In a major shift in its campaign strategy for the Delhi Assembly elections, the Bharativa Janata Party will rake up issues such as the new citizenship law and NRC and also focus on local issues plaguing the city. CITY ▶ PAGE 2

AAP's Bhagwant Mann booked for rioting

AAP's Punjab unit president Bhagwant Mann and some party legislators have been booked on charges of rioting during a protest here against power tariff hike. NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

EDUCATIONPLUS ▶ PAGES 16 & 17

CAA meant to give citizenship, not take it away, says PM Modi

Those opposing amended law fuelling misconception among the youth, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) was aimed at giving citizenship and not taking it

Addressing a gathering of youth at Belur Math, the headquarters of Ramakrishna Mission, in West Bengal's Howrah district, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, Mr. Modi accused those opposing the amended law of "playing political games" and "fuelling misconception among the youth".

'A lot of questions'

"What is there in this Act? Why was it needed? There are a lot of questions in the minds of the youth which have been fuelled by various people. Lot of youth have awareness. Yet, there are



Sharing views: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with monks of the Ramakrishna Mission at Belur Math on Sunday. • PTI

some who are victims of misconception, rumours. It is our responsibility to make them understand," he said.

Mr. Modi's remarks on the day, also observed as International Youth Day, assumes significance as there were widespread protests in Kolkata against the CAA during

his two-day visit, particularly by youth and students.

He asked the audience whether people who faced "religious persecution in neighbouring countries should be left to die".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12 MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGES 12 & 13

None can stop rollout of Act: **Amit Shah**

STAFF REPORTER

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said no matter how much the Congress opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the government would rest only after granting citizenship to members of six minority religions from three neighbouring countries, and no one could stop it.

'They are sons and daughters of the country too. Even they enjoy the same right over the country as you and I," he said at a rally to create awareness about the law in Jabalpur.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

J&K officer may have been ferrying Hizb ultras to Delhi

Officials suspect they were planning a hit on Republic Day

PEERZADA ASHIQ SRINAGAR

The Jammu & Kashmir police on Sunday said they are investigating the role of a gallantry award-winning senior police officer, Davinder Singh, who was ferrying two Hizbul Mujahideen militants. including wanted 'commander' Syed Naveed Mushtaq alias Babu, in a civilian car on Saturday

They are suspected to have been headed to Delhi and may have been targeting the Republic Day function in the national capital.

"Based on an intelligence input provided by the Shopian police, two terrorists and one police officer were held during a search of a civilian car on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway. The police officer will be treated as a terrorist. The ongoing operation started on Saturday. Multiple agencies are questioning them," Inspector



Davinder Singh

General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, said.

House raided

Top police sources said the house of the Deputy Superintendent of Police in Srinagar's Indira Nagar was also raided and "one AK-47 and two pistols were recovered."

DSP Singh's house shares a boundary wall with the Army's 15 Corps headquarters at Badami Bagh.

Awarded the 'Police Medal for Gallantry' in August 2018, he is at present posted with the anti-hijacking wing of the police at the Srinagar International Airport. Sources said Mr. Singh was the officer in-charge who provided security and received a 15member foreign envoys' delegation on January 9 at the airport.

"Mr. Singh has applied for four days' leave," the police officer said. Preliminary reports suggest the officer and the militants were going to New Delhi, just two weeks ahead of the Republic Day.

The police officer, who worked with the special antimilitancy Special Operations Group in 2002, faced a controversy when Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru, in a letter, named him. Guru claimed Mr. Singh had asked him to take another Parliament attacker Mohammad "to Delhi and arrange for him a flat for his stay and also purchase a car for him".

JNU attack state-sponsored: Congress panel

This attack was

'Vice-Chancellor was the mastermind; he should be sacked immediately and put under probe'

is absolutely no doubt about

it... The question is what did

the administration and the

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The January 5 attack against students and faculty members of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) was "statesponsored", a Congress factfinding committee said on

The four-member committee accused Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadesh Kumar of being the "mastermind" of the attack, and demanded his immediate dismissal and criminal investigation against him, faculty members who conspired with the attackers and the company charged with security on the campus. "This attack was state-sponsored. There is absolutely no doubt about it... The question is what did the administration and the Delhi police do to stop it," Mahila



Delhi police do to stop it USHMITA DEV, MAHILA CONGRESS CHIE Congress chief Sushmita the role of the police during Dev, a member of the committee, said during the release of the report. She said

tors were from right-wing factions. "I have no doubt that what happened on January 5 is pre-planned, pre-mediated and a criminal conspiracy," Ms. Dev said.

She pointed to the disconnection of power supply and

to prove that the perpetra-

the attack and the aftermath, including the failure to file attempt-to-murder charges against the perpetrators, there was sufficient evidence

state-sponsored. There

Noting that there was "overwhelming prima facie evidence that [police officers] facilitated the criminal elements on the campus," the report said their negligence and complicity brought the Home Ministry

despite the head injuries to

also under suspicion. "The remarks by the Home Minister on the CAA-NRC agitations and punishing of tukde *tukde* gang also emboldened the perpetrators of violence on the JNU campus," the report said.

'Roll back fee hike'

The committee called for an independent judicial inquiry and an immediate roll-back of the hostel fee increase, the issue that had led to protests by students.

The Vice-Chancellor's role "points to connivance and complicity with the attackers," said the panel, noting that Dr. Kumar did not allow the police to enter the campus until 7.45 p.m. despite calls for help from students.

The report raises the issue of Internet shutdown on the

campus. While the FIR registered by the police says students disconnected the servers on January 3 and 4, the Vice-Chancellor's statement said the servers were functioning on January 4 and many students registered themselves for the winter semester that day. The failure of the servers on January 5 raised questions about deliberate prevention of CCTV coverage to shield the attackers, it said.

"If you can reinstate the Internet connection and the CIS system on the 4th morning, why did not you reinstate that connection on 5th morning? Did you know there was going to be a violent attack because of which vou wanted to ensure no CCTV coverage?" Ms. Dev

Tripura HC says social media posting a fundamental right

Police told to refrain from prosecuting Youth Cong. activist

STAFF REPORTER AGARTALA

In a landmark order, the Tripura High Court has ordered the police to refrain from prosecuting a man who was earlier arrested over a social media post. Chief Justice Akil Kureshi also barred the police from making any further arrests in connection with the

The Chief Justice passed the order on Friday after lawvers moved the court against the arrest and harassment of Youth Congress activist Arindam Bhattacharjee over his post on a social media platform.

Mr. Bhattachariee had in his Facebook page criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party's online campaign in support of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and warned people to not dial a given phone number even by

"If you call 8866288662, all your data would go to hackers," he had commented in his post, inviting the ire of the BJP's IT Cell, which responded with a police complaint.

Govt. staff included

The Chief Justice in his order remarked that posting on social media was tantamount to a "fundamental right" applicable to all citizens, including government employees.

In compliance with the court's order, the police have now erased Sections 120(B) and 153(A) of the Indian Penal Code from the First Information Report.

Subal Bhowmik, senior Congress leader, who had unsuccessfully contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election from the West Tripura constituencv, hailed the order. Mr. Bhowmik had organised protests outside the West Agartala police station after Mr. Bhattacharjee was detained.

"The order has been in line with the very essence of the Constitution. We hope police officers will henceforth adhere to the rule book and not try to act as henchmen of their political bosses," Mr. Bhowmik, himself a lawyer, told The Hindu on Sunday.

Pongal spells peril for Salem's foxes

VIGNESH VIJAYAKUMAR

With Kaanum Pongal, the fourth and final day of the harvest festival, less than a week away, Forest Department officials in Salem are gearing up to prevent an unusual *jallikattu* – one that uses foxes instead of bulls.

using foxes, or vanga nari in Tamil, is usually organised on Kaanum Pongal on the outskirts of the district as villagers believe it will bring bountiful rain and good fortune According to Forest

The *jallikattu*-like event

officials, villagers, mostly from Ranganoor, Chinnamanaikenpalayam and Vadugathampatti in Vazhapadi taluk, trap the foxes and bring them to the village temple.

Regular feature

The animals are muzzled and their hind legs tied with rope. After special rituals are conducted, the hapless animals are chased through the streets, much like bulls in the more conventional jallikattu. After the event, the animals are released into the forest.



trussed up ahead of the race.

has been organised for decades now. District Forest for organising the event and trespassing into forest areas and this year too, we will take stern action." Officials said foxes are a protected species under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and hunting or

Salem Nature Society, said, "The medium-sized Bengal undergoes cruel treatment in the name of this festival. The legs are tied. Capturing a wild this helpless animal is tortured in the name of the



A 2018 photo shows a fox

Despite a ban, the event Officer A. Periasamy said, "We have fined the violators earlier capturing them is prohibited.

V. Gokul, president of the foxes are generally found near agricultural areas. The animal animal is gagged and the hind animal itself is an offence, and festival.'

BJP to fight Delhi polls on national and local issues

With evolving campaign strategy, the party will not only rake up issues such as the citizenship law and NRC but will also focus on pollution and water quality

JATIN ANAND

The BJP's bid to instal a "triple engine government [same party at the Centre, State and municipal corporation level]" in the Capital will involve a delicate balance between raising national and local issues, say party insiders.

Addressing a rally at Ramlila Maidan on December 22, 2019, to kick off his party's campaign for the Delhi Assembly elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had attacked the Congress and other Opposition parties for spreading "lies and rumours" about the National Register of Citizens (NRC), the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and detention

He barely touched upon local issues such as ownership rights for residents of illegal colonies or quality of potable water.

The rally was held on the eve of the Jharkhand election results where the BJP had followed its tested poll strategy to raise mainly national issues. The BJP ended up winning only 25 of the 81 Assembly seats in the State.

A fortnight after Mr. Modi's rally, BJP national president Amit Shah addressed booth-level workers in Delhi and said that national issues such as 'surgical strike following Pulwama attack' and the CAA were at the core of the party's electoral campaign.

Strategy shift

But the Union Home Minister also indicated a shift in the party's campaign strategy.

Mr. Shah also talked about the "negative and obstructionist politics" of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in relation to non-implementation of Central government schemes in Delhi. In a departure from the past, Mr. Shah directly attacked Mr. Kejriwal, indicating the electoral significance of countering "AAP's work"

"Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal opposed the abolition of Article 370

and 35A, Triple Talaq, decision of Supreme Court on Ram temple, surgical strike and air strike done to avenge the Uri and Pulwama attack," Mr. Shah had said.

"We wanted to send the antinational elements who raised slogans like "Bharat tere tukde tukde honge" in JNU to jail, but Kejriwal did not grant permission to prosecute them... We want to grant citizenship to Dalits and Sikh refugees but anti-Dalit AAP and Congress opposed it," he had

He exhorted party workers to undertake a door-to-door campaign to apprise people of "the achievements of the Modi government and the fraud of the Kejriwal government".

Party insiders said the campaign was supposed to revolve around seamless governance at all three levels of administration in Delhi, resting squarely on the shoulders of PM Modi, as it sought to make the Assembly elections "mostly national".

This approach will now be tweaked keeping in mind several happenings in a city where governments and issues intersect, they added.

Party line

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari took the party's line forward and attacked the Congress and AAP of creating an atmosphere of "confusion and falsehood regarding

"The frustrated Opposition parties are trying to push the youth into anarchy for its electoral gains by creating an atmosphere in Jamia and JNU, which is very condemnable... Whatever claims Kejriwal will make of having given benefits during the last five years, the BJP will do at least five times more work for the people of Delhi," he said. BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vijay Goel

said both national and local issues were driving the party's campaign in the Capital, which was being carried out "under the leadership of PM Modi". "The party cannot turn away from the







Clockwise from top left: Delhi Chief Minister Sahib Singh Verma (centre) hands over an ownership document to a slum dweller on September 15, 1998; Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a rally in Ramlila Maidan in December 2019; Sushma Swaraj being sworn-in as Delhi Chief Minister on December 10, 1998. THE HINDU ARCHIVES, SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR, PTI

fact that lies are deliberately being spread about CAA. As far as local issues are concerned, the party is not only telling citizens about the work done by the Modi-led Centre but also seeking suggestions that will be part of our vision document," he said.

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta said both national and local issues were of "equal importance" and the party was working towards addressing the concerns of citizens on both fronts as part of its campaign.

"The AAP government had deliberately created obstructions in Phase IV of the Delhi Metro project, construction of the Regional Rapid Transit System as well as conferment of ownership rights to residents of unauthorised colonies. These were among the many Central-sponsored schemes aimed at bettering the lives of the people of the Capital, but blocked due to petty politics... we will tell the people about this," he added.

New approach

After the defeat in Jharkhand, the initial strategy has been "modified" to a large extent, said sources.



The local BJP leadership has been directed to keep their campaign within the spectrum of local issues... when it comes to CAA, they have been told to mainly take forward the campaign initiated by Amit Shah

A cross-section of leaders and sources told The Hindu that the party, which has been out of power in Delhi for over two decades, had initially sought to embark upon an aggressive, mainly national, electoral campaign. It will now be "relatively muted" and "more multi-faceted", they

The upcoming election has been quickly pegged by the party as a direct battle between PM Modi and CM Kejriwal – by erecting over 21,000 hoardings bearing the PM's face to reinforce his claim of having "removed the blot of being unauthorised" from the foreheads of the residents of 1,731 colonies.

Party insiders said the move was taken not only due to the loss in Jharkhand but also because of the lesson it learnt by projecting a "CM face" in the last Assembly elections. It had projected Kiran Bedi as the CM face.

Subsequent steps in regard to its "evolving" strategy are in line with ongoing Assembly seatspecific surveys, which have revealed that the average voter is "not as responsive" to criticism of the AAP government's power and water subsidy schemes as expected, said a leader.

But the voters were "very enthused" with criticism of the allegedly obstructionist attitude of the AAP government when it came to the blocking of Centralsponsored schemes such as Ayushman Bharat, the leader said, adding: "They ask what the BJP has to offer over and above AAP's subsidies - mainly freebies - and services which have benefited them since it came to power."

A senior party leader said that while freebies were strictly "out of the question", the BJP was not averse to subsidising power, water and public transport for

"specific categories" of citizens based on socio-economic criteria.

Clarifying "doubts" regarding the CAA, countering the "anti-national" ways of the "tukde-tukde gang" and criticising alleged attempts to "spread violence" by AAP and the Congress, who were "instigating the minority community" in the name of the NRC, will be the main components of the national bit.

Air pollution, quality of potable water and questioning the AAP government's claims on health, public transportation and education will be the local issues that the party will focus on, the leader said.

"When the party president himself hits the ground as part of a public awareness campaign revolving around the CAA, it is evidence enough of how significant an issue it is for the party. However, the local leadership has been directed to keep its own campaign within the spectrum of local issues and when it comes to the CAA, to mainly take forward the campaign initiated by Mr. Shah," a source said.

"It would be wrong to say that the CAA and the NRC will not be electoral factors for the party in

Delhi. But it would also be incorrect to say that these will be the only issues on the basis of which we will seek votes," a senior party leader added.

Another senior leader said that a month was a long time in politics and the party's strategy would continue to evolve due to the "significant decisions" taken by the Modi government over the last six months.

A senior leader said that the conferment of ownership rights to the residents of unauthorised colonies and the in-situ rehabilitation of slum clusters would remain the mainstay of its campaign as they represented "an intersection" of both national and local political issues as well as "evidence" of the BJP "delivering on the promises it makes".

Subsidy schemes

"As far as the AAP government's subsidy schemes are concerned, the BJP is more likely to modify them in a way that is sustainable as well as ensures that they benefit those depending on socio-economic criteria instead of a freefor-all in lieu of their votes," the leader added

Academician and political analyst Manisha Priyam said the PM's face was the party's best bet. "The Lok Sabha election saw the BJP sweeping all seven seats in the city in the name of the PM... Given the fact that the Delhi BJP unit does not have a leader who can cater to the average Delhiite, the PM's face is certainly the party's best bet," he said.

Professor Pradip Kumar Datta of the Centre for Comparative Politics & Political Theory, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, said the BJP's dilemma stemmed from the "constituency specific" appeal of its local leaders. "Like the Congress, the BJP, as a large national party, has not allowed any local leader to become popular enough to be its face in Delhi. The BJP's winning card was and remains Mr. Modi. But his magic seems to be waning," he said.

HC issues guidelines for appointing guardians ⁺

'Kerala HC rules can be used as framework for choosing guardian for comatose person'

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH NEW DELHI

An individual who seek to be appointed as guardian for a person lying in comatose state will have to first approach the court for thorough verification, the Delhi High Court has said while issuing a slew of guidelines on the issue.

Justice Rajiv Shakdher, in a significant ruling, said the guidelines framed by the Kerala High Court can be used as a framework for formulating guidelines that need to be applied in Delhi.

The guidelines state that a person who seek to be appointed as guardians shall in his or her petition to the court disclose the details of all tangible and intangible assets of such an individual. The court will then have the person lying in comatose examined by a duly constitut-

Air quality of Delhi-NCR Delhi 348 Gurugram 280 Ghaziabad 374 Faridabad 350

Noida 370 Greater Noida 377 ■Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Moderate 51-100

0-50



ed medical board which would include a neurologist. The court will also direct

the Sub-divisional Magistrate concerned or Tehsildar in whose jurisdiction the person lying in comatose is said to be located to carry out an enquiry to establish the veracity of the assertion. It will also gather material particulars concerning the person who approach the court for being appointed as guardians.

Any conflict of interest concerning the affairs of the

person lying in comatose state will be brought to the fore in the report generated during the course of enquiry, the guideline said.

"Ordinarily only that person will be appointed as guardian who is a spouse or a progeny of the person lying in comatose," the guideline said.

In the event, the person lying in comatose has neither a spouse nor any children or even any legal heirs or if he/she has such persons in his life but stands abandoned by them, subject to the permission of the court his next friend who wishes to be appointed as a guardian can approach the court with such a request.

Alternative measure

As an alternative measure, the court could also direct the Department of Social

Welfare, Delhi government to appoint a public official such as a Social Welfare Officer or a person holding equivalent rank to act as the guardian of the person lying in comatose state. The person appointed as a guardian will have to submit every six months or within such period as the court may indicate in its order a report with the Registrar General of the High Court.

The report should have details of the transactions undertaken by the guardian in respect of the assets of the person lying in comatose state, the High Court said.

The court order came on a petition by daughters of a woman, who is in comatose state, seeking access to the Public Provident Fund which was opened and maintained by their deceased father.

Start pension scheme for staff, HC tells Bhartiya Chikitsa Parishad Decision should be taken within six months, says court

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH NEW DELHI

The High Court has ordered the Delhi Bhartiya Chikitsa Parishad, which maintains register of Ayurvedic and Unani practitioners here, to introduce pension system for its employees.

Justice A.K. Chawla said that the decision should be taken within six months considering that it requires due consideration of various financial aspects by the Parishad, Delhi government and the Centre.

Justice Chawla ordered the authorities "to take a decision to introduce Pension Scheme to the employees of the Parishad from a date to be fixed and in doing so, the benefit of pension may be extended to the existing and alemployees, as an exception". The High Court's decision

came on a plea by a former employee of the Parishad seeking to extend the pension rules as applicable to employees of Delhi government to the Parishad employees.

Previously, the Parishad was known as the Board of Avurvedic and Unani System of Medicine (AUSM), which was constituted under East Punjab Ayurvedic and Unani Practitioners Act, 1949. Later, with the introduction of the Delhi Bhartiya Chikitsa Parishad Act, 1998, the Parishad substituted AUSM.

The plea claimed that the rules and regulations governing the employees of Delhi government were applicable to Parishad staff in all service matters. It claimed that the Parishad forms part of the State and hence the conditions of service and the rules and the regulations governing the employees of Delhi government were applicable to the employees of the Parishad.

"When employees of the Parishad are shown to be beneficiaries under the Contributory PF Scheme, why they should not be extended the benefit of pension, does require due consideration," the court said.

"A consideration on the given aspect cannot be denied on the premise that the Parishad, as of now, was a selfsustaining body, without being the beneficiary of grantsin-aid as contended on its behalf. The statutory provisions cannot be ignored on the given premise," the HC noted.

DELHI TODAY

Talk: An illustrated lecture or

AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) SOURCE: CPC

"Qualitative Aspects for Society of Strong Artificial Intelligence" by Dr. M. Radh Achuthan, Professor of Physics, Long Island University, USAat Conference Room I, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m. Music: Lohri celebrations will feature a vocal recital by Sunanda Sharma from the Benaras Gharana who will bring alive the traditional folklore and rites of passage of Pun-jab, followed by a music perform-ance by Punjabi Sufi singer, Rekha Raj at The Hub, Habitat World, India Habitat Centre, 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Portraits of Automobiles", a solo painting exhibition by Murali Sharma at Convention Centre Foyer, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Exhibition: "Thread through Asia"

by French artist Guyseika at Galerie Romain Rolland, Alliance Française

de Delhi. 72 Lodhi Estate. 11 a.m. - 7 (Mail your listings for this column

so the retired/superannuated

THE HINDU DELHI MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020

Artful protest











Shaheen Bagh protesters on Sunday put up art installations and painted large murals rejecting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens, on the Noida-Kalindi Kunj Highway, which has been blocked for nearly a month now. Similar murals were also painted on the walls outside Jamia Millia Islamia. People of different faiths also came together to participate in a 'sarva dharma sambhava' ceremony. • sushil кимак verма; рті

Tharoor addresses CAA protesters at Jamia Millia Islamia, calls for unity

Cong. leader lauds the 'spirit of resistance' of the students

SIDHARTH RAVI NEW DELHI

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Sunday addressed a large group of protesters opposing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act at Jamia Millia Islamia, lauding their "spirit of resistance" and called for unity.

'Undemocratic efforts'

"What has happened to bring us to this point is the undemocratic and discriminatory efforts by the government to marginalise one community in India," said Mr. Tharoor.

"As it is often said *na me*ra hai na tera hai, yeh hindustan sabka hai. Aur na samihenge ve baat toh nuksan sabka hai [This is not mine or yours, India is for everyone. If you don't get this then everyone will be affected]," he said.

He said Mahatma Gandhi had died for the unity of the country and "the India



Congress MP Shashi Tharoor outside JMI during anti-CAA protest on Sunday. ■PTI

that Gandhi fought for is not the India where we will see religion being introduced

citizenship". The leader said Home Minister Amit Shah's submissions in the parliament that the "discriminatory CAA" would be followed by the National Register of Citizens (NRC), cannot be accepted because the NRC would "put the onus on only one community to prove it's citizenship."

"This is not the India that people like Subhash Chopra [Delhi Congress chief] and I will ever accept. We want an India where everyone is equal, everyone is free...You can be Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Sikh, it does not matter. If you are an Indian, you have the same rights, the same privileges, the same duties," he added.

'A fight for all'

He said Jamia has always been one of the greatest universities in the country "but today, the greatest thing about Jamia, is your spirit. Your spirit of resistance. We stand with you, with the courage you have shown. This is a fight for all. Stay together, succeed together, live together, dream the same dream to-

gether. Jai Hind," he said. The Congress MP along with Mr. Chopra also visited the protest site at Shaheen Bagh and Jawaharlal Nehru University.

BJP Mahila Morcha marches in favour of CAA

STAFF REPORTER

BJP's Mahila Morcha on Sunday marched in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act from the party's State office to Connaught place.

Addressing the gathering, BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi said the youth are being misled. She explained the purposes of the Act to those present, stating that during Partition and formation of Bangladesh, a large number of women were "married by force and pressurised to convert". She also attacked the Opposition for "hatching conspiracy" by linking the CAA with the NPR, which she said was started by the previous UPA government. Mahila Morcha chief Poonam Parashar Jha said an awareness campaign regarding the Act will be soon launched.

5 detained for protesting

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI Five men associated with Asmita Theatre Group were detained after they allegedly raised slogans against National Register of Citizens (NRC) at Pragati Maidan on Sunday, the police said.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (New

Delhi) Deepak Yadav said information was received at 4 p.m. that some people were shouting anti-NRC slogans near Hall No. 11-12 at Pragati Maidan.

"Five persons were detained under Section 65 of Delhi Police Act. They were released at 6.20 p.m.," Mr. Yaday said.

JNU violence: 3 more to be told to join investigation

Forensic team to visit campus today

HEMANI BHANDARI NEW DELHI

In connection to the Jawaharlal Nehru University violence on January 5, the police have identified three more persons – Akshat Awasthi, Rohit Shah and Komal Sharma – and will soon ask them to join the probe, sources said on Sunday.

"Awasthi and Shah were verbally asked to come and share the sequence of events on the day of the attack but they did not turn up. However, the conversation was telephonic and formal notices will be sent to them regarding the same," said an officer.

Caught on camera

Awasthi and Shah were caught on camera in a sting operation conducted by India Today, saying that they were a part of the mob that carried out the attack inside the university's Sabarmati Hostel on January 5.

Komal Sharma, suspected to be Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad activist, will be sent a notice, said sources. A video of a woman wearing a check shirt with a cloth covering her face and holding



Three masked persons inside the JNU campus on January

a stick had gone viral. So far, the police have identified 18 persons from videos and 37 from a WhatsApp group -Unity Against Left. While some of them have already been asked to join the probe, others will be told to do the same in the coming

The police have asked a few identified suspects, including JNU Students' Union President Aishe Ghosh, to join investigation on Monday. "The server room is also functional now. Therefore, a Forensic Science Laboratory team will be visiting on Monday to collect evidence," the officer added.

IN BRIEF

JNU extends winter semester registration

NEW DELHI The Jawaharlal Nehru University on Sunday extended the date for the winter semester registration till January 15. This is the second time that the registration date has been extended in a week

'No gender discrimination during recruitment'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) nurses' union wrote to the Union Health Ministry demanding equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

It has also said no citizen shall on the grounds only of religion, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, etc be ineligible for or discriminated against for an employment/ office under the State.

The Union expressed deep concern at the fourth Central Institute Body (CIB) meeting on the matter pertaining to the recruitment process of Nursing Officers in AIIMS across India. The CIB had said 80% of the posts maybe reserved for women and 20% maybe filled by male nurses. "This unconstitutional decision by AIIMS CIB members simply shows the gender discrimination, which is a blatant violation of Fundamental Rights guaranteed in our Constitution as per Article 16..." the letter noted.

Man arrested at railway station with over 90 kg ganja

Durg was packed inside six iron cylinders, say police

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A 24-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly carrying ganja packed inside iron cylinders at New Delhi Railway Station, the police said on Sunday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Railways) Harendra Singh said 96.5 kg ganja was recovered from Usman, a resident of Samaipur Badli.

On Friday at 11 p.m., Head Constable Sandeep Kumar was on patrolling duty at platform number 16 when he saw a man pushing a wooden cart with six iron cylinders on it.

"A cylinder fell on the

ground and suspicious material came out of it. On checking, the material was found to be ganja," Mr. Singh said.

The official then informed other policemen who came to the spot and nabbed Usman. The receipt for delivery of this parcel was issued in the accused's name, the police said, adding that Usman also got a gate pass issued for transporting the cylinders

from the station. The ganja was packed inside the cylinders, which were sealed with iron lids. "The cylinders were smeared with grease. The cylinders came from Howrah in Kolkata and Usman was tasked to collect it from the station and further transport it," the DCP said.

During interrogation, Usman said he met a man named Krish in Burari about a month ago who lured him to work for him. "He took his ID and also gave him a mobile phone for the purpose. The consignment was booked in the accused's name by one Firoze in Howrah. The cylinders came to Delhi via the Poorva Express train. After taking the delivery from the parcel office at NDRS, he had to deliver it to Krish," Mr. Singh added.

Woman strangled during robbery bid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Four armed dacoits allegedly strangled a 35-year-old woman inside her house in Ghaziabad on Sunday morning, the police said.

The incident took place between 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. in Behta Hazipur village of Loni Border police station area,

hi Naithani. The woman lived with her husband Asif, sons Aatif and Taimoor (1), daughter Nameera (7) and brother Zunaid (14) on the first floor of the house.

said Ghaziabad SSP Kalanid-

On the day of the incident, the victim was sleeping when four robbers barged in and held the family hostage at gunpoint. When Samreen resisted, the robbers strangled her. The dacoits decamped with gold ornaments and cash worth ₹1.5 lakh, he said.

Samreen was rushed to a nearby hospital where the doctors declared her dead, the SSP said, adding that a case has been registered.

Concerned citizens take stock of illegal constructions on Haryana forest land

They take tour of some villages along Gurugram-Faridabad Road to understand implications of amendment in Punjab Land Preservation Act, 1900

ASHOK KUMAR

Amid reports that Haryana Governor Satyadev Narayan Arya has given his consent to the amendment in the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA), 1900, despite reservations expressed by the Supreme Court, a group of people, including filmmakers, photographers, MNC employees and students, led by environmentalists, took a tour of a few villages along Gurugram-Faridabad Road on Sunday to see the extent of illegal construction on forest land and understand the implications of the amendment for the

The group were aghast to find how farmhouses, banquet halls and even ashrams had come up on the land preserved under the PLPA, 1900, in flagrant violation of the law in Faridabad's Ankheer, one of the villages they visited. However, what shocked them the most was that the plots with illegal constructions belonged to a former Haryana government Minister; senior, serving and retired bureaucrats; and even the relatives Parliament.

"The extent of illegal construction and the involvement of the bureaucrats, politicians and even judicial officials hint at the nexus. It is, therefore, not difficult to understand why the government wants to bring the amendments," said Puia Ahmed, senior marketing manager, American Express.

"The pace at which we are playing havoc with our environment, we cannot sustain for more than 50 years. I want to do my bit to protect the environment so that I can tell my 10-yearold daughter that I at least made an attempt," said Ms. Ahmed, a Sector 47 resident.

Explaining the modus operandi of the violators, Vishnu, a local



Illegal construction being carried out on a plot in Mangar village; (right) waste dumped in Aravali. 🛚 asнок кимак, кома jaswal

environment activist, said that the construction started in the guise of running a gaushala or building a temple to avoid complaints. "Most of these farmhouses have a couple of cows tied inside to make it look like a gaushala. Some have even built small temples," said Mr. Vishnu. He told the visitors that the com-

plaints were filed in a few cases, but were either withdrawn or action was not taken.

He told the visitors how a banquet hall was issued a Change in Land Use certificate despite the dispute over the ownership hinting at the nexus between the officials and the violators.

Environment analyst Chetan



Agarwal, who led the group, said that around 75,000 acre of forest land in Haryana was protected under the PLPA, including 60,000-odd acre in Aravalis. "Though the Haryana government stated that if the PLPA was not amended, it would necessitate large-scale demolition of houses and buildings, it is not true. For instance, Akhneer with around 15 illegal structures has only 10% of the PLPA land under illegal construction. It is even less in most of the other areas. It can easily demolished. The amendment will actually throw open the majority of the Aravalis to real estate development causing havoc with the ecology and the environment," cautioned Mr.

He also explained as to how the construction and demolition waste and the soil was deliberately dumped along the Gurugram-Faridabad Road to bring it at the level of the road and then encroach it to illegally run dhabas and wine shops. "It is done gradually without alarming the administration," said Mr. Agarwal.

Sunil, an environment activist from Mangar village, showed to the group a plot measuring around 6 acres in his village with construction being carried out in violation of the law. Ms. Sunil told that the owner of the land had cleared the vegetation on it gradually over the past few years despite repeated complaints and now fenced the area. The land is protected under the PLPA, he

DU students Sudhir Yadav, Ayush Poddar and Anurag Singh and young ecologist Misha were also part of the group. Filmmaker Chander Moli and his architect friend Anu Sachdeva, an amateur wildlife photographer, also accompanied the team members. They also visited Mewla Maharajpur village in Faridabad that has more than two dozen illegal constructions on PLPA protected land. "We need to create awareness and put pressure on the government to withdraw such laws. An 'Awareness Walk' will be organised next week," said Neelam Ahluwalia, a development sector

professional.

IN BRIEF

JJP kicks off campaign for Delhi Assembly polls

Kicking off his party's campaign for the Delhi Assembly elections on Sunday, Haryana Deputy CM and JJP leader Dushyant Chautala, at a rally in Najafgarh, said the State government had made tall claims of having worked in the field of health and education but the rural areas of the city were underdeveloped. He said people in rural areas were distraught due to lack of higher education and traffic jams.

Cong. alleges corruption in civic bodies

STAFF REPORTER

The Delhi Congress on Sunday alleged that there was widespread corruption in the three BJP-ruled civic bodies. Party's State unit chief Subhash Chopra released a "corruption report" and said "no citizen in Delhi dares to go to civic body offices as no work can be done without bribing the officials".

"The extent of corruption in the civic bodies is evident from the fact that the CAG report has not yet been tabled in the three Houses. Due to sealing, livelihood of lakhs of people was ruined. The municipal bodies have been collecting crores of rupees from people in the name of putting an end to sealing," Mr. Chopra said.

The party said that out of 1,472 alleged corruption cases, internal audit has been conducted only in 77 in which corruption of ₹33 lakh was detected. "Had internal audit been done in all cases, corruption to the tune of ₹2,000 crore would have been unearthed," Mr. Chopra said.

'DDA hiking price of EWS houses a scam'

AAP leader demands thorough probe into the matter by CBI and CVC

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

AAP leader Sanjay Singh on Sunday alleged that the prices of houses for economically weaker section (EWS) beneficiaries, in a brochure in 2014, were increased by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and that it was a "scam" that needed to be

"Flats should have been made available for ₹6.90 lakh and ₹11 lakh in easy in-



stalments. But the beneficiaries are now being told to pay ₹19 lakh and ₹24 lakh, which is thrice the amount originally announced," Mr. Singh said. He asked as to why the DDA had put out advertisements of the scheme

claiming that the flats were

ready and then raise the cost

Mr Singh also demanded a thorough inquiry by the CBI and the CVC, adding that he had written to senior officials in both departments.

In response, the DDA said that the EWS flats being referred to have been built by DLF and that the price indicated in the brochure in 2014 was "tentative". It said that a detailed calculation was worked out was communicated to the beneficiaries and on request, the DDA decided not to charge interest.

"Fifty per cent of EWS flats built by private developers are transferred to the DDA at price linked with CPWD index. Thereafter, the DDA offers these flats to eligible beneficiaries. The price charged by DDA is based on actual cost and the formula is approved by the authority," the DDA said.

Haryana supplying water with high ammonia content: DJB vice-chairman

'Trying to affect supply in Delhi may be a political conspiracy'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Vice-Chairman Dinesh Mohaniya on Sunday alleged that ever since the elections were announced, Harvana was supplying water with high amount of ammonia to

Mr. Mohaniya, speaking at

the AAP office, said the water supplied by Haryana was contaminated as it had high ammonia content and hence the DJB production has decreased by 100 MGD. "The water supplied in Delhi comes from other States, in which Harvana is the largest source. After the announcement of polls, the amount of ammonia in the water coming from Haryana has increased a lot," Mr. Mohaniya

He alleged that since Haryana was a BJP-ruled State, trying to affect the water supply in many parts of Delhi seemed to be a "political conspiracy" to defame the Delhi government.

Tiwari serves defamation notice on CM

Seeks ₹500 cr. for using his image in AAP's theme song video

STAFF REPORTER

BJP MP Manoj Tiwari sent a defamation notice to AAP's chief convener Arvind Kejirwal on Sunday for using his image in a video of the party's theme song and sought damages of ₹500 crore. Mr. Tiwari also filed a complaint with the Chief Electoral Of-

In a video released by AAP, clippings from a bhojpuri film in which Mr. Tiwari had acted have been used. In a statement, Mr. Tiwari attacked the Chief Minister, accusing him of indulging in "cheap politics". Mr. Tiwari said that photos of artists could not be used commercially without permission.

Mr. Tiwari claimed that the video was a reflection of AAP's mere "desperation" to win the elections. By using Mr. Tiwari's image in the said video, AAP proved that people liked him more than Mr. Kejirwal, the BJP said.

In a complaint to the CEO, the BIP's State unit argued that it was a violation of the

model code of conduct (MCC) as well as of the IT Act. The letter termed the video an attempt to malign the image of the party's star cam-

The complaint highlighted that according to the MCC, criticisms of political opponents should stay limited to their policies, programmes and past work and that criticisms on all aspects of private life were to be refrained from and argued that the said video violated the provision.

Lekhi says AAP govt. committed fraud

STAFF REPORTER

BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi attacked the AAP government in Delhi on Sunday, saying that it had "committed fraud with the people of the city" by allegedly taking undue credit and was thus "diverting attention from real issues".

When there was an out break of dengue in Delhi, the civic bodies created awareness on prevention and also trained staff, challaned violators. Mr. Kejriwal only issued costly advertisements," Ms Lekhi said. She also hit out at the Delhi government for "taking credit" for the eastern and western peripheral highways that were, she said, constructed by the Centre.

She also said that the Centre had made an effort to instal airpurifiers, vacum cleaners in the city, whereas the Chief Minister did not show concern on the issue.

Ms. Lekhi said the Delhi government spent ₹590 crore on advertisements and ₹29 crore for promotion outside Delhi.

Laying the groundwork



Preparations in full swing at Rajpath ahead of the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi

Five Nuh women go against all odds to study, show others way

They have been nominated as brand ambassadors of Nuh

ASHOK KUMAR

Notwithstanding the penury, the deep-rooted social bias, stiff opposition from their own families and the lack of opportunities, five young Muslim women from Haryana's Nuh, one of the hundred most backward districts in the country, decided not to bogged down and took all challenges head-on to realise their dream of seeking higher education for a better

tomorrow. May not be the "big" achievers, but hero in their own stories, these women have now been nominated as brand ambassadors of Nuh by former Sarpanch and two-time 'Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar' winner Sunil Jaglan for his foundation. The five will share their stories of grit to inspire the women in the region and create awareness among them on their rights, health and education.

"The tag of backward district needs to be shaken off Nuh. Wherever we go, we are reminded that we come from a backward region," says Rizwana, one of the women, with a sense of resolve in her voice. She pursues General Nursing and Midwifery course from Charkhi Dadri, but her journey from an obscure Pipaka village of Nuh's Tauru Block to the present day has not been an easy one, to say the least. Clad in a red hijab, the 19-year-old recalls how her parents borrowed money and sold off all their jewellery to pay for her studies. Though none in her family is literate, her father, a farmer, wanted her to become a nurse to serve people

in Nuh – a district with an



ambassadors. • ASHOK KUMAR

abysmal record on health infrastructure.

Wasima (20), pursuing

law from Sonipat's Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya (BPSMV), comes from an educated family but had a tough time persuading her parents to send her to hostel for higher studies. "Parents in Nuh don't even send girls to neighbouring village fearing for their safety. Most girls drop out after senior secondary. Higher education is a dream for girls here," says Wasima. She says the women in Nuh neglect their health and are not aware of their rights. "They are scared of everyone. I want to create awareness among them working with Selfie With Daughter Foun-

dation," says Wasima, a resident of Ainchwari village. Shahnaz Bano, the eldest in the gang, held meetings with the women in around half-a-dozen villages neighbouring her Sakras village and spoke to them about their problems and rights as part of the nomination process. "During one such meeting I came to know how a Sarpanch's family was opposed to their daughters going to school. They feared that the girls might marry men of her choice if allowed to go out. I convinced them that education was important," says Bano, 25, who is pursuing MA (Urdu).

Juggling between her studies, job and coaching classes in Jaipur, Arastun, 21, a civil services aspirant, found it difficult to convince her parents to let her study after her elder sister chose to marry a man of her choice. But she had put her foot down. "I want people to know my father by my name. I am ready to face anything for it," she says. "Girls are not less capable than boys. I want to work for their rights," says Arastun, a resident of Bhond village. She blames the political class of Nuh for failing

the women of the region. Though her grandfather fought for women's education all his life, Anjum Islam, 18, a second-year-law student at BPSMV, also faced opposition from her family when she expressed her desire to go to hostel for higher studies. But her mother stood up for her. "It is a male-dominated society. No equal opportunities for women," says Islam, from Tain village, who wants to help girls realise their dreamf.

Besides lack of education opportunities and poor health, the five point out "dowry" and "sexual abuse" as two major concerns of the women in Nuh. "Parents consider girls as a liability because they need to pay dowry at the time of their marriage. They don't want to spend on their education," savs Rizwana.

Mr. Jaglan, who is known for his 'Selfie With Daughter' campaign, said the five were shortlisted after a gruelling selection process requiring them to hold meetings in the villages and deliver speech-

INTERVIEW | SANJAY SINGH

'Will talk about work done by AAP in five years'

Aam Aadmi Party's Rajya Sabha MP and national spokesperson Sanjay Singh speaks to Nikhil M Babu about his party's campaign strategy for the Assembly elections. Excerpts from the interview:

How will this election campaign be different from

AAP's previous ones? ■ This time we are focusing on the work done by the Delhi government in the past five years – what we have done in the fields of electricity, water, education, and healthcare -200 units of free electricity, free water, free bus rides for women. We are talking about this with the people of Delhi. We have achieved more than our 70-point manifesto of 2015. The style of campaigning will be almost the same. Our main focus will be on door-to-door campaign.

What were the lessons your party learned from the setback in the Lok Sabha election? ■ The Lok Sabha election was

fought on a different set of issues. What the Delhi government had done, the change it had brought in the lives of the people did not become a big issue. This time it will be a big

This time the party is focusing heavily on local issues and not getting into national issues. Why?

■ Even last time, we talked about what our 49-day government was able to do. If you are fighting a State election, you should focus on State issues.

The party has not hit the ground with protests against CAA or violence in JNU. Why



■ You didn't listen to the statements made by the BJP? Without even our going there, they are blaming AAP for the violence. If Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had gone there, they would have blamed us even more. This is the reason. To appeal for peace, the best way is you stay at a distance and urge people to remain peaceful. If we go there, the BJP will create a conspiracy and trigger violence and blame it on us. As the Chief Minister, Mr. Kejriwal talked to Lieutenant-Go-

vernor Anil Baijal and also

gave a statement. I went to AI- in a different way and take IMS and other members of our party also went there.

In the next five years, what will AAP do if it comes back to power? ■ Water and pollution, these

two are the major areas we will focus on. The other one is traffic. AAP is a new party,

compared to others. In these

five years in power, what has

the party learned? What has

changed in the party? ■ I feel that many times we used to get worried about things very quickly and react. Now we have learnt that we will have to face many challenges. The Central government had put about 25 MLAs behind bars. And there were many CBI raids in the last five years. We have changed the way we react to this. We talk

our side of the story to the people. We have learned that we need to focus fully on work and the people will reply to them.

AAP was formed from the fight against corruption movement. But talk about corruption has disappeared from the party in press conferences, election manifesto. Why? Our

government had passed the Jan Lokpal Bill, in which the Chief Minister was also covered. But the Central government has not approved it. Why are they scared? We used to investigate corruption cases with the anti-corruption branch, but the Centre took way the anti-corruption branch from us. The Delhi government has no agency to inquire into corruption matters.

DELHI

MONDAY, JAN. 13

RISE 07:16 SET 17:45 RISE 20:35 SET 09:21

TUESDAY, JAN. 14 RISE 07:16 SET 17:46 RISE 21:41 SET 10:05

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 15 RISE 07:16 SET 17:46 RISE 22:46 SET 10:45

Delhi Weather Delhi City Safdarjang

Delhi Palam Today 22°C Rain/thundershower is expected over the area. Mostly cloudy sky with warm afternoon is likely.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 20°C Moderate fog is likely in the morning. A warm afternoon with partly cloudy sky is

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THE HINDU

Earthquake rocks Ladakh, no casualties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A medium intensity earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale hit the Union Territory of Ladakh

According to the National Centre for Seismology, the quake occurred at 10.54 a.m. at a depth of 10

The tremor lasted for a

Epicentre in PoK

The spokesman said the

The tremor sparked houses, a police officer immediate report of any

Bhagwant Mann, others booked for rioting during AAP protest

Party had taken out a march to CM's residence on 10 Jan. over power tariff hike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDIGARH

Aam Aadmi Party's Punjab unit president Bhagwant Mann and some party legislators from the State have been booked on charges of rioting, assault and obstructing police from performing their duties during a protest here against power tariff hike, a police officer said on Sunday.

Around 800 unnamed AAP supporters have also been booked.

The FIR was filed on Saturday against the Sangrur MP, around seven-eight legislators and others on the statement of a woman constable here, who complained that AAP activists had pelted stones and assaulted her and some other cops during the protest on Friday last.

SHO of Sector 3 Police Station, Inspector Jaspal Singh said an FIR has been registered here against Mr. Mann



AAP Punjab chief Bhagwant Mann at the protest march on January 10. ■ FILE PHOTO

and others under various Sections of the IPC including rioting, voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant in discharge of his duty, disobedience to order promulgated by public servant.

The protesters created law and order problem and violated the district magistrate's order under Section 144 in the area, police said.

Police had used water can-

nons on Friday last to stop the Aam Aadmi Party leaders and workers protesting against the hike in power tariff in Punjab from moving towards Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's residence here.

The main Opposition party in Punjab was also seeking scrapping of power purchase agreements signed during the previous SAD-BIP regime with private plants.

Police said at least six of their personnel were injured when unknown AAP supporters allegedly started throwing stones on them during the protest.

Police had detained and released AAP functionaries who were trying to march towards the official residence of the Punjab Chief Minister

Police action flayed

Leader of the Opposition and senior AAP leader from Punjab Harpal Singh Cheema slammed the Chandigarh Police for registering the case.

Rubbishing the claim that AAP workers had assaulted the police personnel on duty, Mr. Cheema said, "We will continue to raise the voice of the people of Puniab. We do not fear from going to jail. Being in opposition, we have to play our role and raise people's voice".

'Shiromani Akali Dal reduced to personal fiefdom of Badals'

Party in complete disarray, say Punjab Ministers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

The Ministers of the ruling Congress government in Punjab on Sunday said the Shiromani Akali Dal has been reduced to a personal fiefdom of the Badals, a day after the party suspended rebel Rajya Sabha MP Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa and his son, former Finance Minis-Singh Parminder

Cabinet Ministers, including Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria and Gurpreet Singh Kangar, in a statement here said the SAD was in complete disarray, particularly in the post-Prakash Singh Badal era, pointing to the rebellion by the Dhindsa father-son duo.

Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa and his son Parminder were suspended from SAD on Saturday after a core committee meeting.



SAD had suspended Sukhdev Dhindsa (in photo) and his son on Saturday. ■FIL EPHOTO

"The Dhindsas had openly revolted against the stifling control of SAD by the Badals, declaring their intent to liberate the party from the family and revive its lost glory," the Ministers pointed out, citing it as just the latest example of the mounting disillusionment within the party against Sukhbir Singh Badal's leadership and the lack of democracy prevailing in it.

"If senior leaders of the party are so unhappy with the leadership and loss of ideology, one can only imagine how dissatisfied the ordinary workers would be," they said.

The Akali Dal had lost all credibility under the unprincipled and unethical leadership of the Badals, who had lost all political integrity and had cut off the party complete from the grassroots in order to promote their selfish personal interests," they alleged.

'Time to step down'

The Ministers stressed that it was time for the Badals to step down from SAD and hand over the party reins to those who remain committed to the Akali ideology.

"Else, the day will soon come when the Akalis would be completely wiped out from the face of Puniab (and Indian) polity," they said.

on Sunday, officials said.

kilometres.

few seconds, a spokesman of the Meteorological Department said.

epicentre of the earthquake was in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

panic among the people who rushed out of their said, adding there was no casualty or damage.

Stones hurled at BJP's pro-CAA rally

Situation controlled: Jharkhand police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Stones were hurled at a pro-CAA rally organised by the BJP here on Sunday, prompting police to lob teargas shells to control the situation, the police said.

The incident happened at Padam Chowk area when BJP workers from six Assembly constituencies of the district took out the procession in support of the Citizenship Amendment Act.

'Minor injuries'

"Some anti-social elements pelted stones on a procession of the BJP. Few policemen and some of those participating in the rally suffered minor injuries, forcing police to use teargas to bring the situation under

control," Superintendent of

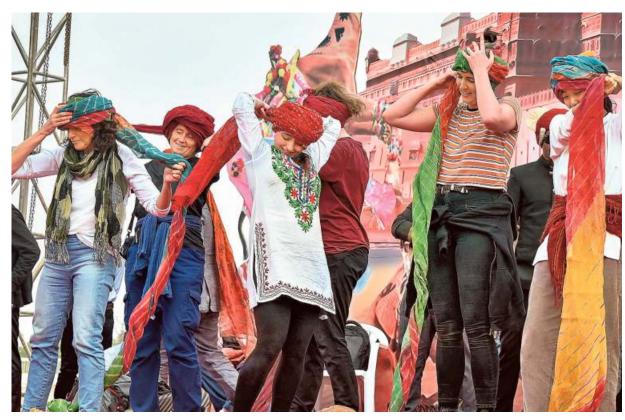
Police Surendra Jha said. Giridih's Deputy Commissioner Rahul Kumar Sinha reached the spot and is camping there, along with

'Not against citizens' Taking part in the rally, former BJP State unit president Ravindra Rai told reporters that the CAA was

not against any citizen of

"The CAA is for the minorities of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who have taken refuge in the country after fleeing persecution. They should be given citizenship. But the Opposition is spreading confusion. No Indian should be worried about the CAA," he said.

Top gear



Tourists participate in a turban-wearing competition during the 27th International Camel Festival in Bikaner on Sunday. •PTI

Student stuck in snow dies in Uttarakhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A student stranded in heavy snowfall in Radighati in Uttarkashi district died while six others were rescued by police and SDRF personnel, officials said on

18-year-old Anuj Semwal died on way to a hospital in Badkot on Saturday after being rescued, SHO, Badkot, DS Kohli said, adding the rest of the students are

A group of seven students of ITI Badkot had got stranded in heavy snow in Radighati while they were on their way home, he said.

The roads were blocked due to heavy snowfall and they decided to walk to their homes in Uttarkashi not realising that they were risking their lives, the offi-

Opposition attacks U.P.

govt. over Noida murder

Gaurav Chandel was waylaid, robbed

U.P. riots: State govt. to withdraw 4 more cases

Total of such cases goes up to 80

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to appeal in court for withdrawing four more cases related to Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013, taking the total number of such cases that it intends to withdraw to 80, an official said on Sunday.

The final decision on the State government's requests to withdraw the pending cases of 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots will be taken by the court, said the district's government counsel Dushyant

According to U.P. Special Law Secretary Arun Rai, the State government on Satur-

day directed the Muzaffarnagar district authorities to file an appeal in the court for withdrawing four more cases related to the riots.

Earlier, the State government had decided to withdraw 76 such cases.

No decision on Ministers

The Yogi government is yet to decide on withdrawing the cases against BIP MLA Sangeet Som, Union Minister Sanjeev Kumar Balyan, State Cabinet Minister Suresh Rana and other leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Communal clashes in Muzaffarnagar and adjoining areas in 2013 had claimed 60

Over 60% teaching posts unfilled: RTI

KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Set up in 2006, Rajasthan Technical University currently functions with less than 50% of sanctioned staff including teaching and nonteaching posts, shows a RTI reply.

The information sought through a Right to Information query by Kota-based acthe university are unfilled.

sanctioned strength of 382 posts, including the important posts of examination controller, director, dean

Currently, against the 37 sanctioned posts of profesWe have written to the government. approval is received, we will

RAM AVTAR GUPTA Vice Chancellor RTL

sors, only 10 posts are filled. Similarly, only 19 associate professors are working against the sanctioned strength of 68 with 49 posts

tioned posts of 156.

mained unfilled.

There are 67 assistant pro-

fessors against the sanc-All the 25 posts in the pe-

Documents also revealed that the varsity had invited applications for filling various sanctioned posts in 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2018 but did not go through with the recruitment process after charging exam fees from the

the RTI reply shows that the university generated revenue of ₹1.05 crore through exam fees from 36,230 candidates, who had applied for various posts in the period, but only conducted exams in

That year, 41 posts of teaching and 19 posts of non teaching staff were filled from the vacancy advertised for 2014, it said.

Ar present, its current

strength stands at 44% with 283 posts of teaching and non teaching staff out of a total 643 sanctioned posts.

When queried about the vacancies, Vice Chancellor Ram Avtar Gupta said, "We have written to the government for permission to fill up vacant sanctioned posts. Once the financial approval is received, we will initiate the process for recruitment."

Also, local BJP MLA Sandeep Sharma has assured to raise the issue in the State Assembly.

"It is unfortunate that so vacant in RTU," the Kota

they had said. 'Justice at the earliest'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Opposition on Sunday

targeted the Uttar Pradesh

government over the murder

of a private firm employee in

Noida last week, with the

Congress and the BSP accus-

ing Chief Minister Yogi Adi-

tyanath's dispensation of lax-

Gaurav Chandel, a resi-

dent of Greater Noida's 5th

Avenue Gaur City, was re-

turning from work in Gur-

gaon on the night of January

7 when he was shot dead af-

ter being robbed of his SUV,

wallet, laptop and other be-

Around 10.30 p.m., he

had called up his wife to in-

form her that he was at Par-

thala Chowk and would

reach home in five minutes,

longings, police had said.

ity and indifference.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said Chandel's family should get justice at the earliest.

"Gaurav Chandel, who worked as a manager, was murdered by criminals in Noida. The government action in this loot-and-murder case has been lax so far," she tweeted in Hindi.

"If the morale of criminals in a place like Noida is so high, what will be the situation in the whole of U.P.," she asked.

Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati asked the Yogi government to pay attention to issues of crime control and maintenance of law and order.

"Public anger is continuously rising across the entire region due to the government's cover up and indifference in the Gaurav Chandel murder case in Noida. It will be better if the U.P. government gives up this kind of laxity in matters of crime control and law and order and gives proper attention to public welfare," Ms. Mayawa-

ti tweeted in Hindi. Chandel was found unconscious around 4 a.m. on January 8 along a service road between Parthala Chowk and Hindon Vihar. He was rushed to a private hospital where doctors declared him dead, the police had said.

His family alleged that they approached the local Cherry County police post

but they got no help. Later, they reached Bisrakh police station where they requested that Chandel's phone be put on surveillance but the officials there kept dilly-dallying the matter, saying the case did not fall in their jurisdiction, and two crucial hours were

Protests against murder Over the past week, protests have been held in Greater

wasted, they said.

Noida (West) to demand 'Justice for Gaurav Chandel' According to officials, a

station house officer and three sub-inspectors of a police station in Greater Noida have been suspended for dereliction of duty in connection with a loot-and-murder

'Rajasthan Technical University invited application but did not recruit'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

tivist Sujeet Swami revealed that 63% of teaching posts in For the non-teaching staff, 187 posts are filled against a

and student welfare officer.

Once the financial initiate the process for recruitment

unfilled.

trochemical, Information Technology and MBA courses in the university have reapplicants.

Between 2011 and 2018,

MLA to raise issue

many posts of teaching and non teaching staff are lying South MLA added

Fresh snowfall in Kashmir throws life out of gear, flights disrupted

Srinagar city received 2 cm of snow, while tourist resort of Pahalgam recorded 9 cm; more snow forecast for Monday



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Fresh snowfall in Kashmir threw life out of gear in the valley on Sunday and disrupted flight operations at the airport here, officials said.

Most parts of the Valley received moderate to heavy snowfall on Sunday which continued during the day.

According to a Met official, while the plains received light to moderate snowfall, the higher reaches of the Valley and Jammu and Ladakh regions experienced heavy snowfall.

Srinagar city recorded two centimetres of snow till 8:30

a.m., while Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district recorded 9 cm, he said.

The ski-resort of Gulmarg in Baramulla district of north Kashmir recorded 8 cm of fresh snow, while Kupwara, also in the north, received 25 cm, the official added.

Snowfall in Ladakh too

There are reports of heavy

snowfall in most parts in the

higher reaches of the Valley

and some parts of Ladakh Union territory, he said. The Met Office has forecast widespread snowfall across

the Valley till Monday.

as no flight was able to land till about noon. Private airlines Indigo cancelled all flights to and from Srinagar for the day, the offi-

cial said. He, however, said if

there was improvement in

the weather, the air traffic

would most likely resume.

The snowfall affected flight

operations at Srinagar airport

Meanwhile, the minimum temperature across Jammu region rose by several degrees to settle above season's average due to overcast conditions. Jammu recorded a low of 9.3 degrees on Sunday, up by 5.4 degrees from the

previous night's 3.9 degrees.

Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by S. Ramanujam at HT Media Ltd. Plot No. 8, Udyog Vihar, Greater Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201306, on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act).

Rural development projects moving at slow pace in Odisha

Of the 62,743 projects worth ₹1,554 crore sanctioned, only 29,327 have been completed; about 50.32% of the funds spent

BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government's much-hyped 'Ama Gaon, Ama Bikash' (Our village, Our development), in which development projects were directly sanctioned on the basis of interaction between Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and villagers, has failed to achieve even 50% progress.

To bridge the gap

The State government had launched the programme in order to bridge the gap and the missing link in infrastructure development which were not taken out of any other State or Central government schemes.

Of the 62,743 projects worth ₹1,554 crore sanctioned under the programme, only 29,327 projects have been completed. About 50.32% of the funds earmarked for these projects have been spent.

Stating that the achievement was not satisfactory, the State Panchayati Raj Department has threatened to link

The progress will be reflected in the confidential character report of the project director of the district rural development

DEORANJAN KUMAR SINGH

agency, BDOs

the achievement with performance appraisal of field level officers.

"Total 29,327 projects have

been completed out of the 62,473 sanctioned projects, which is not satisfactory. The progress of completion of the projects will be reflected in confidential character report of the project director of the district rural development agency and the block development officers," said Deoranjan Kumar Singh, Panchayati Raj Secretary, in a letter addressed to all the

Collectors. The AGAB, which was widely seen as the BJD government's attempt to expand its support base before last Assembly elections, is found to have achieved physical progress of around 30% in some districts.

Launched in 2018

In Balasore and Rayagada districts, it was just above 29%. The central Odisha district of Boudh has completed 88% of the AGAB projects.

2018, but its guidelines were approved by the Cabinet after six months.

The government had launched AGAB on March 5,

Video vans used to be prepositioned in panchayats which were selected by the Panchayati Raj Department. Mr. Patnaik was usually holding interactions with people through videoconferencing at the panchayat level about the development of villages and immediately approving pro-

In October last year, the field level departments were directed to complete all projects by December, but the progress was no way near the target.

One-way routes, carpooling to check traffic woes in Sikkim

Tamang proposes tourist entry permit systems

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang has suggested several measures to address traffic woes in the State capital Gangtok, including one-way routes, carpooling for officials during the peak tourist season and relocating some taxi stands outside the town.

He also proposed creating tourist entry permit systems in the

districts and the sub-divisions to check influx in the town, thereby decreasing the congestion on the

Chairing a meeting with his Ministerial colleagues and senior officials here on Saturday, Mr. Tamang suggested constituting a committee to resolve the traffic congestion crisis in Gangtok.

Sensitisation drive

The Chief Minister also asked the officials to carry out sensitisation drives before implementing major changes regarding the vehicular movement in Gangtok.

Tripura CM orders probe into 'custodial death'

The victim was arrested in an ATM hacking case

A CORRESPONDENT AGARTALA

Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb on Sunday ordered a magisterial probe into the death of an accused in custody in the west Tripura police station. Sushanta Ghosh (38), a resident of Lankamura locality in Agartala, was arrested on Saturday in connection with an ATM hacking investigation.

The Crime Branch, which is probing the case in which nearly ₹1 crore was siphoned off from over 60 SBI customers' accounts in November last, picked up Ghosh on the basis of confession of four foreign nationals - two Turks and two Bangladeshis. The CB had recently got the custody of the foreign hackers from the West Bengal police who arrested them in Kolkata based on specific inputs received from their Tripura and Assam counterparts.

The hackers had used a "skimmer device" to snoop on the ATM pin numbers and other technical details of the customers. They then stole the money from the SBI ATM counters at Battala.

Indra Nagar and Kaman Chowmuhani as well as a booth of the State co-operative at the Chowmuhani post office in Agartala city.

CCTV footage

The hackers were identified from the CCTV footage in the ATM booths.

An officer of the west Agartala police station, who requested anonymity, said Ghosh was found hanging in the toilet attached to the lock-up before dawn on Sunday. He was taken to a hospital where doctors declared him brought dead, he added.

The father of the deceased alleged that the police had tortured him to death and hanged the body to stage "suicide drama". Senior police officers visited the police station.

The State Home department in a statement said the Chief Minister had ordered a magisterial inquiry into the death. It said the government had been strict on matters related to law and

Angry residents staged a protest in Lankamura locality against the death. They attacked an on-duty special branch police constable who sustained head inju-

Noted tribal leader, ex-Congress MP Maurice Kujur passes away

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noted tribal leader and former Lok Sabha member Maurice Kujur died at a hospital here on Sunday following prolonged illness. He was 84.

Kujur was undergoing treatment at a private hospital where he breathed his last, family sources said.

Born in November 1935 at Belmunda village in Sundargarh district, Kujur won the Sundargarh parliamentary constituency as a Congress candidate in 1984. He also worked as chairperson of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes from 2008

A host of dignitaries including Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik have condoled his death.

Celebrating harvest



Villagers participating in a community fishing event ahead of Bhogali Bihu celebrations in Tezpur, Assam, on Sunday. •PTI

Flight returns to airport after bomb scare

A woman passenger claimed she had explosives to blow up the aircraft mid-air

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA KOLKATA

An AirAsia India flight was forced to return to the airport here after a woman passenger claimed that she had explosives and threatened to blow up the aircraft mid-air but it turned out to be a hoax, officials said on Sunday

No bombs were found following a thorough search of the plane after it made an emergency landing and preliminary investigation suggested that it was just a ploy by the woman, who was in an inebriated state,

to return to Kolkata, they said.

The incident happened on Saturday night after the Mumbai-bound flight carrying 114 passengers took off at 9.57 p.m. from the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, they said.

Sends a note

A few minutes after it took off from the airport, the woman passenger on board allegedly gave a note to one of the cabin crew, asking it to be delivered to the pilot. The note said there were bombs strapped to her

body and she would detonate it any moment, an airport official said.

Following this, the pilot informed the Air Traffic Controller which directed him to return to the city airport, he said.

"The ATC had declared full emergency at that time. As soon as the aircraft landed, it was taken to the isolation bay at 11.46 p.m.," he said.

The passenger was taken into custody by the Central Indus-

trial Security Force. A thorough search of the passenger and the aircraft was car-

ried out but no bombs were found, the official said.

has been identified as Mohini Mondol who is a resident of Salt Lake area, said a senior officer of the Bidhannagar City Police. Ms. Mondol was arrested

The woman, in her mid-20s,

and a medical examination suggested that she was in an inebriated state, the police officer

"An investigation has been initiated and we are also talking to her family members to find out why she was going to Mumbai," he said.

Crocodile population on the rise in Odisha's Ghodahada reservoir

STAFF REPORTER

Twenty-one mugger crocodiles live in ten village ponds adjoining Ghodahada reservoir of Odisha's Ganjam district that houses 44 of these

This example of peaceful coexistence of humans and crocodiles in the Digapahandi forest range under Berhampur forest division was revealed during annual crocodile census conducted in the region on Saturday. "As per the census, the number of mature crocodiles in Ghodahada reservoir and its adjoining area has increased from 58 in January 2019 to 65 in 2020. In 2019, there were 43 muggers in the reservoir, while 15 were living in the nearby village ponds," said Berhampur Divisional Forest Officer Amlan Nayak.

The number of mature crocodiles is increasing in the region. In 2018, their number was 45. Digapahandi Forest Range Officer Pramod Kumar Khadagray said that highest number of five crocodiles were in the Ujaleswar temple tank at Khambarigaon village on the banks of the reservoir. The other nine village ponds around



A crocodile basking in the sun on the banks of Ghodahada reservoir in Odisha. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the reservoir housed 10 muggers.

As per the locals and forest officials, in the British era, the area zamindar had kept some crocodiles in the Ujaleswar temple tank.

The crocodiles of the Ghodahada reservoir and its adjoining village ponds have never harmed any villagers or domestic animals. According to zoologists, muggers are less ferocious than other crocodile breeds and they seem to be satisfied with fish in the reservoir and its adjoining ponds. Villagers are fishermen and involved in pisciculture in the reservoir and conservation of crocodiles.

MVA cautious over picking staff, avoids those with BJP ministers

None of Cabinet Ministers, including Chief Minister, have set up office full-fledged

The delay in appointments of staff to the offices of ministers in the Maha Vikas Aghadi government is mainly due to the extensive background search before sanctioning the names. Another reason contributing to the delay is the instructions from top party bosses to avoid the officials who had worked with the earlier government in important positions, especially with the ministers of the Bharatiya Janata Party

Out of the 33 Cabinet Ministers, including Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, none of them have set up their office full-fledged. The final appointments of staff. including personal secretary and officers on special duty (OSD), are still pending for all the ministers.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

payout

Days after the death of four tigers in Goa's Mahadayi Wildlife Sanctuary due to suspected poisoning by locals, a buffalo belonging to a villager was found killed by a feline in the same area, a forest department official said on Sunday. The buffalo owner has been assured of adequate compensation to prevent any 'retaliatory killing' of wild cats by locals, the official told *PTI*.

The carcass of the buffalo was recovered on Saturday from Derode village located in the Mahadayi Wildlife Sanctuary area of Sattari taluka in North Goa district, he said. It was found just a few kilometres away from the place where a tigress and her three cubs were found dead last week. "The way the buffalo was attacked, it appeared to have been killed by a tiger, he said.

Carcasses of a tigress and her cub were recovered from the sanctuary on Wednesday, days after her two other cubs were found dead nearby. The forest department prima facie suspects that the felines were poisoned in a "revenge killing" for preying on cattle in the village.



Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray greets Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar after taking oath during the swearing-in ceremony in Mumbai. • FILE РНОТО

As per rules, each minister, except for the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister, is sanctioned to have a staff of one personal secretary, three personal assistants (which can be converted to OSDs), two stenos, two clerks, one driver, and a peon.

At a meeting of party ministers at Y.B. Chavan Centre, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar sounded a word of caution to his colleagues while choosing the staff.

"He told us to ensure a full

background check. Though

he didn't particularly tell us

to avoid the officials who had worked with the BJP ministers, the issue was discussed. No one will tell us to not take a particular officer in our staff, but the discussion of the issue is an indication for us to decide how to go forward," a NCP minister said.

During the meetings to finalise the common minimum programme (CMP) of the three parties, the issue of appointments of minister's staff was discussed in detail. "We had decided to avoid, if possible, to take those who had worked with the BJP ministers," the NCP minister said.

According to sources, a Congress minister and two Shiv Sena ministers have already appointed an officer each from the BJP ministers' team and the NCP has raised the objection of not adhering to the CMP.

Border row: Karnataka police prevent Marathi writers from attending meet

Minister condemns incident; littérateur slams Yeddiyurappa govt. B.S. Yeddiyurappa govern-

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

The recent spike in Maharashtra-Karnataka border tensions over the long-standing Belagavi claim dispute cast its shadow on the literary world, with the Karnataka Police on Sunday allegedly refusing entry to a group of Marathi littérateurs for attending a rural literary meet in Belagavi's Khanapur tehsil.

The group led by writer Shripal Sabnis was going for a 'Marathi Sahitya Sammelan' scheduled at Idanhol when they were prevented by the police, and warned they would be taken into custody if they attempted to proceed to the venue. The organisers, too, were discouraged from holding the Khanapur meet which eventually did not take place as a result of the police's direc-

The Karnataka police's high-handedness snarp criticism from Sniv Se na leader Subhash Desai, who is the Cabinet Minister for Marathi language and Cultural Affairs. "Today, a group of litterateurs were prohibited entry by the Karnataka police and were detained in Belagavi. I strongly condemn this repression on part of the police authori-

ties," Mr. Desai tweeted. Mr. Sabnis hit out at the ment by likening it to a 'neo-Hitler regime'. "A number of literary meets have been held in the past in the border areas...I was proceeding to one such meet today. But it seems that a Hitler has risen within the Karnataka government, which informed the police to prevent us from holding a literary meet...the organisers were directed not to hold the event while we were threatened with arrest if we attempted to reach the spot. The government had

no moral nor ethical right to

stop us," Mr. Sabnis said at a

conference

Belagavi. Demanding that the Centre reprimand the Karnataka government for its repressive actions, he said it was shameful that the discriminatory tactics of the Yeddiyurappa government was heightening linguistic tensions. "The Karnataka government's actions constitute a blight on the teachings of harmony and unity of its saints and philosophers like Basaveshwara [12th century] and Kanaka Dasa [16th cen-

tury Vaishnava poet]." "The claim over Belagavi and the question of the 20 lakh Marathi-speaking populace on the Maharashtra-Karnataka border region reunsolved. Such

incidents only serve to further exacerbate tensions. The Karnataka government's actions tantamount to a murder of constitutional principles," Mr. Sabnis said, lauding the steps taken by the Uddhav Thackeray government in expediting a resolution of the decades-old border dispute.

Last month, the Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute over the status of Belagavi district witnessed a reigniting of tensions. The immediate trigger was a controversial statement by Karnataka Navnirman Sena (KNS) chief Bhimashankar Patil, who allegsaid that the Marathi-speaking leaders of the Belagavi-based Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) "ought to be shot dead".

Mr. Patil's remark has stirred up a hornet's nest with the KNS and the Shiv Sena - both regional and chauvinistic parties - attempting to outdo each oth er in rhetoric and deed. Protests by the KNS in Belagavi and counter protests by the Sena in Kolhapur and Sangli districts prompted the police to stop State Transport bus services from Kolhapur to Belagavi. Both parties also defaced billboards and hoardings in Marathi and Kannada on their respective sides of the border.

Common minimum programme's sole aim to keep BJP out of power: Fadnavis

Ex-CM dares Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders to inquire into scams during BJP-led regime

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

Alleging that the common minimum programme (CMP) of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government is 'anti-farmer', former chief minister and Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis said the objective of CMP was to keep the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) out of power at any cost.

Speaking in Solapur on Sunday, Mr. Fadnavis dared his detractors, including former CM Prithviraj Chavan and farmers' leader and Swabhimani Paksha president Raju Shetti to prove whether any scams had been committed during the tenure of his BJP-led government.

"It has been two months since this [MVA] government has been formed, yet there has been no meeting to take stock of the problems the sugar cooperative sector is facing. The three parties [the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress] claim their CMP is based on the welfare of farmers and farm labourers...well, their only 'CMP' so to speak was to keep the BJP out of power. The three parties only want power for their sake and they do not have the interests of Maharashtra in their minds," the BJP leader said.



All-out attack: BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis speaking in Solapur on Sunday. • TWITTER

Mr. Fadnavis claimed that his government had always ensured that sugar cane farmers had been paid their fair and remunerative price (FRP) on time. "When we came to power in 2014, the Opposition had mocked us by saying that we [the BJP] did not understand the technicalities of the cooperative sector... But our government never defaulted on the FRP in the five years that we were in power and when we faced certain obstacles, we made provisions for a package of ₹2,000 crore to be given to farmers."

Hitting out at his estranged ally, the Sena, the BJP leader attacked Mr. Thackeray's farm loan waiver plan, saying it would not benefit a single afflicted

farmer in the State. "Around 94 lakh hectares of crop land have been destroyed by unseasonal rain in October. But this government has nounced that it will waive loans between 2015 and September 2019. The implication of this absurd proclamation means no farmer who has suffered due to unseasonal rain in October can avail of any benefit in the government's ₹25,000 per hectare compensation," Mr. Fadnavis said, alleging the government is only

hoodwinking farmers and betraying their trust. "Instead, for the past five years, it was our BJP government which stood firm behind the farmer in their hour of crisis by waiving loans to the tune of ₹50,000 crore," he said.

Mr. Fadnavis challenged leaders from the three ruling parties to launch any inquiry into the workings of the erstwhile BJP government if they so wished. In a thinly-veiled jibe at

Mr. Chavan, he said the BJP did not worry or take cognisance of such 'threats'. "The BJP government had discharged its functions in a most transparent manner. So, if you [Congress and other ruling parties] do not have proof of any misdemeanour, do not hurl shallow threats at us. The public has seen our work," Mr. Fadnavis said, further claiming that the BJP had never halted any projects or withheld funds to Opposition legislators when it was in power.

Earlier, Mr. Chavan had dubbed the BJP government under Mr. Fadnavis as corrupt while stating that the new MVA dispensation would conduct inquiries into the workings of the past government as it had proofs of alleged wrongdoings.

When the brush speaks



on the 'Wall for Freedom of Expression' installed at Town Hall Garden, Bhausingji Road, Kolhapur, by We The People of India, on Sunday. • ABHIJEET GURJAR

Touching a cow drives away negativity, claims minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Days after she faced flak for stating that newly sworn-in ministers in the Maharashtra government had not yet started making money, State minister and Congress MLA Yashomati Thakur has said that touching a cow "drives away negativity"

On Sunday, the Women and Child Development Minister in the Uddhav Thackeray-led government defend-

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A 17-year-old boy was alleg-

edly kidnapped and killed

by his friend for a ransom of

₹40 lakh in Pune, a police of-

ficial said on Sunday. The

body of the victim, identi-

fied as Abdulahad Siddiqui,

was found on the premises

of Savitribai Phule Pune Un-

iversity in the wee hours of

ed her remarks, saying touching any animal, including cows, fills one with compassion.

"Our culture says if you touch a cow, all negativity will go away," the Teosa MLA told a gathering in Amravati on Saturday.

She told PTI on Sunday: "Cow is a sacred animal. Moreover, be it a cow or any other animal, touching them brings a feeling of love to us. What is wrong in what I

17-year-old killed by friend in Pune

for kidnapping and murder,

a senior official at Bhosari

friend Siddiqui from Dapodi

in Pimpri Chinchwad on Sa-

turday evening on the pre-

text of going for a party. After

roaming around, he took the

victim to the university cam-

pus where he allegedly stran-

gulated him to death," the of-

ficial said. The accused then

called another friend of Sid-

diqui using the latter's mo-

bile phone. He asked the

friend to inform Siddiqui's

elder brother that his sibling

had been kidnapped. "When

"Mr. Shaikh took his

police station said.

said?" Earlier, campaigning for the Vashim zilla parishad polls, she had said, "We have just come to power, our pockets are not warm enough yet." She had also said that voters may accept money from the Opposition but must vote for the

Congress. The Congress is one of the constituents in the Shiv Sena-led government, apart from the Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party.

Siddiqui's brother called, Mr.

Shaikh demanded ₹40 lakh

from him. The family then

approached us. The voice in

the call recordings was iden-

tified as that of Mr. Shaikh

following which we zeroed in

for questioning and after sus-

tained interrogation, he

spilled the beans and showed

the police the place where he

had abandoned the body.

The accused told the police

that he hatched a plan to kid-

nap his friend for money af-

ter seeing a movie called

Khatarnak Khiladi-2, he said.

Mr. Shaikh was detained

on him," he said.

35 of 56 Sena MLAs are 'dissatisfied': Rane

He is confident of BJP's return to power

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Former Maharashtra chief minister Narayan Rane has claimed that 35 of the 56 Shiv Sena MLAs in the State are "dissatisfied" with their party leadership.

Talking to reporters at a function on Saturday night, Mr. Rane, currently a Rajya Sabha MP from the BJP quota, dubbed the Uddhav Thackeray-led dispensation as "non-performing", saying the Sena, NCP and Congress took more than five weeks to form the government in

He expressed confidence that the BJP will return to power in Maharashtra. The BIP has 105 MLAs, and the Sena only 56 and of them also 35 are "dissatisfied", Mr. Rane claimed, without elaborating.

He also said that the Thackeray government's promise of loan waiver for farmers is "hollow" as there is no timeline on when it will be implemented.

Referring to Chief Minister Thackeray's visit to Aurangabad on Thursday, Mr. Rane said he came back



Rane dubbed the Uddhav Thackeray-led dispensation as "non-performing".

without announcing any plans or giving any funds to the region. "What we can expect from such a government? They don't know anything about running the government. They took five weeks to form the government, from this one can expect how they will run the show," he said

Refusing to comment on speculations of a tie-up between the BJP and Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, Mr. Rane said only the BJP chief will speak

'No progress on world's second tallest Buddha statue project'

Govt. planned to develop Dev Ni Mori into Buddhist destination

The State

government has

proposed a very

big project at Dev

Ni Mori, but has

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

No progress has been made on the Gujarat government's plan to build the world's second tallest statue of Gautam Buddha in Sabarkantha district and to develop the place into an international Buddhism destination, a member of a Buddhist organisation claimed on Sunday.

The government had proposed to develop Dev Ni Mori in Sabarkantha district inan "international Buddhist destination" with "the second tallest statue of Buddha (108 metres) in the world after the Spring Temple statue in China (153 metres). The proposed statue will be more in height than the Thailand-based Sitting Buddha statue (92 metres).

The estimated cost of the project is around ₹1,200 crore. "The State government has proposed a very big project at Dev Ni Mori, but has not yet sanctioned any fund, which has stalled the project. We are also struggling for it and trying to make it possible as early as

not yet sanctioned any fund, which has stalled the project BHANTE PRASHEEL RATNA GAUTAM

possible," said Bhante Prasheel Ratna Gautam, president of Sanghakaya Foundation, a non-profit Buddhist organisation.

He was speaking on the sidelines of the fourth International Buddhist Conference on Peace and Solidarity, which was inaugurated at Gujarat University on Sunday. As many as129 Buddhist monks from different parts of the country and abroad, apart from common people, are participating in the

three-day conference. "We don't think the government has any issues regarding funds. The government has not said no to the project, but it is not taking it forward either," Mr. Gautam

department had carried out excavation at Dev Ni Mori near Shamlaji, an important Hindu pilgrimage destination, during 1960-1963. During excavation, re-

The State archaeological

mains of a Buddhist monastery dated third-fourth century AD were found. A casket was also found, which as per its inscription, contained relics of Gautam Budhha. The 1700-year-old casket is currently kept at MS University of Baroda in

Mr. Gautam said Sanghakaya Foundation had also proposed to construct a 80-120-metre-tall statue of lord Buddha for which land was identified at Aluva village in Gandhinagar district.

"The collector of Gandhi nagar district had identified the land at Aluva village on the banks of the Sabarmati river. We propose to build a 80-120-metre-tall statue of Gautam Buddha there," he said. The foundation also gifted a five-foot statue of Gautam Buddha to Gujarat University and signed an MoU to promote Buddhist

studies, Mr. Gautam said.

(20), has been arrested and booked under IPC sections

cused, Umar Nasir Shaikh

His family runs a scrap business in Pimpri Chinchwad area of Pune. The ac-

Sunday, he said.



No going back on Citizenship Act: Naqvi

HYDERABAD The Citizenship (Amendment) Act is here to stay. Union Minister of Minorities Affairs Mukthar Abbas Naqvi said here on Sunday. The Act would not affect the minorities, the Muslims in particular. Mr. Nagvi, who was here to inaugurate the Hunar Haat, said no changes would be made to the Act.

CMs of Telangana and A.P. to meet today

The stage is set for the Chief Ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, K. Chandrasekhar Rao and Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, to meet at Pragati Bhavan here on Monday. The two are expected to hold discussions on the issues facing the two States as well as the latest developments

One killed in jallikattu in Andhra Pradesh

A 27-year-old man was killed when a rope tied to a frenzied bull got entwined around his neck at a jallikattu event near Kuppam in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district on Sunday. In the stampede and chaos that followed the tragedy, 20 others were injured. Though the organisers resumed the event, the police rushed to the spot and stopped it.

Sri Venkateswara Bhakti **Channel chairman quits**

Sri Venkateswara Bhakti Channel (SVBC) chairman Prudhviraj Balireddy on Sunday resigned after an audio clip of his alleged vulgar telephonic talk with a woman employee went viral. Based on a report by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams vigilance wing, Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy directed him to step down.

Two more Maradu towers brought down with precision

Supreme Court's order implemented with all four apartment complexes razed; operation leaves no impact on surrounding buildings

Golden Kayaloram, the fourth illegal apartment complex in Maradu that was ordered to be pulled down by the Supreme Court, was razed to the ground on Sunday afternoon.

It took only a few seconds and 15 kg of explosives to bring down the 17-floor structure without any impact on the nearby structures, including an Anganwadi building located just outside the apartment complex.

Earlier in the day, similar controlled explosions inside Jain Coral Cove reduced the largest of the four illegal apartment complexes also to rubble. H2O Holy Faith and Alfa Serene, the two other illegal structures, were demolished on Saturday.

All the blasts took place as planned, said R. Venugopal, the Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives, who oversaw

Nine-month saga

It took around nine months and some tough talking by the Supreme Court for the State government to act against the violations.

Since its landmark judgment on May 8, 2019, the Supreme Court Bench headed by Arun Misra had closely monitored the implementation of its decision to demolish the four apartment complexes that were constructed in violation of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) guidelines.

The State government was forced to file a timeline for demolition after the court ordered the personal appearance of Chief Secretary Tom Jose and warned of serious repercussions

It was on an appeal filed by the Kerala Coastal Zone Management Authority against the High Court order the apex court passed the



Over in a jiffy: Golden Kayaloram and Jain Coral Grove apartment complexes at Maradu near Kochi being brought down on Sunday.

judgement.

After the Maradu demolitions, the State government will have to chart out a plan for removing 54 apartments of the Kapico Kerala Resorts at Nediyathuruthu in Vembanad Lake.

A three-member Bench of the court on Friday ordered the removal of the resort after it was also found to be built in violation of CRZ rules.

On Monday, when the Supreme Court takes up the case, counsel for the State government will make an oral submission about the Maradu demolition works.

There will not be any written submission on the developments as the demolition was completed only by Sunday afternoon, said senior Environment Department officials. The Ernakulam District Collector has been asked to despatch pictures of the demolition, which may be submitted to

'Emulsion explosives did it'

The use of emulsion explosives and its reduced usage at the blast sites helped in the effective demolition of the concrete buildings while containing its impact, said R. Venugopal, Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives.

Speaking to The Hindu, Dr. Venugopal said the controlled implosions brought down the four high-rises at the exact angle as planned.

For Holy Faith, 212 kg of explosives were used against the 215 kg ordered, 14.5 kg in Golden Kayaloram against 125 kg, and 343 kg at Alfa Serene against 600 kg. It was only at Jain Coral Cove that the quantity of explosives used exceeded the earlier estimate, with 372 kg used against the initially estimated 312 kg, considering the size of the building, he said.



PESO Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives R. Venugopal and Joe Brinkman of South African firm Jet Demolition in front of the Anganwadi outside Golden Kayaloram.

While reducing the quantity of explosives, the length of detonating fuse was increased, which improved the efficiency of the blasts while reducing its impact, Dr. Venugopal said.

A. Bhoominathan, head of the Civil Engineering Department of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, who

led a team of experts that assessed the vibrations from the explosions, pointed out that the short duration of vibrations (less than 10 seconds) triggered by the blasts, and the distance between the buildings and the point of origin of the vibrations saved the nearby struc-

tures from damage

Residents see red over debris storage

SAM PAUL A.

The Ezhupunna panchayat has issued a stop memo to a firm which had planned to store debris from the demolished Maradu apartments at a yard in the panchayat in Ernakulam district.

Panchayat authorities said people living near the yard in St. Raphaels ward were worried that the dumping of huge mounds of debris would cause high levels of dust and air pollution.

Aluva-based Prompt Enterprises has bagged the tender to remove the deweighing around 75,000 tonnes, for ₹35.16 lakh.

The firm had identified three yards, Ezhupunna and Aroor in Alappuzha, and

Kumbalam in Ernakulam, to store the debris till it is used for other purposes.

However, a few residents filed a complaint with the Ezhupunna panchavat against storing the debris after the firm brought some materials from the apartment complexes to yards last week.

"The firm has taken a piece of land on lease. They have not yet sought permission from the grama panchayat for storing debris. We have received complaints from residents and the local body issued a stop memo," said M.K. Johnappan, vice president, Ezhupunna grama panchayat.

Prompt Enterprises meanwhile said they might not use the yard at Ezhupunna any further.

Karnataka

CM yet to get

appointment

with PM, Shah

Karnataka Chief Minister

B.S. Yediyurappa is report-

edly upset with the BIP

high command for not giv-

ing him an appointment to

hold consultations on Cabi-

net expansion, resulting in

has been facing pressure

from the newly elected

MLAs for an immediate ex-

pansion, the party high

command has been delay-

ing it, putting him in a

spot, his close associates

to cancel his trip to Delhi, scheduled for Sunday and

Monday, as Union Home

Minister Amit Shah and

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi did not give him an

appointment. "I will meet Mr. Shah and discuss Cabi-

net expansion when he comes to the State on Janu-

ary 18," he told mediaper-

He recently announced that he was unlikely to go

to Davos to attend the an-

nual meeting of World Eco-

nomic Forum, as sche-

duled earlier, over the

The Chief Minister had

earlier found it difficult to

get an appointment with

Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah ov-

er flood relief to the State

in August-September 2019,

leaving him embarrassed.

He had raised the issue of

"inadequate flood assis-

tance" at a recent public

rally in the presence of Mr. Modi in Tumakuru, follow-

ing which the Union go-

vernment released the se-

cond instalment of ₹1,869

sons on Saturday.

same issue.

Mr. Yediyurappa has had

While the Chief Minister

STAFF REPORTER

its delay.

⁺ Two terror suspects arrested at Gundlupet

Police probing nexus among terror outfits

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The arrest of two terror suspects from Gundlupet in Karnataka's Chamarajanagar district, as well as the manhunt for Mehboob Pasha for allegedly planning to carry out subversive acts in and around Bengaluru, have led the police to suspect that there is a nexus among terror outfits.

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) is now probing if modules of the banned terror organisation, Al Ummah, IS, and the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) are working together. This comes in the wake of the Tamil Nadu police, along with

Techie held for Khalistani links

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The CCB, along with their counterparts from Punjab, arrested one Jarnail Singh Sidhu, an alleged member of the Khalistan movement, on Saturday.

According to the police,

the CCB, recently busting an Al Ummah module in Bengaluru. Three persons were arrested, but the key accused, escaped. worked as a daily wager and allegedly provided logistical support to the three terror suspects - Mohammed Haneef Khan, Imran Khan, and Mohammed Syed. .

Pasha lived in the same area and held several meetings at his residence with another wanted Al Ummah man Khaja Moinuddin.

the accused, an engineer,

had been working at an IT

firm at Bagmane Tech Park

for the last six months. "He

Inter-Services Intelligence.

He was seeking support for

the movement," said a

senior police official.

was in touch with Pakistan's

Meanwhile, the two terror suspects held in Gundlupet on Saturday, were taken to Bengaluru for further questioning. "They were in touch with terror operatives from outside the State. They were picked up on the basis of their intercepts with them," said a source.

Break from books



Village flavour: Students taking part in the Sankranthi celebrations organised on the Laurel High Global School premises in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, on Sunday. ■S. RAMBABU

Villagers give up stone-throwing ritual at Buddhist site

INTACH campaign and efforts by officials at Bojjannakonda convince residents to shun practice

VISAKHAPATNAM

After a sustained campaign, heritage lovers and officials have been successful in almost stopping the stonepelting ritual at Bojjannakonda, a famous Buddhist site at Sankaram, 3.5 km from Anakapalle and 41 km from here.

The villagers, as a part of an ancient ritual, would throw stones at a bellyshaped object at the site, believing it to be a part of a demon.

Following the intervention of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), the practice carried out on the Kanuma day during Sankranti has almost been done away with. "With the support of the police and



the district administration, we have been able to stop it [pelting of stones] for the Sunday. past few years. This time also, we have sought the support of the district officials," INTACH

Visakhapatnam chapter

convener Mayank Kumari Deo told *The Hindu* on

"Bojjannakonda and Lingalametta are twin **Buddhist monasteries dating** back to the 3rd century BC. These sites have seen three

forms of Buddhism - the Theravada period when Lord Buddha was considered a teacher; the Mahayana, where Buddhism was more devotional; and Vajrayana, where Buddhist tradition was more practised as Tantra and in esoteric form," she said.

Tourists' delight The name Sankaram is derived from the term, 'Sangharama'. The site is famous for many votive stupas, rock-cut caves, brick-built edifices, early historic pottery, and Satavahana coins that date back to the 1st century AD.

The main stupa was carved out of rock and then covered with bricks, and a number of images of the Buddha are seen sculpted

on the rock face all over the

At the nearby Lingalametta, one can see hundreds of rock-cut monolithic stupas in rows.

'Vandalism, or defacing of any order, like removing bricks and throwing stones at the heritage site, is highly condemnable. We want the administration to provide enough security on Kanuma day to prevent damage to the archaeologically significant site," INTACH, in a letter, urged District Collector V. Vinay Chand.

Recalling how the ritual had been stopped to a large extent, P.V. Prasad, a member of INTACH, said he had to stay at the site along with other heritage lovers to sensitise locals not to damage the Buddhist site.

Chicken bone removed from boy's food pipe

STAFF REPORTER HYDERABAD

A 2-cm chicken bone stuck in the food pipe of a 10-yearold boy was removed by doctors at a corporate hospital here in Telangana.

The boy, who hails from Lingampally, was brought to the hospital a fortnight ago with high temperature, two days after he accidentally swallowed the bone.

A hole had got formed at the site where the bone was stuck. A team of doctors led by Raghuram Kondala, consultant medical gastroenterologist at Continental Hospitals, first removed the bone from the esophagus and did endoscopic clipping to seal the hole.

The boy has been discharged.

Any foreign body in the airway may lead to choking and result in death if not re-



The two-cm chicken bone 10-year-old's food pipe.

"Such cases must be attended to immediately as delay could increase the risks like food pipe perforation, leading to infection, long-term complications, and in some cases, death. It is important that utmost care is taken while removing the object and stenting to ensure restoration of functionality of the food pipe," Dr. Kondala said.

moved in time, say doctors.

Meanwhile, the newly elected party-hopper MLAs have met twice and are exerting pressure on the Chief Minister to induct them into the Cabinet immediately, sources said.



Palghar chemical factory blast toll goes up to 8

The death toll in the explosion at a chemical factory in Maharashtra's Palghar district rose to eight on Sunday after the body of a missing girl was recovered from the site, officials said. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has called a meeting on Monday to discuss the issue. PTI

Samajwadi Party leader shot dead in U.P.

A Samajwadi Party leader, Bijli Yaday, and former village headman in Uttar Pradesh's Mau district was gunned down while he was on his morning walk on Sunday, police said. The assailants. who were on a motorcycle, killed him in Mohmmadabad Gohna, said local reports.

'T.N. should support caste-based census'

Welcoming the resolution passed by Maharashtra Assembly that supported caste-based census. Dravidar Kazhagam president K. Veeramani on Sunday urged that the Tamil Nadu government must follow suit. "Our aim to be create a casteless society. But until several thousand people, who have been denied opportunities due to caste system, attain equality, it is necessary to have reservation," he said.

LCA Tejas takes off from INS Vikramaditya

NEW DELH After completing the landing on the "ski-jump" deck of the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya on Saturday, the naval version of the indigenously-built Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA) on Sunday successfully took off from the carrier. The developments put India among the few nations which have the capability to design a jet which can operate from an aircraft carrier. PTI

India's under-5 girls face high mortality

Unlike global trends, in India they have higher probability of dying than boys, says UN report

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN NEW DELHI

India is among the few countries in the world where, in 2018, the mortality for girls under 5 years of age exceeded that of boys, according to the 'Levels and Trends in Child Mortality' report by the United Nations (UN) inter-agency group for child mortality.

The report states that in 2018, fewer countries showed gender disparities in child mortality, and across the world, boys are expected to have a higher probability of dying before reaching age 5 than girls. But this trend was not reflected in India.

"In some countries, the risk of dying before age 5 for girls is significantly higher than what would be expected based on global patterns. These countries are primariand Uttar Pradesh, with 32, 33 and 30 neonatal deaths ly located in Southern Asia and Western Asia," said the per 1,000 live births, respectively. India's neonatal mor-

Wide Among bigger States in India, the gender gap in the under-five mortality rate was most pronounced in Jharkhand (girls: 38 and boys: 30). Madhya Pradesh had the highest overall under-five mortality (55) while Kerala had the least (12)

| State | Under-five mortality rate (girls) | Under-five mortality rate (boys) | Gap | Under-five mortality rate | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Jharkhand | 38 | 30 | 8 | 34 | | | | | | |
| Assam | 51 | 45 | 6 | 48 | | | | | | |
| Haryana | 38 | 32 | 6 | 35 | | | | | | |
| Uttar Pradesh | 48 | 43 | 5 | 46 | | | | | | |
| Rajasthan | 45 | 41 | 4 | 43 | | | | | | |
| Bihar | 43 | 39 | 4 | 41 | | | | | | |
| Among the 5.3 million On average, 15,000 children | | | | | | | | | | |

According to India's 2017 Sample Registration System, the States with the highest burden of neonatal mortality are Madhya Pradesh, Odisha

under-five deaths in 2018,

2.9 million were of boys

and **2.4** million of girls

tality rate is 23 per 1,000 live

died before age 5 every day in

2018 compared to **34,000** in

1990 and **27,000** in 2000

Further, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttarakhand showed the largest gender gaps in under-5 mortality.

"The burden of child mortality is determined both by the mortality rate (the proof the large cohort of births that occur every year in the State," noted information released by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). Half of all under-5 deaths

in 2018 occurred in five countries: India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia. India and Nigeria alone account for about a third.

The major causes of neonatal mortality are pre-term birth, intrapartum related events, infection.

The report adds that despite advancements made over the past two decades, a child or a young adolescent died every five seconds in 2018.

"Current trends predict that close to 10 million 5- to 14-year-olds, and 52 million children under 5 years of age, will die between 2019 and 2030," said the report.

mortality rate and because

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rain/snow likely over Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand; heavy rain very likely at isolated places over Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh and west Uttar Pradesh. Dense fog likely in isolated pockets over east Uttar Pradesh., Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX |
|-------------|------|------|------|--------------------|------|--------|
| Agartala | | 23.0 | 11.0 | Kozhikode | | .33.0. |
| Ahmedabad | | 27.0 | 17.0 | Kurnool | | .31.0. |
| Aizawl | | 20.0 | 9.0 | Lucknow | | .20.0. |
| Allahabad | | 22.0 | 9.0 | Madurai | | .33.0. |
| Bengaluru | | 28.0 | 15.0 | Mangaluru | | .38.0. |
| Bhopal | | – | – | Mumbai | | .32.0. |
| Bhubaneswar | | 25.0 | 11.0 | Mysuru | | .29.0. |
| Chandigarh | | 18.0 | 10.0 | New Delhi | | .23.0. |
| Chennai | | 30.0 | 21.0 | Patna | | .15.0. |
| Coimbatore | | 31.0 | 16.0 | Port Blair | | .30.0. |
| Dehradun | | 22.0 | 8.0 | Puducherry | | .31.0. |
| Gangtok | | 12.0 | 4.0 | Pune | | .29.0. |
| Goa | | 33.0 | 21.0 | Raipur | | .24.0. |
| Guwahati | | 25.0 | 11.0 | Ranchi | | .21.0. |
| Hubballi | | 29.0 | 18.0 | Shillong | | .14.0. |
| Hyderabad | | 29.0 | 15.0 | Shimla | | .15.0. |
| Imphal | | 23.0 | 6.0 | Srinagar | | 5.0. |
| Jaipur | | 22.0 | 8.0 | Thiruvananthapuran | 1 | .34.0. |
| Kochi | | 32.0 | 21.0 | Tiruchi | | .32.0. |
| Kohima | | 16.0 | 5.0 | Vijayawada | | .30.0. |
| Kolkata | | 22.0 | 12.0 | Visakhapatnam | | .26.0. |

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

| Pollutants in 1 | the a | air yo | ou a | re bre | athing | I |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------|------|--------|--------|------|
| CITIES | 50 ₂ | NO_2 | co | PM2.5 | PM10 | CODE |
| Ahmedabad | 63 | .20 | 43 | 143 | .116 | |
| Bengaluru | 11 | .57 | 32 | 59 | 80 | |
| Chennai | 11 | .57 | 32 | 59 | 80 | |
| Delhi | 16 | .70 | 54 | 414 | .334 | |
| Hyderabad | 3 | .78 | 38 | 158 | .137 | |
| Kolkata | 12 | .65 | 26 | 239 | .180 | |
| Lucknow | 77 | .47 | 77 | 414 | | |
| Mumbai | 4 | .27 | 63 | 275 | .189 | |
| Pune | 75 | .27 | 84 | 208 | .146 | |
| Visakhanatnam | 12 | 35 | 47 | 167 | 123 | |

o.m., Ballabhgarh, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of

502: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues

NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

'Mass planting of exotic trees in Nilgiris harmful

ROHAN PREMKUMAR UDHAGAMANDALAM

A Coonoor-based trust proposes to plant more than 10,000 trees in the Nilgiris – almost all of them exotic flora - from avenue trees such as jacaranda and podocarpus, to pine and bottlebrush.

Conservationists say that though the intention is commendable, the mass plantation drive will be harmful to the environment in the long term.

Dr. Tarun Chhabra, an environmentalist working on habitat restoration Nilgiris, said exotic trees have a huge impact on soil chemistry on the ground, preventing native grass, plants and

herbs from taking root underneath the canopy.

It has a knock-on effect on wildlife, which leads them into vacating the areas, he says.

High water demand "Only native grasses should

be grown in what were previously grasslands, or Shola trees should be grown where they existed previously," said Mr. Chhabra.

N. Mohanraj, a Nilgirisbased ecologist, said when exotics take root, they increase the water demand in that region, impacting not just the Nilgiris but other districts further downstream that rely on rivers emanating from the hills

Two Coast Guard ships commissioned at Kolkata

The modern vessels will be based at Chennai and Haldia

Inder-five mortality of

portion of children who die)

and by the estimated popula-

tion of any given State (total

number of annual births). In

this sense, Uttar Pradesh is

the State with the highest

number of estimated new-

born deaths in India, both

because of the high neonatal

girls in Kerala was 11

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM

Two Indian Coast Guard Ships (ICGS) – Annie Besant and Amrit Kaur - were commissioned by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar at Kolkata on Sunday.

Director General of Indian Coast Guard K. Natarajan, Additional Director General and Coast Guard Commander (Eastern Seaboard) V.S. Pathania, and other officials were present at the ceremony, according to an official statement by the Coast Guard Eastern

insolvency

ordinance

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court is

scheduled to hear on Mon-

day a plea challenging the

newly promulgated Insol-

vency and Bankruptcy

Code (Amendment) Ordi-

nance of 2019, which does

not allow homebuyers to

individually initiate insol-

vency proceedings against

builders in residential

nance prescribes a mini-

mum threshold - 10% or

100 in number, whichever

is lesser, of the total allot-

tees/homebuyers from the

same real estate project -

for initiating insolvency re-

Section 3 of the ordi-



Setting sail: *ICGS* ships *Annie Besant* and *Amrit Kaur* during the commissioning ceremony in Kolkata on Sunday. • PTI

While Annie Besant will be based at Chennai, Amrit Kaur will be based at Haldia. The ships are fitted with state-of-the-art technology,

and navigation equipment, along with Bofors 40/60 guns and 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote Controlled Guns for enhanced fighting efficiency.

Plea challenges Private property is a fundamental right, says SC 'Grabbing private land and claiming it as its own makes the State an encroacher'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

A citizen's right to own private property is a fundamental right. The State cannot take possession of it without following due procedure and authority of law, the Supreme Court held in a judgment on January 8.

The State cannot trespass into the private property of a citizen and then claim ownership of the land in the name of 'adverse possession', the court said, adding that grabbing private land and then claiming it as its own makes the State an encroacher.

In a welfare state, right to property is a human right, said a Bench of Justices Indu Malhotra and Ajay Rastogi.

"A welfare state cannot be permitted to take the plea of adverse possession, which allows a trespasser i.e. a person guilty of a tort, or even a crime, to gain legal title over such property for over 12 years. The State cannot be permitted to perfect its title over the land by invoking the doctrine of adverse possession to grab the property of its own citizens," said Justice Malhotra

The court was hearing a plea filed by Vidya Devi, a widow, whose four acres of land was taken over by the Himachal Pradesh government in 1967.

'The appellant [Ms. Devi] being an illiterate widow, coming from a rural background, was wholly unaware



of her rights and entitlement in law, and did not file any proceedings for compensation...," said Justice Malho-

When Ms. Devi, 80, learnt about her rights in 2010 from her neighbours, who had also lost their property, she approached the Himachal Pradesh High Court. Ho-

wever, when the HC asked her to file a civil suit in the lower court, she moved the Supreme Court.

Authority of law

Ordering the State to pay her ₹1 crore in compensation, the Supreme Court noted that in 1967, 'right to private property was still a fundamental right' under Article 31 of the Constitution.

Property ceased to be a fundamental right with the 44th Constitution Amendment in 1978. Nevertheless, Article 300A required the State to follow due procedure and authority of law to deprive a person of his or her private property, the Supreme Court reminded the

Kaziranga has one of the highest number of wetland birds

Second survey records 19,225 birds belonging to 80 families

RAHUL KARMAKAR

Kaziranga recorded 96 species of wetland birds - one of the highest for wildlife reserves in India, according to the second wetland bird count conducted on Ianuary The survey registered a

total of 19,225 birds belonging to 96 species under 80 families. The first waterfowl census in 2018 had yielded 10,412 birds covering 80 species, belonging to 21 families.

"With 6,181 individuals, the bar-headed goose led the species count, followed by the common teal at 1,557 and northern pintail at 1,359. All three belong to the family anatidae," said an

The other species with sizeable numbers include gadwall, common coot, lesser whistling duck, Indian spot-billed duck, little cormorant, ferruginous duck,



Growing numbers: The bar-headed goose led the species count with 6,181 individuals. • FILE РНОТО

tufted duck, Eurasian wigeon, Asian openbill, northern lapwing, ruddy shelduck and spot-billed pelican.

Mr. Gogoi said the survey covered four ranges of the park – Agoratoli, Bagori, Kohora and Burapahar.

More than half the birds (9,924) and 85 of the 96 species were recorded in Agoratoli Range. This was because Sohola, the largest of Kaziranga's 92 perennial wetlands, is in this range.

The first wetland bird sur-

vey in Kaziranga, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985, was conducted in 2018. Rabindra Sarma, the park's research officer said avian surveys could have been done in the 115-yearold Kaziranga earlier, but no records were maintained.

"Data on avian wealth is important because the wetlands nourish Kaziranga's ecosystem. Increase or decrease in the number of birds is indicative of the park's health," he said.

solution proceedings before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). The petition filed by a homebuver, Manish Kumar, wants the court to stay the implementation of

the ordinance.

A Bench led by Justice Rohinton Nariman is scheduled to hear the case.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked three branch managers of the State Bank of India in Lucknow for allegedly siphoning off funds from the exchequer by sanctioning Kisan Credit Card (KCC)

The FIR named the three officials, Kamal Kumar Srivastava, Ansul Mendiratta and Awadhesh Srivastava, who were managers with its Kakori branch in Lucknow, along with the bank's empanelled advocate Prakash Chandra Vidyarthi and one

An internal inquiry revealed that the officials had disbursed 96 loans under the scheme during 2014-17, totalling ₹6.60

3 SBI officials booked for kisan card fraud

loans on forged documents.

Gole Dwivedi.

A part of the funds was transferred to the account of Mr. Dwivedi, indicating diversion. The agency has initiated investigations to determine the extent of the scam

and to examine the role of other suspects.

Man-made disaster

Iran should have had safety steps for civilian aircraft while preparing for enemy retaliation

The shooting down of a passenger plane by Iran's military on Wednesday, a few hours after it launched missile attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq, is the most tragic outcome of the recent spike in U.S.-Iran tensions. The Ukrainian jet with 176 aboard was hit by an Iranian surface-to-air missile shortly after it took off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini Airport. After initially rejecting western assertion that an Iranian missile brought down the plane, Tehran on Saturday said one of its soldiers fired the missile, mistaking the jet for an enemy aircraft "as it turned to a sensitive area". This is not the first time U.S.-Iran tensions have led to an aviation disaster. In 1988, in the last stage of the Iran-Iraq war, a U.S. Navy warship shot down an Iran Air flight over the Gulf, killing all 290 passengers. Then the U.S. troops said they mistook the plane for a military aircraft that was going to attack the ship. Iran says the same today. In both incidents, innocents, who did not have anything to do with the conflict, became victims.

This time it was U.S. President Donald Trump's reckless decision to assassinate Soleimani that pushed both countries to the brink of a war. After launching missiles at U.S. troops in Iraq in retaliation for the General's killing, Iran's missile defence systems were on high alert, anticipating retaliatory American air strikes. Iran blames "human error" for the attack on the passenger plane. But whatever the context is, it cannot abdicate responsibility for what happened. Ukraine International Airlines says the flight took off after clearance from the airport. The airline also rejects the Iranian military's claim that the plane veered off its route. Iran's admission and apology is a step in the right direction. But it should carry out, along with international investigators, a thorough probe into what led to the "accident", and punish whoever is responsible for the "human error". Such mistakes are unacceptable even in war. Iran should have put in place the highest safety measures and followed international protocols while preparing itself for enemy retaliation. Clearly it did not do so. And innocent people paid a price for Iran's mistake. Both Iran and the U.S. should also ask themselves whether the confrontational path they have chosen since Mr. Trump unilaterally pulled the U.S. out of the Iran nuclear deal, in May 2018, was worth the risk. Both countries were on the brink of an all-out war early this week. At least 226 people, mostly Iranians, have already lost their lives in tragedies related to the Soleimani killing (over 50 were killed in a stampede at the funeral). If Iran is sincere in its apology, it should not only unearth what happened and punish the culprits but also take immediate steps to reduce tensions with the U.S.

Matter of interpretation

Overall crime rate in India in 2018 increased marginally since 2016

nly three months after the release of the much delayed "Crime in India report" for 2017, the National Crime Records Bureau's 2018 report was unveiled last week. While the fact that this document has been made available so soon should be welcomed. this report, as with those for earlier years, carries the caveat that crime records and statistics are only as good as their reporting. Some States are better than others in tracking and registering crimes. This is why Kerala and the National Capital Region having the highest crime rates in the country – 1463.2 per one lakh population and 1342.5, respectively – is also a reflection of the fact that crime reporting, follow-up and subsequent steps in trial and punishment are much better undertaken in these two States/UTs. Yet, what should be worrying for the capital city region is that unlike Kerala, the number of cognisable crimes has steadily increased to 2,62,612 in 2018 from 2,16,920 in 2016. Better reporting could also perhaps explain why there is a 15% increase in the total crimes against women across all States, but the fact that this number went up by 66% in a large State such as Uttar Pradesh must be cause for concern. Conversely, crimes against women fell 20.8% after reaching a peak number of 17,222 in Delhi. It is well understood that the protests against the gangrape in Delhi in 2012 had significantly contributed to greater reporting of crimes against women. The fall in these numbers, corresponding to the general increase in crimes, could reflect the outcomes of better gender sensitisation in the capital region. Unlike crime numbers that are difficult to interpret due to registration and policing issues, the number of murders across States is a stark reflection of violent crime. The finding in the 2017 NCRB report that northeastern States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya have a relatively higher murder rate compared to most States bears itself out in 2018 as well. Other States which have a worrisome record here include Jharkhand (4.6 murders per one lakh population, the highest in the country) and Haryana (3.9). Among cities, Patna (4.4) has an egregious murder rate.

While protests and violence related to them have occupied the news cycle in the last month or so, data from the report suggest that there has been a marginal decrease in the total cases related to rioting from 2016 (61,974) to 2018 (57,828). Cases related to caste and communal/religious riots, political violence and agrarian conflicts registered a dip while there was an increase in industrial rioting and other personal disputes. Among cases registered as "offences against the State", there has been an ominous increase under "sedition" with the number of those booked in 2018 double that of 2016, even as most such cases under this section came under the "Prevention of Damage of Public Property Act"; Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh led with nearly half of the overall cases.

The warp and weft of religious liberty

In expounding the scope and extent of freedom of religion, the Supreme Court faces a difficult question of balance



GAUTAM BHATIA & SUHRITH PARTHASARATHY

▼n December 2014, the Supreme Court of India placed a tempor-📕 ary ban on madesnana, a 500year-old ritual performed at the Kukke Subramanya Temple in Karnataka. The practice involves persons, in particular those from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, rolling over plantain leaves left behind with food half eaten by Brahmins, in the belief that doing so would cleanse their skin of im-

Initially, in 2012, at the behest of a group of progressive-minded petitioners, including the seer of the Nidumamidi Math, a division bench of the Karnataka High Court put a halt to the ritual, but allowed it to continue in a modified form. Devotees could now voluntarily choose to roll over leaves containing prasada, that is offering made to the deity, so long as the food was not "tasted or partially eaten by the members of any community". But this order was lifted two years later by another division bench of the High Court, which found little wrong with madesnana in its supposedly "original" form. The practice, the court said, did not, on its face, violate any law. What is more, in the judges' belief, a proscription of the ritual until a final ruling was delivered would both hurt the sentiments of devotees and impinge on their constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of religion.

What is at stake

It is cases such as this and many more, including the practice of female genital mutilation and the rights of Parsi women to enter fire

temples, which are at stake when a nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court begins hearing arguments on questions concerning the relationship between the right to freedom of religion and the rights of individuals to dignity and equality. The establishment of the Bench emanated out of an order of reference made on review petitions filed against the Sabarimala judgment. But when the Bench assembles today, its remit will involve a rather more abstract exercise: to answer a series of wide-ranging questions and to expound the scope and extent of the Constitution's religious liberty clauses.

In answering these questions, the Court will be faced with a difficult question of balance. Within the Constitution of India, there are two impulses that may, at times, come into conflict with one another. The first impulse recognises that India is a pluralist and diverse nation, where groups and communities – whether religious or cultural - have always played an important role in society. Following up on this impulse, the Constitution recognises both the freedom of religion as an individual right (Article 25), as well as the right of religious denominations to manage their own affairs in matters of religion (Article 26). The second impulse, on the other hand, recognises that while community can be a source of solidarity at the best of times, it can also be a terrain of oppression and exclusion. The Constitution, therefore, expressly provides for the possibility that there may be times when members of religious and cultural communities may need to be protected from authoritarian and oppressive social practices. Thus, both Articles 25 and 26 are subject to public order, morality, and health; and further, Article 25 is also subject to other fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and to the state's power to bring in social reform laws.



These two impulses, and their expression in various provisions of the Constitution, speak to an observation made by Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, one of the foremost drafters of the Constitution: that in our country, religion and social life are inextricably linked. As the madesnana example shows us, religious proscriptions often spill over into broader society, and religious and social status often reinforce each other. A classic example, of course, is that of the practice of "untouchability", which the Constitution explicitly prohibits. Another is the practice of "excommunication", a practice prevalent among certain communities, where the head of the community has the power to expel recalcitrant members, and exclude them entirely from any form of interaction with their former friends or fami-

Finding the middle ground How then do we strike a balance between respecting the autonomy of cultural and religious communities and also ensuring that individual rights are not entirely sacrificed at the altar of the community? Over the years, the Supreme Court has attempted to do so by carving out a jurisprudence that virtually allows it to sit in theological judgment over different practices. It has done this by recognising that it is only those practices that are "essential" to religion that enjoy constitutional protection. Any other ritual is seen as secular and amen-

able to the state's interference. This doctrine of essential prac-

tices has invariably seen the Court play the role of a moral arbiter. It invoked it, for example, to rule, in 2004, that the performance of the Tandava dance was not an essential tenet of the religious faith of the Ananda Margis, even though the followers of the religion conscientiously believed it to be so. Similarly, the Court, especially during the tenure of Chief Justice of India P.B. Gajendragadkar, struck down a number of rituals across religions on the grounds that those practices were embodiments of superstition as opposed to faith. But was the Court at all competent to make this distinction? Many scholars have argued that it was not: the idea of a secular Court sits uneasily with investigations into the nature of religious practice. In response, the Court has often stated that the "essential religious practices" test is indeed the only way it can reconcile the two impulses of respecting religious autonomy and enforcing individual rights.

The anti-exclusion principle

For these reasons, one option before the nine-judge Bench would simply be to affirm existing jurisprudence, as it stands, and has been incrementally developed over the years. That would certainly not be an unacceptable position to

There are, however, other ways. One way, for example, would be to ask whether the effect of the disputed religious practice is to cause harm to individual rights. Madesnana, for example, is a clear violation of human dignity. A few years ago, the Bombay High Court found (similarly) that the exclusion of women from the inner sanctum of the Haji Ali Dargah was an indefensible violation of equality. The enquiry, thus, is not whether the practice is truly religious, but whether its effect is to subordi-

nate, exclude, or otherwise send a signal that one set of members is entitled to lesser respect and concern than others. Interestingly, in the Sabarimala case – out of which this reference arose - both the concurring opinion of Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and the dissenting opinion of Justice Indu Malhotra agreed that this ought to be the test; their disagreement was limited to whether, in the specific case of the Sabarimala temple, the practice, on its facts, was exclusionary or not.

An articulation of the anti-exclusion principle would also take into account an important truth. In many religious communities, norms and practices are shaped and imposed from above, by community leaders, and then enforced with the force of social sanction. Dissenters are then faced with an impossible choice: either comply with discriminatory practices, or make a painful (and often unsustainable) exit from the community. It is here that the Constitution can help by ensuring that the oppressed and excluded among communities can call upon the Court for aid, and by ensuring that powerful communities are not exempt from guaranteeing the basic norms of fairness, equality, and freedom to all their members.

When the hearings begin today, therefore, the nine-judge Bench will face a difficult and delicate task of constitutional interpretation. Much will ride upon its decision: the rights of women in particular (a group that has long been at the receiving end of discriminatory practices) and of many other vulnerable groups in general but also, the constitutional vision of ensuring a life of dignity and equality to all, both in the public sphere and in the sphere of community.

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In martyrdom moment for Iran, America's own goal

The U.S.'s hand in the Soleimani assassination may have only aided Iran by stirring up nationalist and religious passions



STANLY JOHNY

The death of Qassem Soleimani, one of the most important military leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who designed and executed the spread of Iranian power across West Asia, is a blow to the regime. His assassination, by a U.S. drone on January 3, did not only point to the Islamic regime's inability to protect the life of a top General but also left a hole in Iran's credible deterrence. But a bigger question is this: do these military setbacks weaken the regime? What appears to be happening is just the contrary.

Till a few weeks ago, the regime was fighting to quell widespread dissent and protests. Economic hardships, largely because of crippling American sanctions along with the oppressive policies of the government, had triggered mass rallies in early December, which were put down brutally. The regime was in an embattled state. But a few weeks later, millions thronged the streets in one of the greatest displays of support for the regime. Soleimani united the several political factions in Iran through his martyrdom, which he could not even have dreamt of

This unprecedented emotional display for a general who U.S. President Donald Trump called a "ter-

rorist" has its roots in Iran's history and faith. Iran is a civilisation state, not just a nation state. For centuries it has remained a political entity, even before the idea of a modern nation state emerged, defined by Persian civilisation. Since the Safavid dynasty adopted Shia Islam as the official religion of the empire, Iran (Persia) has been majority Shia. And since the 1979 Islamic revolution that overthrew the Pahlavi monarchy, the two key pillars that carried the revolutionary state were political Shiism and nationalism. In Iran, martyrdom is one of the central tenets of both. Shias revere their martyrs, starting from Imam Ali. By making Soleimani, an adherent of the Shia Islamic revolution, a martyr, Mr. Trump, knowingly or unknowingly, has stirred emotions of this collective victimhood of the Shias and the nationalist pride of millions of Iranians.

Politics of martyrdom

After Prophet Mohammed's death, his followers were divided on who should be his successor as the rightful leader of the ummah (the Muslim community). One faction wanted the successor from Mohammed's family. They supported Ali, the Prophet's cousin and sonin-law, while the other faction supported Abu Bakr, a companion of the Prophet. Abu Bakr became the first Caliph. Ali eventually became the fourth Caliph. The supporters of Ali became Shias and the followers of the Rashidun Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali) became Sunnis. Ali's reign was marked by conflicts within the Is-

lamic community and he was killed amid the Sunni-Shia power struggle, becoming the first martyr of Shia Islam. His son, Hassan, the second Imam of the Shias, assumed the Caliphate but would soon abdicate in the face of grow-

ing challenges and threats from the Umayyads. Hussein, Ali's second son, refused to pledge loyalty to the Umayyads ruler, Yazid. In 680, Hussein and 72 of his followers were killed in Karbala, in today's Iraq, by the army of Yazid. Hussein, who is the third Shia Imam, was beheaded and his head was brought to Damascus for Caliph Yazid. The Battle for Karbala holds enormous significance in both Shia faith and political Shiism. For the Shia believers, the Imam who refused to compromise on his beliefs even at the expense of his life, was the epitome of sacrifice. For political Shias, the Imam who

challenged the corrupt Yazid caliphate was the epitome of courage. (Shias across the world take out Ashura processions on the 10th of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calender, to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussein.) During the Islamic revolution, Avatollah Khomeini had invoked both sacrifice and courage to mobilise the public against the rule of the

Shah, Reza Pahlavi. The monarch, according to Khomeini, was the new Yazid. He urged Hussein's followers, the oppressed, to rise. And it worked. Millions, from different streams of politics, joined the uprising against the Shah, forcing him to flee. After the monarchy's collapse, the Islamists captured the state in 1979, and turned it into an Islamic republic.

After the revolution, it was expected that the Mullahs would not be able to retain power in a country that was modern and secular. Within a year of the revolution, then Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, launched an invasion to precipitate the expected fall of the Ayatollah. It was a time when the Mullahs were finding it difficult to stabilise the country. Leftists, trade unionists, Islamists and liberals had joined the protests against the Shah and the Mullahs' capturing of the leadership of the revolution had created fissures within this coalition. But when Saddam attacked Iran, it became easy for Khomeini to mobilise people. Saddam was the new Yazid. The Islamic regime carried out a brutal purge against leftists and liberals at home without triggering any regime-threatening public response while the war was under way. In other words, the war Saddam launched with help from the Sunni kingdoms in the region as well as the U.S. helped the Mullahs tighten their grip. During the war, Iranians carried out several suicide attacks against Iraqi troops, because for them "martyrdom" is god's approval of their path. For most Shia militias in the region,

martyrdom is the bravest path to the "heavenly abode".

A misreading

What is unfolding now in Iran and Iraq has echoes from the past. In March 2019, while awarding the Order of Zulfaqar to Soleimani, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader, said, "I hope that Allah the Exalted will reward and bless him (Soleimani) with a blissful life and that He will make his end marked by martyrdom. Of course, not so soon." In less than a vear, Soleimani is a martyr. By making him one, the U.S. has actually played into the political Shia narrative. For a political ideology that thrives in the memory of victimhood, persecution, the martyrdom of Soleimani is as much a blessing as a setback. That is where Mr. Trump has erred.

What is the best outcome the U.S. could expect from this ongoing conflict with Iran? It is a change in the regime with minimum cost. An invasion would be catastrophic and there is no guarantee that the regime would still fall. The other risk-free option, which the U.S. appears to be pursuing, is to squeeze the Iranian economy, and create internal discord that could cumulatively weaken the regime. But then Mr. Trump decides to take out Qassem Soleimani, stirring up nationalist and religious passions, allowing Ayatollah Khamenei to seize the moment. Mr. Trump may not have realised that he has just scored an own goal.

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

Iran's mea culpa

By admitting that its own missile shot down the Ukraine International Airlines jet last week, Iran has put an end to a debate on who could have been behind the disaster. The country should now reach out to those nations whose unsuspecting citizens became the victims what it calls an act of "human error" (Front page, "Iran admits its missile shot down Ukraine jet," Jan. 12). In this context, one is reminded of a similar incident in 1988 when a guided missile cruiser of U.S. Navy shot down Iran Air Flight 655 over Iran's territorial waters, killing all 290

people on board. It took quite some time for the then-U.S. President Ronald Reagan to express regret while still insisting that the country's officers acted in self-defence. In contrast, Tehran has been more gracious in acknowledging its mistake. In this regard, the UN must take the initiative and devise a more effective mechanism for averting such tragedies in future. S.K. CHOUDHURY,

■ It may be possible for Iran to compensate the kin of the victims but it remains to be seen how the country will bring the guilty to book. In

this context, it may be recalled that the U.S. has not only never expressed remorse for shooting down an Iranian passenger plane using a surface-to-air missile in 1988, it has also shown the audacity to maintain that there was no improper use of force. Its payment of compensation later was only a tacit admission of guilt. C.G. KURIAKOSE, Kothamangalam, Kerala

Maradu demolition The demolition of the illegal

Maradu flats is a perfect example of good governance. It points to the fact that if the government shows political will and is backed by competent officers, anything

can be accomplished for the good of the people and the environment. The exemplary coordination among the district administration, the law enforcement officials, the fire-safety services and the private company that was in charge of the demolitions was on display as the flats were razed down. The locals also need to be praised for not creating any impediments in the implementation of the Supreme Court decision. It was a landmark day for Kerala and restored the people's faith in the government. Hopefully, citizens and officials will

henceforth desist from

violating environmental

norms (Front page, "Biting the dust," Jan. 12). SUJATA NAIR, Thrissur, Kerala

Verdict on shutdown

It is six months since the dilution of Article 370 and the rights of Kashmir Valley residents continue to be violated by the state. Such measures are a rarity even in nations not under

been delivered earlier. The country too much reflect on why it has not raised its voice against the continuing atrocities in Kashmir (Front page, "SC tells govt. to review orders curbing basic rights in J&K," Jan.11). R. NARAYANAN,

Supreme Court verdict.

while welcome, could have

democratic governance. The

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS: In the report headlined "Modi-Mamata ties: one meeting, many questions" (Jan. 11, 2020), the reference to Rajya Sabha should be

The headline of a report that was "Call for Punjab bandh against CAA, NRA" (Jan. 11, 2020, some editions) should be corrected to

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300;

Favouring public order over justice

The Supreme Court's order on the Internet shutdown in J&K was a statist expression of law



Last week, the Supreme Court gave its much-awaited judgment on the legality of the telecommunications and Internet shutdown orders in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), in place for more than 160 days now. Given the centrality of the Internet in our lives and the fact that the preceding weeks had seen such shutdowns in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi, the ruling was eagerly awaited across the country. However, in its language, structure and the relief granted, the verdict came across more as one premised on legal centrism than one advancing fundamental rights.

After acknowledging in the first paragraph that India is a "land of inherent contradictions", the court immediately assumed the role of an acrobat which had to "strike a balance between the liberty and security concerns" rather than rule in fayour of citizens' rights. That said, it is important to understand that the scope of the constitutional challenge before the court was narrow by design. The petitioners, with considered and strategic thought, did not challenge the underlying power of the Central government to turn off telecommunications and Internet connectivity. The focus of their challenge was not the Telegraph Act and the Internet Suspension Rules that enabled the government to shut down the Internet, but squarely on the orders passed under these laws.

Reluctance to furnish orders

In this regard, the petitioners faced a challenge that is common in present times. The government had not made the shutdown orders publicly available. Pressed for disclosure, the Centre initially cited national security concerns and, only after persistent arguments over multiple hearings, filed some sample orders. To not even provide the Supreme Court a copy of such orders was an extreme position, but did not come entirely as a surprise. We have in the recent past seen such opacity, especially under



A protest by Kashmiri journalists in November last year demanding restoration of Internet in the Valley. ■ REUTERS

curity arguments to impair progres-

sive constitutionalism. The judicial

response followed clear precedents

and did not fashion anything novel.

For instance, on the surface, the di-

rections for the right to access the In-

ternet may seem to be a victory for

the litigants. However, this was alrea-

dy a well-established position flow-

ing from various previous verdicts

such as the Section 66A decision in

the Shreya Singhal case and adminis-

trative policies and orders such as

National Telecom Policy and Net

Even when it comes to the court's

direction to conduct a periodic re-

view of such shutdowns every seven

days, it needs to be noted that the re-

view committee will lack indepen-

dence and real power to overturn the

initial Internet shutdown orders. The

committee will be principally com-

posed of bureaucrats and no inde-

pendent members. Further, the find-

ings and recommendations of such

committees, as scholar Nakul Nayak

has shown, will not be legally bind-

ing. As Mr. Nayak has noted, those

wanting to be heard by the review

committee will face several procedu-

ral obstacles. Ultimately, the judg-

ment has left it to the government to

decide on such shutdown orders un-

The Supreme Court applied a li-

mited rights doctrine and removed

the anxiety among a section of the

Indian public concerning drastic

constitutional regression. Such

mixed results can be understood by

looking beyond the court to our pre-

principles.

pre-existing constitutional

Neutrality Rules.

former Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, clothed in what legal scholar Gautam Bhatia termed "sealed cover jurisprudence". Ultimately, it came as a relief that, to some extent, ordinary legality and common sense prevailed. The apex court rejected the government's secrecy claims and directed the publication of orders recognising that, without them, litigants would not be able to seek judicial remedy. However, eventually, it failed to judicially review the orders furnished in court and also permitted claims of privilege to prevent their disclosure.

Question of fundamental rights The principal job of the court in such

writ challenges is to review the administrative and executive action. In this case, the decision charted the link between fundamental rights and access to the Internet and sought to apply it when it came to prohibition in place in J&K. While doing so, the court rejected the government's arguments emerging from extreme positions of national security. It applied the proportionality doctrine to reason that "complete blocking/prohibition perpetually cannot be accepted". And while noting the issues pertaining to the Internet shutdown rules, the order directed the government to change them and placed a time limit of seven working days for periodic review.

These victories were incremental and certainly could not be termed as 'wins'. They emerged amidst a cynical framing of rules by the executive

dict has come at a time when basic rights are being violated with impunity and public expectations for remedy from institutions are extremely low. And though the court may have rejected several contentions by the government, ultimately it seems to have accommodated the arguments of the executive branch on issues of national security. An act of judicial centrism

sent political environment. The ver-

The ruling may be termed as an act of judicial centrism. The court clutched on to the basic constitutional norms to maintain legality, while showing reluctance to expand upon rights. An end product of such a posture is that it may not extend the true spirit of our fundamental rights and would perpetuate a status quo. This was tangibly felt when the judgment shifted the legal review of the J&K shutdown orders - the principal question of determination - back to the government.

The court further avoided any comment on the legality of such orders given in the past, even those furnished by the government before it. Martin Luther King admonished this kind of centrism when he said that it was "more devoted to 'order' than to justice; [that] prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice".

On the whole, the judgment was a statist expression of the law, neither conservative nor radical. For actual relief, petitioners will now need to approach the high courts, which will come at a huge cost to their time and the right to access the Internet. The legal doctrines laid down in this ruling may be beneficial; however, the more difficult task will be to obtain clear-headed pronouncements that actually declare the executive orders, such as those that led to the shutdown of Internet in J&K, to be il-

Today, "We the people" is not a mere phrase of our constitutional preamble but a call for action to Indians. They must encourage our institutions to shift from centrism to a progressive assertion of our fundamental rights.

Apar Gupta is a lawyer and executive director of the Internet Freedom Foundation which assisted intervenors in this case

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Trust in the age of misinformation

Are the journalistic measures taken to confront the scourge of misinformation enough to stop the erosion of trust?



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

Every year, the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford publishes a report on the media. This year's study, 'Journalism, Media, and Technology: Trends and Predictions 2020', documents the changing contours of the news business and how the industry is coping with the challenges posed by technology. It points out that at a time of economic and political uncertainty, news organisations may have to face more challenges to their sustainability. It says broken business models and platform companies are exacerbating the crisis.

Factors affecting journalism

The study also records a number of factors that are affecting journalism. It deals extensively with the impact of post-truth politics on journalism and has suggestions for news organisations on how to deal with this new reality. The study focusses mainly on the U.K. elections and the narratives surrounding Brexit. The findings are not encouraging: politicians have played with facts, avoided journalistic scrutiny, and succeeded in denigrating the media. The report cites the U.K.'s independent fact-checking organisation, Full Fact, which says that the six-week campaign saw "inappropriate and misleading campaign tactics that we hadn't seen before". The devious methods it saw included "an official Conservative Party Twitter account impersonating a fact-checking organisation and editing footage of a Labour politician to make it look as if he couldn't answer a question about the party's Brexit policy."

The report says the reach of misinformation forced many news organisations to integrate fact-checking into their coverage and scrutinise politicians wherever possible. However, these special programmes did not get many views. The report points out that politicians are increasingly trying to bypass the media and convey messages directly via social media. Leaders across the world have become more belligerent than ever before, says the report, and cites the examples of Boris Johnson refusing to giving an interview to journalist Andrew Neil, the regular threats given to review the broadcast licenses handed out to media organisations such as Channel 4, and the funding arrangements for public media like the BBC.

Impact of fact-checking

While 85% of those surveyed said that the media should call out lies and half-truths, readership figures and audience engagement numbers indicate that growing indifference adds a new dilemma to news organisations. What is the impact of fact-checking? There is some indication that rigourous and relentless journalism sometimes leads to disengagement; people simply avoid reading the news. Can journalism effectively engage readers in the light of growing cynicism and negativity? Mary Hockaday, Controller, BBC World Service English, has come up with a possible answer: "We certainly need to offer fact checks and reality checks. But we also need content which explores good faith politics, what might be working, how policy develops and makes a difference. Otherwise we will push our audiences to disengage and distrust politics even more."

These issues resonate with an Indian news ombudsman because this country is in constant election mode and political leaders here too use digital platforms for propaganda. It is not just Mr. Johnson who has refused to give an interview; Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in his second term and is yet to hold a single press conference. He also reaches his audience through his radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', or Twitter, or soundbites to select news agencies which are not questioned. In a sense, we citizens get a series of monologues from our leaders.

Some of the best fact-check exercises in India happened following the brutal attack on the students of the Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi. But they did not deter the peddlers of fake news from regurgitating the same old lies. What can a news organisation do in the present environment?

Journalists should bear in mind what Reuters Fellow Richard Fletcher says about the status of trust. He says the trust factor will get worse before it gets better. Explainers, contextual essays, increased space for data journalism, long-form reportage and analysis of difficult policy decisions are some of the journalistic means to confront the scourge of misinformation. Are these measures enough to stop the erosion of trust?

readers editor @thehindu.co. in

Lessons from Maradu

The demolitions in Maradu will persuade builders against committing future violations

PRAKASH NELLIYAT

When there is weak enforcement of environmental laws, corruption, and undue political influence, violations become common. Such violations have been questioned, and strict action taken by the authorities concerned, on very few occasions. The four high-rise luxury apartment complexes in Maradu municipality in Kochi, which violated Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notifications, were demolished on January 11 and 12 following a Supreme Court order. This incident points to the need for a paradigm shift in our environmental consciousness.

Supreme Court order

The apex court stated that these apartments had been built on the shores of Vembanad wetland, renowned for its rich biodiversity. The wetland is a part of the strictly restricted zone for construction under the provisions of the CRZ notifications, which aim to protect the ecology of the coast. Hence, the violations cannot be lightly condoned. The illegal constructions in Maradu might have hindered the natural water flow of Vembanad and resulted in severe natural calamities such as floods, which Kerala witnessed in 2018. Following the court order, residents, about 350 families, started to protest. Despite this, the court gave strict instructions to the State government to speed-up the demolition process.

After the court order, a house owner said, "We are innocent buyers who are frightened about losing our homes for no fault of ours". The rising demand for waterfront apartments has encouraged many builders to violate norms and construct apartments on the banks of rivers and lakes. It is quite difficult to believe that builders and buyers – the upper class community in Kerala - were unaware of the legal norms they are supposed to obey.

The crime branch found that the builders had constructed the apartments after conspiring with panchayat officials in 2006. This indicates the gravity of institutional and policy failures. According to the Kerala Coastal Zone Management Authority, constructions had taken place

in critically vulnerable coastal areas which are notified as CRZ-III, where no construction should be permitted except repairs of authorised structures. Builders and local body officials who supported the illegal constructions have been arrested. Builders' bank accounts have been frozen and their properties confiscated. The court ordered that a compensation amount of ₹25 lakh be paid to to each household. The demolition costs should be paid by the builders to the government.

Cost of violations

The overall cost of violation is immeasurable. The house owners who lost their flats not only suffered financial losses but were also under mental pressure. There were major administrative challenges in demolishing the apartments. Expert consultations had to take place, the public needed to be made aware of what was happening and a safe demolition strategy had to be drawn up. Families in the neighbourhood were anxious about their life and property. The safety of public assets such as roads and bridges was also a concern. Besides, there were environmental costs of the demolition including air and noise pollution, contamination of the lake, and safe disposal of the debris.

If an industry discharges effluents, the enforcement agency can fine or tax them (polluter pays principle) and/or insist that they install pollution control measures or follow safe waste disposal strategies. But if someone violates the law and constructs apartments in an ecologically sensitive zone, the removal of these buildings is the only solution; no heavy fine will fulfil the purpose of complying with the law.

The apex court order to demolish the Kapico Resorts, also located on the banks of the Vembanad Lake in Alappuzha, is another landmark judgment. We don't know what will happen to other illegal constructions in India. But there is no doubt that the Maradu incident will persuade builders against committing future

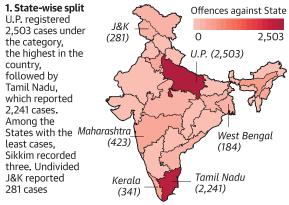
Prakash Nelliyat is a Chennai-based researcher working in the areas of environment and sustainable development



DATA POINT

Enemy of the state

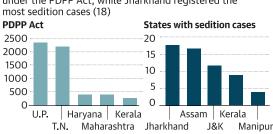
India registered 8,536 crimes under the 'offences against the state' category in the National Crime Records Bureau's 2018 report, a 5% decrease from 2017. Uttar Pradesh accounted for the highest number of crimes under the category, while Sikkim reported the least. Crimes committed by "anti-national elements" also increased in 2018 from 2017. By The Hindu Data Team



2. Cases by crime head | In 2018, the highest cases were registered under The Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, or PDPP Act (7,127). The number of sedition

| ases increased in 2018 from 20 | 17 | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Crime head | 2017 cases | 2018 cases |
| Sedition (Sec 124A) | 51 | 70 |
| Others (Sec 121-123) | 109 | 79 |
| Imputation, Assertions Prejudicial to National Integration (Section 153B) | 24 | 38 |
| The Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act | 7,910 | 7,127 |
| The Unlawful Activities Prevention Act | 901 | 1,182 |
| The Official Secrets Act | 18 | 40 |

3. Affected States | U.P. reported the most cases (2,388) under the PDPP Act, while Jharkhand registered the



4. "Anti-national" activities | Crimes by "anti-national elements" (introduced in 2017) include those committed by Northeast insurgents, naxalites and terrorists. The tables show the two most affected States in each category Northeast insurgents

| 9 78 5 18 | - |
|--------------|---------|
| 5 18 | 3 |
| | |
| | |
| es % of tota | l cases |
| 2 55 | |
| 8 21 | |
| - | 2 55 |

Jammu & Kashmir 243 93 Assam Source: NCRB data 2018

The Ma Findu. FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 13, 1970

Divided sovereignty

Though there has so far been no strong feeling in favour of secession or independence, there is a school of thought airing views on divided sovereignty. The classical theory of undivided sovereignty has been discarded by political thinkers in the context of an expanding technological age, shrinking distances, and giving rise even in the international field to power clusters in place of sovereign States. The concept of divided sovereignty as applied to Centre-State relations in India would involve acceptance of complete division of powers between the Centre and the States, the Centre being sovereign within its sphere, and the States enjoying unfettered authority within their own sphere. There will then be no question of higher authority and lower authority. The State and the Union are to be on a basis of equality in their respective mutually exclusive spheres. The late Mr. Annadurai was a powerful exponent of this view. The most important impediment to the realisation of this concept is of course finance. Taxation powers have developed all over the world in such a way that the Union has the larger resources; and any scheme for division of pooled revenue cannot avoid dependence on the goodwill of the Central power.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 13, 1920 **Indian situation: An interview**

London: Mr. Montagu, interviewed by a Representative of the 'Pall Mall Gazette', emphasised the tremendous advance, which India had made internationally and imperially during the last year. Mr. Montagu paid a tribute to the remarkable degree to which Lord Sinha had won success and confidence in the House of Lords. He said that the reception of the Government of India Bill in India had been satisfactory. It was true that an important section of Indian opinion regarded it with misgiving, but from newspapers and from innumerable telegrams from representative bodies and individual leaders and princes he deduced unanimous determination to work the new Scheme for all it was worth and to make the most of the opportunities afforded and thereby earn a further advance. Referring to the carrying out of the recommendations of the Public Services Commission, Mr. Montagu emphasised that the services were vital to progress and good Government in India. He hoped that no more would be heard of the regrettable disposition in some quarters to grudge pay to Service men. This was a record of which En-

gland and India might well be proud.



FROM PAGE ONE

CAA meant to give citizenship, says PM

"We only implemented what the great freedom fighters including Gandhiji had wished to do," the Prime Minister said.

"A person irrespective of his or her religion, whether he/she believes in God or not but has faith in the Constitution of India can seek citizenship under already laid down procedure," he said.

The Prime Minister also said the Centre had made provisions that the CAA will not have any "adverse impact" on the Northeastern

"As far as the question of Northeastern States go they are our pride. The Centre has made provisions that there will be no adverse effect on the culture and demography of northeast because of this law," he added. Mr. Modi said had the government not brought the amendment to the Citizenship Act, there would have been no debate on it and the world would not have taken note of the atrocities committed by Pakistan on its minorities.

"It is the result of our initiative that Pakistan has to answer how they treated their minorities in the past 70 years," he added.

Later participating in an event organised by the Kolkata Port Trust (KoPT), the Prime Minister announced that KoPT will be renamed as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Trust. He said this was to honour the man who had laid the foundations for the industrialisation of India.

None can stop CAA rollout: Amit Shah

Attacking the Congress, Mr. Shah said if it didn't retract from its stand, "whatever is left of it will also be wiped

"They need to understand the pulse of the nation, know what people want. Instead, they fear their vote bank," he added.

The Minister said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, New Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee were misleading people over the law and had even instigated riots.

"We launched an awareness campaign to contain the misinformation being spread," he added.

Several leaders during Partition, including Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal had offered to embrace the minorities from Pakistan and Bangladesh, whenever they wished to cross over to escape human rights violations and atrocities there. "Yet Rahul Gandhi pays

Nehru, claimed Mr. Shah,

them no heed," he said.

Door-to-door outreach Exhorting party workers to

go door-to-door to spread a positive message and seek support on the CAA, and even the Ram temple in Ayodhya, the surgical strikes in Pakistan and the dilution of Article 370 of the Constitution, he said the party planned to conduct 500 meetings, 250 press conferences and reach out to three crore families

J&K police officer, two + Hizb militants detained

The militant 'commander' travelling with the DSP was behind the killing of 11 truck drivers, non-local labourers and apple traders in south

Meanwhile, three mili-

ation in Pulwama's Tral area

"The militants were hiding in Gulshanpora area. All were locals and associated with the Hizbul Mujahideen," said the police spo-

Publisher evicted from fair for displaying book against govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A publisher-cum-author was evicted from his rented stall at the ongoing 43rd Chennai Book Fair by The Booksellers' and Publishers' Association of South India for "violating rules and displaying for sale a controversial book against the government".

On Sunday, the police arrested V. Anbazhagan, who wrote a book on alleged corruption in the Chennai Corporation's Smart City project, on charges of criminally intimidating office-bearers of BAPASI on Saturday when the eviction notice was served on him.

A metropolitan magistrate in Saidapet remanded him in judicial custody till January 24. In the eviction notice, BAPASI president R.S. Shanmugam said, "You had agreed to abide by rules of BAPASI while being allotted the stall. Selling a book against the government is a

Mamata strategy goes against Cong. plan

She becomes notable absentee in party-convened meet; Kejriwal may follow example of Bengal CM

NEW DELH

president Sonia Congress Gandhi has convened a meeting of Opposition parties on Monday to decide on a joint strategy over the con-Citizenship tentious (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the proposed nationwide National Register of Citizens (NRC). With people's protests against the new citizenship law and the NRC continuing for a month now, the Congress wants to rally Opposition parties to devise a

common strategy. The Congress Working Committee has already passed a resolution asking the government to withdraw the CAA and stop work on the National Population Register (NPR). The legislatures

of Congress-ruled States are also likely to follow the Kerala Assembly in bringing resolutions not to implement the

But more than a common strategy and the parties in attendance, the list of absentees will reflect how united the Opposition is on the issue as pressure of regional elections could determine the outcome.

Jockeying for leadership West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool chief Mamata Banerjee has already announced that she would be giving the meeting a miss. And in a clear indication that the Trinamool chief, who had first taken to the streets

against the CAA, is not will-

ing to cede leadership space



Sonia Gandhi

to the Congress, her party has decided not to send any representative. With Bengal going to the polls by April-May next year and the Bharatiya Janata Party emerging as her main challenger, Ms. Banerjee can ill-afford to be seen as playing second fiddle to the Congress.

While the Trinamool chief

has taken an aggressive stance against the CAA, the party's leaders have been advised not to indulge in any personal attack on the BJP's top leadership. Ms. Banerjee's meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday drew sharp criticism, but also raised eyebrows about her possible poll strategy Another Opposition lead-

er who could stay away is Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal. Elections in Delhi are weeks away and the Congress is a key Though AAP has been

protesting against the CAA, Mr. Kejriwal was conspicuous by his absence from protests at the Jawaharlal

Nehru University (JNU) after the January 5 attack on the campus, allegedly by members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP), something the AVBP has categorically denied. Mr. Kejriwal's distance

from the JNU protests have been viewed as an attempt to stay away from getting caught in the BJP's narrative of projecting those supporting protesting JNU students as "urban Naxals". Bahujan Samaj Party

(BSP) supremo Mayawati too has avoided such Congressled meetings, and relations have soured in the recent

The Left parties, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the NCP and the Samajwadi Party will participate.

National mourning for Oman Sultan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A day of state mourning will be observed across India on Monday in memory of Sultan Qaboos who steered Oman's Indiafriendly policy for five decades. The Ministry of Home Affairs notified that the tricolour would be flown at half mast as a mark of respect to the departed Sultan.

The monarch who passed away on Saturday was a special personality in the Gulf region which is critical for India from multiple points of view.

He was the most consistent partner from the Gulf for years before the UAE took a similar role in the Modi government.

Bihar will not have CAA: Kishor

JD(U) vice-president thanked Congress leaders for their rejection of the Act

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Janata Dal(U) vice-president Prashant Kishor on Sunday thanked Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi for their "unequivocal rejection" of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens while offering an assurance that both would not be implemented in Bihar.

'CM to clarify'

However, when asked for his comment on the National Population Register (NPR) for which the Bihar government issued a notification on December 18, 2019, Mr. Kishor told *The Hindu* that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had to clarify on the issue as Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi had already declared that the process of NPR would be started from May 15, 2020.

"I join my voice with all to

The U.S. State Department

has said the recent visit of

the envoys of 15 countries to

Jammu and Kashmir is an

"important step" but ex-

pressed concern over the

continued detention of pol-

itical leaders and restric-

tions on Internet in the

The restrictions were im-

posed on August 5 last when

India revoked the special

powers of Jammu and Kash-

mir and bifurcated the State

In the first such trip by fo-

reign diplomats post August

5, the envoys including the

U.S., last week visited Jam-

mu and Kashmir where they

interacted with select politi-

cal representatives, civil so-

into two Union Territories.

Foreign envoys' visit to

J&K significant, says U.S.



(Amendment) Act and the National Register for Citizens in Gaya on Sunday. • PTI

thank #Congress leadership for their formal and unequirejection #CAA NRC. Both @rahulgandhi & @priyankagandhi deserve special thanks for their efforts on this count.

ciety members and military

brass, rejecting criticism

Secretary of State for South

and Central Asian Affairs Al-

ice Wells, who will be tra-

velling to South Asia this

week, on Saturday ex-

pressed hope that the re-

gion would return to

@USAmbIndia and other fo-

reign diplomats' recent trip

to Jammu & Kashmir. Impor-

tant step. We remain con-

cerned by detention of polit-

ical leaders and residents,

and Internet restrictions.

We look forward to a return

to normalcy," she said in a

following

normalcy.

"Closely

that it was a guided tour.

Normalcy imperative Principal Deputy Assistant Also would like to reassure to all - Bihar me CAA-NRC implement nahi hoga [CAA-NRC will not be implemented in Bihar]", tweeted Mr.

His tweet came a day after

Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi said "NPR 2020 is a disguised NRC" and termed the CAA as a "discriminator whose puralong religious lines.

CPI(M) demands lifting of Internet curbs in J&K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Sunday demanded lifting of curbs in Jammu & Kashmir, asking the government to restore Internet services in keeping with the spirit of the Supreme Court judgment and revoking the detention of political leaders.

"Five months after the abrogation of Article 370 and the dismantling of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, the people of Kashmir continue to be deprived of various rights and liberties. Hundreds of leaders and activists are under detention. right to assemble denied and Internet shut down." the party said, after a meeting of its Polit Bureau.

The Polit Bureau hailed the countrywide protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). "The CAA undermines the secular concept of citizenship enshrined in the Constitution by introducing a religious criteria," said the party's statement, adding that the movement against CAA-NPR-NRC consisted of students, youth and ordin-

ary citizens. Terming it a brutal repression of peaceful protests, the party criticised the recent police action on Jamia Millia and Aligarh Muslim University campuses. It demanded that all "the false cases foisted on people" during the protests be withdrawn and the arrested persons be released.

IAF to acquire 200 fighter

The government is in the of acquiring process around 200 aircraft to replenish the depleting inventories of the Indian Air Force, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar said here on

The contract for 83 HALmanufactured LCA Tejas Mark 1A advanced fighter jets are in the final stages, Mr. Kumar said.

pression of Interest (EOI) has been floated for another 110 aircraft, based on which Request for Proposal (RFP) will be floated, Mr

"Roughly (for) 200 aircrafts, the acquisition is in

Mr. Kumar said the contract for the LCAs would be "definitely this signed year".

Marandi may merge party with BJP

Former CM was earlier with it only

NISTULA HEBBAR NEW DELHI

Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das has been asked by senior BJP leaders to come to Delhi this week as talks for a merger of the Jhakhand Vikas Morcha (P), led by another former Chief Minister of the State, Babulal Marandi, with the party gain pace.

Senior BJP sources in Delhi and Ranchi have said that Mr. Marandi has been in talks with the party for the merger, and Mr. Das has been asked to give his input. Mr. Marandi had been in the BJP in the past and broke away after he felt he was being undermined.

The loss in the Jharkhand polls is being assessed by the BJP and it was felt, especially by the on-ground RSS in the State, that Mr. Marandi, a former BJP leader, should be wooed and brought back into the party to restore some of its support base among tribal communities, which has been badly eroded under Mr. Das," a senior BJP leader said.

Multiple reasons

The BJP feels that if Mr. Marandi had note fielded strong candidates in seven or eight constituencies in the Santhal-Kolhan belts and cut into the grand alliance votes, the party's tally in the Assembly election could have been lower. Mr. Marandi had broken his Lok Sabha election alliance with



Babulal Marandi

the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and the Congress to go it alone in these polls.

"Mr. Marandi too is assessing his political future, with Hemant Soren having pulled off a big victory. He feels he needs a national party to go forward, as his tally came down from eight (in 2014) to three in 2019," the BJP leader said.

The sabotage that happened within the BJP campaign, specifically in Mr. Das's Jamshedpur (East) loss + to rebel Saryu Rai, is another reason Mr. Marandi is being brought back.

"There are certain leaders who worked against the interests of the party in these polls, and combined with Raghubar Das's unpopularity, the grand alliance managed a simple majority in the Assembly. We have to acknowledge that too," a source said.

With the "inauspicious" khar maas ending with Makar Sankranti on January 14. a meeting of the party parliamentary board will be called soon after to take forward the merger, BJP lead-

Book comparing Modi to Shivaji irks opposition

Congress leader files complaint

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT The release of a book com-

paring Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj during an event at the Delhi headquarters of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) attracted the ire of the three ruling parties in Maharashtra on Sunday.

The book, titled Aaj ke Shivaji: Narendra Modi, was released during a religious-cultural meet organised by the Delhi BJP.

Criticising the author and BJP leader Jay Bhagwan Goyal, Shiv Sena's Member of Parliament Sanjay Raut said Mr. Goyal was in the Sena until a few years ago, but was thrown out after he at-

cendants include former Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MP Chhatrapati Udayanraje Bhosle, who joined the BJP but lost the Lok Sabha bypoll, and Chhatrapati Sambhaji Raje, a Rajya Sabha member from the BJP's quota.

tacked Maharashtra Sadan.

The warrior king's des-

NCP leader and State Social Justice Minister Dhananiav Munde said the action had hurt the feelings of all Marathi-speaking people.

Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe has filed a complaint against Mr. Goyal and the publisher at Nagpur's Nandanvan police station, and has demanded a ban on the book.

APPEAL

I am Sangavi aged 11 years suffering from Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Kindly help me to combat this disease as 1 require Rs. 10,00,000/- towards Allogenic Bone Marrow Transplantation at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre,

Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Cerlite,
Madurai. Donations sent by Ch / D.D. favouring
Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre,
Madurai will be acknowledged. The donations
sent through Ch / D.D / NEFT Transfer (Syndicate
Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No: 60182010063310, IFSC No:
SYNB0006018) favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted All Correspondence is done through **WWS**, Regd. Public Charitable Trust

under 80G IT. (Please do not mention patient's name on the cheque). Flat No. GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No. 13, N.No. 29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006, Ph: 044-42137401 / 28235324.

E-mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org Sangavi

New Army chief can tell country from govt.

region.

The oath a jawan or an officer takes is to uphold the core values set in the Preamble, he says

The new Chief of the Army Staff, General Manoj Naravane, has sent out a clear and direct message to the country and his rank and file that the Army or the armed forces must at all times uphold the Constitution and its Preamble, which contain the core values of justice, liequality

fraternity. The General's comments, contained in his opening remarks at the Army chief's annual press conference, and not in response to questions, make it clear that the oath a jawan or an officer takes is to the Constitution (and not to the government of the day).

Giving out a "few points" about what the Army was about and sending a message to his men and women, Gen. Naravane said 'A' was him: "As the Army, or the armed forces, we swear allegiance to the Constitution of India. In fact, be it a jawan or an officer, we take an oath...that is what should guide us in all our actions and at all times."

for allegiance that meant for

Fight for values

"But what does this really translate into? What this translates into is also the core values which are enshrined into the Preamble to the Constitution – that is justice, liberty, equality and fraternity and that is what we are fighting for when we are deployed on the borders, safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity; it is to secure for our people these core values. We need to keep this in mind at all

times," he added. The General's remarks assume significance at a time



when tens of thousands of people, including young students, have taken to reading the Preamble in public while protesting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Gen. Naravane also makes the point that when deployed at the borders, the forces are fighting for the core values contained in the Preamble, which has received much public attention since the CAA was passed in December.

The Army chief's formulations on Saturday come days after the December 26 comments made by his predecessor and now Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), Bipin Rawat, that leaders were those who led the country in the "right direction".

Gen. Rawat, widely seen as critical of the anti-CAA agitation, had said: "Leaders are not those who lead peo-

NEWS ANALYSIS

ple in inappropriate directions as we are witnessing in a large number of universities and college students the way they are leading masses of crowds to carry out arson and violence in our cities and towns." The former Army chief's

comments had come under

considerable fire from the

Opposition leaders and gi-

not protect the entire gamut of free speech. The question which begs to be answered is whether there exists a clear and present danger in restricting such expression," Justices N.V. Ramana, R. Subhash Reddy and B.R. Gavai said in their judgment on go-

ven his appointment as the first-ever CDS, found favour with the government of the

A point of interest is that Gen. Naravane's emphasis on justice, liberty, equality and fraternity comes a day after the Supreme Court said the "geopolitical struggle" in Jammu & Kashmir "cannot be played down or ignored" while addressing the issue of Internet shutdown and the freedom of expression.

"In line with the aforesaid requirement, we may note that even the broadest guarantee of free speech would vernment curbs in J&K.

jets: official PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sunday.

Apart from these, Ex-

process," he said.

THE HINDU DELHI MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020

'Shenanigans of Left-wing coterie' worry academics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Over 200 academics wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, blaming a "small coterie of Left-wing activists" for the deteriorating academic environment in the country.

"We observe with dismay that in the name of student politics, a disruptive far-Left agenda is being pursued. The recent turn of events on campuses has raised an alarm about the deteriorating academic environment due to the shenanigans of a small coterie of Left-wing activists," they

The signatories include Hari Singh Gour University Vice-Chancellor R.P. Tiwari, Central University of South Bihar Vice-Chancellor H.C.S. Rathore and Sardar Patel University Vice-Chancellor Shirish Kulkarni, official sources said.

The statement is being seen as part of the government's efforts to mobilise support in the academia after it faced criticism from a section of the intelligentsia over protests at some universities over a host of issues, including the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, and the violence at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

The statement said it had become difficult to organise public talks or speak independently owing to the "censorship imposed by the Left-wing politics". Strikes and dharnas over demands" "maximalist were common in the Left strongholds, and personal targeting and public slandering for not conforming to the Left ideology were on the rise, it said.

PM's CAA remarks upset Mission members

Political messages from the platform of an 'apolitical body' condemned

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission founded in the late 19th century by Swami Vivekananda, and his comments on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) from the Mission's platform have created a controversy in West Bengal.

A section of the mission members condemned the visit and many wrote to the mission officials questioning why Mr. Modi was allowed to visit the Math. Political parties, too, condemned Mr. Modi's comments, while the mission distanced itself from his remarks

Mr. Modi reached the



Controversy over visit: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying homage to Swami Vivekananda at Belur Math. •PTI

photos on Sunday. The pro-

blem, however, was over Mr.

Modi's extensive remarks on

the CAA, indicating that it

would not take away citizen-

ship. The comments were

considered a "political state-

Math late on Saturday and paid tributes to Sri Ramakrishna, the mystic saint of the 19th century Bengal, and "the room where Swamiji [Vivekananda] meditated."

He himself tweeted the

mission officials and devotees. A mission member, who was given deeksha (consecration) by late Swami Atmasthananda, who Mr. Modi said was his teacher, said it was "deeply hurtful to see controversial political messages being disseminated from the platform of the mission, which is an apolitical body".

ment" by a section of the

"Let me make two things clear. One, the mission has an elaborate and official process of consecration. Mr. Modi has not been officially consecrated, and two, he is allowed to come and make statements which are political in nature," said Gautam Roy, a mission member.

(With PTI inputs)

In one voice



Protesters hold placards as they participate in a demonstration against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act at Andheri, Mumbai on Sunday. • VIJAY BATE

Quit BJP and form an alternative govt., Cong. tells Sonowal

'CM fighting against his conscience'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Congress in Assam has offered to help Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal form an alternative "anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act" government, if he quits the Bharatiya Janata Party

The All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), led by perfume baron Maulana Badruddin Ajmal, has shown interest in being part of such an alternative arrangement.

Leaders of the All Assam Students' Union and other organisations behind the ongoing protests against the CAA had almost a fortnight ago floated the idea of a "political alternative" to the BJP, its ally Asom Gana Parishad and the Congress.

The idea was to have a party that concentrated on the rights and aspirations of indigenous Assam's communities.

'BIP stranglehold'

The Congress, almost immediately, offered to back such an alternative party. But on Saturday, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Debabrata Saikia asked Mr. Sonowal to "come out of the BJP stranglehold" with 30

"The Chief Minister has been fighting against his conscience, while obeying his BJP masters. He should leave the party with 30 MLAs in view of the anger of the people in Assam at the CAA. We will support him in forming an anti-BJP government so that he can conti-



Sonowal was urged to leave the BJP in view of the people's anger at the CAA.

nue as the Chief Minister," Mr. Saikia said.

"We are ready to back any government that is anti-CAA and anti-BJP," said Mr. Ajmal, the AIUDF's lone member of the Lok Sabha.

The BJP has 61 legislators in the 126-member Assembly. Its regional allies are the Asom Gana Parishad (14 legislators) and the Bodoland People's Front (12). The Congress has 25 and the AI-UDF 13 lawmakers. The House has a lone Independent member

Protests continue

Protests, initially violent, leading to the death of six people in police firing and arson, erupted mainly in central and eastern Assam the Citizenship after (Amendment) Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha on December 11.

The voices against the CAA have grown louder since the Union Home Ministry issued a gazette notification that the law would would come into force on January 10.

Two more MPs under pressure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

After K.G. Kenye of Nagaland, two more MPs from the Northeastern States are under pressure for supporting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Parliament.

The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), an extremist group, has threatened to take punitive action against Lok Sabha member Rebati Tripura for supporting the CAA. Mr. Tripura is one of the two BJP MPs from the State. He is the sitting Lok Sabha MP for Tripura East, reserved for the tribal people.

A majority of 19 tribes in Tripura fear the CAA will bring more non-tribal people, especially Bengalispeaking Hindus, into the State. The tribal people are in a minority in the State.

"The NLFT has reportedly issued a threat letter. We are looking into the matter, and have ensured adequate security," a Tripura police spokesperson said on Sunday.

Mizoram's lone Lok Sabha member C. Lalrosanga has also been facing protests in the State capital Aizawl.

He represents the Mizo National Front, which rules the State and which is a constituent of the BIPfronted North East Democratic Alliance.

On January 8, the Naga People's Front suspended Mr. Kenye from the primary membership of the party after he voted for the CAA in the Rajya Sabha. The NPF is in the opposition in the State, where the BJP is in power in partnership with the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party.

INTERVIEW | ANURAG KASHYAP

+ 'There is nobody to have a dialogue with'

Filmmaker says government borrowing from the Nazis on how to 'other' people

NAMRATA IOSHI

Filmmaker and writer Anurag Kashyap admits to being perpetually angry and 'super-frustrated' of late at the indifference of the government to people's concerns. However, he emphasises that the protests against the CAA and the NRC must continue in a non-violent manner.

So the Home Ministry issued a notification that CAA will come into effect on January 10, 2020...

■ I really don't understand. For me, in any kind of a civil disobedience movement, people talk, they have a dialogue. Problem is there is nobody to have a dialogue [with]. You are shouting at a wall. The way the Prime Minister has been is exactly replicated by the Vice-Chancellor in JNU. Not meeting people who have demands, not having a dialogue. It's also because they don't know what to say and they can't have a logical argument. They break your patience and you tip over. And when you tip over, they somehow feel they have the right to resort to violence. That has been the pattern in everything they have been doing.

Yesterday the CAA was notified in the gazette though rules have not been formulated for it. How did this happen? This is bullying. Just two days back they said they were doing that and now suddenly it's out there. So why are you putting it out there?

They are literally borrowing from the book of the fascist Nazis. How to "other" the people. And the followers are buying it. People are deliberately twisting the truth. It's like they all know what the truth is but need to twist it because the hatred for the "other" is so much.

It's almost like you are sitting in one of the Roman arenas and all the followers are the audience. There's this



bloodlust that all of them have and they are just enjoying it. It's literally like chalo lado, maro (Let's fight and

How do you see the road ahead?

We are in for a long haul. Only thing we cannot do is become like them.

Then there is the fear that the on-going resistance will die

■ They are hoping it will die down. Everybody has a limit, a threshold, work pressures. But the way it's going on right now, those women at Shaheen Bagh... They are incredible. There are students coming out always, every day. It's a very bad time for the economy. None of those issues are being addressed... Even if they did good governance there wouldn't be a problem. But where is the governance? You are constantly focusing on divide and rule, polarisation... They are doing literally what they are accusing others of

Again those electoral bonds have come out because Delhi elections are round the corner. Their whole focus is on the Delhi elections now.

doing: tukde tukde.

How do you see the Delhi elections play out?

■ They know they are going to lose the elections so they are going to do everything to



They break your patience and you tip over. And when you tip over, they somehow feel they have the right to resort to violence

not lose the elections. Everything can entail anything. I don't know to which level they will go to. Will they follow the Constitution? They think they *are* the Constitution. They *are* India. That's the whole problem. They are like these ruthless, cruel oligarchs. What the Supreme Court says doesn't matter to them. They are openly bullying their way into every institution, be it judiciary, police, CBI, ED, everything.

There is no alternative emerging either...

■ Looking at what Uddhav Thackeray is doing or what Hemant Soren is doing... the whole politics will become regional. No one consolidated central thing. Delhi has become regional with AAP. All States will have their own regional parties and regional heads. If it goes that way with no central binding thing and if every government is a regional government then how do you not foresee a Europe-like situation happening?

You have maintained that you have been protesting all through your life. How is this different?

■ When you raise your voice for your rights, there is always an avenue. There would always be someone who'd sit across and talk to you. Like the censor board during [the trouble over Deepa Mehta's] Water. We travelled to Delhi, went to I&B Ministry, there was Arun Iaitley, there was Seshadri Chari from the RSS who sat across. There was an argument, we read the whole script. There was always somebody to address your concerns. Right now it looks like there's no system in place. Suddenly nobody is hearing you and that's why more and more people are coming out. There is problem between the administration and the student's union [at JNU]. The V-C is not hearing the union.

So does one carry on

protesting? ■ Right now one has to keep on at it. I don't know what happens in the Delhi elections. If they lose, will it affect them or will they become more stubborn?

But they may win Delhi. They won the general elections...

■ No, not unless there is manipulation; not unless there is force. They very clearly see that someone has done something for Delhi. Delhi may not have a political leader but it does have an administrator at the helm whose transition to a politician is something we have been waiting for, for years.

Let's go back then to your statement about regional

■ We are seeing regional voices emerging. In his one week tenure, [see] what Hemant Soren has done. He has taken calls. The kind of statements Uddhav Thackeray is making, protecting the citizens. You are seeing a transition in Shiv Sena. How did he make that statement of not mixing religion with politics!

> (For full interview, visit bit.ly/caakashyap)

Iran agrees de-escalation is only way to solve crisis

Protesters angry over handling of plane crisis want leaders to quit; Trump warns Tehran against killing demonstrators

REUTERS

Iran signalled on Sunday it favours a de-escalation after days of heightened tensions with the U.S. during which both sides fired missiles and Tehran accidentally shot down a passenger aircraft.

U.S. President Donald Trump warned Iran against harming demonstrators and against a repeat of a deadly crackdown against rallies in November sparked by a fuel price hike.

"To the leaders of Iran DO NOT KILL YOUR PROT-ESTERS," Mr. Trump tweeted in his occasional all-capi-

U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper, however, said Mr. Trump was still willing to "sit down and discuss without precondition a new way forward" with Iran, although Tehran has steadfastly refused to hold talks unless U.S. lifts sanctions first.

In a meeting between Iran's President Hassan Rouhani and the visiting emir of



Pressure mounts: Students taking part in a demonstration in Tehran on Saturday after paying tributes to victims of the Ukrainian plane that was "mistakenly shot down" by Iran. • AFP

Qatar, both sides agreed deescalation is the "only solution" to the regional crisis, the emirate's ruler said.

Qatar hosts the largest U.S. military base in the region but also enjoys strong ties with Iran, with which it shares the world's largest gas field. "We agreed... that the only solution to these crises is de-escalation from everyone and dialogue."

For his part, Mr. Rouhani said: "Given the importance of security of the region... we've decided to have more consultations and cooperation for the security of the entire region."

Meanwhile, erupted across Iran for a second day on Sunday, piling pressure on the leadership

after the military admitted it had mistakenly shot down a Ukrainian airliner.

Police fired teargas at

thousands of protesters in the capital on Saturday, where many had chanted "Death to the dictator", directing their anger at the Islamic Republic's Supreme Ayatollah Leader

Rockets hit Iraq Olympic base hosting U.S. troops

REUTERS

Four Iraqi soldiers were wounded on Sunday in an attack on Balad air base in northern Iraq which houses U.S. personnel.

The Iraqi military said that eight Katyusha rockets had been fired at the base, about 80 km north of Baghdad, and that the four wounded included two officers.

"Apologise and resign," Iran's moderate Etemad daily wrote in a headline on Sunday, saying the "people's demand" was for those responsible for mishandling the plane crisis to quit.

U.K. envoy detained Britain said its Ambassador in Iran, Rob Macaire, was briefly detained on Saturday, which Iranian media said was because he was inciting protests. The envoy said he attended a vigil for plane victims.

medallist flees

to Netherlands

Iran's only woman Olympic

medallist said she defected

and fled to the Netherlands

describes herself as "one of

women in Iran." Taekwondo

accused Iranian officials of

sexism and mistreatment.

the millions of oppressed

in an online letter that

athlete Kimia Alizadeh

from the Islamic Republic

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iran summoned him on Sunday, while state media said members of the Basij militia gathered outside the mission with signs demanding the "treacherous embas-

Haftar, which days ago cap-

tured the strategic coastal ci-

Late on Saturday, Haftar's

forces announced a ceasefire

in line with a joint call by

Turkish President Recep

Tayyip Erdogan and his Rus-

sian counterpart Vladimir

of the GNA, Fayez al-Sarraj,

announced his acceptance

Early on Sunday, the head

ty of Sirte.

Queen, senior royals set for crisis talks with Harry

Meghan to join via conference call



Queen Elizabeth II leaves after attending a church service at St. Mary Magdalene Church in Sandringham on Sunday. • AP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Queen Elizabeth II will host a showdown meeting with Prince Harry on Monday in an attempt to solve the crisis triggered by his bombshell announcement that he and wife Meghan Markle were stepping back from the royal frontline.

Other senior royals, including Prince Harry's father Prince Charles and brother Prince William, with whom he has strained relations, will join the monarch at her private Sandringham estate in eastern England, according to British media.

Ms. Markle will join the meeting via conference call from Canada as they attempt to work out the "next steps" towards a compromise and nip the growing crisis in the bud.

Issues up for debate include how much money the couple will still receive from Prince Charles's estate, their royal titles and what commercial deals they can strike, according to the Sunday Times.

The newspaper reported that Prince William believes he and Prince Harry are now "separate entities", breaking the bonds forged following their mother's

"I've put my arm around my brother all our lives and I can't do that any more; we're separate entities," the Times reported he told a friend.

The royal couple and their son Archie spent Christmas in Canada, with the American former actress returning there this week.

The Queen on Thursday demanded that staff work with the couple to find urgently a "workable solution" that would take into account their demands for more freedom.

Several Canadian media reported Ms. Markle had returned to Vancouver island off the country's Pacific coast, where the family spent the year-end holidays and where baby Archie remained with his nanny.

Senior royals were caught off guard by Wednesday's announcement that the **Duke and Duchess of Sussex** wanted to seek a "progressive new role" and divide their time between Britain and North America.

The Queen's office issued a terse statement the same evening, saying there were "complicated issues that will take time to work through".

Prince Harry and Ms. Markle said they intended to continue to "fully support" the Queen and "collaborate" with senior royals.

Bangladesh arrests Sufi singer after protests

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

A top Bangladeshi Sufi folk singer was arrested under a controversial internet law that critics say is used to stifle free speech after alleged anti-Islam comments triggered protests, police said Sunday. Shariat Sarker, 40, was detained in Mirzapur on Saturday.

"A cleric filed a case against Mr. Sarker over comments made at a show in December, and he was arrested under the Digital Security Act for hurting the religious sentiment of Muslims," local police chief Saidur Rahman said.

A video of the show was uploaded to YouTube and more than 1,000 Muslim activists and clerics staged a rally to demand the singer's arrest. Mr. Sarker could face up to 10 years in prison if found guilty at trial.

Journalists and right activists say the Digital Security Act passed in 2018 is a serious threat to the freedom of expression in the nation of 168 million people.

Odhikar, a rights group, reported at least 29 arrests last year under the law.

Rival Libya groups agree to ceasefire

It comes months after Haftar's forces began offensive to seize Tripoli from GNA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE TRIPOLI

Both sides in Libya's conflict agreed to a ceasefire from Sunday to end nine months of fighting following weeks of international diplomacy and calls for a truce by power-brokers Russia and The oil-rich North African

country has been wracked by bloody turmoil since a NATO-backed uprising killed long-time dictator Moamer Kadhafi in 2011, with multiple foreign powers now



Truce at last: Demonstrators waving flags at a rally against eastern Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar in Tripoli. • AFP/FILE

Since April last year, the **UN-recognised Government** of National Accord (GNA) in

Tripoli has been under attack from forces loyal to eastern-based strongman Khalifa

Hong Kong

HRW chief

bars entry of

of the ceasefire, saying it had taken effect on Sunday. The UN mission in Libya welcomed announcements.

U.S. to expel a dozen Saudi trainees after base attack probe

Some of them had links to extremist movements: CNN

The global head of Human Rights Watch said he was denied entry on Sunday to Hong Kong, where he was scheduled to launch the organisation's latest world report this week.

Kenneth Roth, the group's executive director, said he was blocked at Hong Kong airport from entering. "The report describes how the Chinese government is undermining the international human rights system. But the authorities just blocked my entrance to Hong Kong, illustrating the worsening problem," Mr. Roth said in WASHINGTON

The U.S. will expel at least a dozen Saudi military students accused of extremist links and child pornography, after an investigation into a shooting rampage by a Saudi officer in Florida, media reported Saturday.

In December, Mohammed Alshamrani, who was in the United States as part of a Saudi military training program, opened fire in a classroom at the Pensacola Naval Air Station, killing three sailors and wounding eight other people before being shot dead by police.

While the dozen or more trainees are not accused of aiding Alshamrani, some were found to have connections to extremist movements or in possession of child pornography, CNN reported. The probe, which was

carried out by the FBI, also found that several had not reported the assailant's disturbing behaviour before the attack, according to The Washington Post.

Background checks

In December, the Pentagon said it had conducted background checks on all Saudi

military personnel currently training in the United States and found no "immediate threat scenario.'

Defense Department officials halted operational training for Saudi Arabian military students in the United States following the attack, though classroom instruction continued.

The 21-year-old gunman, a lieutenant in the Saudi Royal Air Force, was armed with a lawfully purchased handgun, and is reported to have posted a manifesto on Twitter before the shooting denouncing America as "a



reporter murder outcry VALLETTA

Outsider Robert Abela is set to become Malta's new premier on Sunday after Prime Minister Joseph Muscat's downfall over the murder of a journalist. Mr. Abela was elected leader of the Labour Party, meaning he automatically takes the role of PM. In the election run-up, Mr. Abela did not criticise Mr. Muscat, who announced in December he would quit following anger over his perceived efforts to protect friends and allies from a probe into the 2017 slaving of blogger Daphne Caruana

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12831

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles

Taiwan's leader meets with U.S. official after election win

China slams various countries for congratulating Tsai

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Fresh from a landslide reelection victory, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen met on Sunday with the de facto U.S. Ambassador to Taipei, as China warned that countries should stick with recogcommunist-ruled Beijing as the rightful government of "one China," including Taiwan.

William Brent Christensen, a U.S. diplomat who is director of the American Institute in Taiwan, congratulated Tsai on her victory in Saturday's election, and she



Tsai Ing-wen

thanked him for his support. China slammed officials from the U.S. and other countries for congratulating Ms. Tsai for her landslide

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, as well as top diplomats from Britain and

12 Waltz, say, after Indian spies

retreated with a martial

performance (3,5)

lapan, issued statements congratulating the leader and the island's elections. But Beijing, which views Taiwan as part of its territory, denounced their actions

as violating the one-China principle. "The Chinese side expresses strong dissatisfaction and resolute opposition to this," said Foreign Minis-

spokesman Shuang. "We oppose any form of official exchange between Taiwan and countries that have established diplomatic relations with China," he

said in a statement.

14 Took care of denim stitched by thesaurus (4) daughter (6)

5 Charmed a butcher and got old 16 American marine engineer Greek money (8) finally becomes a drug addict

17 Susceptible and lying (5) 18 Gals returned vitrified cinders

assistant (6) 21 Baker whipped up a couple of eggs and some yeast for

19 Bruce Wayne, an army

23 Size of paper for dunce's hat

26 Catch an errant parent (6)

27 Suitably included father or mother giving up Tango, it seems (10)

28 Hear flying bird (4)

DOWN

(4)

1 A bare Asian swimming in our western waters (7,3)

at first and got a plant (8)

(set by Incognito)

3 Chinese dumpling returned? Not now! (3,3)

good judgment (6)

7 Vote out an objection (4)

15 Explained at length about

electronic laboratory after Ed replaced mad Roy (10)

18 Tory boss rewrote a sad tale

20 Muslim theologian's soft bench finally (6)

22 Double approval for a lemur

goes away with an expression of apology (4) 25 Step back to reveal domestic

animals (4)



Solution to puzzle 12830 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

| | Х | | Н | | | | S | | Т | | L | | Н | | 3 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|------------|---|----|---|----------|------------------------|---|---|
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| | × | | z | | ഗ | | כ | | Α | | G | | Ø | | 14 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 6 |
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| | Ø | | ш | | O | | Ը | | | | ш | | 0 | | Э | 9 | O | ш | Ø | / | J | 4 | 2 |
| | | Κ | - | Н | ш | | Е | z | S | - | н | 0 | R | Μ | a | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | Я | 1 | 5 |
| | G | | Ν | | | | D | | Α | | 0 | | 1 | | 9 | _ | - | | | _ | 0 | - | 9 |
| С | 0 | W | G | - | R | ┙ | | Е | Т | Ε | R | Z | Α | ┙ | 18 | 5 | 4 | 17 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 3 |
| | Е | | Η | | ט | | S | | | | Е | | Z | | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | _ | 1 | _ | 7 |
| Α | S | Т | Ξ | Е | Z | - | Α | | С | Α | W | S | | | | 2 | J | Ø | 9 | Э | 4 | О | / |
| | Τ | | ш | | | | Ν | | Α | | - | | ш | | 7 | Я | a | 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Т | 0 | М | В | | Э | Z | D | Ш | Т | Е | О | Т | Е | D | | U | 9 | 9 | 0 | <u> </u> | _ | 9 | |
| | Ρ | | Α | | z | | В | | С | | K | | G | | 12 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 8 |
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| | Т | | L | | 0 | | G | | | | Т | | Т | | О | J | Э | 2 | 4 | Ø | | / | Э |

FAITH

Strong bond of bhakti

In the Gita, Krishna analyses the various ways in which devotion takes root in people. He knows that many seek favours of Him for various reasons, for wealth, knowledge, relief from distress, and so on. Though He then claims that one who seeks Him for His sake is very dear to Him, His unparalleled magnanimity is seen in His recognition and response to all who seek Him, irrespective of their motive, pointed out Kalyanapuram Sri Aravamudhachariar in a discourse. None knows better than Him that for every jivatma, crossing this life on earth is beset with hurdles and therefore His devotees find great mental strength in seeking His help. It is held that at the end of Krishna avatar, the Lord departs with the feeling that he has not done enough for Draupadi. When she is in distress and on the verge of extreme humiliation, she knows that none but He alone could help.

Though Krishna is in Dwaraka, her loud cry for help in her utter helplessness, bears fruit in a totally unbelievable manner. It proves beyond doubt His omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. But He still has this misgiving that He could not be present in person to alleviate her distress. He says that He is indebted to Draupadi in this account.

He comes to the assistance of Gajendra when the elephant calls out to the one who is the primordial source of all. With extraordinary sincerity He befriends a Guha or a Sugriva; accepts the humble offerings of a Sabhari or a Kuchela and graces them handsomely. When He enters Mathura to meet Kamsa, He goes out of the way to bless Kubja who gains a beautiful form and to shower His grace on the garland vendor. He grants the highest attainment to the unlettered and simple Gopis. It is no wonder that His devotees automatically feel doubly indebted to Him. A ND-NDE

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

Monday (8)

ACROSS

8 Fertilizer confiscated by a bureaucrat (4) 9 Old boy instructed to drop

India created a hindrance (10) 10 Missing sailor's near ward (6)

11 Strange that uncle gives up the

French mystic chant on 2 Perhaps banker ate a vegetable

4 Isaac's son mentioned in the

6 Soldiers following a copper's

13 Chemical Poe mixed with unknown ingredients (5)

17 Father stole and got worried

muslin cloth is placed on a

24 Spook comes back after king

ASK US

AARATI KRISHNAN

Investment options

Q. I am 23 years old and started my career in a fintech organisation last year. I earn ₹50,000 per month excluding my PF contribution (₹3,200). My monthly expenditure is about ₹18,000. I want to start my own venture in about 5-8 years' time. I also have retirement savings in mind. Please suggest suitable investment options.

MANISHA JAYSON

A. If you have plans to quit employment and start your own venture, apart from investing towards the initial capital contribution to your venture, it would also be important to protect yourself from emergencies and set up a corpus to take care of your living expenses during the break (until your venture turns a profit). This is apart from investing towards goals such as retirement. From your query, it appears that you can save about ₹32,000 every month. As a first step, if you don't have health insurance offered by your employer, we suggest you take one so that medical emergencies don't dent your savings.

A premium of ₹5,000 a year can fetch you a reasonable cover. We also urge you to set up an emergency fund equal to nine months' living expenses, which would be ₹1.62 lakh in your case. This money should be in safe options such as fixed deposits with a leading bank. If you have money idling in your savings account or elsewhere, earmark it towards this emergency fund. If you don't, we suggest that you invest ₹5,000 each month until you get to this number. Thereafter, this money can go into your retirement plan. To get to a sizeable corpus, aggressive hybrid equity funds or multicap equity funds would be your best bet.

An 8-year time frame may be essential to earn a reasonable return from these vehicles. If you are conservative, consider three aggressive hybrid equity funds with a good 10-year record for your SIPs. Assuming you make an 8% compounded return, that will give you a corpus of about ₹33 lakh in 8 years' time. If you have a higher risk appetite, you can invest in three multi-cap equity funds with a good 10-year record. At an assumed 10% return, this will get you to a corpus of about ₹37 lakh at the end of 8 years. How much of this money you would like to invest in the venture and how much you would like to use for your income needs would be up to you. To make a start on your retirement plan, you must open a PPF and NPS account and start contributing whatever savings you have left after the above investments, towards your retirement. Future savings from increases in income and surpluses from your venture must also go into your retirement investments.

For high returns

Q. I am 24 and earn ₹10 lakh a year. I invest ₹1.5 lakh in PPF and spend ₹1.5 lakh towards personal expenses. That leaves me with ₹7 lakh per annum to invest. I'm ready to take extreme risks. I'm already investing in stocks and mutual funds. Can you guide me on other investment options which can yield high returns? Or is to okay to park the entire money in stocks and mutual funds?

A. To start with, do set up an emergency fund made up of about 9 months' living expenses. In your case, that would amount to about ₹1.12 lakh, which you need to hold in fixed deposits at a leading bank. If you have dependants, you should buy a pure term insurance plan to take care of them in your absence. If you are not covered by your employer, it is also essential to get a health insurance plan so that your savings don't take a hit if you have medical emergencies.

After you fund these necessities, you can decide how much of your surpluses you can invest in equity and fixed income. This allocation must be based on your risk appetite as well as financial need. Stocks or equity mutual funds would not be suitable for any financial need which is likely to crop up in less than 5 years' time. If you have such goals, invest in short-duration debt funds towards such goals. For goals that will crop up in 5-7 years, use aggressive hybrid equity funds that invest in a mix of debt and equity. For goals beyond 7 years, you can rely on stocks and pure equity funds. Continue with your PPF investments as a part of your fixed income allocation.

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular

mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.



Is your equity portfolio HURTING YOU?

Higher the risk, higher the swings. If you want to blunt the impact of high volatility, opt for a diversification strategy

VIDYA BALA

If you think I am going to provide a panacea for equity market volatility, I am afraid I have none.

I think most of you have very little reason to complain. This is because for the vast majority (going by the savings data of the country), equity accounts for 5-10% your overall investments. When I say investments, I include deposits, real estate, insurance (if you are using it as an investment) and gold. And, a majority of this is in deposits, going by RBI's data on the quantum of individual deposits.

So, why, then, would the market volatility cause you so much pain? Simply because that is the only moving part in your portfolio. It swings all the time! And more importantly, it is so easy for you to track it every hour of the day, every single day!

Take it in your stride

While it is important that your equity performs well over the long term for those kicker returns, it is equally important for you not to miss the forest for the trees. Instead of ruing over the negative returns in one small-cap fund, you will do well to look at the tiny blip it caused to your overall investments.

If you cannot deal with this volatility, you are better off shifting even the existing 5-10% into your other investments that you either cannot track or which don't swing wildly. It is not worth doing much planning, market timing,

reading, and constantly acting, really! For, there is no way you can eliminate such movements.

In my experience, a small proportion of investors – a growing number, though – build their portfolios primarily using equities (stocks or funds or NPS). They genuinely believe that only equity will help fulfil their long-term aspirations and build wealth.

There are a few things that this class of investors can do to reduce the volatility in their portfolio through the simple strategy of diversification.

Higher risk, higher swings: Most equity investors believe that mid- and small-cap stocks or funds are the real wealth builders and often go overboard on these segments; holding over 50% of their portfolio in them. Now the issue is, these wealth buil-

ders can be wealth destroyers too! And even if you held good mid or small-cap funds, if they lose the plot in a fall, it may take a good while to climb up again. Hence, going overboard on the riskiest of the risky asset class is not a good idea for long-term wealth building. Even a 15-25% holding in these segments can boost

your portfolio.

The same holds good for sector or thematic investing too. Sectors become conspicuous at their peak. So, often, your entry point goes amiss. While sectors such as banking or consumer goods may not lose their flavour as they are the core of any economy, other cyclical sectors or commodity segments need timing of entry and exit. If you miss the bus, you not only lose an opportunity to build wealth but also suffer from opportunity loss by holding them.

Not flashy asset classes

but diversifiers: In the past 3 years, some investors who held gold may have exited it, totally disenchanted with the returns. But gold surprised in 2019 with a more than 20% returns as global turmoil and trade wars meant investors sought refuge in the metal. But the problem, as I have observed, is this: most people invest in gold seeking high returns and exit disappointed. Gold failed to even beat debt for almost three years until 2019. But one fine day, it stood tall, protecting your portfolio from the equity volatility. It may again go back to oblivion after such glory. This is the limited purpose of gold. If that appeals to you, use it to diversify with some 10-15% exposure and not to gain top returns.

Hedge with global exposure: Did you know that over the past three years, the U.S. markets outperformed India? But very few among you would hold this class of funds or stocks.

Here again, the problem is that you tend to go overboard with such options when performance is at a peak and ditch them when Indian markets return to firm. That is a flawed approach when you use them as a diversification option. Two things help with this kind of investment: one, you get to invest in a market outside India and hence diversify. Second, if you are spending in dollars for future goals such as children's education, this can provide some natural currencv hedge.

Get a bit passive: Finally, if everything seems unclear, having some expo-

sure to index, through funds or ETFs, will ensure that you at least stay with the market. This is not an option that agents or relationship managers will suggest. So, seek it yourself for at least 10% of your portfolio

portfolio. After all this, there would still be volatility! Deal with it. If I should sound more intellectual, learn to be 'antifragile'. That's the term from Nassim Nicholas Taleb's book "Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder". Taleb says we should be antifragile - let shocks and disruptions make you stronger and help you adapt to newer challenges. And, always, look at your overall portfolio performance when you look to see how your investments are doing. Remember the

(The author is Co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)

forest and the trees!

COVER NOTE: WHOLE LIFE POLICY

When to choose a whole life insurance policy over a term policy

If you wish to support dependants in your super-senior years, this is a good option

K. NITYA KALYANI

A Whole Life policy is just that. It offers life insurance cover throughout the life of the insured.

Earlier we saw how a Term policy works. It covers against the risk of death during a specified term and has no maturity or survival benefit once that term is over. Usually there is an upper limit of 65 or 70 years of age.

A Whole Life policy, on the other hand, covers the life assured through their natural life. Companies do define this variously as up to age 99 or age 100.

Unlike a Term policy which is a highly focussed policy as described above, the Whole Life policy can have various features. Should the life assured die, the payment is made to the nominee and if they survive the policy date, the policy gets converted into an endowment which pays out on their passing away.

The Whole Life policy would cost more than the Term policy, naturally, and you should be able to sustain the premium payment until age 100 or so. Apart from options for regular premiums for the entire term of the policy, limited premium paying terms are available and one can choose from them de-



a term policy until age 65 will suffice. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

pending on income flows. Single premium policies are also available.

Choose a Whole Life policy when you have dependants and when your responsibilities towards them will extend to your super senior years. Should you assess that your children, for example, will be standing on their own feet by the time you retire, a term policy until age 60 or 65 would be a better option.

would be a better option.

A Whole Life policy can also be a mechanism to fund funeral arrangements. Morbid as it may sound, more people are thinking through such responsibilities rather than leaving it to those left behind to contend with and do

their best. The Whole Life policy comes with various options that you should consider. There can be a simple life cover without any bonus — called a non-participating or non-par policy. On the other hand, a participating policy partakes of the profits the company makes on investing the premium collected under the policy and offers you a share of it as a bonus.

The policy can also be unitlinked. This denotes that the policy premium is invested in the capital markets and the investment risk is yours. There would be portfolio options to choose from, appropriate to your risk appetite.

A Whole Life policy can al-

so have riders and some examples are Accidental Death Benefit, Terminal Illness, Critical Illness and Permanent Disability. A rider is an additional cover that can be purchased with the main policy and, only at the time of buying the main policy. That coverage comes at a lower cost than it would otherwise, by virtue of the fact that it is an add-on cover.

Loans possible

Another benefit of Whole Life policy over Term policy is that a policy loan can be taken as there is a surrender value.

A Term policy, on the other hand, serves as a better tool for backing up a housing loan, protecting the family from loan repayment should the bread-winner die.

Some policies also allow the death benefit to be given to the beneficiary as a lump sum or as a periodical payment. The policy pay out is exempt from income tax. Premium payments also attract a tax benefit under Section 80C of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

As with any insurance decision, clarity on why you want the coverage will help you decide the right policy.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

TECH TRAIL: PRECIOUS METALS

Gold shines brighter

B. KRISHNAKUMAR

After subdued price action in November, the of price of precious metals recovered and closed on a positive note in December 2019.

Comex gold gained about 15% in 2019, which is the biggest annual gain since 2010. The international gold price gained 3.4% in December to close at \$1,523.1 an ounce. Comex silver rose 5.6% to settle at \$17.92 an ounce.

In India, the price of gold futures at MCX gained 2.8% in December to close at ₹39,108 per 10 gm. MCX silver futures too ruled firm and gained 4.9% in December to end at ₹46,711 per kg.

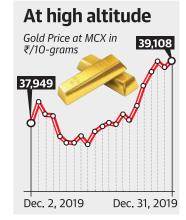
The year 2020 has begun on a

positive for precious metals as mounting tensions in West Asia stoked positive sentiment. Gold price jumped to an almost 7-year high a few days ago, before easing off in the last couple of days.

After several weeks of consolidation, the price action in the past few weeks indicates that precious metals have regained their sheen.

The short-term outlook for Comex gold is positive and the price could rise to the immediate resistance of \$1,625-1,630 an ounce.

The recent spike in Comex gold has, however, pushed the price to an overbought zone. This could trigger consolidation or a cool-off before the next leg of the uptrend resumes. A breakout past \$1,575 would indicate that the cool-off phase is over, and the price could then head to the target of \$1,625. The outlook for gold would be positive until the support at \$1,480-1,485 is not breached. The short-term out-



look for silver is bullish too. A breakout past the immediate resistance at \$18.6 would strengthen the positive outlook for silver. Above \$18.6, Comex silver could rise to its short-term target of \$19.4-19.5 an ounce. The short-term positive outlook would warrant reassessment on a close below the support level at \$17.2.

Outlook for MCX gold and silver too appears positive. Gold futures price at MCX is likely to rise to the short-term target of ₹41,600-41,800 per 10 gm. The positive view would be under threat if the price falls below the support zone at ₹38,600-38,800.

Silver price could move to the immediate target in the ₹48,900-49,500 zone. There is strong support for silver at ₹44,500-45,000. A close below ₹44,500 would invalidate the positive outlook and could push MCX silver price to ₹42,500-43,000 per kg.

(The author is a Chennaibased analyst/trader. This is not meant to be trading or investment advice)

A ND-NDE

LOOSE CHANGE



"Do you have a policy that covers financial headaches?"

CM YK

PERSONAL LOAN - RATES AND CHARGES EMI (Rs) Loan EMI (Rs) Loan amount amount **Processing fee** Interest rate (%) 5 lakh Tenure 1 lakh Tenure (% of loan amount) 5 years 5 years 10,747-11,869 State Bank of India 10.50-14.90 2,149-2,374 Upto 1% Citi Bank 10.50-18.99 10,747-12,968 2,149-2,594 Upto 3% **HDFC Banl** 10.75-21.30 10,809-13,611 2,162-2,722 Rs 2999-25,000 Indian Bank 10.35-14.80 10,710-11,843 Upto 0.512%(min:Rs 512) 2,142-2,369 Punjab & Sind Bank 12.45-13.70 11,236-11,557 2,247-2,311 Bank of Baroda 10.971-12.266 Rs 1.000-Rs 10.000 11.40-16.40 2,194-2,453 Axis Bank 12.00-24.00 11,122-14,384 2,224-2,877 ICICI Bank 11.25-22.00 10.934-13.809 2.187-2.762 Upto 2.25% Union Bank of India 10.10-14.20 10,648-11,686 2,130-2,337 Upto 0.5% Canara Bank Rs 1000-5000 11.35-15.05 10,959-11,908 2,192-2,382 Federal Bank 11.49 onwards 10,994 onwards 2,199 onwards Upto 3% Punjab National Bank 10.75-14.50 10,809-11,764 2,162-2,353 Upto 1.8% **UCO Bank** 10.95-11.35 10,859-10,959 2,172-2,192 Upto 1%(min: Rs 750) Bandhan Bank 15.00-16.26 11,895-12,228 2,379-2,446 11.15-14.25 South Indian Bank 10,909-11,699 2,182-2,340 2% Rates as on January 9, 2020 Source: Paisabazaar.com

NEW CAR LOAN- RATES AND CHARGES EMI (Rs) **Processing fee** Loan amount Name of Bank Interest rate (%) 5 lakh (% of loan amount) Tenure-5 years Oriental Bank of Commerce 7.95-8.50 10,126-10,258 Rs 2,500-7,500 Rs 1000-7500 State Bank of India 8.65-12.10* 10,294-11,148 Axis Bank 9.05-11.30 Rs 3,500-5,500 10,391-10,946 **HDFC Bank** 8.80-10.00 10,331-10,624 Rs 3,000-10,000 **RBL Bank** 13.50-14.00 11,505-11,634 Up to 2% Indian Bank 8.85-9.20 10,343-10,428 upto Rs 10,236 Union Bank of India 8.20-8.70 10,186-10,307 up to 15,000 Punjab National Bank 8.55-9.00 10,270-10,379 up to 1,500 Bank of India 8.60-9.20 10,282-10,428 up to 5,000 South Indian Bank 9.05-9.80 10,391-10,574 Upto Rs 10,000 Canara Bank 8.45-11.05 Rs 1,000-5,000 10,246-10,884 Bank of Baroda 8.65-10.40 10.294-10.722 Rs 2.500-10.000 8.70 Rs 500-10,000 Indian Overseas Banl 10,307 Rs 1,500-2.500 Federal Bank 9.25 10,440 **Corporation Bank** 8.50-9.00 10,258-10,379 Nil till 31/01/2020 Rs 1000 IDBI Bank 10,343-10,489 8.85-9.45 Allahabad Bank 8.30-9.75 10,210-10,562 Upto Rs 8696 Dhanlaxmi Bank 9.95-10.55 10,611-10,759 *Additional concession of 0.25% on application via YONO. Further concession of 0.20% on purchase of EV Rates and charges as on January 9, 2020 Source: Paisabazaar.com

www.thehindu.com/education

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SUDHIR VARADARAJAN

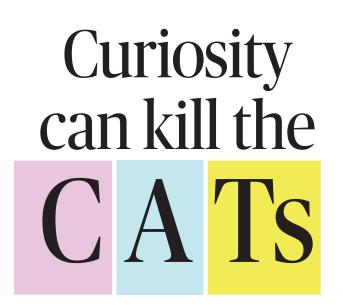
India, at present, is ranked 52nd in the Global Innovation Index. Policy-makers would like the country to leapfrog into the top 25 in the next few years. One of the visible signs of the policy initiatives, both in the academia and the industry, is the increased number and scale of innovation contests. Invariably, these contests target the engineering students, guided by an implicit assumption that young minds are better equipped to find creative solutions for the persistent problems faced by the industry and society.

Challenges

While innovation contests are not a bad idea, they have their limitations in producing innovation due to two reasons. First, it is difficult for students to produce radically new and practically feasible solutions without a deep appreciation of the problem's context. In most cases, the solutions tend to be techno-centric in nature like IoT/Blockchain-enabled farming. Second, students whose ideas are not shortlisted, lose interest in the problems and the contests. As a result, the contests may not be the best tools to seed a culture of

In order to develop a culture of innovation, it is important to pay attention to the key driver of creativity and innovation – curiosity. In the past couple of years, I have been doing a few exercises with students and experienced professionals to understand the relationship between curiosity, creativity and innovation. One of

It is difficult for students to produce radically new and practically feasible solutions without a deep appreciation of the problem's context.



To make a giant leap in the Global Innovation Index, institutions and faculty must do a serious rethink to cultivate curiosity among students

them involves asking the participants to observe things in their context and document on a piece of paper. To my surprise, I did not notice any difference in the way young minds and experienced professionals responded to the

For most of the participants, the context was either too familiar or did not exist at all and it did not trigger any curiosity. The few participants who did exhibit some curiosity, did not explore it. This behaviour can be traced to the fear of failure that is cultivated through our education, competitive exams, and risk-reward systems. And we seem to have accepted the phrase "curiosity killed the cat" as an axiom. I think it is time we put the negative connotation of curiosity to rest.

Today, there is an improved unrent times and integrating the di-

derstanding of curiosity, its inhibitors and enablers.

Research studies indicate that five types of curiosity are relevant for professional work - specific, diversive, social, perceptual and epistemic.

Engineers typically exhibit **specific curiosity**, i.e., curiosity to engage with specific problems like mathematical equations or puzzles. However, this type of curiosity tends to decline when the problem is either ambiguous or the knowledge gap is high.

Diversive curiosity is an interest to know a variety of things (seeking novelty). However, the interest to know a variety of things related to professional work reduces with increased specialisation. One way to overcome this is by deliberately shifting from one topic to another or taking cross functional roles at diffeverse experiences. Diversive curiosity helps deal with ambiguity in problem-solving and boosts creativity.

Social curiosity is the interest to know about other people. Cultivating social curiosity requires a pluralistic, non-judgmental way of engagement. Engineers can learn from anthropologists. Social curiosity can open possibilities for collaboration which can help address knowledge gaps and lead to new meanings.

The fourth type – **perceptual curiosity** – is very natural to all of us. Anything new in our context easily excites us. However,

perceptual curiosity reduces as familiarity increases. We stop observing or seeing everyday routine things. Lack of perceptual curiosity can affect both diversive and social curiosity. Artists and designers know how to cultivate perceptual curiosity. That is the reason why engineers today are being asked to learn from artists

Finally, there is **epistemic curiosity** that is critical to developing creative confidence. It is the process of learning to create new knowledge, which can happen only by trying things out or testing the hypothesis, i.e., problembased learning.

Academic institutions and faculty must do a serious rethink to cultivate curiosity among students. A good starting point is to revisit Anatole France's observation that "the whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards". Maybe the character 'c' in the word faculty is meant to highlight the central role of curiosity. In other words, what would be a faculty without

One way to drive home the point is to make curiosity an important parameter in faculty evaluation and recruitment. If institutions take steps in this direction, then at least in 10 years from now, we can create an environment where increased curiosity among engineering students kills the blind pursuit of CAT, GATE and other competitive exams and enhances the creative confidence to pursue innovation and entrepreneurship. Only this can help the country make a giant leap in the Global Innovation Index.

The writer is Dean (Design. Innovation & Incubation), IIITDM

STUDY ABROAD

History, Hebrew and the future

Israel is the new education hotspot for research and more

■ DEEKSHA TERI

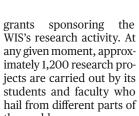
Gone are the days when a handful of countries were considered to be desirable study locations for higher education. Now, there are no geographical limits as students are considering countries other than firstworld countries. Countries, too, are putting in efforts to make themselves student-friendly. One such upcoming study destination is Israel.

It is globally known as 'The Start-Up Nation' and 'the Land of Innovation'. One of the main reasons for it is Israel's advanced higher education system, highly regarded worldwide, with institutes rated among the top 200 universities to-

"All these universities are armed with the best teaching staff and resources which can help shape the future of their students. For foreign students, Israeli universities, and other higher education institutions offer a wide range of programmes and facilities, in even niche research areas, at a much more affordable cost, relative to institutions equivalent across the globe," says Yaakov Finkelstein, Consul General of Israel.

With 1.4% of its current student population being international, Israel is slowly gaining consideration amongst Indian students who are looking at quality higher education and research.

Weizmann Institute of Science (WIS) is one of the leading institutes in Israel that has been attracting young India researchers. Located in Rehovot, and spread over 200 acres of land, this institute is one of the world's top-ranking multidisciplinary research institutions. It was founded in 1941 by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the first President of Israel, has around 1,000



the world. WIS comprises almost 18 departments organised into five faculties: Mathematics and Computer Science. Physics, Chemistry, Bioaddition to this, there is the Feinberg Graduate School and the Davidson Institute of Science Education. Among its faculty are one Nobel Prize, seven Wolf Prize, three Turing Award, two Japan Prize and 33 Is-

ity graduates and to make sure that they leave the campus fully equipped with the best theoretical and practical knowledge of their field, the institute provides the best of equipment to its researchers.

Admission

The admission process for the WIS is straightforward. The institute offers master's, doctorate and postdoctorate programmes in science, and the selection process is based on the practical and theoretical knowledge that the applicant possesses (which is tested by the respective faculty members), rather than a conventional merit-

based system. In order to be a part of



scholarship. chemistry and Biology. In rael Prize winners.

To assure top-class qual-

the programmes, interested candidates need to draft a pitch of their work and contact the respective faculty. Following this, a video/voice interview along with an academic background check is conducted by the faculty. The selected candidates are automatically awarded a full

Diversity

In order to attract international students and maintain diversity in the campus, the Institute's official language is English. This not only helps the international students feel comfortable, but also helps the researchers and the Institute maintain a global image. Interestingly, WIS is one of



All these universities are armed with the best teaching staff and resources which can help shape the future of their students.

the few institutes that has the highest number of Indian students, followed by Chinese and German stu-

The few selected courses which are locally-based are taught in Hebrew but are translated aptly and simultaneously in English for non-Hebrew speakers.

The campus also comes together to celebrate festivals from different parts of the world. Be it Holi or Deepavali, the Indian community, with the help of the International Office (IO), hosts celebratory cultural evenings that are open to all.

The IO also helps the new-arrivals with sorting out their bank and accommodation processes to make the shift to a new country smooth. It also arranges Hebrew lessons for interested students which helps them in reading, writing and speaking basic Hebrew, making their stay

Considering that many PhD and post-doctoral students come with their partners, the IO also extends support to their families, providing them a friendly lounge to meet and greet people from similar cultural backgrounds, and even supporting them during maternity periods for expectant mothers.

The writer was in Israel at the invitation of the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel.



and designers.

A slice of freedom

Academic life in the U.S. taught Arun to be independent and responsible



I distinctly reorientation day, Mr. Cody, Internathe tional Advisor said, "America is all about independence and choice". As I enter the last

semester of my Master of Electrical Engineering thesis programme, with a specialisation in power systems at Washington State University (WSU), I realise how much the statement has resonated with me and stayed on, over the course of the last 18 months.

Located in the Pacific Northwest region of the U.S. and set in a small town called Pullman, WSU offered me a wonderful opportunity to experience the American slice of life. The city is sparsely populated with just about 30,000

Independence and self-reliance

One major difference I perceived in the academic life in the U.S. is that a student is expected to be independent and responsible for their own course work and performance. Research experiences also vary depending on the faculty background and seniority. The courses are outcome-based and in some of them, there is a flexibility of deciding end-goals



and also received a full tuition waiver and

intensive.

a generous monthly stipend. **Intensive** The power systems courses that I am pursuing involve actual case studies including those which the professors have worked on, guest lectures from industry experts, use of actual industrial software and discussion of recent events within the domain. The programme also spon-

sored my travel and stay expenses for

IEEE Power and Energy general meeting

as well. In general, the programme in-

volves a lot of self-reading and is quite

Following my sterling academic per-

formance in the first semester, I was ad-

vised by my faculty to switch to thesis,

though research had not been on my ra-

dar during the application process. As a

thesis student, I got the opportunity to be

a part of the department's research work

and other power-related conferences. In addition to the coursework, there are a lot of on-campus resources such as free Professional Development Initiative (PDI) events for communication, leadership skills, a robust career services office. numerous student organisations (close to 300) and recreation centre.

Arun Abhishek Imayakumar is a second year student of MS in Electrical Engineering at Washington State University, Pullman, the

SCHOLARSHIPS

■ University of Warwick PAIS **PhD Studentship**

The Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick, has announced this studentship for those who wish to start a PhD programme in PAIS. Selected students will get multiple benefits. **ELIGIBILITY:** Students who have obtained a master's-level degree in a relevant subject area from a recognised institution of higher education by September 30, and have a strong undergraduate qualification in a relevant

subject area can apply. PRIZES AND REWARDS: Selected scholars will receive payment of full academic fees and maintenance grant in line with the U.K. Research Council standard stipend for up to three-and-a-half years. **DEADLINE:** January 16 APPLICATION: Online http://www.b4s.in/edge/UOP1

■ CFA Institute Womens Scholarships

CFA Institute, the U.S., has announced this scholarship for girl candidates around the world who are interested in earning the CFA charter. **ELIGIBILITY:** Women candidates from all over the world, who are interested in earning the

CFA charter. PRIZES AND REWARDS: Those selected will get the deduction in the CFA Program enrolment fee and the exam registration fee is reduced to \$350. **DEADLINE: February 01** APPLICATION: Online http://www.b4s.in/ edge/CFA5

■ Holland Scholarship

Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, in collaboration with Dutch research universities and universities of applied science, has announced this scholarship for the bachelor's and master's students from outside the European Economic Area (EEA). **ELIGIBILITY:** Students coming

from non-EEA nations who have applied for a full-time bachelor's or master's programme at one of the participating Dutch higher education institutions and meet the specific requirements of the institution of choice can apply for this scholarship. Applicant must not have a degree from an education institution in the Netherlands. PRIZES AND REWARDS: Those

selected scholars will get €5,000 in the first year of their studies. **DEALINE:** February 01 APPLICATION: Online http://www.b4s.in/ edge/HST1

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

Imagine meeting a doctor for a tummy ache, and instead finding yourself at the receiving end of "conversion therapy"! If you are a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, this could be a reality, and seeking professional help for your health can be an uphill task.

"The challenge begins with opening up to a doctor or counsellor – you aren't sure if the person is homophobic, neutral or accepting", says Dr. Prasad Raj Dandekar, a radiation oncologist and founder of Health Professionals for Queer Indians (HPQI). While judgemental professionals, who are dismissive of the patient or who hurl accusations of "sinning" are obvious red flags, Dr. Dandekar emphasises that, "You need someone who is not just compassionate, but working with you, for you". Professionals have to understand the nuanced needs of the community, and HPQI aims to educate them on this.

Challenges aplenty

An upcoming conference by HPQI, in February, focusses on mental health issues faced by the community, and with good reason. "The queer community is one of the more marginalised within the field of mental health itself," says Raivi Mariwala, Director at the Mariwala Health Initiative (MHI), which funds It's not that queer

Living with an identity that's stigmatised across society takes a toll on one's mental well-being. Much needs to be done to enhance the quality of mental health care of the LGBTQIA community



mental health initiatives, especially those that grant access to help for marginalised persons and communities. She points to how, for a long time, homosexuality was declared a perversion and gender beyond the binary (i.e., of masculine and feminine) was pathologised. Members of the community still experience feelings of isolation and invisibility, and a fearfulness to trust those we would consider "traditional" caregivers (parents, teachers, and so on.).

Living with an identity that's stigmatised across the board - in learning curriculum, law and in society itself – is bound to take a toll on one's mental health. The challenge is to find a practitioner who understands this context.

Recognising this, MHI collaborat-

ed with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) to offer a course on Queer Affirmative Counselling Practice (QACP). This aims to equip mental health practitioners, or MHPs, with a better perspective on the community, the unique life stressors that its members face, and modified approaches to traditional mental health practices.

"Unless the therapist questions his/her own idea of what constitutes "normal" and "abnormal", the "root" of a mental health problem will be traced to the individual's inability to cope, without looking at the monumental challenges that the individual has to cope with," says Pooja Nair, independent MHP and a faculty member in the QACP course. She empha-

sises the importance of listening to

and learning from queer voices. In fact, the QACP course has been designed by people who are queer and MHPs themselves.

Reaching out

Over the decades, a lot of the heavy lifting for mental health has been done – largely unfunded – by queer collectives: members of the community, reaching out to provide emotional support to their peers through difficult times, even meeting with family members. Mariwala recommends that those seeking therapy also ask their counsellor for referrals to peer support groups, so that they have other queer people to reach out to.

There is still a long way to go to enhance the quality of care to the community. "What needs to be

done is changing people's mindset," says Dr. Dandekar. He advocates doing this early. For instance, by training medical college students, "You develop inclusive doctors who are open to learning." Similarly, Nair views educating students - both aspiring MHPs and others - as essential. "We need to push for the institutionalising of material that comes from the margins. The textbooks do not reflect the reality."

Says Dr. Dandekar, "I change the mindset of doctors, but in each walk of life we need to do that. Don't wait for the activists and others to do something about it."

The writer is a psychologist and management consultant. krithvis@gmail.com

KNOWL EDGE

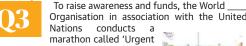
Google, for the last few years, has worked on a project called Makani. India could be one of the first countries for its commercial

launch. It is a project which aims at generating power with minimum

pollution It aims to harness energy by using what specific device, that is especially visible in India during the month of

Joseph Cyril Bamford Excavators Limited was a major sponsor for the Williams F1 Formula 1 team with its logo prominently displayed on F1 cars for the 2018 season.

It is a British multinational corporation which manufactures equipment for agriculture, construction and demolition. How do we better know this company?



marathon called 'Urgent Run' in Paris. The theme for the 2018 Day was 'When Nature

Name the organisation and its main area of impact.

COURTESY: WALNUT KNOWLEDGE SOLUTIONS



Al. Kite

Pore over the document



KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

S. UPENDRAN

What is the difference between 'pour' and 'pore'? (Vinay Kohli, New Delhi)

Both words are pronounced the same way - they rhyme with 'four', 'door' and 'bore'. The word 'pour' is mostly used as a verb to mean 'to flow in a steady stream'. The word can be used with both animate and inanimate objects. For example, when we are in a restaurant, every now and then, the waiter comes and pours water into our glass. Whenever there is an agitation of sorts, newspapers report that people 'poured' into the streets. The use of the word suggests that people entered in large numbers in a steady stream. We also hear about 'letters pouring in' and 'money pouring in'. The word 'pore', on the hand, can be used as a noun and a verb. A 'pore' is a tiny opening that allows things – liquid, gas, and so on – to go through. For example, sweat comes out through the pores in our body. The expression 'pore over' is frequently used in everyday contexts to mean 'to focus intently'. When you pore over a document or a textbook, you go through it carefully. You are focussed on what you are reading.

When do we use 'Yours sincerely' and 'Yours faithfully' in letters? (S Radha, Chennai)

Do people actually write letters, nowadays? Both are used in formal letters and not intimate ones. If you mistakenly use either with your significant other (husband, wife, boyfriend, and so on), you have some serious explaining to do. It is unlikely to go down well with the person. The expression 'Yours faithfully' is mostly used when you are writing to someone whose name you do not know. Such letters usually begin with 'Dear Sir/Madam'. The closing 'Yours sincerely', on the other hand, is mostly used in formal contexts when you know the name of the person you are writing to – Dear Dr. Rao or Dear Mrs. Raman. Books on usage suggest that Americans prefer to use 'Yours truly' instead of 'Yours faithfully', and 'Sincerely yours' rather than 'Yours sincerely'.

What is the meaning of 'run someone off her feet'? (Naresh Kumar, Tiruchi)

When you tell someone that she/he is going to be 'run/rushed off her/his feet', what you are suggesting is that she/he is going to be kept extremely busy for some time. She/he is going to have a series of jobs to do, one after the other, and will have little or no time to rest. She/he is going to be on her/his feet all

It is your sister's wedding. You can bet you are going to be rushed off your

With both kids falling ill, poor Vrinda was run off her feet.

This New Year, I resolved to lead a better life. Now all I have to do is to find someone who will trade lives with me. Melanie White

The writer teaches at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. upendrankye@gmail.com

INNOVATION

Intelligence at play

Roanuz offers students an opportunity to use sports data and build their own web platforms

ARCHANA SUBRAMANIAN

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming various sectors across the world, and how! However, the surprise element is its ability to bring about a volley of changes even in a dynamic sector like sports. Its innovative application in the sports and gaming industry has steered the way forward for online platforms, like Roanuz Sports, India's pioneering AI-driven fanta-

sy sports platform. Roanuz Softwares is a sports intelligence and technology company that makes applications and services using artificial intelligence. Its subsidiary, Roanuz Sports, offers application program interface (API), giving users access to quality sports data - at affordable cost with no long-term contract that can be integrated into their own web platforms.

Anto Kaspar, Founder and CEO of Roanuz, tells us more about this application and how students can benefit from it.

Opportunity

"This platform has created a great opportunity for students to build a cricket, football, kabaddi fantasy app or live sports score website or blog by themselves with the support of our sports data. Once live, they can then sell

to consumers and monetise their app or platform. During a live cricket/ football/ kabaddi match, students can approach cafes, e-commerce websites or any platforms that like to show live scores to their consumers, and pitch their fantasy app or sports website. By building such products, students can learn about sports data and the impact of AI in the sports industry and eventually build their

"All they need is minimal knowledge of coding and the Roanuz team will support them with the rest. During the training, which is free, the Roanuz team will support the students until they complete the app and provide data during the live matches.

"Though cricket has been a do-

minant force in the sports industry, other sports are also getting enough attention these days with the emergence of Indian Super League (ISL) for football, Kabbadi League, Hockey Indian League (HIL), Premier Badminton League (PBL), Pro Volleyball League and so on. As of now, we have our API in the following sports - cricket, football and kabbadi and will guide students in those areas."

Students can connect on contact@roanuz.com for more de-

VALUE ADD

■ NITINA DUA

The age-old Greek saying by philosopher Heraclitus – The only constant in life is change – applies to every aspect of life, including education. It needs to keep pace with the ever-swiftly changing world today. As educators, we need to realise that the critical need of the hour is to provide relevant educational experiences, which include providing life skills, critical thinking abilities, problem-solving faculties and experiences that nurture a child's passion and creativity. Good education is vital not only for an individual to lead a happy and fulfilling life, but also to ensure the well-being of our societies.

John Dewey, one of the foremost American educational reformers, laid great emphasis on practical learning for both students and teachers, saying that students should be given something to 'do' and not something to 'learn', and the nature of that 'doing' must entail 'thinking'. Internships during the high school years, provide an unparalleled opportunity for this kind of practical experiences. It familiarises them with a professional space, helps them make informed choices for further studies and helps them develop the confidence and skills that they would need for opportunities in the future.

My students have had some great experiences while interning at various organisations across domains, learning some invaluable lessons, which, perhaps could not be taught in a classroom setting.



Beyond classrooms

Corporate internships give students an opportunity to take learning beyond the four walls of their study spaces

Some pointers

Explore, experience: During their formative years, it is always important to let students try things that they may never have tried before. This allows them to determine where their interests and natural skills lie. Trishan Dollny, who interned at Shiksha.com, worked closely with his mentor and understood the various facets of the job on hand. He was given great advice by his mentor, which was to look at various career possibilities, but at the end of the day to completely focus on what he would like to do. This can be applied to problem-solving as well, sort of a trial-and-error method. One can try out different approaches until he or she discovers the correct solution.

thyself: SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) analysis for a student is a great idea to strategically review an individual's attributes. While considering the abilities of a student, it is equally important to contemplate a student's weaknesses in order to work on improving these particular aspects. Be aware of areas in which the student might need encouragement and extra help, while also remembering that weaknesses can, in some cases, be an alliance to their strengths.

Prepare for the future: Students must think and plan ahead to be at the head of the queue in today's competitive world, from college admissions to job prospects. The purpose of

internships, at this point, is to help students consider the challenges that may arise as they continue on their path. Arul Kumar, who is passionate about engineering and also wishes to pursue the subject in his undergraduate level, had the opportunity to intern at IndiGo airin the engineering department. He was able to apply the concepts he had learnt in class in a practical context. Such experiences help students become more determined to reach their goals.

Move out of your comfort zone: It is always favourable for a student to be on the driver's seat and internships provide a map to get them started. They are eventually going to find that whether in their careers or in their lives in general, there are going to be some roadblocks; the faster they realise this, the

All-round development: Besides, gaining knowledge of how a professional organisation operates, internships help students learn about different career opportunities, develop good work ethics and professional attitude, improve their communication skills and inculcate a sense of responsibility. These characteristics can further motivate their interest in other school subjects and activities. Understanding the IQ (Intelligent Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient), SQ (Social Quotient) and the CQ (Cultural Quotient) are critical to the ever changing world of work. Internships ensure that students nurture these qualities from an early age.

The writer is Lead, Career Development Centre at Shiv Nadar School, Noida

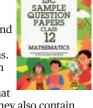
ON THE SHELF

■ NIDHARSHANA RAJU

ISC Sample question papers, Class XII, English paper 1 and 2

Price:₹199

Publisher: Oswall Books Preparation is key for all exams and it never sides with being an option. English exams often demand students to travel an extra mile to fare well and divulge their opinions. These books provide students with sample question papers to expose them to a vast pool of questions that



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CBSE 2020 Sample question papers, Class XII **Price**: ₹149

Publisher: Oswall Books Before exams begin, it is

important for students to solve sample papers and assess the lessons that they are weak in and prepare, to improve their confidence levels. This can be attained with this book as it consists of question papers for 10 subjects, namely, economics, mathematics, physical education,



business studies, accountancy, informatics practices, entrepreneurship, computer science, english and

ETCETERA

Future News Worldwide 2020

Future News Worldwide will take place in July at London. Hundred fully-funded places are available for the students. This opportunity is available to undergraduate and postgraduate students who are between 18-25 years of age. Applications are open until February 24. https://www.britishcouncil.org/future-news-

worldwide

New Chancellor for QUB

Queen's University, Belfast recently appointed Hillary Rodham Clinton as its new Chancellor. She received an honorary doctorate from Queen's last year and now is the university's 11th and first female Chancellor. She will perform the ceremonial role, ambassadorial role and also act as an advisor.

...... **EAR SHOT**

ASHOK RAJAGOPALAN





'My choices are on the strength of story, not gender'

Meghna Gulzar on the process of writing and collaboration, the lure of the story and working with Deepika Padukone for *Chhapaak*

NAMRATA JOSHI

Almost five years after Talvar (with a *Raazi* in the middle) filmmaker Meghna Gulzar is set to present yet another cinematic take on a real life story, that of the acid attack survivor Laxmi Agarwal. Meghna is parked at the Taj Lands End, Bandra, on a day crammed with interviews for Chhapaak. "It's like that when you are leading up to putting your film out there," she says in a hushed voice sitting in one corner of a huge hall that's being set up for TV interactions. With little time on hand for small talk and pleasantries we launch straight into the questions:

Whose idea was it to make a film on acid attack survivor Laxmi Agarwal?

It was my idea. I wrote the script in 2016 after Talvar. I was looking for [such] subjects because Talvar was my first film on [a] true life [incident]. Raazi was nowhere in the ether at that time. I came across this issue of acid violence. I collaborated with my co-writer Atika Chohan. When you start researching on acid violence, Laxmi Agarwal's case comes to the fore because it's a landmark case for many reasons.

We put a structure based on the information in public domain, and then we reached out to her to get her agreement on doing this. Once she agreed we spent time with her where we just let her speak and tell her story so that we could then supplement our own structure with her narrative.

Then meeting players in the story-her lawyer, her surgeon, her father's employer. After Raazi, I



Behing the camera: Meghna Gulzar on the sets of Chhapaak • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

realised let's make Chhapaak when I had reached out to Deepika [Padukone] last

Why did you have to put it on hold after Talvar?

I didn't put it on hold. Raazi just surfaced. Talvar and Chhapaak are very similar in terms of the worlds. Both are Delhi-based, both are on an act of violence. I thought it would get kind of monotonous to do this.

Raazi just came and took a

life of its own. It came together in a year-and-a half – from scripting to release. You don't plan these things. Scripts have their own destiny.

What about real incidents is challenging to you as a filmmaker?

[A] couple of things actually. One, strong stories which have a purpose. Story can be strong but does it have resonance? Strong characters which could be role models or could be negative but they need to be strong. Third thing: my own instinctive reaction to the story is actually the moot point.

If I instinctively get grabbed by the story-oh god, this is the story I want to tell-then all other considerations become secondary.

How easy was it to get Deepika to agree?

Instant. Most unexpected and a very very beautiful surprise. I am guessing it's [to do

with] the story and the significance of it. I just met her, the narration I gave her three months later.

Where do you intervene as a filmmaker when you are dealing with the real world? It couldn't have been a documentary, right? Where has the fiction come into play?

I think only in the narrative order, where you play with the screenplay. You try to tell it in a non-linear order, you try to tell it in an aesthetic way so your cinematography, costume, production design.

You play with the tools that you have at your disposal. You use the cinematic tools effectively, but you don't touch the authenticity of the facts. That's my principle as a filmmaker.

Was Chhapaak easier than Talvar then?

No, it wasn't. They are as complex and as challenging in their own right.

We celebrated Raazi as this women-led ₹100 crore film. How easy or difficult has your life become after that tag?

I think the path got easier after Talvar. It was also a commercial success, considering what it was made at and what it earned. It started from

Two things play a part here. One is, of course, the success of your previous film. Second, what is the cinematic environment at that time. When studios, actors, producers [believe] in slightly unconventional content or content that is not templated and the audience is also appreciating and accepting it, then it becomes easier to tell an unconventional story. And, of course, [the] success of your previous film works in tangent with that.

Do women protagonists come subconsciously to

It's an interpretation of the media. Filhaal was not about two women protagonists; it was about surrogacy. Surrogacy cannot happen without a man. Just Married was about an arranged marriage which cannot happen without men. Talvar was an investigative procedural whose lead was Irrfan Khan. Then there was *Raazi* which was more about human sacrifice. Sehmat could very well have been a 19-year-old boy. It was not as though, it was a boy but I made it a girl because I wanted to tell a femaleoriented story. My choices are based on the strength and potency of the story and the characters, and has very little to do with the gender.

What you have now is

contemporary...

Then I will go back to 1920. [For] the Sam Manekshaw film, Vicky [Kaushal] is playing the part [and] RSVP is producing it. I require nine months to a year of prep. Particularly for the kind of film it is, [and] the kind of detailing and research that is required. We start production in 2021. I do need a break for a couple of months to [work] Chhapaak out of my system. I have lived with something for a year-and-a-half. It can't snap out on the day of release. It takes its own process.

Are you again collaborating on the Maneckshaw film?

I love collaborating. I love the energy that pours into a script in collaborating. It's the flow and exchange of ideas. You know the domino effect, how the dominoes start falling. Sitting with my writers is just the opposite. The scenes start standing. They start getting populated. It's just banter through which it happens. For [the] Maneckshaw film I am collaborating with Bhavani Iyer of Raazi and Shantanu Srivastava who wrote Badhaai

So you bounce ideas off each other?

We talk and make notes of what we have agreed on and then one person will structure it and it will come to the next for another layer and then to the third for another layer. Then we put it all together and circulate it. Every sequence is actually going through three passes. Very [rarely do] you have your semi-final draft in your first

DOWN MEMORY LANE

+ The memory of the Italian crib

Christians believe that three Wise Men visited Jesus on his birth, the day of the Epiphany



R. V. SMITH

If you went past the Sacred Heart Cathedral any time between Christmas and January 6, known as Epiphany day and celebrated by Shakespeare in his play Twelfth Night, you are sure to have seen the crib depicting the manger in which Christ was born. Along with this would have been small statues of the Magi or three Wise Men from the East who went to worship him. It was a bright star which led them on their journey. The Nativity scene brings to mind a grander crib which was brought from Italy by the Greek merchant John's family and presented to the Cathedral in Agra before the Cathedral in Delhi was built.

The life-size statues of Baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Wise Men, shepherds and their sheep have been maintained with great care for many decades. The cracked arms and crowns of the magi have been taped and so also the horn of the shepherd. Incidentally three men, probably from the Russian Embassy stopped by the church to see the crib which reminded them of their Orthodox Church. For them, Christmas, fell on January 7, and they must have missed the three midwives who, according to their belief came for Jesus' delivery.



Coming into the world A nativity scene • THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Now there hangs a tale from the Italian crib dating back to 1938 and one is reminded of it year after year on January 6th, as it also marks the birthday of this scribe and is well worth repeating: It was a Thursday with the sweet aroma of josssticks lingering in the winter air and the parting kick of Christmas. The church bells had just pealed the Angelus, and the old Archbishop crossed himself thrice while a young woman, who was just 18 years old, tried to control her pangs of labour.

"Thursday's child is weeping and gnashing", says the old rhyme and Ruby wanted to prolong her labour so that the birth of her first-born could be delayed until after midnight. Evening marks the end of day and the advent of night. It was the time when the lamplighter came running into the gullies over 80 years ago.

He came again that day, lighting the lamps which had lain barren from cock-crow to twilight. His lamps flickered in the frosty air much like the stars overhead and in the nearby house a young poet echoed the memorable lines: "Shama jalao bahut udaas hai sham", for the evening was indeed sad and needed a lamp to brighten it.

As if infected by the mood, a baker, tired after the day's work, came and stood at the shrine of the Sayyid

Baba outside Ruby's house. He had bought joss-sticks, batasas, candles and flowers. It was Thursday and the aroma of this ritual day hung heavy over Azam Khan's locality. Ruby watched it all from the window upstairs. She wondered what blessings the man sought, perhaps riches, an end to worry, recovery from an illness, or the welfare of his wife and children.

Two streets away evening was being ushered in to the sound of the tabla and the harmonium and the beat of ghungroos on tender feet as the courtesans of the city got into stride after sundown. The Lotharios were aware of this as they made their way to them. They had garlands in their hands, kaajal in their eyes and the sweet scent of Hina pervaded their

Just then Ruby's husband Tom hurried by on his bicycle. One of the Lotharios recognised him and winked in greeting. He knew this young acquaintance was not one of those who spent their evenings above the marketplace where the courtesans had their quarters. He was a sincere sort of person, wise beyond his years and one who worked hard for a living. He had a big family to support: brothers, an unmarried sister and a paranoid mother. His first wife had died in childbirth two years ago. He had to marry again because of domestic compulsions. It was his second wife who was now in labour. Tom cycled on. Meanwhile, Ruby clung to her quilt, bit her lip and gripped the hand of the midwife tight while her sister-in-law stroked her curly hair. The door chain clanged, somebody opened it and in walked Tom, tired and breathless. Ruby could hold herself no longer. She delivered there and then on the cot.

Tom tiptoed into the room and peered at his wife. She smiled weakly and pointed towards the little figure beside her: "It's the feast of the Three Kings", she said. Tom put his hand on the baby's brow. "The gift of the Magi", he replied as he blew a kiss to Ruby and walked out beaming with delight. They are both dead now but the much repaired Italian crib is still there as a reminder.

The writer is a seasoned chronicler

Corrigendum: In the column 'The Parsi link with Delhi' by R.V. Smith dated January 6th, 2019, the term Parsi was mistakenly used to refer to the Zoroastrians in Iran. In fact, Parsi is only used to refer to the community after they came to India. The error is regretted.

What's cooking this Sankranti?

Homemakers and chefs from different regions on their harvest season favourites that you can whip up at home

Uttarayan in Gujarat, Lohri and Maghi in Punjab, and Pana Sankranti in Odisha are essentially celebrations for the same reason, but each is a different kaleidoscope of rituals, traditions and food.

When it comes to food, ingredients like sesame seeds aka til, jaggery, rice, groundnuts, harvest vegetables and sugarcane are quintessential. Here is a look at some regional delicacies prepared on this special day.

Sesame post-solstice

A highly significant festival that marks the passing of the winter solstice, Maghi in Punjab is celebrated with great fervour. The day before is celebrated with a bonfire as Lohri, and it is customary to consume the produce from the new harvest during this day.

Apart from sarson da saag and gur ki roti, til ki barfi (sesame seed cake) is a signature preparation in this region. It is a crunchy delight made from the goodness of roasted sesame which is ground, jaggery, pure ghee and a hint of cardamom.

"Makar Shankranti is incomplete without *til-gud*. It is a tradition that dates over 100 years and every household makes sweets with these two ingredients. Til and gud also have medicinal properties, so it is believed to keep the body warm and increase immunity," says chef Rudra, The Reservoire, Bengaluru.

Undhiyu for Uttarayan

Cultural vibrance, kite flying, peanut chikkis and undhiyu - arguably Gujarat's most famous dish - dominate Makar Sankranti in the State. Undhiyu literally means 'upside down', and is an assortment of freshly grown vegetables like surti papdi (hyacinth beans), kand (purple yam), sweet potatoes, raw bananas, tuvar (pigeon peas), brinjal and potatoes. "The dish, which has several variations, enjoys a cult status in Gujarat," says Hetal Shah, a homemaker from

The elaborate dish also involves



Homemade constants Undhiyu (top) is a vegetarian speciality of Gujarat; Til ki barfi is a seasonal favourite in Punjab • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

the preparation of *methi muthiyas* (steamed or deep-fried fenugreek leaf dumplings) cooked along with the vegetables in a medley of aromatic, heat-generating spices like ginger, garlic, coconut and green chillies, "Undhiyu is originally a regional speciality of Surat. The dish is a seasonal one, comprising of vegetables that are available on the South Gujarat coastline. Since Makar Sankranti is an ode to the harvest season, undhiyu is traditionally made using all the crops harvested around this time," says chef Govind of Masala Mandi, Bengaluru.

Feast from the far East

Along with holy dips and special prayers, makara chaula made from freshly harvested rice is a speciality of Odisha during Sankranti. "This is a traditional recipe made using fragrant ground rice that is fresh from the first harvest. It is added along with milk, cottage cheese, sugarcane, jaggery,

pinch of cinnamon is our secret ingredient," says chef Rajani Kanta Raj of The Belgadia Palace located in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha.

ginger, pepper and cut fruits. A small

For an authentic taste, it is garnished with fruits and rose petals soaked overnight in honey for a fragrant aroma and flavour, adds Arunima Das, a homemaker from Puri.

Til ki barfi

INGREDIENTS

- 200 gms grated jaggery 200 gms white sesame seeds
- 5-6 tbsp pure ghee
- 1 tsp cardamom powder
- **METHOD** Roast the sesame seeds for 2-3 minutes in a non-stick pan till it changes its colour to golden brown. Allow to cool. Grind half of the quantity in a mixer and keep it aside. Take a

pan, add pure ghee and grated

jaggery. Add 2-3 tablespoons

of water. Let the jaggery dissolve completely. Add cardamom powder. It will start forming bubbles. Now add the ground sesame seeds and cook for a while. When it gets mixed properly, add the rest of the sesame seeds. Cool it down and set in a tray. After 30 minutes, cut it diagonally and it is ready.







All we can do is keep moving

In his memoir *Made in India*, runner-actor Milind Soman talks about why stress can actually be a good thing, as long as we know how to deal with it. His secret: run!

SWETA AKUNDI

Milind Soman is not a fan of revisiting the past, holding the belief that we must all "live in the moment". And yet, 25 years after the release of 'Made in India', the music video that shot him to viral fame, the runner-actor is releasing his memoir, with the very same title.

The book, co-written by author Roopa Pai and published by Penguin Random House, delves into his relationships: with the women in his life, with his business partners and the ever-lasting one – with fitness. He talks about his addiction and subsequent de-addiction to smoking, alcohol and rage.

The latter he gets from his late father, a man with whom he shared a complicated relationship. Admitting that one cannot blame genetics for everything, he advocates mindful anger. 'Take a step back, and decide if you need to be angry. If yes, then go ahead and vent it all out.'

In a conversation with us about the memoir, he says, "I actually have a bad memory. But there are

certain things in the past that have not left my mind. Things that I think about a lot without realising it." One of them is the day his pet rabbit died. It is this memory of when he was five that he chooses to start the book with, and continues right up to his marriage with Ankita Konwar.

Edited excerpts from the conversation:

Throughout the book, the anecdote of your first marathon runs as a central thread. What was the idea

behind that? • When Roopa suggested to use a central binding memory, I could have chosen any of the milestones in my life: my first half marathon in 2004, the first Ironman in 2019... But to me, my first marathon (42K) stood out. It was the first time that I faced such a challenge that I thought I might not be able to overcome, that was the only time I had even collapsed. This is the one time that because of my own overconfidence and arrogance, I had a bad time. I learnt a lot from it, so I thought it would be a good backdrop for the story.

The world today recognises burnouts, but in your book, you say stress being a good thing...

 Stress is a good thing, of course. Hunger, thirst are both stresses; if not for them, we would not survive. It is only the way we deal with stress that we need to examine. The way we are today, the space that we occupy on earth

has come from dealing with different kinds of stress, trying to surmount them, and making life better for ourselves.

Burnouts happen because people are not able to deal with stress in a positive way. To do that, you should have created and chosen your own challenges. Sports is a great way to train your mind for that. Running a marathon is a stressful event for your body, mind and spirit. But when you put yourself through that willingly, consciously and in a learning atmosphere, you begin to understand how to deal with any stressful situation in a way that does not drain you.

All stress can be used to better yourself, each individual has to understand how to use that particular stress – whether it is in your relationship, personal life, your own thoughts about yourself - to become a better person.

You say you have an 'obsessive' personality. How did that affect your addictions and your ability to quit them?

 My obsessive nature was what got me into these habits in the first place. But I was also obsessive about feeling physically, mentally and emotionally fit. That is something I could not let go of. As we grow older, we tend to accept that now we can't do the things we could when we were younger. But because of my nature, I kept needing new challenges to keep myself at the top of the game. So I was able to move in and out of experiences, saving myself from those that could be harmful in the long term.

As a model and actor, what do you think of the body neutrality movement? What has brought it on?

• Common sense, I guess! (Laughs) Looks definitely can take you a certain distance, but what is sustainable is performance. It is not just what your body looks like, but

what your body can do, and continue to do. Your body might change – you look different at 20, 40, 70.

We used to give up when our bodies started looking old at 40, but we need to go beyond that to continue performing activities that we enjoy, living life in the best way we



WRITING FOR MILIND

It was not happenstance that children's author Roopa Pai ended up writing Milind's memoir. Milind had specially requested that she be the one penning his voice down. "In 2016, during the Rio Olympics, every day I would write about one Indian sportsperson taking part in the games, and post it on Facebook, asking people to watch their performance." The series of posts became viral, was republished on various news websites, and garnered many fans for her writing. One of them was Milind Soman. Here, Roopa lists his quirks and her impressions of him, that she developed over the course of the seven months that they interacted.

"I found Milind very affable. Whenever somebody would ask him for a selfie, he would make them do push-ups! Men had to do 20, women had to do 10. He felt as a fitness evangelist, it was his responsibility to spread the message of fitness. So now with a picture of him, they will have that story to tell."

"He was always late! But when he was there, he was very focussed, no distractions, no celebrity drama, he wouldn't even check his phone."

"He is so sorted in his head, seems at peace with himself. Sure, there must be parts of him that he did not tell me about, but in my gut I felt there was a certain honesty about him, and a very large acceptance of who he was; he was very comfortable in his skin."

HYPE OR HAPPENING?

Mediterranean diet

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

The Mediterranean Diet has been declared the best diet for 2020 by U.S. News & World Report. So what is it and how does it work for Indians?

Nuts, cheese, fruit, fish-...What we term the Mediterranean Diet today was followed matter-of-factly by the inhabitants of Greece, Italy, Spain and other countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea for years.

There are a number of reasons to assume its effectiveness. The World Health Organization talks of its benefits in Europe's new Health Evidence Network Synthesis Report, saying it protects against cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes. But then it also says the same about The New Nordic diet, and also credited other Mediterranean habits – like shared eating practices, afternoon naps and lengthy meal-

times – for the health of people in the region.

In everyday terms, the appeal of this diet is clear: it relies heavily on local and seasonal. Morevoer, unlike some other diets, this one offers its followers plenty of choice.

The main foundation of the Mediterranean diet is a daily consumption of fresh vegetables, fruits, lentils, herbs, nuts and whole, unrefined grains. Besides these, there is also a strong emphasis on fish (had weekly) and other sources of healthy fat like olive oil.

The diet also allows for the consumption of dairy (particularly yoghurt and unprocessed varieties of cheese), poultry, and eggs. Red meat, however, is avoided or had only occasionally, as are foods rich in sugar. Medical research backsthe

diet. From 1984 to 2004, a studv funded and supported by the US-based National Institutes of Health (NIH) looked at the diet and health of 74,886 women aged between 38 and 63 years.

The researchers were



mainly looking for incidences of fatal and non-fatal stroke, and coronary heart disease (CHD), and computed their Alternate Mediterranean Diet Scores from data submitted by the women themselves. They concluded that "A greater adherence to the Mediterranean diet, as reflected by a higher Alternate Mediterranean Diet Score, was associated with a lower risk of incident CHD and

stroke

women." Bengaluru-

based dietician Sheela Krishnaswamy sees a couple of minor chinks in the diet, but finds it well-balanced on the whole. "It includes a lot of fish and nuts, so if you are allergic to either, you should avoid it. For vegetarians also, it might not work very well," she says, because of the emphasis on fish as a protein source, but also acknowledges that the diet itself offers a solution of sorts.

"Lentils are a part of the Mediterranean diet, but not recommended on a daily basis. Vegetarians who follow it, however, will need to have lentils daily for the protein intake, along with whole grains, fruit and vegetables," she explains. Having said that, however, she does laud the diet for covering all the nutrients a human body needs

"There is also enough fibre in the diet to ensure that one does not overeat," she adds.

In this column, we decode health trends and decide if it's all just 'hype' or actually 'happening'

POOCH CAFE









PEANUTS

imagine.









HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



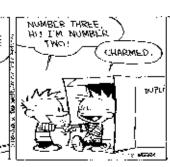


CALVIN AND HOBBES



GRAFFITI





To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code. form (5)

5 Disappointed (3,4)

TIGER

WUMO



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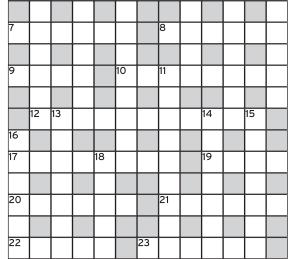
HEALTH CAPSULES®

Maria

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The solution will appear on January 14, 2020. Solution No. 13274

ZEROTOLERANCE

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PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

The last day of the '80s









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India's T20I squad for New Zealand tour named

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Rohit Sharma returned to the T20 squad while Sanju Samson was dropped for the five-match series in New Zealand, starting on January 24, according to a BCCI release.

The Mumbai opener was rested for the T20I series against Sri Lanka which the hosts won 2-0. There were no major surprises in the squad.

The release added that Vijay Shankar has been included in the India-A squad for the New Zealand tour since Hardik Pandya's rehabilitation process is taking longer than expected.

The selection committee, under outgoing chairman M.S.K. Prasad, did not announce the ODI and Test

The squad: Virat Kohli (Capt.), Rohit Sharma (vicecapt.), K.L. Rahul, Shikhar Dhawan, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant (wk). Shivam Dube, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Washing ton Sundar, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Navdeep Saini, Ravindra Jadeja, and Shardul Thakur.

The schedule: January 24 and 26: Auckland.

January 29: Hamilton. January 31: Wellington. February 2, Tauranga. (All matches start at 12.30

A good dilemma to have, says Rathour

The Rahul-Dhawan tussle for opener's slot continues

AMOL KARHADKAR

When Shikhar Dhawan injured his knee during the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, K.L. Rahul got a longer run at the top of the order during India's white-ball matches at home over the last couple of

Despite having proved his mettle, come Tuesday, Rahul may still have to be benched for the first of the three ODIs versus Australia.

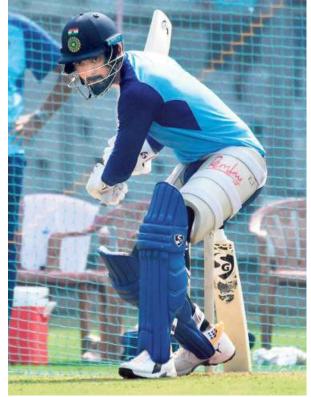
With Dhawan and Rahul coming good against Sri Lanka in last week's T20 series, it will be a toss-up between the two for the series-opener at the Wankhede Stadium.

Coach happyBatting coach Vikram Rathour was happy for the team management to be facing a "good dilemma" but stressed that only one of them would start the series.

"It's a good dilemma to have. Rohit is an obvious choice, of course, Both of them - Shikhar and Rahul are playing well. Shikhar has done well in one-dayers, Rahul is in great form, so we'll deal with it when we have to. There are still a couple of days to go.

'The management will sit down and make a choice. I don't see it as an issue, one of them will have to sit out," Rathour said on Sunday.

Over the last year, the team management has tried



Preparing in earnest: Despite a fine run in the Lanka series, Rahul's place is not assured as Rohit, right, is back. *PRASHANT NAKWE

to accommodate the triumvirate in ODIs. In last year's World Cup in England, Rahul started off at No. 4 with Kohli separating him and the openers before suffering an injury.

However, when Dhawan was sidelined, Rahul grabbed the opportunity to open the innings in ODIs.

Rahul complemented Rohit to perfection, garnering 185 runs at 61.67 and a strike

rate of 89, including a hundred and a fifty in three ODIs against Kieron Pollard's men.

Rathour. however. stressed the team management would avoid experimenting at the start of the ODI series like it did in the recent T20 contests.

"We did that in T20s, because we were willing to give them some game time. But,

against Australia, in the first game, we'll start with our best XI. And I think everyone will bat according to the order that has been tried out. As the series goes on, we'll see if we can experiment," he

Interestingly, Rohit and Rahul were among the six Indians to participate in the optional nets at the Wankhede scare, with a throwdown by Rathour hitting his thumb. But the vice-captain returned for another hit in no time and didn't look in discomfort. With the three openers at

Rohit even got an injury

their best, the team management will surely have its task cut out while finalising the team for the opener on Tues-

Sportstar Aces Awards to be given away today

The online poll received more than 2,10,000 votes

SPORTS BUREAU

The second edition of the Sportstar Aces Awards will be held at the Trident Hotel here on Monday, recognising and rewarding not just the athletes, but also the silent forces that work tirelessly – often behind the scenes - to produce champions.

The awards are an effort to highlight the untold stories of struggle, fierce dedication and selfless work behind an athlete's ascension, irrespective of the popularity of the sport. They will also look to create a medium of knowledge and vision exchange as all stakeholders of Indian sports

23 categories The Aces are being awarded in 23 categories. Voting was held to gauge the sentiment of the readers for 10 categories

are brought

Sportswoman of the Year for Cricket, Racquet Sports, Track and Field, Other Team Sports and Other Individual Sports.

The online poll received more than 2,10,000 votes.

The winners have been selected by a panel headed by cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar, and included THG Publishing Private Limited chairman N. Ram, former India hockey captain M.M. Somaya, Olympians Anjali Bhagwat, Aparna Popat and chess maestro Viswanathan Anand.

under one roof.



Sehwag thanks Tiger Pataudi

Former India opener and captain Virender Sehwag revealed on Sunday that former skipper Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi changed the way he approached Test cricket with a piece of advice.

"I did not want to let go of the opportunity to deliver the Tiger Pataudi Memorial Lecture as I have a personal relation with him," said Sehwag in his inimitable style while delivering the seventh Pataudi Lecture at the BCCI awards here on Sunday.

"I had watched his batting videos, but had never spoke to him. I usually do not take anybody's advice. But Tiger Pataudi sir gave me an advice which changed the way I played Test cricket. I am ever so grateful to him for the advice," revealed Sehwag.

"One of my last interactions with him was about Delhi cricket, when Arun Jaitley ii called us to his home to help restructure and revive and streamline



Holding court: Virender Sehwag delivering the seventh Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi Lecture. •PTI

Delhi cricket," he added.

On BCCI president and former India captain Sourav Ganguly, Sehwag said he is always the "boss".

"Sourav Ganguly is the boss. He was the boss of the Indian cricket team and made me open the batting. And now he is the boss of BCCI," he said.

Sehwag, who wished the Priyam Garg-led India un-

der-19 World Cup team, hoped Virat Kohli would lift the ICC T20 World Cup in Australia in October.

"I hope Virat lifts the T20 World Cup in Australia... but do remember Test cricket in your thoughts as well. It needs your best wishes to remain in the 'pink' of its health," said Sehwag, who played 104 Tests, 251 ODIs and 19 T20Is for India.

BCCI set to appoint Madan Lal and Gambhir as CAC members

VIJAY LOKAPALLY

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has approached World Cup winners Madan Lal and Gautam Gambhir to be a part of the Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC).

Willing

K. Srikkanth

The former Delhi giants confirmed to The Hindu that they are willing to be a part of CAC.

While Madan Lal, the 1983 World Cup winner who also served as India coach in the 1990s, said he is "willing to contribute to Indian cricket in every possible way", Gambhir said he has given his consent to the

The CAC's formation has been delayed since the new BCCI dispensation, headed

by Sourav Ganguly, has made a plea to the Supreme Court seeking relaxation in the Conflict of Interest

Considering the apex court may hear the case on January 14, the BCCI has swung into action.

If the Supreme Court gives its nod, the BCCI will reconstitute the CAC at the earliest so that in can set in place the procedure to appoint revised selection committees.

The first CAC, appointed in 2015, included Sachin Tendulkar, V.V.S. Laxman and Ganguly.

After the conflict clause came into place, all the three backed out.

As a result, an interim CAC headed by Kapil Dev was involved while appointing Ravi Shastri as the head

Richa picked for T20 WC

Rewarded for consistent performances at domestic level

SHAYAN ACHARYA

Bengal's young batter Richa Ghosh was the only surprise in the 15-member India women's squad for the T20 World Cup in Australia next

On Sunday, the five-member National women's selection committee rewarded the 16-year-old from Siliguri for her consistent performances at the domestic level.

The selectors were also impressed by her approach in the recently-concluded Challengers Trophy, where she played two important knocks of 25 and 36 for India-B in crunch situations.

"Earlier the same team used to play, but after the 2017 World Cup several new prospects have emerged and we have nurtured five to six players," selection panel chief Hemalata Kala, said.

Captain Harmanpreet Kaur believes that execution



Who made the grade? India captain Harmanpreet Kaur and National women's selection committee chairperson Hemalata Kala announce the squad. • PRASHANT NAKWE

of plans will be the key.

"That is what we are look-

Prior to the World Cup, the team will figure in a triseries involving England and Australia.

The squads: T20 World Cup: Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Veda

Krishnamurthy, Richa Ghosh,

Taniya Bhatia, Poonam Yadav, Radha Yadav, Rajeshwari Pooja Vastrakar and Arundhati

Harmanpreet Tri-series: (Capt.), Smriti, Shafali, Jemimah, Harleen, Deepti, Veda, Richa, Taniya, Poonam, Radha. Rajeshwari, Shikha, Pooja, Nuzhat Arundhati and

The itinerary: Tri-series: Canberra, from Jan. 31. T20 World Cup: Feb. 21 to March 8.

IN BRIEF



Serena ends three-vear

title drought Serena Williams ended a three-year title drought and donated her winner's cheque to victims of the Australian bushfires in an emotional WTA Auckland Classic final on Sunday where she beat Jessica Pegula 6-3, 6-4. This was her first title since she won in Melbourne in 2017. In the doubles final, however, Serena and Caroline Wozniacki lost 6-4, 6-4 to Americans Asia Muhammad and Taylor Townsend. AFP

Momota and Chen win Malaysia Masters

KUALA LUMPUR World No. 1 Kento Momota won the Malaysia Masters badminton title, easily defeating Denmark's Viktor Axelsen 24-22, 21-11 on Sunday. The victory lends credence to Momota's drive to win the gold in the Tokyo Olympics. Chen Yu Fei, in pic., took home the women's title ousting Taiwanese top seed Tai Tzu-Ying 21-17, 21-10. AFP

...and the winners are The annual BCCI awards for the 2018-19 seaon were given away in Mumbai on Sunday

C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award

Anjum Chopra Lifetime Achievement Award for Women **BCCI Special Award** Dilip Doshi Dilip Sardesai Award - Highest Run-getter in Tests **Cheteshwar Pujara** Sardesai Award - Highest Wickets in Tests **Jasprit Bumrah** Highest Run-getter in ODIs - Women Smriti Mandhana Highest Wickets in ODIs - Women Jhulan Goswami Polly Umrigar Award Best International Cricketer - Men **Jasprit Bumrah** Best International Cricketer - Women **Poonam Yadav** Best International Debut - Men Mayank Agarwal Shafali Verma Best International Debut - Women Lala Amarnath Award for Best Allrounder in Ranji Trophy Shivam Dube (Mumbai) Amarnath Award for Best Allrounder in Domestic Limited-overs Nitish Rana (Delhi) Madhavrao Scindia Award - Highest Run-getter in Ranji Trophy Milind Kumar (Sikkim) Scindia Award – Highest Wicket-taker in Ranji Trophy Ashutosh Aman (Bihar) M.A. Chidambaram Trophy - Highest Run-getter (U-23) Manan Hingrajia (Gujarat) Chidambaram Trophy – Highest Wicket-taker (U-23) Sidak Singh (Pondicherry) Chidambaram Trophy - Highest Run-getter (U-19) Vathsal Govind (Kerala) Chidambaram Trophy - Highest Wicket-taker (U-19) Apurva Anand (Bihar)

Dalmiya Trophy - Best Woman Cricketer (Jr. Domestic) Shafali Verma (Haryana) Best Umpire in Domestic cricket Best Performance in Domestic Tournaments

Smriti Mandhana and Poonam Yadav at the awards function on Sunday

Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy - Highest Run-getter (U-16)

Dalmiya Trophy - Best Woman Cricketer (Sr. Domestic)

Dalmiya Trophy – Highest Wicket-taker (U-16)



Aryan Hooda (Jharkhand)

Deepti Sharma (Bengal)

Abhishek Yadav (Jharkhand)

Liverpool motors along

AGENCIES

The Argentine striker

City's resounding victory

verpool continued its relentless march towards a first Premier League title in 30 years as Roberto Firmino's strike earned a 1-0 win at Tottenham to open up a 16point lead at the top of the table.

Jurgen Klopp's men have now made the best ever start to an English top flight ble 63.

There is now a 31-point gap between the sides that contested last season's

Champions League final as Spurs remains in eighth,

nine points adrift of even

its chances to take at least a

point as Son Heung-min and

Giovani Lo Celso missed the

target with the goal gaping

Lo Celso's miss left Jose

Mourinho on his knees in

anguish and the honev-

moon period for the Totten-

ham manager is already ov-

er after just two wins in

their last eight games in all

in their box, but for 90-95

minutes you have to be rea-

dy," Liverpool manager Jur-

The results: Premier League:

Bournemouth O lost to Wat-

ford 3 (Doucoure 42, Deeney

65. Perevra 90+2): Aston Villa

1 (El Ghazi 90+1-pen) lost to

Manchester City 6 (Mahrez 18,

Mahrez 24, Aguero 28, 57, 81,

Serie A: Udinese 3 (Okaka 14,

Sema 68, De Paul 90+1) bt

Sassuolo O; Torino 1 (Beren-

guer 11) bt Bologna O; Samp-

doria 5 (Linetty 34, Jankto

45+3, Quagliarella 69-pen,

90+2, Caprari 77) bt Brescia 1

(Chancellor 12); Fiorentina 1

gen Klopp told Sky Sports.

"We played super football

competitions.

Jesus 45+1).

in the final 15 minutes.

However, Tottenham had

the top four.

EURO LEAGUES

LONDON

Sergio Aguero became the most prolific foreign goalscorer in Premier League history with a hat-trick as Manchester City thrashed Aston Villa 6-1 to reclaim second place on Sunday.

struck City's third, fifth and sixth goals at Villa Park to take his league tally to 177, two more than Frenchman Thierry Henry managed for Arsenal and fourth on the all-time list alongside Frank Lampard.

means it moved above Leicester City and trimmed Liverpool's lead to 14 points, although Liverpool has played a game less. Earlier on Saturday, Li-

campaign after 21 games with 61 points from a possi-

Saturday: EPL: Tottenham 0 lost to Liverpool 1 (Firmino 37). Serie A: Lazio 1 (Immobile 82) bt Napoli O: Inter Milan 1 (Martinez 4) drew with Atalanta 1 (Gosens 75).

(Pezzela 82) bt SPAL O.

Goncalves dies in crash



Tragic: Paulo Goncalves, being attended to by medical staff, couldn't be saved. • AFP

DAKAR RALLY

SPORTS BUREAU

Motorbike rider Paulo Goncalves of Portugal died after a crash during the Dakar Rally here on Sunday. He was lying 46th overall going into the seventh stage from Riyadh to Wadi Al Dawasir.

The 40-year-old, representing Hero MotoSports Team Rally, and competing in his 13th Dakar Rally, suffered the fatal fall after 276 km in the seventh stage in the 339-mile route from Riyadh to Wadi Al Dawasi. The organisers informed that he was pronounced dead in hospital after he was found

unconscious following a cardiac arrest. Goncalves was the 2013 FIM Cross Country Rally

suscitation efforts, the competitor was taken by helicopter to Layla hospital where he was sadly pronounced dead." Wolfgang Fischer, Head-Hero MotoSports Team Ral-

World Champion, and was

runner-up to Marc Coma in

In a release, Hero MotoS-

ports Team Rally condoled

Goncalves' death. "The or-

ganisers released an alert at

10.08 [a.m.], and dis-

patched a medical helicop-

ter that reached the biker at

10.16 [a.m.] and found him

unconscious after going into

cardiac arrest. Following re-

the 2015 Dakar Rally.

ly, said, "He was a true champion, gentleman, reliable friend to everyone in the racing world and a role model as sportsman and personality."

THE HINDU DELHI MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m. Khelo India Games: Star Sports 1 (SD), 9.30 a.m.; Star Sports 1 (HD), 4.30 p.m.; Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m. Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 1 (HD) & Star Sports 3 (SD),

Big Bash League: Sony Six (SD & HD), 1.40 p.m.

Anand begins with a draw

CHESS

SPORTS BUREAU WIJK AAN ZEE

Viswanathan Anand started his campaign in the 82nd Tata Steel Masters chess tournament with a 31-move draw against Russia's Vladislav Artemiev.

World champion Magnus Carlsen and Anish Giri signed truce in 25 moves in the day's shortest game.

In the 14-player field, debutant Iranian Alireza Firouzja, playing under the FIDE flag, defeated Belarus' Vladislav Kovalev in 36 moves.

The results (first round): Viswanathan Anand drew with Vladislav Artemiev (Rus); Magnus Carlsen (Nor) drew with Anish Giri (Ned); Fabiano Caruana (USA) drew with Wesley So (USA); Alireza Firouzia (FIDE) bt Vladislav Kovalev (Blr); Jorden van Foreest (Ned) bt Yu Yangyi (Chn); Nikita Vitiugov (Rus) drew with Duda Jan-Krzvsztof (Pol); Jeffery Xiong (USA) drew with Daniil Dubov (Rus).

TRAU beats **Arrows**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manipur's Tiddim Road Athletic Union (TRAU) posted a 2-0 win over bottom-placed Indian Arrows in their I-League match here on Sunday. Naocha Singh (44th minute) and Princewill Emeka (79th) were the scorers.

Djokovic steers Serbia to glory

After mastering Nadal again on hardcourts, plays pivotal role in doubles

ATP CUP

REUTERS

Novak Djokovic helped seal victory for Serbia in the inaugural ATP Cup team event after defeating his long-term rival Rafael Nadal in singles on Sunday before going on to play a pivotal role in the deciding doubles match against Spain.

With the final locked at 1-1 after the singles were shared, Djokovic partnered veteran Victor Troicki to beat Pablo Carreno Busta and Feliciano Lopez 6-3, 6-4 and win the title.

The 16-time Grand Slam champion proved to be a calming influence throughout, especially after the Serbian pair fell behind early in the match.

He used his powerful serve and fleet-footed re-



Mission accomplished: The Serbian team is all smiles after becoming the inaugural winner of the ATP Cup on Sunday. • REUTERS

turns to haul his country back into the first set and create a momentum shift which Serbia rode all the way to a victory completed

in the early hours of Monday morning here.

Djokovic earlier beat Nadal 6-2, 7-6(4), extending his dominance over the Spaniard on hardcourts, a surface Nadal has not beaten

blueprint to beat the Spa-

him on since 2013. Djokovic has created the niard on hardcourts, although he is one of the very few players good enough to follow the instructions.

Holding his line

The Serbian held his line, and was rarely pushed back deep into the court by the Spaniard's heavy spin, a position from which Nadal usually dictates terms.

"There were some incredible exchanges today," said Djokovic. "I started off the match perfectly really, everything worked for me."

Earlier, Roberto Bautista Agut completed a flawless tournament by defeating Dusan Lajovic 7-5, 6-1.

The result: Serbia bt Spain 2-1 [Dusan Lajovic lost to Roberto Bautista Agut 7-5, 6-1; Novak Djokovic bt Rafael Nadal 6-2, 7-6(4); Viktor Troicki & Djokovic bt Feliciano Lopez & Pablo Car-

Ancy and Nuzrat claim the under-21 100m gold medals

Maharashtra, with 34 medals, continues to top the table

KHELO GAMES

SPORTS BUREAU GUWAHATI

Kerala's Ancy Sojan gave her best to win the girls' under-21 100m and long jump titles in the Khelo India Youth Games here on Sunday. Ancy timed 12.21 to take the 100m crown and leaped to 6.36m to claim the long jump gold with a new meet record.

Tamil Nadu's A. Sherin, who set the mark at 6.15m last year, claimed the silver with 6.30m. T.K. Sandra Babu of Kerala was third with 5.99m.

Nuzrat Ali clocked 10.77 to beat Delhi's Abhinav Panwar (10.82) for the boys' under-21 100m title. Kunal Kaushik's boys' under-17 shot put gold with a throw of 17.68m



Golden run: Ancy Sojan of Kerala won the girls' under-21 100m crown. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

helped Haryana snatch another gold.

Sadanand Kumar of Jharkhand (10.95) and Jeevanji Deepthi (12.26), who created a new meet record lowering Avantika Narale's 12.36, were the 100m gold medallists in under-17 boys' and girls' sections.

M. Karunya (46.18m) and Hema Malini (46.54m) made Tamil Nadu proud by securing gold in girls' under-21 discus and javelin respectively. Hema Malini achieved the top honour with a new meet record, bettering the old mark of 46.36m set by Manpreet Kaur last year.

Maharashtra's Abhay Bhatu Gurav and Poorva Hitesh Sawant bagged golds in boys' under-21 high jump (2.07m, EMR) and girls' under-17 triple jump (11.89m) respective-

Waykar, Pooja win in cycling

Madhura Waykar and Pooja Danole fetched yellow metals for Maharashtra in cycling. Waykar timed 27.20.81 in girls' under-21 individual time trial (20km) while Pooja clocked 24:17.778 for the girls' under-17 time trial (15km).

In under-21 girls' recurve competition, Maharashtra's Tisha Sacheti beat Pramilaben Barla (Gujarat) 6-4 in the semifinals to set up a title clash with Haryana's Himani, who defeated Sakshi Tote of Maharashtra 5(8)-5(7).

Maharashtra's Sachin Vedwan recorded a comfortable 6-2 win over statemate Mayur Rokade, while Jagdish Choudhary of Rajasthan beat Sunny Kumar of Haryana 7-3 to reach the boys' under-21 recurve final.

Maharashtra continued to top the table with 34 medals, including 11 gold, followed by Delhi (18) and Uttar Pradesh (16).

It's Ashwa Bahula vs Shaquille in feature

HYDERABAD: Ashwa Bahula and Shaquille may fight out the finish in the Hovercraft Plate (1,600m), the main event of the races to be held here on Monday (Jan. 13).

1 TWIN STAR PLATE (DIV. II), (1,100m), 4-y-o & over (not won since July 1 2019), rated 00 to 25, (Cat. III), 1-10 p.m.: 1. Crackershow (9) Deepak Singh 61.5, 2. Khan Sahib (1) A.A. Vikrant 61.5, 3. Let It Be Me (6) Jitendra Singh 61.5, 4. Secret Command (7) San tosh Raj 61.5, 5. Speed Warrior (2) Nakhat Singh 61.5, 6. Blazing Jupiter (4) Rohit Kumar 60.5, Mr. Bruss (3) Kuldeep Singh 59.5 8. London Bridge (8) Gopal Singh 59 and 9. Victoria (5) Afroz Khan

1. LET IT BE ME,

2. SECRET COMMAND, 3. CRACKERSHOW

2 SECUNDERABAD CLUB PLATE
(DIV. III), (1,100m), 4-y-o &
over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 140: 1. Top Saga (8) R. Ajinkya 60,
2. Wah Ms Zara (1) Akshay Kumar
58, 3. California Beauty (4) B.R.
Kumar 56 4 Air Saluta (10) Afroz Kumar 56, 4. Air Salute (10) Afroz Khan 54.5, 5. Composure (7) Jitendra Singh 53.5, 6. Flying Queen (2) Irvan Singh 53, 7. Be dazzled (5) Kuldeep Singh 52.5, 8 Secretary (3) Ajeeth Kumar 51, 9. Ursula (6) Rafique Sk. 50.5 and 10. Acadian Angel (9) Santosh Raj

1. CALIFORNIA BEAUTY,

2. TOP SAGA, 3. WAH MS ZARA

3 TWIN STAR PLATE (DIV. I), (1,100m), 4-y-o & over (not won a race since July 1 2019), rated 00 to 25, (Cat. III), 2-10: 1. Ashwa Yudh Vijeta (3) N. Rawal (15, 2) Populing (Viger (8) Viter (10)). 61.5, 2. Dazzling King (8) Jitendra Singh 61.5, 3. Kintsugi (2) Rohit Kumar 61.5, 4. Latest News (4) Kiran Naidu 61.5, 5. My Dream (1) R. Ajinkya 61.5, 6. Whiskery (7) Abhay Singh 61.5, 7. Brave Syera (6) Mukesh Kumar 59.5, 8, Light Music (9) Nakhat Singh 59.5 and 9. Ekam (5) Rafique Sk. 50. 1. ASHWA YUDH VIJETA,

2. BRAVE SYERA,

4 SECUNDERABAD CLUB PLATE (DIV. II), (1,100m), 4-y-0 & over, rated 20 to 45, (Cat. III), 2-45: 1. Takisha (7) Afroz Khan 60, 2. Stepper (2) G. Naresh 58.5, 3. Carmella (1) Kuldeep Singh 57.5, 4. Tapatio (4) A.A. Vikrant 55, 5. Time Is Good (9) R. Ajinkya 55, 6 Arcade Fire (10) Koushik 53.5, 7 Windsteps (5) B.R. Kumar 53.5, 8. Sea Wolf (ex: Royal Tiger) (3) Akshay Kumar 53, 9. Blazing Speed (8) Ajeeth Kumar 51 and 10.

Dance All Night (6) Gaddam 51.

2. STEPPER 3. SEA WOLF

> AUXILLARY PLATE (DIV. I). **5** AUXILLARY PLATE (DIV. I), (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65, (Cat. II), 3-15: 1. Meritocracy (9) Jitendra Singh 61.5, 2. Shandaar (12) Akshay Kumar 61.5, 3. Trump Girl (4) Koushik

61.5, 4. Meka's (13) G. Naresh 60.5, 5. Arc Of History (10) Surya Prakash 59.5, 6. Dunkirk (7) Mukesh Kumar 56, 7. Top Con-tender (II) Afroz Khan 56, 8. Vancouver (6) A.A. Vikrant 55, 9, Mr Shanghai (5) Rohit Kumar 54, 10. Once More (2) Santosh Rai 53.5. 11. Proud Warrior (8) B.R. Kumar 53.5, 12. Gorgeous Lady (3) Rafique Sk. 53 and 13. Sublime (1) Gaddam 52.

1. TOP CONTENDER, 2. SHANDAAR. 3. MERITOCRACY

HOVERCRAFT 60 to 85, (Cat. II), 3-45: 1. That's My Class (4) Akshay Kumar 62, 2. Ashwa Bahula (8) Mukesh Kumar 60, 3. Starlight (1) Rohit Kumar 57.5, 4. Magical Skill (6) C.P. S7.3, 4. Magtal Skili (6) C.P.
Bopanna 56.5, 5. Doroteo (9)
Koushik 56, 6. N R I Symbol (11)
Afroz Khan 54, 7. Honest Hunter
(7) B.R. Kumar 53.5, 8. Shaquille (7) B.R. Kuniai 53.5, 6. Shaquinie (10) A.A. Vikrant 53.5, 9. Mr. Baahubali (3) Ajeeth Kumar 53, 10. Guiding Force (2) N. Rawal 52.5, 11. Seven Eleven (5) Ashad Asbar 52.5 and 12. Destined Dynamite (12) Irvan Singh 50. 1. ASHWA BAHULA,

2. SHAQUILLE,

3. SEVEN ELEVEN

AUXILLARY PLATE (DIV. II) AUXILLARY PLATE (DIV. II), (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 40 to 65, (Cat. II), 4-15: 1. N R I Power (7) Koushik 61.5, 2. Ashka Ashka Ashka (3) Ajeeth Kumar 59, 3. Crimson Fire (13) Rohit Kumar 58.5, 4. Marian Del Rey (9) T. Ajinkya 58, 5. Lightning Fin (8) Akshay Kumar 57, 6. Locha Stella (12) Nakhat Singh 56, 7. Prince Caspian (1) Jitendra Singh 56, 8. Heaven Can Wait (4) Afroz Khan 53.5, 9. Vallee Bloomer (2) G. Naresh 53.5, 10. Running Fire (11) B.R. Kumar 52.5, 11. Gladstone (6) Irvan Singh 52, 12. New State (5) Mukesh Kumar 52 and 13. Royal Green (10) Rafique Sk. 52. 1. CRIMSON FIRE,

2. LIGHTNING FIN, 3. N R I POWER

SECUNDERABAD CLUB PLATE (DIV. I), (1,100m), 4-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45, (Cat. III), 4-45: 1. Green Turf (5) Akshay Kumar 60, 2. Safra (4) N. Rawal 58.5, 3. Southern State (7) Kiran Naidu 57.5, 4. Shakesphere (3) Mukesh Kumar 55.5, 5. Star Racer (11) Rohit Kumar 55, 6. Vallee Ikon (1) Gaddam 53.5, 7. Tough And Go (6) G. Naresh 53, 8. Original Temptress (10) Abhay Singh 52.5, 9. Withrosemakeup (9) B.R. Kumar 51.5, 10. Dillon (2) Ajeeth Kumar 50.5 and 11. Yogya (8) Afroz Khan 50.5.

1. TOUGH AND GO, 2. GREEN TURF,

2. GREEN TORY,
3. STAR RACER
Day's best: ASHWA YUDH VIJETA
Double: TOP CONTENDER TOUGH AND GO

Jkt: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8; Mini Jkt: 5, 6 7 & 8; Tr (i): 1, 2 & 3; (ii): 3, 4 & 5; (iii): 6, 7 & 8; Tla: all races



Big victory: Aleksej Aleksandrov, right, pulled off a crucial win over Karthik Venkataraman on

Aleksandrov on top

Gets the better of Karthik; 13 players in second spot

CHESS

RAKESH RAO NEW DELHI

Aleksej Aleksandrov escaped from a tight corner in the middle game to nail an in-form Karthik Venkataraman and emerge as a leader, with a perfect score, after six rounds of 18th Delhi International Open Grandmasters chess tournament here on

The Grandmaster from Belarus seized the opportunity after Karthik, playing white, erred in judgement and made a knight-move on the 40th turn.

Six moves later, the decision to sacrifice his rook for a bishop backfired and thereon, it was downhill for Karthik who resigned after 68 moves.

With four rounds to go, Aleksandrov enjoyed a onepoint lead over 13 players sharing the second spot.

On the second of the dou-

ble-round days, Karthik started by stunning fourth seeded Peruvian Grandmaster Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara to lead with Aleksandrov, who defeated Bangladesh's Ziaur Rahman.

Before Karthik lost his first game, C.R.G. Krishna surrendered to Alcantara on the second board. Top seed Farrukh Amonatov drew for the third time before fifth seed Abhijeet Gupta was held by P. Shyam Nikhil.

Good day for Pranesh

Surprisingly, it was 'double' delight for little-known M. Pranesh. He scored over two higher-rated rivals to be among those sharing the second spot.

rated 2317, Pranesh, stunned 12th seeded Ukrainian Grandmaster Stanislav Bogdanovich (2562) and then scalped Vietnamese International Master Nguyen Van Huy (2463).

Important results (Indians un-

less stated): Sixth round: Karthik Venkataraman (5) lost to Aleksej Aleksandrov (Blr, 5); Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara (Per, 5) bt C.R.G. Krishna (4.5): Farrukh Amonatov (Tjk, 4.5) drew with Valeriy Neverov (Ukr, 4.5); Abhijeet Gupta (4.5) drew with P. Shyam Nikhil (4.5); Muhammad Khusenkhojaev

(Iri, 4) lost to Diptayan Ghosh

(5); Adam Tukhaev (Ukr, 5) bt P.

Karthikeyan (4); Sayantan Das

(4.5) drew with Aryan Gholami

(Iri, 4.5); N. R. Vishakh (5) bt

Sammed Shete (4); Kirill Stu-

pak (Blr, 5) bt Al Muthaiah (4).

Fifth round: Alcantara (4) lost to Karthik (5); Aleksandrov (5) bt Ziaur Rahman (Ban, 4); Krishna (4.5) drew with Rozum (4); Florian Kaczur (Hun, 4) drew with Farrukh Amonatov (Tjk, 4); Pavel Ponkratov (Rus, 4) drew with Ortik Nigamatov (Uzb, 4); Al Muthaiah (4) bt M. Karthikeyan (3); Neelesh Saha (3.5) drew with Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb, 3.5); Manish Anto Cristiano (4) bt Aleksey Goganov (Rus, 3); Stanislav Bogdanovich (Ukr, 3) lost to M.

Aussie cricket legends to raise money

In a bid to raise money for victims of Australia's devastating bushfires, the country's cricket legends Shane Warne and Ricky Ponting will come out of retirement and participate in a starstudded charity game next month.

Cricket Australia (CA) on Sunday announced a range of initiatives to help those impacted by the fires besides holding of the Bushfire Cricket Bash on February 8, where Warne and Ponting will lead the two sides.

Meanwhile, other retired Aussie stars like Adam Gilchrist, Brett Lee, Justin Langer, Michael Clarke, Shane Watson and Alex Blackwell will also take part in the game.

The money raised will be donated to the Australian Red Cross Disaster Relief and Recovery Fund. The Bushfire Cricket Bash will act as a curtain-raiser for the BBL Final.

RANJI TROPHY SCORES, ROUND FIVE, DAY TWO

Group A

At Ongole: Hyderabad 225 vs Andhra 237/1 in 94 overs (C.R. Gnaneshwar 73, D.B. Prashanth Kumar 117 batting, Hanuma Vihari 41 batting).

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala 227 & 88/5 in 29 overs (Gurkeerat Mann 4/27) vs Punjab 218 in 65.4 overs (Mandeep Singh 71 n.o., M.D. Nidheesh 7/

Jaipur: Gujarat 325 in 119.4 overs (Priyank Panchal 48, Samit Gohil 93, Bhargav Merai 54, Manprit Juneja 44, Rituraj Singh 5/74) vs Rajasthan 142/1 in 56 overs (Yash Kothari 45, Manender Singh 61 batting).

Nagpur: Bengal 170 & 99 in 26.1 overs (Aditya Sarwate 6/ 47) lost to Vidarbha 212 in 74 overs (Faiz Fazal 51, Akshay Wadkar 49) & 61/1 in 13.5 overs

Points: Vidarbha 6 (17), Bengal

New Delhi: Madhya Pradesh 124 & 47/2 in 19 overs vs Rail-

Chennai: 488 in 148.4 overs (Jay Bista 41, Shams Mulani 87, Aditya Tare 154, Shashank Attarde 58, R. Sai Kishore 4/125) vs Tamil Nadu 66/0 in 31 overs (Abhinav Mukund 52 batting).

Kanpur: Uttar Pradesh 431 in 124.2 overs (Almas Shaukat 48, Mohammad Saif 123, Rinku Singh 62, Upendra Yadav 100) vs Baroda 82/1 in 25

Raikot: Saurashtra 581/7 decl. in 166 overs (Cheteshwar Puja-

Group B ra 248, Sheldon Jackson 161, Prerak Mankad 86 n.o.) vs Karnataka 13/1 in 8 overs. ways 244 in 84.5 overs (Mrunal Group C Devdhar 44, Dinesh Guwahati: Chhattis-

garh 318 in 105.3 ov-Mumbai ers (Harpreet Singh 50, Amandeep Khare 105, Shashank Singh 71, Ranjeet Mali 4/80) vs Assam 209/3 in 72 overs (Rishav Das 99, Gokul Sharma 50 bat-Lahli: Haryana 90 &

218/5 in 75 overs (Shubham Rohilla 48, Ankit Kumar 46, Himanshu Rana 40) vs Odisha 160 in 61.1 overs (Biplab Samantray 52, Tinu Kundu 5/25).

New Delhi: Jammu & Kashmir

360 in 93.1 overs (Shubham Khajuria 55, Parvez Rasool 182, Diwesh Pathania 4/103) vs Services 238/9 in 76.1 overs (Arjun Sharma 47, Arun Bamal 48, Diwesh Pathania 41).

Nagothane: Maharashtra 434 in 172.3 overs (Azim Kazi 140, Vishant More 120, Utkarsh Singh 5/130) vs Jharkhand 2/2 in one over.

Agartala: Uttarakhand 90 in 45 overs (Manisankar Murasingh 4/24, Ajoy Sarkar 4/19) vs Tripura 104/2 in 29 overs. Toss:

Plate

Sovima: Nagaland 534/7 decl. in 140.2 overs (Shrikant Mundhe 166, Rongsen Jonathan 49, Hokaito Zhimomi 76, Yoaesh Takawale 117 n.o., Sedezhalie Rupero 53) vs Arunachal Pradesh 141/4 in 37 overs (Rahul Dalal 64 batting).

Chandigarh: Sikkim 264 vs Chandigarh 338/8 in 90 overs (Uday Kaul 44, Raman Bishnoi 51, Bipul Sharma 58, Gurinder Singh 99, Ishwar Chaudhary 4/

Puducherry: Goa 270 in 87.5 overs (Amit Verma 121, Ashith Rajiv 5/45) & O/O in one over vs Pondicherry 260 in 65.4 overs (Paras Dogra 194, Felix Alemao

Balurghat: Bihar 431 in 130.2 overs (Indrajit Kumar 134, Kumar Mridul 51, Md. Rahmatullah 71, Atulya Priyankar 64) vs Manipur 40/4 in 21 overs.

Kolkata (first day): Meghalaya 414/4 in 90 overs (Dippu Sangma 114, Dwaraka Ravi Teja 119 batting, Sanjay Yadav 107 batting) vs Mizoram. Toss: Mizo-

Halicharan Narzary's strike stuns ATK

The 1-0 win takes Blasters to the sixth spot while the Kolkata side remains third

ISL

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA

Halicharan Narzary produced the all-important goal in the second half as Kerala Blasters downed host ATK 1-0 in their ISL contest at the Salt Lake Stadium here on

Sunday. In a match marred by frayed tempers among the support staff and led to the ejection of ATK head coach Antonio Habas, Blasters held its nerve under pressure to collect full points. Having beaten ATK (2-1) in the season-opener, Blasters kept its record against ATK intact with the successful 'away result.

Blasters started off strongly, making repeated forays into the attacking third, but failed to find the target. The visitors had a ball possession of more than 65% in the first quarter, but could not cash in as the attacking duo of Bartholomew Ogbeche and Raphael Messi Bouli strug-

gled to find a way to score. Looking to break free



Going aerial: Blasters' Messi Bouli, right, and ATK's Armando Sosa Pena, centre, locked in a battle for possession. • RAJEEV BHATT

from the pressure mounted by Blasters, ATK had its first opportunity in the 11th minute when Roy Krishna

launched a fine counter-attack after intercepting a corner and advanced all the way to the Blasters box.

However, the Kerala side's wing-back Mohammad Rakip did well to catch up with the ATK striker and thwart

the attempt.

Krishna, who had Balwant Singh for company upfront in the absence of injured colleague David Williams, had another chance in the 35th minute when a free-kick taken by Spanish teammate Javier Hernandez reached

Having a clear look at the goal, Krishna's half-volley saw Ogbeche make a desperate lunge and effect a vital clearance. The host had another opportunity after the change of ends, but Balwant's header was off-target.

The ATK defence paid for its complacency in the 70th minute as Narzary's rasping drive beat ATK 'keeper Arindam Bhattacharya all ends up. The Kerala team had another chance in the 84th minute, but Messi's header was well saved by Arindam.

The result kept ATK in the third spot with 21 points while Blasters moved to sixth with 14 points. Both have played 12 games.

The result: ATK O lost to Kerala Blasters 1 (Halicharan Narzary