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## Chinese merchant vessel being probed for carrying 'suspicious' equipment

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 18

INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES along with teams of Customs and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at Kandla port in Kutch Gandhidam are inspecting a Chinese merchant vessel which was bound for Karachi in Pakistan, suspecting it to be carrying an "autoclave" equipment, which can be used for both industrial and military purposes.

Investigative officials suspect that the equipment found on the vessel might be designed to be used in the aerospace industry to manufacture ballistic missiles.

According to officials of the customs department, the cargo vessel 'Da Cui Yin' has been stationed at Deendayal Port also known as Kandla Port since February 3 this year, after customs flagged it for suspected cargo and the vessel's no objection certificate to travel via Indian waters to Karachi port was cancelled.

"Our teams are conducting inspection of the vessel and till now nothing conclusive have been found," said an official statement

from the office of assistant commissioner of customs stationed at Kandla Port.

However, sources said that investigating officials have found an equipment resembling an autoclave, when utilised in military technology, can be used to manufacture ballistic missiles.

Officials from the Deendayal Port Trust (DPT) on Tuesday said that the cargo vessel that reached Kandla on February 3 has been shifted from the cargo berth to an anchorage point within the port. The vessel had sailed from port of Jaingyin, People's Republic of China on January 17, 2020, and was detained by the customs department due to "suspected cargo" on February 3.

DPT issued a no-objection certificate to the vessel on February 7, which officials said was headed for Karachi in Pakistan. Notably, the shipping agent DBC and Sons had cancelled the NoC provided to the vessel instead of presenting it to the customs for port clearances earlier. Officials said the lack of clearance from the customs department forced the agents to cancel their NoC and return to the port.

## FROM PAGE ONE

### Citizenship

50, illiterate and quite poor." "We gave a number of documents but the court was not satisfied since it felt that the documents were not enough to prove linkage to her parents," Ali said.

Syed Burhanur Rahman, also an advocate in the High Court, said: "What worked against Begum is that she was not able to link her relationship with her parents. The 1997 voter list she submitted had her husband's name and not her parents' names. Moreover, it had marked her 'D' or a doubtful voter. Technically, the court order has no fault. While the Gaon Panchayat document is a valid certificate and can be used for linkage for a married woman, it is subject to further scrutiny."

Rahman said Jabeda Begum could file a review petition in the High Court or approach the Supreme Court. "She can question why her Gaon Bura (village headman) certificate was rejected as a linkage document despite the Gaon Bura personally attesting the same in the FT. Also, under Section 50 of Evidence Act, her brother's testimony is enough to prove that she is his sister," he said.

The judges, in their order, said: "In the instant case, the petitioner claimed that she is the daughter of Lt. Javed Ali and Jahura Khatun @Jahera Kharan. She could not file any documents to link herself with her projected parents. Certificates issued by a Village Gaon Bura can never be the proof of citizenship of a person. Such certificate can only be used by a married woman to prove that after her marriage, she had shifted to her matrimonial village (Rupjan Begum Vs. Union of India, reported in (2018) 1 SCC 579)."

"This Court in Md. Babul Islam Vs. Union of India [WP(C)/3547/2016], has already held that PAN card and bank documents are not proof of citizenship. Md. Samsul Ali, the projected brother of the petitioner, adduced evidence before the Tribunal. He claimed to be 33 years old and his name appeared in the Voter List of 2015. The petitioner could not file any documents to link herself with her projected brother, Md. Samsul Ali."

"Land Revenue Paying Receipts do not prove a citizenship of a person. Therefore, we find that the Tribunal has correctly appreciated the evidences placed before it and we could not find any perversity in the decision of the Tribunal. That being the position, we would reiterate that the petitioner failed to prove her linkage with her projected parents and her projected brother. Therefore, we find that this writ petition is devoid of merit and accordingly, we dismiss the same," the order stated.

## Woman 'raped' near toll plaza in Karnal, two held

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 18

A 19-YEAR-OLD woman was allegedly raped near a toll plaza in Haryana's Karnal district Sunday night when she went to use the restroom while her husband waited nearby. Investigating Officer Praveen Kumar said two people — the one who allegedly raped her, and his accomplice who threatened her at knife-point — have been arrested in the last two days.

The accused even gave their telephone number to the victim before fleeing from the spot, and the number helped police track them down, sources said.

According to the FIR, the victim, who is from Punjab, had gone to Panipat to meet their relatives. Accompanied by her husband, she was returning home by bus. The couple disembarked at a toll after receiving a phone call from their relative, who had to hand over some money to them.

"The couple then went to use the toilet. When the woman came out, she saw two youths standing outside. One of them threatened her with a knife and the two forcibly took her to a nearby spot where the other person raped her," said police.

The spot where the alleged rape took place is an underpass that is currently not operational. The incident took place at around 11 pm.

Meghraj, a resident of Stondi village of Karnal district who sold snacks near the toll plaza, was arrested on Monday while Sonu, 35, a security guard at the plaza, was arrested Tuesday.

## Focus on growth intact: RBI Governor

Asserting that the central bank has the space for independence and autonomy, Das said all decisions taken in the last year "are our own objective, independent decisions".

He said the government's concern on any issue that impacts the economy has to be considered by the central bank but also pointed to several legislative and non-legislative proposals in the July 2019 and February 2020 budgets where issues concerning the RBI have been addressed by the government.

"These include the amendment of the RBI Act to give additional powers to RBI with regard to regulation of NBFCs and housing finance companies (HFCs) being brought under the purview of RBI, and the amendment to the Banking Regulation Act to accord more powers to the RBI on regulation of the urban cooperative banks (UCBs)," he said.

Das said RBI was "closely and intensively" monitoring the top 50 NBFCs, which account

for roughly 75 per cent of the total portfolio, and that the central bank will endeavour "to ensure that no large systemically important NBFC collapses". "We are very mindful of the aspect of financial stability in the case of banks too. RBI will always ensure that stability of the banking sector is maintained," he said.

On criticism pertaining to the regulatory easing in specific sectors like SMEs and real estate — recognition of bad loans — which some observers de-

scribed as RBI turning the clock back on cleaning up the financial sector mess, Das said these did not qualify as an "across the board forbearance." And that interventions were "specific and targeted" and "subject to certain guidelines and parameters".

On the RBI's new measures to ease credit flow like Long Term Repo Operations and the CRR waiver for loans for auto and real estate, Das said these "innovations" were in response to "the evolving dynamic situation."

## Foodgrains at high, pressure on procurement

be 0.29 per cent higher than the current year's target of 291.10 million tonnes and 2.36 per cent higher than the production of 285.21 million tonnes in 2018-19.

However, the record wheat output during current Rabi season which is estimated to reach a level of 106.21 million tonnes — 5.68 per cent higher than the target of 100.50 million tonnes, 2.52 per cent higher than the wheat production in 2018-19 and 12.26 per cent higher than the average wheat production of 94.61 million tonnes — may pose political and fiscal challenges to the Central Government in the coming months.

It may face difficulties in procurement of the cereal due to record foodgrains stocks available in the central pool (75.43 million tonnes including the quantity of rice from un-milled paddy). Two major wheat-producing states Punjab and Madhya Pradesh are ruled by the opposition Congress and any delay in the procurement may become a political issue.

On the other hand, the Government will have to control the food subsidy bill which is budgeted at Rs 115569.68 crore in 2020-21. The food subsidy for coming fiscal is budgeted lower than the Budget estimate of 2019-20 as the Food

**SECOND ADVANCE ESTIMATES OF PRODUCTION OF FOODGRAINS FOR 2019-20**  
(figures in million tonnes)

	Foodgrains	Wheat	Rice	Pulses
2005-06	208.60	69.35	91.79	13.38
2006-07	217.28	75.81	93.36	14.20
2007-08	230.78	78.57	96.69	14.76
2008-09	234.47	80.68	99.18	14.57
2009-10	218.11	80.80	89.09	14.66
2010-11	244.49	86.87	95.98	18.24
2011-12	259.29	94.88	105.30	17.09
2012-13	257.12	93.51	105.23	18.34
2013-14	265.05	95.85	106.65	19.26
2014-15	252.02	86.53	105.48	17.15
2015-16	251.54	92.29	104.41	16.32
2016-17	275.11	98.51	109.70	23.13
2017-18	285.01	99.87	112.76	25.42
2018-19	285.21	103.60	116.48	22.08
<b>Target for 2019-20</b>	<b>291.10</b>	<b>100.50</b>	<b>116.00</b>	<b>26.30</b>
<b>2nd Adv.Est. for 2019-20</b>	<b>291.95</b>	<b>106.21</b>	<b>117.47</b>	<b>23.02</b>

Corporation of India (FCI) is set to borrow Rs 1,36,000 crore from the National Small Savings Fund (NSSF) in next financial year.

"As per Second Advance Estimates for 2019-20, total foodgrain production in the country is estimated at record 291.95 million tonnes which is higher by 6.74 million tonnes

ing 2019-20 is estimated at record 117.47 million tonnes which is 1.27 percent higher than the target of 116 million tonnes during current year and 0.85 percent more than 116.48 million tonnes recorded last year. The estimated rice production during current year will be higher by 9.67 million tonnes than the five years' average production of 107.80 million tonnes.

The statement further said, "Production of Nutri/Coarse Cereals is estimated at 45.24 million tonnes, which is higher by 2.18 million tonnes than the production of 43.06 million tonnes achieved during 2018-19. Further, it is also higher by 2.16 million tonnes than the average production."

Total Pulses production during 2019-20 is estimated at 23.02 million tonnes which is higher by 2.76 million tonnes than the five years' average production of 20.26 million tonnes.

"The cumulative rainfall in the country during the monsoon season (June to September, 2019) has been 10% higher than Long Period Average (LPA). Accordingly, the production of most of the crops for the agricultural year 2019-20 has been estimated higher than their normal production", said the statement.

than the production of foodgrain of 285.21 million tonnes achieved during 2018-19. However, the production during 2019-20 is higher by 26.20 million tonnes than the previous five years' (2013-14 to 2017-18) average production of foodgrain", said MoA&FW.

According to the statement, the total production of rice dur-

The damaged property has been left as it is, to aid investigation, officials said, adding that no compensation had been received from any quarter till date.

### FATF

Review Group (ICRG) has taken a decision to keep Pakistan on the grey list. A recommendation by ICRG is a precursor to the final decision at the plenary session, and is usually not overturned.

"The ICRG meeting, sub group of the FATF, has recommended to retain Pakistan in the 'Grey List'. A final decision will be taken on Friday when the FATF takes up issues concerning Pakistan," a source said.

The sense in New Delhi is that the sub-group has "taken note" of steps taken by Islamabad against terror outfits, but has not fulfilled its commitments. Last October, Pakistan got a breather from FATF when it was kept on the grey list. India had mounted a diplomatic offensive for blacklisting of Pakistan as it had not met its commitments to check terror financing and money laundering.

At the last plenary session, Pakistan had addressed only five of the 27 tasks given to it to control funding to terror groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, responsible for a series of attacks in India.

Pakistan was given time till February 2020 to fulfill its commitments. An objective assessment of Pakistan's progress in implementing its action plan was made, while the FATF had noted the insufficiency of Islamabad's implementation as "serious concerns".

If Pakistan continues on the grey list, it would be very difficult for the country to get financial aid from the IMF, the World Bank and the European Union, making its financial condition even more precarious. Pakistan was placed on the grey list by the FATF in June 2018 and was given a plan of action to complete it by October 2019, or face the risk of being placed on the black list with Iran and North Korea. China, Turkey and Malaysia are learnt to have resisted India's efforts throughout the last year-and-half. India has lobbied with several countries, from the US to Europe, Australia to West Asian countries, to make the case for blacklisting of Pakistan.

### UP Budget

ek international airport ka nirman ho sake iske liye bhi is Budget mein pravidhan kiya hai (Provision has been made in the Budget for an international airport in Ayodhya).

Adityanath said the state government would construct Asia's biggest airport at Jewar, as part of its plan to improve air connectivity in the region. For this, an additional budgetary allocation, has been made as required, he said.

Last year, the state government had set aside Rs 800 crore for the Jewar airport project, largely for acquisition of land.

The proposed airport at Jewar will be spread across 5,000 hectares and is estimated to cost Rs 29,560 crore. It will be developed in four phases — work on the first phase, spread across 1,334 hectares and estimated to cost Rs 4,080 crore, is expected to begin this year. Sources said a large part of land for the first phase, including about 1,239 hectares of private land, has already been acquired.

Meanwhile, the government plans to expand and develop the existing airstrip in Ayodhya into an international airport. Last year, the government had allocated Rs 200 crore for acquisition of additional land for the project. Sources said the process of land acquisition has already begun.

In its latest Budget, the state government also set aside Rs 85 crore for providing basic facilities to tourists in Ayodhya and Rs 10 crore for upgrading the Tulsī Memorial in Ayodhya.

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### New CVC

Besides Chowdhury, today's meeting was attended by the PM, Home Minister Amit Shah; MoS, PMO and DoPT, Jitendra Singh, Cabinet Secretary Rajeev Gauba and DoPT Secretary C Chandramouli.

At the meeting, Chowdhury, the leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha, is learnt to have argued that the "papers provided by the PMO (for appointment of the CVC) disclose glaring and fatal infirmities with the (search) committee itself." His objection was that Finance Secretary Rajiv Kumar, a member of the search committee, has "also turned out to be an applicant for the CVC and was finally shortlisted for the post of CVC by the search committee."

"The entire purpose of constituting the search committee is vitiated considering that one of the members is himself an applicant and has been shortlisted and recommended for the post of CVC," Chowdhury said in a note and demanded that "a new search committee has to be constituted and the process has to be initiated afresh by inviting fresh applica-

tions". "Otherwise for this high-powered statutory committee to select the names from a pool that is itself a product of arbitrariness would be akin to being a party to the whole process," he wrote.

Besides Kumar, the members of the search committee were Gauba and Chandramouli.

On the appointment of CIC, Chowdhury said, in another note, that the government had rendered the entire process of appointment of CIC and Information Commissioners "an empty paper formality" by not providing any material particulars in advance.

"That in absence of recommendations of the search Committee, having been circulated to the undersigned or to the committee itself, how can the undersigned, as a member of the high powered committee discharge his function under Section 12 of the RTI act on the spur of the moment by looking at the recommendations of the search Committee that would be placed before the high powered Committee," he said in his note.

Chowdhury called it an "unprecedented deviation from the established practice" which "reduces the entire process to be a fait accompli and a formality."

"In absence of the reasoned and informed decision of the search Committee shortlisting and recommending candidates for the CIC and IC, how can the high-powered statutory Committee be rendered a mere stamping tool for a decision perhaps already taken by the PM and

the HM," he asked.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Chowdhury said: "I raised the issues and flagged their attention to the procedural flaws...thereafter names (of Kumar) were expunged...these could be considered as dissent."

Asked whether he agreed with the names selected, he said: "I did not have any other option...it is futile to argue because I had already lodged my dissent...Even the PM has acknowledged my contention. Thereafter, names were selected and I did not find any point in arguing. Because they are in majority..."

The post of CIC has been lying vacant for more than a month after Sudhir Bhargava superannuated on January 11. The post of CVC has been lying vacant since June 9, 2019, after K V Chowdhury left on completion of his tenure. Since then, vigilance commissioner Sharad Kumar has been functioning as interim CVC.

This is not the first time the Opposition has disagreed with the government of the day on the appointment of the CVC. In 2010, the selection of the CVC ran into a controversy after the Government decided to appoint the then Telecom Secretary P J Thomas despite strong objections from the then Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Sushma Swaraj. Thomas's appointment reached the doorstep of the Supreme Court which struck down his appointment in March 2011.

During Modi's first tenure,

Mallikarjun Kharge, who was then the leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha and a member of the high-powered selection committee, had in 2017 registered his dissent on the appointment of the then Delhi Police commissioner Alok Kumar Verma as CBI chief saying he lacked experience to handle corruption cases.

Kharge then dissented when Verma was ousted from the CBI two years later in January 2019 and demanded that he be allowed to continue. He objected to the appointment of Rishi Kumar Shukla as CBI chief a month later in February arguing in a dissent note that he had no experience in investigating anti-corruption cases and that the criterion for selection had been diluted in violation of law and Supreme Court judgments.

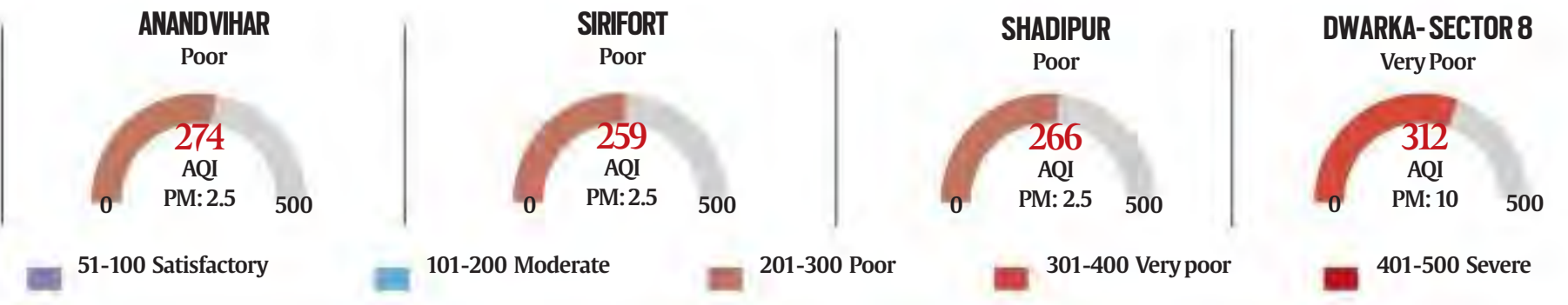
### Jamia

some of the videos appear edited and they are still ascertaining their authenticity.

According to the estimate submitted by Jamia, public property worth Rs 2,66,16,390 was damaged in the violence. The university has specified that the damage "occurred due to Delhi Police action on December 15, 2019". While the university has said security personnel entered without permission, police maintain they were in pursuit of "rioters" and entered the premises as a result.

Just days after the violence, university authorities had told The Indian Express that property dam-

# 3 THE CITY



## SPECIAL INVESTIGATION TEAM VISITS CAMPUS FOR 3 HOURS

# Entered Jamia after stone pelting from inside: Police in chargesheet

PRITAMPAL SINGH  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

NO STUDENT of Jamia Millia Islamia is among the 17 people chargesheeted in connection with the violence that took place in and around the university on December 15 during the anti-CAA protests last year. However, the chargesheet states that one of the arrested accused has named JNU student Sharjeel Imam as an "instigator", who gave "provocative speeches" before the violence.



In the chargesheet, police stated that on December 15, protesters returning from Mathura Road had burnt 12 vehicles; (right) DCP (Crime Branch) Rajesh Deo visits Jamia, Tuesday

"In view of his above disclosure, the role of Sharjeel Imam will be further probed during supplementary chargesheet. After obtaining sufficient evidence against the accused, he was arrested in the present case (on Monday)," the chargesheet says.

Meanwhile on Tuesday, the SIT constituted under DCP (Crime Branch) Rajesh Deo visited Jamia and spent three hours inspecting various locations — including the library. "The SIT interacted with the faculty and examined a few students. The Chief Proctor's help

was also requested," said police. The Delhi Police Crime Branch, in two chargesheets filed before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Gurmohina Kaur, booked 17 persons under various IPC sections, including rioting, unlawful assembly, voluntarily causing hurt to public servant and criminal conspiracy.

Imam was remanded in judicial custody until March 3, after investigators told the court that he, along with other accused persons, was present at New Friends Colony and Jamia Nagar and had

127 of public persons and 62 of police personnel. On the events of December 15, it states: "Violent protesters, including students, entered the iron gates of the university... as visible in CCTV footage... This unlawful assembly in different groups entered the campus and started pelting stones on the police force from three sides."

"Police kept warning protesters to disperse peacefully but they were adamant and kept on pelting stones at police from inside the campus — the same is visible in CCTV plus media photos. In order to safeguard students and identify violent protesters and take them out of the university campus, teargas shells and moderate force was used to disperse and push back this unlawful assembly by various teams headed by different SHO's," it stated.

### EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

SCHOOLS RUN by the North Delhi Municipal Corporation—where students have been forced to sit on floors for over two years due to lack of desks and benches—are set to acquire around 27,000 desks and benches from Tihar Jail, officials said.

North civic body's education committee chairperson Ritu Goel said, "We have signed a contract with Central Jail, Tihar, to supply around 27,000 desks and benches to our primary schools. Of these, 12,000 desks and benches have already been received."

In November 2018, *The Indian Express* reported that more than 38,000 students in over 100 schools under the North civic body were being forced to sit on the floor or on mats, as there were no desks and benches in classrooms.

The issue dates back to 2012-13, but serious efforts to procure these desks and benches began only in 2017. A senior official of the North Corporation had said, "However, it did not materialise because, as per MCD rules, we can buy desks and benches only from the Government e-Marketplace web portal."

"Earlier, the portal had an option to place the demand as per one's requirement, but for around a year, it has not had this option. We needed furniture that is double-sheet, made of hard board," he added.

The North body has 765 schools under its jurisdiction, where more than 2 lakh students are enrolled.

Goel said, "We have installed 24 taps and hand-wash stations in all our schools to motivate children to maintain cleanliness. Besides this, 550 CCTV cameras have been installed in 130 schools and the work of installing them in other schools is in progress."

## 7 people get second life at AIIMS after organ donation

New Delhi: In a span of 48 hours, two brain-dead patients at AIIMS breathed life into seven people as their families agreed to donate the organs. Two hearts, four kidneys, two livers, four corneas and bones were transplanted by teams of doctors at the country's top medical institute.

Sachiin (26), a native of UP's Kasganj who worked as a daily wager in Delhi, fell from the second floor of a building and was brought to AIIMS on February 13. On February 15, he was declared brain-dead. Members of Organ Retrieval Banking Organisation at AIIMS counselled the grieving family, who decided to donate his heart, liver, kidneys and corneas. Anil Mittal (61), a resident of Delhi, was a pledged donor with the Dadhichi Deh Dan Samiti. He was declared brain dead at AIIMS.

As per data provided by the institute, 2 lakh patients are in need of corneal transplantation but only 50,000 undergo the treatment. Over 10,000 people require heart transplants whereas only 150-200 transplants are performed annually. "There is a huge gap between demand and supply of human organs and tissues. In India, around 1.5-2 lakh patients require kidney transplantation but only 7,500-8,000 patients receive it. Around 75,000-80,000 patients require liver transplants annually but only around 1,800 are performed," said AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleria. ENS

## Two Kenyan nationals found dead in Gurgaon

Gurgaon: Two Kenyan nationals were found dead at a paying guest accommodation in Gurgaon's Sushant Lok area Tuesday morning, police said. The dead have been identified as Ruth (27) and David (33). Ruth, who lived at the accommodation where her body was found, worked at a private school in Gurgaon. Police said David's employment status is yet to be ascertained.

"Ruth's family was trying to contact her for the last few days. When she did not return their calls, they asked an acquaintance to check on her," said Gurgaon Police PRO Subhash Boken. On reaching the PG, Ruth's acquaintance found the door locked from inside. Police were alerted when there was no response to repeated knocks on the door. "When the door was broken down, police found the room was empty but the bathroom was locked from inside. On breaking down the bathroom door, Ruth's body was found on the floor, while David was hanging from one of the pipes of the geyser," said Boken. No FIR has been registered yet, he added. ENS

## IIMC students begin hunger strike over fee

New Delhi: Some students of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) Tuesday began a hunger strike demanding affordable fee. Earlier, 12 students who were protesting the 10% fee hike had been placed under academic suspension for five days for alleged indiscipline. "In December, the administration announced the formation of a committee that would submit its recommendations by March 2 on the fee issue. However, on February 10, they released a circular to deposit fees. Students are angry with this

attitude of the administration and have decided to go on a hunger strike to demand an affordable fee structure," said the students in a statement. The IIMC appealed to students to call off the hunger strike, and said the decision was taken in an EC meeting, saying, "The course fee charged is as per the information given in the prospectus." IIMC said that a "committee to look into the entire issue of fee structure has been constituted and a final view would be taken once its report is finalised/examined". ENS

## Jamia student who lost sight in 1 eye wins award

New Delhi: Mohammad Minhajuddin, the Jamia student who lost vision in one eye in alleged police violence on December 15, Tuesday won the best paper award at a multi disciplinary conference organised by the Jamia Teachers' Association. Incidentally, he was working on the same paper when he was allegedly attacked in the library. ENS

## JNU decides to set up alumni endowment fund

New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru University Tuesday decided in its Executive Council meeting to set up a JNU Alumni Endowment fund to achieve "financial self-sufficiency". V-C M Jagadeesh Kumar made a pitch to alumni to

make donations. "On behalf of JNU, I passionately appeal to the JNU alumni to come forward and generously make your contributions. Let us keep a target of raising Rs 100 crore by the end of this year..." he said. ENS

**PANJAB UNIVERSITY CHANDIGARH**  
Corrigendum in Advt No. 01/2020  
It is for information of the eligible candidates that the last date for receipt of applications for the post of Dean College Development Council - 01 and Chief of University Security - 01 has been extended up to 28 February 2020 by 4:00 p.m. The details of advertisement consisting of qualifications, application forms and detailed instructions etc. are available on P.U. website: jobs.puchd.ac.in. The candidates are also requested to visit University website regularly for updations. REGISTRAR

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**KIDWAI MEMORIAL INSTITUTE OF ONCOLOGY**  
GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION  
Dr. M.H.Marigowda Road, Bengaluru - 560 029.  
Phone: 91-80-26560722(Dir), 26094000 Fax: 080-26560723

No.KMIO/EST-1/44/2019-20 Date: 18.02.2020

### NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited from eligible candidates for the following Group-A Posts (Teaching), in the prescribed format, in Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, Bangalore and Peripheral Cancer Centre, Kalburgi.

**Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, Bangalore.**

**I. Associate Professor:**

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	Pay Scale (AICTE Pay Scale)	No. of Post	Classification
01.	Associate Professor of Surgical Oncology	37,400-67,000+AGP 9,000/-	01	GM-01

**II. Assistant Professor:**

Sl. No.	Name of the Posts	Pay Scale (AICTE Pay Scale)	No. of Posts	Classification
01.	Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	06	Residuary Cadre: Category No. of Posts GM 05 SC 02
02.	Assistant Professor of Radiodiagnosis	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	04	Category - II(a) 01 Category - III(a) 01 Category - III(b) 01 Total Posts 10
03.	Assistant Professor of Medical Oncology	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	04	Residuary Cadre: Backlog Posts: Category No. of Posts GM 01 (1-PH) ST 02 (1-PH, 1-Rural) Category - II(a) 04 (2-Rural, 01-others 01 Ex-Service man)
04.	Assistant Professor of Gyneacological Oncology	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	01	Category - II(b) 02 (1-Woman, 1-PH) Category - III(a) 01 (1-PH) Category - III(b) 02 (1-Rural, 1-PH) Total Posts 12
05.	Assistant Professor of Head & Neck Oncology	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	01	Local Cadre (371-J): Backlog Posts: Category No. of Posts SC 01 ST 01 Category - II(a) 01 Total Posts 03
06.	Assistant Professor of Nuclear Medicine	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	02	
07.	Assistant Professor of Pathology (Cytology)	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	01	
08.	Assistant Professor of Radiation Physics	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	06	
<b>Total No. of Posts</b>			<b>25</b>	

Peripheral Cancer Centre, Kalburgi:

**III. Assistant Professor:**

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	Pay Scale (AICTE Pay Scale)	No. of Posts	Classification
01.	Assistant Professor of Radiodiagnosis	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	01	Backlog Posts: Residuary Cadre: ST : 01 Post
02.	Assistant Professor of Radiation Physics	15600-39100+AGP 8,000/-	01	Local Cadre (371-J) GM(PH):01 Post
<b>Total No. of Posts</b>			<b>02</b>	

Note: For eligibility criteria and other details please visit the website of the Institute: [www.kmio.org](http://www.kmio.org). Age limit: For SC/ST, Category-I-40 years, for IIA, IIB, IIIA & IIIB-38 years and for GM-35 years on the last date prescribed for receipt of applications. Relaxation in upper age limit to the candidates will be considered by the Selection Committee. Last date for receipt of Application is on 19.03.2020 at 4.00 PM. Applications received after the due date will not be entertained. Guidelines for submitting the applications can be downloaded from the Institute website: [www.kmio.org](http://www.kmio.org).

Sd/-  
Director

**DELHI POLICE SHANTI SEWA NYAYA**

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**BRIEFLY**

**The Park hotel loses health, trade licences**

New Delhi: Following the suspension of its fire safety licence, The Park Hotel has now lost its health and trade licences as well. A spokesperson from the New Delhi Municipal Council said: "Due to non-compliance of the hotel over fire-safety norms, the NDMC has suspended their licence." This comes after fire broke out in the basement of the hotel. Nine Norwegian nationals were injured due to smoke inhalation. **ENS**

**Road closed for airport expansion**

New Delhi: The Delhi airport Tuesday advised passengers to leave 10-15 minutes early as a road connecting it with Rangpuri on NH-8 will be closed for over a year to carry out airport expansion work. Traffic coming from Rangpuri roundabout will be diverted to central spine road, connecting terminals 2 and 3 from Mahipalpur, the Delhi International Airport Limited said in a statement. **PTI**

**25 students join DUSU foreign cell**

New Delhi: From Nepal to Africa, 25 international students Tuesday joined the Delhi University Students' Union's foreign cell led by the National Students' Union of India. NSUI national secretary and Delhi in-charge Nikhil Kamble said the union would also help address problems faced by students from abroad at the university, such as lack of seats in international hostel. **ENS**

**OSD gets bail**

New Delhi: A special court granted bail to Gopal Krishna Madhav, a Delhi government officer and officer on special duty (OSD) to Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who was arrested in a bribery case. **ENS**

**Former BSP leader among 6 dead in highway wreck**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 18

SIX PERSONS, including former BSP leader Surjeet Singh and a Lok Janshakti Party candidate in the Delhi polls, Vikram (40), died after a speeding Volvo bus crashed into a divider and hit Singh's SUV on the other side of the road. The incident, which took place on the Agra-Lucknow expressway in Kanpur early Tuesday, also left several injured. Singh (45), who contested against AAP's Manish Sisodia as an independent, was on his way to Delhi with four friends after attending a wedding. The other victims have been identified as Sunny (30), Mukesh (35), Ramashankar (48) and bus driver Jitendra (38).

Prima facie, the driver of the bus, attached to the Bihar Transport Corporation, fell asleep and lost control of the vehicle, police said.

"Around 1 am, as the bus was going towards Bihar's Muzaffarpur from Agra, the driver fell asleep at the wheel and turned right towards the 215-km milestone on the expressway. The bus broke the divider, came on the other side of the road and collided with the Fortuner car at a high speed. All five persons in the SUV and the bus driver died on the spot," said Janardan Pratap Singh, SHO of Bilhaur police station.

"Passersby informed police and around 10-12 persons in the bus who suffered minor injuries were rushed to a nearby hospital. They are all out of danger. The impact was such that the SUV was crushed to half its size. As per passengers, while the bus was moving at around 100 kmph, the SUV was moving just as fast," Singh added.

The SHO said an FIR in the



Ex-BSP leader Surjeet Singh

case is under process. Police said Singh was a BSP leader and a corporator from East Delhi's Mayur Vihar Phase 1. He is survived by his wife and their four children.

"We were excited, as my younger son was getting married on February 25. Surjeet had planned the whole wedding. I was sleeping when I got a call from police saying he had met with an accident. Later, we saw the news that he was dead. I was shocked, I wish he didn't go for his friend's wedding," said Dhanpal, Surjeet's father.

Vikram had contested the polls from Trilokpuri on an LJP ticket. His sister Geeta said, "Vikram had shifted to Delhi with his wife, Pooja, 10 years ago. I was informed about the accident at 2 am. Pooja left with her children for Kanpur. The children still don't know about their father's death. He was a financier, but also wanted to win the election and help people. I spoke to him on Sunday... he told me to come to Delhi to meet him."

Singh's friends, Mukesh and Ramashankar, also lived in Mayur Vihar Phase 1. Mukesh lived with his wife, parents and three elder brothers, and worked at the Karkardooma court. Ramashankar worked with Singh during the polls and owned a department store in Vasundhara Enclave, Mayur Vihar.



MLA Saurabh Bharadwaj at the Sundar Kand paath. A narrow lane just outside a Shiv temple in Chirag Dilli was the venue for the paath on Tuesday. Gajendra Yadav

**In Bharadwaj constituency, monthly Sundar Kand paath**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

A 'Sundar Kand' paath held in Chirag Delhi Tuesday by Aam Aadmi Party spokesperson and Greater Kailash MLA Saurabh Bharadwaj was the first of many such paaths that will be held every first Tuesday of the month in his constituency.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Bharadwaj said he was hopeful that "almost 20 other MLAs" who have shown an interest in the event would also hold it in their constituencies soon.

Explaining the idea behind the paath, Bharadwaj said, "This started a month ago when (Delhi CM) Arvind Kejriwal visited a Hanuman temple and the BJP made fun of him. He then recited the *Hanuman Chalisa* and the BJP made fun of him... The election

results were declared on a Tuesday, on the day of Hanuman, and we decided that we will not let the BJP forget this Tuesday and Hanuman. So that's why we are doing it."

Later in the day, he tweeted, "BJP/Congress leaders may be fuming but people, irrespective of their political views, are happy to be part of Sundar Kand paath. It's so positive."

Speaking to *ANI*, Bharadwaj also said that he had "received advanced bookings as well as sponsors for the programmes". At Chirag Delhi, a narrow lane just outside a Shiv temple was the venue for the paath Tuesday, where idols of Lord Ram, Hanuman and other deities were kept. Residents, along with Bharadwaj, offered prayers and recited bhajans.

The crowd of largely middle-aged or elderly residents who gathered for the paath praised

the initiative.

Chirag Delhi resident Suman Dagar (55) said, "The election results had come on a Tuesday, which is the day of Lord Hanuman, and it was a great result. So it's important to thank him for it, right? We like Saurabh ji very much, so we came here, and also to seek blessings of god."

Savitri (62), a resident of Sheikh Sarai, said the event was a good way to create a community space. "Saurabh doesn't have any ego and always greets us whenever he gets the chance. Functions like these are good for him and the party," she said.

Mamta Verma, an AAP volunteer, said, "This is a purification of sort, which everyone needs, and it is important for the party too. The BJP thinks only they are Hindus; this is not the case."

**At meet, Gambhir raises slow pace of work at Ghazipur landfill**

**ABHINAV RAJPUT**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

EAST DELHI MP Gautam Gambhir expressed displeasure at the Parliamentary Standing Committee meeting held on Monday over the slow pace of work in decreasing the height of the Ghazipur landfill, it learnt.

Sources said Gambhir highlighted that government agencies and MCDs were not taking substantial steps to remove the

residue left after the trommelling process. He is also learnt to have expressed disappointment over the quality of water being supplied in areas around the site.

In September 2017, two people had died after a part of the landfill, which should have been closed 17 years ago as it had exceeded its capacity, collapsed. It is among four dump sites in the capital, spread over 70 acres and taller than a 15-storey building. The mountain of trash is a stark reminder of administrative apathy

and the capital's struggle with waste management.

The East MCD has started segregating and processing 640 metric tonnes of waste dumped daily at the landfill through a trommel-cum-ballistic machine. The machine, divided in four parts, will help segregate construction and demolition waste, plastic, inert soil and inert waste.

Sources said while construction and demolition waste is taken to waste-to-energy plants, it is inert soil and waste that is not

being carried away from the site.

Besides Gambhir, East MCD municipal commissioner Dilraj Kaur, senior Delhi Jal Board officials and some politicians were present at Monday's meeting.

Gambhir said water in the area had deteriorated to such an extent that it is visibly yellow in most households near the site. Now that polls are over, he said there should be a joint effort to solve the problem. Kaur said, "We are in talks with NHAI for using the inert waste in making roads."

Gambhir told *The Indian Express*, "This is the Asia's biggest landfill; the problem can't be solved just by civic agencies which do not even have enough money to pay staff. The Centre, Delhi government and MCDs will have to join hands to solve this."

"Everyone's garbage is thrown here and responsibility to clean it should also be taken by everyone... I have written to CM Arvind Kejriwal asking him to set aside a date and time to visit the area," he said.

**AS PART OF CURRICULUM**

**Delhi govt to enrol 17,000 entrepreneurs for its schools**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

TO PROMOTE the Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC) in its schools, the Delhi government is set to enrol 17,000 entrepreneurs and volunteers to engage with students. The decision was taken at a review meeting held Tuesday, a day after the newly sworn-in ministers took over their respective departments.

EMC was started in 2019-20 to instill an entrepreneurial mindset in students. It has been developed by SCERT Delhi, with help from teachers and NGOs, and focuses on providing real-life experiences to students that can help them become responsible professionals.

"We need to create a pool of 17,000 entrepreneurs... There is a need to inculcate an entrepreneurial mindset amongst our students, for which live interactions with entrepreneurs will play a very important part. Our entrepreneurs' recollection of their journey will help students learn from real-life experiences. During the sessions, we should have a two-way interaction between students and entrepreneurs in a small setting of 30-40 for better communication and understanding," said Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Last year, 4,000 entrepreneurs had interacted with 3 lakh students.



Education Minister Manish Sisodia

Senior officials said the government is also planning to give seed money to students of classes XI and XII for field projects, which will roll out in April and July for both classes.

"We will give out seed money of Rs 1,000 to each student for their field project. They will be involved in entrepreneurial activities, which will enable them to 'think-out-of-the-box' and take on a solution-centric approach. We are also aiming to kick-start our training sessions for officers, mentor teachers and EMC coordinators by April. This will facilitate smooth implementation and execution of the EMC programme," said Sisodia.

Senior officials said another component of the EMC is a micro-research project. This aims to involve 7 lakh students in interviewing their neighbours and relatives who are into various professions. Through structured interviews, students will learn about different career choices available to them.

**Ghazipur landfill**



Gambhir visited the landfill, Tuesday. Abhinav Saha

**Lockdown to national anthem, how students spent week in Wuhan amid virus outbreak**

**SAKSHI DAYAL**  
MANESAR, FEBRUARY 18

"TERRIFYING" IS how many of the 148 evacuees, housed at a quarantine facility in Manesar for the last two weeks, described their experience in coronavirus-hit Wuhan in the days leading up to their departure. Many said that even as they were landing in India on February 1-2, they couldn't stop thinking of several of their friends of other nationalities, who remained trapped in Wuhan, hoping to be "rescued" by their own governments.

Murmurs of a virus, many said, started surfacing in November last year. But it was only in January that they realised the gravity of the situation.

"Initially, the Chinese government tried to downplay the infection... When the symptoms finally became difficult to ignore, the situation deteriorated massively," said a student from Wuhan.

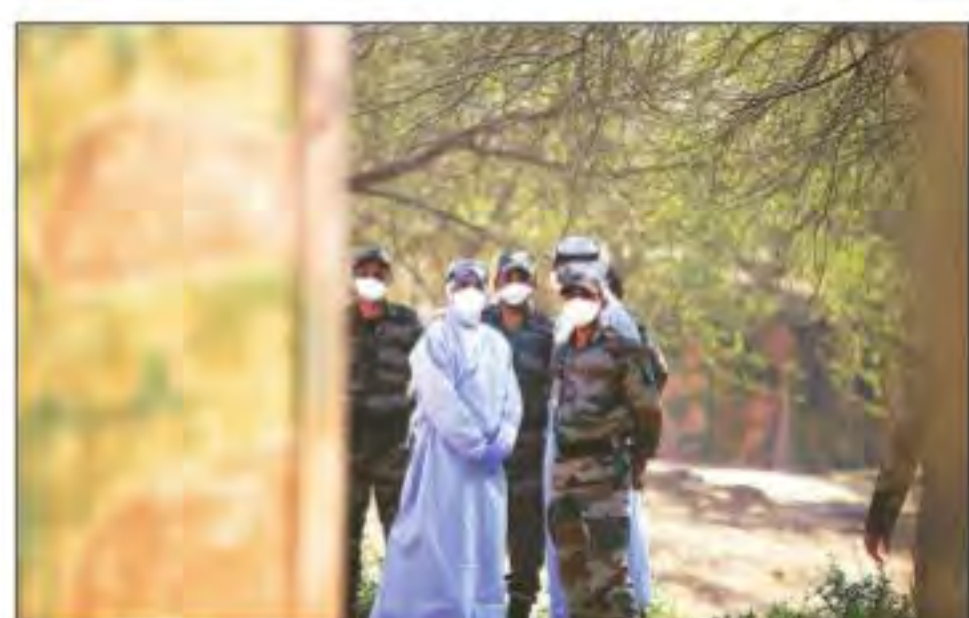
"Around New Year, we found out how serious things were. We had holidays then, so we had planned to travel, but suddenly all our tickets and hotel bookings were cancelled," he added.

The evacuees, mostly students aged between 19 and 24, said the city went into lockdown on January 23. "We were all restricted to our rooms and homes. Even Embassy officials could not come in, so we had to communicate with them through other means," said another student.

Between January 23 and 30, people were allowed to venture out of their homes only between 10 am and 5 pm. Between 6 pm and 9 pm, everyone was asked



The evacuees, mostly students, had arrived in India on February 1-2. They were released from the Manesar facility on Tuesday. Gajendra Yadav



to keep their doors and windows closed, since "they used to do some kind of chemical fumigation". Food shortage, they said, was a constant concern.

Another student said, "There was no entertainment, nothing to keep people motivated, so the

government would do things like telling people to sing the national anthem together. They would tell people that at 8 pm, you all have to sing the national anthem from your balconies."

"Before us, the French and the Americans had left. The day

we left, we saw many locals roaming around in parks without masks; it was as if they had surrendered to fate," said a student. "We managed to escape, but there are still students of other nationalities who are stuck there."

Even as students completed the formalities to return to India, Indian Army personnel were working towards setting up a facility for them in Manesar, chosen due to its distance from the main city, with fencing on the perimeter, allowing a "clear cut divide".

Setting up the facility, divided into 14 barracks — 10 capable of

housing 22 people each, and four housing eight people each — was a tough task that had to be completed in three days.

"We were told on the 27th, we had to set up this facility. News had, by then, also spread that people from Wuhan were coming here, so many civilians got scared. Some contractors for the food backed out; as did people hired for collecting biomedical waste," said Major General Rashmi Dutta.

"The wiring also needed to be taken care of, and our Army personnel who were trained in this had to be deployed here because civilians had backed out."

Although there were initial problems like bathrooms falling short and lack of hot water, evacuees *The Indian Express* spoke to maintained they were satisfied with the facility overall.

"Toilets here were not functional when we were allotted this task, so while we were fixing them, we got portable toilets for students. The ones available to us were those used for the Republic Day function, so we mobilised those and also asked for more... hot water was also available for more time within three-four days... some students got a little worried but we told them their complaints were being resolved," said Major General Dutta.

In the two weeks the evacuees spent at the facility, regular conversations with their families and the food provided to them kept their spirits up. Both of these, officials said, were intentionally given special focus.

"We wanted to give them good food so they felt happy. Lots of variety was also given, because evacuees were from across the country. The aim was to ensure they were not stressed, which is why we allowed them to keep their phones," said the Major General.

Although the evacuees were released on Tuesday, with buses being arranged to transport them to the railway station, airport or bus stop, officials said they have been issued an advisory on follow-up and care needed, and have been directed to alert officials if they experience any cough or cold in the next 14 days.

**Quarantined but not isolated, say those leaving ITBP facility**

**ASTHA SAXENA**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

FROM A 72-year-old man to a pregnant woman and an infant, 406 people who were evacuated from China shared a common roof for two weeks at the Indo Tibetan Border Police facility in Outer Delhi's Chhawla. Hailing from different parts of the country, and placed under quarantine away from their families, they became each other's support system.

On Monday, all of them were given certificates saying they had tested negative for coronavirus. While 358 people have left for their homes, the remaining 48 are expected to leave by Tuesday night or Wednesday morning.

Recalling his experience at the facility, Mukul Kumar (24), who reached his home in East Delhi's Mayur Vihar Phase 1 on Monday night, said, "We used to gather in the common area for medical check-ups and dinner... It was the best time to interact with each other. I learned so many other languages. It was all together a different experience." A second-year student of medicine at Hubei University, Kumar will be attending virtual classes till the situation improves in China.

Attending to the varied food requirements of the people, the team posted at the facility said efforts were made to give them a homely feel.

"All of them were scared on the first day. After initial test reports, which turned out to be negative, they were more relaxed. We had people from Kerala, Maharashtra, Bihar, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and



While most have left the facility, 48 more people are set to leave Wednesday

even from Maldives. We made sure all of them get their choice of food. The woman who was pregnant was given an ample diet and doctors regularly checked up on her. The infant was provided a diet full of milk and the oldest member of the facility was provided food as per his need. We all lived like a family," said Dr Harvinder Singh, who was posted at the facility.

Dr Singh said he has been receiving messages from those who have left. "Everyone is healthy, this is what we were hoping for. It's the biggest reward for us," he said, while checking the final list of people who are set to leave.

A group of students from Kerala, who left Monday night, said the facility turned out to be a common meeting place for Indian students who never met in China despite living there for years.

"We were worried about how we will be airlifted to India. We sent an email to the Indian Embassy and authorities were quick to arrange facilities. In this facility, we have met so many people who have been living in China for so long... We have exchanged numbers and will stay in touch now," said Rubik Roy, a student.

# 6 GOVT & POLITICS



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

**WORK CUT OUT**

BJP PRESIDENT J P Nadda on Tuesday appointed party general secretary P Muralidhar Rao as the Centre's observer to elect a Leader of Opposition in Jharkhand Assembly. While the party won 25 seats in the 81-member House, Rao's job will be to make all of them agree to former Jharkhand CM Babul Marandi taking the post. Marandi's JVM(P), which had split from the BJP, has just merged back with the saffron party. Although Marandi could not bring two fellow MLAs along with him to the BJP, it seems the party leadership is determined to assign him the job of Leader of Opposition. On Tuesday, Nadda also appointed another BJP general secretary, Saroj Pande, to oversee the election of a legislature party leader for BJP in Delhi Assembly, where the party's tally has gone up from three to eight. Both Rao and Pande have tough jobs ahead.

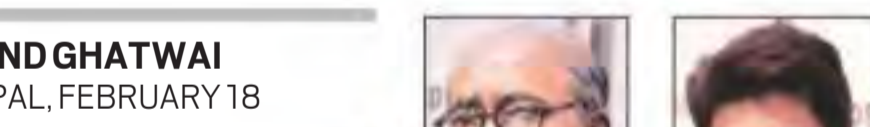
**IN MEMORY**

LESS THAN a week after the government named two prominent institutes under the External Affairs Ministry after former minister Sushma Swaraj, the government has decided to honour, in a similar manner, another late leader who held an important portfolio in the previous term of the Narendra Modi government. The Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, a premier defence think tank, has been rechristened Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses. The government said in a statement it has been done to "honour the commitment and legacy" of the former Defence minister. The IDSA is headed by the Defence Minister.

**RECRUITMENT ON TRACK**

THE RAILWAYS had written to UPSC and asked it to withdraw the indent it had placed to recruit officers from Civil Services Examination and the Engineering Services Examination for this year since all eight Group-A services are slated to be merged into a single Indian Railway Management Service. The UPSC, however, brought out examination notification recently which indicated that recruitment to the Railway services are also on the cards through UPSC exams this year. It turns out that irrespective of the notification, the vacancy against each Railway service would be nil, as the Railways would indicate that it does not intend to recruit anyone from these exams for its eight organised services.

**MP: Proposal to send Priyanka to RS puts Digvijaya, Scindia's claims in a spot**



**MILIND GHATAWAI**  
BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 18

WITH THE tenure of three Rajya Sabha members from Madhya Pradesh ending on April 9, a campaign on behalf of, and against, the hopefuls in ruling Congress and opposition BJP has begun.

Speculation and whisper campaign about who will succeed former chief minister and senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh, and BJP leaders Prabhakar Jha and Satyanarayan Jatia, are doing the rounds of both party headquarters.

For the first time in 16 years, Rajya Sabha polls will be held in the state with BJP in Opposition. Given the current arithmetic, the Congress is set to win two of three seats, with one likely for BJP.

It will take 58 first-preference votes to win. In the 230-member Assembly, there are two vacancies caused by death of two MLAs. The Congress's current strength is 114 and BJP has 107 MLAs. The Kamal Nath government enjoys support of four Independents, one Samajwadi Party MLA and two BSP members.

In the backdrop of the sabre-rattling between Chief Minister Nath and former Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, PWD Minister Sajjan Singh Varma, seen as close to Nath, set the cat among the pigeons by suddenly making a pitch for Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to be sent to the Upper House from MP.

A vocal opponent of Digvijaya Singh, Varma had opened a front against the senior leader when he had filed his Rajya Sabha nomination in 2014. His latest move puts both Scindia, who is hoping for a Rajya Sabha berth, and Singh, who hopes to continue, in awkward position. Immediately after he

# BJP MLAs meet Shettar, trigger talk of dissidence in Karnataka unit

**JOHNSON T A & LIZ MATHEW**  
BENGALURU, NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

A MEETING held by senior BJP leaders who have been denied Cabinet posts in the B S Yediyurappa government in Karnataka and an unsigned letter being circulated on social media seeking replacement of Yediyurappa, who turns 77 this month, has triggered speculation of dissidence brewing in the BJP.

On Monday evening, a group of senior BJP MLAs — Umesh Katti, Murugesh Nirani, Arvind Bellad and Shankar Patil Munenkoppa — met former chief minister Jagadish Shettar, who now holds the Industries portfolio, at his residence. All these MLAs were aspirants for ministerial posts but were not inducted into the Yediyurappa Cabinet in the recent expansion, when only 10 rebels from the Congress and JD(S) — who helped the BJP establish a clear majority in the Assembly — were inducted as ministers.

A day later, the party — both at the state and central level — played down the meeting. Shettar himself denied organising a meeting of dissidents. He rushed to Yediyurappa's home for a breakfast meeting in the morning to clarify that some senior party MLAs had met him regarding issues pertaining to the industries ministry in their constituencies, and no dissident activities had taken place.

"I did not hold any meeting of the MLAs. A few MLAs came to my residence to discuss issues in their constituencies. People keep coming to meet me and I cannot stop them," Shettar said. "It was not a meeting of dissidents. I have explained to the chief minister," he said.

The Yediyurappa camp also rejected speculation of dissidence in the party. "Some rumours were spread by a disgruntled former assistant of the CM of a meeting of dissidents. There is no such activity or concern in the government," said an associate of the Chief Minister.

In Delhi, the party's central leadership firmly backed



Yediyurappa, Shettar

Yediyurappa, saying there is no other leader in the state who enjoys such public support. "There is no threat to Yediyurappa or his government," said BJP general secretary P Muralidhar Rao.

Party sources termed the developments as "pressure tactics" by state leaders. "Those who could not be accommodated (in the Cabinet)... are miffed with the state leadership. There are many senior party leaders who are waiting in the wings to succeed Yediyurappa. They just want to keep the political scene active there," said a senior party leader.

"There is pressure from both the groups. In fact, the state unit is facing an issue of plenty of com-

petent leaders," the leader said.

According to sources, some senior party leaders have communicated their differences and disillusionment with Yediyurappa's style of functioning. A BJP leader admitted that some of them had expressed displeasure over "interference" by Yediyurappa's son, B Y Vijayendra, in the functioning of the government. "There are complaints that he acts like a super CM in the state," said the leader.

However, sources said, the national leadership is "strongly backing" Yediyurappa. "He is the most popular leader and the party has experienced huge losses by antagonising him," said a BJP leader.

Among the MLAs who met at Shettar's residence on Monday, Umesh Katti has been aggrieved over losing out on a Cabinet position despite winning eight elections. He recently met BJP central leaders in Delhi, in what is believed to be an attempt to muster support for his candidature. Murugesh Nirani, a former industries minister, has also been canvassing for a post.

## 'NITISH CAN'T CHOOSE BETWEEN GANDHI AND GODSE' Prashant Kishor floats initiative for 'alternative' politics in Bihar

**SANTOSH SINGH**  
PATNA, FEBRUARY 18

POLL STRATEGIST Prashant Kishor on Tuesday announced a new political initiative — 'Baat Bihar Ki' — that aims to bring together nearly 10 lakh people on issues related to the youth and development at the panchayat level within 100 days.

Announcing the initiative, Kishor said, "Let me settle all speculation... I am not here to help any party or alliance win or lose, but to offer a mid-term or long-term idea of a new Bihar in the coming 10 years. My 100-day plan involves hitting the base in all Bihar panchayats and to create a platform from the aspiration of youths."



Prashant Kishor at a press conference in Patna. Ashok Sinha

He said about three lakh people from all sections of society at the panchayat level had already registered with his initiative and another seven lakh members would be added over the next 100 days. Asked if he would still work for the RJD or Congress, he said, "I have made it clear that I am not going to be associated with any party in any manner."

Kishor, who was expelled from the JD(U) last month, also hit out at Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, saying he was caught between "Gandhi and Godse". He

said that his ouster from the JD(U) was because of "conflicting ideological positions", especially due to Kumar's stand on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and ambivalence on National Population Register.

Kishor said the CM may have brought development to Bihar "in comparison to what Lalu Prasad did" but the development indices remain dismal when compared to other states. "In 2005, we were in 22th position in per capita income, we stood there in 2015. Still, Nitish Kumar thinks that he is the sole-bearer of growth and development. It is only because no one is trying to show him the correct picture," said Kishor.

Saying he treated Nitish as "a father figure", Kishor added, "But

we differed because of two reasons — his ideological position under the given politics of hyper-nationalism and bipolar polity of the BJP under garb of CAA-NPR-NRC, and his failure to effect development after his return to NDA. Did he get special category status for Bihar? He had requested Central university status for Patna University from the Prime Minister with hands folded. But is there even a single correspondence on this?"

Taking a dig at Union Home Minister Amit Shah, he said that it was "preposterous that a man from Gujarat is coming here and saying that Nitish will be the leader in the next poll".

"Hasn't Nitish Kumar been a leader for 13 years? Does he

**EXPLAINED**

**Focus on grassroots**

PRASHANT KISHOR'S idea is offering "alternative politics" at the panchayat and village levels with his new initiative. He says if there is a force of 1,000 youth in each panchayat, they would be change agents of alternative politics in his long-term plan. However, the initiative is also being seen as a bid to cut into Nitish Kumar's political support base and create a new one. The only question is how soon and what manner of alternative politics Kishor offers — especially when caste plays a significant role in the state's politics.

need anyone to say this?" asked Kishor adding that it would not matter if he remained the Chief Minister for two more years.

## TN denies Centre's claim on secondary school dropouts

**ARUN JANARDHANAN**  
CHENNAI, FEBRUARY 18

TAMIL NADU Education Minister K A Sengottaiyan has told the Assembly that the data released by the Centre on the dropout rate in classes 9 and 10 was incorrect. Responding to a question, he rejected the Centre's claim that the number of dropouts had doubled in three years from 2015-16 to 2017-18, and said data available with the state government shows a lower dropout rate of 3.7 per cent for this period.

Terming the data submitted by Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal in Parliament last week as "wrong", Sengottaiyan Monday said the state had written to the Centre to find out the basis on which the minister gave such figures.

"There is no reply from the Centre till now," he said.

According to the Union minister, Tamil Nadu recorded a 16.2 per cent dropout rate in classes 9 and 10 in 2017-18 as compared to 8 per cent in 2015-16, citing the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE). According to the data, the state secondary level dropout rate was 8.1 per cent in 2015-16 and 10 per cent in 2016-17.



K A Sengottaiyan, Ramesh Pokhriyal

According to the Centre's data, states such as Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Karnataka had managed to bring down their school dropout rate at the secondary level.

A senior education department official said they had already challenged the Centre's data in their official communication. "It is just like how Niti Aayog's 'Healthy States Progressive India Report (2017-18)' gave a poor ranking for Tamil Nadu based on data they collected and analysed using ambiguous methods."

In July 2019, the National Health Index had ranked Tamil Nadu ninth in the country despite remarkable performance in quality and affordable healthcare over the years.

"Tamil Nadu's data collection

method in school education system is one of the best in the country ever since an efficient software was brought in after 2011 with a unique number for each and every student in our schools. This contains essential information, including name, age, school and community details of each student. This database is updated whenever a student is transferred from one school to another or disappears from regular list. More importantly, this covers not only government and government-aided schools but private schools in the state as well. When we have these stringent data collection methods, Centre's methods are more relaxed, diluted, random and loosely defined as several states lack such data systems. This is the reason why our performance and best models fail to get recognition," the official said.

Educationist Prince Gajendrababu said that the state government's reply is not acceptable. "They should publicise the letter they wrote to the Centre. Did they assert the authenticity of state data, its source and questioned the grounds on which the Centre disputes it? It is fishy on either side as it is the state that supplies data to Centre," he said.

## SC reserves judgment in Fadnavis poll affidavit case

**VIVEK DESHPANDE**  
NAGPUR, FEBRUARY 18

THE SUPREME COURT on Tuesday completed hearing former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis's review petition in the 2014 poll affidavit case and reserved its judgment.

Fadnavis had moved the Supreme Court last month against its judgment on his previous plea that had quashed an order of the Bombay High Court's Nagpur bench exonerating Fadnavis for not mentioning two criminal cases in his affidavit. The High Court had given him relief by quashing a sessions court order finding merit in petitioner Satish Uke's claim that Fadnavis ought to have mentioned the two cases dating back to 1996 and 1998.

On October 1, 2019, a bench led by then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi had upheld the plea by Uke against Fadnavis's exoneration by the High Court and ordered retrial in the case.

Meanwhile, the retrial is on in a Nagpur court, which had directed Fadnavis to be present. The latter, however, skipped appearance on four occasions citing different reasons. The next hearing is on February 20.

## Bihar: Oppn props up Sharad in bid to take down Tejashwi; RJD says no way

**PRADEEP KAUSHAL**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

THE OPPOSITION in Bihar, led by Lalu Prasad's RJD, may be looking at a leadership tussle as the stage is laid for the Assembly elections, due in October-November this year.

While non-Congress alliance partners such as Rashtriya Lok Samata Party (RLSP), Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) and Hindustani Awam Morcha-Secular (HAM-S) are trying to project multiple-time Parliamentarian Sharad Yadav as the Opposition's chief ministerial face, seen more as a ploy to remove Lalu's son and Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav from the leadership role, the RJD seems to be in no mood to oblige.



Sharad, Tejashwi

Lalu, who is in jail in Ranchi in a fodder scam case, is learnt to have been informed of reservations of some of the allies on Tejashwi's leadership but was not receptive to any suggestion for change. In what is being seen as a firm rejection of that proposal, Tejashwi is poised to undertake a state-wide "Berozgar hatao (remove unemployment) yatra" from February 23.

The Congress indicated that the leadership issue is still open. Sharad Yadav, 72, has been in national politics for decades. Elected to Lok Sabha seven times and Rajya Sabha thrice, he is unlikely to be in the running for the CM's position. His name is seen as having been set afloat to set the stage for a change, and take the leadership mantle from the hands of Tejashwi, or any other member of Lalu Prasad's family so long as the former Bihar CM remains in jail.

Kushwaha pitched in for a change of leadership after a meeting with Sahni and HAM(S) leader and former CM Jitan Ram Majhi. The three leaders also met Sharad Yadav. Calling Sharad a "highly respected leader", Kushwaha said, "The Grand Alliance is plagued by leadership crisis in the absence of Lalu Prasad. It would be beneficial if Sharad-ji is projected as the coalition's face."

"Sharad-ji will be an ideal choice," Sahni said in endorsement.

Sharad himself said, "I am always happy to offer my services and carry out whatever responsibilities I am assigned."

But RJD spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha promptly stated that there is "no alternative to Tejashwi", while RJD vice-president Raghuvansh Prasad Singh indicated that Tejashwi is an obvious choice for CM candidate. Singh said: "Sharad Yadav is a national leader. He cannot be confined to a state-specific role."

Congress spokesperson Rajesh Rathore said: "The question of leadership will be decided jointly by all constituents at an appropriate time. Until then, people are free to express their opinion."

Tejashwi had made his debut in electoral politics in 2015 on a promising note, first as deputy CM to Nitish in the Grand Alliance government, and later as the Leader of Opposition after Nitish's return to NDA. But he gradually lost traction for a variety of reasons. The result was the RJD drew a blank in 2019 Lok Sabha polls, a first since Lalu founded the party in 1997.

## INX Media: Court reserves order on bail plea of 6 ex-FIPB officers

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

A DELHI court on Tuesday reserved its order on bail pleas of six former Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) bureaucrats in the INX Media case, in which former Union minister P Chidambaram and his son Karti are accused.

The court also directed the CBI to hand over copies of certain deficient documents to all the

accused in the INX Media case. Special Judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar will pronounce the order on Wednesday.

The bureaucrats include Ajeet Kumar Durgdung, then Section Officer; Rabindra Prasad, then Under Secretary; Prabhod Saxena, director, FIPB unit of Finance Ministry; Pradeep Kumar Bagga, then Officer on Special Duty; Anup K Pujari, then Joint Secretary; and Sundhresh Khullar, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs.

# 7 EXPRESS NETWORK



## NORTH

### Buddhist monks on peace mission stopped at Pak border

**Barmer:** Thirteen Buddhist monks on a global peace mission from Thailand to France had to return from Barmer after they were not allowed to undertake further journey to neighbouring Pakistan through Rajasthan's Munabao border. According to a police official, they were

stopped from entering the area restricted for foreigners in Barmer, over 100 kilometres away from the Indo-Pakistan border. Now, they will go to the Attari-Wagah border crossing, a police official said. The monks have a valid visa for India and Pakistan. **PTI**



Congress workers protest against the hike in the prices of LPG cylinders in Coimbatore on Tuesday. **PTI**

## EAST

### Police officer, three others arrested for snatching gold

**Malda (WB):** Four persons, including a junior police officer and a civic volunteer were arrested in connection with the snatching of one-and-half-kg gold valued at Rs 50 lakh, the police said on Tuesday. All the four were produced before a local court on Tuesday and remanded to police custody for six days. The snatching had reportedly

taken place here in May, 2019 when the gold was allegedly being taken to Kolkata from Malda, the police said. A verbal complaint was lodged with the Malda police after the incident but the written one was submitted six months later in November that year. The police investigation was launched after it, the police said. **PTI**

## WEST

### Goa govt bans drinking during carnival float parades

**Panaji:** Consumption of liquor in public will not be allowed during the famous Goa Carnival float parades from this year, the state government said on Tuesday. Unveiling the programme for the Carnival 2020 celebrations, which will be held between February 22 and February 25, Tourism Minister Manohar Ajaonkar said, "People

won't be allowed to drink on streets while they watch the float parades". The move is part of the ban on drinking in public places which is already in force in Goa, he said. Shalom Sardinha, a lawyer, has been selected as King Momo — a mythological figure which heads float parades organised by the state tourism department — this year. **PTI**

## SOUTH

### 'Cyanide' Mohan gets life term in 19th murder case

**Mangaluru:** Notorious serial killer 'Cyanide' Mohan has been sentenced to life imprisonment by a court here for the murder of a 23-year-old woman from Kasaragod district of Kerala in 2006, the 19th of the 20 murder cases slapped against him. Sixth additional district and sessions court judge Sayeedunnisa on Monday

sentenced Mohan to life and imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on him. The sentence shall commence after he serves the sentences in the other cases, the judge said. Earlier, he had been awarded the death sentence in five cases and life imprisonment in three cases. Two of the death penalties were later commuted to life in jail. **PTI**

## J&K: Panchayat by-elections deferred after parties meet CEO

Poll official cites no reason; inputs from Home regarding security issues

**ARUN SHARMA**  
JAMMU, FEBRUARY 18

BARELY FIVE days after announcing by-elections to over 12,000 vacant seats in village panchayats across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on Tuesday evening deferred the poll process. Sources cited "security reasons" for the move.

CEO Shailendra Kumar told *The Indian Express* that by-elections have been deferred for 2-3 weeks, but he did not cite any reasons.

However, sources said the decision came after inputs from the Home Department regarding security issues over the next three to four weeks.

Earlier in the day, leaders of major mainstream political parties, aside from those from the BJP, had asked the election authority to defer the bypolls in view of the continued restrictions in place in the region and the detention of senior leaders.

Those attending the meeting included leaders of the BJP, the National Conference, the Congress, the PDP and the Panthers Party.

PDP general secretary Surinder Chowdhary staged a walkout from the meeting saying, "we cannot participate as all our senior leaders are under de-



(From left) National Conference leader Rattan Lal Gupta, Congress's G N Monga, Panthers Party's Harshdev Singh and Monga's party colleague Ravinder Sharma after meeting the Chief Electoral Officer in Jammu on Tuesday. **Express**

tenation."

Elections for 35,029 panchayats and 4,483 sarpanches were held on a non-party basis in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir (which included Ladakh) in November-December 2018.

However, most of the Panchayat seats in Kashmir Valley could not be filled due to a poll boycott, while several other seats fell vacant when the candidate got elected to the block development council.

Now, the election authority is holding by-elections on a party basis in eight phases to fill up these 12,650 vacant seats. Of these, Kashmir has 12,344 va-

cancies. Poll notifications had already been issued for the first and second phase of elections — scheduled for March 5 and 7 respectively.

"The general consensus among all non-BJP parties was that these by-elections shall be deferred as the situation is not conducive in view of the detention of most of their political leaders in Valley," said National Conference vice president Rattan Lal Gupta.

"You (election authorities) claimed the 2018 panchayat elections were a major success. Then from where have these vacancies come?" he asked, adding that it was because "peo-

ple did not participate".

Pointing out that there were instances of a person getting elected only on a single vote during the 2018 elections, he said "we told the election authority that the by-elections will make you a laughing stock."

Asking how by-elections on a party basis were possible when senior leaders of most political parties were detained or barred from meeting people, Panther Party chairman and former minister Harshdev Singh asked the election authorities to first get all the detained leaders released, restore security cover to Opposition leaders and to ensure a level playing field.

Congress spokesperson Ravinder Sharma questioned the motive behind the by-elections being held on a party basis while the general elections were held differently. "We suggested to the election authority to either defer these elections for some time, or get Opposition politicians released from detention and allow them to go to the people and give them time so that situation becomes congenial for participation," he added.

On Monday, the UT administration had denied permission to Congress state chief G A Mir from travelling to Kashmir to hold discussions with party leaders and workers regarding the by-elections.

### SP leader's son shot dead, 6 hurt in 'road rage' clash: UP Police

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 18

THE 25-YEAR-OLD son of a Samajwadi Party leader was shot dead and six people were injured in a clash over a 'road rage' incident in Aligarh Monday.

Police said the incident occurred when Sachin Prajapati, who was riding a motorcycle with his father Puranmal Prajapati riding pillion, collided with another bike coming from the opposite direction, being ridden by BJP leader Ishwar Chand Upadhyay's son Amit.

After the accident, a heated argument took place between Sachin and Amit, police said. Amit allegedly slapped Puranmal. The situation took an ugly turn when Sachin and Amit called their aides, who indulged in pelting bricks and also opened fire. A bullet hit Sachin on the neck and he died on the spot. The assailants then fled, police said. Local residents set ablaze a motorcycle belonging to one of the accused.

A police team reached the spot and the injured were taken to the district hospital. Doctors declared Sachin dead on arrival. Those injured are undergoing treatment and their condition was stable, hospital sources said. Aligarh SSP Akash Kulhary said, three persons were arrested and a search was on for the other accused.

Puranmal Prajapati is a former state secretary of Samajwadi Party.

## Mufti daughter hits out at govt attitude

**ABANTIKA GHOSH**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

IF KASHMIRIS gravitate towards Pakistan it is not their fault but the government's attitude which is forcing them, Ittija Mufti, daughter of jailed former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti, said on Tuesday.

She also said if Home Minister Amit Shah can "tour the state openly, I will salute him".

Ittija, 31, who was in Delhi, professed respect for Prime Minister Narendra Modi but said it seems he is "either being misled or is wilfully misleading the country".

"I will not lie," she said while interacting with journalists at the Indian Women's Press Corps, "politicians are indeed discredited (in J&K). There is a lot of anger among Kashmiris, and this alienation has increased after abrogation of Article 370. They are upset that the rest of India has not spoken up. Politicians such as Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah were buffers, (but) now you have removed them... There is a lot of anger against dubious means adopted by the government (since special status was scrapped on August 5, 2019). If I lock you up at home, you will also be angry."

She claimed that in October last year, just before the UN General Assembly session, the Union government had approached her mother to make her sign an "illegal undertaking" to forbid her to speak about Article



Ittija Mufti in Delhi on Tuesday. **Tashi Tobgyal**

370, parts of which dealing with special status accorded to the erstwhile state was revoked. But there has not been any outreach since, she added.

Ittija said: "When history is written I don't want to be on the wrong side. It is true that Pakistan has fished in troubled waters, but look at what you have done to Kashmir. If Kashmiris now gravitate towards Pakistan, it will not be their fault. It is the attitude of this government... Army men are checking phones of children to check whether they are using VPN (virtual private network) and slapping UAPA on them — a law that was used for terrorists. Successive governments have tried to rule Kashmir with an iron fist, but it does not work. (Atal Bihari) Vajpayee-ji understood this — you cannot bulldoze emotions and aspirations."

India, she said, is no longer the place she grew up in. "I grew up a proud Indian. My grandfather was an Indian by conviction. But now we have become a Hindu (version of) Pakistan; intolerance has affected people like a virus," she said.

### Kerala couple lose 6 kids in 9 yrs, cops file FIR, exhume infant's body

**VISHNU VARMA**  
KOCCHI, FEBRUARY 18

THE DEATH of a couple's sixth child in Malappuram district and the family burying the child Tuesday before a post-mortem raised suspicion among local residents, who informed the police. An FIR has been filed based on the statement of a relative of the family.

"The preliminary post-mortem report of the police surgeon indicates that it was a natural death. The internal organs have been preserved for further tests. So we will have to wait for those results," said Malappuram SP Abdul Karim U.

According to the police, the couple living in Chembra area of Tirur lost their 93-day-old baby early Tuesday morning and the child's death was confirmed by a private hospital.

Five other children of the couple, including four girls and a boy, have died under similar circumstances in the last nine years, reportedly of natural causes. When the family members buried the child before a post-mortem, local residents grew suspicious and alerted the police.

However, the child was laid to rest before the police arrived. On suspicion, police filed an FIR and exhumed the child's body for a post-mortem. The police also collected forensic evidence from the family's residence.

## Uddhav backs NPR, says will personally check questionnaire

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 18



Uddhav Thackeray

CHIEF MINISTER Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday came out in support of the National Population Register (NPR), suggesting that he had no problems in rolling out the exercise in Maharashtra. Thackeray claimed he would personally check the columns in the NPR questionnaire and said there shouldn't be any problem with the exercise.

Thackeray's stand is in variance with that of his allies, the Congress and the NCP, which have been vehement in their opposition to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) as well as the NPR.

"Nobody should fear about the CAA. The NRC hasn't come and will not come. If the NRC is implemented, it will create problems not only for Muslims but for Hindus, Dalits, tribals and others. The Centre has not made any statement on the NRC. The NPR is a census and I will personally go through the columns in the form. I don't think there will be any problem in it. The census is carried out every ten years," Thackeray told mediapersons in Sindhadurg.

He said the CAA and the NRC were two different issues and his government will not allow the NRC to be implemented in the state. The Congress and the NCP have expressed reservations on

the implementation of the NPR. Both parties said the three allies — the Sena, NCP and Congress — will sit together to decide on the questionnaire.

Sources in the government said the first phase of the census will be carried out in the state between May 1 and June 15 this year. The government issued a notification in this regard last week.

The first phase includes "house listing operations" that requires such data as information on the building, head of the household, its ownership with others and assets.

But NCP chief Sharad Pawar, who had a crucial role in bringing together the ideologically disparate Sena and Congress, played it down. "As a party our stand against it is clear because we have voted against it in Parliament. However, as a part of the government we have not decided on it yet. As an alliance, we share common grounds on certain issues while on certain subjects there is variance," Pawar said.

## HUBBALI SEDITION CASE

### Oppn questions police flip-flop

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 18

THE ARREST, release and re-arrest in as many days of three engineering students from Kashmir studying at KLE Institute of Technology, in Karnataka's Hubballi, on charges of sedition has come in for criticism from Opposition Congress and JD(S) leaders.

Sources in police and ruling BJP said that the three were initially released by Hubballi police following pressure from certain quarters in the state government, as the institution is part of a chain run by the KLE Group, belonging to BJP's Rajya Sabha member Prabhakar Kore.

Basit Aashiq Sofi, Talib Majeed and Amir Mohiuddin Wani were arrested on Saturday on charges of sedition and promoting enmity in a case registered over a selfie video, where they allegedly seemed to sing along to a song with the words "Pakistan Zindabad". The three were released on Sunday on grounds of lack of evidence, leading to protests against the police by Hindutva outfits such as Bajrang Dal. This led to their re-arrest on Monday.

But this has led to questions about selective application of law by the government from opposition party leaders. "Who ordered the police to release those accused of being anti-nationals without producing them in court? The BJP needs to answer this," JD(S) member Basavaraj Horatti said in Legislative Council on Tuesday.

State Congress chief Dinesh Gundu Rao said, "Those who raised 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogans have been released on bail, and now they have been arrested again due to pressure from right-wing groups. Is this child's play?"

"They file sedition cases against whoever they want and no cases against others. They (students) were released initially just because they study at a college owned by a BJP MP," said Congress leader and former state minister U T Khader, who is accused in a sedition case in Mangaluru for a speech at an anti-CAA rally.

A police officer said on conditions of anonymity, "We did not want their lives to be spoilt on account of the case. We also did not have sufficient evidence initially. There were fears that the case could mar the college's image since the complaint was also filed by the college authorities."

College principal Basavaraj Emami, who filed the complaint, has denied executing a bond allowing the students' release without being presented in court, as required in cases which entail punishment of more than seven-year imprisonment.

Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said: "They were released on execution of a bond. We have sought a report from police on their release. We will take action based on the report. We will take action against all anti-nationals as per law. The youths were arrested and presented in court. There is no question of releasing them."

## 4 senior judges out soon, focus on Bombay HC's next CJ

**APURVA VISHWANATH**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

WITH THE four most senior judges of Bombay High Court either retiring, resigning or being transferred, the Supreme Court Collegium will have to appoint a new Chief Justice for the country's second largest high court.

While the current Chief Justice of the High Court, Justice Pradeep Nandrajog, is set to retire this week, Justices S C Dharmadhikari, B P Dharmadhikari and RV More — the next three judges in seniority — are also set to move out.

The question on whether Bombay High Court will have a chief from its own court or whether a transfer of another Chief Justice is on the cards is being discussed in legal circles. Bombay High Court has a

sanctioned strength of 94 judges — 71 permanent judges and 23 additional judges — and at present has 72 judges. This number will be down to 68 by April-end.

Justice Satyanjan C Dharmadhikari, who resigned last week, was the second most senior judge of Bombay HC. Although he maintained that he resigned for "personal reasons", he clarified that it was due to his reluctance to move out of Mumbai — he was being considered for transfer to Orissa High Court as the Chief Justice.

Sources told *The Indian Express* that the SC Collegium had discussed the move with the judge.

The timing of Justice Dharmadhikari's transfer to Orissa HC, close on the heels of Chief Justice Nandrajog's retirement is crucial. While this was a promotion for Justice

### 2nd Bombay HC judge to quit over transfer

JUSTICE S C Dharmadhikari is the second judge from Bombay High Court to have resigned following differences with the Supreme Court Collegium over a transfer. Earlier, Justice VK Tahilramani, who was transferred from Bombay HC as Chief Justice of Madras High Court in 2018, had resigned in September 2019 after the Collegium refused to reconsider her transfer as Chief Justice of Meghalaya HC. Justice Dharmadhikari has also resigned in anticipation of a transfer.

Dharmadhikari, it also made room for the Collegium to appoint a Chief Justice in Bombay HC who could be junior to him.

Justice Dharmadhikari is second in the all-India seniority list of HC judges as per initial appointment (the date on which appointment was made as addi-

tional judge). Justice Nandrajog tops the list and only one other judge — Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka, the current Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court, who ranks third in the seniority list — was appointed in 2003. Justice Oka's parent High Court is also Bombay HC.

Appointed as an additional judge of Bombay High Court in November 2003, Justice Dharmadhikari was slated to retire in January 2022, when he would turn 62. If elevated to the Supreme Court before that, he would have had a tenure until 2025.

Justice Dharmadhikari had in fact taken oath as an additional judge of Bombay High Court alongside Supreme Court judge Bhushan R Gavai on November 14, 2003. Justice Gavai was elevated to the Supreme Court in May 2019, and is set to retire as the Chief Justice of India on November 23, 2025.

At least 11 judges currently in the SC were appointed judges after 2003. Bombay High Court's third most senior judge, Justice Bhushan Pradyumna Dharmadhikari, was appointed

an additional judge on March 15, 2004, and is set to retire on April 27. The High Court's fourth most senior judge, Justice Ranjit Vasantraj More, was appointed additional judge in September 2006. He will retire in November 2021, unless elevated to the Supreme Court. If a chief justice from outside Bombay HC is considered for appointment, the judge cannot be junior to Justice More in order of seniority.

Although no transfer order has been issued yet, sources told *The Indian Express* that Justice More is likely to be considered for a transfer to Meghalaya High Court.

Bombay High Court is the second biggest high court in the country after Allahabad High Court, which has a sanctioned strength of 160 judges and is considered the hub of India's economic litigation.

## CHHATTISGARH

### CoBRA commando killed, one injured in encounter

**GARGI VERMA**  
RAIPUR, FEBRUARY 18

ONE SECURITY forces commando was killed and another was injured in an encounter with Maoists in Sukma district on Tuesday evening. The injured man was brought to Raipur in the night and was declared stable, according to the Inspector General of Bastar.

IG Sundarraj P said both men were from the CRPF's elite CoBRA battalion. Identifying the men, he said, "Kanai Majhee was severely injured, and Indrajit Singh had received injuries but was stable. They were both airlifted to Raipur."

The two men were part of a team that was on an area

domination exercise in Palodi, sources said. "Acting on a tip-off, the men had been sent to Pamed area in Bijapur, to check for Naxal presence," said a senior officer. The team was attacked while they were on the way to Bijapur district.

Earlier, in Pamed region, two men were killed and seven injured on February 10 when a CoBRA battalion came under heavy fire while trying to recover the body of a slain Maoist. One of the injured, Ajit Kumar Singh, who was undergoing treatment in Raipur, succumbed to his injuries on Tuesday. The other injured in the incident included the battalion's Deputy Commandant Prashant Kumar, who is stable and undergoing treatment, Sundarraj confirmed.

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION Bus Route Roads Department e-TENDER NOTICE

CENTRAL WAREHOUSING CORPORATION (A GOVT. OF INDIA UNDERTAKING)

INVITATION OF e-QUOTATION Sealed e-Quotations are invited for Contract Rate of Rewinding of Auto Transformer Starter at Pump House MC-4 of Rampuri & Kheri Disty.

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED (A Govt. Of India Undertaking) SIBIAN ROAD, BATHINDA - 151 003 (Pb)

Mumbai International Airport Ltd. INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN BIDDING PROCESS FOR VARIOUS RETAIL CONCESSIONS AT CSMI AIRPORT

STATE INDUSTRIES PROMOTION CORPORATION OF TAMILNADU LIMITED 19-A, RUKMANI LAKSHMIPATHY ROAD, EGMORE, CHENNAI - 600 008.

THE H.P. STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED Totu, Shimla-171011 Short Term Tender Notice

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRONICS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED 1st & Ground Floor, I.T. Bhawan, Mehli, Shimla-171013

ODISHA SKILL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Request for Proposal (RFP) for Selection of a Creative Agency for Branding and Communication Activities of Odisha Skill Development Authority

वन विभाग हरियाणा कार्यालय: वन मंडल अधिकारी, चरखी दादरी

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता लोक निर्माण विभाग, वि.यां. मंडल, बिलासपुर (छ.ग.) ई-प्रक्रिया में निविदा सूचना

निविदा में भाग लेने की प्रक्रिया एवं निविदा के संबंध में विस्तृत जानकारी विभाग के उपरोक्त वेबसाइट में देखे जा सकते हैं।

INVITATION OF e-QUOTATION Sealed e-Quotations are invited for Contract Rate of Requirement of Material in W.S. Mech. Sub Division No. II, Narnaul.

CCS HARYANA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, HISAR (Established by Parliament Act No. 16 of 1970) TENDER NOTICE

26/11 ATTACKS Made Kasab say 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' at Metro Junction: Maria in book

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18



Former Mumbai Commissioner Rakesh Maria

FORMER MUMBAI Police commissioner Rakesh Maria has claimed that he took Pakistani terrorist Mohammed Ajmal Kasab to the Metro Junction in Mumbai where the latter had killed police personnel during the 26/11 terror attacks and made him say 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'.

In his autobiography 'Let Me Say It Now' released on Monday, Maria wrote: "The convoy came to the Metro Junction, the stretch around which the monster had unleashed death just a few days ago, killing my dear colleagues and innocent fellow citizens..."

Mumbai in 2008, Maria said Kasab was made to believe since childhood that Muslims were not allowed to offer prayers in mosques and that all mosques were shut in India.

"He felt that the azaan he heard five times a day in the crime branch lock up was just a figment of his imagination. When we came to know of this, I instructed Mahale (senior inspector Ramesh Mahale) to take him to the mosque near the Metro Cinema in a vehicle.

He explained how Kasab, who studied till Class IV in Urdu medium school, was brainwashed and how poverty forced him to flee from home and reach Rawalpindi where he met Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) operatives.

Maria maintained that LeT had planned to project the 26/11 attack as a case of "Hindu terror"

and Kasab to die as "Bengaluru's Samir Dinesh Chaudhary". He said that when he first interrogated Kasab, who was captured alive, the latter had a red thread tied on his wrist.

"If all had gone well, he would have been dead with a red string tied around his wrist like a Hindu. We would have found an identity card on his person with a fictitious name: Samir Dinesh Chaudhary."

While delivering its order, the court had also observed that the identity card given to Kasab was issued in the name of Samir Chaudhary. Maria wrote that Kasab's identity card claimed Chaudhary was a student of Arunodaya Degree and PG College in Hyderabad and a resident of Bengaluru.

BJP: Was saffron terror plot combined project of Cong, ISI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

WITH FORMER Mumbai Police commissioner Rakesh Maria claiming that the LeT wanted to pass off the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack as a case of Hindu terrorism, the ruling BJP Tuesday accused the opposition Congress of having "links with Pakistan".

While Union Minister Piyush Goyal alleged a conspiracy by the Congress-led UPA, BJP national spokesperson GVL Narasimha Rao accused the Congress of colluding with Pakistan intelligence agency ISI to brand the attack as the work of "saffron terror outfits".

However, the chargesheet filed by the Mumbai Police in the case in 2009 had stated that the terrorists were told that they would be given ID cards bearing Hindu names.

Talking to reporters in Mumbai, Goyal said, "I think it was a conspiracy by Congress, by the UPA. We have seen this before when Congress tried attempts to impose the completely false 'Hindu terror' term at the behest of Chidambaram."

In Delhi, Rao said, "... For the first time... perpetrators of terrorism attempted to mislead people about their identity. This raises serious questions if the saffron terror plot was the combined project of the Congress and Pakistan's ISI."

Green cover has to be protected, says top court

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

BATTING FOR preserving green cover, the Supreme Court on Tuesday observed that the speed at which deforestation was taking place that, before anyone realises it, everything will be lost.

The observation came from Chief Justice of India S A Bobde while hearing a matter regarding the cutting of trees for construction of a foot bridge in West Bengal.

Battling for the bridge, the state government had said that there were around 800 deaths near the railway lines where the project was planned, due to lack of a safe crossing point.

Hearing the plea, the SC had in January this year directed the setting up of a committee to suggest a sustainable idea which would ensure all interests are taken care of.

Taking up the matter Tuesday, the Bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavaia and Surya Kant, pointed out that such questions were repeatedly coming up before the court.

The CJ referred to a metro shed project and the Bombay coastal road project in this regard. The bench sought to know if the value of the green cover should not also be factored in while planning a project.

CJ Bobde also expressed concern over the depletion of water bodies because of unscientific development.

He referred to three lakes in Nagpur located at different levels in the city. They were interconnected and because of this, the one at the lowest level always had the best water, he recalled, adding that now, people have blocked the channels with concrete and as a result, the water quality has gone for a toss.

"I understand you don't have the brains to build new ones, but you are also destroying the existing ones", the CJ remarked.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing an NGO which had moved the court against the cutting of trees, said the environment may take a turn for the very worse in another 50 years, as it is likely temperatures will rise and cutting of trees has a role to play in it.

"It is believable, very believable", added the CJ. The court will take up the matter after four weeks when it will consider the committee's report.

CORONAVIRUS FALLOUT

Hope India reviews travel curbs, resumes normal trade: China

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18



Chinese ambassador to India Sun Weidong

URGING COUNTRIES to "refrain from overreaction", Chinese ambassador to India, Sun Weidong, on Tuesday expressed the hope that the Indian side could "review" the situation with regard to the novel Coronavirus epidemic in an "objective, rational and calm manner" and "resume" normal personnel exchanges and trade.

The Chinese envoy's remarks came as India has put travel restrictions and cancelled visas for Chinese nationals visiting India, in the wake of the outbreak.

On reports that the virus spread from a laboratory in Wuhan, Weidong said that the virus originated from nature and was "not man-made".

During his briefing, he underlined the efforts made by the Chinese government and the Communist Party of China (CPC), led by President Xi Jinping. He invoked the Chinese government at least 11 times during his statement, named Jinping five times and mentioned the CPC three, while reading from a prepared statement that lasted more than 35 minutes.

In the statement, he outlined three aspects of the Chinese government's fight against the epidemic which were termed as the "3Cs" — "confidence, compassion and cooperation".

In his first media interaction since taking charge last year, the Chinese envoy said, "The WHO (World Health Organization) has repeatedly not recommended, even opposed any travel and trade restrictions. We should follow the WHO's professional advice. Countries around the world need to maintain normal flows of people and trade, and refrain from overreaction."

Responding to questions on India's travel restrictions, Weidong said, "We understand that some countries take reasonable and necessary measures like thermal screenings at ports of entry. In fact, most countries have not overreacted to the outbreak, and some countries have even begun to adjust strict measures exceeding the WHO's recommendation."

"We hope the Indian side could review the epidemic situation in an objective, rational and calm manner, implement the two leaders' instructions, trade with China's much-needed items in a humanitarian spirit, and resume normal personnel exchanges and trade between our two countries," he said.

Responding to a question on the genesis of the virus, he said, "... Based on the analysis of the genomic sequence, what we could know now is that this virus originates from nature, not man-made. The virus is terrible, but rumour is more terrible. It will create panic and overreaction. We must ensure the truth outweigh the rumours... Only through mutual understanding and cooperation, can we truly overcome the epidemic. We hope that the international community can view the epidemic in a calm way."

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Fingers crossed on Trump visit: Public diplomacy vs trade deal

SUSHANT SINGH NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump's scheduled visit to India on February 24-25 is expected to be a public diplomacy success and underline New Delhi's efforts to keep him "invested" in India but could fall short on any substantive breakthroughs, say experts who follow the bilateral relationship closely and have handled these issues between the two countries in recent US administrations.



Ahead of US President Donald Trump's visit, artists at work in Ahmedabad on Tuesday. Javed Raja

Paul Staniland, Associate Professor of Political Science at University of Chicago, said that the Trump visit is likely to be overshadowed by US domestic politics "including the Democratic primary, the economy, and Trump's ongoing clashes with the Democratic House".

Tellis said that he didn't expect "startling" breakthroughs but more "a continuation — even if more dramatically this time — of PM Modi's long-standing efforts to keep President Trump invested in India. I think the PM's calculation is that the more Trump sees India as a friend the less likely he is to target India, especially on trade issues where Indian policy is quite problematic."

"We know Trump likes to present himself as a dealmaker so can assume some kind of deal is important to him personally. But the US and India are quite some distance apart on many of the

thoms currently stuck in the sides of a larger trade relationship so the deal from this visit should be considered a helpful step — but negotiators will still need to keep focussed on resolving the extensive and complicated tensions," said Alyssa Ayres, who served as US deputy assistant secretary of state for South Asia from 2010 to 2013.

"The Trump administration has been needlessly combative with India on trade and investment issues, complicating an already difficult dimension of the bilateral relationship. Even a so-called 'mini deal' on trade is likely to be embarrassingly modest," said White. With Robert Lighthizer, the top US trade administrator and negotiator not visiting India along with President Trump, Ayres said she expected "to see something extremely modest on the trade front result from the trip. All progress is good progress and should be encouraged but we can't fool ourselves

into thinking this is something bigger than it really is."

"Current negotiations are focussed on rolling back some of the bad steps on both sides that have exacerbated already-existing and frankly quite longstanding tensions: scaling back the Trump tariffs on steel and aluminum, over which India retaliated with a raft of tariffs on important US exports in particular; lifting or modifying the price caps India put in place on advanced medical devices like heart stents; and it seems the perennial Trump fixation on Harley-Davidsons is driving a possible tariff reduction on >800cc motorcycles," she said.

"It remains unclear to me whether market access for US dairy products will result, as this issue involves a certification process that is really complicated. We haven't heard anything at all about investment issues or digital economy for that matter. We'll have to see how it all shakes out, but yes, a trade deal is viable. It just will likely comprise fixing some irritants, rather than creating a broad opening," she said.

Trump is not visiting Pakistan in this trip. White said that the US-Taliban deal is still fragile and whether President Trump is invested in making it succeed is anyone's guess. "Recognising New Delhi's deep and longstanding concerns about granting any concessions to the Taliban, I suspect that the President won't try to 'sell' the deal to Modi so much as inform him about it, and move on to other topics of mutual interest," he said.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Areas near Taj get facelift but will it be maintained, ask locals

AMIL BHATNAGAR AGRA, FEBRUARY 18

FRESH COATS of paint, potholes covered with dry tar, uniformly coloured shop hoardings, newly dug pavements and broad roads await US President Donald Trump on his scheduled maiden visit to the Taj Mahal on February 24.

Trump is likely stay at Oberoi Amarvilas Hotel while visiting the Taj and attending a cultural programme.

As Agra administration undertakes the beautification process at breakneck speed, several factors that might present tangible problems, remain.

A 350-metre bridge close to Eidgah Bus Stand is on the likely route between the airport and the hotel. Hoardings at the beginning of the bridge put up by PWD states, "This bridge is weak. Only light vehicles allowed."

On Tuesday, work was on to repair and fix lights on the metal arch atop the bridge. At more than 5 tonnes, Trump's vehicle, "The Beast", exceeds the weight category allowed on the bridge.

"The final decision rests with the administration as to what the eventual route will be taken. We have written to the Superintendent of Police (Traffic) that heavy vehicles must not be allowed. The bridge is functional, and as per limit vehicular movement takes place," a Northern Railways official said.

But, other officials said, the bridge has withstood weight of heavy vehicles in the past.

In Agra's Ajit Nagar, a large gate separates the market and Agra Air Force Station premises,



Fountains being cleaned at Taj Mahal ahead of US President Donald Trump's visit. Anil Sharma

from where Trump's security cordon is to travel towards the Taj Mahal. The shopkeepers in Khushwah Market in the Kheria area have been asked by the administration to remove individual hoardings at the shops and replace them with a reddish painted board bearing the establishment's name in Hindi. While more than 50 such shops have already put the boards up, the others have been asked to do so over the next two or three days.

According to an official, the uniform hoardings will make the route look more aesthetic.

"We are not paying and are quite happy that a fresh coat of paint is coming on. We hope this is maintained," Rajesh, a shopkeeper, said.

But another resident said that the administration does not look into the civic issues ahead of VIP visits. "This entire VIP

'Visa of British MP revoked as she was involved in anti-India activities'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

BRITISH LAWMAKER Debbie Abrahams' e-business visa was revoked as she was involved in anti-India activities, and the cancellation was conveyed to her on February 14, government sources said on Tuesday.

Asserting that the grant, rejection or revocation of a visa or electronic travel authorisation is the sovereign right of a country, the sources said that Abrahams was issued an e-business visa on October 7 last year and it was valid till October 5, 2020, for attending business meetings.

"Her e-business visa was revoked on February 14, 2020, on account of her indulging in activities which went against India's national interest. The revocation of the e-business visa was intimated to her on February 14," a source said.

Abrahams was not in the possession of a valid visa at the time of her arrival at the Indira Gandhi International airport here on Monday and she was asked to return, the sources said.

There is no provision of visa on arrival for UK nationals at the airport, sources said, dismissing Abrahams' contention she should have been granted a visa on arrival. Sources said that as per rules, e-business visa meant for business meetings cannot be used for visiting "family and friends", as stated by the British MP.

The Labour Party MP had said that despite having a valid visa, she was denied entry.

Custody battle: Supreme Court says child is always the loser

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday sought to remind that irrespective of which party wins in a custody battle, "the child is always the loser".

Hearing one such matter where the parents had been unable to come to terms over the custody of their two children, a bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and Ajay Rastogi said in such cases, "it is the children who pay the heaviest price as they are shattered when the court by its judicial process tells them to go with the parent whom he or she deems fit".

The court said that "the rights of the child need to be respected as he/she is entitled to the love of both the parents" and underlined that a breakdown of marriage "does not signify the end of parental responsibility".

The bench said it is well established in law that while deciding a custody dispute, "primary and paramount consideration is always the welfare of the child".

"If the welfare of the child so demands, then technical objections cannot come in the way. However, while deciding the welfare of the child, it is not the view of one spouse alone which has to be taken into consideration. The courts should decide the issue of custody on a paramount consideration which is in the best interest of the child who is the victim in the custody battle," the bench ruled.

In the case, the apex court noted that the Delhi High Court made an attempt to effect a settlement.

The judgment also noted that the Supreme Court too had time and again made efforts "to resolve these disputes amicably sitting across the table but unfortunately the ego of the warring parents come forward and the sufferings of the children are shadowed".

The judgment referred to the report of a psychotherapist, tasked by the High Court "to ascertain the background facts regarding the relationship of the children with their father... and paternal grandparents before they joined the sole custody of their mother", which had attributed the death of the grandparents to the fight between the couple. "It is unfortunate to notice that because of a warpath of the couple, both the paternal grandparents died during pendency of the proceedings," the judgment said.

Bombay HC judge's order forged to grab bank deposits, case filed

OMKAR GOKHALE MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 18

A CASE of forgery and cheating was filed at Azad Maidan police station on the basis of a complaint by the Bombay High Court Registry against unidentified persons after the forgery of an order written by Justice Gautam S Patel. The order was forged to create rights over term deposits amounting to Rs 51 lakh in favour of a person who had died 15 days ago.

Advocates Umesh Mohite and Hetal Pandya brought the issue to Justice Patel's notice with a handwritten complaint and a copy of the forged order. Passing an order in his chamber on February 15, Justice Patel noted that the purpose of forgery was evident since it sought to make one Satishchandra Goradia heir to deposits, including Rs 25 lakh with the Indian Bank and Rs 26 lakh with Bank of Baroda. Justice Patel directed the banks to freeze any encashment or transaction from

the term deposits.

One Parth Goradia had earlier approached Umesh Mohite and Hetal Pandya, seeking help in filing a testamentary petition regarding his father's uncle, Satishchandra Goradia, who had died recently. The petition was to be filed for distribution of properties of the deceased. Parth claimed that Satishchandra was involved in a suit seeking succession to bank deposits in the name of his deceased son Mitesh.

When Mohite and Pandya

asked Parth to give details of the case, he said that he did not have much information and handed them an order "passed by Justice Patel on December 1, 2019," allowing the release of funds from Mitesh's bank accounts in favour of Satishchandra Goradia. Parth said the order was given to his father by Satishchandra's lawyer Ashok Vageria.

The lawyers approached Justice Patel after they failed to find the case details on the HC website or in the Judge's chamber.

After inquiring with his staff, Justice Patel noted that there is no such record of any advocate by the name of Vageria. "There is no manner of doubt that the entire document is not only forged but a clumsy one," Justice Patel said.

The court pointed out other glaring indicators of forgery such as certain fonts, punctuation, typographical errors and an "incongruous" paragraph. Stating the need for internal probe, Justice Patel noted that the document was fabricated using courtroom terminal.

Central Government Employees Welfare Housing Organisation (CGEWHO) advertisement for a demand survey in Bengaluru.

Parsvnath Developers Limited advertisement regarding a notice to all customers of the bank.

IDFC First Bank Limited advertisement regarding a notice for sale of immovable properties.

The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library advertisement for a public lecture on social reforms.

Debt Recovery Tribunal, Delhi advertisement for a case regarding recovery of Rs 37,00,142/-.

Bank of India advertisement regarding a notice under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002.

Table listing details of borrowers/mortgagors/guarantors with names, addresses, and amounts.



## TELLING NUMBERS

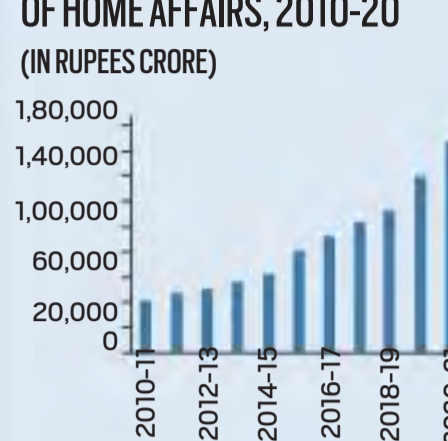
### Overview of finances: trends in expenditure of Home Ministry

BETWEEN 2010 to 2020, the expenditure of the Ministry of Home Affairs has expanded four times, shows an analysis of numbers published by PRS Legislative Research. The average annual growth rate in the Home Ministry's expenditure over the last 10 years has been 15%, shows the analysis. Since 2015-16, the expenditure of the Ministry has been higher than the budgeted expenditure every year.

The Home Ministry is responsible for matters concerning internal security, Centre-state relations, central armed police forces, border management, and disaster management. It also makes grants to the Union Territories.

The Ministry has been allocated Rs 1,67,250 crore in Union Budget 2020-21. This is an increase of 20% over the revised estimates in 2019-20, which was Rs 1,39,108 crore. This year's allocation is 41% higher than the Budget allocation of last year, which was Rs 1,19,025 crore. A significant part of the increase is on account of funds to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh being allocated through the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2020-21, following the reorganisation of Jammu and

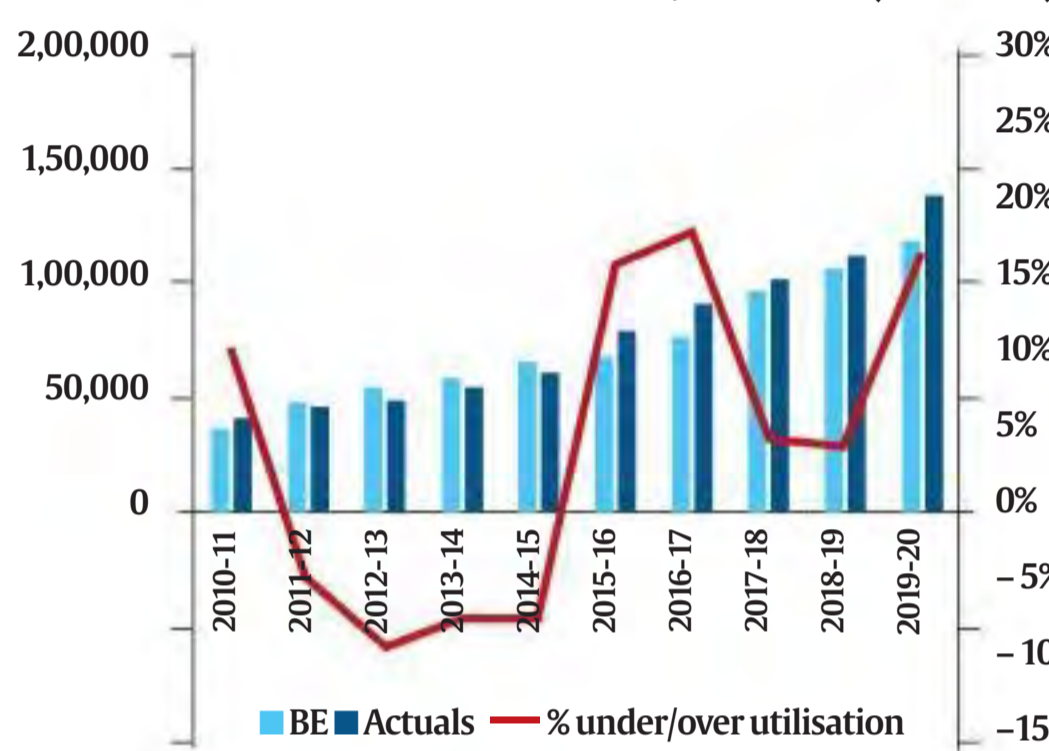
#### EXPENDITURE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, 2010-20 (IN RUPEES CRORE)



Sources: Union Budgets 2010-20, PRS  
Figures for 2019-20 are Revised Estimates; for 2020-21 are Budget Estimates. Figures for all other years are actuals.

Kashmir into two Union Territories. The Ministry's budget constitutes 5% of the total expenditure budget of the union government in 2020-21. PRS Legislative Research has also published similar analyses for 12 other ministries which, along with Home, comprise 53% of govt expenditure.

#### ACTUAL VS BUDGETED EXPENDITURE, 2010-20 (IN Rs CRORE)



Sources: Union Budgets 2010-20, PRS  
Figures for 2019-20 are Revised Estimates. BE: Budget Estimates

## TIP FOR READING LIST

### PIONEER OF US FORENSIC CRIMINOLOGY

**KATE WINKLER** Dawson's *American Sherlock: Murder, Forensics, and the Birth of American CSI* tells the story of the birth of criminal investigation in the United States in the 20th century through the life of Edward Oscar Heinrich, the so-called "American Sherlock Holmes", the first and arguably greatest of that country's forensic scientists. Dawson's work draws on never-before-published primary material on Heinrich's 40-year career, in the course of



which he cracked at least 2,000 cases — among them the famous botched Siskiyou train robbery of 1923. Heinrich pioneered the use of forensic tools such as blood spatter analysis, lie-detector tests, ballistics, and fingerprints in the detection of crime in the decade of the 1920s when, as Dawson says, the FBI mostly comprised "insufficiently trained officers who mostly investigated bank fraud".

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## SIMPLY PUT

# India's 'imported' food inflation

After a period of divergence, domestic and global food prices are rising in tandem. Coronavirus, global crude prices, and an expected bumper rabi harvest could determine the scenario in the coming months

**NUSHAIBA IQBAL & HARISH DAMODARAN**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

IS FOOD inflation in India influenced by global price movements? On the face of it, that seems to be the case.

### The return of food inflation

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO's) food price index — which is a measure of the change in international prices of a basket of major food commodities with reference to a base period (2002-04 = 100) — touched 182.5 points in January 2020, the highest since the 185.8 level of December 2014.

Also, the year-on-year inflation rate based on this index has risen steadily from 1.13% in August 2019 to 2.86% in September, 5.58% in October, 9.33% in November, 12.22% in December, and now, 11.33% for January 2020.

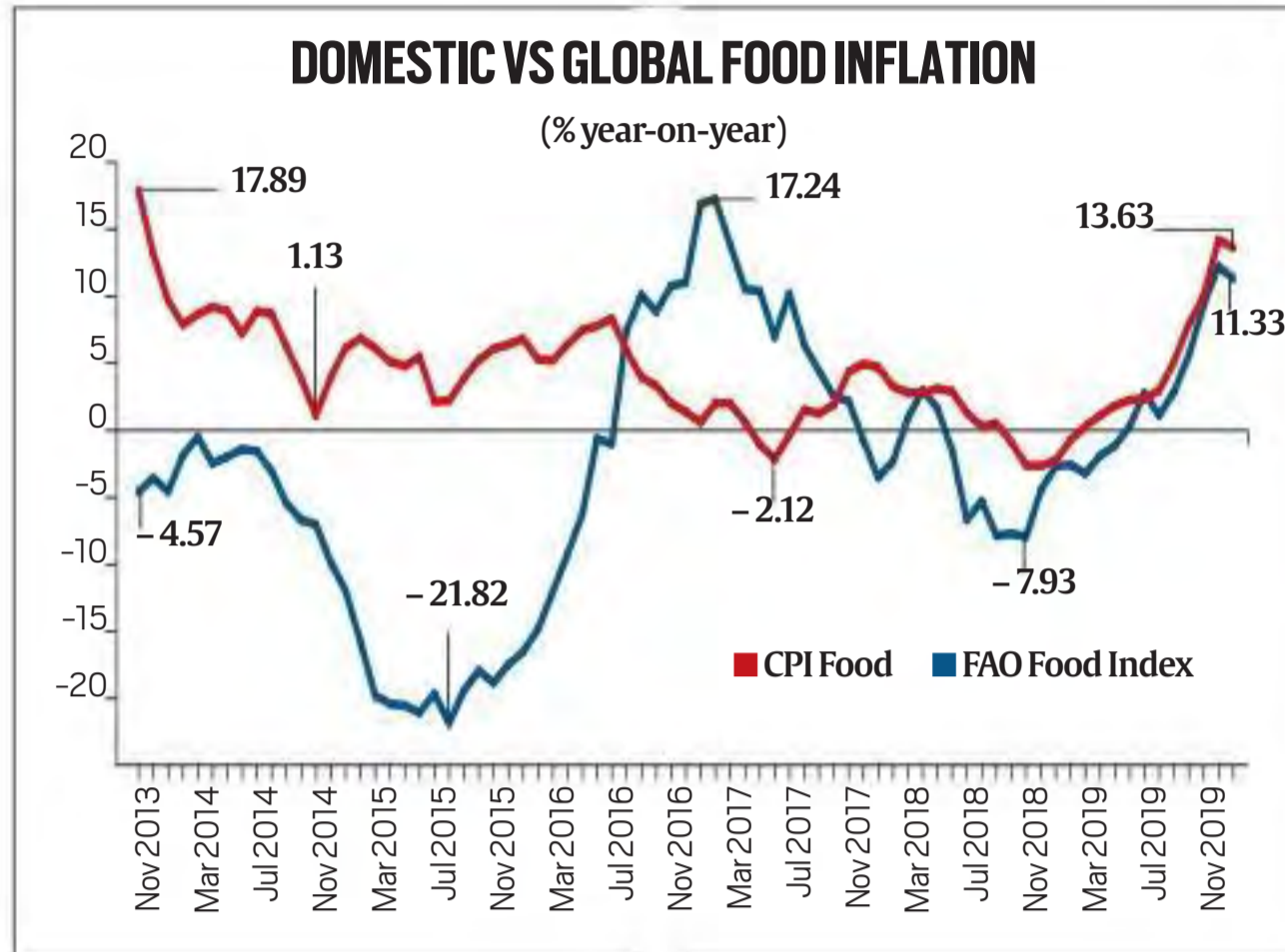
This sharp surge in global food prices is reflected in trends in India as well. Annual consumer food price index (CPI) inflation stood at just 2.99% in August 2019, before climbing to 5.11%, 7.89%, 10.01%, 14.19% and 13.63% in the succeeding five months.

The year-on-year inflation in the wholesale price index for "food articles" began rising somewhat earlier — reaching 7.8% in August 2019 from 2.41% in January last year. Subsequently, it increased to 9.8% in October, 11.08% in November, 13.24% in December, and 11.51% in January 2020.

Retail and wholesale food inflation rates for December 2019 were the highest since November 2013 and December 2013 respectively. Simply put, since October or so, food inflation has made a comeback, both in India and globally.

### Local and 'foreign' factors

While the recent rise in domestic food prices has been blamed largely on "local" factors — poor rainfall during the first half (June-July) of the monsoon season and too much of it thereafter till about mid-November, leading to both reduced/delayed *kharif* sowings and



### The period of divergence

The chart above shows that the domestic CPI and FAO food price index inflation rates started moving in tandem only from around March 2018, while exhibiting significant divergence in the period prior to that.

The FAO index peaked at 240.1 in February 2011, but remained at 200-plus levels until July 2014. Global prices crashed after that, and stayed low up to early 2016, with the FAO index dipping to 149.3 in February 2016. Domestic food inflation, too, eased from 17.89% in November 2013 to fall below 7% by early 2016, as lower global commodity prices reduced the demand for Indian farm exports, even as they made imports cheaper.

However, the actual fall in domestic inflation — to the sub-5% range — took place after September 2016. And that, in turn, had more to do with domestic factors, especially demonetisation, than global prices — between August 2016 and October 2017, the FAO index inflation, in fact, exceeded the corresponding CPI rate.

## FACT CHECK, GROUND REALITY

# Can dams to control rising sea levels work?

**MEHR GILL**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

A PAPER that has been accepted for publication in the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* has proposed an extraordinary measure to protect 25 million people and important economic regions of 15 Northern European countries from rising seas as a result of climate change: a mammoth Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED) enclosing all of the North Sea.

"The concept of constructing NEED showcases the extent of protection efforts that are required if mitigation efforts fail to limit sea level rise," the authors of the paper, Sjoerd Groeskamp of the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, and Joakim Kjellsson of the Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research in Kiel, Germany, have written.

**THE PROPOSAL:** The scientists have proposed the construction of two dams of a combined length of 637 km — the first between northern Scotland and western Norway, measuring 476 km and with an average depth of 121 m and maximum depth of 321 m; the



second between France and southwestern England, of length 161 km, and average depth of 85 m and maximum depth of 102 m.

According to Groeskamp and Kjellsson, separating the North and Baltic Seas from the Atlantic Ocean may be the "most viable option" to protect Northern Europe against unstoppable sea level rise (SLR).

They have also identified other regions in the world where such mega-enclosures could potentially be considered, including the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea.

**THE RATIONALE:** While NEED may appear to be "overwhelming" and "unrealistic", it could be "potentially favourable" financially and in scale when compared with alternative solutions to fight SLR, the paper argues. The researchers classify the solutions to SLR into three categories of taking no action, protection, and managed retreat — and submit that NEED is in the second category.

While managed retreat, which includes options such as managed migrations, may be less expensive than protection (NEED), it involves intangible costs such as national and international political instability, psycholog-

ical difficulties, and loss of culture and heritage for migrants. NEED, the paper says, will have the least direct impact on people's daily lives, can be built at a "reasonable cost", and has the largest potential to be implemented with the required urgency to be effective.

**THE VIABILITY:** Using the costs of building the 33.9-km Saemangeum Seawall in South Korea and the Maasvlakte 2 extension of the Rotterdam harbour in the Netherlands as examples, the researchers have estimated the total costs associated with NEED at between €250 billion and €550 billion. If construction is spread over a 20-year period, this will work out to an annual expense of around 0.07%-0.16% of the GDP of the 15 Northern European countries that will be involved. Construction costs would be higher for the UK, Denmark, Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium, amounting to roughly 0.15%-0.32% of their GDP annually for 20 years because of their vulnerability, awareness of SLR, or both.

The construction will "heavily impact" marine and terrestrial ecosystems inside and outside the enclosure, will have social and cultural implications, and affect tourism and fisheries, the paper says.

# Eyes on the Sun, how ISRO is preparing for its next giant leap in space

**ANJALI MARAR**  
PUNE, FEBRUARY 18

EARLIER THIS month, 47 new papers were published in a special supplement of *The Astrophysical Journal*, analysing data from the first three flybys of the Parker Solar Probe, NASA's historic mission to the Sun. The probe, launched on August 12, 2018, completed its fourth close approach — called perihelion — on January 29, whizzing past at about 3.93 lakh km/h, at a distance of only 18.6 million km from the Sun's surface.

### So why is all of this exciting for India?

Alongside another mission to the Moon, being planned for next year, and the first human space flight scheduled for 2022, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is also preparing to send its first scientific expedition to study the Sun. Named Aditya-L1, the mission, expected to be launched early next year, will observe the Sun from a close distance, and try to obtain information about its atmosphere and magnetic field.

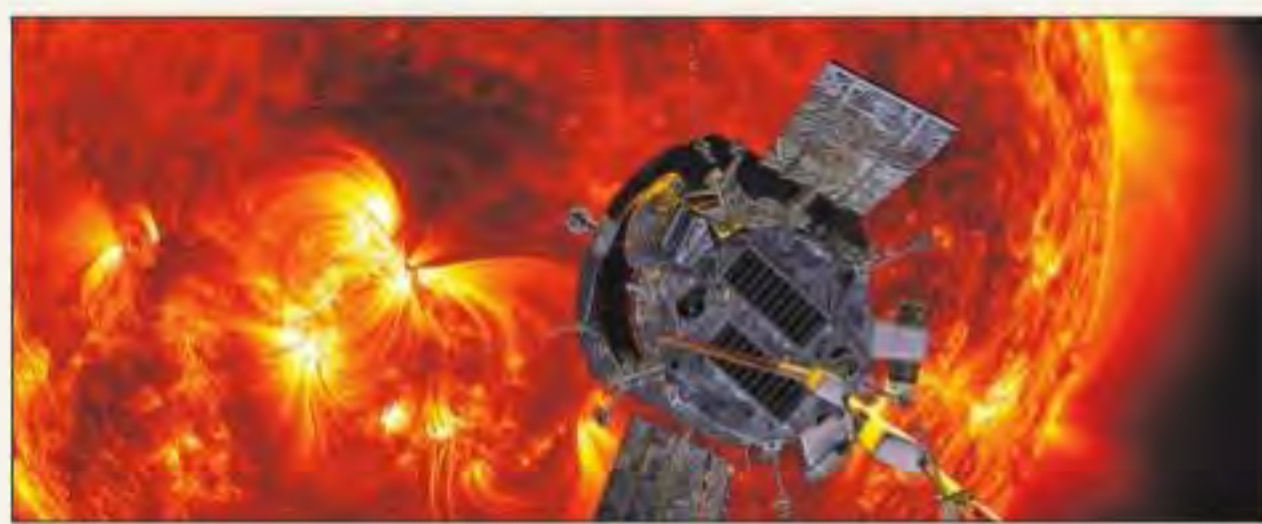
ISRO categorises Aditya L1 as a 400 kg-class satellite, that will be launched using the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) in XL

configuration. The space-based observatory will have seven payloads (instruments) on board to study the Sun's corona, solar emissions, solar winds and flares, and Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs), and will carry out round-the-clock imaging of the Sun.

The mission will be undertaken in collaboration between various labs of ISRO, along with institutions like the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, and Indian Institute of Science, Education and Research (IISER), Kolkata. Aditya L1 will be ISRO's second space-based astronomy mission after AstroSat, which was launched in September 2015.

What makes a solar mission challenging is the distance of the Sun from Earth (about 149 million km on average, compared to the only 3.84 lakh km to the Moon) and, more importantly, the super hot temperatures and radiations in the solar atmosphere.

All participating institutions are currently in the final stages of developing their respective payloads. Some payloads have been built, and are in the testing phase with each component being checked and calibrated. Some payloads are at the stage of integration of individual components.



An illustration of the Parker Solar Probe approaching the Sun. NASA/Johns Hopkins APL

### But why is studying the Sun important?

Every planet, including Earth and the exoplanets beyond the Solar System, evolves — and this evolution is governed by its parent star. The solar weather and environment, which is determined by the processes taking place inside and around the sun, affects the weather of the entire system. Variations in this weather can change the orbits of satellites or shorten their lives, interfere with or damage onboard electronics, and cause power blackouts and other disturbances on

Earth. Knowledge of solar events is key to understanding space weather.

To learn about and track Earth-directed storms, and to predict their impact, continuous solar observations are needed. Every storm that emerges from the Sun and heads towards Earth passes through L1, and a satellite placed in the halo orbit around L1 of the Sun-Earth system has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation/eclipses, ISRO says on its website.

L1 refers to Lagrangian/Lagrange Point 1, one of five points in the orbital plane of the Earth-Sun system. Lagrange Points, named after Italian-French mathematician Joseph-Louis Lagrange, are positions in space where the gravitational forces of a two-body system (like the Sun and the Earth) produce enhanced regions of attraction and repulsion. These can be used by spacecraft to reduce fuel consumption needed to remain in position. The L1 point is home to the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory Satellite (SOHO), an international collaboration project of NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA).

The L1 point is about 1.5 million km from Earth, or about one-hundredth of the way to the Sun. Aditya L1 will perform continuous observations looking directly at the Sun. NASA's Parker Solar Probe has already gone far closer — but it will be looking away from the Sun. The earlier Helios 2 solar probe, a joint venture between NASA and space agency of erstwhile West Germany, went within 43 million km of the Sun's surface in 1976.

### What kind of heat will Aditya L1 face?

The Parker Solar Probe's January 29 flyby was the closest the spacecraft has gone to the Sun in its planned seven-year journey

so far. Computer modelling estimates show that the temperature on the Sun-facing side of the probe's heat shield, the Thermal Protection System, reached 612 degrees Celsius, even as the spacecraft and instruments behind the shield remained at about 30°C, NASA said. During the spacecraft's three closest perihelia in 2024-25, the TPS will see temperatures around 1370°C.

Aditya L1 will stay much farther away, and the heat is not expected to be a major concern for the instruments on board. But there are other challenges.

Many of the instruments and their components for this mission are being manufactured for the first time in the country, presenting as much of a challenge as an opportunity for India's scientific, engineering, and space communities. One such component is the highly polished mirrors which would be mounted on the space-based telescope.

Due to the risks involved, payloads in earlier ISRO missions have largely remained stationary in space; however, Aditya L1 will have some moving components, scientists said. For example, the spacecraft's design allows for multiple operations of the front window of the telescope — which means the window can be opened or shut as required.



## The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY  
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

### IN HER OWN RIGHT

Supreme Court ruling on equality of women army officers is enormously welcome and long overdue

**M**ONDAY'S DECISION BY the apex court to bring women army officers in par with their male counterparts comes like a whiff of fresh air. After comments by Justice DY Chandrachud in the open court last week against government counsel opposing the move, the judgement was expected. Even so, it exhilaratingly went the whole hog in an unequivocal endorsement of the equality of women. The judgement was long awaited, as the first PIL was filed in 2003, followed by other suits in 2006 and 2008, and the Delhi High Court gave a judgement in favour of women officers in 2010. The government went to the Supreme Court and made all attempts to delay the judgement. So much so that even though no stay had been granted by the Supreme Court, the government did not implement the High Court order. The Supreme Court noted this fact in its ruling.

The significance of the SC judgement is two-fold. One, it is a complete endorsement of the equality of women in 21st century India, and against deeply embedded patriarchal mindsets and strong institutional biases. Two, even though the issue was not being directly considered by the bench, it chose to open command appointments to women officers in 10 streams where the Army has agreed they can serve as permanently commissioned officers. While the first will have a larger social impact as conservative mores and anti-women norms are being pushed across the country by forces of religious majoritarianism and in the name of "Indian" culture, the second will force real and substantive change in the Army. The Army will be compelled to change its rules not only for promotion to command appointments, it will also have to instill widespread changes in the pathways for the women officers to do training courses and hold appointments which have so far been the sole preserves of men.

The government had proposed a compromise which would have given limited benefits like pension to serving women officers with 14 years of service or more, and full parity from prospective effect for the younger officers. But the bench has brought in full parity for women. The Army has not yet responded to the judgement. But with the defence minister publicly welcoming the order, there is hope that even though his ministry opposed the case in the Supreme Court, there will be no further challenges to this progressive and far-reaching judgement. Since 1992, when women officers first entered the Army, they have played a significant role which has brought laurels for the organisation. As the court observed, "The time has come for a realisation that women officers in the Army are not adjuncts to a male dominated establishment whose presence must be 'tolerated' within narrow confines". Circa 2020, that time has truly come.

### HIGH INSECURITY

Moves like deportation of Debbie Abrahams will erode perceptions of India as a surefooted player in diplomatic arena

**U**K LABOUR MP Debbie Abrahams has been deported from Delhi airport, where she had arrived to visit family and friends. She chairs the All Party Parliamentary Group for Kashmir, and had criticised the revocation of Article 370 last year. While Abrahams claims to hold a valid visa, and the government claims it had been cancelled, what is certain is that this is a public relations gaffe in the international domain. Which party is right or wrong is no longer important. This is just one more of a series of official responses from India which offer no diplomatic or political advantage, and only suggest to the external observer that this government is happy to swat away minor irritants with the ponderous might of the state. And that, in turn, suggests that in terms of political psychology, this country is deeply insecure. This is an extremely weak position to bargain from, and could lead to Delhi losing the argument with key sections of political opinion across the world.

In December, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had raised eyebrows in Washington when he cancelled a meeting with Democrat Eliot L Engel, chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the top Republican in the body and their colleagues, because they refused to exclude Pramila Jayapal, the Democrat representative for Washington, who had criticised the abrogation of Article 370, as well as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Both Abrahams and Jayapal have clarified that they oppose curbs on human rights everywhere, even in their countries of residence, making the Indian response look ham-fisted and small-minded.

But for sheer pettiness, the response to the writer Aatish Taseer must score very high. Taseer had written a cover story for Time which was not wholly complimentary to the prime minister, and was stripped of citizenship status. The reaction smacked of intolerance and was read, rightly, as the vindictive use of state authority. Over time, and with sufficient effort, such knee-jerk reactions would project, in the eyes of the world, a nation that is so thin-skinned that it must be quite vulnerable. Successful diplomacy is based on dealing, with inexhaustible patience, from a position of apparent strength. It is not a game for high-strung or over-sensitive players. Appearing to be one may cost India many of the advantages it has earned in recent years.

### HANDPUMP HERO

Gurdaspur MP Sunny Deol has alluded to his on-screen powers to make a political point. This should not be surprising

**F**OR THOSE WHO voted for the MP from Gurdaspur based on his showreel, this week has not been a disappointment. At a series of public meetings across Punjab, meant to address the problems facing people in the state, Sunny Deol delivered some of his greatest hits. He can be seen in videos screaming into a microphone, without context, "Tareekh pe tareekh! Tareekh pe tareekh!" from *Damini*, in which the BJP MP played a lawyer who fights in court with his words and on the streets with his muscles. He even danced to a hit song from *Gadar*, displaying conclusively that confidence will outmatch ability every time. But it is when Deol seemed to suggest that his on-screen persona had a bearing on political reality that he caused controversy.

Apart from saying "jab ye dhai kilo ka haath kisi pe padta hai, woh uthta nahi... uth jata hai" (when this 2.5 kg-hand hits you, you don't just rise up, you rise to the heavens), MP Sunny said that "there is no one better than me in beating people up". The provocation for this statement, according to Deol, was the fact that state government employees (the Congress is in government in the state) have been telling people that "they voted for the wrong person". This comes on the heels of "missing" posters featuring Deol cropping up in Gurdaspur, alluding to his spending a bulk of his time away from the constituency.

While many, including local Congress leaders, have taken exception to Deol's barely veiled allusion to violence, they seem to have missed the point. Like many actors from the 1980s and 1990s, Deol played himself, or a version of himself, on screen, rather than morphing into a character. During the 2019 campaign he took this a step further, even producing a hand-pump, a reference to the quasi-comical weapon from *Gadar* used to defeat practically the whole Pakistan army. And he won. Can anyone blame him for thinking that the famed "dhai kilo ka haath" is enough to silence the political opposition as well?



UPENDRA BAXI

THE SUPREME COURT of India has again showed what a constitutional culture of non-discrimination can achieve in demolishing obstinate structures of gender-based discrimination in state and civil society. The march of gender justice which began with the Mathura open letter in the late Seventies, and bemoaned patriarchal culture even in the apex court, has in recent years extended the arc of the right to equality by normative war against all forms of gender-based discrimination, including that against LGBTQI communities and trans-peoples. Now, Justice Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud and Justice Ajay Rastogi have ruled against the army and even gone so far as to characterise as "absurd" all justifications for inequality on the grounds of security, discipline and morale of the forces.

This was not always so. I still recall the early days when the Supreme Court in the early '70s threw out a petition for gender equality in the Judge Advocate General Office. And even though women's rights to equality were recognised by the Delhi High Court decision in March 2010, and reaffirmed in September, 2015, so entrenched is gender inequality that the Supreme Court routinely took a decade to decide the matter in appeal. The appeal from the 2015 decision, which primarily pertained to discrimination in the Navy, still has to be heard.

But the obituary of discrimination was penned vividly in 2010. In 2015, Justices Kailash Gambhir and Najmi Waziri wrote that "sexism" has no place in law and society and quoted UN Secretary General Kofi Annan: "There is no tool more effective than the empowerment of women for development of a country." In a moving gesture they quoted progressive Urdu poet Asrarul Haq 'Majaz' (1911-1955) who exhorted women to fight for their equitable space in the world in the following words: "Tere mathe pe ye anchal toh bahut hi khuub hai lekin tu is anchal se ik parcham bana leti toh achchha tha (While the raiment covering your head is good, it would be better if you made a banner of it.)"

Justice Chandrachud (and Justice Rastogi) take many crucial constitutional steps further. First, and this plays a decisive role, the

## A just verdict

Supreme Court ruling in favour of women officers in Army is pathbreaking, extends arc of equality

Article 14 of the Constitution has been pressed into service as prescribing 'a right to rationality' that forbids any 'blanket' and 'absolute' prohibition. The burden to justify the differentiation between women and men falls 'squarely on the Army', which has to 'justify such differentiation with reason'. Article 14 also stands transgressed when such blanket prohibition extends to command posts. However, an 'individuated justification' may be offered to 'future courts'. This means that non-posting to a command post may also be questioned in courts by affected individuals.

fact that the "engagement of women officers in the Army" has been an "evolutionary process" is little understood by state lawyers who "betray a lack of understanding of the plain consequences" of the Union decisions. These, over time, acknowledge that the "physiological features of a woman have no significance to her equal entitlements under the Constitution".

Second, in the absence of this recognition, "stereotypes about women in the Armed Forces" take over, and 70 years "after the birth of a post-colonial independent state", they indicate "a need for change in attitudes and mindsets to recognise the commitment to the values of the Constitution". Reliance on the "inherent physiological differences between men and women" rests on a deeply entrenched stereotypical and constitutionally flawed notion that women are the "weaker" sex and may not undertake tasks that are "too arduous" for them. Submissions so premised are held as deeply "disturbing" as these continue to ignore "the solemn constitutional values which every institution in the nation is bound to uphold and facilitate".

Third, this change has to be based on "the right of women officers to equality of opportunity", which has two "facets": Non-discrimination on the grounds of sex and equality of opportunity for all citizens in employment. State and civil society have to firmly internalise these rights to achieve even the minima of gender justice. Removal of the "fundamental fallacy" demands non-discrimination and affirmation of equality of opportunity in public employment. To rule otherwise will constitute "a travesty of justice".

This means women now have the same terms of employment as men. No longer will women be forced to retire after 14 years in service, irrespective of their record. They will also have full pension and other financial benefits. The court clarifies that the policy decision will apply to all women SSC officers "who are currently in service irrespective of the length of service which has been rendered by them".

Fourth, Article 14 of the Constitution has been pressed into service as prescribing "a right to rationality" that forbids any "blanket"

and "absolute" prohibition. The burden to justify the differentiation between women and men falls "squarely on the Army", which has to "justify such differentiation with reason".

Fifth, Article 14 also stands transgressed when such blanket prohibition extends to command posts. However, an "individuated justification" may be offered to "future courts". This means that non-posting to a command post may also be questioned in courts by affected individuals.

Some may say, without resorting to sexual stereotypes, that this particular observation flies in the face of judicial enunciation about "the limitations which questions of policy impose on judicial intervention in matters relating to the Armed Forces". In fact, the brief remark outlining the judicial consciousness of policy limitations may well prove to be the proverbial Achilles' heel in future courts. Although the situations may be distinguished, the same Bench referred recently many a well-reasoned two-judge Bench decision to a larger Bench involving shifting lines of precedents concerning regularisation, with back wages, of long-serving contract labour workmen. And a larger Bench is now re-adjudicating the validity of a slew of cases decided by earlier Benches (including the Sabarimala case, despite a strong dissent on the review by Justices Rohinton Nariman and Dhananjaya Chandrachud).

One hopes that the stoic and heroic endeavours of the petitioner army officers and their counsel, Meenakshi Lekhi and Aishwarya Bhati, will not be visited with the same constitutional fates, and this path-breaking judgment will forever vindicate gender equality and justice.

Making gender justice less contingent on the executive's mood swings is the primary task of the judiciary. Making it immune from judicial re-visitations remains the paramount constitutional duty of all citizens, but more particularly of feminist citizens' crusade for judicial consistency as a badge for constitutional rights and justice.

The writer is professor of law, University of Warwick, and former vice chancellor of Universities of South Gujarat and Delhi



NARAYANI GUPTA

## DISASTER FORETOLD

The proposed Central Vista will destroy Delhi's cultural landscape

TAIMUR (1398) and Nadir Shah (1739) carried away camel-loads of treasures from the courts of Delhi to Samarkand and Isfahan. We will be reliving a modern version of those journeys quite soon. Nine miles of shelves of priceless documents, roomfuls of art treasures, and more miles of books, all now housed in the National Archives, and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts will be waiting for the camels or trucks to transport them. But to where?

The plan for the proposed new-look Central Vista is like a kaleidoscope. Every other day there is some modification. The proposed building-blocks numbered 10, then nine. That happened when it was pointed out that the main building of the archives was built in the 1920s and hence had the immunity of a "heritage" building. Like a lego piece, it was put back in, no matter that it will be enclaved by seven-storey buildings with three basements.

What seems undisputed is that the market for Vitamin D will shoot up. People working in the offices will travel from one block to another through tunnels. This, we are told, will reduce the traffic. Equally, no more will tired officers sing "Under the jamun tree/Who will play cards with me?" We are not even sure what the fate of the jamun trees will be.

Coming back to my question. Where will our grandchildren go to see the National Museum, or what is left of it? There is a rumour that the IGNC holdings are going to be shifted to Janpath Hotel. With the memory of the Akbar Hotel's reincarnation, first

as a ministry of the Central government, and then as a university, such suggestions do not surprise. But, anybody in the business will tell you that libraries and museum holdings do not take kindly to relocation. Two journeys — that of the archives library from Kolkata to Delhi in 1937, and of the Archaeological Survey's library to the second floor of the Archives in the 1980s — are sad reminders. Many books and prints mysteriously disappeared in transit. And it does not help any that the National Museum has for years firmly resisted any attempt to have an inventory prepared.

In this digital age, do we need to build for humungous ministries? When post-offices and banks are down-sizing, why not ministries? Is it at all possible to make our civil servants virtual? Plans for 10 seven-storey buildings to house all the staff of the government suggest a monotonous landscape.

In assessing an architect's work, some details are often glossed over. There was a major set of buildings planned by Lutyens which did not get executed. His plan of 1913 included a cultural ensemble at the Queensway/Janpath crossing. Four complexes were to be built — the Imperial Record Office, the Antiquities Museum, an Ethnological Museum and the Imperial Library. The first was built in the 1920s; the Museum had to wait till 1960, the third was not assembled, and Curzon's Imperial Library has remained in Kolkata as the National Library.

Some five decades ago, Delhi used to be dismissed as a city of bureaucrats and shop-

keepers, with no culture. Over time, this void has been filled. The National Archives, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and IGNC (together with the excellent Central Secretariat library) have become part of its intellectual and cultural face — exuding the sense of scholars working in the cool tranquility of the Archives, of school-children in animated chatter wandering through museum galleries, and of citizens relating to a welcoming public space in IGNC. The Janpath crossing has a comfortable relationship with the city, celebrated through their outreach activities like the Rekhta Festival or visiting exhibitions. These have softened the landscape which otherwise would have been redolent of the musty smell of files and as full of endless corridors as "Last Year at Marienbad". The Mandi House Culture Circle, the Lodi Road intersection, and the Humayun's Tomb-Sundar Nursery complex, are three other major culture-nodes. These are achievements of the first half-century of Delhi as independent India's capital. Destroy one, and the rest will feel a sense of insecurity. And what are they to be replaced by? A wasteland of blocks of ministries at Rajpath, a convention centre at what was Pragati Maidan.

Redesigning a building in order to add or modify its contents is one thing. To demolish institutions and substitute offices which have no outreach function is another. A lack of respect for our past will create a cultural crater as deep as the new buildings are high.

The writer is a historian of Delhi



## FEBRUARY 19, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

**STATES' CRISIS**  
WHILE NO DATES have yet been announced for holding elections to the nine state assemblies that have been dissolved, official sources said the Centre is keen that popularly elected governments are put back in the saddle as early as possible. The assemblies were dissolved by a presidential proclamation and the states — Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Orissa, Rajasthan and Punjab — brought under central rule. How soon the process of restoring elected governments in these states will be completed depends on the Election Commission, according to official sources.

**AFGHAN SOLUTION**  
A CONSENSUS REGARDING Afghanistan and the restoration of stability and cooperation in the region is emerging following a series of high-level consultations India has had with its neighbours during the last few days. Stating this in Delhi, the foreign secretary, R D Sathe said the special envoys of the Indian government, who toured various capitals in the region, explained India's position on developments in this area, including implications of the proposed supply of American arms to Pakistan.

**DELAYING CAB**  
NON-COOPERATION ON THE part of

Opposition-run states, by delaying ratification of the Constitution Amendment Bill providing reservation of seats to Scheduled Castes and Tribes, is one of the three specific reasons the government has cited justifying dissolution of nine non-Congress (I) state assemblies. In a four-page statement defending the dissolutions, Law Minister P Shiv Shankar said the opposition parties which were in power in various states continued in office, despite loss of confidence of the electorate, by deliberately delaying ratification of the CAB. Their "deliberate inaction", he said, "highlights their lack of concern for the advancement of the Interest of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes."

# Neighbours' mind games

Given Pakistan's paranoia about an 'existential threat' from India, New Delhi and Islamabad must initiate a confidence-building dialogue between nuclear experts



ARUN PRAKASH

EVEN AS THORNY issues of force-modernisation, budget-prioritisation and joint command structures engage the attention of our newly anointed Chief of Defence Staff, he will, sooner than later, in his capacity as the first-ever Military Adviser to the National Command Authority (NCA), have to address India's nuclear deterrent. When he does so, he might ponder over US strategist Bernard Brodie's prescription for preventing a nuclear conflict: "Thus far, the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them."

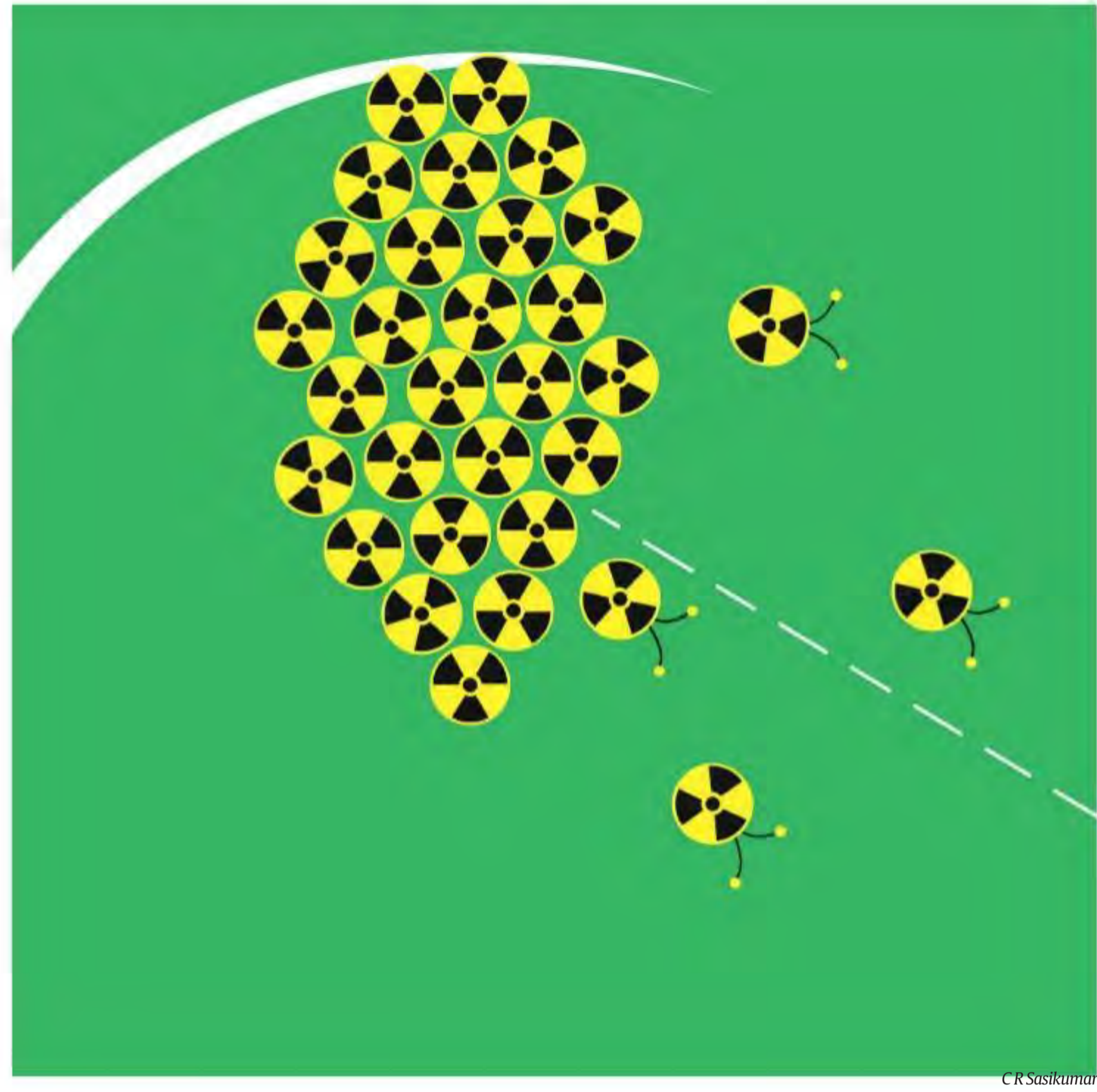
Just as "beauty" is said to lie in the "eye of the beholder", the credibility of nuclear deterrence lies in the "adversary's mind". He must never be permitted to entertain an iota of doubt that a nuclear first strike will invite a devastating nuclear response. The establishment of credible mutual deterrence between two nuclear rivals, by diminishing the possibility of a surprise nuclear attack, forms the basis of what is termed "strategic stability". So, when retired Pakistani Lt General Khalid Kidwai blames India for South Asia's endemic strategic instability, we must take note.

Speaking at a recent workshop organised by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Kidwai claimed that the onus of maintaining strategic stability in South Asia fell on Pakistan's shoulders since "India's insatiable drive for regional domination, especially given its current irrational, unstable and belligerent internal and external policies" could lead to catastrophic consequences. Kidwai, as the Director-General of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) for 14 years, was at the heart of Pakistan's National Command Authority (NCA), overseeing the operationalisation of its nuclear deterrent and evolution of its doctrines and strategies. Although his pronouncements are for public consumption, given the historic absence of a formal Indo-Pak nuclear dialogue, they should provide some food for thought.

Kidwai's discourse attempts to upend conventional wisdom in an effort to show that it is India, not Pakistan, which is a revisionist power bent on destabilising the Subcontinent. His description of "major destabilising strategic steps" initiated by India provides an interesting glimpse of the Pakistani capacity for self-delusion and the visceral hostility underpinning its paranoia about an "existential threat" from India.

The starting point of Kidwai's arguments is India's 1974 peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE), which, according to him, was the trigger for Pakistan's nuclear-weapon programme as the only way of redressing the "India-induced strategic instability". However, Pakistani nuclear expert Feroze Hassan Khan writes that Pakistan's "bomb decision" had come much earlier in January 1972, when then Prime Minister Z A Bhutto spoke to a gathering of scientists in Multan about waging a "thousand-year war" against India and boasted that "...we will make an atomic bomb even if we have to eat grass". US analyst George Perkovich, writing about India's post-PNE posture, mentions that "moral doubts, domestic priorities and international considerations" that prevented Indira Gandhi and successor PMs from authorising weaponisation till Pakistan's stealthy pursuit of an "Islamic bomb" forced India's hand.

Kidwai then refers to the massing of Indian forces for the military exercise



CR Sasikumar

"Brasstacks" in end-1986, which caused serious alarm in Pakistan. According to him, Pakistan not only counter-mobilised its forces, but also dropped hints of a nuclear capability due to which "India blinked and strategic stability was restored". In actual fact, the military crisis had wound down on its own by February 1987, and it was only in March that journalist Kuldip Nayar "broke" rogue nuclear scientist A Q Khan's boast about using the bomb if Pakistan's existence was threatened.

During the 1990s, alleges Kidwai, "India upped the ante" through the introduction of longer range ballistic missiles and eventually, by conducting nuclear tests in 1998. The resultant instability, according to him, compelled Pakistan to induct a new family of ballistic missiles and respond by conducting its own nuclear tests, thus restoring strategic balance. He fails to mention that with the clandestine transfer of missile technology from North Korea and receipt of nuclear-weapon designs and material from China, Pakistan, throughout the 1980s and 90s, had remained ahead of India, as the latter persevered with indigenous technology.

Pakistan, apart from reserving the right to the first-use of nuclear weapons, has refrained from declaring an official nuclear doctrine since 1998. The timeline of Pakistan's transition from "minimum credible deterrence" to "full spectrum deterrence" (FSD) is, therefore, not clear. Kidwai presents the FSD regime as a counter to the Indian army's Cold Start doctrine, meant to be a remedial for India's lethargic general mobilisation of 2001-02.

Kidwai claims that FSD focuses on a capability to bring "every Indian target into Pakistan's striking range" and provides options to select amongst counter-value, battlefield and counter-force targets. Consequently, he believes that the "Cold Start

doctrine has been neutralised, nuclear deterrence holds" and Pakistan is assured that its FSD will bring "the international-community rushing into South Asia to prevent a wider conflagration".

Coming to India's February 2019 air-strike on Balakot, Kidwai vehemently denies that Pakistan's 'nuclear bluff' was called, notwithstanding the IAF having crossed the international border to launch kinetic attacks. It was the presence of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, he says, that 'deterred India from expanding operations beyond a single unsuccessful air strike'. The robust PAF response, according to him, restored strategic stability and 'no new normal' was established.

Finally, Kidwai is not above muddying the waters through disinformation and questions India's nuclear command and control system. Referring to the deployment of India's nuclear submarine, *Arihant*, during the Balakot crisis, he poses an obscure question that would interest our strategists: "One wonders whether India contemplated the use of nuclear weapons from a second strike platform even before its first strike options?"

Pakistan's nuclear posture involving war-head accretion, battlefield nuclear weapons and a sea-based second-strike capability is divergent from India's. Arrival of ballistic-missile defence and multiple re-entry war-heads on the scene will render the Indo-Pak equation far more complex and instability-prone. Since there is no common understanding of issues like nuclear thresholds, deterrence-breakdown and escalation-control, it is in the mutual interest of New Delhi and Islamabad to initiate a sustained confidence-building dialogue — isolated from all other issues — between nuclear experts.

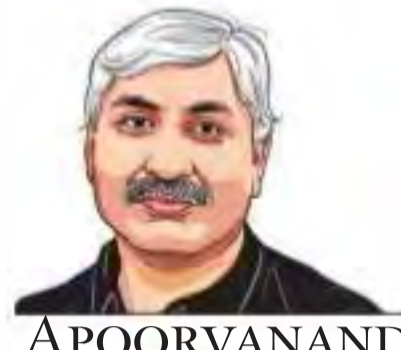
The writer is a retired chief of naval staff

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"There is little doubt now that Pakistan is displaying utmost seriousness in cleaning its stables and laying a financial, legal and administrative infrastructure that would comply with FATF standards for squeezing terror funding." — DAWN

# Content of speech, or name of speaker?

Even if we disagree with Sharjeel Imam's statements, it is important to stand up for his right to speak



APOORVANAND

SHARJEEL IMAM is a lonely man. No student union is marching for his freedom. No press conference by civil society. He has upset not only the secular society but also the liberal Muslims for having spoken as a "hardcore Muslim". A politician who wanted him arrested is once again the Chief Minister of Delhi. Meanwhile, Sharjeel has been booked by the Delhi Police in connection with the violence at Jamia Millia Islamia. His present and future is uncertain — he is facing charges of sedition and also under the UAPA. Though highly unlikely, if some miracle secures bail for him in this case, four more states are after him. He has allegedly asked for the cutting off Assam and/or the Northeast, which is seen as a call to dismember India.

While Sharjeel braces for a long battle with a majoritarian state where Muslims are essentially suspect, he is also being isolated and deprived of any solidarity from outside. The ordeal that Urvashi Chudawala, a student of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, had to face for having raised a slogan in his favour in a pride parade organised by the LGBTQ+ community would deter anybody from loudly sympathising with him. The Bombay High Court thankfully rescued her from the orders of a lower court which felt that "ultimately the intent of the statement uttered by applicant in support of him... prima facie attracts ingredients of section 124A (sedition)." The fact that Urvashi had "liked" a photograph of Sharjeel Imam was deemed sufficient evidence by the court to conclude that the charges framed by the prosecution are serious and that it could not ignore the effect that her sloganeering would have on the public.

Vijay Hiremath, Urvashi's lawyer, made two important points. One, that the charges against Sharjeel are yet to be proved. Second, Urvashi's arrest would have a chilling effect on the protests which are underway in the city. One is aware of the import of the charge of sedition, as the charge itself becomes proof for the courts.

Like Urvashi, Fareeda Begum and Nazbunnisa, the headmistress of a school in Bidar, Karnataka and the mother of a child involved in an anti-CAA play enacted by the students of that school, also got relief from a court and were released after spending 16 days in jail. Again, on the charges of sedition.

We must also take note of the news of the arrest of 19 people in Bilariyaganj in Azamgarh for sedition. What is worrying in both the cases is the alacrity with which the police is cracking down on Muslims or their supporters. These are two separate states but the mindset of the police is the same. The police in Bihar tried to stop

Kanhैया Kumar's yatra and it took an intervention by the chief minister for it to relent. The seeming willingness, at times, of the judiciary to look away from the police's biased approach is only emboldening the latter.

Urvashi, a trans person herself raised the slogan supporting Sharjeel at a pride parade. The organisers immediately distanced themselves from those, including Urvashi, who allegedly raised the slogans. They are right when they say that the purpose of the parade was different. But a queer parade is also about questioning the notion of normalness. All sexual orientations are normal. They have a right to be expressed. Similarly, the normal Indianness is disturbed by the likes of Sharjeel and his friends. They are faced with a nationalist bias and their right to expression needs to be defended against this oppressive idea of Indianness. Freedom, like justice, is indivisible. If you deny it to one kind of people, you should also not expect it for yourself. While disassociating with the slogans, the least the organisers could have done was to say that they stand for the right of free expression of Urvashi and her friends.

We may agree or disagree with Sharjeel's statements but so long as he does not call for violence, he remains a free person. Sharjeel has not called for the dismemberment of India. He was talking about a long road blockade. Since when have road blockades become seditious in India? Would Sharjeel be wrong if he concludes that it is not the content of his speech, but his name, which goes against him? Also, one should not need to repeat that mere speech, however disagreeable to the state, must not be the basis for sedition charges.

In an India where open calls to violence against Muslims — that too by ministers and political leaders — and open propaganda against them are seen as a natural expression of sentiments, it is not surprising that people like Sharjeel are suppressed. To criminalise protests by Muslims and disallow them to even speak is to tell them that they are not part of the democratic universe of India. For what is democracy if not the freedom to have a view which could be contrary to the mainstream? Again, to exercise your democratic rights you need not always present nationalist credentials first. Muslims cannot be asked to talk about their rights only after pledging their commitment to the country. No other section of people in India is burdened with this expectation. Sharjeel is only one of the diverse voices within the Muslim community. He, as an individual and as one who identifies himself as a Muslim, has as much a right to have his views as other, so-called nationalist, Muslims.

What the police is doing to the Muslim protests and persons like Sharjeel effectively tells them that they are already second class citizens of India. Sharjeel should not be left alone to fight this battle. To secure his liberty, to ensure equality for him, to guarantee justice to him — ideas of fraternity and solidarity need to assert themselves.

The writer teaches Hindi at Delhi University

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### BRUTAL POLICE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Caught on camera' (IE, February 18). Notwithstanding, the high court and Supreme Court observations about citizens' fundamental right to peaceful protest, the concept seems alien to the lower judiciary and Delhi Police. It is wrong to assume that the excessive police action was autonomous. The police are being guided by the political executive, which harbours a very different view about the ongoing protests against CAA-NRC-NPR than the apex court. The rule of law is imperative for democracy to survive. Those policemen responsible for brutality against innocent students must face the law.

LR Murmu, Delhi

### WHO RULES?

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Karnataka sedition case: After protest, J&K students re-arrested' (IE, February 18). Three students from Jammu and Kashmir were arrested for sedition. However, they were released by the police because of insufficient evidence. Subsequently, Hindutva groups like Bajrang Dal protested against the release and they were re-arrested. Who is ruling the state? The government and the police or the Bajrang Dal?

Anil Bagarika, Mumbai

### NO CAPITAL BLAME

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The new faultline' (IE, Feb 18). Can the concept of democracy exist without the concept of a nation? If capitalism is winning by

### 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](mailto:editpage@expressindia.com) or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301.

playing within the rules, why paint it with an anti-people brush? We need to remember that the alternative form of human organisation under Stalin and Mao was a nightmare.

HN Bhagwat, Chiplun

### WORLD SANS US

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'When Yankee goes home', (IE, February 18). The Trump administration's attempt to revisit all its engagements in the global arena and the fall out of its hasty actions point to the fact that the contemporary international order is primarily an American project, and its survival depends on the whims the ruling elites in the US. The centrality of the US cannot be wished away but international institutions can provide stability by making readjustments.

Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

## VIEW FROM THE RIGHT

### POLL LESSONS

NOT HAVING A CM face and focusing on "horrific" polarising jingoism cost the BJP the elections in Delhi, the English mouthpiece of the RSS, *Organiser*, has said in its latest issue.

An article titled, "No Lessons Learnt" by Suchitra Kulkarni, says: "The BJP did not have a credible face to project as the chief minister. The suave, smooth-talking Kejriwal has a way with words and manages to connect with the electorate through his advertisement chats." Commenting on the BJP's vitriolic campaign, the article compared it to Sonia Gandhi's "Maut ka Saudagar" comment. "The BJP's intemperate verbal diarrhoea was horrific to say the least — *Desh ke gaddron ko, goli maaro saalo ko*" had no place in a state election. Another Union minister called Kejriwal a terrorist. Both dialogues were right up there with Sonia Gandhi's "maut ka saudagar" com-

ment during the Gujarat elections. And they probably cost the BJP quite a few votes from the educated middle class," the article says.

According to the article, while AAP showcased its schools and mohalla clinics, the BJP had to carry the burden of inept municipal councillors. The article criticises the BJP for its inability to conceive a local campaign: "Election after election, the BJP has managed to confuse national issues with state elections. The CAAs is done and dusted... don't even talk about it. The plank should have been — how Delhi would develop seamlessly if BJP came to power."

### SHAHEEN BAGH

THE CAA PROTESTS have continued to figure in *Organiser*. In the latest issue, it has tried to analyse their impact on the Delhi elections and what it means for the future. An article blamed the "majority" for falling for freebies rather than being worried about the dangers Shaheen Bagh poses. "Shaheen Bagh was milked to the hilt for elections by Left-secular communal forces. It was nurtured by AAP's minister Amanatullah Khan... Yes, it didn't matter for the 'majority' community as its voting percentage and results show. They preferred the comfort of free facilities over the frightening scenario they witnessed in the name

of CAA protests..." an article written by Ratan Sharda claims.

Arguing that the AAP's win should not be seen as a validation of the Shaheen Bagh protests, the article says, "Shaheen Bagh was a cover up to give a sheen of respectability to Jihadi elements who had unleashed violence in the name of anti-CAA protests claiming it was against Muslims... This agitation saw (the) most poisonous hate mongering but critics blame it on BJP. Secular lobbies and their mentors haven't changed."

The article adds: "What is sinister about the Shaheen Bagh model is the axis of Islamists and Marxist nexus... Seculars of all shades, including Congress, were cheering them on. These groups were so happy that there is no law and order repercussion from the government that they began replicating it in other parts of India. There was nothing spontaneous about Shaheen Bagh or its succeeding sit-ins. The very fact that the Shaheen Bagh people went home on the day the elections were over, shows the intent."

### BODO ACCORD

ORGANISER HAS HAILED the Bodo Accord as an electoral bulwark against the setbacks the BJP may face due to anti-CAA protests in Assam. Calling the accord a masterstroke

that will further marginalise the Congress in Assam, the article has expressed hope that the BJP could win 12 seats in the Bodo region.

"From the perspective of general popularity and electoral politics... the BJP is set for rich dividends. The BJP is eyeing 12 seats in the Bodo region for itself and possibly for its regional alliance partners. In Bengali-dominated Cachar valley, where the CAA has overwhelming acceptance, there would be 15 seats. Here too, the Lotus party feels it can gain from the Hindu votes even as Bengali Muslims grudge it with more intensity. The Muslim votes in Cachar Valley and parts of Dhubri district could now actually go to the AIUDF of Badruddin Ajmal," the article claims.

It added that the accord sets a template for resolving regional disputes: "There are demands for such separate homelands in other parts of Assam and in other states as well. Following the Accord, it is presumed that it will be useful for the Centre to reach out to other tribal groups in states like Manipur, and, to an extent in Nagaland — in the Mon-Tuensang region there is already a clamour for a separate Union Territory status — and also to other ethnic and tribal groups in Assam such as those in Karbi Anglong."

Curated by Deeptiman Tiwary



## IRAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS KHAMENEI: VOTING A RELIGIOUS DUTY

Voting in a parliamentary election this week is "a religious duty" for Iranians, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Tuesday, days before the vote seen as a referendum on the clerical establishment's popularity. Due to a large number of disqualified candidates, hardliners loyal to Khamenei are likely to dominate the 290-seat Parliament after the Feb 21 vote.

### TOP OF THE WORLD



USA

### Bloomberg makes debate stage, facing rivals for 1st time

**BILLIONAIRE MIKE Bloomberg** has qualified for the upcoming Democratic presidential debate, marking the first time he'll stand alongside the rivals he has so far avoided by bypassing the early voting states and using his personal fortune to define himself through television ads. A new poll published Tuesday shows Bloomberg with 19% support nationally in the Democratic nominating contest. The former New York City mayor, who launched his campaign in Nov, will appear in Wednesday's debate in Las Vegas alongside former Vice President Joe Biden, Sens. Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar and former mayor Pete Buttigieg.

### 98 MORE DIE IN CHINA, TAKING OVERALL TOLL TO 1,868

# Coronavirus claims life of hospital director in outbreak's epicentre

Liu Zhiming becomes 7th health worker known to have died of the virus; 1,700 doctors, nurses infected

**YANAN WANG**  
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 18

AS A mysterious new virus enveloped central China's Wuhan early this year, Liu Zhiming mobilised all the resources of his hospital in the city's Wuchang district to deal with the thousands of sick people arriving daily, threatening to overwhelm the local health care system.

That dedication appears to have cost him his life, with Wuhan's health bureau announcing Tuesday that he became infected and died despite "all-out" attempts to save him.

Liu is at least the seventh health worker to die of the COVID-19 disease among the more than 1,700 doctors and nurses who have become sick. His death comes as authorities are cautiously cheering a reduction in the number of new daily cases and deaths, along with the results of a study showing most people who contracted the virus experienced only mild symptoms.

China on Tuesday reported 1,886 new cases and 98 more deaths. That raised the number of deaths in mainland China to 1,868 and the total number of



Patients infected with the coronavirus take rest at a temporary hospital converted from Wuhan Sports Center in central China's Hubei Province, Monday. AP

confirmed cases to 72,436.

"Now the prevention and control work is at a critical time," President Xi Jinping told British Prime Minister Boris Johnson in a phone call Tuesday, according to Chinese

state broadcaster CCTV.

The UN secretary general said the virus outbreak "is not out of control but it is a very dangerous situation." Antonio Guterres said in an interview in Lahore, Pakistan, that "the risks

are enormous and we need to be prepared worldwide for that."

The outbreak has caused massive disruptions and China may postpone its biggest political meeting of the year to avoid having people travel to Beijing

### WHO: 92 cases of human-to-human transmission outside China

*Geneva:* There have been 92 cases of human-to-human spread of the coronavirus in 12 countries outside China but the World Health Organisation does not have the data to make comparisons with China, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Tuesday. He said the WHO had not seen sustained local transmission except in specific cases, such as on the Diamond Princess cruise ship quarantined in Japan. China has reported 72,528 cases to WHO including 1,868 deaths as of Tuesday, Tedros said.

while the virus is still spreading. One of the automotive industry's biggest events, China's biannual auto show, also is being postponed, and many sports and entertainment events have been delayed or canceled. AP

## Quarantine on cruise ship in Japan comes under question

Those who have tested negative for the virus on the *Diamond Princess* set to go home starting today

**MARIA CHENG & MARI YAMAGUCHI**  
TOKYO, FEBRUARY 18

AN EXTRAORDINARY two-week quarantine of the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship ends Wednesday, with thousands of passengers and crew set to disembark over the next several days in the port of Yokohama, near Tokyo.

A growing number of scientists, however, say the ship served as an incubator for a worrying new virus from China instead of a quarantine facility meant to prevent the worsening of an outbreak that has sickened tens of thousands.

As of Tuesday, 542 cases of the virus have been identified among the 3,711 quarantined passengers and crew, making the ship the site of the most infections outside of China.

The question now is: Why? The Japanese government has repeatedly defended the effectiveness of the quarantine. But some

scientists suggest that it may have been less than rigorous.

In a possible sign of lax quarantine protocols, three Japanese health officials who helped in the quarantine checks on the ship were also infected.

Japan's health minister, Katsunobu Kato, told reporters Tuesday that all passengers who

remained on the cruise ship have had their samples taken and that those who tested negative would start getting off the vessel beginning Wednesday, when their required 14-day quarantine is scheduled to end. The process is expected to take until Friday because of the large number of people involved. AP

remained on the cruise ship have had their samples taken and that those who tested negative would start getting off the vessel beginning Wednesday, when their required 14-day quarantine is scheduled to end. The process is expected to take until Friday because of the large number of people involved. AP

### UN CHIEF IN PAKISTAN

## 'Kartarpur corridor opening is proof of Pak's desire for peace'

**MZULQERNAIN**  
LAHORE, FEBRUARY 18

UN CHIEF Antonio Guterres on Tuesday said the opening of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor is a practical example of Pakistan's desire for peace and inter-faith harmony, as he visited the revered Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, the final resting place of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev.

The Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbhandhik Committee and Evacuee Trust Property Board officials received the UN Secretary General at Kartarpur Sahib, some 125kms from Lahore. A Sikh boy presented him a bouquet.

Guterres was also briefed about the Kartarpur Corridor pact between Pakistan and India. He was told that Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan took this initiative to facilitate the Sikh community of India and elsewhere to visit the shrine.

The corridor links Gurdwara



UN chief Antonio Guterres

Darbar Sahib in Pakistan's Kartarpur — the final resting place of Sikh faith's founder Guru Nanak Dev — to Dera Baba Nanak shrine in India's Gurdaspur district.

Wearing an orange scarf, Guterres visited different parts of the Gurdwara. He was served with traditional food in lunch along with Sikhs and Pakistani officials. Strict security measures were taken during the visit.

Indian Sikhs in good number were also present at Kartarpur Sahib.

Later talking to media persons, the UN Secretary General said the Kartarpur Corridor is a practical example of Pakistan's desire for peace and inter-faith harmony, Radio Pakistan reported. PTI

## Ghani named winner of disputed presidential polls in Afghanistan

**TAMEEM AKHGAR & RAHIM FAIEZ**  
KABUL, FEBRUARY 18

ASHRAF GHANI won a second term as President of Afghanistan, the country's independent election commission announced Tuesday, but his closest opponent refused to recognise the results, declaring himself winner and potentially endangering peace negotiations with the Taliban.

The Taliban also rejected Ghani's win, further putting into question a US peace plan that calls for a reduction in violence followed by a more permanent agreement expected to be signed Feb 29, between Washington and the Taliban. That agreement would pave the way for US troops to return home, ending America's longest war, and trigger negotiations between Afghans on both sides of the conflict.

The bickering in Kabul and Ghani's surprise suggestion that the Taliban participate in elections would seem to throw a wrench into peace plans announced last weekend at the Munich Security Summit.



Ashraf Ghani secured his second term as Afghan President after winning 50.64% of the vote

The election commission said Ghani garnered 923,592 votes, or 50.64%, in the troubled election that took place last Sept 28. The country's chief executive, Abdullah Abdullah received 720,841 votes, or 39.52%.

Ghani and Abdullah head a fragile national unity government that was put together under US pressure after both leaders claimed victory in Afghanistan's 2014 elections.

Abdullah, in comments broadcast by media outlets, said he considered the election results illegal. "We are going to establish an inclusive government," he said. AP

### EXPLAINED Delayed election, disputed votes

THE ELECTION that took place last Sept was delayed multiple times due to various considerations, including security concerns. It was also marred by uncertainty over the future of the country as the US and the Taliban negotiated a peace deal.

When the election did take place, it saw a relatively low turnout of around 1.8 million. Ghani's main opponent, Abdullah Abdullah, as well as other candidates, dispute around 300,000 of those votes. Many of these votes have been registered in the system either before or after voting hours — by months in some cases. This leaves the conflict-torn country prone to yet another political crisis.

## Qaeda confirms: Pak Lt General joined us after service, has died

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

THE AL QAEDA in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) has claimed that a former top military officer of Pakistan, Lt Gen Shahid Aziz, had joined them after his retirement and died a few years ago.

Aziz, who retired from the Pakistan Army in 2005, was once considered very close to General Pervez Musharraf and played a key role in the 1999 Kargil war.

Saudi Arabia-based Arab News said the announcement on Aziz was made by AQIS in the February edition of its Urdu language magazine 'Nawa-e-Afghan Jihad' (Voice of Afghan Jihad).

The Arab News said while rumours of Shahid Aziz's death had been circulating since 2018, this was the first confirmation from al-Qaeda. Notably, after retiring from the Army in 2005, Aziz headed the anti-corruption watchdog of Pakistan for two years under Musharraf's presidency.

In 2013, he slammed Musharraf for the Kargil "misadventure" which, he said, was done in secrecy and was bound to fail because of poor planning.

In 2016, he disappeared and was rumoured to have fled to Afghanistan's Kunar province where he was said to have fought alongside the Islamic State (IS).

The AQIS magazine said Aziz had close ties with al-Qaeda members, and that he had written a damning account of his life and associations that would be published in the magazine in the coming months, Arab News reported.

The report quoted Saleem Mehsud, a senior journalist, saying: "For the first time, an organisation has stated that Aziz had any sort of contacts with any entity, and now the magazine will publish his alleged articles from his book, which is expected to make startling revelations."

In the past, Aziz's family rejected reports of his jihadi affiliations, insisting that he led a very private life devoted to religion.

While the Indian establishment has not reacted to the revelation officially, intelligence officers say this comes as no surprise. "I am not surprised at all by this revelation. Pakistan has a long tradition of its military officers joining ranks with terror groups. It only validates my consistent assertion that ISIS and AQIS in the Indian

### 37 YRS IN PAK ARMY

■ Lt Gen Shahid Aziz served the Pakistan Army for 37 years and held a number of key posts, including Director General Military Operations, Chief of General Staff, and Commander of the IV Corps in Lahore.

■ Aziz was part of Musharraf's close circle, and also served as director of the ISI's Analysis Wing.

■ In 2016, he disappeared and was rumoured to have fled to Afghanistan's Kunar province where he was said to have fought alongside the Islamic State.

subcontinent are merely an extension of the Pakistani establishment. Aziz was a key player in the Kargil war. Later, he went on to attack Musharraf in public for the botched operation. In fact, there are recordings where he is telling Musharraf that all preparations are done," former Research and Analysis Wing chief Alok Joshi said.

Aziz served the Pakistan Army for 37 years and held a number of key posts. These included Director General Military Operations (DGMO), Chief of General Staff, and Commander of the IV Corps in Lahore. Aziz was part of Musharraf's close circle, and as Director of the ISI's Analysis Wing, one of the architects of Kargil.

Post retirement, however, Aziz was reported to have been attracted to jihadi groups and was said to have harboured such ideology for long. In an interview later, Musharraf spoke of Aziz "having grown a beard" and leaving for Afghanistan.

Husain Haqqani, a journalist who served as Pakistan's ambassador to the US from 2008 to 2011, and was an aide to both Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, said a book written by Aziz in 2013 revealed his "preference for an Islamist Pakistan". According to Haqqani, for Aziz "only the Quran stands in the way" of the modern world's "Satanic way of life".

This is not the first case of a Pakistan Army officer joining militant ranks after retirement. Lt Gen Hamid Gul was reported to have joined the Haqqani network.

## Boy Scouts of America file for bankruptcy after abuse cases



The Boy Scouts of America headquarters in Irving, Texas. It has 2.2 million members between the ages of five and 21. Reuters

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 18

THE BOY Scouts of America filed for bankruptcy Tuesday in what it said was an effort to safeguard compensation payouts for sexual abuse victims.

The organisation has been accused of covering up generations of abuse inflicted on thousands of its young members and failing to do enough to root out pedophiles using the youth movement to prey

on minors over its 110-year history. Bankruptcy proceedings will help the Boy Scouts to "equitably compensate" victims through the establishment of a victims' compensation trust and allow the organisation to continue at a local level, the group said.

More than 12,000 members of the Boy Scouts had been sexually abused since 1944, the victims' lawyer said. The Boy Scouts of America has around 2.2 million members between the ages of five and 21, the organisation said.

### LEAKED DOCUMENT OUTLINES INFORMATION THAT AUTHORITIES GATHERED ON RESIDENTS OF XINJIANG'S KARAKAX COUNTY

# How China monitored, selected people for internment camps in Xinjiang

**AUSTIN RAMZY**  
FEBRUARY 18

THE LAST time she heard from her family was over three years ago, before China began rounding up Muslims in the country's far west. She lived abroad and knew nothing of her family's fate — until the contents of a leaked government document surfaced, describing their lives in chilling detail.

Rozinisa Memettohti, an ethnic Uighur who has lived in Turkey since 2003, learned in the document that two of her sisters

had been sent to indoctrination camps for having more children than the region allowed. One of the sisters was also targeted for obtaining a passport. "The reality is already far worse than any of my fears," Memettohti said in a telephone interview this month. "My father, my brothers and my sisters are in danger."

For the past few years, authorities in the Xinjiang region have placed hundreds of thousands of Uighurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim minority groups into indoctrination camps in the most sweep-

ing mass detentions since the Mao era. The document provides a rare, finely grained view of how the ruling Communist Party has carried out the system of detentions that has shredded the fibers of society in Xinjiang.

The leaked document, a 137-page spreadsheet, outlines information that authorities in Karakax County (also spelled Qaraqash) in south-western Xinjiang have gathered on its residents. It includes the names and government identification numbers of more than 300 people held in indoctrination camps and information on hun-



A call to prayer in the old city of Kashgar in Xinjiang. NYT

dreds of their relatives and neighbors. Even children as young as 16 were closely monitored for signs of what Beijing considered to be wayward thinking.

The document, one of numerous files kept on the more than one million people who have been detained in the camps, shows the range of behaviours that authorities see as problematic that would be normal elsewhere, such as giving up alcohol, wanting to go on a religious pilgrimage or attending a funeral.

In Memettohti's case, her sisters were flagged for praying reg-

ularly and participating in routine religious ceremonies.

The spreadsheet adds to a growing body of evidence on these detentions. Reports on other leaked government documents last year by *The New York Times* and a group of outlets led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists showed the coercive nature of the crackdown and detailed the tight controls placed on detainees in the indoctrination camps.

The latest government document was leaked last year, and overseas Uighur activists shared it

with several media organisations.

The data in it shows how China has tried to establish dominance over Uighurs and other minority groups in the name of increasing security, said Adrian Zenz, a researcher who has analyzed the spreadsheet.

"This document is by far the most detailed that we have," said Zenz, a senior fellow at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation in Washington. "It allows us to dissect the anatomy of both the internment drive and what the government" is now doing with these people. NYT

# 15 ECONOMY

<b>GOLD</b>	<b>RUPEE</b>	<b>OIL</b>	<b>SILVER</b>
₹41,865	₹71.54	\$56.58	₹47,584

\*Indian basket as on February 17, 2020

SENSEX: 40,894.38 ▼ 161.31 NIFTY: 11,992.50 ▼ 53.30 NIKKEI: 23,193.80 ▼ 329.44 HANG SENG: 27,530.20 ▼ 429.40 FTSE: 7,364.67 ▼ 68.58 DAX: 13,685.12 ▼ 98.77

\*International market data till 1900 IST

## SECTOR WATCH AVIATION

### Ahmedabad leads among major airports in wildlife strikes; 11 cases for every 10,000 flights

**PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

TUESDAY'S BIRD-HIT incident at Ahmedabad airport involving a GoAir aircraft will add to its already abysmal statistics on wildlife-related incidents, according to which there were nearly 11 such events every 10,000 flights in 2019 — making it the worst among major aerodromes. This is almost twice as much as Delhi airport — the country's biggest one — which had over five wildlife strike incidents last year.

The GoAir aircraft bound for Bengaluru on Tuesday was hurtling on Ahmedabad's runway to take-off when one of its engines ingested a vulture, resulting in the powerplant catching fire, after which the take-off was rejected. Even as the incident may have caused disruption for passengers, pilots and aviation professionals have developed their means to deal with wildlife-related disruptions that have plagued the Ahmedabad airport, which saw one incident every four days last year.

On the one hand, pilots who regularly fly into or out of Ahmedabad make special efforts to prevent bird strikes and air traffic personnel have started informing the crew about bird movements in their flight path. At every airport where scheduled flights operate, an individual Airfield Environment Management Committee has been constituted to identify sources of stray animals or bird attractions at the airport and take necessary steps for bird-strike prevention.

According to government officials, the AEMCs are mandated to take "proactive measures on time-bound basis" to ensure that no illegal slaughter houses, garbage dumps etc exist in the vicinity of airports, which is a source of increased bird activity and may lead to wildlife strikes to aircraft during approach or take-off.

According to sources, the two primary contributors to the wildlife nuisance at Ahmedabad airport and the

**In 2019, 1,280 wildlife strikes occurred at all airports, lower than 1,320 in 2018**

surrounding airspace are the presence of bird sanctuaries in the vicinity of the airport — the Thol Bird Sanctuary about 30 km away from the airport — and the larger Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary, which is 70-75 km away. Both these spots attract migratory birds from the north in heavy numbers.

The second, more recent phenomenon, is dismantling of a large garbage dump in Ahmedabad, a move that has caused the birds circling the landfill to disperse. The dump is located almost directly in the trajectory of flights taking off from and landing into the airport. While in terms of frequency, the Ahmedabad airport, where US President Donald Trump is expected to arrive later this month, tops the list of wildlife-related incidents, Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport saw the highest number of absolute incidents in 2019 at 242. Ahmedabad was second at 93, while Mumbai was third at 73, and Chennai at fourth with 54 incidents last year. Goa's Dabolim airport saw 41 such cases being reported in 2019.

In 2019, 1,280 wildlife strikes occurred at all airports, slightly lower than 1,320 in 2018. In 2017, the number of incidents stood at 1,125, while in 2016 it was 839.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation have recognised wildlife strikes, including bird and animal hits, to aircraft as one of the "State Safety Priority", and the aviation regulator regularly carries out aerodrome inspection that considered critical in with regard to wildlife strikes. These inspections are carried out jointly with representatives of various airlines and other stakeholders. The DGCA, then, shares the findings of these inspections with the airport operators.

WILDLIFE-STRIKE INCIDENTS				
AIRPORT	2019	2018	2017	2016
Ahmedabad	10.96	14.89	11.61	13.26
Goa	7.36	7.44	5.94	3.29
Delhi	5.36	4.75	5.17	3.54
Mumbai	2.38	3.16	2.45	2.44
Bangalore	1.58	3.05	1.80	2.67
Hyderabad	2.21	4.21	4.26	3.38
Chennai	3.16	4.48	3.06	2.92
Kolkata	2.88	5.23	3.80	3.47

Source: DGCA/AAI

Note: Data is as per 10,000 flights

## VODAFONE IDEA FACING DUES OF OVER ₹53,000 CRORE

# Mar 17 deadline: Under pressure to pay AGR dues, Birla meets DoT Secy

**AASHISHARYAN**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

VODAFONE IDEA Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla and the company's managing director and chief executive officer Ravinder Takkar met Department of Telecommunications (DoT) Secretary Anshu Prakash for over an hour on Tuesday. Both Prakash and Birla, however, refused to comment on what was discussed, with the latter saying he "cannot say anything at the moment". Birla's meeting with Prakash comes after his meeting with Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad Friday, according to sources. Takkar, meanwhile, is learnt to have paid a second visit to Prakash later during the day.

Vodafone Idea, which faces an adjusted gross revenue (AGR) payout of at least Rs 53,000 crore, is under the lens of rating agencies that believe it does not have the ability to pay the required AGR dues by March 17, 2020. Talks of the company's bank guarantees being encashed by the DoT, in case it fails to make the payments, have also been doing the rounds.

On Tuesday, the telco's long-term rating was downgraded by India Ratings, which said it believes Vodafone Idea "does not have the

### 'CANNOT SAY ANYTHING AT THE MOMENT'

■ Vodafone Idea chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla and managing director and chief executive officer Ravinder Takkar met Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash on Tuesday

■ At the end of the meeting, which lasted for over an hour, Prakash and Birla refused to comment on what was discussed, with the latter saying he "cannot say anything at the moment"



ability to pay dues by 17 March 2020, given lack of clarity on promoter equity infusion, severe erosion in refinancing flexibility and insufficient cash balance".

"Ind-Ra believes VIL (Vodafone Idea) does not have the ability to pay the dues by 17 March 2020, given the lack of clarity on promoter equity infusion, severe erosion in refinancing flexibility and insufficient cash balance (Rs 12,500 crore as of December 2019). The ruling has elevated the risk of acceleration in the payment of financial liabilities," the rating agency said in a press release.

The downgrade by India Ratings was preceded by another rating downgrade by Care Ratings, which had on Monday downgraded the long-term rating of Vodafone Idea, "taking into cognizance of the financial impact of no relief being granted" by the Supreme Court on February 14.

"Along with these, any further delay in the monetisation of its tower business housed in Indus Towers Ltd and fibre assets, are likely to put further strain on the liquidity profile of the company. The ability of VIL (Vodafone Idea) to raise funds and manage the financial liability arising out of the AGR dues remains a key monitorable," Care Ratings had said.

On February 14, the Supreme Court, during the hearing of a modification plea moved by telecom and non-telecom companies, said if the firms did not make payments of the pending AGR dues before March 17, the managing directors and other directors of the firms would have to make personal appearance before the court. The apex court then issued show-cause notice to the companies as to why contempt of court should not be initiated against them for failing to comply with orders.

On October 24, 2019, the SC upheld the DoT's definition of AGR and said since the licensees had agreed to the migration packages, they were liable to pay the dues, the penalty on dues, and the interest on penalty due to delay in payments. The apex court had then given the telcos three months to clear their AGR dues.

That three-month deadline ended on January 23, before which the telcos had unsuccessfully tried to persuade the DoT to give them more time to pay the dues. Having failed there, the telcos again approached the apex court seeking a review of the October 24 judgment, which was turned down.

Two days before the stipulated deadline was to end, the telcos moved the top court again, seeking to "work out feasible terms mutually with DoT" to ensure that they remained a "going concern".

## 'India Inc's average salary hike to be 9.1% in 2020'

Companies in India are projected to dole out an average salary hike of 9.1 per cent this year, as they look for key talent and niche skills, as per a report by HR consultancy Aon



**Lowest in a decade**  
The quantum is lower than 9.3 per cent increase seen in 2019 and also the lowest in a decade

**India is expected to dole out the highest salary hike in the Asia-Pacific region at 9.1 per cent, followed by China at 6.3 per cent this year**

Source: Aon/PfTI

**39% COMPANIES OF THE ONES SURVEYED ARE EXPECTED TO GIVE AS MUCH AS 10 PER CENT INCREASE IN PAY**

**6.6% FOR INDIA, THE PREVIOUS LOWEST QUANTUM OF HIKE WAS 6.6 PER CENT IN 2009**

**OUTLOOK**  
■ Despite economic challenges in 2019, organisations in India are taking a positive view. Pay increases in India continue to be the highest in the region

**TOP PAYING SECTORS**  
■ In the manufacturing segment, pharmaceuticals is expected to give the highest salary hike followed by FMCG and chemicals

■ E-commerce and professional services businesses are expected to give double-digit salary increase this year in the services sector

**SURVEY BACKGROUND**  
The results are based on responses from over 1,000 organisations spread across more than 20 industries

**BUSINESS OUTLOOK**  
92 per cent of the firms surveyed expect their business improving or stabilising in 2020 while the rest 8 per cent felt there would be a decline in business

**REASON**  
■ High inflation rate  
■ War for key talent and niche skills

## Response will be speedily announced to offset coronavirus impact on industry: FM

**ENSECONOMICBUREAU**  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

WITH THE novel coronavirus (COVID-19) still hitting China's operations across various sectors, the government has decided to "speedily" formulate measures to minimise the potential impact of the outbreak on its industry. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday called for a secretary-level meeting to assess the various issues the outbreak poses to the Indian industry, known to be heavily dependent on the neighbouring country in several sectors.

The outcomes from the discussions will be taken up in a



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, with Finance Secretary Rajiv Kumar (left) and Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey in New Delhi on Tuesday. Prem Nath Pandey

meeting between the FM and secretaries of the Finance Ministry on Wednesday afternoon, so that "possible solutions" can be zeroed

in on. Post this, the minister hopes to have a discussion with the Prime Minister's Office, so that "speedily some response will be

announced at the earliest," she said. Sectors like pharmaceutical, chemicals (like those for paints and tyre manufacturing) and solar equipment were "very vocal" about disruptions in their supply chain, according to Sitharaman.

"Today, when their raw materials have to come, there is a delay, or the products come, but the papers don't come. So the disruption is felt increasingly by these three," she said. The minister had added that there were some essential raw materials for medicines for which the government would "have to act speedily".

The minister dismissed claims that prices of raw materials had been rising as a result of the outbreak. "There wasn't a worry about price rise from anybody as yet," said Sitharaman.

The discussions on Tuesday centered around issues like requests for a "self declaration" system at Customs for various manufacturers to be able to receive the stocks of raw material that have arrived at the ports, but were stuck due to lack of the necessary paperwork from China.

Another issue raised was whether other countries can be explored as alternatives for sourcing raw materials, she said.

Some micro, small and medium enterprises had sought flexibility from banks, citing delayed and staggered raw material supply that had been impacting their ability to manufacture and send out their products, she said.

The current situation made a "strong case" for removing higher customs duties on certain products primarily sourced from China that may now need to be sourced from other countries, said an analysis paper by the Confederation of Indian Industry.

China accounts for a "significant" share of the top 20 products that India imports from the world. This includes a 45 per cent share in India's total electronics imports, a third of machinery and almost two-fifths of the country's global organic chemical imports.

India sources 65-70 per cent of active pharmaceutical ingredients and nearly 90 per cent of certain mobile phone parts from China.

## CHINA ACCOUNTED FOR 15% OF APPLE'S REVENUE, OR \$13.6 BILLION, LAST QUARTER, AND SUPPLIED 18% OF REVENUE IN THE YEAR-AGO QUARTER

# Apple warns sales to fall short of target as stores reopen slowly on China virus

**REUTERS**  
BENGALURU/NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 18

APPLE INC warned on Monday it was unlikely to meet its March quarter sales guidance set just three weeks ago as the world's most valuable technology firm became one of the biggest corporate casualties of China's coronavirus epidemic.

The rapidly spreading virus has killed nearly 1,900 in China and stricken some 72,000 people, confining millions to their homes, disrupting supply chains and delaying reopening of factories after the extended Lunar New Year holiday break.

Manufacturing facilities in China that produce Apple's iPhone and other electronics



A security personnel at a closed Apple store in Sanlitun, China. Reuters file photo

have begun to reopen, but they are ramping up more slowly than expected, Apple said. That will mean fewer iPhones available for sale around the world, making Apple one of the largest Western firms to be hurt by the outbreak.

Some of its retail stores in the country remain closed or are operating at reduced hours, which will hurt sales this quarter. China accounted for 15 per cent of Apple's revenue, or \$13.6 billion, last quarter, and supplied 18 per cent of revenue in the year-ago quarter.

In late January, Apple had forecast \$63 billion to \$67 billion in revenue for the quarter ending in March, which it said was a wider than normal range due to the uncertainty created by the virus. It did not offer a new revenue estimate nor pro-

vide a profit forecast on Monday.

"The magnitude of this impact to miss its revenue guidance midway through February is clearly worse than feared," Wedbush analyst Daniel Ives wrote in a note.

Apple, worth \$1.4 trillion by market capitalisation, could face a torrid market reaction on Tuesday, when Wall Street reopens after the Presidents Day holiday, analysts said.

"If Apple shares were traded cheaply, that might not matter much. But when they are trading at a record high, investors will be surely tempted to sell," said Norihiro Fujito, chief investment strategist at Mitsubishi UFJ Morgan Stanley Securities.

Shares of its Asian suppliers

fell on the news, with Samsung Electronics losing 2.4%, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co (TSMC) down 1.8 per cent and SK Hynix shedding 3.3%.

Analysts have estimated that the virus may slash demand for smartphones by half in the first quarter in China, the world's biggest market for the devices.

Apple said it will reopen China stores "as steadily and safely as we can," while global supplies of iPhones will be limited as manufacturers work toward operating plants at full capacity. It plans to provide more information in April, when it releases first-quarter results.

Wedbush said it remained optimistic that Apple would be able to recover from the coronavirus setback.

## Foreign firms struggle to resume operations

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
BEIJING, FEBRUARY 18

FOREIGN FIRMS are struggling to resume work in virus-hit China as they face disrupted supply chains, rising inventory and quarantine rules meant to contain the deadly epidemic, the EU chamber of commerce said on Tuesday.

With many pharmaceutical companies globally sourcing from China, pharmacies may also face a shortage of antibiotics and other drugs if the epidemic is not resolved soon, said Joerg Wuttke, president of the European Union Chamber of

Commerce in China. Firms in China have seen a slow restart to work after the Spring Festival break in late January, with residents encouraged to stay home to reduce the spread of a virus that has killed nearly 1,900 people.

"The whole process is stuttering to get back as the magnitude of the challenges is just huge," Wuttke added. "How long this is going to last is anybody's guess."

Many cities have imposed travel restrictions too, with about 56 million people in the hard-hit Hubei province virtually sealed off from the rest of the country.

Ahluwalia calls for FRBM overhaul, says 'govts have limited resources'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 18

FORMER DEPUTY Chairman of the now-defunct Planning Commission Montek Singh Ahluwalia on Tuesday stressed the need for overhauling the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act...

"Private sector is fearful of risks and threats while the governments are bound by welfare principles beyond loss and profit"

MONTEK SINGH AHLUWALIA FORMER DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, PLANNING COMMISSION

ing them simultaneously. As a result, the speed slows down and projects lag behind," he said, emphasising that there was a need to think beyond the conventional approach of depending on budgetary resources...

aging the financial risks for the projects," Ahluwalia added. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath said financial institutions and governments need to change their thought process because the global economic scenario is changing rapidly...

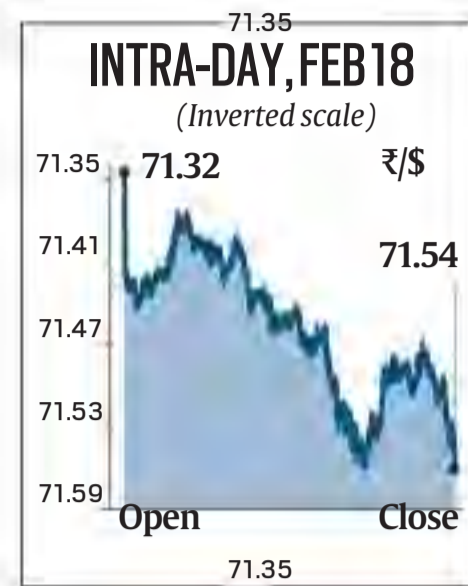
Stressing on deviating from conventional budget making process and working on alternative processes and innovative ideas, Nath said it has become necessary to focus on economic activities that generate jobs. He said many big economies are better off mobilising resources without legislations like FRBM...

SENSEX, NIFTY POST LOSSES FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT SESSION

Re dives 22p against dollar as COVID-19 takes toll on markets

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 18

AS CONCERNS over the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak and AGR dues of telecom companies continued to weigh over financial markets, the rupee declined by 22 paise to settle at 71.54 against the US dollar...



staged a late recovery from the day's low and settled at 11,992.50, showing a fall of 53.30 points or 0.44 per cent.

Asian markets, barring China, closed with heavy losses after warning by Apple and HSBC over the impact of coronavirus out-

break, also known as COVID-19. The coronavirus epidemic, that emerged in central China, has now killed nearly 1,800 people and spread around the world.

"The market sentiment continued to be hit by COVID-19 after the issue of warning note from a key global MNC regarding the sales impact. Global weakness is expected to hurt domestic market as high valuation and low economic growth is not supportive," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services.

Bharti Airtel was the biggest loser, with nearly 3 per cent drop in its share price. The Supreme

Court on Monday refused to stop the telecom department from taking any coercive steps for recovery of dues from Vodafone Idea. Shares of Vodafone Idea, on Tuesday, tanked more than 16 per cent in intra-day trade due to rating downgrade on AGR dues and other issues of the company.

Reliance Industries fell nearly 1 per cent after it announced consolidation of all its media and distribution businesses under flagship 'Network18'. The three group entities namely Hathway Cable & Datacom, Den Networks and TV18 Broadcast — which would be merged into Network18 — rose by 20 per cent, 9.98 per cent and 14.7 per cent, respectively.

BRIEFLY

'Simultaneous voting by CoC on resolution plans'

New Delhi: The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has proposed allowing Committee of Creditors (CoC) to vote simultaneously on two or more resolution plans for a company. Issuing a discussion paper, the IBBI has proposed three changes in regulations — replacement of authorised representative, voting by class of creditors at two stages and voting on two or more compliant resolution plans simultaneously.

Barbeque Nation files IPO papers

New Delhi: Barbeque Nation Hospitality has filed fresh papers with Sebi to raise an estimated Rs 1,000-1,200 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

90% pending I-T cases will be settled: Thakur

Indore: The Centre expects to resolve 90 per cent of income tax disputes through 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme announced in Budget 2020-21, Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur said Tuesday.

Jet resolution: 'Deadline for bids Mar 10'

Mumbai: Grounded Jet Airways's Committee of Creditors (CoC) on Tuesday decided to extend the deadline for submission of bids to March 10 as a new entity has evinced interest in the airline, a source said. PTI

Oil falls nearly 1% on virus hit, OPEC+ delay

New York: Oil prices fell almost 1 per cent Tuesday, pressured by concerns over impact on crude demand from coronavirus outbreak in China and a lack of further action by OPEC and its allies to support the market.

HSBC to slash 35,000 jobs over three years

Hong Kong: HSBC Holdings said Tuesday it would shed \$100 billion in assets, slashing the size of its investment bank and revamping its US and European businesses — in a drastic overhaul that will mean 35,000 jobs cut over three years. REUTERS

EU lists Cayman Islands, Panama as tax havens, spares Turkey

BRUSSELS, FEBRUARY 18

EUROPEAN UNION finance ministers added Panama, the Seychelles, the Cayman Islands and Palau to the EU's blacklist of tax havens, while giving Turkey more time to avoid being listed, an EU document said on Tuesday.

The list, which was set up in 2017 after revelations of widespread tax evasion and avoidance schemes, now includes 12 jurisdictions.

Adding financial centres like the Cayman Islands and Panama marks a shift for the EU. Several reviews had left on the list mostly Pacific and Caribbean islands with almost no financial relation with the EU — drawing criticism for being too lenient on tax havens.

The other listed jurisdictions are Fiji, Oman, Samoa, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu and the three US territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the US Virgin Islands.

Those on the blacklist face reputational damages, higher scrutiny in their financial transactions and risk losing EU funds.

The eastern African archipelago of the Seychelles was added to the blacklist because it has an "harmful preferential tax regime," the EU document said.

696 US goods to get tariff exemptions as China looks to spur purchases

REUTERS BEIJING, FEBRUARY 18

CHINA WILL grant exemptions on retaliatory duties imposed against 696 US goods, the most substantial tariff relief to be offered so far, as Beijing seeks to fulfill commitments made in its interim trade deal with the United States.

Tuesday's announcement comes after the Phase 1 trade deal between the two countries took effect on February 14 and is the third round of tariff exemptions China has offered on US goods.

China has committed to boosting its purchases of goods and services from the US by \$200 billion over two years as part of the agreement, and has already rolled back some additional tariffs on US imports after the deal was signed. US goods eligible for tariff exemptions include key agricultural and energy products such as pork, beef, soybeans, liquefied natural gas and crude oil, which were subject to extra tariffs imposed during the escalation of the bilateral trade dispute.

The coronavirus epidemic that emerged late last year in China has raised concerns about its ability to meet the purchasing targets, however. Authorities throughout the country imposed major restriction on travel and transportation to curb the spread of the virus, which has killed nearly 1,900 and infected over 70,000 in China.

The containment efforts have kept factories shut or operating with drastically reduced staff, hitting production. The public has also been discouraged from leaving homes or going to public places, also hitting consumption.

STATE BUDGET

Odisha proposes outlay of ₹1.5 lakh cr; agri & allied activities, education get lion's share

SAMPAD PATNAIK BHUBANESWAR, FEBRUARY 18

ODISHA FINANCE Minister Niranjana Pujari on Tuesday presented the state Budget for 2020-21, with a thrust on agriculture, skilling, and vulnerable segments of the population.

"We propose a budgetary outlay of Rs 1,50,000 crore, which includes outlay of Rs 65,655 crore for Administrative expenditure, Rs 74,000 crore for Programme expenditure, Rs 3,200 crore for Disaster Response and Rs 7,145 crore for transfer to local bodies and development authorities," Pujari said in his Budget speech in the State Assembly.

As per the Revised Estimates for 2019-20, there will be a revenue surplus of Rs 6,175 crore and the fiscal deficit is estimated to be at 3.4 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP) within permissible FRBM target for Odisha, Pujari told the House.

As per the Revised Estimates for 2019-20, there will be a revenue surplus of ₹6,175 crore

enue surplus of Rs 6,175 crore and the fiscal deficit is estimated to be at 3.4 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP) within permissible FRBM target for Odisha, Pujari told the House. The Budget projects Odisha's growth rate at 6.16 per cent, which, he said, is higher than the 5 per cent national growth rate.

The outlay is proposed to be financed mainly through revenue receipts of Rs 1,24,300 crore and borrowing and other receipts of Rs 25,700 crore. The fiscal deficit

is estimated to be 3 per cent of GSDP for the year 2020-21, the speech noted.

Agriculture and allied activities, Panchayati raj and drinking water, and School and mass education departments of the state government received the highest allocation in the Budget. The agriculture budget is Rs 19,408 crore. Rs 5,115 crore has been transferred to 43 lakh farmers under KALIA scheme, Pujari said.

Stating that quality education and employable skills have been the government's "priority", he added, "We propose an allocation of Rs 22,631 crore for the sector".

Focusing on nutrition needs in the state, the minister said, "We have total investment of Rs 5,210 crore for nutrition specific and Rs 23,754 crore for nutrition sensi-

tive schemes in the Budget".

Claiming that empowerment of SCs and STs is an "integral part" of almost all schemes on education, health, rural employment and livelihood, skill development, housing and electrification, the state FM said, "We propose an overall sum of Rs 13,777 crore under Tribal Sub-Component and Rs 10,313 crore under the SC Sub-Component in 2020-21, totaling to Rs 23,808 crore".

Pujari said that 691 directly affected villages in eight mineral bearing districts will be covered with piped water supply, with an estimated cost of Rs 991 crore under OMBADC funds and Rs 1,538 crore worth of projects under District Mineral Foundation; thus, total investment for piped water would be about Rs 8,000 crore.

Centre, states review skill development activities

PRESSTrust OF INDIA NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

UNION MINISTER Mahendra Nath Pandey on Tuesday held a meeting with states representatives to review skill development activities and sought their suggestions on streamlining the upcoming initiatives, a release said.

In a move aimed at increasing the role of states in skill development, it was decided that district skill committees will work closely with the Centre to drive demand-driven training initiatives, it stated.

Short-term training courses would be introduced in industrial training institutes (ITIs) in consultation with state skill development missions, the release added.

The Union ministry also proposed entrepreneurship development unit in each state which will be anchored with state skilling mission. It also proposed developing mentorship and handholding of existing and new entrepreneurs, through district entrepreneurship incubation lab in existing skilling institutions.

The discussions were also held on developing an action plan for better implementation of skilling initiatives under 'Skill India Mission' and for creating employment opportunities for the youth.

During the day-long workshop, Vision 2025 was also discussed which lays the ready-to-implement road-map for promoting skill development and entrepreneurship in the country.

GFG Alliance acquires Adhunik Metaliks, arm in ₹425-crore cash deal

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 18

UK-BASED GFG Alliance — owned by India-born British businessman Sanjeev Gupta and his family — on Tuesday announced the strategic acquisition of the debt-laden Adhunik Metaliks and Zion Steel in a Rs 425-crore cash deal under the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP). This comes after a prolonged delay in making payments by Liberty House, owned by GFG Alliance, for taking over the two companies.

The transaction marks GFG Alliance's entry into India, one of the world's fastest-growing steel markets, Liberty House said.

earlier failed to meet several deadlines for the payment under CIRP to acquire steelmaker Adhunik Metaliks, the flagship of Kolkata-based Adhunik Group, and ground company Zion Steel after the Kolkata bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) in July 2018 approved its resolution plans for acquiring the two bankrupt companies under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). Uncertainty continued over the fate of Adhunik and Zion as Liberty House had not paid the required upfront cash payment to the lenders by the stipulated deadline. After this, the Cuttack bench of NCLT in July last ordered liquidation of the steelmakers after cancelling the resolution plans of the UK-based group. FE

'PE/VC investments in 2019 hit record high of \$48 bn'

Private equity and venture capital (PE/VC) investments recorded an all-time high of \$48 billion in 2019 in India, EY said in its report 'PE/VC Agenda: India Trend Book 2020'

28%: Increase in PE/VC investments in value terms compared to 2018

35%: Rise in PE/VC investments in volume terms as against 2018

30%: Share of infrastructure sector within overall PE/VC investments in 2019; up from 12 per cent in 2018



Largest PE/VC deals in 2019: \$3.7 billion buyout of Reliance Jio's tower assets by Brookfield \$1.9 billion investment in Reliance Industries East-West pipeline by Brookfield

The report said this is the third consecutive year that the private equity and venture capital sector has outperformed

Source: EY/PTI

Walmart International sales up 2.3% as Flipkart boosts e-comm numbers

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

WALMART ON Tuesday announced that Flipkart led its e-commerce sales in the international segment. E-commerce contributed about 12 per cent of total segment sales in the three months ended January 2020.

Net sales at Walmart International increased by 2.3 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) to \$33 billion in Q4FY20, the US-based retailer said in a statement.

Sales for the year to January 2020 stood at \$120.1 billion against \$120.8 billion in FY19, a fall of 0.6 per cent. Operating income in the international segment dropped to \$1.1 billion in

Q4FY20 against \$1.2 billion in Q4FY19, a decline of 5.6 per cent. Walmart attributed the fall in operating income to "disruption in Chile". Walmart's financial calendar runs from February to January.

"We experienced softness in some key international markets, as well as in Chile, where unrest led to disruption in the majority of our stores. Walnex, China and Flipkart all had a solid quarter," Walmart CFO Brett Biggs said.

In May 2018, Walmart announced purchase of a 77 per cent controlling stake in Flipkart in a hefty \$16-billion deal, valuing the e-commerce firm at around \$21 billion. Flipkart and Amazon jointly hold 80 per cent of India's e-commerce sector. FE

'500 shipments of illicit prescription drugs stopped from entering US in Jan'

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 18

IN A first of its kind of joint operation, India and the United States stopped about 500 shipments of illicit, and potentially dangerous, unapproved prescription drugs and combination medical devices from entering America in January, the US Food and Drug Administration said Tuesday.

Operation Broadsword targeted packages entering the US through an International Mail Facility from January 28 through January 30, it said. In Operation Broadsword, investigators from both nations examined over 800 shipments, which identified approximately 50 different FDA-regulated products, including medications intended to treat and/or mitigate serious diseases, like some forms of cancer and HIV. PTI

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ROADS TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM (HPSRTP) REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI) Name of Project: Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Program (HPSRTP) Loan No./Credit No./ Grant No.: To be allotted Date: February 18, 2020

भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग DEPARTMENT OF SPACE इसरो नोदन कॉम्प्लेक्स ISRO PROPULSION COMPLEX

निविदा सूचना सं. आईसीआरसी/प्र.क.उ.प./पीडी/ई-प्रमाण/03/2020-21/TENDER NOTICE NO.IPRC/HPS/PT/6-PROC/03/2020-21 भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिए और उनकी ओर से प्रधान, क्रय व भंडार, इसरो नोदन कॉम्प्लेक्स (आईसीआरसी), महेंद्रगिरि निम्नांकित की आगुलें हेतु आंगरक्षण निविदा आमंत्रित करते हैं। For and on behalf of the President of India, Head, Purchase & Stores, ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri invites online bidders for supply of the following:

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LTD. E-TENDER NOTICE: TN-35(RVU1920WSOB02064) Online tenders through E-procurement are invited for Excavation and Loading of Pond ash from Ash dyke of various coal based thermal power plants of RVUN located at Kota, Suratgarh, Chhabra and Jhalawar.

Rajasthan State Mines & Minerals Limited (A Government of Rajasthan Enterprise) 4, Meeru Marg, Udaipur - 313001 Phone: (0294) 2428763-67, 2428744, 2428738, Fax (0294) 2428778, 2428768 Email:- project.rsmml@rajasthan.gov.in

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, SAMBALPUR Tel: 0663-2548268, E-mail id serwrcirclesbp@yahoo.com Bid Identification No. Road tender Online- RWCSBP- 13 No: 413 Dated: 15.02.2020



# 17 EXPRESS INTERVIEW

## 'If opinions differ... better I address Govt directly, internally... focus only on outcome'

Shaktikanta Das took over the reins at Reserve Bank of India as its 25th Governor on December 12, 2018. It came at a critical time when relations between the government and RBI had hit a rough patch. In an interview February 17 with ANIL SASI and P VAIDYANATHAN IYER, Das underlined the central bank's focus on growth and financial stability, its relationship with the government and the challenge in sustaining the first trickle of positive numbers

**It's been more than a year now for you as RBI Governor, coming after exits of two governors and one deputy governor. How has the year been in terms of RBI-government relationship?**

For the central bank, it's never a dull moment, especially in today's world, and I'm saying so not just in the context of RBI, but for all central banks. Economies across the world are changing so fast, with new technologies, new business models, new challenges. So, the central bank will always have to be in sync with the changing situations. With regard to the other part of your question, the RBI is a very strong organisation; it has people who are very well experienced and thorough. There is lot of domain knowledge available within the RBI. So, regardless of the leadership, the institutional stability is always maintained. Therefore, it has been a smooth transition. Perhaps I had the advantage of having interacted with many senior officials of RBI because of my long stint in the Finance Ministry.

**How aware have you been in the last one year about RBI's autonomy? Is that something on your mind, given the history of the last two governors leaving amid a discourse that they did not see eye to eye with the government of the day. Does that weigh on your mind?**

It's stating the obvious that the government represents the sovereign and the Reserve Bank is the central bank. Both have important roles to play in the economy and as long as decision-making is independent and autonomous, the rest of the debate is not relevant. But it is necessary that there is constant dialogue, there is constant interaction and engagement between the government and the RBI because both are dealing with important aspects of the economy. There may be some difference of views because of the nature of role played by the fiscal authority, the government, and monetary authority, the Reserve Bank. What is important is that those differences in views are discussed internally. I would like to stress the word 'internally'. There is also a need for both the government and the RBI to appreciate the concerns on either side.

**RBI has an empowered board today. How do you see the board contributing to RBI decision-making?**

All the board members are fully in sync with the RBI's institutional view. We have had very productive and very healthy discussions in the RBI Central Board and the Board members have been very appreciative of the RBI's viewpoint on many issues. Of course, they give very important and very useful suggestions and at the RBI, we are always open to suggestions. I mean, I have been interacting with stakeholders. I regularly meet the public sector and private sector bank MDs and CEOs. I meet the rating agencies. I have met the various industry and trade associations, agriculturists, independent experts, economists, journalists, etc. Any suggestion is always welcome. Consultative approach always helps in understanding of issues and improving the quality of decision-making.

**Some see RBI as having been more accommodative of the government's concerns on a number of issues such as dividend transfer, regulatory forbearance, the one-day default rule... a number of issues where earlier governors had put their foot down. Is there a change in outlook?**

When the government has any concern on any issue which impacts the economy, as the central bank, we have to consider those issues. Similarly, there are issues which, from time to time, are raised by the RBI with the government for its consideration. In the last one year, at least, there are several legislative and non-legislative proposals in the July 2019 and February 2020 budgets where issues concerning the RBI have been addressed; for example, the RBI Act was amended to give additional powers to RBI with regard to regulation of NBFCs and housing finance companies (HFCs) were brought under the purview of RBI. In the February 2020 Budget, the government has announced the amendment to the Banking Regulation Act, to give more powers to RBI with regard to regulation of the urban cooperative banks (UCBs). So, when both the government and RBI are trying to deal with issues related to the economy, there is need for exchange of views and ideas.

What is critical in this process is that we have to listen to each other, we have to appreciate each other's views but eventually the decision is made independently. So, as long as decision is taken after engaging with the government, I think beyond that there is no need for any discussion on autonomy.

**So you have that space for independence and autonomy?**

Yes, absolutely. All decisions, which we have taken in the last year are our own objective, independent decisions.

**On regulatory forbearance in specific sectors like SMEs and real estate, some observers point out that the RBI is only kicking the can down the road. Recognising bad quality assets is critical. You started the Asset Quality Review mechanism in 2016, and now you're going back on that... giving sectors more and more time.**

The first thing I would like to say is that it is not an across the board forbearance which has been given, rather it is specific and targeted, and subject to certain guidelines and parameters. Now, with regard to the real estate sector, you just mentioned about the relaxation granted in terms of permitting extension of DCCO (the date of commencement of commercial operations). In non-infrastructure projects, it is two years, whereas in infrastructure projects, it is three years. For various reasons, it was kept as one year for the real estate sector. So, when we made it two years, we aligned it with what is

**I think monetary policy framework has worked well. But we are reviewing it. If there is a requirement, we will also take it up with the government**

there for non-infrastructure sector. We have not really gone out of the way. And today, if you see the overall deceleration in growth, one of the main sectors impacted is real estate. There are various reasons for that. All that we have said is where there are reasons beyond the promoter's control, we have considered that factor, and it's not as if we have gone beyond a certain framework.

We have taken a very carefully designed calibrated call to deal with MSMEs — the largest employment provider and a critical part of our economy. When there is a slowdown, the impact is felt more by MSMEs. Large corporates, because of their financial muscle and the nature of their business, are probably able to deal with the situation in a better way. But then, it is difficult for MSMEs to come out of stress in a short period. We have tried to give them a calibrated restructuring option. It is not mandatory for banks to restructure all MSME loans. The banks have to assess the viability of units at the time of restructuring. Let me also say with emphasis that while deciding on all these measures, the aspect of financial stability and the stability of the banking sector is always uppermost in our mind.

**What is the quantum of loans being addressed in real estate and MSMEs?**

In the MSME loan restructuring scheme announced last January, out of about 15 lakh eligible units, around five lakh accounts were restructured. The condition was that the loan should be standard as on January 1, 2019. We have widened the ambit but said, the loan to be eligible for restructuring has to be a standard asset as on January 1, 2020. Many more units may avail of the scheme.

In real estate, a large number of units will benefit from the permission to extend DCCO arising out of situations beyond the control of promoters. Such decisions are always preceded by a lot of internal consulting as well as consultation with financial institutions.

**You mentioned the deceleration, but has the pace of the slowdown caught the RBI by surprise? There's been a sharp revision by 2.4 percentage points over a span of 10 months or five policies. That seems unprecedented.**

During the current financial year, deceleration came as a surprise to almost everybody. Definitely, there has been a steep decline. Having said that, we are not so surprised as most others. Right from the February 2019 monetary policy, when we started cutting rates, the market was surprised. We started cutting rates from February 2019 because the slowdown in the growth momentum was very clearly visible from the incoming data. And we do nowcasting internally. So RBI decided to act proactively and cut rates five times after February. By the third cut, all analysts agreed that RBI had acted proactively. Many central banks also initially expressed surprise at our decision to cut rates as early as February 2019.

**An issue that has bothered many over the last 2-3 years is that of economic data release and on credibility of data. How do you view this?**



RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das at his office in New Delhi on Monday. Tashi Tobgyal

**We are not so surprised as most others by the deceleration in growth this year. Right from February 2019 policy, when we started cutting rates, the market was surprised**

We always go by CSO data and there is no reason to doubt their credibility.

**More than three years have passed since the MPC framework has been in place. Has inflation as the sole benchmark really worked?**

I think MPC framework has worked well. But, we are reviewing it. The legal provision in the RBI Act says that price stability should be the prime objective keeping in mind the objective of growth. So, the prime target is price stability 4% +/- 2%. But keeping that as the prime target, the aspect of growth has to be taken into consideration. Internally, we have already started a review of the working of the monetary policy framework in the last three-and-a-half years. And going forward sometime in June 2020, we propose to hold a roundtable with various experts, economists, analysts and other thinkers. Once our review is over, then we will place the outcome of our review before stakeholders. Based on that, we will take it forward. If there is a requirement, we will also take it up with the government. On the whole, inflation has remained under control during the last three-and-a-half years but for

the recent spike on account of spike in vegetable prices, of which onion was the major factor. Other vegetables too contributed to the higher inflation, and in the last print, prices of milk, fish and egg too were higher. Going forward, we do expect it to moderate. With this temporary spike in inflation, we have not shifted our attention from growth. We are still focussed on growth. Because of the spike in inflation, we have decided to take a pause.

**You became the national face to explain demonetisation almost on a daily basis when in government. With the benefit of hindsight and the benefit of where you are right now, how has demonetisation played out?**

I think demonetisation has had positive impact on the economy in terms of formalising the economy, checking the so-called parallel economy/unaccounted money. It is still playing out, I will just say that.

**Has the RBI undertaken any study on the impact of demonetisation, what it did to sectors like MSME?**

No.

**Measures such as LTRO (long-term repo operation) and CRR (cash reserve ratio) exemption had the effect of reducing the policy rate indirectly. There are some who question doing so outside the MPC framework.**

It is actually not in the domain of the MPC because the MPC is focussed on maintaining price stability, and price stability is by way of control of inflation and the key component of monetary policy is the repo rate. Other than that, there are several other instruments, monetary and regulatory which are available to RBI. CRR is a monetary instrument, our decision on real estate is regulatory. We are not ignoring the MPC. It plays its role.

**Kotak Mahindra Bank took the RBI to court, and yet you agreed to its offer to settle it out of court.**

I don't want to discuss individual cases. In this case, Kotak Mahindra Bank came to us with a certain proposal which we found broadly acceptable. And the matter now stands resolved.

**There is still considerable concern in the**

**market about some banks and NBFCs. Are you looking to resolve these?**

So far as the NBFCs are concerned, the RBI closely and intensively monitors the top 50, which account for roughly 75% of the total portfolio. We have a clear understanding of what is happening. We are engaged with their management and promoters, trying to find market-based solutions. The sense we have is that there is a steady improvement in the NBFC sector over the last seven-eight months. Confidence levels have also improved. Even today as we discuss, there are a good number of NBFCs which are able to access funds from the market at competitive rates. With regard to banks, we monitor all the banks, both public and private sector, very closely. Our endeavour will be to ensure that no large systemically important NBFC collapses. We are very mindful of the aspect of financial stability in the case of banks too. RBI will always ensure that stability of the banking sector is maintained.

**RBI is required to respond proactively because the situation is very dynamic. LTRO, rupee-dollar swap and CRR measures are in response to evolving situation**

**We had the Government listing green shoots...what would your definition of green shoots be?**

There are many positive trends visible; PMI numbers, for example, in services and manufacturing but we have to see whether they are sustained. FDI numbers are better, lending to the commercial sector has also improved. In the last six months, the overall fund flow has improved. Of course, I have to qualify by saying that compared to last year's corresponding period, it is lower, but still it is picking up, but we have to see whether it is sustained.

**What is the status on two issues on which the RBI had concerns: sovereign bonds and RBI executives on boards of public sector banks?**

RBI view has been that RBI nominee should not be there. There is a kind of a conflict of interest. On sovereign bond, as a debt manager of the government, we have conveyed our issues internally to the government.

**You use the word, "internally," quite a few times. There's a debate about how institutions should tackle issues with a government which is as strong as the government of the day. It is important to settle these internally?**

Direct communication is always better. If I have a difference of opinion with the government, it's better that I address the government directly and internally rather than voicing it through a third source, because then the confidence levels go down, either way. The real focus should be on the outcome, not anything else.

**In the last year or so, India has added almost \$65-70 billion to its forex reserves. Certainly, there is a cost to it?**

The underlying theme of our forex management is to see that there is no undue volatility in the value of the rupee. Because an undue volatility would affect exports, imports and make life difficult even for manufacturers. So as long as currency is stable, then people can assess and estimate the value, and can take better quality decisions. Our effort is always to prevent any undue volatility and that stance has remained.

**After you announced the LTRO, many asked why did the RBI not do it before for better rate transmission?**

RBI is required to respond proactively because the situation is very dynamic today. We need to be proactively responding to the evolving challenges and issues. So, therefore, to infuse liquidity, we started a very innovative method for the first time, the rupee-dollar swap. Because, OMO had already been done to a large extent. Now, we did what everyone outside calls Operation Twist. We undertook simultaneous buying/selling of securities — we were buying securities at the long end, but selling at the short end. Also, we undertook CRR-related measures and the LTRO. All the decisions we took are in response to the evolving dynamic situation.

## GERMANY'S GOVERNMENT

## Trouble at the top

Angela Merkel's presumed successor quits as party boss

FOREIGN NEWSREADERS might have celebrated. But otherwise there was little to cheer when Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, universally known as AKK thanks to her tongue-twisting name, announced on February 10th that she would resign as leader of Germany's ruling Christian Democrats (CDU) and not stand as its candidate for chancellor at the next election. By forcing her party to confront its deep divisions, Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer has thrown German politics into a new era of uncertainty.

Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer was tripped up by a debacle in the east German state of Thuringia, where the CDU had voted with the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) to install a member of a third party as state premier. This "dam break", the first time AfD votes had secured such an office, so horrified Germany that Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer had to try to repair the damage. But her efforts floundered, the party split and she was undermined when Angela Merkel, the chancellor, chimed in to condemn the result from a state visit in Pretoria, over 5,000 miles (8,000km) away. Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer's unsteady leadership had already left her future in doubt. A recent appointment as defence minister, a job she will retain, did little to help. But Thuringia tipped the balance. The decision, she said, had "matured in her for some time".

In 2018 Mrs Merkel quit the CDU leadership after 18 years. When the party elected Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer to succeed her, the road to the chancellery looked clear. Her decision to bow out thus blows German politics wide open. What happens next is unclear. Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer wants to remain in charge while the party follows an old timetable to choose its candidate for chancellor at the next election, due in autumn 2021. But that could mean she hangs around until a CDU congress in December, and few MPs believe their party can dither that long. Markus Söder, leader of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the CDU's Bavarian partner, urges a faster pace, fearing an extended airing of the CDU's agonies would affect his own party's fortunes.

Mrs Merkel's decision in 2018 to split the job of chancellor and party leader is starting to look like a grave misjudgement. In a rare, if camouflaged, flash of disloyalty towards her mentor, Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer said as much in her resignation speech. The positions of leader and chancellor-candidate should now be fused, she said.

Yet aside from the procedural complexities (the CSU must back a joint chancellor-candidate but has no role in the CDU's leadership race), whoever takes up the job will face the same problem that bedevilled Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer: how to retain authority when real power resides with a chancellor who may be in office until the end of next year. With her succession plans in ruins, some say the best way for Mrs Merkel to clean up the mess she caused would be to resign, probably triggering an election.

But this is unlikely in stability-obsessed Germany. And so the contenders to lead the

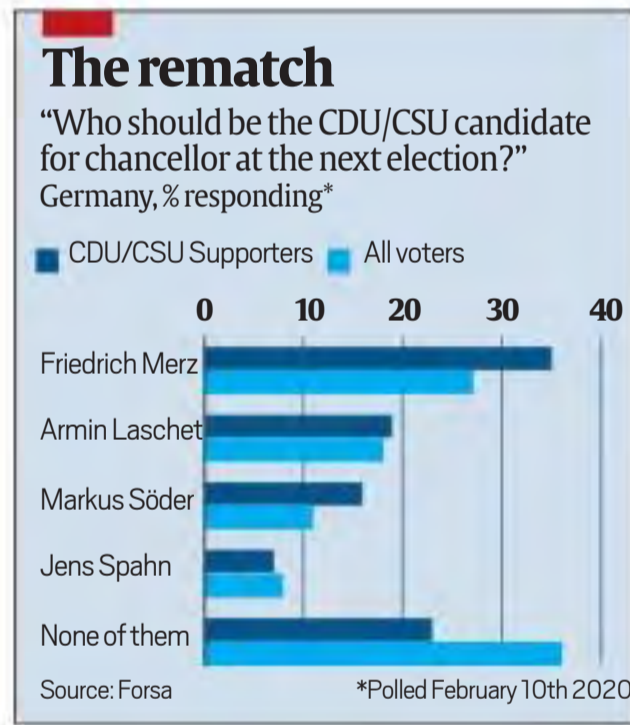


Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer with German Chancellor Angela Merkel after being elected as the party leader during the Christian Democratic Union party congress in Hamburg, on December 7, 2018. Reuters

CDU/CSU into the next election will have to tread carefully. Besides Mr Söder, who is probably happy with his perch in Munich, three names stand out. Start with Armin Laschet, the premier of North Rhine-Westphalia. Affable, moderate and subtly subversive, Mr Laschet's biggest asset is his control of Germany's most populous state (and the CDU's largest branch); as a country it would be the EU's sixth-biggest economy. In style and substance Mr Laschet would represent the closest thing to continuity Merkel, which is precisely what puts off a large chunk of the CDU membership.

A flintier proposition would be Friedrich Merz, a former leader of the CDU's parliamentary group. The plain-speaking Mr Merz quit politics for business in 2009 only to make a spectacular return in 2018, when he gave Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer a close run for the party leadership. He has maintained a steady profile since, flying to party meetings around Germany (often personally; he has a pilot's licence), where adoring crowds

lap up his pro-business, socially conservative line. Mr Merz reckons that fishing in the pool of AfD support can restore the CDU to over 35% of the vote. Early polls give him a head-start.



The final contender is Jens Spahn, the 39-year-old health minister, who also stood in 2018. Mr Spahn made his name as an abrasive right-winger on economics and migration, but has mellowed into a hard-working official with a loyal following. Unlike Mr Merz, who carries an unmistakable whiff of the 1990s, Mr Spahn can credibly claim to stand for a new start.

The air in Berlin is thick with scheming and the CDU is quivering with anxiety. Germany's original *Volkspartei* (people's party), capacious enough for everyone, now risks splintering across its many faultlines: centrist v conservative; for and against

Merkelism; how to handle the AfD in the east—Thuringia remains unsolved, and may not be a one-off. Some in the party fear further infighting might cause the CDU to fall behind the surging Greens.

That seems unlikely; for all its problems the CDU is still likely to provide Germany's next chancellor. That will give the succession race the fevered air of a party primary in a safe seat. Yet there is a palpable contrast with 2018, when Messrs Merz and Spahn immediately declared their interest and the prospect of internal competition electrified the CDU. So far, the same pair have merely hinted at possible candidacies,

while Mr Laschet has kept his counsel. As all three hail from North Rhine-Westphalia, CDU peacemakers hope they might broker a deal among themselves rather than air the party's cleavages in a public contest. "There is zero appetite among my colleagues to go into a divisive leadership election, because it risks tearing us apart," says Andreas Nick, a CDU MP.

During Mrs Merkel's long reign the CDU's repeated election wins trumped concerns over her mushy centrism and lethargic leadership. Now the CDU must ask itself what sort of party it wants to be in a far more complex political scene. "The disruptive potential is much bigger than most realise," says Andreas Rödder, a historian at the University of Mainz and CDU member. For many months the tensions inside the CDU have been bubbling away like subterranean magma. After Ms Kramp-Karrenbauer's decision, they threaten to erupt.

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**In 2018 Angela Merkel quit the CDU leadership after 18 years. When the party elected Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer to succeed her, the road to the chancellery looked clear. Her decision to bow out thus blows German politics wide open. What happens next is unclear**

## SOCIAL CONSERVATISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

## Papal power

Why the Philippines is the only country where divorce is illegal

"YOU HAVE to lose before you can win," explains Jesus Falcis. He is referring to the Supreme Court's decision to dismiss, on procedural grounds, a petition he filed in 2015 challenging a law which proclaims that marriage can occur only between a man and a woman. Mr Falcis finds a silver lining in the fact that the judges did not see any obvious constitutional impediment to same-sex marriage. But he has little doubt that the effort to secure it will take decades, just as it did in rich countries.

Even by the standards of former Spanish colonies, the Philippines has extremely socially conservative laws. It is the only country in world, bar the Vatican City, to outlaw divorce (except for Muslims). The only way of ending a marriage, short of dying, is to have it annulled, but that can be done only on narrow grounds and at great expense. Abortion is illegal, too, and anyone undergoing or performing one risks up to six years in prison. Contraceptives, although not banned, are the subject of fierce legal battles, as opponents try to prevent the state from distributing them.

This is not simply a legacy of colonialism or a reflection of Filipinos' piety. Compared with Mexico, say, another country long ruled by Spain where four-fifths of the population considers itself Catholic, the Philippines is uptight. A constitutional amendment and new laws adopted in 1974 guaranteed Mexicans' access to contraception. Mexico City legalised civil unions for same-sex couples in 2006 and abortion in 2007. A further 17 Mexican states have since legalised gay marriage.

Moreover, Filipinos seem less conservative than the laws that govern them. More than half think divorce should be legal, according to surveys conducted in 2017 by Social Weather Stations (SWS), a pollster.

**Even by the standards of former Spanish colonies, the Philippines has extremely socially conservative laws. It is the only country in world, bar the Vatican City, to outlaw divorce (except for Muslims). The only way of ending a marriage, short of dying, is to have it annulled, but that can be done only on narrow grounds and at great expense**

Seven in ten support a law allowing the government to distribute contraceptives to the poor, which was enacted in 2012 but has yet to be implemented fully. Lots of Filipinos are openly gay. Manila's annual gay pride parade attracted 70,000 participants last year, despite rain. Gay Filipinos enjoy success in all manner of careers, from music to sports. In 2016 a transgender woman won election to Congress. Last year she was re-elected with 91% of the vote.

So why are Filipinos' views so poorly represented in national legislation? The explanation lies in an unfortunate mix of politics and faith. About three-quarters of Filipinos consider religion "very important", SWS found in 2018. A study the same year suggests that almost four in ten voters are likely to cast their ballots for a candidate endorsed by their church or religious movement.

In recent years the clout of the Catholic church has diminished somewhat. The share

of Catholics attending church weekly has dropped from 66% in 1991 to 46% in 2017. Father Jerome Secillano of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines worries that an erosion of traditional values is under way. The church has struggled to respond to the wild popularity of President Rodrigo Duterte, who has called God "stupid", the Pope "a son of a whore" and says that a priest molested him as a boy. The Catholic hierarchy has opposed Mr Duterte's signature policy, a war on drugs that involves cops shooting thousands of suspected dealers, to little avail.

But Catholics' declining influence over politics has been offset by the growing importance of various Protestant sects. Although only about 10% of Filipinos, or roughly 10m people, describe themselves as Protestants or evangelicals, their relative fervour makes them a political lobby to be reckoned with. They tend to espouse a literal interpretation of the Bible and so are fiercely opposed to divorce, same-sex marriage and abortion, says Jayeel Serrano Cornelio of Ateneo de Manila University.

The most influential movements, which took hold in the late 1970s and 1980s, include Jesus Is Lord, perhaps the country's largest evangelical movement, as well as the megachurches Victory Christian Fellowship and Christ's Commission Fellowship. Iglesia Ni Cristo, an indigenous Christian movement founded more than a century ago, also has around 2m adherents in the Philippines. It owns the biggest indoor arena in the world, located near Manila, where 55,000 people can worship at the same time.

Whereas Catholic prelates have become more reluctant to hector politicians, evangelicals often mix religion and politics without compunction. Eddie Villanueva, for example,



A Filipino bride before her wedding at a Catholic church in Manila. AP

a deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, is also a prominent television evangelist and the founder of Jesus Is Lord. Manny Pacquiao, who parlayed a career as a boxer into a seat in the Senate, is famous for his zealotry. He has called people in same-sex relationships "worse than animals".

The nature of the Philippine political system allows such conservatives to thwart liberal reforms fairly easily. Parties are weak, which makes it difficult to build momentum for controversial causes. And the Senate, which must approve all bills before they become law, presents an especially daunting obstacle. Its 24 members are elected in brutally competitive elections from a single, nationwide constituency. Mobilising votes

across a country of 106m people is a huge undertaking, making it unwise for candidates to alienate any big, influential group. Small wonder that the opening of a museum dedicated to Iglesia Ni Cristo in September drew no fewer than half the country's senators. Even the body's wealthiest member, Cynthia Villar, decided she could not miss it.

Fierce religious opposition helped to delay by 13 years the passage of the law allowing the government to distribute contraceptives. Even after it passed, Congress refused to fund it adequately, leaving many poor Filipinos without access to modern birth control. The Catholic church, meanwhile, persuaded the courts to issue an order to restrict the sorts of contraception that could be

provided under the law, on the grounds that some methods were tantamount to abortion. The ongoing battle bodes ill for the bill to legalise divorce that is currently under consideration in Congress. Mr Duterte's own marriage was annulled, after a court found he was so prone to affairs that his wife of 27 years had only been a nominal one. Yet so strong is the religious opposition to the bill that not even Mr Duterte supports it. Nonetheless, argues Carlos Conde of Human Rights Watch, a pressure group, the continuing attempts to introduce liberal bills despite their small chances of success are an encouraging sign in themselves.

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# 19 TALK

ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD

## FROM MY PANTRY

Chef **NITIN BHARADWAJ** on his favourite technique

### MAKING SUSHI



back – you are using.

The best sushi I've ever had was at a century-old Tokyo restaurant called Kyubey. I grew up in a vegetarian home, and even though I do taste everything I make at my restaurant, I prefer to eat *ghar ka khana*. But when the chef at Kyubey put 50 pieces of sushi before me, I ate them all. It was that good.

AS TOLD TO POOJA PILLAI



A still from *Kastoori* (above); Vinod Kamble

### ALAKA SAHANI

THREE YEARS ago, writer-director Vinod Kamble came across a news report about Sunny Chavan, a boy who started assisting his father in conducting autopsies at Barshi Civil Hospital in Maharashtra's Solapur district when he was a class VIII student. Kamble, a fellow resident of Barshi, sought out the then 22-year-old Chavan soon after. Once he overcame his initial disbelief about someone engaged in such a grim task from a young age, Kamble realised how similar their life stories were. This spurred him to write and direct *Post Mortem*, a 25-minute short film that was screened at the Cannes Film Festival in 2017.

Two years later, he expanded the canvas and added layers to this story for his debut feature, *Kastoori* (*The Musk*). In both the films, the young protagonist Gopi is the common factor. He is engaged in manual scavenging, cleaning toilets and assists his father in performing autopsies to contribute to his family's income even as he is forced to choose between education and work. "My father, uncle and grandmother worked as sweepers under Barshi municipal council. While studying at school, I used to help my grandmother with her work. As she was growing old, I used to help in clearing garbage," says Kamble.

With some of Kamble's own experiences woven into the script of *Kastoori*, the movie is an unflinching and nuanced look at protagonist Gopi's struggle to find musk to get rid of the odour that he believes he carries after burying unclaimed bodies or declogging toilets. Since Kamble does not shy away from showing burnt parts of a dead body or dirty toilets, the film for most of its viewers becomes an incisive yet difficult look at the "others". Yet, one has to agree with him when the 31-year-old filmmaker says, "I have tried not to make the obvious mention of casteism and class discrimination in *Kastoori*. Instead, I've

# Unsettling Realities

Marathi movie *Kastoori* is the discomfiting story of a childhood spent in manual scavenging and carrying out autopsies



**I've tried not to make the obvious mention of casteism and class discrimination. Instead, I've tried to show economic barriers and what stops the poorer section of the society from leading a life with dignity**

VINOD KAMBLE

tried to show economic barriers and what stops the poorer section of the society from leading a life with dignity."

The filmmaker believes that Gopi, the character, ably essayed by Samarth Sonawane in *Kastoori*, represents those kids who work at brick kilns or tea stalls. "*Kastoori* is the story of every child who can't access education," Kamble had said during the last edition of Dharamshala International Film Festival (DIFF). After its premiere at the Mumbai Film Festival, *Kastoori* was screened in Dharamshala for a young audience. There was an uneasy silence after its DIFF screening.

However, during the post-screening interaction, they did open up and spoke about the discrimination against the less privileged ones that they themselves had noticed. "Pointing out such social inequalities," says Kamble, "was the aim for telling such a story". *Kastoori* is the first production of Insight Films, which is jointly set up by eight women. The team is in talks with some studios to release the film later this year.

Kamble's decision to become a filmmaker was followed by a moment of epiphany in an examination hall in 2014. "Since childhood, I was interested in watching movies and

wanted to make them some day. But I didn't know how. While appearing for the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) examination in Pune, I wrote down a story after I finished attempting the questions. That's when I realised that I was in the wrong place," says Kamble, who studied civil engineering at Government College of Engineering, Karad.

That year, he went back to Barshi and joined the theatre group, Manavta Nimriti Manch. "I assisted the group backstage and with the play's production. There, I also attended a filmmaking workshop. After that I made my first short film, *Grahan*, during Diwali that year," recalls Kamble. *Grahan*, a four-minute film without any dialogues, was well-received. That consolidated his resolve to be a full-time filmmaker: Kamble assisted director Amar Bharat Deokar on his National Award-winning Marathi movie, *Mhorkya*, which is about a 14-year-old shepherd boy who wants to learn how to march for the Republic Day parade. This movie was released recently.

During the making of *Kastoori*, Kamble depended heavily on his personal experience as he decided to shoot in Barshi. After selecting Sonawane and then Sravan Upalkar, who plays Gopi's friend Adim, Kamble lived with them for three months. "I prepared them for the emotional and intense scenes. For instance, those involving the post mortem and toilet scenes. Staying together helped us understand each other," says the filmmaker. Sonawane was recently awarded the best actor trophy at the Aurangabad International Film Festival (AIFF).

Telling personal stories is something Kamble plans to continue doing for now. "There are some incidents from my life that I want to share with the audience. Most of my writing, so far, has been a reaction to what I've experienced. The process of writing is the most challenging for me. It's also an endeavour to discover myself," he says.

TAPAS PAUL 1935-2020

## 'He was the guy next door'

Tapas Paul was Bengali cinema's good boy who went on to have a controversial political career

### PREMANKUR BISWAS

FORTY YEARS ago, Tapas Paul gave Bengali cinema a prototype — the bumbling, good-natured *bhalo chele* (good boy). It was his breakthrough role in Tarun Majumdar's *Dadar Kirti* (1980), where he played the perpetual *bechara* with a blend of integrity and naivete. It was an image that endeared him to the audience, and stuck because of his subsequent films. In *Tobu Mone Rekho* (1994), for instance, he played a meek young man who is exploited by his stepmother. In *Kori Diye Kinlam* (1989), he played the good-natured loser. For a generation of Bengalis, Paul, who passed away late Monday night of cardiac arrest, was almost always the wronged man. He was 61.

But this benign image was to shatter in 2014. A controversial video, where he threatens murder and rape of people who mess with Trinamool workers, emerged. It made him fall into the mould of the stock-in-trade corrupt politician of Bengali potboilers. By then, he was a seasoned leader of Trinamool, having joined the party in 2001. His political persona, Bengal was to realise, would end up being the exact opposite of his onscreen one.

Paul often drew flak for his aggressive rhetoric. In December 2016, he was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation in connection with the multi-crore Rose Valley chit fund scam and got bail only after being incarcerated for 13 months. For the Bengali

film audience, this was a bit much to digest.

"In films such as *Bhalobasa Bhalobasa* (1985) and *Kori Diye Kinlam*, he consolidated that image. He was the guy next door that Bengali men can identify with. Which is why it was difficult to make peace with his political image," says film historian Sanjay Mukhopadhyay.

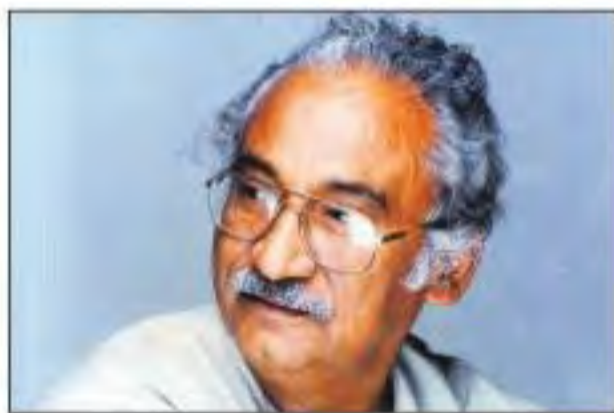
In a career spanning 40 years, Paul gave Bengal different versions of his breakthrough role. His Bollywood debut, *Abodh* (1984), also

Madhuri Dixit's debut film, was a resounding flop. And that was the end of the road for him in the Hindi film industry. At times, he played second fiddle to the reigning superstar of Bengali film industry, Prosenjit. Mostly through the 90s, in Anjan Chaudhuri family dramas, Paul played the ever-suffering elder brother to Prosenjit's avenging younger brother. In these films, Paul, more often than not, fell prey to scheming politicians and duplicitous scammers.

It was not until arthouse filmmaker, Buddhadeb Dasgupta cast him in his homoerotic film, *Uttara* (2001), that Bengali film audience realised that there is still a sensitive actor residing in him. Dasgupta cast him again in *Mondo Meyer Upakhyan* (2002). Aparna Sen, who worked with him in *Kori Diye Kinlam* (1989), remembers him as the *bhalo chele* who endeared himself to a generation of Bengalis. "It's sad how he changed after joining politics. He was such a sweet boy," says Sen.



Paul with Shatabdi Roy in a still from the film *Abishkar*



### Rest in Peace

CELEBRATED MAKE-UP artist Pandhari Juker, who devised the looks of many Bollywood actors including Dilip Kumar, Nargis, Madhubala, Madhuri Dixit, Sunil Dutt and Amitabh Bachchan, passed away on Monday. Bachchan paid a tribute on Twitter while remembering that his first make-up was done by Juker, so did Manisha Koirala. Dixit also tweeted: "Saddened to hear of the passing of Pandhari *dada*, who has worked with everyone from Meena

Kumari to Madhubala to today. I have very fond memories of him working together in *Tezaab*, *Ram Lakhan* and many more." Juhi Chawla took to Instagram to share her memories of the late artiste. They had worked together in *Chandni*, *Darr*, *Saat Rang Ke Sapne*, among many other films and songs. "He would use his thumb and fingers, rarely used a brush to apply our make-up. He would be done in 15 minutes," she wrote. Juker, who has worked in films like *Silsila*, *Dastaan*, *Chitralekha*, has worked on sets of filmmakers like BR Chopra, Kamal Amrohi, Tarun Majumdar, Raj Kapoor, Yash Chopra and Subhash Ghai, among others. In an earlier interview, Juker shared how he was an accidental make-up artist. "It was my father's illness that pushed me to take up work as a make-up assistant at Rajkamal Studios. I had no idea what I was getting into, but I was a commercial artist, so I knew how to use colours. I learned under the guidance of make-up gurus like Baba Vardhan and Dada Paranjpe," he said.

### SNAPSHOTS



### For the New Age

ACTORSTAAPSEE PANNU and Tahir Raj Bhasin will play the lead in the Hindi adaptation of acclaimed German thriller *Run Lola Run* (1998). Titled *Loop Lapeta*, the film is billed as new age thriller comedy and will be directed by Aakash Bhatia. The original, starring Franka Potente and Moritz Bleibtreu, follows a woman who needs to arrange a big chunk of money in 20 minutes to save her boyfriend. While Pannu will next be seen in *Thappad*, Bhasin's upcoming release is *83*.



### Binding Factor

A recent concert titled 'Confluence', organised by HCL Technologies, saw a performance by a group of 11 musicians from across the globe, who performed 16 pieces of symphonies. Through 'Confluence', HCL, with support from the attendees and their foundation, will donate musical instruments to children "who come from vulnerable backgrounds and have been deprived of developmental opportunities due to their socioeconomic and cultural conditions."

# 'Capitalistic governments don't invest in art for children'

Belgian puppeteer Ronny Aelbrecht, who performed at the 18th Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival, on the craft's relevance

### TANUSHREE GHOSH

ONE DAY, an old fisherman pulls out a golden fish, which pleads for its life, promising any wish in return. Scared to see a speaking fish, he lets it go. His angry wife instructs him to ask the fish for varied things — one thing after another — until she demands to be made the 'ruler of the sea' and to subjugate the golden fish, which cures her greed by putting everything back to its older state.

Belgian puppet theatre group Figuretheater Vlinders & Co adapted this 1833 Alexander Pushkin's classic tale into *The Fisherman and the Golden Fish* and brought it to the 18th edition of the Ishara International Puppet Theatre Festival (February 14-22) last weekend at Delhi's India Habitat Centre. The set and design, like a pop-up fairy-tale book, has been actor Ronny Aelbrecht's forte, says Dadi Pudumjee, founder of the Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust.

One day, a professional saw "real talent" in the "low level" performance of Aelbrecht and his friend, who used to play with puppets for "fun", and suggested they join the Puppet Academy acting school. Aelbrecht started studying there in 1983, became a puppeteer



(From left) Ronny Aelbrecht; during his performance

actor in 1990, did "part-time" theatre jobs, and started independent theatre in two years. The award-winning actor — the only non-Russian bit in the play — was part of the first (and the only) foreign group to come to Ishara festival



when it started 18 years ago, with *Valentino* (still running). Excerpts:

### Why Pushkin's poem?

Pushkin's work (normally for adults) is

world heritage. This is a fantastic story, and, for years, I wanted to work with the director (Evgeny Ibragimov) whom I met at global festivals. Since he's Russian, the choice was easy.

### How do you fuse table-top puppetry with stop-motion puppets?

It's a challenge. The control and manipulation look easier than they are. You have to carefully watch your subtle motor-skill movements, which, since I'm solo, is often with two puppets, or three heads at once, therefore, it is even more difficult. It gives the performance a slow, gentle atmosphere, which I love in today's fast-moving society.

### Tell us about Belgian puppet theatre.

Since we have no real country — we're a cocktail formed from parts of other countries, constructed by other countries in 1830 — and no historical cultural background, there is no real 'Belgian' puppetry. Of course, we have taken over some heritage, for example Jan Klaassen (Dutch version of Punch and Judy), Tchantez (Walloon version of Guignol), iron-stick puppets (from the Sicilians who came to work in Belgium in the 1800s). There are many puppet theatres, amateurs and professionals, a lot of them with their own style — like ours

(puppet and figures theatre).

### Does art bridge gaps between nations?

I'm an artiste with friends all over. I'm not interested in colour, race, religion. The only border I know is language. But children around the world are the same. Put Chinese, Indian and African children together. In 10 minutes, they will start playing, even without any language communication. It is the environment, the education by the adults which create gaps/hostility between them; sharing art around the world can connect it better and help people grow closer.

### With greater TV/internet access, are children less drawn to live art?

It is harder but 'live' performances will survive. They have an irreplaceable 'magical element'. Since movies started, there has always been a concurrence. Now there is even more, but still live art will stand. The economic crises is another problem; Western (read capitalist) governments aren't willing to invest in culture or art, especially if it's for children, since it yields no 'financial' benefits. Egocentric systems hardly understand or care that children are our planet's only future. We can only work hard and hope the tide will turn one day.

### ACT TWO

#### THE BOY & THE RAVEN

(FINLAND), 19 FEBRUARY  
Using Hannu Räisä puppets, the non-verbal musical, performed by Royal Puppet Theatre, is about a small boy separated from his parents in a world at war; 30 minutes, for all ages

#### SMASHING BENEDITO

(BRAZIL), 20 FEBRUARY  
Performed by Grupo Sobrevento, the verbal musical is about a mischievous boy always getting into trouble; 45 minutes; for all ages

#### THE UGLY DUCKLING

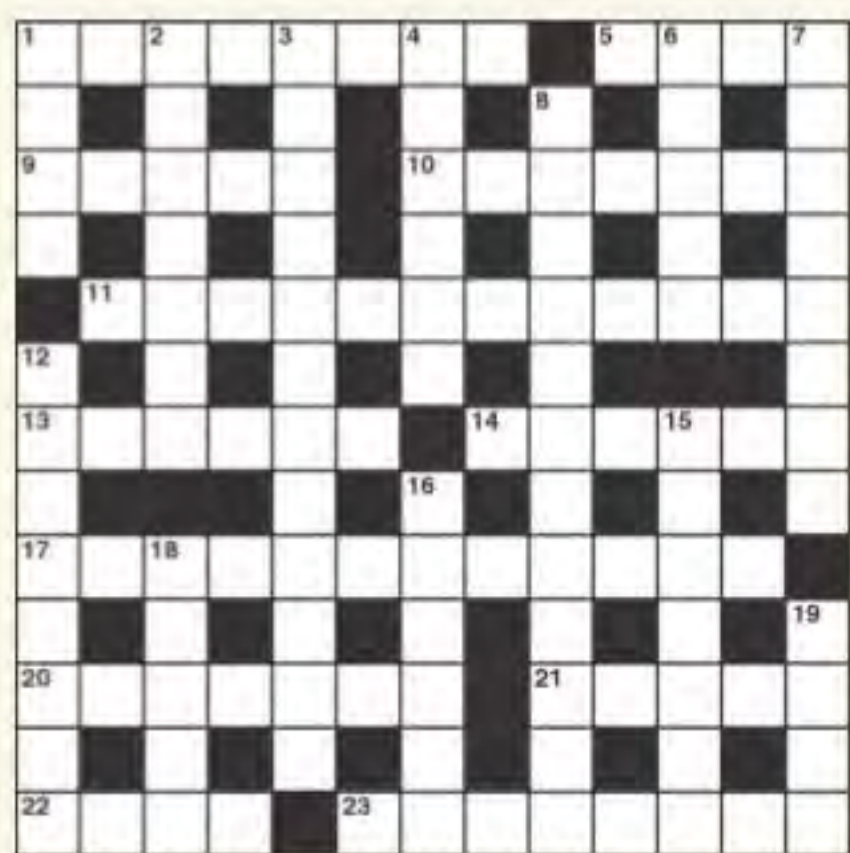
(TURKEY), 21 FEBRUARY  
Performed by Flying Hands Puppet Theatre, it is a rendition of Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale; 40 minutes, for all ages

#### WHEN LAND BECOMES WATER

(INDIA), 22 FEBRUARY  
Directed by Dadi Pudumjee, it has been adapted from Neeta Premchand's *The Storyteller and His Bag of Myths* around the great flood in Indian, Biblical and Mesopotamian mythology. By Ishara Puppet Theatre Group; 60 minutes, ages 7+ and families.

All shows are at 7:30 pm, at IHC, Delhi.

## CROSSWORD 4045



- ACROSS**
- Had a fight and was thrown out (8)
  - Has a choice sort of post (4)
  - Bird doctor goes round to object (5)
  - Footballers wouldn't be prepared to play without him (7)
  - It won't keep you fully occupied (4-4,4)
  - Battle suit (6)
  - Thought it would be back in time (6)
  - A religious point to pursue as a matter of race (12)
  - Given command (7)
  - Prepared to go on with the book to the end of the story (5)
  - Sailors of the Tsar (4)
  - It brings about a military rising (8)
- DOWN**
- Bias shown by the team (4)
  - Sheepish role in defence? (7)
  - Contenders in the high jump? (12)
  - Involve a note before Latin revision (6)
  - Attach to a horse (5)
  - Impressive form of industrial action (8)
  - Don't take legal action for nothing (4,2,6)
  - A ticket and a drink is what many travellers need (8)
  - Invest in a unit of the open market (7)
  - Sewer used for the introduction of drugs (6)
  - Sort of wine of earlier vintage? (5)
  - Use the office keys? (4)

**Solutions Crossword 4044:** Across: 1 Encircled, 8 Ideal, 9 Gorging, 10 Return, 11 Gemini, 12 Bad shots, 15 Shambles, 18 Cheese, 20 Finish, 21 Bulldog, 22 Ensur, 23 Switching. Down: 2 Noose, 3 Ingrid, 4 Cannibal, 5 Divers, 6 Set upon, 7 Alongside, 11 Goes after, 13 Discourt, 14 Varnish, 16 Bosses, 17 Health, 19 Shown.

## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



## CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

**ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)**  
You might be the managing director or the chairman of the board, but one way or another you'll have to sit down and listen to what other people feel. You may even have to do exactly what they want. Come to think of it, that might not be a bad thing.

**TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)**  
The financial situation, by the way, is looking hopeful just as long as you check every microscopic detail. Before very much longer you will come to be admired for your knowledge and wisdom. But, first, of course, you have to prove yourself, and that could take some doing.

**GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)**  
A potent gathering of powerful planets urges you to sort out fundamentals, but also to do things in your way. Children and other relations should therefore fall into line. At least, that's what you hope. But, if they don't, then there might not be much that you can do about it.

**CANCER (June 22 - July 23)**  
You do have a lot to learn at the moment. In fact, the whole of the coming few months should see you acquiring new skills and experience. Even a romantic encounter will teach you more about love. But then that's what life is all about — learning significant lessons.

**LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)**  
Little by little, planetary pressure is easing. What a relief. As the celestial tension lifts, you will be able to stand aside and allow other people to take over where you left off. You don't have to do everything by yourself, you know, especially when you're surrounded by willing hands.

**VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)**  
A whole bunch of planets is soon to shuffle places, so you might be doing a spot of head-scratching as you look around and wonder why everything's not like it was last week. You must take it easy at home, especially if you don't want others to pile the pressure on.

**LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)**  
The Moon is still on your side. You may therefore expect to get your own way. You can, if you wish, imitate the somewhat bossy qualities of your opposite sign, Aries. A cash surprise is coming your way, but your chart doesn't say how much. I hope you're not disappointed.

**SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)**  
There does seem to be some change of mood today, encouraged by the Moon's shifting position. You may reveal a secret, or at the very least share some private information. You will gain credit for your behaviour, even if you have to make one or two sacrifices along the way.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)**  
Your planetary trends may not be perfect, but they are still helpful, so be content with your lot. You may give social contacts a high priority today, especially as you might be entrusted with a secret tonight. Your discretion will win a new friend.

**CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)**  
There's still an excellent chance for all you professional Capricorns to secure an immediate goal. All Goats everywhere should be diplomatic and polite, even if other people are behaving badly. Remember what they say — two wrongs don't make a right.

**AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)**  
Hopefully a loved one is about to change their mind, and hopefully you will be very happy at the outcome. You may apply a little more emotional pressure, but don't push a partner into a corner. They won't appreciate it, now — and they won't let you forget it, later.

**PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**  
Do listen to expert advice over the next two weeks. And if a partner doesn't take the romantic initiative soon, you should make your move. Start asking questions at work as soon as possible, and look at ways in which you can help someone else out of a tight corner.

## 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 clue.

Answer: **QUANTUM**. n. The act of repeating erroneously the words of another (9)

**BTAOO**      **ADEVNT**

**EPYIT**      **AANTQU**

SOLUTION: TABOO, QUANTUM, MEET, ADVENT, QUANTA

**Difficulty Level 2s**  
**Instructions**  
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

**SUDOKU 4125**

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



**SOLUTION SUDOKU 4124**



## NOTICE BOARD

CORPORATE ASSOCIATE DIARY      EVENTS, HONOURS



### FELICITATION-EPCH

Trivendra Singh Rawat, CM of Uttarakhand, felicitated the team of EPCH for skilling the artisans of last Indian Village-Mana at Indo-China border during a programme organised by Swami Vivekanand Health Mission, New Delhi.



### EVENT-RITES

RITES organised its Annual Sports Day with great zeal & fervor at Gurugram, inaugurated by Haryana CM, Manohar Lal Khattar. RITES CMD, Rajeev Mehrotra, administered an oath of true sportsmanship to participants & volunteers.



### PROGRAMME-SCOPE

SCOPE recently organized a programme on International Arbitration & Global Best Practices at New Delhi. Shourav Lahiri, renowned international arbitration lawyer; Atul Sobti, DG, SCOPE & Dr. SB Mitra, ED (Law & HR), GAIL, addressed the participants.



### INAUGURATION-BSNL

Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Communication, Electronics & IT, & Law & Justice, recently launched BSNL's Bharat Air Fibre by connecting Gauri Chak Village in Patna District in Bihar to New Delhi.



### MoU- POWERGRID

POWERGRID recently signed a MoU with NFCH in the presence of MK Singh, CGM (CSR), POWERGRID & RS Tripathi, DDO, NFCH, VK Singh, Dir. (Pers.) POWERGRID, Manoj Pant, Secy, NFCH & senior officials from both the organisations.

### APPOINTMENTS

**GAIL** Manoj Jain recently assumed charge as CMD of GAIL. A Mechanical Engineer with an MBA in Operations Management, Jain joined GAIL as a Graduate Engineer Trainee in 1985 & rose through the ranks to his current position. Before his appointment as CMD, Jain was Dir. (Business Development) of the company.



**ICAI** CA. Atul Kumar Gupta has been elected as President of ICAI for 2020-21. Having served the profession for about two decades, he joined the Central Council of ICAI in 2013. He is widely appreciated for his key contribution as facilitator of the GST regime, particularly in its formative years.



CA. Nihar Niranjan Jambusaria has been elected as the new VP of ICAI for 2020-21. With nearly 27 years of experience, he has represented ICAI in many important committees constituted by the Govt./Ministries/Regulators. He has made noteworthy contributions in whatever capacity he served the profession.



**PHL** Sanjeev Razdan has taken over the charge of CMD of PHL, the National Helicopter carrier. Sanjeev Razdan has been appointed as CMD, PHL for a five-year tenure. Prior to this he was working as GM-Western Region, PHL. Sanjeev Razdan is BE in Aeronautical Engg. with MBA (Aerospace) and has a vast experience of 30 plus years in hand.



### AGREEMENT-AAI

Recently, AAI signed three Concession Agreements for Operations, Management & Development of Ahmedabad, Lucknow & Mangaluru airports through PPP mode with the Concessionaires.



### WORLD CANCER DAY-SBI

On World Cancer Day, SBI, in collaboration with SBI General Insurance & Apollo Hospitals organized a Health Talk. Vijay Ronjan talked about good nutritional habits and urged the staff members to be conscious of their body and mind.

**RITES** has emerged as a successful bidder for supply of Locomotives, Coaches and DEMUs to a Cape Gauge country. RITES has submitted the price bid for the contract amount of around Rs. 680 cr and discussion on contract documents are expected to conclude soon.

**SAIL** declared its performance results for Q3 FY 2019-20 recently. During the quarter, the company reported a 5% growth in its topline over CPLY. Despite the reduction in prices, SAIL has been able to achieve higher revenue through its continual push towards higher volumes which saw production (3.9 MT) & sales (4.1 MT) grow by 3% & 26% over CPLY respectively.

**LIC** issued a clarification for the benefit of all concerned that there was absolutely no proposal to merge LICHL with any other entity and all such rumours floating in the market are not based on facts.

**CRPF** said while no amount of assistance can ever match up to the supreme sacrifice made by the martyrs for the cause of the motherland, yet the Next-of-Kins (NoKs) of each of the Pulwama martyrs except one have already been paid all financial dues and benefits as applicable. The assistance which is due to the NoK of one of the martyrs is held up as the case of legal heir is sub-judice. All the families are getting last pay drawn as monthly pension.

**SYNDICATE BANK** achieved the landmark figure of Rs. 5 Lakh crore business. Bank has reported Net Profit of Rs. 435 cr in Q3 FY 2019-20 as against Net Profit of Rs. 108 cr in Q3 of FY 2018-19. The Operating Profit increased by 111%, from Rs. 634 cr in Dec-2018 quarter to Rs. 1336 cr in Dec-2019 quarter.

**STATE BANK OF INDIA** recently had a meeting with MSME entrepreneurs at SMECC Branch, Ghaziabad to mark the Financial Literacy Week for MSME. The meeting was chaired by Sahil Verma, LDO, RBI, Lucknow and attended by SP Yadav, Lead District Chief Manager Syndicate Bank. SS Jain, Assistant General Manager, addressed the MSME Entrepreneurs present on the occasion.

**MMTC** declared its financial results for the nine-month period ended 31st Dec. 2019. During this period, the company has achieved Revenue from Operations of INR 20,638 cr. Exports increased by 101% to INR 1,384 cr as compared to INR 687 cr during the corresponding period last year.

**WESTERN RAILWAY-AHMEDABAD DIVISION**  
**PROVISION OF OUTSOURCING OF THE PART SUPPLY OF SIGNALING MATERIAL, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING**  
Notice Inviting Tender No. DRM-SnT-ADI-Sig 24 (Re-invite) of 2019-20, DRM/S and T acting for and behalf of the President of India invites E-Tenders against Tender No. DRM-SnT-ADI-Sig 24 (Re-invite) of 2019-20 closing date 13.03.2020, 15:00 Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Name of Work: Provision of outsourcing of the part supply of signaling material, installation, testing and commissioning in connection with work for repair and maintenance of outdoor signaling gears in Asava-Himmaladivagar section of Ahmedabad Division (Re-invite). Estimated Cost of work: ₹ 47,81,794.00/- (₹ Forty Seven Lakh Eighty One Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Four only). EMD: ₹ 95,600/- (₹ Ninety Five Thousand Six Hundred only). Date and time of Closing: Not later than 15:00 hrs of 13.03.2020. Date and time of opening of Tender: Opening on 13.03.2020 at 15:30 hrs. Website of E-Tendering: www.ireps.gov.in 384  
Like us on: Facebook.com/WesternRly

**SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
Follow us on: @SCRailwaysIndia  
Details of the Tender Notices of S.C. Railway can be seen on our website: www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in  
**E-Tender Notice No. C/E.221/ ELS/LGD/RC/328/19-20/15, Dated : 14-02-2020**  
E-Tenders from the Experience contractors are invited by the undersigned for the following work:  
SI.No. : 1. Tender No. & Date : C/E.221/ ELS/LGD/RC/328, Dated : 14-02-2020. Description of Work : Conversion of brake rigging of WAG9 locomotives from TBU/PBU type brake rigging to conventional brake rigging - Quantity : 10 Loco sets. Approximate Value Rs. : 1,74,05,686.67. Earnest Money Deposit Rs. : 2,37,000/- Cost of tender form Rs. : 5,000/- Contract period : 12 months. Date & time of closing & opening : 17-03-2020 15:00 hrs. & 17-03-2020 15:15 hrs.  
SI.No. : 2. Tender No. & Date : C/E.221/ ELS/LGD/RC/323, Dated : 14-02-2020. Description of Work : Rehabilitation of Electronic Cards (PCBs) for 3 phase WAG9/WAP7 Locomotives, Quantity : 6 Loco sets. Approximate Value Rs. : 66,69,751/- Earnest Money Deposit Rs. : 1,33,400/- Cost of tender form Rs. : 5,000/- Contract period : 12 months. Date & time of closing & opening : 17-03-2020 15:00 hrs. & 17-03-2020 15:15 hrs.  
Validity of offer : 63 days from the date of opening of tender.  
Submission of tender document : Through IREPS website at www.ireps.gov.in  
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer, ELS, Lallaguda Secunderabad  
A0267  
For further tender conditions/ details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at https://www.ireps.gov.in or www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

**JHARKHAND BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM LTD**  
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001702)  
**ELECTRIC SUPPLY CIRCLE, RANCHI**  
Regd. Office : KUSAI COLONY, DORANDA, RANCHI - 834002  
Telephone :- 0651-2490467, FAX No 0651-2490558 & Email : ranchicircle.ese@gmail.com  
**Tender Cancellation Notice**  
Due to some unavoidable reason the Tender Notice No. 28/PR/JBVNL/19-20 is hereby cancelled.  
स्वहित एवं राष्ट्रहित में ऊर्जा बचावों। कृपया अपनी शिकायतों को टॉल फ्री नं० 1800 345 6570 पर दर्ज करायें।  
PR No. 210867 Sd/- ESE.  
PR 225610 (Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd) 19-20 (D) ESC , Ranchi

कराया गया मुद्रा मासिकपत्र, निर्माण विभाग  
**उत्तराखण्ड पेट्रोलियम संसाधन विकास एवं निर्यात निगम**  
(उत्तराखण्ड सरकार का उपनिगम) 403/1/1 सुरक्षा, नगर, देहरादून-248 001  
रूयान / ईमेल 0135-2784075 ई-मेल: gprms@pnswing@yahoo.com gprms@pnswing@gmail.com  
**PRESS NOTE**  
Government of Uttarakhand "e" procurement Notice  
Bid Identification NO. 537/Nivida (Garhwal)/71 Dated : 18.02.2020  
1. Name of the Works :- Establishment of Perfumery, Cosmetic, Plant Science, Microbiology and Cell Culture (Clean Room) Laboratory including design and Drawing at CAP selajai, Dehradun on Turnkey Basis (Within the Constructed building).  
2. Estimated Cost :- Rs. 469.10 Lacs  
3. Period of Completion :- 04 Months  
4. Date and Time of Availability of bid documents in the portal :- 19.02.2020 - 15.00 Hrs.  
5. Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal :- 11.03.2020 - 17.00 Hrs.  
6. Name and Address of Officer :- General Manager, Construction Wing, Uttarakhand Pety Jai Nigam, 403/1, Indra Nagar, Dehradun  
7. Pre bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place :- 22.02.2020 - 15.00 Hrs.  
8. Details of subsequent addendum/ corrigendum/cancellation etc. may be obtained from the website:-  
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "https://tenders.uttarakhand.gov.in" General Manager

**DAVANGERE UNIVERSITY**  
Vishwavidyalayika Karyalaya, Shivgangothri, Davangere - 577 007  
NO:DU/DVP/ 391/2019-20/ Date: 12-02-2020  
**TENDER NOTIFICATION**  
E-Tenders are invited from eligible suppliers for **Scientific Equipments** required by Various Post Graduate departments of this University for the Academic/ Financial year 2019-20. The Tenderers should submit filled in applications through e-procurement portal <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>. before 11-03-2020 by 5:00 pm. For details contact Phone no.08192-208029 & 208350.  
**1. The Firm should be familiar with:** i. The Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act. (KTPP Act-1999 and Rules-2000) and its relevant amendments from time to time. ii. E-procurement procedure of Government of Karnataka.  
**2. Important Information/Instructions:** i. The Scientific Equipments supplied by the firm shall be as per our specifications. ii. The tender should contain (i) **Technical Bid** and (ii) **Financial Bid** in separate formats. (As specified in Annexure-II and Annexure. III) iii. Time Schedule is as follows: (1) For any Clarifications/queries etc.- 11-03-2020 by 5:00 pm (2) Last date for submission of tender:- 11-03-2020 by 5:00 pm (3) Date and Time for opening Technical Bid:- 13-03-2020 by 11:00 am. (4) Date and Time for opening Financial Bid:- 13-03-2020 by 12:00 am.  
Sd/ Registrar



“Whether there is still a drive, whether I’m good enough, whether I’m fit, and whether I deserve my spot in the side. If I can tick all those, then definitely 2023 is an option.”

ROSS TAYLOR, ON CHANCES OF PLAYING THE WORLD CUP

BRIEFLY

Fit-again Boult ready to take on Kohli

Wellington: There are no half measures for fit-again New Zealand pace spearhead Trent Boult who is ready to challenge India captain Virat Kohli on his return to international cricket during the two-Test series starting here on Friday. Boult was out of action for the past six weeks due to a fracture on his right hand sustained during the Boxing Day Test against Australia and missed out on the limited-overs leg of the India series. “That’s personally why I play the game, to get guys like that (Kohli) out and test myself against them, so I can’t wait to get stuck in. But he’s an exceptional player. Everyone knows how great he is,” Boult said, sending out a warning after landing in the capital city for the opening Test. New Zealand’s last Test series in Australia was a nightmare as they lost 0-3 and India will be a tough test for the Black Caps. “They are a great side and they are leading the ICC Test Championship. They are very clear on how they wanted to play the game. It was a tough learning curve in Australia. It’s good to see where we are in terms of bouncing back,” said Boult. “I’m preparing for a solid wicket. It generally is very good here and goes the full distance (five days). I do enjoy playing here, the history that’s involved, and it’s going to be an exciting week building up. I can’t wait to get out there,” said the 30-year-old who has taken 256 wickets from 65 Tests. **PTI**

Spinner Poonam stars in warm-up win

Brisbane: Spinner Poonam Yadav claimed three wickets as India geared up for the ICC women’s T20 World Cup with a thrilling two-run win over the West Indies. Electing to bat, India posted a lowly 107 for eight in their stipulated 20 overs before returning to restrict West Indies to 105 for seven. Chasing 108 to win, West Indies were comfortably placed at 57 for one in 13 overs when Deepti Sharma struck, cleaning up opener Lee-Ann Kirby (42) to trigger a collapse. Soon skipper Stafanie Taylor (16), Chedean Nation (0) and Deandra Dottin (1) were back in the hut as West Indies slipped to 67 for five in the 17th over. Hayley Matthews (25) and Chinelle Henry (17) blasted three fours and a six in the 19th over to leave them with 11 to get off the last six balls. Henry blasted Poonam for a four but the Indian dismissed Matthews in the fourth ball. West Indies needed three runs off the last ball but Henry was caught by Veda Krishnamurthy. Earlier, India’s top-three failed to fire as they were reduced to 17 for three in 3.1 overs. Opener Smriti Mandhana (4) lasted just six balls, while Jemimah Rodrigues (0) failed to open her account. Shafali Verma blasted a couple of fours before being caught by Britney Cooper off Shamilia Connell (2/20). **BRIEF SCORES:** India women: 107 for 8 in 20 ovs (Shikha Pandey 24; A Mohammed 2/16) bt West Indies women: 105 for 7 in 20 ovs (Lee-Ann Kirby 42; Poonam Yadav 3/20). **PTI**

It won’t be a breeze at Wellington

Basin Reserve’s gusty reputation is well earned, and how India deal with this unique variable will determine their fortunes



EXPRESS IN NEW ZEALAND

SANDIP G WELLINGTON, FEBRUARY 18

FROM MOUNT Victoria, a steep 200-odd metres uphill from the bustling city centre, one marvels at the distinct geography of sprawling Wellington. The serene Tasman Sea, trails of thin clouds that cling to the trees, aircraft shrieking on the runway, the chuffing trains, the cargo ships in the harbour, and the middle of grey-brick-roofed single-storey houses. At the foot of the Mount is a round green spot, the Basin Reserve, where India embark on their biggest examination in the World Test Championship yet on Friday.

On a sunny day, the locals claim one could catch a fleeting glimpse of the cloud-scraping Kaikoura Ranges. It was gloomy on Tuesday, with sustained bursts of drizzle throughout the day drenching India’s optional training session, and the wind howling like it always does in Wellington, the second windiest city in the world after Chicago.

“Windy Welly” has always been known for the powerful gusts that rifle through the Cook Strait, the body of water that divides New Zealand’s North Island from its South. It’s the city’s identity.

At the mount, there’s a pictographic signage that describes the average force of the wind—beginning with a minimum of 7.5-11 kmph, it can rev up to 62-64 kmph. For as many as 173 days, that’s almost half the year, they get a wind speed of 60kmph. The highest ever recorded speed in 248 kmph, measured in 2011.

The city has a wicked sense of self-deprecatory humour too, celebrating its gusty reputation. In the Hollywood on Beverly Hills font, they have erected a “Wellington Blown Away” sign on a hill in the Miramar suburb. From daily life—there’s an umbrella shop or repair shop in every street—to cricket games, it’s a throbbing presence in the city, where phrases like at the rate of knots and blown over are not just idioms, but an everyday reality. It has an upside too—sailors, wind-surfers and kite-surfers come from afar to ride the vortex. Air pollution is non-existent as any fumes are whipped away and wind power is harnessed for electricity (Wellington has 62 turbines set on the hills around the city).

The Welly Wind is not perhaps as romanticised as the Fremantle Doctor at the WACA in Perth, but is certainly more feared and influential during a game.

Not merely for hapless bowlers, especially those who have to bowl against the wind, but batsmen and catchers too. Slips—men misjudging catches—and batsmen miscuing pull and sweeps are common occurrences, so are those of spinners struggling with their drift and fast bowlers labouring with their line.

Nobody prefers to bowl into the wind, historically prompting captains to thrust the chore on the youngest bowler in the team.



A bird’s eye view of the Basin Reserve ground, the venue of the first Test starting on Friday. A wind chart (below) is a common sight in the city.

It’s where umpires constantly keep raising their arms, not to give men out but to hold their hats firmly on their heads, while the heavy bails are never heavy enough, coming off during almost every over.

On a few instances, the winds have been so violent that camera operators have had to flee their tower of scaffolding. A groundsman was injured during a New Zealand-Australia Test match in 2010 after the covers were blown like a sail, sending him flying.

The Decision Review System also proved unreliable because of the wind during that match, with the cameras shaking so much that an accurate predicted path couldn’t be computed. The biggest traffic jams in the New Zealand capital are caused by toppled billboards.

However, it’s the wind that makes the venue unique and equally dreaded—any Test played here would not be worth its salt without wind coming into the equation, for it creates its humour and demands heroics. It’s daunting if one is playing without acclimatisation. It might be that India have been in the country for a month, and have played a T20 in the city—at the Westpac Stadium—but Basin Reserve is a beast that can’t be easily tamed. Even experienced local bowlers claim they haven’t mastered the element. Admitted Tim Southee sometime early in the series:



The Welly Wind is not perhaps as romanticised as the Fremantle Doctor at the WACA in Perth, but is certainly more feared and influential during a game. Not merely for hapless bowlers, especially those who have to bowl against the wind, but batsmen and catchers too.

“The wind in New Zealand is always unpredictable, and it’s different from one venue to another. After all these years, I can’t single out a guaranteed method that would work.”

Not a happy hunting ground

It’s not a particularly happy ground for India—they’ve played here six times, lost four, drawn two and won a solitary Test, back in 1968, when legendary off-spinner Erapalli Prasanna grabbed eight wickets here. Cricket historian Don Neely was mighty impressed by how he harnessed the wind that he wrote in the Wisden Almanack: “Prasanna had so much control of his art that he hypnotised the wind gods of Wellington. The winds

stopped to see a master bowler weaving his magic.” In Maori mythology, the wind god is called Tawhirimatea (pronounced Tawiri).

But after Prasanna, only three overseas spinners have picked five or more wickets—Bapu Nadakarni (in the same match), Muttiah Muralitharan and Keshav Maharaj three years ago.

Among overseas pacemen, few enjoyed the gusty winds more than Courtney Walsh, an expert in bowling into the wind. Ishant Sharma, on his previous tour, too had furnished a masterclass here, though his availability this time around is uncertain. But even without him, India have a potent attack, and how they, especially talisman Jasprit Bumrah, channel the wind will be an engrossing narrative.

But irrespective of the wind, the city keeps rumbling on.

On the mall road, where streets intertwine each other like a maze, the Bucket Fountain dropped water from one bucket into another and on passers-by, causing them to shriek and jump into one another’s arms to dodge the spray. Further down Cuba Street, clutches of the young and restless spill out along the pedestrian mall on their way from bars, restaurants and cafes. And Mount Victoria stood gazing at Wellington’s distinctly breathtaking geography.

TRAILBLAZER

First Maori woman at Big W looks back on a path-breaking career

SANDIP G WELLINGTON, FEBRUARY 18

RUJIA MORRISON remembers the silence, and the noise, in London when she became the first Maori woman to grace the Wimbledon grass in 1957. “I was a lonely little petunia in a big onion patch, and the silence suffocated me,” she says. At 83, her voice creaks, there are long pauses between words and nostalgia warms a small corner in New Zealand. The silence was from the English crowd, a cultural contrast from the cheery hand-clapping Auckland tennis fans, and the noise was the bustle in the streets of the British capital, a far cry from the serenity that pervaded at home.

“Lonely little petunia” is an idiom that had bloomed from a 1946 melancholic song with the same lyrics. Ruia’s London sojourn was to turn around, rather she turned it around with pluck, hope, skill, and a cheerful attitude that has seen her rise above race and perception battles to live a full and cherished life. “In Auckland, they would keep cheering and clapping even when the game is in progress. I like to feed off the crowd’s support. Here you could only hear the sound of the racquet on the ball. Back then, the racquets never made as much sound as they do these days. Just a swish, and I don’t remember anyone grunting,” she says.

There are long pauses between words, but Ruia’s memory is clear and loud. London marvelled her so deeply that the memories are still fresh—beautiful buildings and streets, lovely cafes and art galleries, the trams and trains, but the bustle dazed her. “I see people literally running on the street. Everyone’s so busy. I think I saw more people in London that week than the whole of my

life in Auckland and Rotorua.”

Auckland was where she learnt tennis, and Rotorua was where she was born and now resides.

Back to the Wimbledon grass, it took Ruia little time to wow the crowd, both with her game and charm. More charm than game, she asserts: “My game, frankly, was average. I was not powerful as say Serena (Williams) or as graceful as Steffi (Graf), but I would fight for each and every point. I was a small little girl. But I would put my life on it. But then I always kept smiling, whether I lost or won a point. I would greet the crowd in the traditional Maori way. I wanted to get them involved in my game,” she says.

But Dick Garrat, her biographer and president of the Rotorua Tennis Association, differs. “She had an amazing all-round game. Her forehand was lightning fast, it would explode off the grass, and she had a terrific serve. The courts back then were faster too. Her game would have won her a lot of matches in the current era too,” he says. Ruia strolled into the quarterfinals, where she stumbled to American Betty Pratt, then world No 4. But not without a fight in the second set which Pratt won 11-9. “I made a lot of basic mistakes, but after the match she came and told me, ‘thank you for letting me win.’ I was in tears. I was obviously devastated at losing, but most importantly I was proud to be there, as an ambassador of my country and the Maori community. I didn’t let either down,” she says.

Three more trips to Wimbledon didn’t yield a better result, but how she reached there is a more fascinating story. There were two hurdles: money and race. Despite winning junior titles, she never got a ticket to the national championship, the winners of which got Grand Slam tickets. “I was always omit-



Ruia Morrison reached the quarterfinals of Wimbledon in 1957.

ted, citing some reason or the other. Once they even claimed I was injured. I wasn’t. I knew the implication. It only motivated me more to fight and earn my rights,” Ruia says.

But in 1956, a couple of Auckland-based coaches protested her exclusion and persuaded the selectors to pick her for the national championship. Ironically, she picked a toe injury but played with it to win the tournament and earn her Wimbledon entry. “After I won the championship, I became nervous and started developing cold feet. How can I play on that stage?”

Music bands raised funds

Another bigger worry was finance. The funding from the New Zealand Tennis Association was negligible and she wouldn’t get sponsors. “Who would sponsor a small

little Maori girl?” she asks. But then some of her well-wishers, including her mentor Hoani Waititi, a young teacher at St Stephen’s School in Auckland, and a local tennis umpire, decided to fund-raise her trip through a concert of Maori bands from around the country. “The support was overwhelming. Hundreds of them turned out,” she recalls.

They helped her raise around 3000 New Zealand dollars and she was on her way to London. “It was the first time I ever saw a plane, let alone travel in one. I didn’t even know anyone (from her community) who had been on a flight. I had to arrange a passport too. And the thought of a small girl in a big city worried me,” she remembers, laughing out loudly.

Then she goes philosophical: “Destiny is strange. It takes you to places you’d never

imagined. I had never thought of going outside Rotorua. Not even Auckland.”

The first twist of destiny was her father meeting a rich white lady called Mrs Mowbray, who was vacationing in Rotorua, an adventure tourist destination. In a casual conversation, he told her that his daughter liked tennis. “We had a strong tennis culture. I don’t know how we got it, but there used to be inter-town tournaments among Maoris. And I was good at it. I also used to knock it around with my father, with worn-out tennis balls and home-made wooden racquets, which were quite heavy. Since I was the youngest at home, I didn’t have much work at home either,” Ruia recalls.

So the lady invited her to a match and the young Morrison impressed her. “She was like ‘why don’t you come over to Auckland? I will enrol you in a club, where you’ll proper training.’ I was scared and told I wouldn’t go. I had never been out of Rotorua. No one in our locality had,” she says.

But persuaded by her father, she packed her bags for Auckland. Naturally athletic and supple, she made an instant impression at the Eden-Epsom Tennis Club. And because she had nothing else to do, she ended up playing tennis all the time.

“I would even play against boys and men. I would lose a lot of games, but I became a tougher player,” she says. It’s there she met Waititi, a teacher, umpire and Maori activist, who turned out to be her godfather. He got her into the Queen Victoria School for Maori Girls, and made arrangements for her free schooling. He provided her with racquets and other equipment. “He took care of me like a brother, convinced me that I had the potential to win national championships and told me not to worry about money for training and going to tournaments,” she recalls. Her world, even

without her realisation, began revolving around tennis.

Beating the great Court

In 1960, the New Zealand national championship became the New Zealand Open. There was a publicity drive and famous players from outside the country were invited for the first time. The biggest among them was Margaret Court, who had just exploded onto the circuit with her Australian Open triumph. The bets were on a Morrison-Court final. Court was 18 and Morrison 24. “The build-up was crazy and, as expected, both of us reached the final. It wouldn’t get bigger than a Kiwi-Aussie final.”

Morrison was so enamoured by Court’s game that she stood frozen for the first 15 minutes of the match. Then she woke up to the piercing sound of claps. “I can’t let my country down,” she whispered to herself. In the next hour and a half, she played perhaps her best game ever, beating Court in straight sets. “I felt like I was in a trance,” she says. But it was also the start of a warm friendship.

Thereafter, though, her career plummeted. She continued her hegemony in the New Zealand Open, but was never the same again. At 32, she retired, after which she decided to start teaching at a local school. “I got several offers to start an academy or do coaching. But once my career was over, I didn’t want to continue in the game. I thought I will go back home and pass on my knowledge to the kids in Rotorua,” she reflects.

But whenever nostalgia clutches her, she feels her hands through the old wooden racquet she had preciously preserved from her match against Pratt. And then she would again feel like a lonely little petunia in a big onion patch. And get transported to a beautiful world of cafes and streets, art galleries and pristine green courts.

# Virus threat: Phogat bout in Singapore behind closed doors

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

WRESTLER-TURNED-fighter Ritu Phogat's will compete in her second Mixed Martial Arts bout in front of an empty arena due to concerns about coronavirus outbreak. Phogat (1-0), is set to take on Chin'a Wu Chiao Chen (2-1) at One Championship's 'King of the Jungle' event on February 28 in the promotion's home base of Singapore.

Chatra Sityodtong, founder and CEO of the Asian MMA promotion, said that he decided against cancelling the event in favour of a behind-closed-doors bout, and all tickets bought for the 12,000-capacity Singapore Indoor Stadium will be refunded. The event will be available globally on broadcast and streaming.

"In light of the coronavirus situation in Singapore, I have made the decision to convert ONE: King of the Jungle on February 28 into a closed event for broadcast only. The Singapore Indoor Stadium will not be open to the general public, but the event will proceed behind closed doors as scheduled live on all TV and digital platforms across 150 plus countries around the world," Sityodtong said in a statement. "If you purchased tickets to attend the event at the Singapore Indoor Stadium, you will receive a full refund... My team and I had the option to cancel the event altogether, but we chose not to cancel it. More than ever, the world needs hope and strength right now."

As of Monday midnight, China's health authorities have reported a total of 72,436 coronavirus cases and 1,868 deaths on the mainland. Singapore's tally of 77 cases is only behind China and Japan (619 cases and 1 death). The outbreak forced the Singapore government to raise the alert level to orange last week, and the Ministry of Health urged organisers to defer non-essential events.

## Masks and home-cooked meals

Since signing with One Championship last February, Asian and Under-23 Worlds medallist Phogat has been living and training in Singapore. Speaking with *The Indian Express* on the sidelines of an open workout last Wednesday, the 25-year-old who made her MMA debut last November, said she "hadn't been thinking about the virus outbreak" and added that she relies on masks and home-cooked food as precautions.

A fighter training at the Evolve MMA gym in Singapore told this paper that fellow One Championship athletes have also been barred from attending the fights next Friday.

"The conditions aren't that bad in Singapore, and we've only been wearing masks for two days," said the martial artist on condition of anonymity. "However the precautionary measures have been raised at our gym too, including daily check-ups."

One Championship has already had to relocate an event from Chongqing, China on April 11 to Jakarta.

"Safety is our number one priority... We will take all the necessary precautions for the athletes, fans, employees feel safe, distribute masks," chief commercial officer Hari Vijayarajan had said when asked about the disruptions due to the outbreak. "We choose to take this as an opportunity... Because others have cancelled, the viewership numbers have doubled as people want to be entertained."

"This is an opportunity to go big in China, even though we may not physically organise matches there. The benefit of having a big audience in the same time zone is that apart from the 10,000 people in the stadium, nobody needs to know where you are."

Rival promotion UFC has also been affected by coronavirus. Ahead of her title defence on March 7 at UFC 248, women's strawweight champion Weili Zhang of China first moved her training camp from Beijing to Thailand, and later to Abu Dhabi.



## CRASH ON THE LINE

Ryan Newman was involved in a ghastly crash on the final lap of the Daytona 500 that hospitalised him with non-life-threatening injuries. *USA Today*

■ Ryan Newman has rolled his way through many crashes over a 20-year NASCAR career. This one, though, caused the sport to pause. Newman slid across the finish line in a crumpled heap of metal, sparks flying as his car skidded to a halt with fuel pouring onto the track, close to open flames.

■ The 42-year-old, nicknamed 'Rocketman' was involved in a crash on the final lap of the Daytona 500 on Monday night and everyone feared the worst. NASCAR has not had a fatality in its elite Cup Series since 2001, but this wreck just looked different.

■ Everyone gasped as track workers placed large black screens around his car and worked to get him out. They had to wait two excruciating hours to exhale, after NASCAR announced Newman had non-life-threatening injuries and was in serious condition at Halifax Medical Center.

■ Breathtaking crashes are common at Daytona International Speedway, where drivers racing for position at 320kph often make contact. There have been no fatalities since Dale Earnhardt's death following a crash on the final lap of the 2001 Daytona 500. *Text: AP*

# T20 league owners threaten boycott, want MCA's partner out

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 18

THE MUMBAI Cricket Association will decide whether it should snap ties with its partner Probability Sports which had marketed and run the franchise-based T20 Mumbai League.

All the eight franchises had officially complained to MCA about their displeasure with functioning of Probability Sports and have threatened to boycott the tournament if MCA doesn't shed its partner and takes full charge of the league. The MCA, which had discussed the issue on February 18, will let its Apex Council take the final call on February 24. Probability Sports is a consortium led by IIFL Investment Managers and Wizcraft Groups that was formed in 2018 to partner MCA to launch and run the T20 league.

In a letter signed by all team owners, and representatives and submitted to MCA president Vijay Patil, the franchises stated their decision.

"We all team owners of the T20 Mumbai League have decided that unless MCA is not taking charge of the league, we owners will not be participating in the league henceforth under probability sports. We hope you will appreciate of harsh decision on behalf of us and the positive decision for the interest of Mumbai cricket." The most recent cause for turmoil was the termination of two teams by Probability Sport for allegedly failing to clear outstanding dues.

"Recently two teams' contract were terminated and MCA didn't know about this. How can they take such decision? We all bought a team looking at MCA and probability sports. We now feel that its high time MCA takes full charge of the tournament. Let them deal with us and not some other company," Mallik said. The Apex Council of MCA will decide on the issue on February 24.

# Family selection race ends with Asian gold

Wrestlers' aura prompted Sunil's father to put his son into the sport, a decision vindicated more than a decade later

MIHIR VASAVDA  
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 18

THE STORY begins at a wedding reception, sometime in the late noughties.

Ashwini Kumar, a small-time farmer from Haryana's Dabarpur village, was at a relative's reception when he first came across wrestlers. Dabarpur, they say, had no wrestlers or even culture for the sport in a radius of 30-40km. It was at the function that Ashwini witnessed first-hand the aura wrestlers have and the respect they command, especially in Haryana.

At that moment, he decided to make one of his two sons a wrestler. "It was impossible that both of us would get into the sport. It's expensive enough to take care of the dietary requirements of just one wrestler. For us, it was unaffordable to have two wrestlers in the family," says Sumit Kumar, Ashwini's elder son.

So, Ashwini came up with an idea. "He held a 5km race and laid down a condition: the one who would finish first would get wrestling training and the other will have to tend to the family's farms," Sumit says.

The elder brother lost the race to his muscular, quicker and eight-year-younger sibling. A little more than a decade later, after the most unusual initiation to the sport but following years of toil and training, Sunil - the younger brother - ended India's 27-year wait for an Asian Championship gold medal in Greco-Roman, a wrestling style that's ignored and an afterthought in the country.

Sunil, 20, wasn't even born when India last won an Asian gold medal in Greco-Roman - in 1993, when Pappu Yadav won the 48kg



Sunil Kumar beat Azat Salidinov of Kyrgyzstan 5-0 in the 87kg Greco-Roman final to clinch gold at the Asian Wrestling Championships. *Abhinav Saha*

class. But in all these years between Tuesday's gold and the one before that, not much has changed in terms of India's outlook towards this style. "During our time, Greco-Roman wrestlers were considered outcasts; failures in freestyle," Yadav, who watched Sunil's bouts from the stands at Delhi's KD Jadhav Stadium,

says. "That mindset hasn't changed till today."

In Haryana's endless swathes of mud pits and cushioned mats, Greco-Roman is not a priority. For some, the style in which holds below waists are not permitted isn't intricate enough compared to freestyle while the majority doesn't care because of India's pitiful international

record. And since dangals, a major source of income for wrestlers, have just freestyle wrestling, Greco-Roman never became popular.

Most every Indian wrestler begins with freestyle as the first choice, and Sunil was no exception. After winning the 'selection trial' his father held, he began freestyle training at a sports school in Haryana's Jind. But soon, the coaches realised his lower body did not have the strength to withstand the strong demands of freestyle wrestling, in which nearly every move begins with a leg hold.

Considered not strong enough for freestyle, Sunil was sent to Greco-Roman. "And it came naturally to him. What he lacked in legs, he made up with shoulders," Sumit says, referring to his brother's physical strength.

While Sunil's move was out of compulsion, in the case of Arjun Halakurki - who won a bronze medal on Tuesday - the shift from freestyle to Greco-Roman was due to desperation. Like Sunil, Halakurki, too, came from a village with very little wrestling pedigree. The Bagalkot native took up the sport after being

inspired by his father, a dangal wrestler. But it was freestyle that attracted Halakurki.

For a decade, he competed in freestyle events across India. But he wasn't good enough to get into Karnataka's state team. "It was very frustrating. My career was heading nowhere despite working so hard," Halakurki says.

Hargobind Singh, India's Greco-Roman coach, says Halakurki was not strong in leg attacks but instead, used his upper body to initiate moves. "It's a style that would have suited him in Greco-Roman, so it was suggested that he shifts categories," Hargobind says.

The Asian Championship was Halakurki's senior international debut. The inexperience cost him as he conceded a six-point advantage to lose to Iran's Pouya Naserpour 8-7 in the semifinals of the 55kg category.

Sunil did the opposite. He gave ample evidence of his prowess during his 5-0 rout of Kyrgyzstan's Azat Salidinov in a one-sided final in the 87kg class. But before that, he staged an improbable comeback in the semifinal, rallying from a six-point deficit to beat Kazakhstan's Azamat Kustubayev 12-8.

The gold also means Sunil would be among the favourites for an Olympic berth in the continental qualifiers next month. "Our father wished for something bigger, we even dreamt of a medal at the Olympics," Sumit says.

Sunil's father passed away in a car accident when he was 10. But Sumit says it took years for Sunil to move on. On Tuesday, Sunil did not dwell on it much. He was surrounded by teammates, coaches and federation officials, everyone trying to be in his vicinity. "This aura and respect is what attracted our father to wrestling," Sumit says. "This is just the beginning."

## [SPORTS BAR]



## Tears of joy for Reinier at Real presentation

Brazilian teenager Reinier couldn't hold back the tears when he was officially introduced by Real Madrid on Tuesday. The 18-year-old Reinier had to compose himself a few times while speaking about his family's sacrifice to help him make it to the Spanish club. He also cried when the club showed a video of his highlights with Brazil's youth squads and former club Flamengo. "It's thanks to my family that I'm here," Reinier said, wiping away tears. "It was hard, to leave everything behind when I was young just so I could play." The sacrifice has been justified, for now. For a reported fee of more than \$32.5 million, Reinier has signed with Madrid until 2026. He is expected to initially play for the B team. "I'm available to do whatever the club wants me to do," he said. "I'll always be giving my best."

## Roland Garros Jr wild card Series from Feb 24

The sixth edition of the Roland-Garros Junior Wild Card Series will be held at the clay courts of the Delhi Lawn Tennis Association (DLTA) from February 24-26 with four-time Grand Slam winner Mary Pierce as event ambassador. The announcement was made by the French Tennis Federation, organisers of French Open, and the All India Tennis Association. Pierce will be present in Delhi to motivate the players during the event. The tournament provides young Indian players with a unique opportunity to qualify for the Roland Garros Junior Main draw to be held in May 2020.

## Sania sails into doubles pre-quarterfinals

Sania Mirza and her partner Caroline Garcia registered a hard-fought win over Russia's Alla Kudryavtseva and Slovenia's Katarina Srebotnik to advance to the women's doubles pre-quarterfinals at the Dubai Open here on Tuesday. The Indo-French pair beat their Russian opponents 6-4, 4-6, 10-8 in the first round match. The Sania-Garcia combine will now meet the fifth seeded duo of Saisai Zheng of China and Barbora Krejickova of Czech Republic in the round of 16. The 33-year-old Sania was returning to action at the Dubai Open after recovering from a calf injury which had cut short her campaign at the Australian Open in January.



Manpreet Singh and Co play Australia on February 21 and 22 in Bhubaneswar.

## Manpreet to lead India vs Australia in Pro League

Manpreet Singh will lead India in the upcoming FIH Pro League matches against world no.2 Australia, a 24-member team for which was announced by Hockey India on Tuesday. Harmanpreet Singh will shoulder the duties of the vice captain in the matches, scheduled to take place on February 21 and 22 at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. The Indian team, which recently climbed to no.4 in the FIH World Rankings, had posted a 2-1 win over World champions Belgium in the first Pro League match, while losing 2-3 in the second game. The 24-member squad will comprise goalkeepers PR Sreejesh and Krishan Pathak, besides outfielders Amit Rohidas, Surender Kumar, Birendra Lakra, Harmanpreet Singh, Varun Kumar, Gurinder Singh and Rupinder Pal Singh. Vivek Sagar Prasad, Hardik Singh, Chinglensana Singh, Raj Kumar Pal, Akashdeep Singh, Sumit, Lalit Upadhyay, Gursahibjit Singh, Dilpreet Singh, SV Sunil, Jarmanpreet Singh, Simranjeet Singh, Nilakanta Singh, and Ramandeep Singh, are also part of the squad. "After having two high intensity matches against the World Champions, we will be facing another strong team in Australia," Chief coach Graham Reid said.

## Vietnam GP on track despite virus fears

Vietnam's inaugural Formula One Grand Prix will take place in Hanoi in April as planned, organisers told AFP Tuesday, avoiding the fate of the Chinese Grand Prix which was postponed over the deadly coronavirus. The race will be held as "scheduled" on April 5, Le Ngoc Chi, CEO of Vietnam Grand Prix told AFP. The virus, which has killed more than 1,800 people in China, has trashed Asia's sporting calendar, forcing the postponement of top events including the Shanghai grand prix and the Hong Kong Sevens rugby. But Vietnamese authorities said the country's inaugural Formula One race would go ahead on schedule.



## Women's golf great Wright dies at 85

Thirteen-time major winner Mickey Wright, often described as the greatest woman golfer of all time, died aged 85. Wright, who accumulated 82 LPGA Tour titles during a professional career which stretched from 1954 to 1969, died in Florida after a heart attack, reports said on Monday. "We're saddened to learn today of the passing of Mickey Wright, a 13-time Major Champion and 82-time winner on the @LPGA, just three days after celebrating her birthday," the World Golf Hall of Fame announced on Twitter. Born Mary Kathryn Wright in San Diego, California in 1935, Wright won the 1954 World Amateur Championship before turning professional the following season. Her retirement in 1969 shocked golf, coming at the early age of 34. Wright would later cite the pressure of the spotlight as influencing her decision.

# Blues lose rhythm at the Bridge

In a VAR-affected match, United stun Chelsea 2-0 to reignite the race for Champions League spots

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON, FEBRUARY 18

MANCHESTER UNITED threw open the race for the final Champions League qualification spots in the Premier League by beating fourth-place Chelsea 2-0 thanks to headers by Anthony Martial and Harry Maguire on Monday.

With 12 games remaining, seven points separate Chelsea and 11th-place Burnley, with the team finishing fifth also set to earn a place in next season's Champions League following UEFA's decision to punish Man City for serious breaches of financial regulations by handing the English champions a two-year European ban.

Martial glanced in a header off a right-wing cross by Aaron Wan-Bissaka to give United the lead in the 45th minute at Stamford Bridge, before Maguire planted home a corner from January signing Bruno Fernandes in the 66th.

Maguire, United's captain, was perhaps fortunate to still be on the field, with the match officials opting not to punish the England defender for appearing to kick out at Michy Batshuayi after tumbling off the playing surface in front of the dugouts.

"I know I caught him but I felt like he was going to fall on me and the natural reaction was to straighten my leg so that if he was to fall on me, to hold him up," Maguire said.

"It probably looks worse than it was. I did catch him... but I knew at the time I had no intent to hurt him or kick him." Chelsea was on the wrong end of two other decisions by VAR, firstly disallowing a volleyed goal by Kurt Zouma in the 56th because of a push by Cesar Azpilicueta on United left back Brandon Williams. Azpilicueta seemed to have been pushed a split-second earlier by Fred.

Then, with 13 minutes to go, substitute Olivier Giroud had a goal ruled out by VAR for a tight offside, leaving Chelsea manager Frank Lampard looking thoroughly glum as he sat in his technical area.

Chelsea has long been in fourth place, but has only won three of its last 11 games in the league to give a slew of rivals clubs hope of catching up. One of them is United, which climbed to seventh place with this win - three points behind Chelsea and two adrift of fifth-place Tottenham.

"This season, we have been far too inconsistent," Maguire said. "We have won at Manchester City, beat Chelsea at home, got a point against Liverpool, but we have let ourselves down against the teams where the pressure is on to break them down."

Injury problems are starting to bite at Chelsea, too. Top scorer Tammy Abraham and winger Callum Hudson-Odoi missed the game because of injury, while central midfielder N'Golo Kante lasted 11 minutes before hobbling off.



Anthony Martial (right) gave United the lead in the 45th minute, before Harry Maguire planted home a corner in the 66th. Reuters

## 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	26	12	5	9	7	41
Spurs	26	11	7	8	9	40
Sheffield	26	10	9	7	4	39

**We are fourth because of some of the good stuff we've done and because of the nature of the league, everyone taking points off each other. But there's a lot of work to do because you can see the problem - that's putting the ball in the back of the net.**

FRANK LAMPARD  
CHELSEA MANAGER

Center back Andreas Christensen didn't come out for the second half after sustaining a knock to the head late in the first period, just before Martial beat the Denmark defender to a header for the first goal.

Lampard's main gripe, though, was his team's failure to finish off chances once again. Batshuayi was the biggest culprit, spurning two great chances in the first half in his first start in the league this season.

"We are fourth because of some of the good stuff we've done and because of the nature of the league, everyone taking points off each other," Lampard said. "But

there's a lot of work to do because you can see the problem - that's putting the ball in the back of the net. "I feel like a broken record. We have to put things to bed by scoring goals." Chelsea hosts Tottenham on Saturday and would finally get overtaken with another loss. "The season starts here," Lampard said.

Nigeria striker Odion Ighalo, who signed for United on deadline day in the January transfer window, came on in second-half stoppage time for his debut and had a late chance saved by Willy Caballero, who again started in goal ahead of Kepa Arrizabalaga. Two players struck the post from free kicks

in the second half, Fernandes for United and Mason Mount for Chelsea.

## Neville backs City to win appeal

Gary Neville has backed Manchester City to win an appeal against a two-season ban from European competition imposed by a "hopeless" UEFA.

European football's governing body announced on Friday that City has been banned from continental competition for two seasons for what UEFA said were "serious" financial fair-play breaches between 2012 and 2016.

English Premier League champions City, who were also fined 30 million euros (\$32.5 million), responded quickly to say they would appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). And former Manchester United defender Neville believes City's legal challenge will prove successful.

"I think City will beat UEFA. UEFA, I have no faith in them whatsoever," Sky Sports pundit Neville said. "I think essentially they are a hopeless organisation who will just apply what would be erratic disciplinary sanctions for different things and I think City will beat them in the courts."

# The 'non-German' side representing Bundesliga

RB Leipzig's first appearance in the knockout stages of the UEFA Champions League should theoretically, be met with more enthusiasm by German football fans. However, the response on the ground is quite the contrary. They have been the club generally the most disliked by fans of other teams. In fact, Leipzig were overshadowed by Austrian side RB Salzburg, having the same ownership, with players like Erling Haaland stealing the limelight despite not qualifying for the knockout stages.

## Humble beginnings

EVER SINCE their acquisition by Red Bull in 2009, Leipzig has ruffled its fair share of feathers on their way to Champions League football as they have gone against the German tradition that scoffs at corporate ownership of clubs.

Finding themselves floundering in the fifth division in Germany with the name SSV Markranstadt, the club was taken over by Red Bull and has seen itself drastically revamped from the ground up. The new owners disregarded German tradition and found a way around the '50 plus one' rule which kept clubs from becoming corporate machines.

From changing the logo and name to its entire philosophy, the club rose through the ranks and made it to the top flight of German football within eight seasons and eventually to the UEFA Champions League. While fans of the club enjoyed its meteoric rise, it has left a sour taste in the mouths of fans of other teams.



Coach Julian Nagelsmann, who's earned the nickname 'Baby Mourinho', is a man in demand.

## Building stars



Regardless of the way it has been achieved, RB Leipzig, in the space of 11 years, have built a formidable side that now finds itself competing against European giants. And they have done so not by splurging on tried and tested talent from around the world, but by investing in youth.

Striker Timo Werner (in pic) leads the line with players like Dayot Upamecano and Christopher Nkunku shining in the youthful Leipzig side. Despite being a point behind champions and perennial favourites Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga title race, the Leipzig would deem a deep run in the Champions League a success.

## Jose against his younger self

Leipzig face a tough adversary in Tottenham Hotspur in the Round of 16, and one of the most fascinating clashes of the two-legged tie would take between lively and bold Julian Nagelsmann in the Leipzig dugout and the experience of Jose Mourinho. Despite the age difference of 25 years, the

German shares numerous similarities with the celebrated Portuguese, even dubbed "baby Mourinho" during his time at Hoffenheim for his attention to detail. And the younger manager has no illusions about what he will be up against. "Jose has experience in every sort of situation. He has managed so many knockout games and knows what to do if his team goes ahead, is behind, concedes early, needs a late goal. I've only had knockout games in the DFB-Pokal."

## Personnel missing

Injuries have not been kind to Tottenham Hotspur as they would miss Moussa Sissoko, Harry Kane and Son Heung-Min (in pic) who suffered a fractured arm against Villa over the weekend, adding on to the attacking woes of Spurs. Leipzig will feel the absence of Ibrahim Konate and Willi Orban in defence along with that of Tyler Adams. With both sides depleted on opposite ends of the pitch, it will come down to the way both coaches set up. Leipzig's counter-attacking football with Werner up front against Mourinho's experience makes it a fascinating tie.

RAHUL ASNANI

# We could surprise them: Leipzig await Spurs test

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
LEIPZIG, FEBRUARY 18

HAVING JOINED RB Leipzig when they were still in Germany's second division, Peter Gulacsi has seen the club grow from Bundesliga new boys and on to a first appearance in the Champions League knockout stage. The Hungarian goalkeeper is relishing Wednesday's last 16, first leg when the ambitious eastern German club, bankrolled by energy drinks giants Red Bull, face last season's beaten finalists Tottenham Hotspur in London.

"It's a new experience to play against an English side. It's a big opportunity and a big test," Gulacsi told AFP.

"If we have a good day, maybe we could surprise them." While Jose Mourinho's Tottenham sit fifth in the Premier League, Leipzig head to London in the midst of a battle at the top of the Bundesliga with Bayern Munich, with whom they drew 0-0 earlier this month. "It's going to be two difficult

games, but this is what you look forward to," Gulacsi said of the Spurs tie. "These are the games we have been fighting to play in."

The last-16 showdown is the latest step in Leipzig's rise over the last decade since starting in Germany's fifth tier in 2009. Gulacsi joined from Red Bull Salzburg in 2015, and the club won promotion to the top tier in his first season.

In their debut campaign in the elite, Leipzig shook up the established order, briefly going top before finishing second behind Bayern.

Now they are enjoying their second Champions League campaign, with ambitious 32-year-old coach Julian Nagelsmann steering Leipzig to the last 16 for the first time in his debut season in charge. Leipzig's success has been built around a core of key players. Along with Gulacsi, Sweden winger Emil Forsberg, Denmark's Yussuf Poulsen, Austrian winger Marcel Sabitzer and German full-backs Lukas Klostermann and Marcel Halstenberg played for the club in the second division.

# Promising loss for Clijsters on return to Tour

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
DUBAI, FEBRUARY 18

KIM CLIJSTERS says she is going to plough ahead with her tennis comeback despite losing her return match 6-2, 7-6 (8/6) to Garbine Muguruza in the opening round of the WTA event in Dubai.

Four-time Grand Slam champion Clijsters, 36, had been out of the game for seven years before the clash with Muguruza, who reached the final of the Australian Open last month, and is keen to push ahead after an encouraging display against the world number 16 Spaniard.

"I had a good feeling out there, I felt a pace I can handle. I felt like I was able to go toe-to-toe with her from the baseline," said Clijsters.

"I wouldn't have done this if I didn't have

that belief somehow. It might take 10 matches to get the way I played in the second set, might take me 10 matches to get that from start to finish.

"I have patience. I'm going to work my way into it and fight. We'll see what happens." Clijsters did not say where she will continue her comeback, not mentioning any future tournament entries after taking part in Dubai as a wild card.

Two-time Grand Slam winner Muguruza meanwhile will play one of Veronika Kudermetova and Dayana Yastremska in the next round after having to fight off a determined Clijsters in a tight second set following a simple first.

"I've seen her play when I started on the tour, she's an incredible player," Muguruza said of Clijsters. "I was excited to be the first (oppo-

nent of the comeback). She played very well, especially in the second set.

"At the end, it was very tight. It was a fun match to play. "I'm sure she's going to get better and better, for sure she give me a lot of trouble. She played really well after all these years (away)."

## Fightback not enough

Ninth seed Muguruza, 10 years younger than Clijsters, dominated early on as the veteran Belgian played her first official match since the 2012 US Open. Mother of three Clijsters, who was playing in Dubai for the first time in her career, was on the back foot in the early part of the match, losing serve in the first game of both sets.

She found herself three down after losing her first two service games in the second set

after being swept aside in the first but fought back gamely to lead 5-4 after nine games.

However Muguruza took the set to a tie-break and emerged victorious with a service winner on her second match point after nearly an hour and three-quarters on court.

Earlier, Ons Jabeur beat Alison Riske 7-6 (7/3), 1-6, 6-3 to earn a second-round date with top seed Simona Halep.

Tunisian Jabeur, ranked 45 in the world, saw off American Riske amid passionate home support for a player who trains in Dubai. "I'm so grateful for the crowd, they really gave me energy. It feels like home here," said Jabeur. "Alison is tough, she made me run everywhere, I was down in the second set but got it back in the third," added the first Arab woman to reach a Grand Slam quarter-final last month at the Australian Open.

## BUG ROADBLOCK

# Tokyo marathon restricted to elite athletes over coronavirus outbreak



More than 300,000 runners had applied to run the Tokyo Marathon. AP

ALYA MINSBERG  
FEBRUARY 18

THE TOKYO Marathon, one of the world's largest races, with an estimated 38,000 runners, has been restricted to elite runners because of new cases of the coronavirus confirmed within Japan, organizers announced Monday.

After a case of the viral respiratory disease was confirmed in Tokyo, the organizers said in a statement, they could not "continue to launch the event within the scale we originally anticipated."

The marathon, scheduled for March 1, will be held only for elite runners and wheelchair athletes, a field that now includes about 200 participants.

More than 300,000 runners had applied to run the Tokyo Marathon, which draws hundreds of thousands of spectators and more than 10,000 volunteers annually. The race is one of the Abbott World Marathon Majors, a collection of the six largest marathons in the world.

One runner, Christopher Warnick, was still planning on participating until he heard Monday morning's news. "Yesterday I ordered enough surgical masks and Purell

for a week and was basically planning to troop it out," he said.

Warnick, from Brooklyn, said the race would have been his sixth Abbott Marathon Major before he turns 60 in April. Running all six major marathons is a bucket list item for many distance runners. "That's definitely disappointing," he said, "but at the end of the day people's health is more important than a race."

Japan has the highest number of confirmed coronavirus cases outside of China, most of them linked to a Diamond Princess cruise ship quarantined off the coast. The viral outbreak has sickened more than 71,300 people in Asia and killed at least 1,775 people as of Monday morning.

The Tokyo Marathon is the latest in a growing list of athletic events that have been canceled, postponed or relocated as the outbreak spreads, and the last-minute changes are raising questions about whether the epidemic will affect Tokyo's upcoming hosting of the summer Olympic Games.

The Hong Kong Marathon, scheduled for Feb. 9, was canceled. The World Athletics Indoor Championships in Nanjing, China, were postponed from this March to March 2021. An LPGA Tour event

scheduled to take place in early March on Hainan Island in China was canceled. The Chinese Grand Prix was postponed.

World Rugby Seven Series events scheduled to take place in Hong Kong and Singapore in March have been postponed to October. Three qualifiers — in China, Japan and the Philippines — for the 2021 International Basketball Federation Asia Cup have been postponed.

"This is yet another example of how this coronavirus is having global impacts beyond the immediate and traditional concerns of public health," said William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "It's having economic and social ramifications that are profound."

## On alert

A week ago, Tokyo Marathon organizers announced new safety measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, including handing out alcohol-based hand sanitizers and surgical masks. In a statement, the organizers asked participants to monitor their body temperature and "refrain from participating in the event" if they had a fever or were "experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness."

Some runners had already decided not to participate in the race, citing fears over the outbreak.

The last time a major marathon was canceled was in 2012, when the New York City Marathon was called off two days before the race in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Tokyo Marathon organizers said 2020 participants could defer their entry to the 2021 race but would have to pay the fees again. They were not offered refunds for this year's race.

Attention is quickly shifting toward the Tokyo Olympics, scheduled for July 24 to Aug. 9, which are expected to draw an estimated 11,000 athletes and 600,000 overseas visitors.

At a gathering in Tokyo last week, the Tokyo Olympics organizing committee president, Yoshiro Mori, insisted the Olympics would go on. "I want to again state clearly that cancellation or postponement of the Tokyo Games has not been considered," he said. "Let me make that clear."

But the elephant in the room is looming. The Olympic torch relay is scheduled to begin next month in Fukushima, traveling through Okinawa, Kyoto and Hokkaido before it turns south toward Tokyo. NYT

**MARUTI SUZUKI**

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