourth officer joins as CDS at the four-star level.

Both the defence secretary and the CDS will report to the raksha mantri. If required, the raksha mantri could ask any or all of the

The new CDS will be the head of a newly-minted Department of Military Affairs within the existing architecture of the Ministry of Defence, which already has four departments — Department of Defence, Department of Defence Production, Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare and the DRDO. All matters that are purely military affairs involving the army, navy and the air force, including the territorial army, especially jointness in tri-service matters pertaining to training, transport, staffing, logistics, communications, repairs and maintenance and even jointness in procurement, would henceforth be handled by the CDS.

departments to give their comments on matters that require a coordinated position to emerge from the MoD.

The key point is that the new CDS will be the head of a newly-minted Department of Military Affairs within the existing architecture of the Ministry of Defence, which already has four departments — Department of Defence, Department of Defence Production, Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare and the DRDO. All matters that are purely military affairs involving the army, navy and the air force, including the territorial army, especially jointness in tri-service matters pertaining to training, transport, staffing, logistics, communications, repairs and maintenance and even jointness in procurement, would henceforth be handled by the CDS.

The CDS will also be a member of the Defence Planning Committee and the Defence Acquisition Council, besides functioning as the military adviser to the Nuclear Command Authority. He would ensure optimal utilisation of infrastructure, facilitate restructuring of military commands including establishment of joint/theatre commands, promote indigenisation and work on "out of area contingencies". Preparation of strategy papers and rationalisation and reforms in the functioning of the armed forces would be part of his mandate.

The CDS will be dual-hatted. As the permanent chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), the CDS will be expected to promote jointness and integration and be the principal military adviser to the raksha mantri. In the past, this role has been attempted by the rotational chairmanship of COSC by the senior-most chief who often held the post for a short tenure, with no time for in-depth study of tri-service issues and integration. The CDS will now have a tenured appointment up to the age of 65 years.

In General Rawat, the government has chosen a seasoned COAS who, as the senior-most of the three chiefs, is the incumbent chairman of COSC. He has also spearheaded far-reaching reforms in the organisational structure and war-fighting capabilities of the army — the move towards greater integration, speed of decision-making and rationalisation of manpower in the army. The idea of Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) headed by major-generals is expected to do away with

the traditional brigade command structure. The existing structure met the requirements of all contingencies in an older age when intelligence and information were not readily available in real-time. The Department of Military Affairs will not only synchronise the expertise and endeavours of the three services but also create harmony and integration between the military and civilian experts.

The rotational chairman of COSC currently commands the only tri-service command in India, that is, the Andaman and Nicobar Command along with other tri-service agencies and organisations such as the Defence Space Agency and Defence Cyber Agency. Nothing prevents the government from changing the structure keeping in mind evolving situations.

The CDS, who will also be the permanent chairman COSC, will not exercise any operational command, including over the three service chiefs. The three service chiefs will continue to retain full command over their services, and give independent military advice to the raksha mantri on matters concerning their respective services. The CDS, in turn, will do what no service chief can do, that is, reconcile the viewpoints of all the three services. This feature will improve his ability to provide impartial advice since his service loyalties will no longer colour his advice. The defence secretary will continue to deal with defence policy, strategy and diplomacy. He will also be responsible for capital acquisitions, defence land, defence accounts, cantonments, border roads, coast guard and a host of other important areas.

The creation of the CDS is part of the fulfillment of commitments by the Modi government on defence matters, starting with the implementation of One Rank One Pension after 40 years, the establishment of the Defence Space and Cyber Agencies as also the Special Operations Division, Make in India initiatives aimed at ensuring an "India First" policy. It is in keeping with India's aspirations to fulfill its destiny as a major power in the 21st century.

The writer, a former ambassador, has worked in the National Security Council Secretariat and is currently director general of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses. Views are personal



SANDEEP PANDEY

INJUSTICE IN UP

Arresting Mohammad Shoab, SR Darapuri insults their legacy of human rights work

ON DECEMBER 19, the day nationwide protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens were planned, me and my close friends — advocate Mohammad Shoab and retired IPS officer SR Darapuri, were put under house arrest in Lucknow. Today, both of them are in jail. Shoab was not produced before any magistrate before being sent to jail and the first magistrate before whom Darapuri was produced had refused to send him to jail. They were picked up by the police from their respective homes much before the arrests were officially made. When they were under house arrest, how could they have participated in any violence outside?

Shoab was already a member of the youth wing of the Socialist Party when I was born in 1965. He first went to jail for a month in the late 1960s, as a student in Gonda, for violating CRPC Section 144. During his university convocation, Shoab burned his degree in the presence of then President VV Giri for raising a slogan that the youth want jobs not degrees. He was fined Rs 50 and debarred from future admission. Presently, he is the state president of Socialist Party (India). Committed to socialist values, he has been taking up cases of people who find it difficult to engage a lawyer for financial and political reasons. In his later years of practice, he also took up cases of youth who were implicated

Shoab was not produced before any magistrate before being sent to jail and the first magistrate before whom Darapuri was produced had refused to send him to jail. They were picked up by the police from their respective homes much before the arrests were officially made. When they were under house arrest, how could they have participated in any violence outside?

in terrorism or related cases. He has been successful in getting 13 such accused in different cases including Aftab Alam Ansari acquitted from the courts.

Any fair society would have honoured Shoab rather than try to paint him as anti-national. His courteous demeanour and personality stands in contrast to what the Lucknow police would have us believe. Shoab and his clients were alleged to have raised "Pakistan Zindabad" slogans, news about which was published in local newspapers without reasoning as to why any accused in a terror case, and his advocate, would raise a slogan that could imperil his chances of acquittal!

Most surprising was the incarceration of Darapuri, a retired inspector general of police. Darapuri has been an untiring campaigner of human rights, especially Dalit rights. He also contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election from Lucknow on behalf of the Lok Rajniti Manch, founded by the late Kuldip Nayyar in 2004. Since then, Darapuri has contested two more elections on behalf of All India People's Front, an organisation fighting for forest rights of the tribals in Sonbhadra district of UP. He too, like Shoab, is a source of strength for the persecuted. A lot of my colleagues working at the grass roots call him directly to seek his intervention when they face harassment by the police or powerful local figures. We have jointly worked on a number

of things — fact finding in cases of human rights violations of Dalits, Muslims and members of downtrodden communities, public hearings on the implementation of various social welfare schemes like food security etc. In 2008, he and I were part of a fact finding team which produced a report declaring Shahbaz Ahmed from Lucknow innocent when he was picked up by Rajasthan police in the Jaipur bomb blast case — Shahbaz was recently acquitted by the court too. Now, the Anti-Terrorism Squad is trying to frame him in a fresh case. Siddharth Darapuri, whom I've seen as a child, wrote a Facebook post about his grandfather: "Loved by his juniors and seniors, he was a person who did not shoot a fleeting miscreant at point blank range, even after the person fired at his jeep. He was a person, who went alone to make a gang surrender, and not finish them off in an encounter. He revolutionised the police-mess, which was marred and divided on caste lines. Never did he fire from his service revolver."

I'm putting out these facts in the public domain for people to judge whether Shoab and Darapuri, both septuagenarians, deserve to be in jail. Is the BJP government in UP being vindictive in order to cover up its failure in maintaining law and order?

The writer, a Magsasay Award winner, is vice president of Socialist Party (India)



DECEMBER 31, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

US AID TO PAK
THE JIMMY CARTER administration has decided to give both military and economic assistance to Pakistan in view of the latest developments in Afghanistan. Negotiations between the two countries have reportedly started. Pakistan has a huge shopping list that includes not merely light arms for guerrilla warfare against the Afghan state but heavy arms that can fire in any direction. Meanwhile, India does not even have an ambassador in Washington. The embassy is under the Charge' D Affairs, Ashok Gokhale.

Uttar Pradesh is in danger with a further fall in its strength and the demand raised by the Opposition leader Raj Mangal Pandey for its dismissal. The panchayati raj minister, Jamuna Prasad Bose, and three Lok Dal members of the Vidhan Sabha, Shriram Dwivedi, Sukhpal Pande and Bharat Singh Chauhan, have resigned from the party and joined the Janata Party. Pande accused the UP government of having failed to give relief to the drought stricken people and said that the law and order situation in the state had broken down completely.

UP CRISIS
THE MINORITY BANARSI Das government in

VETO ON LEGAL AID
A PROPOSAL OF the Union law ministry to

give free legal aid to the poor in Supreme Court cases has been turned down by the finance ministry even though a token budgetary allowance of Rs 1 lakh had been made for this purpose. According to official sources, the finance ministry turned down the proposal on the ground that it involved a policy decision that could not be taken at this point of time.

ALL'S WELL WITH RAM
JAGJIVAN RAM TOOK exception to the AIR report that he was unwell and advised rest by doctors. Addressing an election meeting in Bhubaneswar, he said its a mystery how AIR found me ill.

13 THE IDEAS PAGE

The freedom to speak up

The test of a healthy democracy is that anybody, from any strata of society, can question the government over any decision



KABIR KHAN

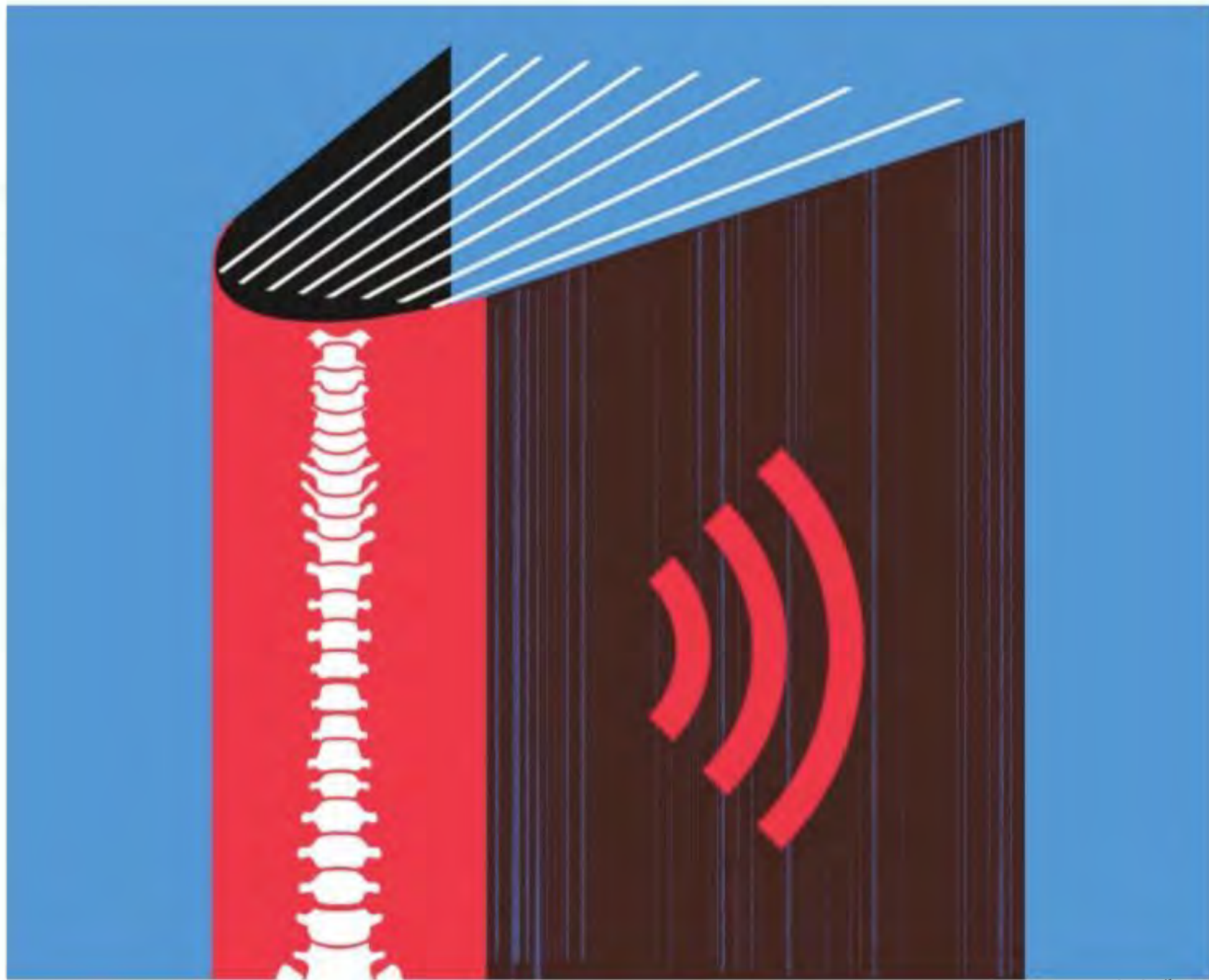
MY MEMORIES OF university life are associated with two institutions. I grew up on the campus of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) as my father (Rasheeduddin Khan) was one of its founding professors. In JNU, I witnessed a culture of political debate and dissent. The evenings would be spent at the Ganga dhaba where two people would stand up and debate some issue. At the Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC) at Jamia Millia Islamia, where I did my masters, we didn't interact much with the rest of the university but the MCRC itself had a very political atmosphere. We were documentary filmmakers in training and being aware of politics was a very important element of our education.

So, now when I see visuals of Jamia students walking with their hands up, it's something I can't get out of my mind. For me, that's like a tipping point. How can you prevent students from protesting peacefully about what they feel is wrong? There is this whole debate about outside elements being there, but we've seen students being pulled out of libraries and beaten up. It's unbelievable. And why is it happening in one university after another university in India — JNU, Jamia and Aligarh Muslim University?

Students are the conscience keepers of the country. As we grow up, we all get a little corrupt, blasé, laidback and indifferent about issues. But students don't. They have idealism. Often, we fear that our youth is becoming apolitical, that they are losing interest in the world around them. Now when you see them reacting to political developments, you should be happy that they care about our country. How can you not let them protest? You should be able to debate with them, and not send the police to beat them up, ransack hostels and libraries. If you don't promote protests among students, then it's going to be a sad day for the country because the youth is our country's tomorrow. The Jamia incident is the culmination of so many wrongs that we've been witness to.

The greatness of a country is reflected in how good its universities are. One of the strengths of the US, even though they have a host of other problems, is its strong university culture and its ability to breed leaders. Similarly, in India generations of leaders, nation builders, opinion makers, thinkers and administrators have come out of JNU, AMU and DU. We have to make sure that an enabling atmosphere flourishes in universities instead of labelling students as part of a "tukde tukde gang" or putting them in jail.

At present, there appears to be an atmosphere where dissent is not welcome — it's seen as anti-national. That we can all criticise and question our government means that we are a flourishing democracy. In the last six years, a narrative has been spun that a government is equal to a country; that if you question the government, you are questioning India. This is dangerous. A government has never been equal to a country. Governments will come and go. We are living in a healthy democracy till



CR Sasikumar

the day anybody, from any strata of society, can get up and question the prime minister, the home minister or any minister over any decision. Otherwise, what's the difference between democracy and dictatorship? At JNU and Jamia, we would have leaders from different parties coming and debating with the students. If a student is not able to openly stand up and put across strongly what he or she believes in, then let's not pretend that we live in a democracy.

I have never been more aware of my Muslim identity than I am today because it had never been never rubbed in my face before. I'm an atheist. For me, my religion is part of my culture and heritage. My religious identity has zero bearing on my life, as I go about doing my work and interacting with people. Religion should be very personal. Today, everything seems to be getting discussed through the prism of religion.

I grew up believing that India is an inherently secular country. Today, I question myself: Am I being naïve? I refuse to believe that the majority is comfortable with what is going on. If I start believing that, it will destroy the concept of India for me.

As a filmmaker, even when I make mainstream movies, I believe a political backdrop has to exist. Mainstream cinema is a powerful medium. I can forgive a bad screenplay, editing or cinematography, but I can never forgive bad politics. Every choice that a filmmaker makes needs to reflect its politics. This is the medium through which I will continue to make statements or ask questions in a format that is accessible to the audience. The chicken song in *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015), which lots of the children love, is very political — it questions the beef ban.

When I see visuals of Jamia students walking with their hands up, it's something I can't get out of my mind. For me, that's like a tipping point. How can you prevent students from protesting peacefully about what they feel is wrong? There is this whole debate about outside elements being there, but we've seen students being pulled out of libraries and beaten up. It's unbelievable. And why is it happening in one university after another university in India — JNU, Jamia and Aligarh Muslim University?

Not everyone speaks out. Our celebrities are more fearful because they are more vulnerable. Many of them have political views and feel strongly about certain issues. However, I cannot sit in judgement and ask them why don't they speak up. I can only hope that more and more people will speak up. In the Western countries, maybe there are certain safeguards in their system that are actually working. Those safeguards, which we used to have in our society, are perhaps breaking down here.

A strong, independent media does not really exist in India today. The one institution that stood up for citizens was a free media. If anything made the establishment wary of coming down on anybody wrongfully, it was the fear that the media would go after it. Today, we can count on our fingers the newspapers and television channels that have a space of their own. If media, that's supposed to be the watchdog of our society, disappears or cowers down, it will be very unfortunate.

The only way that we can protect ourselves is if civil society continues to be vocal, be it by coming out on the streets and demonstrating, expressing themselves on social media, or being able to speak to the media. Students are a part of civil society. We don't all have to become political activists. We should just be able to express our opinions as normal citizens, without fear. We need to speak up whenever something goes against our country's ethos. We need to protect our country. Our country is larger than anything else.

Khan is a filmmaker and studied at the Jamia Millia Islamia

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"With more pubs opening, Britain feels like we can overcome social isolation and cultural confusion of this age. We ought to raise a glass to good news in these dark times."

— THE GUARDIAN

Challenge lies within

Domestic political climate affects external relations. India must recognise this urgently



RAJA MANDALA

BY C RAJA MOHAN

INDIA WILL NEED some decisive domestic course-correction in the new year to prevent the crystallisation of serious external challenges. An India that turns on itself is weaker abroad and invites external meddling. And the combination of internal strife and a faltering economy could turn out to be a dangerous recipe for India's polity. Internal political accommodation and economic revival hold the key to India's diplomacy and foreign policy in the coming days.

In the 21st century, two important factors have boosted India's international relations. One is India's rapid economic growth stemming from the reforms of the 1990s. It put India on the course to join the league of major powers. The expanding size of the economy and the attractiveness of its market was reinforced by another important factor.

India's growing economic weight, many in the world believed, would translate sooner than later into military power and that, in turn, could make Delhi an important player in shaping the regional balance of power in Asia and the Indian Ocean: This would eventually reshape the structure of the international system. The rise of India's hard power capabilities was complemented by its soft power — defined by India's democratic values, the spread of Indian culture and the positive influence of its diaspora.

It is easy to underestimate the weight of India's soft power that is both intangible and difficult to measure. The idea of shared political values with the West played a critical role in ending the decades-old high technology blockade against India and improving the country's standing in the West. India's democratic values were of little strategic consequence during the Cold War, but they helped cement India's strategic partnerships with the US, Europe, Japan and other Asian democracies in the new century.

Besides the question of democracy, India's ability to live with religious, linguistic and ethnic differences highlighted its political exceptionalism amidst the proliferation of intra-national conflicts and civil wars around the world.

If the economic slowdown and the perceived antipathy to trade might be limiting India's attractiveness as a commercial partner, the sense of creeping Hindu majoritarianism has begun to generate concern among a range of groups—from the liberal international media, the US Congress, to the Islamic world. Meanwhile, the diaspora, once seen as an asset, is now becoming part of Delhi's foreign policy problem. India's internal divisions are inevitably transmitted to the diaspora that, in turn, feeds into the emerging negative sentiment towards Delhi.

The sharpening religious divide within the country coupled with the renewed confrontation with Pakistan is generating major headaches for the conduct of India's external relations. Just when India seemed to be pulling away from Pakistan — in terms of economic performance, internal unity and international salience — and poised for a larger global role, Delhi appears to be sliding back into regional conflict with Islamabad and, more dangerously, towards

a Hindu-Muslim conflict at home.

Some in Delhi might scoff at the notion of recognising external concerns in the conduct of India's domestic politics. To be sure, the theory is that all states are sovereign and free to do what they want at home and free to conduct foreign policies as they like. The reality, though, is quite different. Through the ages, statesmen have sought ways to manage the complex interdependence between the internal and the external: Those who pretended that there is no relationship between the two had to pay a high price.

For most nations today, domestic economic policy and, increasingly, technology policy are shaped by a dynamic interaction between the internal and external. Few would contest the proposition that absolute economic sovereignty is unsustainable in a globalised world. While one can control the degree of exposure to the world, there is no room for absolute separation.

The same is also true of political sovereignty. It has never been absolute and is always constrained by size, economy, geography, demography and history. There is no country that does not have internal fault lines. Maximising political sovereignty necessarily involves limiting domestic conflict and strengthening internal political coherence.

Statecraft has long recognised the value of taking advantage of others' internal problems. When a country chooses to inflame the divisions at home, it not only disappoints its friends and well-wishers, but also provides huge opportunities for exploitation by its adversaries.

It is not just strong countries that can take advantage of the internal conflicts of others. Russia, for long dismissed in North America and Europe as a declining power, is now being accused of interference in the domestic politics of more powerful Western democracies. Tiny Qatar in the Gulf is charged by many in the Middle East of destabilising other, larger societies, in the region. Beyond governments, old and new media, trans-national groups and non-governmental organisations are quick to highlight internal conflicts in societies and then shape the international narratives on them.

Nothing draws international attention to a country more than religious conflict. This goes back to the dawn of the modern state system. As the European Christendom organised itself into nation-states, the religion of the sovereign and the citizenry were no longer the same. As governments persecuted religious groups within their territories, the demand for their protection from other states who shared the faith of the oppressed began to grow louder. This eventually led to agreed principles among the sovereigns about protecting freedom of religion.

Few countries, however, have had to bear the kind of religious burden that independent India has. The partition of India along religious lines has left Delhi with extraordinary challenges about sustaining religious harmony at home and maintaining reasonable relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

All governments in Delhi have struggled to cope with the bitter legacies of Partition. The very nature of these challenges inevitably produced much ambiguity, self-doubt and vacillation in India's engagement with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It will be a great tragedy if the NDA government's attempts to answer some of these challenges ends up exacerbating them.

The writer is director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

An act of empathy

CAA is in line with India's ethos of fraternity



RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK

FOR CENTURIES, INDIA has welcomed visitors and refugees who brought with them their rich culture, languages, and traditions. Indians always preached universal love and peace for the universal family. Since ages, India has advocated *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* — that the entire earth is one family. Across the world, Indians are known for their extraordinary ability to assimilate different cultures and values.

After the British finally left the Subcontinent in 1947, India was partitioned into two independent nation-states: Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. This was followed by one of the greatest and most painful migrations in human history. Millions of Muslims trekked to West and East Pakistan (Bangladesh) while lakhs of Hindus and Sikhs headed in the opposite direction. Uncertain about their future, hundreds of thousands never made it to their final destination. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed the sentiments and basic spirit behind the Citizenship Amendment Act: "Citizenship Amendment Bill is not a favour; this Act will protect the interests of those who believe in Mother India." The motive of this Act is to help minority groups who have come to escape persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh, which are Muslim-majority nations.

Mahatma Gandhi, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, J B Kripalani, Abul Kalam Azad and Syama Prasad Mookerjee or Tridip Chaudhuri — they all wanted refugees to be provided shelter

with respect. The CAA seeks to help oppressed illegal immigrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Buddhist and Christian religions from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, who were forced to flee to India and have lived in India without documentation. In these cases, the standard eligibility criteria for citizenship — 11 years of residence in India — has been relaxed. Shah has rightly pointed out that the CAA would not have been necessary had the country not faced Partition based on religion. He further said that this law will bring a new dawn in the lives of crores of people.

It must be asserted strongly that all protests should be scrupulously peaceful and any attempt to damage public property or public servants is unacceptable. There are allegations that the CAA violates constitutional provisions. There are arguments that this Act will facilitate a huge influx of illegal migrants and that illegal migrants will be given citizenship retrospectively. India is a democratic country that ensures fundamental rights to its citizens conferred on them by the Constitution. No statute, including the CAA, can take these away. Certain anti-social elements are spearheading a misinformation campaign. The northeastern states in particular are being targeted to spread this false propaganda. A vicious campaign involving students has been launched to label this Act as anti-Muslim.

The CAA does not affect any Indian citizens, including Muslims. We have to understand

that the CAA has no role in the deportation of any foreigner. The process of deportation takes place as per the mandate of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and/or The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920. In any case, deportation is a judicial process based on inquiries conducted by law enforcement agencies. The home minister has reiterated that the interest of northeastern states will be safeguarded under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and the statutory protection given to areas covered under the "Inner Line" system of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.

We do understand that voicing concern, protest, dissent are inherent to the democratic setup but causing damage to public property and indulging in violence is unacceptable. To uphold the secular and democratic fabric of the country, we should only use democratic forums to express our difference of opinion.

It is heartening that a group of academics, intellectuals, and research scholars have come out in support of the CAA. In a statement issued by over 1,100 academics from all over the country, it was pointed that the CAA is in perfect sync with the constitutional values of India as it does not debar anyone seeking citizenship based on religion. The support not only came from premiere institutes like IITs and IIMs, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, All India Institute of Medical Sciences but also from various international institutions including Princeton University, Oxford, Politecnico di Milano

Milan, the University of Warwick and Imperial College London. The signatories have expressed their complete satisfaction with the way the concerns of the Northeast states have been handled.

Concerns are being raised from different quarters about the violation of Article 14 that guarantees equality and equal protection of law to everyone. We must understand that the CAA proposes to help people under distress. Oppressed minorities are being helped under special circumstances.

As per data obtained from various sources, the minority population has dwindled substantially in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Now, the question is: What happened to the minority Hindu population? Right from the beginning, they faced oppression and because of this, they were forced to flee to India. This speaks volumes about the great failure of Nehru-Liaquat pact.

Thanking all those who supported this important law, the PM said that the CAA is in complete alignment with India's centuries-old ethos and a strong belief in humanitarian values. India has always supported the oppressed, helpless and persecuted people. So, what is new in this Act? India is India because of its rich cultural heritage and its ethos. This Act is about sharing the pain of our brothers and sisters who were forced to move out of their respective countries.

The writer is Union minister of Human Resource Development

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SOREN'S TASKS

THIS REFERS to the report, 'Soren sworn in as CM, stage signals show of opposition strength' (IE, December 30). The new Jharkhand government's decision to drop all Palthagadi cases is the apt New Year gift for the state's tribal communities. Thousands of tribal people are still languishing in jails without trials for trivial offence. In many cases, these people from marginalised communities have spent more time in jail term than they would had they been tried and convicted. The Hemant Soren government should take urgent measures to ensure long overdue justice.

L R Murmu, Delhi

AQUIFER MATTERS

THIS REFERS to the editorial, 'Not a drop to waste' (IE, December 30). It's shocking to know that around 70 per cent of the drinking water across the country fails on quality parameters. The country needs to adopt an agricultural model focused on future food security without affecting environmental and human health. Measures to improve water quality and rain water harvesting systems should be encouraged to recharge ground water and improve the water table.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301.

ASSUAGE BANKERS

THIS REFERS to the report, 'Government soothes banks over harassment by CBI: Won't go after genuine decisions' (IE, December 29). Despite huge NPA levels across the banks, many bankers were targeted by agencies such as the CBI. There is an atmosphere of fear amongst them. The CBI, CVC, and CAG should certainly do their duties but not at the cost of harassing bank officials.

Bal Govind, Noida

14 THE WORLD



MEANWHILE POMPEO TO TRAVEL TO UKRAINE IN JAN

Top US diplomat Mike Pompeo will travel in January to Ukraine, the country at the heart of the ongoing impeachment process against President Donald Trump. During the visit, Pompeo will meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Syed Muazzem Ali

ASIA

Bangladesh ex-foreign secy Syed Muazzem Ali dies at 75

Dhaka: Syed Muazzem Ali, Bangladesh's former foreign secretary and a "good friend" of India, died due to old-age complications here on Monday. He was 75. Ali, who served as Bangladesh's immediate-past High Commissioner to India, died at the Combined Military Hospital in the capital, Bangladeshi newspapers said. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar expressed grief over Ali's demise, saying he was a "good friend" of India. "Deeply shocked to learn of the passing away of former High Commissioner Syed Muazzem Ali. He was a good friend and a strong partner for so many of us. Our thoughts are with Tuhfa and family," Jaishankar said in a tweet.



Churchgoers take cover while a congregant armed with a handgun (top left), engages a man who opened fire (near top centre, just right of windows) during a service at West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas on Sunday. AP

GUN VIOLENCE AT TEXAS CHURCH

Parishioners kill man who shot 2 in church

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WHITE SETTLEMENT, DEC 30

A MAN pulled out a shotgun at a Texas church service and fired on worshippers Sunday, killing two people before he was shot to death by congregants who fired back, police said.

Authorities at a Sunday evening news conference praised the two congregants who opened

fire as part of a volunteer security team at West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement. It was unclear if the two people who were killed were the two who shot at the gunman.

"This team responded quickly and within six seconds, the shooting was over. Two of the parishioners who were volunteers of the security force drew their weapons and took out the killer immediately, saving untold number of

lives," said Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who also hailed the state's gun laws. Britt Farmer, senior minister of the church, said, "We lost two great men today, but it could have been a lot worse."

Authorities said there were more than 240 parishioners in the West Freeway Church at the time of the shooting.

White Settlement Police Department Chief J.P. Bevering said the gunman had sat down

in a pew before getting up, taking out a shotgun and firing at a parishioner, who was killed. He said the church's security team then "eliminated the threat."

Officials have not released the names of the victims or the gunman. FBI Special Agent in Charge Matthew DeSarno said they're working to identify the gunman's motive, adding that he is "relatively transient" but had roots in the area.

DAY AFTER REPORTS OF A TRUCE

Taliban say no plans for Afghan ceasefire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KABUL, DECEMBER 30

THE TALIBAN on Monday denied agreeing to any ceasefire in Afghanistan after rumours swirled of a potential deal that would see a reduction in fighting after more than 18 years of war.

The statement from the insurgents comes as local and international forces brace for another bloody winter amid renewed US-Taliban talks, after President Donald Trump called off the negotiations earlier this year over insurgent attacks.

"In the past few days, some media have been releasing untrue reports about a ceasefire... The fact is that, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has no ceasefire plans," the Taliban said, after multiple media reports, including a story in the *Wall Street Journal*, suggested the group was on the verge of announcing some type of temporary truce.

The US and the Afghan government in Kabul have long called for a ceasefire with the Taliban, including during the year of negotiations between Washington and the militants that were abruptly called off by



According to an Associated Press report, the release from jail of around 5,000 Taliban prisoners has been written into the agreement under discussion with the US. AP

Trump in September.

However, the insurgents have repeatedly stated that any potential truce will only be ironed out after American troops withdraw from the country.

The US-Taliban talks, held mainly in Doha, were aimed at allowing Washington to begin withdrawing troops in return for various security guarantees.

They were on the brink of a deal when Trump abandoned the effort in September, citing Taliban violence. Negotiations have since restarted in Doha, but were earlier this month put on a "pause".

Trump is looking to slash the troop presence in Afghanistan, potentially even before a deal between Washington and the Taliban is cemented.

Deadly bouts of fighting continue however, with tens of thousands of Afghan security forces killed since they inherited combat operations from NATO at the end of 2014.

Earlier Monday, in northern Afghanistan's Jowzjan province, the Taliban killed at least 13 Afghan security forces during a raid on a pro-government militia position.

TURKEY

124 held over suspected links to IS group

Ankara: Police in Turkey detained at least 124 people suspected of links to the Islamic State group, the state-run news agency reported Monday, in an apparent sweep against the militant group ahead of New Year celebrations. At least 33 foreign nationals were detained in the capital Ankara in a joint operation by anti-terrorism police and the national intelligence agency, according to the Anadolu Agency. In Istanbul, police raided 31 houses, detaining 24 suspects, including four foreign nationals.

BRITAIN

I wouldn't have wasted my time on Trump: Greta

London: Teenage climate change activist Greta Thunberg said on Monday that talking to US President Donald Trump at a United Nations summit on global warming would have been a waste of time since he would not have paid any attention. In an interview with BBC radio's *Today* programme, for which she was the guest editor on Monday, Thunberg also said she regarded personal attacks on her as funny and that she hoped to go back to having a normal life.

US airstrikes on Iran-backed militia in Iraq and Syria kill 25

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BAGHDAD, DECEMBER 30

AN IRANIAN-BACKED militia said on Monday that the death toll from US military strikes in Iraq and Syria against its fighters has risen to 25, vowing to exact revenge for the "aggression of evil American ravens."

The announcement in Baghdad came a day after US Defence Secretary Mark Esper said Washington carried out strikes targeting the Iranian-backed Iraqi militia blamed for a rocket attack that killed an American contractor in Iraq last week.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the strikes send the message that the US will not tolerate actions by Iran that jeopardize American lives. The US military said "precisi-

EXPLAINED Escalating tensions between US, Iran

THE US strikes on the Iran-backed militia come just a few months after a flare up in US-Iran tensions. After the Trump administration pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions on the country, Tehran's proxies, especially the Houthis rebels in Yemen, have attacked Saudi oil facilities and oil tankers belonging to US-allied Gulf countries. This led to a period of high tension in which the US came close to taking military action against Iran. However, this is the first recent US strike on an Iran-backed group. Iran responded angrily, calling the airstrikes acts of terror. Whether this will lead to another period of escalated tension remains to be seen.

sion defensive strikes" were conducted against five sites of Kataeb Hezbollah, or Hezbollah Brigades in Iraq and Syria.

"Our battle with America and its mercenaries is now open to all possibilities," Kataeb

Hezbollah said in a statement around midnight Sunday.

The US blames the militia for a rocket barrage on Friday that killed a US defence contractor at a military compound near Kirkuk, in northern Iraq.

Sudan sentences 27 intel agents to death over teacher's killing

REUTERS
KHARTOUM, DECEMBER 30

A SUDANESE court sentenced 27 members of the national intelligence service to death by hanging on Monday over the killing of a teacher in detention in February during protests that led to the overthrow of former president Omar al-Bashir.

It was the first time courts have handed down convictions over crackdowns on demonstrations in the months before and after Bashir was toppled in April.

The death of teacher Ahmed al-Khair in the eastern town of Khashm al-Qirba became a rallying point during 16 weeks of protests against Bashir's rule.

Cyprus: Woman who accused 12 men of rape convicted of 'public mischief'

LIZZY IOANNIDOU & ILIANA MAGRA
PARALIMNI, DECEMBER 30

A BRITISH woman was convicted by a Cyprus court on Monday for lying to the authorities when she accused a dozen Israeli men of raping her and later retracted her statement, the latest twist in a case that divided public opinion in Cyprus and Israel.

The British woman, who was 19 when she made the accusation and has not been publicly identified, had accused the men, who ranged in age from 15 to 18, of raping her in a hotel room in the resort town of Ayia Napa in July. The men were arrested that month but were later released after the police said the woman had retracted the accusations. Marios Christou, the chief in-



Activists protest after a British woman was found guilty of faking a rape claim, in Paralimni, Cyprus. Reuters

vestigating officer in the case, testified during the legal proceedings that she had "admitted that she reported the incident" because the men "were recording her having sex" and "she felt insulted." He also pointed to inconsistencies between her statement and video footage from the night on which

she said she was raped. On Monday, the Famagusta District Court in Cyprus convicted her of public mischief. She is due to be sentenced on Jan 7 and could face up to a year in prison. She can appeal the verdict, and her lawyers have asked for a suspended sentence. **NYT**

Lanka ex-minister held for news conference gets bail

ASSOCIATED PRESS
COLOMBO, DECEMBER 30

A SRI Lankan court granted bail Monday to a former Cabinet minister who was arrested for participating in a news conference about abductions of critics under the government of the current President's brother.

Police arrested Rajitha Senaratne, now an opposition lawmaker, last week at a private hospital where he was receiving treatment.

Opposition lawmakers have criticised his detention, saying it is politically motivated and is

part of a government witch hunt of political opponents that has taken place since President Gotabaya Rajapaksa assumed duties last month.

Police arrested Senaratne on Friday, and he continued to remain at the hospital under the detention of prison guards.

On Monday, a magistrate court granted him bail on two sureties of 500,000 Sri Lankan rupees (\$2,766) each, said his lawyer Gunaratna Wanninayaka.

Senaratne was the second opposition lawmaker to be arrested and detained since Rajapaksa's election victory in November.

Gene-edited babies: China scientist gets jail term

SUI-LEE WEE
BEIJING, DECEMBER 30

A COURT in China on Monday sentenced He Jiankui, the researcher who shocked the global scientific community when he claimed that he had created the world's first genetically edited babies, to three years in prison for carrying out "illegal medical practices."

In a surprise announcement from a trial that was closed to the public, the court in the southern city of Shenzhen found He guilty of forging approval documents from ethics review boards to recruit couples in which the man had HIV and the woman did not, Xinhua, China's official news



He Jiankui

agency, reported. He had said he was trying to prevent HIV infections in newborns, but the state media Monday said he deceived the subjects and the medical authorities alike.

He, 35, sent the scientific world into an uproar last year

when he announced at a conference in Hong Kong that he had created the world's first genetically edited babies — twin girls.

On Monday, China's state media said his work had resulted in a third genetically edited baby, who had been previously undisclosed.

He pleaded guilty and was also fined \$430,000. In a brief trial, the court also handed down prison sentences to two other scientists who it said had "conspired" with him: Zhang Renli, who was sentenced to two years in prison, and Qin Jinzhou, who got a suspended sentence of one-and-a-half years.

The court held that the defendants, "in the pursuit of fame and profit, deliberately violated the relevant national regulations

on scientific and medical research and crossed the bottom line on scientific and medical ethics," Xinhua said.

US scientists who knew of He's plans are now under scrutiny. He's former academic adviser, Stephen Quake, a star Stanford University bioengineer and inventor, is facing a Stanford investigation into his interaction with his former student. Rice University has been investigating Michael Deem, He's doctoral adviser, because of allegations that he was actively involved in the project.

Quake said he had nothing to do with He's work. Deem has said he was present for parts of He's research, but his lawyers have denied he was actively involved. **NYT**

Bushfires reach Melbourne as heatwave fans Australia blazes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 30

FIRE THREATENED three Melbourne suburbs Monday, with residents warned it was too late to flee and they must "act immediately to survive", as a heatwave fuelled Australia's deadly bushfire crisis.

Authorities declared a bushfire emergency as an out-of-control blaze bore down on homes in Australia's second-biggest city. In Bundoora — just 16 kilometres north of the city centre and home to two major Australian university campuses — fire was "threatening homes and lives", Victoria Emergency said.

"You are in danger and need to act immediately to survive," the agency said in a message to residents. "The safest option is to take shelter indoors immediately. It is too late to leave." Local media showed images of water bombers flying over the neighbourhoods and families dousing their homes with water hoses in the hope of halting the fire's spread.

It is the latest emergency in Australia's devastating summer fire season, which has been turbocharged by a prolonged drought and climate change.

Ten people have been killed, more than 1,000 homes destroyed and more than three million hectares — an area bigger than Belgium — have been scorched.

Conditions worsened on Friday with high winds and temperatures soaring across the country — reaching 47 degrees Celsius in Western Australia and topping 40 degrees in every region.

DISPUTE OVER LONG WORK HOURS CAPTIVATES COUNTRY

A 7-Eleven in Japan might close for a day; yes, that's a big deal

BEN DOOLEY & HISAKO UENO
HIGASHI-OSAKA, DECEMBER 30

MITOSHI MATSUMOTO, the most famous 7-Eleven convenience store owner in Japan, wants to do something unthinkable in his 24-hour, 7-day-a-week industry: Take a day off.

That's why, he says, 7-Eleven is trying to put him out of business.

Matsumoto announced in November his plans to close up shop so he and his two full-time employees could take off New Year's Day, Japan's most important holiday, after years of working 14-hour days with few breaks. But on Dec 20, 7-Eleven's parent company told him that

his store had received more customer complaints than any other in Japan. He had 10 days to address the issues, it said, or the location would be closed.

"They don't want to let me take New Year's off. That's all there is to it," said Matsumoto, 57, who has made a name for himself in Japan by publicly defying the company's demands that franchisees stay open 24 hours. "If they allow me to do this, others will start rising up here and there."

His decision in February to shorten store hours inspired other franchisees to demand that 7-Eleven allow them to do the same. But the company has been slow to change, he said, so he decided to take New Year's off in protest.

The standoff has super-



Outside the convenience store owned by Mitoshi Matsumoto in Higashi-Osaka, Japan. NYT

charged a national debate over the business practices of the country's 24-hour convenience store industry. Japan's declining

population has made workers harder to find. Tales of punishing work schedules have struck a chord in a country that holds a

sometimes lethal corporate devotion to working long hours.

Last year, the labor ministry approved 246 claims related to hospitalization or death from overwork, according to government statistics, which show the retail industry as one of the biggest sources of complaints. Another 568 workers took their own lives over job-related exhaustion.

But even as convenience store owners are suffering under increasingly long hours, the country's three biggest convenience store chains — 7-Eleven, Lawson and FamilyMart — have been reluctant to change the 24-hour schedule that Japanese shoppers have come to expect.

In a letter to Matsumoto, 7-Eleven said it received 78 com-

plaints about his store this year. In a statement, it said that the threat to sever the contract was based on the complaints and on the "destruction of the relationship of trust" caused by his criticisms on social media of 7-Eleven's management.

Matsumoto and his supporters say 7-Eleven is trying to make an example of the man who has become the face of the resistance against a company that they say exploits their labour.

"Owners can't organise, because the second you try, they home in on you and apply pressure," said Reiji Kamakura, the leader of the Convenience Store Union, a small group that has struggled to gain members and change industry practices in the

face of corporate opposition.

Though it got its start in Texas in the 1920s, 7-Eleven has been controlled by a Japanese company since 1991. Today, it operates nearly 40% of Japan's more than 55,000 convenience stores.

That makes 7-Eleven an integral part of Japanese life. The government considers convenience stores part of the country's infrastructure, like highways and sewers. They are expected to help promote regional tourism and to help with local policing by offering a safe place for people to flee to. Its stores can be called on to help distribute aid and supplies during a natural disaster.

The vast majority of Japanese 7-Elevens are owned by individuals like Matsumoto. **NYT**

Classifieds

PERSONAL

My name is wrongly written in my 10th, 12th Marksheet as Harish Rawat S/O Durga Singh Rawat, Therefore I informs that my correct name be known as Harish Singh Rawat S/O Durga Singh R/O-E-664(A), Qutub-Vihar,Phase-2, Goyla-Dairy, New-Delhi. 0040525943-8

I, Vishnuddt Khandelwal, S/O Mangtu Ram, R/O-753 Shyam- Colony Hodal-Palwal Haryana. Have Change Name To Vishnu Dutt for all. 0040525943-3

I, Kumari Rachna Mall, R/O-Flat-507, Supertech-507,Supertech-Vaishali, Sector-5, Ghaziabad, have change my name, from Kumari Rachna Mall, for all future purposes. 0040525943-2

I, Intizar Ali S/O Anwar Ali R/O-174/A J-Extn. Gali.No.5, Laxmi-Nagar, Delhi-110092. have changed my name to Intezar Ali. 0040525933-3

I Rohini Pandhari Basunde S/O Pandhari Laxman Basunde, H.No-185/8/Sf, urudwara Wali-Gali, Arjun-Nagar, N.Delhi 110029, changed my name To Rohini Basunde. 0040525943-9

PUBLIC NOTICE My client Mr. Anand Kumar S/O Prakash and Sh. Satish Chandra Chawla intend to buy DDA Built LIG Flat No.AC-IV/46-A/1002 located at Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088. Any person (s) or institution having any title, interest or any claim in the said flat should file his movable & immovable properties due to their misdeeds/unlawful activities & intensions etc. a misadventure in future they are not entitled for any claim for movable & immovable of my client. If any person or institution between them my client's family still not be liable for their misadventure. Shreshth Jain (Advocate) R/O-3, LGF Vikas Nagar, New Delhi-110024

PUBLIC NOTICE I am hereby informed that my client Smt. Madan Singh S/O Late Arjun Singh R/O-C-140, Chander Vihar Mandirwal, New Delhi-110024 has passed away. My client's name is Arjun Singh & his wife Smt. Asha Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal. Public notice is her by given for and on behalf of my client pushpa (Rastogi) do hereby for the disown my daughters Ms. Sarita Rastogi(Gupta), Ms. Neeta Rastogi & Ms. Prabha Rastogi from all my properties, inheritance and all rights, titles, interest or any claim in all of assets, all three shall not get inheritance right from my estate in any manner from my own will and accord. If anyone claiming any right in my estate shall null and void. SANJAY MISHRA ADVOCATE Chamber No.169, Civil Court, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE Public notice is hereby informed that my client Mrs. Bina Soni S/O Late Arjun Singh R/O-C-140, Chander Vihar Mandirwal, New Delhi-110024 has passed away. My client's name is Arjun Singh & his wife Smt. Asha Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal & his wife Smt. Anshu Jaiswal. Public notice is her by given for and on behalf of my client pushpa (Rastogi) do hereby for the disown my daughters Ms. Sarita Rastogi(Gupta), Ms. Neeta Rastogi & Ms. Prabha Rastogi from all my properties, inheritance and all rights, titles, interest or any claim in all of assets, all three shall not get inheritance right from my estate in any manner from my own will and accord. If anyone claiming any right in my estate shall null and void. SANJAY MISHRA ADVOCATE Chamber No.169, Civil Court, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi-110054

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I, Nisha (D/o Shri Baldev) W/o Shri Arun Kumar Kaushik R/O GH-2/55A, Ankur Apartments, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110063 have changed my name to Nisha Kaushik for all purposes. 0050160406-1

I, Rajendra Singh, S/O Sh. Gyan Singh, R/O- House No.2A, Plot.No.B-60, VasantKunj Enclave, Vasant-Kunj, New-Delhi-110070. Have changed my name to Narender Bajaj. 0040525923-1

I, Rajendra Singh, S/O Sh. Gyan Singh, R/O- House No.2A, Plot.No.B-60, VasantKunj Enclave, Vasant-Kunj, New-Delhi-110070. Have changed my name to Narender Bajaj. 0040525923-1

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उत्तर प्रदेश पर्यटन राज्य परिवहन निगम लि. द्वारा नवकाज नाविकसय में (दिनांक 17.01.2020 में 23.01.2020 तक) पर्यटकों को सार्वजनिक कौशल के अनुरोध के तहत नौकायात्रा पर प्रतिबंधित की जा रही है।

NOTICE FOR VENDOR REGISTRATION FOR SUPPLY OF MEDICAL STORES IN MILITARY HOSPITAL, AGRA FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2020-21

मोतीलाल नेहरू राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान इलाहाबाद Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology Allahabad

अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान (एमएस), भुवनेश्वर ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), BHUBANESWAR

Delhi transport Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. An Enterprises of Govt. of NCT of Delhi. ISBT Kashmere Gate Delhi- 110006

VEHICLE FOR SALE E-Auction 15 day Sale Notice for Sale of Movable Assets in exercise of the powers conferred under Hypothecation agreement.

DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH) II JAL SADAN: LAJPAT NAGAR: NEW DELHI

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 743/2019-20 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH) II

I, Suman Panwar W/O-Rajesh Panwar H.No-265-A, Near- Badli Singh Chowk, Shahpur-Jat, Delhi-110049. Have changed My Name To Suman Rana. 0040525943-10

I, Sangeeta Sharma W/O Uttam Kumar Mishra R/O-WZ-68/G/1-Block, Uttam-Nagar, Delhi-110059. have changed my name to SANGEETA MISHRA. 0040525923-7

I, Chandrashekhar Shyamsunder Sharma S/O Shyam Sunder Sharma R/O Ugm-1 UGF D/gm-1 Ajnara Enclave Block-D Chander Nagar Ghaziabad U.P.-201011, have changed my name to Chandrashekhar Sharma for all purposes. 0040525924-1

I, Bibi Fatima W/O Ramzan Khan R/O-79/15, Yellow-Quarter, Near-Police Chowk, Lohi-Nagar, Ghaziabad. have changed my name to Fatma. 0040525929-1

I, Bablu S/O Munne Khan R/O Kh.No.447, Gali.No.3, Gurunanak-Nagar, Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi-110042 have changed my name to Irshad. 0040525929-3

I, Savitri W/O Late shri kishan Lal R/O-7/240 patparganj-village Delhi-91, inform that my date of birth has been wrongly-mentioned as- 25/01/1971 and 01/01/1971 in my pan card and Aadhar card the correct date of birth is- 07/01/1966. 0040525952-11

I, Ruchi Chadha W/O Harash Kumar Chadha R/O-M-22, Gujrat-Sargodha C.G.H.S Ltd, Plot.No.-38, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi-110085.Changed My Name To Khusham. 40525952-10

I, Rosy Janak Chauhan W/O Janak R/O-MIG Flat.No.415 Pocket-C-8 Sector-8 Rohini Delhi-85.changed my name to Rosy Janak. 0040525929-9

I, Arachana Gupta W/O Vinay Kumar Gupta R/O-F-2,Abhi Appt.,4/18, Sec-5,Rajendra Nagar,Sahibabad Ghaziabad-201005,Uttar Pradesh,have changed my name to Archana Gupta permanently.40525903-2

I, Anil Kumar Nim S/O Hukum Singh R/O-9/6554, Gali.No-1 Dev-Nagar Karol-Bagh N.Delhi-110005.Changed My Name To Anil Nim. 0040525958-7

I, Rekha Rani W/O Mukesh Kumar R/O-1985/1 Railway Road Pana Udyan Narela Delhi-110040.,changed My Name To Rekha Mangla. 0040525914-7

I, Rajmukar Sharma S/O Ram Nath R/O H.No.2390, Chhipiwara Kalan, Gali Nal Wali, Chandni Chowk, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Raj Kumar for all purposes. 0040525874-1

I, Ajai Prakash R/O 7 Way Lane, Jopling Road, 27/12/4 Raja Ram Mohan Rai Marg, Lucknow have changed my minor son's name from Parth to Parth Parth for all purposes. 0040525958-6

I, Abdul Gani S/O Najir Khan R/O 56,Village Chinchrol, Ghunjhuna, Rajasthan-335501.Have Changed My Name To Abdul Ganni. 0040525952-6

I, Mohan kumar adhikari S/O Megh adhikari Add-rz-d-302 galino-9 shad Nagar palam-colony New-Delhi-110045.changed my name to Mohan adhikari 0040525958-8

I, Rahul s/o Ami Lal Resident R-497-498, Camp No.5, Jwala Puri Delhi-110087, have changed my name to Rahul Kamwal. 0040525921-1

I, RAJA YADAV S/O BADRI NARAYAN YADAV R/O-H.No.881,Bangali-Mohalla,Satnagar, Old-Faridabad,Haryana-121002 have changed my name to RAJ YADAV. 0040525929-4

I, Abinaash Roy Verma S/O-Sanjeev Kumar Verma R/O G-6-407, 2nd Floor, Sec-16,Rohini,Delhi-89 Have Changed My Name To Avenaash Roy Verma. 0040525952-8

I, Priya Arora W/O Varun Nijhwan R/O-A-309, A-Block Vikasपुरी Delhi changed my name to Priya Nijhwan. 0040525929-10

I, Naseeb S/O Hari Krishan R/O-Vpo, Mayna Distt-Rohatak, Haryana-124001. Have Changed My Name To Naseeb Panghal. 0040525517-8

I, Wasim Ahmad/Waseem Ahmad S/O-Kafeel Ahmad H.No-3537, 1st-Floor, Jatwara-Street, Darya Ganj, Delhi-110002. Have Changed My Name To Waseem Ahmed Ali. 0040525943-4

I, Beena Pandey W/O Abhishek Kr. Pandey R/O-C-61,Flat No.7,Second Floor,Vishwas Park,Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059. have changed my name to Veena Pandey. 40525933-10

I, Masar Nath Bhati S/O Ratan Nath R/O-B-1550, Shastri Nagar, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to Masar Nath for all purposes. 0040525873-1

I, Kumari Vijay D/o Birbal Singh R/O-A-42/2, A-Block,Street.No.8, West-Vinod-Nagar, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to Vijay Sajwan. 0040525933-4

I, Ved Gupta S/O-Shri Pal Gupta R/O-C-4/39 Sector-6 Rohini Delhi-110085.Have Changed My Name To Ved Kishore Gupta. 0040525914-6

I, Varun Chaudhry R/O ZS-18 Shiva Enclave A4 Paschim Vihar Delhi changed my name to VARUN CHAUDHARY for all purpose 0070690460-1

I, Niseeb S/O Hari Krishan R/O-Vpo, Mayna Distt-Rohatak, Haryana-124001. Have Changed My Name To Naseeb Panghal. 0040525517-8

Pradeshik Cooperative Dairy Federation Ltd. 29 Park Road, Lucknow-226001, Ph: 0522-2236469. NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) (E-tender mode only) E-NIT No. 12/PCDF/MU/Aluminium Cant'19 Dated: 27.12.19

Government of Jharkhand Deoghar Municipal Corporation, Deoghar. Very Short term e-Procurement Notice Inviting Tender NIT No. 45/2019-20 Date: 30/12/2019

State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP II) Revenue & Forests Department (Relief and Rehabilitation) Mantralaya, Mumbai 400032. Adv. No: DMU/CR-195/DM-1 Date: 31st December 2019

J&K Bank. NOTICE FOR INVITING TENDER On-line Request for Proposal (RFP) for Supply, Installation, Integration, Commissioning and Ongoing Maintenance of Application Delivery Controller Load balancer.

Table with 7 columns: Sl. No., Tender Reference No., Name of Work, Estimated Cost, Earnest Money, Cost of Tender, Time Period. It lists three renovation and construction projects in Deoghar.

Table with 6 columns: Name of Work, Reference No., Estimated Cost of Work, Bid Security, Cost of Document, Period of Completion. It details the renovation of Saline Embankment at Vadiv Taluka & District Palghar Maharashtra.

Office of the Executive Engineer Road Construction Department, Road Division, Seraikella-Kharsawan. Very Short-Term e-Procurement Notice (2nd Call) e-Tender Reference no.- RCD/SERAIKELA/21 Dated:-30.12.2019

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION BHUBANESWAR. NOTICE INVITING BID NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

VARANASI SMART CITY LTD. (VSCL) Municipal Corporation Varanasi. NOTICE INVITING TENDER (e-tender) NIT No.: 12/VSCL/TENDER/2019-20 Date : 30.12.2019

Table with 4 columns: Sl. No., Name of the project, Tender Fee non-refundable (Rs.), Earnest Money Deposit (Rs.). It lists two projects related to audio-visual IT solutions for ghats and temples in Varanasi.

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER: DISTRICT CENTRAL 14, DARYA GANJ, NEW DELHI-110002. E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Delhi Agricultural Marketing Board (Govt. of NCT of Delhi) 9, Institutional Area, Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058. NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

CANARA BANK (A Govt. of India Undertaking). RECOVERY & LEGAL SECTION CIRCLE OFFICE, BAYSITE 17-18, SECTOR 12 KARNAL- 132001 HARYANA. MEGA E-AUCTION OF PROPERTIES

Table with 11 columns: Sr. No., Branch Name/Address, Brief Description of Property, Possession Type, Total Liabilities, Reserve Price, Earnest Money Deposit, Bid increase amount, Name of Authorised Officer, Earnest Money Collection, Date of E-Auction. It details several immovable properties for auction.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002. There are NIL encumbrances to the knowledge of bank in the above mentioned properties. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in M/s CANBANK COMPUTER SERVICES LIMITED

Table with 11 columns: Sr. No., Branch Name/Address, Brief Description of Property, Possession Type, Total Liabilities, Reserve Price, Earnest Money Deposit, Bid increase amount, Name of Authorised Officer, Earnest Money Collection, Date of E-Auction. It details several immovable properties for auction.

STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002. There are NIL encumbrances to the knowledge of bank in the above mentioned properties. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in M/s CANBANK COMPUTER SERVICES LIMITED

EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY 1, 2020

Home loans set to get cheaper as SBI cuts external benchmark-based rate by 25 bps

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

SETTING THE stage for another round of cut in lending rates, State Bank of India (SBI) — the country's largest lender — on Monday announced a sharp cut of 25 basis points in its external benchmark-based rate (EBR) to 7.80 per cent per annum from 8.05 per cent per annum, effective January 1, 2020.

As a result of the move, new homebuyers will now be able to avail themselves of home loans beginning 7.9 per cent, which is 25 basis points lower than the current offering of 8.15 by SBI.

“With this reduction, interest rate for existing home loan customers as well as MSME borrowers who have availed loans linked to External Benchmark Based Rate would come down by 25 bps,” said SBI in a statement.

On December 9, SBI reduced its Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rate (MCLR) by

EXPLAINED

Decision to prompt other lenders to follow suit

A SHARP cut in lending rate by SBI comes despite the RBI taking a pause in its December monetary policy announcement. While it shows that banks are still catching up to the repo rate cuts by RBI, the decision by the largest lender is set to prompt others to follow suit and thereby benefit the existing and new homebuyers.

10 basis points.

While EBR is linked to repo rate, MCLR is based on the banks cost of funds.

Other banks also joined the move to cut rates following SBI's move, Indian Bank announced a downward revision in its MCLR with effect from January 3, 2020. While it revised its MCLR to 7.90 per cent as against the existing 7.95 per cent for overnight tenors,

for tenors of one year it would be revised to 8.3 per cent from the current 8.35 per cent, Indian Bank said in a BSE filing.

Other banks and housing finance companies are also expected to follow the move. While SBI had introduced floating rate home loans from July 1, 2019, the lender had adopted repo rate as the external benchmark for all floating rate loans for

MSME, housing and retail loans from October 1, 2019, after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) mandated all banks to link a certain categories of loans to external benchmark-based interest rate.

The RBI decision came after the regulator noted that the banks were delaying the transmission of reduction in repo rate by the RBI. Repo rate is the rate at which the RBI lends to commercial banks.

Between February and October, the RBI has cumulatively reduced repo rate by 135 basis points but the weighted average lending rate (WALR) on fresh rupee loans sanctioned by banks declined by 44 basis points so far.

While the RBI did not go for another rate cut in its December policy and took a pause, it said, “Going forward, transmission is expected to improve with the introduction of the external benchmark system, as most banks have linked their lending rates to the policy repo rate of

the Reserve Bank.”

In the past, the RBI has accepted that monetary transmission has remained staggered and incomplete.

A look into the RBI's successive statements show that the transmission in WALR on fresh rupee loans of commercial banks has remained slow. If the transmission was 21 basis points out of the cumulative 50 basis point cut in repo rate in February and April 2019, the RBI in its August statement said that banks reduced their WALR on fresh rupee loans by 29 bps during February-June 2019.

There was been no transmission of the 35 basis point cut in repo rate in August. In its October policy, the RBI said, “As against the cumulative policy repo rate reduction of 110 bps during February-August 2019, the weighted average lending rate (WALR) on fresh rupee loans of commercial banks declined by 29 bps.”

PRABHARAGHAVAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

INDIA'S EXISTING and stalled bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) slowly garnered more attention from the government this year, even as it was trying to conclude seven year-long negotiations to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) — the world's “largest” regional trade pact. Despite the country now having backed out of the mega trade deal, its renewed interest on its other trade pacts, several of which have failed to deliver the results expected, has set the tone for its focus in the coming year.

In the words of the Commerce Ministry, Indian industry and services will be competitive and benefit from access to “large developed markets.”

This includes forging stronger economic ties with regions like the EU, with which FTA talks were initiated in 2007 but fell through.

“The India-EU FTA, to my mind, are countries where India has a number of products, which we can export, which we can benefit from... Currently, there is no discussion on the FTA. It was aborted several years ago,” Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said last month. Since India's walk out from RCEP, Goyal has made more statements at different forums about taking forward these discussions.

“I think some progress could be made on EU in the coming year. This also depends on how issues like the EU's push for concessions in agriculture and India's demand for market access for its services sector are resolved,” said Durgesh Rai, fellow, ICRIER. “Whether the two can close a deal in the coming year is difficult to say. But, one thing is for certain — our willingness to move forward with EU has definitely increased,” he said.

A trade package with the US in the spotlight earlier this year may also be a priority for the government. In October, Goyal said the two countries had “almost resolved the broad contours” of a trade package though nothing has fructified yet.

India and the US have been try-

TRADE BALANCE IN 2018-19

| Region | India's Trade Balance in 2018-19 |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| US* | 16.86 |
| UK* | 1.75 |
| New Zealand* | -0.25 |
| EU (excluding UK)* | -3.01 |
| Japan | -7.91 |
| Australia* | -9.61 |
| South Korea | -12.05 |
| ASEAN | -21.85 |
| China | -53.58 |

All figures in \$ billion

*India currently does not have an FTA with these regions.

Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

ing to resolve trade-related issues that caused the Trump administration to withdraw India's benefits under its Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) programme in June, prompting the Modi government to respond with retaliatory tariffs. “There was a lot of expectation that they (the government) were going to take definite steps in the US deal. That, too, doesn't seem to be the case, even though the US talks are the more realistic option out of the government's proposed negotiations at the moment,” said Biswajit Dhar, professor at Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

“We can see at least some road map or framework for way forward with the EU, but with the US, it is more complicated. It is more political and also depends on how far the other side is able to move on certain issues,” said ICRIER's Rai. India is also keen on revising its existing trade agreements with most RCEP nations, even while it remains firm on staying out of the larger trading pact. “RCEP had become nothing but an India-China FTA, which nobody wants,” said Goyal earlier this month.

In September, before India walked out of RCEP, the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) bloc — a major chunk of the RCEP group — agreed to review their FTA

in goods with the country to simplify them for businesses. Official involved in this review are expected to submit an update at the 17th consultation of ASEAN Economic Ministers to be held next year. This is also crucial as India, currently, has a trade deficit with all RCEP countries because its industries have not been able to take advantage of these FTAs.

It has been pushing for similar reviews with Japan and South Korea, two other RCEP nations, but some trade experts feel that it should also be pursuing fresh FTAs with some of the other remaining countries in the mega trade deal. “They should try to get FTAs with Australia and New Zealand as well... so whatever the potential damage we may see from India not joining RCEP can be reduced,” said Rai. Meanwhile, some experts feel the government needs to reassure all stakeholders that it can lift the economy out of its current state before moving ahead with trade agreements.

“The RCEP decision was taken two months ago, and, since then there are no signs that the economy has improved,” said Dhar. “Hemorrhaging of the manufacturing sector has subsided... but rating agencies show that the country is still in the middle of a crisis,” he said.

“The government had earlier chosen the easier option of monetary policy as a solution, but this kind of supply-side measure didn't have any impact on the economy. What we need now is certain fiscal measures to crack this logjam,” he said. Dhar and Rai expect the Centre to be cautious in taking potential trade deals forward in 2020, a sentiment that already seems to be echoed by Goyal.

“I think the lessons to be learnt are that we should never finalise a trade agreement in a hurry, with a timeline like it was done in 2010 or 2011 with Japan, with Korea, with Malaysia, with ASEAN countries,” Goyal said soon after the RCEP deal fell through.

“I can assure all of you that going forward, none of the FTAs will be settled in a hurry or will be settled to the disadvantage of Indian industry and exporters,” the Minister said in a separate forum earlier this month.

POLICY WATCH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

NITI Aayog set to take up financing exercise with 'historically backward' states

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

GOVERNMENT THINK tank NITI Aayog plans to conduct a financing exercise with states that have been “historically backward” in development to ensure that India can achieve its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on time.

“There is consensus on all levels that unless these States make significant progress, India will find it challenging to achieve its SDG targets on time. NITI Aayog has started working closely with these States, enabling them in establishing SDG monitoring systems and supporting them in forging partnerships for building institutions, capacity, knowledge and convergence,” stated the body in its SDG India Index 2019 report.

Bihar, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh and Assam were among the worst performers in terms of their progress towards achieving these SDGs, shows the report.

NITI Aayog has already begun estimating the financial cost of achieving “key” SDGs in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund, stated the report. “As the next step of the collaboration, SDG financing exercise with select states is planned. Special attention is being given to the adoption, implementation, monitoring and financing of SDGs in states, which have been historically backward in development,” it stated.

“A comprehensive capacity building programme for the States, UTs, and local governments is being designed in partnership with the UN system. The training modules will extensively cover developing SDG monitoring framework, identifying and designing indicators, localisation, and dashboards,” it added.

The SDG India Index 2019 report, which evaluates the progress of states and Union Territories on social, economic and environmental parameters, found that India has managed to improve its average score on the back of improvements in five goals. However, it has stated that two goals — nutrition and gender — continued to be problem areas and demand special attention. In nutrition, food wastage and loss due to inefficient supply chain management remain a “major” concern, according to the report.

“While significant levels of food losses occur upstream, at harvest and during post-har-

Bihar and Jharkhand were among the worst performers in terms of their progress towards achieving these SDGs, as per the SDG India Index 2019 report

vest handling, a considerable quantity of food is lost or wasted during the distribution and consumption stages. Such food could be salvaged by timely withdrawing it from the distribution network, aggregating it and then redirecting it to the people in need,” stated the report.

“Challenges remain for wider adoption of climate-adaptive sustainable agricultural practices, new technology as well as agricultural development plans involving large swathes of land by small farmers, who often lack assets and resources and constitute more than 82 per cent of all farmers,” it added.

Crimes against women stood at around 3.60 lakh in 2017, with the crime rate increasing to 57.9 then, as against 56.6 in 2014, according to the report, which adds that “several” legislations have been enacted towards reforms to ensure gender rights and equality.

Several challenges still remain in achieving gender equality, including an “acute” data gap for gender equality in several sectors, especially for transgender people, stated the report. Other issues include declining female labour force participation, which currently stands at 17.5 per cent, and is characterised by aspects like a gender wage gap across sectors as high as 50-75 per cent.

The agriculture sector still has the “largest” share of women, and a “large” proportion of the population involved in informal employment also consists of women “with little or no social protection”. There is also inequality in women's access to and ownership of land. “In rural India, while 75 per cent of rural women workers are engaged in agriculture, women's operational landholding is only 13.96 per cent. The absence of land ownership limits their access to inputs, seeds, fertilisers, credit and agricultural extension services,” as per the report.

India will be presenting its second Voluntary National Review during the United Nations' High Level Political Forum in July 2020.

'Govt may breach fiscal deficit target in FY20'

The government might breach the fiscal deficit target this financial year amid drop in the revenue mobilisation, as per Dun & Bradstreet's Economy Forecast

NEED FOR FISCAL STIMULUS has increased even as the government finances remain “strained”

CORPORATE LIABILITIES are already higher, as per the report. The balance-sheets of corporates, government, banks and households remain constrained or weak and revenue collection will play an important role

Revenue collection will thus be important for the government to implement a fiscal stimulus. To do that, tax reforms are needed. GST should be simplified further, and direct tax collections should increase

OPTIMISM OF INDIA INC remains clouded and cautiousness among

REASONS

- Drop in revenue mobilisation of the government
- Likelihood of additional expenditure by the Centre



investors has increased over the various graft and compliance related issues in the financial sector
ON THE PRICES FRONT, the report said food inflation is expected to remain higher, given the supply disruptions as crops have been damaged in many

TARGET

The government has set a 3.3 per cent fiscal deficit target for the current fiscal

EFFECT OF BREACHING DEFICIT

Given the resource constraints, increase in fiscal deficit might lead to crowding out of private investments

states, exerting upward pressure to the CPI inflation
RETAIL INFLATION is likely to remain in the range of 6.3-6.5 per cent and WPI inflation to be in the range of 2.1-2.4 per cent during December 2019, respectively

Source: Dun & Bradstreet/PTI

IGST refunds worth ₹1.12 lakh cr paid to exporters: CBIC

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE FINANCE Ministry said on Monday IGST (Integrated GST) worth over Rs 1.12 lakh crore has been refunded to exporters and only Rs 3,604 crore is pending with the Customs department.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said while the focus is on quick disbursal of pending refunds to exporters, data analytics has been used to identify “risky” exporter entities, which take input tax credit (ITC) fraudulently and monetise it by paying IGST and taking refund thereof or taking refund of the accumulated ITC.

“Exporters have already been paid IGST (Integrated-GST) refund of over Rs 1.12 lakh crore and over 83,500 exporters have been benefited by these refunds. This shows that the government's efforts to fast track refunds under the GST, especially to exporters are yielding results,” it said.

IGST is a tax levied on all inter-state supplies of goods and/or services. IGST is applicable on any supply of goods and services in both cases of import and export from India.

The CBIC added refunds of only Rs 3,604 crore are pending; of about 1.85 lakh exporters, 6,421 (about 3.4 per cent only), including some “star exporters”, have been identified as risky and hence red-flagged.

“Even some of the ‘star ex-

PENDING REFUNDS

₹3,604 cr

■ The CBIC added refunds of only Rs 3,604 crore are pending; of about 1.85 lakh exporters, 6,421 (about 3.4 per cent only), including some “star exporters”, have been identified as risky and hence red-flagged. The Commerce Ministry gives ‘star’ status to exporters on export performance of the last three financial years

identified as risky and hence red-flagged.

“Even some of the ‘star ex-

porters’ are not traceable,” it added.

The risky exporters are being subject to KYC and verification process before the grant of refund. The verification, so far, has revealed that 1,241 exporters are not traceable at their given addresses, which include 8 “star exporters”.

In addition, adverse verification reports have been received in the case of 399 exporters, which also include 4 “star exporters”.

The Commerce Ministry gives “star” status to exporters on export performance of the last three financial years.

As per the CBIC, since the introduction of GST in July 2017, 77 per cent of India's exports have been under Letter of

Undertaking, which are unaffected by the verification exercise being done by its officials.

“Even in respect of the exporters identified as risky, the government is taking all necessary steps to expedite the verification,” said the CBIC.

At the same time, the government remains concerned about the misuse of the facility of ITC credit and refunds by few unscrupulous exporters, it added.

Export of goods or services is treated as a zero rated supply. An exporter supplies goods or services or both after paying the amount of IGST and can claim a refund of the amount of tax paid on such goods or services or both.

BEFORE THE DEAL, US CORN, SORGHUM, WHEAT FACED ADDITIONAL TARIFF OF 10% ON SHIPMENTS TO CHINA

How China tariffs on US commodities stand after Phase 1 trade deal

REUTERS
BEIJING/SINGAPORE, DEC 30

CHINA AND the United States recently agreed terms of a Phase 1 trade deal under which the United States reduced some tariffs and Beijing cancelled retaliatory duties that were scheduled to take effect on December 15.

Before the deal, US corn, sorghum, wheat, undenatured ethanol and refined copper cathodes had faced an additional tariff of 10 per cent on shipments to China. Propane, cotton, aluminium scrap, copper scrap and rare earth magnets were all set for an additional 5 per cent duty.

CRUDE OIL
 China imposed a 5 per cent tariff on US crude oil shipments from September 1, the first time US oil had been targeted since the trade war between the

Deal to be signed soon, indicate US, Chinese representatives

Washington: The White House's trade adviser on Monday said the US-China Phase 1 trade agreement would likely be signed in the next week, but said confirmation would come from US President Donald Trump or the US Trade Representative. White House trade ad-

viser Peter Navarro, in an interview on Fox News, cited a report that Chinese Vice Premier Liu He would visit this week to sign the deal, but did not confirm it. “Washington has sent an invitation and Beijing has accepted it,” the South China Morning Post on Monday quoted a source as saying. **REUTERS**

world's top two economies started more than a year ago. The 5 per cent tariff was not affected by Sunday's deal.

China removed an additional 5 per cent tariff on US propane shipments which was set to take effect from Dec. 1. A 25 per cent duty that China imposed on US propane on Aug. 23, 2018, remains in place. Chinese firms process US propane into petro-

barrels per day.
PROPANE
 China removed an additional 5 per cent tariff on US propane shipments which was set to take effect from Dec. 1. A 25 per cent duty that China imposed on US propane on Aug. 23, 2018, remains in place. Chinese firms process US propane into petro-

chemicals such as propylene. Imports last year were worth an estimated \$2 billion.

LNG

China imposed a 10 per cent punitive tariff on US LNG shipments in September 2018, raising it to 25 per cent in June. LNG duties were not affected by the deal. Imports of the super-chilled fuel in the first 10 months of 2019 shrank 87.2 per cent on the year to 258,955 tonnes, as per Chinese customs.

MEG

China imposed tariffs of 25 per cent on US methanol and MEG in June this year. These were not affected by the deal.

SOYBEANS

No additional duty had been scheduled to come into effect on Dec. 15. A 25 per cent tariff on soybeans in July 2018 had halted all buying by commercial buy-

ers, but Chinese crushers went back to the US market following a trade truce in December last year. An additional 5 per cent duty came into effect in September. The Chinese government has given tariff exemptions to some US soybean imports.

PORK

American pork faces total import duties of 72 per cent after including the 12 per cent “most-favoured nation” tariff. These duties were not changed in Sunday's deal, but China is expected to boost US meat imports. An outbreak of African swine fever in China has decimated the world's largest pig herd and sent domestic pork prices soaring to record levels. Total import tariffs on US pork will go down to 68 per cent in the new year, when tariff rate cut on frozen pork shipments takes effect

SCRAP METAL

An additional duty of 5 per cent on US aluminium scrap, which was to go into effect on Dec. 15, has been cancelled. The material was already affected by an initial 25 per cent tariff in April 2018, following by another 25 per cent increase in August 2018. Shipments to China were down only 17.3 per cent year-on-year in the first 10 months of 2019, but those of US scrap copper, subject to a 25 per cent tariff since August 2018, crashed by 76.6 per cent over the same period.

RARE EARTHS

China, which this year raised the prospect of restricting rare earth exports to the United States but has not announced any formal measures, removed the extra 5 per cent tariff on imports of US permanent rare earth magnets from December as part of the Phase 1 deal. There has been a 25 per cent tariff on US rare earth imports since June 2019.

RBI planning to limit exposure of UCBs to single, group borrowers

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) plans to restrict urban co-operative banks' (UCB) exposure to a single borrower and a group of connected borrowers at 10 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, of their tier-1 capital, show draft guidelines released by the central bank on Monday. At present, the limits are 15 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively. The revised exposure limits shall apply to all types of fresh exposures taken by UCBs. Further, UCBs will be required to bring down their existing exposures, which are in excess of the revised limits to the stipulated levels by March 31, 2023. At the same time, where the existing exposure comprises only term loans and non-fund based facilities, while no further exposure shall be taken on such borrowers, these facilities may be allowed to continue as per their respective repayment schedule or till maturity. The draft guidelines say that

As per the draft guidelines, RBI plans to restrict urban co-operative banks' exposure to a single borrower and a group of connected borrowers at 10% and 25%, respectively, of their tier-1 capital

UCBs shall have at least 50 per cent of their loan portfolio comprising loans of not more than Rs 25 lakh per borrower. The overall priority sector lending (PSL) target for UCBs will be increased from the present level of 40 per cent of adjusted net bank credit (ANBC) or credit equivalent amount of off-balance sheet exposure (CEOBSE), whichever is higher, to 75 per cent. UCBs will have to comply with the above target by March 31, 2023 in a staggered manner. UCBs shall prepare, with the approval of their boards, an action plan for compliance with the revised exposure norms and priority sector lending targets, the draft circular said. In the draft, the regulator said that the extant single/group exposure limits of UCBs have been reviewed, revised with a view to

DoT launches portal to track stolen, lost mobiles in Delhi

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE DEPARTMENT of Telecommunications (DoT) Monday launched a web portal for Delhi that would enable users to track and block mobile phones that are either stolen or get lost. The services, launched initially for Mumbai in September this year, will be rolled out pan-India in 2020, Union Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said. The portal, backed by the Central Equipment Identity Register, will help users facilitate blocking of stolen or lost mobile phones across mobile networks, Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash said. "They can go to the portal and register their complaint, along with which they will also have to upload the police complaint and their own ID proof.

USERS CAN REGISTER COMPLAINT AT PORTAL

- Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash said that users can go to the portal and register their complaint, along with which they will also have to upload the police complaint and their own ID proof
- The portal, backed by the Central Equipment Identity Register, will help users facilitate blocking of stolen or lost mobile phones across mobile networks, he added
- Once a phone is stolen or lost, grey marketers reprogramme the IMEI number of the handset, which results in cloning of the unique number. This in turn results in multiple handsets having the same IMEI number

Based on this, the lost mobile will be blocked. Also, if someone uses it, the same can be traced based on the tower signals so the police can also recover the device," he added. Nearly 40,000 mobile phones are stolen by miscreants in Delhi every year. Once stolen

blocked, there was a possibility of a number of mobile handsets being put out of service, Prakash said, explaining that with the new software, only the individual phone that has been stolen will be blocked and traced. The launch of the web portal, attended by Delhi's Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal, and police commissioner Amulya Patnaik, also saw Prasad criticising Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's decision to install close circuit television (CCTV) cameras all over Delhi.

In his veiled attack, Prasad said that speaking as the Law Minister, the question over privacy of individuals would arise as the images captured by CCTV cameras were likely to stay in the database forever. "These are issues which need to be analysed in a healthy, robust, democratic manner to find a solution," Prasad said.

RBI buys ₹10K-crore of long-term govt securities in 2nd special OMO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

IN THE second special open market operation (OMO), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday bought Rs 10,000 crore of long-term government securities and sold Rs 8,501 crore of three short-term bonds. The RBI had announced to purchase and sell simultaneously government securities under Open Market Operations for Rs 10,000 crore each last week. Though the central bank offered to sell four securities in the auction, it accepted bids for three bids only. In the OMO purchase of 6.45 per cent GS 2029, the 10-year benchmark security, the RBI received Rs 25,698 crore worth of

accepted 11, 12 and 8, respectively. For 8.12 per cent GS 2020 security, the RBI received 49 bids but did not accept any bid. In a similar auction held last week, the RBI had purchased and sold same securities in the market. The banking regulator had purchased Rs 10,000 crore of long-term government security while sold Rs 6,825 crore of four short-term securities. These special OMO auctions are similar to the US Federal Reserve's 'Operation Twist' aimed at faster transmission of policy rates, an analyst said. The central bank has reduced repo rate by 135 basis points between February and October this year, but there has been a delay in passing on the cut in repo rate by lenders.

'Negative outlook for renewable energy sector amid delays in project execution, payments'

Ratings agency ICRA has revised its outlook for India's renewable energy (RE) sector from stable to negative amid delays in payments from discoms and execution of projects

OUTLOOK
ICRA said it expects no growth in capacity addition in FY2020 and will remain at about 8.5-9.0 GW, similar to FY2019

COMPARISON WITH PAST PERFORMANCE
Compared to 5.6 per cent in FY15, the share of RE-based generation in the overall generation mix at all-India level is rising, as seen from an increase to 9.2 per cent in FY2019

- HEADWINDS**
- Long delays in payments by state distribution utilities
 - Delays in projects bid out over past two years
 - Difficulties in acquiring land for projects
 - Securing transmission connectivity
 - Financing in a timely manner

- REASONS**
- Large sized capacity addition in the wind and solar power segments
 - Improved tariff competitiveness of wind and solar power vis-a-vis conventional power sources

SLOWDOWN in tendering of wind and solar PV projects by 37 per cent to 10.6 GW in 9 months CY2019 from 16.7 GW in the year-ago period

CAPACITY ADDITION in FY20 will be primarily driven by the solar power segment

AVERAGE BID TARIFFS discovered in the auctions for wind and solar power projects in 2019 so far remained at ₹2.7-2.8 per unit. While this is higher than the low of ₹2.4 per unit discovered in 2018, the tariffs continue to remain less than ₹3.0 per unit, given the imposition of tariff cap by the nodal agencies

Source: Icria/PTI

IFIN reports standalone loss of ₹13,275 cr in FY19

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

IL&FS FINANCIAL Services (IFIN) reported a net loss on a standalone basis of Rs 13,274.52 crore in the financial year 2018-19, compared with a profit of Rs 9.5 crore in the previous fiscal. The company's exposure to non-performing assets (NPAs), expressed as "Stage 3" assets, increased to Rs 12,429.64 crore, compared with an exposure of Rs 2,249.98 crore in FY18. Total liabilities of the non-banking financial company (NBFC) fell 8.76 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) to Rs 16,635.72 crore, while total assets in FY19 fell 79.5 per cent to Rs 3,831.16 crore. As on March 31, 2019, IFIN's total borrowings stood at Rs 8,866.32 crore, up 2.75 per cent y-o-y. Cash and cash equivalents of the NBFC rose 20 per cent y-o-y in FY19 to Rs 964.90 crore.

IFIN's total default amount as on March 31, 2019, stood at Rs 4,628.12 crore, excluding the inter-tenancies post-October aggregating to Rs 392.09 crore. The government-appointed board of IL&FS has made a provision of Rs 11,358.54 crore on account of credit risk and impairment of investments, the firm stated in its annual report. The company started defaulting on debt obligations in August 2018, following which the government had in October 2018 suspended the erstwhile board of IL&FS group companies and replaced it with a another board led by Uday Kotak. The total debt obligations of the IL&FS group companies is close to Rs 1 lakh crore. IFIN, registered as a non-deposit NBFC with the RBI, is required to maintain regulated capital adequacy ratio of minimum 15 per cent, with minimum Tier-1 capital of 10 per cent. **FE**

42,500 MT of onion available, send your demand: Paswan asks states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

WITH RETAIL prices of onions soaring above Rs 100 per kg in most cities, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan said Monday that about 42,500 metric tonnes (MT) of onions is available for supply. He asked states to send their requirements for onion to his department and the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED). "As per target fixed, consignments of imported onion have started arriving from 15 December onwards and approx 42,500 MT of onion stock is available. I request State govt to send their demand to Department of Consumer Affairs and NAFED to augment the Onion supply in their State," Paswan said in a tweet. According to data available on the portal of Department of Consumer Affairs, which monitors the movements in retail and wholesale prices of 22 commodities, retail prices of onion on Monday were recorded at more than Rs 100 per kg in several cities, including Delhi, Kolkata, Patna, and Bengaluru. In a bid to arrest the rising prices of onions, the government had directed public sector undertaking MMTC to import onions

from countries such as Turkey. Apart from this, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution has reduced the stock holding limits for retailers from 5 MT to 2 MT. Moreover, Paswan had written a letter to all chief ministers asking them to carry out immediate anti-hoarding operations to ensure that supplies in markets are augmented and stock holding limits are strictly enforced. Earlier this month, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar had said that a shortfall in production has led to the spike in onion prices and the Centre has taken several measures to deal with the issue. States had given an estimated production of over 69.9 lakh tonnes of onion by November 30 in this season, but the actual production is likely to be 53.67 lakh tonnes, Tomar told the Lok Sabha on December 12.

SBI may see corporate NPAs rise in H2FY20

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 30

STATE BANK of India (SBI) may see some gross non-performing assets (NPAs) arising out of the corporate portfolio in the second half of financial year 2019-20, a senior executive from the bank told television channel CN-BCTV18 on Monday. "We do expect some kind of headwinds from certain corporates which are probably being talked about, but I think overall since we have started providing for those NPAs, though the gross number might look different. Nevertheless, while we have started providing for those NPAs so I don't expect that it will have a significant impact," SBI MD for global banking and subsidiaries, Dinesh Khara said. Khara added that the gross bad asset value is a function of

"... while we have started providing for (corporate) NPAs ... I don't expect that it will have a significant impact"

DINESH KHARA
MD—GLOBAL BANKING AND SUBSIDIARIES, STATE BANK OF INDIA

the state of the economy and the stress on balance sheets. SBI has, for quite some time, been following a policy of up-fronting provisions in order to minimise shocks from credit events, Khara said. The Reserve Bank of India said in the December 2019 edition of its Financial Stability Report that stress tests indicate that under the baseline scenario, the gross NPA ratios of all banks may increase to 9.9 per cent by September 2020 from 9.3 per cent in September 2019. **FE**

ComMin to review FTAs, says Goyal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

COMMERCE AND Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday said his ministry will review all existing free trade agreements with different countries to protect interest of industry and traders. Addressing domestic traders here, he said India also decided to walk out from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement keeping in view the interest of small traders and dairy industry. Goyal said that free trade agreements (FTAs) with countries like Japan, South Korea and Asean provided duty free access to Indian markets but domestic goods face barriers in these countries. These unfair pacts did not benefit Indian traders and industry, he said. "I want to assure you that the commerce ministry will open the old FTAs and hold discussions with these countries," the minister said.

Puri hands over first DGCA-issued licence to ATC personnel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

CIVIL AVIATION Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday handed over the first licence issued by aviation regulator DGCA to Air Traffic Control (ATC) personnel in the country. To date, the licence to ATC personnel was being given by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) itself. After an audit of Indian aviation sector was conducted by safety branch of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in November 2017, it had recommended that the DGCA should maintain oversight over the functions of ATC and its personnel, who work for AAI. Therefore, the Ministry of Civil Aviation had directed the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to start issuing licences and rating to ATC personnel of AAI. Till December 27 this year, total 2,264 ATC personnel across the country got their licences issued by the DGCA, as per an AAI press release.

Phase I services under DGCA's e-Governance project launched

New Delhi: The DGCA Monday launched phase-1 services of the e-Governance (eGCA) project under which automated commercial pilot licences (CPLs) will be issued. As per a government release issued Monday, rolling out automated pilot licences in commercial pilot licences in automated form would help in expediting the process of issuing these licenses and would do away with manual handling and processing of applications. **PTI**

Puri stressed on the need for reducing VAT on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) with immediate effect during a high-level meeting with ministers and chief secretaries of some states.

Tesla delivers first China-made Model 3 sedans in just under 1 yr

REUTERS
SHANGHAI, DECEMBER 30

TESLA HAS started delivering Model 3 electric cars built at its Shanghai factory in just under a year since it began work on the \$2 billion plant, a record for global automakers in China, and said it would ramp up deliveries from next month. The US electric vehicle maker marked the start with an event on Monday where 15 Tesla employees received cars they had purchased, one of whom took the opportunity to propose marriage to his girlfriend after getting his new set of wheels. The China-made Model 3 sedans are priced at \$35,800 yuan (\$50,000) before subsidies. Imported Model 3 vehicles start at 439,000 yuan for the longer-range version, while the standard range plus model costs under \$40,000 in the United States. The Shanghai plant, up and running in just 357 days, is part of Tesla's plans to bolster its presence in the world's biggest car market and minimise the impact of the



The China-made Tesla Model 3 vehicle at the Shanghai Gigafactory of the US electric carmaker in Shanghai, China, on Monday. Reuters

US-China trade war. The automaker, which previously imported all the cars it sold in China, had said it wanted to start deliveries from the Shanghai plant before the Lunar New Year beginning on Jan. 25. "From now onwards China-made Model 3 vehicles will start running on China's large streets and small lanes," Tesla Vice President Tao Lin said at the deliv-

US yield curve steepest since October 2018

REUTERS
NEW YORK, DECEMBER 30

US TREASURY yields rose on Monday and the US two-year, 10-year yield curve was the steepest in 14 months as investors prepared for the end of the year. Benchmark 10-year yields held below recent highs of around 1.95 per cent, after weakening this month on improving risk appetite after the US and China agreed to the first phase of a trade deal. The yields were last at 1.92 per cent. They have backed up from 1.69 per cent at the beginning of December and are up from a three-year low of 1.43 per cent reached on Sept. 3. Longer-dated notes underperformed shorter-dated debt, sending the closely watched two-year, 10-year yield curve to its steepest level since October 2018 at 34 basis points. A major factor behind the relative stability in shorter-dated notes is the Federal Reserve's daily operations to provide liquidity to the repurchase agreement market, where banks and investors borrow funds to finance asset purchases and other expenses.

Benchmark 10-year yields held below recent highs of around 1.95 per cent, after weakening this month on improving risk appetite after the US and China agreed to the first phase of a trade deal

The liquidity has helped to stave off a scramble for funds over year-end, at least so far, which can send the cost of borrowing significantly higher. "That's anchoring the short end of the curve," said Jim Vogel, an interest rate strategist at FHN Financial in Memphis, Tennessee. The yield curve inverted in August, a signal that a recession may be likely in the next one to two years. It has since steepened, however, on optimism the US economy will not slow as much as expected and on expectations the Federal Reserve is unlikely to continue lowering its benchmark interest rate.

BRIEFLY

Oil rises to 3-month high on upbeat data

New York: Oil prices rose on Monday to three-month highs, lifted by optimism over an expected China-US trade deal and upbeat industrial data, while traders kept a close watch on the Middle East following US air strikes in Iraq and Syria. Brent crude futures gained 55 cents to \$68.71 a barrel by 1617 GMT. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 28 cents to \$62.00 a barrel. **REUTERS**

₹1.7K crore of vendor dues cleared: BSNL

New Delhi: Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) has cleared Rs 1,700 crore of vendors dues, its CMD P K Purwar said Monday. It has also made salary payment to its employees for November, Purwar added. "Payments worth Rs 1,700 crore have been released to our vendors and contractors of BSNL," he said. Overall, the outstanding to creditors is Rs 10,000 crore, he added. "Employee salaries for November too have been released," Purwar said, adding that monthly wage cost stood at about Rs 800 crore.

'Tata group stronger, more resilient'

Mumbai: Tata Sons chairman N Chandrabosekaran on Monday said uncertainties will persist in the new year but exuded confidence that the diversified conglomerate is better placed to take on challenges. He said the salt-to-software \$110-billion group is "stronger, more resilient and future ready" now and is moving "decisively" on financial fitness and operational efficiencies.

Irdai fines Maruti Insurance Brokers

New Delhi: Irdai has imposed a penalty of Rs 3 crore on Maruti Insurance Brokers Pvt Ltd (MIBL), the largest insurance broker in the country, for violation of various regulatory norms. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) has found the MIBL violating Motor Insurance Service Provider guidelines on various counts, including the one related to empanelment of general insurers.

NHPC board okays proposal to raise ₹2K cr

New Delhi: State-run hydro power giant NHPC on Monday, in a filing to BSE, said that its board has approved a proposal to raise Rs 2,000 crore through various instruments. **PTI**

MISSILE-TESTING

Going ballistic

America has big plans for new mid-range ballistic missiles



A prototype conventionally-configured ground-launched ballistic missile launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base on December 12 as shown in a frame from video. US Air Force

IN THE early morning of December 12th a missile streaked into the sky above Vandenberg air force base north of Los Angeles. It looped up into the blackness of space and then hurtled down into the Pacific — crucially, over 500km away. That makes it America's first test of a ballistic missile that would have been forbidden under the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, which banned both conventional and nuclear land-based missiles (but not air or sea-launched ones) with ranges of 500km to 5,500km.

The pact died in August after Donald Trump walked out, having accused Russia of illegally testing and deploying several battalions of an intermediate-range cruise missile known as the SSC-8. Proponents of the move argue that land-based missiles are useful because mobile ground launchers are cheaper and can be replenished with fresh missiles more easily than ships, subs and planes, which can then be freed to do other things.

The test is a signal that America is serious about pursuing this idea. It follows an

earlier test on August 18th of another hitherto-banned ground-launched cruise missile fired from San Nicolas Island in California (cruise missiles use jet engines and fly low, whereas ballistic missiles are rocket-powered and arc through the sky). Both tests recycled existing systems: a 1980s-vintage Tomahawk in the summer, and what resembled a target-practice missile for the latest test.

Turning old hardware into INF-range missiles is a quick and dirty way to turn out new weapons. Building 400 Tomahawks—which are currently fired only from ships and subs—and 50 ground launchers would cost \$1.4bn, small-change for the Pentagon, according to a study by the Centre for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), a think-tank. But state-of-the-art weapons are also being considered.

The army tested its new Precision Strike Missile (PRSM) for the first time on December 10th in New Mexico. The missile, which can be fired from existing launchers, had previously had its range capped at 499km; unencumbered by the

INF treaty, it may now go as far as 800km.

An even longer-range hypersonic missile is also in the works.

The CSBA says that 400 brand-new ballistic missiles with 100 launchers would require \$9bn or so. The Pentagon says that, unlike Russia's SSC-8, its new missiles would not have nuclear tips.

The political ground is now shifting in the Pentagon's favour. On December 9th the two houses of Congress reconciled their duelling versions of the National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) after months of wrangling between missile-shy Democrats, who deplore Mr Trump's withdrawal from the treaty and argue that new missiles are unnecessary fripperies, and Republicans, who want America to respond

to China's unconstrained build-up of about 2,000 missiles. In a sop to Democrats, the NDAA bans the Pentagon from buying or fielding new INF-range missiles before October 2020. But it is not much of a constraint: research and testing can continue, and new systems would take years to come to fruition anyway. A defence appropriations bill published on December 16th allocates \$56m for missile research.

The bigger hurdle is diplomatic. The NDAA obliges the Pentagon to submit a report on where new missiles would be deployed and how consultations with allies are going. Those are harder questions to answer. Mark Esper, the secretary of defence, said in August that he wanted to put new missiles in Asia "sooner rather than later".

But several of America's best friends in the region immediately demurred.

South Korea's defence ministry said it had "not internally reviewed the issue" and had "no plan to do so". Scott Morrison, Australia's prime minister, said he could "rule a line under" the idea of such deployments: "It's not been asked of us, not being considered, not been put to us." On October 31st Japan's defence minister insisted that "we have not been discussing any of it".

Europeans are also cagey. NATO squarely sided with America in blaming Russia for the collapse of the INF treaty, and some countries, like Poland, would welcome new missiles. But the alliance has generally preferred to emphasise defensive measures, rather than retaliatory deployments like those which provoked big protests in the "Euromissiles" crisis of the 1980s.

In August Jens Stoltenberg, NATO's secretary-general, argued that a Russian proposal for a moratorium on new missile deployments was "not a credible offer"—what was the point when Russia had already de-

ployed missiles? But in November Emmanuel Macron, France's president, broke ranks to say that Russia's offer could serve as "a basis for discussion". Even if a moratorium could be agreed on, it would probably cover only deployments in Europe, not those in Asia.

Eric Sayers, a former special assistant to America's Indo-Pacific Command, suggests that, as China's power—and missile arsenal—grows, the diplomatic situation in Asia is likely to move in America's favour. Japanese officials "understand the military case and know this will be a future ask", he says. Any deployments there will probably be badged as rotational, rather than permanent, and might focus on anti-ship missiles rather than on those which target Chinese soil. Some American officials view this as leverage to force China into arms-control negotiations. Others just want to shore up a military balance that has been tilting in China's favour. Either way, many more tests will have to come first.

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Eric Sayers, a former special assistant to America's Indo-Pacific Command, suggests that, as China's power—and missile arsenal—grows, the diplomatic situation in Asia is likely to move in America's favour.

HOMELESSNESS

Mean streets

How to cut homelessness in the world's priciest cities

"I HAVE SLEPT on the Embankment," wrote George Orwell in 1933, adding that, despite the noise and the wet and the cold, it was "much better than not sleeping at all". Under the nearby Charing Cross bridge, Orwell reported that "50 men were waiting, mirrored in the shivering puddles." Nine decades on and Charing Cross and the Embankment are once again full of rough sleepers, even during the coldest days of December. Across London their numbers have more than tripled since 2010.

It is a pattern found in much of the rich world. Almost every European country is seeing a rise in the number of homeless people, including those who live in temporary accommodation, as well as the smaller number who live on the streets. Homelessness across America is in decline, but it is soaring in its most prosperous cities. Roughly 5,000 people live on the streets of San Francisco, a 19% rise in just two years.

It does not have to be this way. In post-war America there was little rough sleeping, and homelessness was falling so fast that sociologists predicted its imminent disappearance.

Even today, some rich, successful cities, including Tokyo and Munich, have few people living on the streets.

These places offer lessons on how to reduce homelessness. One is that tough love can sometimes work. Conservatives argue that softer policing tactics in the 1970s, including lax attitudes to public drunken-

ness, were in part responsible for the rise in homelessness.

The world could learn something from Greece, where strong family networks ensure that those down on their luck find someone to take them in.

Many experts argue that it is counterproductive to give money to someone begging on the street. Better, they say, to donate to a charity.

Yet tougher tactics will ultimately do little if housing costs remain high. This is the underlying reason for rising homelessness—which is perhaps one reason why America's Supreme Court on December 16th affirmed that lawmakers may not criminalise rough sleeping.

Few Americans lived on the streets in the early post-war period because housing was cheaper.

Back then only one in four tenants spent more than 30% of their income on rent,

It is a pattern found in much of the rich world. Almost every European country is seeing a rise in the number of homeless people, including those who live in temporary accommodation, as well as the smaller number who live on the streets.

compared with one in two today. The best evidence suggests that a 10% rise in housing costs in a pricey city prompts an 8% jump in homelessness.

The state can do something to help. Cuts to rent subsidies for Britain's poor are probably the biggest reason why Charing Cross has so many people sleeping on the streets once again. Making such subsidies more generous might actually save governments money in the medium term — after all, demands on health-care services and the police would decline. People would also be more likely to find a job.

Another option is for the state to build more housing itself. In Singapore, another place where there is practically no homelessness, 80% of residents live in government-built flats which they buy at knock-down prices.

While many countries have been privatising their stock of public housing, Finland has been building more of it, giving the government the wherewithal to put homeless people in their own apartments rather than warehousing them in shelters.

It has embraced an approach originally pioneered in America, which does not demand that homeless folk quit drinking or drugs before giving them accommodation. Instead it gives them a home first, and then offers intensive support to help them cope with their problems.

In Finland the homeless numbers are moving in the right direction.

The most effective reform, however,



A homeless man sits under a bus shelter, where he sleeps, opposite Windsor Castle in Britain. Reuters

would be to make building more homes easier. In many countries NIMBYist planning rules vastly inflate the market price of shelter. Such rules should be slashed.

The problem of rough sleeping in Germany and Switzerland, two countries with minimal real-house-price growth in recent decades, is less acute. Japan has used

its fair share of strong-arm tactics to deal with the homeless, but then it introduced a big urban reform in the early 2000s.

Up and inside in Tokyo and Singapore

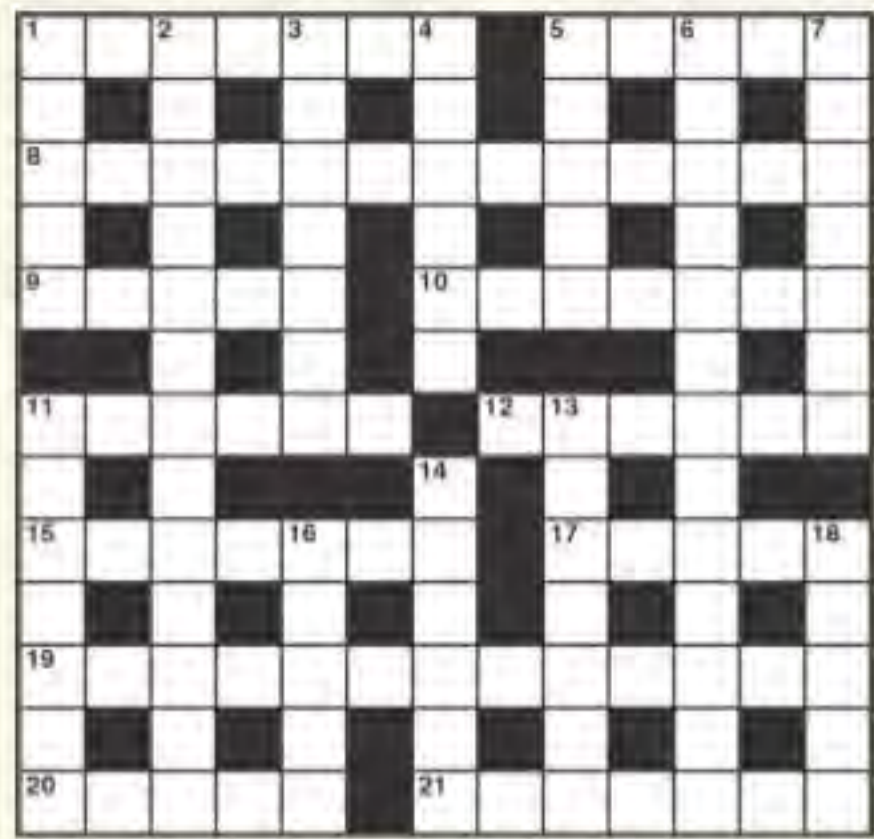
Japan loosened planning rules, prompting residential construction to jump. Since

then, housing costs in Tokyo have fallen in real terms and the number of rough sleepers has fallen by 80% in 20 years.

Until cities elsewhere let the buildings go up, more people will find themselves down and out.

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CROSSWORD 4002



- ACROSS: 1. It's not profitable to make (7), 5. Laughter in company's causing disorder (5), 8. Made money illegally (13), 9. Put off Ted's return with hesitation (5), 10. It distributes by air (7), 11. Puts up a house for sale, perhaps (6), 12. Such a shop is somewhat limited (6), 15. They are entitled to a share of whatever is left (7), 17. Sea air adds a little weight to one (5), 19. Different view put in writing by a dramatist (6,2,5), 20. Directions to prosecute follow (5), 21. Dope and sex orgy gets uncovered (7). DOWN: 1. Like the cubed root of carrot perhaps (5), 2. Jets start out from them (13), 3. Provided food for a domestic pet and wild deer (7), 4. Sailor joins a Scotsman on the roads (6), 5. Acquit the prisoner and empty the court (5), 6. They adopt different attitudes when working (7,6), 7. Burdened - with a back seat driver? (7), 11. Self-propelled transport (7), 13. Sets one's sights higher and improves (5,2), 14. A wild horse on land (6), 16. Cosy feature of a mountain glen (5), 18. Don't go on about me to improve matters (5).

Solutions Crossword 4001: Across: 1 Ideal, 8 Browning, 9 Solve, 10 Straw hat, 11 Reach, 12 Woo, 16 Battle, 17 Dramas, 18 Bed, 23 Aside, 24 Succumbs, 25 Fiend, 26 Gluttons, 27 Essay, Down: 2 Diocesan, 3 Advocate, 4 Grotto, 5 Sweet, 6 Light, 7 Agate, 12 Web, 13 Odd, 14 Washings, 15 Gardenia, 19 Ebbing, 20 Usage, 21 Act up, 22 Quits.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

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

Word jumble puzzle with letters PYAEE, ACECLN, DLOOR, ACUUMV and a grid of squares.

SUDOKU 4076

Difficulty Level 2s Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4075

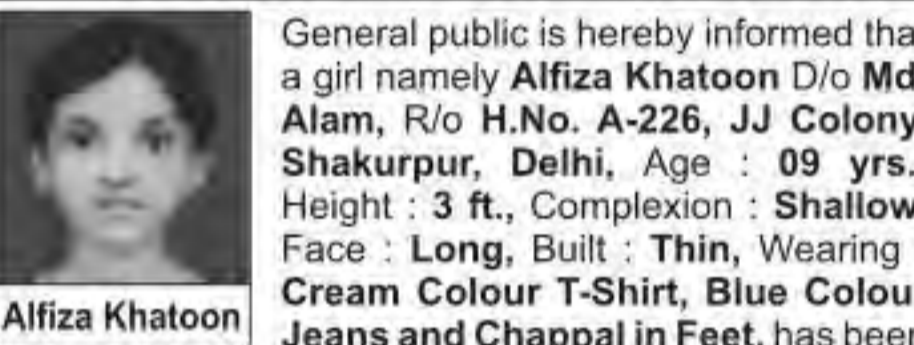


DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

- ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20): You're one to set the rules, rather than obey them. Consider the course of action that is correct for you, rather than just going along with the crowd. Distant places may beckon, and on the most mundane level this is a useful day for fixing travel plans.
LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23): You're coming up to a critical moment for home and family relationships, and any and all positive changes ought now to be encouraged. There should soon be good news for those planning a move, and while financial matters look uncertain, you may need to reach the best agreement you can.
TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21): Social connections could involve legal complications. Just how or why this should be so is not clear, but you can help matters along by making sure that you know exactly what is your responsibility - and what is a partner's. Mind you, they might not agree with you.
GEMINI (May 22 - June 21): Your very personal business could appear to be someone else's problem, but you shouldn't believe everything you hear. At work there are ways to boost your income, but only if you approach the issues from a radically different direction. You may have to drag colleagues into the present, though.
CANCER (June 22 - July 23): As soon as one relationship ended another will begin, which must be good news. Yet, it may be your own attitudes which need attention, rather than the people you mix with. You can, if you wish, completely transform your feelings and behaviour within one special intimate partnership.
LEO (July 24 - Aug 23): Sometimes the right words come out in the wrong way. Too much has been said in haste or in anger recently, and you should now find ways to recharge your emotional batteries. Try to find imaginative means of increasing your earning power, but remember to consult others at every step.
VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23): One particular emotional involvement is now passing through a curious phase. What once seemed so true may now seem like a waste of time. You may feel free to speak your mind and put your foot down, and shouldn't be intimidated by others' ability to confuse the issues.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22): The climate is still much too volatile to settle on long-term plans. The current feeling that everything is up for grabs should suit your temperament, so you'll be tempted to put aside any lingering fears for your security. Keep partners informed as and when you feel it's necessary.
CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20): There is intense pressure for constructive change across the board. You may be primed to benefit most if you are pursuing a creative line, or committed to any activity which is designed for self-improvement. Only the highest standards will do.
AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19): What do you do with your private life is up to you. However, others may disagree. It's especially important to keep a dialogue going at home, all the more so if you want to keep parents or children on your side. If you try to go it alone then you'll almost certainly come unstuck.
PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20): You will be tempted into rash decisions and impulsive actions, a tendency which although strong today, may continue all week. The final decision must always be yours, but do be aware of the likely consequences: there is no substitute for careful planning.

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that a girl namely Alfiza Khatoon D/o Md. Alam, R/o H.No. A-226, JJ Colony, Shakurpur, Delhi, Age : 09 yrs., Height : 3 ft., Complexion : Shallow, Face : Long, Built : Thin, Wearing : Cream Colour T-Shirt, Blue Colour Jeans and Chappal in Feet, has been missing / kidnapped since 13.11.2019.

WESTERN RAILWAY

VARIOUS SURVEY & CONSTRUCTION WORKS E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CE(C)/I/AD/IVG-SIOB/48 & Dy.CE (C) III/ADI/VEH/2019-20/3 (RI) (NIT) Date : 26.12.2019 Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction) III, Near Sahar Kotda Police Station, Saraspur, PO: Railwaypur, Western Railway, Ahmedabad-380002 for & on behalf of President of Union of India invites E-Tenders for the following works: 1. E-Tender No. (1) Dy.CE(C)/I/AD/IVG-SIOB/48 (i) Name of work: Balance work of Laying and linking of Broad Gauge main line, Loops, Longhand loops including points and crossings, spreading of ballast, tamping of track, distressing of UWR, dismantling of existing BG track, Transportation of PWay material and other miscellaneous works in SUKH-PUR yard in connection with Vrangam-Sarmakhiyal Doubling project. (ii) Approx. Cost of work : ₹ 84,65,725/- (iii) Earnest Money: ₹ 1,69,300/- (iv) Completion period: 02(Two) months (Including Monsoon) (2) Dy.CE(C) III/ADI/VEH/2019-20/3 (RI) (i) Name of work: Hiring of One Quailsh/Tata Sumo/ Gypsy/ Bolero or similar (Non-AC) based at DHRANGADHRA for XENI/CDHG under Dy.CE(C)/I/ADI unit. (ii) Approx. Cost of work : ₹ 3,87,144/- (iii) Earnest Money: ₹ 7800/- (iv) Completion period: 12(Twelve) months (Including Monsoon) For All Above Tenders: (v) Closing time & Date for submission of Bid: Submission of E-Tender: 17.01.2020 upto 15.00 Hrs. (vi) Opening time & Date of Bid: Opening : 17.01.2020 up to 16.00 Hrs. (vii) Website particulars Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen & address of the office: www.inspg.gov.in Offices of Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction) III, Near Sahar Kotda Police Station, Saraspur, PO: Railwaypur, Western Railway, Ahmedabad-380002. Telephone No. 079-22921510

Notice for Milk Plants in Haryana ONE TIME SETTLEMENT (OTS) for CESS due of MILK PLANTS

State Govt. has notified on 10th Sept., 2019 vide Gazette Notification No. 054/2019/Ext. a One Time Settlement wherein the compound interest on unpaid cess has been converted to 12% simple interest and this has given a relief of Rs. 1268 Cr. to MILK PLANTS so that they work on full capacity and benefit the Farmers in this milk season. Any MILK PLANT who has not availed this benefit so far may do so by joining the OTS Scheme by 13th January, 2020 at the latest. As per Haryana Murrah Buffalo and other Milch Animal Breed Act, 2001, any MILK PLANT having licensed capacity of more than 10000 liters per day, must register itself with the nearest Semen Bank and pay the cess else huge penalty shall be imposed on them as per Murrah Act.

Managing Director Haryana Livestock Development Board Pashudhan Bhawan, Bays No. 9-12, Sector-2, Panchkula Phone No. 01722574663

J&K Bank The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Facility Management & Administration Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road Sgr.

Expression Of Interest For and On behalf of Jammu and Kashmir Bank, sealed applications are invited from registered firms for empanelment of contractors for execution of Civil/Interior/Electrical/Mechanical and Composite works at various Business Units/ATMs and offices of the Bank across the country.

CORRIGENDUM

This is with reference to release of e-Tender Notice No. 3/2019-20/STA-5 dated 30.12.2019 on the Portal: https://etenders.hry.nic.in. It is to inform to all the applicant Firms/Contractors in addition to the Tender Notice uploaded on the main portal on 30.12.2019 putting up of advertisement Boards/Hoardings etc. at Bus Stands/Workshops of Haryana Roadways, it has been inadvertently mentioned as the contract of Jhajjar Depot is valid upto 31.12.2019. Therefore, the contract of this depot shall start after expiry of this contract. It may be read as 'putting up of advertisement Boards/Hoardings etc. at the Bus Stands/Workshops of Haryana Roadways. The existing contracts for putting up advertisements Boards/Hoardings of Haryana Roadways Depots will expire on 31.01.2020. Therefore, new contracts of Haryana Roadways Depots will be in force after the date of expiry of the existing contracts'.

INSTITUTE OF NANO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MOHALI (An autonomous Research Institute of Department of Science and Technology, Government of India) Habitat Centre, Sec-64, Phase X, Mohali - 160062, PUNJAB

CORRIGENDUM NIT ref. NIT Ref. No. 4/INST/2019-20 'SITC of UPS System for Institute of Nano Science & Technology at Knowledge City, Sector-81, Mohali, Punjab -140306 was published in newspapers on 04/12/2019. The last date for receipt of tender has been extended upto 10.01.2020 till 3:00 PM which will be opened on the same date at 3:30 PM at INST Mohali. The other details of the tender shall remain unchanged. Tender document and corrigendum can be downloaded from INST website (www.inst.ac.in). Tender document can also be downloaded from CPPP website (www.eprocure.gov.in).

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PROJECT OFFICER FISHERIES, MARKETING DIVISION, NARWAL, JAMMU

SUBJECT: Re-advertise Action Notice for Wholesale/Retail Outlets at Narwal Fish Market, Jammu. Auction Notice No. 02 of 2019 Dated: 27.12.2019 Sealed bids for auctioning 08 wholesale shops instead of 10 along with 40 Retail Fish Outlets of Fish Market, Narwal, Jammu are invited from the interested persons dealing with Fish Business registered with respective Municipal Corporation of Municipal Committees or Panchayats shall be eligible to participate in the auction. The sealed bids shall be received in the office of the Chief Project Officer Fisheries Marketing Division Narwal, Jammu upto 16.01.2020 at 2.00 PM. The bids shall be opened by the Auction Committee on 17.01.2020 at 11.00 A.M. in presence of bidders who may like to be present. The other terms and conditions for auction of Fish Wholesale Shops and Retail Outlet are same as laid down in Auction Notice No. CPO/M/A/J/2019-20/1216-22, Dated: 30.11.2019, published in the leading Newspapers "Amar Ujala", Dated: 06.12.2019, "The Hindu", Dated: 06.12.2019 and "Jammu Bulletin", 05.12.2019.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT JAMMU Old University Campus, Canal Road, Jammu- 180016 (J&K)

TENDER NOTICE Sealed tenders are invited for Empanelment of Advertising Agency for Publication of Advertisement in Newspapers for IIM Jammu Tender documents along with the Terms and Conditions, Closing Date & Time of Tenders can be downloaded from http://www.iimj.ac.in/tender-and-notice or https://www.eprocure.gov.in/epublish/vapp. Quotation in sealed envelope clearly mentioning the name of tender on top must reach at following address: Chief Administrative Officer, Indian Institute of Management Jammu, Old University Campus, Canal Road, Jammu- 180016, J&K

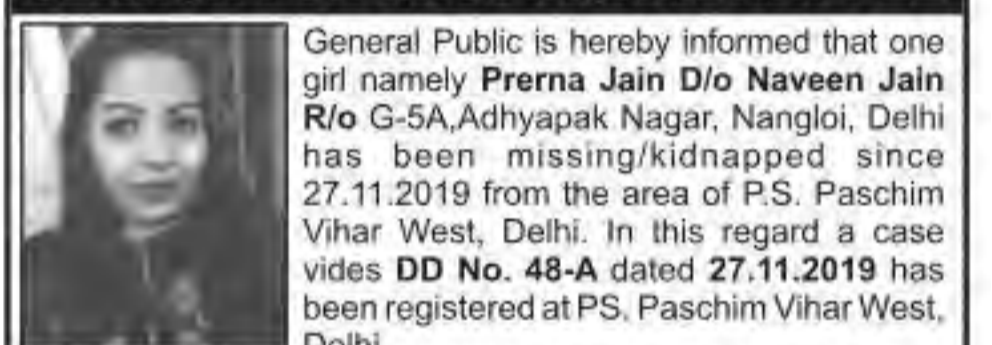
POOMPUR SHIPING CORPORATION LIMITED 692, Anna Salai, IV Floor, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035, India Telephone No: 044-24330505 / 807 Fax: 91-44-24344593, E-mail : pscship@gmail.com / pscship@dataone.in

GLOBAL TENDER NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR SPOT TIME CHARTERING OF ONE SELF-TRIMMING SUPRAMAX GEARLESS VESSEL WITH DEAD WEIGHT CAPACITY OF ABOUT 45000 TO 59000 DWT. Sealed tenders are invited from the owners / disponent owners of Indian / Foreign flag vessels or through their authorized brokers for spot time chartering of one Self-trimming supramax gearless vessel for coastal transportation of thermal coal, on account of TANGEDCO are as follows: One Self Trimming Supramax gearless vessel with the lay days from 28.01.2020 to 10.02.2020 TENDER NO.H/OP/SPSGR/116/001/19-20 (Spot Time Charter) Period : 3 months + 3 months +/- 10 days choption. Last date for issue of Tender book - on 20.01.2020 upto 12:00 hours Tender box to be closed at - on 20.01.2020 at 15:00 hours Tender box to be opened at - on 20.01.2020 at 15:30 hours EMD - Rs.10 Lakhs - For Indian flag vessels - USD 17,000/- For Foreign flag vessels Cost of tender document - Rs.5,000/- each (Indian Flag) - USD 100 each (Foreign Flag) Separate Tender document for spot time chartering are available in our website from 02.01.2020 & the same may be downloaded from our website: www.tamilship.com / www.tntenders.gov.in at free of cost. For more details visit our website www.tamilship.com / www.tntenders.gov.in

POOMPUR SHIPING CORPORATION LIMITED (A Government of Tamilnadu Enterprise) 692, (Old No. 473), Anna Salai, IV Floor, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035, Ph: 2433 0505, 2433 0807; Fax: 2434 4593, 2433 5706 E-mail : pscship@gmail.com / pscship@dataone.in

GLOBAL TENDER TENDER NO.H/OP/LTPG/151/006/19-20 NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR TIME CHARTERING OF ONE SELF TRIMMING PANAMAX GEARLESS/GEARED (OFFERED AS GEARLESS) BULK CARRIER OF 70000-78000 DWT. Sealed tenders are invited from the owners / disponent owners of Indian / Foreign flag vessel or through their authorized brokers for time chartering of one self trimming panamax gearless / geared (offered as gearless) bulk carrier with a minimum loading rate of 3000 MTs per hour for a period of 6 months + 3 months +/- 10 days choption with the lay days from 25.01.2020 to 10.02.2020 for coastal transportation of thermal coal in East Coast of India (Paradip / Dhamra / and Kakinada Ports to Ennore), for NTECL's Vallur Thermal Power Station, North Chennai. ONE SELF TRIMMING PANAMAX GEARLESS / GEARED (OFFERED AS GEARLESS) WITH THE LAY DAYS FROM 25.01.2020 TO 10.02.2020. TENDER NO. H/OP/LTPG/151/006/19-20 Period - 6 months + 3 months +/- 10 days choption Tender box to be closed at - on 21.01.2020 at 15:00 hours Tender box to be opened at - on 21.01.2020 at 15:30 hours Cost of tender document - Rs.5,000/- each for Indian flag vessel - USD 100/- each for Foreign flag vessel EMD - Rs.10,00,000/- for Indian flag vessel - USD 17,000/- for Foreign flag vessel Tender document is available in our website www.tamilship.com / www.tntenders.gov.in from 02.01.2020 & the same may be downloaded free of cost. For more details visit our website www.tamilship.com / www.tntenders.gov.in

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that one girl namely Prerna Jain D/o Naveen Jain R/o G-5A,Adhyapak Nagar, Nangloi, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped since 27.11.2019 from the area of P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. In this regard a case vide DD No. 48-A dated 27.11.2019 has been registered at PS, Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. The description of missing/kidnapped girl is as under : Name : Prerna Jain, Father's Name : Naveen Jain, Age : 22 years, Height : 5'3", Face : Round, Complexion : Fair, Wearing : Brown T-Shirt-Black Coat-Nava Blue Pant and shoes in feet If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned. Website : http://cbi.nic.in e-mail : cbi@cbi.gov.in Fax : 011-24368639 Ph : 011-24368638, 24368641 SHO P.S., Paschim Vihar West, Delhi Ph: 011-25268394 25280980 DP/2965/OD/19

J&K Bank The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited IT Procurement Department Corporate Headquarters M A Road Srinagar 190001

NOTICE FOR INVITING TENDER On-line Request for Proposal (RFP) for Selection and empanelment of vendor for supply of computer hardware like PCs, Thin clients, Laptops, Printers and all allied peripherals. Complete tender document outlining the minimum requirements can be downloaded from the Bank's online portal https://auction.auctioner.net from 30th December, 2019 16.00 onwards and the notice of said RFP is also available on Bank's Official Website jkbank.com RFP Ref No. JKB/ITP/744/2019-010 Dated: 27-12-2019

SOUTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OFFICE OF THE EX. ENGINEER (ELECT)-NGZ, ROOM No. 219, IInd Floor, ZONAL OFFICE BUILDING DHANSA STAND, NAJAFGARH, NEW DELHI-110043

NOTICE INVITING TENDER The EEE/NGZ, SDMC invites on behalf of Commissioner SDMC, online item rate single bids from the eligible electrical contractors registered under the respective class of SDMC/NDMC/EDMC for a street lighting work of GI poles and allied accessories vide NIT No. 20/TC/EE(E)/NGZ/SDMC/2019-20, Date: 30.12.2019. Tender Amount: Rs. 39,24,768/-, Earnest Money: Rs. 79300/-, Time of Completion: 05 Months, Tender cost: Rs. 500/- Head of Account-XL-VIII-V. Start date of sale of tender 30.12.2019. Last date of tender purchase: 07.01.2020 upto 12:00 Hrs. Any corrigendum with respect to the mentioned tenders shall be uploaded online only. No separate press publicity will be done for this. All details are available on : http://www.tenderwizard.com/SOUTHDMCETENDER R.O. No. 144/DPI/S/2019-20 EEE/NGZ

लक्ष्मीबाई राष्ट्रीय शारीरिक शिक्षा संस्थान, ग्वालियर (A + नैक प्रत्यायित विरविद्यालय मानी गर्ड संस्था)

संस्थान ने एक विद्युत् सूचना क्रमांक RCS/05/2019 (Part-II) /56 दिनांक 28.12.2019 जारी कर पात्र एवं इच्छुक उम्मीदवारों को विभिन्न पदों (शैक्षणिक एवं गैर शैक्षणिक) पर सौचित्य निविदा हेतु बुल साक्षात्कार में उन पदों के समूह दर्शाते दिनांक एवं समय पर शामिल होने हेतु आमंत्रित किया है, जो पूर्णतः सौचित्य आधार पर होगी तथा स्वामी निविदा को संभावना अथवा इस प्रकार का कोई अधिकार नहीं होगा। पदों, दिनांक, योग्यताएं, अनुभव एवं वेतन को विद्युत् जानकारी के लिये कृपया हमारा वेबसाइट www.nipe.edu.in का संदर्भ लें। गवर्निंग बोर्ड/अनुभव को सक्षम प्राधिकारों के निवेदन पर अपवादवत्क रूप में विधिवत किया जा सकता है यदि पर्यटन संस्था में आवेदन उपलब्ध नहीं हों। कर्नल जनक सिंह शेखावत (से.नि.) कुलसचिव



LIFE ON SCREEN

An Indian biopic on Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai is in the works and will release next month. Titled *Gul Makai*, film is helmed by Amjad Khan, UN Goodwill Ambassador, and has television actor Reem Shaikh in the titular role.

SNAP SHOTS



Woven Memories

PRANATI PANDA'S solo 'Speaking Threads' features installations, photographs and paintings using thread-work. Panda says "it represents her connection with her inner self and the rest of the world, with time, people and nature". The colour red features prominently in her work, symbolising the energy flowing through the body and more personally, in the memory of her mother whom she lost at the young age of 25. Panda says her mother wore red very often and encouraged her to do the same, also the reason Panda always has a hint red in her clothes, bangles or bindi.

A set of installations titled 'Shades of Sunset' is inspired by human organs, mainly the brain, as the artist believes that nature and brain are strongly connected by the thoughts one has through the day. While most of her work is made using soft materials like fabric and thread used in stitching, primarily regarded as a feminine activity, the installations also employ the use of stronger material like net, signifying masculine work, which is like "a conversation between hard and soft, masculinity and femininity and how they go together beautifully".

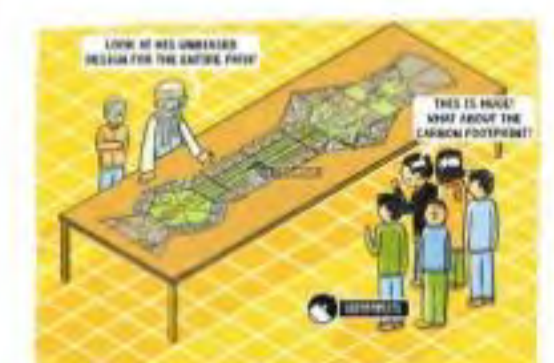
Pointing to a piece filled with layers of red, Pranita explains that it is closest to her heart as it symbolises her mother's absence as well as her presence. This, along with another painting layered with white thread, make up half of the series titled 'Essence of Absence'. In the latter, the thread is faintly woven to outline figures of a baby and the umbilical cord attached to it, with a splash of red in the centre. "The threads are like veins and roots," says Panda, as she reminisces the loss of her firstborn child which inspired the piece.

The exhibition is on display at Vadhara Art Gallery, Defence Colony, Delhi, till January 15, 2020
ANJALI NOTANDAS



Swiping Left

DATING TROUBLES are not just for the ordinary. Actor Sharon Stone's dating profile on Bumble has been taken away by the dating app. The *Basic Instinct* actor took to Twitter to say: "I went on the @bumble dating sight and they closed my account. Some users reported that it couldn't possibly be me... Hey @bumble, is being me exclusionary? Don't shut me out of the hive". This step is a reflection of dating apps policy to weed out fake profiles. The dating app is yet to respond to Stone's tweet.



Building Block

IN RESPONSE to the government's plan to redevelop Rajpath — aka Central Vista in Delhi — a group of architects, urban designers and writers under the name "Leewardists" have created a series of illustrations and compiled them in comic. The series starts with a group of ministers and politicians who announce the plans to redevelop Rajpath. It goes on to show the panel take questions from the media and in the process, takes them through the larger plan — where will the funds come from, who will design it, and queries about carbon footprint. Comparisons are also made with the new central vista and Burj Khalifa, the tallest structure in the world. The projections are, that while Burj Khalifa took 54,000 metric tonnes of material, the new Raj Path will need 70,000 metric tonnes.

There's Kokum in my Cocktail

Regional flavours found a foothold on restaurant menus this year, a trend that's set to get stronger in 2020

POOJA PILLAI

OVER THE last decade, even as Indians began to eat out (and ordering in) with greater frequency than before, one of the most striking developments has been the foothold that regional Indian food has gained over a very monolithic idea of what constitutes Indian food. Over the next year, Indian food professionals believe, the engagement with the country's rich food heritage will only get deeper, exploring aspects that have, until now, been overlooked or marginalised.

"There was a time we explored food from the global perspective. Special occasions and celebrations meant eating at an Italian or Chinese restaurant. That attitude has changed," says Rushina Munshaw Ghildiyal. The writer and food consultant, who has recently authored the 'Godrej Food Trends Report', says that adventures in eating don't have to come from outside now. "That attitude has changed. We want more Indian food on our plate, but with a more 'global' way of serving." Indian Accent and Comorin in Delhi, and Mustard in Goa and Mumbai, adds Ghildiyal, are good examples of how Indian restaurants have both incited and served the curiosity of diners regarding Indian food, while retaining a sophistication that anchors them in the here and now.

Manish Mehrotra, Corporate Chef, Indian Accent, says that 2020 will see restaurants dig deeper into the culinary heritage of the country, moving from regional to sub-regional and community traditions. "For example, it's not going to be enough to just do Konkani food. You're now seeing people researching and serving food from Malwan and Sindhudurg, or, say, food from Goan Catholic community and Goan Hindu Community. Restaurants are beginning to get that specific," he says. Additionally, Mehrotra says, people are becoming more curious about regions that have typically been ignored on menus. "You would never see Bihari or Odia food in restaurants before, but restaurants and their customers are realising that you have all these rich traditions here that deserve to be explored," he adds. Shilpa Sharma who, along with Punam



Singh, runs Mustard, says, "Such explorations are a way of breaking stereotypes about cuisines. People's immediate reaction when hearing that we serve Bengali food, is to assume that we don't have enough dishes that use vegetables. But Bengali food is as creative with vegetables as it is with fish and meat, and this is something that we show through the food we serve."

Importantly, she adds, foraying into regional food is also a way of highlighting the similarities in the food we eat and the way we cook them. "It could be anything, from the way coconut is used in food, to how different parts of the country have used leaves such as that of turmeric to make food parcels," she says. Another factor, according to Sharma, is a re-discovery by chefs and consumers, alike, of the unique properties of Indian ingredients.



(Clockwise from top) Chaanar Dhumpko served at Goa's Mustard restaurant; a kokum-based cocktail; Kukurua Khorika (Assamese-style barbequed chicken)

"The West is now telling us that turmeric and moringa are superfoods but these have been used in India for centuries. In the south, for example, different parts of the moringa are used in different ways. So why should we have to hear about these things from outside? We already have this knowledge, and chefs and consumers both are interested in digging deeper," she says.

In 2019, as Indians developed a taste for cocktails, they've also been adapted to desi flavours. At places like Sidecar, Ek Bar and Together at 12 in Delhi and Masque and the Bombay Canteen in Mumbai, ingredients such as falsa, kokum and curry leaf have found their way into cocktails. Mixologist Yangdup Lama of Sidecar in Delhi — maker of the popular gondhori lebu and aam papad-flavoured CamacSt cocktail — says, "Indian flavours are far more intense in food than they are in drinks, and that gives us the chance to make some really interesting experiments with cocktails, which consumers are now increasingly open to," he says. One of the cocktails he's designing for a bar in Houston, Texas, uses an infusion made from papad paste. "You no longer have to worry about whether or not consumers will accept this. Consumers will try it long as you know how to present it. And that includes being able to give them the story behind each dish and drink," he says.

Storytelling and research have, perhaps, become a tool in the arsenal of chefs and mixologists to sell the rich diversity of Indian flavours. The CamacSt Cocktail, for example, is used to evoke a sense of nostalgia among those who have visited the famous street in Kolkata, and curiosity among those who haven't. Chefs also use recipes sourced from their staff, adding a name and face to the final dish as it appears on the menu. This, according to Chef Megha Kohli of Lavaash by Saby, Delhi, feeds the consumer's need to know that what they are eating is "authentic". She says, "One of the mutton curries on our menu is made with a lot of pepper, but it's not enough to just put a description there or give it a generic name, like Pepper Mutton Curry. So we call it Rajdev's Mutton Curry. Rajdev works with us and this is how this dish is made back in his home town in Bihar. So the consumer knows that this dish is specific to a particular place, and is authentic. Consumers no longer just care about the taste of the food. They care deeply about the stories behind their food."

Prose for the Present

Naseeruddin Shah and TM Krishna collaborate on a new video on the idea of India



SUANSHU KHURANA

THE VIDEO titled *We, The People of India* begins with an alaaap loosely based on raag Yaman, which swirls in the air along a basic beat on the drums and a reading of the Preamble to the Constitution of India — the document that indicates that "the source of authority of the Constitution lies with the people of India" and which has found its place amid the continuing protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the upcoming NPR-NRC.

Actor and director Naseeruddin Shah's deep, solemn voice is heard over the alaaap by Carnatic classical vocalist and Magsaysay Award winner TM Krishna along a montage of photographs, which showcase posters, incidents and highlights from the recent protests. The alaaap merges into the national anthem, which is sung interestingly, differently, each note stretched in an attempt to denote the coming together of the people of India "to celebrate the values enshrined in the #ConstitutionOfIndia, in a way we have already won".

Krishna discussed the piece with Shah about 10 days ago and everything worked out post an exchange of emails. In an interview with *The Indian Express*, Krishna, said, "I was hugely inspired by the fact that the youth of

India has given life to the Preamble again by making it an integral part of their protests. I think that's fabulous. Finally, the Preamble is becoming a part of the culture of young people, who are celebrating it and making it a part of our culture".

The musician added that the anthem has been included as part of the spirit of the Preamble. "The anthem also needs rescuing, as it is become more of a badge of adherence towards a homogeneous notion and this violent nature of nationalism. When you hear the Preamble with the national anthem, you see that it's actually a call for humanity, spirit, empathy, love and beauty," said Krishna.

Incidentally, at a recent kutcheri in Chennai's Mylapore, Krishna had sung the unsung portion of the national anthem, which was originally titled *Bharoto Bhagya Bidhata* by Rabindranath Tagore. It is the first stanza of this piece which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India as the national anthem.

Krishna along with musician Madan Gopal Singh and Indian Ocean frontman Rahul Ram, among others, will also be present at a musical protest "in defence of our secular tradition" at Delhi's Constitutional Club on January 1, 2020, to present a concert organised by Sehmat, titled 'Surur-e-Azadi'.



(From top) A screen grab from the video; Naseeruddin Shah; TM Krishna



It's Time to Celebrate

India's IT world celebrated the seventh Express IT Awards in Mumbai recently

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

ON AN exciting and memorable evening in Mumbai recently, India's IT world celebrated the seventh edition of the Express IT Awards. The proceedings began with a panel discussion on whether technology would take away jobs or help India leapfrog into the future, moderated by Sunil Jain, managing editor, *Financial Express*. Jatin Singh, MD, Skymet, provided several examples of how his company was using drones to monitor agriculture production and give inputs to farmers on the crop. He spoke of how this was easily scalable and, when linked with various experts and details of soil conditions, could boost farmer incomes significantly.

Both V Vaidyanathan, MD & CEO, IDFC First Bank and Rajiv Anand, ED, Axis Bank, spoke of how digital — UPI transactions, details from e-commerce sites and, soon, GST data — allowed banks to get customers who, till now, were too small for banks to even service, let alone make a profit from. Sharad Sharma, co-founder, iSpirt Foundation, spoke of how, over time, Ayushman Bharat would provide reams of data on the health of individuals and, with their tests and other records digitised, AI could be used for preventive treatments.

Roopa Purushotha-man, chief economist and head of policy advocacy, Tata Sons, gave the example of how the Tatas had, with process changes, made the functioning of AI-IMS and its doctors — in Delhi — more efficient and the same process could be applied to courts, for instance, to improve productivity. Sanjeev Bikhchandani, founder and executive VC, InfoEdge, spoke of how, while it was fashionable to talk of jobs being taken, new technology was also creating new jobs. He cited a startup that was helping farmers identify, and treat, crop diseases and how, since Zomato-type food apps had developed — he is an investor in Zomato — several cloud-kitchens had come up and there were regular food deliveries between midnight and 5 am. Vaidyanathan of IDFC First Bank and



(Top) Winners at the Express IT Awards 2019 gather for a photo-op with chief guest S Ramadorai and The Indian Express Group executive director Anant Goenka; participants during the panel discussion



Anand of Axis Bank agreed that democratisation of data had enabled them to target retail customers who could earlier use only local moneylenders for their capital needs. Use of Aadhaar, tablets and credit bureaus helped bankers underwrite small businesses and provide them the same quality of service as was available to more affluent

customers, Anand said. Vaidyanathan allayed fears of traditional jobs becoming redundant due to proliferation of technologies. He said that while new services were being created through technologies, they aren't necessarily replacing old ones.

Chief guest S Ramadorai, former vice chairman of Tata Consultancy Services, observed how IT was being used for social good in areas such as healthcare, education and agriculture. "AI is being used to weigh newborn babies by scanning the volume of their bodies instead of putting them on the spring scale," he said citing an example of social impact of new technologies.

The winners were chosen by a high-powered jury chaired by Mohandas Pai, investor and former CFO, Infosys and included Gopichand Katragadda, former CTO of the Tata Group and former head of GE's India Research, Sharad Sharma, co-founder of iSpirt Foundation, Professor S Sadagopan, Director, IIIT and Sid Pai, technology consultant and investor. The heavy lifting was done by knowledge partner PwC which scrutinised close to 300 entries to arrive at a shortlist. Sanjeev Bikhchandani won the Lifetime Achievement Award for making *naauki.com* India's biggest employment site while Harsh Jain, founder of sports fantasy platform, Dream 11, walked away with the Newsmaker of the Year award.

We're in December and coming into January. Players standing around that long is not good. I'd prefer if referees went to the screen because it's directly next to us and never used, I don't know exactly why.

JURGEN KLOPP, ON THE USE OF VAR

2019  LOOKING BACK

Indian sport didn't stop buzzing in 2019 as its leading lights took to social media, Twitter and Instagram, and gave the world more than a peek into their globe-trotting lives. The Indian Express trawls the year's five best timelines, lingering a tad longer on the highlights of all that trended in Indian sport.

GOLD AND GLITTER       

Fashion was her armour to survive the everyday grind of pursuing a World Championship writes SHIVANI NAIK

PV SINDHU'S twitter timeline is a breathless untiring diary of a packed calendar criss-crossing the world, meeting important people and rocking some seriously glamorous outfits. In the middle of all this, she scored one of the most commanding World Championship title triumphs in August to make 2019 a memorable year. She found herself in the crosshairs of a couple of controversies while making her biggest statement for the country - winning on badminton court.

The Thankyous

The world and its uncle thronged Sindhu's timeline soon after she won the World title. It was a typically grinning Sindhu - she's a spot of sunshine win or lose - who thanked all the celebrity congratulators with varying degrees. There were emojis of warmth and familiarity drizzled with the loves, hugs, kisses and folded hands of gratitude. Politicians of all hues, actors and musicians, bureaucrats and industrialists and consular heads in Hyderabad, cricketers and real athletes, film personalities and assorted famous personalities hailed her success on Twitter.

Then came the felicitations after the customary addition to her fleet of cars, this time gifted by the biggest name in Tollywood and the obligatory Delhi stop-over straight from Basel. It was a busy two months with pitstops at power centres on Telangana and Andhra, and further afield for Dasara in Mysore and Durga Puja in Kolkata. She made a special mention of the sports-crazy supportive state of Kerala, courtesy stories told by her volleyball playing father. In between Bathukamma celebrations (there's a dance around the goddess who resides in flowers) and a 'visishta puraskaram' from an US-based foundation, was a fashion mag shoot. She traded ethnic wear for some avant garde fashion and a chariot procession in Chennai educational institution.

Sindhu had been on a greet & grin roll since her birthday in July, exchanging some warm messages with friends and fellow athletes Sania Mirza, Kidambi Srikanth (whom she'd affably promised a party and a 'catch up for a match') and Joshna Chinappa. There's a Srikanth-special cross-shot that Sindhu's out-Srikanthed Srikanth with this year on the circuit. And top of our Twitter wishlist will be a video of that promised face-off. Just as the birthday rolled off came the Worlds triumph, and it has been one emoji laden showers of blessings going right upto the extended monsoons in November.

Earlier in the summer, she'd stick to a Congratulations template for the whole week - first shooters Saurabh Chaudhary, Apurvi Chandela and Rahi Sarnobat as they



won medals at Munich, and then the state's chief minister and country's prime minister in close succession. There were also assorted birthday wishes for the CM, PM, Sports Minister and Amitabh Bachchan - distant, formal, respectful and economic with emojis.

The emojis

Perhaps Ranveer Singh's exuberance rubs off on anyone who meets him, and Sindhu had an LOL, the laugh-till-you-cry, the wide grin, the bear hug, the 'too good' and lots of love emoticons bubbling through a tweet when she seemed to have met him a second time around this year. Her only frowny and flowing tears emoji was for when she was away in Malaysia and missing Ugadi, while she couldn't resist 'heart eyes' when flying the LCA Tejas at the aero-show.

Sindhu tended to be most expressive when it came to her elder sister Divya and her nephew Aryan, posting long adoring fond messages on their birthdays. "Today's extra special because you turn ONE we'll eat cake and ice cream and have lots of fun It seems like just yesterday you were brand new, and now there are so many things you can do... And the best thing of all that is your life's just begun ❤️❤️ There is no other perfect gift for a baby who has already received the wonderful gift of perfect genes. 🥳 HAPPY BIRTHDAY MY MARSHMALLOW 🥳🥳"

There was similar affection for her elder sister who she's very close to, and later in the year for her soft-spoken mother.

Players don't always handle their own social media feed - her Diwali and Christmas



wishes came wrapped in sponsor videos - similar voice inflections, her understated glee and pretty outfits and all. But one suspects in a year that Sindhu's reached the pinnacle of the World title, these personalized notes are definitely penned by her.

In fact a cryptic and contemplative note fetched up on her Insta and twitter feed at the start of 2019.

"Well I have learned a lot last year ...I learned that things don't always turn our way you planned, or the way you think they should ... I've learned that you can get through bad times and keep looking for better ones, as long as you have people who love you keeping it this way and ending up saying goodbye to 2018 which has given me a lot ❤️❤️ and Entering into this new year 2019 with new moments 🥳 ... I wish everyone a blissful, awesome and cheerful and a happy NEW YEAR 2019"

The Whimper

There also the not-too-popular Mile Sur Mera Tumhara re-make film with the Swachh Bharat theme, featuring Sindhu. Even the Hashtag Bharatkilaxmi, a video that also had Deepika Padukone and highlighting the work of social worker Sindhutai Sapkal, received moderate response. But what snowballed into a controversy was the "copy-pasted" tweets tagged with the Sports Minister's own pitch for celebrating womanhood and platitudes on empowerment. These were put out by half a dozen sports-women. They led to wretched optics and expectedly drew widespread criticism.

This incidentally came a month and half after Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had visited Sindhu calling her "youth icon who can also play an important role in bringing social change."

Pradhan had continued in the tweet: "Suggested that she lend her voice to national missions and campaigns like #SwachhBharat, #JalShaktiAbhiyan and putting an end to single use plastic..."

Sindhu's other tweet that conflicted many of her followers was the one where she said "justice had been served" to four men accused of rape/murder of a Hyderabad vet and shot dead by the cops later. There were many who echoed her view but there were those who found her tweet cringeworthy

Incidentally, on October 24, Sindhu had congratulated the @TS_She Teams, a state police initiative on completing "five years of fabulous service. Thanks to you, like any other woman in the state I feel safe and secure in Bangaru Telangana."

The Serene start

The first half of the year though -- when she had just won the year-end Tour finals and with plenty of time for the World Championships, was when Sindhu's Twitter timeline was a sunny, serene vista of pictures on the beach and lots of sunnies and downtime at an unspecified location. She seemed to be enjoying the time off from what has been three draining seasons 2016-18, with 2018 particularly punctuated with tough finals losses, though it ended with the title.

But she would take in new experiences in 2019 - trying her hand at prone shooting at a Pune rifle range (not seen a goofier face at a 50 m range where shooters are squinting painfully at most times. Sindhu just plonked there and grinned into the camera, never mind the discarded weapon). This was with her league franchise Hyderabad Hunters. One day a delayed flight saw the squad playing Uno, next day she was at Sabarmati Ashram.

The Dresses

With her supermodel stature and striking looks, Sindhu would turn up at the Lakme Fashion Week and rock a little white dress with a strappy sneakers number in what was a stunning turn at the ramp. She can pull off glamour as well as she can grit, and Sindhu's twitter and insta were full of some of the prettiest ensembles put togey on a celebrity.

The shimmery lehengas might be the dullest of her picks, for she was impeccable whenever she stepped out. There was the burberry print sleeveless pantsuit for the pink ball test. On other days there was a fuschia tunic with grey Quillots and striped long jackets with block print borders. And also some sweeping skirts and a bold navy blue, flaming red fusion ethnic outfit. Her timeline threw up an eclectic wardrobe, carefully accessorised and cameras catching her sharpest angles.

Even lunch with people from the American consulate ended up as a peek into a stylish bottle green number. There were pithy statements to go with the outfits: An aubergine ankle length layered dress scrunched at waist: "Keep your heels, head & standards high...". A steely grey-green outfit to go with: Don't change to fit the fashion, change the fashion to fit you 🥳. And a couple of enigmatic tosses in French: "Sois belle à ta façon" And "soyez simplement heureux, cela rend les gens fous 🥳 #stay-happy" (Just be happy, it drives people crazy).

Where Popeye meets Thunberg, Redford and Shri Padma Shri Chhetri

In addition to Indian football team's highs and lows, goalie Gurpreet Singh Sandhu's tweets also gave a glimpse into his multiple facets off the field.



90S KID
GURPREET SINGH Sandhu was the only millennial to use the word 'boomer' unironically in 2019. A fair distance away from the cacophony of Gen X, Y, Z, the true blue 90s kid instead was making a reference to the Wrigley's chewing gum Boomer, and the elastic man.

Sandhu's timeline is littered with sketches of classic cartoon characters such as Daffy Duck, Popeye, Goofy et al, a habit he picked up when he was gifted a Dragon Ball Z pencil box.

"Drawing cartoons and sketching makes me happy. Forgetting about everything, even the game, and shifting your focus to simple things like sketching helps so that you can learn to channel your focus," Sandhu said in a 2017 interview. "It eventually helps on the field too when you need to stay focused for 90 minutes."



CAPTAIN PLANET
THERE'S MORE than just saving goals on Sandhu's agenda. Last week, he retweeted environmental activist Greta Thunberg's call to change in the wake of Australia Fires tragedy. Earlier, on September 24, Sandhu had also shared Thunberg's #HowDareYou speech at the United Nations summit with his 57k followers.

It's not about chasing social media clout either. In July, Sandhu answered a rapid-fire question from stuff.tv: "If I were to choose to be a superhero, I'd wish to be Captain Planet. I wish I could use my powers to reverse the effects of climate change and pollution."

Sandhu also declared his support for Thunberg's 'School Strike 4 climate' movement. "Kudos to the @StrikeClimate for taking this important initiative, it's time to act together and take initiative to protect our planet #ClimateChange"



GOOD GUY GURPREET
SANDHU ISN'T one for emojis. The one he's used most -- 'namaste' -- is common to most athletes. He's into gifs, though. His go-to being the Robert Redford nod of approval from the 1972 film 'Jeremiah Johnson'. He used the gif six times this year: accepting compliments, celebrating Kean Lewis' contract extension at BFC. The most wholesome usage of the gif was the day after the Game of Thrones finale aired. India captain Sunil Chhetri, like millions worldwide, was coming to terms with the disappointing final season. "...I have absolutely no problem with Bran as King, but the build-up to it should have been more solid. In fact, so many major moments lacked a good build up..." Chhetri tweeted. In response, Sandesh Jhingam asked the all-important question. "Paji @chetrisunil11 "GOT" chorho, quinoa kaun la raha lunch pe yeh btao." Enter Good guy Gurpreet. "I'll bring it," with the Redford nod to boot.



CONNECTED TO THE ROOTS
IT WAS also a year of multiple trips down the memory lanes of Norway. Sandhu retweeted a photo of John 'Budgie' Burridge and Espen Granli hanging out together; the former a goalkeeper-turned-pundit who recommended young Sandhu to various scouts across Europe, the latter his coach at Norwegian club Stabaek FC. "The discoverer and the maker, both in a single frame!" tweeted Sandhu. On September 18, he also tweeted a photo of a police report he had filed during his time in Norway. "Was going through some of my archives and found this Police report that i had filed back in Norway, when i could only afford a bicycle?? and that too got stolen! ? #ToughTimesDontLastToughPeopleDo"

It wasn't all overseas either. Sandhu also documented his trips to the St Stephen's Academy in Chandigarh, where his footballing journey began.



DEAR BROTHER
Throughout 2019, Sandhu also expressed his adulation for Sunil Chhetri. The captain-goalie duo continued to rule the roost at BFC, and Sandhu tweeted out a photo of the two walking out of the Bengaluru airport with the ISL trophy and "Dhai kilo ka" golden glove trophy in tow.

In another throwback post, Sandhu recalled '#TheDayIMet@chetrisunil11'. But the crowning glory was on the Republic Day, when Chhetri was conferred with the Padma Shri award. Sandhu congratulated by updating the contact info in his phone to 'Shri Padma Shri Chhetri Bhai'. In return, when Sandhu received the Arjuna Award in August, Chhetri wrote a heartfelt post. "Let's keep the height or the lack of it aside for a minute. A few years ago, I saw you walk into the national team as a kid. And today to see 'Arjuna Awardee' go beside your name, gives me immense pride."

BRIEFLY

Short in for Abbot in Aus squad for India

Melbourne, Dec 30 (PTI) Australia on Monday called up D'Arcy Short in place of injured pacer Sean Abbott in their Aaron Finch-led ODI squad for the upcoming tour of India. Short has been included in the 14-man squad after a side strain during a Big Bash League game ruled out Abbott for four weeks. The India tour begins with the first One-day International in Mumbai on January 14. The second and third ODIs will be held in Rajkot and Bengaluru on January 17 and January 19 respectively. With fast bowlers Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Mitchell Starc and Kane Richardson already in Australia's ODI squad, selectors have called in Short, a top-order batter who also bowls wrist spin, to replace pacer Abbott.

AUSTRALIA SQUAD: Aaron Finch (capt), D'Arcy Short, Ashton Agar, Alex Carey (wk), Pat Cummins, Peter Handscomb, Josh Hazlewood, Marnus Labuschagne, Kane Richardson, Steven Smith, Mitchell Starc, Ashton Turner, David Warner, Adam Zampa.

No MS in Wisden's T20I team of decade

London: India skipper Virat Kohli and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah were the only two Indians who found a place in Wisden's T20I team of the decade, which didn't feature Mahendra Singh Dhoni. Australia's limited overs captain Aaron Finch was named captain of the team, which has two more Australian in Shane Watson and Glenn Maxwell, two England cricketers -- Jos Buttler and David Willey, two Afghanistan all-rounders -- Mohammad Nabi and Rashid Khan, and New Zealand's Colin Munro and Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga. On Kohli, Wisden said: "While Kohli's record in domestic T20 cricket is patchy, the same cannot be said of T20Is. Kohli's average of 53 was the best in the decade, and while his consistency compromises his strike-rate slightly, he is still able to score at a good rate, even if not exceptional. Kohli is an ideal player at No.3, able to fight fires when an early wicket is lost and stabilise the innings, but also accelerate when a platform is set. Following a huge first-wicket partnership, Kohli will slide down the order in this XI," it said on its website. There was no representation from the West Indies in the team despite them winning two T20 titles in the 2010s, including the last one in India in 2016.

DDCA seeks time for president's election

New Delhi: The DDCA on Monday sought time till the state assembly polls in February to conduct election for the post of its president. The DDCA also made it clear that former India opener Gautam Gambhir, whose name was doing the rounds, will not be eligible to contest for the post. "Ombudsman Deepak Verma will be requested to give some extension to conduct election for president's post. Election is slated for January end but a request will be put that it is held after Delhi's assembly election in February," said DDCA general secretary Vinod Tihara. **AGENCIES**

Oly, Asiad, CWG: IOA wants all and more

If bids are accepted, India will end up hosting five major sporting extravaganzas over nine years; Government non-committal so far

MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

THE INDIAN Olympic Association (IOA) has prepared an extravagant wish list heading into the new decade. If things go the way IOA hopes, India would end up hosting the following five major sporting events over nine years: the 2023 International Olympic Committee (IOC) Congress; the 2026 Youth Olympics; the 2026 or 2030 Commonwealth Games; the 2030 Asian Games; and the most ambitious of them all -- the 2032 Olympic Games.

Like a high school graduate who applies at multiple colleges hoping to get admission in at least one, the IOA too has set out to bid for all major multi-discipline events. Depending on how the bidding process goes, they might get all, they might get some, or -- an unlikely scenario -- they might get none.

This comes after the IOA, in its general body meeting on Monday, decided to throw its hat in the ring to bring the CWG to India in either 2026 or 2030. The bidding formalities will begin in 2020, exactly 10 years after Delhi hosted the controversial, scam-tainted CWG.

How it came to this, no one knows. For, in the last 18 months India had constantly threatened to boycott the 2022 Commonwealth Games because shooting was not included in the programme. The IOA president Narinder Batra even claimed that the CWG were a "waste of time and money" and suggested India should "withdraw from the Games altogether". The Olympic body's secretary-general Rajiv Mehta, at the same time, proposed that India should bid for the 2026 edition.

On Monday, the general body agreed that India should consider hosting the CWG again in either 2026 or 2030. And at the same time, the IOA confirmed that India will not pull out of the 2022 Games in Birmingham after the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) said it would host a Commonwealth Shooting Championship in March 2022 at its own expense. Batra said they are also sending a proposal to host a Commonwealth Championship for archery, the other sport where India considers itself strong but is not included in the Games programme.

That means in the coming decade, India's tag of being a sports-hosting nation will be cemented. Apart from the multi-discipline Games, India is also hosting hockey and cricket World Cups in 2023. The All India Football Federation is keen to host the Asian under-23 championship and women's Asian Cup in 2022, a FIFA Futsal World Cup in 2024 and the Asian Cup 2027.

It is believed the national sports federations have been told to bid for their respective World and Asian Championships in 2022 to mark the country's 75th Independence Day.

Big ticket, bigger budget

All of this will come at a cost. The 2023 IOC session, which will be significant because the host of 2030 Winter Olympics is expected to be chosen during the meeting, is likely to cost around \$10 million (approximately Rs 71 crore). The estimated budget for 2018 Youth Olympics, which were held in Argentina's capital Buenos Aires, was \$200 million (roughly Rs 1,500 crore).

The 2018 Asian Games cost Indonesia approximately \$3.2 billion (about Rs 22, 810 crore) while Gold Coast hosted the CWG earlier that year cost the organisers \$1.2 billion (approximately Rs 8,551 crore). Japan, reportedly, could end up spending more than



India's last tryst with the Commonwealth Games -- Delhi 2010 -- was mired with corruption and mismanagement. Express file

A HOST OF EVENTS

In the coming decade, India will host:

- 2020 women's under-17 football World Cup
- 2021 men's boxing worlds
- 2021 World T20
- 2022 Commonwealth Shooting Championship
- 2023 ODI Cricket World Cup
- 2023 Hockey World Cup

...and likely to bid for:

- 2022 Asian under-23 football championship
- 2022 women's Asian Cup
- 2023 IOC Session
- 2024 FIFA Futsal World Cup
- 2026 Youth Olympics
- 2026 or 2030 CWG
- 2027 Men's Asian Cup
- 2030 Asian Games
- 2032 Olympic Games

\$26 billion (around Rs 1 lakh 85 thousand crore) on the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics; considerably higher than the \$7.3 billion originally projected.

Each event that the IOA is bidding for will come with its own set of requirements. For instance, the programme for the Youth

Olympics will be vastly different to the CWG if they are both held in 2026. Similarly, the Asian Games is almost double the size of CWG, both in terms of events and participation, in case India hosts them in 2030. The Olympics, as all previous host cities will attest, will be a different beast altogether given its sheer size.

So far, the IOA has not indicated the host cities for these events. It is learnt that the Youth Olympics will either be held in either Delhi or Bhubaneswar. Batra, who has been involved in the initial talks, had recently virtually ruled out Mumbai -- the third city in the running -- since the infrastructure there will have to be constructed from scratch.

The government, so far, has not committed. Earlier this year, sports minister Kiren Rijju said the country should be well prepared rather than creating an "embarrassing situation." It is learnt that the government is playing a wait-and-watch game, at least with respect to hosting the 2032 Olympics, and taking note of other bidders. In case the government feels that India's bid will be undermined by another strong player, they might hold off for the time being.

So far, the only confirmed bid has come from Australia, which have named Brisbane as the candidate city. The other likely contenders are Indonesia, Germany and a joint bid from North and South Korea. While the host for 2030 Asian Games and 2032 Olympics will be decided in the middle of the next decade, a decision on the host of 2026 CWG is likely to be taken in 2020.

No boycott, India to 'send strong contingent to Birmingham 2022'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 30

DOUBTS OVER India's participation at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham have been cleared after the Indian Olympic Association on Monday withdrew its "threat" to boycott the event over the exclusion of shooting. Another major decision that was taken during its Annual General Meeting in New Delhi was to bid for the 2026 or 2030 CWG. "After a lot of discussions, we have decided to withdraw the boycott threat and send a strong contingent to Birmingham. We will also bid for the 2026 or 2030 Commonwealth," IOA general secretary Rajiv Mehta told reporters.

The Commonwealth Games Federation welcomed India's assurance of participating in Birmingham 2022 and said it was "delighted" to see India express interest in organising another CWG. "The CGF and the entire Commonwealth Sports

Movement are delighted India has confirmed their intent to participate at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games during their Annual General Meeting in New Delhi," CWG federation president Dame Louise Martin said through a statement on their website.

"Our visit and collaboration have significantly strengthened our partnership with the Indian Commonwealth Games Association, under the leadership of President Dr Narinder Dhruv Batra, and we are continuing to work closely. Finally, we are delighted that India has expressed an ambition to host another Commonwealth Games in the future," she added.

The IOA has also given a nod to the National Rifle Association of India's proposal to host a shooting championship prior to the main event slated to start on the 22nd of July. NRAI has volunteered to cover the expenses as well. IOA said it will forward NRAI's proposal in the first week of January itself to the CGF for their approval.

'We will also bid for the 2026 or 2030 Commonwealth Games,' said IOA general secy.

ICC to consider making four-day Tests mandatory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE, DECEMBER 30

THE INTERNATIONAL Cricket Council (ICC) could make four-day Tests mandatory from 2023 as part of the World Test Championship, primarily to free up the crowded calendar. The ICC's cricket committee will formally consider trimming Tests to four days from five for the 2023-2031 cycle.

ICC wanting to stage more global events, the BCCI's demands for an expanded bilateral calendar, proliferation of T20 leagues around the world and cost of hosting a five-day game are some of the factors contributing to the need for a four-day game, reported ESPNcricinfo.

If four-day Tests were held during the 2015-2023 cycle, it would have freed up 335 days of scheduled cricket.

A four-day Test is not a new concept with the last one played between England and Ireland earlier this year. South Africa and Zimbabwe too played one in 2017. It is an issue that is likely to attract a contrasting view from the game's stakeholders.

Cricketer Australia chief Kevin Roberts feels four-day Tests should be definitely considered.

"It is something that we have got to seriously consider this week. It is something that can't be driven by emotion, but it needs to be driven by fact. We need to look at what's the average length of Test matches over the past five-ten years in terms of time

and overs," Roberts told SEN Radio.

"We need to look at it very carefully and perhaps it is more likely than not in the mid-term future. What we absolutely will do is that over the next 12 to 18 months, we make sure the cricket calendar is nailed down for the years 2023 to 2031.

"What we are committed to doing is working with all the ICC members -- nobody is saying it is easy but what we are doing is looking at it holistically and we are committed to doing that."

However, Australian captain Tim Paine was not enthused by the idea following his team's 247-run win over New Zealand in the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne.

"We might not have got a result if we'd done that in the Ashes, I think every game went to a fifth day," said Paine.

"That's the point of difference with Test cricket, it is five days, it's harder mentally, it's harder physically, and it tests players more than the four-day first-class fixtures do. I think that's what it's designed to do, so I hope it stays that way."

It's too early to say: Ganguly

Meanwhile, BCCI President Sourav Ganguly on Monday said it's "too early" to comment on the ICC's proposal to make four-day Tests mandatory as part of the World Test Championship from 2023.

"First we will have to see the proposal, let it come and then we will see. It's too early to say. Can't comment just like this," Ganguly said at the Eden Gardens when asked about his views on four-day Tests.

CA chief Kevin Roberts feels four-day Tests should be definitely considered. 'It is something that we have got to seriously consider this week. It can't be driven by emotion, but it needs to be driven by fact. We need to look at what's the average length of Test matches over the past five-ten years in terms of time and overs. We need to look at it very carefully.'

Faf downvotes 'Big 3 + 1' Super Series

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, DECEMBER 30

THE PROPOSED Super Series involving India, England, Australia and a fourth Test nation received disapproval from Faf du Plessis. The South Africa captain criticised the idea of creating a new annual ODI event, which, if it sees the light of day, would be controlled by the Big Three.

"The last year or so you can see what's going on in terms of the 'big three' countries. There's a lot of movement going towards that, a lot more matches being played against the top three, or big three. It's probably better if you include more teams, better to grow the game as much as you can," du Plessis said after South Africa beat England in the first Test at Centurion. "There are a lot of smaller nations not playing a lot of Test cricket, they are actually playing less," he added.

According to a BCCI functionary, at this moment in time, the four-nation tournament is only a proposal, not even a plan. A former cricket board official said the proposed tournament is basically an extension of a three-nation ODI event that had been mullied on by the late Jagmohan Dalmiya after he became the cricket board president in 2015. "The idea was to organise the tournament during the now-defunct Champions League window," the ex-official said.

About two years after Dalmiya's passing, the BCCI's May 7, 2017 general body meeting in Delhi had unanimously approved the proposal, as a countermeasure to the Indian board's reduced revenue from the ICC. "Mr Abhay Apte (former Maharashtra Cricket Association president) made a request to the house to implement the plans that Mr Dalmiya had proposed as the president. He had proposed that in the Champions League slot, BCCI can organise a bilateral or tri-series.

"The chairman assured to look into this proposal suggested by Dalmiyaji who had contributed to the development of BCCI as well as ICC," the minutes of the SGM noted. It is learnt that after the SGM, the matter



'It's probably better if you include more teams, better to grow the game as much as you can,' said Faf du Plessis on the proposed tournament. Reuters

was informally taken to ICC chairman Shashank Manohar and it received a positive response. During the Committee of Administrator's reign, however, the whole thing was on the back burner.

Earlier this month, when BCCI office-bearers -- president Sourav Ganguly, secretary Jay Shah and treasurer Arun Dhumal -- met the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chairman Colin Graves and his team at Lord's, Ganguly floated the idea of having a four-nation ODI tournament from 2021 onwards. With the ICC contemplating on having eight flagship tournaments in eight years during the next rights cycle commencing from 2023 -- adding two Champions Trophy-like ODI events with six top teams is also on the global body's agenda -- the idea of having a Super Series was deliberated upon, apparently to protect the revenue stream of the game's three biggest stakeholders. India, England and Australia are the chief contrib-

utors to the ICC coffers. India alone contributes to over 70 per cent of the ICC's revenue.

The ECB responded to Ganguly's proposal, saying they are "open" to more discussions with India and other ICC members, with an eye to developing the concept "further". The Cricket Australia chief executive Kevin Roberts termed the idea as "innovative". Ganguly has maintained that at this stage, it's only a "proposal" and that the idea is to have a "good, competitive tournament".

Some BCCI members, however, are excited at the prospect of having a Super Series in the near future. "I totally support the BCCI president and secretary. When the three (India, England and Australia) get together we don't need anyone. If the ICC opposes it, we should keep our options open to break away from the ICC. What is ICC without the BCCI," the Saurashtra Cricket Association president Jaydev Shah told this paper.

Cover-up at a body-building event for women in Bangladesh

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
DHAKA, DECEMBER 30

BANGLADESH'S FIRST women's bodybuilding championship was won by a 19-year-old student in a contest where most of her muscle was covered up to prevent controversy in the Muslim-majority nation.

While skimpy bikinis are the norm at international body-building contests, Awhona Rahman and her 29 rivals kept their brawn under wraps in front of the crowd of hundreds.

Rahman and the other competitors struck poses on stage wearing tight leggings and body-hugging outfits during the three-day event that finished on Sunday and was held in the capital Dhaka.

"I am really happy, I really worked hard for this," Rahman told AFP.

"It never entered my mind that someone might criticise me for showing my body. My brother, who runs a fitness centre, has always encouraged me," she added.

"We were told there would be proper dress code and the outfit provided was perfect from a Bangladeshi perspective," Bangladesh Bodybuilding Federation general secretary Nazrul Islam said there had been a huge response to the landmark women's competition which aimed to encourage health and fitness.

"We were very careful about the dress code because of our religious and social culture. We selected long sleeve crop tops and leggings for the girls," he added.

Islam predicted the competition would help create jobs for women in the growing number of gyms in Bangladesh where women now have memberships.

Nearly 90 per cent of Bangladesh's population is Muslim and women are making a growing impact in sport including cricket, football and archery.

Runaway leaders Liverpool have soundtrack of champions

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, DECEMBER 30

LIVERPOOL FANS ended 2019 by chanting "Champions of the world" for the first time at Anfield. "Champions of England" will surely be sung by the Kop in 2020. Sadio Mane ensured Liverpool reached the halfway point with a 13-point lead - with a game in hand - that seems unassailable after clinching a 1-0 victory over Wolverhampton on Sunday.

And all Wolverhampton fans could forlornly chant was: "Is this football anymore?"

That reflected more frustration with the application of VAR in the technology's first Premier League campaign, of course. Even if the calls were ultimately correct by on-field referee Anthony Taylor. Mane's goal was initially ruled out by Taylor for handball but it was actually helped on by teammate Adam Lallana's shoulder. There was a handball by Liverpool defender Virgil Van Dijk in the buildup but that didn't appear to be factored into the decision. "I just heard there was complaints of handball, I thought it was for Adam," Van Dijk said. "What can we do? They made a decision and the goal stood."

The naked eye would have struggled to see a reason to deny Pedro Neto an equalizer but once the hazy footage had lines inserted over it, offside was the decision from VAR HQ in London. "VAR is killing us," Wolves captain Conor Coady said. "It is constantly against us. I don't know where we are going wrong. It is affecting games. No one likes it."

Liverpool has built a lead more than double the six-point advantage surrendered at this point last season before being overhauled by Manchester City. Pep Guardiola's side is certainly less of a threat this season, still 14 points back after beating Sheffield United 2-0 on Sunday night. Leicester is a point better off to sit as Liverpool's closest but very distant challenger.

The cushion looks unassailable for a club that has endured three decades of anguish and near-misses since last winning the English championship in 1990 - three years before the new Premier League trophy was handed out for the first time. Liverpool certainly has the winning habit, bringing the Club World Cup back from Qatar last weekend to join the European titles - the Champions League and Super Cup - collected earlier in 2019.

VAR's fault lines

A weekend filled with video reviews showed how rule book is simply incompatible with scrutiny of replay system

RORY SMITH
LIVERPOOL, DECEMBER 30

PERHAPS, FOR you, it was way back on the first day of the Premier League season that the doubts set in, when Raheem Sterling's armpit was deemed offside in Manchester City's game against West Ham.

Or maybe you had a little more patience than that. Maybe you accepted that any innovation, any disruption, drags a learning curve in its wake. Your own tipping point might have come with Son Heung-min's shoulder blade, or John Lundstram's toe, or Sadio Mane's hip.

Or it might have come on Sunday at Anfield, where Liverpool squeezed out of 2019 with a 1-0 win against Wolves to maintain its 13-point lead at the top of the Premier League, thanks in equal parts to a goal from Mane, its visitors' wastefulness and Jonny Castro Otto's unforgivable inability to keep the arch of his left foot onside at all times.

There is one final possibility, of course, which is that no matter how long that list of insignificant body parts grows, your faith in the benefits that the video assistant referee has brought to English soccer remains unwavering.

That would be an increasingly niche viewpoint. This Premier League weekend alone brought fans in Norwich, Liverpool and Manchester - among others - to the edge; games are more and more frequently being played out to a background hum of dissatisfaction at the decisions being made by V.A.R. - always the institution, never an individual - and the prominence it has assumed. "It's not football anymore" is the song that can be printed; there are a couple regularly heard in stadiums that cannot.

The complication is that in all of those cases, whichever referee is sitting in the Premier League's broadcast headquarters at Stockley Park has reached the correct decision; or, rather, the referee has reached the correct decision, allowing for the margin of error inherent to the system.

Otto's foot, or at least a sliver of it, was offside in the buildup to Pedro Neto's goal; so, too, Mane's armpit and Lundstram's toe and all the rest.

That is not to say the anger is illegitimate; it is just that it is misplaced. There is a tendency for both the news media and fans themselves to see goals ruled out by remote



Wolves had a goal disallowed in their 1-0 defeat to Liverpool on Sunday. AP

This weekend alone brought fans in Norwich, Liverpool and Manchester - among others - to the edge; games are more and more frequently being played out to a background hum of dissatisfaction at the decisions being made by V.A.R

control as being "denied by V.A.R.," or goals or penalties awarded as being nothing more than the unpredictable whim of some all-seeing, unaccountable entity.

That is misleading. The job of the V.A.R. system is simply to establish whether a goal should or should not stand in accordance with the laws of the game; it no more denies or approves goals than the referee on the field. The video is simply an instrument for enforcing the laws.

And in the case of offside, it has become increasingly clear that the problem lies within the laws. All that V.A.R. has done, with its pinpoint cameras and its geometric lines

and its limitless time in which to examine each incident, is to highlight it.

Otto was technically offside when he planted his foot a few yards outside the Liverpool penalty area, albeit only barely - by no more than the depth of the sponsor's logo on his boot. But he was not offside in the sense that any fan, any coach, any player would understand it. "They say it gets the right decision," the Wolves captain Conor Coady said after the game, "but I'm not sure it's worth it."

Rules of the game

That may seem a trivial argument, but although the rules of soccer have a name full of grandiose self-importance - the Laws, always capitalized - they are not, actually, laws. They are the rules of a game. They draw their authority not from some celestial being or from centuries of jurisprudence, but from the willingness of participants and observers of that game to abide by them. They are a convention, not a covenant. Soccer is policed by consent, not by coercion.

As soon as they seem invalid to those who are playing and watching, then they are no longer fit for purpose. Otto, Sterling

and the rest might have been offside by the letter of the law, but they were not by the spirit of it. In the case of soccer - unlike, say, criminal justice - the spirit of the law is what matters.

V.A.R. has exposed that fault line, and to some extent we have nobody to blame but ourselves. It is managers who created a climate in which officials felt that only technology could save them from waves of criticism every time they got a call wrong, using the referees as a convenient scapegoat for their own failings.

It is fans who booed them off the field every time they made an incorrect decision - always, always just a tiny percentage of the decisions they had to make - and who, in extreme cases, hunted out their home addresses, chased them from the game. And the news media pored over their calls, with slow motion video and freeze frame and the benefit of hindsight, and told them they were not fit for purpose.

The solution, now, is not to turn back to those days, to tell the referees that they just have to fail on their own again. V.A.R. can work, as it proved - admittedly aching slowly - in allowing Liverpool's winning goal. Nor is the solution to stubbornly proceed as we are, surrendering the game to unseen technocrats, making it perfect in a technical sense but unsatisfactory in a spiritual, sporting one.

Instead, it is to accept that the method of enforcement requires an update of the law. Perhaps that means, as has been suggested, that only a player's feet can be offside, though that would not have saved Otto or Wolves. Perhaps it is a time limit on how long a decision can be analyzed or how many replays officials are allowed to see.

Or perhaps it is changing the law so that it is fit for purpose now: a player's whole body should have to be offside or that any decision requiring the drawing of lines for certainty should be ruled onside. There will always be marginal calls, of course; there will always be controversy. What matters is to minimize it, to regain that consent once more.

The current impasse works for nobody: not for referees, not for players, not for fans. The song has it right: It is not football anymore. That is not an argument against change, though. Soccer has always changed. The problem, at the moment, is that it has not changed quite enough.

Injured Nishikori latest high-profile player to pull out of Aus Open



Nishikori's withdrawal comes days after Andy Murray pulled out. File

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, DECEMBER 30

A DAY after Andy Murray put his Grand Slam comeback on hold, Japan's Kei Nishikori has become the latest high-profile player to withdraw from next month's Australian Open, citing a right elbow injury.

Tennis Australia issued a statement Monday saying Nishikori had withdrawn from the season-opening major at Melbourne Park and from the ATP Cup, a new international men's team event which starts next week and will be played in Sydney, Perth and Brisbane. The world No.13, who has not played since a third-round loss to Australia's Alex de Minaur at the U.S. Open, required minor elbow surgery in the off-season.

"Today, together with my team, we have made this decision as I am still not 100 per cent ready (or) healthy to compete at the highest level," Nishikori said. "This decision was not taken lightly as Australia is one of my favorite places to compete. Together with my team I will keep working hard to be back on court as soon as possible. Thanks for all the support."

Nishikori, who reached a career-high rank of No.4 in 2015, is a four-time Australian Open quarterfinalist (2012, 2015, 2016, 2019) with a 29-7 record at Melbourne Park. Murray, a three-time major winner, announced Sunday that he had experienced a "setback" in his recovery from injury and as a precaution would not be coming to Australia in January.

NYT

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