



1 COUNTRY 1 COMPANY 16 AWARDS

We have won all **16 awards** including

Best Private Banking Services Overall - India

at the **2020 Euromoney Private Banking and Wealth Management Survey.**

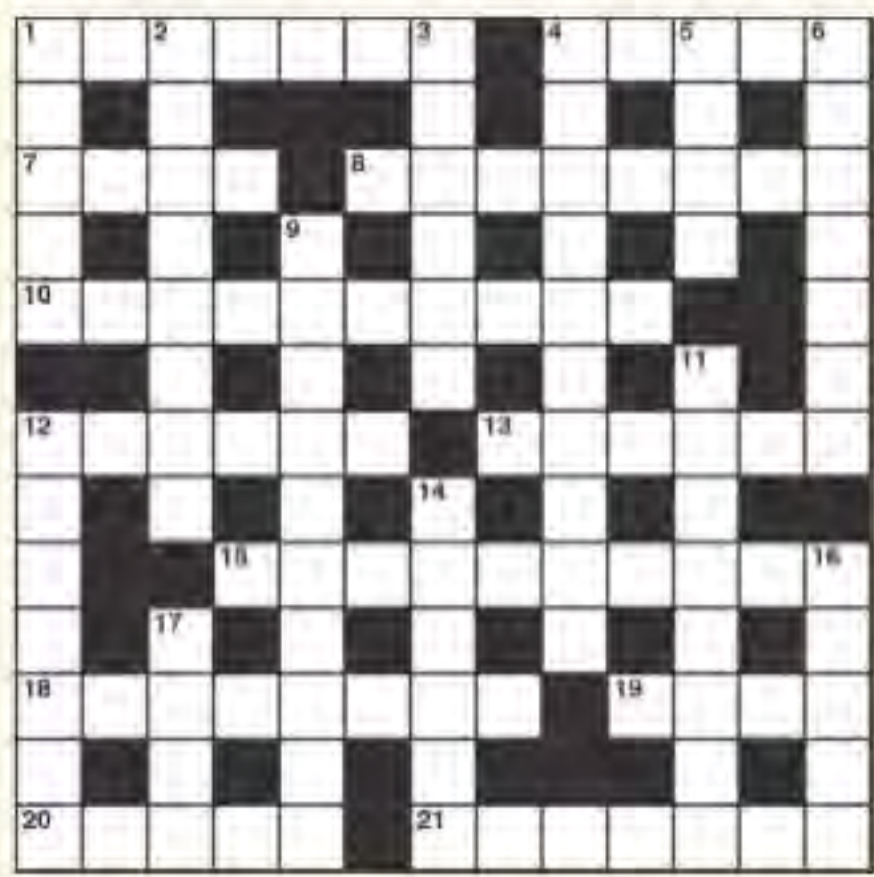
Thank you to our peers, clients, investors and team for helping us once again become the best wealth and asset management company in India.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ① Best Private Banking Services Overall | ⑨ Serving Business Owners |
| ② Mega High Net Worth Clients (US\$ 250mn+) | ⑩ Research and Asset Allocation Advice |
| ③ Ultra High Net Worth Clients (US\$ 30mn - US\$ 250mn) | ⑪ Capital Markets and Advisory |
| ④ High Net Worth Clients (US\$ 5mn - US\$ 30mn) | ⑫ International Clients |
| ⑤ Super Affluent Clients (US\$ 1mn - US\$ 5mn) | ⑬ Philanthropic Advice |
| ⑥ Family Office Services | ⑭ ESG/Impact Investing |
| ⑦ Investment Management | ⑮ Data Management and Security |
| ⑧ Next Generation | ⑯ Innovative or Emerging Technology Adoption |

The awards are based on peer ratings.



CROSSWORD 4043



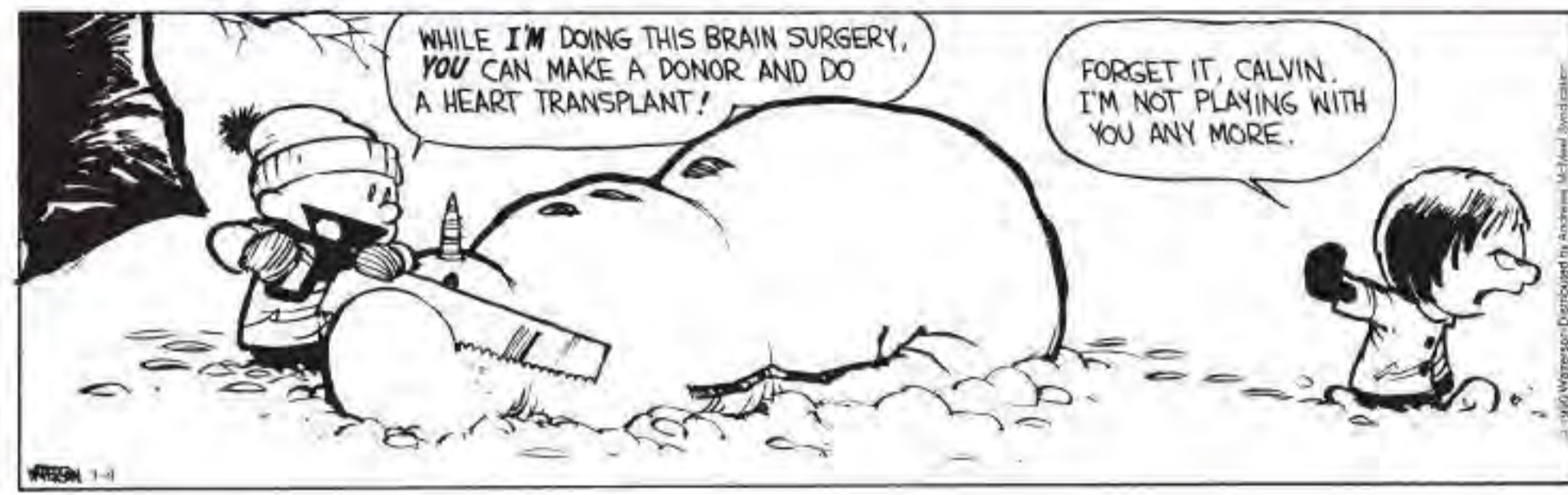
- ACROSS**
- Inject a cubic centimetre into a climber as a safeguard (7)
 - Lifting of spirit in debate (5)
 - A plane that climbs gradually (4)
 - Starfish disclosed by tides or a storm (8)
 - I can upset a clergyman - but it's not right (10)
 - Daren't become passionate (6)
 - Put in position around a stately residence (6)
 - Like a dream of no importance (10)
 - He has aimed to cut down the world's leaders (8)
 - Heartless head cook (4)
 - Gratuities about right for journeys (5)
 - The French female gets subordinate to do the washing (7)
- DOWN**
- Composer of unusual drive (5)
 - Orders ambitious officers hope to get (8)
 - Possibly run and see to make certain (6)
 - Business, he thinks, should not be a matter of duty (4,6)
 - Overcharge for a bird (4)
 - She makes personal deliveries (7)
 - Financial experts involved in some cost (10)
 - Divan he's ordered has disappeared (8)
 - First male worker is determined not to give way (7)
 - He is upset by denial (6)
 - He's unable to serve any longer (5)
 - A way I finish the wine (4)

Solutions Crossword 4042: Across: 1 Newsreaders, 9 Landing, 10 Ranch, 11 Slip, 12 Formulae, 14 Sedate, 16 Portal, 18 Coverage, 19 Asia, 22 Extol, 23 Spondee, 24 Reading desk. Down: 2 Ennui, 3 Soil, 4 Egg nog, 5 Dartmoor, 6 Ringlet, 7 Close secret, 8 Cheerleader, 13 Startled, 15 Devotee, 17 Eggs on, 20 Sides, 21 Ford.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

There is room in the _____ for a happy loving pair. - Friedrich Schiller (8,7)

GTAAE **EILLTT**

COSST **COMING**

SOLUTION: AGATE, COSTS, LITTLE, ECONOMIC. Answer: There is room in the smallest cottage for a happy loving pair.

Difficulty Level 1s

Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.



Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4122



SBI
Anytime Channels Department, Air India Building, Corporate Centre, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400 021.

CORRIGENDUM
Please refer RFP No. SBI/AC/2019-20/005 dated 24.01.2020 for Procurement of Managed Services (MS) for Endpoints (ATMs / ADWMs etc.), Bank's Responses to Pre-Bid Queries are uploaded and can be accessed under Procurement News on the Bank's website <https://www.sbi.co.in>. Last date and time for submission of bids: 29.02.2020 15.00 Hrs.

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager (ATM-I&S)

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: "Ujjwal", Maharami Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248001
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866
(Tel.: 0135-2763508, Fax: 0135-2763507)

Corrigendum-01
Due to typing error at point No. 2.3 A (for experience) in Section II-'ITB' of e-19/UJVN/EE(M&G)/KPS/2019-20, Procurement of self-lubricated bushes for Unit-B of Kuhlul PH (3x10 MW)(3x10 MW) correction is hereby made as per following:
"last 7 years" shall be read as last 2 years"
All other terms and conditions of the tender shall remain unchanged.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal <http://uktenders.gov.in>
पत्रांक: 85 दिनांक: 15.02.2020 Executive Engineer (M&G), Kuhlul
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

भारतीय अणु-भारतीय विज्ञान अनुसंधान संस्थान
ICAR-Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research
संस्थान, इंदौर-500 030, तेलंगाना राज्य, भारत
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-500 030, Telangana State, India
Tel: 049-2458208, Website: <http://www.icar-iior.org.in>
ISO 9001:2008 Certified Institute

F.No.5(6)/2019-20/1st **NOTICE INVITING TENDER** Date: 15.02.2020

Bids are invited from the interested bidders under two bid system at CPP Portal for procurement of following equipments (Semi-Automatic Weighing/Packing Machine, Band Sealer, Castor Threshers (2 no's), Castor Mini Threshers (2 no's) and Seed Counter. For more details visit: <https://www.icar-iior.org.in/> or <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

पश्चिमांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि.
विक्टोरिया पार्क, मेरठ

ई-निविदा सूचना पब्लिकनिटि मेरठ के अन्तर्गत विशिष्टीकरण संख्या पी.वी.पी.एन.एल.- एम.टी.कॉम/2019-20 के अन्तर्गत 500 नं 33 के.वी. टी.वी.पी. कोट-सी. मेरठ की आपूर्ति हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित है। निविदा खुलने का दिनांक - 16.03.2020 विस्तार से सभी जानकारी हेतु www.pvnl.org एवं E-Tendering website www.etender.up.nic.in पर लॉग ऑन करें। अधीक्षक अभियन्ता (वाणिज्य) "बिजली चोरी को सूचना हेल्डलाईन नम्बर: 1800-180-3002 (मेरठ), एवं 9412207451 पर दे"।
Remark:- www.etender.up.nic.in हस्ता./- अधीक्षक अभियन्ता (वा.) कृते प्रबन्ध निशक राट्ट हित में बिजली बचाव पत्रांक 1717/प.वि.वि.नि.लि./मे. दिनांक 15/02/20

THE NEW INDIA ASSURANCE CO. LTD.
Regd & Head Office: 87, M. G. Road Fort, Mumbai-400001
Subject: Utilization of Service Provider for Roadside Assistance Cover provided to the Insured INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) APPLICATION are invited in accordance with the terms mentioned in EOI by The New India Assurance Co. Ltd. for empanelling service provider for Roadside Assistance Cover provided to the Insured. Details of the EOI are available on our website i. e.: www.newindia.co.in.
Last date of submission: on or before 05.00 p. m. of 03.03.2020
CIN No. L66000MH1990G000526 IRDAI Reg No. 190

UTILITY POWERTECH LIMITED.
(A JV of NTPC Ltd. & Reliance Infrastructure Ltd.)

Notice for e-Tendering
Utility Powertech Limited is switching over to e-tendering portal (<https://www.tenderwizard.com/UPL>). Utility Powertech Limited, Jhark invites e-tenders from the eligible experienced vendors who have successfully executed the similar job and who fulfill the qualifying requirements for the works.
Job contract for operation & analysis of DM plant & water system, housekeeping in chemistry and H-Type & field operation of main plant Unit 1,2,3 & off site areas, at IGSTPP, Jharli, Jhajar (HR).

- Tender document cost (Non refundable): Rs. 2688/- for the NIT (inclusive of GST). Earnest money Rs. 10,00,000/00 for the NIT. Tender document cost and EMD are exempted for NSIC for services/MSE's registered vendors (only D or E Service Category).
- Period of Online issue of bid document: 17.02.2020 to 05.03.2020

The PRE-QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS (PQR). regarding tender for online bid submission are given on <https://www.tenderwizard.com/UPL> and <http://www.utilitypowertech.org/>. For participation in tender of Utility Powertech Limited, the vendors shall enroll themselves on the e-tendering portal (<https://www.tenderwizard.com/UPL>). For enrollment, bidder has to click on the link "Register with us". to create their login ID and password. Bidder has to register Digital Signature Certificate (Signing Certificate) of class III also. Any further information needed is available in "User Manual" of M/S ITI Ltd. (Tenderwizard)

For any Help/Queries regarding online tendering. You may contact M/S ITI official.
Mr. Nagendra Singh (9870393812), Mr. Mayank Singh (8800115628)
For any tender related queries at UPL official end, You may contact:
1. Sh. Ashish Sharma, Dy. Manager (CS), Phone No: 01251-267865/9416211693
2. Sh. A.K. Mishra, Resident Manager, Phone No: 01251-267866/9599445459

पुलिस मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़
नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर- 492 002

क्रमांक/मुमु/पुस्तकालय/निविदाविज्ञा./04/2020, दिनांक:- 12/02/2020

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

पुलिस मुख्यालय द्वारा विधि पुस्तकों (PRINT) हेतु प्रतिष्ठित प्रकाशकों/विक्रेताओं से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। क्रय किए जाने वाली पुस्तकों की सूची एवं निविदा प्रपत्र पुलिस मुख्यालय के वेबसाइट www.cgpolice.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

SCHEDULE FOR TENDER

a) निविदा जमा करने का स्थान एवं पता	ब्लॉक नं. 4, कक्ष क्रमांक- 409, सेक्टर-19, पुलिस मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर।
b) निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि/समय	22/02/2020 अपराह्न 03.00 बजे तक।
c) निविदा खोलने की तिथि/समय/स्थान	ब्लॉक नं. 4, कक्ष क्रमांक- 409, सेक्टर-19, पुलिस मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर। 22/02/2020 अपराह्न 04.00 बजे

नोट- निविदा शुल्क राशि रु. 2000/- निर्धारित की गई है, जो चालान अथवा डिमाण्ड ड्राफ्ट के माध्यम जमा की जावेगी। रु. 2000/- का चालान लेखा शीर्ष-8443 सिविल जमा राशियां, 103-प्रतिभूति" में जमा कर मूल पावती जमा की जावे अथवा डिमाण्ड ड्राफ्ट, सहायक पुलिस महानिरीक्षक, लेखा, पुलिस मुख्यालय नवा रायपुर अटल नगर के नाम पर देय हो, जमा की जावे। यह राशि वापसी योग्य नहीं है।

हस्ता/-
(ए.के. सिन्हा)
अपर संचालक (वित्त)
हेतु-पुलिस महानिदेशक

कार्यालय अधीक्षक, केन्द्रीय जेल बिलासपुर छत्तीसगढ़
Office-fax-Ph.No. 07752-224090 Email Id- centraljailbilaspur@yahoo.com
क्रमांक 612/उद्योग/2020/बिलासपुर, दिनांक 13/02/2020

वाणिज्य निविदा सूचना

केन्द्रीय जेल बिलासपुर में संचालित आफसेट/स्क्रीन प्रिंटिंग प्रेस, सिलई उद्योग, स्टील उद्योग, काष्ठकला उद्योग, बुनाई/पावरलूम उद्योग के लिए आवश्यक कच्चा माल व औजार क्रय करने हेतु निविदाएं सोलबंद लिफाफे में दिनांक 18.03.2020 को प्रातः 11:00 बजे तक आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यह निविदा, निविदा दिनांक से आगामी 01 वर्ष के लिए वैध रहेगी। इच्छुक व्यापारी/फर्म निविदा फार्म एवं निविदा से संबंधित पूर्ण जानकारी कार्यालय समय प्रातः 9:00 बजे से 1:00 बजे तक प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

- निविदा फार्म बिक्री की अंतिम तिथि 16.03.2020 समय सुबह 9.00 बजे से दोपहर 1:00 बजे तक।
- निविदा संपूर्ण फार्म राशि-5,000/-, (निविदा के आंशिक भाग फार्म हेतु राशि - 2000/-)
- निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 18.03.2020 समय सुबह 9.00 बजे से दोपहर 1:00 बजे तक जेल गेट बाक्स/पंजीकृत डाक से।
- निविदा खोलने की तिथि 18.03.2020 समय 5:00 बजे, स्थान- कार्यालय जेल अधीक्षक केन्द्रीय जेल बिलासपुर (छ.रा.)।

हस्ता/-
(एस.के. मिश्रा)
वरिष्ठ कल्याण एवं परिवेक्षा अधिकारी,
जेल अधीक्षक (चालू प्रभार)
केन्द्रीय जेल बिलासपुर (छ.रा.)

उष्ण कटिबंधीय वन अनुसंधान संस्थान
(भारतीय वानिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद)
(पशुवर्षण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की एक स्वायत्त परिषद)
डॉक्टर - आर.एफ.आर.सी.ओ, मण्डला रोड, जबलपुर-482 021

TROPICAL FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education)
(An Autonomous Council under the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change Govt. of India)
P.O. -R.F.R.C, Mandla Road, JABALPUR - 482 021 (M.P.)
No.15-1(27)/e-procurement/2019-20/pur/TFRI/JBP dt. 14/02/2020

NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR : SUPPLY OF FURNITURE FOR LABORATORY
No. 19-20/TFRI/JBP/01

Tropical Forest Research Institute, Jabalpur invites online tenders for the supply of **Furniture for Laboratory** from eligible bidders. Details may be obtained online at CPPP web site <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/> and <http://tfri.icfre.org>. Last date for submission of bids is 09/03/2020. Bids shall be submitted online only at CPPP web site. Manual bids will not be accepted Man. Manual bids will not be accepted. Sd/-
Under Secretary TFRI, Jabalpur

Corrigendum No.2

Some modification/correction has been done with reference to the tender notice of different packages issued vide this office letter No. 17012-20 on dated 17.01.2020 published in different newspapers on dated 18.01.2020 to 19.01.2020 and corrigendum No. 17739-49 dated 05.02.2020. Tender stands uploaded on website 12.02.2020 and some more modification in the construction cost/maintenance cost has been occurred as below:-

Sr. No.	Read as	Instead of
2	L050- Upgradation of Oachghat Kalaghat to Nandal road km. 0/0 to 4/625. (SH- R/Walls & B/Walls, V-shape drain, PCC, Parapets, Cross drainage work, M/T, Logo Board etc under PMGSY Batch-I).	L050- Upgradation of Oachghat Kalaghat to Nandal road km. 0/0 to 4/625. (SH- R/Walls, V-shape drain, PCC, Parapets, Cross drainage work, M/T, Logo Board etc under PMGSY Batch-I).

Package No. HP-11-113
(a) Construction Cost = 287.29 Lacs
(b) Maintenance cost = 25.79 lacs
(c) Bid Security = 6.27 lacs
(d) Type of EMD = DD/FDR
(e) Bid validity = 90 days

Package No. HP-11-113
(a) Construction Cost = 370.06 Lacs
(b) Maintenance cost = 25.79 lacs
(c) Bid Security = 7.92 lacs
(d) Type of EMD = DD/BG
(e) Bid Validity = 120 days.

The Cement/Steel/Explosive materials etc. shall be arranged by contractor at his own level.

The other terms and conditions will remain the same.
Superintending Engineer,
3rd Circle, HPPWD, Solan.

NO. PW SE-III/CTR/ TENDER (PMGSY)/2020-21- Dated:- 4798HP

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE DIVISION
SATISH DHAWAN SPACE CENTRE-SHAR, SRIHARIKOTA-524124.
Ph No.: +91-8623-22-5009 Fax No. +91-8623-22-5157

BRIEF e-TENDER NOTICE
Date: 12.02.2020

File No.: SHAR/CMD/E/AZ 1987252/2019-20, SHAR/CMD/E/BA 1987253/2019-20

On behalf of President of India, on-line Item rate tenders (e-Tenders) are invited from contractors of appropriate class for the following works by Group Director, CMG, SDSC-SHAR, Sriharkota - 524124.

E-Notice Inviting Tender No.	SHAR/CMD/E/AZ 1987252/2019-20	SHAR/CMD/E/BA 1987253/2019-20
Title of Work	External power supply for Orbital Module Preparation Facility (OMPF) at SDSC SHAR. Package-B - External power supply augmentation works (Electrical work)	External power supply for Orbital Module Preparation Facility (OMPF) at SDSC SHAR. Package-C - SITC of 11kV DG Sets & associated works (Electrical work)
Estimated cost put to tender	₹ 375.33 Lakhs	₹ 450.77 Lakhs
Period of Completion	06 Month(s)	08 Month(s)
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	₹ 7,50,660/-	₹ 9,01,540/-

Period during which the tender document can be downloaded: From 10:30 Hrs 17.02.2020 To 14:30 Hrs 02.03.2020

Last date and time for uploading of tenders: 14:30 Hrs on 06.03.2020
Due date and time of opening of tenders: 15:00 Hrs on 06.03.2020

Interested tenderers may please log on to www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for eligibility, Terms & Conditions and participating in tenders. For further details please contact this office of Group Director, CMG, SDSC SHAR, Sriharkota over Phone No.: 08623-226431, 226370 (or) visit our website www.isro.gov.in

Sd/- Group Director, CMG, SDSC-SHAR.

"IMPORTANT"

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POLICE CITE ANOTHER VIDEO, CLAIM HOT PURSUIT OF RIOTERS WITH STONES

Camera nails official denial: Police did enter Jamia library, beat students

ARANYA SHANKAR & SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

THE STUDENTS' organisation that is coordinating the protests against the new citizenship law in Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) has released a video that shows uniformed personnel in riot gear indiscriminately beating students with batons and lathis inside the university's library.

The video is from the evening of December 15, 2019, when Delhi Police and the paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) entered the campus, ostensibly in pursuit of miscreants who had allegedly set buses on fire in the vicinity of the university. Some of the men seen attacking the students in the video have their faces covered with handkerchieves.

Delhi Police, who had initially denied having ever entered the library, on Sunday said they were "verifying" the video, and that it appeared to have been "edited". They also referred to two other videos, which they said were from the same evening, and which appeared to show protesters as being "prepared with stones".

Tear gas shells were fired on
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNAY



INSIDE

VIDEO FROM LIBRARY, CONFIRMS JAMIA

WHEN DELHI POLICE ENTERED JAMIA: DEC 15 RECALLED

NO FIR A MONTH AFTER COMPLAINT

STAY CALM WHILE DEALING WITH MISCREANTS, AMIT SHAH TELLS POLICE

PAGE 3



Grab from video of police attacking students in the Jamia library on December 15, 2019.

Scared, had latched door... police kicked it down: students in library recall attack

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

TWO STUDENTS who can be seen in the video from Jamia Millia Islamia's library, where they were beaten with batons and lathis, told *The Indian Express* on Sunday that the atmosphere just before the police action was

one of fear and panic.

Mohammad Minhajuddin (26), who lost vision in his left eye after being beaten by police, can be seen in the video, sitting in the library wearing a black jacket. As Delhi Police and CRPF personnel enter the room in riot gear, Minhaj attempts to slide out from behind the desk. The uniformed personnel hit him with lathis, and

force him into the hall.

Narrating the events of December 15, 2019, when the police entered the Jamia campus, the final year student of LLM said, "The video is of the first floor. Before they climbed on to the first floor that day, there was violence on the ground floor. We could hear the noise of glass
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Kejriwal 3.0: Want to work with Centre to make Delhi the best

At swearing-in, says forgive our opponents for their remarks

MALLICA JOSHI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

TAKING CHARGE for a third time after a tenure marked by face-offs with the central government, AAP leader and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said Sunday that he wanted to "work together" with the Centre to make Delhi a "world-class city".

Addressing a large gathering at the Ramlila Maidan after being sworn-in along with six ministers, Kejriwal also said that he has forgiven his opponents for their remarks against him during a bitter election campaign, including calling him "a terrorist".

"I had invited the Prime Minister for the ceremony today, but he could not make it because he is busy. I want the PM to bless us so that we can work



Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, with deputy Manish Sisodia at the swearing-in in Delhi on Sunday. Renuka Puri

for the development and progress of Delhi," Kejriwal told a large gathering.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in Varanasi but later congratulated Kejriwal "on taking oath as Delhi's CM earlier today". "Best wishes to him for a fruitful tenure," Modi tweeted.

Delhi witnessed a heated, and often vicious, campaign this time with BJP leaders targeting Kejriwal, MoS Anurag Thakur

prompting the "Goli maaro" chant in reference to the anti-CAA protests, and the party's West Delhi MP Parvesh Sahib Singh targeting protesters at Shaheen Bagh in an interview where he spoke of them entering homes and "raping
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SIMPLY PUT

HOW TO TREAT A CHILD WITNESS

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PM underlines: CAA is in national interest, there will be no rethink

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
VARANASI, FEBRUARY 16

IN THE face of raging country-wide protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday asserted emphatically that there would be no rethink on the new law enacted by Parliament.

He said steps such as enacting the CAA and removing the special status of Jammu and Kashmir were necessary in the national interest, and were taken



PM Narendra Modi in Varanasi at Jangambadi Math. Anand Singh

despite pressure from all sides. His government, Modi told a public meeting during a day-

long visit to his Lok Sabha constituency, was taking decisions which had always been avoided.

"Mahadev ke aashirvaad se desh aaj wo faisla bhli le raha hai jo hamesha pichhe chhod diye jaate the. Jammu-Kashmir se Article 370 hatane ka faisla ho, ya phir Citizenship Amendment Act, barson se desh ko in faislon ka intezaar tha. Desh hith main yeh faisla zaroori the. Aur duniya bhar ke saarey dabao ke bawjood in faislon par hum qayam hain aur qayam rahenge (With the blessings of Lord Shiva, the country is
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

India says no to UN chief's offer of mediation with Pakistan

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

HOURS AFTER UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was ready to help if India and Pakistan agreed, India underlined that there is "no role or scope for third party mediation" on the Kashmir issue.

Guterres said in Islamabad Sunday that it was important for India and Pakistan to de-escalate "militarily and verbally" and exercise "maximum restraint". "I offered my good offices from the beginning. I am ready to help if both countries agree for mediation," the UN chief said, as he began a four-day visit to Pakistan.

In response, the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said: "India's position has not changed. Jammu & Kashmir has been, is and will continue to be an integral part of India. The issue that needs to be addressed is that of vacation of the territories illegally and forcibly occupied by Pakistan. Further issues, if any, would be discussed bilaterally. There is no role or scope for third party mediation."

Kumar said: "We hope the UN Secretary-General would emphasize on the imperative for Pakistan to take credible, sustained and irreversible action to put an end to cross-border terrorism against India, which threatens the most fundamental human right — the right to life, of
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

State discoms' large dues spark NPA fears in renewable energy

PRABHA RAGHAVAN & ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

RENEWABLE ENERGY projects, which have cornered the bulk of private funding in the power sector over the last six years, could be facing a fresh wave of non-performing assets (NPAs). There is renewed nervousness among banks that lending to renewable power utilities over the last five years could turn bad.

In a deposition before a Parliamentary panel, a senior government official flagged that "outstanding payments" due to

renewable energy developers "is a very big issue and an issue of concern" and that "if the situation will not get improved, many solar and wind projects may turn into NPAs".

The power sector accounts for almost half the credit to the infrastructure sector, with the telecom sector coming in second. In the power sector, the renewable energy sector witnessed significant FDI inflows of \$3.22 billion over the last four years. This came alongside domestic investment leveraged mostly by bank funding.

So far, in the renewable
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

EXPLAINED
Renewing concerns

THE CONCERN over renewable energy comes amid uncertainty posed by the SC's decision to uphold the government's definition of adjusted gross revenue, which impacts telecom majors. There are fears over loans in aviation, too, due to groundings, thin margins, and fuel price volatility.

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5 FIRs and counting... NRC ex-chief Hajela's hounding goes on

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 16

FOR OVER five years, he was the face of Assam's historic National Register of Citizens (NRC) — an exercise rife with controversy, and statistics of astounding proportions: 3.29 crore applicants, 6.6 crore documents and more than 50,000 employees.

But months after its completion on August 31, 2019, Prateek Hajela, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, remains the target of those unhappy with the NRC, including the Assam government.

Since the publication of the final list, which excluded 19 lakh people, five FIRs have been filed against Hajela, accusing him of



Faces wrath of those who are unhappy with outcome of NRC process. Express Archive

allegedly tampering with NRC data and misappropriating funds. Three of the FIRs have been filed by Assam Public Works (APW), the main petitioner of the NRC update process. It claims that
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THE GOVERNANCE PAGE



DISABLED WOMEN IN PUNJAB GET HELP
PAGE 13

WORLD

VIRUS CURBS STARTING TO WORK, SAYS CHINA; DEATH TOLL IS NOW 1,665

ROCKETS STRIKE US COALITION BASE IN BAGHDAD, NO DEATHS
PAGE 14

Longest civil suit vs a strong room that can't be breached: royal saga continues in Rampur

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

ESHA ROY
RAMPUR (UP), FEBRUARY 16

A STRONG room built in the 1930s to withstand bombs and war is set to be felled by a family dispute that lies at the heart of the country's longest-running civil suit. However, before that, the authorities in UP have to be able to open it.

A few weeks of drilling has so far yielded only a note-book size hole into its six-tonne, two-lock door, after which the court ordered a stay. Meanwhile, as the

squabbling Rampur royals wait with bated breath, speculation is rife about what lies inside.

Hidden deep in the centre of the 220-room, 450-acre Khas Bagh Kothi, accessible only through the master bedroom, the strong room has been seen by few even within the royals, one branch of which includes former Congress MP Noor Bano Begum.

But the legend of its riches, which occupies Rampur's marketplaces, tea stalls, even lawyers' chambers at the Collectorate, includes gold coins, Kohinoor-type diamonds, gem-encrusted and gold-hilted Rampuri knives and swords, and crowns and tiaras.



Inside the 220-room, 450-acre Khas Bagh Kothi. Gajendra Yadav

The attempt to open the strong room is part of evaluation of the royal inheritance being

done by the Rampur district court, following a Supreme Court order on July 31 last year on the

dispute within the royal family.

Apart from Khas Bagh Kothi, two of whose 220 rooms are still in use by the family, officials will be assessing other properties such as the 200-acre Kothi Benazir, Sarhari Kunda and Shahbad Kothi, all in Rampur. Shahbad Kothi includes the famous Lakhi Bagh, so named for the one lakh trees planted by the Rampur Nawab there. Both Benazir as well as Shahbad are home to the family's mango orchards.

Since January, officials have been going room to room at Khas Bagh Kothi — last Monday, an armoury yielded 1,000 swords and 315 rifles — before
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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TRIPURA'S TEA GETS POPULAR

As Tripura's indigenous variety gains popularity, state tea board plans to increase supply

EXPRESS EXPLAINED



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Govt wants pvt players to pump in more trains into the system

FILM OF THE MONTH



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How the Sanjeev Chawla case changed cricket

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

On the 3 Things podcast, we pick apart the bizarre story of how the first match-fixing case was caught, and how it changed cricket rules.

FROM PAGE ONE

Jamia video

campus on December 15, and students were lathicharged. Over 100 students were injured, and many ended up in hospitals. Two months on, no FIR has been registered on the complaints filed against the police by the university and students.

The video of police action inside the library was tweeted by the Jamia Coordination Committee (JCC) at 1.41 am on Sunday. By Sunday afternoon, two more videos had surfaced online, showing men and women rushing inside the library and blocking the gate with tables.

On Sunday, The Indian Express reached out to the Commissioner of Delhi Police Amulya Patnaik and several of his top officers for comments on the video. Commissioner Patnaik declined to comment.

Special CP (Crime) Praveer Ranjan said: "We have taken cognizance of the videos that have emerged. We received footage from JMI a few days ago only after repeatedly requesting them to hand it over to us. We have to verify the footage, see if it's been doctored, and also establish the chain of sequence."

Asked why police had earlier denied entering the library, Ranjan said Delhi Police stood by their position that they "entered the campus in hot pursuit after rioters started going inside the campus and began pelting stones at police". He said that "there is a video of the joint CP requesting them to talk".

Former DCP (Southeast) Chinmoy Biswal, who was the officer in charge of the police operation in Jamia, declined to comment. Biswal, who was criticised for the police highhandedness on December 15, was removed from the post by the Election Commission ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections.

R P Meena, who replaced Biswal as DCP (Southeast), was at Shaheen Bagh on Sunday along with Additional DCP (Southeast) Kumar Gyanesh. Asked for a comment on the video, these two officers told The Indian Express: "The matter is with the Crime Branch and is being investigated."

A senior police officer who declined to be identified said that the personnel in riot gear who "can be seen using force" in the video were CRPF. A spokesperson for the CRPF said on Sunday that he had not seen the video; however, "on December 15, the CRPF was deployed with the Delhi Police".

Ranjan said that the video appears to have been "edited". He also referred to the two other videos that surfaced on Sunday, which appear to show men and women, including some wearing masks, entering the library, with at least one individual holding what could have been a stone.

"It appears that the protesters were prepared with stones. Who sits in a library with a mask? They

were not unarmed. The sequence, once established, will clarify everything," Ranjan said. One of the students in the video appears to have a piece of cloth around his neck; his face, however, is visible.

Delhi Police spokesperson M S Randhawa said: "We have received all three videos, and we are trying to establish the sequence. First video is edited, it appears."

A senior officer said that the first video that the student body released is "only half truth". He said that the police "can enter any building or institution when it's in hot pursuit, and in this case 'rioters' had entered an institution".

He said that on December 15, maybe there were "some innocent students genuinely studying in the library, but it's also clear that many who entered the library were armed protesters".

Jamia university authorities confirmed that the video in circulation was from December 15, and was from the university library, but said that they did not release it. They said the footage had been given to various investigating agencies.

"It has come to our notice that some video with regard to police brutality in Dr Zakir Husain Library of the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) is in circulation. This is to clarify that the video has not been released by the university," university PRO Ahmad Azeem said.

The 44-second video has a time stamp of 6.08 pm. The men in riot gear, including helmets, shields, and jackets, are seen raining batons on the cowering students, who are seen trying to cover their heads and faces with their hands as they are beaten.

According to the JCC, the footage is of the MPhil/PhD reading room in the Old Library building. It is the same room in which Mohammad Minhajuddin (26), a law student, was assaulted by the police. He has lost vision in his left eye due to injuries from the attack.

On the other two videos released later, Safoura Zargar, a JCC member, said, "These are not 'rioters' entering the library, but scared students trying to escape police brutality and tear gas exposure. Anybody with a stone in their hand is not a rioter, and whether there are stones in the hand is also not clear."

After the events of December 15, Jamia Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar said that the police did not take permission to enter the university. The V-C had condemned the police brutality. Having failed to persuade the police to register an FIR, the university and students have now moved court.

Students recall

shattering and tear gas shells bursting. Students were scared, that is why they had shut their books and laptops. We knew the police would come upstairs. We did not know what to do, so we latched the door, and everyone was looking at the door anx-

Kejriwal 3.0: Want to make Delhi the best

daughters and sisters".

In his speech, delivered nearly a week after AAP won 62 of 70 seats, Kejriwal said he had "forgiven our opposition" for the remarks. "We have to do a lot of work in Delhi. I cannot do it alone, I need your support in making Delhi the most developed and beautiful city in the world. I want to work together with everybody. It is normal to have tussles between different political parties during elections. We have forgiven our opposition for whatever remarks they made. I would also like to request the opposition parties to forget what happened during

the elections... I want to work together with the central government to make Delhi a world-class city," he said.

Kejriwal had first taken charge in 2013 before quitting within two months when the Jan Lokpal Bill was not passed, keeping with his image at the time as an activist and protester. Since taking oath for the second time in 2015, the AAP government has made key interventions in education and health, apart from reducing electricity and water tariffs.

On Sunday, Kejriwal shared the stage with his son and brother. With no other

Opposition leaders invited, those who shared the elevated platforms were the chief guests: "50 Dilli Ke Nirmata" — teachers, public servants, farmers and bus marshals, among others.

The Chief Minister hit a combative mode, however, when he referred to those who questioned him on the subsidies that AAP offered over five years.

"They say Kejriwal is making everything free, but isn't everything precious that has been given by God free? A mother's love for her child is free, a father's love that shows in the struggle to secure a good future for his child is priceless. Shrawan Kumar

served his parents with all he had. Kejriwal is your Shrawan Kumar. Do I start charging people for education and health? Do I start charging patients for their operations? I cannot do this," he said, referring to the character in the Ramayana who devoted his life to his parents.

In a marked difference from the ceremony of 2015, none of the AAP MLAs wore the trademark party caps while being sworn-in. As in 2015, the ceremony ended with Kejriwal singing a few lines. Five years ago, it was "Insaan se insaan ka ho bhaichara". On Sunday, it was "Hum honge kamyab".

iously."

"The movement you see at the beginning of the video, where people are trying to go towards the back and hide, happened because the police had started kicking the door, and everyone was very scared. Nobody could study. They finally broke open the door and burst in, and started to rain lathis on us. I was trying to escape. I received a blow on my hand and then, at the door, I got another one in my eye," Minhajuddin said.

He said he ran to the bathroom to save himself. A picture of him collapsed on the bathroom floor with a bloody handkerchief covering his face had gone viral. Despite filing a police complaint, there has been no FIR.

"The Jamia administration wanted to just bury the issue. Had the students not taken the initiative, the matter would have been buried. The police have not called me even once, and the complaint has not been converted into an FIR," he said.

Minhajuddin has moved the Delhi High Court seeking a court-monitored investigation or a probe by a special investigation team (SIT) into the violence.

Md Mustafa (27), an MA student of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy, who suffered fractures in both hands, can be seen in the video in another corner in a white shirt and blue sweater vest. He too, attempts to make his way out of the room, but is hit by lathis.

Mustafa said he had reached the library at 9 am as usual. "I am studying for the Civil Services examination, so I come in the morning and leave at night. That day I was reading Indian Economy by Ramesh Singh. Around 5:45 pm, I heard sounds of tear gas shells outside, but I was confident that the police would not enter the library. But as the tension increased, we decided to latch the door. But the police kicked it open and entered," he said.

"They gave us no warning; they just charged with lathis. They were saying, 'Tumhe aazadi chahiye? Ye lo aazadi'. I have never been part of any protest, so I was shocked. They didn't even bother to hit us on our legs; the first blow I got was behind the ear, as a result of which a blood clot was formed. Once out of the hall, I was repeatedly hit and my laptop was broken," Mustafa said.

He said that instead of being taken to hospital, he was taken to New Friends Colony police station along with several others. "They took our mobile phones from us. No medical treatment was given; we didn't get enough water and no food, except a samosa. They forced us to sit on the floor in the cold. We were finally taken to AIIMS Trauma Centre at 3:30 am."

Mustafa said he was initially scared. "I didn't want to file a complaint, but I finally did so in January. Until now, not even an IO (investigating officer) has been assigned to me. The police are just not doing anything," he said. Mustafa too, has moved the HC against the delay in filing an FIR.

Renewable energy

energy sector, while there have been NPAs in the hydro and biomass sectors, there has not been a single instance of an investment in the wind sector and solar sector turning bad.

The concerns stem from mounting payment dues of renewable energy generators, primarily as distribution companies (discoms) of states such as AP, TN and Telangana have been falling back on payments for electricity contracted. The dues were pegged at Rs 9,403.58 crore up to end-November 2019, with Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Rajasthan together contributing over 85 per cent of the total, according to data compiled by the Central Electricity Authority.

Delays have started to stretch beyond 12 months in some cases, effectively impeding the working capital flows for these companies and hindering their debt servicing capability — a warning sign for lenders. In all, over 15 discoms have fallen back on payment obligations against electricity supplied by solar and wind energy developers — the only spark in an otherwise sluggish sector.

"There are outstanding bills by discoms, not only to the renewable energy sector, but also to the conventional energy sector. That is something which we have taken up with the states. We have raised this thing that they pay, and they pay quickly," R K Singh, MoS (Independent Charge) for Power and New and Renewable Energy, told The Indian Express.

"I have asked the ministry to set a timeline of about 6 months," said the minister, adding, "We will make sure that the discoms pay. We are pressurising them."

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's directions in her Budget speech to utilities to close old thermal plants with high carbon emission levels might encourage the growth of renewables. But the government has also signalled that it would allow the possibility of imposing tariffs up to 20 per cent on solar cells.

India has limited domestic capacity to produce these products, according to Wind Independent Power Producers Association president Sunil Jain. "Today, 85 per cent is imported. Even the domestic capacity is basically only in assembling the module. Even the cells are imported from China," said Jain, who is also CEO of Hero Future Energies.

Upto end-August 2019, installed renewable power capacity stood at around 80.63 gigawatts. The red flags come in the wake of two state-owned discoms of Andhra Pradesh moving to reopen contracts signed with wind generators earlier this year, a step that threatened to impact at least 40 of India's biggest RE developers. This had triggered concerns that other states could initiate similar reopening of wind and solar project PPAs (power purchase agreements) on the same grounds — that tariffs discovered in subsequent years have

been cheaper.

According to analysts, firms with a higher proportion of assets exposed to states like Andhra Pradesh are under greater stress.

During that period, over 20 firms, including ACME Solar, Renew Power and Tata Power Renewable, approached the Andhra Pradesh High Court against the move. According to the court's judgment, they had argued that they had invested "huge sums of money and have borrowed equally large sums" to establish their plants in the state. They had calculated a return on investment based on factors like tariff and had argued that, if their capacity was curtailed, it "would drive them into debt".

"The full payouts (in Andhra) are still not coming — that money is stuck at present. So there are some renewable players who are certainly facing cash flow challenges as far as this is concerned," said Manish Gupta, Senior Director, CRISIL Ratings.

Industry executives are divided in their views over the gravity of the situation in the sector following the Andhra Pradesh issue. While Vineet Mittal, president of Solar Power Developers Association, said the enforcement of a letter of credit system has helped improve payments, Wind Independent Power Producers Association chief Jain said the situation is "risky". The exposure of banks in renewable projects in Andhra Pradesh alone currently stands at around Rs 35,000 crore, according to him.

Hajela

it will file a total of 22 FIRs against the official.

The 50-year-old Hajela, who was relieved of his responsibility as NRC State Coordinator by the Supreme Court last November and moved to Madhya Pradesh, was unavailable for comment. But sources close to the NRC office in Assam said whatever is happening with Hajela amounts to "a witch-hunt". "There is absolutely no reason to be harassing him like this now," the sources said.

On February 7, Hajela was booked by the Assam CID on an FIR lodged by APW for allegedly tampering with data for the final list. On February 12, Hajela's name surfaced again, this time with regard to the disappearance of data on the official NRC website.

"The data had disappeared because Hajela failed to renew the contract with Wipro," alleged current NRC coordinator, Hitesh Dev Sarma. Sarma's office has also lodged an FIR against a former employee, a 32-year-old woman, who is known to have worked with Hajela through his tenure from 2014 to 2019, for "not sharing the password of two official email IDs".

The latest FIR against Hajela follows three filed last September: by APW, by Goriya Moriya Yuva Chitra Parishad and by an individual in Dibrugarh, respectively. The government then released a statement alleging that Hajela was working under the direction of "certain forces" to "publish a

faulty NRC with names of illegal foreigners in it".

Last November, APW filed another FIR, with the CBI, alleging corruption and misappropriation of money from funds allotted by the Centre for the NRC. "The next 19 FIRs will be phased out and lodged in the coming months," said APW's president Aabhiheet Sharma. "If we lodge them all at once, people will forget after a while. We will give them one by one. Moreover, we are still in the process of gathering evidence to make our case stronger," he said.

In 2015, Hajela, who holds a B.Tech in Electronics from IIT, and his team introduced a key intervention to the NRC exercise: a mechanism of digitising records so that applicants could trace their legacy on an electronic database and generate a unique code to avoid replication due to similar names or surnames of ancestors.

But as multiple extensions were granted by the Supreme Court — January 31, 2016 was the first deadline for the final NRC — and his team grew manifold, Hajela became answerable to not just the apex court, but as it turned out, even the public at large.

In October 2018, a Durga Puja pandal in the Bengali-majority district of Cachar, where Hajela was first posted in 1996, represented him as the "demon" slayed by the goddess.

The following year, Hajela got on the wrong side of the government. In July 2019, the Supreme Court dismissed a petition filed by the ruling BJP for re-verification of NRC names in border districts on Hajela's word that 27 per cent verification was already done.

This irked the government to such an extent that it went against the Court and released the district-wise exclusion data of the draft NRC to question the accuracy of the process. Describing the exercise as "flawed", it claimed that the inclusion rate is higher in Bangladesh-border districts, and lower in districts with a predominant indigenous population.

The APW and the BJP share common ground on the NRC but both have denied any links to each other. Registered as a society in 2000 by a group of Guwahati-based businessmen, the APW is convinced that there are "80 lakh" Bangladeshis in Assam, and has demanded 100 per cent re-verification of the NRC. "Earlier, people alleged that we were Congress agents. Later, they said we work with RAW. Now they say we are BJP-RSS agents. We are doing our duty towards the country," said Sharma. BJP president Ranjit Dass said the APW "has nothing to do" with the party. "We have had no discussion or any contact with them," he said.

And yet, it is believed that their constant hounding led Hajela to approach the Supreme Court, seeking a transfer. In October, in former CJI Ranjan Gogoi's last order with regard to NRC, Hajela was transferred to Madhya Pradesh, where he took charge as Commissioner Health (Principal Secretary) in Bhopal.

While the court did not give any reason for the order, sources close to Hajela said he was compelled to seek this transfer because of security threats.

But then, in December, an "interim audit report" was leaked with observations of an inspection report related to a partial audit of the NRC exercise from 2014 to 2017 by the Accountant General (Audit) pointing to alleged "financial irregularities and impropriety".

At the time, sources close to the NRC process had said "each objection raised in the inspection was countered" by Hajela's office. They had also said that "someone is trying to short-circuit" the due procedure for an AG audit "by leaking this report".

In November 2019, on the last day of his NRC stint, Hajela told The Indian Express: "I am confident of the work that has been done during my tenure. It was a Constitutional duty which I have performed." Sources close to the NRC exercise said they now fear that "even the Court is not doing anything to protect him".

UN chief

the people of India, including in J&K."

Addressing a press conference after meeting Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the UN Secretary-General said he was "deeply concerned" over the situation in J&K and tensions along the LoC. "Diplomacy and dialogue remain the only tools that guarantee peace and stability with solutions in accordance with the Charter of United Nations and resolutions of the Security Council," Guterres told reporters.

He said that he had "repeatedly stressed the importance of exercising maximum restraint". "UNMOGIP (UN Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan) should be given free access. It is already there on the Pakistan side, and it should also be given on the other side," the UN chief said. India maintains that UNMOGIP has outlived its utility and is irrelevant after the Simla Agreement and the consequent establishment of the LoC.

(WITHPTI IN ISLAMABAD)

Rampur

they ran up against the strong room.

Rampur Nawab Raza Ali Khan had been the first of the kingdoms to accede to India after Partition, in 1949. In return, the Indian government had allowed the Nawab full ownership of the properties with a guarantee that inheritance would be determined on customary law, that is go to the eldest son. Raza Ali died in 1966, leaving behind three wives, three sons and six daughters. His eldest son Murtaza Ali Khan was recognised by the government as the sole inheritor, which was challenged by a brother.

The case lasted in court till the Supreme Court last year went by the Muslim personal law or Shariat, entitling women in the family to a share and calling for equal division of properties among all the descendants. In January, officials of the district court arrived at Khas Bagh Kothi to put the exercise in motion.

Having given up trying to cut through the thick metal door of the strong room, and to open its intricate set of two locks, they have now called in an expert welder from Moradabad, court officials in Rampur and Delhi said. Following objections from one side of the family, the district court has barred publication of pictures of the room "for security reasons".

Ironically, the last time the strong room was in the news was for a break-in. In 1980, in what was described by the Uttar Pradesh CID at the time as "the biggest ever robbery in India", thieves had made away with goods estimated to be worth crores (though no one can be

sure). The CID put the figure at about Rs 2 crore, including gold, silver and diamonds.

Soon after, a gold plate was recovered from the Kothi's lawns and a silver urn from the terrace (which is when the servants discovered a breach in the roof). Two years later, the CID had arrested a CRPF jawan and seized from his home 25 gold alums (embossed plates used in Moharram processions) worth Rs 2.4 lakh and 10 pieces of silver relics.

Says Haidar Ali Khan, the great-grandson of Raza Ali and Noor Begum's grandson, "We believe a diamond crown and 60 kg of gold were also stolen." The 30-year-old, who lives in the colonial-style Noor House in Rampur with other members of his branch of the family, is among those who has never seen the strong room.

Other descendants Nawab Mohammad Ali Khan, now based in Goa, and sister Shahzaadi Naghad Abedi also say they have no idea what the room holds. Both are here for the evaluation.

Haider Ali, who accuses Mohammad Ali and Naghad Abedi of neglecting the family inheritance, contests, however, that he has a fair idea of what is at stake. According to him, a crystal throne from the Great Hall is missing as is other crystal furniture, and also a bed entirely made of gold. "We submitted a list of 5,000 items that have disappeared over the years, to the Supreme Court. None of the palaces is furnished anymore, where has the furniture gone?" Haider was present as officials took stock of the Khas Bagh Kothi armoury Monday. Its keys have been with the government.

At the palatial house, walls are crumbling, the wooden panelling shows age, and alcoves that once held Italian marble statues stand empty. Pointing towards a railway station initially built for use by the Rampur Nawab, Mohammad Ali also remembers the golden era, including travelling in exclusive salons with family and friends.

The railway station is among the properties to be evaluated.

PM in Varanasi

now taking decisions that were always left behind. Be it the scrapping of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir or the Citizenship Amendment Act, the country had been waiting for these decisions for years. These decisions were necessary in the interest of the nation. In spite of pressure from all over the world, we remain firm on these decisions, and will continue to remain firm," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister's assertion came days after his party was defeated in the Assembly elections in Delhi, the campaign for which saw a highly charged debate on the CAA and the protests at Shaheen Bagh, where a group of women, supported by a cross-section of society, have been holding a sit-in for two months now. Since the passage of the CAA in December last year, hundreds of thousands of protesters have come out in the streets in cities and towns across India, taking the government by surprise.

Listing out key decisions taken by his government, Modi also referred to the trust set up for the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, and asserted that it would work without losing time.

During the visit, the Prime Minister either launched or laid the foundation stones for 36 projects worth Rs 1,254 crore in his constituency. He also flagged off by video link IRCTC's Maha Kaal Express, the country's first overnight private train that will connect the pilgrimage centres of Varanasi, Ujjain, and Omkareshwar.

Modi also unveiled the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Memorial on campus at the Sugarcane Development Research Institute.

FULL REPORTS ON

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5 KEJRIWAL TAKES OATH



Tens of thousands attended the CM's swearing-in ceremony at Ramlila Maidan, Sunday. PTI

At swearing-in, talk of *bijli-paani*, health — and a larger role for Kejriwal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

THOUSANDS OF people from Delhi and beyond gathered at Ramlila Maidan on Sunday morning to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, with many conversations around Delhi's "development under the Aam Aadmi Party", and how the model should be "replicated across the nation".

Hemant Kumar (35), an accountant from Seemapuri, brought his wife, mother and one-year-old daughter to see the ceremony.

"Kejriwal has brought a revolution in politics of the country and now other states are looking at his model of governance and trying to improve. People are scared to take and give bribes now. Our government schools have changed drastically — from having tin roofs to a proper building; perhaps they can be made better if students' aptitudes are assessed and they and their parents are encouraged to focus on subjects they like," said Kumar.

The oft mentioned subsidised electricity and water supply schemes and improvement in healthcare cropped up in many conversations at the Maidan, but there were also some who spoke about Kejriwal assuming a larger national role.

Sabir Ali (58) from Okhla, who came to the ceremony with his friend Dr M Rehman, said, "Kejriwal keeps everyone's welfare and growth in mind and doesn't just say 'sabka saath, sabka vikas' for the sake of it. His ministers are educated and we need people like them. If he keeps working with the same vigour as he does now, he can be the next PM."

Many at the event said they want the government to keep working on electricity, water supply, healthcare and education and improve them further. Others said unemployment and crime also need attention.

Jitendra Rawat (32) from Burari, said, "We voted for development and for those who worked to provide services to us. In the past five years in our area, the condition of unauthorised colonies and roads have improved by 80% after moving at a slow pace previously. In the next term, the government needs to work on creating employment because that will help curb thefts and other crimes in the city. Our MLA has told us he would work on this within one month, so we will see."

In the crowd were also people from other states, who said



(Clockwise from top) CM Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita, mother Gita Devi and daughter Harshita at the swearing-in ceremony at Ramlila Maidan, Sunday; (above) one-year-old Ayaan Tomar, whose pictures dressed as Kejriwal went viral, was a special invitee for the event. Pics: Renuka Puri



(Clockwise from top) CM Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita, mother Gita Devi and daughter Harshita at the swearing-in ceremony at Ramlila Maidan, Sunday; (above) one-year-old Ayaan Tomar, whose pictures dressed as Kejriwal went viral, was a special invitee for the event. Pics: Renuka Puri

ARVIND KEJRIWAL'S THIRD TERM AS CM

AAP's key projects this term: MCD grants, doorstep delivery of ration

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

AS IT comes to power for the third time in the capital, two key priorities for the new Aam Aadmi Party government are both areas that have been hard to navigate during its previous tenure. According to sources, the big projects that the government wants to implement are the doorstep delivery of ration scheme and project-specific sanitation grants to municipal corporations.

The AAP government first floated the idea of delivering ration to people at their homes in 2018, saying it would help fill distribution gaps and could also help those who queue up outside ration shops only to be disappointed.

The project, however, did not take off, with the L-G refusing to sign off on it. The cabinet of ministers, including Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, had held a nine-day sit-in at the L-G's office demanding that the project be cleared. The L-G had raised objections against the plan before the Supreme Court judgment, which said the L-G is bound by the aid and advice of the cabinet of ministers except in areas of law and order, land and police.

"Our plan is ready and we hope to roll it out in the next three-six months. We already have experience with doorstep delivery of services and believe



Abhinav Salta

that since this is just one product, we will be able to manage easily," said a senior official, who did not want to be named.

After the L-G's refusal to pass the file, the Centre had issued guidelines to states, asking them to start a similar service to prevent starvation deaths.

The second big project that AAP wants to get rolling soon is a project-based sanitation solution for the municipal corpora-

tions. The three municipal corporations in the city — South, North and East — have demanded more funds from the government. The latter two have not managed to pay regular salaries to its employees several times over the past few years. In East Delhi, sanitation workers have gone on strike repeatedly, demanding better working conditions.

"Whenever we gave money

to the corporations to pay salaries, they diverted the funds and used it for something else. We are now working on a project-specific funding pattern, whereby funds will be released only for that particular project. One of our main aims this time around is to make sure that Delhi is clean. Since our next electoral focus in the city is also the corporation polls, the project will help people see how

well things can work if there is coordination between the government and the corporations," said the official.

The other scheme that the government aims to roll out in the coming month is free bus rides for students, along the lines of free bus rides for women. "The government will pay DTC and cluster buses a set amount per ticket," said the official.

SEEN AT THE RALLY



PTI



AAP plans nation-wide expansion: Roping in more volunteers, meetings in states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

AAP SWEEPING the Delhi Assembly polls has reignited national ambition in the eight-year old party, which so far has representatives in the Delhi and Punjab assemblies. On Sunday, after the cabinet of ministers took oath, senior leader Gopal Rai held a meeting with state office bearers and in-charges at the CM house.

"The agenda of the meeting was to discuss two things. First, the message of the historic win in the Delhi elections purely on unprecedented development works in Delhi should be disseminated across the country... This victory is emphatic and decisive as the BJP put in all their efforts by deploying the Prime Minister, Union Home Minister and CMs from other states using their politics of hatred. People of Delhi taught BJP a lesson and, therefore, AAP's spectacular win with 62 out of 70 seats has important national significance. Secondly, how this victory can be used as a springboard for expanding the party nationally," said Rai.

The party also launched a campaign to invite people to join. "We have launched an extensive campaign to invite people to join AAP and take part in nation building by giving a missed call



(Clockwise from top) Cabinet ministers Imran Hussain, Rajendra Pal Gautam, Gopal Rai, Satyendar Jain, Kailash Gahlot, CM Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia. Renuka Puri

to 9871010101. The campaign was launched nationally on February 11 and nearly 15 lakh people have already expressed interest to join. We want to take this campaign to the next stage,"

added Rai. He said the three-point action plan comprises a state-level meeting of active volunteers and office bearers, publishing posters inviting peo-

ple to join the 'nation building' campaign in all legislative assembly constituencies in India, and press conferences by the state leadership in state capitals and major cities.

MEANWHILE

Taking oath

New Delhi: While the other ministers took oaths of office and secrecy in the name of God, Gopal Rai, who was the labour minister in the previous cabinet, took it in the name of freedom fighters who lost their lives in the struggle for independence. Rajendra Pal Gautam, who was the social welfare minister, took oath in the name of Lord Buddha, while Imran Hussain took the oath of office in the name of Allah and the oath of secrecy in the name of Ishwar (God). The others, including CM Arvind Kejriwal, took the oaths in the name of God.

Little CMs spread smiles

New Delhi: With Ayaan Tomar, the toddler whose pictures went viral after dressing up as Arvind Kejriwal, getting an invite for the oath-taking ceremony on Sunday, several parents also dressed up their young children as the CM and brought them to Ramlila Maidan on Sunday. ENS

BRIEFLY

Six held for duping and robbing elderly woman

New Delhi: Six men were arrested for allegedly posing as executives of a gas agency and robbing a 65-year-old woman in Paschim Vihar on January 29. Police said the woman was with her domestic help when three of the accused men allegedly entered the house on the pretext 'entering meter readings'. The accused then injected the woman with sedatives and took their jewellery. They were eventually identified via CCTV footage and caught from Jwalapuri, police said.

1 more arrest in Gargi incident

New Delhi: A 19-year-old man was arrested by police at Hauz Khas for his alleged involvement in the mass molestation of students at a cultural fest in DU's Gargi College on February 6, taking the number of persons arrested in the matter to 15.

Capital to see warmer days

New Delhi: Warmer days are expected over the coming week in Delhi as maximum temperatures have begun to rise, the IMD said. The highest temperature recorded Sunday was 27.1 degrees Celsius—three degrees above normal—and lowest was 9 degrees Celsius, two degrees below normal. ENS

AFTER FOOTAGE SHOWING POLICE HITTING STUDENTS EMERGES

Jamia confirms video from library, says didn't release it

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

AS CCTV footage of police hitting students inside the library at Jamia Millia Islamia on December 15 went viral on social media, the university authorities Sunday sought to distance itself and clarified that the administration did not release the video. The university, however, confirmed that the video was from the university library but did not comment on its contents.

Jamia Chief Proctor Waseem Ahmad Khan said the footage had been given to various agencies and added that he didn't know from where it leaked.

In an official statement, PRO Ahmed Azeem said, "It has come to our notice that some video with regard to police brutality in Dr Zakir Husain Library of the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) is in circulation. This is to clarify that the video has not been released by the university."

"The Jamia Coordination Committee, which is actually a Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) of students and alumni of JMI, is spearheading the movement against CAA/NRC/NPA outside Gate No 7 of the university on Maulana Mohammed Ali Jauhar Road. This is to clarify that JCC is not an official body of the university. Any communication from JCC should not be taken as communication from the university," he added.

Azeem also added that "a number of Twitter accounts, Facebook pages and other users on different social media platforms are using Jamia Millia Islamia's name, creating confusion among people".

On the video being from



The Jamia library a day after the violence in December. University officials haven't commented on the contents of the video

Jamia library, he said, "Prima facie the footage seems to be of the MPhil & PhD section of the Old Library. Police are investigating the case."

Asked why the university did not comment on the violence in the video, Azeem said, "We have already spoken about the violence. We have submitted a police complaint on police brutality and moved court for an FIR. We have mentioned it in our report

to the MHRD as well. Today, the talk was about the footage, so we clarified that."

The Chief Proctor said the footage had been submitted to the Delhi Police, NHRC, MHRD, the internal fact-finding team of the university as well as the Jamia Teachers' Association. "We had, however, given it to them with the undertaking that they will not release it anywhere. We don't know from where it has been released.

There is nothing in the video that we haven't already said. We have been saying from day one that police entered without permission, beat students and damaged our property. Still, we will inquire into the matter," he said.

Jamia had set up two committees in December last year, around two weeks after the incident, to probe the matter. One committee was supposed to collect evidence and submit it to the other committee, which would prepare a report. Asked about the status of the report, Azeem said, "The first committee has already submitted all evidences to the second committee. They are now working on it."

Jamia Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar did not respond to calls and texts by *The Indian Express*.

WHAT HAPPENED ON DEC 15

AROUND 3 PM
Jamia students, joined by locals, take out a march against CAA, passing through Batla House and Zakir Nagar areas

AROUND 4:40 PM
Buses set on fire, stones pelted by section of protesters, police use teargas, lathicharge

AROUND 5:45 PM
As protests spiral out of control, reports of gunshot injuries emerge, police deny claims

AROUND 6 PM
Police enter campus and library, lob tear gas, beat students with lathis and drags them out, some with their hands raised in the air. Some students taken to Kalkaji and NFC police stations. Police also accused of entering mosque inside campus

AROUND 7:30 PM
Jamia V-C condemns violence, says police did not have permission to enter campus

8 PM ONWARDS
Injured protesters are taken to various city hospitals for treatment. Over 100 are injured

9 PM
Civil society members gather outside old PHQ at ITO to protest against Jamia violence

AROUND 3:30 AM (DEC 16)
Around 35 students kept in police detention released, sent for MLCs



Month after Jamia admin filed police complaint, no FIR



During a protest outside Jamia campus in December. Md Mustafa (below) and Minhajuddin, two of the students injured in police action in the Jamia library. Pics: Gajendra Yadav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

A MONTH after students gheraoed the Jamia V-Office, the university had filed a police complaint against "brutal action" of "unruly policemen" who beat students and damaged university property. Police, however, are yet to register an FIR in the matter.

A Delhi court had also directed Delhi Police to file an action taken report (ATR) by March 16 on a plea filed by the university, stating whether any action has been taken on the complaint by the varsity administration to lodge an FIR.

University officials had alleged that police "illegally" entered campus and attacked students with teargas shells, lathis and also opened fire. The plea filed by the university registrar, also alleged that police broke open the mosque and vandalised it while people were offering their prayers and manhandled the Imam.

In their complaint, the university sought an FIR against police under IPC sections 295 (defiling place of worship), 297 (trespassing on burial places), 307 (attempt to murder), 342 (wrongful confinement), 435



(mischief by fire or explosive substance), and 120-B (criminal conspiracy). University sources said due to the defacement, the authorities faced a loss of Rs 2.5 crore.

Police have registered two FIRs — one at New Friends Colony and another at Jamia Nagar — against protesters for damaging public property and rioting. According to police, the case is with the special investigation team, crime branch, which is scanning the videos and investigating the matter.

Delhi Police should be calm while dealing with miscreants: Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah Sunday suggested to the Delhi Police that it should be ready to deal with miscreants with a "firm hand", and at the same time remain calm despite "provocation".

At the 73rd Raising Day ceremony of the Delhi Police, Shah called it one of the leading metropolitan police forces in the country and the world which has foiled attempts to create disturbance without any fail.

Citing a speech of India's first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in 1950, he said, "Despite all the anger and provocation, Delhi Police should remain calm but it should also be ready to deal with miscreants with firm hands to protect people...I believe, on many occasions the Delhi Police has lived up to this advice of Sardar Patel."

He lauded the force, saying it has helped the government on important occasions like celebrations of Independence Day and Republic Day, festivals and visits by foreign dignitaries.

Shah observed that while constructive criticism of the force is always welcome, it must also be kept in mind that more than



Amit Shah at the 73rd Raising Day celebrations, Sunday. Prem Nath Pandey

35,000 personnel laid down their lives in the line of duty.

He also paid homage to the five Delhi Police personnel who lost their lives in the 2001 Parliament terror attack, and to Inspector M C Sharma who died in the Batla House encounter.

The event was also attended by Delhi L-G Anil Baijal and his Pudu-cherry counterpart Kiran Bedi, Delhi Police chief Amulya Patnaik and other senior officials. Shah presented medals to officers for their meritorious service as well.

Shah said that under the Delhi Safe City Project, the Centre has sanctioned Rs 857 crore for the safety and security of the capital. On police welfare measures, he said the Centre has sanctioned Rs 137 crore for housing.

Protesters set out to meet Shah, stopped by police

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

SHOUTING SLOGANS against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), protesters at Shaheen Bagh, led by the *dadis*, marched towards the police barricades Sunday and said they are going to meet Home Minister Amit Shah at his residence. Police, however, requested them to first get permission from authorities.

Senior officers from the South and South East districts, and eight groups of paramilitary forces with anti-riot gear, stopped the march at Shaheen Bagh T-point.

R P Meena, DCP (South East) said, "At 3 am Sunday, we received an application from one of the protesters that they want to march to the Home Minister's residence at 2 pm on Sunday. After they gathered near the ground, we spoke to them. There are many groups here, we are negotiating with them and hopefully they will disperse peacefully. Since protesters haven't sought any appointment from officials to meet the Home Minister, we can't allow them to march. If a small group or delegation is willing to take permission, we can help."

He added that adequate security arrangements have been made at the spot.

The protest entered its second month on February 15.



A model India Gate at Shaheen Bagh. The inscription reads: "In sacred memory of the deceased Indian revolutionaries who fell to the atrocities of the state during the anti-CAA protests all over India. Honoured in Shaheen Bagh."

Incidentally, Shah, at a Times Now summit last week, had said he was open to discussions with anyone, including protesters at Shaheen Bagh, but that any conversation would take place on merit. "I want to say that they (Shaheen Bagh protesters) should ask for time from my office. Within three days I will give time. I have said anyone will meet, but nobody wants to discuss. A discussion will have to be done on merits," he had said.

"We want to meet the Home Minister and put forth our view

of his 'unconstitutional' law..." said Amir, one of the protesters.

Shaheen Kausar (56), another protester, said, "Police should help us and let us march to his residence. We want some answers from the government... only the Home Minister can help us."

Meena said, "It wasn't possible for them to march from Shaheen Bagh to Shah's residence. To arrange a meeting, we have sent their application to DCP, New Delhi, who then transferred it to the Police HQ. Officials at the HQ will take a final call."

At Jamia Nagar, a discussion on raising kids amid protests

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

WHEN HER six-year-old daughter asked her "Shaheen Bagh mein kaunsa current lagega?" Zehra Siddiqui figured out that her child had heard Home Minister Amit Shah's speech on TV, but she didn't have an answer to her question.

"We begin every day at Shaheen Bagh with the national anthem, followed by *Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Isai/Aapas mein hai bhai-bhai...* What she is hearing from politicians is traumatising, not the protests at Shaheen Bagh," said Siddiqui, at a panel discussion titled "Bringing up children in times of protests" at Saiyidain Manzil, Jamia Nagar, earlier this month.

Last month, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) issued an order to the DM, South East Delhi, to identify the children involved in anti-CAA protests in Shaheen Bagh and send them for counselling as they "may suffer from mental trauma because of rumours and miscommunication".

Apart from three mothers, the panel at Jamia Nagar comprised Dr Poonam Batra, professor of education, DU; child and adolescent psychologist Dr Amit

Sen; Jamia professor Farah Farooqui; Supreme Court advocate Anuj Prakash; and child rights activist and NCPCR's first chairperson Dr Shanta Sinha.

Batra said, "Women don't have a choice except to bring children to work spaces, protest sites. Haven't we all seen toddlers at construction sites sitting atop rubble? Has the NCPCR intervened there?"

Prakash added: "How is it okay for a child to sit outside a locked house and not in the lap of his/her mother at a protest? NCPCR is not raising a voice against children being beaten up by police."

Shabana, who was a part of the panel along with her toddler, said the protest is a place of learning for her kids: "At the site, there are photos of freedom fighters and I tell my daughter, who is in class III, about them. She tells me that it's all a part of her GK class too. She goes home and recites the slogans of unity for her father."

Kehkashan, a Shaheen Bagh resident and protester, said, "As mothers, we know what's best for our children. They are learning about inclusiveness and how to fight for their rights at Shaheen Bagh; on TV, they are hearing slogans like '*desh ke gaddaro ko...*' you tell me what's good for my child now?"

Scuffle breaks out at Tihar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

A GROUP of 10-12 Tihar Jail inmates sustained injuries after a scuffle broke out between them, jail officials said on Sunday.

On Saturday, the inmates allegedly fought amongst themselves after one of them refused to enter the prison barracks. Jail officials soon intervened and stopped the fight.

Tihar DG Sanjay Goel said, "Around 12:30 pm, as inmates were being locked inside jail number 4, one inmate refused to enter the barrack. When security personnel tried pushing him inside, the inmate tried to instigate others to protest. The other men refused and instead started fighting with him. They attacked each other with sharp pieces of tile. We intervened in time and stopped the fight. While all of them sustained minor injuries, two of them were taken to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital for primary treatment. They were discharged later."

A senior police officer said, "Two of the inmates used sharp objects and attacked each other on their limbs and face. They were taken to the hospital due to excessive bleeding, but were soon discharged."

AT MOHYAL COLONY

200-year-old tomb of French major in Gurgaon to be restored

SAKSHI DAYAL
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 16

THE TOMB of a French major, who served in the army of Begum Samru, will undergo a transformation in the next two months, with the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) taking it under its wing and intending to begin restoration work in coming weeks.

Erected 200 years ago in an area now falling under Gurgaon, the tomb has undergone massive deterioration — with chipping paint revealing bits of bricks underneath, and the inscription on the tomb faded in several places. "Our drawings, project and fi-

nanial reports are ready. We now have to award the contract to a contractor to start work, which should be done in the next 15-20 days. An architect, who is an INTACH member, will supervise the work. He has estimated it should be done within a month," said Atul Dev, convener of INTACH's Gurgaon chapter, adding that the restoration will likely cost "between Rs 15-20 lakh".

Located at the centre of one of the three parks tucked away in Gurgaon's Mohyal Colony, the structure has a tombstone at the top, which can be accessed by a flight of four stairs that runs along three sides. The inscription on the tombstone reveals it had been erected in memory of Major Jean



Etienne, who was born in Bordeaux, France, and died in 1821 aged 75.

"He served HH BEGUM SOMBRE for Thirty Five Years was a Gallant Soldier and an honest Man" the inscription reads, ending with the phrase, "Poor Mortals Fare You Well".

The wife of Captain Sombre from France, Begum Sombre came to locally be known as Begum Samru since people found it difficult to correctly pronounce her French name, say historians. After her husband's death, she be-

The tomb of Jean Etienne, who served in Begum Samru's army. Abhinav Saha

gan her own mercenary army which, during one of its assignments, had camped in Gurgaon, between Badshahpur and Jharsa. Historians believe the tomb of Jean Etienne helped ascertain the location of this camp, when there was no other evidence of it.

"People talk of a palace in Jharsa that was demolished by a builder in 2008. Nobody really could tell you where exactly her camp was, until we discovered the major's tomb, who served in Begum Samru's army and was her trainer. His tomb lies at the edge of Jharsa village. That gave us proof of Begum Samru's establishment in Gurgaon," said Dev.

Among local residents, the story behind the tomb is more

vague, with most only knowing it was erected in memory of a French major. Rumours and myths, however, surround another structure that adjoins it. While some insist it is "the grave of the major's horse", others say it is the tomb of Etienne's daughter. Dev dismissed these claims: "These are all local myths. The structure actually seems to be not more than thirty or forty years old. It is not from the same time".

"After the work is complete later this year, we hope to invite the French ambassador for the inauguration, and to also involve him to see if any of the major's family in France can be tracked down, who can come and be part of the ceremony," said Dev.

7 GOVT & POLITICS



SELFIE DEMANDS

UNION MINISTER Anurag Thakur may have been publicly reproached by former BJP chief Amit Shah for his controversial remarks during the Delhi election campaign but Thakur appears to have become a much sought-after leader after the controversy. During his tours to explain the Union Budget across the country, Thakur is much in demand for selfies. During the post-Budget dinner during the weekend, Thakur was requested for selfies even by some officials. While obliging them, Thakur explained to them how to take perfect selfies — the angle in which the camera has to be held, the position each person in the group has to take and even about adjusting the light. Thakur said he would give lessons on selfies to almost everyone who comes to him with the request.

WITH THE FAMILY

THOUGH DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh was one of the guests invited to the wedding reception of former finance minister Arun Jaitley's son on Saturday, Singh played another role without any hesitation. With invitation extended to everyone who Jaitley may have invited had he been alive, the reception saw constant stream of guests and well-wishers. Singh, in a way, ended up playing a role what Jaitley would have played in some cases. He stood with the Jaitley family and received top leaders — President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah among others — acting virtually as a host and took them through the ceremony.

THE BUZZ

THE APPOINTMENT of Vishnu Datt Sharma as Madhya Pradesh BJP president replacing Rakesh Sinha has triggered fresh speculation in the party circles. Sinha, a Lok Sabha MP from Jabalpur, is an OBC leader while the leader of opposition Gopal Bhargava is a Brahmin. The appointment of Datt, another Brahmin leader, has led to whispers in the power corridors that former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan could take over as the Leader of Opposition in the assembly to take on Chief Minister Kamal Nath. The logic given is that two Brahmins at the two key party posts is an unlikely formula for a state like Madhya Pradesh. With rumblings erupting in the Congress camp between Nath and Jyotiraditya Scindia, the BJP leadership appears to be preparing to give a hard time for the state ruling party.

UPHILL TASK

KERALA BJP's new president K Surendran may have strong backing at the Centre as he was apparently picked by new party chief J P Nadda and general secretary (Organisation) B L Santosh and his name was strongly recommended by Union Minister V Muraliedharan too. However, according to party sources, Surendran may find it difficult to get cooperation from the faction-ridden state unit. While various central leaders who have links with the Kerala unit tried to push their favourites for the post till the last minute, both Santosh and Muraliedharan succeeded in convincing the leadership about Surendran's credentials. Other senior leaders pointed out that the new chief has an uphill task of keeping the state unit together while preparing the party for upcoming local body elections and the assembly polls due next year while keeping the flock together. But for some of the other aspirants, some assignment at the national level rather than working under Surendran is the next target.

Divorce cases more in educated, affluent families: Bhagwat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 16

RSS CHIEF Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday said cases of divorce are found more in "educated and affluent" families nowadays as education and affluence brings arrogance along, which results in families falling apart.

He also said that there is no alternative to a Hindu society in India.

Bhagwat was addressing RSS workers here, who were present along with their family members.

"Nowadays the number of divorce cases has increased a lot. People fight over trivial issues. The cases of divorce are more in educated and affluent families because with education and affluence comes arrogance, as a result of which families fall apart. Society also falls apart because society is also a family," Bhagwat was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the RSS.

"We expect swamyamsevak to tell their family members about their activities in the Sangh, because many times women members of the family have to carry out more painful work than us to ensure that we can do what we do," he said.

He said confining women to homes has resulted in the condition of society that we see today.

"The condition of the society is because of the customs that have been followed here for the last 2,000 years. Women, we have here, were confined to homes. This was not the case 2,000 years ago. That was the golden age of our society," Bhagwat said.

"Hindu society should be virtuous and organised, and when we say society, it is not only men. A society is the one which gets its identity due to its sense of belonging," he said.

"I am a Hindu, I respect the places of reverence associated with all faiths. But I am firm regarding my own place of reverence. I have got my sanskar from my family, and it is 'matru shakti' which teaches us so," he was quoted as saying in the statement.

"There is no society without a household, and women, who comprise half of society, should become more enlightened. But if we do not care about our society, then neither we will survive, nor our family," he said.

"India has no option other than a Hindu society and Hindu society has no option but to behave like a family," the RSS chief said.

If you have courage, seek fresh mandate: Fadnavis to Uddhav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 16

FORMER CHIEF minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday dared his successor Uddhav Thackeray to seek a fresh mandate from the people of Maharashtra for his Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

Describing it as a battle between *dharma* and *adharma*, the BJP leader said his party alone can fight Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress, the three parties in the Uddhav-led coalition government.

Addressing BJP's state-level convention held at Nerul in Navi Mumbai, Fadnavis said: "Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has challenged us to bring down the government. I would like to say that we will not pull down any government. We have no such dreams. Instead, if you (Uddhav Thackeray) have courage, go to polls and seek a fresh mandate. Thackeray should verify whether the people of Maharashtra have given consent to the three-party coalition."

"Let Congress, NCP and Sena contest the elections together. The BJP alone will be able to give them a befitting reply," he added.

The statement came a day after Uddhav, speaking at an awards function in Jalgaon, had said, "I am the son of Shiv Sena supreme Bal Thackeray who accepted and threw challenges. I challenge the BJP to topple my government today itself instead of waiting till April when operation lotus is likely to be activated (by the BJP)." Urging party workers not to go



BJP chief J P Nadda with party leader Devendra Fadnavis at the Maharashtra BJP convention at Navi Mumbai. Amit Chakravarty

RULING ALLIANCE UNNATURAL: NADDA

Mumbai: Describing the MVA as an "unnatural alliance", BJP president J P Nadda said the government is driven by "selfishness". Urging party workers to be prepared to fight, he said: "The cadre will have to prepare itself for a fight — all versus the BJP. Yet, we will emerge victorious." The BJP chief expressed confidence that his party will win the next Maharashtra Assembly polls on its own. **ENS**

on the defensive, Fadnavis said: "Playing the role of the Opposition is in BJP's DNA. We have to take the government head on... The BJP is not going to oppose for the sake of opposition. But it will not relent when it comes to exposing

the government on issues that concern the poor and farmers."

Referring to the Mahabharata, Fadnavis said, "Great warrior Arjun asked Lord Krishna 'how can I fight against Duryodhana, who is my brother'. Krishna explained to him that the battle is against *dharma* and *adharma*. Duryodhana had taken the path of *adharma*. Therefore, you have to fight against him to protect *dharma*. Similarly, Shiv Sena has betrayed the people's mandate to join hands with Congress and NCP out of its greed for power."

On Uddhav's plan to visit Ayodhya next month on the completion of 100 days in office, Fadnavis said, "He should surely visit the holy place. It may help him to come to terms with his identity and Hindutva blood."

Lashing out at Sena, BJP's former ally, Fadnavis said: "Shiv Sena appears to have buried ideologies for its greed for power. Else, how does one explain Sena's silence on

repeated insults to Veer Savarkar by Congress."

Pawar afraid truth will come out in Bhima Koregaon case: Ex-CM

Devendra Fadnavis also said NCP president Sharad Pawar was afraid that "truth" would come out in the NIA's investigation into the Bhima Koregaon violence case.

Even as a Pune court on Friday ordered transfer of the Elgar Parishad case records to a special NIA court in Mumbai, Pawar criticised the Uddhav government for clearing the transfer of the case.

Speaking to reporters in Kolhapur, he said: "As per the Constitution, law and order is a state subject. It is wrong to take away the rights of the state... It was not right for the Centre to hand over the investigation into the case to the NIA. But it was even more wrong for the state government to support the transfer of the case."

"I must thank Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray for taking a stand in favour of handing over the case to NIA," Fadnavis said on Sunday. Taking on Pawar, he also said the Centre was facing a "perception war" from Pawar on CAA and this will have to be countered by taking the political fight to the streets. "NCP chief Sharad Pawar is playing a perception war against the BJP-led Union government, deliberately creating confusion over CAA. A misinformation that citizenship (of certain communities) will be taken away by CAA is being spread."

ELGAR PARISHAD CASE

Role of cops needs to be probed by retired HC judge, says Pawar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 16

NCP PRESIDENT Sharad Pawar on Sunday said that the conduct of Maharashtra's police officers, who made the arrests in the Elgar Parishad case, should be probed by a committee headed by a retired high court judge.

"There needs to be an investigation by a retired high court judge into the conduct of police officers who have arrested people in this case. There needs to be an in-depth investigation," Pawar said in Jalgaon.

Pawar's statement came a day after Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said he has sought legal opinion from the Advocate General of Maharashtra on the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to inquire into the Elgar Parishad case even as the Home department has given consent for the transfer of the investigation into the case to the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Pawar on Sunday claimed that the Centre had handed over the case to NIA to hide certain facts pertaining to the case which could have been detrimental to the previous Devendra Fadnavis-led BJP government. He said that while the Centre had the right to do what it did, the decision to hand over the case to the NIA without taking the state government into confidence pointed to "the fear the BJP had about truth coming out".



NCP chief Sharad Pawar

"While the Centre has the right to investigate, the state also has the right to do its investigation. I have read that the state is also planning to investigate. The behaviour of certain officers who made wrong inferences and filed cases against people just because they wrote something and put them behind bars is not proper. This needs to be investigated," Pawar said.

The case relates to alleged inflammatory speeches delivered at the Elgar Parishad conclave, held in Pune on December 31, 2017, which the police claimed triggered violence near the Koregaon-Bhima war memorial in the district the next day.

The Pune Police claimed the conclave was backed by Maoists.

During the probe, the police arrested Left-leaning activists Sudhir Dhawale, Rona Wilson, Surendra Gadling, Mahesh Raut, Shoma Sen, Arun Ferreira, Vernon Gonsalves, Sudha Bharadwaj and Varavara Rao for alleged Maoist links. These nine activists, currently in jail, are among 11 people booked by the NIA in the Elgar Parishad case.

— WITH PTI INPUTS

Geelani stable, his condition improving: Docs

Srinagar: Ailing Separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani is stable and his health condition is improving, doctors said on Sunday.

"The condition of Syed Ali Geelani is stable and he is conscious, cooperative and oriented. A team of doctors is monitoring his condition," SKIMS Hospital director AG Ahangar said. Earlier in the day, a senior doctor said 90-year-old Geelani's condition is improving. "He (Geelani) is stable, though he continues to suffer from chest infection. In fact, he is recovering and is better than before," the doctor said.

"The patient is taking liquid diet and medicines prescribed by Dr Naveed from Chest Medicine of GMC Srinagar," the doctor said. Speculation about the health condition of Geelani had forced authorities to shut down mobile Internet for a day last week. Security forces have been deployed outside his residence to deal with any eventuality. **PTI**

Row over Shivaji bust: CM's MP-son says will install 2 statues

MILIND GHATWAI BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 16

DAYS AFTER a bust of Chhatrapati Shivaji at a road trisection at Sausar in MP's Chhindwara district was removed by the administration on the ground that it was put up without requisite permission, local Congress MP and Chief Minister Kamal Nath's son Nakul Nath has said two life-size statues would be installed in the district.

The statues will come up at Sausar and Pandhurna in Chhindwara district. Both towns are close to the border of Maharashtra, where the Congress

is in an alliance with Shiv Sena. The removal of the bust using an excavator on Monday night had caused ripples in the neighbouring state after former BJP ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Devendra Fadnavis slammed the ruling Congress.

Chouhan followed up his attack on the state government with a visit to Sausar on Saturday where he led a march and addressed a rally. He worshipped the bust that has been kept in the office of the civic body and also performed bhoomipujan amid chants of "Jai Bhavani Jai Shivaji".

Accusing the Congress of insulting great personalities, the senior BJP leader said, "We will



Nakul Nath is MP from Chhindwara

decapitate ourselves but won't tolerate the insult to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj." He alleged that the bust could not have been removed without a phone call "from the top".

"Who ordered the removal should be investigated and the guilty punished," he said.

After the BJP targeted his government on the issue, Chief Minister Kamal Nath had asked his son and Chhindwara MP

Nakul to install a life-size statue at the same spot. Nakul then said he would spend from his own pocket and ensure that the statue is installed after a grand ceremony. Chhindwara is the only seat in Madhya Pradesh that the Congress won in the Lok Sabha elections last year.

Referring to the announcement that the MP will spend from his pocket, Chouhan accused him of being arrogant about money. Nakul was the richest candidate in the state, as per his election affidavit. Chouhan said people will raise money and won't accept a penny from Nakul. "We may be poor but we have self-respect," he said. Chouhan even took a dig at

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, saying that if Balasaheb Thackeray was around, he would have broken the alliance with Congress and NCP. He also criticised NCP chief Sharad Pawar for keeping quiet on the issue.

Nakul, meanwhile, tweeted copies of a proposal about installing a Shivaji statue at Ambika Chowk in Pandhurna when Chouhan was chief minister. Accusing Chouhan of not giving permission for the statue and for the renaming of Ambika Chowk after Chhatrapati Shivaji, the MP said a life-size statue would now be installed there too. He also said Chouhan's visit to Sausar was "politicking".

INDIA TRADE PROMOTION ORGANISATION
(A Government of India Enterprise)
Pragati Bhawan, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi-110001

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by

Dr. Uma Shanker Pandey
Assistant Professor, Ramjas College
University of Delhi

&

Academic Research, Translation and Book Writing Fellow, NMML

Tuesday, 18 February 2020 at 3.00pm
Venue: Seminar Room, Library Building
Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
Teen Murti House, New Delhi-110011

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All are Welcome

Telangana to pass anti-CAA resolution in assembly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HYDERABAD, FEBRUARY 16

THE TELANGANA government on Sunday decided to pass an assembly resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The state government took the decision in a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister K Chandrababtu Naidu, while urging the Centre to repeal last year's changes to the citizenship Act.

It appealed to the Centre "not to discriminate" on the basis of religion in granting citizenship to anyone. "The state Cabinet appealed to the Union Government, not to discriminate on the basis of religion for according Indian citizenship. It requested that all religions must be treated as equal before the law," an official release on decisions taken at the Cabinet meeting said late Sunday night.

The Cabinet felt the CAA would lead to discrimination on the basis of religion in grant of citizenship and jeopardise secularism envisaged in the Constitution. "The Cabinet further requested the central government to take measures to abrogate the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 which will lead to discrimination on the basis of religion while granting citizenship and thereby jeopardising secularism envisaged in the Constitution," the release said.

The Cabinet decided to pass the anti-CAA resolution in the assembly on the lines of the ones passed by Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal, it said.

Chief Minister Naidu had said last month that he might convene a meeting of regional parties and chief ministers to oppose the amended citizenship law. The assembly may pass a resolution against the CAA, he had said then.

The Cabinet also decided to organise 'Pattana Pragathi' programme, aimed at ensuring cleanliness, greenery and planned development in urban areas, for 10 days beginning February 24 in all towns and cities.

In UP, PM flags off Kashi Mahakal Express to connect three jyotirlingas

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
VARANASI, FEBRUARY 16

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Sunday flagged off the Kashi Mahakal Express that connects, for the first time, three religious sites with jyotirlingas — Omkareshwar near Indore, Mahakaleshwar in Ujjain and Kashi Vishwanath in Varanasi, which the Prime Minister represents in the Lok Sabha.

This was part of a slew of new projects related to Varanasi that the Prime Minister launched.

The commercial run of the train, which will operate thrice a week, will start from February 20. Railway PSU Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) will be running this as the third "corporate" train after two Tejas Express trains.

IRCTC is in talks with the authorities at the Kashi Vishwanath temple so that devotees arriving in the city by trains can book various puja packages at the temple from the IRCTC website. "The talks are at a final stage. Our officers are working out the modalities," said Rajni Hasija, Director, Tourism and Catering, IRCTC.

With a side-upper berth converted into a puja place complete with pictures of Lord Shiva, incense sticks, flowers et al, waiters dressed in traditional UP attire and a vegetarian menu, the Kashi Mahakal Express virtually leaves no stone unturned to play to its theme. On Sunday, Bhajan singers and shehnai players performed live on the platform and

11 priests blessed the train at Varanasi Cantonment station as giant screens showed the Prime Minister flagging off the train using a remote control.

The train will cover the 1,131 km between Varanasi and Indore via Lucknow and the 1,102 km between Varanasi and Indore via Prayagraj in approximately 19 hours.

Railways say that there was a demand from devotees for a train like this. The overnight train, which has 15 up-graded AC-III tier Humsafar coaches, is also IRCTC's first overnight, long-distance train to run on a regular basis.

Apart from selling tickets to the train, IRCTC has worked out packages that involve taking pilgrims on all-inclusive tours of Kashi, Ayodhya and Prayag, and trips to jyotirlingas. There will be packages for religious sites connected by the train such as Kashi, Omkareshwar, Mahakaleshwar, Bhopal, Sanchi, Ujjain, Bhimbetka, Ayodhya and Prayag. The packages cost between Rs 4,950 and Rs 12,450 per person.

The train's fare is Rs 1,951 for a journey between Varanasi and Indore. After 70 per cent of the seats are booked, there will be an increase of 10 per cent for the next 20 per cent of the tickets and a further increase of 10 per cent for the last 10 per cent of the tickets as per the dynamic fare scheme. Each ticket comes with a Rs 10 lakh life insurance cover for free and every coach has six CCTV cameras and two guards.

Like IRCTC's Tejas trains, this train will not provide any concession on fare.



EXPLAINED Railway push for religious tourism

THE KASHI Mahakal Express and a couple of other projects in the pipeline mark a major push by Railways in religious tourism. After Kashi Mahakal Express, themed on Lord Shiva, a Ramayan-themed train is to be launched next month that will touch places related to Lord Ram, including Ayodhya. According to sources, a Krishna circuit train is also in the works.

Train's commercial run will start February 20. Anand Singh

PM launches 50 projects worth ₹1,254 crore in Varanasi

ENS & PTI
VARANASI, FEBRUARY 16

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Sunday launched 50 projects worth Rs 1,254 crore in Varanasi, his Lok Sabha constituency. He dedicated to the nation the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Memorial Centre and unveiled a 63-foot-tall statue of the RSS ideology — the tallest statue of the leader in the country.

The Prime Minister also took part in a programme called 'Kashi Ek Roop Anek', a cultural arts and handicrafts exhibition, at Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Trade

Facilitation Center here. Speaking at the event, he said that facilitating and strengthening traditional handicrafts workers, artisans and MSME will help in achieving the 5-trillion-dollar goal of the Indian economy.

The PM also praised the Yogi Adityanath government for taking measures to create more opportunities for Indian products in the international market.

Earlier in the day, he participated in the closing ceremony of the centenary celebrations of the Shri Jagadguru Vishwaradhya Gurukul. He also inaugurated a 430-bed super-specialty government hospital here.

Delhi opted for 'real nationalism', Nitish will be shown door in Bihar polls: Tejashwi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

DELHI VOTERS have shown the way by opting for "real nationalism" and the electorate in Bihar should emulate them to vote out Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has no qualms in taking off his "secular veil" on issues such as the CAA, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said on Sunday.

The onus of defeating the "divisive agenda" of the NDA government in Bihar also lies on the opposition that should provide a "formidable and unified" alternative, Yadav told PTI in an interview ahead of his 'Berozgari Hatao Yatra' starting on February 23 with a rally in Patna.

He said the grand alliance was ready to take on the NDA against its "divisive agenda and 15 years of misrule" in the assembly polls.

"Nitish Kumar has never criticised the CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act), NPR (National Population Register) and the NRC (National Register for Citizens). He didn't utter even a single word on the recent reservation issue. He doesn't have any courage to criticise any of the BJP's policies," the Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly said.

While the JD(U) helped the BJP in getting the amended citizenship Bill passed in Parliament, Kumar only said his government will not implement the NRC in the state, Yadav said.

"Nitish Kumar is a cunning politician. He knows that once the BJP makes NRC an Act, he can

do nothing but comply. Then he will cry over his helplessness in light of constitutional norms. His party could have made a difference during voting for the CAB in Parliament, but there he exhibited his true communal character," the 30-year-old leader said.

The whole exercise of the CAA, NPR and NRC is for dividing and polarising the nation on religious lines for political gains and Kumar has no qualms in shunning his "secular veil to show his true colours", Yadav alleged.

Talking about the Delhi polls won by the AAP, Yadav said the message was loud and clear not only for the Bihar polls but also for the entire nation that if the government works for necessary amenities and social and financial security, no diversion will work.

"Welfare of the citizens is real nationalism. Dividing people on communal lines is proving catastrophic for the nation. Youth is on the streets fighting, lynching and abusing. Union ministers are pushing the citizens to indulge in violence against those who are asking questions of the government," the RJD leader said.

Union ministers are delivering veiled "incendiary and communal" speeches against citizens who are protesting, he said.

Voters of Delhi have shown the nation the right path and now it is up to the people of Bihar and the whole country to emulate them, he said. Delhi elections were assembly polls which should be fought on local issues, but the way the BJP is trying to rake up national issues every time sets a "very dangerous precedent", Yadav said.

ANTI-CAA PROTEST IN PILIBHIT

Cong leader among 33 booked for attack on policeman

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 16

POLICE HAVE booked 33 identified people, including Pilibhit district Congress president Harpreet Singh Chaba, and 90 unidentified people for allegedly assaulting a constable and holding him captive during a protest last Thursday against the CAA and NRC at Sher Mohammad locality.

Five of the named protesters, excluding Chaba, were arrested on Saturday and raids were being conducted to arrest others, said Circle Officer (Pilibhit city) Pankaj Malik.

Dismissing the allegation, Chaba on Sunday said the police had cooked up the assault story to intimidate protesters.

The case was registered with City Kotwali police station under IPC provisions relating to rioting,

voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty, causing grievous hurt to deter public servant from his duty among others, said Shridhar Dwivedi, District House Officer of the police station.

Circle Officer Malik said 40-year-old constable Dushyant Kumar was posted at the Theka police outpost and deployed at the protest sit-in Sher Mohammad locality on

Thursday. He said the protesters attacked Kumar when he objected to food being prepared for the protesters.

Kumar was allegedly held captive at a house from where he managed to escape on Friday, Malik said. He was taken to a district hospital where doctors said he was out of danger. Police said he had suffered seven injuries.

"We were earlier under the impression that Kumar was

missing from duty on Thursday and he was marked absent. On Friday, when he reached the police outpost, we came to know about the matter," said Malik. He said the police were unaware of the incident as Kumar was attacked behind the tent and they were deployed at the front.

Chaba claimed Thursday's protest ended peacefully and he was not allowed to enter the site by police.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, hitherto known as Sapna Rani D/o Rajender Prasad W/o Kuldeep Kumar employed as Nursing orderly residing at A/272, Gali No. -6, Kaushik Enclave, Burari, Delhi-110084 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sapna Sharma. 0040532305-8

I, Subhash Kumar Singh S/o Shivpujan Singh R/O- HEWO-1 Apartment, House No.523, Sector-56, Behind Rail Vihar Society, Gurugram, Haryana-122011 have change my daughter's name from Srishti Singh to Srishti Subhash Kumar Singh for all future purposes. 0040532171-1

I, Pooja Agarwal W/O Sh. Ankit Agarwal R/O H. No. 67, Road No. 41 West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026, have changed my name from Pooja Goyal to Pooja Agarwal, after Marriage. I Should Be Known Henceforth by the New Name Pooja Agarwal Only. 0040532196-1

I, Moumita Ghosh spouse of No. 6496715K Rank NK/ASH, R/O. Village Rukupur P.O. Majida Distt. Bardhaman West Bengal-713512 inform that my correct DOB is 20.04.1993 instead of 23.04.1992 vide affidavit dated 15.02.2020 before Notary Public India. 0040532176-1

I, Maya Mamtani W/O Kamal Makhija R/O 24, Parivar Apartments, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, Delhi-110092 have changed my name to Maya Makhija for all purposes. 0040532179-1

Sanya Mendiratta W/O Sh. Sahil Mendiratta R/O H. No.10, Road No. 42 West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026 have changed my name from Sanya Garg to Sanya Mendiratta, after Marriage. I Should Be Known Henceforth by the New Name Sanya Mendiratta Only. 0040532202-1

I, Kuber Khara S/o Rakesh Khara R/O-B-503, Hare Krishna Valley Plot.No.10, Sector-18A, Dwarka, Delhi-110075, have changed my name to Harshill Khara. 0040532305-7

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I Harshdeep S/O Anand Kumar R/O. Vpo-Charra, Distt.-Jhajjar, Haryana Lost My 12th Class Original MarkSheet Year-2017, Roll No.2642533, Cbse, Delhi. 0040532305-10

500 Shares of 250 each of Shivam Autotech Ltd. Vide Folio No. 26456, Certificate no. 4983, Distinctive No. 1283386-1283635 & Certificate No. 4984 Distinctive No. 99726476-99726725 in the Name of Anuj Gupta Have Lost. If Found, Contact : anujguptapco@gmail.com 0040532204-1

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि., कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, हमीरपुर, पत्रांक सं.- 1174/ वि.वि.म.ह./ पी-1 (प्रकाशन)/ निविदा/ 2019-20, दिनांक- 15.02.2020, अल्पकालीन (ई-निविदा) निविदा खुलने की तिथि एवं निविदा से सम्बन्धित अन्य सभी विवरण ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> एवं निगम की वेबसाइट <https://dvnvl.org> पर उपलब्ध है।

- ई-निविदा संख्या- 136/ SE/ EDCH/ 2019-20: कार्य का विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड राट की सीमान्तगत पूर्ण जमा योजना के अन्तर्गत राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 198 आर.जी. ग्राम चिकासी, राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 200 आर.जी. ग्राम उजनेडी राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 201 आर.जी. ग्राम जरिया के ऊर्जीकरण का कार्य।
- ई-निविदा संख्या- 137/ SE/ EDCH/ 2019-20: कार्य का विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड राट की सीमान्तगत पूर्ण जमा योजना के अन्तर्गत राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 207 आर.जी. ग्राम मोहम्मदपुर के ऊर्जीकरण का कार्य।
- ई-निविदा संख्या- 138/ SE/ EDCH/ 2019-20: कार्य का विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड राट की सीमान्तगत पूर्ण जमा योजना के अन्तर्गत राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 207 आर.जी. ग्राम मोहम्मदपुर के ऊर्जीकरण का कार्य।
- ई-निविदा संख्या- 139/ SE/ EDCH/ 2019-20: कार्य का विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड हमीरपुर की सीमान्तगत पूर्ण जमा योजना के अन्तर्गत राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 62 एच.जी. ग्राम झलोखर, राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 254 एच.जी. ग्राम जल्ला के ऊर्जीकरण का कार्य।
- ई-निविदा संख्या- 140/ SE/ EDCH/ 2019-20: कार्य का विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड हमीरपुर की सीमान्तगत पूर्ण जमा योजना के अन्तर्गत राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 428 एम.जी. ग्राम परछल, 89 एम.जी. ग्राम परछल, राजकीय नलकूप सं.- 51 एम.जी. ग्राम पढोरी 88 एम.जी. ग्राम सिलोसर के ऊर्जीकरण का कार्य।
- ई-निविदा संख्या- 140/ SE/ EDCH/ 2019-20: कार्य का विवरण:** विद्युत वितरण खण्ड हमीरपुर की सीमान्तगत 33/11 के.वी. विद्युत उपकेन्द्र चन्द्रपुरवा Govt ITI को 40 कि.वा. का विद्युत संयोजन निर्गत करने का कार्य। "राष्ट्रीय हित में बिजली बचाये" हस्ता./- (एस.आर. गर्ग), अधीक्षण अभियन्ता

Out of city on poll day? EC, IIT-Madras working on remote voting technology

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

THE ELECTION Commission has collaborated with IIT-Madras to work on a new technology which will allow electors to vote from far away cities without going to the designated polling station of their respective constituencies, according to a senior poll panel official.

The project is at present in the research and development stage with an aim to develop a prototype, another official said. Explaining the 'block chain' technology involved in the project, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Sandeep Saxena said the concept is a "two-way electronic voting system, in a controlled environment, on white-listed IP devices on dedicated internet lines, enabled with biometric devices and a web camera".

He, however, made it clear that voters will have to reach a designated venue during a pre-decided period of time to be able to use this facility. It does not mean voting from home, Saxena said.

Explaining the technicalities, the Senior Deputy Election Commissioner told PTI that the "two-way block chain



The project is currently in the research and development stage, said an EC official. File

remote voting" process would involve voter identification and authorisation using a multi-layered IT enabled system working on the EC's e-Governance award winning Electoral Registration Officer Network (ERO Net) using biometrics and web cameras.

After a voter's identity is established by the system, a block chain enabled personalised e-ballot paper (Smart Contract) will be generated. When the vote is cast (Smart Contract executed), the ballot would be securely encrypted and a block chain hashtag (#) will be generated. This

hashtag notification would be sent to various stakeholders, in this case the candidates and political parties, the official said.

The encrypted remote votes so cast would once again be validated at the pre-counting stage to ensure that they have not been decrypted, nor tampered with.

"Suppose there is Lok Sabha election and a Chennai voter is in Delhi. Instead of returning to vote in his or her constituency or missing out on voting, the voter can reach a pre-designated spot set up by the EC, say in Connaught Place, in a particular time window and cast his vote," Saxena said. He said such voters may have to apply in advance to their returning officers to exercise the option.

Another top EC functionary, who refused to be named, said at present it is only a research and development project. If the technology is found to be "okay", then only after stakeholder consultations and changes in the election laws and rules, it will be tried in actual conditions, he said.

There have been demands from various parties that the poll panel should ensure that migrant workers who miss out on voting as they cannot afford going home during elections to exercise their franchise should be allowed to vote for their constituency from the city they are working in.

India known for co-existence of all religions, says Vice-President

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 16

VICE-PRESIDENT M Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said India is known for its unity in diversity, pluralistic ethos and peaceful co-existence of all religions.

Addressing a global meeting of Rotary India at New Town, Naidu said, "This ethos should be nurtured and there should be no discrimination based on gender or differences between people."

He said the country wants good relations with all its neighbours and advocated for a climate of peace and progress. "We want to have good relations with all our neighbours. Let us take a stand... we must all seek to create an atmosphere where peace can



Naidu addresses the Rotary meet at New Town on the outskirts of Kolkata, Sunday. PTI

flourish. You can change your friends, but cannot change your neighbours. Peace is the prerequisite for progress. India has always believed in the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is a family)," he said.

Naidu said India has believed in living together and working together. "The world probably needs to adopt this approach as it moves to implement the ambitious 2030 Sustainable Development agenda."

The Vice-President appealed to the lawmakers to discuss and debate in a constructive manner. "Discuss and debate to decide, not to disturb. Agree to disagree. Let the government propose, let the opposition oppose and let the House dispose. (This is) My request to all parliamentarians," he said.

9 EXPRESS NETWORK



NORTH

Electricity meter reader held for molesting girl in Shamli

Muzaffarnagar: An electricity meter reader was arrested for allegedly molesting a minor girl at a village in UP's Shamli district, police said. The accused Parveen Kumar came to the teenager's house to note the electricity reading on Saturday, police said. A case has been registered

against the accused and he has been arrested. According to the complaint lodged by the victim's father, it is alleged that the girl was alone at home and the accused sexually harassed her. She cried and resisted his attempts and local residents came to her rescue. **PTI**



Soldiers of Indian and Bangladesh Army during the ninth edition of joint military exercise, SAMPRITI-IX, which commenced in Umroi, Meghalaya. PTI

EAST

Man hacks brother and his family over land dispute

Rourkela: A 22-year-old man allegedly killed four members of his family, including two children, and surrendered before the police in Odisha's Sundargarh district, police said. The accused Kalu Munda killed his elder brother, sister-in-law, niece and nephew on Saturday,

SDPO, Bonai, Abakash Routray said. It is suspected that a land dispute led to the incident, he said. The deceased were identified as Kande Munda (27), his wife Sumi Munda (25), daughter Malani Munda (7) and son Mara Munda (5), police said. **PTI**

WEST

Govt official and wife among 3 dead in Gujarat car accident

Rajkot: A senior government official, his wife and a staff member were killed after a private car in which they were travelling crashed into the culvert on National Highway-47 near Chotila town in Gujarat's Surendranagar district on Sunday. Police said, Ashok Kumar Vaghela, director of District Development Agency (DRDA) of Devbhumi

Dwarka, his wife Karuna and driver Ravi Sasa were killed on the spot after their car hit the sidewall of a culvert near Chotila and overturned. Vaghela's five-year-old granddaughter Riyan escaped with minor injuries while Ravibhai, an employee with the DRDA, Devbhumi Dwarka district, suffered a fracture in his leg. **ENS**

SOUTH

Woman from Bihar tops Malayalam literacy exam

Kollam: A 26-year-old woman from Bihar has proved that language is no barrier as she topped a Malayalam literacy exam conducted in Kerala for migrant labourers. Romiya Kathur got 100 marks in the examination held by the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority recently. She had reached Kerala in search of a job along with her

husband Saifullah and settled down in Umayanallor in Kollam district in 2014. The mother of three runs a juice parlour. A total of 1,998 migrant labourers appeared for the literacy exam in the second phase of the scheme "Changathi" on January 19. The project aims to teach migrant labourers Malayalam within four months. **PTI**

Coronavirus hits two more Indians on cruise ship in Japan

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

TWO MORE Indian nationals on a cruise ship off Japan have tested positive for the coronavirus, COVID-19, and are in hospital for treatment and quarantine, the Indian Embassy said Sunday. Last week, three other Indians on the ship Diamond Princess had tested positive for the virus.

"As per the data released by the Japanese authorities, two more Indian nationals have tested positive for COVID-19 amongst 137 new cases over Saturday and Sunday on board Diamond Princess cruise ship (bringing the total number of cases to 355). Both have been sent to medical facilities for further treatment and quarantine," the Indian Embassy in Japan said.

"Health conditions of all Indian nationals currently being treated for COVID-19 are stable and improving. Embassy is coordinating with Japanese government and ship management company for health, safety and welfare of on-board Indian nationals," it said.

"Over the last 2 days, 137 new cases on #DiamondPrincess tested positive for #COVID19, including two Indian nationals, taken to onshore medical facilities for treatment. Three other Indian crew members, receiving treatment are responding well, with no fever or pain," the Embassy said.

It also said that it is in touch with all the Indian nationals who are "successfully braving out the



The Diamond Princess at Yokohama port. AP

situation". The Diamond Princess, docked off the coast of Yokohama, has 3,711 people on board — 132 crew members and six passengers are Indian nationals. Sources said the ship reached Yokohama on February 3 after visiting Hong Kong and Okinawa.

The ship was placed under quarantine after one passenger who had disembarked at Hong Kong on January 25 was found to be infected with the virus on February 1. The quarantine is expected to be in place till February 19.

"During this period, the passengers have been kept under monitoring and requested to remain restricted to their rooms. They have been provided with protective masks, medicines, and necessary supplies, including water and food, regular phone and internet services. Some quaran-

tine officers have been deputed by the Japanese government on the ship, including doctors to attend to the needs of guests, as and when required," sources said.

"We understand that once the quarantine is over, everyone leaving the ship will be screened for temperature and other symptoms related to the infection. Thereafter, people will be free to go to a place of their choice. The managing company of the cruise liner has also announced that the passengers will be refunded full cruise fare including air travel, hotel, ground transportation, etc. Crew members of the cruise ship will be remunerated as per their existing contracts post the quarantine period," they said.

The Indian Embassy in Tokyo is monitoring the situation and will continue to provide necessary assistance to all Indian nationals on board, sources said.

Final test result of 406 people who returned from Wuhan found negative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

ALL 406 people, who are housed at an Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) quarantine facility here after being brought back from Wuhan, have tested negative for coronavirus in the latest sample examination and will be discharged in a phased manner beginning Monday, officials said.

The final samples of all 406 people quarantined at the ITBP facility here were collected by a team of doctors on Friday. The final test reports of all 406 people have been found negative, an ITBP spokesperson said on Sunday.

All 406 persons are going to be discharged in a phased manner from Monday onwards based on the advisory issued by the Ministry of Health with due medical procedures and protocols, he said.

The group includes seven Maldives citizens. There are seven children in the group. A total of 650 people were brought back from Wuhan in China on February 1 and 2 in two aircraft after outbreak of the novel Coronavirus. While 406 are being looked after at the ITBP facility, the others are at an Army centre at Manesar.

Wedding procession of Dalit Armyman targeted because he rode mare, 11 booked

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 16

DESPITE POLICE protection, the wedding procession of a Dalit Armyman in Gujarat's Banaskantha district was on Sunday pelted with stones by a group of people, allegedly from another community because the groom rode a mare.

According to police, the incident took place around 11 am at Sharifda village when Akash Kumar Koitiya (22), a jawan with the military police wing of the Army, started on his wedding procession. A Dalit, Koitiya had recently finished his training in Bengaluru and was about to join his posting at Meerut. He was on leave for his wedding.

"Earlier, we received threats from a few people from the Thakor Koli community that they would not allow the procession to pass through the village if the groom rode a mare. We gave a written request for police security after which 6-7 police personnel were deployed to accompany the wedding procession. However, after the procession started moving, a group of people started throwing stones. The groom narrowly escaped an injury and was taken to the police control room van. However, three of our relatives, including two women, were injured in the stone-pelting," said Vijay Koitiya, the elder brother of Akash. Vijay, too, is with the Army and is posted in Jammu and Kashmir.

Following the incident, multiple police teams were rushed to the village. "At least 50-60 policemen joined the wedding procession as security convoy so that the groom and other baratis could reach the bride's village, Sundha, in Palanpur taluka. The wedding went on without any incident," said Dalpat Bhatia, a Dalit rights activist based in Banaskantha.

Taking cognizance of the complaint lodged by the groom's family, an FIR has been filed at Gadh police station in Banaskantha against 11 people belonging to the Thakor Koli community.

The accused have been identified as Senji Koli, Shivaji Koli, Deepak Koli, Tushar Koli, Bhavan Koli, Vinod Koli, Ramaji Koli, Deepak Ishwar Koli, Bai Koli, Manju Koli and Jeetu Koli.

"The groom and his procession were attacked with stones by a group in the village who objected to him riding a mare. We provided security in advance and after the incident, more personnel were deployed. We have booked 11 accused under Indian Penal Code sections 323 (assault), 337 (causing hurt by rash act) 294 (obscenity), 506 (criminal intimidation) 147 (rioting) and 148 (rioting with deadly weapon) along with sections of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities Act)," said P G Rajput, officer in charge of Gadh police station. No arrests have been made yet, police said.

Girl shot dead, father among three family members held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MEERUT, FEBRUARY 16

A 19-YEAR-OLD girl was shot dead by her cousin brother in Meerut's Sardhana area on Sunday for allegedly seeing a man despite her family's disapproval. Police have arrested the girl's cousin brother, Prashant Chaudhary (25), his father, Dharamveer (55), and the girl's father Jayvinder (45).

"On Saturday, Tanya Chaudhary went to stay at her uncle's place at Garhi village where his son Prashant, who was opposed to her meeting a man, fired three bullets at her, killing her on the spot," Sardhana police station in-charge Bhupendra Chaudhary said.

According to the police, Tanya, a Class XII student who belongs to a Jat family, was keen to marry a man from her village, who her family disapproved of.

Police said that after Tanya was killed, the family tried to hide the murder by telling neighbours that an unknown person shot her dead. However, when police reached the house, they became suspicious.

"Only after they wiped out bloodstains in the room where she was shot, they informed police. When we reached there with forensic experts, we found there was blood on the walls. This made us suspicious," said Superintendent of Police (Meerut Rural) Avinash Pandey.

Residents of Ahmedabad slum on Trump visit route fear eviction

RITU SHARMA
AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 16

WORK IS on in the full swing on the four-foot wall along the Saraniyavas or Dev Saran slum in Ahmedabad, which falls on the route Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump would take during their roadshow on February 24.

The height of the wall, initially proposed to be six feet, was reduced after *The Indian Express* reported that it was being ostensibly built to mask the slum.

Now, as work continues on war footing, residents of the slum fear that they might be evicted.

As per the plan, a fence will run parallel to the wall and the AMC will plant trees between the two. AMC sources said they plan to plant bamboo and evergreen trees along the 600-m route the Prime Minister and US President would take as they travel from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport to Indira Bridge.

Sushilaben Saraniya (45), a resident of the slum, says her husband's family had been living there for five decades. Her husband Ramanbhai, the breadwinner of the seven-member family, is a carpenter. "They (AMC authorities) came here, demolished our houses and started constructing the wall. Now they are asking us to leave. Where will we go? We have no idea where they would rehabilitate us," she said. "We want our



The slum is located along the road Modi and Trump will take on February 24. Javed Raja

houses here only with water facility that we earlier had... we have been living here for decades and will continue to live here."

One of the oldest couples at the slum, Sardarbai (95) and Ramuben (60), claimed that late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi asked them to live there.

"There was nothing but jungle here... we would get frightened... people were scared to come here. There was a cremation ground where bungalows have come up now. There was no road. Indiraben (Gandhi) told us, 'This is yours... no one will evict you from here'. We like this place and we will not leave," said Ramuben.

Another resident, Sonal Saraniya (50), said, "We do not want to move anywhere. They (AMC officials) came here and said

that alternative arrangement is being done, but we don't know where."

Bhimabhai Saraniya (45) runs a small grocery shop in the slum and earns Rs 100-200 a day. He "Nearly 15 shanties towards the road were pulled down last month by the corporation authorities, saying that they were encroaching. Now with this wall, they want to evict us, too," he said. Municipal Commissioner Vijay Nehra said, "Two months ago, I visited the site and had an initial discussion of in situ construction of houses (at the same place). The plan can be moved only when they agree to it. We would construct houses for them free of cost, the market value of each would be Rs 20 lakh."

On the demolition and construction of the wall, he said, "During my visit, we noticed that some new constructions were coming up towards the footpath. A few dwellers voluntarily demolished them and AMC demolished three. The wall is also to prevent encroachment onto the footpath."

Residents said that the wall has replaced green sheets that used to be put up earlier to "hide them during VIP movement". Anilbhai Jeswani (35), who has a family of seven and runs a grocery store in the slum, says, "They are saying this wall is being constructed due to Trump's visit. The work is on since January. During every VIP movement, they do this to us. They have been covering us for long now. This wall will lead to water-logging... this area usually gets flooded during monsoons."

Punjab: Head constable shoots dead wife, 3 others

DIVYA GOYAL
LUDHIANA, FEBRUARY 16

A PUNJAB Police head constable allegedly shot dead his wife and three members of her family at a village in Punjab's Moga.

According to police, the incident took place around 6.30 am at Said Jalapur village. Police said head constable Kulwinder Singh, who is his late 40s and was posted with the tear gas unit at Moga Police Lines, got an AK-47 rifle issued from the armoury on Sunday. Police said he "died" at the armoury that he had been put on duty with the anti-drug STF and needed the weapon for a raid.

He then reached his in-laws' home in the village, where his wife Rajwinder Kaur and son Manpreet Singh were, and allegedly started shooting incessantly. Rajwinder (45), her mother Sukhwinder (65), her brother Jaskaran Singh (38) and her sister-in-law Inderjit Kaur (33) died on the spot. Kulwinder then allegedly opened fire at his niece Jashanpreet (10), who has been hospitalised.

Police said Kulwinder has surrendered and has told them during interrogation that a monetary dispute over a pig farm in which he and his in-laws had invested was the reason behind the crime.

A senior police officer said that Kulwinder had gone to his in-laws' home drunk on Saturday evening and had threatened to set himself and others on fire. Following this, his wife had called the police and asked them to arrest him. "Some police officer from Dharamkot police station reached the spot and took him along. However, he later said it was his family's personal matter and he would sort it out by Sunday morning. He was then let off. Around 5 am Sunday, he reached the armoury at Police Lines and got the weapon issued," said the officer.

Dharamkot DSP Yadwinder Singh, however, said police let Kulwinder off after receiving a call from his brother-in-law Harjinder. "We let him off after Harjinder Singh called and said it was their personal matter and they do not want any action against him."

Moga SP (Investigation) Harinderpal Singh Parmar said, "Kulwinder had invested Rs 20-25 lakh in a pig farm at his in-laws' village. Recently they sold some pigs and did not keep Kulwinder in the loop. He was asking for a share of his profit, due to which they had heated arguments on Saturday too."

Father set to marry off minor to 'atone' for running cow over, officials foil plan

MILIND GHATAWAI
BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 16

FOLLOWING A panchayat direction, a man in Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh was about to marry off his minor daughter to "atone for his crime" of accidentally running over a calf, but the local administration and police managed to stop the marriage ceremony.

It is common practice in some parts of the state to impose social sanctions on individuals or families for accidentally killing cows. The sanctions include asking the "culprit" to take a dip in the Ganga and throw a feast for villagers. Occasionally, the culprit is asked to marry off his daughter, irrespective of her age, because the villagers believe *kanyadaan* in the culprit's

family is the only way to get rid of the "sin".

In-charge of Pathariya police station B D Singh told *The Indian Express* that a few months ago, the man was riding his two-wheeler when it accidentally hit a calf and it died. Subsequently, he took a dip in the Ganga and was also ready to throw a feast but the villagers refused to turn up and said he will have to marry off his daughter.

After receiving a tip-off that the girl is a minor, a team of the state Women and Child Development (WCD) department and police reached the village on Friday. The family resisted the administrative action and refused to admit that the girl is minor.

WCD supervisor Anita Mourya said the sub-divisional magistrate asked her to rush to the village to check on a tip-off

about child marriage. She said the girl and her parents are illiterate and could not provide documents to support their claim that she is a major. Her Aadhaar card mentions the date of birth as January 1, 2007, which makes her just 13, she said.

Mourya said wedding preparations were on and lots of relatives were present when the team reached the village. The team was told that the groom was on his way. "We had no option but to stop the illegal wedding because the girl is a minor," she said.

The team took a written undertaking from the family members that the girl will not be married off till she turns 18. Mourya said no case was registered against the family. She said she was not aware of the killing of the calf and did not inquire.

DRINK DRIVING

Fear of flu in the air, Dehradun Police suspends use of alcometer in road checks

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, FEBRUARY 16

FOLLOWING APPREHENSIONS expressed by people that use of alcometer to check drink driving may spread flu and diseases, Dehradun Police has suspended the use of the device until further orders and the traffic wing has been directed to examine the procedure adopted in alcometer use and develop a standard operating procedure to ensure safety.

The police move follows anxiety among the people after reports that more than 270 people are being monitored across the state by the Health Department



In Dehradun, at least 15 to 20 people face action for drink driving everyday.

as they had recently made trips to China, which is battling the coronavirus challenge.

All the police stations, traffic police staff and patrolling units in Dehradun district have been

directed to not use alcometers until further orders.

"Many people had expressed apprehensions that use of alcometer can transfer communicable diseases from one person to another. They have requested to avoid the use of alcometer. We will not use it till we are convinced that it is not spreading diseases. Public have apprehensions because several communicable diseases such as flu infect people and spread in current weather conditions," said Arun Mohan Joshi, DIG, Dehradun.

He said if it is found that the procedure adopted in the use of alcometer can spread diseases, the police with experts will work

on a way out and the procedure may be rectified. "It will be examined that at which step of the procedure there is possibility of transfer of disease and how that possibility can be ruled out. If it is found that the procedure is safe and there is no chance of spread of diseases with the use of alcometer, it will be communicated to the public and use of the device will be resumed," the DIG said.

In Dehradun, at least 15 to 20 people face action for drink driving everyday. In the absence of the alcometer, the police will check the driver's breath and the suspects will have to undergo medical examination.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

HOW SHE VOTES

The woman voter is speaking up, in Delhi and elsewhere. Parties need to listen and respond

ANALYSIS OF THE mandate won by the Aam Aadmi Party in Delhi reveals that women voters had an unprecedented say in shaping its landslide victory. According to a poll-eve survey conducted by the Lokniti-CSDS, 60 per cent women voted for AAP, as compared to 49 per cent men — a gender divide formerly unheard of. In all, a staggering majority of women voters (69 per cent) voted for AAP, as compared to the BJP (35 per cent), a lead of 25 per cent. The current of support for AAP from women cut across caste, class and age groups — and made the difference between a narrow win, and a massive one.

For a while now, a growing political mobilisation of women has been showing up in turnout figures, even if it has had little influence on their skewed political representation. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections the gap between male and female voter turnout was closed for the first time. In the Delhi election, too, the difference was negligible. The significant and articulate presence of women in the anti-CAA protests is another manifestation of this deepening of democracy. The old, disparaging shibboleth about women meekly acting out male diktats at the ballot box needs a burial. But also, the tantalising possibility of a woman's vote needs to be considered. In Indian democracy's meticulous arithmetic of caste and religion, the woman voter and her concerns often slip through the cracks. In recent years, however, political parties have become more responsive to their need for mobility, and the potentially detoxifying effect of female presence in public spaces. It is, therefore, doubly disquieting that the new Kejriwal government, evidently swept to power by women's choices, has no place for women in its cabinet.

One way of reading the Delhi result suggests that women voters were repulsed by the spittle of violent slogans from the BJP and its divisive rhetoric, and more drawn to the calmer politics of service delivery espoused by AAP. While it might be simplistic to think of women as more rational voters, immune to the lure of identity politics, their overwhelming, decisive presence in politics ought to offer a path to a new political imagination. A woman's vote must also translate into more women in cabinets, assemblies and party organisations.

BAD TO WORSE

In the wake of the Supreme Court order, government must intervene for the sake of the health of the telecom sector

ASERIES OF UNFORTUNATE events threaten to derail what was once a sunrise sector. On Friday, the Supreme Court rejected the plea filed by telecom operators seeking a new schedule for payments related to the adjusted gross revenue (AGR) issue. The Court had previously weighed in on the side of the government's unreasonable demand and rejected a petition that sought a review of its earlier order asking telcos to pay around Rs 1.47 lakh crore to the government — regardless of its implications for the sector or the broader economy. Though the government had insisted that no coercive action would be taken against telcos till the issue was resolved by the Court, it did not think it reasonable to reconsider its problematic position that revenues from non-telecom activities be part of AGR calculations. As there was ambiguity over what constitutes AGR — this is also one of the reasons why bundling has not really taken off in India — the least it could have done was to recommend a waiver of all penalties and interest. Yet, despite knowing that telcos are struggling, rather than reconsider the licence regime, and the statutory levies, the government now hopes to extract a staggering Rs 1.33 lakh crore from the sector in 2020-21.

The reluctance to provide relief to the two major incumbents will have grave implications for the structure of the telecom sector. Vodafone Idea has once again reiterated its doubts over its ability to continue as a going concern. Closure of the firm could lead to a duopoly-like situation with one dominant player setting the rules of the game. An enfeebled competition will lead to a loss in terms of consumer welfare. The pain, however, does not stop with the telecom sector. With the Supreme Court unequivocally stating its position, even non-telcos holding telecom licences will face the heat. PSUs like GAIL (which reportedly owes Rs 1.72 lakh crore), Oil India (Rs 48,000 crore), Power Grid Corporation (Rs 22,168 crore) will now be asked to pay up. The implications for banks, employees and the broader economy are ominous. But beyond the destruction of wealth, the message to investors from this ordeal — the lack of policy stability and predictability — is hard to ignore.

A cash-strapped Centre may welcome the Court's verdict. But considering the long-term consequences, it must step in. A possible first step is to subsume this matter under the newly announced "Vivad Se Vishwas" scheme, wherein taxpayers are required to pay only the amount of disputed taxes and will get a waiver of interest and penalty. The Centre must also reconsider its approach to the sector, beginning with an overhaul of the current licensing regime.

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



SANJAYA BARU

Hype Trumps Hope

US president's visit comes when mutually beneficial framework of bilateral relationship stands disrupted

UNITED STATES PRESIDENT Donald Trump arrives in India just about a month ahead of the 20th anniversary of the first India visit of a US President in the post-Cold War era. Arriving in March 2000, President Bill Clinton inaugurated a new phase in state-to-state bilateral relations between the US and India by implicitly recognising India's nuclear power status, admitting that the line of control between India and Pakistan should be viewed as the international border so as to bury the "Kashmir issue" forever and increasing entry visas for Indians that has since contributed to the emergence of a sizeable community of Indian Americans.

The Clinton visit occurred against the backdrop of a new assessment within the American strategic community of India's potential role in the post-Cold War era and against the backdrop of the rise of China. Condoleezza Rice reflected this new thinking in an important essay in the influential journal *Foreign Affairs* (January-February 2000) in which she suggested that the rise of democratic India would be in the interests of the US and so the latter ought to be supportive of the former.

The rise of China and of radical Islam and jihadi terrorism provided the geopolitical context, the growth of an increasingly open Indian economy provided the economic context. Influenced by this new thinking, President George Bush took the next steps in strategic partnership and led the initiative to promote cooperation in the field of civil nuclear energy that also explicitly recognised India as a nuclear weapons power. As heads of state, Clinton and Bush altered US-India bilateral relations in a fundamental way.

President Barack Obama was the only US President to visit India twice during his tenure but his first visit only helped to make up for his earlier missteps — of not voting in favour of the US-India civil nuclear power agreement in the US Congress and then naming Richard Holbrooke as an emissary to sort out the "Kashmir issue". His second visit was more a recognition of the growing importance of people-to-people (P2P) relations and aimed at promoting defence sales to India in the hope that the new "muscular" Indian leader, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, would spend more money

on defence purchases. During the nuclear deal negotiations, US Congresspersons would often suggest that it was a "123 for 126" deal — that is, they would vote in favour of the 123 agreement in Congress in the hope that India would buy 126 fighter jets from the US. That hope remains as yet unfulfilled, with the French getting the Rafale deal and no decision taken on the purchase of US fighter jets.

While Obama finally came around to sticking to the Bush template, the credit for laying the foundation for a new and supportive post-Cold War relationship between the US and India goes singularly to President Bush. The mutually beneficial framework that Bush helped create to promote the bilateral relationship has been rudely disrupted by the arrival of Donald Trump in Washington DC and the turn towards aggressive Hindu majoritarianism in India.

Trump's "America First" policy offers no space for offering India "special and differential" treatment on any front, least of all trade. With per capita annual national income of US \$60,000, Trump's America has no qualms declaring India, with a per capita annual average national income of US \$2,000 a "developed economy" not deserving of any leniency in trade policy. To club China, a \$15-trillion economy, with a \$3-trillion India on the trade front is not just stupid but an affront to Indian sensibilities. On the other hand, such backhanded compliments are a consequence of the premature celebration of India's rise by a self-congratulatory elite.

It has to be recognised that neither Democratic liberals nor Republican conservatives are any longer willing to be supportive of the Bush-Rice paradigm that views India's rise in benign and mutually beneficial terms. The bipartisan consensus in the US on relations with India cuts both ways. It covers both the positives and the negatives in the relationship. Today the relationship seems caught in the pincers between the inward-orientation of rightwing nationalists in both nations. There is no reason as yet to believe that this unfortunate state of affairs will be altered by the Trump visit next week.

Trump has also moved away from the Clinton-Bush framework on India-Pakistan

relations and moved closer to Obama's initial approach of wanting to insert the US into the equation on Kashmir. Trump's motives are no different from those that initially drove Obama — namely, to appease Pakistan in the hope of securing a peaceful exit from Afghanistan. Expect differences to persist. At best, India can hope to limit the damage Trump may do to strategic stability in the region.

There will be much talk about US investments in India and increased visas for Indians going to the US. Both are driven largely by US corporate interests. Given the direction of the Modi government's trade policy, one cannot expect any dramatic concessions being made. The best India can do for the US is to buy more defence equipment and ease up on some trade restrictions. Defence sales to India are an essentially commercial activity and much of it can go on even in the absence of strategic convergence and shared geopolitical perspectives. The US has often armed both sides in a conflict, interested only in selling arms, not resolving disputes.

Much is made of Indian Americans heading US multinationals and the Great Indian Diaspora in the US, and many of them get paraded around by politicians on such occasions but the fact is that they constitute a "brain drain" out of India, perhaps as big as the "drain of wealth" out of colonial India and into imperial Britain that Dadabhai Naoroji wrote about in the 19th century. The continued neglect of education in India is increasing the outmigration of talent, offering the US a reservoir of talent. While the Indian elite celebrate this out-migration, the fact is that it is a drain on national resources.

In sum, therefore, with the supportive Bush-Rice doctrine defining the post-Cold War US-India partnership virtually abandoned, and the new Trump doctrine treating India as a "developed" economy, demanding parity on trade, bilateral relations have become uncertain and testy. To hide the lack of substance in the relationship the Trump visit will focus on hype and Prime Minister Modi has perfected the art of diplomacy as mass entertainment.

The writer is a policy analyst and former media advisor to prime minister of India



DIVYAM KHANDELWAL

THE JOJO RABBIT LESSON

The film has important insights on the dangers of propaganda

JOJO RABBIT, WHICH won the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay and was nominated for Best Picture, paints a striking view of our times, though it is set in Nazi Germany towards the end of Second World War. Jojo Beltzer, a boy of 10, is brainwashed to believe that all Jews are evil, devil-like creatures, and are against Germany and "the Aryan" people. Not surprisingly, Jojo — who attends "Nazi summer camps" — accepts this view easily. He has been born and brought up in a totalitarian regime, and a version of Hitler is his imaginary friend.

The human mind is a malleable entity. It is easy to mould it to identity with a particular worldview, especially in the early phase of our lives. So many of us still believe the little superstitions that were passed on to us in our childhood. For example, "Don't cross the road if a black cat cuts your path". Such beliefs have no logical or scientific basis. But we hold on to them, in all likelihood because they became a part of our psyche when we were at our most impressionable.

Superstitions, of course, are often harmless. But there are some seeds that are sown in our minds during our childhood that become trees and loom large. And these trees

are very hard to cut. Some of us were told as children that "Muslims are ruthless non-vegetarians" or "they hate us". These ideas, over time, can shape how we see people and place certain pre-conceived notions about a community in our minds. Much like Jojo, we end up de-humanising those we do not know.

But things change for Jojo, as they do for many of us. He encounters a Jewish person, realises that things he was told were not true. That the friend he makes is as human as he is.

The main theme of *Jojo Rabbit*, I think, is the devastating effects of false propaganda. The Holocaust, soldiers killing each other — all the outcome of a lie. Jojo is a child, influenced by a state's lies. But sooner or later, the truth does come out. And when it does, he realises how wrong he was.

Jojo sees the truth through. Elsa, a young Jewish woman who his mother is hiding in their home. In each of our homes too, in our minds, there is a corner where an Elsa stays. Sometimes, we can't see that corner because of blind faith and ignorance. But when we do, we come face to face with the reality of who we are. As Elsa says to Jojo: "You are not a Nazi, Jojo. You are just a 10-year-old kid who

likes to dress up in a fancy uniform and wants to be part of a club." Sometimes, I think that's what so many of us are.

States and political parties use their power to spread a particular type of propaganda. This is also used as a distraction, to lead the public away from the main issues that concern them. False information is so easy to spread in these times. What about the credibility of that source? Alas, not many people give much thought to that. Social media armies, and click bait on the internet lure the user in. Tweet after tweet, snap after snap.

Jojo Rabbit is a striking account of the game which some people play in the name of nationalism and which leads to the destruction of countries and cultures. We must understand the difference now. Between truth and lies. Between what we are and what we may become. Between false nationalism and a genuine love for our country. We don't want to be part of a story where, at the end of it all, we realise that what we were fighting for were lies.

The writer, 18, is pursuing a bachelors' degree in Physics in JECRC University, Jaipur

FEBRUARY 17, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO



as saying that Soviet control of Kabul is "coming apart". The BBC also reported that US intelligence reports have said that the Kamal government's control in Kabul and other major cities is weakening, and that Soviet troops in Afghanistan may not be adequate to restore the authority of the administration.

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE
STARS CAME OUT, birds went to roost and the nation almost stopped in its tracks as a total solar eclipse transformed the afternoon into dusk over a diagonal corridor across the peninsular India. Clear skies afforded millions along the 130-km corridor from Gokarna on the west coast to Puri on the east

a grand-stand view of the celestial spectacle. As the eclipse scare, unwittingly aggravated by well-intentioned official warnings, kept all but the daring indoors, scientific India joined researchers from abroad to undertake vital studies into the sun.

KURUKSHETRA DIP
OVER A MILLION people had their dip in the Brahma and Sunhit sarovars on the occasion of solar eclipse. Home Minister Zail Singh has performed a yagna at Brahmasarovar, which was attended by Haryana CM Bhajan Lal among others. Urging the people to sink their differences and forge unity, Singh said the message of Gita meant new directions.

11 THE IDEAS PAGE

FIGURE 1: FOOD SUBSIDY ALLOCATION, OUTSTANDING DUES TO FCI, EFFECTIVE FOOD SUBSIDY (₹ CRORE)

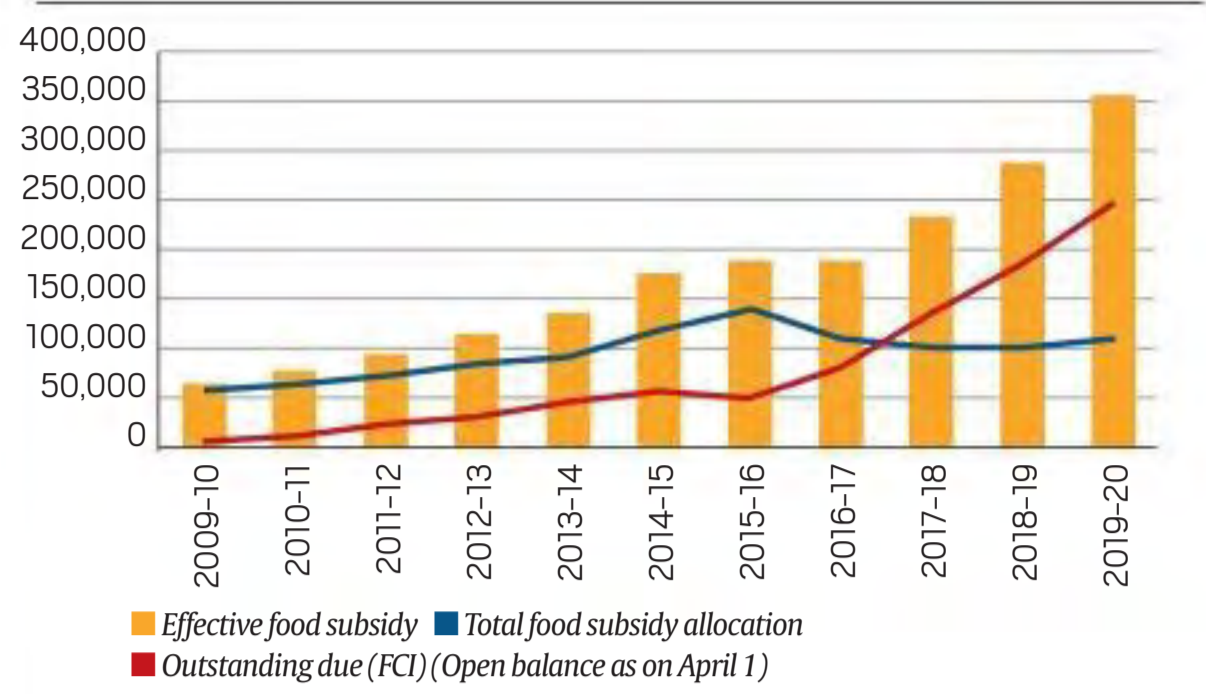
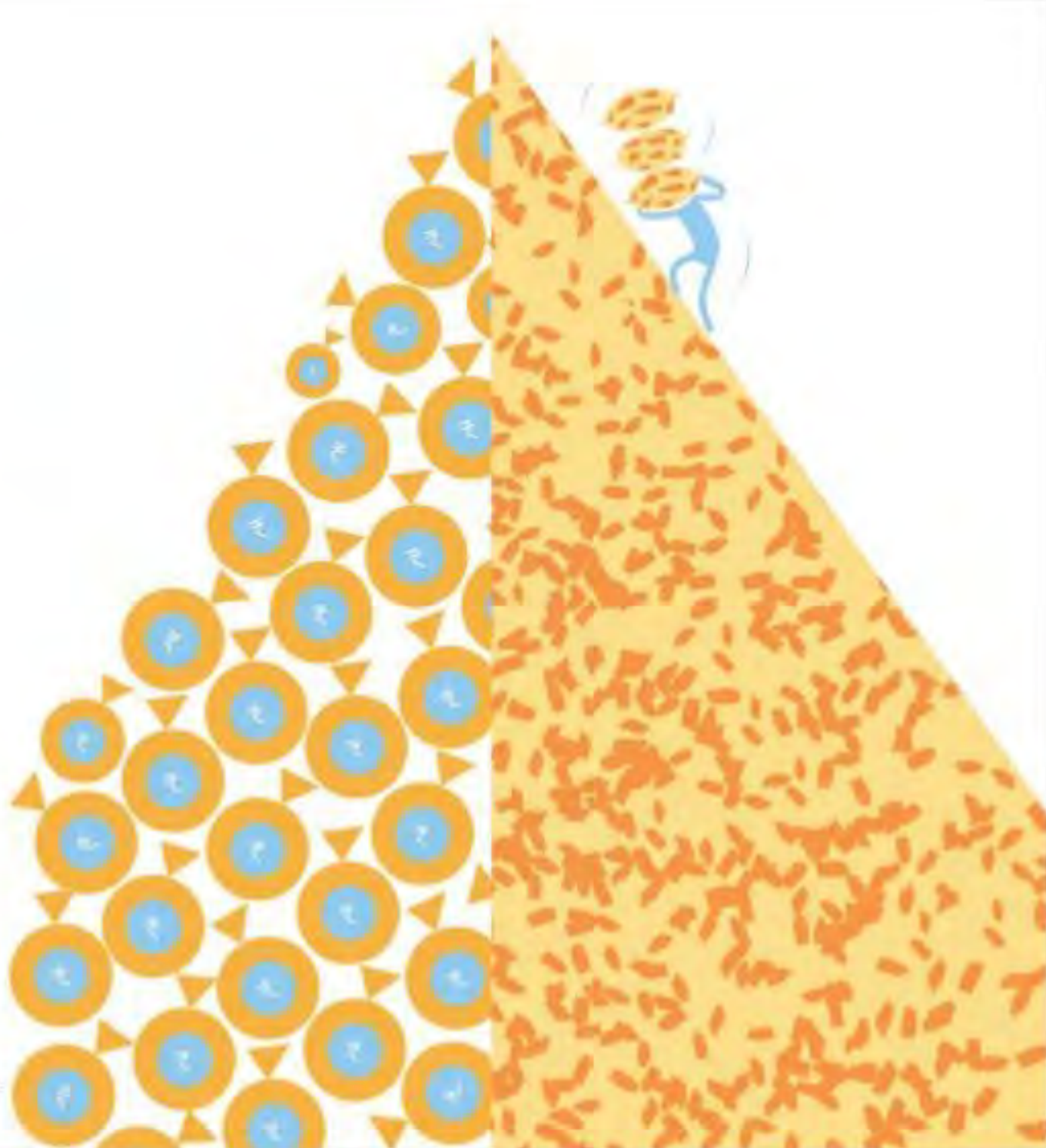
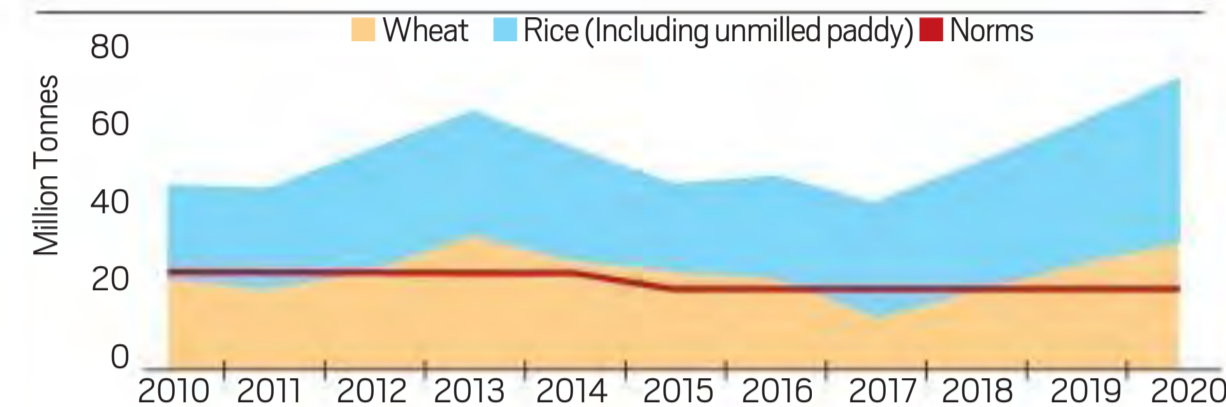


FIGURE 2: GRAIN STOCKS WITH FCI AND BUFFER STOCK NORMS (AS ON JANUARY 1 EACH YEAR)



C R Sasikumar

A crisis deferred

Union budget missed an opportunity to undertake reforms in the grain management system and the food security act



FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH
BY ASHOK GULATI AND SANDIP DAS

states that the coverage under NFSA needs to be revisited, and brought down to say 20 per cent of population, the budget did not bite this bullet. Maybe something will come up later in the year. In the meantime, it is worth noting that the expected cost of rice to FCI in 2020-21 is going to be about Rs 37/kg, and for wheat it will be Rs 27/kg. The issue price, that covers 67 per cent of the population, is just Rs 3/kg and Rs 2/kg respectively. Can 67 per cent of the Indian population not afford even basic food? If so, what is the development that we have been talking about all these decades?

Now, look at the grain situation in the country. Compared to a buffer stock norm of 21.4 million tonnes, actual stocks with FCI (including unmilled paddy) were 3.5 times higher. It speaks of a colossal waste of scarce resources, especially when tax revenues have been sluggish.

Given that Skymet has predicted that the coming wheat crop is going to be one of the best in many years — it is likely to touch 113 million tonnes — and with procurement prices being above global prices, the chances of wheat exports are bleak unless there is a subsidy for exports. And that will be challenged in the WTO. So, one should expect a piling up of grains stocks with a record procurement of wheat. FCI may run out of storage capacity. Stock levels may touch 85-90 million tonnes, or even more, by July 1, 2020.

This raises some fundamental questions. One, is the government ignorant of the impending crisis of plenty? Second, does it realise that the policy of procurement prices (50 per cent above cost A2+FL), without looking at the demand side, is likely to create more troubles for the government? Third, does the government have any plan to reform the public distribution system under NFSA?

The budget does not give any indication of reforms in the grain management system that may be ushered in in months to come. In their absence, one wonders what is the game plan of the government. Reforms in foodgrain management have to start with reforming the PDS system, and gradually moving away

While the Economic Survey clearly states that the coverage under NFSA needs to be revisited, and brought down to say 20 per cent of population, the budget did not bite this bullet. Maybe something will come up later in the year. In the meantime, it is worth noting that the expected cost of rice to FCI in 2020-21 is going to be about Rs 37/kg, and for wheat it will be Rs 27/kg. The issue price, that covers 67 per cent of population, is just Rs 3/kg and Rs 2/kg respectively. Can 67 per cent of the Indian population not afford even basic food? If so, what is the development that we have been talking about over all these decades?

from grains to cash transfers. The policy of procurement prices, with open-ended procurement in the Punjab-Haryana belt is doing more damage by depleting the water table and not letting crop diversification take place. This is very unfortunate as the “dead loss” in grain management runs to more than Rs 1,00,000 crore. This does not speak good of the government. It looks like the government’s attitude is like an ostrich with its head in sand, nay grain.

Interestingly, when the Narendra Modi 1.0 government came in, a high powered committee was set up to reform the grain management system under the former Union food minister, Shanta Kumar. The report is on the website of FCI. What is needed is the courage to bite the bullet. The Economic Survey talked of moving in the direction of cash transfers, but the government seems to have developed cold feet. Public money is being wasted year after year, and that runs into thousands of crores. At a time when the government is scratching its head desperately to raise revenue, nothing can be more ironical than this.

The other part related to this is the fertiliser subsidy, which is largely used in wheat and rice. The budget estimates for 2020-21 show a reduction in the subsidy, while dues of the fertiliser industry keep on piling. The fertiliser industry estimates that by April 2020, the dues will be roughly Rs 60,000 crore. While FCI has been asked to borrow, the fertiliser industry does not have that type of window. It is feeling totally demoralised. No private player wants to come and invest in this sector. No wonder all new plants are being set up by the public sector, which will be another major problem in years to come. And this is happening when the budget speaks of zero budget natural farming. One wonders whether the left hand of the government realises what the right hand is doing.

Gulati is Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture and Das is senior consultant at ICRIR

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“This prime minister [Boris Johnson] is not the first among equals, as holders of his office were once said to be. He is the sole source of authority within a cabinet that is no longer made up of ministers and now consists of mere courtiers.” — THE GUARDIAN

Ahead of the latest

Wendell Rodricks’ clothes were an ode to minimalism and organic fabrics much before these terms became fashionable



PRAMOD KUMAR KG

IN 2008, AS the programme for “Mantles of Myth” — a textile conference I was curating — was going to print, Devdutt Pattanaik wrote in saying that fashion designer Wendell Rodricks had a unique story of the first Indo-Western garment that merited attention. Later at the conference, amidst veteran textile historians, revivalists and experts, at every turn, Rodricks’ session more than held its own. There was not a single dry eye in the room as he recounted the tales of persecution and trauma that Konkani ladies underwent in the 16th century under the Portuguese inquisition. Their forced abandoning of traditional garments was to pave the way for the first forms of Indo-Western garments to emerge in the subcontinent. Clothes that both the coloniser and the colonised could accept, keeping their respective notions of ritual purity and modesty intact.

Much before all of this, Rodricks had successfully created an eponymous label that brought a couturier’s precision to resort wear. His clothes were an ode to minimalism and organic fabrics much before these terms reached the average fashionista’s lexicon. His training in fashion, both in California and Paris, were to hold him in good stead and he always surprised women by being able to tell their size without bringing out the measuring tape. He credited the rigour of his education in the US for his great affinity towards costume history besides an ability to illustrate his design ideas. A zest for originality was instilled post his training in Paris, where relentless sessions demanded an ability to create new design ideas and novel structural innovations that allowed a garment to map out the human body and its contours in fresh silhouettes. All of this would later allow any length of fabric to emerge from his design book as a free-flowing sheath that the trade would struggle to categorise as a blouse or a dress or even a gown.

His short but intense years of professional life in Mumbai in the late 1980s, teaching at SNDT Women’s University and working at the Garden Silk Mills, then at the height of its creativity and popularity, were to give him a unique perspective into the mainstream textile industry in India. His creative world was in another silo and it frequently collided with what was happening elsewhere in the fashion industry since he started out in 1990. The trauma

and aftermath of the Mumbai riots and serial bomb blasts of 1993 was to see him move base with his team to his native Goa. This allowed him to steer clear of designer traps that others often succumbed to within the ebbs and flows of seasons and colours. It was not as if he didn’t understand any of this, it was just that his metier understood the flow of India in a more deeply satisfying personal way and he chose to manifest his creative impulses in an altogether different manner. Pared down, devoid of fuss, clothes that moved seamlessly from day to night, careful choice of materials and superb tailoring that was rarely visible but needed oodles of innovation for its construction to be realised.

Wendell and Jerome’s (his partner) hospitality became legendary. Their table groaned under the weight of the most delectable food that Goa had to offer, all served with dollops of trademark wit and quick repartee that would frequently catch an uninitiated visitor unawares. His kindness to those in his field and his mentorship of several big names in the fashion industry is oft repeated. He was key in the establishment of the Lakme India Fashion Week in 2000 and was prescient in his ability to see potential amongst the gauche young who thronged such events. A prominent advocate for the LGBTQ+ community, animal rights and the environment, he was always careful in not allowing his divergent interests to subsume his identity as a designer.

The last decade saw him divert a significant amount of his time towards preserving Goan material culture and heritage. His three books on the subject tackled this from myriad perspectives, with *Moda Goa*, particularly, being a vanguard in its ability to delineate and tease out the complex history of Goa’s sartorial traditions. It was however his enthused engagement and work with the Museum of Christian Art in Goa that was to help crystallise an earlier idea towards creating a first museum dedicated to the region’s rich costume history and culture. His commitment to this cause led him to vacate his 450-year-old home, now repurposed towards the setting up of the Moda Goa Museum (disclosure: My company Eka is assisting with this project).

A Padma Shri in 2014 was taken in his stride, pretty much like everything else that life threw his way. His decision to appoint a successor, Schulen Fernandes, for his label is a first for any major Indian fashion label. It was also a signal for a pause from the rigours of day to day design and a step towards other creative pursuits. Goa was his forever muse in all her piquancy, joy and colours. At 59 perhaps there was another journey that beckoned.

The writer is managing director of Eka Archiving, a Delhi based museum consulting company

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NO SLEDGING

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Bad boys on the field’ (IE, February 14). The final match of the under-19 World Cup, 2020, was full of emotions where both Indian and Bangladeshi players lost their control. The ICC has rightly handed out suspensions to the players. Good conduct and self-discipline are must for every sportsman: The Kiwis showed real sportsmanship during their quarter-final match against West Indies when they carried West Indies player Kirk McKenzie to the boundary line after he started getting cramps. Our Indian captain, Virat Kohli, also showed respect to Australian Steve Smith in the 2019 World Cup when he requested the crowd not to hoot him. Younger players should learn from this and respect the sport.

Aaditya Kanchan, Noida

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Bad boys on the field’ (IE, February 14). The recently concluded U-19 cricket World Cup has raised some concerns. Termed as the gentleman’s game, the behaviour shown by the both teams was substandard. The boys in blue and green need to rethink the manner in which they want to represent their country at a senior level — by sledging and abusing or by showing temperament, class.

Ankit Singh, Prayagraj

CAMPUS SAFETY

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Our unsafe campuses’ (IE, February 14). Campuses have been made unsafe by a few students and some leftist professors whose full-time occupation is to politicise the campus and spew venom against country, the government, JNU and AMU students broke the law and order, and then

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

played the victim card, the standard trick any scoundrel resorts to. JNU, AMU and JU are constantly in the news for political violence while other universities in the country are pursuing academic activities. The author should take the cudgel along with the other professors to make the campus safe by concentrating on academic activities, without getting distracted by unnecessary politics.

Partha Guha Ray, via e-mail

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Our unsafe campuses’ (IE, February 14). Of late, extreme violence against students protesting against the government’s high-handedness has taken place. Besides the atrocities at Jamia, JNU and DU, we are reminded of the heckling of Union Minister Babul Supriyo at Jadavpur University. These incidents have given a bad name to the government and the police. Space ought to be given to all, irrespective of their views.

Sauro Dasgupta, Kolkata

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



A weekly look at the public conversations shaping ideas beyond borders — in the Subcontinent. Curated by Aakash Joshi

PRAISING ERDOGAN

ISLAMABAD IS, UNDERSTANDABLY, pleased with Turkish Recep Erdogan’s visit to Pakistan, which concluded on Friday. Erdogan, who addressed a joint session of Pakistan’s parliament, chided India for the clampdown in Kashmir and the alleged human rights violations in the now union territory, *Dawn*, in its editorial on February 16, seems to echo the government and states pleasure. Noting that Erdogan has “raised his voice for the oppressed people” of Kashmir and that the ruling AKP in Ankara “consistently supported ‘strong ties’ with Pakistan. In addition, the editorial welcomes Erdogan’s praise for Pakistan’s role in “bringing peace to Afghanistan”.

All three points mentioned in the editorial — Kashmir, Afghanistan and Pakistan’s overall role as a responsible nation-state — are arenas where New Delhi has consistently sought to undermine Islamabad in the international arena. That a regional power like Turkey has reiterated its support for Pakistan’s view is certainly noteworthy. Yet, the editorial raises a deeper question: Is the role of a critical media merely to celebrate when the powers-that-be do? Two caveats: One, *Dawn* does note, however fleetingly, the authoritarian tendencies displayed by

Erdogan. Two, it also cautions against coming down too strongly on Turkey’s side in its dispute with Syria as PM Imran Khan has done.

The editorial does, however, seem to endorse the role of religion in international relations: “Both Pakistan and Turkey should work to enrich their relationship bilaterally as well as at multilateral forums. Mr Erdogan raised valid concerns about the plight of Palestinians during his speech, and Pakistan’s other Muslim friends should not feel threatened by the efforts of Ankara, Islamabad and others to strengthen the ummah.”

This celebratory note may well be an over-compensation for the fact that countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar have deepened ties with India and the changed status in Kashmir has not irked these countries as many imagined it would.

THINK REGIONALLY

CHAITANYA MISHRA, WRITING in *The Kathmandu Post*, puts forward an interesting idea on how to read the dynamic between India, China and Nepal. The Yam (Nepal), appears to be in a dire situation, caught as it is between the Elephant (India) and the Dragon (China). Mishra then takes a long view of history and argues that the two other periods

in the last millennium when the region was in such close engagement could offer lessons for the present.

First, during the Maurya and Gupta empires in India and the Han and Ching dynasties in China, both powers saw growth, high agricultural production and trade. This was the period when the Silk Route was established, and a win-win situation developed. “The second dense meeting of the trio took place during CE 1100-1600, just prior to the dominance of Britain and Europe across the globe. The gross domestic products of China and India have been shown to account for as much as 55 percent of the world gross domestic product (GDP) at the close of this period. The Malla period in the Kathmandu Valley, adjacent areas and along the border trade points were well developed. The three cities of the Kathmandu Valley had developed excellent infrastructure and excelled in Buddhism, Hindu and other learning as well as artisanship, crafts and engineering,” writes Mishra.

For landlocked Nepal, as well as for both India and China, the growth of all will benefit all. For Nepal, of course, conflict and economic deceleration within and between the Elephant and the Dragon can have dire consequences. But equally, “if Nepal becomes a regional or global centre for money launder-

ing, trade in drugs or arms, or a haven for global security agencies, terrorists or even infectious diseases, it would be directly harmful to peace and growth in China and India.”

ROHINGYA TRAGEDY

ON FEBRUARY 11, a fishing trawler capsized in the Bay of Bengal, killing 135 Rohingya refugees, mostly women and children. The February 13 editorial in *The Daily Star* takes note of the tragedy, and pulls up Bangladesh authorities.

It writes: “The tragedy that unfolded on Tuesday is as disturbing as it was preventable. The local authorities, as well as UN agencies and other international organisations, are perfectly aware of a transnational human trafficking network that runs from Myanmar and Bangladesh to Thailand and Malaysia, preying on vulnerable refugees and often trapping them into a life of bonded labour and slavery.”

Despite there being laws to prevent human trafficking, the editorial contends that much more needs to be done on the ground. It also asks the UN and other international agencies to help make the refugee camps humane enough so that people do not seek such dangerous journeys.

TELLING NUMBERS

In five years, 376 died cleaning sewers & tanks; high in 2019

A NATIONAL Survey in 18 states identified 62,904 manual scavengers between 2013 and January 31, 2020. Tabling the data in Parliament, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment said there have been no reports of deaths due to manual scavenging, but also acknowledged reports received by the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis about deaths of people while cleaning septic tanks and sewers.

Manual scavenging has been prohibited under The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, in all states and Union Territories with effect from December 6, 2013.

The Ministry said the reason manual scavenging happens is the existence of unsanitary latrines that require manual cleaning.

The number of deaths of individuals who died while cleaning septic and sewer tanks, as tabled by the Ministry, add up to 376 between 2015 and 2019. The number peaked last year at 110. In 2019, Uttar Pradesh reported the highest number of such deaths at 21, followed by Gujarat (16), Tamil Nadu (15) and Haryana (14). In 2017 and 2018, too, the most such deaths were reported by Uttar Pradesh, at 18 and 11, respectively.

INDIVIDUALS WHO DIED WHILE CLEANING SEWERS AND SEPTIC TANKS, 2015 TO 2019

State	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Andhra Pradesh	-	3	2	9	2
Bihar	0	0	6	6	0
Chandigarh	-	-	3	-	-
Chhattisgarh	-	-	-	1	-
Delhi	2	1	13	10	8
Goa	0	2	0	0	0
Gujarat	7	7	7	2	16
Haryana	4	-	11	6	14
Kerala	-	-	1	-	-
Karnataka	14	9	4	1	7
Maharashtra	0	2	4	7	17
Punjab	-	2	4	2	3
Rajasthan	11	5	6	2	5
Tamil Nadu	8	10	7	9	15
Telangana	1	2	-	2	0
Tripura	-	2	-	-	-
Uttar Pradesh	10	3	18	11	21
West Bengal	-	-	7	0	2
TOTAL	57	48	93	68	110

Source: National Commission for Safai Karamcharis, via Social Justice & Empowerment Ministry

THIS WORD MEANS

ADRIAN HELMET

WWI helmet in France; in new tests, it outperforms modern helmets in protection from overhead blasts

DURING WORLD WAR I, the first combat helmet was issued to the French Army. Called the Adrian helmet, and introduced in 1915, it is often described as the first modern steel helmet. It was designed to protect French troops in trenches from head wounds from falling shrapnel. Now, new research has found it performs better than modern military helmets in protecting the head from shock waves created by overhead blasts.

have found. And the Adrian helmet, in particular, actually performed better than modern designs in protecting from overhead blasts, the researchers reported last week in the journal *PLOS ONE*.



Wikipedia

The researchers placed different helmets on a dummy's head outfitted with pressure sensors at various locations. They then placed the head directly underneath a shock tube, which was pressurised with helium until a membrane wall burst, releasing the gas in a shock wave. The helmets were tested with shock waves of varying strength. The risk for someone wearing an "Adrian" helmet was less than for any of the other helmets tested, including the modern advanced combat helmet.

In protection from ballistics and blunt impacts, modern military helmets have advanced. But in terms of protecting the brain from shock waves from nearby blasts, the modern helmets are no better than WWI helmets, biomedical engineers of Duke University

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

How to treat a child witness

In the Bidar school sedition case, spotlight has fallen on reports that police questioned children. What are the international conventions for questioning children? What do Indian laws say on this, and on child witnesses?

SADAF MODAK
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 16

IN THE two weeks since police slapped sedition charges on a school in Bidar, Karnataka, where a play critical of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) had been staged, much of the spotlight has been on reports that the police questioned the children.

The Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights has pulled up the district police for violations, including repeated questioning of the children. Additionally, a public interest petition has been filed in the Karnataka High Court seeking a departmental inquiry against the policemen who allegedly questioned the children of Shaheen School, aged between 9 and 12, without the consent of their parents or guardians, and also video-recorded them without consent. The PIL referred to a statement by the Shaheen Alumni Association to say that the children were questioned by policemen carrying guns, which created an "intimidating and fearful environment".

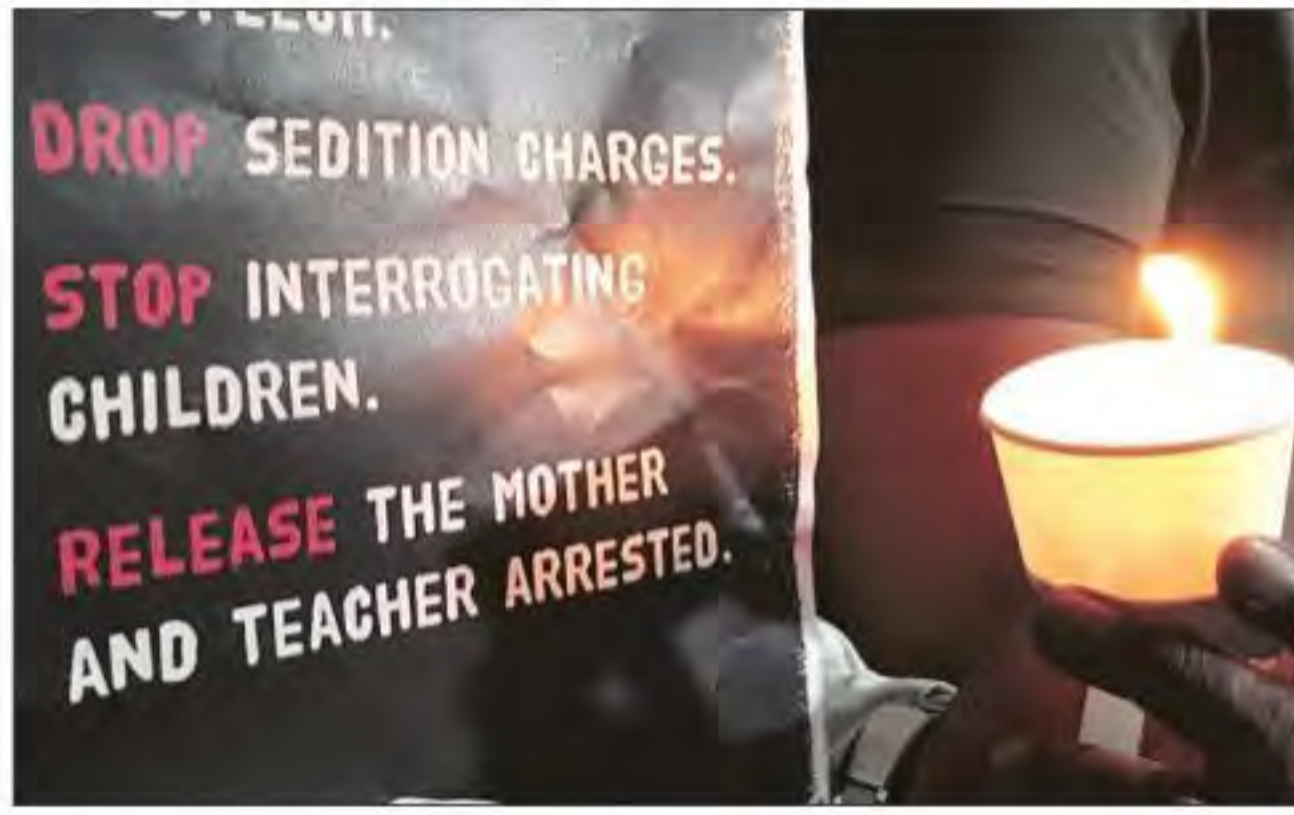
The PIL has asked for guidelines to be issued to police regarding interrogation of minors in criminal proceedings in accordance with the Juvenile Justice Act and United Nations resolutions. How do the law in India and resolutions of the UN address the issue of questioning children? What are the safeguards for children being made witnesses?

What are the international conventions on children in these situations?

India has been a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child since 1992, which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989. "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration," the Convention states.

In 2009, the 'United Nations: Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses in Crime: Model Law' provided a more specific set of guidelines in the context of child witnesses. These guidelines recommend that authorities treat children in a caring and sensitive manner, with interview techniques that "minimise distress or trauma to children".

They recommend specifically that an investigator specially trained in dealing with children be appointed to guide the interview of the child, using a child-sensitive approach.



A protest in Bengaluru against the police action at Bidar. Ralph Alex Arakal

The investigator shall, to the extent possible, avoid repetition of the interview during the justice process in order to prevent secondary victimisation of the child. "Secondary victimisation is defined as victimisation that occurs not as a direct result of a criminal act, but through the response of institutions and individuals to the victim.

Child rights activists say that children repeatedly questioned by authorities while in police uniform, without the presence of their parents, can lead to such trauma.

How do Indian laws address the issue of child witnesses?

Under Section 118 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, there is no minimum age for a witness. Children as young as three years old have deposed before trial courts in cases of sexual abuse. Usually during a trial, the court, before recording the testimony of a child witness, determines his or her competency on the basis of their ability to give rational answers. A child is usually asked questions like their name, the school they study in, and the names of their parents to determine their competency. If the child is very young and does not understand the significance of taking an oath to speak the truth — which is administered to each witness before testimony

— the judge or the staff explain to the child that he or she should speak the truth, thinking of whichever God they believe in.

Trials involving children as witnesses have primarily been in cases of child sexual abuse. Other criminal cases where children are examined as witnesses have included those where a parent is the victim of violence at home, in the sole presence of the child.

Have courts dealt with how child witnesses are to be treated?

The Delhi High Court has come up with guidelines for recording of evidence of vulnerable witnesses in criminal matters. A vulnerable witness is defined as anyone who has not completed 18 years of age.

Focusing primarily on child witnesses giving testimonies that are recorded in court, the Delhi High Court guidelines underline the importance of the criminal justice system needing to respond proactively, sensitively, and in an age-appropriate manner when dealing with children. "The lengthy process of navigating the formal and adversarial criminal justice system can affect the vulnerable witnesses' psychological development," the guidelines say. They allow for a facilitator for a vulnerable witness to be appointed by a court for effective communication between various stakeholders including the police.

In 2016, the Delhi High Court said that while children can be pliable, their testimony

can be considered after careful scrutiny.

What are the laws pertaining to the questioning of children?

JJACT: The primary legislation in the country pertaining to children is The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. The Act does not provide guidelines specifically relating to questioning or interviewing of children as witnesses. The Act's very preamble, however, says that a "child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposal of matters in the best interest of children" must be adhered to. This means adhering to general guidelines pertaining to the juvenile justice system — for instance, for the police to not be in their uniform while dealing with children. It also requires that interviews of children be done by specialised units of police who are trained to sensitively deal with them.

The Act prescribes that a Special Juvenile Police Unit is to be constituted by the state government in each district and city, headed by a police officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police, and including two social workers, at least one of whom must be a woman, and both of whom should be experienced in the field of child welfare. Their work includes coordinating with the police towards sensitive treatment of children. The Act also provides for a Child Welfare Committee in every district to take cognisance of any violations by the authorities in their handling of children.

POCSO ACT: Apart from the Juvenile Justice Act, The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 has specific guidelines regarding interviewing children as witnesses. While it pertains to child sexual abuse victims, child rights activists say the guidelines are a framework for all children who are being interviewed by the police as witnesses. The Act states that interviews should be conducted in a safe, neutral, child-friendly environment, including allowing for them to be done at homes. It says a child should not be made to recount the incident in question multiple times. The Act also allows for a support person, who could be trained in counselling, to be present with the child to reduce stress and trauma.

In 2018, the Bombay High Court had pulled up the police for repeatedly summoning a three-year-old to the police station for recording his statement in a case of alleged sexual abuse of his classmate; a school trustee was an accused in the case.

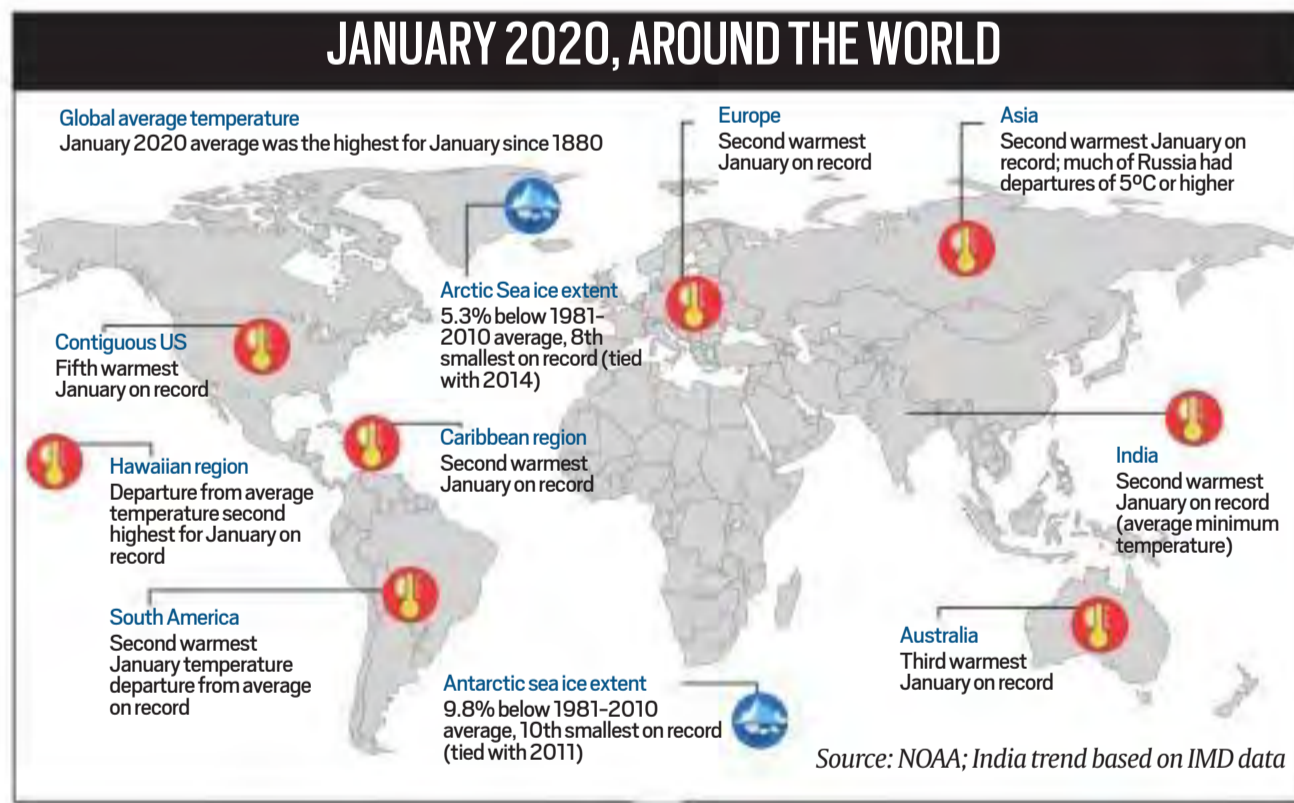
A warm Jan 2020: the records in India, world

ANJALI MARAR
PUNE, FEBRUARY 16

GLOBALLY, THE average temperature over land and ocean surfaces made January 2020 the hottest January on record, according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) whose dataset dates back to 1880. In India, January 2020 was the second warmest since 1919 in terms of average minimum temperatures, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data dating back to 1901.

India trends

Against a January normal of 20.59°C, minimum temperatures for January 2020 averaged approximately 21.92°C, a deviation of 1.33°C. The only warmer January on record was January 1919 at about 22.13°C, an anomaly of 1.54°C. The only other years when January was warmer than normal were 1901 (+1.23°C), 1906 (+1.1°C) and 1938 (+1.05°C). The average maximum for January 2020 was the third highest on record at 30.72°C (normal 30°C), after 2016 (+1.1°C) and 2013 (+0.95°C).



India's mean temperature anomaly for January crossed 1°C for the first time since 1901. Against a January normal of 25.3°C, the mean temperature was 26.32°C — a deviation of 1.02°C. Other years when January mean temperature was over normal were

2016 (+0.88°C), 2013 (+0.87°C), 1998 (+0.78°C) and 2005 (+0.57°C).

Bucking the nationwide January trend, the overall winter in North India was harsh, with some areas in Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand experiencing

record cold conditions leading to extreme snowfall. In Delhi, cold-day conditions broke records during December, including a 17-day cold spell when the maximum plunged up to 4°C. Punjab and Rajasthan, too, had severe cold conditions in December and January.

Global trends

The January 2020 globally averaged temperature departure from average over land and ocean surfaces was the highest in the 141-year NOAA record, at 1.14°C above the 20th-century average of 12°C. This surpassed the 2016 record by only 0.02°C. Across all months, only March 2016, February 2016 and December 2015 had a greater temperature departure. January 2016 and 2020 were the only Januaries with a global temperature departure from average above 1°C. The four warmest Januaries have occurred since 2016; the 10 warmest Januaries have all occurred since 2002.

The January 2020 temperature departure was the highest monthly temperature departure without an El Niño present in the tropical Pacific Ocean.

With ENS in New Delhi

Why government wants to locate Dara Shikoh tomb, and why it's not easy

DIVYAA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

THE MINISTRY of Culture recently set up a seven-member panel of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to locate the grave of the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh (1615-59). He is believed to be buried somewhere in the Humayun's Tomb complex in Delhi, one of around 140 graves of the Mughal clan.

Headed by T J Alone, Director-Monument at ASI, the panel has senior archaeologists RS Bisht, Sayeed Jamal Hassan, K N Dikshit, B R Mani, K K Muhammed, Satish Chandra, and B M Pandey as members. It has been given three months. "For the findings to be conclusive, the three-month time can be extended. The panel will use architectural evidence from that time, and also written history and any other information that can be used as evidence," Culture Minister Prahlad Patel said.

Dara Shikoh's legacy

The eldest son of Shah Jahan, Dara Shikoh

was killed after losing the war of succession against his brother Aurangzeb. Dara Shikoh is described as a "liberal Muslim" who tried to find commonalities between Hindu and Islamic traditions. He translated into Persian the Bhagavad Gita as well as 52 Upanishads.

One of the archaeologists on the panel, Muhammed, described Dara Shikoh as "one of the greatest free thinkers of that time". "Dara Shikoh realised the greatness of the Upanishads and translated them, which were earlier known only to a few upper caste Hindus. Translations from that Persian translation have inspired a lot of free thinkers of today, even inspiring the likes of former United States President Barack Obama."

Dara Shikoh & Aurangzeb

Some historians argue that if Dara Shikoh had ascended the Mughal throne instead of Aurangzeb, it could have saved thousands of lives lost in religious clashes. "Dara Shukoh was the total antithesis of Aurangzeb, in that he was deeply syncretic, warm-hearted and generous — but at the



Grave said to be Dara Shikoh's; no conclusive evidence. Abhinav Saha

same time, he was also an indifferent administrator and ineffectual in the field of battle," Avik Chanda writes in *Dara Shukoh, The Man Who Would Be King*.

Of late, there have been renewed attempts to compare Dara Shikoh's legacy against that of Aurangzeb. At a recent con-

clave in Delhi, speakers included RSS functionaries called Dara Shikoh "a real Hindustani". A research chair was set up in Dara Shikoh's name at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) last year.

Prof Sunil Kumar, professor of medieval history at the University of Delhi, said: "Whenever you use the past for modern political purposes, you will always twist it because the past doesn't serve modernity very well. You end up manipulating it for your present intentions. If he was the monarch and not Aurangzeb, would India have been any different? These assumptions are coming from a misplaced understanding of Mughal history... He is made to be a good Muslim but why the search for his grave?"

The remains of Dara Shikoh

According to the *Shahjahanama*, after Aurangzeb defeated Dara Shikoh, he brought the latter to Delhi in chains. His head was cut off and sent to Agra Fort, while his torso was buried in the Humayun's Tomb complex.

Muhammed said: "No one knows

where exactly Dara Shikoh was buried. All we know is that it's a small grave in the Humayun's Tomb complex. Most people point to a specific small grave there. Italian traveller Niccolao Manucci gave a graphic description of the day in *Travels of Manucci*, as he was there as a witness to the whole thing. That is the basis of the thesis."

Panel member Mani said: "One of the graves in the compound is traditionally said to be that of Dara Shikoh. It's located on a platform on the western side of the Humayun's Tomb complex. We have been hearing about this from people living in the area for generations, as well as from senior ASI officials, but again, there is no proper evidence."

Prof Shireen Moosvi of AMU said, "Until 1857, all in the family were buried in the complex... According to historian Jadunath Sarkar, 'All authorities European as well as Persian point that he was indeed buried finally in Humayun's Tomb.'"

The way forward

The ASI's biggest problem is that most

graves in the complex have no names.

Panel member Hassan, a former ASI Director, said, "The *Shahjahanama* compiled by Muhammad Saleh Kamboh... has dedicated at least two pages to the last days of Dara Shikoh, on how he was brutally murdered and buried somewhere in the complex."

But most on the panel are uncertain about how conclusive evidence can be found. "I don't know how it will be concluded. Let people go for further research and find out from literary resources. All people on the panel will apply their areas of expertise," Mani said.

Muhammed said the committee hasn't met yet, so no methodology has been decided. "You can't say with certainty, but probability is there," he said. "Let us hope, even as we can't open any tomb, that it works out. It's a step in the right direction. It should have been done earlier."

Prof Moosvi fears the search may be never-ending: "No one has mentioned the place of the grave. No graves there are marked or inscribed. No way to identify,"

13 THE GOVERNANCE PAGE



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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Punjab govt equips disabled women to run e-rickshaws, support their families

Selects and trains 42 women to earn a livelihood; Hoshiarpur is the first district to launch the scheme

ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA
JALANDHAR, FEBRUARY 16

JASWINDER KAUR, in her early 30s, had never known how to ride even a bicycle, let alone a vehicle of any kind. But she has become one of the first women e-rickshaw drivers in Punjab. Now she drives an 8-seater e-rickshaw with confidence. Jaswinder is a mother of two children and both she and her husband suffer from a disability in their legs. She has passed the Class 10th exam but was unemployed. She chose to earn a living by plying an e-rickshaw because this way she could start earning without making any initial investment.

"I don't feel bad when anyone looks at me. Rather it makes me happy that I am doing something a little different from the rest," she said when asked how she felt entering a male-dominated field. Jaswinder said, thanks to more women taking up driving e-rickshaws, people will soon get used to women drivers.

She is correct in saying that she is not alone. Rekha Rani, a widow having three kids, too is learning to ferry passengers in her auto. After the death of her husband in a road accident in 2016, Rekha took up tailoring to take care of her family. But the earnings were barely enough to provide two square meals. "When I saw an advertisement in a paper about women e-rickshaw driver, I applied because I have no money to start any of my work and here the government was to provide e-rickshaws," said Rekha.

Like Jaswinder and Rekha, 40 other differently-abled women, aged between 20 to 50 have become e-rickshaw drivers in Hoshiarpur district, which is the first district of Punjab that has launched a women e-rickshaw driver project.

The project is the brainchild of the Punjab Industry Minister, Sunder Sham Arora, who is based out of Hoshiarpur, and the district administration.

Women are plying these autos in the Roshan Ground and around by carrying the passengers during their 10 days training programme, which is being provided by the district administration. All the women were selected



Women e-rickshaw drivers being provided training at the Roshan ground in Hoshiarpur Express

EXPLAINED
E.
Livelihood and empowerment

MOST OF the women chosen by the Punjab government to receive training for driving the e-rickshaws come from economically-weaker sections of the society. Further, almost all of them find it difficult to earn money because of some physical disability. By training these women, the government hopes to provide them not just with a means of livelihood but also a sense of empowerment.

through the interview recently. Arora handed over a cheque of Rs 51 lakh to the district administration recently — this money, in turn, was the contribution of businesses. Already 42 e-rickshaws have been purchased by the administration costing around Rs 10 lakh each, and Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh has waived off the imposition of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on these e-rickshaws, according to Arora.

In the first phase, autos were provided to 42 women after a selection process led by Isha Kalia, the former Deputy Commissioner of Hoshiarpur who has been recently transferred. Kalia said that the chosen women will ply on several routes in the city after they have completed their training.

But, what is the reason behind this project? Arora replied, "I wanted to empower womenfolk in every field and thought about this unique project which is quite easy to handle and it can earn a fair amount (of money) to provide a good life to the families of these poor women".

"For safety and security, all the women's e-rickshaws would be equipped with GPS-enabled systems, and their location can be monitored any time from the control room. Also, these e-rickshaws will be run within the city area," said Arora. He added that all women have also been given mobile phones so that they can connect with each other and with the administration easily. He said that another phase of it would also be launched soon.

Kalia said that this project will make women more confident and they will become an inspiration for the many unemployed men and women. She said that these are eco-friendly battery-operated rickshaws and two battery charging stations are also being set up in the city.

Shelly, a divorcee and educated up to primary level, another woman e-rickshaw driver, said that after the death of her father she had to take care of her mother, sister and her 10-year-old physically-challenged son.

"This is the best job for me because the e-rickshaw is very easy to drive," she said.

THE BIG STORY

'Reservation is a Constitutional right and nobody can end it'

RAM VILAS Paswan, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, says reservation is a constitutional right and nobody can end it. He spoke to HARIKISHAN SHARMA on the recent ruling of the Supreme Court and the demand for the creation of an Indian Judicial Service.



THE POLICY INTERVIEW
RAM VILAS PASWAN
Union Minister for Consumer Affairs

What is your view on SC's recent ruling that states are not bound to provide reservation in government jobs and that quota is not a fundamental right?

Reservation is a Constitutional right and nobody can end it. Whenever the matter of the reservation came in the Parliament, all the parties supported it. The latest example is the meeting of the SC and ST MPs that took place at my residence; about 70 MPs participated in it. The meeting was attended by not just the members of the BJP and its allies but also by the members of other parties such as the Congress, the DMK and Shiv Sena as well. All the MPs were very angry as to why the SC had said that reservation is not a fundamental right. Given the fact that Article 16(4) of the Constitution has a provision for reservations.

Reservation in promotion is available for the SC and ST only but the reservation in government jobs is now available to the SC, ST, OBC and the weaker sections of the upper castes. But the SC has said both things; first, if the state wants it can give reservation or it can choose otherwise; second, that reservation is not a fundamental right. If the reservation is not a fundamental right then what is Article 16(4)?

Isn't Article 16(4) an enabling provision?

When it is only enabling reservation they how can upper caste get a reservation? When there is an SC ruling that reservation cannot go beyond 50% then how it reached up to 60%? At the time of the Mandal Commission, there was a proposal to give 10% reservation on the basis of the economic criteria but the SC rejected it saying there is no provision in the Constitution for it. But this time it became a reality because the NDA government amended the Constitution first. So, reservation is already a fundamental right. How can you say that it's not? Second, when a 9-member Bench in the Mandal Commission case said that reservation is a Constitutional provision they how can a 2-member Bench say that it is not Constitutional?

What is the way out?

All MPs, who attended the meeting, were of the view that either the government should bring an ordinance or enact a law as done in case of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes

(Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Whether a Constitutional amendment or a separate law is required, it should take all the necessary steps. Our party is also contemplating filing a petition seeking a review of the recent SC ruling... No one can end the reservation. Yab patthar ki lakir hai (it's indelible). Now it has been extended to the poor sections of the upper castes also. So, now no one can end the reservation.

Do you see any reason behind the SC making such observations?

All the MPs, who attended the meeting, demanded reservation in judiciary and creation of the Indian Judicial Service (IJS) because whenever a matter related to the weaker sections goes to the Court, it gets stuck.

Will the govt accept the demand for IJS?

The Centre has given a positive reply about IJS in the Parliament. The government is seriously considering the proposal.

So, you want IJS with reservation?

Article 312 of the Constitution provides for the creation of an all-India Judicial Service. It should be on the line of the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service and the selection process of the IJS should be transparent and through a competitive examination with proper reservation.

Do you support the creation of IJS?

I support it on two counts. First, because the present system of collegium lacks transparency. Second, it will have representation from all sections of society.

FROM STATES REFORMS TRACKER

MADHYA PRADESH

Private investments to create 14,000 jobs

LAST WEEK, the state government has announced that private firms will put in more than Rs 3,000 crore-worth investments in the state. According to an official document, these investments can potentially generate 14,000 employment opportunities. The announcement in this regard was made by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath during the textile and garment sector roundtable.

DELHI

Mohalla clinics set to be replicated elsewhere

WHILE THE AAP's thumping victory in Delhi polls is being projected as validation of its development model, several state governments have already taken a cue from the Arvind Kejriwal dispensation's flagship Mohalla clinic scheme and are replicating it. It is being said that the opening of nearly 500 Mohalla clinics since 2015, where doctor consultation, medicines and lab tests can be availed free of cost, played a vital role in tilting the balance in favour of AAP in the recently-concluded elections. Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Telangana, Karnataka and UT of Jammu and Kashmir have already announced that they would be replicating the initiative.

TELANGANA

State poll panel uses a face-recognition app

THE FIRST-of-its-kind facial recognition app used in the recently concluded municipal polls in Telangana yielded an accuracy of 80 per cent, officials have claimed. The Telangana State Election Commission used a facial recognition app in a bid to counter impersonation of voters.

Gujarat CM's Mokla Mane: citizen interaction forum also resolves old complaints of people

PARIMAL DABHI
GANDHINAGAR, FEBRUARY 16

IN AUGUST 2019, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani launched an initiative under which he started meeting — once a month — different sections of society to have an open discussion on the issues concerning them. The initiative, titled Mukhyamantri Sath, Mokla Mane (With the Chief Minister, with an open mind), has not only caught the attention of the people but also proved to be a catalyst towards some key welfare decisions by the government.

In the months since, Rupani has held interactions with people from different strata of the society like urban slum dwellers, award-winning teachers, Divyang or specially-abled persons, and nomadic & denotified tribes etc.

Secretary to the CM, Ashwani Kumar said the interaction is like an open dialogue about knowing each other better. "If some decision



CM Rupani during an interaction Express

is taken during and after this interaction, it is a by-product, but the objective is not that of people asking something and the CM giving something," he clarified.

Additional PRO to the CM, Hitesh Pandya

said: "The CM himself decides the group of people that he would interact with... We shortlist around 60-75 names for the final programme. The selection gets done in a manner that every district gets equal representation".

Shantabhai Bamanिया from Kharaghoda of Surendranagar district is a salt pan worker and visited the CM house for the first time last year.

"I felt very happy after visiting the CM House. We spent one full day there, had a meal there and even got photographed with the CM," said Bamanिया.

"More importantly, one of our problems got resolved after the visit. A hostel near our village was (by rule) not enrolling students beyond Class VIII. I raised the issue with the CM during the interaction as our kids had to leave school education because there was no hostel for students of Class IX onwards. The issue was resolved very soon. Now our kids can study beyond Class VIII," Bamanिया added.

CHHATTISGARH/EDUCATION REFORMS

Tribal languages to be a medium of education in pre-school

GARGI VERMA
RAIPUR, FEBRUARY 16

INSTEAD OF "aa se aam", children in the tribal regions of Chhattisgarh will soon be learning "aa se aak patta (peepal or sacred fig leaf)". In around 19,000 anganwadis across the state, the Chhattisgarh government is going to start teaching pre-school children in 10 different tribal languages.

The brainchild of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, the programme was announced by him at the Republic day parade in Jagdalpur. In a state where 32% of the total population belongs to Scheduled Tribes, the decision is expected to not only provide comfort but also to save these tribal languages.

"We first made a linguistic map of each district and the languages spoken in the region; then we made a linguistic map of the state. The ten languages we have included in



Pre-school students in Chhattisgarh will soon be taught in their language Express

this program are Gondi, Halbi, Madiya, Bhatra, Dhurva, Dorli, Singrauliya, Sarguiya, Sadri and Kudukh," said Siddharth Komal Pardeshi, Secretary, Women and Child Development Department.

Among other responsibilities, the angan-

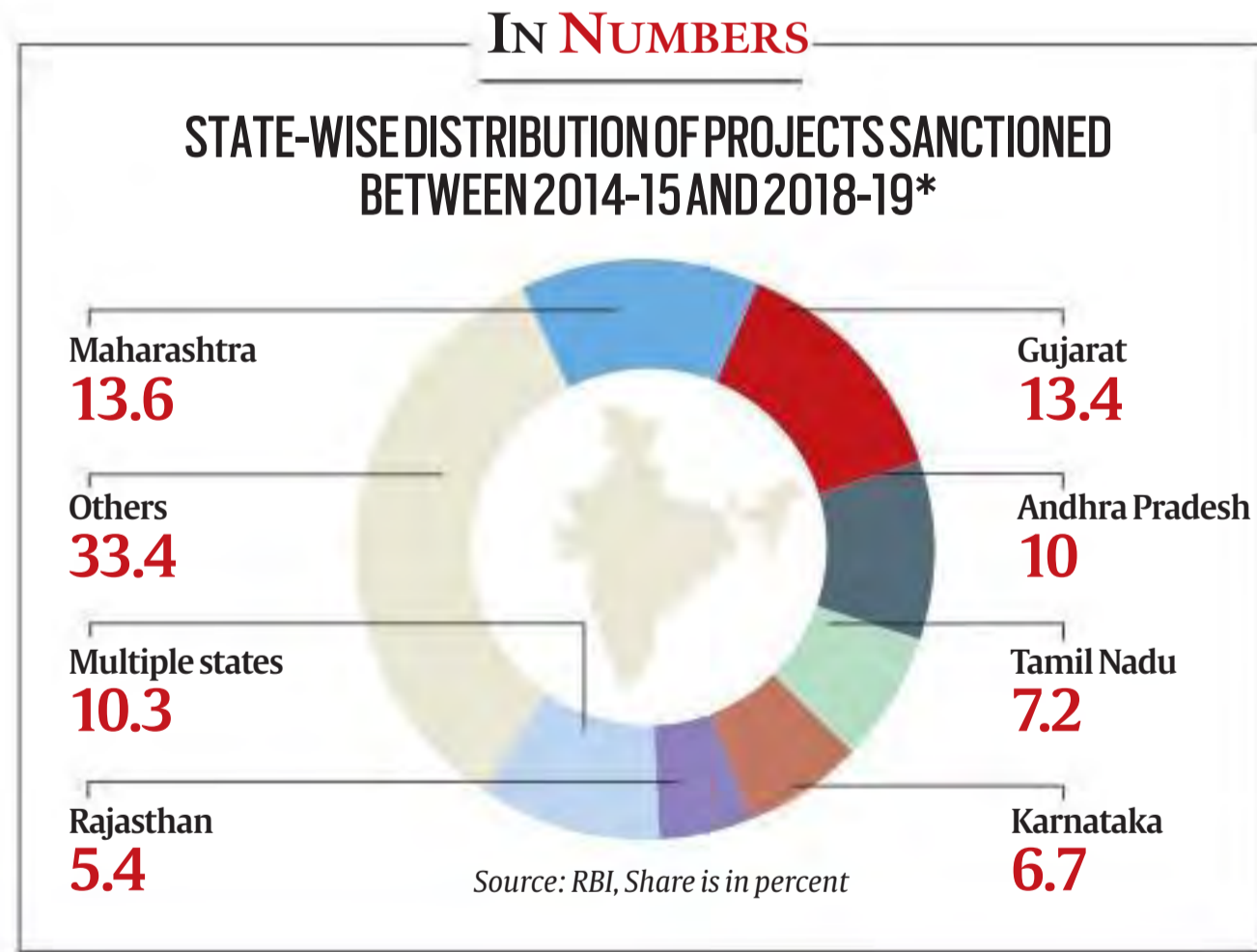
wadis work as the pre-primary schools for children. However, the medium of education was Hindi. "For the first time, we don't have to train our frontline workers. All the anganwadi teachers are well versed in their regional language. They connect to the people in those languages. In fact, we have been taking their help to design the books and teaching material," Pardeshi said.

"There is no script in most Adivasi languages, they are phonetically driven. In 2018, a dictionary in Gondi was released by Kannada University in Hampi. There is a need to preserve these languages and to ensure that children who have grown up speaking such languages don't feel left out at schools," Dada Jokal, an author of several books in Gondi and who now teaches school teachers the language, said.

The linguistic divide in the state has been brought forth time and again by officials. In 2015, the previous government had planned

to train the officials in Gondi, a plan that stopped before it began. In 2019, police started training their men in the Gondi language to fight the Left Wing Extremists better. "In schools, teachers often have a hard time connecting with students because of the language divide. I had an interesting case, when a primary school teacher approached me that the children just kept repeating what he said, without understanding a word. They would keep repeating his questions at him, thinking that was their lesson. This is because of language barriers, which other linguistically prosperous states have understood and exploited," Dada Jokal said.

According to education expert Ujjwala Shankar, the idea of ensuring pre-primary and primary education in one's mother tongue is necessary for many reasons. "When the course imparted is in a language that the child is already familiar, the interest to learn more increases," she said.



14 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Rouhani said Tehran's help was essential in establishing security in the Middle East. Reuters

IRAN
Will never yield to US pressure for talks: Rouhani

Dubai: Iran will never hold talks with the US under pressure, President Hassan Rouhani said, adding that Tehran's help was essential in establishing security in the Middle East. Tensions between the two countries spiked after the killing of Iran's most prominent military commander Qassem Soleimani on Jan 3 by US drone attacks at Baghdad airport. "Iran will never negotiate under pressure... We will never yield to America's pressure and we will not negotiate from a position of weakness," Rouhani said in a televised news conference. Although the reimposed US sanctions have crippled Iran's economy, Tehran has repeatedly dismissed talks over any new deal.

PAKISTAN
Provincial lawmaker shot dead in Sindh

Karachi: A provincial lawmaker of the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was shot dead in Naushero Feroze district in Sindh province, police said. Member of Provincial Assembly Shahnaz Ansari was shot dead on Saturday allegedly by a nephew of her recently deceased brother-in-law Zahid Khokar in Darya Khan, Naushero Feroze, Sindh police said. Ansari, who was nominated on a reserved seat, was attending a mourning ceremony for Khokar when the attack took place. She was rushed to a hospital where she was declared brought dead, Geo News reported.

WEST ASIA
Israel: Hamas hackers tried to 'seduce' soldiers

Jerusalem: The Israeli military said it has thwarted an attempt by the Hamas militant group to hack soldiers' phones by posing as young, attractive women on social media, striking up friendships and persuading them into downloading malware. Lt Col. Jonathan Conricus told reporters that the phones of dozens of soldiers had been infected in recent months, although he said the army detected the scam early on and prevented any major secrets from reaching the militant group.

BANKSY'S VALENTINE'S DAY MURAL DEFACED



The Banksy artwork in Bristol, England, before it was defaced. AP

■ The family that owns a house in England where an artwork from Banksy appeared in time for Valentine's Day has covered the mural after it was defaced.

■ Temporary fencing was also added Saturday to the home in Bristol and closed-circuit television has been installed to protect the artwork, which shows a young girl firing red flowers from a catapult.

■ The elusive artist confirmed the mural as his creation on his official Instagram account on Feb 14. It was later defaced with an expletive.

■ Kelly Woodruff, daughter of the man who owns the home on which the mural appeared, said the family felt a "strong responsibility" to ensure it could be enjoyed by the public.

Airstrikes in Yemen kill 31 civilians after Saudi jet crash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI, FEBRUARY 16

THIRTY-ONE PEOPLE were killed in air strikes on Yemen Saturday, the United Nations said, the victims of an apparent Saudi-led retaliation after Iran-backed Huthi rebels claimed to have shot down one of its jets.

The Tornado aircraft came down Friday in northern Al-Jawf province during an operation to support government forces, a rare shooting down that prompted operations in the area by a Saudi-led military coalition fighting the rebels.

The deadly violence follows an upsurge in fighting in northern Yemen between the warring parties that threatens to worsen the war-battered country's humanitarian crisis.

"Preliminary field reports indicate that on 15 February as many as 31 civilians were killed and 12 others injured in strikes that hit Al-Hayjah area... in Al-Jawf governorate," the office of the UN humanitarian coordinator for Yemen said in a statement.

Lise Grande, the UN coordinator, denounced the "terrible



A view of an explosion in Al-Jawf, Yemen. Reuters

strikes".
"Under international humanitarian law, parties which resort to force are obligated to protect civilians," she said.

"Five years into this conflict and belligerents are still failing to uphold this responsibility. It's shocking." The rebels reported multiple coalition air strikes in the area where the plane went down, adding that women and children were among the dead and wounded, according to rebel television station Al-Masirah.

The coalition conceded the "possibility of collateral damage" during a "search and rescue operation" at the site of the jet crash, which left the fate of its crew uncertain.

Rockets land on US base in Baghdad, no casualties reported

REUTERS
BAGHDAD, FEBRUARY 16

ROCKETS HIT A US-led military coalition's Baghdad headquarters early on Sunday but caused no casualties, a coalition spokesman said, in the latest attack to target US facilities in Iraq. Washington has blamed Iran-backed paramilitary groups for increasingly regular rocketing and shelling of bases hosting US forces in Iraq and of the area around the US Embassy in Baghdad.

An attack last month hit the US Embassy compound itself, and a rocket attack on a military base in the north in Dec killed a US civilian contractor. There have been no claims for the attacks.

Tension between Iran and the administration of US President Donald Trump has mostly played out on Iraqi soil in recent months.

The United States killed top Iranian commander Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi paramilitary chief Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in a drone strike in Baghdad last month, after which the region braced for full-scale conflict. Iran launched its first direct missile

Washington has blamed Iran-backed paramilitary groups for increasingly regular attacks on bases hosting US forces in Iraq and on the area around the US Embassy in Baghdad

attack on two bases hosting US forces in response.

Sunday's attack, before dawn, was carried out with "small rockets" and caused no casualties, the coalition spokesman said in a statement on Twitter. He provided no further details.

An Iraqi military statement said three Katyusha rockets had hit the fortified Green Zone which hosts the US Embassy, other foreign missions and Iraqi government buildings. It said a fourth hit a nearby logistics base for Iraqi paramilitary groups.

Iraq, caught between its two allies Washington and Tehran, also faces an unprecedented domestic crisis as months of anti-government unrest continues.

Britain battered as 'weather bomb' Storm Dennis brings heavy rain, travel chaos

STEPHEN CASTLE
LONDON, FEBRUARY 16

BRITAIN HAS been battered by severe weather for the second consecutive weekend, prompting an official warning on Sunday that lives were at risk as streets became flooded, rail tracks submerged and dozens of flights cancelled.

The storm, named Dennis and classified as a "weather bomb" by the national weather service, the Meteorological Office, unleashed wind gusts of 91 miles per hour, becoming one of the most intense winter storms to grip the North Atlantic. The term weather bomb is applied when the air pressure of a storm drops by a certain measure in 24 hours, causing huge turbulence and high wind speeds. The impact on the ground



An ambulance and a car are submerged after flooding in Nantgarw, Wales, on Sunday. AP

brought chaos to parts of England, Wales and Scotland, with more than half a month's worth of rainfall falling in one day. In addition, the body of a teenager was pulled from the sea during the storm, and a man died

after he apparently fell overboard from a ship moored off the coast.

The extreme weather slammed areas that were still recovering from last week's storm, Ciara. That storm, called Sabine in German-speaking countries, tore

through Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, and Poland with winds of more than 90 miles per hour. It left at least five people dead and forced the cancellation of hundreds of flights, train services and sports matches.

At least 170 flights were cancelled Sunday, a weekend that is especially busy in Britain because of a weeklong school vacation. A red warning for parts of Wales early Sunday expired around 11 am, but most of Britain remained under an amber alert, the second-highest warning after red.

Also on Sunday, about 320 flood warnings were issued across the country, including in South Wales, where fast-flowing or deep floodwater caused by the storm posed a risk to life, the Met Office said. It added that 109.4 millimetres of rain had already fallen in Tredegar, a town in Wales, since 4 am Friday. NYT

CORONAVIRUS TOLL RISES TO 1,665 IN CHINA

Virus curbs starting to work, says China

Americans set to fly home from virus-stricken cruise ship

ENGEN THAM & STELLA QIU
SHANGHAI, BEIJING, FEBRUARY 16

THE NUMBER of new coronavirus cases in China fell on Sunday and a health official said intense efforts to stop its spread were beginning to work, as another 70 people tested positive on a virus-stricken cruise ship quarantined in Japan.

China's latest figures showed 68,500 cases of the illness and 1,665 deaths, most of them in Hubei.

The National Health Commission reported 2,009 new cases on Sunday, down from 2,641 the previous day, and 142 new deaths, just one lower than the 143 on the previous day. All but four of the new deaths were in Hubei.

The province and its capital, Wuhan, have been virtually sealed off and locked down since Jan. 23, with schools, offices and factories shut and most travel suspended.

The virus is believed to have an incubation period of 14 days which would appear to indicate it has been spreading since the lockdown was imposed. But health commission spokesman Mi Feng said the campaign was beginning to show results.

"The effect of the coronavirus controls is appearing," Mi told reporters. Increased medical support and preventive measures in Hubei had headed off more critical cases and the proportion of critical cases among confirmed cases had fallen to 21.6% on Saturday, from 32.4% on Jan 27, Mi said.



Workers disinfect a residential compound in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, China. Reuters

WOMAN WHO LEFT CRUISE SHIP TESTS POSITIVE FOR VIRUS

AN AMERICAN woman who left a cruise ship in Cambodia last week and flew to Malaysia with more than a hundred other passengers has tested positive for the coronavirus, alarming experts who fear that exposed passengers who then travelled onward could become a new source for global transmission. In all, 1,455 passengers and 802 crew members were aboard the *Westerdam*, which left Hong Kong on Feb 1. It was at sea for just under 14 days, the time frame that is believed to be the maximum incubation period for the virus.

US officials in hazmat suits boarded the cruise liner, *Diamond Princess*, on Sunday to fly home Americans quarantined for two weeks off Japan. After being held on board the ship since Feb 3, American passengers were told to get ready for Sunday evening charter flights home from the cruise liner, which accounts for around half of all confirmed coronavirus cases outside China.

Canadian, Italian, South Korean and Hong Kong passengers were expected to follow, after their governments also announced plans to repatriate passengers. 70 new cases were confirmed on board the ship, bringing the total on the ship to 355.

Meanwhile, Taiwan reported its first fatality on Sunday. The first fatality in Europe was reported on Saturday, an 80-year-old Chinese man who died at a Paris hospital. REUTERS

Xi speech claims he led virus fight in early days of outbreak

YANAN WANG
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 16

A RECENT speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping that has been published by state media indicates for the first time that he was leading the response to a new virus outbreak from early on in the crisis.

The publication of the Feb 3 speech opens Xi up to criticism over why the public was not alerted sooner.

In the speech, Xi said he gave instructions on fighting the virus on Jan 7 and ordered the shutdown that began on Jan 23 of cities at the epicentre of the outbreak. His remarks were published by state media late Saturday.

"On Jan 22, in light of the epidemic's rapid spread and the challenges of prevention and control, I made a clear request that Hubei province implement comprehensive and stringent controls over the outbreak of people," Xi told a meeting of the party's standing committee. Xi's role was muted in the early days of the epidemic, which has grown into one of the biggest political challenges of his seven-year tenure.

The disclosure of his speech indicates top leaders knew about the outbreak's potential severity weeks before such dangers were made known to the public. It was only in late Jan that



Chinese President Xi Jinping receives a temperature check at a community health centre in Beijing last week. AP

EXPLAINED Bid to build trust may have backfired

THE PUBLICATION of Xi's speech, which shows that he knew about the dangers posed by the virus long before he publicly commented on it, was likely a move to assure the public that the leader was working to contain the virus even though he wasn't seen in public during that period.

However, the speech has triggered backlash with many asking why, if the top leadership knew about the dangers, the public were not alerted sooner. The measures he took are also being criticised for not being effective enough as the virus continues to spread.

Trust in the government's approach to outbreaks remains fractured after the SARS epidemic of 2002 and 2003, which was covered up for months. Authorities in Hubei and Wuhan faced public fury over their initial handling of the epidemic. Wuhan on Jan. 23 became the first city to impose an unprecedented halt on out-bound transportation, a measure since expanded to other cities with a combined population of more than 60 million.

The anger reached a peak earlier this month following the death of Li Wenliang, a young doctor who was reprimanded by local police for trying to spread a warning about the virus. AP

CAROLINE FLACK, 40, WAS FORMER HOST OF POPULAR BRITISH SHOW 'LOVE ISLAND'

UK TV host commits suicide, stirring debates on tabloids, reality shows

DERRICK BRYSON TAYLOR
FEBRUARY 16

CAROLINE FLACK, a well-known television personality and former host of ITV's *Love Island* and other shows in Britain, died Saturday in London. She was 40. The Associated Press, citing a statement from her family, confirmed her death. A lawyer for the family said she had died by suicide and was found in her home, the AP reported.

In 2015, Flack began hosting *Love Island*, a British dating-real-

ity show on which the public voted off "islanders" until one couple remained.

She was replaced in December after being charged with assault after an episode involving her boyfriend, tennis star Lewis Burton, *The Guardian* reported.

"Caroline was a much loved member of the *Love Island* team and our sincere thoughts and condolences are with her family and friends," ITV, which broadcasts the show, said on Twitter.

Laura Whitmore, who replaced Flack as the show's host, said on Twitter that she was "try-

ing to find the words but I can't." Flack's management agency and team were not immediately available for comment Saturday.

Flack was no stranger to reality television. In 2014, she won *Strictly Come Dancing* with her dance partner Pasha Kovalev and also hosted several other shows, including *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here! Now!* and *Xtra Factor*, according to ITV.

Flack, who had several famous partners including Prince Harry and Harry Styles, is a fixture in the British tabloids. She also had to deal with their in-



Flack was replaced as host of *Love Island* in December after being charged with assault after an episode involving her boyfriend, tennis star Lewis Burton. AP

cessant prying and constant criticism.

She once told *The Sun*, "Not everyone is going to like you, so you have to filter it."

The Sun, which had blanket coverage of the assault allegations against Flack, called her "Caroline Whack" in a December story.

The tabloid faced online backlash in the aftermath of Flack's death as social media users attacked it for its articles about her. At one point, #dontbuythesun and #thesun were both trending on Twitter. In a 2019 Instagram post,

Flack wrote that she was "in a really weird place" and that she found it hard to talk about it. She said when she reached out to someone to talk about her feelings, they called her "draining".

"I feel like this is why some people keep their emotions to themselves," she said. "I certainly hate talking about my feelings. And being a burden is my biggest fear."

Flack said she was "lucky" to be able to pick herself up, adding "but what happens if someone can't".

"Be nice to people," she continued. "You never know what's

going on. Ever."

While *Love Island* is a wildly popular show in Britain, it has raised issues about mental health.

Two previous contestants died by suicide, Sophie Gradon in 2018 and Mike Thalassitis in 2019. Their deaths stirred a debate in Britain over the ethics of reality television and the duty that broadcasters have to care for contestants.

ITV released new guidelines in May to promote contestants' well-being and also offered contestants "training on dealing with social media." NYT

15 ECONOMY

CAPITAL BOOST EXIM BANK TO GET ₹1.3K CR IN FY21

New Delhi: The Centre has decided to pump Rs 1,300 crore into state-owned Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) to fund its business growth in the upcoming fiscal. Last year, the Centre doubled its authorised capital from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore. **PTI**

POST BUDGET, FIIs PUMP IN ₹24,623 CRORE INTO INDIAN CAPITAL MARKETS

Strong FPI inflows, fall in global oil prices push forex reserves to record \$473 bn

SANDEEP SINGH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

A SIGNIFICANT jump in foreign portfolio investment inflows over the first two weeks this year, coupled with drop in foreign currency outflow on account of sharp decline in global crude oil prices and dip in imports from China over the last month following the outbreak of coronavirus — which has till now claimed over 1,400 lives in China and is threatening its exports and economy — has resulted in a spike in India's foreign exchange reserves.

The reserves jumped to an all-time high of \$473 billion in the week ended February 7, as they grew by \$1.71 billion over the week ended January 31.

In one of the biggest expansions in forex reserves in recent times, the reserves have grown by \$10.86 billion in last three weeks. Earlier, in the three-week period between September 20 and October 11, the reserves swelled by \$11.3 billion. This was after the Finance Minister announced a sharp cut in corporate tax rates from 30 per cent to 22 per cent (exclusive of surcharge and cess).

As the reserves rose again in

EXPLAINED

Crude prices may stay low due to coronavirus impact

WHILE RISING foreign fund inflows and lower crude oil prices have helped India raise its foreign exchange reserves to record highs, the impact of coronavirus on China's economy activity over the next few months may keep the global crude oil prices lower, thereby benefitting India by way of lower import bill.

the week ended February 7, the sweet run of forex expansion has now continued for the 20 weeks — or five months — since September 20, 2019.

According to the data released by the Reserve Bank of India, while the foreign exchange reserves increased by \$1.71 billion in the reporting week ended February 7, the rise in reserves was mainly on account of an increase in foreign currency assets that rose \$1.94 billion to \$439.18 billion. The gold reserves in the same week declined by \$218 million to \$28.77 billion.

Since the Budget announcement on February 1, foreign institutional investors (FIIs) have

pumped in a net of Rs 24,623 crore into Indian capital markets. Since September 20, 2019, when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a cut in corporate tax rates, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have pumped in a net of Rs 78,676 crore (around \$11 billion).

In the same period, the foreign exchange reserves have grown \$44.4 billion — from \$428.5 billion in September 20, 2019 to \$473 billion in the week ended February 7, 2020.

It is important to note that, while there was a sudden spike in global crude oil prices in January — following the geopolitical tensions between the

United States and Iran and hit a 8-month high of \$70.25 per barrel on January 6, 2020 — it fell sharply following the de-escalation of tensions and then the outbreak of coronavirus in China.

While the Brent crude price hit a low of \$53 per barrel on February 10, it was trading at around \$57 per barrel on Friday.

The continued inflow of funds by foreign investors, despite a slowdown in economic growth, has fuelled the rise in forex reserves.

While investor sentiment turned weaker after the Budget announcement last July to impose higher surcharge, market participants say that the impact of the government's decision to reverse its Budget 2019 decision on higher surcharge on FPIs along with a cut in the corporate tax rate in September played a significant role in turning the investors' mood and draw them to invest in the Indian economy and markets.

While a decline in global crude oil prices has played an important role in keeping India's import bill under check, the impact of coronavirus on China's economy over the next few months is likely to keep global crude oil prices lower.

RISING FOREX RESERVES

Week ended	Forex (\$ bn)
Sept 20	428.57
Sept 27	433.59
Oct 4	437.8
Oct 11	439.7
Oct 18	440.75
Oct 25	442.5
Nov 1	446.09
Nov 8	447.8
Nov 15	448.2
Nov 22	448.5
Nov 29	451.08
Dec 6	453.4
Dec 13	454.49
Dec 20	454.9
Dec 27	457.46
Jan 3	461.15
Jan 10	461.21
Jan 17	462.15
Jan 24	466.69
Jan 31	471.3
Feb 7	473.01

Source: Reserve Bank of India

INTERVIEW: UK'S DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR WESTERN INDIA

'Enforcement of contracts in courts an area where investors would like to see progress'

UK'S TRADE Commissioner for South Asia and Deputy High Commissioner for Western India CRISPIN SIMON spoke to GEORGE MATHEW about Indo-UK trade ties and the prospects for investments in the wake of Britain leaving the European Union. Excerpts:



"We're here to promote British investment in India and British exports to India, and the same other way around"
CRISPIN SIMON

The UK economy is facing recession. Bank of England recently cut growth forecast to 1.1 per cent in the next three years... Major sectors like steel and auto are hit. What's your assessment on the economy?

I would not be overly concerned about one quarter. The UK grew quite well through the whole of 2019 and grew faster than many other countries in Europe. I would like European growth to be as fast as it can be as well because it promotes everybody's prosperity. I think that a lot of people said that, when we, after we had the referendum, there would be a collapse in the UK economy and it just hasn't happened. The UK economic outlook is good.

How do you assess the trade between the two countries at a time when both are facing slowdown?

We're very interested in how the two countries can help each other. And not just in how we can sell more stuff to India. And so if you add the growth rate of the two countries together in terms of trade, Indian exports to the UK and UK exports to India, it grew by 6 per cent last year. And that's a very satisfactory number. In fact, Indian exports grew faster than British exports, and that's fine.

There're reports that companies moved out of the UK due to Brexit. Do you agree?

There was talk about companies leaving, but there have been no substantial exits. I'm sure you will be able to find one or two examples. But there has been huge new increase in investment into the UK. One that I was particularly pleased with was the announcement by Tata Motors of hundreds of millions of pounds in electric vehicles in the UK to convert the Jaguar line from diesel to electric. And I find it particularly exciting, because obviously it was from a country outside the European Union, which is where we want to be developing our investments.

Do you think London would lose its position as the leading financial centre in the wake of

Brexit?

I don't agree with that. I think that ultimately whether or not London retains its preeminence as a financial centre, is if you provide products and services that people want to buy, right? It has sustained its market share through the last two and a half years. And I see no reason why it shouldn't continue to do so.

How do you assess investments by UK companies in India?

We're here to promote British investment in India and British exports to India, and the same other way around — bilateral trade and bilateral investment. So there are some huge investments by British companies here. For example, BP has an enormous joint venture with Reliance group in oil exploration, and JCB, the digger manufacturer. As I drive around India, in every town and village, I see big JCB yellow diggers and they're made across India in six plants, including a huge one in Navi Mumbai. And indeed, a lot of JCBs are exported to Africa.

So now you're looking at a kind of three-way trading relationship... where you've got a design and engineering done in the UK, manufacturing done in India and then the final product ending up in Africa. I think that's an exciting collaboration.

What are the major hurdles UK companies face when they make investments in India?

This is a glass half-full-half-empty question. India has made fantastic progress over the last three years moving from 144 to

66 in the ease-of-doing business ranking, and clearly it has been huge effort by the central government and the states are also involved. That is the glass half full interpretation. And it would be great if they continue to improve. And secondly, I think there needs to be a focus in the minds of a lot of companies who are international investors on the issue of the courts... India still has a weaker performance in terms of the ability to resolve contractual differences... in enforcement of contracts in the courts. I think that is an area in which oversees investors would like to see continued progress.

Do you think Indian firms are nervous about investing in the UK?

An investment going the other way is Genpact acquisition in Glasgow, Scotland, as part of an extension of their wealth management business. That's a financial services business and a big Indian company wanted to go in there. So if it had been nervous about the UK, if they had been nervous about financial services, then it wouldn't have made that investment.

What're your focus areas in terms of investments in India?

We've brought 15 companies in the field of artificial intelligence for the ongoing Nasscom conference. And this is the time that we want to give more investment in financial technology because it's changing so fast and growing so fast, and secondly, to green technology, because there is such a significant need in the planet. In offshore wind, for example, Britain has gone from nothing to it contributing around 20 per cent of our energy needs at peak times. And that's a lot of energy.

And we would love to share that with a country with such an enormous coastline and some pretty significant winds at certain times of year. So we are putting special emphasis this year on green technology.

How's the trade in South Asia?

In the South Asia region — India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal — India accounts for 85 per cent... I think growth rate in Bangladesh has been consistently... And Sri Lanka is developing some free ports just outside Colombo... So it's a competitive world for inward investment. It's a competitive world and India will need to compete for overseas investment just like everybody else.

BRIEFLY

Deloitte to stop select services in India

New Delhi: Deloitte Haskins & Sells and its network firms in India will no longer offer non-audit services to public interest entities that they audit in the country, the company said on Sunday. It said that this voluntary action is in the spirit of self-regulation and extends beyond non-audit services permissible under prevailing rules and regulations in India.

'Budget was disappointing; lacking vision'

New Delhi: The Union Budget was "disappointing" as it lacked a vision, though measures like relaxing the fiscal deficit target and simplifying income tax are positives, Ashima Goyal, part-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), said. She also said that it was a "surprise" not to have a mention of the word 'slowdown' in Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's nearly three-hour long speech.

Coronavirus: Impact on trade to be assessed

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry will hold a meeting on Tuesday to assess the impact of coronavirus outbreak and any disruptions posed by it to the country's trade or Make in India initiative. "On the impact of #CoronavirusOutbreak and any disruptions to #MakeInIndia or to Indian export/import @FinMinIndia is scheduled to hold a meeting on Tuesday 18 Feb. Stakeholders welcome. If unable to attend please email your inputs at fmo@nic.in." Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tweeted Sunday. **PTI**

'Online retailers seek rollback of proposed tax'

New Delhi: Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart are among online retailers demanding that India scale back a proposed tax on third-party sellers on their platforms, saying the burden of compliance will hurt the industry, as per documents seen by Reuters. **REUTERS**

'Discoms' outstanding dues to gencos up 50% in Dec'

Total outstanding dues owed by discoms to power gencos, rose nearly 50 per cent to ₹88,177 crore in December 2019 over the same month last year, according to PRAAPTI portal

₹59,015 CRORE:

Amount owed by distribution companies, or discoms, to power generation companies, or gencos, in December 2018

₹78,174 CRORE:

Total overdue amount not cleared by discoms in December 2019, even after 60-day grace period offered by gencos

₹44,464 CRORE:

Total overdue amount in December 2018

₹82,414 CRORE:

Total outstanding dues on discoms in November 2019

OVERDUES OF CENTRAL PUBLIC SECTOR GENCOS ON DISCOMS:

NTPC:	₹15,695.65 crore
NLC India:	₹5,010.69 crore
NHPC:	₹3,165.09 crore
THDC India:	₹2,136.30 crore
Damodar Valley Corporation:	₹822.09 crore

OVERDUES OF PRIVATE GENCOS ON DISCOMS:

Adani Power:	₹3,201.68 crore
Lalitpur Power Generation Company Ltd:	₹2,212.66 crore
GMR:	₹1,930.16 crore

OUTSTANDING DUES AND OVERDUES: Gencos give



₹73,175 CR:

Total overdue amount on power distribution companies in November 2019

₹6,739.47 CR:

Overdues of non-conventional energy producers like solar and wind in December 2019

25.45%:

Share of overdues of independent gencos with total overdue amount of ₹78,174 crore on discoms

60 days to power discoms for paying bills for supply of electricity. After that, outstanding dues become overdue and generators charge penal interest on that in most cases

PRAAPTI: Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators (PRAAPTI) portal was launched in May 2018
Source: PRAAPTI/PTI

Non-payment of AGR dues: DoT set to issue show-cause notices to telcos

KIRAN RATHEE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

THE DEPARTMENT of Telecommunications (DoT) is likely to go ahead and start issuing show-cause notices to telecom operators, starting Monday, asking why action should not be taken against them for non-payment of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues within the stipulated timeframe.

According to official sources, a financial penalty can be imposed on operators for not complying with its order to make payments by midnight of February 14, the day the Supreme Court expressed its displeasure over the companies not making any payment by January 23. It even pulled up the DoT for issuing orders to its field offices for not taking any coercive action against the companies for

Oil India to move TDSAT against DoT

New Delhi: Oil India is likely to move the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) this week against the telecom department seeking about Rs 48,500 crore in past dues on the surplus bandwidth capacity it had leased to third parties, the state-owned company's CMD Sushil Chandra Mishra said. **PTI**

not making the payment.

Contempt proceedings have been initiated on the matter against the DoT and the telecom operators, and the next date of

hearing on the matter is March 17.

Following a hard rap on February 14, all the field offices of DoT had issued notices to telecom operators to make immediate payments by midnight. However, no telecom operator has made the payment so far, though they have indicated that they would do so before March 17. Still, the offices are expected to send the compliance report to DoT headquarters on Monday and seek instructions for the next course of action.

The notices issued by the controller general of communication accounts of all telecom circles, clearly stated that in case of non-payment, action will be taken as per the licence agreement.

According to officials, a penalty can be imposed on operators for non-compliance and notices issued asking why their licences should not be cancelled. **FE**

Have not really breached FRBM in Budget: FM

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
HYDERABAD, FEBRUARY 16

A DAY after Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Shaktikanta Das sought to allay fears of the Budget proposal on fiscal slippage causing a spike in inflationary pressure, finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman reiterated on Sunday that the Budget 2020-21 has not violated the fiscal discipline.

Addressing a gathering of industry representatives here, she said, "We have not really breached the FRBM. We have not gone outlandish on it. We have kept fiscal discipline, which is a USP for both the Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi governments."

Speaking to reporters, alongside Sitharaman, after a meeting of the RBI board in New Delhi on Saturday, Das too had said the government had largely remained within the deficit road map set by

"We have not really breached the FRBM. We have not gone outlandish on it. We have kept fiscal discipline, which is a USP for both the Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi governments"

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN
FINANCE MINISTER

the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act.

Acknowledging that the FM hadn't really succumbed to the temptation to launch a fiscal stimulus to pump-prime the economy, former RBI governor D Subbarao wrote in *The Indian Express* on February 12, "It has long been known that the true fiscal deficit is higher than what the government's books show. To her credit, the finance minister took a step towards transparency by ad-

mitting to off-balance sheet borrowings of 0.8 per cent of GDP for both the current and next fiscal years — acknowledging that the fiscal deficit would actually be higher at 4.6 per cent and 4.3 per cent of GDP respectively. This is already excessive. Add to this the unrealistic projections of revenue growth and disinvestment proceeds for next year and we have a potentially unsustainable fiscal situation. Any stimulus on top of this would have been clearly unwarranted, and for many reasons".

Invoking an escape clause, the Budget FY21 proposed to inflate fiscal deficit by 50 basis points for this fiscal and the next to 3.8 per cent and 3.5 per cent of GDP, respectively, amid a sharp cut in the corporate tax rate and a shortfall in revenue mop-up following a broader economic slowdown.

On the Budget, the FM said several novel measures have been initiated to address the demand

side and allocations have been made to enhance consumption.

She said capital-stressed MSMEs were offered additional terms loans through their respective banks and given them additional working capital.

On the GST, she said from April 1, a "simplified regime" will begin also to ease technical glitches, if any (thanks to the new, simplified monthly returns). She asked the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs to reach out to people and clarify their doubts.

She also said the Centre is trying to reduce the dependence of the pharmaceutical industry on active pharmaceutical ingredient (APIs). "We were at one point of time dominant producers of API. Today, we don't any of them left. The government of course is spending a lot of time on how best we can encourage production of the API... So, some work is going on partly addressing the issue." **FE**

AHEAD OF US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S TWO-DAY VISIT STARTING FEBRUARY 24

Details yet to be drawn, no final word on limited Indo-US trade deal

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

PERSISTING DIFFERENCES on sticky issues — including Washington's demand for greater access to agriculture, dairy and ICT products, have cast a shadow over the prospect of a limited trade deal being signed during US President Donald Trump's two-day visit to the country, starting February 24.

Fresh speculations about disagreements have gathered pace,

as US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, who was widely expected to come before Trump to finalise the broad contours of the deal, hasn't landed here yet, with no clarity on his arrival.

Importantly, the US last week reportedly changed a key exemption to its trade remedy laws to make it easier to penalise several developing countries, including India and China, in the latest move to underscore its anxieties over New Delhi's trade policies.

While the quantum of incen-

US TRADE REPRESENTATIVE YET TO LAND

■ Sticky issues, including US demand for greater access to agriculture, dairy and ICT products, have cast a shadow over the prospect of a limited trade deal

■ Fresh speculations about disagreements have gathered pace, as US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer has not landed in India yet

tives involved in the deal is unclear, it was initially expected to cover products with a total bilateral trade of over \$10 billion. The

limited deal was supposed to be signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US in September last year but a lack of

consensus had then stalled it.

Both the countries haven't yet reached a consensus on the US demand that India scrap an up to 20 per cent duty on seven ICT products, including mobile phones worth over Rs 10,000 and smart watches. Nevertheless, India has strived to narrow the stark differences through hard negotiations over the months.

New Delhi has already conveyed that while an across-the-board cut of import duties on the seven items would cost it a mas-

sive \$3.2 billion a year and help only third parties (like China and Korea) that supply more, it is willing to lower duties on those ICT products where it would benefit the US. The US made up for only 2 per cent of the Indian imports of the seven products in FY18.

As part of the initial deal, India is learnt to have agreed to sweeten its offer on the price control regime for medical devices and apply trade margin on coronary stents and knee implants at the first point of sale (price to stockiest), in-

stead of imposing it on the landed prices, as was planned earlier.

Last month, Commerce and Industry minister Piyush Goyal had held a meeting with Lighthizer in Davos, where both are learnt to have discussed the deal.

For its part, India is pitching for an exemption from the extra duty imposed by the US on steel (25 per cent) and aluminium (10 per cent) and a complete restoration of duty-free export benefits for some Indian goods under the Generalised System of Preferences. **FE**

THE ECONOMICS OF MIGRATION

Delayed reaction

Immigration to America is down. Wages are up. Are the two related?

IN BOTH 2018 and 2019 nominal wages rose by more than 3%, the fastest growth since before the recession a decade ago. Americans at the bottom of the labour market are doing especially well. In the past year the wages of those without a high-school diploma have risen by nearly 10%. Intriguingly, this has come as America has turned considerably less friendly to immigrants, who are assumed by many to steal jobs from natives and lower the wages of less-educated folk. The two phenomena may be connected—but only for a while.

For the first time in half a century America's immigrant population appears to be in sustained decline, both in absolute terms and as a share of the total. Net migration to America (ie, the difference between people arriving and people leaving the country) fell to 595,000 in 2019, the lowest in over a decade. This is a profound shift in a country which has often prided itself on its openness to outsiders.

The number of highly qualified immigrants continues to rise. San Francisco airport remains just as crammed with Allbirds-and-gilet-wearing tech investors from all over the world. It appears instead that the overall decline in the foreign-born population is a result of falling numbers of low-skilled migrants. Those numbers slumped a decade ago because of the recession that began in 2007, changing demographics in Mexico and tougher border policing. More recently the number of low-skilled migrants appears to be in decline again. That is probably a consequence of policies implemented by President Donald Trump, as well as the off-putting effects of his rhetoric on foreigners.

Many factors lie behind America's growing wages. Labour demand is exceptionally high, with unemployment at 3.6%, giving some workers more bargaining power. Ambitious increases in state-level minimum wages in recent years have boosted the wages of the lowest earners. Nominal wages are rising not just in America but across rich countries—even though the foreign-born population in many of them continues to grow rapidly.

There are nonetheless scraps of evidence that some workers are benefiting from America's growing antipathy to immigrants. Gordon Hanson of Harvard University suggests that if the impact of reduced low-skill migration is showing up anywhere, it will be in three particular occupations: housekeepers, building-and-grounds maintenance workers, and drywall installers. These occupations rely heavily on immigrant labour and the services they provide cannot be traded internationally. Average wages in those occupations are rising considerably faster than wages in other low-paid jobs, according to calculations by The Economist.

Intriguing evidence also shows up geographically. According to research by William Frey of the Brookings Institution, a think-tank, five big metro areas saw absolute declines in their foreign-born populations in 2010-18. Wages in those areas are now rising by 5% a year, according to our calculations. Cleveland, which is in one such area, has pockets of se-



A demonstration against US President Donald Trump's immigration policies in Los Angeles. For the first time in half a century America's immigrant population appears to be in sustained decline. AP

vere poverty but seems to be doing better than before. Many of the city centre's astonishingly grand buildings are being converted into luxury lofts for millennials.

The apparent short-term boost to wages may encourage politicians to go further. Inspired by the president, some Republican senators are pushing to cut immigration by half in order, they say, to boost workers' wages. But several recently published academic papers, looking at other occasions when America has clamped down on immigration, suggest that these episodes ultimately offer little benefit to native workers—and may even harm them.

Restrictions on Chinese labourers were

some of America's earliest anti-immigration measures. Mary Coolidge, who wrote one of the world's first studies of the effect of immigration on pay, could see no benefit to the expulsion. The perceived decline in wages in California which had motivated the reform, she argued in 1909, was "due to a number of causes with which Chinese competition had nothing to do." Expulsion did little to raise earnings. A few decades later America enacted its first big immigration reform, shutting out immigrants from Europe for the first time. A paper released in December, by Ran Abramitzky of Stanford University and colleagues, finds that after the border closure of the 1920s the occupation based earnings of

native-born workers actually declined.

Giovanni Peri of the University of California, Davis, and his colleagues find that during the Depression state and local governments sent up to 500,000 residents of Mexican descent to Mexico, a move intended to boost American wages. Cities subject to a larger number of repatriations saw little change or even declines in native employment and wages. Another paper, by Michael Clemens of the Centre for Global Development and two colleagues, looks at the expulsion of 500,000 Mexican seasonal workers in the 1960s, concluding that the exclusion "did not increase the employment or wages of native workers".

The lesson from all these papers is that, over time, the economy adjusts to a fall in the number of immigrants. In the short term, native workers may well see a wage boost as labour supply falls. But businesses then reorient production towards less labour-intensive products; natives take jobs previously occupied by foreign-born folk, which may be worse paid; and bosses invest in labour-saving machinery, which can reduce the pay of remaining workers.

Even the apparent short-term benefits to wages are a poor economic argument for tough immigration restrictions. Migrants have economic effects far beyond the labour market. They spur innovation and entrepre-

neurship and they help create trade links between America and their home countries. Both low- and high-skilled migration are linked with higher productivity.

As America ages, it will need a lot more people willing to work in health care. Study after study finds a positive association between immigration and long-run economic growth—and therefore, ultimately, the living standards of all Americans. The Trump administration's immigration restrictionism may achieve a temporary boost in wages of the low-paid now, but at a cost to the country's future prosperity.

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OBITUARY: LI WENLIANG

The man who knew

Li Wenliang died on February 7th. The doctor who was one of the first to warn of a new coronavirus was 33

BUSY THOUGH he was as an ophthalmologist at Wuhan Central hospital, rushed off his feet, Li Wenliang never missed a chance to chat about his favourite things on Weibo. Food, in particular. Japanese food with lashings of wasabi, plates of steaming beef noodles, the Haidilao hotpot restaurants that had kept him going when he spent three years in Xiamen just after his medical training—and fried chicken. The drumsticks at the railway station were the best, and he never missed a chance to grab some when he was there; but then the chicken at Dicos fast-food was so delicious that he just had to compliment the chef. A big basket of that, washed down with a Coke, was the peak of his existence.

As a result he got chubby, and as a result of that he tried to do sport, but apart from a bit of badminton early on he mostly exercised by live-streaming snooker, commenting live on Weibo and energetically querying the ref's decisions. So, though he had once been slim and was still fairly good-looking, he had strayed far away from the willowy baby-faced look of Xiao Zhan, the boy-band actor whose music he loved. But he was a husband now and a father, secure in a stable profession, a man of weight. That had been his aim since his schooldays, when he decided to leave industrial Liaoning in the north-east, where his parents were unemployed, and go to college in the south. At Wuhan Central the pay was bad and the hours punishing, but as long as his patients were satisfied, he was happy. Egg pancakes (that wonderful dopamine hit on his tongue!) got him through the grim night shifts.

From late January, he could not breathe on his own and was hooked up to continuous-flow oxygen. But online he could go on making defiant and upbeat remarks. There had to be more transparency. The truth was important. A healthy society should never have just one voice

Since he shared every passing observation online, it was not surprising that on December 30th he put up a post about an odd cluster of pneumonia cases at the hospital. They were unexplained, but the patients were in quarantine, and they had all worked in the same place, the pungent litter-strewn warren of stalls that made up the local seafood market. Immediately this looked like person-to-person transmission to him, even if it might have come initially from bats, or some other delicacy. Immediately, too, it raised the spectre of the SARS virus of 2002-03 which had killed more than 700 people. He therefore decided to warn his private WeChat group, all fellow alumni from Wuhan University, to take precautions. He headed the post: "Seven cases of SARS in the Huanan Wholesale Seafood Market". That was his mistake.

The trouble was that he did not know

whether it was actually SARS. He had posted it too fast. In an hour he corrected it, explaining that although it was a coronavirus, like SARS, it had not been identified yet. But to his horror he was too late: his first post had already gone viral, with his name and occupation undeleted, so that in the middle of the night he was called in for a dressing down at the hospital, and January 3rd he was summoned to the police station. There he was accused of spreading rumours and subverting the social order. He then had to give written answers to two questions: in future, could he stop his illegal activities? "I can," he wrote, and put his thumbprint, in red ink, on his answer. Did he understand that if he went on, he would be punished under the law? "I understand," he wrote, and supplied another thumbprint.

His birthday resolution, posted on Weibo, had been to be a simple person, refusing to let the world's complications bother him. So much for that. At least he had not been detained, which would have consumed his family with worry. At least his licence to practise had not been revoked. In fact, he had not even been fined. Yet why should he have been? He had been right to raise the alarm. The authorities were still denying that there was human-to-human transmission, and that was just wrong. He had spoken out before, when two trains had crashed in Wenzhou in 2011 with 40 deaths, demanding on Weibo the reinstatement of a journalist who had been sacked for asking about lack of safety on the line. The truth mattered. Public safety mattered. Public power should



On February 1, a test showed positive for the coronavirus. Well, that's it then, confirmed, he wrote on Weibo from his bed. Reuters

not be used for excessive interference. In this turmoil, though silent as promised, he went back to work, and then he was careless again.

On January 8th an 82-year-old patient presented with acute angle-closure glaucoma and, because she had no fever, he treated her without a mask. She too turned out to run a stall in the market, and she had other odd symptoms, including loss of appetite and pulmonary lesions suggesting viral pneumonia. It was the new virus, and by January 10th he had begun to cough. The next day he put an N95 mask on. Not wanting to infect the family, he sent them to his in-laws 200 miles away, and checked into a hotel. He was soon back in the hospital, this time in an isolation ward. On February 1st a nucleic-acid test showed positive for the new coronavirus. Well, that's it then, confirmed,

he wrote on Weibo from his bed.

He was an optimistic sort. Though the household finances were pretty stretched, he felt sure he would win the big prize in the online lucky grab-bag run by Luo Yonghao, the founder of the Smartisan tech company (whose products he much coveted), and got that same lucky feeling when he tried to win a pair of AirPods Pro, though he ended up with neither. When it came to this new virus, though it might take him half a month to regain full lung function, he would soon be back on the front line fighting. After all, he was the man who in 2012—when the world had been supposed to end—had announced on Weibo that he was going to save it. ("Though if the sun rises as usual...don't thank me. I'm just doing my duty.")

His fame had spread far and wide, too.

Reporters, even from the *New York Times*, wanted interviews. These had to be done by text and via WeChat, since from late January he could not breathe on his own and was hooked up to continuous-flow oxygen. It didn't help as much as he expected—his blood-oxygen saturation levels got no better. But online he could go on making defiant and upbeat remarks. There had to be more transparency. The truth was important. A healthy society should never have just one voice. And to the young woman reporter who wanted a selfie of him (as if he was Xiao Zhan, ever perfectly groomed, cute and slim), he sent an apology along with the photo of his masked, tubed and haunted face: sorry, he hadn't washed his hair for a while.

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17 TALK ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD

WEEK AHEAD



Soul Notes

SING ALONG with singer Arijit Singh (pictured) as he performs his most iconic songs on stage. Watch him live at Sector 10 grounds in Dwarka on February 22 at 7 pm. Tickets priced at Rs 2,500 are available on *Insider.in*



Tight Rope

THE EXHIBITION 'The Idea of the Acrobat' delves into the life of an acrobat through the works of renowned artists such as Bharti Kher and Dayanita Singh. Get a peek into their sessions entailing gymnastics and juggling acts at Bikaner House on Pandara Road.



Seasonal Flavour

DASTKAR HAS brought 120 stalls under one roof to celebrate the arrival of spring with Basant Bazaar, by displaying weaves of Chanderi and ikat, hand-painted garments full of folk paintings and folk art like Pichvai and Pattachitra. On till February 24 at Nature Bazaar, Andheria Modh.

Regional Touch

GANGA PUTRA BHISHMA, based on the *Mahabharata*, finds its roots in Jatra, a popular folk-theatre form of Bengali speaking regions. Part of Bharat Rang Mahotsav, the play will be staged at Kamani Auditorium, on February 19, 7 pm. Tickets on Bookmyshow.



Avni Doshi at the Zee Jaipur Literature Festival
Rohit Jain Paras

This is Where We Say Goodbye

In her debut novel, titled *Girl in White Cotton*, Avni Doshi talks about exploring memory and the bitter aftertaste of messy relationships

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI

IN AN essay published in a fashion magazine in May 2017, Avni Doshi wrote of her grandmother, who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, "We are losing a bit of her every day. I tell my shrink that my heart is breaking but the truth is I feel it most in my stomach, in the watery unease of my gut." Her Nani had held the family together with her "kindness and her meals" and the imminent loss of her memory also signalled to Doshi a watering down of the family's shared past.

If it was love that she explored in that essay on her maternal grandmother, when her debut novel *Girl in White Cotton* (HarperCollins) arrived in November 2019, a book that had been in the making for seven years, Dubai-based Doshi would train her lens again on memory and its corrosion. Only this time, it would be a discomfiting fictional account of what it means for those caught in its bitter throes, especially if the relationship has been one of distrust and disenchantment. In one of last year's most anticipated debuts, Doshi explored the fraught relationship between Tara and Antara, mother and daughter, that comes to a head when Tara begins to lose her memory, forcing Antara to turn caregiver for her. The inversion of roles initiates a piecing together of the years of neglect that Antara suffered through because of Tara's radical life choices and her apathy towards her daughter. It's a hard, unflinching look at familial bonds and how they damn us and un-

I always knew I wouldn't work as a curator for very long — I wasn't very good, not academic enough, too fanciful. When I started writing fiction, it immediately felt better to me, and since I loved reading, literature felt familiar

AVNI DOSHI, AUTHOR

ravel us. Doshi sets the tone with her opening sentence: "I would be lying if I said my mother's misery has never given me pleasure" and carries it through to its rather unconventional ending.

It was the narrative voice that drove the story, says Doshi. The centrality of memory in the novel — not just its medical frailty but also what we choose to remember and what we forget — was more intuitive. "I just followed the story the narrator was telling, and memory turned out to be one of the central ideas. When I could hear the narrator's voice in my head, I knew she was going to tell her story. I liked the way she sounded, that voice guided me," says the writer, who grew up in New Jersey's Fort Lee, and studied art history, with a focus on contemporary Indian art.

The company of women, not just her mother, but also her grandmother and other women in the family would calibrate her to the cadences of the feminine experience. Vacations meant trips to India, often to Pune,

where her mother's family lived. In her novel, where all other characters fade to the periphery, leaving Tara and Antara centerstage to grapple with their demons, the invisible constructs of patriarchy are in place and Doshi examines their impact on the lives of her protagonists with incisive sharpness. "It seemed natural to me to write about the inner lives of women — those are the stories I want to tell, those are the stories I know," she says.

It would be art, though, that would bring her to India in her mid-twenties, where she lived for seven years, working as a curator with galleries such as Latitude 28 in Delhi and Art Musings in Mumbai. This was in 2012 and Doshi would embark upon her novel soon afterwards. "I always knew I wouldn't work as a curator for very long — I wasn't very good, not academic enough, too fanciful. When I started writing fiction, it immediately felt better to me, and since I loved reading, literature felt familiar. It was only after I won the Tibor Jones Prize for the first draft of this book in 2013, was introduced to an agent and the literary world, that I started to actually doubt myself. I was sure I didn't know how to write, that this was all a mistake," she says.

Now that the book is out of the way, Doshi says she's taking her time to begin work on her next, spending time with her infant son, letting ideas simmer till the moment is ripe. "I guess there is no way to cope with the uncertainty of writing, and this is true for even the most seasoned writer; every book is different, has to be written in a way, and must be discovered," she says.



FUTURE DESIGNS

British luxury fashion house Alexander McQueen has announced a new initiative where the brand will donate its surplus and unused fabrics to fashion colleges in the UK. The move aims to benefit fashion students to help ease their finances.

ON THE LOOSE

Green Shoots

Veganism, in a dog eat dog world



LEHER KALA

IN HIS poignant speech at the Oscars, Joaquin Phoenix was at his most heart-felt when he described consequences of the collective human assumption, that we're at the centre of the universe. "We go into the natural world and we plunder it. We feel entitled to artificially inseminate a cow and steal her baby even though her cries of anguish are unmistakable," said Phoenix. Like many woke people in and out of Hollywood, Virat Kohli and Roger Federer for instance, Phoenix is a practising vegan.

It's true enough that human beings have an egocentric worldview, which is precisely why, over millennia, we successfully transitioned from nomadic wanderers to conquerors of outer space. Now, very much like the circumference of the earth, we've come full circle to the point that to control further environmental degradation, even our dietary choices need to be monitored. Meanwhile, the resolutely self-aware Phoenix and his small but growing tribe are well ahead of the curve, having taken a serious look at the world and drawn some realistic conclusions on the future of the planet. Is it that these special few care more about carbon emissions and animal welfare than us stellar, law abiding citizens who continue being meat eating offenders? It is a truth (silently unacknowledged) that there is an unpleasant chasm between the born again herbivores and the omnivores, who have yet to see the light.

Even the rabidly unapologetic non-vegetarian Anthony Bourdain confessed to having nightmares about a lobster donning a chef's hat and exacting revenge, after he saw the beleaguered specimen trying to get away from a pot of boiling water. Though Bourdain built a career eating a variety of exotic creatures with relish on national TV, some part of him was aware that just maybe, his

lifestyle was painfully callous. Because, everyone likes to think of themselves as fundamentally good. We think we care about the issues plaguing mankind except, it's in an off-hand kind of way with an acceptable lack of integrity. Like the image floating around WhatsApp of a woman sitting at a dining table, weeping at a Koala bear suffering in the Australian wildfires. On her plate, was an uneaten beef steak. Or, it's much easier to support the Shaheen Bagh protests by changing a display picture on Facebook (while secretly thanking your stars that it's not your kid who's spending two hours in a school bus on Mathura Road).

All these contradictions come to the fore more forcefully when we are faced with people who find the wherewithal to make difficult changes, and support others while inconveniencing themselves. Turning vegan though, is a different level of challenge for self-improvement. For example, if you care about labour practices and exploitation in the fashion industry, it's not so difficult to change purchasing habits. One may move to a different, sustainable brand, or stop shopping completely. Turning vegan means giving

up milk in coffee and cheese with wine, a situation guaranteed to make most of us very whiny. Needless to say this makes vegans a bit annoying, more than teetotalers and fanatical exercisers who subsist on boiled veggies and packaged protein. They're doing it for selfish reasons, their health and hopefully, a great figure.

Vegans may, in all fairness, make the preposterous claim, they're thinking of the greater good, and what can be more annoying than that. For people who can't hack an all-or-nothing diet but who aim to make changes, there is a new term: reducetarianism. A reducetarian commits to eating less red meat and dairy, working towards the goal of veganism but without committing to be a plant muncher for the rest of his life. It's a humble beginning.

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Actor Joaquin Phoenix at the Oscars ceremony

'Maybe, God needed a guitarist in heaven'

Friends remember Parikrama's lead guitarist Sonam Sherpa, who passed away on Saturday

ANDREW AMSAN

PARIKRAMA'S LEAD guitarist Sonam Sherpa, who passed away on Saturday due to a cardiac arrest, had held the mantle since the band's inception in 1991 and toured almost every corner of the earth. He developed his distinct tone and style of play, earning him a cult status.

The Kalimpong musician is being remembered not only for his riffs or solos but also for his gentle demeanour. For every person associated with him, it's his good nature that first comes to mind, music later. "He was too young to die and one of the nicest people I have ever met. Maybe, he was called by God to play a gig in heaven. I met him sometime back and he told me if I ever needed a guitarist, I could call him. I was always touched by his humility. Such a great guitarist but he never showed off and that's something we all need to learn," says Euphoria's frontman Palash Sen, who dedicated his latest concert in Bengaluru to Sherpa.

Bandmate and fellow guitarist Saurabh Chaudhary is yet to come to terms with the loss of a friend of over two decades. "I was really young when I joined the band in 2000 and he helped me a lot to develop my own style. He was always calm and composed. For 20 years, I played with him and he was part of my family. I am not sure how I will cope with this," Chaudhary says. Sherpa was the founding member of Parikrama, along with Subir Malik (keyboards), Nitin Malik (vocals), Chintan Kalra (bass), Prashant Bahadur (guitars) and Rahul Malhotra. Over the years, the band has become one of the most recognised rock outfits in the country.

Sherpa's style, heavily influenced by American rock and a fair bit by the blues, was something every budding rock guitarist tried to emulate. His music school, which started in 2003 in Delhi, has produced countless musicians, not just guitar players. "I know a lot of young musicians who have been influenced by Parikrama's brand of rock 'n' roll. He was a very good



guitar player. He stitched together the band's music and stage shows with his playing style and flair for showmanship. I will always remember his humility and his laughter. He was a good man," says Rudy Wallang, the lead guitarist of India's leading blues band, Soulmate.

Sherpa never quit learning. Srijan Mahajan, Parikrama's drummer, says he kept updating himself with new styles. "While travelling, he would watch instructional videos and practise playing on the neck. He always wanted to learn, and that inspired and pushed me," recalls Srijan.

Sherpa's success boosted the music scene back home in Kalimpong. Making a career in music was unheard of in the region during the '90s but now, scores of talented musicians have sprung up. "We used to hear a lot about him. He was probably the first musician to leave this region and earn and establish himself. He has definitely inspired several youngsters from Kalimpong to pursue music," says Pranai Gurung, lead guitarist for Bipul Chettri and The Travelling Band.

A prayer service was held on Sunday in his hometown where his mortal remains were buried. He will, however, continue to live in the music he created. "It's a lesson for everyone. He was just 48. Life is uncertain and we should all live it like Sonam. Make music, enjoy music and most importantly remain humble," adds Sen.

Keeping it Simple

Day two and three of the Lakme Fashion Week threw no surprises, with big Bollywood names being conspicuous by their absence



Performers at the Chola show; (right) Sania Mirza walks for the Telangana State Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society

energetic show put up by Chola, the label run by Sohaya Misra, in collaboration with Reebok. Blended with an adrenaline-induced performance by Omaggio, a dance performance company, which had aerial acrobatics and acts that would not look out of

place at a Cirque De Soleil act. Adding to it were live drummers and lighting, which if nothing else would make your heart race because of the impact value. As for the clothes, there were boxy jumpsuits, layered dresses, biker jackets, drop crotch pants and unisex



voluminous capes, which could all fit into the umbrella term of anti-fit and athleisure. Aditya Roy Kapur was the showstopper in an all-black outfit — pairing drop-crotch pants with a shirt. The neon-soled shoes did break the monotony, predictably so.



BIRTHDAY SPLASH

Team-mates smear cake on Mayank Agarwal on his 29th birthday in Hamilton on Sunday. BCCI

Taking the road less travelled

Worried by lack of runs and chinks in his technique, Agarwal devised his own method to correct the flaws



EXPRESS IN NEW ZEALAND

SANDIPIG
HAMILTON, FEBRUARY 16

AT DIFFERENT stages of his career, Mayank Agarwal has sought unconventional methods to fine-tune his game. Like taking meditation classes, then branching out to the Vipassana school of meditation, practising yoga, watching cartoons, long-distance running, among others. Sometimes, his net sessions too are unique. Like the other day, he made throw-down specialist Raghavendra roll the ball along the ground, which he firmly drove, mostly straight, from the crease.

Like in the past, the latest training method seemed to have worked for the opener as he scored a confidence-building 99-ball 81 (retired out) in the second innings of the tour game. It's clearly the best Agarwal has batted on this tour — scoring nearly three times as many runs as he had in the limited-overs series, wherein his scores read 32, 1, 3. His numbers against New Zealand A too weren't great — 0, 0, 24, 37, 29, 32 and 8. No matter how magnificently his Test career might have panned out, this stretch of poor returns would have alarmed him and the team management, more so as he's India's most experienced opening batsman in the series, and both his prospective partners are 20-year-olds, one yet to make his debut and the other returning from a lay-off. Both have a combined experience of two Tests. So India could ill-afford an out-of-form Agarwal.

Back to the pre-game net session, where he spent a lot of time working on his batting. After every stroke he hit off the throw-down, Agarwal would mark the exact point of his fol-

low-through to understand how fluently his feet were moving and how far forward they were going. The stance was also different, he would crouch a fraction more than usual, open up the stance a bit and make a concerted effort to move his back-foot across and stretch as far forward as he possibly could.

He was trying to iron out a glitch that had recently crept into his game, specifically in limited-over games. If one rewinds to some of his dismissals in the ODIs, one could see him getting into ugly tangles, bowlers opening him up and getting him squared up, particularly the ball that would hold its line after angling in. He was lunging and shoving at the ball rather than defending it beside his body. Such modes of dismissals can make one look like a novice and drain the morale.

It's the dodgy footwork that troubled Agarwal in the first innings of the warm-up game too, when he would stab at back-of-length balls from the crease, his feet crease-tied. He was comfortable defending the short balls on the back-foot, but struggled with the in-between lengths outside the off-stump, where he would be dilemma-ridden whether to play on the front-foot or back. The unusual bounce the surface spat out in the first innings too might have contributed to his indiscretion.

The back-foot would remain static, or drag towards the leg-stump while his front-foot would make a hesitant prod. Not the full front-foot stride. Once the alignment of his feet goes awry, his whole game disintegrates. He's not one of those all-hands players, who make up for static feet with the suppleness of the hands, rather a sum of different parts. As a result, for him to be at his best, he needs a perfect alignment of each of those parts. He subsequently loses the shape at the crease, turns twitchy and fidgety, and as an off-shoot loses control of his shots.

The simple drill, thus, was to get his feet moving fluidly and precisely, as it used to be during his spectacular home season. Terrific though his returns might have been in this period, a few middling outings are all it requires to induce self-doubts. And there was a time in his career when Agarwal was afflicted by appre-



Mayank Agarwal scored a 99-ball 81.

hensions. So he wanted to cleanse his mind of those failings as fast as possible before a Test series. "It's been a little different playing here but I want to leave all that behind. I was just being a little too closed. That's just one part of it. I have sat with Vikram Rathour sir and worked on it. After I got out in the first innings, I went back to the nets, did a lot of drills," he revealed.

The he paused and added a philosophical line, like the platitudinal ones one finds in self-help or spiritual books: "Whatever has happened has happened. There's no point thinking of the past," he said. This is a line he repeats when he's not among the runs, and it's where the benefits of yoga and meditation have kicked in. He's no longer over-analytical or as hard on himself as he once used to be. But it's still difficult to cut out the immediate past from the subconscious, no matter how smartly one has identified the flaws and worked towards correcting them.

But nothing soothes a batsman like runs and how he gets them. Here he strode out authoritatively, the back-foot moving across smoothly

and not getting dragged on. Subsequently, he got into better positions to play the balls — so he was defending stoutly, driving fluently, the hands coming along nicely and the feet-movement orchestrated. Late on the second day, he demonstrated his fondness for driving with a flurry of shots all around the ground.

His cover drives could be more eye-catching, but it's the more minimalistic on-drive, bereft of one-for-the-camera flourishes and an exaggeratedly high front elbow, that helps to gauge his touch. "You know that you have to be doing a lot of things correct to hit an on-drive. When I got a couple of those, it gave me the assurance that was required."

One of those was off Daryll Mitchell, who was seaming the ball late into the batsman. Two such balls had devoured Prithvi Shaw and Shubman Gill, the former clumsy with his footwork and culpable of swiping across the line while the latter was relatively new to the crease. But Agarwal played it close to the body and assessing the degree of swing let his wrists guide the ball just a touch wide of the umpire.

Buoyed, he played a flurry of breathless strokes, including a short-arm semi-Nataraja pull. It was short-of-length rather than a short ball, angled into his body, but he lifted his front leg and just glided it past fine-leg. To the spinners too, he didn't step out to meet them but would play them from the crease, again pressing forward fully. Whenever they erred on the shorter side, he would hang back and slap them fine to third man.

Apart from a couple of times, noticeably so when he tried to steer a climbing back-of-length ball through gully, he was in utter control of his shots. The best he had been in the series, a far cry from the travails of the white-ball leg of the tour and more in tune with some of his Test knocks last year. It couldn't have arrived at a better time, when his patchy form would have proved a messy riddle. And how an unconventional little drill has paid off for Agarwal.

BRIEF SCORES: India 263 (H. Vihari 101, C. Pujara 93, S. Kuggeleijn 3-40, I. Sodhi 3-72) and 252/4 (M. Agarwal 81, R. Pant 70, P. Shaw 39, D. Mitchell 3-33) drew with **New Zealand XI** (M. Shami 3-17, Bumrah 2-18).

MAHMUDULLAH DROPPED FOR ZIM TEST

Bangladesh have dropped Mahmudullah while senior batsman Mushfiqur Rahim, who opted out of the tour of Pakistan this month, returned to the side for the one-off Test against Zimbabwe beginning on Saturday.

Waiting in the wings: Pant keeps his chin up while being Saha's understudy

SANDIPIG
HAMILTON, FEBRUARY 16

HALF AN hour before the start of the third day of the practice game, India's lower-order batsmen were having a merry-go-round slog-sweep session on a practice wicket. Jaspit Bumrah, with an un-hyperextended elbow action, would toss benign off-breaks, which Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Shami would look to heave out of the ground. More often than not, their strokes were miscued. Watching all this from the dressing room, Rishabh Pant ran up to them and literally snatched the bat, before calling out Bumrah for a challenge; "Tera har ball mein main chhakka maroonga!" Bumrah, in splits, retorted: "Kya mein tez dalooga?" "Haa, haa, bilkul," Pant snapped back with his usual gusto.

The pacer, obviously didn't, but Pant kept his word, smearing four of his five balls over the ropes. Two of them straight down the ground, and two over mid-wicket, his favourite six-hitting arc. The last disappeared into a leafy park where the trees swayed like a bunch of revellers on Saturday night, that hugs the stadium. Bumrah gingerly walked off. Pant couldn't resist a jab: "Fas gaya tum?" And they retreated merrily into the dressing room, as the day's proceedings began.

It's the cheeriness of Pant that stood out, for there are several reasons he could have been melancholic. A: He hasn't played red-ball cricket for a while, the last Test he played was at Sabina Park six months ago. Despite his superior batting aggregate to Wriddhiman Saha, he had to sit out of the entire home season. It's less likely that he would add another Test cap on this tour. B) Despite some useful knocks in the ODIs, he was mocked, ridiculed and heckled by the crowd and now KL Rahul has replaced him. The circumstances have been unfortunate and criticism harsh.

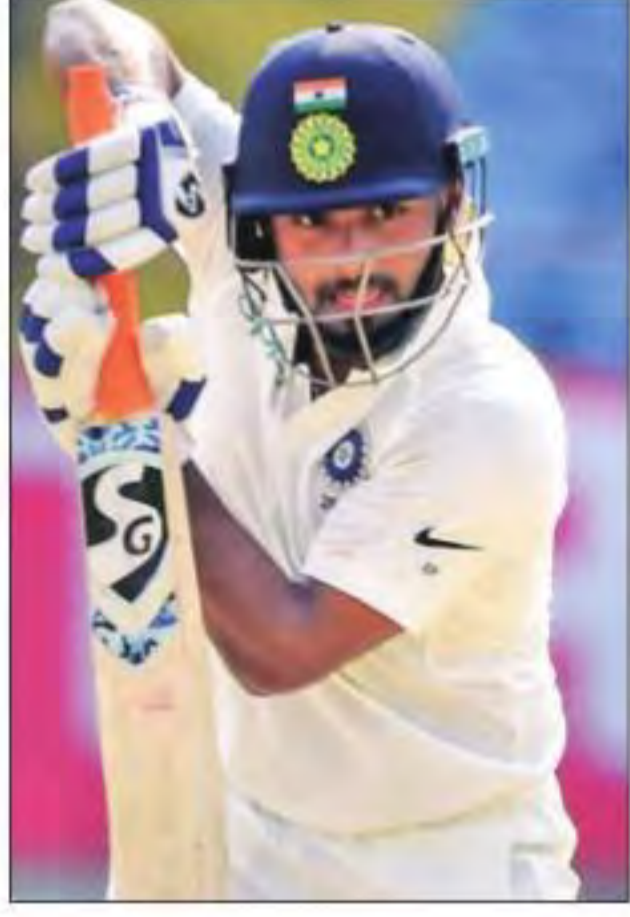
There are strong reasons for young impressive cricketers to harbour self-doubts and negativity. But not Pant, a self-admittedly non-plussed cricketer who shuts out the outer-world chatter. "I remember Rahul Dravid would tell me, 'stay the same way. Even if you do well or if you do badly, there is no need to change. Stay the same'. I have tried to follow that. Ravi bhai (Shastri) has always backed me and given me great confidence," he had once told this paper.

So, one could find Pant always up to something funny or clownish. On the first day, he was wrestling with Shami and scissor-locked him. On the third day, he was pasting the sugar-icing from the birthday cake all over Mayank Agarwal's face. His batting is an extension of his cheerful, merry ways off the field. Some batsmen maintain different personas on the field and off it.

But not Pant, he is what one sees. Always cheeky, always bantering (Tim Paine would vouch, and he departed Australia as the most-liked Indian cricketer of the tour) and always lightening up the mood. The personality has always been appreciated by team-mates, who have been often vocal in their praise about him being a team man. That he enjoys others' success, though his cheeriness had often been misconstrued as frivolous and silly.

But at the same time, it's vital that he keeps optimising the opportunities that beckon him. A back-up keeper in form is a source of assurance for the team, especially as Saha is returning from a lengthy injury lay-off. Pant squandered away an opportunity in the first innings, but presented a better account of himself in the second, with his 70 off 65 balls, a typical Pant innings replete with slashed-fours square on the off-side and murderous sixes off spinners.

Ish Sodhi was buried deep into the stands. Two hefty slog sweeps, the second more difficult because it had to be dragged from outside the off-stump. Both times, Pant was in



Pant scored 70 in the warm-up game.

One could find Rishabh Pant always up to something funny or clownish. On the first day, he was wrestling with Shami and scissor-locked him. On the third day, he was pasting the sugar-icing from the birthday cake all over Mayank Agarwal's face. His batting is an extension of his cheerful, merry ways off the field. Some batsmen maintain different personas on the field and off it.

supreme control of his shots. It was all bottom hand and muscle, characteristic of Pant.

Impressive defensive game

As impressive was his defensive game, especially on the back-foot, where he sometimes has a tendency to play away from the body. He would also look to dab the ball through third man without the back-foot moving across, which is self-destructive on pitches that swing. But here he seemed to have made a conscious effort to play the ball as close to the body as possible, meet it with a straight bat than an angled one. Moreover, he resisted the temptation to swipe across his stumps. In short, it was a mature knock, where he was aggressive, but not hyper-aggressive, where he showed his much-raved about match-changing abilities.

But the reason he finds himself out of the team is neither because of his batting nor 'keeping deficiencies. Only that Saha is a better 'keeper, arguably the finest around. Pant understands this and one could see him keenly observing Saha on the field, studying his movements and routines. It's perhaps the only time one can catch him sitting quietly in the dressing room.

His 'keeping definitely has improved too — he's more mobile and flexible than what he used to be. Their relationship is more fraternal than that of a mentor-understudy. "We always observe each other's wicketkeeping. We work hard in our practice sessions and have a good understanding and co-ordination among ourselves. We always try to point out each other's mistakes. It's been going well so far," Saha had remarked. Until Saha retires or his abilities diminish, Pant's red-ball opportunities will be limited, despite his superior batting skills. But creditably, he's not nursing any bitterness and is ready to bide his time, all the while hitting sixes during practice, lightening up the mood in the dressing room and improving his glove-work.

BCCI APEX COUNCIL MEETING

India to play D-N Test in Australia; Ahmedabad to host pink-ball Test vs England

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
FEBRUARY 16

A DAY-NIGHT Test in Australia during India's tour Down Under next winter (southern summer), a pink-ball home Test against England early next year, contracts for first-class cricketers from the next season onwards and confirmation of the All-Star game to inaugurate the renovated Sardar Patel Stadium in Motera, were some of the decisions taken at the BCCI Apex Council meeting in New Delhi on Sunday.

BCCI president Sourav Ganguly confirmed to the reporters in Delhi that India will play Day-Night Tests against Australia and England. "Yes, India will play a Day-Night Test in Australia. Also, the second Test between India and England at Motera will be a day-night affair," an Apex Council member told *The Indian Express*. India will play a four-Test series in Australia in December-January, while England will come here for a five-Test series in January-February 2021. A home day-night Test is going to be an annual fixture.

The decision was taken after India's first-ever day-night Test, against Bangladesh, at Eden Gardens in November last year became a super hit. Ganguly has always maintained that this is the way forward, given the dwindling stadium attendances in long-form cricket.

During India's last tour of Australia, in 2018-19, the BCCI, however, had refused to play a day-night Test, but Ganguly, after assuming the BCCI top office, had a meeting with captain Virat Kohli, which paved the way for India playing day-night Tests.

"I don't know what's the reason they didn't want to play (Adelaide day-night Test). I met Virat, met him for an hour and the first question was that we need to have day-night Test cricket. The answer in three seconds was, 'yes let's go ahead and do it'. So I really don't know what's happened in the past," Ganguly had said. Kohli, too, had spoken about his team's readiness to play day-night Tests in Australia. "We are ready and up for the challenge — whether it's Gabba or Perth... it doesn't matter to us. It's become an exciting feature of any Test series and we are open to playing day-night Tests."

The proposal to play day-night Tests in Australia was formally put forward by Cricket

Australia chairman Earl Eddings, when he and his delegation met the BCCI top brass last month. The Indian board agreed to play a day-night Test, although it is yet to be confirmed whether Adelaide will host the match or Brisbane.

No Pak player for All-Star game

As reported by this paper, an exhibition All-Star game between Asia XI and World XI game will be played in March to inaugurate the new Sardar Patel stadium, built at a cost of Rs 700 crore after razing down the old structure at Motera, Ahmedabad. But no Pakistan player will be part of it, this paper has learnt. Given the cross-border tension and a freeze in India-Pakistan bilateral cricket ties, Pakistani players will be kept out of the event.

Contract for first-class cricketers

The Apex Council decided to hand out contracts to first-class cricketers from the next season onwards. This was high on the BCCI agenda since the elected body took charge in last October. It is learnt that first-class cricketers will be brought under contract system, like England and Australia, through respective state associations. At present, first-class cricketers are paid

Rs 35,000 per day for a multi-day fixture. The Apex Council also decided to release funds to the state associations.

Office-bearers to decide ethics officer's extension

Meanwhile, the Apex Council empowered the BCCI office-bearers to take a call on the cricket board's ombudsman-cum-ethics officer Justice (Retd) DK Jain's extension. Justice Jain was appointed in February last year on a one-year term. *PTI* has reported quoting Justice Jain that the conflict of interest complaint against Kapil Dev been rendered "infructuous".

Siva in contention

Former India leg-spinner Laxman Sivaramakrishnan is in contention to become a national selector, an insider informed. "He is one of the applicants. Candidates are yet to be shortlisted, but the BCCI will complete the process of appointing the new selectors this month," he said. The Apex Council also decided that the BCCI will make an ad-hoc payment of Rs 2 crore to the Indian Cricketers' Association.



Ever since Sourav Ganguly took charge of the BCCI, he has supported the move for India to play more day-night Test cricket. File

In Olympic year, Hima makes a shift

400 metre star, who has been unable to train regularly, will focus on 200m in the run-up to the Games

NIHAL KOSHIE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

WORLD JUNIOR 400m champion and Asian Games silver medallist Hima Das will focus on the 200m this season, which drastically reduces her chances of qualifying for an individual event for the Tokyo Olympics. Hima will switch back to the 400m only next year as her training regimen for the speed and endurance race was affected because of a re-occurring fever, costing her three weeks of training over December and January.

On top of that, a back injury, which put paid to her plans of qualifying for the World Championships last year, has set her back. Hima's personal best in the 200m is 23.10 seconds, clocked in mid-2018 leaving her with a mountain to climb to meet the Entry Standards for the Tokyo Games, set at 22.80 seconds.

The decision to shift Hima to the 200 metres was taken to ease pressure on her to qualify for her favourite event when she is under-cooked. Hima was subject to intense scrutiny the whole of last year as she struggled with a back injury.

From the high of setting a national record and winning the 400m silver at the 2018 Asian Games, she endured a torrid year and missed the World Championships.

"It does not make sense to focus on the 400m this season because she does not have the basic conditioning level she needs. And in the 400m, you need a decent amount of endurance and considering that now there are only four-and-a-half months till the end of the qualifying period for the Olympics, we didn't want to make similar mistakes like last season and didn't want to force anything. If we put her into 400m competitions again, there would be a lot of pressure. She is still young and we don't want to rush anything," Athletics Federation of India's high performance director Volker Herrmann said.

The AFI's think tank - comprising chief coach Bahadur Singh, deputy chief coach Radhakrishnan Nair, 400m coach Galina Bukharina and Herrmann - took a collective decision to shift the star athlete to 200m for this season. Coaches also hope training for the 200m will help her improve speed, which can be handy when she goes back to the longer event in 2021.

The target is to get her closer to the average of world-class 400m runners (22.80 in the 200m), which in turn can make her go faster in the one-lap race.

"Hima's main limitation now is her



Last year, Hima Das pulled out of the 400m at the Asian Athletics Championships in Doha due to a bad back.

Last year, she was feeling the back injury and we did our analysis after the season with recovery experts, doctors and physiotherapists... She could not train properly and that was a setback. So now we are trying to make the best out of the situation. I think it is better she focuses on the shorter event."

VOLKER HERRMANN
AFI PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR

speed for a 400m runner, so this year as far as individual events go, Hima will focus more on the 200m. The goal is to improve her personal best, and from 2021 onwards with better speed base and hopefully with

more endurance as well, she can focus on improving her 400m performance," Herrmann added.

Last season, Hima won five gold medals, four in the 200m, in less than a month in low-key meets while competing against little-known athletes.

She had pulled out of the 400m at the Asian Athletics Championships in Doha because of a bad back and making her run the shorter event was portrayed as a way to ease her back into competition.

Yet, plans went awry when the AFI had to pull her out of the World Championships after having named her in the 4x400 metre relay and mixed relay squads.

"Last year, she was feeling the back injury and we did our analysis after the season with recovery experts, doctors and physiotherapists and the back issues seemed to have been solved now, but then she had fever. She could not train properly

and that was a setback. So now we are trying to make the best out of the situation and say 'I think it is better she focuses on the shorter event' where you don't need such a high volume but the training is focused on intensity. This will definitely help her in the future," Herrmann said.

There is an outside chance of Hima being part of the 4x400 metre relay squads, but it is too early to predict as the AFI will finalise the team only by mid-May.

"May be in the relay, she could run, but we have to see. It depends, of course, on the quality of the other runners. Right now, it is too early to say."

The Indian relay squads are set to run against the German national team at the end of May in a quest to give them exposure of competing against one of the top teams in the world and also improving timing to ensure the squads remain in the top-16, the cut-off rank for the Olympics.

Morgan powers England to win in a 'hell of a game'

REUTERS
PRETORIA, FEBRUARY 16

CAPTAIN EOIN Morgan scored a brilliant unbeaten 57 from 22 balls as England chased down a massive victory target of 223 to win the final Twenty20 International against South Africa on Sunday and secure a 2-1 series triumph.

South Africa won the toss and posted 222 for six in their 20 overs, but man of the match Morgan crashed seven sixes in a 21-ball half-century to equal his own England record for the fastest fifty in Twenty20 cricket.

The visitors reached 226 for five with five deliveries to spare, the ball sailing through the Highveld air as 28 sixes were hit in the match, 15 by England, as they completed the fourth highest successful Twenty20 International run chase.

South Africa won the first match by one run and England claimed the second by two runs in a tight series ahead of the World Cup in Australia in October.

"It was a hell of a game, you have to commend both sides' bowlers as it is not easy to bowl on a wicket like that," Morgan said at the post-match presentation.

"When any side posts 222 it is a tough ask, but going back to the 2016 World Cup with this group of players, we chased down 230 against South Africa in Mumbai, so there was always that belief.

"It's a nice note to leave this tour on, we have loved every minute of it. The cricket we have played has been so close between the sides and it has been hugely productive for us."

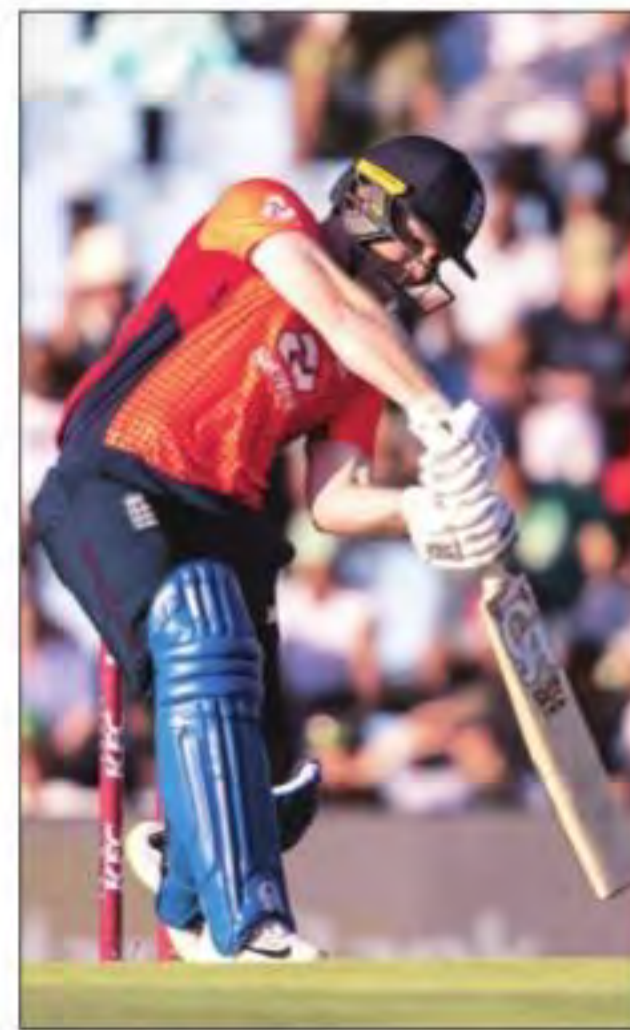
Klaasen's efforts go in vain

South Africa's innings was boosted by a powerful 66 from 33 balls by Heinrich Klaasen, before he picked out Ben Stokes at mid-off from the bowling of the impressive Tom Curran (2-33).

Opener Temba Bavuma, with 49 from 24 balls, gave the home side a fast start and David Miller (35 from 20) provided a strong finish. England lost Jason Roy in the second over of their reply, but Jos Buttler (57 from 29) and Jonny Bairstow (64 from 34) put on 91 in 49 balls as the tourists kept up with the required rate.

Once they fell, Morgan, who also earned the man of the series award, took up the mantle, dealing only in sixes in a brilliant display of skill and power hitting, and making up for not seeing his side home in the first match in east London.

He was supported by Stokes (22 from 12) in adding 61 from 27 balls before the



Morgan hit seven sixes in his unbeaten 57 off 22 balls against South Africa. AP

It was a hell of a game, you have to commend both sides' bowlers as it is not easy to bowl on a wicket like that. When any side posts 222 it is a tough ask, but going back to the 2016 World Cup with this group of players, we chased down 230 against South Africa, so there was always that belief.

EOIN MORGAN
ENGLAND CAPTAIN

all-rounder was out with victory in sight as England completed their second highest Twenty20 chase.

"When we got here and saw the wicket we knew it would be high-scoring, we are just disappointed we didn't get over the line. We felt our score was just over par," De Kock said.

"As we get closer to the World Cup we are clearer in our plans and about who is putting up their hands."

Brief Scores: England 226/5 (Bairstow 64 Eoin Morgan 57, Jos Buttler 57) beat South Africa 222/6 (Heinrich Klaasen 66, Tom Curran 2-33) by five wickets.

India clears Pak wrestlers' visas, Chinese on hold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 16

UNCERTAINTY OVER Pakistani wrestlers' participation in the Asian Championships here is finally over after they were granted visas by the government, but the Chinese grapplers' fate will be known on Monday, a national federation official said on Sunday.

Wrestling Federation of India assistant secretary Vinod Tomar confirmed to PTI that after days of uncertainty, the entire Pakistani contingent have been granted visas.

"The entire Pakistan contingent were granted visas on Saturday. I met Sports Secretary Radhey Shyam Julaniya on Friday and he instantly took up the matter with Home Secretary after which the visas were issued," Tomar said.

"Indian Olympic Association President Narinder Batra also played a crucial role in the entire process." Pakistan is sending a contingent of four freestyle wrestlers, one coach and one referee in the Championships to be held here from February 18 to 23.

The Pakistani wrestling contingent will,

thus, become the first team from the neighbouring country to travel to India for a sporting event after the Pulwama terror attack in February last year. The four Pakistan wrestlers who will be competing are Muhammad Bilal (57kg), Abdul Rehman (74kg), Tayab Raza (97kg) and Zaman Anwar (125kg).

The denial of visas to Pakistani wrestlers could have led to serious repercussions for India, including a possible ban on the Wrestling Federation of India by the world body (UWW), that too in an Olympic year.

However, it was still not clear regarding the 40-strong Chinese wrestling contingent as their travel documents are yet to be cleared because of the deadly coronavirus outbreak that has put several travel restrictions on people coming from that country.

The Indian government has even cancelled all-e-visas for Chinese nationals due to the virus outbreak that has killed more than 1500 people till date. "The Chinese contingent is yet to get visas and a final decision on their participation will be known on Monday," Tomar said.

"The issues involving China is serious because the coronavirus outbreak has become a global threat."

Stoinis, Pattinson's homophobic slurs hurt Schutt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SYDNEY, FEBRUARY 16

A FINE swing bowler for Australia's women's cricket team and a champion of same-sex marriage, Megan Schutt is upset with her male counterparts James Pattinson and Marcus Stoinis' recent homophobic slurs.

She wants men to be more receptive towards homosexuality as they are "attacked" more for being gay.

Heading into the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup as the number one bowler in the format, Schutt faced a volley of vitriolic attacks after she came out as a lesbian a few years ago.

Undeterred, the straight-talking cricketer went on to marry her girlfriend Jess Hollyoake, finding happiness after being called a paedophile and asked to go to hell.

"It was a pretty horrible thing. I remember putting out a rainbow flag (it represents LGBT pride) on our balcony and Jess didn't want to have that up there at the time. She said, what if someone targets our house because of that?" Schutt was quoted as saying by *Sydney Morning Herald*.

"And I said, 'We can't hide, this is a time to

show support for everyone else around us'. No one who is trying to fight for same-sex marriage is having a good time right now so we need to stick together more than ever."

She was asked about the recent incidents in which two Australian players, Pattinson and Stoinis, were sanctioned for homophobic slurs on the field. According to her, these incidents highlight the need for further awareness and education.

"I think it's important to talk about it. I wasn't angry as much as I was disappointed, which is such a dad thing to say. It's disappointing that we still use that language, and I don't believe that those boys actually are homophobic, I truly don't."

"And they wouldn't be saying it with that intent, but they're still using the wrong words. Why can't you just call someone a d**khead? Schutt said men are attacked more for being gay. "I haven't been attacked for being a lesbian but I know men that have been for being gay."

"And the fact that it's always men that are still using those derogatory terms is the most disappointing part of it because they're going to have gay friends, whether they're out to them or not."

On the field, Schutt is known for her



Megan Schutt (R) married her partner Jess Hollyoake in March last year.

change of pace and an ability to seam and swing the ball. She reminisced about the time when she would be judged, abused for

coming out in the open about her personal life. "It was honestly a pretty horrific time. I got called some really nasty things. The usual stuff was go to hell and I don't really care that much, but I had people who call you (a) paedophile or say you're worse than an animal and just things that are really extreme.

"And that was why I wanted to campaign (for legalising same-sex marriage), obviously for myself, but for everybody else in the sense that I just could not and still can't really understand hatred." Her efforts were rewarded when same-sex marriage was legalised in 2017.

India's warm-up game against Pakistan washed out

India's first ICC Women's T20 World Cup match against arch-rivals Pakistan was washed out in Hamilton, New Zealand on Sunday without a ball being bowled, denting the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side's last-minute preparations.

Heavy downpour resulted in the match being called off without the toss being held at the Allan Border Field, days of the show-piece starting February 21. India will face West Indies in their second and final warm-up game here on February 18.

[SPORTS BAR]



Monfils defends Rotterdam crown

Gael Monfils won his second title in the space of seven days on Sunday as he swatted aside Canadian teenager Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-2 6-4 in a lopsided Rotterdam Open final to retain the trophy. The 33-year-old Frenchman, who came into the tournament on the back of a record-equalling third triumph in Montpellier the previous Sunday, converted four out of 11 break points as he denied his 19-year-old opponent a maiden ATP title. "You're young, you'll improve fast and you'll win this tournament and other tournaments, so keep going," Monfils told Auger-Aliassime. "I'm super happy... it's been an amazing week for me."

Clijsters faces Muguruza on return

Kim Clijsters faces an unexpectedly tough first match on her comeback after seven years out in Dubai this week - against Australian Open finalist Garbine Muguruza. Clijsters, 36, had been due to play Kiki Bertens but the eighth-ranked Dutch player withdrew after reaching the Sunday final in St Petersburg. Her absence moved tournament wild card Muguruza into the draw opposite Clijsters, the four-time Grand Slam singles champion and mother-of-three who is making a return after last competing at the 2012 US Open.



Uganda's Joshua Cheptegei clocked 12 minutes 51 seconds, shaving 27 seconds off the mark set by Kenya's Rhonex Kipruto last month. Reuters

Uganda's Cheptegei smashes 5km world record

Uganda's Joshua Cheptegei shattered the 5km road world record in Monaco on Sunday, shaving 27 seconds off the mark set by Kenya's Rhonex Kipruto last month. Cheptegei, the 10,000m world champion, crossed the finish line in 12 minutes and 51 seconds in his first race of the year to eclipse Kipruto's effort from the 10K Valencia Ibercaja in Spain last month. Kipruto had set the mark en route to the 10km road world record. "Wow, this is really great. I had sub 13 minutes in my mind today so when my legs felt good during the race, I really decided to go for it," the 23-year-old Cheptegei said. "To take this many seconds of the record makes me very happy and is a great first test for me in an important season." Frenchman Jimmy Gressier finished second in Monaco with a time of 13:18 to beat the European record of 13:29 set by Julien Wanders in the same race last year.

Duckworth claims Bengaluru Open title

Australia's James Duckworth registered a straight-set win over Benjamin Bonzi in the finals to lift the USD 162,500 Bengaluru Open title on Sunday. Duckworth took just 68 minutes to notch up a 6-4 6-4 win over Benjamin at the KSLTA Courts. Duckworth was coming with a reputation of having won four titles out of six final appearances, and was in fine form after having reached the last four of the ATP 250 in Pune last week. His opponent Benjamin, meanwhile, had felled four seeds enroute to the final, including India's No.1 and defending champion Prajnesh Gunneswaran.

AIFF hands Mohun Bagan a ₹ 3 lakh fine

The All India Football Federation's disciplinary committee on Sunday fined I-League side Mohun Bagan Rs 3 lakh for non-payment of salary to four of its former players. The Mariners have been directed to clear the dues and pay the fine within a fortnight. "The disciplinary committee under the chairmanship of Ushanath Banerjee directed Mohun Bagan to pay dues of four players within 30 days and pay fine of Rs. 3,00,000 within 15 days, failing which they will face 'Transfer Ban' for forthcoming successive two windows in whatever name or under banner it plays in any AIFF tournament," the order stated.



Gujrathi keeps lead in Prague chess event

Indian Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi continued to lead the standings in the Masters Category of the Prague Chess Festival here after sharing a point with Swedish GM Nils Grandelius in the fourth round. P Harikrishna, the other Indian in the 10-player field, held Sam Shankland of the USA to a draw after suffering a defeat in round three at the hands of the world's top junior Alireza Firouzja. Gujrathi (Elo 2721), the second-ranked Indian chess player behind Viswanathan Anand, could not force the issue against Grandelius, the lowest rated player (at 2659) in the field, in a 35-move game. Harikrishna, on the other hand, opted for a Sozine attack against Shankland, but had to sign peace after 48 moves. Top-seed Jan-Krzysztof Duda of Poland played out a quiet draw against Spanish GM David Anton Guijaro in 30 moves.



'DIE GELBE WAND...'

...or 'The Yellow Wall', in Dortmund's imposing south stand, is lurking to test Paris Saint-Germain stars like Neymar and Kylian Mbappe in the Champions League on Tuesday. AP

Up against the wall

From Sex Pistols' Johnny Rotten to former boss Klopp, everyone knows about the 'gigantic monster' in Dortmund stands

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DORTMUND, FEBRUARY 16

PACKED WITH passionate home fans, Borussia Dortmund's imposing south stand - dubbed 'The Yellow Wall' - is the 'gigantic monster' lurking to test Paris Saint-Germain stars like Neymar and Kylian Mbappe in the Champions League on Tuesday.

"It's just a fantastic feeling that I haven't had before," is how Dortmund's star striker Erling Braut Haaland described scoring in front of 'Die Gelbe Wand' (The Yellow Wall) at Signal Iduna Park. The 19-year-old has bagged nine goals since Dortmund snapped him up for 20 million euros (\$22 million) from Salzburg. Five of them have come in his three home appearances games, including one in the 4-0 thrashing of Frankfurt on Friday.

"If you are the opposition, it crushes you - but if you have her at your back as a goalkeeper, it's a fantastic feeling," is how ex-Dortmund shot-stopper Roman Weidenfeller describes the experience of the imposing terrace.

For Bundesliga games, the south stand, which is 100 metres (328 feet) wide and 40 metres high, is packed with 25,000 fans, but capacity is reduced to 16,000 to meet UEFA regulations for Champions League games.

'Huge, roaring monster'

Nevertheless, the noise will be deafening when the Dortmund team walk out for Tuesday's last 16, first leg tie. "Just look at the south stand in Dortmund," Johnny Rotten, lead singer of British punk band The Sex Pistols and a passionate Arsenal fan has said on the matter. "They all stand, chant and make such a noise that the stand seems like the pharynx of some huge, roaring monster. It's fantastic."

Dortmund fan Max Kiwiit, 27, has been coming to the stadium with his family since he was four and told AFP why he is a regular on 'The Yellow Wall'. "Because here, everyone can let go of their emotions. No one will complain if they get elated in the head" or if they get showered by beer when Dortmund score to send thousands of plastic cups flying, he said with a smile. Season tickets for the south stand start at 219 euros (\$237), but are often passed down from generation to generation.

The waiting list is often counted in years, as Max's girlfriend Sabrina Rupp discovered to



Liverpool, coasting towards a first English League title in 30 years, have qualified for the Champions League next season. Reuters

her cost. "Until I was 13, I had a season ticket," she admits regretfully. "I gave it back, and that's the worst mistake you can make, because after that it's almost impossible to get it back."

The Yellow Wall is often described as the beating heart of Signal Iduna Park. It's from there that designated fans lead the chants, yelling into megaphones while drummers beat out the rhythm. The fans in the south stand see themselves as the 12th man of the Dortmund team.

Malaga mayhem

On the run to the 2013 Champions League final, where Dortmund lost 2-1 to Bayern Munich at Wembley, the wall played a key role in the quarter-final at home to Malaga, when the hosts found themselves 2-1 down with 90 minutes on the clock.

With Dortmund seconds from elimination, the fans erupted, inspiring tired legs to one last push. Pandemonium broke out when forward Marco Reus, then defender Felipe Santana grabbed goals in added time to seal a fairy tale 3-2 win after a goalless first leg in Spain.

The delicious scenes at the final whistle are part of club folklore. "I don't think it's something you can really grasp unless you're exper-

rienced it yourself. It was unbelievable," said defender Mats Hummels. Former Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp explained what the PSG team can expect on Tuesday. "You come out and the stadium explodes... you look to your left and it looks like 150,000 people are standing there going crazy," said Klopp, who led Dortmund to back-to-back Bundesliga titles in 2011 and 2012. As the Malaga game demonstrated, PSG need to play until the final whistle as Dortmund can never be written off with their backs to 'The Yellow Wall'.

Liverpool the team to beat

LIVERPOOL RETURN to the scene of their Champions League triumph when they visit Atletico Madrid's Wanda Metropolitan on Tuesday very much the team to beat for those hoping to succeed Jurgen Klopp's men as European champions. Liverpool are coasting towards a first English League title in 30 years having dropped just two points all season and are likely to be crowned English champions before the Champions League quarter-finals commence in early April. Liverpool remain on course for a potential five-trophy haul this season. They have already lifted the UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup and are used to reach-

ing European finals under Klopp.

The German has overseen three in four seasons at Anfield, losing the Europa League final to Sevilla in 2016 and Champions League to Real Madrid two years later before getting over the line against Tottenham in the Spanish capital last year. "I have no clue if we can win the Champions League again but we should be ready to go for it," said Klopp. "What I know and what we showed last year is that we can beat the best." On current form Atletico are little match for the holders. For the first time in over eight years in charge, the future of Diego Simeone has been questioned with Los Rojiblancos languishing well off the pace in La Liga and battling just to qualify for next season's Champions League.

A chronic struggle to score goals has hampered Simeone's side all season. Joao Felix has failed to deliver on his 126 million euro (USD 138 million) price tag and the Portuguese wonder kid is a doubt for Tuesday's first leg. By contrast, Liverpool have hit the money with almost every major signing in recent years. With Alisson Becker, Virgil van Dijk, Fabinho, Sadio Mane and Mohamed Salah they have built a side capable of not just winning, but retaining the Champions League.

Manchester City's family silver may be up for sale

Manchester City's two-year Champions League ban for flouting financial fair play rules has proverbially put the cat among the pigeons. Even though the club has recourse to an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, there will be several European heavyweights prowling around like vultures to poach on the prized assets of the four-time Premier League champions. Also, it would make attracting the best players to the Etihad Stadium a difficult proposition if the club can't offer them a chance to play in the best club competition in the world.

NO SHORTAGE OF SUITORS FOR GUARDIOLA



THE SPANIARD has not won the Champions League since leaving Barcelona. The ongoing season provides him another opportunity to fill that void in his CV (City face Real Madrid in a blockbuster Round of 16 clash), but whatever happens, Guardiola is unlikely to stay at Man City for two seasons without the lure of the Champions League. According to The Sunday Times, Juventus has coveted him for long and the Serie A is one of the top leagues in Europe where Guardiola has not managed. With Cristiano Ronaldo already in Turin, getting the Spanish master tactician could be the final piece of the zigsaw in their quest for European glory. Guardiola managed to get

the best out of Lionel Messi during his time at Barcelona, and it would be fascinating to see how he deals with the other preeminent player of the generation.

Maurizio Sarri is facing a tough domestic battle and his position could be under scrutiny if the Old Lady doesn't manage to hold on to the title.

Paris Saint-Germain also has the financial muscle to get Guardiola, but the French Ligue 1 is still not at a competitive level of other top European leagues. Also, the tense geo-political relations between the UAE and Qatar can make the move difficult.

As an aside, can a move back to Camp Nou be ruled out completely?

AGUERO'S CONTRACT NEARS END



The deadly goal poacher has just one year left in his City contract, and would not be their biggest concern. He and fellow Argentine Nicolas Otamendi have made their preference to end their careers in their home country. The ban may hasten their departure.

REAL TO GO AFTER STERLING



According to Daily Mail, Real will also go all out to sign Raheem Sterling'. The 25-year-old is under contract at City for another three years and talks started in November to increase his salary from £300,000-a-week to £450,000-a-week. But the heavyweights from Madrid are already planning a £180 million swoop, the paper claimed.

SILVA ALSO GETTING ON

David Silva is arguably the club's greatest ever player, but at 34, he is out of contract and prime to make a move. Could he be persuaded to stay on for some time if other big guns around him leave? According to media reports, David Beckham's Inter Miami is one suitor.

DE BRUYNE - THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Any club will welcome such a top player - arguably one of the top ten in the world. It's no surprise that Real Madrid would like to have the 28-year-old on their roster.

Rules at risk of being 'scuppered' if City overturn European ban

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON, FEBRUARY 16

EUROPEAN FOOTBALL'S financial fair play rules risk being "scuppered" if Manchester City overturn their two-season ban from continental competition, according to a soccer analyst.

UEFA announced the punishment on Friday and also imposed a fine of 30 million euros on the English champions for what it said were City's serious breaches of its FFP regime. City, however, wasted little time in responding by saying they would appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in the hope of securing an "impartial judgment".

Since the Sheikh Mansour takeover in 2008, which put the financial might of Abu Dhabi behind them, City have won 10 major trophies - including four Premier League titles. Yet the prize that has eluded them is the one the Abu Dhabi project most desires - the UEFA Champions League.

The Chinese government have provided City with additional backing, as has US private equity firm Silver Lake. They are all set to ensure City has a no expense spared legal team that will challenge the validity of UEFA's ruling.

Should City succeed, the entire FFP system could collapse, according to Professor Simon Chadwick, director at the Centre for the Eurasian Sport Industry.

'Transnational power'

"In essence UEFA has to try to win this because, if it doesn't win or is undermined in any way, then its position on Financial Fair Play begins to unravel... FFP is scuppered," Chadwick told Britain's Press Association news agency.

"However, they are not taking on Wigan, they are taking on Asian governments, US tech investors and some of the smartest, most-talented people in football. It is transnational power versus localised governance." Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was just one of several leading football figures stunned by the sever-

PREMIER LEAGUE STANDINGS						
	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
Liverpool	26	25	1	0	46	76
Man City	25	16	3	6	36	51
Leicester	26	15	5	6	28	50
Chelsea	25	12	5	8	9	41
Spurs	26	11	7	8	9	40
Sheffield	26	10	9	7	4	39

ity of the UEFA punishment. "It was a shock," said Klopp, whose Champions League title holders are on well on course to succeed City as champions of England. "What they have done on the football pitch is exceptional. The rest, I don't know," added Klopp, speaking after a 1-0 win at bottom-of-the-table Norwich on Saturday saw leaders Liverpool extend their advantage over second-placed City at the top of the Premier League to 25 points.

Son's strike edges Spurs past Villa

Son Heung-min struck deep into stoppage time as Tottenham's chances of Champions League football next season were boosted by a 3-2 win at Aston Villa on Sunday.

A third consecutive Premier League victory lifts Spurs up to fifth - which could be enough to secure Champions League qualification with Manchester City facing a two-season ban from the competition - and within one point of fourth-placed Chelsea. Jose Mourinho's men were worthy of their victory after bouncing back from a nightmare start when Toby Alderweireld sliced into his own goal.

The Belgian quickly made amends at the other end with a triumphing finish before Son followed up after Pepe Reina had saved his penalty to put the visitors in front. Slack defending threatened to cost Tottenham all three points when they allowed Bjorn Engels to equalise early in the second half.

Putting woes wipe out Woods' hopes at Riviera

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES, FEBRUARY 16

ABOUT THE best thing Tiger Woods could say about his day at Riviera Country Club was that it was over. "That was a lot of shots," the 15-time major champion said of his five-over-par 76 in the third round of the US PGA Tour's Genesis Invitational. "I hit the ball quite a few times, especially on the greens and it was a long day."

Woods' tough day with the putter included a four-putt from 18 feet for double-bogey at the 13th - his fourth hole of the day, and a three-putt bogey at his final hole, the ninth.

Nine adrift to start the day, he knew he needed something special to move into contention for a record 83rd tour title - but he was going the wrong way from a bogey at the par-five 11th - where he was in the fairway off the tee but missed a par putt from within six feet.

"I didn't putt well today at all," said Woods, who took 33 putts. "I didn't have a feel for it, I didn't see my lines, I couldn't feel my pace and I was just off. "Well, I'm done," Woods said when asked if he took any positives from the round. "A new day tomorrow, that's the way golf is." Woods will try again to get it right on

Riviera's bumpy Poa annua greens on Sunday, and then he'll take a week off. Under the circumstances, he was feeling good about his decision to skip next week's WGC Mexico Championship, despite the fact that the elite event promises world ranking points key to the race to qualify for the US team for the Tokyo Olympics. Woods said there are other priorities in managing his schedule, especially now that physical concerns limit the number of events he can play. "The idea is to peak around Augusta time, yes," said Woods, who captured his 15th major at the Masters last year to end a Grand Slam drought of more than a decade. "I just felt I wasn't going to be ready for next week, a little rundown and playing at altitude as well isn't going to help that, so take the week off."

McIlroy, Kuchar, Scott in lead

Rory McIlroy, looking to cement his return to number one in the world, fired a three-under par 68 on Saturday to join Matt Kuchar and Adam Scott in a three-way tie for the third-round lead. Kuchar was atop the leaderboard for a third straight day after a one-under par 70 at Riviera Country Club.

Playing partner McIlroy carded a three-under 68 while Australia's Scott grabbed his share

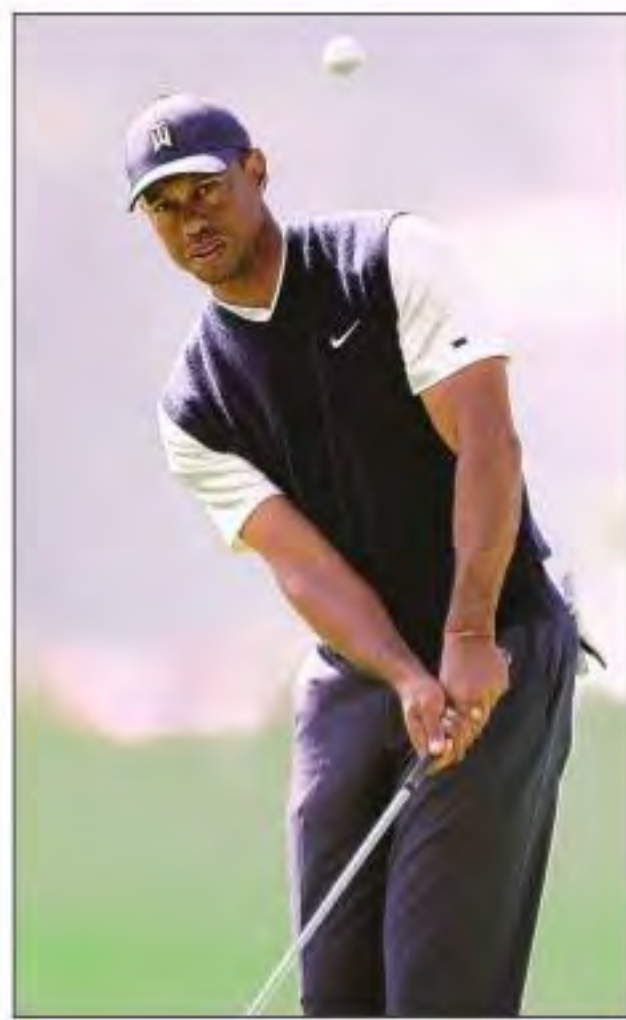
of the lead with a birdie at 18 to cap a four-under 67. They were all tied on 10-under par 203 - one shot ahead of Russell Henley and Harold Varner on a jam-packed leaderboard.

Tiger Woods, who came into the week gunning for a record-setting 83rd US PGA Tour title, was nowhere near the top, however, after a five-over par 76 that left him languishing 15 off the pace. Kuchar started the day with a two-shot lead and maintained his cushion with three birdies through 11 holes.

But three bogeys in four holes from the 13th through the 16th opened the door for McIlroy, who tied the lead with his fourth birdie of the day at 13 and despite a bogey at 14 was one shot ahead until Kuchar got up and down for birdie from a greenside bunker on the 17th.

Scott, first in the clubhouse on 10-under, was looking forward to challenging for a victory on the same Riviera course where he hoisted a trophy in 2005 but couldn't claim an official win because the rain-soaked event was shortened to 36 holes.

He also has two runner-up finishes. "I think all of that is just a bit of motivation for me to win here and have an official victory at Riviera," Scott said. "I think that would be extremely satisfying for me."



Tiger Woods shot a five-over-par 76. AP