

Youth who helped, sheltered Pulwama bomber arrested: NIA

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

SIGNALLING A major breakthrough in the Pulwama terror case, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said Friday that it has arrested a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) operative who allegedly tracked movement of security convoys and helped assemble the bomb used in the attack that killed 40 CRPF personnel in February last year.

NIA identified the alleged operative as Shakir Bashir Magrey, a 22-year-old furniture shop owner from Pulwama. NIA sources said Magrey allegedly drove the bomb-laden car till 500 m from



He tracked CRPF convoy, drove car till near site: NIA

the attack site before handing it over to Adil Ahmed Dar, who was identified by the agency as the suicide bomber.

Magrey was produced before the NIA Special Court in Jammu **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

AMIT SHAH ASKED FOR IT IN DELHI POLL CAMPAIGN

AAP rethink: Kanhaiya, nine others to face sedition trial

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

SEVEN MONTHS after its standing counsel advised against prosecution sanction to Delhi Police in the 2016 JNU sedition case against former JNUSU president Kanhaiya Kumar and nine others, the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP government has given police the go-ahead.



Kanhaiya calls for speedy trial

In an order Thursday, the Deputy Secretary (Home) stated: "Whereas on perusal of the chargesheet under Sections 124-A and 120-B IPC at Vasant Kunj (North) police station, and

on consideration of the allegations made in case, and other material and evidences placed on record, it appears to the government of NCT of Delhi that the accused, Kanhaiya Kumar, Syed Umar Khalid, Anirban Bhattacharya, Aquib Hussain, Mujeed Hussain Gattoo, Muneeb Hussain Gattoo, Umair Gul, Rayees Rasool, Basharat Ali and Khalid Bashir Bhat, have prima facie committed an **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

EXPLAINED
E AAP's nationalism pitch

THE PROSECUTION sanction, coming as it does after its comprehensive electoral win in Delhi, signals AAP's recalibration of politics around nationalism.

REAL ESTATE GUIDE

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FLAG BEARERS OF THE NATION

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In Chhattisgarh, war breaks out: Cong vs BJP, state vs I-T

GARGI VERMA
RAIPUR, FEBRUARY 28

THE INCOME Tax department conducted searches at more than 50 locations in Chhattisgarh, including premises of senior IAS officials, Deputy Secretary to the Chief Minister and the Mayor of Raipur, on Thursday and Friday.

The ongoing searches have unsettled the state bureaucracy and increased tensions between the ruling Congress and the Opposition BJP, each accusing the other of corruption and vengeful politics.

Income Tax teams, sources said, are being assisted by CRPF **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

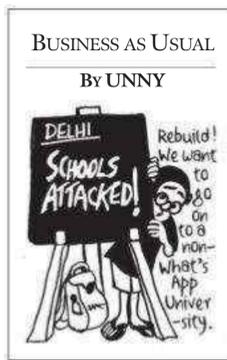
60-year-old man beaten to death, Delhi toll rises to 42

123 FIRs filed, 630 detained, 47 peace meets in affected areas

SUKRITA BARUAH & AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE DEATH TOLL in the violence that broke out in northeast Delhi five days ago reached 42 after a 60-year-old man was beaten to death in Shiv Vihar early Friday morning, despite heavy police deployment in the area.

According to police, 123 FIRs have been filed so far following the violence in the area, 630 people detained and 47 peace committee meetings held in affected localities. "We have controlled



the situation in northeast Delhi," Additional CP M S Randhawa told reporters.

Police identified Friday's victim as Ayub Ansari, a scrap collector and resident of Loni in **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Video showed men being made to sing anthem, one is now dead

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

A 24-YEAR-OLD man, seen lying injured on the ground in a video clip which also has men in police gear telling him and four others to sing the national anthem and Vande Mataram, has died of injuries.

The video began circulating Tuesday and families of two other men seen in the clip told *The Indian Express* that it was shot at Kardam Puri Monday evening when police were **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Third quarter GDP growth slows down to 4.7 per cent

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE COUNTRY'S Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate slumped to a 27-quarter low of 4.7 per cent in October-December even as the government retained the 2019-20 forecast at 5.0 per cent, an 11-year low, in the second advance estimate released by National Statistical Office (NSO) Friday.

The slowdown in GDP **CONTINUED ON PAGE 12**

ECONOMY

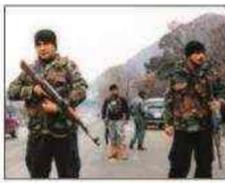
SENSEX CRASHES 1,448 POINTS **PAGE 21**

Foreign Secy dashes to Kabul as Taliban, US sign pact today

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

A DAY ahead of the signing of a peace pact between the US and Taliban in Doha, the government Friday sent Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla to Kabul where he conveyed "India's support to the government and the people of Afghanistan" in their efforts to bring "peace and stability through an inclusive & Afghan-led, Afghan-owned & Afghan-controlled efforts".

Shringla told President Ashraf Ghani that India stands with Afghanistan for "strengthening national unity, territorial integrity, democracy, plurality and prosperity" in the country and bringing an "end to externally sponsored terrorism", MEA spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said — "externally sponsored ter-



Afghan policemen keep watch in Kabul, Friday. Reuters

rorism" is a reference to Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

Besides Ghani, the Foreign Secretary also met Afghanistan Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, First Vice President-elect Amrullah Saleh, Acting Foreign Minister Haroon Chakhansuri and National Security Advisor Hamdullah Mohib. Essentially, he is meeting **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

FROM PAGE ONE

Delhi toll now 42

Ghaziabad, around 2 km from Shiv Vihar. They said a probe is underway and no arrest had been made so far.

Incidentally, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval had visited the area two days ago and Home Minister Amit Shah had held a meeting Thursday to discuss the situation.

Police have so far identified 36 bodies of victims of the violence. Apart from Ayub, the others identified Friday were Mubarak Husen (28), Dilbur Negi (20), Monis (21), Babbu Salmani (33) and Faizan (24).

Speaking to The Indian Express, Ayub's son's, 18-year-old son Salman Ansari, said a group of "unknown people" brought his father, who was severely injured, to their home from where he took him to a local clinic on their scrap cart around 6 am. After first-aid, Salman said, they left for further treatment at GTB Hospital but his father died on the way.

"My father had been at home for the last few days because of the violence. Today, he left around 4 am-5 am to collect scrap. I was woken up when some unknown people brought him to our home. He had injuries on his head, body and legs. He was still conscious at the time and told me that some men had stopped him in Shiv Vihar and asked him his name. Once he answered, they beat him," he said.

Salman claimed that they called UP Police who didn't provide him with a vehicle. "I carried my father to a nearby private clinic on the cart in which we keep the scrap material," he said.

Salman, who also works as a scrap collector, said the clinic provided first-aid and bandaged the wounds. "But I could not get him

admitted there because I was told it would cost us Rs 5,000," he claimed.

"It was clear that my father needed further medical attention, so I let him rest for some time and then took him in an auto to GTB hospital. But on the way, I could see him weakening and bleeding. He died on the way," said Salman, weeping outside the mortuary in the afternoon.

Both of them used to earn Rs 300-400 per day, Salman said. "I have nobody left in this world," he said, adding that his mother no longer lived with them.

The northeast district, meanwhile, saw peace meetings and police flag marches as residents attempted to pick up the pieces after days of violence.

At Farrukhiya mosque in New Mustafabad, residents gathered on the roof for Friday prayers in batches around 1 pm. On Tuesday, a portion of the mosque and the neighbouring madarsa had been destroyed.

"The mosque sustained damage, but we have to move on. Our priority is that no more violence takes place. Initially, there was apprehension about coming out for prayers but we believe the area will recover," said Shahil, a resident of Mustafabad.

The stretch between Brijpuri crossing and Mustafabad was marked with stones on the roads, battered walls and torched establishments, including houses and a school. While the East Delhi Municipal Corporation started cleaning the area, Delhi Police and CRPF personnel manned the entrances of lanes in both Old Mustafabad and New Mustafabad.

In Bhagirathi Vihar Phase 1, conversations revolved around the role of "outsiders". "We have a school here and children need to

come and study. We are being vigilant and the area is on the edge," said Gaurav Jain, a resident.

Shiv Vihar remained tense, with many residents seeking shelter with relatives in other parts of the city. On the stretch between Karawal Nagar and Shiv Vihar, a burnt car or shop could be seen every 50 metres.

Two kilometres away in Chand Bagh, as a small group of policemen kept watch, residents said "the real test" would be once the forces start leaving.

Additional CP Randhawa said: "A total of 123 FIRs have been registered and local police, along with Crime Branch, are looking into the cases...25 cases of firearms have been registered. We have detained 630 people and more will be detained as the probe is going on. We have conducted over 47 peace committee meetings in northeast Delhi. Over 400 such meetings were held in different parts of Delhi."

— (WITH INPUTS FROM ASTHA SAXENA)

Kanhaiya offence under Section 124-A and 120-B IPC. IPC section 124-A relates to sedition and 120-B to criminal conspiracy.

"And whereas, it is necessary in the interest of the justice that prosecution sanction should be granted against the said accused in the court of competent jurisdiction for their trial in respect of the said offence alleged to have been committed by them. Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by the sub-section (1) of section 196 of CrPC, 1973 (2 of 1974), the government of NCT, Delhi, hereby, grants prosecution sanction against all the ten accused. This issues with the approval of LG, Delhi," it stated.

In its chargesheet, police claimed that Kumar led a procession and supported — along with others named as accused — seditious slogans raised on the JNU campus on February 9, 2016 during an event to mark the hanging of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru.

Responding to the Delhi government's move, Kanhaiya Kumar, in Twitter posts, said: "I thank the Delhi government for giving permission in the sedition case. I request the Delhi Police and government lawyers to take the case seriously now, conduct speedy trial in a fast-track court and justice be guaranteed in a court of law and not in TV's 'Aap Ki Adalat'. Satyamev Jayate... A fast-track court and quick action is important in a sedition case so that the country knows how, in this instance, the sedition law was misused for political gain and to distract people from basic issues."

The wait for prosecution sanction had been a constant irritant in the already strained ties between the AAP government in Delhi and the Centre. Police claimed the trial was stalled for want of sanction and several BJP leaders accused AAP of shielding the students by not giving the go-ahead.

On February 5, in the run-up to the Delhi Assembly election, Union Home Minister Amit Shah told a poll meeting in East Delhi's

one around 10 pm Monday that my father was injured and was at GTB Hospital. I later saw this video on Facebook... My father is in it." Tariq said his father, a painter, was returning home to Kardam Puri from India Gate that day.

Aslam Khan, uncle of Rafiq (25), also a Kardam Puri resident and seen in the video, claimed: "He was standing near a mosque when police fired tear gas shells. Some people were caught because police thought they are rioters... Late Monday evening, we got a call he was at GTB Hospital... He was taken to Jyoti Nagar police station and let off Tuesday night."

Faizan's body is at the mortuary in LNJP Hospital for a post-mortem examination, and will be handed over to the family in the coming days.

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Kondli that if the BJP were to be voted to power, it would grant prosecution sanction against Kanhaiya Kumar and Umar Khalid, as well as JNU PhD student Sharjeel Imam, "within one hour" of forming the government.

"As soon as Sharjeel's statement came to light, Kejriwal tweeted asking for his arrest. I said that for the first time, Kejriwal is talking about patriotism. I immediately got him (Sharjeel) arrested and he was put behind bars. But now that prosecution sanction is needed against Kanhaiya, Umar Khalid and Sharjeel, he (Kejriwal) has not given permission... My throat has run dry asking him if he will give permission or not," Shah told the crowd.

In July last year, Delhi government standing counsel Rahul Mehra, when asked for an opinion by the government, was learnt to have said that activities of the accused "do not amount to sedition against the State" and that the evidence on record was "flimsy" and riddled with "gaps".

But on Friday, AAP MLA Raghav Chadha said the government "as a matter of policy and as a matter of principle, does not and has not intervened in any of such cases... The Law department of Delhi govt has, after conducting due diligence, given its opinion on this matter to the Home department... Our government has not stopped prosecution in any case, whatsoever, in the last 5 years."

"We believe that judiciary and judiciary alone should decide on the merits of each case. It is not for governments to decide on the merits of such cases... Our government has not stopped prosecution in any case, including those pertaining to our own MLAs and party leaders... It is only fair for the permanent executive as well as political executive to not intervene in the process of law and let the judiciary perform its independent function," he said.

Pulwama

Friday and remained in the agency's custody for 15 days. The arrest is the first by the agency after registering the case more than a year ago. All the other alleged accused were either killed in the attack or in encounters with security forces.

NIA sources claimed that initial interrogation of Magrey revealed that the material used to assemble the bomb was bought online. They said Magrey allegedly used to track the movement of CRPF convoys from his shop near the Lethpora bridge in the area.

NIA said that Magrey is from Kakapora, the village that Dar belonged to. "Shakir Bashir Magrey provided shelter and other logistical assistance to the suicide-bomber Adil Ahmad Dar. He was introduced to Adil Ahmad Dar in mid-2018 by a Pakistani terrorist viz. Mohammad Umar Farooq and he became a full-time over-ground worker (OGW) of JeM," the NIA said in a statement.

"During his initial interrogation, he has disclosed that on several occasions, he

collected and delivered arms, ammunition, cash and explosive material to the JeM terrorists including those involved in Pulwama attack," it said. Farooq was killed in an encounter following the attack.

According to NIA, Magrey allegedly revealed during interrogation that he had harboured Dar and Farooq in his house from late 2018 till the attack on February 14, 2019, and assisted them in the preparation of the IED.

"His shop is located near Lethpora bridge, and as advised by Mohammad Umar, he started conducting reconnaissance of the movement of CRPF convoy on Jammu-Srinagar Highway in January 2019, and informed Mohammad Umar and Adil Ahmad Dar about it. Further, he was also involved in modifying the Maruti Eco car and fitting the IED in it in early February 2019," the statement said.

NIA sources described the arrest of Magrey as "a big catch as he knows the entire conspiracy from start to finish and was with Dar till minutes before the attack".

"Dar was not a good driver and also nervous. So Magrey was given the task of driving the car till 500 m from the attack site and hand over the vehicle to Dar. Barring the explosives, it was Magrey who arranged for other stuff needed for assembling the IED. He ordered stuff such as gloves and batteries from an e-commerce site," an NIA officer said.

According to NIA, it had ascertained the make, model and number of the Maruti Eco car used in the attack through forensic examination of its remnants recovered from the spot. It said that the explosives used were Ammonium Nitrate, Nitro-Glycerin and RDX. The investigation confirmed that Dar was the bomber through a DNA match with his father, it said.

The NIA had identified the other accused in the attack as Muddasir Ahmad Khan, a JeM leader who was killed by security forces on March 11, 2019; Pakistani terrorists Muhammad Umar Farooq and IED expert Kamran, who were killed on March 29, 2019; Sajjad Ahmad Bhat, who owned the car used and was killed on June 16, 2019; and, Qari Yassir, a JeM commander who was killed on January 25, 2020.

Chhattisgarh

personnel and no information is being shared with the state police or agencies.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel called a meeting of the state Cabinet which said the searches were politically motivated. Baghel and his ministers went to Governor Anusuiya Uikhey to submit a letter, requesting her to step in and stop the "damage to the democratic structure" of the country.

"The alleged I-T employees have been raiding properties belonging to senior officers including people working in the CM's office," the letter stated. Calling the searches unconstitutional, the letter accused the BJP of acting

against democracy by deploying central forces in the state without any communication.

Minister Ravindra Choubey told reporters: "These actions are politically motivated. For the past few days, the I-T raids have been happening without informing local authorities. In a federal structure, it is of utmost importance that the state and central governments exchange information freely."

State BJP leaders hit back at the Congress government. BJP leader Sachidanand Upasane said: "Just yesterday, Congress leaders and ministers were commenting that officials involved were from the previous government. What happened today that the government's happiness fled?... The face of the government is full of wrinkles of corruption... They don't dare see their own reflection."

Incidentally, the searches directed at bureaucrats began a day after the state Economic Offences Wing informed the High Court in Bilaspur about the registration of an FIR against former Principal Secretary Aman Singh and his wife Yasmeen Singh over alleged disproportionate assets.

Considered close to former BJP Chief Minister Raman Singh, Aman Singh is an influential bureaucrat. The FIR was registered Tuesday after the EOW claimed to have uncovered several shell companies and undisclosed assets. The couple had moved the High Court seeking respite from what they called "politically motivated" harassment.

On Thursday, around 200 men from the I-T department, along with CRPF personnel, descended on properties of senior bureaucrats, businessmen and chartered accountants. The houses of Raipur Mayor Ejaz Dhebar and his brother Anwar Dhebar were searched around 6 am and these were followed by searches at the houses of IAS official Anil Tuteja, former Chief Secretary and current state RERA chairperson Vivek Dhand, Excise Secretary A P Tripathi, CM's Deputy Secretary Soumya Chaurasia, liquor businessmen and chartered accountants.

Dhand was named in a Rs 1000-crore 'disability fund' scam, the investigation of which was handed over to CBI by the High Court last month.

In the early hours of Friday, the Raipur traffic police seized 18 cars, reportedly being used by the I-T Department. Raipur SP Arif Shaikh said: "The vehicles were parked in a no-parking zone. We have been policing the traffic and because of the upcoming visit of the President on March 1, we have stepped up security. There were no stickers or papers, and all the vehicles were private. We cut the challan, asked them to pay and let the vehicles go."

The I-T confirmed the searches but declined to comment on why these were being conducted. CBI spokesperson Surabhi Ahluwalia said: "We have done the groundwork and have reasons to investigate these premises. The details of the case will be made clear later."

US, Taliban pact

all the key figures in Kabul, even as India is sending its envoy in Doha to attend the US-Taliban deal ceremony.

During his meeting with Abdullah, Shringla discussed India's long-standing multifaceted cooperation with Afghanistan. They agreed that "independent, sovereign, democratic, pluralistic and inclusive" Afghanistan would promote peace and prosperity in the region.

"Foreign Secretary conveyed India's steadfast support for democracy, plurality, national cohesiveness and socio-economic development and enduring peace and stability in Afghanistan," the MEA spokesperson said.

Acting Foreign Minister Chakhansuri and Shringla "reviewed and positively assessed" developments in bilateral strategic partnership. "Foreign Secretary conveyed India's support for the people of Afghanistan in their pursuit for sustainable peace, security and development," Kumar said.

The Mohib-led Afghan National Security Council, in a tweet, said Mohib met Shringla who reiterated India's support for an "Afghan-led, -owned, &-controlled peace process". Shringla's dash to Kabul came at a time when India, in its first step towards engaging with the Taliban, decided to send its envoy to the signing of the peace pact between the US and Taliban in Doha on Saturday, according to sources.

Sources said India received an "invitation" from Qatar, and after deliberations at the highest level, the government decided to send India's Ambassador to Qatar, P Kumaran.

Sources said Shringla's visit needs to be seen in the context of India engaging with all stakeholders and political, state and non-state actors in Afghanistan.

India has been a key stakeholder in the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan, but has played a marginal role in the peace and reconciliation process. Now, faced with the new reality in Afghanistan, India is moving to diplomatically engage with the Taliban.

In fact, earlier this week, US President Donald Trump had briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the situation in Afghanistan and the deal since the signing of the pact has strategic, security and political implications for India.

What happens to the Ashraf Ghani government will be something that Delhi will watch. Under Modi, India has developed a close relationship with Ghani, and both have been on the same side regarding Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. Shringla's outreach to top officials in the Ghani government is a step in that direction.

The visit is aimed at gauging the sense on the ground about Pakistan's influence, post deal, and how empowered is the Ghani government after the rise of the Taliban.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

CLARIFICATIONS & CORRECTIONS

ON 26.2.2020, PAGE 5

REACTING TO the Delhi violence report — "Atishi asks why no Army, her AAP govt can answer" — AAP MLA Atishi posted on Twitter that "legal facts are wrong and that in Delhi, the power to call the army does not lie with DM, but the Delhi police".

The Indian Express responds:

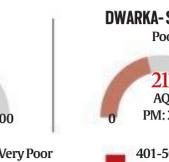
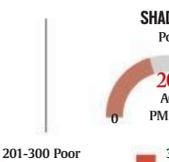
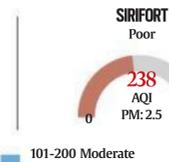
Atishi is right that the Delhi police can request the Central government to call the Army. However, there is no bar on officials like Additional District Magistrate (ADM) and SDM, who report to Delhi government — and who are also designated as Executive Magistrates. For the purpose of maintaining "public tranquility", they have restricted powers to invoke certain sections of the CrPC requesting police and armed forces to disperse an unlawful assembly. The Delhi government's official website elaborates on

the power and "statutory function" of ADM and SDM to deal with provisions under CrPC. Further, the Ministry of Home Affairs notification, issued under Section 70 of the Delhi Police Act, 1978, also empowers Additional Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police to perform as special Executive Magistrate under nine specific sections of the CrPC. The Delhi government's official website clearly shows that the ADM and SDM have the powers to deal with several Sections of the CrPC that relate to "security for keeping the peace and good behaviour" and "other link provisions". These two officers report to the elected government via the DM.

On the powers and role of the Executive Magistrate, the manual on the Delhi Government website mentions Sections 129 and 130 CrPC for "maintenance of public order and tranquility" — the two provisions under which the Army can be requisitioned for dispersing unlawful assembly.



0-50 Good



PICKING UP THE PIECES

Shops in Jafrabad open on Friday, after three days of violence in the area. Abhinav Saha

FSL TEAM INSPECTS TAHIR HUSSAIN'S RESIDENCE

Ankit murder FIR: Victim's father points to involvement of AAP man

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

A TEAM of the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) inspected AAP councillor Tahir Hussain's house in Chand Bagh on Friday morning. Hussain has been named in an FIR filed in connection with the murder of 25-year-old Intelligence Bureau staffer Ankit Sharma, who went missing on Tuesday night. His body was found in a drain the next day. The FSL team collected samples and pieces of evidence from the house, amid allegations that petrol bombs, bricks and stones had been found on the terrace. The FIR has been registered under charges of murder, destruction of evidence and abduc-

tion, at Dayalpur police station. In his complaint, Ankit's father has alleged that Hussain had "assembled goons (gunde)" at his residence, and they were firing guns and throwing petrol bombs from the rooftop. The family lives in Khajuri Khas, close to Chand Bagh. His father said in the complaint, "On Tuesday, he came back home but left around 5 pm to buy groceries. When he did not return, we started looking for him at different police stations and hospitals. We couldn't find him and waited the night, and filed a missing persons report in the morning. Later, a neighbour told me that he saw Ankit with a friend. We went to his place and asked about Ankit. We then heard rumours that a man was



IB staffer Ankit Sharma's body was found in a drain

killed at Chand Bagh. His body was dumped from the bridge in a drain." After the family informed police, local divers were deployed to find the body. His father said in the complaint that there were multiple stab wounds on his

son's body, as well as burn injuries. "I believe Tahir's goons assembled at his office and killed my son. Later, they dumped the body in a drain," alleged the father in the police complaint. On Thursday, AAP had suspended Hussain from the party membership, with Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal saying: "If anyone from AAP is found guilty, give him double punishment." He also said that the accused, irrespective of the party he belongs to, must be awarded stringent punishment. On Friday, police claimed Hussain was missing from home. A senior police officer said, "The crime branch is investigating the matter. Teams have been deployed to search for him."

Speaking to reporters Thursday, Hussain had said: "I am very sad to hear about the death of IB officer Ankit Sharma. He should get justice. I am not involved in this incident. There should be a thorough investigation of this matter." Speaking to *The Indian Express* Tuesday, he had said: "They (rioters) pelted stones from the road and other tall buildings too. This was around 2-2.30 pm on Monday, and when people saw this, they forcefully entered our house and went to the terrace." Suggesting that his home had been taken over by rioters, he had claimed that he went inside his house on the ground floor, behind his office, and hid there with his wife and three children.

Shrivastava gets additional charge of Delhi Police chief post

New Delhi: The Ministry of Home Affairs Friday gave S N Shrivastava, a 1985-batch AG-MUT cadre officer, additional charge of the post of Delhi Police Commissioner from March 1 until further orders. The decision was taken days after Shrivastava was repatriated to the Delhi Police from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and appointed as Special Commissioner (Law and Order). Shrivastava, whose name has been doing the rounds for the post of police chief, had been repatriated with immediate effect after the performance of Delhi Police in connection with the violence in Northeast Delhi was analysed by the Home Ministry. An emergency meeting called by Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday afternoon had found lack of action by the top brass of Delhi Police since Saturday night, it is learnt. **ENS**

Days after violence, police patrol lanes, hold peace meetings with communities

AMIL BHATNAGAR & JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

"WE WANT to forget everything that happened, even if it was the worst thing that happened to our families. Police want to help and we will coordinate with them. Today is very important for all of us and it should mark the beginning of peace in this area," said Afzal Adil (60), a member of the Aman committee in Chand Bagh. On Friday morning, Adil and other members of the committee met local police and discussed their plans to maintain law and order. In the last 24 hours, security personnel have intensified peace-keeping measures in the form of announcements and flag marches across neighbourhoods. Every few hours, a group of police officers walked the lanes and spoke to people about keep-



Police said 47 meetings have been held so far. Amit Mehra

ing calm in the face of any provocation. Police used microphones to make the announcements. A Delhi Police spokesperson said 47 meetings have been held in Northeast Delhi. These included a handful of peace marches and meetings were held in Chand Bagh. "We are trying to tell people

that it's in their best interest to remain calm and peaceful. A lot has happened in the last few days and it's time to live with brotherhood. We are constantly appealing to them to not give in to rumours because there are miscreants who want to create a law and order problem," said an inspector.

DCP (Crime Branch) Rajan Bhagat, who patrolled the area with 300 personnel, said: "For the last two-three days, we have held separate peace meeting with imams and pandits in Brijpuri and Mustafabad. The response has been good; people who were scared due to the riots are coming up and discussing their issues." Outside a school in Mustafabad, several people had lined up to meet the DCP. Among them was Yunus (35), whose departmental store in Brijpuri was vandalised during the riots. "I want to reopen the shop and have already cleared everything. I want police to help me. Several shops that were shut earlier have been reopened because of police intervention. Those who vandalised the shop tore food packets and broke furniture," he said. Jafrabad, Khajuri Khas and Karawal Nagar saw police patrolling the streets, though no meetings were held.

Toll up, auto driver, scrap collector and waiter among dead

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

AN 18-YEAR-OLD boy bringing in the body of his only parent, a young man having to identify the charred body of his brother, an uncle finding his nephew's body after three days of searching — scenes of agony continued five days after violence erupted in Northeast Delhi. On Friday, *The Indian Express* had reported on the identities of 30 people who had died during the violence. It met the families of five more victims.



MUBARAK HUSEN, 28

At the mortuary was Muhammad Ibrahim, who had flown to Delhi from his village in Madhubani, Bihar, the previous day. His son, Mubarak Husen (28), had died Tuesday. "The people of my village collected money for my wife and me to take a flight to Delhi as soon as possible. We arrived on Thursday afternoon but have not been able to see his body till now," he said Friday afternoon.

According to Mubarak's younger brother Sadaqat (19), he had left his home in Bhajanpura on Tuesday afternoon to go for his work as a construction labourer. "At the gate of the five-story building, a group of men shot three bullets towards him. The first two missed but the third hit him on the chest," he alleged.

DILBUR NEGI, 20

Twenty-year-old Devender Negi identified the charred body of his brother Dilbur, who was born in the same year as him. Dilbur had come to Delhi from his village in Pauri, Uttarakhand, and was working as a waiter at Anil Sweets in Shiv Vihar, which was also where he stayed.

According to Shyam Singh, who worked with him, Dilbur had been missing since Monday when a mob broke into the eatery. On Wednesday, the body had been found by police just outside the eatery, burnt. "I identified him by checking the height," said Devender.

MONIS, 21

A new body had also been



With the death toll touching 42 on Friday, many waited at GTB Hospital for the bodies of their relatives. Amit Mehra

identified on Friday afternoon by Shahbir (35) — of his nephew Monis.

"I had come to the hospital on Wednesday and Thursday as well but could not find his body among those in the mortuary those days. I found it on the third day," he said.

A resident of Mustafabad, Monis had stepped out of his home Tuesday and had called his cousin at 4 pm saying he was on his way home. However, he did not reach and his family could not reach his phone after that.

BABBU SALMANI, 33

Salmani, who had been injured on Tuesday, succumbed to his injuries at GTB Hospital on Thursday.

"He lived with his wife, and three children, aged one, three and seven, and his parents. He



drove an auto for a living. Babbu had left for work in the morning but did not come back home for lunch as he usually does. A friend called his brother and he found him injured and immobile 300 metres from home," said his uncle Shamim Ahmed.

AYYUB, 60

A scrap collector, he was brought to GTB Hospital on Friday by his 18-year-old son Salman. According to the teenager, his father had been beaten up by a group of men in Shiv Vihar early Friday morning.

FAIZAN, 24

Faizan was identified Friday after succumbing to a gunshot wound at Lok Nayak Hospital on Thursday morning. A resident of Kardam Puri, he had been injured on Monday.

Khureji Khas stir: Court denies bail to former Cong councillor

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

OBSERVING THAT when protectors of law are targeted, public confidence in them is lowered, a Delhi court denied bail to former Congress councillor Ishrat Jahan, who was arrested when Delhi Police was clearing out an anti-CAA protest site in Northeast Delhi's Khureji Khas Wednesday. Police alleged that as riots raged in Northeast Delhi, a flag march headed by senior officers had asked protesters to clear the road, but Ishrat "instigated the crowd by saying they would not remove themselves even if they die, and whatever police officers do, they want freedom (azadi)". Police told the court that

Ishrat asked the crowd to pelt stones at officers, due to which a constable sustained injuries and a person from the crowd opened fire. Ishrat has been charged under IPC sections of attempt to murder and rioting. Police have arrested seven persons in the case, and claim to have recovered a country-made pistol, three sticks, two iron rods and 10-12 pieces of bricks and stones. Additional Sessions Judge Naveen Gupta denied bail to Ishrat, saying she did not deserve bail despite being a woman. "The charges are serious in nature. When protectors of law are targeted in the manner as reflected in present FIR, and that too in the gaze of general public, such actions lower public confidence in the ability of police officers to do

their duty... the applicant/accused, despite being a woman, does not deserve bail at this stage," the court said. Ishrat's counsel, advocate Pradeep Teotia, argued that it was "one of the fundamental rights of citizens to protest and register their dissent against any unreasonable measure of the government". Her lawyers also submitted that Ishrat was targeted because of political vendetta as she was associated with the Congress, and she was not present at the spot but was arrested from her house. But the court held: "There is no doubt a peaceful protest is the essential right in a vibrant democracy as ours, but this right is subject to certain exceptions provided under the Constitution."

NORTHEAST DELHI VIOLENCE

Govt opens shelter homes, people prefer to leave for relatives' place

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

IN A bid to rehabilitate those affected by violence in Northeast Delhi, the Delhi government has set aside two night shelters in Shastri Park and outside GTB Hospital. While the one outside the hospital found no takers on Friday, two men whose relatives sustained injuries in the violence and were being treated at the hospital stayed at the shelter on Thursday night. Caretaker Rajesh Thakur said,

"No one has come here on Friday. I will go outside the emergency ward and the mortuary to tell people that this facility is available to them." At the Shastri Park shelter, around 20 mattresses with green bedsheets were placed on the floor and blankets kept in a corner. Caretaker Karan said, "We vacated the shelter in the morning by sending the occupants to another shelter. But so far, no one affected by the communal violence has come here. We are waiting for them. I am telling everyone I see on the road to let those without homes

know that this one is open to them 24x7." He said that since there was violence so close to the shelter, there was a drinking water problem as the vendor has stopped coming there. "I bought water for Rs 60 with my own money today. Even if the victims come, what will we do about the water?" he said. However, many families have left their homes and moved in with relatives and friends in other areas. Among them is a 65-year-old man in Yamuna Vihar, who watched Monday afternoon a mob of 20 people setting



At a shelter home in Shastri Park. Abhinav Saha

fire to parked vehicles. At 5 pm, two hours after the incident, the man hurriedly packed suitcases and left with his family of three. "I have moved to a relative's house in Southeast Delhi's Okhla. It was terrifying, they broke everything... I am just thankful they didn't burn the house down. My car was parked a little far away so we left," he claimed. Similar stories came from families who hail from Kabir Nagar, Chand Bagh, Brijpuri, Maujpur, Shiv Vihar and Yamuna Vihar. Around 22 km away at the

Shaheen Bagh protest sit-in, many women said they had received SOS calls from relatives in riot-hit areas. "My aunt's family has temporarily moved from their Shiv Vihar house to a relative's place in Loni. They have a special needs child and old parents so they felt the need to leave. A neighbour told them that soon after they left, their home was attacked," claimed Rubina (23), a protester at Shaheen Bagh. Another protester, Bano (50), said she received a call from a relative in Chand Bagh that their bike shop had been

set on fire, and they had temporarily moved out. In Kabir Nagar, Dilshad Ansari (50) tried his best to stop his landlord from leaving for a relative's house in UP Tuesday morning. *The Indian Express* witnessed Ansari's garment shop being damaged by young men wielding sticks and rods on Monday evening. He said, "Woh apna ghar mere havale chhor ke chale gaye hain... We want to leave too but where will I go with such a big family? We are 10 people, who will accommodate us?" (Inputs from Sukrita Baruah)

NORTH EAST DELHI

Some schools charred, HC asks police, govt to ensure Board exams are smooth

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE DELHI High Court Friday directed the Delhi government and police to ensure the safety and security of students during their Board exams at centres in riot-affected areas of Northeast Delhi, and warned against any "breach of security".

The violence over the amended citizenship law in Northeast Delhi, which has left 42 people dead and over 250 injured so far, also saw schools in the area being torched.

Justice Rajiv Shakdher issued the direction to the authorities after arraying them as a party to a plea by a private school, Bhai Parmanand Vidya Mandir in East Delhi's Surya Niketan area, seeking a change of its Board exam centre in Northeast Delhi.

It issued notice to the Delhi government and the police, seeking their stand on the school's plea by March 4.

"The newly added respondents (government and police) shall ensure the (exam) centres are sanitised and there is no breach of security," Justice Shakdher said, observing that the situation in Northeast Delhi appeared to be "improving".

Meanwhile, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) apprised the court that it has postponed Board exams for Classes X and XII to be held on Friday and Saturday at 86 centres in Northeast Delhi.

It said it was optimistic about holding exams at the centres from March 2 onwards.

The CBSE also said it has no plans to shift the centres to other locations in the capital.

Advocate Kamal Gupta, appearing for the school, told the court there was no police pres-



A school damaged during the violence in Mustafabad. Amit Mehra

ence at centres in Northeast Delhi and he has videos showing two schools and school buses being torched.

CBSE's counsel informed that the Delhi government and police were the appropriate authorities to ensure exam centres are protected.

On Wednesday, the court

took note of the "worsening situation" in the area and directed CBSE to come up with a plan to reschedule the exams or change the affected centres.

The school, in its plea, said the centre allotted to them was 16 km away and situated on the Chandu Nagar-Karawal Nagar road, one of the violence-hit ar-

eas. The petitioners, which include students of Class X and XII, said it would be hard for them to reach the centre due to violent clashes in the area.

They urged the court to direct CBSE to change the examination centre from New Sandhya Public School to a cen-

tre located in East Delhi district with proper infrastructure and security.

Highlighting that around 550 students in Class X and XII are registered for taking the Board exams, the plea said the "violent clashes and riots have posed a serious threat and danger to the lives of students and

their parents, in as much as they have no option but to reach the centre, come what may be the situation of the area around the centre; reaching the centre not only involves mental agony, trauma and stress for the students and their parents, but also poses grave and palpable threat to life and limb."

Claims of stone pelting at Dwarka

New Delhi: Friday prayers at a Dwarka mosque took place with around 10 policemen, including the area SHO, outside after allegations emerged that stones had been pelted at the structure early Friday morning—a claim denied by police. The Imam of Shahjahanabad mosque in Sector 11, Mohd Rashid, said the alleged incident took place around 2.30 am. Mannan, the Muezzin at the mosque, claimed they woke up to the sound of a thud and discovered broken glass and stones inside.

Delhi Police, however, claimed no such incident had taken place, with DCP Dwarka tweeting: "Rumours of stone pelting at a religious place by a mob chanting religious slogans in Dwarka are completely false. Public is advised not to pay attention to or spread rumours/fake news on social media."

An online complaint was filed by Abrar Ahmad, joint convener of the mosque, to DCP (Dwarka). **ENS**

9 shelters for victims, govt deploys officials for relief work



CM, Sisodia at the press conference Friday. Prem Nath Pandey

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

IF THOSE injured in communal violence in Delhi are not getting adequate care at government hospitals because of overcrowding, the Delhi government will shift them to private hospitals, said Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Friday.

The government has set up nine shelters for victims of violence and it will start distributing Rs 25,000 in cash to those whose houses have been burnt down in the violence, starting Saturday.

Kejriwal said that 19 sub-divisional magistrates had been appointed to make sure relief work is carried out properly in the area.

This includes four night magistrates. "These areas fall under four sub-divisions but we have appointed 18 SDMs to coordinate relief work. As a result, there are only three-four mohallas under one SDM. At night, four SDMs will be there to look into any relief work requirement," said Kejriwal.

The government started distributing food in the area on Friday with help from SDMs, NGOs and RWAs.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said that a compensation form will be issued on behalf of the Delhi government. A mobile application will also be developed for people to register details of loss of property, loss of vehicles, damage to businesses and details of injuries and deaths.

Trouble brewing, Ghaziabad top cop chose to cross border

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

HEAVY POLICE deployment, Aman Committee meetings and constant vigil helped the Ghaziabad administration and police prevent incidents of rioting, despite violence ensuing at the border. Some Northeast Delhi areas, where clashes broke out, lie within a few kilometres of the Ghaziabad border.

Referring to an incident where the Ghaziabad Police crossed the border into Northeast Delhi to prevent a riot-like situation, officials said it was a "spontaneous" reaction.

"I was standing at the border as I had come for an unscheduled inspection. Women and children were looking at us from the balcony as people began to mobilise at that spot. We crossed the border to help the people and prevent a huge law and order situation. We didn't think about jurisdiction because it needed to be done at that point, and it was purely done for law and order reasons," said Neeraj Kumar Jadaun, SP Rural, Ghaziabad.

According to police, homework of police layout had already been done during the time of the Babri Masjid verdict, which helped them identify sensitive locations and carry out



Police initiated criminal proceedings and several people were detained for making prank calls

police deployment.

In the last few days, the Ghaziabad administration received over 300 PCR calls, a majority of which turned out to be fake, officials said.

"Since the clashes erupted Sunday, we prepared a coordination plan with police to prevent any spillage into our district. One instruction we issued was to respond to every PCR call, no matter what its nature. We visited the Loni border, which lies near the Shahdara region, several times in a single day to ensure things are peaceful. We met several people from both communities and advised them to act with restraint," said

Ghaziabad DM Ajay Shankar Pandey.

Miscreants and anti-social elements made prank calls spreading misinformation to create a law and order situation in Ghaziabad, officials said. Police have initiated criminal proceedings and several people were detained for making prank calls.

The administration will be slapping the NSA against such accused, an official said.

"We took several decisions on the spot, including that of crossing the border. At a few points, we saw huge crowds gathering. Instead of waiting for Delhi Police, we crossed the border and took measures to stop the crowd from getting violent and entering other regions. I believe it also prevented the spread of violence," said Pandey.

Over 2,500 police personnel have been deployed at border areas, including at Masuri and Muradnagar, since the clashes broke out. The Ghaziabad administration briefly sealed the borders, but the passage was soon cleared amid heavy checking.

The administration also held peace meetings with Aman Committees at various police stations in proximity with the border region, to ensure peace was maintained.

Fifth day but no closure: Outside mortuary, relatives say wait is endless

ASTHA SAXENA &
SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

ON WEDNESDAY, cousins of Mohsin Ali (24) stood outside the GTB Hospital mortuary hoping not to find their brother inside. With his photo in hand, they went inside, only to return minutes later with grim news—they had identified Ali's body. Taking a moment to digest the news, they started the paper work to take the body back to their native village in Hapur. According to the family, Ali's car was torched when he was returning from work in Chand Bagh.

On Thursday, some of the family members were doubtful if it was him and requested to verify the body a second time. "The body we verified on Wednesday had different hair. This is not our brother," said his cousin Haidar Ali, who has been at the hospital since Wednesday.

The family found hope again. They spent Thursday looking at bodies and also checked the spot where the charred remains of his car lay. "There was a body in the mortuary that was completely charred. We have asked authorities to conduct a forensic test to find out if it's our brother," said Ali.

Married in December, Mohsin was a generator worker and lived in Noida Sector 5.

A total of 42 people have died since the violence broke out. Of these, 38 were in GTB, three in Lok Nayak Hospital and one in Jag Pravesh Chandra Hospital. The mortuary at GTB Hospital has 15 bodies, of which nine have been identified.

On Friday, many families continued to look hospitals in search of their loved ones who have been missing since the clashes.

Among them is the family of Firoz Ahmed (35), whose wife



Families outside the GTB mortuary Friday. Amit Mehra

Shahana last spoke to him at 11 pm Monday, when he called from an unknown number.

"He told me he had been beaten up badly and that a stranger had given him shelter in Karawal Nagar. He said the man had fed him and given him first-aid," she said.

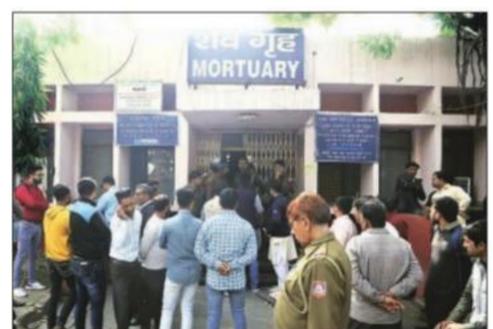
However, the number was unreachable the next day.

On Friday, Shahana looked for his body at GTB Hospital mortuary. "We have been looking for him in different hospitals. We even sent some people to check the place he said he was in... but many homes had been torched there," said his uncle Anees Ahmed.

Meanwhile, Mahir (30), whose 13-year-old daughter went missing after going to school on Monday, was reunited with her on Friday.

"Police informed us that she was at her friend's place in Meet Nagar. They found her and brought her back. She told us she didn't come home and stayed at her friend's place because of the riots. We are happy that nothing happened to her," said Mahir.

Police had received a complaint from the girl's father three days ago and had started looking for the girl. A senior police officer said they traced her location to Khajuri Chowk Friday.



SIT heads also probing Jamia, JNU cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

OUTGOING DELHI Police Commissioner Amulya Patnaik transferred all riot-related cases to the Crime Branch Thursday. Two teams have been formed under DCPs Joy Tirkey and Rajesh Deo—officers who were in the news recently for cases related to JNU and Shaheen Bagh.

Deo was barred by the Election Commission from poll duty in February after he gave a statement to the media that the Shaheen Bagh shooter, Kapil Baisala, had joined AAP last year. The EC panel said Deo's statement was "uncalled for" and could "adversely impact elections" in Delhi.

On February 1, Baisala had fired twice in the air 50 metres away from the main stage at the anti-CAA protest in Shaheen Bagh. Deo had said that the accused and his father were AAP members.

Deo is also investigating the December 15 violence at Jamia Millia Islamia, and is a part of the team investigating the case against Sharjeel Imam.

On January, Tirkey held a press conference on the violence inside JNU campus by a masked mob, in which he released names of nine suspects, who were students. He named seven as associated with Left student outfits. However, he did not take the name of ABVP, with which the two others were attached. None of the people have been arrested since.

RESIDENTS BACKED EACH OTHER DURING VIOLENCE

Mandir-Masjid Marg stays true to name, keeps the peace alive

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

A GROUP of residents in Noor-e-Ilahi was alerted the moment violence broke out in parts of Maujpur, metres from their lane, on Sunday. The group, comprising both Hindus and Muslims, immediately stood guard outside their lane, known as Mandir Masjid Marg.

As the name suggests, the narrow lane in Noor-e-Ilahi has a mosque and a temple within metres of each other. As violence grew in scale over the week,

Hindus shielded the mosque while Muslims stood guard outside the temple and the area remained unscathed.

For decades, the area has been known for its communal harmony due to the presence of two places of worship—Azizya Mosque and Hanuman temple—within close proximity. The area has a mix of both communities' residents within a 1-kilometre radius.

On Sunday, when stone-pelting began, local youths came out to inform people about mobs in the neighbourhood. The elders of both communities held an

emergency meeting in which it was decided that the residents in the area will remain peaceful irrespective of the situation around.

"For us, there is no distinction of Hindus and Muslims in this area. Our childhood has been spent at both the temple and mosque. Shortly after the news broke out, a mob tried to enter the lane from the side of the temple. They wanted to attack both places of worship in order to create a riot. We made sure that the crowd didn't enter the lane," said Faizan, a resident.



Next to the temple, a resident described how he helped a Muslim man, who was injured in the clashes, receive treatment before escorting him safely out.

"We have a lot of faith in each other. In fact, when a few people who had been injured came this side for treatment, because they knew they will not be harmed here, we got their dressings done and made sure they reached their homes

The lane has two religious structures within metres of each other. Abhinav Saha

safely. The legacy of this harmony will continue," said Sunil Kumar, a resident.

The mosque has a capacity of more than 500 and announcements of peace were also made through the loudspeaker at the peak of the violence. The Hanuman temple dates back to the 1980s, a local said. Locals also said they prevented a petrol pump and several houses being gutted in the colony adjacent to the Marg.

"We were simply doing our duty. And if the time comes, we will do it again," said Amer, another resident.

2 students sustain acid burn injuries at school in Gurgaon

SAKSHIDAYAL
GURGAON, FEBRUARY 28

TWO CLASS I students at Gurgaon's Heritage Xperiential Learning School allegedly sustained burn injuries earlier this week, when they unearthed bottles of a "solution" buried in the school's playground and threw its contents on each other, after mistaking it for water. The school authorities claimed the solutions were placed in the ground to prevent snakes from coming into the campus. The parents of one of the children told *The Indian Express* they would be lodging a police complaint Saturday.

The parents of one of the seven-year-old victims said they

were alerted to the incident by a phone call from the school on February 24. "We were told our son had an allergic reaction after coming in contact with some chemical. When we rushed him to the hospital, we found it was an acid burn," said the child's father. "My son told me he and another child were playing treasure hunt, and looked for things under trees and below the ground. They found these bottles and, thinking they contained water, began throwing its contents at each other. He got hit by the acid and sustained injuries to his eyes and burns on his face. Fortunately, he closed his eyes, so they were not affected," he said.

"The doctors told us the wounds may heal to some extent

but the marks will likely be there. We intend to shift him to another school," said his father.

He also alleged that when he questioned school officials about the bottles being present underground, he was told these had been placed every ten feet across the ground "to prevent snakes from coming in".

"We are greatly pained by the trauma these children and their families have faced... We have always made efforts to make the school a safe place," said the school's principal Neena Kaul in a statement Friday. "We are constantly evaluating risks. When snakes posed a threat in recently, no effort was spared to engage experts to mitigate the problem." The bottles have now been removed.

Nephew of murdered BSP leader held

New Delhi: Delhi Police's Special Cell arrested a nephew of former BSP leader Virender Mann on February 18 in connection with skipping bail. The accused, Parvesh Mann, is allegedly a sharpshooter with the Neeraj Bawana gang. He was arrested in a case of murder at Ashok Vihar, but had fled after being granted interim bail last year. Police said the accused was also involved in several MCOCA and extortion cases.

Parvesh's uncle and MLA candidate, Virender Mann, was allegedly shot dead by unidentified men in Narela in October 2019.

Pramod Khushwah, DCP (Special Cell), said, "After he fled, we were tracking his movements but he evaded arrest by changing hideouts. In February, we were informed that Parvesh was in Bengaluru. A team was sent there but he fled to Goa. Another team was sent to Goa, but Parvesh was-

n't found. Sources revealed the man was hiding in Karwar in Karnataka, and was planning to avenge his uncle's murder." On February 18, a police team apprehended Parvesh from a restaurant on the Goa highway in Karwar, and brought him to Delhi. In a probe led by inspectors Umesh Barthwal and Neeraj Kumar, police found Parvesh met Bawana at a drug de-addiction centre in 2005 and subsequently joined his gang. **ENS**

Man kills wife, 2 kids and self in Ghaziabad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NOIDA, FEBRUARY 28



Dheeraj's wife Kajal

A 27-YEAR-OLD man committed suicide after allegedly killing his wife and two children in Ghaziabad's Aryhala area Friday. Police said the man, Dheeraj Tyagi, allegedly strangled his two children, Ekta (4) and Dhruv (2) before hanging himself in the same house. Police are yet to ascertain the cause of death of his wife Kajal (23) and are awaiting post-mortem reports.

The bodies were discovered after one of the neighbours knocked on the door to call upon Dheeraj, but no one responded. The neighbour then peeped from a window and saw the bodies.

"We were informed about bodies inside a house in the Aryhala area. At the spot, we saw a man had hung himself after allegedly killing his family. A suicide note was found scribbled on the wall. Prima facie, it appears there was marital discord due to personal and financial reasons. We are probing details mentioned in

the note", said Dr Rakesh Mishra, Circle Officer (Sahibabad).

Police said Dheeraj had scribbled phone numbers of three men in the note. The note states that he suspected Kajal was in touch with them, and he did not approve of it. He further wrote that one of them "loved" Kajal, and he did not approve of her consuming alcohol.

Police said one of the couple's children was receiving medical treatment, which was putting financial pressure on the family and the couple fought regularly over these reasons. Both hailed from Bijinor—Kajal was a homemaker and Dheeraj worked in a welding shop.

Bhim Army chief hits out at Centre over violence in NE Delhi

ANANYA TIWARI
NEW DELHI, FEB 28

BHIM ARMY chief Chandrashekhar Azad blamed the central government and Home Minister Amit Shah for the violence that rocked Northeast Delhi from February 24 and questioned why the Army was not deployed in time. Speaking at a press conference in front of Andhra Bhavan Friday, he also blamed BJP leader Kapil Mishra for inciting violence through hate speeches.

"I blame the central government because if they had wanted, this could have been stopped. Where were they? This violence was allowed to occur for two days because the agenda was to scare away the anti-CAA-NRC protests, but we will not let that happen," said Azad.

The Bhim Army had called a Bharat bandh on the SC order of making reservations in government posts and promotions optional for the states. He said that all Valmiki temples have been opened to provide food and shelter for those

who seek it, and that Bhim Army workers are collecting essential items as donations for the victims.

On February 24, violence broke out in Delhi's Northeastern areas of Maujpur, Chand Bagh, Jafrabad, and many others, which continued to the next few days. The death toll touched 42 Friday.

Azad blamed the hate speech by Kapil Mishra for the violence. "For more than two months, protests against the CAA-NRC have been peaceful and in support of the Constitution. But a plan was there with regard to the hate speeches — before and after elections — all along. Who does Kapil Mishra think he is in taking law and order in his hand? This was a big mistake and it is why Delhi is burning," he said.

He added that the government should not take the matter lightly and provide compensation and proper medical aid to all people affected by the violence, regardless of their religion.

"I hope that the police does thorough investigations and finds all those who perpetrated the violence," he said.

SC asks CPCB to carry out new water tests

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday asked the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to carry out a fresh test of water samples from the capital to check if it was fit for drinking.

A bench of Justice Arun Mishra and Justice Deepak Gupta ordered this after noting that tests by the Bureau of Indian Standards, Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) had thrown up conflicting results. Advocate Vipin Nair

referred to the BIS report which said all 11 samples collected for testing from Delhi were "were non-conforming in one or more requirements as per IS10500:2012," while as per a joint report by DJB and NEERI, only 17 of 1316 samples were found unsatisfactory.

"How can conflicting reports come from responsible bodies," Justice Mishra said, and asked CPCB to conduct another test with a member each from DJB and BIS in it. **ENS**

Central Vista: HC stays its Feb 11 order

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Friday stayed the direction of a single judge bench earlier this month to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to approach the court before notifying change of land use in the Master Plan for the Central Vista redevelopment project.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice C Hari Shankar issued the direction on

pleas by the Centre and DDA challenging the single judge's February 11 order.

"Till next date of hearing, para 20 of the February 11 order is stayed," read Friday's order. The next date of hearing is May 6. Friday's direction by the HC means the DDA can go ahead with notifying changes to the master plan until the next date of hearing. **ENS**

9 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



NEPAL VISIT UNLIKELY

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi is unlikely to go for the first edition of the 'Sagarmatha Sambaad' in Kathmandu, scheduled to be held April 2-4, on the theme 'Climate Change, Mountains and the Future of Humanity'. The Nepal government has invited the SAARC countries and China, and there was expectation that it would provide an opportunity for the top leadership of India and Pakistan to gather at a venue in Kathmandu. But India is likely to send its environment minister, who could be best suited to represent the government at the platform. However, a final call is yet to be taken.

DIVIDED OPPN

WITH THE second half of the Budget Session of Parliament beginning next week, the big question is whether the Opposition parties will try to corner the BJP-led government on the communal violence in Delhi. The Opposition, however, has not put up a united front on the issue. On Thursday, the Congress went on its own to meet President Ram Nath Kovind. And on Friday, seven parties, including the Left and Congress's allies DMK, RJD and NCP, wrote to the President separately. The Trinamool Congress was not part of either initiative; the BSP and SP were also missing. The Congress was also missing from a rally organised by CPI leader Kanhaiya Kumar in Patna on Thursday against the new citizenship law and NRC.

NEW ROLE

FORMER INDIAN Ambassador to China Gautam Bambawale has joined Ola as senior advisor for corporate and international affairs. A diplomat with 34 years of experience, Bambawale earlier served as India's Ambassador to Bhutan as well as the High Commissioner to Pakistan. He also held a number of positions where he was directly involved in advancing India's relations with Japan, China and South Korea among others. He will now play a key role in advising Ola on its corporate affairs initiatives across India and the global markets where it operates.

MAHARASHTRA

5% quota for Muslims soon in educational institutes

VISHWAS WAGHMODE
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 28

THE MAHARASHTRA government on Friday announced that it will bring a law to give five per cent reservation to Muslims in educational institutes.

The announcement was made by Minister for Minority Affairs Nawab Malik at the Legislative Council. In 2014, the then Congress-NCP government had passed an Ordinance allowing five per cent reservation for Muslims in jobs and educational institutes in the state. The Bombay High Court, where the decision was challenged, had upheld reservation for Muslims in government and government-aided educational institutes but not in jobs. However, the Devendra Fadnavis government, which subsequently came to power, had allowed the Ordinance to lapse, as it did not convert it into a law.

Replying to a question raised by Congress' Sharad Ranpise,

Malik said at the Council: "The five per cent reservation given in educational institutes to Muslims in 2014 has been upheld by the HC. The government will bring a law soon to provide the reservation."

Maintaining that the government will bring a law that will be valid as per the Constitution and stand scrutiny in court, he added: "The government will take appropriate decision on bringing the law before school admissions begin in June."

In a written reply to a starred question on Muslim reservation by Ranpise, Malik said the state had given five per cent reservation to Muslims in government jobs and educational institutes through an Ordinance in July 2014. "...Petitions were filed against it and the HC, in its interim order in November 2014, had upheld five per cent reservation in government and government-aided educational institutes. But it had stayed the reservation given in private ed-

ucational institutes and government jobs," he added.

Malik further said that the Ordinance had lapsed in November 2014, as it was not converted into a law. At present, reservation in jobs and educational institutes in Maharashtra is at 75 per cent and 74 per cent, respectively.

"Leaders of the Maha Vikas Aghadi will collectively take a call on policy decision like giving reservation to any community. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will take appropriate decisions at right time. No decision has been taken yet," Eknath Shinde, Urban Development Minister and senior Shiv Sena leader, told mediapersons.

Anil Parab, Parliamentary Affairs Minister, said: "Whatever decision is taken by the leaders of Maha Vikas Aghadi will be acceptable to all of us."

However, the Opposition BJP said that giving reservation to Muslims will impact the existing quota of OBCs and Marathas.

"The Constitution does not provide for quota based on religion. Any attempt to give reservation to Muslims would indirectly impact the existing quota of OBCs and Maratha community in Maharashtra," said Devendra Fadnavis, the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly.

The Mehmood-ur-Rahman Committee, set up by the Congress-NCP government to look into the socio-economic condition of Muslims in Maharashtra, in 2013 had recommended reservation for the community. In its report, it recommended eight per cent reservation in education and housing — both public and private. It also asked for an anti-discrimination Act for Muslims on the lines of the atrocity Act. Further, it had demanded that a special commission be set up to inquire into the large number of Muslims in detention and recommended that the minority department should monitor detention of community members in terror and riot cases.



Union minister Ravi Shanker Prasad at the BJP head office in New Delhi on Friday. Prem Nath Pandey

Don't preach us raj dharma: BJP hits out at Cong

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

WHILE THE BJP said on Friday that it didn't approve of provocative statements made by some of its leaders, it accused the Congress of instigating the violence in Delhi.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters, senior party leader and Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said: "Yesterday, the Congress went to the President, and is now teaching us raj dharma. Sonia Gandhi, please don't preach us raj dharma; your record is full of twists and turns".

On Thursday, a Congress delegation, led by Sonia, met President Ram Nath Kovind and submitted a memorandum demanding Union Home Minister Amit Shah's resignation for "abdication of duty" during the communal violence in northeast Delhi. Sonia had also reminded the Centre of its raj dharma, and the need to protect people of all faiths.

Prasad said several Congress leaders had supported granting citizenship to persecuted minorities from other countries. "How have all of them done a volte face now? What kind of raj dharma is that," he said.

He accused the Congress of making provocative statements on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. "During your rally at Ramlila Maidan, you said

is paar aur us paar ki ladai hai (fight to the finish). If this is not provocation, what is? A statement like this means moving away from the Constitutional path," he said.

"Congress leaders went to Shaheen Bagh and one of them called Modi ji a murderer. They were standing by people who chanted 'Jinnah wali azadi'. Whatever happened in Delhi should not have happened; provocative statements were made. But this was a time for peace, not for politics. In the name of raj dharma, an attempt is being made to provoke people," he said.

"The BJP condemns the politicking by the Congress party on such a sensitive issue, when we should all be talking about peace," he said.

Asked about the provocative remarks made by BJP leaders like Kapil Mishra and Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma, Prasad said the Home Minister had already "clarified" the party's position, and the top BJP brass did not consider these comments appropriate.

"They have not approved of their remarks... If very senior leaders have disapproved of these statements publicly, I think it means a lot. The party, with its own internal system, will surely respond to these situations," he said.

He said the police were looking into these statements, and the matter was sub-judice.



Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik hosts a lunch for Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar at his residence in Bhubaneswar on Friday. Courtesy: Twitter

EASTERN ZONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Naveen demands special package for eastern region

SAMPAD PATNAIK
BHUBANESWAR, FEBRUARY 28

AT THE 24th Eastern Zonal Council meeting in Bhubaneswar on Friday, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik demanded a special economic package for speeding up infrastructural development in the country's eastern region, saying that it lags behind in many sectors despite being endowed with natural and mineral resources.

The meeting was chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah and attended by Patnaik, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

According to a statement released by the Odisha government, Patnaik stated that the eastern zone is at the bottom, nationwide, on tele-density, banking density and rail and road density. "There is a need to double the allotments made to this region," he said.

Highlighting that one of the objectives of Zonal Councils is "national integration, healthy inter-

state and Centre-state relations", Patnaik said, "Integration has to be financial, infrastructural and technological, so it leads and strengthens emotional integration."

He also mentioned that royalty on coal has not been revised since 2012. While saying that there is an urgent need to revise royalty, he also said the proceeds of the clean energy cess must be shared with the state government.

Patnaik also thanked the Centre for its support after the state was hit by cyclonic storm Fani and demanded that Odisha should be declared as a Special Focus State by accepting "vulnerability to natural calamities" as a criterion.

Bengal Chief Minister Banerjee told reporters after the meeting that there was no discussion on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) or the NRC at the zonal council meeting, but she raised the issue of the violence in Delhi. Banerjee expressed concern over the riots in Delhi and said steps should be taken so that the situation doesn't aggravate further. "I am very sad about what happened in Delhi. A

police constable and an IB official also died. Peace must be restored in Delhi," she told the meeting.

Asked if she would back the demand of Shah's resignation in wake of the riots, she said, "The problem should be solved first and then we will discuss politics."

At the meeting, she raised alleged negligence of the Centre towards her state. She claimed that West Bengal did not get the required assistance during natural calamities such as cyclone Fani and Bulbul, besides several other pending dues from the Centre. "We have not got Rs 50,000 crore from the Centre," she said.

Bihar Chief Minister Kumar demanded special category status at the meeting. He asserted that Bihar must be given "its due" to enable it to make rapid progress and contribute better to the overall development of the country.

Kumar also called for developing a mechanism for resolving interstate issues in the eastern region which shared a common cultural legacy and faced problems of similar nature.

— WITH PTI INPUTS

Oppn inciting people, causing riots: Shah

SAMPAD PATNAIK
BHUBANESWAR, FEBRUARY 28

DAYS AFTER the riots in Delhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday alleged that the Opposition parties are spreading falsehoods over CAA and inciting people.

Speaking at a rally in Bhubaneswar, he said, "The Opposition is spreading falsehoods. They are inciting people. They are causing riots."

Earlier in the speech he had claimed, "On CAA, the entire opposition — Communists, Congress, BSP, SP, Mamata Didi — all these people are opposing this."

"(They say) minorities will lose citizenship rights. Why are you lying so much? Not a single Muslim or person from minority community will lose citizenship rights because of CAA. CAA is not a law that takes away citizenship, but actually gives citizenship," Shah said.

Speaking about 2019 elections in Odisha, he said, "We got 91 lakh votes. Naveen Babu got 1.1 crore votes. Let me tell you that only one more jump is needed to ensure that the BJP's flag flies permanently in Odisha."

Tathagata cites Tiananmen Square to 'handle' Delhi violence, later deletes tweet

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 28

TWO DAYS after tweeting that "lessons" can be taken from Tiananmen Square to "handle" the violence that affected parts of Delhi, Meghalaya Governor Tathagata Roy has deleted his post.

"Remember Tiananmen Square, Beijing in 1988? And how Deng Xiaoping handled it? Perhaps there is a lesson there on how to handle the engineered disturbances of NE Delhi! I'm sure all comrades will agree!" Roy had tweeted on Wednesday.



Tathagata Roy

Roy was referring to the bloody crackdown on thousands of student protestors by the Chinese government on June 4-5, 1989 at Beijing's Tiananmen Square, which led to the death of

hundreds, if not thousands, of civilians.

However, on Friday, he deleted the tweet, and put up another post, saying, "Comrades of different hues, from card-holding communists to fellow-travellers, are making strange hurt noises after my tweet on Tiananmen Square in the capital of their fatherland. So, out of tender concern for them I have deleted my tweet-after all they are Indian, aren't they!"

Asked if he stood by the tweet, Roy told *The Indian Express*, "I have deleted it from Twitter and from my memory. Apparently my tweet about

Communists' fatherland had caused them a lot of pain. So I better not give these poor fellows a reasons to cry- since they already have enough reasons to cry."

Roy is no stranger to controversy. After the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, Roy had taken to Twitter to endorse a retired Army officer's suggestion to boycott Kashmir and Kashmiris economically.

In December that year, during the Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests, Roy tweeted that those who do not want "divisive democracy" could go to North Korea.

Plea in HC seeks NIA probe into 'anti-India' CAA protests

Separate plea calls for FIR against Sonia, Rahul, Priyanka for 'hate speech'

PRITAMPAL SINGH
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE DELHI High Court Friday sought the response of the Centre, Delhi government and the Delhi Police over a plea seeking an NIA probe to uncover the "anti-national" forces who are "funding and sponsoring" the "anti-India" protests over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and are "openly threatening to kill" Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

The plea was filed by activist Ajay Gautam, who contended that anti-CAA protests have led to large-scale violence and destruction of public property.

While raising anguish over the Delhi riots, Gautam goes on to submit, "...it is clear that what is going on Shaheen Bagh, Seelampur, Jafraabad, Jheel Khureji, Inder Lok and other places of Delhi is not a normal protest and it is well plan conspiracy against the state, anti-national powers are involved behind the protest, funding from

illegal sources is coming to run these protest."

The court has listed the case for hearing on April 13.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice C Hari Shankar also issued notice to the Centre and Delhi Police on separate pleas seeking registration of FIRs against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, among others, accusing them of making "hate speeches" in the run-up to the communal violence in Delhi.

The petition, filed by Lawyers Voice, a lawyers' collective, sought the constitution of an SIT to look into the alleged hate speeches.

The bench also sought the government's stand on a petition filed by Lawyers Voice, which urged the court that direction to be given to lodge FIRs against Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, MLA Amanatullah Khan, AIMIM leaders Waris Pathan and Akbaruddin Owaisi, and advocate Mehmood Pracha for alleged making hate speeches.

Will give befitting reply in court, says Cong

New Delhi: As the Delhi High Court on Friday sought the response of the Centre, the Delhi government and police on pleas seeking FIRs against political leaders, including Congress's Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, for allegedly making hate speeches, the Congress said the party will give an "extremely strong, befitting and comprehensive" reply in court.

"The whole world is receiving FIRs, but, the whole world does not include the great and only Kapil Mishra, the whole world excludes the great and only Anurag Thakur and Praveesh Verma. Not even an FIR now after months and, of course, after years not an FIR against Giriraj Singh, against Chinmayanand, against Sangeet Som of UP... Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi said. **ENS**

10 EXPRESS NETWORK

CAA, Inner Line Permit: 1 killed in Meghalaya clash

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 28

ONE PERSON was killed as clashes broke out between Khasi Students Union (KSU) members and non-tribals in Ichamati area of Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district on Friday, after a meeting called by the KSU to discuss the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and Inner Line Permit (ILP).

The victim was identified as Lurshai Hynniewta (35), a Khasi taxi-driver.

Curfew has been imposed in Shillong and surrounding areas, and mobile internet service has been suspended in six districts. "We have taken a decision to impose curfew. We will see how the situation goes and, if necessary, we will further extend it," Chief Minister Conrad Sangma told reporters after an emergency meeting on Friday night.

Lambokstarwell Marnagar, president, KSU central body, said "the meeting was regarding our opposition to CAA and to demand implementation of ILP", adding, "the meeting went peacefully, but some non-locals attacked us after it was over".

In a statement, the Meghalaya Police said: "There was a KSU meeting in Ichamati today afternoon. At around 3 pm, after the meeting, clashes broke out between KSU members and

local non-tribals of the area. Thereafter, the KSU members burnt a haystack at the edge of the market and attempted to burn a house. The non-tribals retaliated, and stoned a bus carrying KSU members."

It added: "Four members of KSU were injured, two were sent to Ichamati CHC and discharged, two were referred to Sohra CHC. One local taxi which had gone to collect the KSU members from the Ichamati market after the clashes was damaged."

According to police, the taxi driver, Lurshai Hynniewta, was injured in the attack and later succumbed to his injuries.

A notification issued by the office of the District Magistrate, East Khasi Hills District, ordered a curfew in Shillong and adjoining areas from Friday, 10 pm, to Saturday, 8 am, citing "apprehension of serious deterioration of law and order".

Mobile internet service has been suspended in six districts — West Jaintia Hills, East Jaintia Hills, East Khasi Hills, Ri Bhoi, West Khasi Hills and South West Khasi Hills District — for 48 hours. According to an official notification, SMSes will be limited to five per day.

"Law and order situation has arisen in East Khasi Hills District, including incidents of vandalism and arson, which have a potential to disturb public peace and tranquility," said the notification.

CHINMAYANAND SC to hear plea for transferring rape case against former minister to Delhi court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE SUPREME Court on Friday agreed to hear on March 2 the plea of a law student that the rape case lodged by her against former Union minister Swami Chinmayanand be transferred to a Delhi court from Uttar Pradesh.

The top court, while agreeing to hear the plea on Monday, however, observed that there is a "problem in transferring the criminal proceedings".

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde took note of the submission of senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, appearing for the complainant woman, that the trial in the case be transferred as she feared for her life in Uttar Pradesh.

"There are threats to us in Uttar Pradesh," Gonsalves told the bench, which also comprised Justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant.

"We are not doubting (your contention) that you are in danger. But, the point is you apply for police protection," the bench said.

The lawyer said that the complainant has been provided a gunman for her security by the UP administration.

Earlier also a plea was mentioned for urgent hearing in the top court against the Allahabad High Court order granting bail to Chinmayanand in the case. The high court had on February 3 granted bail to Chinmayanand.

1984 RIOTS Former Cong MLA's nephew under scanner, kin say court exonerated him

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, FEBRUARY 28

THE NEPHEW of a former Congress MLA from Kanpur has come under the scanner of the SIT reinvestigating the 1984 anti-Sikh riot cases there.

According to the SIT, they have found that 65-year-old Raghvendra Kushwaha, the nephew of the then local Congress MLA Shivnath Singh Kushwaha, had allegedly led and instigated mobs after the riots broke out in the city in the aftermath of the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

"On the basis of statements of the complainants and the witnesses, we have found that Raghvendra Kushwaha had allegedly played a vital role in the violence. The role of Raghvendra is being investigated by us and action will be taken only after collecting evidence against him," Superintendent of Police and SIT member Balendu Bhushan said, adding the evidence so far against Raghvendra shows he "led the mob at three places in Kanpur".

Meanwhile, the family of Raghvendra said he was exonerated by the court earlier. "After the 1984 riots, Raghvendra was arrested under the Arms Act. While in jail, police had then invoked MISA (Maintenance of Internal Security Act) against him, which was later vacated by the court," Raghvendra's brother Indrajeet said.

IIT German student's visa cancelled over protest

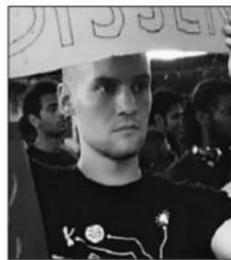
RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE GOVERNMENT has revoked the visa of Jakob Lindenthal, the German exchange student at IIT-Madras who was asked to leave the country two months ago after he participated in protests against the new citizenship law.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Lindenthal said the Indian Embassy in Germany informed him on February 8 that his visa has been cancelled. "I wasn't given any reason for the decision," he said.

Lindenthal is a student of Technical University-Dresden (TUD), and had been studying in the Physics department of IIT-Madras as part of a collaboration between the two institutions. He had joined IIT-Madras on July 26, 2019, and would have completed his course work by May this year.

On January 19, *The Indian Express* first reported that the Indian Embassy in Germany had advised Lindenthal against re-entering India on his current visa. Confirming the latest devel-



Jakob Lindenthal took part in an anti-CAA protest. File

opment, Kim Magister, Head of Press Office and Public Relations at TUD, said in an email: "Mr. Lindenthal's visa has indeed now been officially cancelled, meaning that he is no longer able to travel to India to continue his student exchange. However, he was able to successfully complete one semester at the IIT Madras. For this period, he will receive a Transcript of Records from our partner university."

The Consular Wing of the Indian Embassy in Germany did

not respond to an email sent by *The Indian Express* seeking comment.

IIT-Madras director Bhaskar Ramamurthi said: "Granting of visa is done by Immigration and the educational institute is not involved, except for giving the admission offer or invitation. If visa is granted the student or visitor comes, else they do not. This is the process followed everywhere."

Lindenthal's expulsion from India hasn't affected TUD's student exchange programme with IIT-Madras but the university has decided to introduce special workshops to "optimally prepare" students for an exchange abroad.

"The main objective is to raise awareness in our students regarding the understanding and the respect for regional particularities all over the world," Magister wrote, adding that Lindenthal will also "present his experiences in India" at these workshops.

About five students of TU-Dresden have been going to IIT every year under the collaboration, which started in 2008. TU-

Dresden was ranked 179 worldwide in QS Rankings for 2020 and 157th in the Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking. IIT-Madras, on the other hand, stood at 271 position in QS Rankings and falls in the 601-800 bracket in THE rankings.

IIT-Madras was awarded the 'Institute of Eminence' tag by the government last year. As an IoE, IIT-Madras will receive up to Rs 1,000 crore from the HRD Ministry to improve its performance in world rankings. Under the IoE scheme, institutions are permitted to admit more international students to improve their rank.

Speaking to *The Indian Express* in January, Lindenthal had claimed that he was given less than a day on December 23 by the immigration office in Chennai to book his tickets, pack, vacate his room in Bhadra hostel of IIT-Madras and leave the country.

He had said that he was asked to leave after he attended three protests in Chennai against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, including one on campus.

Probe officer trying to save Asthana, former IO tells court

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

FORMER CBI investigating officer A K Bassi, who probed the bribery case in which former Special Director Rakesh Asthana was given a clean chit, told a Delhi court on Friday that there was "clinching evidence" against Asthana, but the current Investigating Officer Satish Dagar was "trying to save" him and other public servants.

The hearing was marked by a verbal spat between Bassi and Dagar that prompted Special Judge Sanjay Aggarwal to tell them to "not wash dirty linen in public" as they "both work in the same organisation". The judge adjourned the matter for March 7.

Bassi had been summoned by the court to answer its query on the initial investigation. The chargesheet, filed on February 11, had only arraigned "middleman" Manoj Prasad as accused. Asthana and CBI's DSP Devender Kumar, who was arrested in 2018 and later got bail, were named in column 12 of the charge sheet since there was not enough evidence to make them accused.

During the hearing, Bassi told the court that Dagar "deliberately ignored" evidence against Asthana and Devender in a 2017 case involving meat exporter Moin Qureshi.

Accusing Dagar of conducting a "biased" investigation, Bassi told the court, "From Day 1, the new IO has been trying to give clean chit to Rakesh Asthana. There was clinching evidence in the affidavit filed before the Supreme Court but it has been ignored...He (Dagar) did not even seize Devender Kumar's phone and other electronic evidence."



Rakesh Asthana

The CBI registered an FIR against Asthana on the basis of a complaint from Hyderabad-based businessman Satish Babu Sana, facing investigation in a 2017 case involving meat exporter Qureshi. Sana's allegations of bribery against Asthana triggered a war within the CBI, particularly between then director Alok Verma and his number two, Asthana.

Replying to Bassi's claims, Dagar said, "I have better antecedents than you in the organisation. Don't level personal allegations. I summoned you six times, why didn't you appear before if you wanted to assist in the investigation?"

Dagar told the court that it was Bassi who had been removed from the case due to his "biased investigation".

Bassi wanted to hand over an additional note on his findings to the court, but this was opposed by Dagar who asked why he was submitting the documents when it was not in the case diary.

When the court asked how much time the CBI will take to complete the investigation into the Qureshi case, which is linked to the bribery case, Dagar said the agency was waiting for response to letters sent to the US.

The agency also sought two weeks to complete the investigation.

BUDGET DAY FOR TWO STATES: PAPER AND PAPERLESS



Punjab Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal arrives at the Assembly with the Budget papers. (Right) Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar with a Tablet preloaded with a copy of the Budget. Jasbir Malhi



MP: Bill against cow vigilantism faces uncertain future

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, FEBRUARY 28

A BILL seeking to curb cow vigilantism, which was moved in Madhya Pradesh Assembly last year, appears to be headed for an uncertain future as members of a select committee formed to examine the legislation hold diametrically opposite views.

The Congress government moved the Bill on July 24, 2019. The Bill, which proposed an amendment to the anti-cow slaughter legislation, provides for a jail term ranging from six months to five years for people who engage in violence in the name of cow protection. It was referred to a select committee after BJP members opposed it, arguing that it will encourage cow slaughter.

A 10-member select committee was constituted on August 26

Punjab slashes staff retirement age to 58

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 28

PUNJAB'S CONGRESS government Friday presented its fourth budget with an outlay of Rs 1.54 lakh crore, and a fiscal deficit of Rs 18,827.73 crore.

While not imposing any new tax to mop up resources, Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal showered largesse on state government employees by announcing implementation of sixth pay commission and six per cent Dearness Allowance (DA).

In a move intended to offer more employment opportunities to young people, the government also reduced retirement age of its staffers from 60 to 58 years.

The move reverses a decision taken by the SAD-BJP government in 2009 to provide an extension in retirement age due to paucity of funds.

Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal presented the budget in absence of SAD-BJP MLAs, who had gheraoed his house before the presentation of the budget and faced a Privilege

Education outlay hike of 28% in Haryana

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 28

WITH MAJOR focus on education, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, who also holds the finance portfolio, presented his maiden budget for the year 2020-21 with an outlay of Rs 1.42 lakh crore. He hiked funds kept for the education sector by 28 per cent compared to last year.

Khattar also rolled out a series of steps with an aim to improve education standards in the state. These include reintroducing Board exams for Class VIII students, 4,000 playway schools, no tuition fee in educational institutes upto post-graduation (for those families whose annual income is below Rs 1.80 lakh), free bicycles for students belonging to Scheduled Castes who take admission in Class IX or XI in villages where there is no high school or senior secondary school.

Under the Mukhya Mantri Saksham Chatravriti Yojana, students securing more than 80 per cent marks in Class V will be provided scholarship of Rs 6,000 against the existing Rs 1,500

scholarship in Class VI, VII and VIII. The state will also open over 500 creches for children of working women.

In Budget Estimates 2020-21, the total expenditure has been projected to increase to Rs 1,42,343.78 crore from last fiscal's Rs 1,32,165.99 crore — an increase of 7.70 per cent. The government's revenue receipts are anticipated to increase by 15.96 per cent in BE 2020-21 to Rs 89,964.14 crores from Rs 77,580.73 crore.

Making a beginning towards turning into a "paperless Vidhan Sabha", Lenovo Tablets were distributed to all the MLAs of House and senior officers who were present in the officers' gallery preloaded with budget copies.

Speaker Gian Chand Gupta said, "It is for the first time in the history of this country that a Vidhan Sabha is going paperless. Thus, you all have been given these tablets to read the budget."

Khattar, however, read the budget's paper-copy, while a few members of the House used the tablets to read it.

In fact, Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha is India's first paperless Vidhan Sabha known as eVidhan.

Kerala govt's Life Mission sees completion of 2 lakh new houses

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEBRUARY 28

A HOUSE of his own — that was a years-long dream of Amal Govind, a medical student from a tribal colony at Chaliyar in Kerala's Malappuram district.

In 2008, his parents Govind and Manjula, both daily wage workers, were made beneficiaries of the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY). However, with a paltry allocation of Rs 70,000 under the scheme, their home was little more than four walls, and the family lived in a hut with a plastic sheet for a roof for more than a decade.

This year, Amal's dream came true — he is one of the beneficiaries of the state's flagship project 'Life Mission', under which the Pinarayi Vijayan government aims houses for all. So far the mission has completed two lakh houses, either by constructing them afresh or by finishing incomplete structures.

Minister for Local Self Governments A C Moideen said, "This is the first time in the country that a state government has completed such a massive housing scheme in a short period. The Life Mission envisaging total housing for all the homeless began in 2017, and over two lakh houses have been completed so far. It is matchless achievement."

Vijayan is scheduled make an official declaration about completing over two lakh houses under the Life Mission on Saturday.

Officials at Life Mission said in the first phase, the mission fo-

CBI books customs official, wife, sons over disproportionate assets

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE CBI has booked a senior customs department official for allegedly amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

Deepak Pandit has been booked along with his wife and two children. He is currently posted as Assistant Commissioner of CGST and Central Excise in Bhubaneswar.

The CBI has alleged that Pandit's assets were disproportionate to his income by Rs 3.96 crore. His disproportionate assets, according to CBI, were acquired during his stint with the Customs Department of Mumbai between January 1, 2000 to March 31, 2014.

Pandit is the younger brother of documentary filmmaker Ashoke Pandit.

"Deepak Pandit during the check period has acquired assets in the form of immovable properties and movable properties like bank balances, fixed deposits, Mutual funds in his own name and in the names of his family members worth Rs. 4.39,53,753/-

against likely savings of Rs. 43,42,005/-. Thus, the accused Deepak Pandit was found in possession of disproportionate assets to the tune of Rs 3,96,11,748 acquired in his own name and in the names of his wife and two sons," the CBI FIR said.

The agency alleged that his wife, Arushi Pandit, had during the check period acquired immovable properties in her name and sold the same. "She was not having any independent source of income at that time and it is alleged that properties were purchased by her for and on behalf of her husband Deepak Pandit," it said.

Similarly, it has alleged, his elder son Ashutosh Pandit had also acquired immovable properties during the check period in the form of two flats at JVPD Scheme, Vile Parle, Mumbai for Rs 2 crore, when he was not having any source of income. "These properties were acquired by him for and on behalf of his father Deepak Pandit," the agency said.

His younger son Divyansh Pandit, CBI has alleged, purchased gold bar bullion during the check period for Rs 94 lakh without any source of income.

PATIDAR AGITATION
Hardik Patel gets interim protection from arrest till March 6

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

OVERRULING OBJECTIONS by the Gujarat Police, the Supreme Court on Friday gave Congress leader Hardik Patel interim protection from arrest till March 6 in a case pertaining to violence during the 2015 Patidar agitation.

"If for five years you could do nothing, it's just a matter of seven more days," a bench of Justices U U Lalit and Vineet Saran said, fixing the matter for hearing on March 6. The court asked the state to apprise it of the steps taken against Patel in the case till now.

Appearing for the accused, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi said the case pertained to 2015 and he had not been named in the FIR. All the sections charged, except one, were bailable, he submitted, and added that the sessions court had received a request from the prosecutor for the first time in 2020.

The bench then asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who appeared for the state, as to whether any requisition for investigation had been issued to the accused which he had not complied with.

No, said the SG, who then referred to the case diary and said it was recorded that he was not available.

Balakot airstrikes changed perception about India: Rajnath

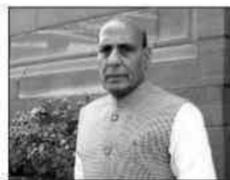
KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Friday said the Balakot airstrikes changed the perception that India does not respond to terrorism adequately.

Speaking at a seminar organised by the Centre for Air Power Studies, Singh said, "Balakot reflected our approach against employment of terrorism as a low-cost option against India. It also indicated that terrorists, terrorist infrastructure and terrorist training facilities in areas beyond LoC and IB when employed against India, will no longer be a safe haven."

The airstrikes, he said, "will continue to reiterate India's intent to employ the most appropriate resources for the intended impact, with an element of unpredictability and innovation as an integral part of the endeavour". He emphasised that it is "this factor that must remain uppermost in our minds".

Singh said the airstrikes made "amply clear" that terrorism cannot "proliferate under veiled threats and bogeys that have repeatedly been voiced by irresponsible and ill-informed leaders from across the border". India, he said, was earlier "seen as a country that did not respond adequately to terrorism despite grave provocations" but the surgical strikes and Balakot airstrikes "changed



Rajnath Singh

that perception once and for all".

On the international response to the airstrikes, Singh said "the world stood as one against terrorism and its employment for perceived strategic gains" and thanked all partner nations "who recognised the challenge posed by terrorism to be greater than narrow parochial pronouncements".

He said the world "remains committed in the fight against terrorism and stands shoulder-to-shoulder with India in forcing countries like Pakistan to bring terrorist leaders to justice". He also mentioned the recent impact of collective diplomatic and financial pressure on Pakistan.

Talking about changes being brought about in the three services — the Army, Navy and Air Force — Singh said that some "major structural changes" have been initiated "in the way we intend tackling threats to our nation" and it will take some time for the entire set-up to be fully operational.

Important to develop indigenous weapons to give jets an edge: IAF chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

INDIAN AIR Force chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria on Friday said that it is important that India develops indigenous weapon systems to give its fighter jets an edge.

Speaking at a seminar organised by the Centre for Air Power Studies, Bhadauria said the 36 Rafale jets India is set to receive will "alone not provide us solution for the IAF's need". He said India needs to be "able to use the indigenous Astra missile on the Su30s and across other fighter aircraft like the Mig-29 for better performance of air power".

The induction of the Rafale jets will bring better capability, the Air Force chief said, adding that "in air engagement, especially in a deeply contested area, it is important to have a weapons' edge".

He said the Indian Air Force had the edge over the Pakistan Air Force "in terms of Beyond Visual Range Missile capability at the time of Kargil" war, but "we allowed that to slip and thereafter it took a decade and half in our



Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria

struggle to acquisition process to be able to get better capability".

He stressed that once India regains the edge, "it is important that we don't allow it to slip back". He said if India has not been able to "work towards developing an indigenous weapons system", then "the focus has been in the wrong place". He added that India should "focus on the requirements and have this edge in terms of weapons and technology" as it is only then that "you can provide this edge to aircraft fleet". Talking about Balakot airstrikes, Bhadauria said "use of air force was a major paradigm shift", which was not thought possible earlier, even during the Kargil conflict.

On Pakistan's response some 30 hours later, he said that "it was fundamentally tailored to disengage", and that "the retort was designed primarily to demonstrate action taken for their domestic audience".

Uttarakhand cabinet nod to stepping up witnesses' security

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, FEBRUARY 28

THE UTTARAKHAND government has approved a law to make available various arrangements for the security of witnesses, to define the witness's 'family' to be given security, and the nature of cases in which security cover will be provided.

Sources said the state cabinet on Friday gave its nod to the proposal for the Uttarakhand Sakshi Sanrakshan Adhiniyam, 2020 (Uttarakhand Witness Protection Act, 2020). A senior official in the Home Department said the Act has been made to decide the security arrangements following an order of the Supreme Court to states in this regard. The official said that such security arrangements are aimed to prevent witnesses from turning hostile in criminal cases and increase conviction rates in criminal trials.

Defining the 'family' of witness, the proposal says security will be provided to the grandfather, grandmother, parents, brothers, sisters, grandchildren, spouse and children of the witness.

Security will also be provided to witnesses in cases in which the punishment to the guilty amounts to death penalty, life imprisonment, imprisonment of seven or more years, and who are witnesses in cases of IPC section 509 (word, gesture or act intended to

insult the modesty of a woman), 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354-A (sexual harassment), 354-B (assault or use of criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe), 354-C (voyeurism) and 354-D (stalking).

While a gunman may be provided to the witnesses on their requests, more security arrangements under the new Act can be provided to the witness if he/she appeals to a competent authority. Once those security arrangements are sanctioned, it will be ensured that the witness and the accused do not come face-to-face, states the proposal.

It adds that mails and phone calls of witnesses will be monitored and their phone number will be changed. Safety instruments like security gates, CCTV, alarms, fencing etc can be installed at the witness's residence. For the witness's security, their name or its spelling can be changed. An emergency contact person will be provided to the witnesses, and a temporary relocation to the residence of any relative or in any nearby city can be effected.

A government vehicle or state-financed vehicle will also be provided to take the witnesses to court for hearing and drop them back to home, the proposal states. Trial will be done in closed room i.e. 'in camera'. An assistant will be allowed with witness when he/she makes his statement.

Lawyers for Kashmiri students held for sedition file bail plea under police cover

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, FEBRUARY 28

THE LAWYERS for the three Kashmiri students arrested for sedition in Karnataka filed a petition for their bail on Friday under police protection.

Earlier, on February 24, they had failed to file the plea due to protests by local lawyers in Dharwad. The Karnataka High Court had subsequently warned that attempts to stop the filing of their bail plea would be treated as contempt of court.

"The petition has been filed and it has been taken on record and the matter has been posted for hearing on March 2," said former state public prosecutor and senior advocate B T Venkatesh who moved the high court along with 23 other advocates after the Hubballi Bar Association passed a resolution on February 15 opposing legal representation for the Kashmiri students and calling upon lawyers to "boycott anti-nationals".

Basit Aashiq Sofi, Talib Majeed and Amir Mohiuddin Wani, who are pursuing an engineering course at a college in Hubballi, were arrested on February 15 and charged with sedition over a video in which they were purportedly heard singing along a song that had the words "Pakistan Zindabad".

A group of advocates linked to civil liberties and human rights groups then approached high court. On February 20, a division bench of the high court headed by Chief Justice Abhay Sreenivas Oka issued orders for the police to provide protection to lawyers from Bengaluru to approach courts in Dharwad on behalf of the arrested students.

The court also said "such resolutions passed by the Bar Associations are wholly illegal and against all traditions of the Bar and against professional ethics".

However, on February 24, when advocates from Bengaluru tried to file a bail petition for the arrested Kashmiri students at the Dharwad district court, they were prevented by other lawyers from doing so. The lawyers approached the high court again and the court thereafter summoned the Hubballi Bar Association officials.

On Thursday, the high court warned that preventing the filing of a bail plea for the students would amount to contempt of court. The Hubballi Bar Association volunteered to issue a new resolution to cancel its February 15 resolution.

On Friday, when the bail pleas were filed, no protests were held on the premises of the Dharwad court but a few protesters raised slogans against the students outside the premises.

BARMER DALIT CUSTODIAL DEATH

'I could hear my brother screaming ... when we went in, he was lying there, dead'

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 28

THE FAMILY members of Jitendra Khatik, a 26-year-old Dalit man who died in police custody in Rajasthan's Barmer district Thursday, have said in their complaint that they could hear Khatik screaming inside the police station.

Khatik's brother Dharmendra has stated in the complaint that Khatik told him about the torture when he went to the police station on Thursday morning.

"My brother was crying and told me, 'Throughout the night I have been inhumanly beaten and tortured by the police station in-charge and the staff...If you don't

get me released, the policemen will kill me'. By then a policeman came and took me out," reads the FIR filed on the basis of the complaint by Dharmendra.

Dharmendra has stated that shortly after this, as he along with his father and brother were sitting outside the police station, they could hear Khatik screaming.

"We three were sitting outside the police station when we could hear Jitendra screaming from inside. We were sitting there, worried. After some time a policeman came and told us that Jitendra has fallen ill and told us to come inside. When we went in, we saw Jitendra in another room...he was lying on the floor, the police had beaten him to death in illegal custody,"

states the FIR. The police then took Khatik to the hospital where he was declared dead, it adds.

Following the incident, Deep Singh, SHO of the police station, was suspended and Barmer SP Sharad Chowdhary sent the entire staff of the police station to the police lines. The SHO and other police personnel were booked for murder. Later on Thursday night, the state government removed Chowdhary as SP and he was put under awaiting posting orders. A circle officer was also removed.

The FIR has been registered under sections 302 (murder), 342 (punishment for wrongful confinement), 143 (unlawful assembly) of the IPC along with sections of the SC/ST (prevention of atroc-

ities) Act. Till Friday evening, the family of Khatik had not taken his body. They have demanded immediate arrest of the accused, compensation of Rs 1 crore and a government job.

"The post-mortem couldn't be done yet as the family members are not letting it happen unless their demands are fulfilled. Talks are on with them. The case is being investigated by an additional SP of the CID-CB," said Barmer Addl SP Khinvi Singh.

Khatik's brother Champalal said that they won't take back the body till all their demands are fulfilled by the government.

Dalit rights activists have demanded strict action against the accused in the case.

People have hopes from our govt... Dalit atrocity case disappointing: Pilot

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, FEBRUARY 28

RAJASTHAN DEPUTY Chief Minister Sachin Pilot on Friday said that atrocities against Dalits are disappointing and apart from administrative action and inquiries, there is a need to make a political statement.

Pilot's statement, which sounded critical of his own government, came a day after a 26-year-old Dalit man from Barmer district died in police custody with his family members accusing the police of murder. The Rajasthan government is presently drawing severe criticism over incidents of atrocities against Dalits, including a recent incident in Nagaur, in which two Dalit youths were assaulted on the suspicion of theft, and a screwdriver inserted in the anus of one of them.

"Log umeed karte hain hamari sarkar se ki jo garib tabka hai, vishesh roop se Dalit bhai hain, adi-



People have expectations from our govt: Sachin Pilot

vasi bhai hain, dabe hue log hain, wo Congress ke sarkar se umeed karte hain ki unko paryapt suraksha aur maan sammaan diya jai. Hamesha se hamari party ki reeti neeti rahi hai, manifesto hai, itih has gawah hai ki hamesha Congress sarkaron ne sab logo ke raksha karne ka kaam kiya jo samaj mein aaj pichhe hai, dabe kuchle log hain. Lekin Dalit utpidan ka mamla jo samne aya, wo bada nirashjanak hai aur mujhe lagta hai ki sirf prashashanik karyavahiya inquiry karne ke alawa ham logo ko ek ra-

jneetik sandesh dena bahut zaruri hai (People have hopes from our government, that the poor section, especially the Dalit and tribal brothers, oppressed people, they have hopes from the Congress government that they will get proper protection and respect. It has always been a tradition of our party, the manifesto and history is witness to this that Congress governments have worked for the protection of everybody, of those who are oppressed in the society. But the Dalit atrocity case is very disappointing and I feel that besides taking administrative action or inquiry, it is very important that we send a political message). Pilot told reporters in Jodhpur.

He added that it is the responsibility of the government to strike fear in the hearts of those involved in such incidents and to let them know that they won't be spared.

"There is a need to send a message...When the previous

government was in power, then whenever any such incidents happened, we were vocal about it and tried to hold the government accountable. Today we are in the government, so our responsibility increases. People have more expectations from our government that we not only give physical protection to SC/ST, poor, farmers but also protect their honour. If there is fear among people, it should be our priority to allay it and to help build trust in their minds," said Pilot, who is also the president of state Congress.

Pilot added that appropriate action should be taken against any officials found to be involved or negligent in such cases. He said he has submitted a report by a delegation of Congress MLAs on the Nagaur incident to party president Sonia Gandhi.

Pilot also said that time has come to fix accountability and take action against corruption in issues such as sand mining,

UTTARAKHAND

SC warns lawyers over Saturday strike for 35 yrs in district courts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

IRKED BY lawyers holding strike every Saturday for 35 years in Uttarakhand district courts over reasons such as 'bomb blast in Pakistan', 'earthquake in Nepal' or 'condolence references for family members', the Supreme Court on Friday warned advocates of contempt action if they persisted with it.

Holding the strike illegal, the top court sought response from Bar Council of India and all the State Bar Councils within six weeks to suggest the further course of action to deal with the problem of strikes/abstaining from work by the lawyers.

Taking suo motu cognizance of the issue, the top court wondered how the judiciary can afford such strikes for four days a month at a time when it is facing serious problem of pendency. The court said that every month on three or four Saturdays, the advocates are on strike on one pretext or the other

and had the lawyers worked on those days, it would have achieved the goal of speedy justice.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and M R Shah said boycotting courts on every Saturday in the districts of Dehradun, Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar is not justifiable at all and is tantamount to contempt of the courts.

The bench dismissed the appeal by Dehradun Bar Association challenging the Uttarakhand High Court order of September 25 last year, which asked the lawyers and their associations to withdraw the strike in district courts and warned them of contempt action. While dismissing the appeal, it said, "The High Court is absolutely justified in issuing the impugned directions. We are in complete agreement with the view expressed by the High Court and the ultimate conclusion and the directions issued by the High Court."

The bench said despite of law laid down in various verdicts, the court had time and again deprecated the lawyers for going on strikes but it continued unabated.

DEFAMATION CASE FILED BY M J AKBAR

'Moment you call someone media's worst predator then it is per se defamatory'

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 23

FORMER UNION Minister M J Akbar's lawyer Geetha Luthra told a Delhi court that the moment you call someone media's biggest predator, it is "per se defamatory". Journalist Priya Ramani had levelled allegations of sexual misconduct and harassment against Akbar, who subsequently resigned as MoS for External Affairs and filed a defamation case.

Luthra, appearing for Akbar, was making her final arguments before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja. The final argu-

ments could not be concluded and will be taken up on February 29.

Luthra told the court, "What has been said is per se defamatory... the moment you call someone media's worst predator then it is per se defamatory... The fact is all of it has harmed my reputation." Luthra told the court that she has examined people who said in their examination in chief that "they held Akbar in high regard but his reputation was lowered in their eyes".

"Reputation effects not only that person but also others... you are sowing seeds of suspicion... you are doing it to his family, his children and those who interact

with him socially and publicly... It has a cascading effect. Embarrassing questions were asked," she told the court.

Luthra told the court that no due process was followed in the case: "At the toss of a coin, just make an allegation and then let that person suffer for years. To speak at the workplace is always the right of the person and those forums are there."

During the end of the hearing, Luthra told the court, "To attack a person behind their back, to stab them like this to attack him on social media in a casual manner knowing that his whole life will be adversely affected."

ELGAR PARISHAD CASE

Accused sent to judicial custody till March 13

Mumbai: A month after the investigation in the Elgar Parishad case was transferred from the Pune police to the NIA, nine accused in the case were produced before a Mumbai court Friday, which sent them to judicial custody till March 13.

Surendra Gadling, Mahesh Raut, Sudhir Dhawale, Rona Wilson, Arun Ferreria, Vernon Gonsalves, P Varavara Rao, Shoma Sen and Sudha Bharadwaj were shifted from Pune's Yerawada Central Jail to Arthur Road Jail and Byculla Women's Prison in Mumbai on Wednesday.

FROM PAGE ONE

Third quarter GDP growth

growth in the third quarter was marked by tepid growth in manufacturing, electricity and construction, coupled with a contraction in investment and weak exports, the data showed.

Despite the December quarter generally being one of the strongest quarters due to the festival season uptick and higher rural spending driven by the kharif harvest, the continued growth slowdown is seen as worrying, especially in the context of some high frequency

data sets pointing to a rebound.

Economists also warn of the downside risks due to the impact of the COVID-19, with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stating in Mumbai Friday said the outbreak could "emerge as a challenge for India" if issues were not resolved in the coming three weeks.

Barring a minor rise in Q1 GDP growth rate, the 4.7 per cent growth rate for October-December now marks a slowing rate of growth for the seventh consecutive quarter. It's the lowest since 4.3 per cent growth in January-March 2012-13.

For this fiscal, the GDP growth rates were revised up sharply to 5.6 per cent for April-June and 5.1 per cent for July-September from earlier estimates of 5.0 per cent and 4.5 per cent, respectively. This follows the January 31 GDP release, where the growth for 2018-19 was revised down to 6.1 per cent from earlier estimate of 6.8 per cent.

With the growth rate seen at 5 per cent for the whole year, back of the envelope calcula-

tions show that the GDP growth is estimated to remain broadly flat at 4.7 per cent in the fourth quarter as well.

Both the government and the RBI see growth picking up in next financial year with the Economic Survey expecting growth rate to be 6-6.5 per cent and the Reserve Bank of India pegging it at 6 per cent. "We have already bottomed out," Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty told reporters after the NSO released its data.

"At present, it is difficult to conclude whether the risks arising from the rapid spread of the coronavirus for domestic tourism, trade and manufacturing, would outweigh the improved outlook for the agricultural sector and rural spending, engendered by the encouraging outlook for the rabi crop. The continued slowdown in economic growth in Q3 FY2020 suggests that the MPC may well undertake another rate cut, but only when the CPI inflation retraces considerably towards the 4 per cent mark. Therefore, we continue to expect a pause, at least in the

April 2020 and June 2020 policy reviews," said Astita Nayar, Principal economist, ICRA Ltd.

Growth rate in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), which is GDP minus net product taxes and reflects supply-side growth, is seen slowing to 4.9 per cent in 2019-20 from a revised 6.0 per cent growth in the previous year, while for the October-December quarter it is estimated at 4.5 per cent against a 5.6 per cent growth in the same period last year.

The nominal GDP growth rate, which accounts for inflation, is estimated to grow at 7.5 per cent in 2019-20, lower than 11.0 per cent in the previous year.

Sector-wise breakdown showed a pickup in agricultural GVA growth to 3.5 per cent in October-December from 2.0 per cent a year ago and GVA growth in "public administration, defence and other services" to 9.7 per cent in October-December from 8.1 per cent a year ago.

The sharpest fall is seen for manufacturing and electricity sectors, with a contraction of 0.2 per cent and 0.7 per cent, respectively. Even

more worrying is the sharp decline in gross fixed capital formation, a proxy for investment growth, by 5.2 per cent in the October-December quarter as against 11.4 per cent rise in the year-ago period, the data showed.

Economists said though higher rural spending was expected to provide support to growth, the slowdown has continued.

"The only bright spot is private final consumption expenditure which improved to 5.9% in 3QFY20 from 5.0% in 1QFY20. However, investment demand does not show any chance of revival, fixed capital formation (GFCF) declined 5.2% in Q3 FY20 and declined 1.71 per cent in April-December," said Devendra Kumar Pant Chief Economist, India Ratings and Research.

Separate set of data released Friday showed a 2.2 per cent growth recorded by eight core industries in January helped by expansion in the production of coal, refinery products and electricity. The infrastructure sectors had expanded by 1.5 per cent in January 2019.

FACT CHECK, GROUND REALITY

RED SNOW AT ANTARCTIC BASE: THE CAUSE, AND THE CONCERNS



Red snow at Ukraine's Vernadsky Research Base in Antarctica. Andriy Zolov/Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine via Facebook

OVER THE last few weeks, photographs of "red snow" around Ukraine's Vernadsky Research Base, off the coast of Antarctica's northernmost peninsula, have gone viral. "Red snow" or "watermelon" is a phenomenon that has been known since ancient times. Now, it raises concerns about climate change.

WHY IT HAPPENS: Aristotle is believed to be one of the first to give a written account of red snow, over 2,000 years ago. In *History of Animals*, Aristotle wrote: "And, by the way, living animals are found in substances that are usually supposed to be incapable of putrefaction; for instance, worms are found in long-lying snow; and snow of this description gets reddish in colour, and the grub that is engendered in it is red, as might have been expected, and it is also hairy."

What Aristotle described as worms and grub, the scientific world today calls algae. The Greek philosopher was right: it is the algae that give the snow its red

tinge. This alga species, *Chlamydomonas Chlamydomonas nivalis*, exists in snow in the polar and glacial regions, and carries a red pigment to keep itself warm.

WHAT IT SIGNALS: In turn, the red snow causes the surrounding ice to melt faster, a 2017 study from Alaska Pacific University said. The more the algae packed together, the redder the snow. And the darker the tinge, the more the heat absorbed by the snow. Subsequently, the ice melts faster. While the melt is good for the microbes that need the liquid water to survive and thrive, it's bad for glaciers that are already melting from a myriad of other causes, the study said.

These algae change the snow's albedo — which refers to the amount of light or radiation the snow surface is able to reflect back. Changes in albedo lead to more melting. In the melting of snow in the Arctic, the key drivers have been snow and ice albedo, according to a 2016 study in the journal *Nature*.

TIP FOR READING LIST

IGNORED STORIES OF WARTIME RAPE

MANY WRITERS have recounted the horrors of war over the years, but one aspect that has been covered less extensively than others is the mass rape of women and girls. Award-winning foreign correspondent Christina Lamb has now gone into this at length. Currently the chief foreign correspondent for *The Sunday Times*, and co-author (with Malala Yousafzai) of *I am Malala*, Lamb recounts the experiences of women to show how rape is used in modern warfare as a tool to humiliate, oppress and carry out ethnic cleansing.

Our *Bodies, Their Battlefield* is built around Lamb's conversations with survivors first hand. It talks about "comfort women" in Southeast Asia where, during the Second World War, they were enslaved by Japanese soldiers. It looks at what women suffered during the Rwandan genocide, when an estimated quarter of a million were raped. And there are accounts of the Yazidi women and children who witnessed the mass murder of their families before being enslaved by ISIS.

In the process, Lamb also uncovers stories of heroism and courage, such as the Bosnian women who hunted down more than a hundred war criminals, and

a Congolese doctor who treated many rape victims.

The book has deeply impressed English military historian Antony Beevor, himself a veteran who has written extensively on the Second World War. Reviewing the book for *The Spectator*, Beevor writes: "I had assumed, after 40 years of researching and writing about war in the 20th century, that I was prepared for just about any horror. But Christina Lamb's research, into the mass rape of women and young girls in more recent wars and ethnic cleansing shook me to the core. This is the most powerful and disturbing book that I have ever read, and it raises important questions."

Lamb herself acknowledges that the book does not make for easy reading. "This has been in many ways a journey through the worst depravities of man and I thank you for bearing with me, for I know it has not been an easy read," she writes. Quoting this line, *The Guardian* notes in its review: "But silence is the women's worst enemy, and that's why, while some may be tempted to turn away from the horror, this is such an important book."



SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Assam's citizenship test papers

One woman submitted 15 documents, another submitted eight; High Court ruled that neither of them could establish her link with her ancestors. Which papers really work as proof of citizenship in Assam?

TORA AGARWALA
 GUWAHATI, FEBRUARY 28

IN TWO rulings this month, the Gauhati High Court rejected a number of documents as proof of Indian citizenship in Assam. In one case, a woman had submitted 15 documents including voter lists, land revenue documents and PAN card. In the other case, another woman had submitted eight documents. In separate rulings, the court found that they had failed to prove "linkage" to relatives who were Indian citizens.

Are citizenship rules different in Assam?

India has various provisions and dates for citizenship by birth, descent, naturalisation etc. "Assam has a special provision when it comes to citizenship," said Brajendra Prasad Katakey, former Gauhati High Court judge.

This special provision sets the cutoff for citizenship at midnight of March 24, 1971. This date was agreed in the Assam Accord of 1985, signed by the Centre, the Assam government and the All Assam Students' Union after the Assam Movement to expel "foreigners". A Non-Obstante Clause (Section 6A) was inserted in the Citizenship Act, 1955, stating that people who entered Assam between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971 need to register with a Foreigners Regional Registration Office. "This section is disenfranchised for ten years after which they enjoy rights as Indian citizens. Those who enter Assam after 1971 are considered foreigners," Katakey explained.

So, how does one prove his or her citizenship in Assam?

Broadly, two documents are required. The first one needs to show that the applicant's parent, grandparent or ancestor was living in Assam in 1971 or earlier. The second document needs to show that the applicant is indeed a descendant of the parent/ancestor named in the first document. This is called linkage. "Basically, these link documents need to bear the name of the person's pre-1971 ancestor," Katakey said.

For the update of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), published on August 31, 2019, the admissible documents were categorised as List A (pre-1971) and List B (for linkage).

LIST A: This document could be any one among: land records; citizenship certificate; permanent residential certificate; refugee registration certificate; passport; LIC; any licence/certificate issued by a government authority; any document showing service/employment under government/PSU; bank/post office accounts; birth certificate, educational certificate, or court documents — as long as it was issued before March 24, 1971.

LIST B: The link document could be: birth certificate; land document; board/university



Officials sort papers submitted by NRC applicants in Guwahati in 2019. Dasarath Deka

document; Bank/LIC/post office document; electoral roll; ration card; circle officer/gram panchayat secretary certificate in case of married women; or any other legally acceptable document.

"Appearing on a (post-1971) voter list is not a conclusive proof of citizenship. It just means that you have been residing in the place for 60 odd days or six months," said Kamal Nayan Choudhury, a senior advocate at the High Court, "but if you can corroborate it with other (pre-1971) documents like a birth certificate or land documents in the name of your father, then it means something."

How could applicants find papers so old?

NRC authorities digitised all pre-1971 electoral rolls, as well as the 1951 NRC (which exists only in Assam). The authorities introduced an intervention — a number called the legacy code. Using this mechanism, applicants could trace their legacy on an electronic database. This generated a unique code to avoid replication.

While NRC is one test of citizenship in Assam, individuals can also be served a notice to appear before a Foreigners Tribunal, where they need to prove their citizenship under the same rules. In the two High Court cases, both women had been served notices from Foreigners Tribunals, Assam's quasi-judicial bodies that examine complaints against suspected "foreigners".

What papers did the women submit?

Jabeda Begum of Baksa district and Nur Begum of Golaghat district had both been marked D-Voters ("doubtful" citizenship) and thereafter received notices from Foreigners Tribunals.

JABEDA BEGUM: She furnished 15 documents, including voter lists from 1966 and 1971 that showed her parents' names. To establish linkage, she submitted two certificates by the Gaon Bura or village headman who attested that she was indeed the daughter of her parents, and had moved away to another village after marriage. To prove her own identity, she submitted a voter list from 1997 bearing her name, land revenue receipts, bank passbook, PAN card etc. The court observed that she "could not file any documents to link herself with her projected parents."

NUR BEGUM: She submitted eight documents, including a 1966 voter list bearing her grandfather's name. She submitted three documents bearing her name and her father's — a Class IX certificate from a provincialised school, a Gaon Bura certificate, and a caste certificate stating she belongs to the Jolha community. In addition, she submitted the 1997 voter list, which showed the relationship between her projected father and grandfather. The court was not satisfied that these documents established her relationship with her projected father.

Why was the court not satisfied?

Both women had submitted village panchayat certificates as their link document. Often the only document rural married women have, this is from the village headman certifying permanent residency and marriage. In February 2017, the Gauhati High Court had ruled that village panchayat certificates were not admissible proof of citizenship. A number of petitioners appealed against this.

"In November 2017, the Supreme Court passed an order that they were 'valid documents' but would be subject to further

scrutiny," said Syed Burhanur Rahman, a High Court advocate. The Supreme Court order stated that such certificates are "not document for citizenship" but a "supporting document and, for it to be valid, there needs to be proper verification".

How is verification to be done?

According to Rahman, to prove the content of such documents, it needs to be verified orally by the issuing authority.

In Jabeda's case, the village headman gave oral testimony in the Foreigners Tribunal, and so did her brother. The court ruled: "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, 2018]."

In Nur Begum's case, none of the issuing authorities of the three linkage documents appeared in court. Her mother appeared. "All the certificates rendered itself as inadmissible in evidence, inasmuch as, the authors were not examined to prove the Certificates and the contents thereof," the court ruled. "We would reiterate that in a proceeding under the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964 the evidentiary value of oral testimony, without support of documentary evidence, is wholly insignificant. Oral testimony alone is no proof of citizenship" it stated.

According to Rahman, "Section 50 of the Evidence Act, which says that close relatives can give oral testimonies to prove relations, could have been invoked."

Why did Nur Begum's provincialised school document not count?

The court stated: "Although an argument can be made that since the school in question is a provincialised school and on that account the Certificate is admissible in evidence, we may observe that a document which is found admissible is not the end of the matter. The content of the same has to stand proved through the legal testimony of the Issuing Authority."

According to Rahman, the provincialised school document could have been admissible. He referred to a 2009 Supreme Court judgment (*Shyam Lal @ Kuldeep vs Sanjeev Kumar & Ors*) and said: "If a public document — like Nur Begum's school certificate — is admissible in a judicial forum, and that is not rebutted by the other side, then presumption can be drawn in favour of that document."

Choudhury, however, said these documents are usually considered "secondary evidence". "They are admissible only if one produces original gazette documents. With photocopies etc, the issuing authority has to be brought to the court. These are the intricacies of the Evidence Act," he said.

TELLING NUMBERS

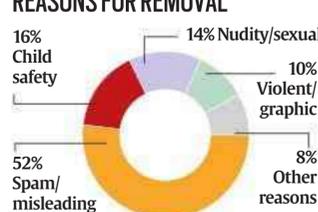
5.8 mn YouTube videos removed in 3 months: where, why

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

YOUTUBE REMOVED over 5.8 million videos between October and December 2019, a newly released Google Transparency Report shows. The highest number was from the United States, at 1.1 million. Videos from India were at third place, at over 7.5 lakh.

Individual YouTube users, described as "trusted flaggers", reported 10.9 million videos during the period. The highest number of flags were received from India. The report does not specify the number of flags received from each country; India is followed by South Korea, the United States and Brazil.

REASONS FOR REMOVAL



Flagged content remains live when it doesn't violate the company's community guidelines. Of the over 5.8 million removed videos, automated flagging systems accounted for the bulk, at 5.3 million. Users re-

moved 3 lakh videos themselves. The remaining 2 lakh-plus were removed after flags from "trusted flaggers" (2 lakh videos), NGOs (12,000) and government agencies (36).

REASONS FOR REMOVAL: Of the videos removed, 52% were considered spam or misleading. Others were removed for reasons such as child safety issues (16%), nudity or sexual content (14% percent) and violent or graphic content (10%).

OTHER REMOVALS: During the period, YouTube removed over 2 million channels, 89% of them for spam and misleading content.

Over 540 million comments, too, were removed. Spam and misleading comments accounted for 59%, followed by hateful and abusive comments (25%).

5,887,021

Videos removed worldwide, October to December 2019

MOST REMOVALS (IN LAKH)

US	11
Netherlands	7.9
India	7.5
Indonesia	5.2
Brazil	3.3
Russia	2.8
Vietnam	1.1
Pakistan	1

AN EXPERT EXPLAINS

How India can be an opportunity for cheetah, and why it will take time



Laurie Marker

What are the global trends in cheetah population, now around 7,000?

There are 31 cheetah populations spread in 23 countries and we all know that population is declining due to human cause at this point in time, like human-wildlife conflict, decline of prey, loss of habitat, illegal wildlife trade etc. For example, in Namibia, 150 cheetahs are taken as legal trophy-hunting, and around 300 more are taken by farmers as laws there say that you can take

the animal if there is fear of loss of life or property. Plus, the illegal trade is coming from the Horn of Africa where cubs would be snatched from the wild, their mother is either killed or not killed...

What role does Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) play in Namibia?

We did baseline work to understand their home ranges, population densities, understand how cheetahs live, what is causing their loss etc. They, as any other predators, would prefer prey rather than livestock. So, it is important to maintain that balance to have enough prey for the predators... Getting rid of predators can actually cause more problems. For instance, chances are that the population of jackal would increase. The more you kill predators, the higher is the jackal population. In Namibia, farmers have started thinking that, 'Oh, my God, I can't take this animal out as

other animals would come from far and wide to fill in that territory.'

In Namibia, there are still issues, but the government is aware that cheetahs are the one species that is being affected by human-wildlife conflict and everybody is making plans. Education is key. In 30 years of CCF being in Namibia, we have worked with 650,000 school students. They are the people running the government now... We have stabilised the population in Namibia. There are an estimated 1,500 cheetahs.

If India goes ahead with its plan to reintroduce the cheetah, what will be the factors at play?

I think it's an experimental view. The country is looking at cheetah as an experiment. The animal went extinct and we do know that the species can be brought back. If India is willing to give it a try, it can be very useful for the species, and obviously very im-

portant for the biodiversity of India's grassland ecosystems and helping cascade facts as to what a top predator can do in helping other species which are in that ecosystem.

It is true that India is in a different continent, but then cheetahs are very adaptable. Just what we know through facilities provided to them in captivity and breeding programmes, cheetahs are adaptable. But they do need to have a place to live. India is providing an opportunity of a new landscape, a landscape which can also assist other species within. It is going to assist the biodiversity here in the country as well. Cheetahs are not aggressive animals, so they are not going to eat people...

If we can maintain our livestock well, there is wildlife here and there are arid landscapes here that are perfect for cheetah. At the same time, cheetahs are also found in a variety of landscape throughout its range there in Africa, from thorn-bush Savannah

to arid Savannah. India's prey base is also very similar... But you have to have more than just hares because hares are not going to feed a mother with cubs.

How can India address such issues?

Put them in a proper habitat and then create awareness, supporting research projects, and realise that it is going to take a number of years to re-establish populations. Look at the population support that has gone on in the United States for species like the California condor. It was nearly extinct. That programme is ongoing for 40 years and, after 40 years, now we can call it successful. We think about things in a short period of time because, remember we are in a fast lane these days, everything is about fast. Cheetahs are fast too, but its reestablishment is going to be long-term and it's not going to be fast. We hope that all of India would support this interesting long-term

experiment for the betterment of India, its people and its wildlife.

Have there been such relocation experiments elsewhere?

There's been a lot of reintroductions in southern part of Africa. Last year, our team members reintroduced cheetah up into Malawi where they were extinct... The Malawi project is still ongoing. Things take time. Extinction takes time and bringing the species back takes more time and more money... But in India, they have a will and a way, they have the roadmap, they have ideas and I believe it's really worthwhile to try to see what happens.

Laurie Marker, settled in Namibia, is the founder of Cheetah Conservation Fund and serves on the IUCN's Species Survival Commission's Cat Specialist Group. She spoke to **Gopal Kateshiya** in Gandhinagar.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

WITH DUE RESPECT

From sedition to habeas corpus, the courts give government the benefit of the doubt. That's deeply troubling

WHEN A HIGH Court bench on Thursday gave Delhi Police what amounted to a four-week breather, on the matter of registration of FIRs against BJP leaders and others who made hate speeches in the run-up to the communal conflagration in the capital, it stepped back from the urgency displayed only a day earlier by another bench of the same court. Late on Wednesday, a bench headed by Justice S Muralidhar had questioned the conduct of the police, got it to listen to video clips of the hate speeches, ordered that a decision on FIRs be taken by Thursday. In effect, the second bench — headed by Chief Justice DN Patel, after Justice Muralidhar's transfer to another court was effected by a late-night notification — acceded to the government argument that immediately lodging FIRs on hate speech was not conducive to restoration of normalcy. The court letting up pressure on the government even as the consequences of the mobilisation of hate and fear take a mounting toll in the city, is deeply troubling. What is more disquieting is that it appears to be part of a building pattern. In too many crucial cases that involve a face-off between government and citizen, on questions of the fundamental rights and liberties of the individual and their protection from arbitrary, whimsical or malevolent transgression by the state, the court has been seen to see things from the government's point of view. Over and over again, it has given the government time, and the benefit of the doubt.

Ever since the detention by government of Kashmiri politicians, business leaders, lawyers and journalists after the August 5 decision, to take another instance, amid an information blackout, the courts have shown a similar lack of alacrity on habeas corpus petitions. This, despite the fact that they concern the most important of all rights, liberty. And in spite of the reality that an adjournment in such a petition effectively extends the detention without determining its legality. The rash of sedition cases being filed against individuals on flimsy grounds hold up the same dismal pattern. Even though the SC has underlined that while ordering an arrest for sedition, a magistrate must satisfy herself that there is clear and immediate incitement to violence, it has done little to enforce its own directions. Most recently, a 19-year-old student, Amulya Leona Noronha, was sent to judicial custody for two weeks in Bengaluru after Section 124A was slapped on her for mere sloganeering. Across states, in the 25 sedition arrests since CAA protests began, analysed by this newspaper, remand orders by magistrates do not ask questions, nor state reasons.

It is in this context that a Supreme Court justice's effusive praise in public of the Prime Minister as a "versatile genius" and "internationally acclaimed visionary" blurs the inviolate line that should mark out the questioning distance between the judiciary and the executive, so necessary for the former's independence. At a time when the political executive wields — and sometimes weaponises — a large mandate and countervailing institutions are under strain, the independence of the judiciary has never looked more indispensable. For, it is the judiciary which has been the custodian of constitutional principles and values, the only protection the citizens, especially the powerless and the defenceless, have against the powers that be. That needs underlining, with all due respect.

SLOWER STILL

As growth declines to 4.7 per cent in the third quarter, NSO expects that economy has bottomed out. There are risks

INDIA'S ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN deepened further in the third quarter of the current financial year. The economy grew at 4.7 per cent in the October-December quarter, down from the revised estimate of 5.1 per cent in the second quarter. The picture is, however, much worse than what the headline numbers suggest. Growth continues to be propped up by higher government spending.

At the aggregate level, gross value added grew by 4.5 per cent in the third quarter, down from 4.8 per cent in the previous quarter. But excluding public administration, defence and other services, which largely connote government spending, value added by the rest of the economy grew by a mere 3.7 per cent in the third quarter, down from 5.2 per cent in the same quarter last year. The manufacturing sector continues to disappoint, contracting for two consecutive quarters. For the full year, the sector is expected to grow barely at one per cent, down from 5.7 per cent in the last year. Construction activity also slowed down reflecting the continued dismal performance of the real estate sector. The other worrying aspect is that gross fixed capital formation, which represents investment in the economy, has now contracted for two straight quarters, with the decline accelerating. The NSO now expects investments to contract by 0.6 per cent in 2019-20, after growing by 9.8 per cent in the previous year, underscoring the continued weakness in investment activity.

The latest data suggests that the statistics office believes that the economy has bottomed out. Gross value added is expected to pick up to 5 per cent in the fourth quarter, up from 4.5 per cent in the third quarter. Data of the eight core sectors, which have now grown for two consecutive months, offer some encouragement. However, there are downside risks. For one, the Centre's revenues may well fall short of the revised estimates. This may impinge on its ability to maintain its spending at current levels in the fourth quarter. Second, the full impact of the coronavirus is yet to play out. Economic activity in February and March is likely to be impacted directly and indirectly, depending on the duration and intensity of its spread. Disruptions in supply chains and lower external demand may further add to domestic issues.

DON'T MISS MARIA

Sharapova is retiring from tennis too early. Other arenas await

IN AN ERA where the average retiring age of a tennis player is rising, Maria Sharapova, just 32, has decided to call it quits. The end comes just as suddenly as when she first announced her entry on the big stage, with that 2004 Wimbledon win over Serena Williams, then just 17. But she always had the requisite skills to make it big — the towering serve that came with her 6-foot-2 frame, the booming groundstrokes, the grunt that reverberated inside a crowded yet silent stadium. The arenas she played in were always packed. Mental fortitude helped her excel, so much so that of the five Grand Slam titles she won, the only major she won twice was the French Open, where she had once described herself as a "cow on ice."

The accolades made her the first Russian woman to scale the summit in a sport dominated by the US. The beginning of the end started when she failed a drug test at the 2016 Australian Open and was handed a 15-month ban. But her brand was so widely popular that she was granted wild cards when she returned to the tour. Sharapova was a name that brought fans to the stands. Unfortunately for the women's game and the marketing people, the form and consistency of play did not return. As of today, she's ranked a low 373 in the singles chart — the last time she had gone lower was in August 2002.

For most, she's retiring from the game too early, despite enjoying a glittering career that has spanned almost 18 years. The tennis may be over, but there's a whole wide world waiting for her — endorsement deals, fashion shows, and of course, her own line of candy, Sugarpova. Without her, though, tennis stadia around the world will fall a bit more silent.

One country, two viruses

China's handling of coronavirus, in contrast to SARS, has been effective, should be a template for others



THOMAS ABRAHAM

MAO ZEDONG FAMOUSLY declared that a revolution was not a dinner party, but a brutal enterprise. Mao's current successor as China's leader, Xi Jinping has clearly taken the dictum to heart and adapted it to the task of stamping out the new coronavirus before it spreads more widely.

China's lockdown of roughly 60 million people in Wuhan and other cities in Hubei province for more than a month now is without precedent in the history of public health. The best way to stop a virus from spreading from person to person, is to give it no place to spread to. This is achieved by isolating those who are infected and quarantining those who might be infected. In China, though, the control has moved beyond traditional quarantine to a cordon sanitaire — an exclusion zone people cannot travel into or get out of.

In most countries, this simply would not work for a period this long and a population that large. Wuhan is a city of 11 million people, slightly larger than Chennai or Bengaluru. It would be inconceivable to think of cutting off transportation in and out of these cities, or asking people to stay at home for even a day, let alone a month. Like India, most countries in the world have neither the political control to impose their will on people this way, nor the administrative mechanism to enforce this degree of control.

The human cost of such a strategy is immense. The fear induced by being unable to escape from a place where a new virus is circulating is immense. The worries and stresses of everyday life multiply one hundred-fold when everything from shopping for food to occupying children stuck at home becomes a challenge. The slightest cough, cold or fever can trigger panic.

The ethics of the cordon sanitaire in Wuhan, as well as the quarantining by Japanese authorities of the cruise ship *Diamond Princess*, will be debated for years after this particular outbreak is over.

But whatever its human and financial

cost, China's actions in the first month of the outbreak helped to slow the spread of the virus within the country as well as internationally. Critics have accused China of covering up and playing down the virus in the first month, threatening whistle blowers and fudging patient figures. Part of this flows from the general suspicion in the West (and India) of anything China says or does. A look at the timeline of events in December last year, when the virus first started causing disease, shows a fairly rapid response.

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A look at the timeline of events in December last year, when the virus first started causing disease, shows a fairly rapid response. The first cases appeared in late November and early December. But because the symptoms of the new disease mimicked those of flu and pneumonia, which are extremely common in the winter months, it took till the end of December for doctors to realise that there was something different about this pneumonia: That all the initial cases could be traced back to a seafood market in Wuhan. On December 31, the Chinese government informed the WHO, and the world, of the existence of a form of pneumonia of unknown cause, and also told the people of Wuhan to wear masks if they had symptoms and seek medical attention.

For the world, the big breakthrough from China came on January 7, when researchers in Wuhan identified the virus as a new coronavirus — and two days later shared its genetic sequence with the world. The sharing of the genetic sequence allowed labs all over the world to develop testing kits to detect the disease. It also put countries on the alert for travellers with the disease, without which the new coronavirus would have spread much quicker and farther than it has so far.

The Chinese response to SARS in 2003, in contrast to this, was a cover-up. The disease circulated for nearly three months, enabled by government secrecy and censorship. When travellers from China brought the disease first to Hong Kong and from there to other cities across the globe, there was no warning. It was only after the disease spread

in Hong Kong, that scientists and public health experts began to decipher this new virus. China, fortunately, learned the lessons for SARS and put together systems to identify and respond to this new disease quickly.

Public health officials all over the world, including in India, should study the speed with which China put together an infrastructure to deal with this new disease. Modern, well-equipped hospitals dedicated to coronavirus patients were constructed in weeks. Centralised information and logistics systems and systems to ensure coordination between multiple levels of government — from the central government to provincial and municipal governments, were put into place and seem to have worked reasonably smoothly, given the chaotic and complex atmosphere of a disease outbreak.

The way China has tackled this disease has been an "all of government, all of society approach", in the words of Bruce Aylward, the leader of the WHO team that recently spent two weeks in the country. It was, as he described it, "a very old-fashioned approach", but one that had "prevented at least tens of thousands, but probably hundreds of thousands of cases."

The disease is now popping up in countries that have not had great experience in dealing with infectious diseases, or the systems that China has in place. The rapidity with which coronavirus cases have increased in Iran is a case in point. In all probability, it is only a matter of time before India sees new cases. The Indian health system, as in China, is multi-layered. Some states like Kerala have strong public health infrastructure and a strong response capability. Many other states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar do not have strong public health systems. They will find it difficult to respond, and will learn that diseases, like revolution, can be brutal.

Abraham is the author of *Twenty First Century Plague, the Story of SARS*

MANUFACTURED ENEMIES

Pakistan is hunting down groups it sees as acting on India's behalf



KHALED AHMED

AVINASH PALIWAL OF the London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in his revealing book *My Enemy's Enemy: India in Afghanistan from the Soviet Union to the US Withdrawal*, has confirmed in a way what Pakistan's Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has already expressed through his campaign of wire-fencing Pakistan's western border — the Durand Line. It appears that Pakistan is no longer concerned about the already-fenced border with India. It is now worried about an Indian-induced ingress from Afghanistan, as demonstrated by the arrest of alleged Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav in Balochistan in 2016.

The "western (border) threat" perception has resulted in the hunting down of the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM), suspected of being funded by India from across the Durand Line. On January 25, the police arrested Member National Assembly (MNA) Mohsin Dawar and 30 others as they protested against the detention of MNA Manzoor Pashteen, who had been arrested earlier from Peshawar and accused of using threatening and derogatory language against the state during a gathering in Dera Ismail Khan on January 18.

The PTM arrests have disturbed the civil society in Pakistan and brought the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of Imran Khan under pressure from conscientious objectors to "negotiate with PTM" instead of hunting its members down as "Indian agents". Dawar and Pashteen agitate for the "rights of ethnic Pashtuns affected by Pakistan's war against the Taliban in the northwest". The PTM was

formed in 2016 by a group of eight university students in the northwestern city of Dera Ismail Khan, all eight originally from South Waziristan, most adversely affected by Pakistan's "hosting" of the Afghan Taliban movement.

The Pashtun society of North-South Waziristan was destroyed by the "nesting" of such local warlords as Baitullah Mehsud and Afghan warlords like the Haqqani brothers. The PTM wants life in the Tribal Areas restored to normalcy. Pakistan has endured terrorism unleashed by these "guest" warriors. Local warlords joined the socially destructive routine of "guests", killing normal life. Warlord Hakimullah Mehsud killed ex-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 2007 in Rawalpindi through terrorists sent from North Waziristan.

As in Balochistan, the PTM also protests the "disappearances" of innocent people protesting their devastated lives under the Pakistan army finally decided to get rid of its "guests" in 2014. But the protesters are being seen as "agents of the enemy" and killed, as it happened in the case of one Naqeebullah Mehsud in Karachi in 2018, while his killer police officer has gone unpunished.

Paliwal notes that India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a "policy shift" in 2016, indicating "interference" inside Pakistan just as Pakistan had "interfered" in Kashmir. On August 15 that year, he said: "I want to express my gratitude to the people of Balochistan, Gilgit, and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, for the way they wholeheartedly

thanked me, the way they expressed gratitude to me... people of a distant land I haven't even seen... when they thank the Indian prime minister, it's an honour for the 125 crore people of the country."

Paliwal writes: "What for, and how, the people of these regions had thanked Modi was unsaid. The implicit message was that India was capable of, and perhaps already exercising (both via Afghanistan and otherwise), covert intervention in Pakistan's internal troubles. Whether this was empty rhetoric, as in the 1960s when Indian parliamentarians sought to support the Pashtun and Baloch insurgencies in the wake of the 1965 war, or a true shift in India's security practices like the early 1970s when Indira Gandhi proactively supported the Baloch insurgency, is yet to be seen. But if one is to go by optics, India was now intent on exploiting Pakistan's fear of strategic encirclement."

It is sad that the PTM is being seen as an "enemy agent". In April 2019, a warning was delivered by the army to the PTM directly, warning the group that its "time is up", alleging that the human rights organisation was being funded by foreign intelligence agencies. The PTM leaders asked for "evidence" for this accusation, but were ignored.

Pakistan and India might think it good strategy to use tribesmen in Afghanistan and Pakistan to get even with each other; but the common man is suffering and is being punished for protesting his uprooted life.

The writer is consulting editor, Newsweek Pakistan

FEBRUARY 29, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

HOSTAGE CRISIS

GUNFIRE BROKE OUT shortly before afternoon at the Dominican Republic's embassy in Bogota, where 60 persons, including at least 16 ambassadors, were being held hostage by leftist guerrillas. The guerrillas took the embassy during a diplomatic reception. An Associated Press newsman who called the embassy and talked with a guerrilla who identified himself as commander number one said that government snipers had opened fire on the embassy. The reporter could hear the gunfire. The guerrilla spokesman said the attackers were still awaiting a sign of willingness on the part of the Colombian government to meet their demands which in-

clude \$50 million in ransom, freedom for 311 political prisoners, withdrawal of hundreds of police and soldiers around the embassy and safe passage out of Colombia.

NEW UP GOVERNOR

C P N SINGH, the new governor of Uttar Pradesh, told his first press conference that the restoration of law and order would be his first priority. The governor promised that it would be his endeavour to make the lives of people in general and housewives in particular easier by ensuring them security of life and property and making essential commodities available. The 79-year-old governor was administered the oath of office and se-

crecy by Justice Satish Chandra, chief justice of the Allahabad High Court, at Raj Bhavan.

LEFT IN ASSAM

WHILE WALL SLOGANS like "CPI, CPM quit Assam" are not ubiquitous as yet, it is generally accepted that the current movement has spoiled the CPM's broth. Having been branded as a party of "militant Bengali nationalism", the CPM is organisationally paralysed. "The CPM citadel is entirely shattered and all its leaders have gone into self-exile", says a triumphant looking Nibaran Bora, chairman of the Purbanchaliya Loka Parishad, one of the two major regional parties that have emerged in Assam.



17 THE IDEAS PAGE

Remaking the riot

Violence in Delhi indicates a new pattern: It is intended to polarise as well as to teach a lesson



CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT

THE RECENT DELHI riots have been compared to the anti-Sikh riots of 1984 and the 2002 anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat. Their common features are obvious. First, in all the three cases, the police remained passive or joined the rioters. Second, these rioters were mostly activists connected to the ruling party. Third, in all the three cases, nobody was spared, not even the oldest members of the communities whose houses were set on fire. Last but not least, in the three cases, well-armed outsiders attacked pockets where members of the minority community lived in large numbers. In 1984 and 2002, thousands of people died as violence continued unabated for days, and, sporadically, for weeks. The Delhi riots appear to be part of a new pattern.

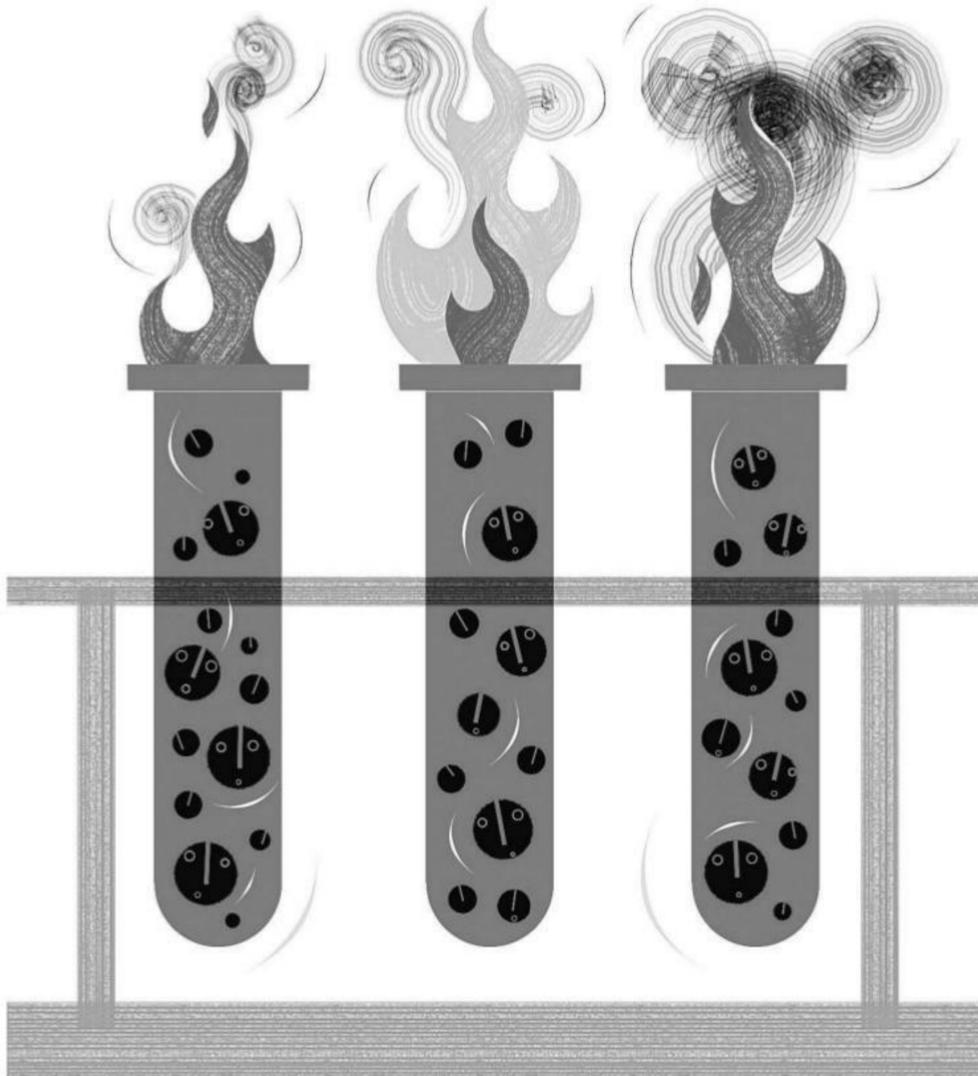
This pattern emerged in the 1980s when communal violence became a tool to polarise voters. This technique was systematically used during the 1989 election campaign in places including Indore and Jaipur. The maps of riots and the BJP's electoral success almost overlapped them. A similar "coincidence" was clear in Gujarat in 2002. Thereafter, no mass violence of a similar magnitude has taken place. So, why has a previous pattern come back, though in a different form?

Atal Bihari Vajpayee had blamed the Gujarat riots for the BJP's defeat in the 2004 general election. However, some BJP leaders were keen to reinvent the polarisation strategy. After all, their party had lost the election despite the economic success — the BJP's campaign slogan was "India Shining". The 2004 results showed that economic achievements did not guarantee electoral victory. For instance, in UP, the BJP's tally fell from 22 seats to 10 seats. So, the BJP leaders — Vajpayee retired soon after the poll debacle — proposed a revival of the polarisation strategy. The idea was to step up low-intensity riots.

Uttar Pradesh, a key state due to its large number of Lok Sabha seats, was the testing ground for this strategy that combined victimisation, outrage and polarisation. In their work, *Everyday Communalism: Riots in Contemporary Uttar Pradesh*, Sudha Pai and Sajjan Kumar describes the UP "model" of riot: "Rather than instigating major and violent state-wide riots as in the earlier phase, the BJP-RSS have attempted to create and sustain constant, low-key communal tension together with frequent, small, low-intensity incidents out of petty everyday issues that institutionalise communalism at the grass roots, to keep the pot boiling."

This approach was motivated by political intentions, but not just that. The aim was no longer only to polarise society prior to elections for immediate electoral gains. The goal had also become the promotion of social and even "civilisational" majoritarianism in a bid to permanently Hinduise the country by terrorising minorities and delegitimising their cultures, and secularism — to create what I call a de facto Hindu Rashtira.

The second distinctive feature of this "model" has to do with the actors involved. To instill Hindutva ideology deep in the society, they had to further integrate the masses and promote what Pai and Kumar call the "non Brahmanical Hindutva". The best way to achieve this was to proceed in a way the local Sangh Parivar leaders could recruit peripheral support for recurrent mobilisation. "This group often trains a larger fuzziest group, often the educated, unemployed youth in backward states such as UP who are treated as a reservoir of support during agitations



CR Sasikumar

and lie dormant during lean times," Pai and Kumar write.

Third, these men were invited to take part in frequent and regular campaigns — against cow slaughter, conversion to religions other than Hinduism, inter-community marriages and so on. These mobilisations created an atmosphere of tension between Hindus and Muslims, making it possible to provoke a riot at the first available opportunity, as in Mau in 2005 and in Gorakhpur in 2007, and even Muzaffarnagar in 2013. The persistence of tension and the frequency of clashes were intended to prevent any return to normalcy — hostility between the two communities was supposed to become the rule, the new normal under which Hindus and Muslims were supposed to avoid interaction, a process running parallel to ghettoisation.

Implementation of this plan translated into a recrudescence of low intensity riots, enabling the Sangh Parivar to polarise society while staying "under the radar", except when the number of casualties reached levels nobody could ignore — like in 2013 when more than 55 people died in western UP. Even when the violence was somewhat contained, the societal effects resulting from it were long term, as evident from the unprecedented ghettoisation of the Muzaffarnagar riots started in rural parts of western UP.

In UP, between 2007 and 2017, the number of riots remained in the range of 580 to 943 annually, while the number of casualties remained much smaller than in Gujarat 2002 — 37 in 2012 to 91 in 2017. 2017 was a bad

year because it was a very important election year for BJP, and particularly for Adityanath. Incidentally, the description of the rioters that Pai and Singh offer fit in well in the case of the Hindu Yuva Vahini cadres. The recent Delhi riots partly fit in the Pai and Singh "model". Indeed, their timing may not be explained only by the conflict between anti- and pro-CAA activists; it has much to do with the atmosphere created by BJP leaders in the context of the election campaign. But this time, riots took place after the polling days. They took place in some of the few consistencies that the BJP had won or lost with small margins. In that sense, the Delhi riots have initiated a new pattern: They are not only intended to polarise, but also to teach a lesson to the Other. These ideas — of "revenge" and "lesson" — take us back to the killings of 1984 and 2002. The magnitude of Delhi riots may be different, but its impact in terms of ghettoisation will probably be equally strong. Mixed neighbourhoods are bound to further shrink in Delhi as they have in most of northern and western India (*Muslims in Indian Cities*, edited by Christophe Jaffrelot and Laurent Gayer). In that sense, the Delhi riots recall the long-term effect that the UP "model" of the 2000s was intended to achieve. The problem has become structural indeed.

The writer is senior research fellow at CERI-Sciences Po/CNRS, Paris and professor of Indian Politics and Sociology at King's India Institute

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The 24 deaths and hundreds of injuries seen as mobs set fire to mosques and businesses and invaded Muslim homes result from the slow accretion of loathing, indulged and fostered by political leaders." — THE GUARDIAN

Benched by the Bar

Bar associations in Karnataka instructing members not to represent accused in sedition cases violates constitutional morality



JAYNA KOTHARI

THE EVENTS OVER the last couple of months in the context of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have been unprecedented in the country. Civil society, students, activists, ordinary people from all walks of life have been protesting peacefully against the CAA, without a break, in so many parts of India. We have never witnessed this level of a collective outcry against the discrimination that the new citizenship law brings.

We have also not witnessed what has been happening in Karnataka over the past couple of months. Courts, which are meant to be places of refuge from injustice, a place for all to be heard and a forum where every person — including a person accused of the most heinous crime — can receive a fair trial, are turning into mob houses, preventing legal representation for accused persons.

In two separate instances, advocates' associations in Karnataka have passed resolutions preventing any legal representation for persons who were involved in protests against the CAA and charged under different criminal offences. The first instance was in Mysuru in January, when a young student who was participating in an anti-CAA protest, holding a poster stating "Free Kashmir", and many others were charged with sedition. The Mysuru District Bar Association on January 16, passed a resolution directing all lawyers to not to file a vakalath and appear for this student, labelling her as "anti-national". The Bar Association went even further and attached a copy of the resolution at multiple locations in the Mysuru City Court Complex and sent messages through print/electronic media to all its member advocates not to represent her.

Thereafter, this month, when two Kashmiri students were charged with sedition again in relation to protests against the CAA, the Hubli Bar Association passed a resolution ordering lawyers not to appear for these students and represent them. The students were beaten up and manhandled when they were produced before the court. Despite directions from the Karnataka High Court permitting lawyers to represent them and directing that there should be police protection provided, the lawyers were manhandled and faced violence when they attempted to file bail applications for them.

This pattern of bar associations pass-

ing resolutions asking lawyers to not represent the accused, coupled with violence in the court premises, is completely illegal. While these resolutions have no binding effect of, the violence in the court premises would deter any lawyer engaged by the accused to appear for them, or put such lawyers' life in danger. It would certainly ensure that any local lawyer from the district bar would not dare to appear for them.

Not only is such action illegal and criminal when coupled with violence, it also is a violation of a fundamental right to legal representation guaranteed to all accused persons. Article 22 (1) of our Constitution guarantees that no person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest nor shall he be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of their choice. Hence, every accused has a fundamental right to legal representation and it is rather horrifying to see that bar associations are themselves seeking to deprive accused persons of this precious right.

The Supreme Court in the case of *Mohd. Sukur Ali v. State of Assam* (2011) held that in a criminal case, even if the counsel engaged for the accused does not appear for any reason, the court should not decide a criminal case against the accused in the absence of his/her counsel and in such a situation the court should appoint another counsel as amicus curiae to defend the accused. This is because the liberty of a person is the most important feature of our Constitution and it cannot be taken away without giving the accused a proper trial — which means a trial with legal representation. A hearing without a lawyer representing an accused would be one without due process in the constitutional sense. The Supreme Court held that it is only a lawyer who is conversant with law and can properly defend an accused in a criminal case and if a criminal case (whether a trial or appeal/revision) is decided against an accused in the absence of a counsel, there will be a violation of the accused's right to life and liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.

The Karnataka High Court remarked in the hearings that even Ajmal Kasab, accused in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks case, was provided with a senior advocate to represent him when he did not have legal representation, and that is the true import of the fundamental right to legal representation. As lawyers and members of the legal profession, it is our duty to uphold and protect the legal and constitutional rights of all. There can be no situation under any circumstance where the right to legal representation of any accused can be denied.

The writer is a senior advocate

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RIGHT'S HYPOCRISIES

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Secular hypocrisies" (IE, February 27). Even as the writer accuses others of indulging in propaganda, his own political party has thrived on the propaganda that Hindus are threatened. That those who oppose the CAA actually oppose relief to victims of religious persecution is another example of right-wing propaganda. The hypocrisy of the ruling dispensation is obvious from their avoiding questions like why have only those neighbouring countries been considered that have Muslim majorities or why is religious persecution the only criterion.

Abdullah Ghazali, Patna

DARK TIMES

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Dishonouring a pledge", (IE February 28). The desecration of a mosque in Delhi by rioters is unacceptable. The riot could occur only due to a lack of law and order. The Delhi police and the Centre must be held responsible. At least 38 people lost their lives. Even the judiciary is giving the impression that it is falling short when it comes to protecting fundamental rights.

Abhayjeet Singh, Delhi

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Dishonouring a pledge" (IE, February 28). The social contract embedded in our Constitution demands that the primary duty of state is to protect the life, liberty and property of citizens. The government seems to have breached this trust through its inept handling of the anti-CAA protests and the consequent riots. It is high time that the government reaches out to all sections and allays their apprehensions, however misplaced they may be.

Tushar Chaudhary, Meerut

LETTER OF THE WEEK

A BETTER POLICE

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Cop out in Delhi" (IE, February 27). The National Human Rights Commission has made it clear that "with every passing year, the evidence before the Commission mounts that there must be major police reforms in the country if the human rights situation is to be improved". In the light of events that have happened in the past few months, a layperson no longer trusts a policeman with his/her life. We should not forget that police force comes from the same society we live in. A khaki uniform does not lead to change of mentality. But if we do not begin now, with the police, then with who and when?

Ankita Srivastava, Delhi

SHIFTING BLAME

THIS REFERS TO the article, "The guilty of Delhi" (IE, February 28). The author has tried to put the blame for all the nationwide protests against the CAA, riots in Delhi, etc, on the Opposition. While it is the job of the government to control the riots or answer the questions put forth by people and the media, the author is questioning the Opposition. The author should introspect and answer: Since when has opposing the Acts of Parliament the same as opposing the democratic values of India? In fact, he should understand that it is the Opposition that drives democracy.

Madhuri Bhasme, Nagpur

THE Urdu PRESS

DELHI VIOLENCE

INQUILAB, ON FEBRUARY 28 in an editorial titled, "Delhi violence and a mooh-taakti police — who is responsible?", writes that it is "surprising that in a part of the capital city, this murderous display of hate took place when the world's most powerful person, US President Donald Trump, was present in India with his family". The editorial asserts that, "the Delhi police, known for its dedication, took a big blow to its image as it appeared that someone had tied its hands. Delhi's true face has come to the fore..." It ends by claiming "the police is protecting the masterminds instead of arresting them".

The editor of *Inquilab*, Shakeel Shamsi, in a signed column on the same day, writes about "a young man Anees in Khajuri khas, whose house got burnt". Anees is a BSF soldier who was also posted in Kashmir "ready to take terrorists' bullets...". Shamsi writes about how someone ready to defend India from her enemies would have felt. But, he says, neither the media nor the police care about this: "Goons have collected to get riots organised saying Hindutva ko khatra hai... riots are raging and the police is not listening." Commenting on AAP MLA Tahir

Hussain, and on the fact that stones were found on his roof, Shamsi says: "He had no weapons... if, after calling the police, they don't listen... will he not collect stones? This is making the victim the aggressor."

Munsif, on February 26, writes: "Home Minister Amit Shah speaks of controlling the situation fully, but the question is, why was this allowed to happen? Why was Kapil Mishra allowed to vitiate the atmosphere? Why was no case registered against him after his inflammatory speech? Many such questions keep the BJP in the dock." The editorial says that Mishra's "ultimatum was not a secret, it was shown on TV, but no party leader nor the police objected".

Etemad, on February 27, cites "evidence (of police connivance) in the form of eyewitnesses... We saw this in UP too... how, due to government and administration's partisanship, the situation became violent". The editorial says that the "various sections in the country believe that an attempt is being made to stop anti-CAA demonstrations through this... Delhi's peaceful environment is being demolished. We need the Delhi police to be impartial and take the matter to its logical conclusion." This logical conclusion, the editorial says, "is putting them in the

dock of the accused in court, so that the confidence of minorities is won back".

Siasat, on February 26, also speaks of the violence in Delhi: "Chief Minister Kejriwal should have been seen at violence-ridden spots, taking stock of the partisan role of the police. But CM Kejriwal limited himself to tweets. The elected leader's silence is what is sad." The paper also speaks of how "in UP we saw compensation being charged for property damage, but here there has been nothing for so much burnt public property".

Urdu Times, on February 27, too has an edit on 'Delhi violence and Supreme Court'. The *Roznama Rashtriya Sahara* also had editorials on February 26 and 27 on the Delhi violence — and how Delhi is embarrassed at such heinous nature of events.

NO TO NRC AND NPR

THE EDITORIAL IN *Inquilab* on February 26 speaks of the Bihar resolution against NPR/NRC as a big story: "It is for the first time in India's history that opposition parties have presented an adjournment motion in Bihar, which was accepted, and unanimously. The motion says that there will be no NRC in the state and NPR's format will remove those

columns which have been added after 2010."

The newspaper says this step is a truly big one. It writes: "The resolution was possible as Nitish Kumar shares this view on the NPR. But, despite this, this is no ordinary step on part of the assembly and the Bihar government." The editorial concludes by saying that "PM Modi had said much earlier that his government was undecided on this. But his home minister, Amit Shah, declared the chronology is such that the NPR process will lead to the NRC. There are many dimensions to this resolution but the biggest is the defeat of the BJP, which has burnished Nitish's image as a leader who will not be cowed down."

Siasat, on February 19, carried an editorial before the Bihar resolution which stated that the "NPR is the first step on the CAA ladder". It wrote about how "Kerala has decided to not allow the NPR. Telangana too must state its position clearly against the black laws, so the BJP is forced to its knees". The editorial writes that "the police must state clearly what the alternative is to street protests (opposing the CAA) if the anti-CAA protests are not allowed there."

Compiled by Seema Chishti

18 THE WORLD

END WOMEN INEQUALITY: UN CHIEF

Women's inequality should shame everyone in the 21st century as it is 'stupid' and 'unacceptable', UN chief Antonio Guterres has said, as he called for removing this stain. He declared himself a proud feminist and called for men everywhere to support women's rights. "Just as slavery and colonialism were a stain on previous centuries, women's inequality should shame us all in the 21st century. Because it is not only unacceptable; it is stupid," the Secretary General said

TOP OF THE WORLD



Jimmy Lai

HONG KONG Publisher held over protest march

Hong Kong: Hong Kong's *Apple Daily* newspaper says the outspoken head of its publishing group, Jimmy Lai, has been held by police Friday over his participation in a protest march in August that was part of a months-long pro-democracy movement. The paper said Lai, the founder of Next Media, was picked up from his home by officers at around 7 am and taken to a police station. It also said the vice chairman of the opposition Labour Party, Lee Cheuk-yan, and others were also detained at in connection with an August 31 march, which led to violence between protesters and police.

MEXICO Man jailed for murder of journalist

Culiacan: One of the murderers of acclaimed journalist and AFP contributor Javier Valdez Cardenas was sentenced Thursday to 14 years and eight months in prison by a Mexican court. Heriberto Picos Barraza, nicknamed "El Koala", was one of the perpetrators of the crime committed in the north-western city of Culiacan in May 2017, according to the prosecution. He had served as a driver for two men, Juan Francisco Picos Barrueto and Luis Idefonso Sanchez, who shot Valdez outside his office. Valdez, 50, was one of the most prominent chroniclers of Mexico's deadly drug war.

USA Bloomberg might not spend to help Sanders

San Francisco: Billionaire Mike Bloomberg said Thursday he might not spend money to assist Bernie Sanders if Sanders is the Democratic presidential nominee, days after a Sanders adviser said they wouldn't want help. Sanders adviser Jeff Weaver said Tuesday that it would be a "hard no" on accepting Bloomberg's financial assistance. "What do you mean, I'm going to send a check to somebody and they're not going to cash the check? I think I wouldn't bother to send the check," Bloomberg said.

CANADA Govt to no longer pay for security of Harry, Meghan

Ottawa: Canada will no longer pick up the security tab for protecting Prince Harry and his wife Meghan starting in March, the office of Public Safety Minister Bill Blair said Thursday. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex have been living in an oceanside mansion in westernmost British Columbia since November. Last month, they made a shock exit from life as working royals. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have provided security for the couple in this country under the internationally protected persons convention.

ANTI-RUSSIA PROTESTS IN ISTANBUL, ERDOGAN ON PHONE WITH PUTIN

Airstrike kills 33 Turkish troops in Idlib, NATO calls for de-escalation

Ankara says Russia knew of troop presence, did nothing to stop attack; Moscow rejects assertion

AGENCIES
ISTANBUL, FEBRUARY 28

Turkey vowed on Friday to resist further aggression against its troops in northwestern Syria, a day after Russian or Syrian air and artillery strikes killed 33 Turkish soldiers, bringing Russia and Turkey close to open conflict.

NATO ambassadors met on Friday in an emergency session called by Turkey, a member state. They expressed "solidarity" with Turkey, condemned the airstrikes, and called for a de-escalation of the conflict and for a renewed cease-fire. But they did not approve any military action, let alone the no-fly zone that Turkey has demanded over Idlib, the region where the strike occurred.

Turkish officials have warned that if the pressure in Idlib is not resolved, Turkey will not be able to hold back Syrian refugees from forging across borders into Europe, which officials in Brussels have interpreted as a veiled threat to leverage a refugee crisis for cooperation from NATO.



Turkish military forces in Syria's Idlib Province this week. AP

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and President Vladimir V Putin of Russia spoke to each other in an effort to calm tensions. According to the Russian side, they agreed to hold a summit meeting in the near future.

But emotions were still running high in Turkey on Friday. "We will not leave the blood of our brave soldiers on the ground," Fahrettin Altun, the director of communications in the Turkish

presidency, wrote in a thread of comments posted on Twitter. "The international community must act to protect civilians and impose a no-fly zone."

Turkish protesters in Istanbul converged on the Russian Consulate there early Friday, chanting "Murderer Russia! Murderer Putin!"

Russia denied any role in the attacks, saying on Friday that none of its jets were operating in

EXPLAINED NATO council faces tightrope walk

ANKARA'S ANGER over the attack has led to talk of whether Turkey would launch full-scale attacks on Russia-backed troops in Syria. In its emergency talks, NATO has avoided committing additional support for Turkey.

But with Ankara reportedly pressuring Europe by allowing refugees to enter Europe, the alliance faces a difficult situation. It is deeply divided about Turkey's role in Syria, and is reluctant about entering a conflict of Turkey's making, as per reports. Erdogan has also tested NATO by purchasing the Russian-made S400, which threatens the alliance's security. Now, while NATO has said it will protect its interests, experts said it must balance a need to reduce tensions as well as stave off internal crisis.

the area when they occurred. "Aircraft of the Russian Air Force did not engage in combat in the Behun vicinity," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

Turkey has blamed the Syrian government for the strikes. But it has also indirectly blamed Russia, saying it knew of the presence of Turkish troops and did nothing to stop the attack even after being alerted. Turkey's defense minister, Hulusi Akar, said the attack

was carried out even though the Turkish troops had coordinated their location with Russian forces on the ground.

The Russian Defense Ministry rejected Turkey's assertion. "Immediately after obtaining information about injured Turkish servicemen, the Russian side took comprehensive measures to completely stop shelling by the Syrian military," its statement said.

Turkey opens border, migrants head to Europe

REUTERS
ANKARA/ISTANBUL, FEB 28

Hundreds of migrants in Turkey started arriving on the borders with Greece and Bulgaria on Friday after a senior Turkish official said Ankara would no longer abide by a 2016 EU deal and stop refugees from reaching Europe.

The migrants, some carrying small children and carrier bags, trekked along roads out of Istanbul and through fields, in scenes reminiscent of the 2015 refugee crisis, when more than a million people fleeing wars and poverty sought asylum in Europe.

Some wore face masks, in an apparent attempt to guard

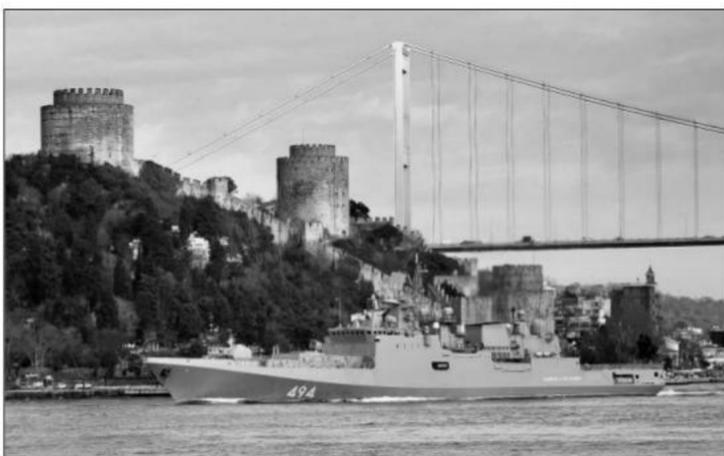
against the coronavirus outbreak now sweeping the world and adding to the concerns of hard-pressed European authorities.

Greece and Bulgaria, both European Union member states, vowed not to admit the migrants. Greek police used smoke grenades at one border crossing, while Bulgaria sent an extra 1,000 troops to its border with Turkey.

"There is no work (here in Turkey)," said Muhammed Abdullah, a 25-year-old Syrian queuing in Istanbul to board a bus bound for the Greek border.

"Turkey is not nice at all, Europe is nicer," he said, adding that he wanted to go to Germany.

Turkey already hosts some 3.7 million Syrian refugees and says it cannot handle any more.



RUSSIA WARSHIPS TRANSIT BOSPHORUS STRAIT: Two Russian warships armed with cruise missiles were on Friday transiting the Bosphorus Strait in Istanbul on their way to Mediterranean waters. Russian naval ships that pass through the Bosphorus normally head into the Mediterranean to back Moscow's operations in Syria. Reuters

Lawmakers call for assurances, transparency on Taliban peace deal

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 28

NEARLY TWO dozen American lawmakers have sought assurances and transparency prior to the signing of a landmark peace deal between the US and the Taliban to end the brutal war in Afghanistan, urging the Trump administration against making a commitment that would embolden America's adversaries and undermine its allies.

In a letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the defense secretary, the Congressmen Thursday called for prioritisation of American security as the US pursued a peace agreement with the

Taliban. Dated February 27, the letter calls for transparency and highlights the importance of keeping the US safe.

Additionally, it outlines the need for certain security pledges, including that any deal between the US and the Taliban will be public and not contain secret annexes or side deals.

"We have serious concerns about reports that the United States is preparing to sign a deal with the Taliban, the terrorists who harboured al-Qaeda before and after the attacks of 9/11. President Trump has a proven track record of putting America's security first and ensuring our country stays out of bad deals that aid our adversaries," the letter said. PTI

United States invited to invest in CPEC project, says Pakistan

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, FEBRUARY 28

IN AN interesting move, cash-strapped Pakistan has invited the US to join the USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, an ambitious infrastructure project looked with suspicion by the Trump administration for being non-transparent.

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's adviser on commerce Abdul Razak Dawood on Thursday said the government made the offer during a meeting with the US trade delegation led by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross on Wednesday, *The Express Tribune* reported.

Interestingly last month, senior US diplomat Alice Wells said that there is not transparency in the



China has committed to invest over \$60 bn in CPEC

CPEC and the firms blacklisted by the World Bank have got contracts under the project, which will increase Pakistan's debt burden.

Wells, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia was speaking at a think tank event during her four-day visit to Pakistan.

Khan's commerce advisor

Razak said: "The US has shown interest in (Pakistan's) energy, oil and gas, agriculture and food processing". China has committed to invest over \$60 billion in Pakistan as part of the CPEC under which it planned to build a number of special economic zones.

India has objected to the CPEC as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

The US Commerce Secretary's visit is the result of recently-held discussions between Prime Minister Imran Khan and President Donald Trump to promote bilateral trade and enhanced economic engagements, the report said. "Pakistan-US market access is the main point. We want access to the US market," Dawood said, adding that the US official has assured of his cooperation. PTI

FEARS OF PANDEMIC GROW

'Very high': WHO raises global risk of coronavirus

REUTERS
GENEVA, FEBRUARY 28

THE RAPID spread of the coronavirus increased fears of a pandemic Friday, with six countries reporting their first cases and the World Health Organisation (WHO) raising its global spread and impact risk to "very high".

World shares fell again, winding up their worst week since the 2008 global financial crisis and bringing the global wipeout to \$6 trillion. Hopes that the epidemic that started in China late last year would be over in months, and that economic activity would quickly return to normal, have been shattered.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said his organisation was not underestimating the risk. "That is why we said today the global risk is very high," he told reporters in Geneva. "We increased it from 'high' to 'very high'."

WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier said the scenario of the coronavirus reaching multiple or all countries "is something we have been looking at and warning against since quite a while."

Mexico, Nigeria, Estonia, Denmark, the Netherlands and Lithuania reported their first cases, all with travel history connected to Italy, the worst-affected European country.

Countries other than China now account for about three-quarters of new infections.

A Chinese official said some recovered patients had been found to be infectious, suggesting the epidemic may be even harder to eradicate than previously thought. Lindmeier said the WHO was looking very care-



Hospital workers comfort each other in South Korea. Reuters



fully into reports of some people getting re-infected.

The death toll in Italy rose to 17 and those testing positive rose to 655. Germany has nearly 60 cases, France about 38 and Spain 23, according to a Reuters count. South Korea reported 571 new infections on Friday, bringing the total to 2,337, with 13 people killed.

The head of the WHO's emergency program, Dr Mike Ryan, said Iran's outbreak may be worse than realised - its toll of 34 dead is the highest outside China. Tedros said he expected a WHO team to be in Iran by Sunday or Monday.

US health workers lacked training, gear: Whistleblower

EMILY COCHRANE,
NOAH WEILAND &
MARGOT SANGER-KATZ
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 28

FEDERAL HEALTH employees interacted with Americans quarantined for possible exposure to the coronavirus without proper medical training or protective gear, then scattered into the general population, according to a government whistleblower who lawmakers say faced retaliation for reporting concerns.

The team was "improperly deployed" to two military bases in California to assist the processing of Americans who had been evacuated from coronavirus hot zones in China and elsewhere, according to a portion of a narrative account shared with Congress and obtained by *The New York Times* ahead of a formal complaint to the Office of the Special Counsel, an independent government agency.

Staff members from the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families were sent to Travis Air Force Base and March Air Reserve Base in late January and early February and

were ordered to enter quarantined areas, including a hangar where coronavirus evacuees were being received, the complaint said.

Without proper training or equipment, some of the exposed staff members moved freely around and off the bases, with at least one person staying in a nearby hotel and leaving California on a commercial flight. Many were unaware of the need to test their temperatures three times a day.

"I soon began to field panicked calls from my leadership team and deployed staff members expressing concerns with the lack of HHS communication and coordination, staff being sent into quarantined areas without personal protective equipment, training or experience in managing public health emergencies, safety protocols and the potential danger to both themselves and members of the public they come into contact with," the whistleblower wrote.

In a statement on Thursday, the Department of Health and Human Services acknowledged the complaint, which was first reported by *The Washington Post*, without elaborating. NYT

IN MOVE TO COMBAT 'PERIOD POVERTY'

Scotland set to be first country to provide free pads, tampons

CEYLAN YEGINSU
LONDON, FEBRUARY 28

SCOTLAND IS poised to become the first country to end "period poverty" by providing free sanitary products to women of all ages in the country.

Free menstrual products are already available to students in high schools, colleges and universities in Scotland. And a bill passed by the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday will make pads and tampons free across the board.

Monica Lennon, the lawmaker who submitted the draft



The Bill is aimed at combating the culture of stigma surrounding menstruation, said supporters. Reuters/flip

proposal of the bill, said she was thrilled that it had attracted sup-

port across Scotland, including from civic groups and "individ-

uals who have had their own lived experience of period poverty and know what it is like not to have access to products when they need them."

Although the bill passed with 112 votes in favour, none against and one abstention, some lawmakers warned that the legislation faces a few hurdles before becoming law, though they were regarded as surmountable.

One of those is a yearly cost that the government puts at about \$31 million.

Tampons are taxed at 5 percent in Britain — a levy that the British government has been

unable to abolish because of European Union rules that class sanitary products as "luxury" products.

The bloc has pledged to remove all taxes on menstruation products by 2022.

About 62 million pounds, or \$80 million, collected in taxes on sales of sanitary products in Britain has been diverted to women's charities since 2015, the minister for civil society, Mims Davies, said last year.

Nearly 10 percent of girls in Britain have been unable to afford period products, and 19 percent have resorted to using substitutes like rags, newspapers

and toilet paper because of the high cost, according to research by a girls rights charity, Plan International UK.

The provision of free products is also aimed at combating the culture of silence and stigma surrounding menstruation, which the charity says can pose physical, sexual and mental health risks for young women. Nearly half of girls age 14 to 21 in Britain are embarrassed by their periods, the research found.

Last month, women's groups criticised supermarkets for putting up anti-shoplifting messages across sanitary product shelves, warning that

such campaigns stigmatised women who cannot afford the products.

"Period poverty is an issue that affects women and girls across the UK, with more than a quarter having missed work or school because they couldn't afford or didn't have access to menstrual products," said Mandu Reid, the leader of the Women's Equality Party.

"A decade of austerity has pushed many women into a desperate financial situation," she said, "and many have been forced to use makeshift items, shoplift or simply go without these basic necessities." NYT

21 ECONOMY

GOLD	RUPEE	OIL	SILVER
₹43,358	₹72.24	\$51.16	₹48,130

*Indian basket as on February 27, 2020

SENSEX: 38,297.29 ▼ 1448.37 NIFTY: 11,201.75 ▼ 431.55 NIKKEI: 21,142.96 ▼ 805.27 HANG SENG: 26,129.93 ▼ 648.69 FTSE: 6,559.27 ▼ 237.13 DAX: 11,884.08 ▼ 483.38

*International market data till 1900 IST

CORONAVIRUS FEARS PULL 30-SHARE INDEX DOWN 1,448 POINTS

Sensex plummets, global markets in meltdown

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 28

INDIA'S STOCK market benchmark Sensex on Friday reeled under a huge global sell-off, and posted its second-biggest one-day fall in absolute terms, as the coronavirus continued to spread, increasing fears that the epidemic could push some of the world's biggest economies into recession.

Even as markets in Asia, Europe and America plunged for the seventh day in a row on worries over a recession, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 1,448.37 points, or 3.64 per cent, lower at 38,297.29. This was the second largest fall in the Sensex after August 24, 2015, when it had plunged 1,625 points.

The bloodbath in the market wiped out investor wealth worth Rs 5.45 lakh crore as the market capitalisation fell to Rs 146 lakh crore on Friday. In the worst week since the 2008 global financial crisis, the Sensex plunged 2,873 points or 6.97 per cent, and the Nifty tumbled 879 points, or 7.27 per cent. The market is set for further losses as Wall Street's Dow

EXPLAINED Virus presents significant threat to global economy

INVESTORS HIT the sell button in early trade Friday, with Indian market indices, tracking the slide in global markets, dropping to near 5-month lows. The S&P BSE Sensex saw a slide of over 1,000 points while Nifty50 breached the 11,300 levels in intraday trade. Selling pressure was visible across sectors such as metals, infrastructure, IT, capital goods, auto, banks and oil & gas stocks.

The bigger question roiling markets is how badly the global economy will be hit, particularly if the spread of infections is not contained.

Jones Industrial Average opened with a loss of over 500 points on Friday. On Thursday, Dow Jones dropped 1,190.95 points intra-day, or 4.42 per cent.

"Increase in new virus cases is diluting investor wealth across the globe. On the domestic front, broad-based selling was witnessed with sectors having global exposure like metals and IT being impacted the most," said Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services.

China's Shanghai Composite

closed down 3.7 per cent, Japan's Nikkei ended down 3.7 per cent and benchmark indexes in Australia and South Korea both shed 3.3 per cent. European stocks suffered even greater losses, with Germany's DAX dropping as much as 5 per cent in early trading and London's FTSE 100 shedding 4.4 per cent intra-day. In Italy, where 17 people have died so far due to the virus, the benchmark index was down nearly 4 per cent.

Europe is emerging as the new hotspot for the virus, while the US

has reported a rise in the number of cases, and the situation in Iran is looking bad. Equity research firm Jefferies warned that the "large outbreaks of COVID-19 in South Korea, Italy and Iran point to risk of a global pandemic that, if not handled correctly, could swamp hospitals with acute cases."

Significantly, foreign fund outflow has turned significantly negative during the week. Foreign institutions have sold close to Rs 10,000 crore worth of stocks in the first four sessions this week.

MARKETS IN FREEFALL

Premier Indices	Change on Friday (%)
BSE Sensex (India)	-3.64
Dow Jones (US)*	-3.72
Nikkei 225 (Japan)	-3.67
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	-2.42
FTSE 100 (UK)	-3.18
CAC 40 (France)	-3.38
DAX (Germany)	-3.86
SSE Composite (China)	-3.71

*As of 12:40 AM Saturday (IST)

Other Asian currencies were also weak as investors dumped emerging market assets to seek the safety of US treasuries and other assets like gold amid the rapid spread of coronavirus epidemic outside China. "Foreign outflows of around \$1.5 billion had put pressure on the rupee," said an analyst. Analysts said the fall in crude oil prices provided some respite to the Indian currency.

According to economists at Oxford Economics, if the coronavirus outbreak becomes a global pandemic, \$1 trillion could be wiped off the world economy, with recessions in the United

Rupee dives 63p against dollar on foreign fund outflows, equity sell-off

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 28

THE INDIAN rupee on Friday plunged by 63 paise to settle at 72.24 against the US dollar, amid the heavy sell-off in the equity market and sustained foreign fund outflows.

Other Asian currencies were also weak as investors dumped emerging market assets to seek the safety of US treasuries and other assets like gold amid the rapid spread of coronavirus epidemic outside China. "Foreign outflows of around \$1.5 billion had put pressure on the rupee," said an analyst. Analysts said the fall in crude oil prices provided some respite to the Indian currency.

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Bank of America Corp economists warned clients Thursday that they now expect 2.8 per cent global growth this year, the weakest since 2009. A global recession is likely if coronavirus becomes a pandemic, and the odds of that are uncomfortably high and rising with infections surging in Italy and Korea, Moody's Analytics said on February 26.

There will be an impact across sectors and supply disruptions, alongside the quarantine measures being undertaken in China and other countries would dent supply chains across geographies.

Three yrs after setting cap on stents, NPPA exempts Meril's device from price control

PRABHA RAGHAVAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE NATIONAL Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has decided to exempt a new stent made by Meril Life Sciences from price control, several months after a patient activist group raised safety concerns about the product. The decision comes nearly three years after the drug pricing regulator had capped the prices of these products "in public interest".

The authority deliberated upon the matter "at length" and observed that establishing significant therapeutic advantage and increased efficacy "is not a pre-requisite for obtaining exemption under para 32(ii) of DPCO 2013."

Para 32 of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 lists out certain conditions a product has to meet to stay out of the provisions of the price regulation. This includes new drugs developed through indigenous research and development that are patented under the Indian Patent Act, 1970 and not produced elsewhere as well as new drugs produced in the country by a new process developed indigenously and patented.

NPPA, in 2017, had slashed the ceiling prices of stents by up to 85 per cent. Meril had approached the NPPA for exemption under this provision after it received the drug pricing regulator's approval in 2017 for the stent, a drug-coated product called MeRes-100 that naturally dissolves over a period of time.

However, the All India Drug Action Network (AIDAN) last year had raised concerns related to the safety of the product.

"It has been our concern that the only data submitted by Meril are limited to a small, non-randomised, single-arm trial which was inadequate to prove safety. While close monitoring has been recommended, no specific plan has been drawn up for post-marketing evaluation of safety and efficacy, against the current standard of care — a DES stent," said Malini Aisola of AIDAN.

"The safety concerns of the product in question are not required to be examined by the Authority in order to consider a case for grant of exemption under para 32 (ii) of DPCO 2013. The 'new drug' approval certificate of the DCGI and the grant of Indian Patent being the two essential conditions," stated minutes of NPPA's meeting on the issue, which *The Indian*

KEY POINTS

1 Para 32 of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 lists out certain conditions a product has to meet to stay out of the provisions of the price regulation. This includes new drugs developed through indigenous research and development that are patented under the Indian Patent Act, 1970 and not produced elsewhere as well as new drugs produced in the country by a new process developed indigenously and patented

2 Meril Life Sciences had approached the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority for exemption under this provision after it received the drug pricing regulator's approval in 2017 for the stent, a drug-coated product called MeRes-100 that naturally dissolves over a period of time

3 However, the All India Drug Action Network last year had raised concerns related to the safety of the product, saying that the only data submitted by Meril are limited to a small, non-randomised, single-arm trial which was inadequate to prove safety

Express has viewed.

However, it added that issues related to the safety concerns raised by AIDAN were referred by the authority to the Standing National Committee on Medicines and the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) to "seek assurance in public interest".

The authority took the decision after DCGI, which convened a meeting of experts on the issue, had found clinical data and three-year follow up data on 108 patients submitted by Meril to be "satisfactory".

"While considering any product, the safety and efficacy is considered by experts and the committees," added a December letter by the Standing National Committee on Medicines.

"We do not know the basis for the experts to be satisfied by the (safety & efficacy) data of the stent," said AIDAN's Aisola.

FM on coronavirus concerns: No need to press panic button

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 28

FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said that the government has loosened its purse strings as much as it can on fiscal deficit worries, but is "willing" to consider further requirements.

Speaking at television network CNBC-TV18's awards event, Sitharaman said the government is mulling creating a Development Finance Institution (DFI) to help fund the Rs 102-lakh crore infrastructure funding, but hinted at a larger reliance on the private sector in doing so.

On the coronavirus scare, Sitharaman said there is no need to immediately press the panic button at present, but added that industry executives have warned her about challenges cropping up if the crisis continues for three weeks.

A suggestion has also been made by the pharma and the electronics industries for an airlift of materials from China in case of a need, she said, making it clear that the companies will have to aggregate the goods and get it to a port.

Other details of the plan have not been finalised, she said, making it clear that this is merely a suggestion at present.

There is an opportunity for India to be a part of the global supply chain and investors at a G-20 meeting in Saudi Arabia recently were extremely positive about investing in India, she said.

The government has utilised a clause under the fiscal deficit and budget management Act to have a wider fiscal gap of 3.8 per cent in FY20 and has committed to narrow it to 3.5 per cent in the FY21 budget.

Advocates of pushing up growth want the government to do more, while there are others who point out to the costs of a wider fiscal deficit like high inflation and also a higher cost of borrowing if the rating agencies downgrade India.

Sitharaman hinted that in the budget, the government has



PTI file photo

"We will have to see as it goes. I am not closing the options out. If there are more requirements, we are willing (to loosen the purse)"

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN
FINANCE MINISTER

done all that it could on "loosening the purse" keeping the fiscal deficit in mind.

"We will have to see as it goes. I am not closing the options out. If there are more requirements, we are willing," Sitharaman, who had taken a slew of measures between the July 2019 budget presentation and the full year one for FY21 in February, said.

On the Goods and Services Tax, Sitharaman said the focus is on making the network more efficient so that difficulties in compliance are done away with, and added that Infosys chairman Nandan Nilekani is helping her on the same. "I am sure we will be able to drastically improve the functioning of the GSTN," she said, adding that there is also a move to review rates on items only once a year.

Virus impact, slowdown to keep steel sector growth 'modest'

Ind-Ra has revised outlook for steel sector to 'negative' for FY21 on the back of slowing economic activity, cost pressures and impact of coronavirus outbreak

28.6% growth in consumption in five years: The per capita consumption of steel has increased from 57.6 kg to 74.1 kg between 2014 and 2019, according to data provided by the Ministry of Steel

Modest demand growth in FY21: India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has given the 'modest' demand growth expectations of 5 per cent for FY21. Slowing economic activity would continue to affect the demand growth in the steel sector and any significant pick-up is unlikely, it added

Rising iron ore prices: Average premiums for about a quarter of India's newly auctioned iron ore mines could be above 100%, resulting in a "significant" increase in iron ore prices



KEY NUMBERS

	FY19	FY20	FY21(f)
Real GDP	6.8	5	5.5
Mining*	1.6	0.9	1.5
Manufacturing*	6.9	0.6	3.4
Electricity*	7	4.1	3
Construction*	8.7	5	5.7
Steel Outlook (Demand)	8	4	5

*Gross value added growth at FY 12 prices Source: India Ratings and Research

Margin pressures: Muted growth is expected due to margin pressures from iron ore price risks. High iron ore premiums for new mine owners (both captive and

merchant) could shift the cost positions of steel mills. Cost pressures could build up 'majority' for non-integrated & new captive steel producers

Rising iron ore prices: Average premiums for about a quarter of India's newly auctioned iron ore mines could be above 100%, resulting in a "significant" increase in iron ore prices

ComMin to meet exporters on Mar 3 to discuss export, import opportunities

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

AS FEARS of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak in China hitting supply chains across the world continue to rise, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has decided to hold a meeting next Tuesday to discuss these disruptions.

The meeting has been called at a time when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that the virus would become a challenge for India if the issue was not resolved in three weeks.

The Commerce Ministry on Friday notified the industry that Minister Piyush Goyal would be chairing a meeting in New Delhi on March 3 to discuss "global disruptions in supply chains and their impact on India." The meeting is also expected to look into export and import opportunities emerging on account of the outbreak in China, which has been a global supplier of goods.

Huge export and import opportunities have emerged due to outbreak of the deadly virus in China and other parts of the globe, said an industry source as cited by PTI. "The outbreak of this disease has reflected that de-

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will chair the meet

pending completely on one country for goods is not a good idea and in such a situation, India is best placed to fill this global supply chain gap," the source added.

According to an analysis by the ministry, there are as many as 550 products where Indian exporters can plug global supply gaps. These identified products accounted for about 75 per cent of India's exports in 2018. Currently, exports of these items are estimated at \$243 billion.

Further, 1,054 products have been identified where India is dependent on Chinese imports. In the analysis, the ministry has identified alternate countries from where New Delhi can import products disrupted by the outbreak in China.

The ministry has shared this list of made in India products which can be used to plug global supply line disruption with embassies. The death toll in China's deadly coronavirus has climbed to 2,788 so far 25 with confirmed cases rising sharply to 78,824.

Virus slams breaks on Geneva car show, forces rethink on launches

REUTERS
FRANKFURT, FEBRUARY 28

CARMAKERS WERE scrambling to reorganise press conferences and vehicle presentations after Swiss authorities forced the cancellation of the Geneva car show on Friday in an effort to contain the coronavirus.

More than 160 exhibitors were scheduled to show off their cars and services at the 90th Geneva Motor Show, which was due to start on Monday and last until March 15.

BMW and Mercedes-Benz said they would use live-streaming to present the BMW Concept



Cars at the now cancelled 90th Geneva International Motor Show in Geneva, Switzerland, on Friday. Reuters

i4 and a revamped Mercedes E-Class respectively.

Ferrari does not plan to arrange alternative events, and Fiat Chrysler said it had no plan B, but that it was considering ways to show off a new electric Fiat 500.

French brand DS, part of PSA Group said it was seeking a venue near Paris to showcase a new concept car and was rescheduling interviews with executives by telephone.

Audi, a premium brand belonging to Volkswagen, said it would seek to use digital channels to launch its Audi A3 sportback and Audi e-Tron S. Switzerland on Friday

banned large events expected to draw more than 1,000 people to try to curb a coronavirus outbreak that has spread from China across the world.

"We regret this situation, but the health of all participants is our and our exhibitors' top priority. This is a case of force majeure and a tremendous loss for the manufacturers who have invested massively in their presence in Geneva," said Maurice Turrettini, chairman of the Geneva International Motor Show Foundation Board.

Last year 660,000 people attended the Geneva show and the exhibition generated an estimated 200-250 million Swiss

francs (\$205-\$256 million) worth of business.

Visitors who bought tickets will be refunded, although exhibitors will not, given it was the health authorities, rather than organisers Palexpo, who called off the event.

The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Switzerland has risen to 15, and more than 100 people are in quarantine, government minister Alain Berset said.

"We have the situation under control, but this can change very quickly," he told a news conference in Bern, adding the ban would certainly hit the Swiss economy.

RAJEEV MISRA ALLEGEDLY RAN CAMPAIGNS TO PLANT NEGATIVE STORIES AGAINST NIKESH ARORA & ALOK SAMA

SoftBank power tussle: Vision Fund chief accused of smear campaign

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE LEADERSHIP of Japan-based SoftBank Group Corp, which manages the \$100-billion Vision Fund, has come under fire with allegations of the fund's chief Rajeev Misra running smear campaigns against two of his former colleagues — former SoftBank COO Nikesh Arora and former SoftBank Group International CFO Alok Sama — to clear his way to the top, according to a report by *The Wall*

Street Journal. SoftBank, which is led by its chairman Masayoshi Son, was recently criticised for its investment choices including a failed attempt at listing co-working firm WeWork. As per the WSJ report, Misra — who heads the Vision Fund, which has investments in India too, including firms such as Paytm, Oyo, and others — allegedly ran campaigns to plant negative news stories against Arora and Sama, in addition to a concerted shareholder campaign to oust them. Arora, who left SoftBank in

'OLD ALLEGATIONS ... SERIES OF FALSEHOODS'

■ A spokesman for Misra told WSJ: "These are old allegations which contain a series of falsehoods that have been consistently denied... Mr. Misra did not orchestrate a campaign against his former colleagues"

■ SoftBank, which is led by its chairman Masayoshi Son, was recently criticised for its investment choices, which included a failed attempt at listing American co-working company WeWork

2016, was seen as the heir apparent to Son upon his retirement. However, he left the firm after failing to make it to the top. Sama

left SoftBank in 2019. A spokesman for Misra told WSJ: "These are old allegations which contain a series of false-

hoods that have been consistently denied... Mr. Misra did not orchestrate a campaign against his former colleagues."

A SoftBank spokeswoman was quoted by the newspaper as saying, "For several years, we have investigated a campaign of falsehoods against SoftBank Group and certain former employees in an attempt to identify those behind it. SoftBank will be reviewing the inferences made by *The Wall Street Journal*."

Misra's alleged attempts at ousting his "main rivals inside SoftBank" included teaming up

with an Italian businessman Alessandro Benedetti to run the smear campaign. The news report said that Misra paid \$500,000 to Benedetti in 2015. Misra's spokesman told the publication that the \$500,000 payment to Benedetti was towards an oil investment.

Benedetti, as per WSJ, was involved in setting up a honey trap for Arora, which was to be followed by sexual blackmail. Additionally, he hired a law firm to represent a few unnamed SoftBank shareholders, who alleged impropriety against Arora.

Fiscal deficit touches 128.5% of Budget Estimate at Jan-end

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE FISCAL deficit touched 128.5 per cent of the whole-year Budget target during the April-January period. The deficit in the year-ago period was 121.5 per cent of the corresponding target. The government had targeted to restrict the fiscal deficit (RE) at Rs 7,66,846 crore for the year ending March 31, 2020.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had raised the fiscal deficit target to 3.8 per cent of the GDP, from 3.3 per cent pegged earlier for 2019-20 due to revenue shortage.

Total expenditure in the April-January period stood at Rs 22,68 lakh crore, or 84.1 per cent of the Revised Estimate (RE), the data showed. Capital expenditure in the first 10 months of the fiscal stood at Rs 2,68 lakh crore, 75.5 per cent of the full-year estimate (RE) of Rs 3,48 lakh crore.

The Centre's decision to cap Q4 spending at 25 per cent of the Budget Estimate for the full finan-

Total expenditure in the April-January period stood at Rs 22.68 lakh crore, or 84.1 per cent of the RE

cial year, compared with the norm of 33 per cent, itself could result in an annual spending compression of nearly Rs 2.2 lakh crore, versus Revised Estimate of Rs 26,98 crore. So there could be curbs on spending in February-March.

If the trend in tax receipts in recent years are any indication, the shortfall in net tax receipts (post transfers to states) could still be about Rs 36,000 crore from the revised estimate (RE), which itself was lower than the Budget estimate (BE) by over Rs 1.4 lakh crore. Of course, if the direct tax dispute resolution scheme, 'Vivad Se Vishwas', yields a tidy sum and a good part of it is accounted for in FY20, then the shortfall would reduce. **FE**

Core sector grows 2.2% in Jan as power generation picks up

New Delhi: Eight core industries recorded 2.2 per cent growth in January helped by expansion in the production of coal, refinery products and electricity, official data released on Friday showed.

The infrastructure sectors had expanded by 1.5 per cent in January 2019. The production of coal, refinery products and electricity grew by 8 per cent, 1.9 per cent and 2.8 per cent, respectively.

Sectors which recorded negative growth during the month under review are crude oil, natural gas, and fertiliser.

During the April-January period, core industries growth slowed down to 0.6 per cent against 4.4 per cent in the year-ago period. **PTI**

MEETING TO BE HELD ON A LATER DATE

DCC meet on AGR fails to arrive at a decision on relief to telcos

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

A MEETING of the Digital Communications Commission (DCC), the top executive decision-making body of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), ended inconclusively on Friday as the members could not arrive at a decision on what or whether any relief should be given to telcos facing adjusted gross revenue (AGR) payouts, sources in the know of the development said.

The meeting, which was headed by Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash, will be held again at a later date when the final reconciled details of how much each AGR each telco has to pay come to the ministry. Earlier this week, the DoT asked all the telcos to submit documents supporting their calculation of AGR, which is much lower than the numbers arrived at by the ministry.

MARCH 17 DEADLINE APPROACHING

■ Earlier this week, the DoT had asked all the telcos to submit documents supporting their calculation of AGR, which is much lower than the numbers arrived at by the ministry

■ As of last Thursday, Airtel had paid Rs 10,000 crore of the over Rs 36,000 crore it owed to the DoT, while

Vodafone Idea paid Rs 3,500 crore of the Rs 53,000-crore AGR dues it owed. Vodafone Idea paid another Rs 1,000 crore on Thursday.

■ Both Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea are under pressure to complete the remainder of their AGR payments before March 17

"This exercise will help us run a time-bound check and test for the AGR dues that are being deposited so far. We have asked them to send the supporting documents as soon as possible," a senior DoT official had then said.

As of last Thursday, Bharti Airtel had paid Rs 10,000 crore of the over Rs 36,000 crore it owed to the DoT, while Vodafone Idea

paid Rs 3,500 crore of the Rs 53,000-crore AGR dues it owed. Vodafone Idea paid another Rs 1,000 crore on Thursday. The Rs 3,500 crore paid by Vodafone Idea is half of its self-assessed AGR principal.

Tata Teleservices, which has so far paid Rs 2,197 crore, will be sent another notice in a couple of days, which will seek for payment

of the rest of the AGR dues, a DoT official had said on the condition of anonymity.

The talks of a possible bailout package being offered to the telecom companies started doing rounds after Bharti Airtel founder and chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal and Vodafone Idea chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla met Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in successive days. Mittal had met Prasad at least two times in the past two weeks, in addition to meeting Sitharaman.

Both Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea are under pressure to complete the remainder of their AGR payments before March 17. The deadline is the next date of hearing in the Supreme Court, which had, on February 14, slammed the DoT as well as the companies for failing to make any payments before the stipulated deadline of January 23.

HANDING OVER OF THIRUVANANTHAPURAM AIRPORT TO ADANI SC sends back Kerala govt's plea to HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE SUPREME COURT Friday sent to the High Court the Kerala government's plea challenging the Airports Authority of India's (AAI's) decision to grant development, management and operation rights of the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport to Adani Enterprises, which had emerged successful in a bid, for 50 years.

Hearing an appeal filed by the state, a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India S A Bobde and comprising Justices BR Gavai and Surya Kant said the contention re-

garding Article 131 of the Constitution — whether it involved a centre-state dispute — will be kept open for further hearing if necessary.

The state had earlier moved HC against the AAI move, saying Adani Enterprises had no prior experience in the field and that this was not in public interest and was violative of the provisions of the AAI Act of 1994.

The HC, however, dismissed the plea, saying it was not maintainable. The HC said state should have filed a petition under Article 131 of the Constitution before the Supreme Court, as this was a dispute between the state and Centre, which only the SC could decide.

Appealing against this before the Supreme Court, the state government said the HC had "failed to appreciate that Article 131... does not contemplate any private party being arrayed as a party on one side or other".

The state added "for determining as to whether a suit before the Supreme Court under Article 131... has to be taken recourse to, it is necessary to consider whether the state can, in the facts of the given case, independently maintain a suit against the Government of India."

The petition also contended that this also against the proprietary rights of the state which owns the land.

Sebi chief Ajay Tyagi gets 6-mth extension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

THE GOVERNMENT has given a six-month extension to incumbent Sebi Chairman Ajay Tyagi, amidst a continuing process of selecting a new chief for the capital market regulatory body.

A 1984 batch IAS officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre, Tyagi assumed charge as Sebi chief on March 1, 2017.

According to sources, the government has decided to give a six-month extension to Tyagi as Sebi Chairman, a post for which the top applicants include Economic Secretary Atanu Chakraborty, Corporate Affairs Secretary Injeti Srinivas, Additional Secretary in the Finance Ministry Pravin Garg and Sebi Whole Time Member Madhabi Puri Buch. An official notification in this regard is expected soon. Last week, sources said that two dozen people, including two Whole Time Members of Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), have applied for the post of Chairman.

Jaishankar on trade: Paradoxical that those who urge us to be more open are even more sensitive

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, FEBRUARY 28

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Minister S Jaishankar said on Friday that trade-related decisions could not be taken without accounting for their impact on livelihood and social stability. He was speaking via a video link at the inaugural Asia Economic Dialogue at the Pune International Centre here.

The minister, without naming any country, said those who were urging India to open up its market were themselves taking protectionist measures.

"Competing against those with structural advantages cannot be a casual decision justified by political correctness... The past record shows lack of adequate homework and absence of effective standards end up hollowing out many sectors... Many trade-related decisions have direct livelihood and social stability consequences. This is obviously not unique to India, but it is paradoxical that those who urge us to be more open are even more sensitive themselves on this score," he said. India and the United States



Foreign Minister S Jaishankar at Asia Economic Dialogue, via video link. Ashish Kale

have been trying to finalise a trade deal for the last few years now.

"Today as conversations about trade between nations get more animated, there is less pretense that we are also talking about the parallel exercise of political influence... Trade has never been politically neutral. It is even less so now," he said. He hinted that linkages to non-trade issues could be one of the stumbling blocks in finalising the deal.

"Reaching an international understanding on issues of trade... is

naturally more challenging than in the past. As economic thinking has narrowed in many societies, and trade interests more sharply defined, there is a greater element of a zero-sum game. Linkages to non-trade issues, whether of a social nature or a security concern, have added further to the challenge," he said.

Emphasising that trade was key to ensuring a multipolar world, Jaishankar said it was in the interest of the world to have more countries powering the global economic growth. The minister said building up infrastructure might be the most crucial comparative advantage for India in the long run.

"Making it easier to do business or to ensure easier living can make some difference. But evolutionary change may not be enough in transformational terms. Each of us has to devise their course and India's prospects are heavily focused on improvement in infrastructure. At the end of the day, this may be one of the defining elements of its comparative advantage. Getting politics, economics and governance all right at the same time is therefore critically important," he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 28

FORMER RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan has said slowdown in growth is due to the current government focussing more on meeting its political and social agenda rather than paying attention to the economy.

India can still reverse its slow economic growth by paying at-

tention to key issues, he said.

"It's a sad story. I think most recently, it is politics," Rajan said in response to a question on what was stopping India's growth which remains below potential.

In an interview to Bloomberg TV, Rajan said unfortunately the current government after a massive election win has "focussed more on fulfilling its political and social agenda rather than paying attention to the economic

growth".

"Unfortunately, this drift has continued a pace of slowing growth, which was precipitated initially by some actions the government took such as the demonetisation and a poorly rolled out Goods and Services Tax (GST) reform," Rajan said. He said India has not paid sufficient attention to cleaning up the financial sector and unfortunately, that is leading to the slowing growth.

Emergency rate cuts 'not the baseline': Fed's Bullard

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 28

A US central banker said Friday that emergency interest rate cuts in response to the coronavirus outbreak are possible but not likely unless the epidemic becomes much worse.

James Bullard, head of the St Louis Federal Reserve Bank, last year pushed for more aggressive rate cuts, but now says policy is in a good place. "In my view, further policy rate cuts are a possibility if a global pandemic actually develops... But that's not the baseline case at this time," he said during a speech in Arkansas.

Bullard is not a voting member of the Fed's rate-setting committee this year, but in September he dissented from their decision, arguing the central bank should have lowered interest rates by a half point rather than a quarter point.

He said the Fed is watching the development of the virus closely.

Amazon bars 1 million products over false coronavirus claims

REUTERS
SAN FRANCISCO, FEBRUARY 28

AMAZON.COM INC has barred more than 1 million products from sale in recent weeks that had inaccurately claimed to cure or defend against the coronavirus, the company told Reuters on Thursday.

Amazon also removed tens of thousands of deals from merchants that it said attempted to price-gouge customers. The world's largest online retailer has faced scrutiny over the health-related offers on its platform, and earlier this week Italy launched a probe into surging prices around the internet for sanitizing gels and hygiene masks while it battled the biggest outbreak in Europe.

The coronavirus has caused at least 2,797 deaths globally. New reported infections around the world now exceed those from

Amazon bars 1 million products over false coronavirus claims

REUTERS
SAN FRANCISCO, FEBRUARY 28

AMAZON.COM INC has barred more than 1 million products from sale in recent weeks that had inaccurately claimed to cure or defend against the coronavirus, the company told Reuters on Thursday.

Amazon also removed tens of thousands of deals from merchants that it said attempted to price-gouge customers. The world's largest online retailer has faced scrutiny over the health-related offers on its platform, and earlier this week Italy launched a probe into surging prices around the internet for sanitizing gels and hygiene masks while it battled the biggest outbreak in Europe.

The coronavirus has caused at least 2,797 deaths globally. New reported infections around the world now exceed those from

PROTECTING CONSUMERS

■ Amazon also removed tens of thousands of deals from merchants that it said attempted to price-gouge customers

mainland China, where the flu-like disease arose two months ago out of an illegal wildlife market. Governments from Australia to Iran have closed schools, scrapped events and stockpiled medical supplies to contain the spread.

One offer comparison site showed recent examples of higher-than-usual prices for masks on Amazon made by U.S. industrial conglomerate 3M Co.

A merchant Thursday offered a 10-pack of N95 masks for \$128, a Reuters reporter saw when click-

ing through the buying options on Amazon. That was up from a recent seller average price of \$41.24, according to the tracking website camelcamelcamel.com. The item was no longer available in a check later in the day.

A two-pack respirator was offered new at \$24.99 earlier this week by a third-party seller, up from a recent average of \$6.65 when sold by Amazon, the price-following site showed.

"There is no place for price gouging on Amazon," a spokeswoman said in a statement, citing the company's policy that product information must be accurate and that Amazon can take down offers that hurt customer trust, including when pricing "is significantly higher than recent prices offered on or off Amazon." It declined to specify the exact threshold at which an item is considered unfairly priced.

BRIEFLY

Oil set for biggest weekly drop since 2008

New York: Oil prices slumped on Friday to their lowest in more than a year, set for their steepest weekly fall since 2008 as the global spread of the coronavirus stokes demand fears. The most active Brent future for May was down \$2.73, or 5.3 per cent, at \$49.00 a barrel by 11:14 a.m. EST (1614 GMT), its lowest since July 2017. **REUTERS**

Sebi penalises Motilal Oswal Fin Services

New Delhi: Sebi on Friday slapped a fine of Rs 17 lakh on Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd for failing to comply with Sebi's circular that mandated stockbrokers to segregate the funds and securities of the clients. **PTI**

SBI Cards IPO open from March 2-5

New Delhi: SBI Cards and Payment Services' initial public offer of around Rs 9,000 crore will open for subscription on March 2 amid volatile markets due to deepening concerns over coronavirus outbreak. **PTI**

Total acquires ₹5K-cr shares in Adani Gas

New Delhi: French energy major Total on Friday picked up shares worth over Rs 5,000 crore in Adani Gas through an open market transaction. On Friday, five promoter entities of Adani Gas on Friday sold shares worth more than Rs 5,000 crore through open market transactions. **PTI**

Codeshare pact of Vistara, Japan Airlines

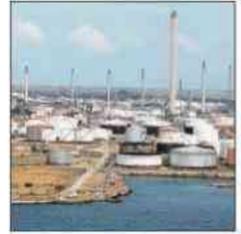
New Delhi: Vistara and Japan Airlines will expand their codeshare partnership, a move that will provide additional options for travellers between India and Japan, according to a release. **PTI**

'Refiners plan to wind down Venezuelan oil buys in April'

REUTERS
NEW DELHI/NEW YORK/PARRAGA, FEB 28

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES and Nayara Energy are planning to wind down purchases of Venezuelan oil in April fearing future US sanctions could choke off all avenues to trade with state-run oil firm PDVSA, three sources with knowledge of the matter said.

Such a step by Reliance, which operates the world's biggest refining complex, and Nayara - part owned by Russian oil major Rosneft - would severely curtail purchases by one of Venezuela's last big export destinations. India accounted for about a third of



Isla Oil Refinery PDVSA terminal in Curacao. Reuters file

Venezuela's oil shipments in January.

The move comes as US President Donald Trump warned in New Delhi this week of an increase in sanctions in a bid to oust

Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, whose 2018 re-election was considered a sham by most Western countries.

Washington last year imposed tough sanctions on PDVSA that cut off Venezuela from the US, and severely curbed trading with other major buyers of its oil, the nation's main export. The US set a May 20 deadline for companies to wind down purchases from Rosneft. Reliance, a long-time customer of PDVSA, has so far not placed requests for April cargoes, one of the sources said. Nayara is planning to stop processing Venezuelan oil at its refineries after receiving two cargoes that are scheduled for loading in March, two of the sources said.

South Africa crushed Thailand by 113 runs to inch closer to the semifinals of the Women's Twenty20 World Cup, while England beat Pakistan in another Group B match to remain in contention

After art galleries were reduced to dust, a city became the mural capital

SANDIP G
CHRISTCHURCH, FEBRUARY 28

THE TWIN earthquakes destroyed most of Christchurch's art galleries. Even the Christchurch Art Gallery, the city's pre-eminent art institution, was driven to the streets. For six months after the quake, it was taken over by recovery authorities, and then it was shut down for its own repairs.

Without a home, the gallery began commissioning murals on walls across town. Soon, street murals became a trend that's still flourishing in the city. And Christchurch became the mural capital of the country, overtaking Wellington.

Most of the artists apparently left the city, but many remained, expanding their work, finding new scope and range. There are so many murals and public artworks now—some commissioned by the gallery, others by the long-running SCAPE Public Art group that the entire city centre feels like a giant exhibition space. Competition for wall space is fierce—one of the gallery's murals was even tagged by a graffiti artist who not so politely requested the gallery keep its art indoors.

Bright, colourful murals are up all over town on the walls of office buildings, warehouses, corner stores, laundromats, and even public schools and sports stadiums. Some streets are so dense with murals that it's hard to find an empty wall. Often, the work carries a strong social message on subjects from domestic violence and immigration, to education and gender diversity.

Some portray faces of indigenous men and women, some works are abstract, some skilfully done tributes to favourite cartoon characters, bands or movies. The most famous ones are those drawn by Ruby Jones, who designed a Time magazine front cover after her illustration in response to the Christchurch mosque attacks went viral. The artwork depicted two women hugging with the caption, "This is your home and you should have been safe here". One of the women was Muslim and wearing a hijab.

After that, works from her book *All Of This Is For You* were recreated on the walls. They include a drawing of two men holding hands with the caption "Stand up for what you know is right", a figure looking out of an open window with the text "No-one else knows what they are doing either", and a woman holding a child's hand with the message "Look after yourself the way you'd look after your 5-year-old self".

Other recognisable pieces include Richard Baker's Rising Tide row boat mural on the Sampan House Restaurant building on Gloucester Street. Another one is Wongi Wilson's Hide and Seek mural on Manchester Street, the city's red-light area. Its street art is a tourist attraction full of Instagram moments with 'Lonely Planet' naming Christchurch as one of the street art capitals of the world. As an off-shoot, self-sustained local groups started funding street art festivals in the city, attended by connoisseurs from all over the world. The street art culture has gone to such a level that the video animation of the mural is the latest trend.



Street art in Christchurch has become a tourist attraction. *Express*

Versus Lanka, India women look to keep clean slate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY 28

A SEMIFINAL berth secured, the unbeaten Indian women's cricket team would look to address some of its batting issues in the final Group A match against a deflated Sri Lanka in the ICC T20 World Cup here on Saturday.

The Indians are on a roll, having easily sealed their semifinal berth with wins over defending champions Australia, Bangladesh and New Zealand. The Lankans, on the other hand, are out of the semifinal race following two losses so far.

While India beat hosts Australia by 17 runs in the tournament opener, they defeated Bangladesh by 18 runs before eking out a narrow four-run victory over the White Ferns on Thursday.

And come Saturday, the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side would look to end its group engagements on a high when it takes on the islanders. But the Indians definitely have a few things to worry about, especially their below-par show with the bat, going into the business end of the tournament.

In all the previous three outings, India failed to put on big scores on the board. They managed just 132 runs against Australia, 142

against Bangladesh and 133 vs New Zealand. India's unpredictable middle-order has repeatedly squandered good starts to eventually settle for low scores.

In all the three matches, the bowling unit came to India's rescue and the bailed the side out. Heavily reliant on the brilliance of a 16-year-old Shafali Verma, the Indian middle-order has cut a sorry figure so far and it's time senior pros like Harmanpreet and Veda Krishnamurthy step up and take the responsibility. Opener Smriti Mandhana too has failed to join the party so far.

Verma has been impressive at the top registering scores of 29, 39 and 46 for a total of 114 from three games. But it's high time she converts the starts into big scores.

Skipper Harmanpreet has rued the inability of her batters to capitalise on good starts and cautioned them against making "silly mistakes" in the knock-out rounds.

"It's a great feeling when your team performs day in day out. Still we made the same mistakes after a good first 10 overs, we got a good start but couldn't carry the momentum," Kaur had said. "We can't make silly mistakes with harder games coming up. Shafali (Verma) is giving us good starts, her initial runs are crucial for us," she added.

LIVE: On Star Sports network, 9:30 am



LOCAL TAXI

Cheteshwar Pujara rides an electric scooter as he leaves a training session ahead of the second Test against New Zealand in Christchurch. *AP*

Spirit of Christchurch

City is bouncing back from last year's gun violence at a mosque



EXPRESS IN NEW ZEALAND

SANDIP G
CHRISTCHURCH, FEBRUARY 28

SHORTLY BEFORE 5 am on September 4, 2010, when half its residents were asleep, an earthquake that measured 7.1 devastated nearly 1,000 buildings in the city. Six months later, on February 22, at the stroke of one in the afternoon, weekday lunchtime in the central business district, the earth shook again, killing 185 people, a catastrophe beyond the wildest imagination of the Garden City of New Zealand.

The derelict ruins still remain at the heart of the city. The Gothic cathedral that once stood majestically, the monument that brought the city its name, is partially restored, though its antique golden bells and wooden rose windows are enshrined in the national museum.

Beyond that are open spaces, car parks or just waste ground, where once stood colonial buildings. The last remains of the swanky Lancaster Park, Christchurch's historic ground, was razed to the ground a month ago after years of debates whether to demolish or restore it as a symbol of the resilience of the city.

There are so many safety pylons on the sidewalks and roads that locals joke that the region's traditional sporting colours—red and black—should be changed to fluorescent orange. The everyday sounds of the city have been replaced by jackhammers, bulldozers and the endless beeping of construction vehicles backing out of building sites.

Then, last March at the Al Nur mosque in the neighbourhood of Hagley Oval and Linwood Islamic Centre, 10-odd kilometres away from it, a gunman unleashed bullets on the worshippers, who had gathered for the afternoon namaz, murdering 50 people.

At the entrance is a pedestal, strewn with artificial flower and pebbles, emblazoning the message of love and peace. The scars remain, but the city has moved on and

bounced back. To a visiting eye, life is returning, life is normal. Despite the tough decade, people perennially wear a smile. Hence, the moniker New Zealand's friendliest city.

A quarter of a mile away from the mosque is the main square, where life is bristling, the small retail outlets, food stalls and cafes are abuzz, like any modern Western town, people are warm and gracious, greeting every passerby, exuding not only enterprise and inspiration but also optimism. Beneath their warm smiles is an inner steel that has enabled the city to spring back to life. Says Douglas Hickey, an old groundsman, with a tinge of philosophy: "A tragedy sometimes brings the best out of human beings. How a man reacts defines him."

A quiet resilience defines the city, and metaphorically there could not be a better city in the country, where India could channel the bouncebackability.

Though to compare human disaster with a sporting tragedy is trivial, how India would respond from their first crushing defeat since the tour of England would considerably define the character of Virat Kohli's team.

Team India's predicament

They have lost series in South Africa and England, dropped a game in Perth, but none of the defeats were as unprecedented as this was. Between then and now, India have unearthed arguably their finest ever pace bowler, the batting unit has evolved, Kohli has raised himself to a superior level, a space inhabited by the greats of the game, there is talent and depth, there is pedigree and potential. Hence, the defeat was a shocker, the manner of the defeat gutting, shot out inside 200 in both innings, tracelessly blown away by the southerly.

Formidable a team as New Zealand is, no one expected the series to be a breeze. No one expected them, a mean side in their backyard, to be steam-rolled.

But weren't they back from a 3-0 drubbing in Australia? Haven't they won just two Tests against the top-four teams in half a decade? Don't they have the reputation to be frazzled in pressure moments? They're a daunting but not an invulnerable side at home, a side with its own sets of weaknesses. But they scarred India like few other sides in the past. In both South Africa and England, India began as the clear outsiders; in Australia, without David Warner and Steve



Fast bowler Neil Wagner is set to play after returning from paternity leave. *AP*

Smith, India were on an equal footing. But here, India had begun as favourites. The defeat might have been ego-bruising.

The short duration between games magnifies the extent of the defeat, reducing time to recover. However, the short break could actually benefit India, for there's little time to pine on the defeat and accumulate more negativity. Whatever changes they need to make, be it regarding tactics and personnel, those should be on an emergency basis.

Sometimes, this urgency perks up focus and determination. Or as Shastri puts it, "a shake-up like this is good." His rationale: "It opens your mindset. When you are on the road winning all the time, or you have not tasted defeat, you can have a closed mindset, a fixed mindset. Here once you have seen what has happened, which is good, there are opportunities to learn."

The team, he asserts, would be better at dealing with the challenges. "You know what strategies New Zealand are employing. Mentally now, you are prepared in what to expect and you have your plans, how you are going to counter that. It's a good lesson and I am sure the boys are up for the challenge," he avers.

Indians had never encountered a more unique attack that New Zealand's in Basin Reserve in recent times. Their batsmen might have faced quicker, taller and shrewder bowlers, better swing and seam merchants, but not a combination of all these. It was not a singular peculiarity or gift of the New

Indians had never encountered a more unique attack that New Zealand's in Basin Reserve in recent times. Their batsmen might have faced quicker, taller and shrewder bowlers, better swing and seam merchants, but not a combination of all these.

Zealand bowling that defeated them—in which case it was easier to identify and rectify the aspect—but a raft of different factors. At times, it was swing, other times it was seam, then bounce, angles and the smarts of the bowlers. In short, if India are to stave off the blushes of a series defeat, they need an overall upgrading of their system.

You could see the effort of the Indian players at the nets to prevent another loss. Kohli's India is not unused to it. In his first assignment as full-time skipper, Kohli's team orchestrated a terrific comeback to win the series in Sri Lanka.

In Australia, his team rallied back resoundingly to win the series after losing in Perth. In the lost shores of South Africa and England, they've illustrated their where-withal, albeit in patches. The only difference is that they hadn't the mantle of No.1 side. The pressure of expectation on them was not as pronounced as it's now.

"They know what to expect and they are mentally tuned and ready. Now it's the execution part," asserted Shastri.

At the nets, you could see batsmen experimenting with their guard, you could listen to them asking the net bowlers to bowl from different angles and release points. You could see them practising the back-foot defence and hooks off bowlers from around the stumps. You could see them constantly chatting with each other.

The bowlers, too, bowled with specific plans in the nets. Thus, there seemed to be a throbbing togetherness in dealing with the Wellington loss.

They were chattier than usual, cracking jokes and bantering around, feeding off each other's observations and opinions, as if they were unaffected by the Basin bashing. Even if they were, they were not showing it.

Recurring ankle injury puts question mark over Ishant's availability

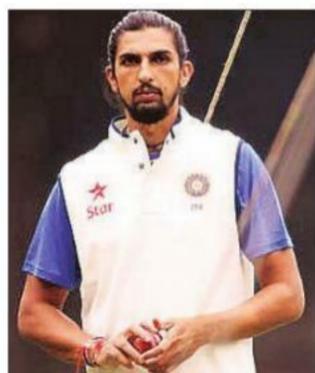
SANDIP G
CHRISTCHURCH, FEBRUARY 28

THE EVENING Ishant Sharma hurt his right ankle when appealing for an lbw in a Ranji Trophy fixture against Vidarbha at the Kotla, the Delhi support staff were skeptical of his recovery in time for the New Zealand tour. "Looks like a grade-three tear. Minimum six weeks. It would be a miracle if he makes it. Even if he's declared fit, it could be a big risk," a senior support staff had said. In two days, he was flown into the National Cricket Academy for further diagnosis, where he underwent the rehabilitation and was passed fit just six days before the Test match.

Reaching Wellington two days before the match, it was widely expected that he would miss the first Test and come back for the second, as he had little game time or proper practice other than the 21 overs he had

bowled at the NCA nets. But surprisingly, he was picked for the first Test—his experience was too strong a temptation. The biggest fear was whether he would break down in between the Test, which would have severely hamstrung India. In the past, there had been multiple episodes of Zaheer Khan breaking down on the first day of the game and India trudging through the match with a bowler short. But Ishant, though jet-lagged and sleep-deprived, not only played the entire match but also was India's most potent bowler picking five wickets for 68 runs in the first innings, looking as sharp as he had been before getting injured.

But the ankle injury, apparently, recurred, and he complained of pain after the Wellington Test. He was in visible discomfort during the net session on Wednesday too, not bowling at full tilt and not bowling lengthy spells as he likes to. And on Thursday, it was learned that he is likely to miss the



Ishant Sharma was India's best bowler in the first Test at Hamilton. *File*

In all likelihood, he would be replaced by Umesh Yadav, not a like-for-like replacement, but nonetheless quite experienced. In the last couple of years, he has emerged as India's most penetrative bowler at home.

Christchurch Test, leaving India considerably weakened in their bid to restore the series. More so as Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami had looked quite ragged in Wellington, picking just two wickets between them.

In all likelihood, he would be replaced by Umesh Yadav, not a like-for-like replacement, but nonetheless quite experienced. In the last couple of years, he has emerged as India's

most penetrative bowler at home. However, his performances abroad, the last Test he played outside India was a year ago in Perth, is still far from presentable.

In 17 Tests away from home, he has eked out only 46 wickets at a middling average of 42.19, the worst among India's quartet of seamers.

Moreover, he has been quite expensive too, bleeding 4.15 runs an over. However, he's India's best option in a crucial Test as this, where it would be harsh to throw the callow Navdeep Saini into the deep end.

But if the Hagley Oval surface does assist swing, as it historically has, Umesh could be an asset, as he's India's only genuine swing bowler. Shami and Bumrah are more in the hit-the-deck seam-bowler mould, whereas Umesh could swing the ball, especially away from the right-handers at good pace. If he can ally his craft with discipline, as he had been at home, he could be a handful on the

strip. So it's not quite a doomsday scenario, though irrefutably the experience, guile and effectiveness of Ishant will be sorely missed. For, he has not just been a terrific bowler, but the leader of the pack, under whom Bumrah and Shami have blossomed.

But the handling of Ishant's injury rakes up the whole debate as to whether he should have been on the tour in the first place. If so, should he have been hurried into playing the Wellington Test, before his body had fully acclimatised to the conditions as well as the rigours of Test cricket.

Though he bowled well in the nets, though he himself thought his body was tuned up, it was an ill-advised move. What could be worse is his injury aggravating and him spending more time in the rehab. It was exactly what some of the support staff members had feared when he got injured that afternoon in Delhi. And it's exactly what it could turn out to.

How Indian shuttlers' qualification chances are affected

BRIEFLY

SHIVANI NAIK
MUMBAI, FEBRUARY 28

WITH HIGH morbidity striking the world at a tragic pace in the form of Covid-19, sport is but a trifle. But caught in the uncertainty just six months before the Tokyo Olympics, are the qualification campaigns of India's shuttlers. With German Open cancelled and the outbreak threatening to disrupt even more tournaments upto cutoff of April 30th, precious qualifications are on the line. Here's a look at how the gloomy picture looks:

Worst-case scenario: No events take off. What happens then?

India will then be limited to those who are in the safe zone at this moment: Sindhu is at No. 6, Sai Praneeth is at No 11, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty are at No. 8. Those losing out will be Saina Nehwal at No 22 who needs around 12000 points and Kidambi Srikanth at No. 23, needing approximately 15000 points from whatever tournaments

they can turn up at to be in Top 16 for automatic qualification. The permutations concern far too many variables of other players to be exactly computed.

What is the status of upcoming tournaments?

While German Open was crucial (Polish, Vietnam & China Masters where top Indians weren't playing were also cancelled), the real massive point hoarding (defending) is to start with All England, which was scheduled to go ahead at the time of writing though developments are being monitored closely every hour. The Asian Championship in China is sure to be cancelled, while Malaysia and Singapore will be on the edge. The Swiss Open is not affected as of now. The Indian Super 500 has resolutely attracted its best field in several years. Should international players from China and affected areas undergo quarantine ahead of All England, there should be no problem for the Indian event thereafter, according to Indian organisers.

Why is it crucial for Srikanth and Saina?

Both are camped in Denmark currently and videos emerging from the national centre show both are looking sharp and raring to go. However, both will bleed points in case of more cancellations. Srikanth needs to defend his semifinal place from last year, especially and Verma and PKashyap are in fact in better striking distance of qualification (at 20 & 22 respectively) and marginally ahead of Srikanth, and with all the cancellations might sneak ahead in a freak leap should a good result jump up, though both are nursing niggles.

SIMPLY PUT

What's the deal with Swiss Open?

Though Sai Praneeth is defending points from finals last year, he won't get dumped out of 16 if the event faces a cancellation. After a positive case of a person in Geneva returning from north Italy, the Federal Council has categorised the situation in Switzerland as particular in terms of the Epidemics Act. Large-scale events involving more than 1000 people are to be banned. The ban comes into immediate ef-

fect and will apply at least until 15 March 2020. However, Swiss Open starting two days later on March 17, is on. Geneva motor show was postponed by six months. However, the organisers of the Swiss Open and Swiss Badminton "are in close contact with the relevant national and cantonal authorities and will provide information should there be any changes to the current situation or to the requirements imposed by the authorities," according to the website.

What about All England?

Currently authorities are not advising changing plans, though the evolving situation is prone to quick changes. While two Badminton England medical officers will attend to teams in two different hotels, a fully serviced medical centre is readied. The tournament and good results there can propel Srikanth and Saina into a relatively safe zone as this is a Super 1000. Kento Momota is absent, and the Chinese have agreed to a 15-day quarantine ahead of the tournament. In the middle of all this, PV Sindhu is being talked

up to win the event if she's primed for it in preps.

What is BWF's conundrum?

While the world body insists it will not change qualification criterion, it might come under pressure to review its process should no event take off from here on due to cancellations. While Indian interested is hooked to Nehwal and Srikanth, Chinese Shi Yuqi returning from injury, is also gasping at No 21 in ranking point race during qualification period. The world body isn't risking disturbing the existing method as of now though.

Why are Indian organisers punch pleased?

India has lucked out with shuttlers thronging the Super 500 to pick points on the home straight. Eight of women's Top 10 singles shuttlers — Chen Yufei, Akane Yamaguchi, He Bingjiao, Carolina Marin, An Se Young, Ratchanok, Michelle Li besides Sindhu and Saina will be in action making it the best field in India since the 2009 World championships. Viktor Axelsen is here to prop up his points along with a desperate Shi Yuqi of China and Son Wan Ho, making life tougher for Srikanth.

Bains lowers Chitra's 1500m record

Bhubaneswar: Punjabi University's Harmilan Kaur Bains improved upon PU Chitra's All-India Universities women's 1500m record to steal the limelight on the opening day of the athletics competition in the inaugural Khelo India University Games 2020 at the Kalinga Stadium here on Friday. Harmilan led from start to finish to complete her victory in 4:16.68. The 21-year-old from Patiala, who had shaved a hundredth of a second from PU Chitra's record time of 4:24.87 earlier, left none in doubt on Friday that she was rising as one of the nation's metric mile prospects with the fastest time of the year by an Indian woman, over eight seconds faster than her personal best. Harmilan's gold was one of the three that the Punjabi University won on Friday to rise in the medal tally to the fourth place with seven gold behind Savitribai Phule Pune University (14), Panjab University (9) and Jain University (8).

Chennaiyin-FC Goa clash in ISL semis

Chennai: Having made a superb turnaround after a poor start, two-time champion Chennaiyin FC will look to continue the good run when they take on FC Goa in the first leg of the ISL semifinal here on Saturday. The Blues entered the 2019-20 season after a nightmarish performance in the previous one, having finished with the wooden spoon and fewest points (nine). Things didn't get better at the start of season as they were languishing at the bottom before they witnessed a change in fortune after Owen Coyle replaced John Gregory as the head coach. The transformation under Coyle has been remarkable and in 12 games, Chennaiyin has got 24 points — from 7 wins and 3 draws — to sealed a play-off berth.

Miranda, Katsumi score in Chennai's win

Mumbai: Courtesy two goals from Fito Miranda and Katsumi Yusa in quick succession, Chennai City garnered three points against Indian Arrows in their I League game here on Friday. With this win, Chennai City go third in the points table with 19 points from 14 games. Indian Arrows, on the other hand, remain at the 11th spot with eight points from 14 matches.

Chawrasia makes cut in Oman

Muscat: SSP Chawrasia suffered a mid-round lapse to score a three-over 75 in the second round, while Shubhankar Sharma and Gaganjeet Bhullar missed the cut at the Oman Open here on Friday. Chawrasia, who dropped two bogeys and a double bogey between sixth and ninth, is now one-under 143 and was the only Indian to make the cut at the event. Shubhankar (74-74) and Bhullar (74-76) had a two-day total of two-over 148 and four-over 150 respectively to miss the cut, which fell at even par.

Tasnim, Treesa march into 3rd round

Haarlem: India junior No. 1 Tasnim Mir and rising star Treesa Jolly notched up convincing victories to enter women singles third round at the Dutch Junior International badminton tournament here on Friday. After winning the first game easily, Gujarat girl Tasnim faced some resistance from Lui Lok Lok of Hong Kong Chinabut won 21-14 21-17.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Home 2, Visitor 1, Spectators 0

In Italy, where coronavirus has infected hundreds, Inter's Europa League match is played in an empty stadium

NEW YORK TIMES
FEBRUARY 28

THE STANDS didn't fill and the crowd didn't roar, but there was an important soccer match scheduled in Milan on Thursday, so Internazionale, the home team, and Ludogorets, the visitors from Bulgaria, set aside their fears about the coronavirus and dutifully went about playing each other.

Italian health officials had set the bizarre stage for the game by ordering the stadium closed to spectators. In Italy, where the number of confirmed coronavirus cases soared past 600 this week, the authorities have restricted public gatherings in an attempt the slow the spread of the outbreak.

But the Europa League schedule was inflexible, and so the round-of-32 game went on, with only the players' shouts, the coaches' instructions and the referee's whistle as a soundtrack. Ludogorets arrived more than an hour before kickoff but was clearly wary: When its players filed off the bus and entered the stadium, they were wearing face masks.

While the tens of thousands of fans who had bought tickets were absent, attempts at pageantry were preserved: The teams walked out of the tunnel side by side as normal, then stood stoically while the Europa League anthem boomed out of the loudspeakers in the empty stadium. The players posed for team photos, and the captains exchanged handshakes and team pennants.

Ludogorets scored first, on a timely shove and a tight-angle finish by the Brazilian Cauly. Inter's defenders protested, saying Cauly had shoved down center back Diego Godin to free himself, but even in the silence the referee wasn't inclined to listen. Inter equalized on Cristiano Biraghi's shot to the near post in the 31st minute, and then took the lead on Romelu Lukaku's rare double header just before halftime. Lukaku didn't know much about the goal — his first attempt was saved, and the ricochet went in off his forehead as he lay on the turf. It was, though, the first time it would have been nice if a crowd had been there to rise as one and scream for something, especially something that doesn't happen very often.

As the scoreboard clock ticked down, Inter's two goals, combined with the two it scored in the first leg of the home-and-home tie, effectively assured it would advance to the next round. But the German referee, Daniel Siebert, wasn't up for any stalling. "Take the ball," he shouted to an Inter player at one point. "They need three goals. Come on."

Inter's days playing in empty stadiums are not over. Its match against league-leading Juventus on Sunday, a pivotal and highly anticipated moment in this year's title race, is one of five this weekend that have been ordered played behind closed doors.



Fans were not allowed to enter the San Siro for Inter's Europa League match against Ludogorets over coronavirus fears. Reuters

Newcastle ban handshakes at training

REUTERS
FEBRUARY 28

TRAINING SESSIONS at Newcastle United will be a lot less cordial after manager Steve Bruce said on Friday that players and staff had been advised to avoid handshakes in a bid to prevent spreading coronavirus.

The United Kingdom now has 19 confirmed cases of coronavirus and Bruce said the club were not taking any chances. "There's a ritual here that everybody shakes hands with everybody as soon as we see each other every morning. We've stopped that on the advice of the doctor," Bruce told a news conference ahead of Saturday's match against Burnley. "We're like everybody else. Thankfully, we've got a superb doctor here and he will keep us informed of what we have to do. We're glued to the TV for where it's going to go next and let's hope it doesn't get any worse in this country."

Bruce was given an injury boost with midfielder Jonjo Shelvey — the club's top scorer in the league — and defender Javier Manquillo coming back from injuries, but said they would make a call on whether defender Ciaran Clark needs ankle surgery.

"He's damaged his ankle ligaments badly. He's been excellent this season. He's been one

There's a ritual here that everybody shakes hands with everybody as soon as we see each other every morning. We've stopped that on the advice of the doctor.

STEVE BRUCE
MANAGER, NEWCASTLE UNITED

of our best players, in my opinion, so it's bad news for all of us," Bruce said. "Andy (Carroll) isn't going to make it but Jonjo has trained for the last 10 days or so, Javier Manquillo is back as well so it's good to see them back."

'United won't capitulate'

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is convinced his side will not capitulate at Everton on Sunday like they did in last season's 4-0 thrashing.

Solskjaer described the defeat at Goodison Park in April last year as his "lowest point" as United manager and revealed it was the moment he decided to rebuild the squad. "That was the lowest I have been. It was a capitulation. We had nothing about us," Solskjaer told reporters ahead of Sunday's trip to Goodison Park. "That was when one or two had their last

chance more or less. But we had to get to the summer first. "As I've said a few times, Rome wasn't built in a day. But the culture, the attitude, the fitness, the camaraderie, the spirit and maybe even the understanding between players have improved. I'm 100% sure we will put in a better performance this time."

United are fifth in the Premier League table, three points adrift of Chelsea in fourth and five ahead of 11th-placed Everton. Solskjaer's side extended their unbeaten run to seven matches in all competitions with Thursday's 5-0 win over Club Brugge to secure a place in the Europa League's last 16.

January signing Bruno Fernandes was again the standout performer in midfield, scoring the opener from the penalty spot before creating goals for Odion Ighalo and Scott McTominay. "He loves football, he wants to be out there and wants to be better," Solskjaer added. "I tried to send him inside (after being substituted against Brugge) because it was cold but he said 'no, I want to watch'. We have missed that box-opener that Bruno is proving to be now. He is a big, big boost for us."

Ighalo found the net for the first time since completing a deadline-day move from Shanghai Shenhua, and he could be asked to step in again at Everton if Anthony Martial misses out through a thigh injury.

RANJI TROPHY: SEMIFINALS

Bengal hope to ride on momentum against thoroughbreds Karnataka

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, FEBRUARY 28

THE CRICKET Association of Bengal (CAB) is opening three enclosures for fans at Eden Gardens for the Ranji Trophy semifinal between Bengal and Karnataka, starting Saturday. A message has been conveyed to all first and second division clubs, coaching centres and schools affiliated to the CAB to send their players to watch the game. "We want everyone to come and support our team," CAB president Avishek Dalmiya said.

On the field, KL Rahul was having an intense net session on Friday. After he was done, the opener, along with Karnataka captain Karun Nair and teammate Manish Pandey, went to have a close look at the pitch. The shade of green on the surface suggests help for the fast bowlers.

On the other side, at the home team nets, Ishan Porel was going full tilt. The Bengal team head coach Arun Lal calls Porel "India material" and banks on fit-again Akash Deep's pace. This semifinal, at the country's most storied venue, has a Test match-like feel.

Karnataka, at least on paper, are superior, given their pedigree in domestic cricket and the players they have. The eight-time Ranji Trophy winners have all the bases covered. Rahul's inclusion has given them an added fillip. Karnataka have domestic cricket thor-

oughbreds in their ranks.

Bengal, on the other hand, are a work in progress. A process has started under Lal this season, which might take a year or two to come to fruition. Bengal still need a seam-bowling allrounder and an impact batsman at the top to complete their regeneration process. Then again, they are the form team, with three outright wins in the last four group league matches to reach the knockouts. In the quarterfinal against Odisha, the way they fought back after being reduced to 46/5 on the first day, spoke volumes for the team's character. The two-time champions have the fighting spirit and a winning momentum to fall back on.

Lal refused to call his team underdogs. "Not at all... I think we are the favourites. We have momentum behind us, played some fabulous cricket. And we have got unquantifiable heroes. Nobody knows about them. We are just getting to hear about them. Tomorrow they could be the finished products. We have three-four players who could go on to play for India within a year or so. We are a team on the zoom. The curve is going up," he said.

Nair counted on experience. Karnataka are one of the elite teams in domestic cricket and they qualify for the knockouts for fun. "It does give an edge that our players are used to playing in pressure situations. At the end, it's about who does well on the given day. It's really important to do well for all five



KL Rahul's inclusion has given Karnataka an added fillip. PTI

days and in all sessions," the Karnataka captain observed.

Talking about 'unquantifiable heroes', Bengal unleashed a wiry spin-bowling allrounder, answering to the name of Shahbaz Ahmed, this season. With 30 wickets and 427 runs, the 25-year-old has emerged as the team's X-factor. "Shahbaz is redefining the Hindi language. Instead of saying janbaaz (daredevil) cricketer, we will say Shahbaz

cricketer. I haven't seen such performances for a long time. Who knows where he will end up but he is one for the future," Lal didn't mind a bit of aggrandisement.

Over to Karnataka and their batting factory — the GRV (Gundappa Viswanath) and RD (Rahul Dravid) school of cricket — rolled out another top talent this season. Devdutt Padikkal is 19 years old, but he has shown maturity beyond his years to make a serious

Gujarat vs Saurashtra: A battle of equals

Rajkot: The bowling strengths of hosts Saurashtra and Gujarat will be put to test on what is likely to be a flat track when the two sides battle it out in the first semifinal of the Ranji Trophy.

Gujarat has built its momentum slowly through the tournament. But last year's runner-up, Saurashtra will look to cash in on the home advantage with an all-round display. Gujarat comes into the game after thrashing Goa by a whopping 464 runs, while Saurashtra made the grade courtesy a massive first innings lead against Andhra.

PTI

impression. With 583 runs from nine matches, he has attested his class as well.

The Ranji Trophy started in full winter this term, with result pitches being laid out aplenty. Given the points system and that only five teams would qualify to the knockouts from a pool of 18 in Elite, Group A and B, going for outright wins during the league stage became en vogue. Both Rahul and Pandey were away on India duty, Nair, despite

playing some important knocks, has been inconsistent. Padikkal stood up to be counted. Karnataka also thrived on collective batting performance, which offset the fact that they had just one century — scored by R Samarth — during their march to the semifinal.

Now Rahul's arrival has given Karnataka the problem of plenty. Padikkal has cemented his place as an opener. Samarth, his opening partner, is one with the experience. Samarth also had a 70-plus score in the quarterfinal against Jammu & Kashmir apart from his 500-plus runs in eight matches. Rahul, of course, is an automatic pick, so it needs to be seen how the visitors alter their playing XI. KV Siddharth is fresh from his match-winning 76 followed by 98 in the quarterfinal and doesn't deserve to be dropped.

Karnataka had a couple of semifinal heartbreaks at Eden. In 2006-07, a Manoj Tiwary special — 151 not out — took the game away from them, as Bengal chased down 307 in the fourth innings. More recently in 2017-18, they lost to Vidarbha by five runs in a humdinger despite Nair's brilliance.

Tiwary is still the mainstay of Bengal batting, ready to hurt the opponents. But the Bengal top-order, especially captain Abhimanyu Easwaran, must step up. Against a team of Karnataka's calibre, the hosts will have little margin for error, as the tourists will be keen to break their Eden jinx.

Live on Star Sports Select 1/3, 9.20am

Ritu comes out on top again

GAURAV BHATT
FEBRUARY 28

IT WASN'T the first-round knockout that Ritu Phogat had been hoping for, but Friday's decision win should be more reassuring. The wrestler-turned-fighter took Wu Chiao Chen of China down at will over three rounds, taking her MMA record to 2-0.

The Singapore-based One Championship prides itself on sincere martial arts contests and flambouyant presentation. But Friday's 'King of the Jungle' event, a broadcast-only show after the coronavirus outbreak forced it to be held behind closed doors, saw each fighter dial it up for those watching at home.

The 25-year-old Phogat too grooved down the ramp to the 'Dhaakad' song from 'Dangal'. The fight itself was a no-frills story of Phogat's takedowns. The one in the opening round took the longest at 76 seconds, her opponent was down in 30 seconds in the next two rounds. In that sense, the fight pretty much followed the template set by Phogat's inspiration, the undefeated Dagestani Khabib Nurmagomedov.

The two began exchanging strikes, and though neither landed cleanly, Phogat's wind-up was enough for Chen to respect the Indian's power. Phogat threw lunging rights, often of the overhead variety, to close the distance. She then trapped Chen against the cage and brought her down with a double leg.

In MMA, referees can stand the opponents up on account of inactivity on the ground. Phogat however did enough to keep Chen pinned. The Chinese, 11 years older than Phogat, showed a lot of heart in the first two rounds. She recovered to get back into a close guard by the end of the opening round, and made it to her feet in the second.

Phogat didn't let up in the third, launching a flurry of strikes to the head of her downed opponent. Phogat promised progress and there were improvements in her game from her debut in November. For starters, she didn't allow her opponent to get up because she didn't find the position suitable!

Expectedly, there are gaping holes too. She decided to make do with the half mount, but couldn't effectively advance her position i.e. put herself in a spot to end the fight through a submission or ground and pound knockout. Phogat often spent time in a half mount, and while she landed, less room to extend strikes meant less damage to her opponent.

Even the uninitiated could make out that the third round was her most successful, and that is because it was the only instance of her moving from the half guard into a side position. A question could be, why is ad-

Friday's 'King of the Jungle' event, a broadcast-only show after the coronavirus outbreak forced it to be held behind closed doors, saw each fighter dial it up for those watching at home.

vancing guard or moving into a better position so important if Phogat can keep her opponent on the ground, be on top of them and thus record dominating decision wins?

For one, it shows killer instinct if a fighter, after scoring a takedown, is able to then secure submissions and knockout wins. Stoppages are crowd-pleasing and name-building.

More importantly, a wrestler can get a clean take-

down but then be trapped from the bottom by a high-level submission expert.

Chen, 36, has a JJJF Asian Jiu-Jitsu Championship gold medal and Chinese Taipei kickboxing and sanda championships. But she wasn't lethal with Phogat on top of her. Her guard was closed and there was never a threat of sweeps or submissions.

Phogat's wrestling pedigree serves her well not just in securing the takedowns but to control the opponent's head and wrists on the ground, opening them up for damage. An added threat of submissions will raise her game a few notches higher. And with the progress she's made in double-quick time, it's only inevitable.

China's top swimmer banned for 8 years

CHINA'S TOP swimmer Sun Yang said he would appeal after being handed an eight-year ban for a

dope test violation that rules him out of the Tokyo Games. CAS said the eight-year ban was imposed

because Sun, 28, already had an earlier anti-doping rule violation against him from 2014. **REUTERS**

DIET DIARY

Nutrition for your eyes



BY ISHI KHOSLA

AGE-RELATED cataract and Macular Degeneration (AMD) are the leading cause of acquired blindness and visual impairment in individuals more than 50 years of age in developed countries. It is a major challenge in the new millennium in the developing countries too as the size of elderly population continues to rise due to better medical facilities and increased life expectancy.

In the last two decades, research has linked diet and nutrition with good eye health, decreased risk of visual impairment, age-related macular degeneration, dry eyes and cataract.

Including foods rich in essential fatty acids and antioxidants such as vitamin A, lutein, zeaxanthin, E and C, zinc and selenium in our diet has been found to be beneficial in maintaining good eye health. Intake of adequate anti-oxidants helps retina and crystalline lens of the eye to withstand the oxidising effects of UV light and, therefore, become more resistant to both cataract and AMD.

Two carotenoids, lutein and zeaxanthin, are anti-oxidants in the eye. Several dark green leafy vegetables, as well as other foods such as eggs, contain these important nutrients. Many studies have shown that lutein and zeaxanthin reduce the risk of chronic eye diseases, including AMD and cataracts.

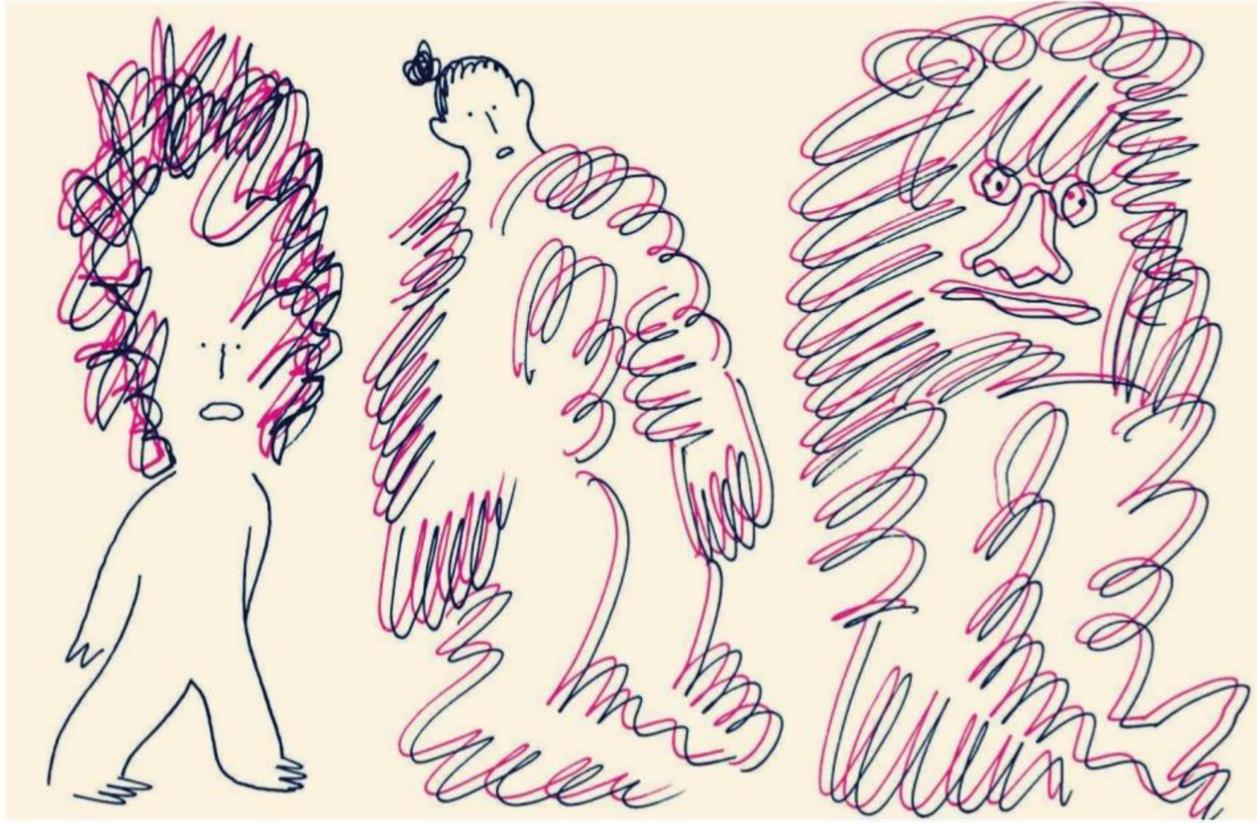
Lutein and zeaxanthin filter harmful high-energy blue wavelengths of light and help protect and maintain healthy cells in the eyes. Of the 600 carotenoids found in nature, only these two are deposited in high quantities in the retina (macula) of the eye.

Unfortunately, the human body does not make the lutein and zeaxanthin it needs. This is why eating green vegetables is important. Getting daily amounts of lutein and zeaxanthin through diet or nutritional supplements can help maintain good eye health.

Although there is no recommended daily intake for lutein and zeaxanthin, recent studies show health benefits in taking 10 mg/day of a lutein supplement and 2 mg/day of a zeaxanthin supplement. A recent longitudinal study in US showed that high quantities of the antioxidant vitamins A-C-E complex plus zinc can help to slow down the progression of AMD.

Another study reported a strong protective effect of folate, vitamin B12 on cataract and role of vitamins C and E in slowing the development or progression of cataracts. Some people who have AMD or at risk for it, like diabetics and smokers, might require supplementation with essential vitamins and anti-oxidants for reducing risk of eye disease. Supplementation must be considered under the supervision of a qualified physician.

Author is a clinical nutritionist and founder of www.theweightmonitor.com and Whole Foods India



Peter Gamlen

The difference between worry, stress and anxiety

They're not all the same, but we do have tips to help you deal with all of them

EMMA PATTEE

YOU PROBABLY experience worry, stress or anxiety at least once on any given day. Nearly 40 million people in the US suffer from an anxiety disorder, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America. Three out of four Americans reported feeling stressed in the last month, a 2017 study found. But in one of these moments, if asked which you were experiencing — worry, stress or anxiety — would you know the difference?

I reached out to two experts to help us identify - and cope with - all three.

What is worry?

Worry is what happens when your mind dwells on negative thoughts, uncertain outcomes or things that could go wrong. "Worry tends to be repetitive, obsessive thoughts," said Melanie Greenberg, a clinical psychologist in Mill Valley, California, and the author of *The Stress-Proof Brain* (2017). "It's the cognitive component of anxiety." Simply put, worry happens only in your mind, not in your body.

How does worry work?

Worry actually has an important function in our lives, according to Luana Marques, an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the president of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America. When we think about an uncertain or unpleasant situation — such as being unable to pay the rent, or doing badly on an exam — our brains become stimulated. When we worry, it calms our brains down. Worry is also likely to cause us to problem-solve or take action, both of which are positive things. "Worry is a way for your brain to

handle problems in order to keep you safe," Marques explained. "It's only when we get stuck thinking about a problem that worry stops being functional."

Three things to help your worries:

Give yourself a worry "budget", an amount of time in which you allow yourself to worry about a problem. When that time is up (start with 20 minutes), consciously redirect your thoughts.

When you notice that you're worried about something, push yourself to come up with a next step or to take action.

Write your worries down. Research has shown that just eight to 10 minutes of writing can help calm obsessive thoughts.

Remember: Worry is helpful only if it leads to change, not if it turns into obsessive thoughts.

What is stress?

Stress is a physiological response connected to an external event. In order for the cycle of stress to begin, there must be a stressor. This is usually some kind of external circumstance, like a work deadline or a scary medical test. "Stress is defined as a reaction to environmental changes or forces that exceed the individual's resources," Greenberg said.

How does stress work?

In prehistoric times, stress was a natural response to a threat, like hearing a predator in the bushes. Today, it still prompts a behavioural response, firing up your limbic system and releasing adrenaline and cortisol, which help activate your brain and body to deal with the threat, Greenberg explained. Symptoms of stress include a rapid heart rate, clammy palms and shallow breath. Stress might feel good at first, as the adrenaline and cortisol flood your body, Marques

said. You might have experienced the benefits of stress as you raced through traffic to get to an appointment, or pulled together an important assignment in the final hour. That's called "acute stress," and the rush wore off when the situation was resolved.

Chronic stress, on the other hand, is when your body stays in this fight-or-flight mode continuously (usually because the situation doesn't resolve, as with financial stressors or a challenging boss). Chronic stress is linked to health concerns such as digestive issues, an increased risk of heart disease and a weakening of the immune system.

Three things to help your stress

Get exercise. This is a way for your body to recover from the increase of adrenaline and cortisol. Get clear on what you can and can't control. Then focus your energy on what you can control and accept what you can't. Don't compare your stress with anyone else's stress. Different people respond differently to stressful situations.

Remember: Stress is a biological response that is a normal part of our lives.

What is anxiety?

If stress and worry are the symptoms, anxiety is the culmination. Anxiety has a cognitive element (worry) and a physiological response (stress), which means that we experience anxiety in both our mind and our body. "In some ways," Marques said, "anxiety is what happens when you're dealing with a lot of worry and a lot of stress."

How does anxiety work?

Remember how stress is a natural response to a threat? Well, anxiety is the same thing, except there is no threat.

"Anxiety in some ways is a response to a false alarm," said Marques, describing a situation, for example, in which you show

up at work and somebody gives you an off look. You start to have all the physiology of a stress response because you're telling yourself that your boss is upset with you, or that your job might be at risk. The blood is flowing, the adrenaline is pumping, your body is in a state of fight or flight — but there is no predator in the bushes.

There is also a difference between feeling anxious (which can be a normal part of everyday life) and having an anxiety disorder. An anxiety disorder is a serious medical condition that may include stress or worry.

Three things to help your anxiety

Limit your sugar, alcohol and caffeine intake. Because anxiety is physiological, stimulants may have a significant impact.

Check in with your toes. How do they feel? Wiggle them. This kind of refocusing can calm you and break the anxiety loop.

When you're in the middle of an anxiety episode, talking or thinking about it will not help you. Try to distract yourself with your senses: Listen to music, jump rope for five minutes, or rub a piece of Velcro or velvet.

Remember: Anxiety happens in your mind and your body so trying to think your way out of it won't help.

Too worried, stressed or anxious to read the whole article?

Here's the takeaway: Worry happens in your mind, stress happens in your body, and anxiety happens in your mind and your body. In small doses, worry, stress and anxiety can be positive forces in our lives. But research shows that most of us are too worried, too stressed and too anxious. The good news, according to Marques, is that there are simple (not easy) first steps to help regulate your symptoms: Get enough sleep; eat regular, nutritious meals; and move your body. NYT

SHORT COURSE

[0-10 YEARS]

Vitamin D during pregnancy may benefit children's bones



MOST EXPERTS recommend that pregnant women take a daily supplement of 400 units of vitamin D. Now a randomised clinical trial suggests that a much larger dose may be beneficial for children's bone health. The study randomised 517 women to take either a 2,400-unit vitamin D supplement or a placebo from 24 weeks of pregnancy until one week after birth. In addition, all the women were advised to take a 400-unit vitamin D supplement.

The researchers followed the offspring with periodic bone scans through age 6. Over all, children whose mothers took 2,800 units had significantly higher bone density at age 6 than children in the placebo group. The effects were particularly robust in women who were initially deficient in vitamin D and in those who gave birth during the winter, when sunlight levels are lower and vitamin D blood levels tend to drop. About 7 percent of children whose mothers took the high dose suffered bone fractures through age 6, compared with 11 percent in the placebo group. NYT

[30+YEARS]

Education may be key to a longer life, shows study



WHITE AMERICANS, on average, live longer than black Americans. A new study suggests that this apparent racial disparity may largely be explained by varying levels of education.

In 1985, researchers recruited 5,114 men and women, roughly equal numbers of blacks and whites, average age 25. They followed them through 2015, and over those years 395 died, all before age 60.

The death rate among blacks was about 70 per cent higher than that of whites. But when the researchers controlled for factors that affect longevity like age, sex and socioeconomic status and compared blacks and whites with similar levels of education, the disparity almost completely disappeared.

Among people with a high school education or less, 13.5 per cent of whites and 13.2 per cent of blacks died before 60. NYT

[30+YEARS]

Exposure to air pollution linked with poor kidney health



LIVING IN areas with higher levels of air pollution is associated with an increased risk of developing kidney diseases, according to a study.

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine said the findings may be especially important for parts of the world with higher air pollution.

The study examined information on 10,997 adults across four sites in the US who were followed from 1996-1998 through 2016. The researchers estimated the monthly average levels of tiny particles of air pollution based on participants' addresses. They found that exposure to higher amounts of fine particulate matter was associated with a higher degree of albuminuria — a marker of kidney dysfunction — at the start of the study and higher risk of developing chronic kidney disease over time. PTI

Super cushioned running shoes are the rage, but aren't foolproof

Runners wearing maximalist running shoes pound harder and pronate more than in standard shoes

GRETCHEN REYNOLDS

ANYONE WHO runs or spectates at races has probably noticed that stacked, generously cushioned running shoes have become almost ubiquitous. But running in those thickly cushioned shoes could affect a runner's form in sometimes surprising ways, according to a series of new studies of maximalist running shoes and recreational athletes.

The studies, among the first to examine the biomechanics of ordinary runners wearing super-cushy shoes, find that some of them pound harder and pronate more than in standard shoes. The results have implications for runners' comfort, injury risks and perhaps for our thinking about whether the increasingly popular fat-soled models are right for us.

Thickly cushioned running shoes have largely supplanted the minimalist, barefoot-style shoes that many of us wore a few years ago. Those light, barely cushioned models were expected to nudge us into running in a more natural way, reducing the risk of injuries.

But some runners did get hurt in minimalist shoes, and others did not enjoy the shoes'

skimpy feel. And so, as often happens, interest swung recently toward the other extreme, of running shoes with plenty of cushion.

These maximalist shoes, which generally feature high, foam-filled midsoles (and sometimes other high-tech additions, such as carbon-fiber plates), are reputed to be more comfortable, less likely to contribute to injuries and, in the case of some models, like the popular Nike Vaporfly, faster than less-cushioned shoes, making them especially popular with competitive athletes.

But few studies have examined the effects of maximalist shoes on how average, recreational athletes run. So, for the new studies, a group of researchers at Oregon State University-Cascades in Bend, Oregon, began a series of experiments.

The first of these, which was published in 2018 in *The Orthopaedic Journal of Sports Medicine*, involved 15 female runners. The researchers supplied these volunteers with neutral running shoes, which contain an average amount of midsole cushioning, and maximalist, thickly cushioned shoes.

The women donned each type of shoes in turn and ran over force plates embedded in a



Reuters

long track, while the researchers filmed them using motion-capture technology. Immediately afterward, the women ran 5 kilometres on a treadmill and then raced along the track again.

Comparing their form, the researchers noted that the women almost uniformly landed harder in the maximalist shoes than the neutral pair and pronated more — mean-

ing that their ankles rolled inward slightly — when they pushed off.

Those changes in running form could be expected to increase the risk of running injuries, if they lingered. But that study looked at only one run in each type of shoe. So, for a follow-up study, which was published last year in the *American Journal of Sports Medicine*, the researchers had runners again stride over force

plates in neutral and fat shoes, but then also wear the maximalist pair for six weeks of training, before they repeated the testing. As before, the runners tended to impact the ground with greater force and pronate more in the maximal shoes during their first visit to the lab. But those changes in running style did not lessen during the six weeks. In effect, the runners did not adjust to the shoes. They continued to thwack the ground and roll at the ankles a bit more in the stacked-sole shoes than the neutral ones.

Finally, for the most recent, related experiment, which was published in January in the *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, several of the researchers asked a shoe company (New Balance) to custom-alter a pair of their neutral shoes, removing or adding foam, so that the same model could serve as a minimal, neutral and maximal shoe. These customised shoes would allow the scientists to focus exclusively on the role of cushioning in the runners' form.

The researchers then rounded up a new group of 20 male and female recreational runners, gave them the custom shoes and repeated the force-plate measurements and motion capture. This time, few of the runners thudded as forcefully in the maximalist shoes, but they continued to pronate more than in the other models.

Taken as a whole, the three experiments suggest that extra cushioning does influence

several aspects of how we run, says JJ Hannigan, now an assistant professor of kinesiology at San Jose State University, who, with his postdoctoral adviser, Christine Pollard, and others at Oregon State, was an author of each of the studies. In particular, the stacked soles of the maximalist shoes seem to subtly affect balance.

"If you extend a shoe's height, it will tend to be more unstable," Hannigan says, which is likely to increase ankle movement and pronation.

Likewise, he says, extra layers of foam could blunt road feel, which is our bodies' sense of where the ground is. In that case, our muscles, brains and nervous systems might be less able to precisely coordinate and anticipate footfalls as we clop against the earth.

None of the three studies tracked actual injuries among the runners wearing the maximalist or other shoes, though, so the authors cannot say if extra padding contributes to or reduces the chance of getting hurt. They also were not looking at running speed or how runners felt about the fat shoes, which are factors that can matter when choosing a shoe. Hannigan hopes to look into some of those issues in future studies.

For now, if you are interested in maximal shoes, "visit a running store and try them out before buying", Hannigan says, and ease into training with them slowly. NYT

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Vijai Bahadur Singh S/O Late Parashuram Singh R/O Sandhya Home for Senior Citizen Netaji Nagar New Delhi-110023 changed my name to Vijay Bahadur Singh. 0040533743-3

I, Bishan S/O Jagdish Prasad R/O H.No.44-A, Govind Mohalla, Haiderpur, Delhi-110088. Have Changed My Name To Bishan Gupta. 0040533912-3

I, Yogesh Pal Kapoor S/O Bhandari Lal Kapoor R/O-13-A New Layalpur-Extn., Krishna-Nagar Delhi-110051, have changed my name to Yogesh Kapoor, for all purposes. 0040533892-7

I, Vijay Nagar S/O Mam Chand Naagar R/O-C-49-D, Patel Garden, Kakrola, Dwarka, Delhi-110078. Changed My Name To Vijay Kumar Naagar. 0040533900-1

I, Upma Singh Baghel W/O Sushil Kumar Singh R/O-B-2/11 Sewak Park Dwarka-mor, Kakrola delhi, have changed my name to Ishika Singh Baghel 0040533828-5

I, Suman Sharma W/O Virender Kumar Sharma R/O-Flat No.46, The Palms Apartment, Plot No-13B, Sector-6, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075, have changed my name from Suman Sharma to Suman Lata Sharma. 0040533834-1

I, Sonia Katra W/O Underjeet Singh R/O-16/102 G/F Gali No-4-5, Block-16 Joshi Road, KarolBagh Delhi-110005, changed my name to Sonia permanently. 0040533892-4

I, Shrutu Kohli W/O Sachin Kohli H.No-E-227, Patel-Nagar-II, Ghaziabad, U.P-201001, Changed My Name To Deepti Kohli. 0040533912-2

I, Shivani w/o Gulshan Kapuria R/O-158, 3rd-floor, Satya-Niketan, MotiBagh-2, Delhi-110021, have changed my name to Shivani Verma Kapuria permanently. 0040533892-2

I, Sharnjit Singh S/O Gurbachan Singh R/O-B-41, Shivaji Vihar, Janta Colony, New Delhi-110027. Have Changed My Name To Sharanjeet Singh. 0040533879-10

I, Shaileendra Kumar (as per High School Certificate) S/O Sh. Veerban Singh R/O 14, Gali No. 1, Nand Gram, Radha Kunj, Ghaziabad-201001, UP have changed my name to Shaileendra Singh Chauhan for all purpose and Shaileendra Kumar and Shaileendra Singh Chauhan is the name of the same and one person. 0040533865-1

I, Bhuvan Yogita Mishra D/o Bhuvan Chandra Mishra R/O-A-94, Pandara Road, New Delhi-110003, have changed my name from, Bhuvan Yogita Mishra to Yogita Mishra and here in after I, Shall be known as Yogita Mishra for all purposes, and future correspondences. 0040533944-3

I, Rekha Arora D/o Tilak Raj R/O-38 Second-floor Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027, have Changed My Name from Rekha Arora to Rekha Kumar, for all purposes 0040533828-3

I, Reena Sachan W/O Upendra Kumar Sachan R/O-403/22, 15 Shivaji Park, Gurgaon, Haryana-121001, have changed my name to Reena Singh. 0040533885-4

I, Ravi Kumar S/O Raju Chauhan R/O-Plot-No.60 Ground-Floor Kh. No-7/77 Rajeev Nagar Extn. Karala Delhi-110086, have Changed My Name from Ravi Kumar to Ravi Kumar Chauhan, for all future purposes. 0040533828-4

I, Rashmi Nagpal W/O Jagdeep Singh R/O-2/444, UGF, Subhash Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Rashmi. 0040533885-7

I, Raju S/O Shri Om Prakash R/O J-3/140, J.J.Colony, Wazirpur, Delhi-110052, have changed my name to Raj Kumar. 0040533879-1

I, Preetam Singh S/O Jawahar Lal Kumar R/O-633, Niti Khand-3, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad-201014 have changed my name to Pritam Kumar. 0040533944-2

I, Praveen Ahuja S/O Chanan Dass Ahuja R/O-9-39-A MIG, Flats Ashok-Vihar Phase-I Delhi-110052, inform that my name is Praveen Ahuja and Parveen Ahuja are same person. 0040533892-8

I, Prashant Barwal S/O Shri Yatender R/O-H.No-5/76, Sector-2, Rajender-Nagar, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, U.P. have changed my name from Prashant Barwal to Prashant, for all future purposes. 0040533900-7

I, Pooja W/O Ankit Kumar R/O-Y-1/14, 15/Fut Gali, Dalmil Road, Nithari, Budh Vihar, Delhi-110086. Changed my Name to Pooja Chugh. 0040533900-2

I, Jaskaran S/O Jeet Singh R/O-F-44, Sudershan Park, Motinagar, N.Delhi-15 have changed my name to Jaskaran Singh. 0040533885-5

I, Jagdeep Singh Nagpal S/O Bahadur Singh R/O-2/444, UGF, Subhash Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Jagdeep Singh. 0040533885-6

I, Pinky Devi spouse of No.4078384L HAV Surendra Singh, R/O VIII- Nadda, PO-Dadmandi, Teh.- Kotdwara, Distt- Pauri Garhwal, UK-246124, have changed my name from Pinky Devi to Pinki Devi, vide affidavit dated 20/02/2020. 0040533854-1

I, Payal D/O Madan Lal Sharma W/O Raveesh R/O-C-83, Sanjay Gram opp.Sector-14, Gurgaon (Haryana)-122001, have changed my name to Payal Sharma. 0040533885-1

I, Parul W/O, Ashwani Malik R/O-429-D, Railway-Colony, Old-Aryanagar, Dhoibighat, Ghaziabad-201001, changed my minor son's name Samanyu Chaudhary to Pragyan Malik. 0040533900-4

I, Nikhil Surendra Peshave S/O Surendra Shiram Peshave R/O-B804 platinum height Ramprastha Green Sec-9 Vaishali-Extn. Ghaziabad UP-201010, have changed my name from Nikhil Peshave to Nikhil Surendra Peshave for all future purposes. 0040533885-2

I, Nariender Kaur w/o Darshan Singh r/o H-88, GS Apartment, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi-110085 have changed my name to Narinder Kaur for all future purposes. 0040533859-1

I, Namita Nagrath Sawhney W/O Kushagra Nagrath R/O-C-2/2272, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070, Have Changed My Name To Namita Sawhney Nagrath. 0040533879-6

I, Monika Dogra W/O Latif Joshi R/O 1324/11, Badshahi bagh Colony Ambala Haryana-134003, have Changed my name to Aanchal Joshi 0040533828-1

I, Nandini W/O Mohammad Mistar r/o A-25, East Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to ENJARAN NISHAN 0040533857-1

I, Monika Parihar W/O Mr. Anoop Gupta R/O Village + Post - Bijauli, Distt- Aligarh U.P.-202131, have changed my name from Monika Parihar to Monika Parihar Gupta for all future purposes. 0040533855-1

I, Mohammad Alam S/O Latifur Rahman r/o A-155, East Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to Mohammad MISTAR. 0040533857-2

I, Medni Dhar Upreti S/O Hari Ram Upreti R/O H-II/23, IIPA, I.P. Estate, Ring Road, (ITO) New Delhi-110002 have changed my name from Mednidhar Upreti to Medni Dhar Upreti. 0040533877-1

I, Manoj Kumar S/O Rishi Pal R/O-E-2/4/15, Sector-15, Rohini, Delhi-110089, Have Changed My Name To Manoj Kumar Chaudhary. 0040533892-10

I, Mamta W/O Itendira Singh Butola R/O-A-112, Sector-22, Noida G.B.Nagar, Pin-201301, have changed my name to Mamta Butola after marriage 0040533944-1

I, Magan Singh S/O Bakhtawar Singh Rana R/O 38 Telupura Raja Road Selauki Sahaspur Dehradun Uttarakhand-248197 have changed my name to Magan Singh Rana. 0040533881-2

I, Madhu Kumari D/o Binay Krishna Tiwari R/O H.No.398, Sector-9, Gurugram 122001, have changed my name to Madhu Tiwari for all legal purposes. 0040533907-1

I, Km Najhat Jahan W/O Syed Mohammad Ali R/O-B-29/1, Abul-Fazal-Enclave, Jamia-Nagar, Okhla, Delhi-110025, Have Change My Name To Nuzhat Syeda. 0040533879-3

I, Khasti Gariya, Wife of, Harish Chandra Singh, Address-15, Safdarjung-Road, New Delhi, have changed my Name to Khastil Dosaad, for all future purposes. 0040533912-5

I, Kaushik Sarkar S/O Sh. Asim kumar Sarkar R/O-F-402, Plot No.23, Sabka Ghar Apartment, Dwarka, Sector-6, South West Delhi-110075, hereby inform Asim Kumar and Asim Kumar Sarkar are name of same person. 0040533867-1

I, Kaushal Hasmukhraj Meghani R/O-CAF/202, Janakpuri, N.Delhi-110058, have changed my Minor son's name Vir Kaushal Meghani to Veer Kaushal Meghani. 0040533885-3

I, Jigmohan Singh S/O Magan Singh Rana R/O Flat-B-28, Trikuta Hill Apartment, C-58/27, Sector-62, Noida have changed my name to Jigmohan Singh Rana. 0040533881-1

I, Ishita Kumari W/O Sanchit Mackol R/O H.No-17/77, Subhash Nagar Delhi-110027 Have Changed My Name To Ishita Mackol. 0040533912-6

I, IFTIKHAR KHAN S/O Asrar Ahmad Khan R/O-P-11/8, Fourth-Floor Right Side, Batla House, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025 have changed my name to IFTIKHAR AHMAD KHAN for all future purposes. 0040533836-1

I, Hitherto Known as Vidyawati Saxena W/O Late.Mohan Lal Residing at H.No-287, Sector-7, R.K.Puram Delhi-110022, Have Changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Vidyawati. 0040533892-6

I, Harpreet Singh S/O Shri.Daljeet Singh Taneja R/O-C-97, Fateh-Nagar, Tilak Nagar, N.Delhi-110018, Have Changed My Name To Harpreet Singh Taneja. 0040533879-2

I, Gulfeshan Ateem W/O Abdul Ateem R/O 4109, Katra Nizumul Mukh, Urdu Bazar, Jama Masjid, Delhi-110006 have changed my name to Gulfeshan. 0040533871-1

I, Garima Chhabra, D/O Tnder Raj Chhabra, R/O-H.NO.1/9069, Street.no.2, West Rohtas-Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-32, have changed the name of my minor son RITVIKK to RITVIKK CHHABRA, for all future purposes. 0040533900-6

I, Gagan Singla R/O-H-103, Tower-A, Anjara Pride, Sector-4B, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad have changed my son's name, from Apoorva Singla to Apoorv Singla. 0040533892-3

I, Divyam R/O ward no.3 Farrukhnagar(Rural)(35) Gurgaon, Haryana 122506 have changed my name to Divyam Sharma. 0070700786-1

I, Diropati W/O Shiv Charan R/O/ Flat No-1101, Tower-No-5, Unitech Horizon, Sector-Pi-2, Greater Noida, Gautam-Budh Nagar, U.P, changed My Name To Draupadi Devi. 0040533892-9

I, Dineshwar Singh Chauhan S/O Vishwambar Singh Chauhan R/O-Flat-6261, ATS-Dolge, Plot-GH-12A, Sector-Zeta-1, Greater-Noida, UP have changed my name to Dineshwar Singh. 0040533892-5

I, Deepti Gupta W/O Ravi Gupta R/O WZ-54, Chauhankind Extn., Tilak Nagar, New Delhi-110018 have changed my name as Meenu Gupta for all purposes. 0040533833-1

I, Deepti Guglani W/O Sachin Kohli H.No.E-227, Patel Nagar-II, Ghaziabad, U.P-201001, Changed My Name To Deepti Kohli. 0040533912-1

I, Deepa Choudhary W/O Manoj Kumar Choudhary R/O-E-2/4/15, Sector-15, Rohini, Delhi-110089. Changed My Name to Deepa Chaudhary. 0040533900-3

I, Ashish Khepar S/O Sh. Raj Kumar R/O B-151, B-Block, Swaroop Nagar, Libaspur, Uttar Paschim, Delhi-110042 have changed my name to Aashish Khepar for all purposes. 0040533829-1

I, Abhijeet Rai S/O Shri. Bharat Rai R/O D-II, 262, Vinay Marg, Chanakya Puri, N.D. - 110021 inform that Abhijeet Rai & Abhijeet Kumar are one & the same person and I should be known as Abhijeet Rai for all future purposes. 0040533924-1

I, Yogesh Pal Kapoor S/O Bhandari Lal Kapoor R/O-13-A New Layalpur-Extn. Krishna-Nagar Delhi-110051. Have Changed My Name To Yogesh Kapoor, For All Purposes. 0040533879-5

I, Samir Khan S/O, Vishal Mohammed R/O 83, Pocket-1, Jasola Vihar, New Delhi-110025 have changed my name to Sameer Khan for all purposes. 0040533847-1

I, Ram S/O, Surya Dev Sah R/O 5508 Gali Number 5 New Chandrawal Delhi-7 have changed my name to Ram Sah for all purposes. 0040533851-1

I, Pramjeet Father Rohtash Sharma Add-D-5/16, Gali No.5 West Vashisht-Park Pankhara West New Delhi-110046, Changed My Name To Paramjeet Kumar Sharma. 0040533879-9

I, Mohammad Ali, alias Syed Mohd Ali S/O, Syed Mohammad Sajid Hasan R/O Mehmood Manzil, Kothi Rani Dulhan, Dodpur, Civil Lines, Aligarh have changed my name to Syed Mohammed Ali for all purposes 0040533849-1

I, Nitin Sirohi S/O, Balraj Singh R/O 6, Mohammedpur, Rajabpur, Amroha, UP-244236 have changed my name to Kunwar Nitin Sirohi for all purposes. 0040533845-1

I, Lalit Kumar S/O Chander Mohan R/O 1324/11, Badshahi Bagh Colony Ambala Haryana-134003, have changed my name to Lalit Joshi 0040533828-2

I, Meenu Sharma W/O Ravi Ahuja R/O-21 Prem Colony Sonipat have changed my name to Meenu for all purposes. 0040533892-1

I, Kaushalya Devi/Koshalya W/O Attar Singh, H.No.17, Sarai Sohail Mang Lapuri Delhi-110045, Changed My Name To Kaushalya. 0040533912-4

I, Kamla Rani W/O Bharat Bhushan Sharma, H.No-153/4, Shaheed Babu Labh Singh Nagar Jalandhar Punjab-144013. Changed My Name To Kamla Rani Sharma. 0040533879-8

I, Hema Kohli W/O Vipin Chandra R/O-Masi Distt. Almorra, Uttrakhand-263658, have changed my name to Hema Devi for all purposes. 0040533900-5

I, Chander Singh S/O Mangtu Ram Kataria R/O-B-246/4 Keshav Nagar Near Mukti Ashram Ibrahimpur Delhi-110036. Changed My Name To Chander Singh Kataria. 0040533885-9

I, Bharat Bhushan S/O Bodh Raj H.No-153/4, Shaheed Babu Labh Singh Nagar Jalandhar Punjab 144013. Changed My Name To Bharat Bhushan Sharma. 0040533879-7

I, Ashish Ashok Garg S/O Ashok Hazarilal Garg R/O-R-562, New Rajinder Nagar N.Delhi-110060 Have Changed My Name To Ashish Garg. 0040533879-4

I, Tansan Parveen W/O Abdul Mannan R/O-90/99, Onkar Nagar-B, Tri-Nagar Delhi-110035, have changed my name to Afsha Parveen, for all purposes. 0040533885-8

LOST & FOUND

This is for the information of public that my client Malik Abhay Veer Batra S/O Tara Chand Batra R/O Plot No. 21, Block-B, Pocket-10, Sector-13, Dwarka, New Delhi-110078 has lost/misplaced the original documents of Plot No. 21, Block-B, Pocket-10, Sector-13, Dwarka, New Delhi-110078 and Police Report has been lodged in this regard on 28/02/2020. That nobody should misuse the same and nobody should sell & purchase the said property without the knowledge and consent of my client. 0040533918-1

I, Priti Bajaj W/O Late Vasdev Bajaj R/O A-611, Shastri Nagar, Delhi-110052 have lost my original four sets of un-executed Perpetual Lease Deed documents issued by D.S.I.I.D.C. wide Application No. 47875 for execution of Plot No.153, Pocket-I, Sector-4, Bawana Industrial Area, Delhi-110039. Finders may contact at Mobile No. 9811274374. 0040533829-2

I, Vimal Devi W/O Ajnash Poddar Add: D-2/149 Shiv Durga vihar Lakarpur Faridabad- 121009 have lost 1st G.P.A. chain copy name of Pawan Kumar s/o Raj Kumar in favour of Reva Devi W/O Satyanarayan Poddar village Lakarpur Faridabad. If anyone find kindly contact Mob. 9582859332. 0040533905-1

I, Namrata Mann, D/O Surinder Singh Mann R/O-108, Uday-Park, New Delhi-110049, is notifying for the information that my original qualifying examination Marksheet and Certificate of Main Secondary examination of the year-1995, roll number-6124875 and senior secondary examination of the year-1997, roll number-7517931, issued by CBSE has been actually lost. 0040533912-7

PROPERTY

1119/C, Third Floor, SadhNagar, Palam Colony rent - Hari Shankar, 2362, Hudson Line, Delhi-9 0050163192-1

PUBLIC NOTICE
My clients: Sh. Bhushan Pandey S/O Sh. Bhagya Narayan Pandey and his wife Smt. Asha Devi both R/O House No. 101, Kh. No. 80, Main Market, Samay Pur Chowk, Samay Pur, Delhi-110042, severally all social and family relations with their son Parshant Kumar, his wife Smt. Khushboo, due to their cruel acts, unruly and disobedient behavior and from today my clients severally all social and family relations with them and disowned them from all movable and immovable properties. My clients shall not be responsible for any act and conduct done by his said son and his wife Khushboo. A.K. SURI (Advocate) Ch. No. T-18, 1st Floor, Tehsil Lane, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

PUBLIC NOTICE
My clients: Sh. Gurbachan Lal Pathwa S/O Late Kipal Singh and his wife Smt. Savitri Devi both R/O House No. 101, Kh. No. 80, Main Market, Samay Pur Chowk, Samay Pur, Delhi-110042, severally all social and family relations with their son Kulpip Pathwa, his wife Mrs. Pooja and their children, who are residing separately from my clients since 2011, from all their movable and immovable properties due to their disrespectful behavior and being out of control of my clients. My clients have also severed all their relations with them. If anyone deals with them in any manner, he/she shall do so at his/her own risks, costs and consequences. My clients shall not be liable and responsible for the same. Sd/- SARVAGYA SHARMA (Advocate) Ch. No. 735-B, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is inform to the General Public that my clients: Sh. Jaswant Singh S/O Sh. Kham Singh and Smt. Sanjesh Sidhu W/O Sh. Jaswant Singh, Both R/O G-202, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi-110080, have disowned and disbarred of their son named Saurabh Singh Sidhu & his wife Smt. Keshu Rani from all their movable and immovable properties and disowned and disbarred them from all their liabilities and have no relation with them in future. Sd/- Narendra K. Sharma (Advocate) Ch. No. 170, Saket Court, New Delhi-110017 Enrolment No. D-950/02 Mobile- 9891210446

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the public at large that my clients: Sh. Shripada L. Jais, S/O Late Mangal Singh R/O-B, Mangal Puri, New Delhi-110083 has severed all their relations from his sons Sh. Tarun Kumar (22 Yrs) & Sh. Mukul (21 Yrs), disowned & disbarred them from all their movable & immovable properties with immediate effect because of disobedience & temperament issues with the sons & atrocities committed by them against my client. Any person dealing with them, shall be doing so at their own risk, costs & consequences. My client shall not be responsible in any manner for the same. Adv. Nakul Grover & Associates Suneja-I, DC Janakpuri, N.D.-58

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notified that my client (1) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (2) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (3) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (4) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (5) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (6) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (7) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (8) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (9) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (10) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (11) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (12) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (13) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (14) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (15) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (16) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (17) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (18) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (19) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (20) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (21) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (22) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (23) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (24) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (25) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (26) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (27) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (28) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (29) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (30) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (31) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (32) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (33) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (34) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (35) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (36) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (37) Smt. Shiv Dular Devi (38) Smt. 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29 REVIEWS CINEMA & MUSIC

SHUBHRA GUPTA

ANUBHAV SINHA'S *Thappad* has a one-point agenda: you cannot slap a woman, and expect her to ignore it, and 'move on'. You Can Not.

That it has taken us until 2020 to say this out loud in a movie says a lot about our society, which sanctions all kinds of evil under the guise of our *sabhyata* and *maryada*: if you are an *adarsh bahu*, as Amrita (Pannu) is, it is your job to check your elderly mother-in-law's (Azmi) blood sugar levels, supervise the kitchen, escort your husband (Gulati) to the car, and hand over his wallet and packed lunch, as he busily moves off to earn a living. All without demur, all with a smile, and good grace, every single day.

Amrita has made peace with this unending routine, but there is a niggling regret for what might have been. She could have been a dancer, professional even, just like her loving father (Mishra) wanted her to be. She has left those dreams behind, just like a dutiful wife and daughter-in-law ought, being content with creating a morning slot of her own — a cup of black tea infused with herbs, and a deep breath at the morning outside — before the day is upon her, with all its demands.

Thappad resonates, as it is meant to. Because the director shows, without mincing any words (sometimes too many, and too explicatory), just how patriarchy is handed down from one generation to another, and how women are equally complicit. After that fateful slap, in full view of family and guests, Amrita responds by self-soothing, and when that doesn't work, by expecting her own family, including her mother (Pathak Shah), her brother and his girlfriend (Grewal), plus, of course, her father, to be supportive. No surprise that it is her mother who baulks, and talks about the importance of *rishtey nibhana*, and *wohi tumhara ghar hai*. After marriage, the *maayka* is no longer the girl's by right. It is a place where she can visit and stay for a while. A traditional Indian girl in a traditional Indian marriage can never go back home again.

The most effective parts of the film are the ones in which we are shown just how women are always being told how to feel, how to keep their feelings in check, how not to give into them. It's not just Amrita who is dealing with *sirf ke thappad hi toh tha*, and how Vikram (the husband) who slaps her is 'only' taking out his workplace frustration on her. The film also pays attention to the other women who are in Amrita's orbit; how her lawyer (Sarao), and her mother, and mother-in-law have dealt with their own disappointments, and how the maid (Ohlyan), who is routinely beaten by her drunken husband, has learnt to combat it.

Domestic abuse is rampant across class and age, and the well-intentioned Sinha is sometimes too on the nose as he goes about laying out this shamefully well-known but never really acknowledged fact. And clearly there is concern about not alienating your viewers, especially when it comes to the unravelling of the relationship between Amrita and her husband: she is made to give him a long rope, and there are tears, on both sides, at the parting. His feel convenient, and hers a sop.

What stands out in all this, is the time Amrita is given to wrap her head around the incident: the first shock, the withdrawal, and then the gradual loss of self-respect, till she can't stand it anymore: this is a powerful arc,

THAPPAD ★★★
Director: Anubhav Sinha **Cast:** Taapsee Pannu, Pavail Gulati, Ratna Pathak Shah, Kumud Mishra, Maya Sarao, Tanvi Azmi, Geetika Vidya Ohlyan, Manav Kaul, Dia Mirza, Naila Grewal, Ram Kapoor

Hitting Hard



Tejinder Singh Khamkha

and lends *Thappad* much of its heft. Pannu drives the film, but the effort she puts into her performance shows. There is more welcome edge in the way Sarao comes across, especially with her own dismissive spouse (Kaul), as she charts her own path. And Ohlyan's spirited *kaamwaali* fairly leaps off the screen. Both these actors, as well as the fresh-faced Grewal, as the girl who stands by the wounded Amrita, leave an impression.

Surprisingly, the skilled Pathak Shah is also a tad more effortful than she usually is, taking time to settle into her part, laying just that little extra emphasis on the broad middle-parting in the oiled hair, the shapeless salwar kameez, and the chappals, which make up her character. But one of the truest moments in the film belongs to her, when she says that she could have also been more, if only she had more support from her loving husband, and Mishra's shame-faced response, a nod to all those years for taking her for granted, makes it complete.

Azmi is a delight, not putting a single foot wrong, as she finally realises how she, as the conventional *saas*, expecting everything

from her *bahu*, but giving her *beta* as many excuses as he wishes, has contributed to the situation. It is the strongest sequence in the film, and both Pannu and Azmi are excellent in the exchange. And it's good to see Mirza in a small but interesting role as a single mom, trying to raise her teenage daughter right, and free.

In a film led by its female characters, the men do their job well. In particular, Pavail is credible as the guy who thinks his job is done once he gets the money home, completely oblivious to the hurt he has caused his wife. As far as he, the provider, is concerned, that one slap is not anything that Amrita should take to heart, not really. Nothing, at any rate, serious enough for him to render an apology, which would imply that he is aware that he's crossed a line, and that it should never happen again. As far as he's concerned, if ever a situation like this occurs again, when he is done against at the workplace, and if ever Amrita happens to be in front of him, that slap can occur again.

You can see so many men reflected in Vikram, men who are personable and affa-

ble, and perfect in so many ways, but who have no empathy. Not bad men per se, but thoughtless and careless, who would be horrified if they were called out as sexist. Vikram just cannot fathom Amrita's response, and it would have been in character if he had stuck to his beliefs. His admitting to his 'faults' feels specious, and hurried: in fact, all the main characters are not only handed out a flash of awareness of their wrongdoing, they are given redemptive speeches too. And some of the sharpness is leached away, and the impact is diluted.

But there is not a shred of doubt that Sinha has made an important, crucial film, which shows up centuries of male entitlement and damaging sexism for what it is. *Thappad* bears its message, more essential than ever, on its chin: Women are not property. Wives are not owned. Dreams have no gender, and everyone is allowed to realise them. And how all it takes, from a woman who just wants self-respect, is a decision to say no, Not Even One Slap.

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DVD & BLU-RAY
DOCTOR SLEEP
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 ₹ 1499/-



Visible Fears

THE INVISIBLE MAN
 ★★★

Director: Leigh Whannell
Cast: Elizabeth Moss, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, Harriet Dyer, Aldis Hodge, Storm Reid

SHALINI LANGER

A SHARP, minimalistic house up on a cliff, surrounded on all sides by full-length glass windows, overlooking the sea, and carrying the echo of crashing waves.

The Invisible Man begins with a lot of promise, as Cecilia (Moss) wakes up in the bedroom of that house in the middle of a night, carefully removes the arm lying across her waist, takes out some pills from under the mattress, adjusts the CCTV camera to focus on her sleeping husband, takes out a bag already packed with cash and passport, changes into sweatshirt and tracks, disables the alarm, and sneaks out. Rarely do films devote so much attention, in so brief a time, to an escape. Cecilia's minutely-crafted one makes us both root for her as well as have faith in her.

The film proceeds to progressively erode the latter, as Cecilia turns out to be little more than the hapless victim of an abusive marriage, her husband being one of the world's leading entrepreneurs in optics. There are a lot of suggestions here, of the invasive world of technology, of mind

playing tricks, of fear and how much it rests on the acknowledgement of it, of a marriage dynamics, of gaslighting of women, of who is the real victim here, and even of the lure of money. However, none of it really matters as *The Invisible Man*, despite its lineage to the HG Wells classic, essentially turns out to be *Sleeping With The Enemy* re-loaded, with less of the sex, more of the horror and the lead character invisible.

Moss, she of the vulnerable face and the moist eyes, is shouldering her first solo-lead here. And she does a commendable job with what she gets, which is mostly staring at seemingly empty corners and lurking around quiet houses. The supporting cast suggests there will be supplementary story lines, but *The Invisible Man* inexplicably lingers on them only to discard them. Its 120-plus-minutes length doesn't help as the plot becomes more and more stretched, before bouncing to an incredulous plot twist (that you may see a while coming) and crawling to a limp finish. Plus, given the suffusion of cameras all around us these days, it is a wonder that none of what Cecilia is experiencing isn't captured by any.

A lot of the horror lies in having one second guess the source of fear. Having revealed its hand too early, there is only so much *The Invisible Man* can do to keep up the surprise element. What adds to the disappointment is that the film has its sure-shot moments of slow-burning terror, like a hunt in the attic, the sudden glimpse of a shape, and that early sequence at the house. One keeps hoping director Whannell — stepping in to help Universal Pictures with reboot of its hit horror franchises — will return to that house, and its angles and shadows, its whispers and echoes. These seem to house more secrets than the film chooses to tell.

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Sounds of Injustice

THE STATE AGAINST MANDELA AND THE OTHERS (DOCUMENTARY)

Directors: Nicolas Champeaux, Gilles Porte
Cast: Quartus de Wet, Denis Goldberg, Ahmed Kathrada, Nelson Mandela, Winnie Mandela

GLENN KENNY

THE TRIAL for sabotage and a conspiracy to violently overthrow the government of South Africa that earned Nelson Mandela a life sentence in 1964 was not filmed. But its audio component was recorded; 256 hours of it, according to this film. *The State Against Mandela and the Others*, a documentary about that trial and its aftermath directed by Nicolas Champeaux and Gilles Porte, has clever, effective means of compensating for the absence of visual documentation. One is animation.

In striking black-and-white renderings that look like charcoal drawings, scenes from the trial are depicted, sometimes metaphorically. A judge upbraiding the anti-apartheid activist Mandela is drawn in an outside fashion so as to dwarf the defendant. One is reminded of the animated *Before the Law* sequence that prefaces Orson Welles's film of Kafka's *The Trial*.

The movie also features interviews with surviving co-defendants and comrades of Mandela, all of them filmed with headphones around their necks. Periodically they put these on, listen to the trial audio



and comment on it.

No visuals can compete with Mandela's voice at the trial: "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to see realised. But my Lord, if it need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Mandela did not die before effecting a huge change in his still-traumatised country. This movie sheds a valuable light on his struggle. In its final scene, four aged survivors of that struggle reunite and talk over ideals and old times. They catch footage of Donald J Trump on television and their eyes light up, as if they've seen his like before.

NYT

Story of a Band

ONCE WERE BROTHERS (DOCUMENTARY)

Director: Daniel Roher
Cast: Martin Scorsese, Bob Dylan, Levon Helm, Bruce Springsteen, George Harrison

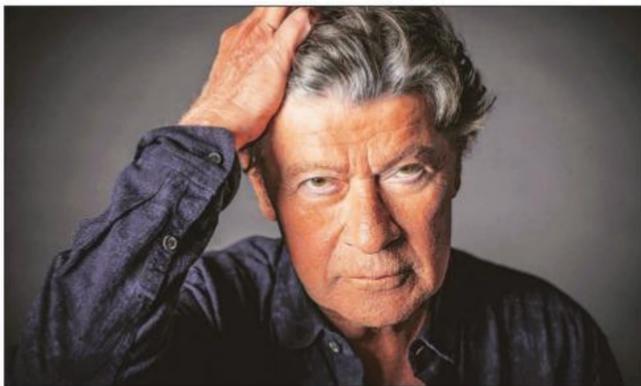
BEN KENIGSBURG

ANY DOCUMENTARY on the Band is inevitably going to play like a supplement to *The Last Waltz* (1978), Martin Scorsese's extraordinary record of the complete group's final gig — or, as guitarist-songwriter Robbie Robertson describes it in *Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and the Band*, the beginning of a hiatus after which "everybody just forgot to come back".

This new documentary, from Canadian di-

rector Daniel Roher, seems to recognise that it falls heavily within the Scorsese film's shadow; Roher even uses the performance of *The night they drove old dixie down* from *The Last Waltz* for a finale. (Scorsese, who has an executive producer credit, is among the starry interviewees, who also include Bruce Springsteen and Eric Clapton.)

Once Were Brothers centers on Robertson, one of the Band's two surviving original members (along with the keyboardist-saxophonist Garth Hudson), and it is a good primer on the group's formation, influences and rise. You'll hear about the musicians' performances with Rockabilly singer Ronnie Hawkins; their stint playing backup — and getting booed for it — with Bob Dylan; the atmosphere of freedom at the big pink house where they collaborated near Woodstock, NY; and a dive into drugs and alcohol. That



last phase, as relayed here, largely bypassed the family man Robertson. ("I was confused that the guys wanted to play with that fire," he says of heroin.)

You can't beat the access or the clips, al-

though the absence of Hudson (whom Roher apparently filmed) from the present-day interviews is peculiar. His voice might have provided a valuable counterpoint to Robertson's recollections.

NYT

BREAKING DOWN NEWS

Through a Lens, Darkly

The last incident of lethal sectarian violence in Delhi happened before there were camera phones. In 2020, we have 20/20 vision everywhere



BY PRATIK KANJILAL

THE ONLY laugh to be had in this grim week is that pursuant to Arnab Goswami sounding off about troublemakers in Delhi trying to detract from the magnificence of the Trump visit, Republic TV sought cannon fodder for a debate on "Western media peddling fake news about India". The channel, which is frequently called out for disseminating fake

news, must be run by a different species altogether — *Homo audax*, Audacious Man.

Since sapient humans prefer not to watch Republic debates, we missed the show. However, we do know that recently rejected writer Aatish Taseer was invited and declined, since he shared the email correspondence. He dismissed the subject as "ridiculous" and urged Goswami to "try and be a better man". We also know that Michael Kugelman of the Wilson Center in Washington DC rashly appeared on a "far right" channel, perhaps emboldened by the fact that Republic had done a decent interview of him earlier. He found it was "like speaking to a loud, huge, and angry wall". Republic was also running this internet poll: "Is there a conspiracy to spread violence using CAA as an excuse? Yes/No." Note that the conspirators are unspecified. Even if

you fantasise that pink toads or little green men are behind it, you would click 'yes'. The false positives would add up and signal public support for a conspiracy theory.

But in principle, Republic is right: there is no such thing as spontaneous public action. Someone primes the pump. Someone else strikes a match. Who are they? Some, like the BJP's inflammatory Kapil Mishra, are in plain sight. But Kapil Mishras operate in an environment of impunity, which is created by someone else. The pogrom against Sikhs

in 1984, the last incident of lethal sectarian violence in Delhi, happened before there were camera phones, the internet and privately owned TV channels. The names of the Congressmen who enabled it were commonly known, but they suffered no consequences until the Vajpayee government instituted the Nanavati Commission. In 2020, we have 20/20 vision everywhere, and it only remains to sift out fakes.

Those who were in Delhi in 1984 are seeing striking similarities — allegations

Those who were in Delhi in 1984 see striking similarities — allegations that the first attackers were not locals, that the police were missing in action or that the government was completely mute

that the first attackers were not locals, that the police, who have been energetic bouncers on campuses, were missing in action or failing to intervene. The government which they report to was completely mute until the violence had taken hold. The number of guns which appeared on the streets of the capital both times is simply extraordinary. And state Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal (who does not control the police) was most visible at a prayer meet in Rajghat, on the wrong side of the Yamuna. Strikingly, retired police officers seen in various TV debates, irrespective of their political persuasions, insisted that all people offering violence should have been immediately arrested, irrespective of party affiliation. The reluctance to speak and act is significant.

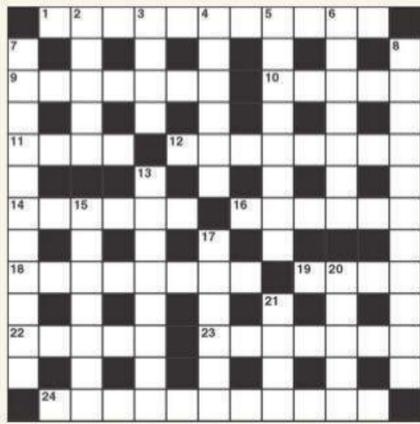
G Kishan Reddy, Minister of State for Home — which the Delhi Police reports to — spoke against anti-CAA protesters who were out to diminish the nation precisely when the world's eyes were on it. "Will Rahul Gandhi take responsibility?" he asked. A perplexing question. Why would Rahul Gandhi who, to the dismay of the Congress, has demitted all responsibility,

take any responsibility for anything? Reddy is not alone in discovering a conspiracy to diminish India. On social media, there have even been references to the Chittisinghpura massacre, in which 36 Sikhs were massacred in Anantnag to cloud the visit of Bill Clinton. But that was a terrorist attack, and one fails to detect a correspondence.

Besides, there is no need to call international attention to the anti-CAA protests which have been in progress throughout India. Every media organisation which matters has covered the riots, and this week, it even made the satirical news. On *Last Week Tonight* (which had premiered with Narendra Modi's 2014 victory), John Oliver reminded viewers of a strange speech that Donald Trump had made about the Indian Prime Minister last September, when he said that he had brought the nation together like a father, and can be called the "father of India". Which must be problematic for the estate of another man who "already holds the title", and at whose ashram Trump stopped off on Monday.

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CROSSWORD 4054



- ACROSS**
- This could make you afraid to go on (5,6)
 - The only luggage that one needs? (7)
 - Machinery for the garden (5)
 - Trick for finding right employment (4)
 - An animal looking for his master (5,3)
 - An asinine remark (6)
 - Sleeps soundly (6)
 - An impartial outlook is nothing a writer has to take care of (4,4)
 - Part of the modern Polish-German border (4)
 - A blow for fishermen (5)
 - The jam-making trade? (7)
 - He prefers to be in good company (11)
- Down**
- Counts and recounts (5)
 - Stimulus produced by travel publicity (4)
 - Double over and collapse (4,2)
 - Being saucy I am put outside the room (8)
 - He keeps a lot to himself (7)
 - Poor little creature (6,5)
 - Longing to take part? (5-6)
 - He works when the sun's shining? That's a blow (8)
 - It protects an organ from dust (7)
 - Quickly take a few notes, maybe (6)
 - He wrote of French adversary (5)
 - Seasonal drop (4)

Solutions Crossword 4053: Across: 1 Artist, 4 Sceptres, 9 Road up, 10 Rosemary, 12 Duds, 13 Flees, 14 Neon, 17 Lack interest, 20 Acceleration, 23 Edam, 24 Blade, 25 Fowl, 28 Slimming, 29 Molars, 30 Nearest, 31 Skirts. Down: 1 Airedale, 2 Tear duct, 3 Soup, 5 Close friends, 6 Peep, 7 Reader, 8 Spying, 11 Clothes lines, 15 Pinch, 16 Oscar, 18 Dinosaurs, 19 Analyses, 21 Reason, 22 Patina, 26 Omen, 27 Dock

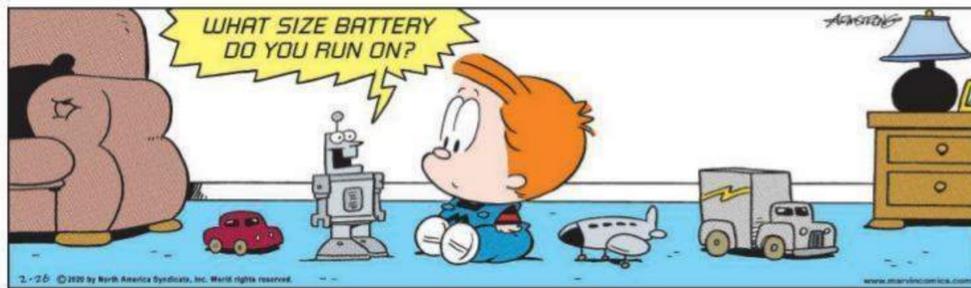
OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

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

Nothing revives the ___ so completely as a ___ that was once associated with it. - Vladimir Nabokov (4...5)

SAUCE **ENUJLL**

OOYST **HIRSMP**

SOLUTION: CAUSE, SOOTY, UNWELL, SHIRMP

SUDOKU 4135

Difficulty Level 5s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

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

SUDOKU 4135

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4134

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4134

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

DEPARTMENT OF POSTS NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

The Executive Engineer (E), Postal Electrical Division, tenth floor, Meghdoot Bhawan, New Delhi-01 invites on behalf of President of India, online percentage rate (CPWS-6) e-tenders for the work of "Renovation of Electrical Installation in 100 nos PSQ Type-III C block at P&T Colony Vivek Vihar, Delhi." N.I.T. No.: 70/EEEE/PED-III/ND/NIT/2019-20, dated 28.02.2020. Estimated Cost : Rs. 53,36,600/- Earnest Money : Rs. 1,06,732/- & Period of completion- 180 Days. Last time and date of submission of bid : 09.03.2020 up to 15:00 Hours. The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <https://dopcivil.eunizarde.com>

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OAO BANK **Applicant**

Mr. RANBEER KUMAR & ORS. **Defendants**

To, 1. Mr. Ranbeer Kumar S/o Shri Jay Kumar, R/o A-7, 2nd Floor, A Block, Gali No. 3, Laxmi Nagar, New Delhi-110045. 2. Mrs. Amandeep Kaur W/o Mr. Ranbeer Kumar, R/o A-7, 2nd Floor, A Block, Gali No. 3, Laxmi Nagar, New Delhi-110045. Also At : Search Infotech 404, Pooja Complex Veer Savarkar Block Shakarpur, Delhi-92. 3. M/s Krishna Estate Developers Pvt. Ltd., Regd. office at : 1/11006, Gali No. 4, Saptrishi Marg, Navin Shahdara, Delhi-110032

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of Rs.49,29,594/- (Rupees Forty Nine Lacs Twenty Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Ninety Four Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on 08.04.2020 at 10.30 a.m.

Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence. Given under my hand and seal of the Ld. Registrar on this 12th February of 2020.

By order of this Tribunal
For Registrar

STORES E-PROCUREMENT

Tender Notice No. S/37/2019, Dated: 27-02-2020 (1) All tenders have been uploaded on Indian Railways E-Procurement Portal (IREPS); www.ireps.gov.in. For details & necessary guidelines for quoting against e-tender. Please visit IR E-Procurement portal. (2) The prospective tenderers are advised to get them registered on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> online. This registration is mandatory for participation in e-tendering and is free of charge. (3) Offers are to be submitted online only. Offers sent/submitted against such e-tenders through e-mail, post/fax or in person will be rejected summarily without any consideration. (4) This notice is for information during initial phase only. In future, no such notice shall be published. Vendors are requested to get registered with IREPS and visit portal www.ireps.gov.in for future tenders. (5) Please submit offers online for the following materials: **SN.1:** Tender No.: 30/19/5017/07/399/19, Brief Description, PL No & Quantity : LHB coach braking simulator and fault trainer, Qty-1 Nos for SSE/CIC/Kamakhyia, P.L. No. 3350N001. AMC for LHB coach braking simulator and fault trainer, Qty-1 Nos. SSE/CIC/Kamakhyia, P.L. No. 3350N002. Closing/Opening date : 16-03-2020. **SN.2:** Tender No.: 30/19/5017/07/399/19, Brief Description, PL No & Quantity : Endless V belt-size C-122 confirming to specification No. RSO/PE/ISPECIAC/0059-2004, Qty-7000 Nos. New Bongaigaon Workshop Depot, 5900 Nos. Pandu GSD, 3800 Nos. New Jalpaiguri GSD, 12000 Nos. Dibrugarh Town Workshop Depot, P.L. No. 75018378. Closing/Opening date : 16-03-2020.

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD

(A Government of India Undertaking)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Chief Engineer, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., invites Open Tender in Single bid system through E-Tendering on IREPS portal from eligible contractors for the following work:-

1) Name of Work : Supplying and stacking of ballast at Kundapura ballast depot, loading into KRCL hoppers for CTR (P) works under the jurisdiction of Senior Regional Engineer, Karwar region. Tender Notice No.: KR-W-01-58-2019-16. Estimated cost : Rs. 554.54 Lakhs, Excluding GST. Completion Period : Nine Months including moonson. Closing Date/Time : 20.03.2020 up to 15:00 hrs for submission of online Offers/Bids.

2) Name of Work : Supplying and stacking of ballast on cess at nominated location between Udipi-Thokur sections for CTR (P) works under the jurisdiction of Senior Regional Engineer, Karwar region. Tender Notice No.: KR-W-01-58-2019-17. Estimated cost : Rs. 148.68 Lakhs, Excluding GST. Completion Period : Six months including moonson. Closing Date/Time : 20.03.2020 up to 15:00 hrs for submission of online Offers/Bids.

Manual offers shall not be accepted. Please visit www.ireps.gov.in website for details / participation. Corrigendum / addendum will be hosted in this website only.

उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग

हस्ताक्षरित विज्ञापन
पत्रिका-249404

संख्या: 684/75/गोपन-1/एडिओ प्रो(राजकीय महा0)-17/2017-18, दिनांक: 28 फरवरी, 2020

विज्ञापित

शिक्षाशास्त्र विषय के लिए पूरक स्कीनिंग परीक्षा परिणाम

एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग द्वारा अडिस्ट्रेट प्रोफेसर (राजकीय महाविद्यालय) परीक्षा-2017 के द्वितीय चरण के अंतर्गत शिक्षाशास्त्र विषय के लिए स्कीनिंग परीक्षा का परिणाम दिनांक 17 जुलाई, 2018 को घोषित किया गया था। सकल अभ्यर्थियों में से कतिपय अभ्यर्थियों के अनर्ह हो जाने के कारण उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग परीक्षा परिणाम निर्माण प्रक्रिया नियमावली-2012 यथा संशोधित 2016 के नियम 5(4) के प्रावधानानुसार शिक्षाशास्त्र विषय के लिए स्कीनिंग परीक्षा का पूरक परीक्षा परिणाम दिनांक 28 फरवरी, 2020 को घोषित किया गया है। अभ्यर्थियों के लिए पूरक परीक्षा परिणाम एवं कट-ऑफ मार्क्स की सूचना उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग की वेबसाइट www.ukpsc.gov.in पर प्रसारित की गयी है। (राजेन्द्र कुमार) सचिव

उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग

हस्ताक्षरित विज्ञापन
पत्रिका-249404

संख्या: 480/03(03)/डीओआर/डिप्री/सेवा-02/2017-18, दिनांक: 28 फरवरी, 2020

विज्ञापित

एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग द्वारा प्रकाशित विज्ञापन संख्या : 01/03/डीओआर/सेवा-2/2017-18 दिनांक 04 अगस्त, 2017 के अंतर्गत विज्ञापित अडिस्ट्रेट प्रोफेसर-संस्कृत के रिक्त पदों पर चयन हेतु अर्ह अभ्यर्थियों के साक्षात्कार की तिथि 30 एवं 31 मार्च, 2020 निर्धारित की गयी है। अर्ह अभ्यर्थी अनुक्रमानुसार साक्षात्कार कार्यक्रम व साक्षात्कार ज्ञाप दिनांक 20 मार्च, 2020 से आयोग की वेबसाइट www.ukpsc.gov.in से डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं। अर्ह अभ्यर्थियों को पृथक से डाक द्वारा साक्षात्कार ज्ञाप प्रेषित नहीं किये जायेंगे। उक्त के अतिरिक्त अनर्ह घोषित अभ्यर्थियों, अभ्यर्थन निरस्त घोषित अभ्यर्थियों एवं साक्षात्कार से पूर्व कतिपय वांछित अभिलेख उपलब्ध कराने हेतु अर्ह अभ्यर्थियों की सूची व विस्तृत विवरण आयोग की वेबसाइट www.ukpsc.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। (राजेन्द्र कुमार) सचिव।

BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD

(IRRIGATION WING)

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

NIT No. 602/20/TS

Name of Office : Sr. Executive Engineer, BC & Township Division, BBMB, Nangal Township, Distt. Ropar - 140 124 (Pb.)

Name of Work : Construction of Museum and National Training Hydrology Centre at Nangal Township.

Last Date / Time of Sale / Availability of Documents

Documents downloading start Date & Time : 26.02.2020 at 0900 Hrs.

Download end Date & Time : 30.03.2020 at 1100 Hrs.

Last Date & Time of Online Bid Submission : 30.03.2020 at 1100 Hrs.

Date & Time of Online Bid Opening : 30.03.2020 at 1130 Hrs.

Approx. Cost : Rs. 8.13 Crore

Note: Pre-bid meeting in the office of Sr. Executive Engineer, BC & Township Division, BBMB, Nangal Township, Distt. Ropar (Punjab) on 06.03.2020 at 1100 hrs. For detailed NIT / Terms & conditions etc. please visit / download from BBMB website : www.bbmb.gov.in & www.eproc.punjab.gov.in 1063-PR-Bhakra Dam-5 | FOR YOUR BETTER TOMORROW SAVE ENERGY TODAY

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male **Namely Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown Age: about 45 years, Height: 5'10", Complexion: Shallow, Build: Strong, Hair: Small Black, Face: Round, Identification Mark: Burn mark on right foot, Wearing: Dark Brown jacket and Light Brown pant,** was found laying inside a room at 1st Floor of H.No. A-110, Madangir Village, New Delhi. In this regard a **DD No.13 Dated 09.02.2020** has been lodged at P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO
P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi
Ph.: 011-29052304, 29051917

DP/08/SD/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Rekha D/o Sh. Sanjay, R/o H.No. 18, Gali No. 5, Gazipur Dairy Farm, Delhi, Age : 16 yrs., Height : 5'1", Complexion : Fair, Face : Long, Build : Medium, Wearing : Black Colour Sweater, Pink Colour Suit and Yellow Colour Salwar,** has been missing / kidnapped since 29.01.2020

from the area of P.S. Gazipur. In this regard a case **FIR No. 42/2020 dated 31.01.2020** u/s 363 IPC has been registered at PS. Gazipur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local Police to trace out the missing / kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. if anyone have any information about this missing / kidnapped girl please inform undersigned

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in, Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641, Fax : 011-24368639

SHO
PS. Gazipur, Delhi
Ph.: 011-22610068, 8750870625

DP/7272/ED/2020.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is here by informed that this girl (depicted in the photo) namely: **Sarswati D/o Sh. Mohan Giri R/o Jhuggi No. N-28/C-195, CSA Colony, WP/IA, Ashok Vihar, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped from her house since 22.02.2020 at 06:00 AM. In this regard FIR No. 54/20 IPC dated 23.02.2020 has been registered at P.S. Ashok Vihar, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Her physical description is as under:-
Sex: Female, **Age:** 15 years, **Height:** 5' ft., **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Build:** Medium, **Wearing:** Black Color Shuit, Salwar & Black Colour Chapel in foot

Any person is having information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO
Website:<http://cbi.nic.in> P.S. Ashok Vihar, Delhi
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph. No.: 011-27243066
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob. No: 8750870221
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/31/NW/2020

कार्यालय आबकारी आयुक्त, छत्तीसगढ़

(वाणिज्यिक कर (जी.एस.टी.) भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19 रायपुर अटल नगर जिला-रायपुर)

//विज्ञापन//

क्रमांक/आब./देका/2020/955 नवा रायपुर, दिनांक 26.02.2020

सर्वसाधारण की जानकारी के लिए राज्य शासन के आदेशानुसार यह सूचना प्रकाशित की जाती है।

2/ राज्य शासन के आदेशानुसार छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य के बाहर निर्मित विदेशी मदिरा (स्प्रिट/माल्ट) एवं एफ. एल.-9क के अधीन निर्मित विदेशी मदिरा (स्प्रिट/माल्ट) भंडारण एवं प्रदाय (एफ.एल.-10-क) तथा राज्य में एफ.एल.-9 अनुज्ञापित के तहत बॉटलिंग की गई विदेशी मदिरा (स्प्रिट/माल्ट) भंडारण एवं प्रदाय (एफ.एल.-10-ख) अनुज्ञापित की वर्ष 2020-21 के लिए सूचीकृत के संबंध में कार्यालयीन पत्र क्रमांक /आब./देका/2020/953-954, दिनांक 26.02.2020 में निहित प्रावधानों के अंतर्गत आवेदक दिनांक 11.03.2020 तक अपना आवेदन पत्र कार्यालय आबकारी आयुक्त, छत्तीसगढ़, जीएसटी भवन, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में प्रस्तुत कर सकता है। उपरोक्त संबंध में विस्तृत विवरण विभागीय वेबसाइट <https://excise.cg.nic.in> में उपलब्ध है, जिसका अवलोकन किया जा सकता है।

हस्ता/-
(निरंजन दास)
आबकारी आयुक्त
छत्तीसगढ़

77399

सेन्ट्रल माईन प्लानिंग एण्ड डिजाइन इन्स्टीट्यूट लिमिटेड

CENTRAL MINE PLANNING & DESIGN INSTITUTE LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Ltd.)
Gondwana (A), Kanke Road Ranchi - 834031, Jharkhand

No: CMPDI/HQ/SE/R/19-20/E-454079 Dated: 28.02.2020

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Central Mine Planning & Design Institute Limited, a Mini Ratna Company and one of the profit making CPSUs in energy sector of the country invites application from Indian citizens for filling up the vacancies in the following posts, which may increase/decrease at the discretion of Management:-

Sl. No	Name of Post	Grade	Basic Pay	UR	SC	ST	OBC (NCL)	EWS	Total*	ESM	Categories of Disabled suitable	Physical Requirement
Current Vacancies												
1	Dy. Surveyor (Mines)	T & S Gr. C	Rs. 31,852.56	7	2	1	4	0	14	2	OH (OA only)	S.ST.W.L.MF.SE.RW.C
Backlog Vacancies												
2	Stenographer (Eng.)	T & S Gr. C	Rs. 31,852.56	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	OA.O.L.B.L. OAL. B. LV	S.ST.W.L.MF. SE.RW.H.C.
TOTAL				7	3	3	4	0	17	2		

For details w.r.t. qualification, age limit, allowances / benefits, how to apply, selection process, general instructions & other important information, please visit company's website www.cmpdi.co.in or Employment News and Rojgar Samachar dated 29.02.2020 to 06.03.2020. Candidates can apply through ONLINE mode only by logging into CMPDI website www.cmpdi.co.in between 01.03.2020 at 9:30 AM to 30.03.2020 at 12:00 PM. The last date for receiving the hard copy of the application form along with all the relevant documents/application for special assistance, if any, is 15.04.2020.

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि., आगरा

ई-निविदा सूचना अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा सक्षम/प्रतिष्ठित एवं अनुभवी संविदाकारों से निम्नलिखित सामग्री की आपूर्ति/कार्य करने हेतु ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा के संबंध में विस्तृत नियम व शर्तें निविदा अभिलेखों में उल्लिखित हैं जो उ.प्र. शासन के ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> एवं दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि. की वेबसाइट www.dvvn.org पर उपलब्ध है। क्रम सं., निविदा संख्या, सामग्री/कार्य का विवरण, निविदा खुलने की दिनांक, निविदा शुल्क, परहेर सौ. (रूपरे में) क्रमानुसार। (1) ई.एस.सी./ए./टी-20 (2019-20), (ई-निविदा), विद्युत भण्डार मण्डल एवं अधीनस्थ विद्युत भण्डार खण्डों/केन्द्रों पर कुशल श्रमिक (कम्प्यूटर ऑपरेटर्स) एवं अकुशल श्रमिकों को रखा जाने का कार्य, 24.3.2020, रु. 5900.00, रु. 1.27 लाख। (2) ई.एस.सी./ए./टी-21 (2019-20), (ई-निविदा), अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत भण्डार मण्डल, आगरा, पत्रांक 743 अधी.आ.प. (भ.)/आ/निविदा, दिनांक 28/02/2020