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NEARBY



Shah, Modi to lead BJP's poll campaign in Delhi

BJP president Amit Shah on Sunday signalled that the campaign for the Delhi Assembly election will be held under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was addressing the party's booth-level workers here. Highlighting his involvement in the campaign, Mr. Shah said he would start group meetings and reach out to individual households. CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Artists paint CP in protest against CAA, NRC

NEW DELHI Artists gathered at Connaught Place to write slogans and paint the pavements to protest against the CAA and the NRC on Sunday. The artists wrote various slogans like "Hum Bh Dekhenge", "Bol Ke Labh Azaad Hain Tere' and "Save the Constitution of India" in addition to "Reject CAA and NRC" near Gate 6 of the Rajiv Chowk metro station.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

After denials, police admit they did open fire

Nearly three weeks after the police fired tear-gas shells in the city and thrashed students inside the Jamia Millia Islamia library, a senior police officer confirmed that they had opened fire during the anti-CAA protests here. He said a Special Investigation Team would probe all incidents of violence, including the use of firearms by the police.

CAPITAL ▶ PAGE 2

Bengal station collapse: one succumbs to injuries

One of the two persons injured in a partial collapse of the Bardhaman railway station building in West Bengal succumbed to his injuries early on Sunday, said Minister Swapan Debnath. He said that the man, who suffered serious injuries when a chunk of concrete fell on his head, could not be saved despite efforts by doctors of Bardhaman Medical College

Hospital. NATION ▶ PAGE 9

EDUCATIONPLUS PAGES 18 & 19

Iraqi MPs vote to expel U.S. troops Masked goons thrash

Resolution comes amid mounting backlash against killing of Iranian Commander

REUTERS

The Iraqi Parliament on Sunday called on the government to work to end all foreign troop presence in the country as the backlash grew against the killing of top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in a U.S. strike in Baghdad.

A resolution passed by a special session of Parliament said the government should cancel its request for assistance from a U.S.-led coalition. Parliament resolutions, unlike laws, are non-binding. But this one is likely to be heeded: Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi had earlier called on Parliament to end foreign troop presence as soon as possible.

Coalition halts action

The U.S.-led coalition battling the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria said it had halted most of its operations against the militants for now to focus on protecting coalition forces and bases, amid soaring tensions with Iran.

Since the killings, rival Shia political leaders have called for U.S. troops to be expelled in an unusual show of unity among factions. "There is no need for the presence of American forces after defeating Da'esh (the Is-



Paying their respects: People attending a funeral procession for Iranian Major-General Qassem Soleimani in Ahvaz, Iran, on Sunday. • REUTERS

lamic State)," said Ammar al-Shibli, a Shia lawmaker.

"We have our own armed forces which are capable of protecting the country," he told Reuters.

Around 5,000 U.S. troops remain in Iraq, most of them in an advisory capacity. Many Iraqis, including opponents of Soleimani, have expressed anger at Washington for killing Soleimani and Muhandis on Iraqi soil and potentially dragging their country into another conflict.

INDIAN, IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS HOLD TALKS > PAGE 12

ATTACK IN KENYA ▶ PAGE 14

President Trump warns Iran of attacks

President Donald Trump said the U.S. would hit dozens of targets in the Islamic Republic if it retaliated for the killing of the head of the Qods Force Qassem Soleimani in Iraq.

In a series of tweets, he said Iran "is talking very boldly about targeting certain USA assets".

The U.S. has identified

WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD." "The USA wants no

more threats!" Mr. Trump

"52 Iranian sites", some of

them "at a very high level

& important to Iran & the

Iranian culture, and those

targets, and Iran itself,

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 14

students, staff in JNU

COURSES AVAILABLE FOR 2021 ALSO

Cut-off Marks for

2017

35 students and teachers injured during violence

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Scores of students, including JNUSU president Aishe Ghosh, and several teachers were beaten up on the JNU campus on Sunday evening.

Masked men and women, armed with sticks and stones, went around the campus, entering hostels, beating up students and teachers and smashing cars.

A video of a bleeding Ms. Ghosh was posted on Twitter. The JNUSU claimed in a statement that a large number of ABVP activists entered the campus with iron rods and singled out students' representatives.

Several teachers said ABVP activists had entered the campus and indulged in violence. "Female students have locked themselves up inside the girls' wing in Sabarmati Hostel. These attackers are roaming the corridors armed with rods and sticks... we are under attack," the JNUSU said, calling for help and sharing videos of the violence on campus.

"Professors who were trying to protect us have been beaten up. These are unknown ABVP goons, not all are students, they have covered their faces, and are moving towards the...West



Masked persons armed with sticks roaming around the JNU campus. ■PTI

Gate. Stay alert. Make human chains. Protect each other," another tweet from the Union added.

Sources at AIIMS and Safdarjung Hospital said that over 35 students and teachers were treated for injuries sustained during the violence.

"You can judge how scary a situation it was from the videos and photos that are being shared. I was in my hostel room when people with their faces covered entered and started breaking things with sticks and metal rods. I did not recognise any of them but they were on a mission to spread fear," a BA student of the university said.

Ayesha Kidwai, a professor teaching at JNU, told The Hindu that one of her colleagues, Sucharita Sen, had been beaten up and suffered head injuries. "She is being treated at the trauma centre," Dr. Kidwai said. Joint Commissioner of Pol-

ice Anand Mohan said two groups of students had clashed on the campus, and the police were called in by the administration. "We conducted a flag

march. The situation is under control. The injured have been moved to AIIMS," Mr. Mohan said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12 SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 2

India condemns killing of Sikh youth in Pak.

Asks Imran Khan to ensure security of minorities after Peshawar murder

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

India on Sunday strongly condemned the murder of a Sikh citizen of Pakistan in Peshawar and urged the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan to stop attacks on religious minorities.

A statement from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) pointed to Islamabad's inaction in several cases of violence against Sikhs and urged Pakistan to punish the perpetrators.

"India strongly condemns the targeted killing of a minority Sikh community member in Peshawar that follows the recent despicable vandalism and desecration of the holy Gurudwara Sri Ianam Asthan at Nankana Sahib. The Government of



Seeking action: Sikhs in Hyderabad staging a protest against the attack on Gurudwara Nankana Sahib in Pakistan. • K.V.S. GIRI

Pakistan should act in defence of their own minorities instead of preaching sermons about it to other countries," the MEA said.

The statement also highlighted the case of Sikh girl, Jagjit Kaur of Nankana Sahib, who was allegedly abducted and forcibly married.

came soon after Ravinder Singh was killed by miscreants in Peshawar.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

It is against my vision: Imran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said the vandalism at Gurdwara Nankana Sahib went against his "vision" and the government would not tolerate such acts. He said there was a "major difference between the condemnable Nankana incident and the ongoing attacks across India on Muslims and other minorities". "The former is against my vision & will find zero tolerance & protection from the govt incl police &judiciary (sic)," he tweeted.

219 infants died at two Gujarat civil hospitals in December

134 deaths in Rajkot alone and 85 in Ahmedabad

MAHESH LANGA AHMEDABAD

The number of infant deaths at the civil hospitals in Gujarat's Rajkot and Ahmedabad is markedly higher than over 100 deaths reported from the government hospital at Kota in Rajasthan.

The two hospitals in Gujarat have reported 219 deaths in December. In Rajkot alone, 134 infants died and 85 deaths were reported from Ahmedabad. In the last three months, 253 infants have died in the Ahmedabad hospital, Gujarat's largest. "In December, 455 chil



Worse outcomes: 1,235 infants died during 2019 at the Rajkot civil hospital. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

NCP gets crucial Home,

Ajit Pawar will also look after Planning

Finance portfolios

dren were admitted and 85 lost their lives during treatment," Superintendent of Ahmedabad Civil Hospital G.S. Rathod said. At the Rajkot civil hospital, 1,235 infants died during 2019.

The highest number of newborn deaths in 2019 was reported in December, and the second highest, 131, in October. According to Manish Mehta, head of Rajkot Civil Hospital, 269 children died in October, November and December.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Karnataka's Challakere to be ISRO's astronaut training hub

Plan ready for Space Flight Centre to come up at Chitradurga

MADHUMATHI D.S.

India's world-class facility for training astronauts will come up not in the space headquarters in Bengaluru, nor in any glitzy metropolis. It will be established in three years at Challakere, a shrubby, arid oilseeds town on the Bengaluru-Pune NH4 in Chidistrict Karnataka.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has proposed a ₹ 2,700crore master plan to create top infrastructure that will house its young Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC).

K. Sivan, ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space, told The Hindu, ing in Russia for the Gaga-



ISRO and DRDO facilities will be set up at Challakere.

"Everything connected with

events and planning of the HSP [Human Spaceflight Programme] will shift to our campus at Challakere. We want to establish a self-contained facility there so that in future, whatever training and activities we are now donyaan crew can all be done by us here." When ready, the 400-acre ISRO land at Challakere will be the single-stop consolidating infrastructure and activities related to space travellers.

The country pays a hefty, unnamed sum to use such facilities abroad. The first set of four astronaut candidates for the first Gaganyaan mission of 2022 are to train in Russia. The amount sought for the HSFC is over and above the ₹10,000-crore approved budget of Gaganyaan. Pending its approval, the centre may take 2-3 years at the earliest to be set up, but would come up after the first Indian crewed flight.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Our kin were framed in riots, say Lucknow residents

Police have arrested more than 1,200 people across U.P.

OMAR RASHID

A Lucknow court on Saturday granted bail to more than a dozen persons accused in the violence that took place in the city during the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act on December 19. However, many like Yasmin Siddiqui still await relief for her son Osama, 20, a third-year B.Com. student. He has been in jail for more than two weeks and his bail plea is expected to come up only on Monday.

Ms. Siddiqui is concerned about her son's well-being and anxious about his academic future. Osama has his exams on January 7 and 8 and is likely to miss them. "He is anxious and wants

to return home. He is tense about the examination. He didn't get to study for so many days. They should understand our situation. It's about his future. He will waste a full year," she said.

Like the kin of several persons who were arrested for the violence, Osama's family claims he had nothing to do with the protests. Till 2 p.m. on December 19, he was playing with his friends in the lane outside his house, his family said, adding that they have CCTV footage to prove

After that, he was going to a stationery shop, unaware of the violence some distance away, Ms. Siddiqui said.

"Nobody from our locality had gone to the protest. He

must have moved further out and encountered the stampede. He ran and took shelter in someone's house. The protesters also ran into the same compound," she said, based on what he told her in

"But since they were being chased by the police, many of the protesters escaped climbing over rooftops. But Osama sat quietly in one corner, hoping that the police would not touch him as he didn't do anything. But it was him the police caught," she

Osama is among more than 500 people in U.P. who have been issued notices to pay for damage to public and private property during the arson and vandalism.

expansion, the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government in Maharashtra on Sunday assigned portfolios, with senior NCP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar getting Finance and Plan-

ning.

The Home Ministry was allocated to his party colleague Anil Deshmukh.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Five days after the Cabinet

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will look after General Administration, IT, Information and Public Relations, Law & Judiciary.

While Mr. Thackeray will lead the Cabinet, the Sena has 11 Cabinet Ministers and three MoS. The NCP has the largest number of Ministers, with 12 Cabinet Ministers



and four MoS. The Congress has 10 Cabinet Ministers and "This is one of the most

experienced Cabinets the State has ever got. There are no issues with any party," said Housing Minister from the NCP, Jitendra Awhad. The Congress attempt to get either the Agriculture or Rural Development departments from the Shiv Sena and the NCP respectively did not succeed.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12





(From left) A group of people protest outside the Delhi Police Headquarters; ABVP members and JNU students raise slogans against each other; policemen outside JNU main gate on Sunday evening. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

'Students wanting registration beaten up by those opposing it'

Complaint filed, says JNU administration

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) administration on Sunday strongly condemned the violent incident that took place inside the campus.

Registrar of the university, Pramod Kumar, said since afternoon, the campus witnessed scuffles at the Schools as well as inside the hostel premises between the groups of students who wanted to stop the registration and those who wanted to register and continue their studies. "At 4.30 p.m., a group of students, who are against the registration process moved aggressively from the admin block and reached the hostels. The administration immediately contacted the police. However, by the time the police reached the university, the group of students opposing the registration beat up those who were in favour of it," said Mr. Kumar.

He added that a few men

with their faces covered also entered the Perivar hostel rooms and attacked the students with sticks and rods. "It is unfortunate that a group of students with their violent means of protests is preventing thousands of non-agitating students from pursuing their academic activities," he said, adding that the administration stands by every student who wants to continue their academic pro-

"The JNU administration feels great pain and anguish for the students who have been injured in the incident. The university is always known for peaceful and democratic protests. The administration will not tolerate any form of violence on the campus. A complaint is being filed against the culprits," a statement issued by the university read.

grammes peacefully.

It also appealed to all the stakeholders of the university to maintain peace and not

Faces covered, rods in hand, mob creates ruckus outside JNU gate

ABVP member says violence inside campus launched by 'Leftists'; Yogendra Yadav attacked

SIDHARTH RAVI

Several men with faces covered, who identified themselves as "nationalists and supporters of ABVP", gathered outside the North Gate of Jawaharlal Nehru University on Sunday evening, holding sticks and rods, and raising "Bharat Mata ki Jai" slogans.

The group present there attacked activist Yogendra Yadav, while he was making an attempt to speak to the teachers.

"They [teachers] were telling me about the situation inside the campus when the police dragged me from there. All these goondas joined the police in assaulting me. This happened in front of the camera," Mr. Yadav alleged.

Mob threatens scribes

Later, he was taken out of the area amid heavy police presence even as the mob



Activist Yogendra Yadav alleged that he was attacked by a mob and the police outside the campus. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

continued to heckle him. The mob also threatened journalists present at the spot among others.

Police stood guard

After reports of a mob on rampage, stone-pelting and violence from inside the campus, it was closed and the police stood guard at the university's North Gate.

Meanwhile, all street lights leading up to the gate were disconnected, leaving the area in darkness.

Delhi Social Media Coordinator (ABVP) Anurag Gautam, a student of Delhi University, said people had gathered in support of injured ABVP students inside the campus, who he alleged had been at the receiving end of "unprecedented violence and stone-pelting by

"Are they students or Naxalites?" he asked.

The mob also attacked an ambulance, carrying nine doctors, while it tried to enter the campus to provide medical assistance to the injured students. Some of the accused deflated the tyres of the vehicle.

'Don't click pictures'

The mob also asked individuals not to click pictures or take videos of the incident. They attacked those who refused to listen to

The ABVP supporters here blamed the "leftists" for the stone-pelting at Periyar hostel. The mob chanted "Vande Mataram", "Jai Shree Ram", "Delhi Police Zindabad", "Desh ke gadaron ko goli maron salon ko". Some of them even called the students "Naxalites".

Doctors attacked by mob outside university campus

'They surrounded ambulance, threw stones'

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH NEW DELHI

A group of nine doctors from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and other hospitals was attacked by a mob outside Jawaharlal Nehru University's main entrance gate on Sunday night.

The doctors, who had come in an ambulance with medical supplies to help the injured students, were not allowed to enter the campus.

"Around 100 masked goons attacked our ambulance with stones and lathis when we tried to enter the campus," said Praveen, a general surgeon at Maharishi Valmiki Hospital.

Another doctor, who had come on his own as a volunteer to treat the students, said: "The police remained a mute spectator while our ambulance was being surrounded and attacked by the

Dr. Praveen added that the mob broke a window of The mob even tried to drag and pull one of the doctors out of the ambulance's

window

even tried to drag and pull one of the doctors out of the ambulance's window," he said, pointing towards the doctor, who had received A visibly rattled woman doctor in the group said,

the ambulance. "The mob

masks and helmets. I could smell that they were drunk. They even tried to take our mobile phones as we were taking videos."

"The goons were wearing

"There is no safety even for ambulance and doctors," another doctor.

After some policemen intervened, the ambulance was allowed to leave the pre-

After denials, police admit they did open fire on December 15

SIT to probe all incidents of violence, including use of firearms

STAFF REPORTER

Nearly three weeks after the police fired tear-gas shells in the city and thrashed students inside the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) library, a senior officer confirmed that they had opened fire during the anti-CAA protests here.

Confirming reports in NDTV and The Indian Express, the police officer, who preferred not to go on record, said a Special Investigation Team (SIT) would probe all incidents of violence, including the use of firearms by the police.

Since the incident, the Delhi police had maintained that no gunshots were fired on protesters.

Even a protester undergoing treatment at Safdurjung Hospital is suspected to have received gunshot injury but later it was claimed that injury was from shards of tear-gas can-



Policemen fire tear gas during a stir by JMI students against the CAA in New Delhi. • FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

isters. In a video shot by a resident and uploaded on social media, three policemen were seen using a wall as a shield while stones were being pelted at them.

Two policemen pulled out their service pistols and fired three shots in the direction of the protesters and they ran away. The video was shot at Mathura

Road on December 15.

"We won't be able to confirm it as the investigation is with SIT. If it was done, then it was an act of self-defence. No separate inquiry is required," said

A senior officer who was at the spot, saw the policemen firing, had mentioned it in police diary.

Shaheen Bagh agitation: police put rumours to bed

'We went there to resolve argument'

Amidst reports that security personnel were trying to remove those protesting against the amended Citizenship Act from Shaheen Bagh, the police on Sunday clarified that they had gone to the area to resolve an argument, which had ensued between a group of protesters and shopkeepers.

The police said they make regular visits to the spot to ensure law and order remain intact. They said they were informed by one of the shopkeepers on Sunday that some protesters were not allowing them to open their showrooms.

On reaching the spot, the police saw that an argument had ensued between a few protestors and the shop owner over the issue.

"We tried to pacify them. After the dispute was resolved, the man opened his showroom and later the barricades were again put in place," an officer said



Protesters in Shaheen Bagh on Sunday SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

A protester, Sajid Mojib, said the police had removed barricades and the locals to keep the stir in control in Shaheen Bagh. "The rumours were that

the police will launch a crackdown during 3 a.m.-8 a.m. at Shaheen Bagh. We will continue to protest peacefully and ready to face any kind of situation. For any mishap, the administration will be held responsible," he said.

The protestors, including women, have been camping in Shaheen Bagh, near Jamia Millia Islamia for over 20 days now.

High Court orders CBI inquiry over continued custody parole

Probe against jail, police officials begins; seeks explanation from Judge

STAFF REPORTER

The Delhi High Court has ordered CBI inquiry against jail and police officials here over the continued custody parole, for over five months, of an undertrial facing trial in three different cases.

A Bench of Justice Manmohan and Justice Sangita Dhingra Sehgal also sought explanation from an Additional Sessions Judge at Tis Hazari Court here for "his conduct in granting the custody parole" and extending it through subsequent orders.

Not more than 6 hours

As per Rule 1203 of the Delhi Prison Rules, 2018, an undertrial prisoner can be granted custody parole by a trial court in case of an exigency for a period of not more than six hours, excluding the time taken to reach the destination and return to the prison.

The High Court's direction came on a criminal reference made by Special Judge Kiran

Bansal at Rouse Avenue District Courts here seeking clarity on whether an accused, who is in custody in more than one case is required to obtain custody parole from each and every court concerned or the accused can move to anyone court of his choice for seeking custody

Special Judge Bansal submitted that one accused Sukesh alias Sukash Chandrashekhar, who is facing trial in three different cases, in three different courts, including her's, was not produced before her court on the date fixed.

The Judge submitted that the accused was granted custody parole by the order of an Additional Sessions Judge at Tis Hazari Court but he failed to seek permission from her court. She further said no such information was received either from the accused or from the Jail Superintendent concerned.

The High Court said: "The

the pretext of buying toys

for her on Friday night.

When she did not return

home, the family began to

After a few hours, the ac-

cused came with the girl,

who was bleeding, to drop

her back. When the girl's

grandmother questioned

him about her condition, he

punched her on the face

and tried to escape.

Locals protest

accused in the present case, astonishingly has been on custody parole from July 05, 2019, which was in gross violation of the Delhi Prison Rules, 2018 and law pertaining to the custody parole. Strangely enough, the State failed to challenge the order dated July 05, 2019, and the subsequent orders...and no action was taken by the concerned authorities.

It noted that if one court had issued an order of custody parole, it was incumbent on the Director-General Prison or Jail Superintendent to inform the other two courts about the absence of the accused, obtain the next date production of the accused.

Next hearing on Jan. 20

The High Court directed the State government to take the accused in custody forthwith and sent him to the concerned jail and posted the case for further hearing on January 20.

Artists paint CP pavements in protest against CAA, NRC



Artists during a protest against the CAA at Connaught Place in New Delhi on Sunday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ELISHA VERMANI NEW DELHI

Several artists gathered at Connaught Place to write slogans and paint the pavements to protest against the amended Citizenship Act and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) on Sunday.

The artists wrote down various slogans like "Hum Bhi Dekhenge", "Bol Ke Labh Azaad Hain Tere' and " Save the Constitution of India" in addition to "Reject CAA and NRC" near gate number 6 of Rajiv Chowk metro station.

They were joined by several passers-by who contributed by writing slogans

"Dharm Nishpeksh

Police ask group raising slogans in support of the Act to disperse like "Secular India" and

> A few erase words A few of the passers-by

asked others not to pay attention to these "gimmicks". Some of them even began to erase the word "secular" written on the ground while chanting "Jai Shree Ram". In response, the protesters sang the National Anthem and also protected their artworks.

The police present at the site also asked a group, raising slogans in support of CAA, to disperse.

A 56-year-old filmmaker,

Rahul Roy, one of the organisers of the event said: "It is important for people to express what they are feeling at this point of time." A 22-year-old student of Ambedkar University, Jasmine Yadav, said: "We are against the kind of hatred and intolerance that the current government is pushing us forward to...this is a peaceful protest." Calling the CAA "inhu-

man" and "anti-India", Zeenat Nyazi (52), a social activist, said: "I have always believed that this country is for everyone. We have always stood with our arms open for everybody."

Man held for raping toddler

15-month-old girl is said to be critical

ASHOK KUMAR GURUGRAM

A 22-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly raping a 15-month-old girl in Sector 58 here, the police said on Sunday.

The toddler is undergoing treatment at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi and her condition is said to be criti-

The accused was arrested on Saturday under the Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

He was produced before the court on Sunday and sent to judicial custody. He allegedly took the girl

away from her mother on

look for her.

However, the neighbours nabbed him. Following the incident, the locals held a protest on Saturday, seeking exemplary punishment for the accused.

Man robbed of cash; 2 arrested

STAFF REPORTER

Two men were arrested for allegedly robbing a man after offering him a lift near Gurugram's Shankar Chowk, the police said on

Alim Khan and Faizel were nabbed on Friday from Mahipalpur. The case came to the fore when a man complained that he was robbed off ₹8,000, mobile phone and other valuables by three to four men inside a cab. A manhunt is on for three others, said DCP (South-West) Devender Arya, adding that all items have been recovered.

Shah, Modi to lead BJP's poll campaign in the Capital

BJP leader says he will start group meetings and reach out to households

SIDHARTH RAVI

Addressing Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) booth-level workers in the run-up to the Delhi Assembly elections here on Sunday, party president Amit Shah signalled a campaign to be run under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

BJP's government will be formed in Delhi under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said Mr.

Highlighting his involvement in the campaign, Mr. Shah told party workers that he, as their president, would start group meetings in the neighbourhoods of Delhi and reach out to individual households. He also appealed to the workers to do the same and said that the election was not only to be fought only through rallies and posters, but also through the outreach programme. He asked party workers to highlight the work carried out in the city by the Central government and to "expose the false promises" made by the Kejriwal government. Later in the evening, Mr. Shah, along with party working president J.P. Nadda, went doorto-door and kicked off the campaign.

Mr. Shah attacked the Kejriwal government on multiple fronts, saying that the Aam Admi Party (AAP) had managed to fool the people of Delhi once during the 2015 Assembly elections, but were wiped out in the subse-



Senior BJP leaders Amit Shah and J.P. Nadda at a rally of booth-level workers in New Delhi on Sunday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

quent municipal and Lok Sabha elections.

Mr. Shah condemned the AAP government for spending public money on advertisements "congratulating" people for having begun various schemes. "What work have you [AAP government] completed in five years?" he

He also attacked the Chief Minister for denying permission to prosecute JNU students in a sedition case, arguing that through this, the Kejriwal government was supporting the 'tukde tukde gang'. Mr. Shah also said that various promises made by AAP, such as opening new schools, colleges and hospitals had not materialised, adding that the State government did not allow various Central schemes such as the Ayushman Bharat Yojana to be implemented here. He alleged that nearly ₹10,000 crore funds had not been given to the municipal bodies in an attempt to "cripple"

Highlighting some of the works carried out by the Centre in Delhi, Mr. Shah said that the long-standing demand to regularise unauthorised colonies was being met by the government with registrations having been started. He said that the promise of allotting pak*ka* houses to people living in 35,000 jhuggi jhopris was fulfilled by the Prime Minister, adding that surveys of up to 160 such JJ clusters had started. He went on to highlight the DDA's land pooling policy.

Apart form this, he highlighted developmental works such as construction of parks, cycle tracks, extension of metro lines and spoke of developing a "Yamuna river front" along the lines of Sabarmati river front. With such a river front.

Mr. Shah added, the purvanchali people would not have to go anywhere else to carry out Chaath puja cele-

Other than abuse, nothing in speech: CM

'If BJP has suggestions, AAP will implement it in next 5 years'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Reacting to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's speech on Sunday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that Mr. Shah chose to "abuse" him instead of talking about development and pointing out shortcomings of the AAP-led government.

Mr. Shah had in his speech accused Mr. Kejriwal of "wasting" public money on advertisements and "misleading" people.

"I heard the entire speech of the Home Minister, Amit Shah ji. I thought he would point out the shortcomings of our work and talk about the development of Delhi. He did not say anything else except abusing me [sic]," Mr. Kejriwal tweeted.

"If they [BJP] have suggestions for Delhi, then they should tell us and we will implement them in the next five years," Mr. Kejriwal

Speaking at a town hall meeting in north-west Delhi where he was presenting a report card of his government's five-year term, Mr. Kejriwal said that Delhi's healthcare schemes are better than the Centre's Ayushman Bharat Yojana.

"In Delhi, healthcare is completely free for all irrespective of rich or poor. Ayushman Bharat Yojana assures insurance for people, but those who own scooter, fridge, and cellphones and have an income of ₹10,000 are excluded. With these criteria applied, hardly anyone will be eligible for the scheme. Therefore, we have decided not to implement it," Mr. Kerjiwal said. He ad-



Chief Minister Arvind Keiriwal and others at the inauguration of a Mohalla Clinic. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ded that if the Delhi government wants, Ayushman Bharat can be implemented right away, adding that the scheme, however, will not simply work in Delhi.

The Chief Minister also said that earlier, people had to spend their entire savings or sell their properties to save their lives in case of any kind of serious illness but that the healthcare infrastructure in Delhi's government hospitals has been significantly improved now. 'People can avail of treatment, surgery and various tests free of cost. Delhi government provides support of up to ₹15 lakh for the treatment of severe illness at private hospitals in Delhi," he said.

'Fake registration'

He also hits out at the BJP government, saying that they were providing "fake registration" to people from unauthorised "How can a property be registered on agricultural land? You have to change the land use first. They said they are regularising the colonies, but instead of regularising them, they are providregistration properties on agricultural lands. The change in land use and mapping should be done first for the registration process to take place," Mr. Kejriwal said.

He said that all was not well in today's politics in the country and that there was a lot to change. "In the last five years, irrespective of manifold difficulties, we tried our best to ensure that people get the best from the government. There is an increasing trust between the people of Delhi and the Delhi government because they know that taxpavers' money will not be wasted, "Mr. Kejriwal said.

New schemes

Responding to a question on what new schemes his government would reintroduce if voted back to power, he said that they would continue working with the same dedication.

"Cleaning up the Yamuna, cleaning up Delhi, redesigning roads, reducing air pollution, resolving traffic congestion and parking issues and providing 24-hour tap water facility to the people of Delhi are some of the key steps that we will take in the next five years," Mr. Kej-

150 Mohalla Clinics inaugurated

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Delhi government inaugurated 150 Mohalla Clinics on Sunday taking the total number of such clinics in the Capital to 450. Chief Minister Arvind Keiriwal. speaking at the inaugural function, said that it was for the first time that expansion of healthcare facilities on such a large scale was happening in the country.

"People of Delhi flagged off a new bandwagon of development in the previous elections. Now it runs at a speed of 100 km per hour. Don't press brake; you should accelerate its speed to 200 km per hour", Mr. Kejriwal said while making a pitch for the upcoming elections.

"When we came to power in 2015, we observed that there is no lack of big hospitals in Delhi. But for the common people, it was difficult to access these hospitals for the treatment of small illnesses. Due to this these hospitals used to see a huge rush. So we realised that if we start smaller clinics, people can avail the services without having to travel a lot and that also reduced the rush in bigger hospitals in the city," Mr. Kejriwal said.

The Chief Minister added that his government was not only building Mohalla Clinics for enhancing healthcare facilities, but also constructing world-class hospitals.

Will not

implement

NRC, CAA if

Congress

NEW DELHI

voted to power: _

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Delhi Congress on Sun-

day said that if it was elect-

ed to power in Delhi. it

would not implement the

National Population Regis

ter (NPR), National Register

of Citizens (NRC) and the

amended Citizenship Act in

Congress said that the issue

has been raised at the first

meeting of the Manifesto Committee ahead of the

Delhi Assembly election

and it was decided that the

party's stand would be in-

cluded in the manifesto.

The State unit of the

its present form.

School for have-nots: a Delhi Police constable's effort to educate 50 children

This makeshift school inside Red Fort battled many financial troubles to teach them good touch vs bad touch, and more life lessons

HEMANI BHANDARI

NEW DELHI Four years ago, a chance encounter between Sachin - an IAS aspirant - and a Delhi Police Constable changed the lives of several children of labourers working inside the

Mr. Singh has been running the makeshift school inside the fort for a few years now. He joined the police force 10 years ago on January 5. It was his third year in a Delhi University college when he cleared the examination after three attempts. His parents –Vasudev and Shashi – used to iron clothes for a living, he said, adding that he did the same till Class 11 before he started selling corn.

Importance of education Growing up in a JJ Colony in Meera Bagh, he said, he understood the importance of education. Sharing an instance, he said once he and his siblings tried to watch TV at their neighbour's house

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Ghaziabad 417 Faridabad 415

Good Satisfactory Moderate

51-100

mukh Auditorium, In International Centre (IIC) 6 p.m.

Talk: "The Geopolitics of Climate Change" a lecture by Dr. Nitin Desai

economist, will explore the geopolit-

ics of climate change by examining the current state of climate dip-

Exhibition: A paintings show by

Dipnarayan Paul and Moinudin Mul-

lick at Convention Centre Foyer, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m. - 7

Exhibition: "Katha", a solo painting show by Chandar Panjre at Triveni

Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Exhibition: "Shelter" a solo show of

sculptures by Pintu Sikder at Shrid-harani Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam,

205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Exhibition: "Truth". a solo show of

lomacy, at IIC, 6.30 p.m.

Noida 403 Greater Noida 414

Delhi 407 Gurugram 404



Ankita Sharma, the first student of the makeshift school inside Red Fort, now teaches around 50-odd students. • R.V. MOORTHY

when the latter shooed them away. The neighbours treated them differently because they didn't "look educated", he believes. Mr. Singh said when he met Sachin at Red Fort in 2016, he saw a reflection of his

On their first meet, Mr. Singh had asked Sachin to leave the premises as he thought the boy was a wanderer. He continued telling Sachin the same for the next three days until the latter broke down. "I asked him what was he doing inside the fort? He told me that he had

come from Maharashtra and was in the city to study for UPSC exams. He could not afford coaching classes so he was studying all by himself. He used to study here all day and would then go to a gurdwara nearby to sleep," recalled the Constable.

Sachin cleared two written examinations that year but got stuck in the interview round. He then left, said Mr. Singh. After a few days, Mr. Singh called him when Sachin told him: "I won't show you my face till I become an IAS".

But before leaving the city,

start a makeshift school to educate the needy. The Constable had told him that while studying, Sachin could also teach the children inside the

Sachin's first student was 16-vear-old Ankita Sharma. She now is a teacher at this school, which is attended by labourers' children from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. inside a temple in the Red Fort premises.

"The school had started with two-three kids. Then I went to the jhuggis and forced the labourers them to send the kids to the school. Most of these children go to schools in their villages but they are here for months. Therefore, it is important that they don't spend their time in bad activities," Mr. Singh said.

In the next four years, the open school managed to around 50-odd amass students.

Hurdles crossed Running the school comes at

Mr. Singh had made Sachin a cost. Mr. Singh, who has to take care of his own two children, has received flak from his wife for spending a chunk of his meagre salary on the education of many.

"Initially, she fought with me but later she understood. In 2018, because of finances, the school was also shut for 10-15 days but with some help, I started it again.

The school provides the children with notebooks, pens and pencils. Out in the open courtyard, stands a green board against a temple wall, while the children sit on cloth sheets given to them by the school.

Mr. Singh has procured halogen lights over many years from the numerous events that Red Fort has been a venue for. Not only do they cover the school's premises, but also the kids' way back to their jhuggis.

"Their safety and security, especially of little girls, is very important," he said. In running the school, senior police

officers have helped Mr. Singh time and again with stationary and money among other

At the school, the youngest is a 2-vear-old and the oldest is a 15-year-old. They are taught alphabets, numbers and tables, the difference between good and bad touch, the importance of hygiene and the dangers of chewing

Two boys and a girl - all aged between five and eight years - raised their hands in the class of 50, when Ankita asked: "How many of you have quit chewing tobacco?"

Six-year-old Pooja, who studies in Class IV in a school in her village in Ranchi, said she has learnt "ABCD, ginti [counting], pahade [tables], vowels in this school." She had come to Delhi over a month ago and will return in the next 10 days.

Fourteen-year-old Sakshi is said to be among the brightest here. This is the only school that she attends and is proud

to have added fruits and vegetables to her vocabulary. Two years ago, when Shah-

nawaz Khan was all of three, his parents made him sit in the school, which he was not too fond of. However, he seems to love it now. Even though he doesn't like studying too much, he sits here with due diligence - his notebook opened and pencil shar pened - looking at Ankita.

For Ankita, whose parents also reside in the jhuggis inside the monument, teaching these children started casually. Her mother used to teach

She said her teacher in a private school once told her that teaching is a rewarding experience. A student of commerce, she either wants to become a mathematics teacher

or a bank manager, she said. When the class ended and the kids started to leave, Mr. Singh reminisced about the Delhi Police's motto and said: "This is also Shanti Seva Nyaya for me.'

drain. He said he had made

requests to the Block Deve-

lopment and Panchayat Of-

ficer and NHAI officials in

Delhi Agra Toll Road offi-

cial P.K. Singh said the water-

logging was caused due to

the choking of the pipelines

and the storm water drain.

Mr. Singh said the Municipal

Corporation of Faridabad

had made drains in many vil-

lages along the highway to

this regard.

Chairman of the Manifesto Committee, Ajay Maken, said that there was a huge difference in the NPR of 2010 and the one of 2020 as the Modi government at the Centre has added six new "illegal" questions and was in violation of Article 14 in the Constitution.

> "The BJP has done an illegal act by dividing people. Details collected from the fresh questions included in the NPR are linked to the NRC, and are part of a conspiracy by the BJP-led Central government to push citizens' list in the garb of the NPR," Mr. Maken said. Delhi Congress chief

Subhash Chopra alleged that the Centre was trying to divert people's attention from issues like economic distress, price rise, unemployment, and using policies to divide the country on the basis of community

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Overflowing sewage on National Highway-19 sparks safety concerns

Locals, commuters fume as complaints go unheard; authorities, Panchayat pass the buck

For more than six months, sewage from Seekri village has been overflowing onto DELHI TODAY the service road and a stretch of the Delhi-Agra Talk: Lecture on "Solving the Grand Challenges of Humanity" by Prof. Vivek Wadhwa, Distinguished Fellow highway, causing a major nuisance to locals and at Harvard Law School and Carnegi Mellon University's College of Engin motorists. eering at Silicon Valley, at C.D. Desh The authorities and the

ASHOK KUMAR

Panchavat, however, shift the blame on the matter. The flooded road hampers the movement of the vehicles, put the pedestrians to inconvenience, emanates foul smell, and also causes waterborne diseases and accidents on the National Highway.

Running a kiosk off the highway for over a decade, Majlis from Nuh, said the sewage from the village earlier flowed down a drain. However, the trouble began six months back when the highway was widened to six-lanes and a service road was constructed over the drain, he



■ ASHOK KUMAR

Though pipelines have been laid under the service road to allow the sewage to reach the storm water drain along the highway, but the pipelines and the drain get frequently choked due to indiscriminate dumping of the garbage, including plastic waste, in an open nallah along the highway.

The small drains from the village fall into this *nallah*, which in turn is connected to the storm water drain with the pipelines. The choked pipelines and storm water drain lead to overflow of the sewage to the service road and the Agra-Delhi carriageway of the highway.

Dotted with vendors, kiosks and tea stalls, the nallah, close to the local market, remains full with garbage. A waste dumping site has also come up near the *nallah* and the garbage often ends up in it.

Local resident Ranjit, who also runs a makeshift kiosk, said he had complained to Sarpanch on several occasions but was told that it was

the responsibility of the highways authority. He said highway authorities came to clear the water but not before it had entered their kiosks. The kiosk owners had put sandbags to prevent the water from entering their premises. Ranjit's mother recalled that it was the worst near Rakshabandan festival and then Diwali, adding that the water was not cleared for the over a month this time around.

Breeding ground The overflowed water has also affected his business, said Majlis. "Customers find it difficult to reach my shop due to water all around," he said. Local villager Siddhu Khan said the stagnant sewage was a breeding ground for the mosquitoes and water-borne diseases. He suggested the nallah be covered and made рисса.

Prahlad, who runs an eggs-stall, said the water overflowing onto the high-

way led to frequent accidents. Not expecting sewage on the highway, the motorists, coming at a high speed, took sharp turn fearing potholes and met accidents. "A portion of the road is damaged due to constant waterlogging and a truck overturned a month ago. The highway authorities then closed the right turn near the spot to the road passing through Seekri and connecting a dozen villages," said Prahlad. Auto-rickshaw driver Lal

Singh said the road passing through Seekri connecting to other villages also remained waterlogged due to overflowing of sewage and crates had appeared on it. Sarpanch Anil Kumar alleged the drain to discharge the sewage was demolished by the agency that constructed the highway with a promise to make it again but did not do so. He said he was aware of the situation but the Panchayat did

not have funds to make a

ter drain. He added that a proposal for a drain to carry the sewage of the village was being considered as a lasting

solution.

discharge sewage, but Seekri was outside the municipal limits causing the problem. He added the road was also damaged due to constant water-logging. NHAI, project director, Badarpur, Mohammad Safi told *The Hindu* that a notice was served to the Panchayat a month back to regularly clean the *nallah* to prevent the choking of the pipelines and the storm wa-

Mr. N SELVA KUMAR

gaurav.sehgal@thehindu.co.in THEMOHINDU

All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, 1, Rafi Marg, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. (Mail your listings for this column at cityeditordelhi@thehindu.co.in)

(Clockwise from top left) Homeless people sleeping on a pavement nea Jama Masjid; a vendor waiting for customers at a makeshift shop in Old Delhi; people at a night shelter near Jama Masjid; patients taking a nap outside AIIMS; homeless people near AIIMS.

• SLISHII KLIMAR VERMA (SHIV KLIMAR PILISHPAKAR









CITY TEAM

ast 10 p.m. on New Year's Day, Phoolkumari (22) covered herself in a blanket as she, along with her mother, were getting ready to sleep on the pavement outside AIIMS. She had undergone chemotherapy a few hours ago at the hospital. "Whatever I eat, I vomit... Due to weakness I feel colder," she said. The minimum temperature that night was 2.4 degrees celsius.

The 22-year-old from Kaimur district in Bihar, a 12-year-old boy who had come from Uttar Pradesh for a check-up after being operated and a 50-year-old woman waiting for heart surgery were among those huddled up on the pavement outside the hospital on the cold January night. Over 100 others gave them company with flattened cardboard boxes doubling up as mattresses and a few with the luxury of plastic sheets as roofs. For those without a roof over their head, it was not only cold winter nights with single-digit temperatures that they had to deal with but also one of the coldest winters in over a century. The Capital recorded its coldest winter day with the maximum temperature falling to 9.4 degrees Celsius on December 30. December also saw 18 consecutive cold days and the MeT department has forecast a cold wave again after January 8.

Over occupancy

Finding shelter for those stranded in the city due to cancellations of trains due to fog or medical treatment is not an easy task. A Delhi government-run free temporary night shelter at gate number 2 of AIIMS with a capacity of 15 beds had 30 people for the night. The one on the opposite side with a capacity of 46 beds had 60 people by 10.45 p.m.

"People are sharing a bed and we were full last night also. Most of the tents [temporary night shelters] near AIIMS are full. They will find space in the ones a little away," said Ved Pal, caretaker of the second night shelter

taker of the second night shelter.
Sooraj Kumar (12) and his
father, who had come from Uttar

Rising against the odds

For those without a roof over their head, it was not only cold winter nights with single-digit temperatures that they had to deal with but also one of the coldest winters in over a century



Pradesh for a check-up and were sleeping next to Phoolkumari, said that they were not aware of the free night shelter. Many others sleeping in the open reiterated the same.

Free blankets

Anil Sharma, care taker of the tent at gate number 2 said that many sleep outside as they get free blankets which they then sell for a price. "Most of them stuff the blankets in sacks and sell it later. They would not come and stay in the tent even if we ask them to," he said.

The 12-year-old lifted a quilt they had got from their village to show the three blankets they got from people distributing them outside the hospital.

"About an hour ago someone came and asked us to sell the blanket we had got for a mere ₹100, but we did not give it," the boy said.

In over an hour spent in the area, at least three different groups had come to distribute blankets and some to distribute food, like the people who gave *Phoolvati* an apple. Some of them sleeping outside were seen tucking the blankets they had got under their belongings and rushing for another one.

To protect herself from the chilling weather, 11-year-old Sita was seen wearing an oversized brown sweater with a torn woollen bottom and a beanie cap. Sita and her mother Rajjo spend their day at the traffic light in east Delhi's Vivek Vihar; nights are spent outside a temple in the area. The father is a drunkard whose whereabouts the mother-daughter duo is unaware of.







"The last few days were very cold. An uncle gave me this sweater a few days ago. He was very nice," smiled Sita sitting next to a bonfire. Before she was

given a sweater, she managed with two undersized sweaters.

us... we and ext we craver, a black with two undersized sweaters.

The

Other who spend the day with

Sita said that she is the chirpiest

among the lot. She smiles





More than 100 people are sleeping outside AIIMS with flattened cardboard boxes doubling up as mattresses and a few with the luxury of plastic sheets as roofs. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

through adversity, they said. "Hamare liye kya hai... kabhi zada thand to kabhi zada garmi... kabhi paani ko taraste hain to kabhi kambal ko [What about us... we bear with extreme cold and extreme hot... in one season we crave for water and in another, a blanket]," they said.

The homeless people, said the nights are unbearable but blankets provided by temple officials and locals come in handy. The bonfire of course helps.

Rohit (14) sells pens to motorists. His parents stay at a different red light in the area. They don't visit him often. Sometimes, he also cleans the cars' mirrors when the signal is red.

He recalled a night four days ago. "I had to beg people to give me something to wear on top of two thin sweaters I was wearing. No one helped. I had fought with one from the bunch so I didn't

ask them for help. I slept shivering"

shivering."

For 24-year-old Rinku, who stays at a permanent night shelter at Sarai Kale Khan along with his wife and a three-month-old child, this has been a challenging winter. Rinku himself has been staying at the night shelter for the fourth consecutive year now and with the addition of a child he does want a better home for his family. However, even after doing a 12-hour shift at a local canteen, he still cannot afford a rented house.

"There are so many expenses. I want my family to have a home of their own, but that is not possible now. This time the winter is very cold, but the night shelter has been a blessings for us," said Rinku.

"We cook our own food here and get blankets and mattress at night. What else can we ask for," said Ricky, who hails from Reva district of Madhya Pradesh.

Around 9.30 p.m. on New Year day, 49- year-old Rajani and a couple of women and young boys were sitting around a bonfire at the entrance of the night shelter.

Livelihood issue

Rajni, whose husband worked as an engineer in the Railways, has been staying at the night shelter for the last eight months. Asked how she ended up staying at the place, Rajni said that she has been fighting a protracted battle against the Railways for pension

after the death of her husband.

A resident of Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, Rajni said she has been working as a maid at a house in Govindpuri to support her and her 27-year-old son who does the running around the Railways office for the pension.

This winter was particularly difficult for her as this was the first time that she has been forced to leave the comfort of her home and reside besides 60 to 70 people inside a single dorm in a new city.

"Everything else is fine. I have no issues on the facilities at the shelter. I hope to get back home soon as the pension work is almost complete," she said.

(With inputs from Soibam Rocky Singh, Nikhil M Babu and Hemani Bhandari)

CM YK

● C Timings DELHI

MONDAY, JAN. 06

RISE 07:15 SET 17:39
RISE 14:06 SET 02:42

TUESDAY, JAN. 07

RISE 07:15 SET 17:40

RISE 14:45 SET 03:40

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 08

RISE 07:16 SET 17:41

RISE 15:30 SET 04:38

Delhi WeathermaxminDelhi City2107Safdarjang2107

Delhi Palam Today 19°C Moderate fog will prevail in the morning. A cloudy sky rain will prevail likely in parts.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 18°C A pleasant morning lies ahead. A cloudy sky will prevail. Rain and thundershowers would occur.

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THE HINDU

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Villagers attack police station in Rajasthan

Some villagers on Sunday pelted stones at the Khoh police station in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district and gheraoed the staff on duty after the police personnel could not catch alleged cow smugglers, an officer said. The police had to fire tear gas to disperse the agitating crowd, the officer said, adding that no casualty was reported. As the alleged cow smugglers escaped, SHO Prem Bhaskar and a constable have been taken off duty, Bharatpur SP Haidar Ali Zaidi said. The villagers had informed the police about a vehicle in which cows were being allegedly smuggled. A police team chased the vehicle but could not catch it, the SP said. PT

Ensure safety of Indians in Gulf: Amarinder to Centre

India cannot afford to simply wait and watch, says Punjab CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Amid escalating U.S.-Iran tension, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Sunday urged the Central government to take urgent steps to ensure the safety and security of the 10 million Indians in the Gulf region.

India could not afford to simply wait and watch, or to just monitor the situation, given the rising stakes in view of the threats and counter-threats between the U.S. and Iran, said Capt. Amarinder, in the context of the Ministry of External Affairs' statement that it was keeping a close watch on the situation.

The Chief Minister emphasised that the Indian go-



Amarinder Singh. • FILE РНОТО

vernment should immediately direct their embassies in the region to connect with the Indians settled there, and provide all possible help to them in this hour of crisis.

Pointing out that besides the U.S., other countries like Britain were preparing to evacuate their citizens, if needed, Capt. Amarinder asked the Centre to also prepare and initiate plans to evacuate all Indians seeking to return to India in the current circumstances.

'Without delay'

The close proximity of the Gulf region to the Indian border made it imperative for the Centre to intervene without delay, and issue the necessary directions to its missions in the West Asian countries, as well as the Indian population there, the Chief Minister stressed.

With the conflict showing no signs of easing, the situation was evidently grave and it would be in the interest of the Indians to leave the Gulf region immediately, he added.

Over 100 infants died in two Jodhpur hospitals: report

The report was prepared by S.N. Medical College

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Over 100 infants died in two government hospitals in Jodhpur in December last year, a report has found amid growing outrage over infant deaths in a Kota hospital.

While a total of 146 children died in Umaid and MDM hospitals in Jodhpur in December, 102 deaths were reported in the neo-natal intensive care unit.

The figures of infant deaths in Jodhpur were given in a report prepared by the S.N. Medical College in the light of casualties in Kota's J.K. Lon Hospital.

Over 100 infants have died in the government-run hospital in Kota.

S.N. Medical College principal S.S. Rathore, however, said the figure is in the range of international standards of infant mortality.

"A total of 47,815 children had been admitted to the hospitals in 2019 and of this, 754 children died," said Dr. Rathore.

In December, 4,689 children had been admitted to the hospitals of which 3,002 had been admitted to NICU and ICU and 146 of them died. Dr. Rathore said most of the children who died were those referred from

other surrounding districts in a critical condition.

The hospitals here have to bear the load of patients from entire western Rajasthan and children were also referred from hospitals like AIIMS, he said.

He added the critical care unit of the hospitals have been adjudged best in the State for two consecutive years and attributed it to their best practices and care. Though Dr. Rathore denied any shortage of resources at the hospitals, there have been reports that many senior doctors have been running their own private hospitals.

BJP starts door-to-door campaign to garner support for CAA

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar visits houses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In a bid to garner support for the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday kicked-off the BJP's "Sampark Abhiyan" campaign here.

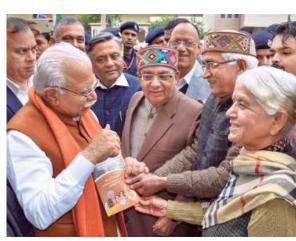
As a part of the campaign, the Chief Minister visited the houses of a few people and informed them about the CAA.

'Misinformation on Act'

Addressing a gathering, Mr. Khattar hit out at the Congress and other Opposition parties, accusing them of spreading misinformation on CAA.

"The CAA has been passed by Parliament with an aim to provide citizenship to the minorities coming to India from neighbouring countries that are being oppressed there in the name of religion. But a few Opposition parties are misguiding the people of the country by spreading false information without understanding the provisions of the Act," he said

sions of the Act," he said. He said it is being propa-



Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar during the 'Sampark Abhiyan' in Jalandhar on Sunday. •PTI

gated among the Muslims that it is a law to take away the citizenship of the country from them, whereas in reality, it is to give citizenship.

Flays attack on devotees Condemning the incident of attack and stone-pelting on Sikh devotees at the historic Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in Pakistan, Mr. Khattar said that protest would be registered, if required, against Pakistan and other countries like Afghanistan

and Bangladesh to ensure

that the minorities there are not oppressed in the name of religion and their rights are protected.

Minister's visit

In Chandigarh, Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur started the party's door-to-door campaign by meeting people in Sector 38.

He said that CAA would benefit scores of people and it was wrong to say that it would harm minority communities.

'Putting protesters in jail shameful'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Sunday asked the Uttar Pradesh government to seek an apology from the public for putting anti-citizenship law protesters behind bars without thorough investigation. She dubbed it as "highly shameful and condemnable".

"In Uttar Pradesh, especially in Bijnor, Sambhal, Meerut, Muzzafarnagar, Firozabad and other districts, innocent people have been sent to jail for protesting against the CAA/NRC without an investigation. This issue has also been raised by the media and is highly shameful and condemnable," Ms. Mayawati said in a tweet in Hindi.

'Seek apology'

Accusing the Yogi Adityanath-government of jailing anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protesters without proper investigation, she asked them to seek an apology from the public.

Ms. Mayawati also demanded financial assistance to those killed in the protests.



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CM YK

'Non-tribal communities can never claim to be indigenous'

Kochari samaj slams Assam govt. for destroying tribal history, culture

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Non-tribal communities living in Assam can never claim to be 'khilonjia' or indigenous, said the All-Assam Kochari Samaj that represents the earliest ethnic communities inhabiting the State.

Leaders of the samaj in a statement on Friday evening also slammed the Assam government and non-tribal people for destroying tribal history and cultures.

The Assam Sahitya Sabha and the All-Assam Students' Union have panned the statement as "immature" and "politically-motivated" to undermine the ongoing movement against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The samaj's statement assumes significance ahead of a report to be submitted by a 15-member panel enlisting the communities that qualify to be called 'khilonjia' for implementing Clause 6 of the Assam Accord of 1985. This Clause prescribes land and constitutional rights only for the indigenous in

1881 census

The 1881 census recorded 19 groups within the Kochari classification but some got isolated from the parental stock. Today, it comprises communities such as Bodo, the largest plains tribe in the northeast, Deuri, Dimasa, Rabha, Sonowal Kachari, Thengal Kachari and Tiwa. Large swathes of Assam are under autonomous or development councils specifically for these communities.

"Kochari kings began ruling areas under present-day Assam and beyond 1,500 years before the Mahabharata era. But the non-tribal have pushed the tribal history aside despite the United Nations specifying that only the aborigines can be called indigenous," said the statement signed by the organisation's working president Ma-

secretary Pradip Sonowal

and four others represent-

general

Rabha.

ing as may tribes. The samaj claimed many traits representative of mainstream Assamese culture today were appropriated from the tribes. These include the floral 'gamosa', or cloth-towel, that has become a symbol of the anti-CAA protest.

The Kochari group also pointed out that the Ahoms, who came from Thailand some 800 years ago, were non-indigenous. The Ahoms are one of six communities demanding Scheduled Tribe

status, which the Kocharis enjoying ST status are opposed to.

'Baseless claim'

Advising the Assamese to stop making the "baseless claim" of being indigenous or 'bhumiputra' (son-of-thesoil), the Kochari Samaj said they would otherwise seek justice from the Supreme Court and approach the U.N. besides the Centre.

"The views of the organisation are utterly immature. I appeal to their leaders to come to our office with facts and discuss for establishing their claims and specify the communities they consider non-tribal. We should refrain from comments that divide the indigenous communities," said Paramanda Rajbongshi, former president of Assam Sahitya

White blanket



A view of snow-covered Mechuka following heavy snowfall in Shi-Yomi district of Arunachal Pradesh on Sunday. PT

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Man arrested for posing as Maoist in Odisha

Releases nephew after extorting ₹2 lakh

STAFF REPORTER

A youth was arrested in Odisha's Gajapati district for posing as a Maoist to kidnap his eight-year-old nephew for ransom.

The arrested kidnapper was identified as K. Chandra Rao (25), cousin of K. Dileswar Rao, the father of the kidnapped child. Both are residents of Paralakhemundi, district headquarter town of Gajapati district.

Demanded ₹20 lakh

The kidnapper initially demanded ₹20 lakh as ransom. But he released the child after extorting ₹2 said Bibekananda Swain, inspector in charge of Paralakhemundi police station Bibekananda Swain.

According to police sources, Chandra Rao was arrested on Saturday and ₹1 45 000 was seized from a new four wheeler he had

paid up the remaining ₹55,000 of the ransom money as the first down payment of the vehicle, said Mr

Swain. The police have alsoseized the vehicle.

Kept him in Srikakulam According to the police, on

the morning of December 31, Chandra Rao had asked the child to come with him, and kept him at a village in adjoining Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh.

He then made calls from different mobile numbers posing as a Maoist leader to his cousin, the father of the

Police complaint

Police during his interaction with his parents after the release, the child said that he had spent the whole day with his uncle. This made the father suspicious, who filed a complaint at Paralakhemundi police sta-

2 picnickers die after touching live wire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Two picnickers, including a child, died while another was critically injured after coming in contact with a high-tension electric wire at Usthi in South 24 Parganas district on Sunday, police said.

Six-year-old Rezaul Mollah and 32-year old Guffar Mollah died on the spot after accidentally touching the hanging live wire on the rooftop of a three-storey school building in the area, a police officer said.

Mofizul Mollah, the father of Rezaul and uncle of Guffar, was seriously injured as he tried to save the two, the police officer

Mofizul was referred to a Kolkata hospital and his condition was very critical, the officer said. The three were part of

a picnic party from nearby Mograhat area in the

OPTIONAL

CORING

S

Two killed in freak mishap in Odisha

Paddy-cutting machine fell on them

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BALASORE (ODISHA)

Two persons were killed on Sunday when a heavy paddy-cutting machine fell on them at a village in Balasore district, the police

The men were trying to mount machine on a tractor after completion of

paddy-cutting operation at Khuada village, when it slipped and fell on them, they said.

Gopal Tudu (21) and Hamir Hansda (22) were taken to the district headquarters hospital at Balasore, where doctors declared them brought dead, hospital sources said.



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Sena's choice of portfolios shows party's focus on urban areas

Congress, NCP go for rural departments

TANVI DESHPANDE

The portfolio distribution of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) announced on Sunday seems to indicate that the Shiv Sena is focusing on urban areas, while the Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) will concentrate on rural areas.

The Sena has primarily kept urban portfolios with itself, including the most important Urban Development Department, which controls all municipal corporations in the State. The Sena has allocated it to party heavyweight Eknath Shinde. Similarly, Subhash Desai's Industries portfolio and Uday Samant's Higher and Technical Education are departments primarily concerned with urban areas. Mr. Desai held the portfolio in the previous government with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as well, while Higher and Technical Education was with the BJP's Vinod Tawde.

Although the portfolios given to - environment and tourism – Aaditya Thackeray are neutral, Mr. Thackeray has largely worked in Mumbai so far. The other departments with the Sena are Agriculture, Forests, Water Supply and Sanitation, and Employment Guarantee.

"With the BMC elections coming in 2022, the Sena

Discontent in Cong. over 'raw deal'

The Maharashtra Congress is facing discontent over allocation of portfolios, with a section of leaders blaming State unit chief Balasaheb Thorat for the party getting a "raw deal" as compared to the Shiv Sena and NCP.

Their ire is also directed towards NCP chief Sharad Pawar, with a Congress leader claiming they need someone in the State unit who could stand up to the Maratha strongman.

Mr. Thorat, later in the day, brushed off the criticism claiming the portfolios given to the Congress were those connected to the "day-to-day issues" of the common man.

Some Congress leaders said they demanded at least two departments from Agriculture, Rural Development, Industries, Housing, Transport and Cooperation, but the Sena and NCP refused to pay heed. Instead, departments like Culture, Salt Pan and Port Develop-

its stronghold and expand its

base as a pan-Maharashtra

party through corporations.

It has kept Agriculture with

itself because of the exten-

sive tours the CM and Aadi-

tvaii took across the State be-

fore and after elections to

assess crop losses. The farm



Nitin Raut is said to be unhappy over his party colleagues getting better portfolios. • FILE PHOTO

ment, which were earlier with the Sena, have been handed over to the Congress. "The Congress has got a raw deal in powersharing among the three alliance partners. Thorat has not been able to put forth the Congress's interest during deliberations on power-sharing," a senior party leader said on the condition of anonymity.

According to sources, Congress leader Nitin Raut, who has been made the Energy minister, is unhappy over the Public Works Department being given to his senior col-

loan waiver was the party's

topmost priority and it has

[fulfilled it]. Besides, Forests

will compliment the Environ-

ment portfolio that is with

the Sena," said a senior party

While the Rural Develop-

functionary.

league Ashok Chavan and Mr. Thorat being allocated the Revenue department.

Citing how intense was the bitterness in the rank and file, a leader said vandalising the party office and burning effigies of a general secretary had never happened and "such acts of indiscipline need to be taken seriously".

Former Maharashtra Congress president Manikrao Thakre admitted that such outpouring of anger was earlier unheard of in the party. He, however, said MLAs Sangram Thopte and Praniti Shinde, whose supporters are unhappy, have said they are with the Congress. Meanwhile, a senior

party functionary has written to AICC general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal, claiming there is no discipline in the party. "Several Congress leaders and workers are unhappy because most decisions are being taken after discussion with Sharad Pawar. This is dangerous," the functionary wrote.

NCP's Hasan Mushrif, Water Resources is with Jayant Patil. In the Congress, Revenue is with Balasaheb Thorat, Tribal Development with K.C. Padavi, and Animal Husbandry with Sunil Kedar. Thus, the parties have firmly established their priorities.

Nine debutants entrusted with portfolios

Six first-time Ministers of State also get chance to be part of government

TANVI DESHPANDE MUMBAI

With nine first-timers in Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's Cabinet, including himself, the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) has given a chance to many senior legislators and party loyalists, allocating them important portfolios. The government also has six first-time ministers of State.

The MVA government announced its portfolio distribution on Sunday after it was approved by Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari. The Chief Minister himself is a Cabinet member for the first time, and will hold charge of the General Administration, IT, Information and Public Relations, and Law and Judiciary departments. His son Aaditva, also a first-time legislator, has been allocated the Tourism, Environment and Protocol portfolios.

Despite being newcomers, with a team of Shiv Sena veterans guiding them, the father and son are expected to match up to veterans like Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and former CM Ashok Chavan in Cabinet meetings.

Another first-timer is tribal leader K.C. Padavi, a seven-term MLA from Nandurbar. Despite his seniority. this is the first time the Congress leader has become a minister.

Paithan MLA Sandipan



Sweet success: Supporters of Karad North MLA Balasaheb Patil celebrate him becoming a first-time Minister by weighing him against a heap of peda in Karad on Sunday. • RAJU SANADI

Bhumre, who has been representing the constituency since 1995 (except from 2009-2014), is now Minister for Employment Guarantee and Horticulture. Independent MLA Shankarrao Gadakh from Nevasa had declared support to the Sena, and has been given the Soil and Water Conservation Department. Both are making their debut in the Cabinet.

MLC Anil Parab, who has been a strong presence in the Legislative Council for three terms, has landed a Cabinet berth for the first time.

A lawyer by profession,

Mr. Parab successfully pursued the Sena's plea in Supreme Court after the early morning swearing-in of Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar last year. Mr. Parab was also responsible for keeping party legislators under his watch at a Madh Island resort during the drama over

government formation. Apart from being a firsttimer in the Cabinet, Malad West MLA Aslam Shaikh representing the constituency for the third time – is the only minority community minister from his party. Karad North MLA Balasaheb

Patil is also a newcomer to the Cabinet. The NCP leader is the chairman of the Sahva-Sugar Cooperative

NCP heavyweight Dhananjay Munde, who has steadily risen through the party ranks, has been given charge of the Social Justice and Special Assistance departments.

The first-time ministers of State are Independent MLAs Bachchu Kadu and Rajendra Patil-Yadravkar. Congress leader Vishwajeet Kadam, and the NCP's Sanjay Bansode, Prajakt Tanpure and

BJP would have won had it not gone with Sena, says Rane

Former CM says Uddhav lacks knowledge of State's issues

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

Remarking that the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) alliance with the Shiv Sena ahead of the Assembly polls was a mistake, former chief minister and the BJP leader Narayan Rane on Sunday targeted his nemesis, Chief Minister and Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray, yet again by saying that the new Chief Minister lacked "adequate knowledge" about issues of the State.

Speaking in Solapur, Mr. Rane asserted that the BJP would have swept the Assembly polls had it contested on its own strength.

"We [the BJP] put a lot of trust in the Sena and fought the Assembly elections with them ... but this proved to be a mistake. Had we gone it alone, today the BJP would have formed the government in Maharashtra," Mr.

The Konkan strongman, once a Shiv Sainik but now a bitter foe of his former party, said that the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi government under Mr. Thackeray would not last for more than two



"Uddhav Thackeray has no proper knowledge nor has done adequate study of the pressing issues afflicting the State ... he is just a nominal Chief Minister," said Mr.

Mr. Rane had formally joined the BJP and merged his party, the Maharashtra Swabhiman Paksha, with it in October last year ahead of the elections. In September 2017, Mr. Rane had severed his decade-plus association with the Congress, which he had joined following his acri-

monious exit from the Sena. His exit from the Congress, equally laden with acrimony, was with the expectation that the BJP, which is weak in the Konkan belt. would welcome him with open arms. At the time of his exit, Mr. Rane had vowed to deplete the ranks of his former parties.

Since then, the Konkan strongman has repeatedly targeted the Sena. Ahead of the elections, Mr. Thackeray had warned his then ally, the BJP, that the Sena would exit the saffron coalition if the BIP inducted Mr. Rane.

As a result, the Kankavli Assembly segment in particular and the Konkan belt in general had turned out to be a major flashpoint between the erstwhile saffron allies where the BJP and the Sena, despite contesting together, had propped up their own

The BJP had fielded Mr. Rane's son, sitting MLA Nitesh Rane, from Kankavli. An irked Sena had in turn propped up its own nominee, Satish Sawant.

Mr. Rane had fielded his aides, Rajan Teli and Ranjit Desai, against Sena nominees Deepak Kesarkar and Vaibhav Naik for the Sawantwadi and Kudal seats, respectively. However, the BJP could win only two seats in the Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg belt, including Kankavli.



The bike of the balloon seller, whose cylinder exploded in Solapur on Sunday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Five hurt in cylinder blast before Solapur marathon

Man was filling balloons with gas

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

At least five people, including a woman and a teenager, were injured in what appeared to be a cylinder explosion in Solapur early on

The blast occurred at the start of the Solapur International Half-Marathon, said authorities.

According to the police, the incident occurred a little after 5:30 a.m., minutes before the inauguration of the third edition of the CNS Solapur International Marathon organised by the Solapur Runners' Association.

Authorities said a family was selling gas balloons at the spot before the commencement of the event, which saw the participation of more than 5,000 people. A man was filling the balloons with gas from a cylinder when it exploded, seinjuring those standing nearby, including a woman and a 14-year-old

The injured were rushed to nearby hospitals, and the man filling the balloons is said to be in a critical condition.

A team of the Solapur police's bomb detection and disposal squad rushed to the spot to ascertain the precise cause of the blast. Investigations are on.

Pune to host fifth edition of global Drosophila conference

Event to help researchers on fruit fly interact with peers

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

The city is set to host the fifth edition of the Asia Pacific Drosophila Research Conference (APDRC5), which is being organised in the country for the first time by the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research

This biennial conference, which is to be held between January 6 and 10, aims to promote the interaction of Drosophila researchers in the Asia-Pacific region with their peers in the rest of the world. It will bring together scientists from all over the world who use the fruit fly, Drosophila, as a model organism to address basic and applied questions.

"Drosophila is one of the most widely-used and preferred model organisms in biological research across the world for the last 100 years. Several discoveries in biology have been made using this. Its genome is entirely sequenced and there is enormous information available about its biochemistry, physiology and behaviour," said professor (biology) Sutirth Dey of IISER.

Drosophila is one of the most widelyused and preferred model organisms in biological research

SUTIRTH DEY Professor (biology), IISER

The event will feature 430 delegates: 330 Indian and 100 foreign. It will see the participation of two Nobel laureates, professors Eric Wieschaus and Michael Rosbash, known for their seminal contribution to the fields of development biology and chronobiology respectively.

"This event is one of the largest meetings of Drosophila researchers in the whole world and attracts scientists working in diverse disciplines ranging from cell and molecular biology to ecology and evolution," said

Prof. Dey. Explaining the choice by the APDRC board of IISER to organise the meet, he said the institute is one the premier scientific research institutes of the country and is very strong in Drosophila research, given that there are five professors and 30 Ph.D. scholars who were using

tions in developmental biology. A total 57 talks and 240

Drosophila to answer ques-

posters on topics ranging from gametogenesis and stem cells, morphogenesis and mechanobiology, hormones and physiology, cellular and behavioural neurobiology, infection and immunity and ecology and evolution are scheduled for the conference.

"One of the highlights of this conference is that we are explicitly encouraging undergraduates from various institutes of the world to participate in it. There is a pre-conference symposium called 'signals from the gut' in collaboration with the National Centre for Cell Science, as well as a pre-conference microscopy workshop on super-resolution microscopy. This will feature microscopes from fluorescence imaging to super resolution imaging (50 nm resolution) which are vital for certain kinds of fly work," Prof. Dev said.

The last four editions of this conference took place in Taipei, Seoul, Beijing and

Marble domes of Aurangabad's Bibi Ka Maqbara to get new glow

ASI to carry out scientific conservation of monument

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The marble domes of Bibi Ka Maqbara, the famous 17th century Mughal-era monument in the city, are set to

get a new shine. The domes and other marble parts of the mausoleum will undergo scientific conservation, an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) official said. The work is estimated to cost ₹45 lakh.

The structure, known as the 'Taj of the Deccan' because of its striking resemblance to the Taj Mahal, was commissioned by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1660 in the memory of his wife Dilras Banu Begum.

Deputy Superintending Archaeologist Shrikant Mishra said its domes and mina-



The Bibi Ka Maqbara was commissioned by Aurangzeb in 1660 in the memory of his wife. • FILE РНОТО

rets, which are built in marble, as well as the marble screens inside would undergo scientific conservation. The work, which will go on for six months, will involve

cleaning and and carrying out a chemical treatment to give it a new glow, he said. The paintings inside the entrance of the mausoleum, too, will undergo cleaning.

'Government should reveal how much money has been spent on airline subsidies' ging doubt that airlines are

Need transparent UDAN: air passengers' association

ADITYA ANAND

The Air Passengers Association of India (APAI) wants the Connectivity Regional Scheme (RCS) - Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) - to be fine-tuned and recalibrated with details of money spent by the government in airline subsidies, the number of routes suspended. The air passengers' body said the details must be made public for the sake of transparency.

In his outlook for 2020, APAI president D. Sudhakara Reddy said there was a growing cacophony of claims by airlines about poor bottomlines and other difficulties being faced by them, which are unsubstantiated.

"The irony is that while this high-decibel lobbying is going on, elsewhere in the world, particularly in the U.S. and Europe, most of the



ing its stand that a forensic audit should be carried out by the relevant government agencies on airlines' balance sheets to know what exactly is happening," he said.

Mr. Reddy said the government was about to announce the auction for the fourth edition of UDAN to give a push to the scheme while making efforts to privatise

six airports to create the desired aviation infrastructure in the country. "Our considered view is

that the achievement of flying 35 lakh passengers under the scheme since its inception augurs well. Yet, to have the desired level of excellence, the scheme will have to be fine-tuned and recalibrated. APAI has been expressing concern that the scheme in the present form is opaque and there is a nagtaking advantage of the loopholes, deciding arbitrarily how many seats have to be allocated under the scheme," he said. The APAI president said

passengers have the right to know how much money has been spent by the government on subsidy to the airlines, how many routes have been suspended by the airlines after launching them, the reasons for this and so on. "Needless to say, such an exercise will make the scheme more transparent and enable objective assessment of the efficacy of UDAN," he said.

Mr. Reddy said the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has spent over ₹1,100 crore for revamping airports, but still the facilities and operations at these airports remained woefully inadequate. "While the rhetoric is high, traffic levels are low. Viability of the airports has to be established on a sound footing. Airlines are reluctant to include these airports in their network," Mr. Reddy said.

There are 449 airports in the country including helipads. A majority of the unserved and underserved airports are in this category, the APAI president said. Those with scheduled services, sometimes, see footfalls as few as 7,000, he said.

"There are indications that 75% of the airports owned by it are registering losses, most being regional airports. With the profitable airports being privatised, AAI will soon have a stable revenue stream, which should be deployed towards developing regional airports," Mr. Reddy said.





Only two-day 'Vaikuntha dwara darshanam'

The emergency meeting of the TTD board of trustees on Sunday resolved to confine 'Vaikuntha dwara darshanam' at Tirumala for only two days - Vaikunta Ekadasi (January 6) and Dwadasi (January 7). The High Court had directed the TTD to make known its opinion on extending 'Vaikunta Dwara darshanam' for 10 days, while hearing a **Public Interest Litigation** (PIL) plea filed by an advocate, Tallapaka Raghavan, last week.

Man kills daughter suspecting wife's fidelity

A man killed his three-monthold daughter, suspecting his wife's fidelity, in Andhra Pradesh's Kadapa district on Sunday. Rajendra, a resident of Raiiv Colony of Vempalle town, grew suspicious of his second wife Krishida, after she gave birth to the baby. On Friday, on not finding the baby, the mother lodged a complaint with the Vempalle police. On interrogation, Rajendra admitted to have killed the baby and buried it in the Papaghni river bed. The baby's body was exhumed and Raiendra was arrested.

Spurious toddy claims two lives in A.P.

MAREDUMILL Two tribal people of Boddumanu Veedhi hamlet in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh died after allegedly consuming spurious toddy on Sunday. Five others from the Kondareddi tribal community, including three women, who too consumed the intoxicant, are under treatment. The deceased have been identified as Palla Somireddy, 32, and Sadala Aswareddy, 30, natives of Chawadi Kota panchayat, Maredumilli mandal

States have to implement CAA: Minister

If they don't, President may take action citing 'breakdown of Constitutional machinery', says R.K. Singh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

"The President can take action against the States if they fail to implement the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)," Union Minister of State for Power R.K. Singh said here on Sunday.

"As citizenship is a Central subject, the States are duty-bound to implement it," Mr. Singh said while addressing the media after releasing a brochure in connection with the 'Jana Jagaran Sampark Abhiyan', a people connect campaign on CAA.

'Spreading lies'

Accusing the Opposition of spreading falsehood on the Act, Mr. Singh clarified that it was meant to give citizenship to the Hindus and other minorities who were being driven out after persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Mr. Singh, a former IAS officer who had served as Un-



Counter attack: Union Minister R.K. Singh, centre, releasing a CAA brochure in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. •c.v. SUBRAHMANYAM

ion Home Secretary, said that the CAA was not meant to take away citizenship of any person.

Referring to Kerala and West Bengal, where the governments vowed not to implement the CAA, Mr. Singh said they were bound by the Constitution. "If they don't implement, the President may come to the conclusion that there is a breakdown of Constitutional machinery," he observed.

Awareness drive

"The campaign is to educate people about the lies being spread by the Congress and other parties on the CAA. We have even launched a number, 8866288662, to which people can give a missed call

to express their support for the Act," the Union Minister said. Asked whether the government would provide citizenship to Shias and Ahmedis being persecuted in some countries, he said: "If they seek citizenship, we will certainly consider on a case-tocase basis."

'Fear psychosis'

Mr. Singh pointed out that the number of minorities in Pakistan after Partition in 1947 had come down from a little over 19% to 1.9% due to persecution and coercion.

"Do not to go by the fear psychosis being created by the Congress and other Opposition parties," he said, appealing to minorities.

BJP National Executive member K. Haribabu, city president M. Ravindra Reddy, former MLA P. Vishnu Kumar Raju, spokesperson Suhasini Anand and State vice-president Kasi Viswanath Raju were present.

Rijiju begins campaign in Kerala

Minister speaks to Archbishop, Muslims on CAA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday launched a campaign in Kerala to stave off mounting criticism that the recently enacted Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) was patently anti-Muslim.

Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju had arrived in the State with a mission to assuage the fears of the minorities about the law. Kerala had emerged as a hotbed of anti-CAA protests and the Assembly had recently passed a near-unanimous re-

solution seeking its repeal.

Mr. Rijiju met Thiruvananthapuram Archbishop (Latin rite) Soosa Pakiam M., writer George Onakkoor, leading Muslim businesspersons and other opinion leaders as part of the BJP's nationwide campaign to dampen the anti-CAA protests.

'People in fear'

The Archbishop reportedly told Mr. Rijiju that the Centre was speaking in different voices on the CAA. The legislation had caused a grave sense of insecurity among minorities. The people feared that the CAA, when implemented along with the National Register of Citizens (NRC) would render lakhs Stateless.



Kiren Riiiiu

By depriving naturalised Muslim refugees and migrants the chance to acquire citizenship, the Centre had introduced a clause that empowered the law to discriminate against persons based on their religion. It had set off a ripple of fear among

other minority communities that they could become the target of similar discriminatory Parliamentary legislation in the future, the Archbishop said.

Mr. Onakoor reportedly told Mr. Rijiju that it was incumbent on the Centre to mitigate the fear the CAA had caused in minorities.

Mr. Rijiju told newspersons later that the law was not anti-Muslim. India had accorded citizenship to Pakistanis, including singer Adnan Sami. He said certain people had reservations about the CAA. They felt the Centre had not been able to convince a section of society. "If they are not convinced yet, then we are here to convince them." he added.

Yediyurappa visits houses with brochure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa on Sunday launched the BJP's door-to-door campaign in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 by visiting 10 houses, including those belonging to Muslims, in Bengaluru city.

"The CAA will not affect the interests of minorities. The Opposition parties are unnecessarily undertaking a false propaganda against it. Do not be misled," the CM told the residents.

Later, he told reporters that the Opposition should give examples with documents if minorities had been genuinely affected by the CAA. Claiming that there was no *mala fide* intent behind the CAA, he said the main intention of the campaign was to create awareness that the CAA would not affect minorities, as being alleged by the Opposition parties.

BJP leaders and party workers would visit three crore houses in the country, including 30 lakh in the State, under the campaign, he said. He distributed pamphlets with details on the CAA to houses during his visit.

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister C.N. Ashwath Narayan visited the houses of several prominent personalities, including that of Jnanpith Award winning writer Chandrashekar Kambar, and handed over pamphlets related to the CAA. Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi also visited the houses of several dignitaries.

UPSC to conduct separate exam for Railway Service

Part of overall restructuring of Dept.

V. GEETANATH HYDERABAD

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) will conduct an exclusive examination for recruitment of officers to handle specialised services in the newly created Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS) following unification of eight different Railway services. The exam is expected to be held in the next recruitment circle of 2021.

Top sources in the Indian Railways stated that the UPSC will be given information about the requirement of cadre in various wings for the services, engineering etc. and the number of posts will be notified accordingly.

"For instance, we could convey to the UPSC that we need 200 officers with 20 each engineers in civil, electrical, mechanical/stores and electronics, and the fifth will be for general service for traffic, accounts and personnel wings. Candidates from engineering will have to take the main examination on their specialised domain course and not any other subject," sources said.

Reasons behind move

The objective behind the "historic" massive restructuring of the management of the Indian Railways is to remove the "departmentalism" culture which has seeped all the way up to the Railway Board and ensure there is "one service and officers from one batch should get promotion in on go" and not as has been happening thus far.

Chairman, Railway Board, Vinod Kumar Yadav, having just received a year's exten-



Vinod Kumar Yadav

sion, has asserted that the 350-odd officers joining the Railway service annually will all have an equal opportunity of reaching the top posts of Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) and above, including General Managers, as well as to the Railway Board.

New benchmarks

"Till now, only those chosen to become 34 DRMs each year based on their UPSC marks and date of birth had opportunity to reach higher posts, with the rest not even evaluated.

For the IRMS, we will benchmark performance and personal integrity for all those joining service based on their 15-year tenure by a group of three senior officers," he explained.

The CRB has already clarified that existing officers would not be discriminated against in terms of promotions or posts as a Group of Ministers would be looking into the issue to make necessary adjustments even in creating new posts to accommodate performers.

Residents of Maradu to be moved to two rehab centres

Holy Faith and Alfa Serene will be demolished first

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Two temporary rehabilitation centres will be opened at Sacred Heart College, Thevara, and Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies, Panangad, to house local residents of Maradu when the four illegally built apartments will be demolished on January 11 and 12.

The Maradu municipality has asked local residents to move to the rehabilitation centres before 9 a.m. on the days of the blast as a precautionary measure.

The apartments H2O Holy Faith and Alfa Serene will be demolished on January 11 from 11 a.m. The original schedule was to trigger the first implosion by 11.30 a.m.

The district administration has marked 200-metre areas from the boundary of these buildings as exclusion



A resident of a locality near the Alfa Serene apartment in Maradu moving household items. •H. VIBHU

zones. The notification marking the exclusion zone will be in force from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. In case of Jain Coral Cove, the notification will be in force from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on January 12.

Prohibitory orders will be imposed in the region under Section 144 of the Cr.PC. Wa-

terbodies around the flats will also come under the exclusion zone and hence entry into the area will be banned. Entry into exclusive zone and unauthorised parking in the region will be treated as illegal acts.

No-fly zone

The entire exclusive zone has been marked as no-fly zone and unauthorised operation of drones has been banned.

The police have drawn up a contingency plan for the demolition. Vehicular movement along major roads would be stopped for 10 minutes during the blast, said District Police Chief (Kochi City) Vijay Sakhare. Side roads in the exclusion zone will also remain out of

bounds during the time.

Around 500 police personnel will be deployed.

Art and life



Visitors at a stall at Chitra Santhe 2020, an art fair conducted by the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath on Kumara Krupa Road in Bengaluru on Sunday. Paintings of over 1,500 artists from across the country were displayed at the 17th edition of the fair, which was dedicated to farmers. • K. MURALI KUMAR

Kothi Raj' set to go high for biopic climax

He will climb the rock face along Venezuela's Angel Falls, the world's highest waterfalls

S. BHUVANESHWARI

Rock climber Jyothi Raj, often called 'Kothi Raj' for his amazing prowess of climbing rock faces, fort walls or tall buildings with his bare hands, is now set to scale new heights.

He plans to climb the rock face along Angel Falls, the world's highest waterfalls in Venezuela, in one go. This will constitute the climax of his biopic *Incredible Monkey Man*, which will be released worldwide this year. The movie is produced and directed by the Sydneybased Stanley Joseph, who is a native of Bengaluru. The shooting for *Incredible*



Rock climber Jyothi Raj climbing the Chitradurga Fort in Karnataka. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Monkey Man will take place in Chitradurga, Shivamogga, Bengaluru, and Venezuela.

The climax will be shot on February 26 or 27, and Mr. Raj is undergoing special training from an international climber, Praveen C.M., for it. Mr. Raj says two persons, as a team, have successfully climbed Angel Falls, and they took three days to do it. "I will make India and Karnataka proud by climbing Angel Falls," Mr. Raj said. Mr. Joseph said all

Mr. Joseph said all precautions would be taken for the climb.

Mr. Raj, a native of Theni village in Madurai of Tamil Nadu, was separated from his parents at a fair at the age of three and was brought up by a couple from Bagalkot.

The couple then moved

to Chitradurga, where Mr. Raj worked as a construction labourer. He was 18 when he first climbed the Chitradurga Fort. He earns ₹3,000 to ₹4,000 on weekends from tourists who want to see him climbing the fort. He also trains children in rock climbing.

SBI asks Telangana to pay dues in food credit account

Bank says these accounts are subject to NPA norms

na government.

M. RAJEEV HYDERABAD

The stalemate over the division of food credit advances from the State Bank of India by the Civil Supplies Corporations of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, has resulted in the bank asking the Telangana government to liquidate its outstanding dues with immediate effect.

The SBI, which holds the food credit accounts of the two States, said these accounts are subject to the NPA (non-performing assets) norms of the RBI and liable to be classified as NPA if they remained irregular or overdue for more than 90 days. "While the interest in res-

pect of these accounts is being serviced, it is observed that the position of stocks and outstanding is running almost static for the past few years. The position revealed is not satisfactory as the account is overdue for liquidation now," the SBI said in a letter addressed to Telanga-

The Andhra Pradesh government had informed the bank that the apportioned amount due from it has been liquidated.

"As the outstanding in this account pertains to the share of Telangana State Civil Supplies Corporation as per the internal adjustment between the two corpora-

count need to be prioritised," the letter said.

tions, liquidation of this ac-

Future hurdlesThe food credit ac

The food credit accounts are to be liquidated before availing fresh loan for the subsequent season.

The tussle over the ownership of the food credit account has continued since the bifurcation of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh without any favourable resolution.

The delay in resolution was against the credit discipline and would also affect the State's future prospect of raising funds through market as any default may pose hurdles later.

Boston Consulting Group's Wiki page defaced

THARUN BODA

The Wikipedia page of U.S.-based global management consulting firm, Boston Consulting Group (BCG), has been reportedly defaced by users in an apparent attempt to spread misinformation about the company's credentials.

This came after BCG India representatives submitted their report 'Strengthening Andhra Pradesh through balanced and inclusive growth' to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on January 3 in line with the State's idea of three capitals for decentralised development. The edits have now been reverted by Wikipedia volunteers, but the edited content is being spread on social media platforms.

The company's page, which is open for users to "update" and "improve", had been edited at least 12 times on Friday and Saturday. Initially, an unidentified user changed the name of the company to 'Boston Buffoon Consulting Group', and added the names of Mr. Reddy and V. Vijaya Sai Reddy as founders of the 57-year-old company alongside its founder Bruce Henderson.

The text "Jagan Mohan Reddy has 50 per cent share in Boston Consulting Group" had been added to the Company Description section on the page. Though the current version of the page does not show the edits, the older versions available under the "view history" section reveal the changes.

"Wikipedia seriously needs to protect the community standards. It has become a tool for such misinformation," said Brahma, a Twitter user who posted the changes made to the BCG page.

M K



Police inspect Lalu's ward at hospital

A team of senior police officers on Sunday inspected the ward where jailed Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad is undergoing treatment at the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences "It was a general inspection." said an officer. PTI

Navy kicks off 'Maha-Navy Connect'

The Navy on Sunday launched a first-ever threedimensional expedition to promote the heritage of India and spread awareness on coastal security among the sea-side communities in Maharashtra, said an official spokesperson. The expedition extends from Arnala Fort, the northernmost fort in Palghar district, built by the then Portuguese rulers, to Sindhudurg Fort.

Police officer charged with sexual harassment

An IPS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, Gaurav Upadhyay, who is currently posted as SP in Karbi Anglong district, was charged with sexually assaulting a minor girl on December 31. A case was filed against him under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act on Friday, at Guwahati's all women's police station.

Puducherry CM 'quashes' **Governor Bedi's order**

PUDUCHERRY Puducherry Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy has issued an order declaring as "illegal" and "null and void" an order of Lieutenant Governor Kiran Bedi annulling the appointment of State **Election Commissioner T.M.** Balakrishnan. He also directed Chief Secretary Ashwani Kumar to ignore Ms. Bedi's earlier order.

NAL wants govt. push for Saras takeoff

It says Centre should buy at least 50-60 Saras Mk2 aircraft to make production commercially viable

SOBHANA K. NAIR NEW DELHI

The government needs to be the "launch customer" to make Saras Mk2 commercially viable, the National Aerospace Laboratory (NAL), which has developed the first indigenous light transport aircraft, told the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science Technology.

The 19-seater aircraft, developed with a target cost of ₹50 crore, is at least 20-25% lower in cost than other aircraft in the similar category.

The aircraft has been in the making for long. The first prototype flew in 2004. But without the initial push from the government, the manufacturing capacity required for commercial production could not be set up, the NAL

On a five-day tour of ISRO



Taking wing: A Saras aircraft participating in the biennial AERO India show in February 2019. The 19-seater Mk2 will be the first indigenous light transport aircraft. • FILE РНОТО

facilities from December 25 to 30, the committee members visited the NAL on December 28 and were briefed about the aircraft. Later, NAL Director Jitendra J. Jadhav sent a report on the plan for commercial production. Committee chairperson and

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh forwarded the report Mr. Naidu. to Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu.

"Our job is to study and recommend. We cannot and should not step into the domain of the executive," Mr. Ramesh said, explaining why

he forwarded the report to

Presently, the NAL has only one order from the Indian Air Force for 15 aircraft.

Connectivity plans The NAL has been pitching Saras Mk-2 for the governAam Nagrik), since it has the capacity to operate in "illequipped", "semi-prepared" and "unpaved airstrips". The scheme, launched in October 2016, is aimed at linking areas that have no air connectivity.

The NAL has said in its report to Mr. Ramesh that the government should be the "launch customer", and place an order for at least 50-60 aircraft, which can be used for VIP services or tackling emergencies in times of natural calamities.

"With the firm commitment for procurement from the government, industries will come forward to set up manufacturing infrastructure. This will also push the growth of the micro, small and medium enterprises and allied service sector," Mr. Jadhav said in his report.

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rain/snow likely in isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir: heavy rain likely at isolated places over south Tamil Nadu. Thunderstorm accompanied with hail and lightning likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh. Uttarkhand, Punjab, Haryana Chandigarh, Delhi and east Rajasthan.

.111	KAIN	IVIAA	IVITIN		CITY	KAIN	IVIAA	IVITIN
gartala		23.0	13.0		Kozhikode		.34.0	25.0
hmedabad		25.0	12.0		Kurnool		.33.0	22.0
izawl		–	–		Lucknow		.21.0	11.0
llahabad		18.0	10.0		Madurai		.34.0	23.0
Bengaluru		31.0	19.0		Mangaluru		.32.0	20.0
Shopal		20.0	13.0		Mumbai		.30.0	16.0
hubaneswar		26.0	13.0		Mysuru		.32.0	18.0
handigarh		18.0	6.0		New Delhi		.21.0	7.0
hennai		32.0	25.0		Patna		.18.0	13.0
oimbatore		33.0	23.0		Port Blair		.31.0	26.0
ehradun	8.8	19.0	4.0		Puducherry		.31.0	23.0
angtok	3.3	8.0	4.0		Pune		.26.0	12.0
ioa		30.0	19.0		Raipur	0.5	.24.0	15.0
iuwahati		–	–		Ranchi		.20.0	9.0
łubballi		29.0	17.0		Shillong			–
lyderabad		–	–		Shimla	6.4	.10.0	1.0
mphal		–	–		Srinagar			–
aipur		21.0	10.0		Thiruvananthapuram	71.6	.32.0	25.0
Cochi		33.0	26.0		Tiruchi		.33.0	25.0
Cohima		–	–		Vijayawada		.27.0	22.0
Colkata		21.0	13.0		Visakhapatnam		.27.0	21.0
				_				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

...97 Delhi 206 80 ..395 .336 Hyderabad3 .66 44 ..166 .126

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI) **SO2:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by

reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters. CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

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

Army to sign MoU for 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles

They will be manufactured by an Indo-Russian joint venture

The Army is likely to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in a month for the procurement of over 7.5 lakh AK-203 assault rifles, which are to be manufactured locally by an India-Russia joint venture (JV), a Defence source said. The Defence Ministry has already floated a Request For Proposal for the supply of 6.71 lakh

"About 1 lakh rifles will come directly from Russia and the remaining will be manufactured by the JV in India. The MoU should be



About 1 lakh rifles will be manufactured in Russia and the remaining in India.

signed in a month," an offi-

The rifles will be manufactured by the Indo-Russian

(IRRPL) at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh. The facility is being set up by the Ordnance Factories Board from the Indian side, and Rosoboron Exports and Kalashnikov on the Russian side.

Major General Sanjeev Senger as the Chief Executive Officer of IRRPL. In addition to the AK-203,

The Army has appointed

the Army recently began inducting the first batch of 10,000 SIG-716 assault rifles.

The force has been looking to replace the indigenous INSAS rifles, which are currently in use, with modern

CIC website inaccessible again outside India

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

While the website of the Central Information Commission (CIC) has been inaccessible in many countries since the beginning of the year, Chief Information Commissioner Sudhir Bhargava says there has been no policy decision to block the website outside India.

The CIC website, cic.gov.in, offers facilities to file appeals online, as well as a database of all appeals and

On Sunday, Indian citizens living in the United States, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Vietnam told The Hindu they could not access the site. RTI activist Commodore Lokesh Batra (retd),

officials as well as National Informatics Centre (NIC). . However, Mr Bhargava told The Hindu, "It is just a glitch," adding that no specific decision has been taken to make the website inacces-

currently in the U.S., said he

had been unable to access

the site when trying to file

an appeal on New Year's

Day, and had informed CIC

Commodore Batra says after a similar instance in August 2018, he had filed an RTI request seeking the reasons behind the denial.

sible outside India.

The response had merely said: "Due to some unknown technical error, the access to the CIC website through some of the channels was not available."

I-T Dept. notifies new forms for filing income tax returns

Joint owner of house cannot avail ITR-1, ITR-4 forms

The government, which usually notifies forms for filing returns by individuals in April every year, on January 3 notified tax return forms for assessment year 2020-21 (income earning year April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020).

As per the notification, returns in ITR-1 Sahaj can be filed by an ordinary resident individual whose total income does not exceed ₹50 lakh, while form ITR-4 Sugam is meant for resident individuals, HUFs and firms (other than LLP) having a total income of up to ₹50 lakh and having presumptive income from business and profession.



The forms for filing returns are usually notified in April every year.

According to the notification, in two significant changes, an individual taxpayer cannot file return either in ITR-1 or ITR-4 if he is a joint-owner in house property, and the ITR-1 form is not valid for those indivilakh or ₹1 lakh on foreign travel or electricity respective-Such taxpayers will have to use different forms, which will be notified in due

duals who have deposited

more than ti crore in bank

account or have incurred ₹2

course. An individual who "owns a house property in joint ownership with two or more persons" is required to fur-

nish a return of income, the notification said. "... A taxpayer, who is required to file the return be-

fore the previous year ends, cannot do so until the return filing facility is activated on the e-filing portal," said Naveen Wadhwa of Taxmann.

+ Investors wary of uncertain tax administration in India' Association flags existence of multiple tax regimes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Uncertainty in tax administration is one of the key threats to private investments in the country, the Indian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association said in a presentation made a Parliamentary panel on Finance on Friday. The presentation ac-

cessed by The Hindu lists five major threats to private investors in the country. The first is "increased frictional costs on capital mobility, including dividend distribution tax, buy-back tax and so on, which diminishes returns prospects," the association noted. A similar demand was recently made by



Ease of Doing Business across the world in 2019.

Association of National Exchanges Members of India.

The second point raised by the association is "uncertainity in tax administration". The association told the members that there are multiple tax regimes within a single structure.

The group also pointed out that there is a "perception of India being unfriendly to foreign investors." While the government is busy patting its back for better "ease of doing business" rating, there is an "increasing risk perception about doing business in India", the group

India was on the 63rd rank in World Bank's list of countries rated on ease of doing business in 2019.

Finally, the association said that a slow down in growth has reduced opportunities. As per the latest data the GDP growth is down to 4.5%, a 26-quarter low.

One dead in Bengal station collapse

Another injured has suffered a fracture

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

One of the two persons injured in a partial collapse of the Bardhaman railway station building in West Bengal succumbed to his injuries early on Sunday, said Swapan Debnath, Minister in the State Cabinet.

He said that the man, who suffered serious injuries when a chunk of concrete fell on his head, could not be saved despite efforts by doctors of the Bardhaman Medical College Hospital.

A portion of the roof of the two-storey station building collapsed near the enquiry counter on Saturday evening.

The other injured person, who suffered a frac-



collapsed near the enquiry counter on Saturday.

ture in one of his legs, is being treated at the Staterun hospital, where Railway doctors had also rushed on Saturday evening to provide necessary assistance, an Eastern Railway spokesperson

Centre bats for science outreach programmes

It moots Scientific Social Responsibility

STAFF REPORTER

Importance of communication and outreach programmes was on the agenda on the third day of the 107th Indian Science Congress here on Sunday.

Akhilesh Gupta, adviser and head, Climate Change Programme, Department of Science and Technology,

funded by any of the Ministries under the Central government will have to unactivities to dertake popularise science and make it more accessible to

the public. Gupta said they would draw

could be taken up under the Scientific Social Responsibility programme, that was similar to Corporate Social Responsibility. Part of outcome report

up a list of activities which

"This could range from going to colleges delivering lectures, writing an article in a magazine or doing something beyond the curriculum," he said. The science outreach

would be mandatory and researchers had to include this as part of their outcome report, he added Mr. Gupta said the move

would not only bridge the gap between research institutes and the civilians, but also help scientists hone their communication skills.

"It will be implemented this year after a consultation meeting with all stakeholders," Mr. Gupta added.

Women scientists seek conducive workplaces

They want childcare facilities and safer laboratories

STAFF REPORTER

Better childcare facilities, safer laboratories and more funding for research projects were some of the issues that women scientists and researchers batted for to make the work environment more conducive.

Several scientists spoke to *The Hindu*, on the sidelines of the Women's Science Congress, as part of the Indian Science Congress, about how institutions and the government can ensure that not only more women choose science, but they remain in their field instead of dropping out.

Shyamala Subba Reddy, Department of Horticulture, Professor, University of Agricultural Sciences, said: "There is a need for more supportive system on cam-



the Women's Science Congress on Sunday.

• SUDHAKARA JAIN

puses for young women. Having child care facilities and creches will make a significant difference in ensuring that more women rescience and research." Surekha Ramrao Gaik-

home science at SSSP Col-

getting approvals.

to play in the way our society inculcates women's aspirations, said Trilochan Mohapatra, Director-General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, at the inauguration of the Congress. Tessy Thomas, Director-

Men also have a huge role

wad, Associate Professor of General of Aeronautical Syslege, Parbhani, spoke about tems, Defence Research and the bureaucracy involved in Development Organisation, was present at the event.



MYSURU - 570 020, INDIA

Advt. No. Rec.: 119/2019

RECRUITMENT OF SCIENTIFIC POSITIONS Date of Commencement of Online Applications: 08.01.2020 (Wednesday) at 10:00 AM

Closing Date for Online Submission of Applications: 06.02.2020 (Thursday) at 05:00 PM CSIR-Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysuru, a constituent laboratory of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ministry of S&T and Earth Sciences, Govt. of India, invites online applications from Indian citizens who are bright highly motivated, enthusiastic and qualified Researchers / Professionals in order to contribute towards Nation's development by pursuing in-depth R&D in the diverse areas of Food Science & Technology to fill up the following scientific positions:

Designation	No. of Vacancies & Reservation	Pay Scale	**Age Limit
Scientist	25 [UR-11*, EWS-2, OBC(NCL)-6*, SC-4, ST-2] *{includes 1 post reserved for PwBD (OH)}	Level-11 (₹ 67,700-2,08,700)	32 Years
Senior Scientist	3 [UR-03]	Level-12 (₹ 78,800-2,09,200)	37 Years
Principal Scientist	3 [UR-03]	Level-13 (₹ 1,23,100- 2,15,900)	45 Years

*Upper age limit as on the last date of online application.

For detailed advertisement and other information on online application, the interested eligible candidates may please visit official CFTRI website *https://www.cftri.res.in* under Recruitments or https://www.recruitment.cftri.res.in All further announcements / details pertaining to this process / updates / corrigendum / addendum etc., will be published / provided only on CFTRI official website https://www.cftri.res.in from time to

Administrative Officer

spoke about the Centre's policy on implementing scientific social responsibili-Under the programme, researchers who are working on a science project

Speaking at the Science Communicators' Meet, Mr.

Life of science

The Science Congress needs new ideas, and not a mix of myth and pseudoscience

The Indian Science Congress (ISC) – its 107th edition is under way in Bengaluru – has served as a reminder of the status accorded to science and technology in the early years of the Indian republic. Though the formation of the congress pre-dates the Indian republic, it was the intellectual nursery of modern science in the country. Early ideas of how science and technology could aid the development of the new nation were incubated at this coming together of scientists. It is for this reason that the congress, normally held in the first week of January, is inaugurated by the Prime Minister. The years since have seen the nature of the congress change: from one where scientists, in the era of postal communication, congregated to exchange scientific ideas to one today where it has become a 'science mela'. The prime purpose of the ISC now is to draw school and science college students to hear Nobel Laureates and Indian-origin scientists from abroad to lecture about their work and the future prospects of science. The other draws are science projects and innovations by schoolchildren and stalls showcasing scientific work being done in key national laboratories and

But there is an unmistakable decay, a choreographed ennui, that has set in. In recent years, the congress often makes news for becoming a forum for pseudoscience and less for interesting scientific ideas or demonstrations. Speakers - some holding distinguished positions in leading universities – have tended to mix mythology and science and publicise far-fetched assertions: that the Kauravas were born from stem-cell technology and the Vedas discussed avionics. While this has eroded the congress's public image, the government itself does not seem too keen to vitalise it. The exhibits at several scientific laboratories are re-runs from old congresses, or from similar and past science fairs. Many laboratories showcase their work as 'posters' rather than actually showing demonstrations or working inventions. Several luminaries of India's science establishments - the Principal Scientific Adviser, secretaries from several ministries, the chiefs of major organisations such as ISRO or the Department of Atomic Energy, who have been fixtures, or have at least had their organisation present a dedicated talk or session, were absent this year. It is inevitable that traditions change over time and the relative importance accorded to institutions wax and wane. However this must make way for inspiring new ideas, or new models of taking science to the public. A rising trend in science displays, at museums or exhibitions in many places, is to mix science and art as well as make interactive displays that encourage audience engagement. A rebirth, and not a creeping requiem, is what the congress needs.

Least surprise

The DMK remains the front runner in Tamil Nadu, but the AIADMK is fast catching up

The only surprise in the December 2019 elections to rural local bodies in Tamil Nadu was that there was no surprise. Held after eight years, the polls, which were due in October 2016, were relatively peaceful, with around 77% of voters – nearly two crore people – exercising their franchise in 27 of 36 districts to elect their representatives for village panchayats, panchayat unions and district panchayats. The results reaffirmed that much of the State's political space continues to remain with the DMK and the ruling AIADMK. Some churn was thought possible in the light of the debate on the perceived vacuum in political leadership in the State. The DMK-led front - it won 38 of the 39 Lok Sabha seats last year - has retained its lead over its arch rival with a higher tally of wards in panchayat unions and district panchayats, the elections to which are on political lines. However, the fact that the AIADMK, an important ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party, has been able to bridge some of the gap with the DMK was also in keeping with the results in the Assembly by-elections in October last. Clearly, both parties have reasons to believe that their prospects in the 2021 Assembly polls are good. Though the ruling party appears to have regained much of its support base lost during the parliamentary polls – this being the first State-wide electoral contest in the last seven months – the reality that it finished behind its key adversary in the overall tally of the local bodies' wards is a situation that will not be to the liking of its leadership; the perception is that the AIADMK is traditionally stronger in the rural areas. Finally, political mobilisation against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, is believed to be a factor that influenced voters against the ruling party.

The State Election Commission (SEC), which conducted itself reasonably well with new measures such as the use of flying squads and closed circuit television sets, should stick to its plan of holding the polls to urban local bodies including the Greater Chennai Corporation and abide by the Supreme Court's direction of completing the poll process for rural local bodies in the remaining nine districts within three months. It should note that the reason behind the Court granting more time is for carrying out fresh delimitation of wards in five new districts. The panel should also ensure that the poll process is always fair and credible. It would be in the fitness of things for the State government to assist the SEC in ensuring the early completion of the next round of polls. Any delay will not reflect well on the SEC and the ruling party. For the AIADMK, it will be an occasion for course correction. For the DMK, the message is that it cannot be complacent. It is the front runner, but the AIADMK is regaining momentum.

Scoring a foreign policy self-goal

The government's political expediency over the Citizenship Act has landed India in an unenviable diplomatic spot today



HAPPYMON JACOB

The frightening fall of a great nation has begun. Once a leading light of inclusiveness, democracy, and a major pole of stability in the comity of nations, despite occasional failings, India today is embarrassingly at the centre of attention for bad behaviour. While the present government's decisions on Jammu and Kashmir put the spotlight on New Delhi, the recently legislated Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, or CAA, 2019 pushed it over the edge. Not only has the Act deeply divided a communally sensitive country, its effect is bound to have long-term implications for India's foreign policy. India's global standing is ever more vulnerable today, and the chinks in India's diplomatic armour have never been so evi-

The essence of the CAA

But before we weigh the foreign policy implications, let us understand the CAA for what it really is. Shorn of the deliberate confusion and politically-convenient rhetoric, the CAA is neither about refugees nor about illegal immigrants, as the government would like to claim; it is about the Muslims in India. If you are an Indian Muslim with incontrovertible domicile documents, it is a message for you. If you do not have the requisite documents and you are Muslim, this is where you should be scared about your future.

Let us be clear: If the objective is to provide refuge to the persecuted, what we need is a proper refugee law with legally sound standard operating procedures on a par with global standards, and without discrimination. If it is about illegal immigration, the as-

sumption – when one reads the CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) together – that only Muslims can be illegal immigrants is a deeply problematic one.

Regional fallout

The present government's zealous pursuit of the CAA citing human rights violations in the neighbourhood and illegal immigration from it is a foreign policy self-goal. Clearly, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) could not have, if it were to derive domestic political utility from it, talked about illegal immigration to India without castigating Bangladesh, nor could it have pontificated about the human rights violations of non-Muslims in the region without pointing fingers at Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. It is such political expediency that has landed the government in an unenviable diplomatic spot today.

It would, however, be foolish of those of us who are outside the government to assume that the leadership did not foresee the negative fallout its policies and rhetoric on India's relations with two of its best friends in the region, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, at a time when it does not have many friends in the neighbourhood.

But that is not the point. That the BJP leadership would have, most likely, foreseen the serious loss of diplomatic capital with these countries and yet gone ahead with its anti-neighbour rhetoric given its domestic political utility is what makes it singularly worrying. Put differently: the political bosses of the Indian government decided to sacrifice the country's crucial foreign policy interests at the altar of domestic political contingencies.

This becomes a diplomatic double whammy given how India is already losing its traditional heft and influence in the region and at a time a China-led balance of power is emerging in the region. Once again, New Delhi is not unaware of it. On the contrary, South Block's



foreign policy mandarins are wary of the Chinese state's sure-footed engulfment of the neighbourhood. And yet, the political bosses have preferred domestic political gains over diplomatic benefits, relegating foreign policy to the whims of

electoral outcomes. That from a foreign policy point of view the CAA is short-sighted is obvious, and that it will adversely affect India's regional influence and standing is an unavoidable outcome; what is shocking is that the political leadership does not seem bothered by it. That is what should worry us.

Reputational costs

From Kashmir to the NRC to the CAA - one reckless action after another - New Delhi seems to have finally exhausted the goodwill of the international community. In December, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called the CAA "fundamentally discriminatory" - something unheard of in recent memory. Again in December, the United States, arguably India's best friend today, urged the country to "protect the rights of its religious minorities in keeping with India's Constitution and democratic values". The same month too, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) referred to CAA as not only "highly discriminatory and arbitrary" but also contrary to New Delhi's "obligations under international human rights laws".

New Delhi's attempts to reach out to the international community, albeit selectively, while assiduously avoiding those critical of its policies, have not met with much success. When India's External Affairs Minister pulled out of a meeting with senior members of the

U.S. Congress after U.S. lawmakers refused New Delhi's demands to exclude Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal – she has been critical of the Indian government's policies in Kashmir – the message that went out was that India is unable to justify its own policies. Or that it does not bother with what others think of it.

For a government that steadfastly shied away from internationalising domestic issues, its own actions have done precisely that thereby bringing lasting damage to the country's reputation. Now, one might ask as to why a state should worry about its reputation and whether it is not enough to use one's material power to achieve foreign policy outcomes. For one, the BJP has traditionally been more concerned about India's reputation, at least as a rhetorical plank, than anyone else. Second, India's traditional foreign policy pursuit has been a careful mix of soft power and material capability with the balance often tilting in favour of soft power. Finally, reputation, among other things, is critical in aiding India's quest for a place at the high table of international politics, such as acquiring a United Nations Securi-

ty Council (UNSC) seat. More so, status quo powers, as opposed to revisionist ones, are far more favoured by the international order. India was the region's quintessential status quo power that the world loved to engage and promote. This key characteristic of India may be undergoing a dramatic change, with many viewing India as a reckless power with revisionist ambitions – just as Pakistan has long been viewed.

Great power equations

India is a major power with great power ambitions and may even be an indispensable power in some respects. However, if India decides to shape its foreign policy based purely on domestic calculations, its indispensability and systemshaping abilities will take a serious

hit. A great power, among other things, is a state that is willing to live up to certain global expectations and has the ability and willingness to help with system main-

Great powers have traditionally been supportive of India's rise in the global order and have more or less stood by India in its pursuit of power and reputation. This is bound to change thanks to the government's domestic preoccupations. While the Trump White House may be indulgent towards New Delhi, at least for now, the patience of the Washington establishment is fast running out. If there is a Democratic government in Washington DC next year, things might get harder for New Delhi. Moscow's unequivocal support for New Delhi is now a thing of the past, and New Delhi's fall from grace suits Beijing more than

When was the last time we heard a mention of rising India? When was the last time someone 'seriously" argued that India should be part of the UNSC? Our sheen has come off and the world is beginning to see the ugly realities within.

Moreover, thanks to the heavy political fire-fighting that it needs to do on a daily basis on issues such as Kashmir, the NRC, and the CAA, much of New Delhi's diplomatic capital is spent on doing precisely that. Its focus on crucial regional and global issues seems to be waning fast. With little talk of renegotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, no appetite to be part of the Afghan peace process, and disinterest in the Indian Ocean's geopolitics, among others, the regime in New Delhi resembles a provincial capital today.

Meanwhile, the world is watching as we make a spectacle of our-

Happymon Jacob teaches national

Spotting an opportunity in changing fundamentals

Growing rivalry between the United States and China could spell a strategic moment for India



SUJAN R. CHINOY

The "Phase One" trade deal between the United States and China gives both sides a reprieve, especially since the U.S. stayed its hand in not imposing additional tariffs worth \$160-billion in mid-December. But the rift runs deep. Beyond trade, the chasm is growing. A technology war has erupted in the areas of artificial intelligence, digital space and 5G. Tensions have risen following the U.S.'s passing of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019 and the proposed Uighur

The slowdown in the global economy is compounded by the U.S.-China trade war. As more sectors get drawn in, costs are rising and disrupting global supply chains.

Energy concerns Slack demand for energy and surplus production mainly by the U.S. had lowered oil prices, which was good news for India, given its huge imports. Lower energy prices may help India address its current account deficit. It can also make India's export sector more competitive. But oil prices have surged more than 4% following the U.S. air strike killing Iranian General Qassem Soleimani, Commander of the Oods Force. An outbreak of hostilities would send oil prices soaring. Unlike India, China continues to buy Iranian crude oil and

is its largest buyer. Reports suggest that China will invest \$280-billion in developing Iran's oil, gas and petrochemicals sectors and even station Chinese security personnel to guard Chinese projects. Dependence on China prevents Iran from criticising China on its policies in Xinjiang. In tensions with the U.S., of pork due to an outbreak of Iran sees in China a sympathiser.

India's ramped up energy imports from the U.S. are likely to touch \$10-billion in 2019-2020. Meanwhile, China's interest in Saudi Aramco's initial public offering and interest in weakening the dollar in the global energy market has grown. It is forging closer ties with oil producers that are in the U.S.'s cross hairs on human rights and governance issues. This facilitates its naval presence in the western Indian Ocean, including the Strait of Hormuz.

On trade

According to a State Bank of India "Ecowrap" report of July 2019, India has scarcely benefited from U.S.-China trade. Of the \$35-billion dip in China's exports to the U.S. market in the first half of 2019, about \$21-billion (or 62%) was diverted to other countries. The rest, \$14-billion, was made good largely by the U.S. producers. Going by a UN Conference on Trade and Development report of November 2019, additional exports from India to the U.S. market in the first half of the year due to trade diversion amounted to only \$755-million. U.S. tariffs on China seem to have made some other players such as Taiwan, Mexico, Vietnam and the European Union even more competitive.

China is facing a great shortage



swine flu but India's meat exports. primarily buffalo meat, reach China indirectly through Vietnam and the Philippines, adding to costs and reducing market share. Besides, India's pork exports are meagre. China's ambitious thrust on artificial intelligence, robotics, autonomous vehicles and space technologies has goaded the Donald Trump administration into action. With tensions rising after the blacklisting of Huawei Technologies by the U.S., the spectre of a high-tech war looms large.

The big three Chinese high-tech companies, Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent, together poured in \$5-billion in Indian startups in 2018. India could use this opportunity to try and force China to pry open its market to India's IT and other tech exports. The U.S.-China high-tech war threatens India's strategic autonomy. Yet India has decided to allow all network equipment makers, including Huawei, to participate in 5G spectrum trials. The outcome is far from clear.

As U.S.-China tensions drive supply chains out of China, India could emerge as an alternative destination with the right policies, as Vietnam has done.

Any impact on clean energy targets in China due to U.S. technology restrictions in the nuclear field could be a setback to efforts to reduce emissions and mitigate climate change in the entire region. Denial regimes often spur dom-

estic research and development and if the development of India's own missile programme during years of U.S. sanctions is anything to go by, China may yet succeed in riding out the storm on the technology front.

China claims that the U.S. is behind the disturbances in Hong Kong. There is no sign of the protests abating. If things turn uglier, India may have to cater to refugees of Indian origin.

Key regional issues

The situation in the South China Sea is weighted in favour of China given its fait accompli in occupying several man-made islands. India has no role in negotiating the "Code of Conduct" with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, though it is a participant in the "Quad" dialogue on broader issues in the Indo-Pacific. India reserves the right to sail and fly unhindered through the South China Sea in accordance with the principles of freedom of navigation and

On connectivity, the U.S.'s position is helpful to India. Recently, the U.S. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs Alice G. Wells criticised the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which traverses Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, as eventually worsening Islamabad's economic troubles. India is neither part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) nor the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. It is absent from the

Indo-Pacific Business Forum created by the U.S., Japan and Australia

A future challenge lies in India having to reconcile its own regional connectivity initiatives with the BRI projects that have mushroomed in the neighbourhood. In the ideological battlefield,

as also from the Blue Dot network.

China's economic success has emboldened it such that it challenges the liberal democracy model and offers an alternative developmental model based on its own system.

Overall, the military advances by China notwithstanding, U.S. defence spending far outstrips China's budget. Its nuclear arsenal dwarfs that of China. With the creation of a U.S. Space Force as a separate arm under the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. will seek to increase its superiority in networkcentric warfare. As China's anxieties in the Asia-Pacific theatre grow, India may yet have to contend with a greater Chinese military presence on its periphery. The Western Theater Command created in 2016 is responsible for the border with India. It is the largest of China's military regions, and the Tibet Military Command under it has been accorded a higher status than other provincial commands to widen its scope for combat preparedness.

U.S.-China rivalry coincides with an upward trajectory in India-U.S. relations. This is important for equilibrium and multi-polarity in Asia, even as India and China try and build much-needed trust and cooperation.

Sujan R. Chinoy, a China-specialist and former Ambassador to Japan, is currently Director General of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi. The views expressed are personal

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

Nankana incident

While all right thinking people should condemn the attack on Nankana Sahib, it is quite amusing that political parties are using the incident to gain media attention. It is not surprising that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was quick to connect the incident with the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA). The ruling party saw the incident as a godsend and used it target those agitating against the CAA. Ideally, the

government should have asked the High Commissioner to visit the shrine and submit a report ("Amid fury over Nankana Sahib attack, BJP uses it to justify CAA," January 5). N. NAGARAJAN,

Modifying the CAA

The Central government can modify the wordings of the CAA, stating in general that all persecuted religious minorities from the three countries would get citizenship, and delete the

names of individual religions from the Act. The exclusion of Muslims from the provisions of the act has given rise to the protests. Notwithstanding its absolute majority, the BJP should have been alive to the sensitivity of the issue while drafting the Bill. V. RAGHAVAN,

A whimsical act

While the world grapples with the aftermath of a seemingly whimsical act by the U.S. in killing the

commander of another sovereign nation, it is easy to be pulled into unwanted situations, as far as India is concerned. The attempt by U.S. President Donald Trump to invoke India is one such situation which needs to be handled with great caution and adroit diplomacy. Statements by Mr. Trump blaming the slain commander for "terrorist acts and plots"

sound shallow without adequate proof. One sincerely hopes our diplomats know how to

steer clear of the baits and pitfalls arising out of the situation. Traditionally, India and Iran have had a long history of love-hate relationship and the present situation could also lead to a new low. It would be wise for both nations to keep their heads still. YOGANANDH T., Salem, Tamil Nadu

■ The U.S.'s misadventure can prove to be another strategic misstep by Washington in affairs of West Asia. This is nothing short of

declaring war on Iran. In the times of a global economic slowdown, the mindless act of the big brother would lead the world community to the brink by affecting the supply and price of hydrocarbon fuels. The slain commander was instrumental in fighting against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. A strong retaliation from Iran is in offing. India too would have

to bear the brunt.

D.V.G. SANKARARAO,

Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh

Safeguarding the idea of India

The nation's current social and political predicament poses an existential challenge



Ominous clouds have gathered over India, casting shadows of divisiveness and hate, threatening to undermine civil society and halt or even reverse economic progress. There is today a risk of going over a precipice beyond which there may not be a

As the new decade dawned, the two of us decided to get together to write not on problems of economic theory or some immediate policy challenge, as we did in the past, but on the nation's social and political predicament, which poses an existential challenge. We have known each other for decades, and grown up in an India that was imperfect but seemed to possess an ideal of togetherness that created hope. We come from different backgrounds. One of us (as the reader may have guessed) is Bengali, one Punjabi; one of us is Hindu, one Sikh. What is common between us is a concern for human well-being and a belief in the fundamental importance of empathy, tolerance and compassion; the need to treat all human beings as equal; and to reach out to anybody in need - irrespective of religion, gender, and caste. We believe that judgments concerning what is morally good or fair must not depend on who is making the judgment or his or her religion or race. These are principles emphasised in the writings of John Rawls and go back to the Enlightenment philosophers. These are also principles that can be found in the writings of philosophers and religious thinkers on the Indian subcontinent. These are the moorings of the very idea of India.

India's composite culture

This is the time to remember the spirit of Guru Nanak, which led Guru Arjan to write, "No one is my enemy, no one is a stranger, I am connected with all," and Guru Gobind Singh to insist, "Recognise all of humanity as one." This is the time to remember Rabindranath Tagore's resonant verse: "Come Aryans, come non-Aryans, Hindus and Mussalmans/



Delhi, on August 15, 1947. Since Independence, the country has stood out as a beacon of hope, committed to democracy and secularism. • WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Come today, Englishmen, come Christians/ Come Brahmin, cleansing your mind/ Join hands with all."

It is the sharp erosion in these basic moral tenets in India that concerns us. India has had a turbulent history since its independence on that momentous midnight of August 1947. There have been dark times and events that we should all be ashamed of. Following the end of the Second World War, many new nations were born as peoples and lands shook off their colonial shackles and declared independence. These nations began with idealism, embracing democracy and equality, but military coups and religious captures felled the ideals of one nation after another. But India stood out as a beacon of hope, committed to democracy, freedom of speech and secularism. From the mid-1990s, it also began to see rapid economic growth.

There are still many challenges to contend with. There is poverty and discrimination, there is corruption and a growing environmental challenge, and there is pollution that, if left unchecked, will damage the cognitive powers of future generations. We have to attend to these urgently. The steady progress of the economy since the mid-1990s was raising hope that we would take on these challenges head on. The divisiveness being advocated has, however, caused a setback. This is affecting trust and cooperation in the nation. For example, the use of the state machinery in Uttar Pradesh to seek "revenge," and

to promote the ring-fencing of peo-

ple and silencing of voices is ethically

unacceptable and doing great dam-

Trust improves economy

age to India's standing globally.

What is not always appreciated, but for which there is a lot of evidence, is that societal trust and a sense of belonging improves economic outcomes, including growth. Economists Yann Algan and Pierre Cahuc have used rigorous statistical analysis to show that higher levels of trust can cause national income to increase dramatically: Africa, with Sweden's trust levels, would achieve six times its present per capita income. A recent study, published in Harvard Business Review, shows that if workers feel appreciated and have a sense of belonging to their company, they have a 56% higher job performance, there is a 50% drop in turnover risk, and a 75% reduction in sick days. "For a 10,000-person company, this would result in annual savings of more than \$52M". One has to extrapolate this to a nation to get a sense of how economically important this sense of belonging is.

Even before the turmoil of 2019, India's economy was already reeling, with industry, agriculture and exports all growing much slower than a decade earlier. But now, beyond the basic moral principles at stake, we argue that the promotion of hate and divisiveness is also hurting India's economy. We are at risk of a major downward spiral.

A call to reject partisanship

We must make this a moment to pause and ask ourselves what we as individuals must do. We write this to appeal not just to the young students, scientists and Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and Muslims who are already out there protesting against the doctrine of exclusion, but also to those who are preaching violence. We urge them to look into their own hearts, and drop their cudgels. We suggest to the police and functionaries of the state that to make people listen to and respect them, they must not just wield the baton, but also be bearers of ethical standards.

We take hope from the fact that so many students on our campuses understand this. We take hope from the fact that so many leading thinkers and scientists, unaffiliated to any political party, have begun to speak up. We take hope from the Sikhs who have refused to discriminate against other religious groups, from the Hindus who have stood with the Muslims and Christians to defend all minorities, to uphold India's commitment to democracy and secularism.

We are not suggesting that if we stand together and pull back from the brink of the precipice, all our challenges will disappear. India is a lower-middle income economy, with a great deal of injustice, unfairness and suffering that will not vanish in haste. Yet, if we resolve to reject the partisanship that is being preached and then strive to take on the many challenges, there can be hope, the hope of pulling back from the brink and building a society and an economy that will be exemplary for not just its own people but for the world.

Kaushik Basu, former chief economic adviser to the Government of India, is Professor of Economics at Cornell University; Nirvikar Singh is Professor of Economics at the University of California, Santa Cruz

Making hope possible, not despair convincing

If Faiz Ahmed Faiz can help restore democracy in Nepal, he can do so in India too



Is it possible to retain hope when charlatans dictate our terms of engagement with the world of the arts and ideas? This was the question I had to encounter during a documentary film festival in Chennai where I paraphrased the Welsh writer and academic Raymond Williams and said that the mission of journalism and documentaries "is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing".

The participants of the film festival were concerned about many things, but they were particularly agitated about the Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur's decision to form a panel to examine whether the poem, "Hum Dekhenge", by the celebrated poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz was indeed communal and hurt sentiments. This panel was formed after a temporary faculty member,

Vashimant Sharma, and 16 others complained against the students for reciting the poem in support of the students of Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi. If an exemplary artist of the stature of Faiz can be shoehorned into a narrow communal jacket, many tend to believe that despair is the reality of the moment.

However, when the media highlighted the absurdity of the complaint, the management was forced to retract its original position. Talking to this newspaper, the IIT's Deputy Director, Manindra Agrawal, said that the panel is not going to determine whether sentiments were hurt or not, but would only investigate if there was any "deliberate mischief". This climbdown in the present environment of impunity is a testimony to the power of journalism as a site of hope rather than as a megaphone of despair.

The power of Urdu

My linguistic skills are restricted to just two languages, English and Tamil. I have no knowledge of Urdu. But I was moved by the power of Urdu verses not once but twice in 2005. I was based in Kathmandu when Nepal was going through its worst political crisis, the royal coup. I watched as King Gyanendra dismissed the government and restored an absolute monarchy. He suspended the fundamental rights of Nepali citizens, including the freedom of opinion and expression, the freedom of the press and publications, the right to information, the right to constitutional remedy, and the right to property. Similar to what is happening in Kashmir now, a communication blackout was imposed across the country.

This did not deter senior journalists in Nepal from assembling at the Yalamaya Kendra in Patan to formulate ways and means to keep the public informed of what was happening

despite the draconian measures taken by the royalty. I was invited to join the deliberation and, unlike what is happening in India today, not seen as an alien poking his nose in the domestic affairs of a foreign country. Kanak Mani Dixit, a senior editor and regular contributor to this newspaper, invoked Faiz Ahmed Faiz in a moving manner. Armed with the brilliant multimedia production of Faiz's major poems by the Dawn group of publications, Mr. Dixit

rendered the poem "Bol (Speak)" and explained how Faiz made the blazing smithy a symbol of the freedom movement during colonial rule. Here is the English translation of the lines that moved me:

"Speak - your lips are free, Speak – your tongue is still yours Speak – your life is still yours Look inside the smithy -Leaping flames, red-hot iron. Padlocks open their jaws. Chains disintegrate. Speak - there is little time But it is enough Before the body perishes Before the tongue atrophies. Speak – truth still lives. Say what you have to say."

In a year when the resistance cascaded into what Nepalese political historians call the Jan Andolan-II, another brilliant poem of Faiz ,"Soldier's elegy", was used to create a space for reconciliation after a decade of civil war. If Faiz can help restore democracy in our neighbourhood, he can do so here too.

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Theatre of the absurd

It is ironical that a poem denouncing Islamic fundamentalism should be condemned as anti-Hindu

MOHAMMED AYOOB

IIT-Kanpur's decision to set up an investigation committee in response to complaints that the reading of Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poem, "Hum dekhenge (We are sure to witness)", at an anti-Citizenship Amedment Act rally on December 17 was an anti-national and anti-Hindu act is nothing short of a theatre of the absurd. The complaints registered by a temporary faculty member and 16 others demonstrate their ignorance of Urdu literary idiom, poetic metaphors, Faiz's political views, and, above all, the context in which the poem was written.

Against injustice

Faiz Ahmed Faiz (1911-1984) was arguably the greatest Urdu poet of his generation. The fact that he was a Pakistani national was purely an accident of birth. He was a native of Lahore, which fell to Pakistan's share. Additionally, Lahore had become a major centre of Urdu literature as well as progressive thought when he was growing up in pre-independence India and it was but natural that Faiz would find the literary and cultural atmosphere in that city conducive for the flowering of his poetic talent.

Faiz was a part of the All-India Progressive Writers' Association established in 1936. The goal of the association was to promote equality and social justice, and many of its leading lights belonged to the Communist movement. The ideals of social equality and opposition to injustice and authoritarian rule inspired much of Faiz's poetry.

His famous poem "Mujh se pehli si mohabbat mere mehboob na maang" (My beloved do not demand from me the earlier intensity of love)" is a classic embodying his quest for social justice. In it, Faiz tells his imaginary beloved not to expect the same intensity of love from him that existed earlier, now that he has become aware of the oppression inflicted on his people by an age-old system based on inequality and injustice. Consequently, he implies, his passion for his beloved is bound to be diluted because a major part of his energies has to be diverted to fighting

oppression and injustice. Faiz's anguish when Partition ac-

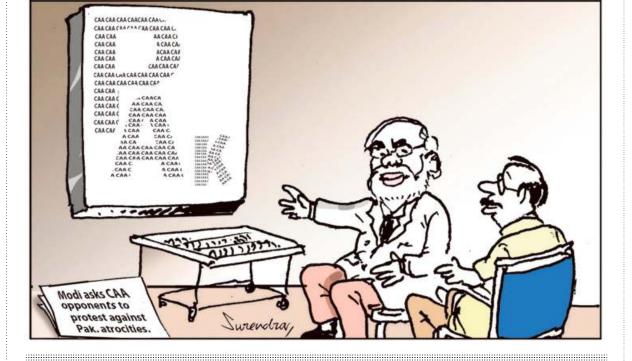
companied independence was embodied in his poem "Subh-e Azadi (The dawn of independence)". It begins with the couplet, "Yeh daagh daagh ujaalaa, yeh shab gazidaa seher; Woh intezaar tha jiska, yeh woh seher to nahin (This blemished light infused with the darkness of night; Surely, this isn't the dawn we waited for so eagerly)". This political statement cannot be surpassed in its intensity of feeling by political speeches denouncing Partition.

A clarion call

Faiz spent a few years in Pakistani jails in the 1950s for his revolutionary views and produced an anthology of poems titled Zindan Nama (Prison Musings) while incarcerated. He had to go into self-imposed exile from 1979 to 1982 because of persecution under the Zia-ul-Haq regime. His poem, "Hum dekhenge", written in 1979 was a clarion call for resistance against Zia's authoritarian and fundamentalist rule. Written for a predominantly Muslim audience it effectively used Islamic imagery to denounce the fundamentalism and authoritarianism that had become the hallmark of the regime. It uses the allegory of judgment day when all false gods (authoritarian rulers) will be overthrown and all thrones and crowns will be destroyed ("sab taaj uchhale jayenge; sab takht giraye jayenge") in order to project a democratic and egalitarian future for

It is ironical that a poem condemning authoritarianism and Islamic fundamentalism should be denounced as being anti-Hindu and anti-Indian. It demonstrates the cultural philistinism of those making the charge and their total lack of understanding of the poem's context. "Hum dekhenge" was written to inspire the masses not only in Pakistan but everywhere to take their destiny in their own hands and overthrow authoritarian and bigoted rulers. For, as Faiz posits, the day is bound to come when dictators who behave like gods will be toppled and the will of the people will prevail.

Mohammed Ayoob is University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations, Michigan State



DATA POINT

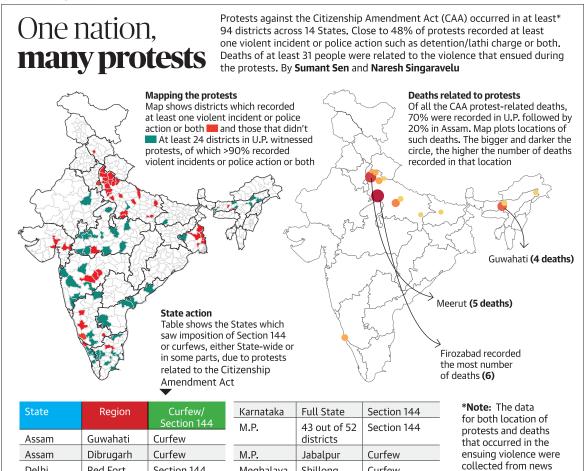
Red Fort

Full State

Section 144

Section 144

Delhi



Shillong

Full State

Curfew

Section 144

reported by The Hindu

and PTI

Meghalaya

The Man Bindu. FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 6, 1970

Suggestion to limit poll contests

A proposal was made at the conference of the Chief Electoral Officers to-day [January 5, Bombay] that in any election to the Lok Sabha or to a Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly), a person should not be allowed to stand as a candidate from more than two constituencies. It was also suggested that an employer should give on the polling day at least three hours' leave of absence to every employee to enable him to cast his vote. Any failure on the part of the employer would be an offence under the law. Similarly, if any employee avails himself of the leave granted to him, but does not intentionally exercise his franchise, he will also be liable for punishment. Another subject discussed was the use of vehicles for carrying voters to and from polling stations. A proposal was made that on the polling day, no vehicle should ply in any polling area till the close of the poll except under a permit obtained from the Returning Officer or some other specified officers. Some doubts were expressed by some Chief Electoral Officers that a stringent provision like this might cause some practical difficulties and inconvenience in big cities.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 6, 1920.

More Secret History.

London, January 2. – In further letters from the Ex-Kaiser to the Ex-Tsar dated September 26th and October 25th, 1895 published in the "Morning Post", the former indulges in a diatribe against the French, whom he accused of Chauvinism and imperialism, remarking: "God knows I have done all in my power to preserve European peace, but if France goes on violating all the rules of peace one fine day, Dearest Nisky, you will find yourself nolens volens embroiled in the most horrible war Europe has ever seen. If you are allied with the French, keep the damned rascals in order. The curse of God has stricken that people for ever." The Ex-Kaiser referring to the British Foreign policy says: - "The British seem to have some idea or other of changing their policy in the Mediterranean, for two days ago Malet paying a farewell visit to our Foreign Office used the most blustering words about Germany behaving badly to England in Africa saying England would not stand it any longer and that after buying off the French by concessions in Egypt they were at liberty to look after us. He was even so undiplomatic as to utter the word war, saying even that England would not shrink from making war upon me if we did not knock in Africa."

FROM PAGE ONE

NCP gets crucial Home, Finance portfolios

While the Congress demand for extra portfolios was the reason for the delay, the internal dispute in the NCP on who should get Home slowed down the process.

Ultimately NCP chief Sharad Pawar chose Mr. Deshmukh from Katol constituency stressing on the need to expand the party in the Vidarbha region.

The Chief Minister, who after taking charge last month, had said that he would not like to be confined to the four walls of his office but prefer to reach out to the people, has decided not to keep any of the key ministries with

This is for the first time in two decades that the CM will not be holding charge of the Urban Development Department (UDD). Sena's Ek nath Shinde will be the UD minister, along with Public Works (Public Undertaking).

According to sources, the Sena chief wants to follow the Delhi model set by Arvind Keiriwal. His son and first-time MLA Aaditya Thackeray has been given charge of the environment, tourism and protocol depart-

Senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat has got the revenue ministry, while his party colleague and former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan got the Public Works Department (PWD), excluding public undertakings.

Senior Shiv Sena leader Subhash Desai has got industries and mineral departments, while party leader Anil Parab got the transport and parliamentary affairs departments. The delay in portfolio allocation led to opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders suggesting that the MVA government 'auc-

219 infant deaths at two Gujarat hospitals in Dec.

The increase in infant deaths in December was mainly due to more referral patients coming with serious ailments.

As soon as the matter surfaced in the media and on social media, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, who is from Rajkot, refused to respond and walked off when journalists asked him about the deaths.

The Opposition Congress criticised him for being evasive."The Chief Minister is from Rajkot where healthcare has collapsed. He shamelessly runs away from journalists," said Congress State president Amit Chav-

Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel, who also holds the Health portfolio, said infant mortality rate was decreasing, and now stands at 30 deaths per 1,000 newborns. "Every year, 12 lakh infants are born. Of these, 30 of every 1,000 infants die owing to malnutrition and premature delivery or because the mothers are unable to reach hospital in time." Mr. Patel argued that there was no dearth of facilities at government hospitals or health centres.

Officials said the Rajkot hospital caters to the needs of several districts, so the number there is higher. Also, the number of deliveries goes up in November and December.

Among the factors are the shortage of medical staff at government hospitals and the collapse of primary healthcare services.

But officials maintain that the reasons include premature delivery, low birth weight, infection and asphyxiation among infants referred to government hos-

India condemns killing of Sikh youth in Pak.

In a social media message, Puniab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, said: "Shocked and anguished over killing of Sikh youth Ravinder Singh in Pakistan coming on heels of Nankana Sahib attack. Imran Khan government must ensure (a) thorough investigation and strict punishment for the culprits. This is the time to act on what you

nounced in January 2019, works from a temporary

place at the ISRO headquar-

rector and R. Hutton the

project director of Gaga-

nyaan. The centre is tasked

with pursuing human space

missions, complete mission

planning, developing engi-

neering systems for survival

and safe return of the crew

and selecting and training

a quarantine facility at the

second launch pad (SLP) in

the Sriharikota space port.

Dr. Sivan said it would en-

sure that astronauts who

were about to enter the spa-

cecraft before the launch

ABVP activists of JNU," the

ABVP's JNU unit said in

stayed unexposed.

The ISRO planned to add

astronauts.

S. Unnikrishnan Nair has been named its Founder-Di-

ters, Antariksh Bhavan.

Challakere to be ISRO's astronaut training hub

HSP work is split across various centres such as the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru. The Institute of Aerospace Medicine of the Air Force has been roped in for their selection and basic and final training in Bengaluru.

Challakere will also host work related to crew and service modules of the spacecraft that carries the astronauts.

Such full-fledged facilities, Dr. Sivan said, were needed as the HSP was not a one-time affair. "We are going to have a sustained HSP and will need a large number of facilities for training [future] astronauts."

The HSFC, formally an-

du reporters were able to

verify that the crowd, which

roughed up Mr. Yadav, in-

Masked goons thrash

students, staff in JNU Swaraj India president Yocluded BJP workers. On its part, the ABVP gendra Yadav was also roughed up outside the JNU blamed Left groups for the campus by a mob just as he violence in JNU. "Leftistwas addressing the media. goons of JNU accompained "You can see what is hap-[sic] with their cadre from pening to me outside, just other universities have imagine what must be going crossed every limit. They on inside the campus," he have proceeded with unwas heard saying. The Hinimaginable violence on

Fascists afraid of students: Rahul

Universities should remain places of learning and education, says BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Political parties across the spectrum condemned the violent attack on the students and teachers of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) on Sunday, with most of the Opposition leaders blaming the ruling dispensation for the violence.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi tweeted with the hash tag #SOSJNU.

"The brutal attack on JNU students & teachers by masked thugs, that has left many seriously injured, is shocking. The fascists in control of our nation, are afraid of the voices of our brave students. Today's violence in JNU is a reflection of that fear," Mr. Gandhi said on Twitter.

The BJP hit back at the Opposition and accused it of politicising campuses. "We strongly condemn the violence on JNU campus. This is a desperate attempt by forces of anarchy, who are determined to use students as cannon fodder, create unrest to shore up their shrinking political footprint. Universities should remain places of learning and education," the



JNUSU president Aishe Ghosh was injured in the attack on the campus. ■PTI

BJP's official handle tweeted. CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, who has been a former president of the JNU students' union, alleged that the violence on the campus was part of the Hindutva agenda of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

'Planned attack'

"Reports coming from JNU point to a collusion between the administration and goons of ABVP to inflict violence on students and teachers. It is a planned attack by those in power, which is afraid of the resistance provided by JNU to its Hindutva agenda," Mr. Yechury tweeted.

"Masked attackers entered JNU while law enforcers stood by. This video is what RSS/BJP want to convert India to. They will not be allowed to succeed," he added and tagged the video that showed the JNU Students Union president badly bleeding. External Affairs Minister

S. Jaishankar and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, both of whom were former JNU students, condemned the attack. "Horrifying images from JNU – the place I know & remember was one for fierce debates & opinions but never violence. I unequivocally condemn the events of today. This govt, regardless of what has been said the past few weeks, wants universities to be safe spaces for all students," Ms. Sitharaman said.

"Have seen pictures of what is happening in #JNU. Condemn the violence unequivocally. This is completely against the tradition and culture of the university," Mr. Jaishankar tweeted.

Former Union Minister P. Chidambaram questioned

the role of the police in allowing the violence. "What we are seeing on live TV is shocking and horrifying. Masked men enter JNU hostels and attack students. What is the police doing? Where is the Police Commissioner? If it is happening on live TV, it is an act of impunity and can only happen

with the support of the go-

vernment. This is beyond

belief," said Mr. Chidamba-

ram in a statement. Condemning the attack, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said a Trinamool delegation will visit JNU to express solidarity with the students. "We strongly condemn brutality unleashed agst students/ teachers in JNU. No words enough to describe such heinous acts. A shame on our democracy," she said.

Akhilesh Yadav blamed the BJP for the violence. "Masked men teachers and students in JNU shows the low to which the government will stoop in order to rule through fear. The ABVP are acting like the storm troopers of the BJP,"

Former Uttar Pradesh CM



Mayhem on campus: An image released by a JNUSU officebearer of a damaged section of the campus. • PTI

HRD Ministry seeks report on violence

Alumni in govt. service flay violence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Human Resource Development Ministry has asked the Registrar of the Jawaharlal Nehru University to send an immediate detailed report on the current situation on campus, HRD Secretary Amit Khare told The *Hindu* on Sunday evening.

"Definitely, it is a serious matter. I am speaking with the Vice-Chancellor. We have called for an immediate detailed report from the Registrar," said Mr. Khare, just before boarding a flight from Bhopal to return to Delhi in light of the attacks on the JNU campus.

His predecessor R. Subrahmanyam, now Social Justice Secretary, condemned the violence in strong terms on Twitter. "#INUViolence completely unacceptable and shameful. I condemn the violence is no uncertain terms and demand immediate action against the hooligans," he tweeted.

Mr. Subrahmanyam, an alumnus of JNU himself, was transferred out of the HRD Ministry last month in the wake of massive JNU protests on Delhi roads.

Stone-throwing scales a peak in J&K in 2019

RTI reply says there was a spike in numbers after the special status was withdrawn in August

VIJAITA SINGH

The number of stone-throwing incidents in Jammu and Kashmir rose in 2019 from the figures recorded in 2017 and 2018, according to data provided by the Union Home Ministry in response to a Right to Information (RTI) Act application.

Till November 30, 2019, as many as 1,996 such incidents had been reported.

In the whole of 2017 and 2018, however, the numbers stood at 1,412 and 1,458, respectively.

Post-August spike

There was a spike in the number after August - the month when J&K's special status was revoked witnessed 658 incidents, the highest in the year. July saw just 26.

J&K has been placed under unprecedented restrictions and a communication blockade since August 5, when Home Minister Amit Shah moved two Bills in the Rajya Sabha to revoke its special status under Article 370 of the Constitution and bifurcate the State into Union Territories.

On November 19, while

Rising violence

The number of terrorist incidents in Jammu and Kashmir increased after it was placed under lockdown since August 5, according to data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Between January and July 2019, 282 such incidents were reported, while 309 incidents were reported between August and November

	Months	Terrorist Incidents	Stone pelting	Ceasefire violations	Securit	y forces	Militants			
		Including	incidents	Violations	Killed	Injured	Killed	Arrested		
	Jan.	45	56	216	3	16	17	7		
	Feb.	32	103	251	50	27	23	10		
	March	39	79	275	6	22	22	15		
	Apr.	51	224	240	2	8	11	6		
	May	56	257	238	2	6	28	6		
	June	38	58	190	11	28	24	2		
	July	21	26	314	2	0	6	16		
	Aug.	50	658	323	2	3	5	8		
	Sept.	152	248	308	1	9	7	18		
	Oct.	97	203	398	0	11	9	10		
- 10	Nov.	10	84	333	1	8	5	11		
SOURCE: MHA RESPONSE TO AN RTI FILED BY JAMMU RESIDENT ROHIT CHOUDHARY										

responding to a question by Kanakmal Katara, MP, on the number of stone-throwing incidents reported after Article 370 was diluted, the Home Ministry informed the Lok Sabha that from January 1 to November 15, 2019, the police had registered 551 cases "relating to stone pelting/ law & order", of which 190 cases were registered after August 5.

In response to an RTI petition filed by the Jammu resident Rohit Choudhary, the Ministry said the number of incidents of terrorist violence from January to November 2019 stood at 591, with the highest of 152 in September.

The Ministry informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply on December 3 that "the incidents of terrorist

violence have declined after August 5."

"During the 115-day period, from August 5 till November 27, there have been 88 such incidents as compared with 106 such incidents from April 12 till August 4," the Ministry said in a written reply.

The RTI reply shows that from January to July, the number of incidents of terro-

rist violence stood at 282, while 309 incidents were reported from August to November.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah told the television channel ABP News last week that the situation was "under control" in the Union Territory and routine activities were going on.

Ceasefire violations

The RTI reply also said that 3,086 ceasefire violations or firing from Pakistan's side had been reported along the Line of Control (LoC), with the highest of 398 recorded in October. There had been a drop in

the number of militants killed, from 131 killed from January to July to 26 from August to November. The number of militants

arrested stood at 109, with 47 held from August to November.

Nearly 43,000 Central armed police personnel were deployed in J&K in the run-up to August 5, with the force strength surpassing the deployment seen in the 1990s.

Nearly 7,000 personnel were pulled out in Decem-

IN BRIEF



Akali Dal questions Sidhu's silence

The Shiromani Akali Dal on Sunday hit out at Congress leader Naviot Singh Sidhu questioning his silence on the alleged hate attack on Sikhs as wells as Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in Pakistan.

Former Minister Maheshinder Singh Grewal said Mr. Sidhu should explain his silence on the issues of forced conversion of a minor Sikh girl in Pakistan and the subsequent turn of events.

Azad detained illegally, says Priyanka

Congress general secretary

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday said the government's policy of "oppressing" dissent has reached a point of "cowardice" as she demanded that Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad be shifted to AIIMS. Mr. Azad is lodged in the Tihar Jail. He was arrested after he led a protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act in Delhi. "There are absolutely no grounds to keep Chandrashekhar in jail, Ms. Gandhi said on Twitter.

Jaishankar discusses Gulf with Iran, Oman, U.S.

Talks come after Soleimani's killing

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Sunday spoke to his counterparts in Iran, Oman, the United States and the United Arab Emirates regarding the escalating tension in the Gulf. The exchanges were a part of the international consultations among various stakeholders that began soon after Iran's Major General Qassem Soleimani was killed in an American drone attack in Baghdad.

'India concerned'

"Just concluded a conversation with Foreign Minister Javad Zarif of Iran. Noted that developments have taken a very serious turn. India remains deeply concerned about the levels of tension," said Mr. Jaishankar in a social media message.

Sunday's exchanges were the first since Maj. Gen Soleimani was assassinated on January 3. India had described the slain military figure as a "senior Iranian leader" saying peace, stability and security in the Gulf as of "utmost importance" to the country. The Indian



S. Jaishankar

position is borne out of the fact that the Gulf region hosts nearly seven million Indian citizens. That apart India is partnering the port of Chabahar in Iran Any conflict with Iran will adversely affect India's investments in Chabahar. Late on Sunday evening,

Mr. Jaishankar sent out a series of social media messages informing that he had telephonic conversation also with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Oman's Foreign Minister Yusuf Alawi, and Abdullah Bin Zayed of the UAE. "Had a telephonic discussion with Secretary of State Pompeo on the evolving situation in the Gulf region. Highlighted India's stakes and concerns," said the Indian Minister in his message.

BJP holding meetings for Budget inputs

Suggestions will be passed on to FM

NISTULA HEBBAR

In a first of its kind exercise, the BIP has been holding a series of meetings with 11 groups of stakeholders, on the expectations from, and suggestions for, the Union Budget.

Suggestions that have been conveyed to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will also be released as a background paper after the last of the meetings is wound up on January 14.

Gopal Krishna Agarwal, BJP spokesperson and head of the economic cell, started this exercise on December 19, with five sectoral meetings done and six to follow.

"We have invited stakeholders from agriculture, trade, the automobile industry and pharmaceuticals, and economists who work with banks for separate meetings and discussed specific issues related to those sectors," he said.

"For example, in agriculture, the meeting focussed on supply chain issues, input costs, and crop information, with traders and small manufacturers on the issues related to the Goods and



Nirmala Sitharaman

Services Tax (GST), the indirect taxes and implementation issues, and with the automobile sector, discussion hovered over industry cycle, electric vehicles and consumer demand," he said.

Mr. Agarwal said the suggestions of these sectors had already been passed on to the Finance Minister, and a background paper is being prepared for an overview of the exercise.

"Our last meeting will be with economists of banks on the larger picture of the economy," he said.

While Ms. Sitharaman has been holding meetings as part of the budget exercise, Mr. Agarwal says this is a first such attempt by the BJP as far as the budget is concerned.

Sahara: U.K. Sinha lauds former Finance Ministers

Ex-SEBI chief credits them for action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Crediting three successive Finance Ministers – Pranab Mukherjee, P. Chidambaram and the late Arun Jaitley - for SEBI's strong action against the Sahara Group, the market regulator's former chief U.K. Sinha has said the three leaders stood their ground and did not interfere in the matter despite repeated attempts by vested interests.

Mr. Sinha also praised former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for his sound advice on how to balance the multiple roles of the Securities and Exchange

Board of India (SEBI), and applauded PM Modi for being a "very inquisitive" leader and always being firm in his belief that no person big or small should be spared for any wrongdoing.

The SEBI had ordered Sahara India Real Estate Corporation Ltd (SIRECL) and Sahara Housing Investment Corporation Ltd (SHICL) in 2011 to refund the money raised from investors through certain bonds known as Optionally Fully

Convertible Bonds (OFCDs). The net amount raised by the two companies was more than ₹24,000 crore from over 3 crore investors.

APPEAL

1 year old Mayanila is diagnosed with B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and she urgently requires Rs. 6,00,000/- towards Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Please help her for a lasting change and a healthy life. Donations sent by Ch / D.D. favouring Meenaksh Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged. The donations sent through Ch / D_D
/ NEFT Transfer (Syndicate Bank, Nungambakkam
Branch, A/C No: 60182010063310, IFSC No: SYNB0006018) favouring

WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT. (Please do not mention patient's name on the cheque).

All Correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. 6F 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No. 13, N.No. 29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006. Ph: 044-42137401 / 28235324. Email ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

Rahul, Priyanka instigating riots: Shah

Union Home Minister says Oppn. leaders are misleading people on the features of the Citizenship Act

STAFF REPORTER

Union Home Minister and BJP president Amit Shah on Sunday accused Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of instigating "riots" by "misleading" people on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Mr. Shah said minorities in the country had nothing to fear as the Act did not have any provision to take away anyone's citizenship. "I want to tell brothers and sisters from the minority communities that none of them can lose their citizenship because the CAA has no provision about taking it away," Mr. Shah said.

At a meeting of party workers in Delhi, Mr. Shah

Creating awareness



Leading the way: Union Home Minister Amit Shah during a door-to-door campaign on CAA in New Delhi on Sunday. • PTI

attacked Pakistan for "terrorising" Sikhs as he referred to the attack on Gurdwara Nankana Sahib by a violent mob and asked Opposition leaders to open their eyes to atrocities against minorities

Reaching out:: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh campaigning in support of the Citizenship

Vijayvargiya booked for 'threatening'

The BJP was protesting against an anti-encroachment drive

Kailash Vijayvargiya. • FILE

The police registered a

case, including against In-

dore MP Shankar Lalwani,

on Saturday night based on

complaints of government

officials, said Jyoti Umath,

City Superintendent of Pol-

ice, Sanyogitaganj. "Initially

a case for disobedience to

order promulgated by public

servant was registered.

Hours later, four more

counts were added. No ar-

(Amendment) Act as part of the Jan Jagran Abhiyan in Lucknow on Sunday. • PTI

govt. officials in Madhya Pradesh

in the neighbouring country. 'This is an answer to all those opposing the CAA. Tell me if these Sikhs who were attacked the other day in Gurdwara Nankana Sahib will not come to India, then where they will go" he asked. a government in Delhi which The BJP president directincites riots for politics," he ed party workers to reach out to every household in

Mr. Shah claimed that Ms. Vadra had extended her support to rioters by saying that she would visit the houses of those who carried out riots.

'Not a Netflix number'

Mr. Shah asked people to give missed calls to a toll free number put out by the BJP to show their support for the CAA. He slammed rumours that the number belonged to Netflix, a streaming service.

The number has run into controversy after it was found that several Twitter accounts were advertising it as a means to get free subscriptions on Netflix and to chat with "lonely women", among other scams.

(With PTI inputs)

NPR order divides Bihar ruling allies

JD(U) leaders pan Sushil Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Delhi about the features of the Act, which, he said, was

an attempt to give citizen-

ship to Dalit and Sikh refu-

gees who had come from Pa-

kistan and Afghanistan.

Opposition leaders were

spreading a pack of lies over

Mr. Shah attacked Mr. Kej-

"Prime minister came out

with CAA. It was approved

by the Cabinet and Parlia-

ment passed it. (Arvind) Kej-

riwal misled people; the

Congress, especially Rahul

Gandhi and Priyanka Gand-

hi, instigated riots by mis-

leading people. Do you want

riwal and the Congress lead-

ers, terming them "anti-Da-

lits" for opposing the Act.

the CAA, he said.

The Bihar government on December 18 issued the notification to begin the first phase of the National Population Register (NPR) exercise from May 15 to June 28, much before Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi announced it on Saturday.

On Sunday, Janata Dal(U) national general secretary and spokesperson Pawan K. Verma wrote a two-page letter to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and expressed "surprise" over Mr. Modi's "unilateral" announcement.

Earlier, on Saturday, Mr. Modi, while making the announcement, said "no government has the courage to stop the NPR exercise in their respective States".

However, soon after Mr. Modi's announcement, senior JD(U) leader and his Cabinet colleague Shyam Rajak said he had no information about any such decision and "Mr. Modi may have made such an announcement in his personal capacity.'

Principled stand'

In his letter, Mr. Verma asked the Chief Minister to take a "principled stand" against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the NPR.

"Reject the nefarious agenda to divide India and create a great deal of unnecessary social turbulence," wrote Mr. Verma, adding that "the CAA-NRC combine is a direct attempt to divide Hindus and Muslims and to create social instability. You have always stood for a secular India, where there is peace, respect and goodwill among all its communities."



Reject the nefarious agenda to divide India and create a great deal of unnecessary social turbulence

PAWAN K. VERMA JD(U) spokespersor

But, JD(U) leader and party spokesperson Rajiv Ranjan told journalists in Patna, "The Bihar government has categorically said that it will not implement NRC in the State but since Union Home Minister Amit Shah has stated that NPR data won't be used for the NRC, the JD(U) doesn't have a problem with the NPR exercise in Bihar."

Other JD(U) leaders too said the government had taken the decision to begin the NPR process from May 15 and "now there should not be any further discussion on it.'

Meanwhile, State BJP leaders like Mr. Modi and State party president Sanjay Jaiswal on Sunday began the Jan Jagran Abhiyan (awareness campaign) about the CAA in Patna and West Champaran. They visited households in those areas and briefed residents about the Act.

Party sources also told The Hindu that Mr. Shah is likely to visit Vaishali on January 16 to address people about the CAA.

'Will pursue options to protect minority shareholder rights' Cyrus Mistry, the ousted chairman of Tata Sons, will not pursue the executive chairmanship of the corporate group or directorship of other Tata firms despite the National Company Law Ap-

battle for helming Tata Sons

Cyrus Mistry backs out of

Cyrus Mistry

the hearing in the Supreme Court, profess an interpretation of "corporate democracy as being one of brute majoritarianism with no rights for minority stakeholders," the statement said.

The statement added that the question is whether the oppressive actions of a majority, that stifles minority shareholders, is outside judicial oversight. The statement said, glo-

bally, and in India, "Company Law has evolved to protect the rights of minority shareholders and strengthen corporate governance. The Companies Act 2013, has considerably strengthened the statutory protections accorded to minority shareholders from oppressive conduct of the majority

shareholders." Mr. Mistry stressed that for "corporate democracy" to be strengthened, all stakeholders must operate within the ambit of law and statutory protections.

'Time to introspect'

He said the relationship between the Tata Group and the Shapoorji Pallonji Group spanned several decades and was built on common agreement and mutual faith. Former Tata leaders had worked together with the minority partner to create value for all stakeholders.

"In the last three years, both in conduct and in their statements to the world at large, the Tata Group's leadership has shown scant respect for the rights of minority shareholders. It is time the Group's management introspects and reflects on its conduct as it embarks on future actions," he said.

"As an 18.37% shareholder, it is in our own interest to ensure the Group's longterm success. My family, although a minority partner, has been a guardian of the Tata Group for over five decades. This legal fight has never been about me," Mr.

'CAA humiliates Muslims'

Govt. has violated basic structure of the Constitution: Sinha

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

pellate Tribunal (NCLAT)

In a statement on Sunday,

Mr. Mistry said, "I intend to

make it clear that despite the

NCLAT order in my favour, I

will not be pursuing the ex-

ecutive chairmanship of Ta-

ta Sons, or directorship of

TCS, Tata Teleservices or Ta-

ta Industries. I will, howev-

er, vigorously pursue all op-

tions to protect our rights as

a minority shareholder, in-

cluding that of resuming the

30-year history of a seat at

the Board of Tata Sons of

TCS, Tata Teleservices or Ta-

The statement said the deci-

sion was made in the inter-

ests of the Tata Group and to

dispel the misinformation

tributed to Ratan Tata, chai-

ram emeritus of Tata Sons.

and others questioning the

NCLAT judgment ahead of

campaign being waged. Recent media reports at-

ta Industries."

In group's interest

ruling in his favour.

Ahead of the 22-day yatra in protest against the amended Citizenship Act and the proposed National Population Register, former Union Minister Yashwant Sinha said on Sunday that the deliberate exclusion of the Muslim community from the legislation was to "humiliate"

"Many like me feel that by discriminating on the basis of religion the government has violated the basic structure of the Constitution. And



Yashwant Sinha

the omission of the Muslim community from the legislation has been done to humiliate them," Mr. Sinha said. Mr. Sinha said if the goright they would have included the Rohingya community who had been forced to flee Myanmar. "The basic purpose of the

vernment's intentions were

government is to keep the nation and the people involved in this communal debate and not talk about the more basic issues of econo-

On the NRC, Mr. Sinha said the government was trying to create confusion with its double-speak. "The government has been lying repeatedly," Mr. Sinha said

'Won't engage with 'tukde tukde' gang

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Sunday said the government will not talk to those who raise slogans of Azadi and are part of the 'tukde tukde' gang. "... Such voices and views which talk about dividing the country are not acceptable," he said at a programme on the CAA organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

TENDER NOTIFICATION For and on behalf of Annamalai University, sealed tenders are invited for supply of following equipment for the University from the firms of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) / Authorized Dealers/ Authorized distributors/ Indian

Tender document can be downloaded from the website of Annamalai University Other Tender details:

Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscope (FESEM 2,70,000/ MATLAB software

 All the tenderer who have applied for tender should be present at the time of ening of technical bid Tenders received after the mentioned date & time will not be accepted and the University will not be responsible for any postal delay

Tenderer should apply for each equipments separately if they apply for more than one equipment and all communications should be addressed to the Registrar Annamalal University only.

4. After evaluation of technical bid only responsive tenderers only will be called for

a)	Last date and time for receipt of tender	23.01.2020 – 5.00 p.m.
b)	Date, time and Venue of Opening of tender	24.01.2020 –10.30 a.m at Conference Hall, Golden Jubilee Building, Annamalai University Annamalainagar - 608 002.
R/ 23	/TENDER/2020	Registrar i/c.

India faces a year of tough trade talks

After RCEP walkout, govt. to focus on renegotiating FTAs, bilateral deals in 2020

SUHASINI HAIDAR

STAFF REPORTER

sit-in on Friday.

Indore on fire."

The Madhya Pradesh police

have registered a case

against BJP national general

secretary Kailash Vijayvargi-

ya, an MP, and around 350

party workers after he was

purportedly seen in a video

threatening to set "entire In-

dore on fire" while staging a

outside the Indore Division-

al Commissioner's house

against the anti-mafia drive

of the government, Mr. Vi-

jayvargiya told an official,

"We will not tolerate this.

There are Sangh [RSS] lead-

ers present here. Otherwise,

we would have set the entire

Several leaders of the

right-wing group, including

its chief Mohan Bhagwat,

were in the city for an inter-

As the workers protested

After walking out of negotiations on the 16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement, the government said it would renegotiate its existing free trade agreements (FTA) and redouble its efforts to conclude other trade negotiations. The task is likely to swamp negotiators of both the Commerce and Industries and External Affairs Ministries in 2020.

To begin with, the RCEP walkout is not cast in stone yet, as the other 15 countries, including 10 ASEAN members and their FTA partners China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South Korea, will complete legal reviews by June and are only expected to sign the deal in November 2020.

In the interim, many countries, most notably Japan, Australia and even Chi-



Piyush Goyal

na, have said they would be keen to work with India to convince the government to rejoin the RCEP.

While the RCEP is being wrapped up, India's longpending negotiations with Australia for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), as well as Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's plans to reopen the existing FTAs with ASEAN, Japan and South Korea will have to take a back

The next big trade focus for the government will be during the EU-India summit any kind of deal, despite viexpected in March, when Mr. Modi is expected to travel to Brussels, to meet the new European Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen, and discuss restarting EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) talks. However, this is easier said than done, given that the talks that began in 2007 and stalled in 2013 over tariff issues, have not been resumed despite several

rests have been made so far,"

under Sections 188 [Disobe-

dience to order duly promul-

gated by public servant], 143

[unlawful assembly], 149

[Every member of unlawful

assembly guilty of offence

committed in prosecution of

common object], 153 [Wan-

tonly giving provocation

with intent to cause riot] and

506 [Punishment for crimi-

nal intimidation] of the In-

The BIP was protesting

against the State govern-

ment's anti-encroachment

drive, which, it alleges, was

targeting only structures

owned by its workers. On

Friday, the party leaders had

invited senior civic officials

to raise the issue with them,

but when only junior offi-

cials turned up, it riled Mr.

dian Penal Code.

The case was registered

she said.

Bridging gap with U.S.

Finally, the two Ministries will focus on closing talks with U.S. Trade Representatives. In 2019, President Trump rescinded India's GSP special status for exporters, which has led to more bitterness over the issue. Mr. Modi and Mr. Trump discussed the trade issues on two occasions when they met in 2019, but negotiators have been unable to forge sits by Mr. Goyal to the U.S. In the New Year, both

sides hope a package of smaller agreements can be announced, but a free trade agreement could be several years away, as it hasn't even been discussed officially yet.

Dedicated team

Given all the challenges, the government is actively considering a sharper and leaner trade negotiating team that merges the best strengths of Commerce Ministry officials and External Affairs diplomats, on the lines of countries with a consolidated Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

With the world being carved up into regional trading blocs and India's only regional Bloc, for SAARC nations (SAFTA) stalled, the odds of concluding more bilateral trading agreements will be that much harder in 2020.

e-TENDER NOTICE E-Tenders are invited by the <u>Airport Director</u>, <u>AAI</u> <u>Trichy Intl Airport from</u> the leading firms or persons having good experience in the business activity, for the commercial contracts (1) <u>Airport Canteen</u> at

City side (existing running location) of Trichy Intl Airport and (2) Meet & Greet services and Paid Porterage Services at Trichy Intl Airport, to be submitted through NIC CPPP E-Tendering Portal at www.etenders.gov.in. Last date of submission of tender is scheduled on 24.01.2020 by 1500 hrs via NIC CPPP E-Tendering

For Eligibility criteria and further details visit our web

Site: www.aai.aero (or) www.aiiportsindia.org and NIC CPPP E-Tendering Portal at www.etenders.gov.in. For further corrigendum it any, the same will be published in AAI website and NIC CPPPE-Tendering Portal only.

E-TENDER NOTICE

AAI Cargo logistics and Allied Services Ltd invites Item rate tenders through the E-Tendering portal by Regional Manager AAICLAS Chennai on behalf of Chairman, AAICLAS from Interested gencies for the work of "Replacement of existing ETV I, FMC & CMC of ETV I & II with associated equipments a Integrated Air Cargo Complex
Meenambakkam, Chennai." at an
estimated cost Rs. 8,30,88,250/-.
(excluding GST, Custom Duty &
PF,ESI for FMC work) with period of
completion 9 Months for Capital work 2
years for FMC & 5 years for CMC after years for FMC & 5 years for CMC after DLP of 2 years for ETV I and 2 years for ETV II. Last date and time of submission f e-bid document is 10.02.2020 upto 11.00 hrs. For detailed information log on to CPP e-Procurement porta reference https://etenders.gov.in f anv will be notified through urement portal at **https**:/ etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app Regional Manager AAICLAS



भारत सरकार/ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र/ VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रुप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP तिँरुवनंतपुँरम/,THIRUVANANTHAPURAM- 22 (फोन नं. /Ph.No.:0471 2564568 / 2564537)

ई-निविदा सूचना सं वीएसएससी / सीएमजी / सिविल / 11/2019-20 दिनांक 03.01.2020 E-Tender Notice No. VSSC/CMG/CIVIL/11/2019-20 Dt. 03.01.2020

ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

।. भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, **सम्मिश्र श्रेणी** के अधिन निम्नलिखित कार्य के लिए ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा ऑनलाइन मद-दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित

क्र.स SI.No.	विवरण / Description	ब्यौरे / Details
1.	कार्य का शीर्षक / Title of work	इन्सतेफ, वीएसएससी, तुंबा में ईंधन कक्ष प्रयोगशाला के लिए व का निर्माण (सिविल, पीएच तथा वैद्युत कार्य)। / Construct of Building for Fuel Cell Laboratory at INSTEF, VS Thumba (Civil,PH&Electrical works)
2.	निविदा में दी गई अनुमानित लागत / Estimate cost put to tender	कुल / Total -₹ 1190.20 लाख /Lakhs ए/a) सिविल तथा पीएच कार्य / Civil & PH works -₹ 929.75 लाख /Lakhs बी/b) वैद्युत कार्य / Electrical works -₹ 260.45 लाख /Lakhs
3.	कार्य पूरा होने की तिथि/ Period of completion	14 (चौदह / Fourteen) महीने/ months
4.	बयाना जमा राशि (ईएमडी) / Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	₹ 21,90,200/-
5.	अवधि जिसके दौरान निविदा दस्तावेज़ को डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है/ Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	से /From 06.01.2020, 10.00 बजे / Hrs. तक / to 20.01.2020, 23.00 बजे / Hrs.
6.	बोली स्पष्टीकरण / Bid clarifications.	से /From 06.01.2020, 10.00 बजे / Hrs. तक / to 21.01.2020, 16.00 बजे / Hrs.
7.	निविदा पाने की अंतिम तिथि व समय / Last date and time for receipt of tenders.	को तक / Up to 22.01.2020, 14.30 बजे / Hrs.
8.	निविदा खोलने की अंतिम तिथि व समय / Due date and time of opening of tenders	को / On 23.01.2020, 15.00 बजे / Hrs.

II. योग्यता मानदंड तथा अन्य ब्यौरों को पाने के लिए इच्छुक निविदाकार ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए विस्तृत सूचना (ई-एनआइटी) का अवलोकन करें, जिसे <u>www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO</u> से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है।/ Interested tenderers may please refer detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (E-NIT) for eligibility criteria and other details, which can be downloaded from Website www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO sd/-ग्रुप निर्देशक, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Group Director, CMG, VSSC

U.S. will target 52 sites if Iran retaliates: Trump

U.S. President ups the ante as mourners across the country pay their respects to Soleimani after his body reached home

President Donald Trump warned on Saturday that the U.S. would hit dozens of targets in the Islamic Republic if it retaliates for the killing of the head of Iran's elite Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani, in

Showing no signs of seeking to reduce tensions raised by the strike on Friday that he ordered, the U.S. President issued a stern threat to Iran on Twitter.

Mr. Trump wrote in a series of tweets that Iran "is talking very boldly about targeting certain USA assets" to avenge Soleimani's death. Mr. Trump said the U.S. has identified "52 Iranian sites" and that some were "at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

"The USA wants no more threats!" Mr. Trump said, adding that the 52 targets represented the 52 Americans, who were held hostage in Iran after being seized at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in

Raised concerns

Mr. Trump's suggestion that the U.S. could strike targets of importance to Iranian culture raised eyebrows.

Colin Kahl, a former Obama administration national security official, wrote on Twitter that he found it "hard to believe the Pentagon would provide Trump targeting options that include Iranian cultural sites. Trump may not care about the laws of war, but DoD (Department of Defense) planners and lawyers do... and targeting cultural sites is war crime.'

Downplaying the comments, the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has de-



Tension escalates: A large crowd surrounding the coffin of slain top commander Qassem Soleimani during the funeral procession in southwestern city of Ahvaz, Iran, on Sunday. • AP

nied that Mr. Trump said he would target Iranian cultural sites if Tehran retaliates against the killing of Soleima-

"President Trump didn't say he'd go after a cultural site - read what he said," Mr. Pompeo told Fox News.

Former Vice-President Joe Biden and other Democrats criticised Mr. Trump's tweets, with some including U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren saving the President was threatening to commit a war crime. "The more the walls close in on this guy, the more irrational he becomes," said Mr. Biden.

Meanwhile, the body of Soleimani was returned to Iran on Sunday, the official IRIB news agency reported.

While many Iranians have rallied in to show grief over the death of Soleimani, regarded as the country's second most powerful figure after Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, others

worry his death might push the country to war with a superpower.

Soleimani's body was flown to the city of Ahvaz in southwest Iran.

IRIB posted a video clip of a casket wrapped in an Iranian flag being unloaded from a plane as a military band played.

Thousands of mourners marched through the streets of Ahvaz, beating their chests in live footage aired on state TV. Soleimani's casket was driven amidst the large crowds on the back of a

Mourning in Iraq

The body of Iranian-backed Iraqi militia leader Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who was killed in the attack with Soleimani, was also flown to Ahvaz, according to IRIB.

Tens of thousands of people marched in Iraq on Saturday to mourn Soleimani and

"Death to America".

Iranian parliamentarians also chanted "Death to America" in a parliamentary session shown on state TV on Sunday.

Oman has called on the U.S. and Iran to seek dialogue to ease tensions, Oman News Agency reported on Sunday.

Oman, which maintains friendly ties with both the U.S. and Iran, has previously been a go-between for the two countries.

Iran summoned the Swiss envoy representing U.S. interests in Tehran on Sunday to protest against Mr. Trump saying Washington would target Iranian sites if Tehran attacks Americans or U.S.

On Saturday evening, a rocket fell inside Baghdad's Green Zone near the U.S. Embassy, another hit the nearby Jadriya neighbourhood and two more were fired at the Balad air base.

Donald Trump is just a terrorist in a suit: Tehran

Iran condemned Donald Trump on Sunday as a "terrorist in a suit" after the U.S. President threatened to hit 52 Iranian sites hard if Tehran attacks Americans or U.S. assets in retaliation for the killing of military commander Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad.

As the two countries assailed each other in a war of words, the European Union, Britain and Oman urged both to make efforts to defuse the crisis. Heightened fears of war drove Gulf stocks sharply lower on Sunday.

"Like ISIS, Like Hitler, Like Genghis! They all hate cultures. Trump is a terrorist in a suit. He will learn history very soon that NO-

BODY can defeat 'the Great Iranian Nation & Culture'," Information and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari-Jahromi tweeted.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell urged Iran's Foreign Minister to work to de-escalate the situation and invited him to Brussels to discuss ways of preserving 2015 nuclear deal with

Iran has said it will decide about its next step to further roll back its commitments to the nuclear containment deal, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi was quoted as saying.

Iran's Army chief, Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, said the U.S. lacked courage for military confrontation with Iran.

Iran dumps nuclear pact, says it won't respect limits

Iran's state television reported that the country will no longer abide by any of the limits set under the nuclear deal signed with six major powers in 2015.

The station cited a government spokesman as saying Iran would not respect any limits set in the pact on the number of uranium enrichment centrifuges it could use, which meant there would be no limits on its enrichment capacity, the level to which uranium could be enriched, or Iran's nuclear research and development. These would from now on be based on Iran's technical needs. It did not elaborate on

what levels it would immediately reach in its pro-The International Atomic

Energy Agency, the United Nations watchdog observing Iran's programme, could not be immediately reached for comment. However, Iran said that

its cooperation with the IAEA "will continue as before." The statement said Iran's steps could be reversed if Washington lifted its sanctions on Tehran.



Military base used by U.S.

forces in Kenya attacked

'Aircraft, choppers & vehicles destroyed'

A file photo of U.S. troops at Camp Simba in Kenya. • AP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Jihadists from Somalia's Al-Shabaab group on Sunday stormed a military base said officers were "on high alused by U.S. forces in Kenya's coastal Lamu region, cording to Kenyan police and army officials.

vy security at Camp Simba at dawn but were repelled and four jihadists were killed, said Army spokesman Colonel Paul Njuguna.

Al-Shabaab has launched regular cross-border raids ers. since Kenya sent troops into ing the internationally backed government – which the jihadists have been try- (AFRICOM) in a statement. ing to overthrow for more than a decade.

includes popular tourist quent attacks, often carried authority. out with roadside bombs.

"Four terrorists' bodies of the base". have so far been found. The ding that a fire had broken create false headlines.

out but had since been dealt

Kenya's Inspector General of Police Hilary Mutyambai ert" after the attack.

An internal police report destroying several aircraft seen by AFP said two aircraft, and military vehicles, ac- two American helicopters and "multiple American vehicles" were destroyed at the Attackers breached hea- airstrip. The type of aircraft involved was not immediately clear.

> US military officials confirmed the attack and said U.S. and Kenyan forces had repelled the Al-Shabaab fight-

"Working alongside our Somalia in 2011 as part of an Kenyan partners, the airfield African Union force protect- is cleared and still in the process of being fully secured. said the US Africa Command

The nearby civilian airport at Manda Bay, which brings The Lamu region, which tourists visiting Lamu Island a UNESCO World Heritage beach destination Lamu Is- Site - was closed for several land, lies close to the Somali hours after the incident, acfrontier and has suffered fre- cording to the civil aviation

Al-Shabaab said in a state-Njuguna said "an attempt ment it had "successfully was made to breach security stormed the heavily fortified at Manda Air Strip" at military base and have now 5:30am but it was repulsed. taken effective control of part

AFRICOM accused Al-Shaairstrip is safe," he said, ad- baab of lying in order to

ELSEWHERE



by drunken driver in Italy

A drunken driver speeding on a mountain road plowed into a group of young German tourists in northern Italy early on Sunday, killing six people and injuring 11 others, Italian authorities said. The deadly crash occurred in a village of Valle Aurina, northeast of Bolzano in the Alto Adige region, shortly after 1 a.m. as the Germans gathered near their tour bus. They were between the ages of 20 and 25. The largely German-speaking autonomous region, with its ski resorts in the Dolomites, of northern Italy is popular with German tourists. AP

Bangladesh orders arrest of 'fugitive' former Chief Justice

Justice Sinha and 10 others face charges of embezzlement

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

A Bangladesh court ordered the arrest on Sunday of former Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and 10 others on charges alleging they embezzled nearly half a million dollars, a prosecutor said.

"All of them are fugitives from justice," prosecutor Khurshid Alam Khan said, adding that Mr. Sinha was accused of embezzling monev and laundering it from one bank account to

Justice Sinha headed the South Asian nation's Supreme Court for a landmark



Surendra Kumar Sinha

verdict on judicial independence that went against the government, but fled Bangladesh in late 2017 amid allegations he had been forced to step aside.

Opposition groups and rights activists said the departure of Justice Sinha was a blow to the credibility of the judiciary in the Muslim majority country. Justice Sinha, 68, now lives in North America.

He was the first Hindu to be made Chief Justice of the officially secular Muslim-majority nation of 168 million.

Justice Sinha's departure came after a rare statement from the Supreme Court in October 2017 said other judges had accused him of graft and refused to sit with him on the top bench.

Just months earlier, Justice Sinha had led the SC in a decision that scrapped Parliament's power to sack top

Dozens held after protest in Hong Kong

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Petrol bombs were hurled at a Hong Kong police station and dozens of people were arrested on Sunday following a march against so-called parallel trading near the Chinese border.

The Democratic Party said about 10,000 people marched peacefully in Sheung Shui district, but violence erupted after police ordered protesters to disperse.

The marchers were protesting against parallel trading, which sees thousands of mainlanders cross the border every day to bulkbuy goods such as infant formula to sell at a profit in

Cambodia building collapse kills 36 people, injures 23

The seven-storey guesthouse was under construction

REUTERS

Thirty-six people were killed and 23 more injured when a tourist guesthouse under construction in Cambodia collapsed, trapping workers under rubble, officials said on Sunday.

Officials said rescue oper ations ended two days after the seven-storey concrete building collapsed on Friday in the coastal town of Kep, about 160 km southwest of the capital Phnom Penh.

The 36 dead included six children and 14 women, officials said in a statement that did not detail why children were at the site.

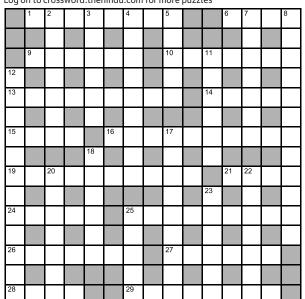


Mountain of rubble: Rescue personnel working at the site in Kep, where a building collapsed, on Sunday. • AFP

Kep Governor Ken Satha said that the owners of the building, a Cambodian couple, had been detained for

However, Prime Minister Hun Sen defended the government response and said that no officials in Kep province would be fired.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12825 Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code

ACROSS

1 Most clever statutes put out

6 Do without short mast (4)

9 Killer necklace? (6) 10 Scattered coal priced with certain limits relative to heat

13 A farm harvest by loose soil in old building (9)

14 Plea from principal I bickered with (5)

15 Belted out - it's no good! (4) 16 What a newly wed couple did

before moving (3,2,5) 19 Somehow bear speech starting

late in a deviancy (10) 21 Information Bureau section's

gone over one bloomer (4) 24 Government order by the bell?

No, it is a famous no-show (5) 25 Ohio poll I conducted with

26 One may throw it in a fit (7)

ordinary people (3,6)

27 Kind of game in MP town, we

28 Teacher back with trick finally to take a chance (4) 29 Reveal information about bird

that's appropriating (8)

DOWN

2 Certain African has risen for a magnificent stripping (7)

3 Scruffy man leaves, neglected

(set by Gridman)

4 Ron let men in a whirl for registration (9)

5 Amasses beheaded nails (5) 7 Neighbourhood is an almost

clean place (7)

8 Set's in a state of administration after financial

11 Hate the combination of two articles by incomplete bunch

12 Charge for fellow's sound of

merriment (12) 17 Murder of animal reared in old

18 About to assess Rajasthan leader's depression (6)

city – that is getting

20 Dispatching son to the South for finales (7) 22 Swell dance by silly person

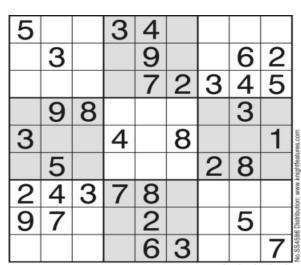
stripped (7)

23 Rogue head of clan dismissed to circular niche (6)

25 It's hard on some dilapidated

residences (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12824 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★公公公公

Α	Т	Α	F	Α	L	R	С	L	I	Ρ					3	4	7	8	2	5	6	1	9
F		G		S		Е		U		Α		W		S	-	-	÷	-	=	-	$\stackrel{\smile}{-}$	÷	-
Т	Α	R	т	s	\supset	Ρ		s	0	R	0	R	Α	L	11	6	2	3	4	9	7	5	8
E		Ε		Ε		Α		Н		Κ		1		U	0	^	_	-	^	_	^	^	4
R	Τ	Ε	J	М		Ρ	0	Е	Т	Α	s	Т	Е	R	9	8	5	1	6	/	3	2	4
G				В		ш		s				Е			1	1	Я	6	7	2	a	3	5
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FAITH

Similarity to Brahman

The jivatma is not the doer of actions; it is the three gunas that cause us to act, says Lord Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita. The atma does not inherently know grief or anger. These arise because of qualities like rajas and tamas. And his contact with prakrti is what brings him into contact with the gunas, because they are inherent in prakrti, said Valayapet Ramachariar, in a discourse. This is similar to a good man transforming into a bad one, when he falls into bad company. Even sattva guna is binding, because it makes us desire happiness and knowledge all the time. It thereby binds us to samsara. We have to, therefore, move beyond the three gunas. However, through sattva guna, we are born into families that have atma jnana, and gradually we too progress to a state where we can attain liberation.

The Lord says that the person who knows that the three gunas are the karta, that is the doers of actions, will attain His state. This is not to be taken as the jivatma merging with the Brahman. It means that the jivatma attains qualities like Ananda. Like Him, we too will not know hunger, or thirst. Like Him we too will not experience ageing. Our thoughts will be pure. Our actions will be pure. What we will have will be His svabhAva, His qualities. But we do not merge with Him. Similarity to the Brahman, but not identity with the Brahman is what is to be understood here. Before one can attain liberation, one must first transcend the three gunas. Arjuna then wants to know what a person is like when he has transcended the gunas. And he also wants to know how the gunas can be transcended. The Lord replies that to obtain knowledge of atma svarUpa, we should neither like nor dislike the illumination caused by sattva, or actions caused by rajas or wrong knowledge caused by tamas.

A ND-NDE

ASK US

K. NITYA KALYANI

Life cover as a job-seeker

Q. I am 26 years old and live with my mother (47), brother (18) and sister (23). I lost my dad a year ago and I am still studying for my civil services examinations. Our source of income now is my dad's pension and he has not bought any life insurance plan for us. Which plan will be

RISHIKESH NAMDEO THORVE

suitable for us?

A. I assume you are referring to family pension after your father passed away. Without an independent source of income, you will not be able to buy a life insurance policy as the concept of insured value is based on the economic value of your life. You could try to buy a policy based on the assets you own, but insurance companies will need to know you have the income flow to keep paying premiums.

As for your family members, you can buy insurance on their lives if their death will set you back financially. This is called insurable interest. You should also be able to quantify that loss, which determines the sum assured And again, your ability to keep paying

Once you start earning, you can buy a policy on your life and make your family members beneficiaries thus securing their

Higher health cover for seniors

Q. My wife and I have a joint health policy. It has ₹2.5 lakh cover for hospitalisation and ₹5 lakh for personal accident (PA) for me and ₹3 lakh and ₹5 lakh respectively for my

I am 73 years old and she is 72. Given our age, companies are unwilling to enhance the cover. My son has been taking health insurance cover of ₹2 lakh for each of us through his employer.

Can we have the benefit of the combined amount offered under both the policies if the hospitalisation bill exceeds the limits of one of the policies? If so, how do I make the

Alternatively, do you suggest we take a new policy with higher cover from any insurance company, provided they agree, considering

If the total premium is more than ₹50,000, can both of us claim tax benefits, each up to ₹50.000?

M. AJAYA KUMAR

A. Hospitalisation policies are indemnity policies which means you can make claims only against actual expenses as evidenced by the bills. So, you can choose the policy you want to make the claim under and then, for the excess amount, make the claim under the other policy.

As for higher coverage, please opt for it if you can get it. Here are some more efficient and less costly options.

Maintain one of your two policies as your basic hospitalisation cover. For additional cover, replace your second hospitalisation policy with a top-up or super top-up policy. This will cost less for the same sum assured You can read about this in greater detail in Cover Note published in the May 5, 2019 edition of The Hindu. (https:// www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/wantextra-cover-on-your-policy/article27035752.ece).

Ensure that your current benefits, like having completed your waiting period for pre-existing conditions, stay intact. You should be able to appeal to the logic of your

insurance company and talk them into it!

You can supplement this with a critical illness policy and/or a major surgery policy. These are benefit policies, meaning you can make a claim for the sum assured on the occurrence of the insured peril (the diagnosis of the illness or requirement for surgery) with no reference to actual expenses. You can also claim under vour

hospitalisation policy against bills for actual expenses.

income tax benefits are only for the first insured. In this case it is ₹30,000 as both of you are senior citizens. The ₹50,000 deduction you mention is only if dependent, senior citizen parents are covered under the

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit

Shut the door on six home loan myths

Applicants often fall prey to misconceptions and end up making wrong choices while selecting loan options

RATAN CHAUDHARY

Just like any other financial product, there are numerous myths and misconceptions circling around home loans. Home loan applicants often fall prey to these myths and end up making wrong choices while selecting loan options. Here is list of the most prevalent home loans myths that you need to be aware of.

Shorter tenure good

Shorter home loan tenure will always have lower interest cost than longer tenure loan, assuming that their interest rates are equal. However, such tenures would also attract higher EMI vis-a-vis loan with longer tenure.

This can have negative impact on your financial health if it leaves you with little room to invest for other crucial financial goals. Such aggressive repayment tenures without insufficient buffer can also cause you to default on EMIs during financial emergencies. This might have long-term negative consequences on your credit score and your future loan eligibility.

Lowest interest rate

Home loan interest rate is just one of the several factors to be considered while choosing a lender. The other important factors include LTV (loan-to-value) ratio, processing fee and

cessing fee and other charges. loan tenure. For example, a lender ex-Hence, take a more holistic tending lowest interest rate view while comparing various may require you to opt for a loan offers instead of limiting it

that you will need to put in higher down payment money. Some lenders also charge lower interest rate for borrowers availing loans for longer tenure. Similarly, lenders offering lowest interest rate may charge you



Good credit score guarantees loan approval

Credit score is one of the several factors used for evaluating loan applicant's creditworthiness. Other major factors include your age, monthly income, employer profile, job stability, existing EMI commit-

etc. Each of these play a crucial role in assessing your credit profile. Failure to meet any of these criterion will lead to rejection of your home loan appli-

ments, location, property title,

Penalty for prepayment

The Reserve Bank of India has barred banks, NBFCs and HFCs from penalising pre-payment or foreclosure of floating rate loans. This has made all floating rate home loan borrowers free to make pre-payment or foreclose loans without incurring any prepayment penalties.

Even in case of fixed rate home loans, many lenders do not charge prepayment charges if it is made from the borrowfunds.

Fixed better than floating

With home loan interest rates recording consistent decline over the last one year, many home loan applicants consider fixedrate home loans to be a better option to do away with interest rate volatility. However, very few lenders offer fixed rate home loans for the entire te-

Those who do, usually charge higher interest rate for fixed rate home loans to reduce their own interest rate risk. What most lenders usually offer are mixed rate home loans whose rates remain fixed for a pre-specified period, say for the first 2, 3 or 5 years of the loan

After the end of that period, floating rates become applicable. Even the interest rate charged during fixed rate period is higher than interest rate for floating rate home loans at

Direct loan application better

the time of loan sanction.

Most home loan applicants reach out to multiple lenders to shop for best loan rates and other features. However, every time one makes direct loan application with a bank or an HFC, the lender will contact credit bureaus to fetch your credit report and evaluate your creditworthiness. Such lenderinitiated enquiry is considered as hard enquiry and each of them will reduce your credit score by a few points. Multiple loan applications will reduce your credit score multiple times, which might adversely impact your loan eligibility. Instead, visit online financial marketplace to compare various home loan offers available on your credit score, monthly income, job profile and other eligibility parameters. While these marketplaces, too, will fetch your credit score, it is considered as soft enquiry and hence, would not impact your credit score.

(The author is head of home loans, Paisabazaar.com)

Setting the financial milestones for New Year

While bank FDs and recurring deposits are popular among investing goals in 2020, gold and realty are also on the radar

BAVADHARINI K.S.

With New Year upon us, many would like to hit the reset button and start on a clean slate be it joining a gym, starting a diet programme or taking a vacation. Better fi-

nancial decisions will definitely be one among them. It could be as small as maintain-

ing an expense account or starting a SIP with a mutual fund to buying a property. reached out to a few people to find out what they have promised them-

selves on the financial front. Here is what they said:

Bank deposits popular

Unsurprisingly, most of the financial resolutions for 2020 are to increase savings. While there are various investment options available, including mutual funds, equity/debt investments and gold, most people that I spoke to prefer to park their money in banks as fixed deposits (FDs) and recurring deposits (RDs).

Twenty-five-year-old Shiva, who started his working career two years ago, says "I get to save nearly 40% of my income every month in RDs. This year, I want to make a FD for two to three years"

Similarly Srilakshmi Indrase-

nan, a 28-year-old entrepreneur, says "I ensure that I save ₹5,000 to ₹10,000 every month in RDs. For 2020, I want to make FDs whenever I get bulk payments" Further, Srilakshmi also wants to learn

> about investing in stock market and mutual funds this year. But 26-year-old Prashstudent anth, prefers post office fixed depo-

sits for savings. "Bank returns are very low, so I prefer post office deposits. Nearly 50% of the money I get

every month goes to post office deposit schemes. I intend to continue the same this year

Swathi C.S., who has taken a break from work, says "Over 80% of the amount meant for savings goes to RD but this year I would like to make a FD too"

Though she has SIP in mutual funds running, she would rather make FDs as the risks are lower. Anjana, another home maker, too, the same way. "It is easy to liquidate FD than a mutual fund I feel and for this year, I would definitely



Insurer name

Prashanth R.

make a minimum of two FDs of over ₹50,000 each" However, senior citizens like Sundar Ram M. says "For me,

nearly 90% of my monthly income goes to FDs and other debt instruments. I will continue to do the same this year

instead of exploring new investment avenues." Sundaraman does have minor exposure, less than 2%, in equity shares to 'try his luck.' Remember.

while bank deposits are safer than stock markets or

mutual fund investments which are subject to the risk of capital erosion, it is also not the best way to save, especially for the young.

Also, bank FD/RD rates today are nothing to write home about. To maximise returns, investors need to lock-in when the rates are high.

> On the other hand, investing regularly through SIPs in mutual funds over a long -term of 10 years or more, can minimise the risk as well as fetch good returns. Also, on the debt side, investors can consider other instru-

> > **Key features**

Family Floater Option

ments such as PPF, NSC, etc apart from RDs and FDs. Thus, a mix of equity and debt instruments, according to each one's risk appetite, is ideal. For senior citizens though, FDs are a good way to earn

regular income as also to preserve capital. Gold and real estate

on the yellow metal in the New Year given the price appreciation last year. Also, Indians have always had an affinity for

Many want to bet

gold, particularly in the form of jewellery. So, people like Swathi consider it to be a good investment. She says "I pay around ₹3,500 per month to a jeweller so that I can buy an ornament at the end of the period for my wedding anniversary" This is something she wants to continue every

While jewellers' schemes - where you pay for 11 months and the jeweller pays for one month – appear attractive, it is not a secure investment as there have been examples of fly-by-night operators disappearing

Plan names

Activ Health Enhance

Activ Health Enhance (Diabetes)

Activ Health Enhance (Asthma)

Activ assure Diamond with Super NCB and Unlimited Reload

Activ assure Diamond with

Unlimited Reload



Vinothraj J.

Premium(Rs.)

Health insurance premium

with investors' money. The recent incident of Goodwin Jewellers defaulting hundreds of individuals' money is a good example of how unsafe such investments are. It is better to in-

vest gold in other ways, including sovereign gold bonds or as gold ETFs. Vinothraj prefers gold ETFs over gold jewellery. He says, "Stock market seems overheated now, so I have started with investments gold ETFs and will continue investing this year too." Vi-

nothraj has 5-10% of his portfolio in gold.

Since house property prices in certain regions are correcting, some people are willing to consider real estate as an investment option. Srilakshmi, for one, has started saving towards down payment for a property buy in the

near to medium

Other goals For many, taking a

long vacation every year has become mandatory and accordingly, some have started saving for that as

Take Swathi, for

instance. She plans to allocate nearly 20% of income to save for a vacation this year.

Same way, Vinothraj says, "I want to invest in short-term funds to save for a vacation ev-

ery year." Anjana, says she plans to create a fund for vacation. "I want to allocate 10% every month towards vacation fund this year. So, at the end of 2020, I can util-

> vel," she says. People are saving for contingen-

ise it for my tra-

Vinothraj says, "For this year I want to create a contingencies fund for medical emergencies." For now, Vinothraj has health cover offered by his company. "I want to update my health insurance cover for better coverage.'

cies too.

Swathi, too, wants to save up to 20% of the family's income towards contingencies in bank deposits.

"I don't have any insurance but for any emergencies, I would like to set aside some money starting this year."

While it is important to create a contingency fund, it is equally important to take a plain vanilla term cover for your life. Consider buying additional health insurance after you across 30.

LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"True! Money can't buy everything! Especially

Life insurance term plan premium Age: 30 Years, Sum insured- Rs. 1 crore, Cover upto- 70 Years

Insurance company	Plan name	Maximum cover	Annual premium (Rs.) (Male)
Aditya Birla Capital	Ultima Term	85	10,270
Aegon Life	iTerm Insurance Plan	100	9,114
Aviva Life Insurance	iTerm Smart	80	9,007
Bajaj Allianz	Smart Protect Goal	99	8010
Bharti AXA	Flexi Term Plan	85	9,440
Canara HSBC OBC Life	iSelect Term Plan	80	9,491
DHFL Pramerica Life	Flexi e-Term	75	9,403
Edelweiss Tokio Life	Zindagi+ Term Insurance Plan	80	9,309
Exide Life	Smart Term Plan	75	12411*
Future Generali	Flexi Online Term Plan	75	9,427
HDFC Life	Click2Protect 3D Plus	100	12,478
ICICI Prudential	iProtect Smart	99	12,502
IDBI Federal Life	iSurance Flexi Term	80	12,402
India First Life	e-Term Plan	80	8,260
Kotak Life	Kotak e-Term Plan	75	9,558
Max Life	Online Term Plan Plus	85	10,148
PNB Met Life	Mera Term Plan	99	10,148
Reliance Nippon Life	Digi Term	80	11,012
SBI Life	eShield	80	15,070
TATA AIA Life	Sampoorna Raksha	100	9,912
*Exide coverage upto 60 yrs for a	Source:	www.policybazaar.com	

Day Care Treatments NCB Super Premium 8.675 Family Floater option 7,887 8,478 Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage NCB Super Premium with UAR 9.267 Day Care Treatments Health Companion with Health Recharge 8,764 Max Bupa Health Health Companion Hospitalization at Home 9,862 Alternate Medicine 11,747 Go Active Family Floater option Restoration of cover Star Comprehensiv 11,476 Wellness Benefits 11,024 Optima Restore Easy Health Individual Standard 9,613 Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage Easy Health Individual Exclusive Easy Health Individual Premium Day Care Treatments 14,945 Apollo Munich Health Hospitalization at Home Energy Gold 20.036 Hospital Room Eligibility Energy Silver 14,136 Energy Gold with Co pay 17,216 Energy Silver with Co pay 11,316 Hospitalization at Home My:health Suraksha Gold Smart 13,886 HDFC Ergo General Hospital Room Eligibility Alternate Medicine Activ assure Diamond 7,938

Key features Premium (Rs.) Lifeline supreme Day Care Treatments 7,936 Hospitalization at Home Hospital Room Eligibility Alternate Medicine Day Care Treatments ProHealth - Protect 8.979 Hospitalization at Home ProHealth - Plus 10,119 Manipal Cigna Health Alternate Medicine Family Floater Option 8,861 Option 1 - Maxima Restore Supe Day Care Treatments Option 2 - Early Cover 7.985 Share Claim Payment Option 3 - Super care 7,541 Day Care Treatments 10,777 Hospitalization at Home Basic 9,579 Individual Health Guar Hospital Room Eligibilit Wellness Benefits Health Ensure Family Floater Option Hospitalization at Home Complete Healthcare 12,241 Insurance Priviledge Alternate Medicine Health OuBF Basic 4.711 Restoration of Cover Health OuBE SuperSaver 3.820 Hospital Room Eligibility Health QuBE Comprehensive Day Care Treatments Edelweiss Health Insurance 9,801 Edelweiss Health Insurance Gold 16,818 Hospital Room Eligibility Activ Health Enhance (Hypertension) 32,616 Alternate Medicine Activ assure Diamond with Super NCB 8,732 Pre and Post Hospitalisation Individual Mediclaim Policy 12,080 Coverage 8,494 Day Care Treatments 9,287

New year, new you

How to take back control of what you eat, so 2020 becomes a year that helps you adopt better food habits

RUJUTA DIWEKAR

Hello dear readers, wishing you a happy new year. How are you feeling today? Did you sleep well last night? Have you been complying with your exercise plans? Do you have sweet cravings post meals?

How many of us consider the above factors as a reflection of our health? But that's what they are surrogate measures of metabolic health – your hormonal health, cholesterol levels, kidney and liver function, gut health, and much more. However, the public health narrative is almost always about losing weight. Often, at the cost of health gain.

This is why we started the 12-week fitness project in the beginning of 2018. It was to reinforce common sense and put control back in the individual's hands as far as health goes. More than 1.25 lakh people from over 40 countries participated and saw improvements in metabolic health parameters, inch loss from their waists and developed a better relationship with food.

Most importantly, the culturally compliant food and lifestyle modifications were sustainable, as most participants continued following them. It's 2020, climate change is a reality, and we need to go back to eating practices that were good for both people and the planet.

What follows is a cheat sheet to essential learnings from the 12-week fitness project, a fast-track version that will help you reset yourself in 10 days. It is uncomplicated, inexpensive, and more importantly, it's easy.

It is independent of influencers, gadgets and the weighing scale and is about improving health and losing weight as a consequence. Repeat that after me. Because that is exactly how metabolism works and

not the other way around. Most importantly, I promise you, that if you follow this eating plan for the next 10 days, you will report better sleep, less bloating, more energy, and be on the path to losing those inches in a sustainable manner.

Meal plan

1. Eat a banana or any other fresh fruit first thing in the morning. Or soaked almonds or soaked raisins. You can have a traditional homecooked breakfast (idli, dosa, poha) about 45 minutes to an hour after

Why: Fitness is built one step at a time by small but daily actions. The body rewards consistency over anything else.

2.Add ghee to every meal – do this gradually if this is a new habit. So, add ghee to one meal first, then gradually increase. Put in as much as enhances the taste of the food and does not mask it. Also take into account the food item: Rice-dal, roti-

12-Week

fitness

ATUCON

WINE MK



BEFORE WE START

Here are some ground rules Don't start your day with

tea/coffee Eat home-cooked meals as

often as possible Eat your meals without your phone next to you

Structure your meals as follows: Pre-breakfast, breakfast, mid-morning snack, lunch, 4-6 pm meal, dinner

Patronise what grows around you, is in season and is cooked in your kitchen

Performance plan Adopt a few guidelines to get you going and sustain you through this year ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

VEGAN OR KETO?

Recently, a headline declared that research has now proven that eating meat is not dangerous to health and that all these years we have been misled. They had looked at the same data as the studies which said limit meat intake and found their results to be statistically irrelevant. The keto community felt vindicated. On the other hand, the vegan community had lots to cheer about too. The documentary The Game Changers was successfully converting once hard-core meat eaters to plantbased diets. Virat Kohli even tweeted how he felt much better being a vegetarian athlete.

It's really not about meat but eating it in a sustainable manner without it taking a toll on our body or the planet. So, if you are from a traditional meat-eating community, go back to the practice of eating meat sometimes, two to three times a week max and with rice or bhakri and sabzis, just like your grandmom taught you to. And if you are a vegetarian, don't worry about protein, just eat your dals and pulses with rice and bhakris and sabzis, just like your grandmom taught you to.

can have a fresh fruit or a home-

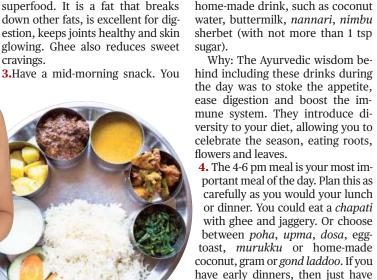
made *laddoo* or *barfi* (traditionally

made as per season, with limited

quantities of jaggery). Or a seasonal/

vegetable will need lower quantities; puran poli, dal baati will need more.

Why: Ghee is the ultimate Indian superfood. It is a fat that breaks down other fats, is excellent for digestion, keeps joints healthy and skin glowing. Ghee also reduces sweet cravings.



some groundnuts with jaggery. Why: I always tell my clients that the key to losing weight lies in what they eat between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., a time when most of us are the most hungry and also the most careless in our eating. By eating something wholesome in the evening, you can eat a light dinner. This is the makeor-break meal, this decides whether you will have long-lasting fitness or whether it will fizzle out in the next

5. For dinner, eat rice with *sambar*, rasam or dal and any vegetable you want to add. For the rice, pick handpounded or single-polished rice, instead of brown rice for your every-

couple of weeks.

Why: This is easy to digest, and a complete meal. Rice and dal also improves sleep quality. It is suitable for people of all kinds of constitutions according to Ayurveda (vata, pitta and kapha doshas).

Rujuta Diwekar's The 12-week Fitness Project is published by Juggernaut Books

Do consult a physician before beginning any diet, especially if you have a medical condition

RESEARCH **MATTERS**



Eat well now, see better later

Unhealthy dietary patterns may not lead to just obesity and heart disease. There may also be a link to age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a recent study in the British Journal of Ophthalmology, has found. AMD impacts the retina with age, blurring central vision. The incidence of late AMD was three times higher in those whose diets included a high intake of processed and red meat, fried food, dessert, eggs, refined grains, high-fat dairy, and sugar-sweetened beverages. Previous research has suggested that a high dose of antioxidants may slow the progression of AMD.

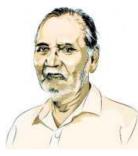
Beware of the health food blogger The refined-sugar-free recipes of health

food bloggers were nutritionally analysed in relation to their sugar and fat content. The researchers found that 80% of the recipes of the four bloggers picked "contained more fat than a Mars bar and 70% contained more fat than a popular online cake recipe, while 25% of the recipes contained over half of the recommended daily sugar intake as advised by the SACN (the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition) and the WHO (the World Health Organization)." The researchers concluded that while the platform was useful, the recipes did not conform with dietary guidelines.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

The Parsi link with Delhi

The community's association with the city dates back to Akbar's time, culminating in the establishment of the Anjuman, a repository of its culture



R. V. SMITH

The Parsis have a certain mystique about them. I realised this when I met Bapsybano Pavry, the only Indian Marchioness who had married the Marquess of Winchester. The interview took place when she was on her way to Tehran to meet the Shah of Iran, Mohd Reza Pahaivi, in 1967 to plead with him for the restoration of the Parsi fire temples. Most of these were demolished with the advent of Islam.

The Parsi origins go back to the Iranians who ruled as early as 3000 B.C. though the religion propagated by the prophet Zarathushtra flourished in Iran until the defeat of the Sassanian king Yazdegard III by the Arabs at the battle of Nihavand in 641 A.D. The community was persecuted and fled to India, settling down in Gujarat, from where they made their way to Bombay and other areas, coming to north India some 500 years ago, though some think it was much earlier.

The Parsi association with Delhi dates back to the time of Akbar, when Dastur Meherjirana of Navsari, the spiritual



Repository of history The facade of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

learned Parsi where invited to Akbar's capital, Fatehpur Sikri, where they took part in religious discourses with Hindu, Iain, Muslim and Christian scholars. It can be conjectured that Parsi buildings must have

been in existence at Agra and Delhi even in those times, but no trace of them remains now. However, an inscription bears testimony to the fact that the site of the old aramgah (cemetery) in Delhi was acquired by Jamsetjee Cavesjee Jussawala in 1869. This link in the Parsi connection with the Capital grew with the formation of the Parsi Anjuman in 1925. In 1913 there were hardly 30 or 40 Parsis in Delhi; there are now about a 1,000.

leader, impressed the empe-

ror with his piety and know-

ledge. Thereafter, other

Just as one leaves Delhi Gate and enters Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, a signboard with the words 'Delhi Parsi Anjuman' greets the eyes. Behind the board in a compound are the Muhgusi Parsi Dharamshala, or rest house; and the Bhiwandiwall (community) Hall, located within the premises of the Anjuman. It also houses books on Zoroastrianism, its history and culture, and the Kaikhusuru Palonji Katrak Dar-e-Meher or Fire Temple.

There are three kinds of temples: Atash Benram, Atash Adarm, Agvary or Dare-Meher. There's also the Atash Dadgah or the household fire in every Parsi home. The first fire temple in India was consecrated in 790 A.D. at Sanjan from the *alat* (instruments) brought by the Parsis from Khorasan. Hence, the importance of Delhi's only Fire Temple.

Every day when the liturgy is performed at the Fire Temple, the names and deeds of the great saints and kings of Iran are remembered. As the early morning breeze blows in from the Yamuna, the beautiful dawn prayer *Hosh-Baam* is recited. The opening lines, 'Through Asha most high, Asha most pure', seem to merge with the first rays of the sun, for it is the sanctity of light that

the temple personifies. In a way it reflects the glory of Ahura Mazda, the supreme deity. Ahura means Lord, and Mazda, the wise or one full of light – the first and the last. Along with Ahura Mazda there are six other Ahuras, explains a Parsi worshipper at the temple. These are his six angles, who are also known as the six cardinal virtues, through whom only Ahura Mazda can be worshipped. This is borne out by the Avesta, the sacred scriptures and the Gathas.

The importance of the Fire Temple can be gauged from the fact that Parsis prefer to put their dead bodies in

the Towers of Silence so that birds devour them. To bury them would be to defile the earth; burning would pollute the fire, the most sacred of all elements. The fire in the Atash Temple is never extinguished, reveals the worshipper. It is considered regal, with a crown hanging over the cauldron, three feet in diameter and four feet high. The fire in it is fed by a priest five times a day and on special occasions with wood.

In places like Delhi and Agra (where there is no Tower of Silence). Parsis have aramgahs, in which the dead are laid to rest. These places are named after theirs heroes like Rustam, Sohrah and the greyeyed Zal, whose names are also recited every morning when the Parsi prayers are held with great solemnity and the strict participation of only community members.

Incidentally, Bapsybano's marriage was a disaster. William Paulat never consummated it. He had an affair with the James Bond creator Ian Flemming's mother, and the British aristocracy did not take kindly to her either. The Marchioness died in 1995, at the age of 93, in Bombay, where her father, Khurshidji Pavry, had been Head Priest.

The writer is a veteran chronicler of

Art from the heart

Five artisans from Bangladesh highlight the craftsmanship of Nakshi Kantha on garments, at the Dastkari Haat Crafts Bazaar

MADHUR TANKHA

Shwettaj Jahan's stall in Dilli Haat, has a green fan made of bamboo and intricately woven with thread. It looks like a craft from the Northeast of India, but the jewellery designer clarifies that it is the work of a Rohingya refugee. "The girl who worked on this was able to get the desired result as her hands are soft," she says. Shwettaj, who has in the past gifted a sari to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, trained a group in design and weaving at a workshop. She helped them make trinkets, bracelets and fans that appeal to an urban audience.

"I am finally showcasing what they make there. We are facing a humanitarian crisis right now. My intent was to provide them with livelihood opportunities. I got funds from the United Nations," says this young designer, whose grandfather hailed from West Bengal, before they migrated to what is now Bangladesh. Her assistant Mohammad Arhan, though lives in Daryaganj.

This is the 34th edition of the fortnight long Dastkari Haat Crafts Bazaar at Dilli Haat that commenced on Friday. This year, Jaya Jaitly, president of Dastkari Haat Samiti, has





Dedicated to the cause (Top) Shwettaj Jahan works with Rohingya artisans; Tahira Begum with fish motifs in the background * SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

invited Bangladesh, carrying on the tradition of showcasing a neighbouring country's craft tradition, in a bid to foster people to people con-

In focus is the craftsmanship of Nakshi Kantha, a traditional Bengali tradition that involved stitching discarded pieces of cloth and bits of old clothes to make quilts. "In earlier times, when Bengali women got married they would do Nakshi Kantha on a razai. Even in those days, they were recycling, using torn pieces to make one piece," says Veena Sikri, convenor of the South Asia Women's Network and former professor at Jamia Millia Islamia, who was invited as a guest on the first day, when artisans were introduced. She explains that Kantha is the stitch, while Nakshi refers to the motifs: fish, lotus, elephants and wild flowers. "In our part (West Bengal),

there are more floral patterns, whereas there (Bangladesh) the fish is the dominant motif," she explains. At Dilli Haat, there are bedsheets, scarves and saris, some with contemporary geometric patterns, others with traditional motifs.

Tahira Begum, a middle-aged artisan shows the contours of the Hilsa on one of the bedsheets. She's measured the distance between each fish using one handspan.

"It's such painstaking work that four artisans have to be involved to complete one bedsheet, with just the leaf motif," she says, On January 14th, prototypes of bamboo baskets, recycled jewellery, hand bags with Nakshi Kantha – jointly created by Indian and Bangladeshi artisans will be on display.

At Dilli Haat, Aurobindo Marg; opposite the INA Market, on until January 15

A ND-NDE



A movement that's gaining momentum, (below) Sangeeta Bahl • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK,



Flip your calendar, it's Veganuary

This January movement encourages people to go vegan for 31 days. So should you sign up?

SWETA AKUNDI

When Sangeeta Bahl summited Mount Everest in 2018 at the age of 54, to become the oldest Indian woman to do so, it was a matter of great joy. One niggling desire remained, however: the next summit she would peak, she vowed, would be as a vegan.

In July last year, she came

close to fulfilling that wish. Although she was beaten by the weather before she could climb to the peak, Sangeeta spent 21 days on Mt McKinley in Alaska as a vegan and can't wait to do it all over again. "My message is that it is possible to stay strong and get all the proteins you need from a plant-based diet. Mountaineering is no easy task, and if I can do that while consuming

seeds, nuts and legumes, then the idea that vegans are weak is quite a fallacy," she says, adding her digestion has improved and she feels more active than before.

That is the reason Sangeeta is the face of Veganuary, a month-long movement that encourages people to go vegan for 31 days, in January. It was started in 2014 in UK by Matthew Glover and Jane Land, gaining momentum each year with support from celebrities such as Joaquin Phoenix, Paul McCartney and Evanna Lynch. The idea is that for something to become habit-forming, it needs 21 days.

Having spread to 179 countries so far, this is the second time it's being celebrated in India. This year, The Vegan Samooh, a collective of vegan activists, is organising it.

What is Veganuary?

Outreach is the major focus of Veganuary, and just as important is changing the image of who a vegan is. "The issue is vegans are today looked upon as part of a cult," says Akshita Kuk-

ganuary are those worried about the impact of dairy and meat industries on climate change.

Much like how Veganuary is celebrated all over the world, in India too, The Vegan Samooh has teamed up with over 60 establishments, cosmetics and restaurants in seven cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune and Goa, to offer discounts on vegan products.

Recently, Akshita also organised a trip to an animal sanctuary in Delhi, where a vegan buffet was held, and at the same time, people could interact

with rescue chicken, goats and cows. All this, she says, is an attempt to be inclusive, build a community, and get rid of the 'elite' tag. "The idea is that people make the connection between veganism and ethics themselves," she says, adding that they'd like to change the image of vegans being pushy people.

30 days or more?

How sustainable is it though? Ontario resident Dev Vajaria explains how he could not keep up with his vegan lifestyle when he would visit India, "because of the limited availability of dairy substitutes like soy and almond milk." But things are changing in terms of 2019 participation numbers for Veganuary, India was the third country, after the UK and USA, and Mumbai the fifth city. Akshita points out that many Indian dishes are vegan by default, whether it's rajma-chawal up North or idli, dosa and *upma* in the South. She says that some people see veganism as a western concept. "But a big part of The Vegan Samooh is to go back to our Indian roots of shakahar (plant-based diet)."

This year, the movement has had a growth spurt among the health-conscious, thanks to the Netflix documentary The Game Changers. A report by Veganuary UK says that globally nearly 49% of the participants listed health as a reason to go vegan.

Founder of Bengaluru-based Right Living, dietitian Anupama Menon, says it is about making sure you have both complete and incomplete proteins. The latter is available in vegan products, but eggs, fish, dairy and meat is a rich source for the former. "Incomplete proteins are basically those that are lacking in some amino acids. Rice for instance, misses out on lysine. So you need to have it with dal, to get the complete protein." Similarly, you need to find replacements for other nutrients such as iron, calcium and Vitamin B12.

She reminds us though that shifting to being vegan means giving up food groups that your body is used to, a shift it is likely to resist. It is important then, to pay attention to your gut health. If you have food allergies because of which you can't eat peas, quinoa, certain legumes, almonds, gluten or certain oils, by going vegan you will be further limiting your nutrient sources. "If it has to become a sustainable lifestyle, you have to know if it is working for you as an individual, no matter what the studies on plant-based diets say."

Q&A

Does every headache have to be related to some eye problem? My daughter is in Class XII and of late has been complaining of a headache. She has her **Board exams coming up** and I feel she's stressed and anxious. Could that be the reason? Do I need to get her eyes examined immediately or can it wait for a few more months?



It is possible the stress associated with a very demanding examination system is the cause of such 'stress'-related headaches, not uncommon in this age group. Rarely does intense reading and work strain the ocular accommodation tissues, aggravating or manifesting a latent refractive error, causing a headache. Migraine, or vascular headache is also common in girls of this age. The lack of proper rest, an imbalanced diet, the poor intake of fluids, can all exaggerate the headache.

Though very uncommon, some brain-related conditions can be a cause. Although your daughter is unlikely to have any serious eye disease, we recommend seeing an eye doctor, who will be able to exclude these possibilities and suggest simple remedies. Since it does not take long for a complete eye examination, do prioritise an immediate visit to the eye doctor, so that the entire family is stress-free to face the examination.

Please discourage analgesic tablets and caffeine-containing beverages, which is treatment worse than the disease itself.

Does the prolonged use of eye drops for tired or dry eyes cause any side effects I should know of?

■ Most mild to moderate dry eyes are treated by tear substitutes. When these drugs are used without preservatives even for prolonged periods, they do not cause adverse effects. Your eve doctor may prescribe cvclosporine or mild topical steroids if dry eyes are associated with inflammation. These drugs need to be discontinued once inflammation subsides and are not to be used for a long period of time without medical supervision.

I had a baby two months ago. My husband works abroad and has not visited us yet. I live with my inlaws, am stressed out and have been terribly sleep deprived. I experience pain on my upper eyelids a lot. Does it indicate bad health of the eye?

Sleep deprivation and stress are probably contributing factors and upper lid pain need not necessarily indicate bad health. However, sleep deprivation can contribute to dryness or eye surface abnormalities due to the lack of lubricating function of the eye lids. This causes roughness of the eyes and pain or discomfort.

You could undergo a routine eye evaluation by an eye doctor when time permits and have him prescribe preservative-free tear substitutes for relief. Until then, gentle massaging over closed lids or cold compresses over closed eye lids can provide comfort. Though rare inflammation of the lids, styes, could also be a cause of upper lid pain.

Dr R Krishnadas is Senior Medical Consultant, Glaucoma Services, Aravind Eve Care System, Madurai

Nothing in this column is intended to be, and is not, a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please seek independent advice from a licensed practitioner if you have questions regarding $\overset{\cdot}{a} +$ medical condition. Email at mp_health@thehindu.co.in

POOCH CAFE







PEANUTS









HAGAR THE HORRIBLE





reja, part of The Vegan Samooh,

who is organising inclusive pot-

lucks and parties to recolour

that perspective. "We want peo-

ple to realise that vegans can

have fun. It's not all about prot-

esting, though that is a big part

her team organised a vegan-

themed eco-conscious New

Year's party in Delhi. "We also

wanted to bring together vegans

and zero-waste activists through

this," she says. A significant por-

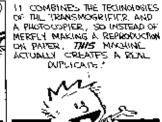
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Under Veganuary, she and

CALVIN AND HOBBES









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To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

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January 7, 2020.

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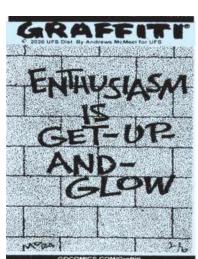
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE













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A ND-NDE

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Cloud computing, AI, robots, and social media marketing are already with us. How many graduates have equipped them-

selves for a seamless absorption

into the new jobs? According to Aspiring Minds, an objective assessment organisation, a mere 26% of engineers are employable. Analytical reasoning, financial and marketing analysis, essential for the vast data being transferred through Cloud, has rendered the large number of engineers and MBAs, unfit for employment. The assessment concludes with the observation that "our students are not ready for the next decade".

What is it that has changed, and why is it necessary that students prepare for the New Machine Age with alacrity?

I spoke with R. Venkatesh, Chief Scientist, TCS, Pune and asked him this question. He replied, "New age innovations are going to dominate businesses and college curricula because jobs will centre on advances in Artificial Intelligence, machine learning and Internet of Things - or Internet of Everything which consists of all the webenabled devices that collect, send and act on the data collected from their surrounding environments, using embedded sensors, processors and communication hardware. Obviously, new jobs are set to replace uncreative, boring jobs where those who work on projects do

up for the applications for easily available data (on Cloud) and creatively exploit technology to provide entertainment. For instance, New Age

Students have to prepare themselves industriously to meet the requirements of the New Machine Age

not understand the entire project."

Jobs will be created to increase profits in a digital economy by working with a handful of employees – as in Amazon, Google, Facebook and Instagram using technology and data imaginatively. Employees will be expected to use critical thinking to develop automation for decision-making or develop

the arts (such as paintings and symphonies) can be creatively produced with machines by highly imaginative employees, and sold on portals in large numbers at little cost. A new way of marketing is

growing for selling products. This is called social media marketing, an important and growing skill which requires MBAs with a knowledge of machines, the web, finance and marketing to sell products in big numbers. Cloud computing has become a key part of enterprise digital transformation strategy. Cloud services are projected to become a \$300 billion business by 2021. Employer interest in positions related to Cloud will rise manifold. In the past three years, jobs in Cloud computing, Cloud infrastructure, and Cloud architecture have risen by 108%. Employer demand everywhere in the world is outpac-

ing the number of qualified can-

didates available. The U.S., with some of the most advanced curricula, is struggling to find an adequate number of qualified employees for the jobs in the new age. To expect that India, where colleges offer a generally outdated curricula, will be able to produce well-qualified graduates and have faculty who can teach courses in the new areas, is unrealistic.

What does this mean? Will our graduates be rendered jobless, especially those studying computer science and engineering, although it appears that no stream is likely to remain unaffected by the machine revolution?

What can students do? They must develop a life-long 'education mind set', and urgently begin to train themselves to meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. On researching, I found many online courses on these subjects - some costly, some affordable and some free. Students will have to search for

courses of their interest, enrol for them and master them without delay. The new employer is keen on employees who are well-equipped in the different machine technologies, as well as possess skills such as inventive-

ness and creativity

"AI can take on repetitive and mundane tasks, freeing up humans for other activities," said Mike Rollings, Vice President Research at Gartner. "Rather than have a machine replicating the steps that a human performs to reach a particular judgement, the entire decision process can be re-factored to use the relative strengths and weaknesses of both machine and human to maximise value generation and redistribute decision making to increase agility."

These requirements heighten the need to be trained in communication skills, critical thinking, soft skills and the global language of business - English. "They are precisely the skills robots can't automate," writes LinkedIn Learning Editor Paul Petrone in a blog.

The writing on the wall is clear. Students will have to prepare themselves industriously for these challenges, or experience joblessness. The New Machine Age is not going to spare anyone as it is going to affect every aspect of business and society.

The writer is a former Professor of English, IIT Bombay

On the threshold of change

These trends will gain importance in the coming decade



RACHIT JAIN

Education is all set to go through a massive change in India in the coming years, which aims at reducing the gap between what students study and industry requirements. Technology will serve the objectives of the New Education Policy that aims at making education affordable for all, including free education for girls, developing world-class industrial workforce that strengthens educationindustry partnership, holistic education that ensures literacy, life skills and employability, and helping deserving students with financial aid. A look at some trends that will thrive in 2020 and beyond.

Augmented Reality

AR is being used in education, especially to impart knowledge of abstract lessons that are difficult to grasp. AR changes the timing and location of learning, which keeps dullness at bay that usually settles in an environment that students are subjected to, on a daily basis. AR helps students break from the mould of passive learning, and perform in virtual practices by engaging them with highly interactive exercises.

Gaming

Video games and educational simulators teach skills such as computer programming and flight training, and breaks down trick algebra and trigonometric questions into engaging practices. It also helps students imbibe technical skills with reality games that provide an immersive experience through a rich combination of digital technology, real-world game play and strong narrative.

Interest-based learning

Here, students pursue subjects that they are inclined towards. For example, if a student is more into math than science, then he/she will be encouraged to learn more about that subject so that he/she can excel. This type of education taps into the inherent passion that the person has for a particular

Social and emotional learning This helps improve student behaviour as it is all about ingraining a positive outlook towards society and its members including fellow students, teachers and parents. It fosters better motivation towards learning, as well as deeper commitment to school activities. By making everyone feel part of the group, it encourages them to participate and share ideas and their

Self-learning

beliefs.

Technology has enabled users to study at their own pace and grasp content with personalised learning. This removes the pressure of matching up to their peers and instances of rote learning, as students are not studying only for exams but for better comprehension of subjects. Many institutions have come up with courses and certification programmes that are exclusively taught online, which enables students to view recorded lectures, participate in live sessions and study from any location.

The writer is founder and CEO,

Standing between over-confidence and over-caution, 'maybe' calls for openness, curiosity and humility



NIVEDITA DAS NARAYAN

If you followed MasterChef Australia 2019 on television, you would have watched with awe, the youngest ever winner, Larissa Takchi, who bagged the quarter million dollar prize money and the coveted MasterChef Australia 2019 title. The two contestants who fought head-to-head till the last second of the threeround grand finale were equally resilient, talented, creative risk-takers throughout; yet some key aspects were fundamentally different on the day it mattered the

The difference was most apparent when, at the finish line, Larissa's surprise at winning was as big as Tessa's (her opponent) at her loss. Both contestants had come up through the long, gruelling stages of the contest on a trail of innovative, audacious and unpredictable flavours and combinations. That set them apart from the rest, as they beat professional chefs in the preliminary rounds, riding on their penchant for the unique. Yet, in the finale, Tessa's hunger to seal her win seemed to dim her innovative streak, as she settled for safer, crowd pleasing, predictable recipes, while Larissa continued to back herself with a slew of audacious and intuitive flavour ideas. Yes, the possibility of it backfiring loomed right till the end of the four-hour contest.



high stakes for those very

Spirit of winning

A winner's momentary surprise at winning steers me to what I call the attitude of 'Maybe' in success - an attitude that is unafraid to put everything on the line for creativity and excellence and by that very act is tentative of a win, because creativity is subjective. The winner in the above reference opts out of playing safe and follows her own wild and imaginative spirit; she honours the quality that had got her there and car-

ries it through to the big win. How does 'maybe' look on ground?

Standing between overconfidence and over-caution, 'maybe' calls for openness, curiosity and humility. It makes us learn to approach 'knowing' and 'certainty' in a tentative spirit, particularly in fluid environments. This is not the tentativeness of capability, but the smart wisdom to overlook the pressure of certainty that our brain demands in conclusive moments. A pressured mind poses roadblocks

taking. 'Maybe' gives space to the spirit of possibility and experimentation, reinforced by tons of patience and self-belief.

'Maybe' is non-linear

'Maybe' has the power to distil and distance us from our noisy, overstretched minds. Going into a challenge ready to excel, yet being open and relenting, is more forgiving than a constricted headspace. 'Maybe' is an open and unbound internal setting that potentially replaces the linear pressure points of the mind.

In linear settings, we tell ourselves story after story, believing we know how life should proceed for our success and well-being. Yet, how can there be just one way for us to win or manifest our goals?

This realisation guides one straight into the rewarding potential of 'maybe'.

The writer is a life coach, blogger and writer who simplifies the patterns and archetypes she encounters at work and in life. nivedita@ lifealigncoaching.com

BREW A CAREER

Ask yourself if you have what it takes to be a coffee hot shot?

■ MADHUMITHA SRINIVASAN

Coffee is one of the second most con- The perfect cup: Sherri Johns (left) sumed beverages in the world. Now, imagine the economic potential in that one fact. According to E-Imports, in the U.S. alone, about 50% of the population drinks coffee in some form, and independent coffee shops equal \$12 billion in annual sales.

This throws the door open to multiple career opportunities from production to retail. To deal with this demand, Araku Coffee, a speciality, certified organic luxury global Indian coffee brand, has been offering courses covering various skills.

The Coffee Skills Programme consists of six different modules: Introduction to Coffee, which is available at one level, and five specialist mo-



teaching a class.

dules: Barista Skills, Brewing, Green Coffee, Roasting, and Sensory Skills. Each of the specialist modules is available at three different levels -Foundation, Intermediate, and Professional, with points attached at every stage. Each course (ranging from one to three days) offers a certificate. A diploma is offered once students garner 100 points.

Baristas to boardrooms

Araku Originals Coffee Campus has now become the first in the country to receive global accreditation as an SCA (Speciality Coffee Association)

Premier Training Campus Hvderabad.

"Coffee is a complex beverage and there's so much that goes into creating a good coffee - the perfect soil, the perfect terroir, the perfect climate, and meticulously carrying out each step from seed to cup. This makes way for a lot of opportunities that people can explore when it comes to a career in coffee," explains Sherri Johns, Head Judge, and Mentor, Araku Coffee, who teaches Barista and Sensory at the campus currently. "Our team at Araku Coffee consists of agricultural scientists, coffeeologists, organic farming experts, quality controllers, coffee mentors, master roasters, master brewers, baristas, and so on... so there are a lot of possibilities that one can explore when it comes to a speciality coffee like ours.'

Speaking about the future of the industry, Johns feels it is really promising. "Independent shops and cafes are springing up throughout the country with Bengaluru being the hotbed of activity. The expansion of the coffee industry has a lot to do with people becoming increasingly aware of what they're consuming and looking for better coffee than they've been drinking in the past."

Introduction to Coffee A foundation course suitable for everyone from enthusiasts to beginning professionals. **Barista Skills:** Practical skills you need behind the espresso bar: learn how to set your grinder, milk techniques and latte art, health and safety, customer service, and basic business practices. **Brewing:** Provides hands-on learning on grind profiles, brewing methods, measuring coffee strength and charting a coffee's extraction **Green Coffee:** Coffee production, processing, grading, shipping, storage, arrival at the

destination, as well as coffee contracts and portfolio management. Sensory Skills: Investigates the way we perceive what we taste, how to evaluate coffee's natural characteristics, and implementing this knowledge in business.

Roasting: Includes roast cycle, roast levels, identifying defects, the physical changes that beans undergo during the roasting process, as well as workspace

SCHOLARSHIPS

■ Tata Steel Millennium **Scholarship**

Tata Steel Limited, Jamshedpur has announced this scholarship for children and spouse of workers. supervisors and officers of Tata Steel Limited. ELIGIBILITY: Children and spouse of all existing workers, supervisors and officers including those separated under ESS job or job/MSS/EFBS/FBS/FSS and who were transferred on the roles of JUSCO, can apply. Applicants must be enrolled in a full-time or regular engineering, medical and professional courses from a college specified in the scheme

PRIZES AND REWARDS: Under "Category A", selected 120 B.Tech, M.Tech and medical students will get financial award up to ₹50,000 per annum. Under "Category B" 240 awards of ₹24,000 per annum will be given to the students studying in selected colleges. **DEADLINE:** January 9

APPLICATION MODE: Online http://www.b4s.in/ edge/ TSM1

■ Incentive for meritorious students in class/board/ university examinations

Department of Telecommunications, Government of India has announced this award to support the study of meritorious children of employees of the

Department of Telecommunication who are toppers in the annual examination of school/ board/university. **ELIGIBILITY:** Children of the employees of DoT who are Indian citizens, studying at school, college or university level and have secured highest grade in all subjects can apply for this award. PRIZES AND REWARDS: The selected first position holders will get incentive up to ₹2,000; second position holders will get ₹1,000 and third position holders will get ₹600.

DEADLINE: January 31 APPLICATION MODE: Online http://www.b4s.in/ edge/

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

EAR SHOT

ASHOK RAJAGOPALAN



...........

THE HINDU DELHI

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020



medium?

ARUNA SANKARANARAYANAN

Gargi has to endure a twohour commute to college each way. As she has to board a bus, the metro and then walk for 15 minutes each way, she prefers to listen to audio books instead of reading them. This way, her hands are free and she can even listen while standing in an overcrowded bus. She is grateful she is majoring in English because most of the books on her reading list are easily available in the audio format unlike textbooks in other subjects. Moreover, she is really pleased that she saves time.

With audio books and podcasts gaining popularity vis-à-vis printed or e-books, students may benefit from understanding the pros and cons of each medium. In an article in The New York Times, cognitive psychologist, Daniel Willingham compares the two media and

ETCETERA

MoU signed

Birmingham City University has collaborat-

ed with a Mumbai-based Ronkel Media Edu-

cation Institute, which will help their stu-

dents gain real-world experience by working

on motion picture productions. It will also

provide opportunities to study aspects of

the media, arts and entertainment overseas

as part of exchange study programmes.

Umpteen studies have pointed out that humans are poor multitaskers. When our attention is thus fragmented, our comprehension is likely

Audio scores over the print format when it comes to prosodic cues, that includes pitch, tone and tempo. Statements like "I simply love it here" can be interpreted as a genuine praise or as mockery depending on

tone can be conveyed auditorily, it's harder in print and the reader usually relies on contextual cues. So, do audio books aid comprehension as compared to print?

Put to test

The answer is not so straightforward. In one study, researchers compared performance of students on a science quiz. Half the participants heard the material on a podcast while the other half read a printed version. Even though both groups spent the same amount of time with the study material, the print group outperformed the audio group.

Willingham points out that the content was fairly dense and hard to grasp. What do we readers typically do when we encounter difficult subject matter? Typically, we pause and slow down our reading and may even reread bits to clarify our understanding. While going back and forth is easy to do with print, the audio format doesn't easily lend itself to this type of comprehension monitoring.

Additionally, in print, the text can be divided with headings and subheadings and keywords and concepts may be bolded to highlight them. These organisational markers are not available in the auditory format. However, Willingham wagers that as people get more used to audio books, their comprehension in this format may increase with practice.

When we listen to audio

books, we may engage in other tasks like driving or cooking. However, umpteen studies have pointed out that humans are poor multitaskers. When our attention is thus fragmented, our comprehension is likely to be compromised. Willlingham says that you will get the gist, not subtleties." So, while audio books may entertain us on long commutes, they may not replace reading in the conventional sense just yet.

Thus, based on your purpose and what you wish to derive from your reading experience, choose your medium wisely.

The writer is Director, **PRAYATNA** arunasankara@gmail.com

Take care, folks!

While student life gives you cherishable memories, it can also impact one's health



BACKPACKER'S GUIDE

USHA RAMAN

If I may ask, what was your New Year's resolution? Or perhaps, you are among those who has discarded this tradition of making promises to oneself that begins with the big lift of good intention and ends with the slow slide of regret? I have reached the age of forgetting, where I can happily blame unkempt resolutions on the erosion of short-term memory. So at this point, almost a week into the new year, if such a thought existed, it has conveniently slipped out of remembering

range. However, one of the advantages of reaching this point in life is that one can dispense advice freely (and unashamedly) to those who will listen, and even to those who won't, confident in the belief that one has acquired at least some measure of clarity over the years.

Self-care

So what advice can I pull out of my rather worn backpack at the start off this year? What new resolution can I ask you to consider, having myself given up on the practice of resolving a long time ago? Well, here is

one that I think will stand you in good stead: resolve to take better care of yourself and your health physical. emotional. mental.

Perhaps that sounds selfevident. After all, isn't selfinterest the guiding principle of life, for most? Selfcare, however, while being in one's interest, is quite different from self-interest. When you are young, you get caught up in many activities that are driven by passion, curiosity and ambition, as well as the appetite for adventure and learning. You are eager to feed your body, mind and soul with all manner of exciting things, experimenting and exploring to the fullest - and no doubt, that's the best part of being a student, and being

Little wonder then, that you occasionally go to class sleepy, having survived several nights on a few hours of rest, or that you are distracted by mid-morning hunger pangs, having had no time for breakfast or having overdosed on instant noodles and multiple mugs of tea the previous night. A few days of this can be great fun, but more than that can show on you over time. Some of the downs come from the indifferent quality of food and

young.

less-than-perfect hygiene in hostels, but a fair contribution also comes from simple disregard for that aspect of life, that most young people think is an old person's concern: health. But, and this is not backed by citable evidence but by simple observation, I find that my campus clinic is more often visited by students than by the older faculty.

Balancing act

So, even as you participate in all the excitement that college and particularly, hostel life can offer, do be mindful of your well-being. Balance out the fast food days with some good food days, making sure you always have a bottle of water at hand. Even as you stretch out the days and nights in conversation and hard work, find a few times a week when you get a full night's sleep. Even as you gather many fair-weather friends to laugh with, make sure you have at least one or two you can cry with as well. And even as you sharpen your mind with deep conversations, learn to pay attention to the signals of your own body and psyche.

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to be compromised.

concludes that each has its own pluses. Knowing how the two formats stack up against each other in different contexts can help readers or listeners pick the one that best meets their needs.

the tone employed. While

Learning easy

London Learning Centre, Delhi, in collaboration with Ansal University, Gurugram, has launched a certificate programme for adults between 18 and 32 years with additional learning needs. The one-year programme is set to commence today at the Ansal University campus in Gurugram. The course will focus on aspects such as employability, social communication and language skills. Admissions are open. For details, contact 98184 82996.

Building leadership skills

Listen to the words

The International Institute of Sports Management (IISM) has announced the IISM Edge programme, which aims to develop leadership skills and teach the 'Art of Losing' and dealing with failure. The duration of the course is nine months, beginning from February and classes will be conducted on weekends. Edge will delve into topics such as critical thinking, active and passive listening, conflict management, time and stress management, and so on. Admissions are now open. https://iismedge.com/

NIRF RANKING - METHODOLOGY NEEDS REVIEW

Asish K Bhattacharyya

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In 2016, the federal government introduced National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), which publishes ranking of HEIs in India. NIRF ranking will complete five years of its existence in 2020. It is high time to review whether it provides information on relative academic quality of HEIs operating in different domains.

The stated objective of the NIRF ranking is to galvanise Indian institutions towards a competitive environment and to communicate the quality of scholarship of the faculty and students and the student-caring culture of the institutions.

NIRF awards score out of 100 marks for ranking B-schools. It uses the following parametres:

Student strength (6 per cent weight), faculty-student ratio (9 per cent weight), ratio of faculty with Ph.D. (3 per cent weight), faculty experience (3 per cent weight), expenditure per student (9 per cent weight), publications per faculty (12 per cent weight), citation per paper (6 per cent weight), citations in top 25 percentile (6 per cent weight), earnings from consultancy etc. per faculty member (6 per cent weight), percentage of students placed (8 per cent weight), percentage of students completed the programme (4 per cent weight), median salary in campus placement (8 per cent weight), outreach and inclusivity (10 per cent weight), and stakeholders' perception (10 percent weight).

OS BRICKS ranking uses the following eight parametres: academic reputation based on the QS survey of academics (30 per cent weight), employer perception based on the OS survey of graduate employers (20 per cent weight), faculty-student ratio (20 per cent weight), percentage of faculty with a Ph.D. (10 per cent weight), paper per faculty (10 per cent weight), citations per paper (5 per cent weight), international faculty (2.5 per cent weight), and international students (2.5 per cent weight).

B-school's reputation depends on the respect for its faculty members in the academic community for their scholarship, and the quality of teaching and grooming process, which is captured by recruiters' perception. NIRF assigns 10 per cent weight to the combined perception of peers and recruiters, which is quite low. NIRF should consider increasing the weight.

NIRF uses input per student and placement data as a proxies for measuring teaching quality. Placement data fails to capture the outcome in an environment in which obsolescence of skills and knowledge is fast and skills required for new jobs is not known. In this environment, reputed B-schools like IMTG aim to create a drive among students for life-long learning, blossom students' creativity and develop skills for 'unlearning-learningrelearning', in addition to providing skills and knowledge for the immediate job. Teaching outcome can be measured by the performance of graduates employed for at least three to four years, which is not captured by the placement data. Therefore, placement data cannot be used as a proxy for measuring the

QS uses faculty-student ratio (20 per cent weight) as a proxy for measuring teaching commitment and student support. NIRF assigns only 9 per cent weight to faculty-student ratio. It uses other measures - student strength, faculty experience, expenditure per student, in addition to faculty-student ratio, as

proxies for student-support. It is difficult to establish the correlation between those three parametres and teaching quality. For example, increase in expenditure per student does not necessarily increase the students' learning experience. Similarly, it is not clear how the teaching quality is impacted by the student strength in the B-school. There is an inherent problem in calculating expenditure per student. Moreover, B-schools submit total expenditure incurred during the year, which forms the basis for calculating expenditure per student. This gives undue advantage to those B-schools which offer large number of educational programmes, in addition to PGDM/MBA. This distorts the ranking.

QS uses the ratio of faculty with a Ph.D. (10 per cent weight) as a proxy for measuring the ability of the institution to attract quality faculty. NIRF assigns 3 per cent weight, which is quite low.

NIRF assigns too much weight (20 per cent) on campus placement, which fails to capture the teaching quality in the current business environment. Moreover use of 'median salary' as a parameter distorts the ranking, as the same depends on the batch size and therefore, is not comparable among various

One significant shortcoming of NIRF ranking is that in calculating the faculty-student ratio and resources available per student, it considers the sanctioned and approved intake and not the actual intake. Similarly, in calculating the research paper per faculty member, it considers the number of faculty members required based on the sanctioned intake, assuming faculty-student ratio of 1:15. Roughly, parametres carrying 48 per cent weight are measured using the sanctioned intake. Use of sanctioned intake (and not actual intake) for calculating values of parametres distorts the relative ranking based on the faculty and student scholarship. Perhaps, the assumption behind using the sanctioned intake is that seats in a B-school remain unfilled only because of the lack of interest among students to pursue their education in that B-school. That assumption is not correct for B-schools like IMTG, which is the most sought after B-schools in India.

B-schools like IMTG prefer to retain sanctioned seats in excess of the target intake for future expansion, as AICTE does not sanction additional seats to an existing B-school if, its existing sanctioned intake is 300 or more. AICTE should be liberal in sanctioning additional seats to B-schools in order to reduce the gap between sanctioned intake and actual intake. B-schools will be confident that it will get approval for additional seats if they present their case before AICTE with conviction. AICTE should close B-schools that produce unemployable graduates in order to improve effectiveness of its regulatory and oversight functions.

NIRF does not disclose the exact formulas for calculating scores even after publishing the ranking. NIRF should publish the formulas for the sake of transparency and to help B-schools to check back their own score and improve their performance.

NIRF should review the methodology. NIRF and NBA deserve praise for completing the huge task well in time for consecutive four years. However, the initiative will go waste if the ranking loses credibility among the wider stakeholder groups.













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India-Sri Lanka first T20I abandoned

Water seepage leaves wet patches on the pitch, forces the umpires to call off the contest

SL IN INDIA

Y.B. SARANGI

The opening match of the India-Sri Lanka three-match T20I series at the ACA Stadium, Barsapara, was abandoned without a ball being bowled on Sunday due to wet patches on the pitch.

much-anticipated contest, the first match in a T20 World Cup year, had a bizarre end as rain water seeped through the covers and on to the wicket.

The abandonment dampened not only the spirit of thousands of enthusiastic fans who had hoped to witness an international match after more than a year, but also for the two teams which were planning to experiment in the run-up to the big event in Australia in October.

It also delayed Jasprit Bumrah's comeback after an injury layoff. Things looked bright when India captain Virat Kohli, who left out Manish Pandey, Sanju Samson, Yuzvendra Chahal and Ravindra Jadeja from the playing XI, and elected to field, keeping in mind the dew factor.

Untimely downpour

However, rain lashed the ground 15 minutes before the scheduled 7 p.m. start. The cricket-starved fans, who could not make it to the ground on time, thronged

Inspection time: Shikhar Dhawan, Rishabh Pant and Virat Kohli have a look at the pitch. • RITU RAJ KONWAR

the venue even as it continued to pour for about an

The spectators roared, expecting the match to start when the covers came off, but their wait got longer as the umpires - Anil Choudhary, Nitin Menon and Virender Sharma - were concerned about the wet patches at one end on the pitch. After Kohli had had a look at the damp patches, seemingly due to leakage, the inspec-

tion was pushed from 8.15 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Kohli, along with Rishabh Pant and Shikhar Dhawan, made another visit to the middle when the umpires made their inspection at 9 p.m. There was another inspection half-an-hour later and about five minutes after the scheduled cutoff time of 9.46 p.m., the match was abandoned.

Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi, CM Sarbananda Sonowal, Tripura CM Biplab Kumar Deb and BCCI secretary Jay Shah, who had come to witness the match, must have felt disappointed.

Assam CA clarifies

Assam Cricket Association secretary Devajit Saikia said the match was abandoned due to heavy rain. "The official reason is there was rain. There were two spells of heavy showers," he said. When pointed out that television

commentators blamed it on the wet patches on the pitch, Saikia said, "I have no idea because I have not spoken to the curator or the groundsmen. Once I speak to them, I will be able to know if there were any lapses. There was a heavy shower till 9.15 p.m."

Interestingly, the covers were taken off at 7.50 p.m.

The groundsmen used a vacuum cleaner, a steam iron and a hair dryer in their efforts to dry up the track

Sibley puts England in command

Anderson completes his 28th five-wicket haul in Tests

ENGLAND IN SA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

A gritty unbeaten 85 from opener Dom Sibley ground down South Africa's bowlers as England took control on the third day of the second Test against South Africa at Newlands.

Sibley, playing in only his fourth Test, came in during the morning session after James Anderson had picked up the last two South African wickets to finish with five for 40 and give England a first innings lead of 46.

By the close, Sibley was still there and England had reached 218 for four, stretching its overall lead to 264.

Sibley's 85, his first Test half-century, came off a painstaking 222 balls in just under six hours and included 13 boundaries. It was slow going but it consolidated England's advantage after Anderson and Ben Stokes combined to secure an important first innings lead.

Anderson completed his 28th Test five-wicket haul an England record - and Stokes caught last man Anrich Nortje to set an England Test record of five catches by a fielder.

England captain Joe Root made 61 off 98 balls before being caught at slip off Dwaine Pretorius shortly before the close. Dom Bess, who suffered a golden duck in the first innings, came in as night-



Five and five: Ben Stokes takes his fifth catch and James Anderson his fifth wicket. • GETTY IMAGES

watchman and survived until the last ball of the day when he was adjudged to have gloved a bouncer from Nortje to wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock, thus collecting a 'pair' Stokes held his fifth catch

of the innings, all taken at second slip to dismiss last batsman Nortje off Anderson's bowling. It was the first time in 1,020 Test matches that an England fielder held five catches.

SCOREBOARD

England — 1st innings: 269. South Africa - 1st innings: D. Elgar c Root b Bess 88, P. Malan c Root b Broad 5, Z. Hamza c Stokes b Broad 5, F. du Plessis c Stokes b Anderson 1. H. van der Dussen c Stokes b Curran 68, Q. de Kock c Anderson b Curran 20, V. Philander (not out) 17, D. Pretorius c Stokes b Anderson 4, K. Maharaj c Sibley b Anderson 4, K. Rabada c Buttler b Anderson O, A. Nortje c Stokes b Anderson 4; Extras (b-4, lb-2, nb-1): 7; Total

(in 89 overs): 223. Fall of wickets: 1-26, 2-38, 3-40, 4-157, 5-191, 6-200, 7-207, 8-215, 9-215.

England bowling: Anderson 19-6-40-5, Broad 18-6-38-2, Curran 13-3-39-2, Bess 27-3-62-1, Stokes 9-0-34-0, Root 3-1-4-0.

England - 2nd innings: Z. Crawley c de Kock b Rabada 25, D. Sibley (batting) 85, J. Denly c Pretorius b Nortje 31, J. Root c du Plessis b Pretorius 61, D. Bess c de Kock b Nortje O; Extras (b-14, lb-2): 16; Total (for four wkts. in 79 overs): 218. Fall of wickets: 1-28, 2-101, 3-

South Africa bowling: Rabada 13-3-41-1, Philander 12-6-12-0, Nortje 15-2-36-2, Pretorius 12-3-34-1, Maharaj 27-8-79-0.

Lyon has the Kiwis in a spin

Debutant Phillips, stand-in skipper Latham put up some fight

NZ IN AUSTRALIA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Australia took a commanding 243-run lead over plucky New Zealand in the third Test in Sydney on Sunday, looking set for a clean sweep of the series.

The Australians dismissed the Black Caps for 251 to lead by 203 runs on first innings before batting a second time in a bid to build an overwhelming total with two days remaining.

Charmed life

Off-spinner Nathan Lyon captured five for 68, while Kiwi Test debutant Glenn Phillips top-scored with a charmed knock of 52. Phillips, who only flew in on the eve of the Test as cover for a team weakened by a virus



Homing in: Neil Wagner is about to be bowled by Nathan Lvon. • AFP

outbreak, was dropped twice and given a reprieve when caught off a no-ball.

Lyon bowled Will Somerville and Neil Wagner for

SCOREBOARD

Australia - 1st innings: 454. New Zealand — 1st innings: T. Lathamic Starc b Cummins 49. T. Blundell b Lvon 34. J. Raval lbw b Lyon 31, R. Taylor lbw b Cummins 22, G. Phillips b Cummins 52, B-J. Watling b Starc 9, C. de Grandhomme run out 20, T. Astle (not out) 25, W. Somerville b Lyon O, N. Wagner

b Lyon O. M. Henry st. Paine b Lvon 3: Extras (b-1, lb-4, nb-1): 6; Total (in 95.4 overs): 251. Fall of wickets: 1-68, 2-117, 3-117, 4-145, 5-163, 6-195, 7-235, 8-237, 9-237.

Australia bowling: Starc 21-1-57-1, Cummins 22-6-44-3, Pattinson 16-3-58-0, Lyon 30.4-10-68-5, Labuschagne 40-8-0. Head 2-0-11-0. Australia - 2nd innings: D. Warner (batting) 23. J. Burns (batting) 16; Extras (lb-1): 1. Total (for no loss in 16 overs):

New Zealand bowling: Henry 5-2-11-0, de Grandhomme 3-1-Wagner

Leo Carter smashes six sixes in an over

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Zealander Leo Carter emulated the likes of Ravi Shastri and Yuvraj Singh when he became the seventh cricketer in the world to hit six sixes in an over, here on Sunday.

Carter achieved the feat during his side Canterbury Kings' win over Northern Knights in New Zealand's domestic Twenty20 tournament Super Smash.

The 25-year-old left-hander smashed left-arm spinner Anton Devcich six times over the Hagley Oval boun-

dary during his stunning unbeaten knock of 70 off 29 balls. Carter is the seventh in world cricket to record the feat across all formats.

He joins West Indian great Gary Sobers, Shastri, South African Herschelle Gibbs, Yuvraj, Worcestershire's Ross Whiteley and Afghanistan's Hazratullah

Carter also became only the fourth batsman to achieve the feat in T20 cricket. The others are Yuvraj (2007), Whitely (2017) and Zazai (2018).



Running riot: Leo Carter joined an elite group on Sunday.

Medvedev blunts Isner's serve

Ruud claims another big scalp

ATP CUP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

World No. 5 Daniil Medvedev blunted big-serving John Isner in an almost flawless straight sets victory at the ATP Cup on Sunday.

The US Open finalist hit 24 winners and made just two unforced errors in the 6-3, 6-1 rout in one hour to ensure Russia clinched the tie against the United States ahead of the doubles.

Unbeaten Russia is top of Group D, while winless United States is all but out of contention for the knockout stages in Sydney.

Earlier, emerging 21-yearold Casper Ruud continued his giant-killing run with a 6-2, 6-2 victory over world number 12 Fabio Fognini on Sunday, before Italy recovered to down Norway.

Ruud levelled the Group D tie in Perth in just 66 minutes and then backed up alongside Viktor Durasovic in the deciding doubles only to be thwarted by Fognini and Simone Bolelli, who prevailed 6-3, 7-6(3).

Ruud, whose father Christian is Norway's captain, has led his team's surprising



Hanging tough: Russia's Karen Khachanov overcame United States' Taylor Fritz in three sets. • REUTERS

run, starting the season spectacularly after upsetting not only Fognini but bigserving American John Isner in his first wins over top-20

The results:

In Sydney: Group C: Bulgaria 2 bt Moldova 1 {Dimitar Kuzmanov bt Alexander Cozbinov 6-1, 7-5; Grigor Dimitrov bt Radu Albot 6-2, 6-3; Dimitrov & Alexandar Lazarov lost to Albot & Cozbinov 6-4, 7-6(4)}.

Britain 2 bt Belgium 1 {Cameron Norrie lost to Steve Darcis 6-2, 6-4; Dan Evans bt David Goffin 6-4, 6-4; Jamie Murray & Joe Salisbury bt Sander Gille & Joran Vliegen 6-3, 7-6(7)} In Brisbane: Group F: Australia

3 bt Canada O {Alex de Minaur bt Denis Shapovalov 6-7(6), Auger-Aliassime 6-4, 6-2; Chris Guccione & John Peers bt Auger-Aliassime & Adil Shamasdin 3-6, 7-6(3), [10-8]}

Germany 2 bt Greece 1 {Jan-Lennard Struff bt Michail Pervolarakis 6-4, 6-1; Alexander Zverev lost to Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-1, 6-4; Kevin Krawietz & Andreas Mies bt Tsitsipas & Pervolarakis 3-6, 6-3, [17-15]}.

In Perth: Group D: Italy 2 bt Norway 1 (Stefano Travaglia bt Viktor Durasovic 6-1, 6-1; Fabio Fognini lost to Casper Ruud 6-2, 6-2; Fognini & Simone Bolelli bt Ruud & Durasovic 6-3,

Russia 2 bt United States 1 {Karen Khachanov bt Taylor Fritz 3-6, 7-5, 6-1; Danlil Medvedev bt John Isner 6-3, 6-1; Khachanov & Medvedev lost to Austin Krajicek & Rajeem Rav

Sushree spins India-B to thrilling win

SPORTS BUREAU

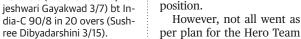
India-B edged out India-C by four runs in an exciting contest of the women's T20 Challenger at the Barabati Stadium on Sunday.

Batting first, India-B posted a below-par 94 in 20 overs. Richa Ghosh chipped in with 25 while Shikha Pandey made 15. Left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad returned with remarkable figures of 4-1-7-3 for India-C.

In reply, India-C faltered against some accurate bowling from young offspinner Sushree Dibyadarshini (three for 15). The other off-spinner Anuja Patil and left-arm mediumpacer Tanuja Kanwar took a wicket each

On Monday, India-A takes on India-C.

The scores: India-B 94/8 in 20 overs (Richa Ghosh 25, Raieshwari Gavakwad 3/7) bt Inree Dibyadarshini 3/15).



Day of mixed results for Hero Goncalves manages best finish at 12th

DAKAR RALLY

K. KEERTHIVASAN AL WAJH (SAUDI ARABIA)

It was a day of mixed results for Hero MotoSports Team at the Dakar Rally here on Sunday.

The opening day saw the

Hero riders mix caution with

aggression given that it is going to be a long and arduous rally on difficult terrain. Paulo Goncalves finished the stage in 12th place while

Sebastian Buhler and C.S.

Santosh came in 31st and

Goncalves rode in his trademark style, cautious to begin with and then raking up some good pace.

Buhler, on the other hand, had to make a small additional run to catch a waypoint, while Santosh had his first taste of the Saudi sands with a couple of minor crashes. But, overall, he managed to climb a few notches from his starting

However, not all went as



crashes to finish relatively well. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

as Joaquim Rodrigues suffered an unfortunate mechanical problem that forced him to forfeit the stage. He will try for a re-start on Monday – pending permission from the competitors' department and recovery of the bike – becoming the first competitor of the rally to avail the newly introduced 'wild-card' rule.

As per the rule, he will now be out of contention for overall placing, but remain in competition for stage

After a gruelling race, San-

tosh said: "I was really excited to see what the Saudi terrain has to offer. It was a really fast stage and had some technical sections as

The results (provisional rank-

Stage 1: Two-wheeler: 1. Toby Price (Red Bull KTM Racing) 3h 19m 33s; 2. Ricky Brabec (Monster Energy Honda Team) +02:05s; 3. Matthias Walkner (Red Bull KTM Racing) +02:40s.

(The writer is in Saudi Arabia at the invitation of Hero MotoCorp).

Espanyol holds 10-man Barcelona

Wu Lei's late strike secures a dramatic draw in Catalan derby

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Barcelona was pegged back by La Liga's bottom club Espanyol as Wu Lei struck late to secure a dramatic 2-2 draw in a thrilling Catalan derby.

Luis Suarez appeared to have inspired another turnaround at the RCDE Stadium on Saturday after he cancelled out David Lopez's opener with a deft half-volley before digging out an exquisite pass for substitute Arturo Vidal to finish.

But a red card for Frenkie de Jong with 16 minutes left gave Espanyol renewed hope and Chinese forward Wu emerged the hero, firing past stand-in goalkeeper Neto to rescue a point in Abelardo Fernandez's first game in charge. "De Jong's sending off

hurt us," said Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde. Barcelona remains top of

the table but only on goal difference, its two-point advan-

tage removed after Real Madrid earlier clinched an impressive 3-0 win away at

Atletico Madrid moved up to third after beating Levante

It will be hoping for another rescue mission from new coach Abelardo, who took over Alaves with six points from 13 games in 2018 and led it to 14th.

Barca now switches its attention to the Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia next awaits if Real Madrid beats Valencia in the last four and it can overcome Atletico.

But Valverde will have

much to ponder after defensive problems again undermined his team against the league's bluntest attack.

Impressive start

Real Madrid made a more impressive start to its year as it picked apart a robust Getafe side, even without the suspended Sergio Ramos and injured Eden Hazard.



Clean finish: Wu Lei underlined Espanyol's numerical advantage with this late strike for a share of points against Barcelona. • GETTY IMAGES

Coliseum Alfonso Perez, first pressuring Getafe's David Soria into a missed punch and an own-goal, before himself heading home a cross from Toni Kroos.

instigator of two goals at the

Luka Modric added a third deep into injury-time after a brilliant first-time pass by Gareth Bale had set Madrid away on the counter-attack.

The results: Sunday: La Liga: Granada 1 (Montoro 24) bt Real Mallorca O; Real Sociedad 1 (Willian Jose 22) lost to Villarreal 2 (Trigueros 58-pen, Cazorla 72). Serie A: Brescia 1 (Balotelli 18) lost to Lazio 2 (Immobile 42-

pen, 90+1). La Liga: Saturday: Valencia 1 (Gomez 27) bt Eibar O: Getafe O lost to Real Madrid 3 (Soria 34og, Varane 53, Modric 90+6): Atletico Madrid 2 (Correa 13, Felipe 18) bt Levante 1 (Roger 16); Espanyol 2 (D. Lopez 23, Wu 88) drew with Barcelona 2 (Suarez

Friday: Real Valladolid 2 (Unal 8. 79) drew with Leganes 2 (Braithwaite 4, Mesa Quevedo 13); Sevilla 1 (Nunez 60-o.g.) drew with Athletic Bilbao 1 (Capa 15).

50, Vidal 59)

Mohun Bagan in cruise control

Jumps to the top of the table; Real Kashmir fails to fire



No trouble: Mohun Bagan's players, in white, made light of the conditions and Real Kashmir's home advantage in a dominant display on Sunday. ■PTI

I-LEAGUE

UTHRA GANESAN

The stands were full and noisy, the queues outside the TRC Turf Ground stretching far and everyone waiting for Real Kashmir FC to get going on Sunday.

It never did. Barring a few isolated attempts at the goal and some desperate shooting and heading, the local favourite in its second home game appeared collectively off-colour against a betterprepared Mohun Bagan. It went down 2-0 for its first loss this year even as the visitor, after complaining about the conditions, the artificial turf and even the practice time, completed a dominant victory to top the I-League table with 10 points from five

RKFC so far had managed to get off to good starts this season, stumbling in the second half but managing to get away with draws in its first two games before winagainst champion Chennai City FC. On Sunday, the team seemed to have left its plans back in the hotel.

Busy and clueless

Bagan began well, attacking early on and creating quite a few chances but couldn't find a break-through. Between them, Joseba Beitia in the middle and Ashutosh Mehta on the right, kept the RKFC defence busy and clueless. In fact, almost every attack that Bagan mounted had the imprint of one of

Despite physical superiority, RKFC appeared lost for possession and space. An on-field scuffle early on did not help matters. Papa Babacar Diawara, Bagan's new Senegalese signing playing his first game, came close to putting it ahead in the 17th minute but, with only the RKFC goalkeeper to beat in front of an empty goal, hit

Kallum Higginbotham was the only RKFC player who appeared to find a way to push the ball forward but could only find Mason Robertson out of position. When he was in position, Mason ended up heading wide. Danish Farooq was offtarget upfront and Subhash Singh had an off-day at the

back, Mehta outflanking him

at will. The second half was far more balanced. Coach David Robertson clearly had made himself heard during the break. There were more coordinated attempts from RKFC, more passes upfront and more breaking through

The game opened up and Bazie Armand had the best chance for RKFC in the 50th minute but sent the ball sailing over

Deadlock broken

Gnohere Krizo came off the bench and tried to leverage his height but found a match in Bagan defender and compatriot Daniel Cyrus. It finally took a Mehta throw-in, headed by Cyrus and volbreak the deadlock in the 71st minute.

Three minutes later, substitute P.M. Britto put through Nongdamba Naorem for the team's second goal. RKFC kept trying to pull one back but there appeared no sense of urgency and a complete absence of planning in its shooting.

Robertson later admitted that Bagan managed to fend off the early attacks that RKFC is known for. He added that while his team did grow in the game, Bagan always controlled the proceedings.

The host next plays Punjab FC here in what is likely to be a grudge match after the latter refused to travel last season. It would also be a chance for Robertson's boys to put Sunday's disappointment behind.

At Srinagar: Real Kashmir FC O lost to Mohun Bagan 2 (Joseba Beitia 71, Nongdamba Naorem

The results:

At Vasco: Arrows 1 (Vikram Pratap 42) drew with Neroca FC 1

Kashmir grows on Robertson

For three years, David Robertson has been coming to Srinagar as coach of Real Kashmir. It was like jumping into something completely "raw and unique", he says, coming from the rarefied environs of the English and Scottish Premier Leagues.

Since that first visit in January 2017, when he almost quit and went back, the stays have only become longer to the extent of it becoming a "second home" for the Scotsman.

"Everything was strange but the owners, Shamim and Sandeep, convinced me to come back and I am glad they did. From a few weeks to a couple of months to almost eight months this time,

it has been increasing and now when I go back, I miss Kashmir," Robertson said in an interaction here.

From winning the Second Division I-League to finishing third in the top flight last season, RKFC has gone from being underdog to contender in just three years. A lot of credit for that, the players feel, goes to the coach who brings a lot of positivity.

Handling turbulence

That positivity, Robertson admitted, was important when it came to handling the players during their recent outings amidst the communication clampdown.

"We had just arrived in Kolkata (for Durand Cup) and weren't sure of how the local players were going to



David Robertson. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

get there. For the first time in their lives they couldn't contact their homes. They didn't know when they would go back and needed support. I know the Indian culture is of coaches being tough on players but I had to be different and let them know the coach had their back," Robertson explained.

It was tough to keep the players motivated through the five months of pre-season even as the state continued to face struggles but Robertson prefers to look at the positives of the extended period of staying together on the road. "We played a lot of ISL teams – five of them – in our pre-season and it was great preparation for the season. But we were just relieved to get the first game out of the way!

"The game against TRAU was, in a way, the first time the players were under pressure. They are a promoted side and we were expected to win. We started well but they fought back in the second half for a draw. We thought we would lose, but the players rallied around."

Ankita gears up for season in Australia

Hopes to play all Grand Slams and break into the top 100

KAMESH SRINIVASAN NEW DELHI

Ankita Raina is off to Australia, to compete in the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Bendigo, and prepare well for the Australian Open in Melbourne.

The country's No. 1 woman singles player, the 26year-old Ankita, ranked 180 in singles and 170 in doubles, is keen to lift the profile of Indian tennis.

"I hope in future, we take tennis to the next level the way our badminton players have done," she said, when contacted.

It may take some doing and a lot of time to match the spread and progress of Indian badminton, but Ankita is focused on her job, to improve upon the last season.

"I am very happy with what I could do last season. I think it has been one of the best years so far, even though winning the Asian Games medal in 2018 was very special. Last year had its



Ankita Raina. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

own highlights. I think, playing all the four Grand Slams and winning against Grand Slam champion and finalist, Samantha Stosur and Sabine Lisicki is still fresh in my memory," said Ankita.

She has simple goals for

"The goal this year is to play the main draw of all the four Grand Slams and eventually break into the top 100 in WTA rankings," she said.

Support team

To that end, Ankita has been able to strengthen her team. Yes, she will have a team for the Australian Open.

"I have a good support team this time at the Australian Open. I am grateful that after all these years of struggle of travelling alone, I can finally travel with my team. Coach Hemant sir and Ketan sir, hitting partner, are travelling with me," she said.

Hemant Bendrey has been guiding Ankita for many years while Ketan Dhumal will ensure that she is well prepared for her matches.

Even as she is thankful for the support and guidance, Ankita believes that she needs to believe in herself and her game to get to the

She had closed the season nicely in the professional circuit by winning the singles

title in the \$25,000 event in Solapur.

"Honestly, in the last couple of weeks, I am feeling that it is very close and everything just needs to come together, to click in any of the big events. Now that I have gained all the experience in the pro circuit, I feel one just needs to stay positive regardless of the results and keep working," she said.

Ankita is understandably elated about Sania Mirza returning to the professional circuit after the birth of her son, and into the Indian Fed Cup team.

"Our chances of qualifying in the Fed Cup this time look very high, considering the doubles will be stronger with Sania's come back. She comes with the aura. Everyone is inspired by her. So, her presence will give us an added advantage. Last couple of times, it wasn't easy for us when we were not able to clinch the decider dou-

Soosairaj — a lethal weapon in ATK's armoury

NANDAKUMAR MARAR

Michael Soosairaj's cartwheel celebration behind the Mumbai City FC goalpost, following his first and ATK FC's second goal in the 2-0 win on Saturday, revealed a lot about the freedom given to the players by chief coach Antonio Habas to express themselves. Coming off the bench in the 34th as replacement for midfielder Pronay Halder, who had scored the opening goal, the 25-year-old showcased his skill with a quality goal.

Talking into the television cameras at the Mumbai Football Arena, Soosairaj was asked about any advice from Habas when the substitution decision was taken. "The coach asked me to focus on my game. He told me my role was to defend, but gave me

the clearance to do what I wanted when I had the ball in front. I scored, we won the match and I am delighted." The win took his team to the top of the ISL table.

Cut, bend, curl

The goal may have been a move played thousands of times in his mind, visualising what he would do with the ball at his feet and having time in the goalmouth to execute the plan. The cartwheel celebration was as instinctive as his scoop to the right corner, turning his body in time to ensure the ball travelled the distance. "I always used to try this in practice. I cut it (the ball), bent it and curled it. It is my favourite

There was no way for MCFC captain and custodian Amrinder Singh to read his rival's mind, the next best thing possible was to react,



King Michael! Soosairaj was in the zone as he beat Mumbai City goalkeeper Amrinder Singh hands down. • SPORTZPICS/ISL

flinging himself across to get his hands behind the ball. However, the ball looped beyond blocking range and lodged gently in the net. The

home team players around Soosarai were trying to comprehend what had happened even as the goalscorer ran into space behind the post and

took off in celebration. Since switching from Chennai City FC in the I-League and Iamshedpur FC in the ISL, the midfielder has found a place in II games so far this season and has scored twice. He is shaping into another big weapon in an ATK strike force that is

sharp and skilful. The coach focused on what went right on a night of celebration for the travelling

ATK fans. "I am happy with the performance and discipline. I will admit Mumbai (City) had opportunities to score goals in the second 45 minutes, but we created chances as well." Converting the opportunities is what separated ATK from MCFC. Modou Sougu, Mohammed Larbi, Diego Carlos got within sight of target for the hosts, fired wide or into Arindam Bhattacharja under the bar.

All set for KIUG launch

The Games will be held from Feb. 22 to March 1

SPORTS REPORTER

Bhubaneswar is all set to host the first edition of the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) from February 22 to March 1, 2020. The KIIT University will be venue for the event which will feature around 4,000 athletes from 80-100 universities.

The games, organised by the Government of Odisha in association with the Sports Authority of India, Association of Indian Universities, National Sports Federation and Indian Olympic Association (IOA), will witness competitions in 17 disciplines: individual events - archery, athletics, boxing, fencing, judo, swimming, weightlifting and wrestling; Team events: badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table tennis, tennis, volleyball,



Behera. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

rugby and kabaddi. Odisha has hosted a bunch of big-ticket events in the past few years, including the 2017 Asian athletics championships, 2018 men's hockey World Cup, 2019 Commonwealth table tennis championships and the Hockey Olympic Qualifiers in November 2019.

Ahead of the launch event

on Monday, Odisha's Minister of Sports and Youth Services Tusharkanti Behera said the KIUG will provide a perfect platform for the young athletes to gain National recognition.

"It is an event of a massive scale involving youth and we expect a seamless and successful execution. We are confident that the participants will demonstrate the highest level of sportsmanship and return to their States as ambassadors for KI-UG and Odisha. We also feel that the athletes who shine here will get a chance to elevate their careers to the next level through recognition and thereby better access to guidance and training," Behera told The Hindu.

The Khelo India University Games 2020 will be telecast on Doordarshan.

'Australian Open delay valid if smoke haze worsens'

Bushfires continue to blaze across large sections of the southeast

World No. 2 Novak Djokovic said he was concerned that smoke might cause some problems at the Australian Open later this month as bushfires continued to blaze across large sections of the southeast on Sunday.

Hundreds of fires in New South Wales and Victoria have killed at least 24 people and destroyed more than 5.25 million hectares (13 million acres) of land over the last few months.

Smoke from the blazes has also resulted in hazardous conditions in Sydney, where the final rounds of the inaugural ATP Cup will take place next weekend, and Melbourne, where the year's first tennis Grand Slam gets underway on Jan. 20.

Seven-time Australian Open champion Djokovic, who is playing in the ATP



Cup, said he hoped the crisis would "dissipate" soon but that an action plan would be needed to avoid any impact on the health of players if it

"If it continues same way and if the quality of air is affected in Melbourne or Sydcreate some rules about it." he told a Brisbane news conference in the early hours of "It's tough for them be-

ney, I think Tennis Australia probably will be forced to

Sunday morning. cause ... there's a lot of different things involved. But health concern is a health concern for me and for anybody."

Disruptions

The smoke has so far caused the most disruption to the sporting calendar in Canberra, where a Twenty20 cricket match was abandoned on Dec. 21 when conditions became too hazardous to continue.

An ATP Challenger/ITF Futures tennis tournament scheduled for next week in the capital was moved to Bendigo, while on Sunday the city's ACT Brumbies rugby team announced they would be moving their preseason training camp to Newcastle.

The twice Super Rugby champion made the decision after their training ground at the University of Canberra was closed indefinitely "due to hazardous air quality".

'On the right path for Slam glory'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Elina Svitolina believes the progress she made in 2019 will help her achieve her ultimate goal of becoming the first Ukranian woman to win a Grand Slam singles title.

Speaking ahead of the season-opening Brisbane International, the 25-year-old insisted she was ready to take the next step after promising so much over the past five

Svitolina has long been touted as a future Major champion, but despite reaching a career-high World ranking of three and winning 13 titles on the WTA tour, until 2019 she had never reached the semifinal stage at a Grand Slam.

However, last year she made the semifinals at both Wimbledon and the US Open and she said this showed she was on the right path.

"Making semifinals definitely brought me the belief



Major champion, but only reached the semifinal stage of a Slam in 2019. • GETTY IMAGES

that I could take one step further," she said.

"I had the chance to play

Svitolina had a mixed year

on the biggest stages and that

gave me lots of confidence at

in 2019. Although she also

made the decider at Novem-

ber's WTA Finals, where she

fell to World No. 1 Ashleigh

Barty, she also failed to win a

title for the first time since

that particular point."

"I think maybe 2019 was tough because there were more sad moments, I would say. But also, it's tough to really understand what's going on because the year is very long," she said.

"You have to lose almost every single week, so you have to take lots of positives somehow, and that's, I think, what I learned from the past moments and try to move Svitolina has brought former men's number eight Marcos Baghdatis onto her

year - that you have to stay really positive in even bad

drew Bettles in a bid to give her game an extra dimension. "As an ex-player, he sees the game from his point and it's something different that I was looking for to add into

coaching team to assist An-

my game," Svitolina said. "For sure we improved massively with Andy for the past years I've been working with him and he knows me

very, very well. "(But) for me it's important to add the small things that can improve my game and that's what I'm looking

Svitolina, who won the Brisbane title in 2018, will open her 2020 campaign against American Danielle Collins.

TV PICKS

Senior women's T20: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 10.45 Ranji trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9 a.m. ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD),

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6 a.m. & 8.30 a.m. Serie A: Sony Ten 1 & ESPN

(SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.; Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 5 p.m., 7.30 p.m. & 10.30 p.m. **BBL:** Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 1.30 p.m. Australia v New Zealand:

3rd Test, Sony Six (SD & HD), South Africa v England: 2nd Test, 2 p.m.

IN BRIEF



'Fourth-decade' Carter makes NBA history

LOS ANGELES Evergreen Vince Carter (42) made NBA history when he became the first player to compete in the league in four different decades in Atlanta Hawks' 116-111 victory over Indiana Pacers. He was drafted in 1998 by Toronto

Akanksha in main draw

SPORTS BUREAU CHANDIGARH

Akanksha Nitture outplayed top seed Karina Rizvanoa of Kazakhstan 6-2, 6-0 to make the girls' main draw of the ITF grade-3 junior tennis tournament at the CLTA Complex on

results (qualifying event, third and final round): Boys: Arnav Pathange bt Heerak Vohra 6-2, 6-0; Sushant Dabas bt Aman Dahiya 7-6 (4), 6-2; Nikita Sidorov (Kaz) bt Sukhpreet Singh Jhoje 6-4, 4-6, [10-6]; Karan Singh bt Yuvan Nandal 5-7, 6-3, [10-5]. Girls: Akanksha Nitture bt Karina Rizvanova (Kaz) 6-2, 6-0: Kanika Siyaraman ht Kayya Khirwar 6-2, 6-2; Lakshanya Vishwanath bt Hannah Nag-

pal 6-0, 6-2; Harleen Kaur

Dhanda bt Anjali Maheshku-

Narendra. Komal and Jyothi win

mar 6-2, 6-4,

SPORTS BUREAU

Mangalore's Narendra Prathap Singh, S.S. Pune's Komal Jagadale and Acharya Nagarjuna's Y. Jyothi picked up their second golds in the 80th National inter-university athletics championships here on Sunday.

The results: Men: 5000m: 1. Narendra Prathap Singh (Mangalore) 14:17.77s [MR, OR: 14:19.39]; 2. Adesh (Mangalore) 14:30.02; 3. Tadvi Kisan (SS Pune) 14:36.77.**110m** hurdles: 1. Elden Noronha (Mumbai) 14.26s; 2. Debarjun Murmu (Mangalore) 14.40; 3. Ronald Babu (MG, Kottayam)

3000m steeple chase: 1. Atul Poonia (Maharaia Ganga Singh, Bikaner) 9:20.03s; 2. Prince Raj Mishra (Lakshmibai National IPE. Gwalior) 9:25.21; 3. Sumit Kumar (Panjab, Chandigarh) 9:28.00.

Women: 5000m: 1. Komal Jagadale (SS Pune) 17:04.13s; 2. K.M. Jyoti (Panjab) 17:04.92;

3. Seema (Punjabi, Patiala) 17:08.03. 100m hurdles: 1. Y. Jyothi (Acharya Nagarjuna, Guntur)

13.03s [MR, OR: 13.72]; 3. Sapna Kumari (Vinoba Bhave, Hazaribag) 13.23; 3. Aparna Roy (Kerala) 13.55. Javelin: 1. N. Hemamalini

(Madras) 48.81m: 2. Monika (Chaudhary Devi Lal, Sirsa) 46.27; 3. Manpreet Kaur (GND, Amritsar) 45.67.

Shot put: 1. Kiran Baliyan (Chaudhary Charan Singh, Meerut) 15.69m; 2. Poorna Raorane (Mumbai) 14.45; 3. Srishti Vig (Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand, Bareilly)

Heptathlon: 1. Sonu Kumari (Lovely Professional, Phagwara) 4640 pts; 2. Rimpy Dabas (Mangalore) 4565; 3. Mariya Thomas (MG, Kottayam)

Mixed 4x400m relay: 1. Calicut (3:24.65s); 2. Mahatma Gandhi, Kottayam (3:27.94): 3. Punjabi, Patiala (3:28.18).

Delhi snatches crucial first-innings lead

Punjab in a spot of bother, having lost four second-innings wickets

RAKESH RAO

Sunday proved to be an offday for Punjab and a productive one for Delhi.

The visiting team snatched a slender, but significant 26run first innings lead and then reduced the host to 44 for four before dark clouds forced a premature end to the third day's play of the Ranji Trophy match at the PCA Stadium here.

Rain forecast

Punjab, just 18 ahead with six wickets in hand, is sure to pray for more intervention from the weather on Monday, when the forecast is for rain after 11 a.m.

In any case, this depleted Delhi side will either get three points for first-innings lead in a drawn encounter or force an outright win, worth a minimum of six points.

Resuming at 266 for four, Delhi surpassed Punjab's 313 with three wickets in hand. Nitish Rana (92, 12x4), like skipper Dhruv Shorey on Saturday, missed a well-deserved century but contributions from Jonty Sidhu (41, 7x4) and Lalit Yadav (39, 6x4) ensured Delhi delivered a psychological blow.

Rana paid the price for playing away from his body and the resultant inside-edge was taken by the wicketkeeper. Sidhu, after looking good for a big knock, was foxed by Arshdeep

At this stage, Delhi was trailing by 39 runs with four



Rubbing it in: Simarjeet Singh pegged Punjab back, picking up two of the four wickets to fall. • FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

wickets in hand.

Lalit and Kunwar Bidhuri soothed Delhi's nerves by adding 31 runs before the latter was caught by the lone slip. Soon, Delhi overhauled Punjab's tally when Lalit sent the ball past the point-boundary.

Eventually, the 26-run lead was handy for Delhi but the fall of early wickets made it look more than a handful for Punjab.

Like in the first innings, Shubman Gill was caught behind but looked clearly unhappy. Fortunately, he did not confront the umpire, Mo-

hammad Rafi, like he did on Friday though he did have a word with the Delhi fielders before leaving the ground. Replays confirmed Gill had

edged the ball. Sanvir Singh, the other opener, failed again. The flamboyant Gurkeerat Mann holed out at long-off and Anmolpreet Singh was bowled off the fifth delivery he faced.

Now in-form skipper Mandeep Singh, a couple of reliable batsmen and weather stand between Delhi and a possible win on Monday.

Punjab — 1st innings: 313.

Delhi - 1st innings: Anuj Rawat c Malhotra b Baltej O, Kunal Chandela c Malhotra b Sanvir 31, Dhruv Shorey c Markande b Pandove 96, Nitish Rana c Malhotra b Baltej 92, Simarjeet Singh lbw b Markande 1, Jonty Sidhu b Arshdeen 41. Lalit Yaday c Malhotra b Arshdeep 39, Kunwar Bidhuri c Lumba b Arshdeep 17, Subodh Bhati lbw b Markande 6, Vikas Mishra b Markande 3, Tejas Baroka (not out) 6; Extras (b-3, lb-3, w-1): 7. Total (in 115.5 overs): 339.

Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-64, 3-186, 4-195, 5-257, 6-274, 7-305, 8-330, 9-330.

Punjab bowling: Baltej 25-3-74-2, Arshdeep 26-5-73-3, Sanvir 18-8-40-1, Markande 26.5-4-77-3, Pandove 11-1-37-1, Gurkeerat 9-1-32-0.

Punjab - 2nd innings: Shubman Gill c Rawat b Bhati 4, Sanvir Singh c Rawat b Simarjeet 11, Gurkeerat Mann c Bhati b Simarjeet 15, Mandeep Singh (batting) 8, Anmolpreet Singh b Bidhuri O, Sharad Lumba (batting) 6; Total (for 4 wkts. in 13 overs): 44.

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-20, 3-37,

Delhi bowling: Bhati 5-0-18-1, Simarjeet 6-0-21-2, Bidhuri 1-0-2-1, Mishra 1-0-3-0.

RANJI SCORES, ROUND 4, DAY 3

GROUP A

At Hyderabad: Kerala 164 & 204/7 in 78 overs (Rohan Prem 44, Vishnu Vinod 44) vs Hyderabad 228 in 76.5 overs (K. Sumanth 111 n.o., Sandeep War-

Mohali: Punjab 313 & 44/4 in 13 overs vs Delhi 339 in 115.5 overs (Dhruv Shorev 96. Nitish Rana 92, Jonty Sidhu 41).

Jaipur: Rajasthan 151 & 243/8 in 95.2 overs (Yash Kothari 41, Ashok Menaria 79, Rajesh Bish noi 49) vs Andhra 257.

Kolkata: Gujarat 169/7 in 65 overs (Priyank Panchal 40, Akash Deep 4/43) vs Bengal. **GROUP B** Vadodara: Baroda 201 & 98 bt

Railways 99 & 101 in 25 overs Points: Baroda: 6 (12),

Railways: 0 (10). Dharamshala: Himachal 175 & 176/3 in 57 overs (Akash Vashist 74 batting, Ankit Kalsi 75 batting) vs Madhva Pradesh 427/9 decl. in 122.4 overs (Rameez Khan 192. Venkatesh

Iyer 55, Gautam Raghuwanshi 64, Pankaj Jaiswal 4/106).

Mumbai: Mumbai 194 & 149 in 50 overs (Sarfaraz Khan 71 n.o., Prateek Jain 4/11) lost to Karnataka 218 & 129/5 in 24.3 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 50, Shashank Attarde 4/52). Karnataka 6 (16), Mumbai 0 (6).

Kanpur: Tamil Nadu 180 in 63.4 overs (V. Ganga Sridhar Raju 45, L. Suryapprakash 51, Ankit Rajpoot 4/60, Saurabh Kumar 5/44) vs Uttar Pradesh 170/9 in 66 overs (Mohammad Saif 77). **Group C**

Ranchi: Jharkhand 259 & 103/4 in 28 overs vs Jammu & Kash mir 441 in 87.4 overs (Suryansh Raina 76, Shubham Pundir 56, Abdul Samad 128, Abid Mushtaq 50 n.o.).

New Delhi: Maharashtra 44 & 147 in 48.1 overs (Naushad

Shaikh 41, Diwesh Pathania 5/ 49, Sachidanand Pandey 5/56) lost to Services 285. Services 7 (14), Maharashtra O (3).

Dehradun: Assam 294 bt Uttarakhand 121 in 42 overs (Mayank Mishra 52, Ranjeet Mali 6/24) & 83 in 35.2 overs (Unmukt Chand 41, Ranjeet Mali 4/27, Mukhtar Hussain 6/ 15). Assam 7 (11), Uttarakhand 0 (0).

Raipur: Haryana 123 & 258 in 72.4 overs (Ankit Kumar 41. Shivam Chauhan 42, Nitin Saini 55. Veer Pratap Singh 4/49) vs Chhattisgarh 119 & 33/3 in 13

Agartala: Tripura 288/6 decl. in 82 overs (Samrat Singha 65, Milind Kumar 105 n.o., Manisankar Murasingh 72) vs Odisha 5/0 in 4 overs. Toss:

Odisha. **PLATE**

Patna: Mizoram 378 & 68 in 31.4 overs (K.B. Pawan 46. Abhiieet Saket 7/12) lost to Bihar 262 in 66 overs (Babul Kumar 85, MD Rahmatullah 58, Taruwar

Kohli 5/78, Bobby Zothansanga 4/92) & 188/4 in 32.4 overs (Indrajit Kumar 98 n.o., Babul Kumar 61). Bihar 6 (8), Mizoram 0 (3).

Porvorim: Manipur 106 & 88 in 42.4 overs (Amit Verma 6/52) lost to Goa 553/5 decl. Goa 7 (23), Manipur O (12).

Mangaldoi: Meghalaya 65 & 63 in 26 overs (Vinay Kumar 5/27, Ashith Rajiv 4/5, incl. a hattrick) lost to Pondicherry 80 & 49/5 in 12.3 overs. Pondicherry 6 (27), Meghalaya 0 (6).

Sovima: Chandigarh 400/6 decl. in 70.3 overs (Arslan Khan 87 Manan Vohra 121 Raman Bishnoi 100, Bipul Sharma 50 n.o., Nagaho Chishi 5/80) vs Nagaland.

Bhubaneswar: Sikkim 274/6 in 68 overs (Yashpal Singh 118 batting) vs Arunachal Pradesh.

Vijay Shankar — as tough as they come



The guide: Vijay Shankar says that he has learnt a lot from Prasanna. • AKHILESH KUMAR

RAYAN ROZARIO

Vijay Shankar has seen freak injuries trouble him regularly, but has battled them all with courage, grit and determination. It probably is this remarkable ability to never give up that has made the selectors hand over the captain's armband to him this Ranji season.

"At times, I have [wondered] why God is so harsh on me. It was probably to test me and make me the stronger person that I am today," he told *The Hindu* in an exclusive chat.

Appreciative of the good times

Lying on the recovery table at frequent intervals can break hearts and careers, but in Vijay Shankar's case it has made him appreciate the good times and make the most of them.

More than anything, he felt that being out of the game was what hurt him the most. "I must have missed a year or so of First Class cricket through injuries. It's a long period, but I have always kept that away and made it a point to come

"I learnt it all from R. Prasanna (current assistant coach). I have seen him play those important knocks early on in my career and I sought his guidance though the Tamil Nadu squad had some big names in the list," said Vijay, whose journey with the State squad began eight years

"The other players did outstanding things, but I must admit that it was Prasanna's special contribution that had an impact on me," he added.

Vijay Shankar, who has hit five hundreds and 15 half-centuries and averages 46, said he always put the team ahead of himself. "I could have got more 100s, but in many of those matches, I had to bat with the tailenders and try and steer the team home.

"Even last year, when I came straight from New Zealand, I reached at 3.30 in the morning and played the match against Punjab. Tamil Nadu was on the back foot at 50 for four, if I remember right, and I got a 75. Against New Zealand, I chipped in a 45 when the team was strug-

gling at 18 for four. 'These knocks gave me more satisfaction than a century. They are memorable to me and that's why I got to play a few more

games for India.' About the way he likes to go about his business, Vijay Shankar said: "I am one who always wants to make my presence felt. I can change a game even with my fielding and I have done that several times," he said.

'Will not change' He revealed that there were quite a few who had advised

him to change his style. "I will not, because it has given me so much happiness. People may come up with lots of ideas, but my muscle memory is tuned to this. But, if my coach (S. Balaji) feels I need to do something, I may think about

it," he said. Tough times never last but the tough ones do, as Vijay Shankar keeps proving time and again.

Smashing Blue completes a hat-trick

HYDERABAD: R.H. Sequeiratrained Smashing Blue, ridden by Akshay Kumar, completed a hat-trick by winning the Byerly Turk Million, the chief event of the races held here on Sunday (Jan. 5). The winner is owned by Mr. Prabhakar Reddy & Dr. Peddi Reddy Prabhakar Reddy. Both Akshay and trainer Sequeira scored a treble each.

1 UMRAOLAL GUPTA ME-MORIAL CUP (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o only (Cat. II), (Terms): COMMITTED WARRIOR Akshay Kumar) 1, Belle Springs (I. Chisty) 2. Chuckit (Dashrath Singh) 3 and Look Of Love (P. Trevor) 4. 3/4, 2-1/2 and 1. 1m SHP: 17, FP: 24, O: 27, Tla: 201, Favourite: Committed Warrior. Owners: Mr. P. Prabhakar Reddy, Dr. Peddi Reddy Prabhakar Reddy. Trainer: R.H.

↑ SUNNY BLOSSOM PLATE (Div. II), (1,400m), 4-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): KATE (Akshay Kumar) 1, Explosive (Ashhad Asbar) 2, Red Snaper (Jitendra Singh) 3 and Sputnic (B.R. Kumar) 4. 8, 1-1/2 and nk. (B.K. Kumar) 4. 8, 1-1/2 and nk. 1m 23.79. ₹8 (w), 6, 9 and 9 (p), SHP: 19, FP: 34, Q: 31, Tla: 149. Favourite: Kate. Owners: M/s. Five Stars Shipping Co. Pvt. Ltd. rep. by M/s. K.N. Dhunjibhoy & Z.K. Dhunjibhoy. Trainer: Laxman Singh

3 SRI A.S. KRISHNA MEMORIAL CUP (1,600m), 5-y-0 & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): STARIDAR (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Dandy Man (I. Chisty) 2, On My Way (Dashrath Singh) 3 and Balius (Akshay Kumar) 4. 3/4, nk and 2 3/4. 1m 38.10s. ₹69 (w), 17, 7 and 17 (p), SHP: 23, FP: 576, Q: 202, Tla: 6.140. Favourite: Balius

Owners: Ms. Viveka Kumari Idar & Mr. Ashok Kumar Gupta.

RYERLY TURK MILLION 4 BYERLY TURK MILLION (1,200m), fillies 3-y-o only (Terms): SMASHING BLUE (Akshay Kumar) 1, Akashima (Mukesh Kumar) 2, Southern Princess (Nathan Evans) 3 and Bedford (P. Trevor) 4, Hd, 2-1/4 and 3-1/4. 1m 11.46s. ₹11 (w), 5, 9 and 5 (p), SHP: 30, FP: 90, Q: 67, Tla: 234. Favourite: Southern Princess. Owners: Mr. P. Prabhakar Reddy & Dr. Peddi Prabhakar Reddy. Trainer: R.H. Sequeira.

TELANGANA AND ANDHRA II): HAPPY TOGETHER (Jitendra vor) 2, Rahil (Ashhad Asbar) 3 and Giethorn (Deepak Singh) 4. Nk, 3 and 1/2. 1m 4.73s. ₹87 (w), 13, 6 and 12 (p), SHP: 18, FP: 302, Q: 81, Tla: 1,497. Favourite: Yours Forever. Owner: M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar of Chetti-nad Charitable Trust rep. by Mr. A.C. Muthiah. Trainer: Satheesh.

SUNNY BLOSSOM PLATE (Div. SUNNY BLOSSOM PLATE (DIV. I), (1,400m), 4-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): APOLLO (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Spiritual (P. Trevor) 2, Ice Warrior (Nakhat Singh) 3 and Maxwell (Kuldeep Singh) 4. 4-1/2, shd and 1/2. 1m 25.45s. ₹12 (w), 5, 9 and 10 (p), SHP: 26, FP: 52, Q: 35, Tla: 237. Favourite: Apollo. Owners; Mr. Tekula Chandra Reddy & Mr. Aditya P. Thackersey. Trainer: M. Srinivas Reddy.

Jkt: ₹28,267 (11 tkts), Runner-up: 3,919 (34 tkts), Mini Jkt: 19,461 (three tkts), Tr (i): 550 (73 tkts), (ii): 1,303 (64 tkts).

Paso Robles, in rousing form, may complete classic double (9) Surai Narredu 60, 2. Incredu

HYDERABAD: Paso Robles, who is in rousing form, may complete a classic double in the Golconda Oaks (2,400m), the feature event of the races to be held here on Monday (Jan. 6).

y-o only (should have ran at least once and placed 2nd or 3rd not eligible), (Cat. II), (Terms) 1.10 p.m.: 1. Astronaut (1) Ajeeth Classy Dame (7) Koushik 53.5, 8. Ice Berry (3) Nakhat Singh 53.5, 9. Lacrosse (5) Akshav Kumar

MALAKPET PLATE (Div. I). 20 (1,200m), 4-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 1.40: 1. Loch Stella (9) Nakhat Singh 60, 2. G. Naresh 50.5.

JUST INCREDIBLE

RACE CLUB PLATE (1,100m), 3 Kumar 55, 2. Detonator (2) Ashhad Asbar 55, 3. Grand Finale (8) A.A. Vikrant 55, 4. Just Incredible (4) B.R. Kumar 55, 5. Bulls Ace (10) N. Rawal 53.5, 6. City Of Function (2) Michael Economics 75, 7 sion (6) Mukesh Kumar 53.5, 7. 53.5.10. Lady Of War (11) G. Naresh 53.5 and 11. Turf Winner (9) I. Chisty 53.5. 1. LACROSSE, 2. ASTRONAUT, 3.

Shivalik Valley (3) Rohit Kumar 59.5, 3. Safra (4) N. Rawal 59, 4. Kimberly Cruise (8) Surya Prakash 57, 5. Flying Queen (2) Irvan Singh 53.5. 6. Hashtag (6) Afroz Khan 53.5, 7. Sree Sree Sree (5) Abhay Singh 52.5, 8. Tremendous Desire (10) Ajeeth Kumar 52.5. 9. Io Malone (7) Dashrath Singh 51 and 10. Halo Princess (1) 1. SHIVALIK VALLEY, 2. LOCH

ANMOL RATAN PLATE 3 (1,200m) 4-y-0 & over, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 2.10: 1. One One One (6) Aneel 60, 2. Rapid Fire (8) Abhay Singh 58.5, 3. Lightning Fin (4) Surya Prakash 57, 4. Crim

STELLA, 3. JO MALONE

son Fire (1) B.R. Kumar 55, 5. Heaven Can Wait (10) Afroz Khan 54, 6. Linewiler (11) G. Naresh 54. 7. Royal Green (3) Irvan Singh 53.5, 8. Avantika (9) B.R. Kumar 53, 9. Kingswood (2) Ashhad Asbar 52.5, 10. Marvel Princess (5) Santosh Raj 52.5 and 11. Tokyo Jam (7) Akshay Kumar 52.5. I. LIGHTNING FIN, 2. RAPID FIRE, 3. TOKYO JAM

DYNAMIC DANCER PLATE (Div. 4 DYNAMIC DANCER PLATE (Div. 1), (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.45: 1. Gorgeous Lady (8) Akshay Kumar 60, 2. Hurricane (11) Abhay Singh 60, 3. Ta Ta (10) Gaddam 60, 4. Soul Empress (6) Irvan Singh 59, 5. Desert Moon (7) Kuldeep Singh 58, 6. Story Teller (1) Jitendra Singh 56.5, 7. Brush The Sky (4) Aieeth Kumar 55.5, 8, Alexander thegreat (9) Mukesh Kumar 54.5, 9. Semira (2) Aneel 54.5, 10. Sec retary (12) Dashrath Singh 52, 11. Patron Saint (3) Santosh Raj 51

and 12. Invasion (5) Ajit Singh GORGEOUS LADY, 2. SOUL

EMPRESS, 3. HURRICANE RAJA SITHARAM BHUPAL OF DOMAKONDA SAMASTHAN ME-MORIAL CUP (1,400m), 4-y-o & over (Cat. II), (Terms), 3.15: 1. Titus (8) Deepak Singh 61.5, 2. Magical Skill (3) B.R. Kumar 59.5. 3. Nayadeep (1) Irvan Singh 59.5, 4. Be Sure (4) Nakhat Singh 58, 5. Champion Bull (6) G. Naresh 57.5, 6. Victory Parade (5) Akshay Kumar 57.5, 7. Air Strike (7) Mukesh Kumar 54.5 and 8. Rikki Tikki Tavi (2) Gaddam 54.5.

1. VICTORY PARADE, 2. RIKKI TIKKI TAVI, 3. NAYADEEP MALAKPET PLATE (Div. II). 6 (1,200m), 4-y-o & over, rated

20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.45: 1. Mystery

58, 4. Aliston (4) I. Chisty 57, 5. Star Racer (7) Mukesh Kumar 55.5, 6. Bar Et Law (6) Koushik 53.5, 7. Sweet Brandy (8) Afroz Khan 53, 8. Tammana (5) Dashrath Singh 52 and 9. Speed Warrior (2) C.P. Bopanna 51 1. INCREDULOUS, 2. MYSTERY, 3. BAR ET LAW

lous (1) Akshay Kumar 59.5, 3. Wah Ms Zara (3) Ashhad Asbar

GOLCONDA OAKS (2,400m), fillies 4-y-o only (Terms), 4.15: 1. Artistryy (4) Akshay Kumar 57, 2. Cape Kidnappers (1) P. Trevor 57, 3. Flamboyant Lady (3) Nakhat Singh 57, 4. Nekhbet (5) Leigh Roche 57 and 5. Paso Robles (2) Suraj Narredu 57.

PASO ROBLES, 2. CAPE

O II), (1,200m), 5-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 4.45: 1. Humaaghar (5) Mukesh Kumar 60, 2. Royal Dynamite (1) Ajit Singh 60, 3. Human Touch (10) Akshay Kumar 59.5, 4. N R I Vision (II) Abhay Singh 59.5, 5. His Excellency (3) P. Trevor 57, 6. Best Friend (7) Jitendra Singh 56,

7. Promiseofhappiness (9) Rafique Sk. 54.5, 8. Farmville (4) Ajeeth Kumar 52.5, 9. Limousine (2) B.R. Kumar 52.5, 10, Blazing Speed (8) Afroz Khan 50.5 and 11. Agilis (6) Surya Prakash 50.

1. HIS EXCELLENCY, 2. HU-MAAGHAR, 3. HUMAN TOUCH Day's best: VICTORY PARADE Double: GORGEOUS LADY - PASO

Ikt: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8: Mini Ikt: 5, 6, 7 & 8; Tr (i): 1,2 & 3; (ii): 3, 4 & 5; (iii): 6, 7 & 8; Tla: all races.

Blasters blow away Hyderabad

ISL

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Kerala Blasters, trailing by a goal, bounced back to thrash Hyderabad FC 5-1 in their ISL match at the Nehru Stadium here on Sunday.

Captain Bartholomew Ogbeche scored twice in the stunning win and the result helped the Kerala side climb from ninth to seventh with 11 points from 11 It was Blasters' second

victory in this edition and

it ended more than a 75-

day wait - the first had

in

come

season-opener. Hyderabad remained ters but she noticed a curlast with five points from 11. rent had taken them away The result: Kerala Blasters FC from the shore. 5 (Bartholomew Ogbeche 33 & 75. Vlatko Drobarov 39. Messi Bouli 45, Seityasen Singh 59) bt Hyderabad FC 1 trying to take us, because it's (Deyvison da Silva 14).

Near-death experience gives Osaka new perspective

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BRISBANE

A "near-death" experience off the coast of the Turks and Caicos Islands has given reigning Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka a new perspective heading into the 2020 season.

An upbeat Osaka told reporters ahead of the seasonopening Brisbane International that she had tried to have a bit of fun and experience new things during the off-season, which meant her "first vacation ever". "It was really fun - my sis-

ter was there. She made me paddleboard, and then the current took us and I almost died," a smiling Osaka said. Osaka said she and her sister had been in shallow wa-

Can't swim well "I'm like, how far out are you

Young followers: Naomi Osaka of Japan, right, takes a selfie with fans Lilly and Isabella Kenneally, ahead of the Brisbane International draw. • GETTY IMAGES

black, like, the water is black now, and the house is like a tiny dot, and I can't really swim that well," she said.

scene in 2018 when she beat "I just feel like I'm expe-Serena Williams to win the riencing so many things in US Open, then followed that my life and everything's realup by winning the 2019 Ausly fun and I'm trying to take tralian Open. The Japanese star reached it all into... perspective that these are things that I've nev-

able to do.'

World No. 1 ranking in 2019

er thought I was going to be

Osaka, 22, burst onto the

and finished the year at No. 3, behind Australia's Ash Barty and Czech Karolina Pliskova.

Sore shoulder

She said a sore shoulder meant she had not spent as much time on the court in the off-season as in previous

"I didn't play for most of November, which was a first for me," she said.

"I've never really taken that long of a break before. But I think it was really necessary because my shoul-

der was kind of worn down. "But after that, I just did rehab and slowly started playing again and I think that that worked out really well because I don't feel anything in my shoulder, and I like to think that I'm playing well right now."

Osaka opens her Brisbane International campaign against World No. 23 Maria Sakkari of Greece.