

millenniumpost

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NO HALF TRUTHS

▼ NIFTY 9105.15 (-34.15) ▼ SENSEX 29,319.10 (-94.56) ▼ DOW JONES 20,484.13 (-152.79) ▼ NASDAQ 5,832.41 (-24.38) ▼ RUPEE/DOLLAR 64.63 (-0.11) ▼ RUPEE/EURO 69.15 (-0.46) ■ GOLD/10GM 29,900.00 (-00.00) ▼ SILVER/K 49,800.00 (-150.00)

DEVELOPMENT
PUSH: SOON, LINK
ROAD TO CONNECT
SECTOR V & VI **PG3**



CHECK TRAIN
DELAYS OR FACE THE
MUSIC: PRABHU TO
OFFICIALS **PG6**



SIKH CAB DRIVER
ASSAULTED,
TURBAN SNATCHED
BY RIDERS **PG11**



RAVEENA SEEKS
CHANGE IN
'OUTDATED' CBFC
RULES **PG16**



Quick News

'Fuel pumps in eight states to be shut on Sundays from May 14'

CHENNAI: Beginning May 14, fuel outlets in eight states will be shut every Sunday following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to conserve oil, a fuel pump owners' body said here on Tuesday.

"We had planned to shut our outlets on Sundays a few years back. But oil marketing companies had then requested us to reconsider our decision. Now we have decided to shut the outlets on Sundays," said Suresh Kumar, an executive committee member of the consortium of Indian petroleum dealers.

He said the association's decision was made in view of the Prime Minister's call during his recent 'Mann ki baat' programme to conserve oil to save the environment. **MP08T**

Prez, ministers may have to give speeches in Hindi

NEW DELHI: All dignitaries, including the President and ministers, may soon start giving speeches in Hindi if a parliamentary panel's recommendations accepted by President Pranab Mukherjee are implemented.

Mukherjee has accepted most of the recommendations made in the ninth report of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language. The report was submitted in 2011.

The panel's recommendation that all dignitaries including the President and ministers, especially those who can read and speak Hindi, may be requested to give their speech/statement in Hindi only, has been accepted, as per an official order. **P7**

Religion-based reservation not in country's interest

M VENKAIHAH NAIDU

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We are waiting for justice, says Mamata

SUDIP GETS MISTY-EYED SEEING PARTY SUPREMO

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday evening met ailing party colleague Sudip Bandopadhyay at a state-run hospital in Bhubaneswar.

She took an evening flight out of Kolkata on Tuesday and went straight from Bhubaneswar airport to meet Bandopadhyay who has been receiving treatment at a hospital. He is in CBI custody in connection with the Rose valley scam.

Talking to media persons at Bhubaneswar airport Banerjee said: "Sudip Bandopadhyay is our leader and I have come to see him in hospital. I will meet Naveen Patnaik if time permits, and will also visit the Jagannath temple."

Banerjee spoke to Bandopadhyay for 10 minutes. She thanked the judges for giving her permission to meet Bandopadhyay and Tapas Pal, another party MP who has also been arrested in the same case. She also talked to the doctors attending to her party colleague.

Talking to newsmen after meeting Bandopadhyay she said the doctors had expressed concern over his health. He has been in custody since early January.

Sudip's condition recently deteriorated and he is unable to move. He has been suffering from a heart ailment. Banerjee said that Sudip had lost 16 to 17 kgs in the past four months. "We are waiting for justice. Both Bandopadhyay and Pal are unwell. *Sudip* is bed ridden and cannot walk." The veteran TMC leader turned



emotional on seeing Mamata.

Bandopadhyay had expressed his desire to meet Banerjee who had opposed his arrest calling it a conspiracy of BJP. She had said that Bandopadhyay was targeted as he had criticised the demonetization of high-value notes in Lok Sabha and was one of the key persons in organising a rally in Parliament to protest against demonetization which was attended by leaders of all opposition parties including the Left. Banerjee had said: "Bandopadhyay's arrest was nothing but political vendetta of BJP"

She had sent Suvendu Adhikari and Manas Bhuniya to attend the rally to protest against Bandopadhyay's arrest. Trinamool Congress had organised many rallies in the state to protest against the arrest.

Banerjee left for Puri later on Tuesday night. She will be put up in the state guest house as she is a guest of the Odisha government.

She is likely to visit the Jagannath Temple and offer puja on Wednesday morning. She is also likely to meet Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik. The chief minister is expected to return to the city on Thursday.

LIQUOR BARON DISMISSES IT AS 'USUAL INDIAN MEDIA HYPE'

Mallya arrested in UK by Scotland Yard, gets bail in 3 hours

MPOST BUREAU

LONDON: Embattled Indian tycoon Vijay Mallya, who has been declared a proclaimed offender, was on Tuesday arrested in London by Scotland Yard on India's request for his extradition on fraud charges.

The 61-year-old liquor baron, wanted in India for defaulting on loans, was arrested after he appeared at a central London police station this morning.

The flamboyant businessman, who once called himself "The King of Good Times", was released on bail a few hours later.

"Officers from the Metropolitan Police's Extradition Unit this morning arrested a man on an extradition warrant. Vijay Mallya was arrested on behalf of the Indian authorities in relation to accusations of fraud," Scotland Yard said.

The Metropolitan Police said Mallya was arrested after attending a central London police station.

He appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London and was seen walking out with his legal team a few hours later after being granted bail.

ster Magistrates' Court in London and was seen walking out with his legal team a few hours later after being granted bail.

"It was a voluntary action. He will be out in a few minutes," said a member

of Mallya's team at the court, without giving any further details of the bail conditions.

"Usual Indian media hype. An extradition hearing in Court started today as expected," Mallya tweeted soon after getting the bail.

Mallya, whose now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines owes more than Rs 9,000 crore to various banks, had fled India on March 2, 2016. He has repeatedly dismissed the charges against him.

In January, an Indian court ordered a consortium of lenders to start the process of recovering the loans.

Senior Indian officials described his arrest as the first salvo in the case, which will now involve a legal process in the UK to determine if Mallya can be extradited to India to face charges in Indian courts. **More reports on P5**

RESPECT FOR NATIONAL FLAG, ANTHEM NON-NEGOTIABLE: CENTRE TO SC

SC seeks Centre's reply on plea for policy on anthem, song

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Centre in four weeks on a plea seeking framing of a policy for promoting the national anthem and the national song.

A bench headed by Justice Dipak Misra issued notice and asked the Centre to file its reply on the plea which also sought to ascertain the feasibility of singing the national anthem and the national song in Parliament, assemblies, courts, schools and colleges on working days. The petition filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay sought directions for taking steps to promote brotherhood and national integrity in the country.

On February 17, the apex court had refused to go into the debate for making singing of the national song mandatory in schools and clarified that it has "kept alive" such a plea only for the national anthem without expressing any view on it.

The apex court had on November 30 last year ordered cinema halls across the nation to mandatorily play the national anthem before the screening of a movie when the audience must stand and show respect.

The order had come on a PIL filed by one Shyam Narayan Chouksey seeking directions that the national anthem should be played in cinema halls across the country before a film begins and



proper norms and protocol be fixed regarding its playing and singing at official functions and programmes where those holding constitutional office are present.

The apex court, while passing a slew of directions, had also observed that "time has come when citizens must realise they live in a nation and are duty-bound to show respect to the national anthem which is a symbol of constitutional patriotism and inherent national quality".

The apex court had in February clarified that the audience need not stand when the national anthem is sung or played in the story line of a feature film or part of a newsreel or documentary.

It is "unfortunate" that someone has to knock the doors of the court for ensuring respect for the national flag and national anthem, the government told the Supreme Court on Tuesday, asserting that respect for them was "non-negotiable".

SASIKALA FACTION READY FOR MERGER TALKS WITH OPS

OPS gets his way, Sasikala faction dumps Dinakaran

MPOST BUREAU

CHENNAI: In a dramatic turn of events, the K Palaniswami cabinet on Tuesday revolted against AIADMK (Ammu) Deputy general secretary T T V Dinakaran and decided to keep him and his family out of the party and the government.

Emerging from a "consultative" meeting chaired by Chief Minister E K Palaniswami, Finance Minister D Jayakumar declared that the "unanimous" decision was taken in tune with the aspirations of the party cadres and people.

"A decision has been taken to fully keep away Dinakaran and his family from the party and the government," he told reporters on Tuesday night.

He claimed it was the desire of all party cadres, top functionaries, district secretaries, MPs, MLAs, and the Ministers. A committee will be formed soon to run the day-to-day affairs of the party, he said.

Dinakaran, who was expelled from the AIADMK by Jayalalitha, was reinstated by Sasikala and appointed the party's deputy general secretary just before she proceeded to Bengaluru to serve the remnant of her jail term after the Supreme Court upheld her



O Panneerselvam

conviction and sentence in a disproportionate assets case in February this year.

Replying to a question, Jayakumar, however, said the decision was not linked to the demand of rebel leader O Panneerselvam that party general secretary V K Sasikala and her nephew Dhinakaran be kept away as a pre-condition for talks for the merger of the rival factions. Jayakumar, flanked by several Ministers, said still they were prepared to hold talks with Panneerselvam.

Senior Ministers including Dindigul C Srinivasan, S P Velumani, RB Udayakumar, Thangamani, C Ve Shanmugam Raja Sabha MP V Vaithilingam were present.

The sudden announcement by Jayakumar came after efforts for the merger hit a hurdle with Panneerselvam insisting on his demand for the ouster of Sasikala, Dhinakaran and their family from the party and the government. Earlier on Tuesday, mooting a patch-up with the rival AIADMK group led by O Panneerselvam, senior party leader M Thambidurai on Tuesday said it will be in the party's interest if both factions merge to take forward the legacy of late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha. Ruling out any change of Chief Minister in the state for this possible patch up, Thambidurai said people from the opposing faction may be included in the organisation.

Australia abolishes visa programme used largely by Indians

MELBOURNE: Australia will abolish a popular work visa used by over 95,000 foreign workers, a majority of them Indians, to tackle the growing unemployment in the country and replace it with a new programme requiring higher English-language proficiency and job skills.

The programme known as 457 visa allows business to employ foreign workers for a period up to four years in skilled jobs where there is a shortage of Australian workers. "We are an immigration nation, but the fact remains: Australian workers must have priority for Australian jobs, so we are abolishing the 457 visa, the visa that brings temporary foreign workers into our country," said Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

The majority of the visa holders were from India followed by the UK and China. "We will no longer allow 457 visa to be passports to jobs that could and should go to Australians," he said. He said Australia will adopt a new 'Australians first' approach to skilled migration. **See P5**

41 IAS officers transferred in UP, tainted LDA VC shunted out

MPOST BUREAU

LUCKNOW: The UP government on Tuesday shunted out tainted Vice Chairman of Lucknow Development Authority Satyendra Singh while effecting a major bureaucratic reshuffle involving 41 IAS officers in the second such drill in less than a week.

Singh, who is mired in controversy over alleged corruption in LDA, has been put on a wait list by the Yogi Adityanath government which completed one month in office on Tuesday.

In its first major bureaucratic reshuffle on April 12, the state government had transferred 20 senior IAS officers shunting out Principal Secretary (Information) Navneet Sehgal and others who wielded considerable influence under the Akhilesh Yadav dispensation.

Sehgal was stripped of all key charge and replaced by UP cadre IAS officer Avanish Kumar Awasthi, who was relieved by the Centre on Adityanath's



request after he took over the reins of the state on March 19.

Among those transferred on Tuesday are a number of divisional commissioners and district magistrates.

Resident Commissioner of UP, Prabhat Kumar has been made Divisional Commissioner Meerut with the charge of Chairman Greater Noida, Yamuna Expressway and Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority.

Secretary Rural Development and Director Mandi Parishad Ashish Kumar

Goel has been made Divisional Commissioner Allahabad replacing Rajan Shukla, who will be Principal Secretary Civil Defence and Political Pension, an official release said.

DM Basti Prabhu Narain Singh has been made new VC of LDA while Director Administration (Medical and Health) Arvind Kumar Singh has been made DM Basti.

Rajiv Rautala, who was on the wait list, has been made DM Gorakhpur replacing Sandhya Tiwari who will Special Secretary Secondary Education.

Secretary, Housing Board, Rudra Pratap Singh has been put on the wait list while Commissioner Revenue Dheeraj Sahu has been made Housing Commissioner.

Estate Officer Brijraj Singh Yadav has been made Special Secretary Rural Development while Special Secretary Irrigation Yogesh Kumar Shukla has been made Secretary and Estate Officer, the release added.

DHIRENDRA KUMAR

NEW DELHI: There's good news farmers in general and government in particular, the national weather forecaster — India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted a normal monsoon this year with 96 per cent of the long-period average.

India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director General K J Ramesh said there would be good distribution of rainfall across the country. "The country will receive 96 per cent of Long Period Average," he said.

Anything between 96 and 104 per cent of the LPA is considered as "normal". Anything under 96 per cent is considered as "below normal" and 104-110 per cent of the LPA as "above normal".



In reply to a question as to why IMD refrained from releasing figures of the forecast, Ramesh said, "Since we have changed the weather forecasting model, the predictions of rainfall would be released in later months and details of monsoon onset would be announced in the second week of May."

"There is nothing to worry as

every part of the country would get 'proportionally' equal rainfall distribution. There are some areas that remain in rain deficit every year, even if the monsoon is above normal, which is a natural occurrence," Ramesh said.

However, the farmers have expressed satisfaction over the forecast of 96 per cent, which has come amid a continuing drought

in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka even though the forecast was above normal last year.

"We have no option but to trust IMD predictions. Given that last year's predictions of the IMD were proved right, farmers are hopeful this year's forecast will also hold true, which will prove helpful in increasing production," said Ganesh Nanote, a farmer from Vidarbha region in Maharashtra.

Rejecting private weather forecaster's prediction of slightly lesser rainfall for 2017 due to high chances of El Nino, an IMD official said, "There is no one-to-one relationship between El Nino and Indian monsoon as during 34 per cent El Nino years, monsoon rainfall was normal or above normal."



Understanding money lowers OLD AGE ANXIETY

Financial literacy helps shape people's perception towards risk and uncertainty – making them more confident in tackling whatever problems life throws at them'

People who have better understanding of finance are less likely to be worried about the later stages of their life, a new study has found.

It seems financial literacy – the ability to understand how money works, enables people to accumulate more assets and income during their lifetime, and so increases confidence for the years ahead, researchers said.

Additionally, financial literacy seemingly engenders a greater perception for risk and enables those who have it to face off later-life's dilemmas with ease.

The findings, from Associate Professor Yoshihiko Kadoya of Hiroshima University and Mostafa Saidur Rahim Khan of Nagoya University in Japan, stem from a study which asked people questions assessing their calculation skills, understanding of pricing behaviour, and financial securities such as bonds and stocks.

Respondents were also asked about their accumulated wealth, assets, and lifestyle – and to rate the level of anxiety they felt about life beyond 65.

The study suggests that men, and those with a higher level of education are more financially clued-in than women, and those with less education respectively.

The overriding thrust is that the more financially literate earn and accumulate more during their lifetime – and thus worry less about growing old.

It also appears that financial literacy helps shape people's perception towards risk and uncertainty – making them more capable and confident in tackling whatever problems life throws at them. Financial literacy increases our



awareness about financial products, builds a capacity to compare all available financial options, and changes our financial behaviour – all which bodes well for our perceptions of, and actual experiences during our seniority, said Kadoya.

While financial literacy taken alone was seen to reduce anxiety – its affect was further heightened by other factors.

Married respondents had even lower levels of anxiety about growing old than financially literate singletons.

This could be down to married couples together planning more-effectively for the future due to familial responsibilities.

Age also plays a significant role, with anxiety levels peaking around 40. The researchers suggest that people at this age have the most home and workplace responsibilities, but with less money and time to support them, increasing anxiety about the here and now – and the journey ahead.

As people get older their anxiety levels drop off on gaining access to social security, government

funded health care and pensions – all taking the sting out of the post-retirement blues.

Having dependent children on the other hand increased anxiety levels – presumably due to respondent's worry for their children's wellbeing – as well as their own.

It is increasingly perceived that a pension is insufficient for daily expenses without a backup pool of savings and assets – putting the financially literate at a distinct advantage, researchers said.

DAY IN DAY OUT

What's on Around Town

(IM)POSSIBILITIES

A group show of paintings and sculptures of some of the most celebrated artists of the nation, the exhibition, (im)possibilities showcase how one can one can decipher the word impossibilities to read as i m possibilities. The names showcased in this exhibition has already proved that impossible is nothing and it is a privilege to celebrate their (im)possibilities.

WHEN: April 13 – May 13
WHERE: Creativity Art Gallery, Hauz Khas Village **TIMING:** 11 am – 7 pm

KOREAN FLOWER EXHIBITION

An exhibition of flower arrangements and fragrances, which will be presented by 15 Korean artists. The exhibition will not only show case varieties of Korean flowers used for different occasions but will also give provide you with an environment for relaxing yourself in the lap of nature.

WHEN: April 17 – 19
WHERE: Korean Cultural Centre India, Lajpat Nagar 4
TIMING: 9 am – 6 pm

FRAMING THE LIVING TRADITIONS

A collaborative photography project under the aegis of Neel Dongre Awards/ Grants for Excellence in Photography (2017) by India Photo Achieve Foundation, will showcase five photographers presenting different living traditions like The Art of Making Tanpura in Maharashtra and Muga & Eri Silk cultivation in Assam through distinctive artistic styles.

WHEN: April 21 – May 2
WHERE: Kamla Devi Complex, IIC
TIMING: 11 am – 7 pm

A MUSICAL NIGHT

With dual voice singing ability, Sairam Iyer is all set to enthrall the Delhi audience. Sairam's incredible skill of effortlessly switching between male and female voices has received accolades from musical heavyweights. In addition to strengthen the cultural and social fabric, the event promotes Prime Minister's key project – 'Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao-Beti Khilao' by donating part of the events proceeds towards the cause.

WHEN: April 25 **WHERE:** Kamani Auditorium **TIMING:** 7 pm onwards

Capturing the soul of Rajasthan



her jauhar. Her love for nature took her further into the interiors of the state, exploring the natural reserves of Ranthambore, Sariska as also to the Pushkar cattle fair.

"Mirage is a condition where a layer of water appears in the distant but when one actually goes near it, there is no water to be found. This specifically happens in the desert areas pointing at the hot arid conditions of the place. Despite the heat, the people of the place are full of vivacity, hospitality and mirth. This has touched me to the core. Living in the metro cities we have all the amenities but still we are dissatisfied and yearn for more. Even we are running after an illusion to ameliorate our lives but in d process we do not live our lives, we do not live in d present. It seems the people of big cities are constantly running after a mirage," said the artist who has participated in various group and solo exhibitions in esteem galleries in India and abroad.

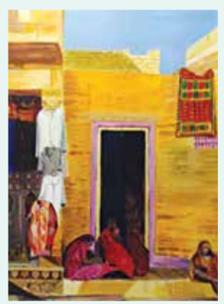
Bringing soul-food for all art-lovers and connoisseurs in the form of an exhibition titled 'Mirage', at Convention Foyer, India Habitat Centre, Priyanka has brought the soul of Rajasthan through her paintings to the capital. The exhibition will open on April 20 till April 23 from 10 am to 7 pm.



OUR CORRESPONDENT

THE LOVE of photography and travelling has taken Priyanka Banerjee all over the world and the country. Amidst her myriad likes for various cultures covering the longitude and latitude of the country, of particular interest is her absolute love for the state of Rajasthan.

She has travelled extensively across the length and breadth of the state, covering the pink city of Jaipur, to the bylanes the lime-stoned walled city of Jaisalmer, the palace city of Jodhpur where she has captivated the glory of Mehrangarh fort of the by gone era, or the ruins the city of lakes, Udaipur which tell many stories, Chittorgarh reminds us of the beauty of queen Padmini and tales of



Delhi through the eyes of Yamuna

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SHOWCASING the story of Delhi through the eyes of Yamuna as a celestial being, displaying the rise and fall of empires, the glory and degeneration of cultures, the suppression and liberation of millions, Shivani Varma, an Indian classical dancer presented a stunning Kathak performance at the C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Center.

The audience was spell bound to listen and watch this elegant depiction of the capital city through a Kathak performance. The show was

presented and organised by Beenu Rajpoot and Precious Planet Charitable Trust.

The production was based on text written by Pavan K Varma, where the narration was done by Begum Syeda Hameed.

Elaborating on the Kathak production, Shivani Varma, said, "The concept and theme was based on the river Yamuna, which is an integral part of this city."

"We wanted to create an impact through this recital wherein the condition and environment of Delhi was shown through the perspective of Yamuna. A lot of hard work was

put in by the whole team and we worked like an ensemble to make this happen."

Shivani Varma is an Indian classical dancer trained in the classical dance form Kathak. She is a disciple of renowned danseuse Guru Shovana Narayan, and an integral member of danseuse Sharmishtha Mukherjee's troupe.

She has been dancing at reputed professional platforms nationally and internationally for more than a decade.

Being a soloist, she has played leading roles in many classical projects directed by acclaimed film



maker Muzaffar Ali including Sufi festival Jahane-Khusrau and the Wajid Ali Shah Festival.

Shivani has had the privilege of having performed at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Commonwealth Games held in India in 2010 and has given recitals at several Literature Festivals such as those at Agra, Lucknow and Bhutan.

Where Art Meets Technique

OUR CORRESPONDENT

THE rendezvous of technique, style, Indian designs, comfort and wide variety can be spotted at the sixth edition of Home Expo India, where exhibitors prove innovation, buyers learn about trends and industries come together for business. It is a culmination of Indian furnishings, floorings and textiles, accessories shows and Indian houseware and decorative shows.

Organized by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), the Expo has been put up as a response to the industry demand and International trend of organizing sector specific shows enabling better focus on specific requirements of buyers and is well recognised by International visitors who can easily spot what they are looking for instead of getting lost in a myriad of products.

The show opened at world class state-of-the art India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida. "The fair which will be held from April 18 to 20 is a must visit as it is one of the leading business-to-business shows where a



wide range of tableware, home textiles, kitchenware, homeware and bathroom accessories are displayed by Indian exporters engaged in manufacturing and exporting of these products", informed Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH.

The major markets for exports for these products are USA, Canada, countries in European Union like France, Italy, UK, Netherlands etc. in addition to UAE, Japan and Switzerland.

Udit Saran Agarwal, President, Home Expo India 2017 informed that about 500 companies in permanent marts are exhibiting their collection of furnishing, flooring, textiles, furniture and houseware and decorative categories under one roof.

The key feature of Home Expo India is the participation of a large number of top buyers, buying houses, import houses, chain stores, boutique owners and interior decorators from leading markets like USA, European Union, Far East and African continents to visit and source at this show including domestic retail volume buyers.

EPCH is a nodal agency for promotion, development and increase of exports of handicrafts from the country and create brand image of Home, lifestyle, fashion. The emphasis laid by the Council has popularised this show



as a "Home Total tag" show amongst the International buying community and made it a benchmark event for household items.

The council has thrown light upon specialties of select regions of India at this show. In this direction, separate arenas for products from North Eastern Region (NER) and themes

of products made by crafts persons from central, northern region and Uttaranchal have been set up. Cane and Bamboo products from North east and glass decorative, brass craft, home decor, candle stands have been displayed by craft persons from central region.

"The Handicrafts exports during the year 2016-17 were Rs. 24530.25 crores with overall 13.79% increase in comparison to last year. This year it is expected to generate huge business inquiries," said the Executive Director, EPCH.

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Development push: Soon, link road to connect Sector V & VI

DEBAMOY GHOSH

KOLKATA: The State government will set up a Link Road to connect two information technology hubs – Sector-V at Salt Lake and Sector-VI at Bantala.

The work for the 7.5 km-long link road will be supervised by the experts from Jadavpur University and the work is expected to be initiated soon.

It may be mentioned that the work of the building infrastructure at Bantala is already underway by the state government. The long-standing issues of toxic wastes, water treatment and stench from the tanneries would be solved after completion of the work.

Information Technology major Cognizant has already commenced operations on a 20-acre plot after having raised the issue of toxic wastes with the authority and decided to expand its operations in Ban-



A VIEW OF SALT LAKE SECTOR V

tala. The company targeted to house around 16,000 professionals there.

Tech Mahindra earlier agreed to resume the construction of its proposed campus there, following measures taken by the developer to restrict pollution from the adjoining leather tanneries. The company

had stalled construction five years back on the 12 acre land at Bantala over pollution issues.

Bantala Special Economic Zone (SEZ) which was named as 'Sector-VI' comes under Sector-VI Industrial Township Authority. The state Cabinet came up with that name in 2014. But this year, the state

Urban Development department decided to connect two sectors with the direct road for helping out the growing IT industry.

"Sector-VI is the new IT destination in the state. A link road to connect Sector-V to VI was long needed for better communication as Cognizant

has already set up a campus there and some other companies would come up as well," said the minister.

"Good road connectivity is required as the IT professionals need to reach from one sector to the other. There is almost 100 acre space in Bantala and IT firms have requested the

state government to separate the areas which would be used by them and the tanneries," a source at the state secretariat informed.

However, the state government conducted a series of meetings to expedite the canal segregation work and sewerage treatment plants at Sector-VI.

'Every municipality should award the best taxpayers'



Firhad Hakim at the event

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: State Urban Development minister Firhad Hakim urged all the municipalities to give awards to the best property taxpayers in every financial year. He made such proposals after giving away prizes to the best taxpayers at Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority on Tuesday.

"Inspiration for taxpayers is really necessary. I would certainly like to see that all other municipalities take up such programmes where highest property taxpayers are awarded. This should be followed by other municipalities as well," the minister said.

"If we can present some people as the example of good taxpayers, others would get inspiration from it," the minister added.

However on Tuesday, Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority (NDITA) awarded three best taxpayers in the last financial year. Bengal Intelligent Park Limited at Sector V GP Block took the prize of the best

taxpayer. He paid Rs 2.22 crore as property tax to NDITA. The Forum Project Holding Limited paid Rs 1.55 crore and got the second prize and Institute of Engineering and Management (IEM) paid Rs 1.6 crore and bagged the third prize.

"NDITA is giving the best service to the people coming here. They got Rs 38 crore as property tax in 2015-16, Rs 40 crore in 2016-17 and this year's target is Rs 45 crore," the minister added.

It may be mentioned that the 430 acre sector V in Salt Lake is the first Information Technology hub in Bengal. To ensure proper infrastructural development, Bengal government considered it imperative to constitute an Industrial Township under Section 385A of the West Bengal Municipal Act, 1993. A notification was issued on January 31, in 2006 and a new Township Authority called 'Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority' was set up. Since then, NDITA has been looking after the development of Sector-V.

Another set of 22 bike taxis to be introduced in Rajarhat, New Town

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: The state Transport department is gearing up to introduce another set of 22 bike taxis that will serve as last-mile connectivity vehicles in Rajarhat and New Town respectively.

It may be recalled that the department had already introduced around 21 bike taxis for Rajarhat and New Town on March 16. The bike taxis were named as K Bike Taxi. The company is having a plan to introduce as many as 50 such two-wheelers for better connectivity in the area.

Now, the state government has given clearance to another firm to operate bike taxis in Rajarhat and New Town areas. According to an official of the state Transport department, the new company will be initially introducing 22 two-wheelers and afterwards the number would gradually increase.

The official further added that it will help in increasing the visibility of the bike taxis in the area as well and it would help in attracting more people to avail the facility.

Suvendu Adhikari, the state Transport minister, will be flagging off the new bike taxis at Maidan tent of West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) at 4 pm on Wednesday. Sujit Bose, MLA and Director of WBTC, Debashis Sen, CMD HIDCO, and Alapan Bandyopadhyay, Principal Secretary of Transport department will also be present at the programme.

The state Transport department had framed a set of guidelines that all the operators of bike taxis will have to follow. Such guidelines have been framed considering the safety and security of passengers.

Senior officials of the department had made panic buttons mandatory in the taxi bikes and at the same time the fare will also be controlled by the transport department.

Moreover, riders of the bike taxis will carry an additional helmet that the pillion rider might need to put on while availing the service. At the same time, raincoats for pillion riders during the monsoon season will also be provided.

Work on CM's dream project Swasthya Sathi likely to be completed by this month

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's dream project of introducing Group Health Insurance Scheme to cover around 3 crore population and issuing Swasthya Sathi cards to the beneficiaries for availing the services is expected to be completed within this month.

According to a senior official of the state Health department, around 93 percent of the work has already been completed as 40 lakh families across the state have already been given the Swasthya Sathi Card as a result of which, more than 2 crore people are already getting the benefits of the health insurance scheme.

The Health department officials believe that the remaining 5 lakh families will soon be covered under the scheme. A total of 3 crore population or 45 lakh families would be included in the scheme as the Chief Minister had announced in February 2016. She announced that people working in self help groups, ICDS workers, ASHA workers, civic volun-



teers, civil defence volunteers and various other workers would be covered under the health insurance scheme.

Under the Swasthya Sathi scheme, the state government provides basic health coverage for secondary and tertiary care up to Rs 1.5 lakh per annum to each worker. In case of critical illnesses and surgeries like cancer, neurosurgeries, cardiothoracic surgeries, liver diseases and blood disorders, the patients are entitled to get up to Rs 5 lakh for each patient or their family members. All pre-existing diseases are covered under this scheme. The state government will bear the entire premium

and the beneficiaries need not contribute to avail the benefit. The Swasthya Sathi cards will have detail information about the beneficiaries and their names.

Distribution of smart cards was started in December last year when the Chief Minister handed over Swasthya Sathi Cards to 20 beneficiaries. It was learnt, that there will be no cap on the family size and parents of both the spouses will be covered. All newborns will be covered whereas all pre-existing diseases will be covered from day one.

It may be noted that for the first time in the history of Bengal, the state government has decided to give health insurances to people.

The state government has already tied up with 700 hospitals both public and private which are brought under the coverage of health scheme. After seeing the success of the Bengal's Group Health Insurance Scheme, the Centre is trying to introduce the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) to provide better healthcare facilities to people.

Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna: Health dept introduces toll-free number

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: To ensure that more number of people is covered under the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY), the state Health department has introduced a round the clock toll-free number.

The people who are availing various benefits under the RSBY scheme can now call at the toll-free number 1800-345-5384 if they face any problems relating to the scheme. The move was taken by the Health department to provide various health facilities to the people in the remote areas. The Health department officials believe that with the introduction of the number, people from different parts of the state will get a platform to lodge their com-

The people who are availing various benefits under the RSBY scheme can now call at the toll-free number 1800-345-5384 on facing troubles

plaints if they face any problems relating to the scheme.

According to the Health department sources, around 62 lakh people have already been brought under the coverage of the RSBY. The state government has set a target to cover 1 crore people under the scheme.

A senior Health department official said that the state government is stressing on the implementation of the RSBY in a better way so that more number of people can get the benefits of the scheme. There were

some grievances among the people in the districts over the availability of the services. To address the issues of the people who were denied services, the new initiative has been initiated. People can also call up at the toll free number to know how they can avail the health services extended by the RSBY.

People will be able to get the benefits of the scheme at the annual cost of Rs 30. The patients will get coverage up to Rs 30,000 in the state-run hospitals. It may be pointed out that the state government

has already brought eye surgeries of poor patients at government-run hospitals under the coverage of RSBY. Earlier, these patients did not get the insurance coverage under RSBY scheme. Now, the poor patients undergoing eye surgeries can avail the insurance coverage under this scheme.

It may be mentioned that West Bengal Clinical Establishment (WBCEC) also launched a phone number 033-2262-8447 where people can lodge their complaints. The office of the commission has made operational at 32 BBD Bag. People can also register their complaints by visiting the website and can also step into the office of the commission with health related issues.

Soon, Pathadisha to have realtime location of state-run buses plying to tourist spots

PRITESH BASU



KOLKATA: Realtime location of the state-run buses plying from the city to tourist spots, including some religious places in adjoining districts, will be soon made available in Pathadisha App.

If everything goes as planned, then in another four months the information will be available in the app.

The state Transport department has introduced the app in the mid of March to help commuters get information on the real time location of state-run buses. Since its inception,

the state Transport department has managed to make real time location of around 700 buses of West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) available in the app. At present there are around 1,100 WBTC-run buses.

An official of the state Transport department said it would take another four months to include all the 1,100 state-run buses in the app. With inclusion of all the buses run by WBTC, the real time location of those plying in adjacent districts including Howrah, Hooghly, Nadia, North and South 24 Parganas will be available in the app.

He further said that buses connecting tourist spots in South Bengal districts including Digha in East Midnapore and Gadiara in Howrah will be included in the app. Moreover, real time location of the buses plying between the city and religious places including Mayapur, Aathpur, Jayrambati, Kamarpukur, Furfura Sharif and Belur Math will also be made available in the app.

At present information about some of the buses connecting Dakshineswar Kali Temple with the city and other places have already been made available in the app.

The official further said that a

survey has been conducted to ascertain the possibility of introducing the buses connecting the tourist spots and religious places in the app. Basically, there is a need for better internet service to ensure proper functioning of the GPS system in the buses.

Thus, a trail run has been conducted to ascertain whether the internet network is well available in all the places so that it doesn't create any problem after being introduced in the app.

All steps are being taken to complete the task within the next four months, the official added.

Chandrima Bhattacharya administered oath as MLA

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: Chandrima Bhattacharya was sworn in as the MLA at a function held in the Assembly House on Tuesday afternoon.

Speaker Biman Bandyopadhyay conducted the oath taking ceremony. Bhattacharya won the Kanthi South by-election by defeating her nearest BJP rival by over



42,000 votes.

After taking oath, Bhat-

her and assured to work for them and also thanked Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee "for keeping faith on her." Bhattacharya is likely to be inducted in the Cabinet as the state Law minister. It may be recalled that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had earlier said that Bhattacharya would be made a minister in "the month of Baishak."

TMC vows to counter BJP conspiracy politically

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: The Trinamool Congress on Tuesday said it would counter BJP's conspiracy to deploy CBI in Narada sting operation politically. Partha Chatterjee, Trinamool Congress general secretary on Tuesday said: "It is nothing but a conspiracy and we will fight the matter politically. Mamata Banerjee is a responsible person and is working for the common people and so any attempt to malign her will be dealt with suitably. The legal battle will continue in the court of law." Mukul Roy, vice-president of Trinamool Congress said: "The very action of CBI shows it is vindictive. Trinamool Congress has come to power with the blessings of the people and no canards can dent the party's popularity." It may be recalled that shortly after CBI had filed FIR against 12 Trinamool Congress leaders and a senior IPS officer in Delhi, Trinamool Congress supremo had described it as a clear case of conspiracy and said it would be fought politically. "There is nothing to worry."

FIR does not mean they are accused", she had told party leaders and workers on Monday. Meanwhile, CBI said that other than the 13 named in the FIR, there were 15 more under its scanner and the investigating agency was keeping tabs on them. In the FIR, CBI said: "The inquiry also revealed that several other unknown persons had also conspired with those named in the FIR in the alleged offences."

Meanwhile, Trinamool sources claimed that the FIR was not a good enough reason for the arrest of the concerned persons. CBI had filed FIRs against 20 leaders of different political leaders including L K Advani, V C Shukla, P Shiv Shankar, Sharad Yadav, Balaram Jakhar and Madan Lal Khurana in Jain hawala case in 1991. But not of those named in the FIRs were arrested. Also, the agency had lodged a FIR against its former director Amar Pratap Singh for allegedly favouring a controversial meat seller Moyn Qureshi but did not arrest him. Meanwhile, the sources maintained that arrest was required as the agency needed to collect further information. But here the main evidence is the video footage lying with the CBI. So, the question of tampering with the tapes does not arise. CBI can complete the inquiry and then file charge sheet against those named in the FIRs. It will be a real challenge for CBI to prove before the court whether those named in the FIRs taking money to extend favours to the "non-existent" firm as shown in the video clip could be tried under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The Trinamool Congress is also exploring the option of challenging the FIR in the High Court. It is learnt that the party has got in touch with some legal luminaries to discuss the matter.

IN DEFIANCE WITH POLITBURO

CPI(M), Cong march together, file nominations

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: Though the CPI(M)'s politburo and the central committee have not yet given the green signal allowing the Bengal unit to join hands with Congress for the forthcoming municipal polls, workers of both the parties on Tuesday held a joint rally and their candidates submitted nominations in Domkol in Murshidabad.

Anisur Rahaman, CPI(M) MLA and former Animal Resource Development minister led the rally. Adhir Chowdhury, WBPC president had on Monday said that both Congress and CPI(M) would fight jointly in the civic polls.

There are elections to seven municipalities of which four are in the hills, namely, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong and Mirik and three in the plains, namely, Domkol, Rajgunj and Pujali.

Political experts felt that the unauthorised alliance was inked so hastily that this indicated the nervousness of the two parties and their insecurity.

"The question of existence has become more important than ideology and the lead-

ers of CPI(M) and Congress have realised that if they do not form an alliance, then BJP will become second in all the municipalities," political experts opined.

The unauthorised alliance which was formed before the forthcoming municipal polls, brought shame for both Congress and CPI(M). CPI(M) got only 26 seats, the lowest in the past three decades and Congress bagged 44 sets which was marginally better than its partner.

The politburo in a written statement declared the alliance as illegal and rebuked the Bengal unit. But after that, both Congress and Left fought the by-elections independently and the results were disastrous. In the Kanthi South Assembly by-election, whose results were out last week, both CPI and Congress candidates lost their deposits. While the CPI candidate got 17,000 votes, the Congress nominee got only 2,270 votes.

It was learnt that the politburo did not approve of the alliance this time too. The two-day central committee meeting of the CPI(M) is now in Delhi and the matter would be discussed at length.

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TJM/TL17/ENG

Teenage Assam girl flees brothel, lodges complaint

AMITAVA BANERJEE

DARJEELING: A teenage girl made a daring escape from a red light area in Siliguri and later, with the help of a priest, she even managed to lodge a complaint with the police.

Few months back, the victim had been trafficked from Dimapur, Assam to Siliguri and was sold off at a brothel in the red light area of Khalpara. She was confined in a room for days and then was forced into flesh trade.

As she was not willing to entertain customers, she had to endure severe torture including physical abuse. Finally on Monday night, she chanced upon a golden opportunity. Finding the door of the room ajar and with no one around, the girl managed to flee.

However, as she was new to Siliguri, she did not know the way. As luck would have it, she chanced upon a priest to whom she narrated the whole incident and requested him for help.

The priest then took her to the police, first to the Women's police station from where she was taken to Khalpara Police Outpost.

A case has been registered and the police have initiated an investigation. The victim has divulged the name of one Sumi who has been forcing her into this trade. The girl, at present, is undergoing treatment at the Siliguri hospital.

Siliguri, with its close proximity to four international borders and the gateway to the North East, is highly vulnerable to trafficking. Human trafficking is growing at an alarming rate these days.

According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the crime of human trafficking during the year 2014 has increased by 59.7 percent over 2010.

The data presented by the Union government in Rajya Sabha claimed that as many as 3,856 women and children had been trafficked from Bengal in 2015 and the number increased to 6,672 in 2016, the highest in the country.

The Union government figures claim that in 2016, a total of 19,223 women and children had been trafficked from all states and Union Territories in the country.

Highway robbers attack bizmen, snatch Rs 10 lakh

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: A gang of highway robbers attacked some businessmen on National Highway 60 in between Binpur and Kusumi in West Midnapore early Tuesday morning and snatched Rs 10 lakh cash from them.

Police said the three businessmen were admitted to Belda Village Hospital with severe injuries as they were roughed up by the miscreants.

Some vegetable sellers were returning from a weekly market. They were travelling in a mini-truck when the miscreants stopped their vehicle.

Each of the businessmen had around Rs 1 to Rs 2 lakh as they were returning after having done good business in the market. The miscreants were aware that they had huge cash with them and attacked them after chalking out a proper plan.

The miscreants were carrying choppers and firearms. They threatened to kill them if they cried for help. But three businessmen were not ready to give them the bags containing the money. Thus, the miscreants hit them on the head with the butt of a weapon and took away their bags.

Police rushed to the spot after receiving the information and took the injured persons to the hospital. A probe has been initiated in this connection.

Train runs over man in Howrah

KOLKATA: A middle-aged person was killed after he was hit by a train near Howrah's Bauria Station on Tuesday. The deceased, identified as Bhupendra Halder, was resident of North 24 Parganas' Khardah. He was crossing the train track at around 7:15 pm when a Howrah to Patna Jan Shatabdi Express hit him. The local resident said Halder was a worker at the level-crossing near Bauria Rail Station. "I saw the incident. I saw the train -- Jan Shatabdi Express was passing through the main line. He was working there along with the other workers. All the other left the spot in a hurry but Halder did not have time to move," said an eye-witness. Police took his body to post-mortem. "We have to see why he could not move from the spot whereas the other people timely moved to safety. We are waiting for the post-mortem report," said a police officer. The local resident alleged that it was lack of communication between Railways' officials and those workers in the level-crossing. "This incident would not have happened if these people were timely informed about the arrival of the train," said a local shopkeeper.

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Two held for TMC's Hanskhali Block president's murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has started investigation into the murder of Dulal Biswas, president of Hanskhali Block of Trinamool Congress and the pradhan of Bagula-I gram panchayat in Nadia.

Biswas was killed by unknown criminals inside the party office on late Sunday evening. Trinamool Congress secretary general Partha Chatterjee and party MP Abhishek Banerjee had gone to Bagula and attended the meeting held to condole the death of Biswas. Banerjee said he would talk to the Chief Minister to take stringent actions against the persons involved in the murder.

Meanwhile, two persons have been arrested in connection with the murder of

Biswas who were interrogated for long hours. The CID team visited the site along with forensic experts and officers of Krishnanagore police station. The forensic experts also collected samples from the crime scene. Biswas was murdered inside the party office in presence of around 25 party workers including his son. They tried to overpower the assailants and were successful in removing the masks from the faces of two of the criminals. But three more criminals who had stayed outside the party office opened fire to scare the people and the assailants left the spot.

The police felt that they had crossed the railway track situated behind the party office and entered the locality through a narrow lane. Meanwhile, CID officers said hired criminals had been deployed to eliminate Biswas.

Dipankar Biswas, Dulal's son had lodged an FIR against 13 people including Karthick Biswas. The police said Dipankar had identified two of the criminals and a massive hunt is on for them. Local Trinamool leaders held some BJP leaders responsible for the murder.

Biswas, an erstwhile CPI(M) leader, joined Trinamool Congress after the 2011 Assembly polls. Because of his organisational capabilities, he roped in many CPI(M) workers.

There was a threat to his life and the Nadia district administration had deployed an armed bodyguard and incidentally, the security personnel had taken a leave on Sunday. CID officers on Tuesday talked to some of the Trinamool workers who were present in the room when the murder took place.

Three injured in TMC-BJP clash, two detained

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: Three persons were injured in a clash that broke out between BJP and Trinamool Congress at Parui in Birbhum on Tuesday.

The incident triggered tension among the local residents. Local Trinamool Congress leaders claimed that the injured were their party supporters. They said some BJP workers attacked them and also alleged that BJP-backed miscreants hurled bombs on the Trinamool Congress workers. The TMC workers said that they were also shot at.

BJP leaders in the district, however, alleged that some Trinamool Congress affiliated goons attacked their party supporters when the TMC supporters were returning after attending a rally.



REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

They alleged that the Trinamool Congress goons attacked them without any provocation.

Three persons who received injuries during the clash were

taken to Bolpur sub-divisional hospital. The doctors in the hospital said that the victims had received splinter injuries on their bodies. The villagers

Class VI girl ends life after tiff over tiffin sharing

The suicide note found inside a book read: 'I am leaving the world for my best friend. I was being betrayed by everyone and it will be good for everyone if I quit', which the cops are now examining

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: In a tragic incident, a 11-year-old girl committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling of a room in her house at Behala following a dispute over sharing of tiffin with her "best friend" in school. The incident took place on Monday night.

Police said the victim Srestha Dey was a Class VI student of Jodhpur Girls' High School. A suicide note was found inside a book in her room. After going through the suicide note, investigating officers suspect that the girl had some dispute with a friend and committed suicide.

On Monday night, the victim's family members found her room locked from the inside. Srestha was not responding despite repeated knocks on the door. The family members broke open the door and found her hanging from the ceiling fan. Police from Parnashree police station went to the spot and brought down the body and sent it for an autopsy.

A police officer said Srestha, who was a monitor of her class, wrote in the suicide note: "I am leaving the world for my best friend. I was being betrayed by everyone and it will be good for everyone if I quit."

In the suicide note, the victim also urged her parents to stay in good health and regretted that she would not be able to be present at her elder sister's wedding.

The police initiated a probe in this connection and investigating officers are tallying her handwriting with the one of the suicide note.

The girl was a good student and was



On Monday night, the victim's family members found her room locked from the inside. Srestha was not responding despite repeated knocks on the door. The kin broke open the door and found her hanging from the ceiling fan

Ratnabali Roy, noted mental health activist said it was most unfortunate that the parents are giving only protection to their children and not getting them acquainted to face the challenges of the world.

"Parents do not bring up their kids properly. By giving gifts and giving them protection they are actually doing more harm than good. The children leave in a dream world and are unable to face the actual physical world," said Roy.

Children should be taught that quarrels with friends are quite natural. "But this does not mean rejection of the individual. It means temporary rejection of an idea at that particular point of time," she said adding: "Parents should take parenting seriously." Roy said there should be national suicide policy and "lawmakers should realise that suicidal tendencies among children has gone up alarmingly."

also good in co-curricular activities like painting and dance. Her mother told the police that her girl didn't disclose the entire incident that took place in the school but said that her friends had not allowed Srestha to stand with them while eating tiffin.

It is learnt that the school authorities have decided to suspend classes of Class VI for the next few days and will be holding meeting along with the parents of other students of the class on Monday.

Calling the incident "most unfortunate", psychologists felt that parents are responsible for such low frustration level of children and they should learn how to expand it.

19-year-old college student dies after falling off building



OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: Mystery shrouds the death of a college student whose body was found adjacent to an under-construction multi-storied building under Pradhan Nagar police station in Siliguri.

The police said that the victim, Nitesh Tamang (19) who was originally from Pedong in Sikkim died after falling from the fourth floor of the building. However, the police are yet to ascertain the real cause of his death. They are investigating if the victim had committed suicide or if there was any foul play behind the incident.

Police said that the victim had been staying at a rented house at the Gurung Basti area.

Three of his college friends used to stay with the victim the house. They were all studying management at a local college. The friends of the victim told the police that they heard a loud thud in the morning and found that the victim was lying in a pool of blood on the ground. They informed the matter to the Pradhan Nagar police station.

Police reached the spot and took the victim to the North Bengal College and Hospital

where the doctors pronounced him brought dead. The body has been sent for the post-mortem examination. The police were awaiting the post-mortem report as it will throw light on the cause of his death. After hearing about the incident, the family members of the victim reached Siliguri. Police were interrogating the friends and the family members of the victim.

According to the preliminary investigation, police suspect that the victim might have been drunk at the time of the incident. Police also suspect that the victim was consuming alcohol on the fourth floor of the under-construction building when he somehow slipped and fell on the ground.

Police were investigating if there were some other persons at the time of the incident. Police are not, however, ruling out the possibility of the foul play in the incident. They are also investigating if the victim had gone to the building alone or if there were some other persons. Police are still clueless as to why the victim would have gone to the building alone at night. Police have started a detail probe into the incident.

With announcement of polls, launch of Passport Seva Kendra in Siliguri deferred

AMITAVA BANERJEE

DARJEELING: With the declaration of elections to the four Hill municipalities in the Darjeeling Hills in May resulting in the clamping of the model code of conduct, the inauguration of the a Passport Seva Kendra in Siliguri slated for April 18 was put on hold.

A letter from Bibhuti Bhushan Kumar, Regional Passport Officer, Kolkata stated: "In view of the imposition of Model Code of Conduct on account of announcement of the Municipal General Election 2017 in the Urban Local Bodies of Darjeeling, Kurseong and Mirik (among others) in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, the inauguration of Passport Seva Laghu Kendra (PSLK) Siliguri, that was scheduled for 18 April

2017 has been deferred. The revised schedule for inauguration shall be conveyed in due course."

Darjeeling, Kurseong, Mirik and Kalimpong Municipalities will be going to polls on May 14.

The PSLK Siliguri office located at Himachal Vihar at Matigara, Siliguri is slated to become the third passport office in West Bengal.

Applicants who have already received appointments with the Siliguri centre can either undergo the process at the Calcutta passport office on any working day or they can wait for the inauguration of the Siliguri centre, stated officials of the Kolkata Passport centre.

Till the Siliguri Passport office is not inaugurated, no fresh appointments for the Siliguri office will be issued stated passport officials, Kolkata.

Fight over cultural event: One dead, several injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: One person was killed and around 15-20 injured after two groups broke into a fight on Monday night.

Police have learnt that the clash broke out over a cultural programme at Khirigram under Kotulpur police station.

One group claimed that the organisers did not have necessary permission to arrange the cultural event, while their rivals insisted that they had all the necessary permission. They accused the other group of intentionally trying to spoil the programme.

The police, however, could not identify the deceased. The investigators suspected that the man came there to attend the cultural function but could not find a way to escape when the fight broke out between the two groups.

"At least 35-40 people were fighting each other. Unfortunately the man could not run away from there and he was beaten up," a police officer said.

A major success: Eco Park's footfall crosses 75 lakh, says HIDCO

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: The footfall at Eco Park has crossed the 75 lakh mark according to a statistics issued by the Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation (HIDCO).

Exactly 75,01,629 have visited the Eco Park renamed as Prakriti Tirtha by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. As computerised tickets are given to the visitors, the data is preserved and the number of visitors coming to the park daily is monitored.

Banerjee inaugurated the park on December 29, 2012 and it was thrown open to public from January 1, 2013. After coming to power in 2011, Banerjee urged HIDCO officials to develop the park which spreads on a 480-acre land and is surrounded by 112 acres of waterbody.

The Japanese food court, which is a part of the newly-constructed Japanese garden, will be thrown open to public from April 30. The Japanese garden has a pagoda, a



wish tank and this is the first-of-its-kind in eastern India and one of the 500 Japanese gardens worldwide. Japanese experts

had visited the garden and expressed their satisfaction.

New Town's slogan is "there is never a

dull moment at New Town. Here you can keep expecting the unexpected." This is absolutely true for the Eco Park as well.

New Town's slogan is 'there is never a dull moment at New Town. Here you can keep expecting the unexpected'

The park has become the most attractive destination for both domestic and foreign tourists because of its uniqueness. There are flower gardens and mystic gardens and the new addition will be a hibiscus garden. There is an arena where people can enjoy cycling and also a joggers' ally. There is a zone for other indoor games as well and people can go for boating inside the park. Two restaurants, Café Ekanta renamed by Chief Minister and a houseboat restaurant offer mouthwatering dishes.

Two important things that will add more value to the urban garden are replicas of the seven wonders of the world and a sculpture garden. Both are the initiatives of the Chief Minister. Final touches are being given to the sculpture garden which is likely to be opened within a month.

A replica of the Ghoom railway station of Darjeeling and the toy train are great crowd-pullers. Some artwork which were used in the prize winning puja pandals are in display at the art museum. Taking cue from the overwhelming enthusiasm of participants and spectators at the recently concluded angling competition at Eco Park, HIDCO authorities have decided to hold the second version on April 29.

The USP of Eco Park is cleanliness. A person littering or throwing soiled papers and plastic outside waste bins are fined. Debashis Sen, chairman of HIDCO said the park is closed for visitors on Monday for its upkeep.

India in touch with UK on Mallya's extradition: MEA

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: India is in touch with the UK on the issue of extradition of Vijay Mallya who has been declared a proclaimed offender, the external affairs ministry said on Tuesday.

Holding that Mallya's arrest in London by Scotland Yard on Tuesday was in connection with the request by the government to the UK authorities for his extradition, external affairs ministry spokesperson Gopal Baglay said legal process in this regard is underway in the UK.

"The two governments are in touch in this context," he added. The 61-year-old liquor baron, wanted in India for defaulting on bank loans, was arrested after he appeared at a central London police station this morning.

The flamboyant businessman, who once called himself "The King of Good Times", was released on bail a few hours later.

Last month, setting in motion the process of extradi-



tion of Mallya, the British government had certified India's request and sent it to a district judge for further action.

The extradition process from the UK involves a number of steps including a decision by the judge whether to issue a warrant of arrest.

In case of a warrant, the person is arrested and brought before the court for preliminary hearing followed by an extradition hearing before a final decision is taken by the secretary of state.

The wanted person has a right to appeal to the higher courts against any decision all

the way up to Britain's Supreme Court. Under the 2003 Act, the British secretary of state may only consider four issues when deciding whether to order a person's extradition.

They are whether the person is at risk of the death penalty; whether special arrangements are in place; whether the person concerned has previously been extradited from another country to the UK and the consent of that country to his onward extradition is required; and whether the person has previously been transferred to the UK by the International Criminal Court.

Meanwhile, the government and the ruling BJP quickly claimed credit for the arrest of the flamboyant tycoon, while congress dubbed the exercise as an attempt to "hoodwink" the people of India.

Minister of State for Finance Santosh Kumar Gangwar said, "We are now assessing the facts how we can bring him back into the country and start judicial proceedings against him."

A similar dossier has been

ED to file first chargesheet against Mallya and others

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is set to file its first charge sheet against Vijay Mallya and others in the IDBI bank loan default case.

Officials said the agency has been preparing the charge sheet for quite sometime now and it will be filed in a court in Mumbai in the next few days.

The charge sheet, which is expected to be voluminous, will include statements from numerous executives and investigation of assets and transactions of the accused from both the Kingfisher Airlines (KFA) and the IDBI bank.

The agency is probing this alleged loan fraud case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

A similar dossier has been

filed by the CBI in a court in Mumbai in January.

The charge sheet, called prosecution complaint in the ED's parlance, will detail the proceeds of crime generated by the accused as investigated under the provisions of PMLA, the officials said, adding the same will also be furnished to the competent court in the UK which will hear the extradition proceedings against him.

The liquor baron was today arrested in London by Scotland Yard on India's request for his extradition on fraud charges.

The agency has attached assets worth Rs 9,661 crore in this case till now and has also obtained a court-issued proclamation declaring Mallya an absconder in this PMLA case.

Over Rs 4,100 cr earmarked for 1,800 fast track courts

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: After a gap of six years, the Centre has once again pushed for creation of fast track courts to try heinous crimes such as rape, murder and dacoity for which an allocation of more than Rs 4,100 crore has been made.

With the 14th Finance Commission allocating Rs 4144.14 crore, the Centre has now asked states to set up a total of 1,800 fast track courts for a period of five years.

As per the Finance Commission document, these courts will be set up for a period of five years. The Law Ministry had proposed before the Commission that additional 1,800 positions created in the lower judiciary be used to man these fast track courts.

In 2012, the Supreme Court had directed that 10 per cent additional position of judges be created in the subordinate courts, which comes to 1,800.

These courts will have the mandate to try all cases of heinous crimes such as murder, rape, dacoity, kidnapping, human trafficking and dowry



deaths.

They will also settle civil cases involving senior citizens, women, children, disabled and litigants afflicted with HIV/AIDS and other terminal ailments.

Civil disputes involving land acquisition and property/rent disputes pending for more than 5 years will also come in the ambit of these courts, the document said.

While the most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, has been granted Rs 488 crore, Maharashtra has been given Rs 469 crore for the courts. Gujarat, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal have been earmarked Rs 400 crore, Rs 338 crore, Rs 306 crore, Rs 218 crore and Rs 216 crore respectively.

The 11th Finance Commis-

sion had recommended creation of 1,734 fast track courts in the country for disposal of long pending cases for a five year period.

The term of scheme on these courts ended on March 31, 2005. The Supreme Court, which is monitoring the functioning of these courts through the case of Brij Mohan Lal Vs Union of India, had observed that the scheme should not be disbanded all of a sudden and had directed the Centre to continue with these courts.

The government had then approved continuation of 1,562 fast track courts that were operational as on March 31, 2005 till March 31, 2010.

The scheme of central assistance for these courts was extended for a period of one year upto March 31, 2011. It was decided that there will be no central funding for fast track courts beyond March 31, 2011.

A note prepared by the Law Ministry on fast track courts said 32.34 lakh cases were disposed of by these courts, out of 38.90 lakh transferred to these. It leaves a pendency of 6.56 lakh cases.

PC: ED making 'wild allegations' against Karti

NEW DELHI: Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Tuesday accused the Enforcement Directorate of making wild allegations against his son Karti in an alleged forex violation case. In a statement, the former Finance and Home Minister said the ED's press release issued on Monday did not refer to any specific act on the part of Karti.

Instead, he said it made the "extraordinary and ridiculous" allegation that Karti "appears to be the controller and ultimate beneficiary" of certain transactions of two companies.

"What does 'appears to be' mean? It means that the ED is making a wild allegation just to drag him into the case," the senior Congress leader alleged.

A show cause notice has been issued by the ED to Karti Chidambaram and a firm purportedly linked to him for

alleged FEMA violations of Rs 45 crore.

A similar notice has also been issued in the case of Chennai-based M/s Vasan Health Care Private Limited for alleged forex violation of Rs 2,262 crore.

The ED in a statement issued on Monday said, "The total amount of contravention identified on different counts and found to have been committed by M/s Advantage Strategic Consulting Private Limited in the sale transaction of shares of Vasan Health Care to overseas investors is around Rs 45 crore."

"A show cause notice has been issued to M/s Advantage Strategic Consulting Private Limited, its directors and also to Karti P Chidambaram who appears to be the controller and ultimate beneficiary in these transactions," it said. MPOST

BJP not anti-Muslim, Centre working on schemes for them, says Naqvi

OUR CORRESPONDENT

RAMPUR: Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Tuesday condemned the opposition parties for terming the BJP as "anti-Muslims", while rejecting doling out more reservation to the community saying the demand has no "constitutional" merit. The Minister of State (independent charge) for Minority Affairs said the Muslim community has indicated that they will not let the anti-BJP forces "mislead or befool" them for "political benefits".

Naqvi said the central government is working on programmes for establishing education and skill development facilities for the community and trying to get more industries set up to generate more employment opportunities.



BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi in Rampur on Monday

"There are schemes being launched for backward classes and that does not mean Muslims would not avail the benefits of the programmes because more than 50 per cent of the backward population consists of Muslims," he said.

"Muslims will get the major

share of the development programmes," he added.

Naqvi lashed out at the opponents who have been demanding reservation for the community, claiming the demand was "not based on legal or constitutional ground".

He said for the districts having domination of Muslims the government has prepared a road map to establish polytechnics, IITs, educational institution right from primary level to higher standards and Garib Nawaz Skill development centres besides Sadbhawna Mandaps (goodwill generating centres) each with an investment of Rs 10 crore.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is touring places within and outside the country exploring avenues to attract business and industries in India.

NATION BRIEFS

GOVT EXTENDS CEASEFIRE PACT WITH NAGA INSURGENT GROUPS

NEW DELHI: The Centre has extended a ceasefire agreement with two insurgent groups in Nagaland for one more year from April 28. The ceasefire agreement is between the central government and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Reformation) and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Neokpao-Khitovi). "It was decided by the government of India to extend the Suspension of Operation with NSCN-R and NSCN-NK for a further period of one year with effect from April 28," an official statement said here on Tuesday. The pact was signed by Satyendra Garg, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs on behalf of the government of India, and Toshi Longkumer and Imlongkushi Chang on behalf of NSCN-R and Jack Jimomi on behalf of NSCN-NK.

NAVY TO FINALISE A RAFT OF BIG TICKET DEALS BY YEAR-END

NEW DELHI: After years of delay, Indian Navy is all set to sign a deal with a South Korean defence major for building 12 minesweeping vessels at a cost of nearly Rs 35,000 crore. Controller of the Navy's Warship Production and Acquisition Vice Admiral D M Deshpande said issues between Goa Shipyard and the South Korean collaborator in the project have been sorted out and the deal should be sealed by the end of this year. The Navy's existing fleet of six Soviet-origin minesweeping ships will be decommissioned by the end of 2018. The parliamentary standing committee on defence had recently criticised the government on the issue and asked it to make efforts to fill the gap in the Navy's capability. Deshpande said a contract for procurement of Landing Platform Docks (LPD) will also be finalised by the end of this year.

PANEL FOR IMPLEMENTING 7TH PAY COMM IN EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

NEW DELHI: The HRD Ministry has formed a committee to review the recommendations made by a UGC panel on implementation of the seventh pay commission in educational institutions. The development comes against the backdrop of teachers' associations of various universities threatening to go on strike over the "delay" in implantation after the UGC panel submitted its report earlier this year. "Seventh Pay Review committee for implementing the recommendations (of the 7th pay commission) in educational institutions, universities and colleges has submitted its report to the Ministry. I have constituted a committee headed by Higher education secretary to study them," Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters.

Dynamic fares in Rajdhani, Shatabdi acceptable under LTC: Govt

NEW DELHI: Dynamic or flexi-fare in Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains will be admissible under the Leave Travel Concession (LTC) allowance.

The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has issued a directive in this regard to all central government ministries. The move comes after references were received from various segments seeking clarification on the issue of admissibility of flexi-fare while booking the tickets of these trains for the purpose of LTC.

"The matter has been examined in consultation with Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance and it has been decided that flexi fare (dynamic fare) applicable in Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains shall be admissible for the journey(s) performed in these trains on LTC," the DoPT said. MPOST

NCP rules out Sharad Pawar's nomination for Rashtrapati Bhavan

NEW DELHI: The NCP on Tuesday virtually ruled out possibility of its chief Sharad Pawar contesting presidential elections, scheduled to be held before July 24.

Speaking to reporters here, NCP general secretary D P Tripathi also played down Congress leader KV Thomas' call for merger of the two parties, saying his party is there to "emerge and not merge".

"Pawar is our party president, head of our Parliament party. Now, there is no question (of Pawar being in the race to be the next President).

"There could be several other leaders who can contest (the polls)," Tripathi said responding to a query if Pawar is in the race for the post.

Tripathi noted the ruling parties are falling short by 15,000 votes for the presiden-

tial polls and sought to wait to see if they want to field a consensus candidate (along with opposition).

"If they decide to field a consensus candidate, all parties (including opposition) will think over it. It depends on what their approach is going to be. There is still lot of time, different parties will think over it," he added.

Having assumed the office in 2012, President Pranab Mukherjee's term in the Rashtrapati Bhavan is scheduled to get over this July. Tripathi further dismissed Thomas' call for a merger, but maintained the NCP will "continue to co-operate" with the Congress.

Thomas had on Tuesday suggested that Pawar and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee merge their parties with the grand old party to take on the BJP. AGENCIES

Now, Maneka wants father's name optional in caste certificates

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The Woman and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi has sought a change in rules that require father's name to be mandatorily mentioned for getting caste certificates, in case of children raised by single or separated mothers.

Gandhi's move comes days within her approaching HRD minister Prakash Javadekar with a request to change the rule that requires father's name to be mandatorily mentioned on a student's degree certificate.

In a letter to Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot, Gandhi said she has been approached by several women facing prob-



lems in getting caste certificates for their children without the name of the father from the jurisdictional offices.

Stating that breakdown of marriages and separation of husband and wife is now a "reality" which cannot be ignored, Gandhi added, "What we need to appreciate is the fact that women in such situations often do not get their rights and entitlements due to certain

loopholes in the procedures/laws." She said her ministry was working towards plugging these loopholes. "Keeping in view the sensitivity of the single/separated mother, we need to make a provision for this purpose by changing rules/guidelines," the letter added.

Last year, Gandhi had written to External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj asking her to reconsider the rule of having the father's name mentioned for getting passports.

Priyanka Gupta, a single parent, had initiated a petition last year on Change.org website, asking for passport rules to be altered so that she was not required to mention her husband's name on her daughter's passport.

Private persons from Arunachal issued 'official' passports: CBI

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The CBI on Tuesday registered an FIR to probe the nexus between unknown MEA officials and agents who allegedly arranged "official" passports for private persons by showing them as Arunachal Pradesh government officials to facilitate their trafficking to the US.

The conspiracy was hatched to get "official" passports to 12 people on the basis of forged documents showing them as officials of the Arunachal Pradesh government, the FIR said.

"Official" passports, with white cover, are issued to government officials if they are travelling on official assignments.

The agency registered the FIR against private individuals Raja Kipa, Thupten, Kalden Kunseng and Lucky and unknown officials of the External Affairs Ministry (MEA) on the basis of a tip off received

by it.

In its FIR, the CBI has levelled the charges of criminal misconduct by public servants, criminal conspiracy, trafficking, cheating, forgery and fraudulently obtaining official passport by furnishing false information among others.

The alleged criminal conspiracy was hatched between December, 2016 and March this year, the FIR said.

It is alleged that the 12 people had applied for non-immigrant visa for the US and presented their "official" passports along with letter purportedly written by the ministry to the US Consulate in Kolkata, the FIR said.

They were called for visa interview but only four persons appeared for it on March 14, 2017 at the US Embassy here posing as government officials of Arunachal Pradesh, it said.

During the interview, they admitted not being government officials and disclosed their real identities.

India examining consequences of Australia's visa move: MEA

NEW DELHI: India is examining "consequences" of Australia's decision to abolish a popular work visa used by over 95,000 foreign workers, majority of them Indians, and said the issue will also be looked at in the context of free trade talks. The programme, known as 457 visa, allows businesses in Australia to employ foreign workers for a period up to four years in skilled jobs where there is a shortage of Australian workers.

"The government is examining consequences of the new policy in consultation with all stakeholders. This is also a matter we will be looking at in the context of Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) negotiations," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Gopal Baglay said. Announcing his government's decision to abolish 457 visa, PM Melcolm Turnbull said though his country was an immigration nation, the fact remains that Australian workers must have priority for Australian jobs. MPOST

WEST BENGAL BOARD OF PRIMARY EDUCATION
A.P.C. Bhavan, DK-7/1, Sector-II, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700 091

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পার্শ্ব শিক্ষকদের Study Centre নির্বাচন প্রক্রিয়া

In continuation of our Memo No. 382/BPE/2016 dated - 31.03.2016, this is further to notify for all concerned that the process for Selection of Study Centres of the Two Year D.El.Ed. Course through ODL Mode for Registered eligible In-service Para Teachers will -

commence from 25-04-2017

&
end on 02-05-2017

from the link to the website www.wbsed.gov.in

The registered Para Teachers are requested to visit the said website and click first on 'D.El.Ed. for In-service Para Teacher' and then click on 'Selection of D.El.Ed. Study Centre' and do as directed below for choosing D.El.Ed. study centres.

Directions:-

Click on [Apply Online](#)

1. Enter your Registration number;
2. Enter your DOB;
3. E-mail ID:

[Submit](#)

After giving the valid data the registered Para Teacher should select 5 (Five) study centres in order of priority. Selection of all the 5 (Five) centres from drop down list are mandatory and same centre can't be given more than once. Before submitting check once again all the choices as these could not be changed thereafter.

After submission the 'Print' option will appear. Now, click on 'Print' to get a print out.

This is further to inform all registered Para Teachers

- Each candidate will select five Study Centres compulsorily in order of priority from the list of available study centres of the district.
- Candidates can view the list of available study centres of the districts before entering into the application for selection of study centres so that they can keep ready five study centres in order of their priority beforehand. Once choice of study centres is submitted there will be no option for further changing it.
- Generally, the study centres of the list of a district are located within the district except for the district Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar. For these two districts study centres are from Jalpaiguri & Malda due the scarcity of the required number of study centres within the district.
- Study centres will be allotted to the candidates randomly by the machine considering their choice as far as possible. However, it may not be possible to allot study centre to each candidate within their choices. In that case any centre from the available centres of the list of the district may be allotted to them.
- During allotment PH candidates will be given top most priority.
- Female candidate will come next in the priority list.
- The allotment process will be started after the completion of the process of 'Selection of Study Centres'. It will never be on first come first serve basis.

Date: 18/04/2017

Sd/-
Secretary

Check train delays or face the music: Rail Minister to officials

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: With a number of complaints being received over the late running of trains, Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu has cracked the whip on officials concerned, asking them to improve punctuality rate or "face action".

Zonal heads have been asked to deploy a senior-level officer in the night shift between 10 pm and 7 am immediately to monitor the situation and address the problems, if any, to prevent delay in train running.

Besides, Prabhu has also taken note of discrepancies between train timings data available on national train enquiry system (NTES), the official website of Indian Railways, and actual train timings being experienced by passengers.

He, in a letter to the officials, has sought immediate corrective measures to obviate the problems.

The punctuality rate has deteriorated further to 79 per cent during April 1-16 period, as compared to 84 per cent in the corresponding period last year, a decrease of 5 per cent.

Analysis of performance



of zonal railways reveals that punctuality has registered a sharp drop over Eastern Railway (-8.9 per cent), North Eastern Railway (-11 per cent), East Central Railway (-10 per cent), South East Central Railway (-11 per cent), West Central Railway (-8 per cent) and Konkan Railway (-6.9 per cent).

Division-wise analysis of punctuality reveals that the performance of 11 divisions including Varanasi, Mumbai, Sambalpur, Danapur, Samastipur, Jhansi, Jabalpur leaves much to be desired, according to the letter written by Railway Minister office to all zonal heads.

The Railway Minister has expressed his deep concern regarding further dete-

rioration by over 4 per cent in punctuality between 1-16 April and directed that very close monitoring of these divisions should be done by senior officers in the 10 PM-7 AM shift with immediate effect, the letter stated.

According to the instruction, besides monitoring overall performance, these officers should take immediate steps to minimise asset failure time and co-ordinate with divisional and control offices of neighbouring divisions to make up for the delay, if any, in their own divisions.

The names and mobile numbers of these officers should be conveyed to Board's Punctuality Control on a daily basis, it stated.

Over 500 railwaymen to be trained abroad on high-speed rail tech

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: Indian Railways has undertaken a massive exercise of imparting training to over 500 railwaymen on high-speed rail technology in China and Japan, ahead of running trains at speed ranging from 160 to 200 kmph in select corridors in the country.

Railways has firming up plans for running trains at higher speed of 160 kmph in the busy trunk routes of Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Mumbai section to reduce travel time between these metropolises.

Besides, the public transporter has asked SNCF, the French railways, to explore possibilities of running trains at 200 kmph on the Delhi-Chandigarh route.

"There is a need for imparting training on high-speed rail technology to our officials

before the introduction of the service here," a senior Railway Ministry official involved in Mission Raftaar said.

Railways has launched Mission Raftaar, a programme to increase speed of trains in all busy routes to reduce journey time between cities.

There will be about 550 railway officials from directorates concerned, including traffic and electrical, who will be trained in China and Japan as arrangements for such training has been put in place, the official said.

While the first batch of 40 railway officials are being trained in high-speed rail technology at Chengdu in China, 20 officers have already been trained in Japan and 38 more are undergoing the training programme there.

The training programme in China is for two weeks and in Japan the study course is for 20 days.

Kashmir violence: Cabinet asks forces to exercise restraint



Meeting was convened against the backdrop of unrest in Kashmir valley

MPOST BUREAU

JAMMU: Amid a surge in violence in Kashmir, the state Cabinet on Tuesday expressed deep anguish over the loss of precious lives and asked the security forces to exercise maximum restraint while handling law and order situation.

At a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti here, the Cabinet also "urged the civil society and parents to counsel the youth to stay away from violent protests which, in spite of maximum restraint, can at times lead to fatal consequences," an official spokesman said.

The meeting, convened against the backdrop of unrest in the Kashmir valley over the last few weeks, reviewed the security and law and order situation and "expressed deep anguish over the loss of precious lives" in the violent pro-

tests. The Cabinet "directed the police and security agencies to exercise maximum restraint while handling law and order situation to prevent loss of human lives," the spokesman said.

It made a "fervent appeal to all shades of political opinion to help restore peace and normalcy in the valley," he added.

The Cabinet also directed the state administration to take all required measures to tackle the situation effectively and at the same time ensure that the general public is not put to any inconvenience and their grievances are addressed.

The Kashmir valley has been witnessing violent protests over the last few weeks, with the peak being witnessed on the day of polling for by-elections to Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency on April 9, when eight people were killed.

Jawan dies in accidental misfire along LoC in Poonch

MPOST BUREAU

JAMMU: An Army Jawan posted along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district in Jammu and Kashmir died in an accidental fire from his service weapon.

A jawan deputed on a forward post along the LoC in Mendhar sector of Poonch district received bullet wounds due to accidental fire around 2150 hours last night, Defence spokesman Lt Col Manish Mehta said on Tuesday.

Sepoy Manmohan Budhani (23) later succumbed to injuries, he said. He was in the army for two years and is survived by mother Vidhya Bukhari. Budhani belonged to village Awalakot Kota Bagh in Nainital district of Uttarakhand.

The Defence spokesman denied reports in a section of the media that the soldier died in Pakistani firing.

He said there was no firing from the Pakistani side on Monday in Mendhar.

Heat forces SEC to extend polling time for 3 civic bodies

MPOST BUREAU

MUMBAI: In view of severe heat across Maharashtra, the State Election Commission has extended the poll timing by one hour for municipal corporation elections at three places scheduled tomorrow.

"Voters can exercise their franchise for Latur, Chandrapur and Parbhani corporations between 7.30 AM and 6.30 PM tomorrow," the State Election Commissioner JS Saharia said on Tuesday.

The polling hours at the time of announcement of election for three municipal corporations at Chandrapur, Latur and Parbhani were between 7.30am and 5.30pm.

He said the decision to extend the poll timing was taken in the view of severe heat conditions prevailing in Vidarbha and Marathawada

regions of the state.

While Chandrapur falls under Vidarbha region, Latur and Parbhani fall under Marathwada.

Maharashtra has been reeling under severe heat for the last few days, with the temperatures crossing 40 degrees Celsius in many parts of the state.

Saharia said that adequate arrangements will be made for providing shelter from heat at all polling stations, besides facilities for drinking water.

The extension of poll timing will be also applicable for by-elections to be held tomorrow for one seat each in Akola Zilla Parishad and Akot Panchayat Samiti in Akola district in east Maharashtra.

The bypolls were necessitated as these seats have been lying vacant.

A total of 1,284 candidates are in the fray for 201 seats in the three civic bodies.

Farmer suicides: Maha govt too will die a casual death, warns Sena

MUMBAI: The Shiv Sena on Tuesday hit out at the BJP government on the issue of farmers suicides, alleging that it terms these deaths as "casual" and if the present trend continued the state government would also one day die a casual death.

"The dust of schemes announced by the chief minister in his weekly programme 'Mi Mukhyamantri Bolto' has been flying for the last 25 years and while the then (Congress-NCP) government was making similar claims, Devendra Fadnavis as part of opposition was demanding a loan waiver," the Sena said in an editorial in party mouthpiece 'Saamana'.

Fadnavis will have to give a complete loan waiver now, as demanded by him earlier, if he takes himself seriously and considers himself to be the same person as he was before, it said.

Mumbai dabbawalas condemn Pak over Jadhav death sentence

MPOST BUREAU

MUMBAI: Mumbai's famed dabbawalas, who deliver tiffins to over a lakh office-goers with precision daily, on Tuesday held a protest against Pakistan and condemned the country for "illegally" sentencing Kulbhushan Jadhav to death.

"Pakistan's act should be condemned by all sections of the society. India should do whatever it can, to bring Jadhav back," Mumbai Dabbawala Association spokesperson Subhash Talekar told PTI.

The protest was held outside the Lower Parel railway station in central Mumbai, where around 200 dabbawalas shouted slogans against Pakistan, he said.

"We demand that India should put national and international pressure on Pakistan,



which is illegally holding Jadhav, who hails from our Maharashtra state," Talekar said.

"Jadhav should be returned to India without any harm," he said. "If another surgical strike is needed to achieve this objective, India should go ahead," he added. A military court in Pakistan recently sentenced Jadhav to death on charges of "espionage".

Last week, protesters had formed a human chain against Pakistan and sought the immediate release of the 46-year-old former Indian Navy official from Pakistani captivity.

Why were you silent over allegations of rape: Apex court asks Army

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday rapped the Army asking why it had maintained silence over allegations of rape and murder against its personnel in Manipur and questioned the state government for not proceeding with these cases against them.

The apex court asked the Manipur government to explain whether it was a "sheer helplessness" on their part or a "tacit understanding" that they would not proceed against the Army personnel despite there being serious allegations of rape and murder against them.

"You may have two alleged rapists. Why you have kept quiet," a bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and U U Lalit asked Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi, who was appearing for the Army and the Assam Rifles. Responding to the query, the



Attorney General said, "these are allegations only. The question is whether rape was committed by the Army personnel".

The court posed this query to Rohatgi after it was told that there were allegations against two Army personnel that they had raped a 15-year-old girl in 2003 following which she had committed suicide. The bench was also told that an inquiry commission report had also indicted some officials of Assam Rifles in a separate case in which a woman was allegedly sexually

assaulted before being shot dead in Manipur.

When Rohatgi said an inquiry was conducted on the allegations of rape, the bench shot back, "we would want to know what kind of inquiry you have conducted. We would like to see the inquiry report also".

The Attorney General also said that state government had set up commission to inquire into these matters but it had no power to do so.

During the hearing, the counsel appearing for Manipur told the bench that "in cases where personnel of armed forces are involved, we have stopped from proceeding ahead". To this, the bench said, "the reports clearly suggest that the girl was subjected to rape. You are creating a stone wall and you do not want to break that stone wall. You have not tried anything. You have not asked the Army to handover the custody of the alleged culprits".

Yogi govt's work in one month showing positive impact: BJP

MPOST BUREAU

LUCKNOW: As the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh completed one month in office, the BJP on Tuesday said the welfare schemes initiated by the new dispensation have started "showing positive impact".

"The people of the state have



started realising that finally, they have a government which is dedicated to their cause. In just 30 days, the positive works of the government have started showing results," the party's spokesperson Shalabh Mani Tripathi said. Adityanath took over the reins of the state on March 19 after the BJP stormed to power with a three-fourth majority in the 403-member Assembly.

Referring to the key deci-

sion of loan waiver for small and marginal farmers in the first Cabinet meeting, Tripathi said it showed "the BJP does what it says". Formation of anti-Romeo squads, closure of illegal slaughter houses, electricity for all and decision to scrap the system of interview in group C and D government jobs have won hearts of the people in a short time, he claimed.

"By recognising the good work of officers during the previous SP dispensation, the Adityanath government showed that if there is commitment in leadership they can make bureaucrats work for people," Tripathi said and warned that the days ahead will be tough for those involved in corruption.

Dog feeds on body at Jind mortuary, probe ordered

CHANDIGARH: A shocking video of a dog feeding on a body at the mortuary of the civil hospital in Jind in Haryana surfaced on social media triggering outrage and prompting the state government to order a probe into the incident.

The latest incident comes barely four months after three disturbing incidents of rats nibbling at dead bodies at hospitals in Kurukshetra and Kailash were reported. In the latest video, a stray dog is seen feeding on the body of an unidentified person lying in the mortuary of the civil hospital, Jind. The video is believed to have been shot by a passerby, who also alerted hospital officials about the incident.

Police said the dead body had been found on railway tracks and was brought to the hospital on April 16 by the Railway Police for post-mortem examination. Taking a strict view of the incident, Health Minister Anil Viji on Tuesday ordered an inquiry into the whole incident. The minister has asked Director (Dental Health) in the Haryana government Dr Parveen Sethi to look into the matter and submit a report within two days, an official spokesman said here.

A police official said that the body was properly handled and the room had been locked a they had no clue how the door was opened and dog managed entry inside.

WEST BENGAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD
(A Govt. of West Bengal Undertaking)
NOTICE INVITING E-QUOTATION
NIT NO. 3/WBTDCL 2017-18 (Operations)
E-quotation are invited by WBTDCL from reputed contractor for supply installation & commissioning of WiFi Network solution at the beaches of Bakkhali, Henry Island and Frazerganj.
Details are available in website www.wbtdcl.com and www.wbtenders.gov.in
Sd/- Managing Director
West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation Ltd.
Udayachal Tourism Lodge
DG - Block Sector - II
Salt Lake, Kolkata-700091
ICA-T 815/2/2017

Notice Inviting e-Tender No. 01 of 2017-18
EE/TD/PWD, Purba Medinipur invites e-tender for the work "Repair and Construction of surface drain inside the premises of Purba Medinipur District Hospital at Tamluk". Estt. Amt.: Rs. 4496488.00
Tender ID: 2017_WBPWD_109216_1
Bid Submission End Date is 03.05.2017 at 14.00 Hours. For details visit the website <http://wbtenders.gov.in>
Sd/-
Executive Engineer, PWD,
Tamluk Division

KMDA KOLKATA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Abridged e-NIT No. KMDA/E&M/SE/EC-1/NIT-02/2017-18
Superintending Engineer, Electrical Circle-I, E&M Sector, KMDA, Block-D, 2nd Floor, Unnayan Bhavan, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700 091 invites online tender from original equipment manufacturer for the following work: Name of work : Supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of double dome LED Surgical light with AMC and CMC at new OT new complex, JNM Hospital, Kalyani. Estimated Amount : Rs. 44,05,500/- Earnest Money: Rs. 88,110/- Time of Completion: 02 months. Last date & time of request for participating in the tender : 24.04.2017 at 17.00 hrs. For details contact the above office or visit our both websites. KMDA/T-018/A-Contd(3)/2017-18
Visit Website : www.kmdaonline.org/www.wbtenders.gov.in

KMDA KOLKATA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Abridged e-NIT No. 05/SE/EC/WS/KMDA of 2017-2018
e-Tender is invited by the Superintending Engineer, East Circle, WS Sector, KMDA, C' Block, 2nd Floor, Unnayan Bhavan, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700 091 from eligible and resourceful contractors for the following works: Sl. No.; Name of works; Estimated Amount; Earnest Money: (1) Laying of different dia. D.I. (K-7) pipes from 100 mm dia to 400 mm dia including road restoration, up to WBM Stage as distribution Main in Zone-1 (Ward No. 1, 2) within Hooghly - Chinsurah Municipal area under AMRUT Scheme; Rs. 1.66.05.975/-; Rs. 3.32.120/-; (2) Same as Sl. No. 1 From 100 mm dia to 500 mm dia in Zone-2 (Ward No. 3, 4); Rs. 2.10.24.107/-; Rs. 4.20.482/-; (3) Same as Sl. No. 1 From 100 mm dia to 500 mm dia in Zone-3 (Ward No. 5, 6, 7 & 8); Rs. 2.63.01.275/-; Rs. 5.26.026/-; (4) Same as Sl. No. 1 From 100 mm dia to 450 mm dia in Zone-4 (Ward No. 9, 10, 11 & 50% of 15); Rs. 2.28.47.935/-; Rs. 4.56.959/-; (5) Same as Sl. No. 1 From 100 mm dia to 450 mm dia in Zone-5 (Ward No. 50% of 15, 80% of 16, 70% of 17); Rs. 1.61.07.351/-; Rs. 3.22.147/-; (6) Same as Sl. No. 1 From 100 mm dia to 400 mm dia in Zone-6 (Ward No. 12, 13, 14, 20 & 50% of 21); Rs. 1.23.32.814/-; Rs. 2.46.656/-; (7) Same as Sl. No. 1 From 100 mm dia to 450 mm dia in Zone-7 (Ward No. 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29 & 30); Rs. 3.04.43.063/-; Rs. 6.08.861/-; Time of Completion: 90 days for each Sl. No. Last date & time of submission of bids online is: 05.05.2017 at 18.50 hrs. For details contact the above office or visit our both websites. KMDA/T-025/A-Contd(6)/2017-18
Visit Website : www.kmdaonline.org/www.wbtenders.gov.in

BJP using its sister-bodies to polarise people on communal grounds: Cong

DOMINICK RODRIGUES

PANJIM: The political beef about beef continued as Goa Congress has charged the BJP-led NDA government of using its frontal organisations to prop up its hidden agenda of polarising the people on communal grounds - a day after rightwing Hindu outfit Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) called for a beef ban in Goa, while earlier BJP senior leader and MP Subramaniam Swamy had commented on national television that "Goa has a tradition. We have to change that".

"It is a well-planned and well-thought out strategy of the BJP at the Centre and the only hidden agenda behind these statements is to polarize the people of Goa on communal grounds. The BJP and its frontal organizations like



CALLS FOR BEEF BAN IN GOA

VHP want to divide the united people of Goa," GPCC President Luizinho Faleiro told media, adding, "The BJP also wants to create a situation of artificial beef shortage in the State and has appointed an extra-constitutional authority like VHP to prop up their hidden agenda. The act of the BJP-ruled Central Government on deciding who will eat what and who will wear what or how many children a couple would have - is

very dangerous to our constitutional setup. It is a serious threat." Pointing out that under the Goa, Daman and Diu Cow Slaughter Act, there is prohibition on slaughter of cows, Faleiro said "The question of cow slaughter does not arise. Also, we have a government-run Goa Meat Complex for legal slaughter."

Congress MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco, while condemning the VHP statement

on banning beef consumption, said the Goa Government and its allies should come clear on this issue.

"The issue of cow slaughter has been settled once and for all and nobody wants to kill cows which are primarily bred. Being a cattle farmer myself, I do not want to kill cows," he said, adding that the VHP tirade was basically to target the minority communities including primarily Muslims and Catholics who consume beef and Muslims involved in the beef trade in Goa.

NCP MLA and former Chief Minister Churchill Alemao also condemned the VHP statement on beef consumption ban and said that beef is staple food of minorities where the VHP cannot think of stopping its consumption as it would amount to an attack on the minorities.

NATION BRIEFS

NATIONAL CADET CORPS ORGANISES NAGRIK JAGRUKTA PAKHWADA



NEW DELHI: The National Cadet Corps sensitizes its cadets towards their responsibilities as responsible citizens by taking up a host of Social Service and Community Development activities. The cadets regularly participate in rallies and work related to social campaigns like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, safe sanitation, AIDS awareness, cancer awareness and female foeticide. The cadets also spread awareness regarding Road Safety and Digital Awareness.

UP GOVT FOR 'E-TENDERING' OF ALL CONTRACTS

LUCKNOW: To curb corruption, the Yogi Adityanath government on Tuesday decided that it would award government contracts only through 'e-tendering'. In two other key decisions taken at a meeting of the state Cabinet on Tuesday, the Yogi Adityanath government also approved Rs 487 per quintal as the minimum support price for the purchase of potato and also decided to implement the Prime Minister's Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) in the state. "In order to ensure total transparency, the state cabinet at its meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday decided go in for e-tendering," said state power minister Shrikant Sharma.

HARYANA GOVT APPROVES NEW CRIME RECORD BUREAU SERVICE RULES

CHANDIGARH: The Haryana Cabinet approved new rules for recruitment to the State Crime Record Bureau at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar here on Tuesday. As per the State Crime Record Bureau Service (Group C) Rules, 2017, the academic qualification for promotion or absorption to the post of Junior Classifier would be Bachelor in Science from any recognised university or institution along with Hindi or Sanskrit in Matric or higher education, an official spokesman said here.

WHATSAPP PRIVACY POLICY

Working on data protection framework: Govt to SC

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: A comprehensive data protection framework may be put in place by this year end and the TRAI is working on it, the government on Tuesday told the Supreme Court.

The government told the apex court that there would be a regulatory mechanism in place on data protection, likely by Diwali in October, and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was actively pursuing a framework of this nature.

Stating this, Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi urged a five-judge constitution bench, headed by Justice Dipak Misra, to defer the hearing in the WhatsApp privacy policy matter by a couple of months so that the government can come out with the law on data protection.

"The government is actively mulling over a comprehensive data protection framework," Rohatgi told the bench, which also comprised Justices A K Sikri, Amitava Roy, A M Khanwilkar and M M Shantanagoudar.

Senior advocate Harish

Salve, appearing for the petitioners, told the bench that there was no regulation in place and there should be privacy of data or information shared by the users on social networking or instant messaging platforms.

"It does not look like that even the government is alive to this problem," he said, adding that the "TRAI is focussing on net-neutrality. Let them start on the policy for privacy first".

Responding to this, the Attorney General said, "The TRAI is already in the process. By Diwali, we should have it (the new data protection framework)." He said the Centre's stand was "that there is going to be a regulatory regime to save the data base to guide the concept of net-neutrality".

Rohatgi also referred to the privacy aspect and said another five-judge bench would be dealing with it while deciding petitions challenging the constitutional validity of Aadhaar scheme.

Meanwhile, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing WhatsApp, told the apex court that they have an encrypted technology and data or con-



tents, including voice and messages, shared on their platform cannot be accessed by a third party. "WhatsApp has an end-to-end encrypted technology. We are more concerned about it. We are very popular because we protect privacy. We do not share content, data or anything," he said.

Sibal also questioned the way in which the matter was listed for hearing before a constitution bench, saying it could not have been referred to such a bench without hearing the issue and framing questions.

Salve countered him saying "it has been done under the order of the Chief Justice of India. The CJ has unbridled power. He is master of the roaster. He can place anything before any bench of any strength".

"It is a direction, by exercise of discretion, that this matter be placed for hearing before a five-judge constitution bench," the court said, adding, "we are not concerned with the issue of net-neutrality. We are concerned with the points raised by the petitioner".

Sibal, however, said that bench headed by CJI J S Khehar should have formulated the questions to be deliberated upon by the constitution bench.

The court said that it would deal with the preliminary objection raised in this regard in its final verdict saying, "once an issue has been raised, it has to be addressed. And we think we shall put the controversy to rest in this regard".

During the hearing, Salve argued that privacy policy of WhatsApp was "unacceptable" and suffers from constitutional vulnerability as it affects the freedom of an individual.

He argued that WhatsApp could not have framed such policy under the garb of data sharing.

Senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing for Facebook, told the court that they were in compliance with the provision of the Information and Technology Act and the 2011 privacy policy and rules.

The bench, while posting the matter for hearing on April 27, asked Salve to formulate the issues to be deliberated upon by it by August 24.

Ayodhya: SC judgement on BJP leaders today

MPOST BUREAU

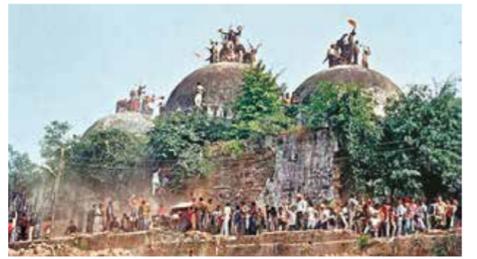
NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is likely to pronounce its verdict on Wednesday on a plea seeking restoration of conspiracy charges against senior BJP leaders, including I K Advani, M M Joshi and Uma Bharti in the Babri Masjid demolition case. A bench comprising Justices P C Ghose and R F Nariman is scheduled to pronounce the judgement.

There were two sets of cases relating to the demolition of the disputed structure on December 6, 1992. The first involved unnamed 'karsevaks', the trial of which is taking place in a Lucknow court, while the second set of cases relate to the VVIPs in a Rae Bareilly court.

On April 6, the bench had indicated that they may order holding of joint trial of the two sets of cases by transferring the trial from Rae Bareilly to the Lucknow court.

The bench had also said since 25 years have already passed, in the interest of justice, it would consider ordering time-bound trial on day-to-day basis, to be completed preferably within two years.

Senior advocate K K Venugopal, appearing for Advani and Joshi, had vociferously opposed the proposal for holding joint trial and transferring their case from Rae Bareilly to



Lucknow. The CBI had clarified that it was not making any submission on the issue of the trial of the VVIPs accused but restricting itself to restoration of the charge of conspiracy against them.

The apex court had earlier decided to examine the appeal against dropping of conspiracy charge against Advani, Joshi, Uma Bharti and 10 others.

The clubbing of two FIRs was opposed by the counsel for the accused on the ground that there were different sets of persons named as accused in the two cases, the trial of which were at an advanced stage at two different places. They were of the view that joint trial would lead to the beginning of de novo (afresh) proceedings.

The conspiracy charge against 13 accused including Advani, Joshi and Bharti was dropped in the case, the trial of which is being held at a special

court in Rae Bareilly. The second set of case was against unknown 'karsevaks' who were in and around the disputed structure and pulled it down. The trial against them is being held in a Lucknow court.

The apex court was filed by one Haji Mahboob Ahmad (since dead) and the CBI against dropping of conspiracy charges against 21 accused including the top BJP leaders. Eight of them have died.

A supplementary charge sheet was filed against eight persons but not the 13 who were discharged for plotting the demolition.

Besides BJP leaders Advani, Joshi and Bharti, conspiracy charges were dropped against Kalyan Singh (currently the Governor of Rajasthan), Shiv Sena supremo Bal Thackeray and VHP leader Acharya Giriraj Kishore (both have since died).

INDO-NEPAL TIES



Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomes Nepalese President Bidya Devi Bhandari as President Pranab Mukherjee looks on, at the Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on Tuesday. Bhandari is on five-day visit to India

Bihar govt's skill devp programme to help youth get employment

DHIRENDRA KUMAR

NEW DELHI: In a bid to address unemployment among youths in Bihar, the state government has launched a major skill development programme to impart skill training to youths from 15-25 years of age.

The scheme christened as "Kushal Yuva Program" (KYP) has been launched under the ambit of Bihar Skill Development Mission (BSDM) with the objective to contain the migration of youth of this age group to other cities in hoards.

"The objective behind initiating such a scheme is to train youths with some skills which will help them in shaping up their lives. It will also help in creating better employment opportunities for the youths of Bihar who have passed Class



10," said Dipak Kumar Singh, who is heading BSDM as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Youths enrolled under the KYP programme would get training of soft skills for 40 hours, training of communication skills for 80 hours and 120 hours of basic computer literacy training. The programme has been designed in such a way that students enrolled with the programme get training in computer education and learn

complicated commands without any difficulty.

"The students learn important computer tools through useful and fun activities like creating greeting cards, menu cards, etc. Students learn concepts through animated story lines and testing practice exercises," said Singh, who is also the Principal Secretary in Nitish Kumar government.

"The BSDM has created a comprehensive portal to monitor skill development centre (SDC), empannelment and training. The BSDM has deployed a district level team to ensure quality SDC partner and ground monitoring. Prior to getting empannelled under KYP, the SDCs have to go through a rigorous check to ensure compliance to BSDM's norms," Singh, a 1992-batch IAS officer, said.

US reaffirms Major Defence Partner status for India

NEW DELHI: The Trump Administration on Tuesday reaffirmed the Major Defence Partner status granted to India as its National Security Adviser H R McMaster met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and held talks with his counterpart Ajit Doval here.

During the meeting between Modi and McMaster, views were exchanged on how India and the US can work together to effectively address the challenge of terrorism and to advance regional peace, security and stability, a PMO statement said.

McMaster, whose trip here marks the first visit by a top official of the Trump Administration, shared his perspective with the Prime Minister on the security situation in the extended region, including Afghanistan, West Asia and North Korea. The US NSA conveyed the

greetings of President Donald Trump to the Prime Minister, the PMO statement said about the meeting in which Doval, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and some other key officials were present.

"NSA McMaster emphasised the importance of the US-India strategic relationship and reaffirmed India's designation as a Major Defence Partner," said a statement issued by the US Embassy here. India was granted the Major Defence Partner status by the previous Barack Obama Administration in December last year.

Modi recalled his "positive telephonic conversations" with Trump that "reaffirmed the importance attached by both sides to the strategic partnership and to stepping up India-US engagement across the board", the PMO statement said. MPOST

PUSHING FOR HINDI

Use Hindi besides regional languages: Naidu to people

GUWAHATI: Union minister M Venkaiah Naidu on Tuesday urged the people to use Hindi in their day-to-day life along with the regional languages.

"The Centre is using more and more Hindi in government programmes and policies and we have to make the habit of using the Rashtrabhasha in our day-to-day life, along with the regional languages," the Union Information and Broadcasting Minister said while presiding over a meeting of the Joint Hindi Advisory Committee.

"Rashtrabhasha Hindi is an important tool and language for the development of the nation," Naidu, also the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation,

added. Emotions could be easily and effectively shared with others in the mother tongue as well as in Hindi, he said.

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, who was also present at the review meeting, urged everyone to try and learn Hindi and use it more.

He thanked the Union minister for organising the meeting of the Joint Hindi Advisory Committee in Guwahati.

Members of the Joint Hindi Advisory Committee of various states, including secretaries and senior officers of both the ministries - Information and Broadcasting and Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation - were present at the meeting.

Hindi may be made compulsory till class X in CBSE schools, KVs

NEW DELHI: Students of schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Kendriya Vidyalayas may have to compulsorily study Hindi till class X with recommendations of a Parliamentary panel in this regard getting the President's nod.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has also been instructed to form a policy in consultation with the state governments to make the language compulsory.

"The HRD Ministry should make serious efforts to make Hindi language compulsory in curriculum. As a first step, Hindi should be made a compulsory subject up to standard X in all schools of CBSE and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan," the Presidential order said.

"The Centre should form a policy in consultation with state governments," it added.

CBSE, as on this February, has 18,546 schools in India and 210 schools in 25 foreign countries.

There are 1,117 KVs, 2,685 government/aided schools, 14,141 independent schools, 589 Jawahar Novodaya Vidyalayas and 14 Central Tibetan Schools, as per the board's website.

The recommendations were made in the ninth report of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language. MPOST

President, ministers may have to give speeches in Hindi

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: All dignitaries, including the President and ministers, may soon start giving speeches in Hindi if a parliamentary panel's recommendations accepted by President Pranab Mukherjee are implemented.

Mukherjee has accepted most of the recommendations made in the ninth report of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language. The report was submitted in 2011.

The panel's recommendation that all dignitaries including the President and ministers, especially those who can read and speak Hindi, may be requested to give their speech/statement in Hindi only, has been accepted, as per



an official order.

The President has accepted many other recommendations, including making announcements on Indian aeroplanes in Hindi followed by English.

On flights, half of the reading material should consist of Hindi newspapers and magazines as "Hindi is grossly neglected by airlines", as per the panel's recommendation, accepted by the President.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has been asked to ensure implementation of this recommendations. Mukherjee has accepted another recommendation of the Committee that maximum usage of Hindi should be ensured on all tickets of Air India and Pawan Hans helicopters.

The recommendation favouring cent percent availability of training material in bilingual at the Mussoorie-based Lal Bahadur Shastri National Administrative Academy, the premier institute to train civil servants including those in Indian Administrative Service (IAS), has also been accepted.

The panel had asked the Ministry of Human Resource Development to make serious

efforts to make Hindi Language compulsory in curriculum. "As a first step, Hindi should be made a compulsory subject up to tenth standard in all schools of CBSE and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan," it had recommended.

"This recommendation is accepted in principle. The Union government should form a policy in consultation with state governments," the order said.

Another recommendation accepted by the President is that universities and higher educational institutes situated in non-Hindi speaking states, where the students are not given an option for Hindi to appear in exams/interviews, must be given an option to answer in Hindi.

West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission
32, B. B. D. Bag, Standard Insurance Building
Kolkata-700001

NOTICE

The Government of West Bengal has set up the "West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission" to maintain transparency in Patient-Care Services in private hospitals, nursing homes and diagnostic centres. This Commission will ensure proper functioning of the licensed clinical establishments in the state.

The service recipients of all private hospitals, nursing homes and diagnostic centres are hereby informed that if they do not get proper service or if they observe lack of transparency in matters relating to billing or medical records, they may file complaint with the Secretary of the Commission at the above noted address.

Complaint may also be lodged online through the website of the Commission www.wbcerc.gov.in.

In the districts, concerned District Magistrates will receive such complaints on behalf of the Commission.

For further details please contact

☎ (033) 2262 8447
✉ wbcerc@wb.gov.in

The working hours of the Commission is Monday to Friday
(except holidays) from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm

Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of West Bengal

WEST BENGAL STATE LOTTERY

Results of Nababarsha Bumper Draw held on 18.04.2017 at 3.00 P.M. at Tarapada Memorial Hall, 37, G. C. Avenue, Kolkata-13.

• JUDGES PRESENT •
Smt. Mahua Ghosh
Smt. Kuhu Sengupta
Smt. Mithu Dutta

1st Prize : One : ₹ 1,01,00,000/-
(Common to all Series): AA-11896

2nd Prize : One : ₹ 5,00,000/-
(Common to all Series): AA-108979

3rd Prize : One : ₹ 2,00,000/-
(Common to all Series): CC-29367

4th Prize : One : ₹ 1,00,000/-
(Common to all Series): DD-932161

5th Prize : One : ₹ 50,000/-
(Common to all Series): AA-929471

6th Prize : 5,000 : each (2 in 10,000 tickets)
(Sold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

35811 13197 12532 21870 86482
08743 55484 82568 45212 53912
64134 03957 05707 83886 69720
65828 20242 91673 54493 39848

7th Prize : ₹ 1000 : each (4 in 10,000 tickets)
(Sold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

22636 94892 36720 60506 01084
87708 25007 13943 35333 14483
26952 78046 77295 28339 89488
79422 55199 76551 61773 73550
93772 16344 41497 61237 76575
93800 84093 83933 39875 00200
93814 71511 78591 22778 71055
90510 38135 90174 34799 46085

8th Prize : ₹ 500 : each (5 in 10,000 tickets)
(Sold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

97485 19331 54792 54267 21995
78017 07904 85274 44024 85172
70548 12405 51827 74063 65270
15290 39870 48076 31305 52878
45274 44397 60527 73698 13021
56767 70575 02933 76555 52349
82394 22441 24625 11349 35603
65672 48017 38121 34320 72457
71629 25325 95981 62038 10552
40806 09941 32064 93604 50655

9th Prize : ₹ 200 : each (3 in 1,000 tickets)
(Sold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

4565 6410 5074 6187 2702
2767 6230 1330 4399 7794
5831 7381 2480 9085 4638
3987 7918 1248 2500 5385
8038 4124 1165 3063 3486
6217 4887 6834 2423 0707

10th Prize : ₹ 100 : each (4 in 1,000 tickets)
(Sold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

2827 8440 7822 2228 2563
8494 1679 0331 5306 6000
3497 2962 1696 2310 3460
4484 6414 3400 3442 4028
7552 2881 1425 7131 2336
8123 1685 6311 5885 0896
4465 8952 8556 1166 4619
3988 8163 2922 7613 5901

Claim by 17.05.2017. Claim for prizes above ₹5,000/- shall be received and paid through Nationalized Bank by the Directorate of State Lotteries, Govt. of West Bengal, 69, Ganesh Chandra Avenue, Kolkata-700013 (Phone Nos. 2236-4688/89). Rest by the Distributor. Official Result Sheet is FINAL. Terms & Conditions apply. Sd/-
Deputy Director, State Lotteries, Government of West Bengal.
ICA-5715/2017 Government of West Bengal.
205* Bangalokhumi Super Draw, on 24.04.2017.
496* Bangalokhumi Draw, on 28.04.2017.

EDITORIAL

Enhancing credibility

Recent reports state that the Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi wrote to the Centre last month seeking funds for paper trail voting machines before the 2019 elections. For the uninitiated, the Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) devices provide voters with a printout of the candidate they have chosen, so as to avoid any confusion. In the letter, Zaidi said that the commission wanted to deploy the VVPAT machines along with Electronic Voting Machines so that the "transparency of the voting process is enhanced" and "voter's confidence in the process is further strengthened". He added that the procurement "cannot be delayed any longer". News of this letter comes at a time when sixteen opposition parties urged the Election Commission last week to revert to the paper ballot system, claiming the faith of the people in the electronic voting machines (EVMs) has "eroded". Representatives of parties including Congress, BSP, DMK, Trinamool Congress and the Left met top officials of the Election Commission of India to demand reintroduction of the ballot paper system. They have been complaining that the EVMs currently in use are rigged in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party. One school of thought believes that political parties raising a hue and cry about electoral tampering are behaving like sore losers, considering the BJP's massive success in recent polls. However, many constitutional experts, including senior BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, have argued for a paper trail accompanying the electronic voting process, which confirms that the votes have been cast correctly. As discussed in these columns, demands for a return to paper ballots are shortsighted primarily because of the sheer costs and logistical issues involved—their printing, transportation, and their safe storage between elections—not to mention booth capturing. In a state like Uttar Pradesh, however, one also has to confront the problem of scale, as lakhs of ballot boxes are required.

After an election, officials can tally electronically counted votes against paper records, thereby enhancing transparency in the system. In fact, the Supreme Court in 2012 directed the EC to upgrade the EVMs to include a paper trail. "From the materials placed by both the sides, we are satisfied that the 'paper trail' is an indispensable requirement for free and fair elections. The confidence of the voters in the EVMs can be achieved only with the introduction of the 'paper trail'. EVMs with VVPAT (voter-verified paper audit trail) system ensure the accuracy of the voting system. With intent to have the fullest transparency in the system and to restore the confidence of the voters, it is necessary to set up EVMs with VVPAT system because a vote is nothing but an act of expression which has immense importance in a democratic system," the court said. "If the VVPAT record is verified by the voter to be a faithful reproduction of the vote, is stored securely separate from the EVMs, and is publicly audited after the election, it provides strong independent confirmation that the outcome is correct," says Poorvi L Vora, Professor of Computer Science at The George Washington University, in a recent column for an Indian news website. "A correctly printed VVPAT record indicates merely that the machine correctly understood the vote. It does not indicate that the vote was correctly recorded or counted. A public audit needs to be performed to determine that the VVPAT records are consistent with the declared election outcome," she goes on to add. The ECI had earlier roundly debunked all allegations of tampering. It presented a detailed explanation about the steps taken to prevent such a thing from happening. As one of the most reputable institutions in this country, one is inclined to take the ECI at its word. However, no EVM can be assumed to be invulnerable to a determined attacker.

In fact, many news outlets had reported that the Election Commission issued a challenge to political parties, and technical experts to prove instances of tampering in EVMs. A similar challenge was issued in by the ECI in 2009, but that examination was held under serious restrictions so as to prevent anyone from carrying out any meaningful attack. If reports of an open challenge are right, the EC must be serious about allowing for a complete, unbiased third-party analysis under the reasonable supervision of the government. The ostensible purpose of any testing should be for the public to understand the EVM design and its vulnerabilities, besides suggesting technical solutions to the various problem the tests may throw up. None of the previous governments could get around this task. In allowing for open testing, within justifiable limits, the current ruling dispensation could enhance its credibility among the masses, and leave the opposition with nothing to complain about. But first, it needs to deliver the necessary funds for the EC as soon as possible.

Clear violation

In an unfortunate development, the Pakistan Army said that would not provide India consular access to former Naval officer Kulbhushan Jadhav, who was sentenced to death by a military court last week. This announcement comes days after New Delhi had sought a certified copy of the chargesheet and the military court order in the case, in addition to consular access to Jadhav. New Delhi has maintained that it will treat Jadhav's sentencing as murder if Islamabad goes ahead with the execution, claiming that he was abducted while on a business trip to Iran. Pakistan's conduct during this entire affair (failing to inform Indian authorities of his detention and refusal to provide consular access to Indian authorities) is in clear contravention of Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963 (VCCR), to which both India and Pakistan are signatories. "Under the VCCR, the receiving state (Pakistan in this case) is obligated to facilitate this protection work by (a) promptly informing the competent consulate when one of their nationals is arrested or detained; (b) inform the detained foreign national of his right to consular access with his home state; and (c) facilitate the protection work performed by the competent consuls in the form of visits, communications and legal arrangements made for the detainee," writes Yateesh Begoore, a lawyer specialising in public international law, in a recent column for an Indian news website. There is little doubt that the entire process of trial and sentencing that Jadhav was subjected to reeks of impropriety. Civilians should not be tried before military courts, where their rights are not protected. Military tribunals are not regarded as independent and employ exceptional procedures that violate basic individual freedoms. Since the Pathankot terror attack, bilateral relations have remained rather tense. At this juncture, it is hard to tell what is happening in the Jadhav case definitively. What is evident, however, is that little or no due process was followed in Jadhav's trial, contrary to international law. Unlike Islamabad, New Delhi has remained consistent in its assertions that he was not a RAW agent but was kidnapped, and taken to Pakistan. Also, Islamabad must contend with the reality of what it would mean for Pakistani spies caught in India if they went ahead and executed Jadhav. Does Pakistan want to go down that path? However, the Pakistani civilian administration in Islamabad seems powerless. It's the Pakistani military which is calling all the shots. Under these circumstances, New Delhi may well have to initiate legal proceedings against Pakistan before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for violation of international law.

Reporter's Notebook



SIDHARTH MISHRA

The party rightly perceives that people want a better life, but also realises that it has a core Hindu constituency to address. Thus, Modi-BJP offers Hindutva the right dilution. He never apologises for Gujarat, doesn't throw Iftaar parties, doesn't wear an Islamic prayer cap, but at the same time, takes corrective measures to navigate out of his Hindu hardliner image by propping up issues of economic and social developments

Quote martial

Every science consists in the coordination of facts; if the different observations were entirely isolated, there would be no science

AUGUSTE COMTE

A CLEANER RIVER

Yamuna is just one of the many rivers in India that is at the receiving end of reckless modern development. The Damodar river, for instance, has turned black from the use it is put to, it is virtually a nature-provided coal washery. While the cleaning up of a grossly polluted river remains the most prominent aspect, the disposal of garbage is also a badgering concern with solutions waiting to be implemented. It goes without saying that the government can only begin the major work of cleaning but the maintenance will depend on the proper coordination of other responsibility-bearing agencies.

KIRAN GUPTA Via email

dear EDITOR

millenniumpost.in

Log on to write letters to the editor or send them to letters.mp@gmail.com You can also send your comments to The Editor, Millennium Post, Pratap Bhawan, 5 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110 002

A new political paradigm

Yogi's rise counters perception that Modi doesn't want strong peer group

At the just concluded meeting of the national executive of the Bharatiya Janata Party at Bhubaneswar, 13 Chief Ministers from the states ruled by the party were present. This should be signal enough for the Congress and the other Opposition parties that the rise of the saffron brigade cannot be blamed alone on the electronic voting machines (EVMs).

More importantly, the BJP leadership at the meeting said that it did not wish to stop at that with party president Amit Shah claiming that victory in four of the five states which went to polls in the last quarter was just a milestone and not the destination. "We now have 13 Chief Ministers. We can now do it in every corner of the country," Shah said in a terse message to the Opposition, which must have been music to the ears of his party workers.

Such phenomenal rise of the BJP in the past few years cannot also be attributed just to the factors of polarisation and counter polarisation. If Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls was successful showcasing of Brand Modi, which overshadowed all other brands even that of his own party, the party's victories thereafter have been an example of building on the advantage.

The party in the last decade has created in Brand Modi an amalgam of Hindu poster boy, development mascot, and OBC leader. The 2014 Lok Sabha polls proved extraordinary for one reason -- a political party, which for long faced isolation, romped home to a thumping victory under a leader named Narendra Modi, who was considered a political pariah both nationally and internationally. The results of 2017 Assembly polls, especially in Uttar Pradesh, too, is significant as the party demolished the caste-calibrated political equations in the India's politically most significant state.

The 2014 polls were the first elections which witnessed both the polarisation of the votes of the majority community and their desire for development aggregate in support of the same candidate. Though a similar phenomenon was witnessed in 1984 too when Rajiv Gandhi led Congress to power but then he had the support of the largest minority group as well -- the Muslims.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and BJP president Amit Shah

However, soon thereafter questions were raised on 'Modi wave'. The query became stronger after BJP lost Assembly elections in Delhi and Bihar. This development has been variously explained. One perception being that from debacles in Delhi and Bihar, the party decided to strengthen the organisation and make it more close-knit. On the other hand, in the rival parties, there has been constant erosion in support base and loss of political workers.

This phenomenon was best explained by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley at an interaction with people from intelligentsia at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library last month, wherein he said, in a reference to the Congress party outsourcing its poll management in the ongoing Assembly polls, "a party leadership which cannot manage its campaign will find it difficult lead its party to consistent victories in the polls."

There was a perceptible difference in the role of poll manager Prashant Kishor from 2015 in Bihar to 2017 in Uttar Pradesh. In Bihar, he was coordinating and implementing the vision and strategies of political leaders like Nitish Kumar. On the other hand in UP, he was acting as puppeteer and political leaders were playing to his tune. In UP, Kishor ended up hawking political inadequacies of the leadership of Congress and to an extent, the Samajwadi Party. The role of the political organisa-

tion had come to be usurped by a corporate entity, which was bound to be rejected by people. The political leadership should have the ability to stand the scrutiny of people, as has been done by Narendra Modi in the past 10 years. People have tried to grill him on Gujarat riot but he has successfully shifted the focus on development reflected in the coinage of the slogan 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas'. In the recent times, from development, he has moved onto his unique model of economic reforms -- demonetisation to curb black money.

The biggest challenge Brand Modi faced was diverting public attention away from the 2002 communal riots in Gujarat that claimed the lives of more than 1,000 people, mostly Muslims. Initially, Modi's supporters in BJP attempted to engage in public debate and highlighted the clean chit given by courts to wash off the stigma. Then, they changed the track. They toned down the Hindutva rhetoric and focused on development and good governance. While he was Chief Minister of Gujarat he was talking about five crore people of Gujarat but now he is engaging 125 crore people of the entire country.

The party rightly perceives that people want a better life, but also realises that it has a core Hindu constituency to address. Thus, Modi-BJP offers Hindutva the right dilution. He never apologises for Gujarat, doesn't throw Iftaar

parties, doesn't wear an Islamic prayer cap, but at the same time, takes corrective measures to navigate out of his Hindu hardliner image by propping up issues of economic and social developments. When opponents try to grill him, he navigates from one issue to another.

Moreover, Narendra Modi as a political personality has not stopped evolving. The recent elevation of a strong leader like Yogi Adityanath as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has put paid to the theory that he did not want to promote a strong peer group. The sidelining of senior party leaders like Lal Krishna Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi created the perception that Modi did not want to promote strong leaders. But Yogi's elevation has created complexities in this perception.

Another point to mull over is whether Modi's pro-business persona has added value to his efforts to connect with the youth and urban voters. His brand value has been helped in no small measure by business leaders from Ratan Tata to Mukesh Ambani singing paeans to his policies. This has allowed Modi to build his brand as that of a progressive leader who has the ability to deliver economic results. And Brand Modi, for now, is definitely in the bullish phase.

(Sidharth Mishra is President, Centre for Reforms, Development & Justice and Consulting Editor, Millennium Post. Views are strictly personal.)

States must strategise development

Indian states need to understand that one size indeed does not fit all

The Modi government has been pulling all stops to improve the ease of doing business rankings since it came into power in a bid to improve India's image as a business-friendly economy and attract global investment.

In the last three years, the states have been given a 98-point, 340-point, and 295-point reform agenda to achieve key targets that determine the World Bank ranking. The states have themselves been caught up in a frenzy to attract investment. State Chief Ministers have been seen making trips to other nations to woo investors, and almost every major state has picked up the trend of organising an investment summit on the lines of Gujarat.

However, Mamata Banerjee's trip to Germany last year to attract investment to West Bengal did not yield any real results. Similarly, Amarinder Singh's recent visit to Mumbai elicited demands for first revamping Punjab's industrial policy and criticism for lack of action to revive existing industries. Elaborate investment summits in these states have suffered a similar fate. Although these efforts are laudable, Indian states need to understand that one size indeed does not fit all.

First, Indian states are as big as nations across the world. For instance, Uttar Pradesh's population that lives below the poverty line equals the entire population of South Africa. Similarly, Bihar, which has the dimensions of the 16th-most populous state in the US (Indiana), is home to a population equalling the combined population of the first four most-populous states of US. So, quite clearly, strategies that work for one state will not necessarily work for the other.

Each state needs to understand its drivers of competitiveness and play them up for prospective investors in that area. For instance, Punjab was historically an agrarian success story. So, it could incentivise setting up of food processing units by playing out the proximity it has to offer with high-yielding



Batmakers in Jalandhar

(Representational Image)

farms. It can also work on reviving its dying industrial cities of Jalandhar and Ludhiana as sports and cycle industry linkages already exist in these cities. West Bengal can work upon developing a steel cluster owing to its proximity to neighbouring resource-rich states. The northeastern states can develop a thriving tourism industry. States with port facilities can encourage the development of export-oriented industries.

The investment summits that states have put so much faith into fail to follow such a focused approach. When anything and everything is on the table, industries do not see how a particular state is unique in its competitiveness. Throughout history, economic successes of regions have been stories of the rise of particular industries followed by reinvention with the times.

For instance, both New York and London were centres of garment production and trade followed by the rise of financial industries when labour became costly. Regions like Detroit that

were once known for being a production hub for certain industries but failed to reinvent have fallen into oblivion.

This brings us to the second point of the fallacy in the idea of merely attracting investment. More than business incentives, industries follow skill. Bengaluru has become an IT hub not because the Karnataka government offered tax breaks or speedy contracts -- but due to easy access to a pool of talent in the field. An initial kernel of engineering talent attracted companies like Infosys and a virtuous cycle of workers attracting potential employers and employers attracting potential employees developed.

Human capital, more than anything else, explains economic successes of regions. A study in the US showed that as the share of the population with a college degree in an area increase by 10 per cent, its per capita gross product rises by 22 per cent. On the contrary, an area with a skill-deficit usually loses out in the long-run. Detroit, which was

once a production hub for cars attracted plenty of low-skilled workers, and when the firms moved out of the city after the labour began demanding higher wages, the city failed to re-invent itself unlike New York or London due to a lack of skill in the area.

Therefore, to ensure economic success, states need to understand these two things: develop and showcase their drivers of competitiveness and simultaneously develop a vast pool of talent for long-term sustainability of its economy.

The role-reversal of corporates running after Chief Ministers for setting up industries to Chief Ministers wooing the former is a welcome picture in the Indian business landscape. However, short-sightedness and a lack of strategy are delaying change across Indian states.

(The writer is chair, Institute for Competitiveness, India. Views expressed are personal. Chirag Yadav, researcher in the same institute, has contributed to the piece.)



AMIT KAPOOR

Each state needs to understand its drivers of competitiveness and play them up for prospective investors in that area. For instance, Punjab was historically an agrarian success story. So, it could incentivise setting up of food processing units by playing out the proximity it has to offer with high-yielding farms

Hopeless Indian teacher

We need teachers with high moral quotient. We have long ignored their potential



CHANDRA BHUSHAN SHARMA

The media is abuzz with news from Uttar Pradesh promising brighter days. Hopefully, 'ache din' (good times) for education will also come. But what would that mean? We need to discuss and analyse the education scenario upfront because that should be on top of UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's agenda. While this discussion is in the context of UP here, one can extend the ideas discussed here to the rest of India.

Agenda One: Teachers must be well-paid. When I plead for teachers' salary, I am not demanding a sum equivalent to a 'constable' or a 'government peon'. I am just asking for a minimum decent salary. Those in power can themselves decide what should be the salary of a person who has a family and requires to pay school fees. If a teacher does not get a minimum amount to provide a decent life to his/her children, then he/she will definitely work extra hours, providing private coaching to make their ends meet. A minimum salary must be entitled to all teachers.

Agenda Two: Societies survive and thrive on a created image. Individuals and communities derive their power and prestige through economic power (wealth), social power, and the moral power. Teachers were seen as the custodian of moral power in ancient times. Guru Dronacharya was not a king but most revered because he was the 'guru' and kings lent their ears to him. Our governments don't even consult university professors on academic issues. The draft Education Policy committee headed by TSR Subramanian is a case in point. Educational systems survive on this moral strength, not on economic power. It is such a large sector that we cannot pay the highest salary to the teaching community. Globally, in the best of institutions, more than 80 per cent of the budget goes for teachers' salary. But they are meant for the elite and the chosen few. Especially for large and populous countries like India, we cannot give the highest salary to the teachers, because the number would be unimaginably high and the burden on the exchequer unbearable. This will mean charging the beneficiaries dearly. We need to invoke the power of 'moral payment' to the teachers.

The British systematically destroyed the ancient Indian system of education because it was self-sustained and quality intensive. The local community planned and main-



Representational Image

tained the system. It was possible to micro-manage it. The British could not conquer the Indian mind without destroying the Indian system of 'man making' education. They successfully converted our system into a degree generating system. The aura of the Indian guruji withered. This was necessary to establish the British idea of all-powerful Indian babu. Why in all these years of Independent India have we not gone back to celebrating the teacher through events like Guru Purnima? Let us start celebrating the teacher. Every newspaper, every news channel, every government official is always on the lookout for an occasion to denigrate the teacher and the teaching community. Let us celebrate every good teacher and the act of the teachers. He/she will, under social pressure, become the idol of sacri-

fice and the custodian of morality. It was so encouraging to hear Prime Minister Narendra Modi remember his teacher on Teacher's Day. Let us entrust teachers with the responsibility for the moral health of the society, and we will require no campaigns to clean our roads and parks, take care of the old or the less privileged.

Agenda Three: Our teacher education program is in bad shape. We have not taken concrete steps to rescue it. We must be one of the few countries where we hear of 'non-attending B.Ed' student. This means a trainee who was exempted from attending classes by paying the extra fee. Our teacher training cannot be a replica of the Western model. We need teachers with high moral quotient. In 2015 the Ministry of Human Resources Development had

set up an NCTE Review Committee under the chairmanship of Prof. Md. Akhtar Siddiqui. The report was submitted in April 2016. We need to implement some, if not all the recommendations. Most of our problems will be solved if teacher education is revamped.

We have a vast army of teachers, and they can be the builders or destroyers of our society. We have long ignored their potential in giving our society a turnaround. On April 3, 2017, Krishna Gopal, the Joint General Secretary of the RSS in his 4th Shanti Sharma Memorial Lecture discarded the effort to monitor teachers by asking them to mark their attendance. Let us use this army in the process of nation building, and it won't cost us a dime.

Agenda Four: Pandit Deen

Dayal Upadhyaya has very pertinently mentioned in his four seminal lectures on Ekatma Manavvaad (Integral Humanism) delivered in Mumbai during April 22-25, 1965 that we plant trees and nurture them without asking for payment but when they grow they feed us with their fruits. We don't ask plants to pay us during their growth. Similarly, if we expect our children to grow and serve the society and the nation why charge them for their education? They must be provided education free of cost only then we can expect them to serve the country in return when their turn comes. Schools first then the institutions of higher learning need to be strictly monitored for charging exorbitant fees and donations. All schools must charge comparable fees. Some of the schools

charge around Rs 50,000 per month per child. Who can afford and why should we permit such elitist system to exist which will obviously allure all to reach this figure through whatever means to put their children in these school. Gujarat has already passed the Gujarat Self Financed Schools (Regulation of Fees) Bill - 2017, to check exploitation of learners. Other states need to follow.

The government order to admit 25 per cent of the total class strength of children from the economically weaker sections is followed by only some of the schools. The children from the EWS are dumped in one class and taught by someone who often does not possess the minimum qualification of a teacher. The objective of social justice goes for a toss. We must ensure that all children sit together and study together. Why are they not mixing? The reason is obvious. The children of the most influential people study in these schools, and they don't want the EWS children to sit with their children. We keep praising the Finnish model of education but why can we not implement the Finnish system that all children from a particular area will go the local school and not outside. This will mean children from the President House whether the President's family or the employees' family will all study in the same classrooms and mix. This is actually in practice in Finland.

We have completely demoralised the teaching community and demolished public funded schools. This was exactly the British agenda of education in India. We have given way to international agencies and business houses, where teachers are paid more salary than the government-funded University Professors and the rich and the affluent send their children to these schools. I am not complaining. I am concerned because every citizen would like to do the same, but they don't have the option to earn such money. By not halting this process we are prodding more and more people to collect money from whatever means to get an expensive education for their children. If we cannot give the teachers, decent salary let them work hard and fulfil their dreams.

(Prof. Chandra Bhushan Sharma is Chairman, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), New Delhi. The views expressed are strictly personal.)

Disunity among rivals suits BJP

Can the opposition take on Modi in 2019?



KALYANI SHANKAR

Will the Opposition be able to unite to take on the BJP in the 2019 polls? This is a million-dollar question as it has been elusive although the opposition wants to make the 2019 polls as one of Prime Minister Modi versus the rest. Disunity in the opposition suits the BJP.

The Opposition has realised the need to come together to fight the BJP, which has expanded in the west and the east. Only in south it is not that successful so far. In north, it has already saturated. Moreover, the opposition is getting jittery after the stellar performance of the BJP in the recent five-state Assembly elections where the party won two and managed to form the government in two other states despite not being the number one party. Today the BJP is ruling alone or in coalition in 15 states. So ever since the results went the BJP way, there has been a call for opposition unity. But it is not easy, as, except Congress and the Left, other parties are confined to regions and headed by single individuals whose influence may not go beyond their state.

The first move came from Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar recently when he suggested forming a united opposition front while speaking at a book release function in Delhi. He asked the Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi, who was sitting in the audience to take the lead in this regard. The West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also attempted opposition unity during Modi's demonetisation drive in December. The unity move was taken forward during the just concluded budget session, and Rahul had discussions with the left leaders D Raja and Sitaram Yechury. Congress President Sonia Gandhi who had come back after her medical checkup also held a meeting within the party about how to check the influence of the BJP.

The first evidence came on the efficacy of Electronic Voting machines which many opposition leaders including BSP's Mayawati, Aam Aadmi Party's Kejriwal and others had complained about. Last week, 13 opposition parties went to President Pranab Mukherjee to protest about the EVMs, and they also met the Election Commission informing of their distrust in the machines.



Representational Image

What must be music to the ears of the opposition leaders is the latest addition to the unity move chorus when the BSP supremo Mayawati said in Lucknow this week: "The BSP now has no reservations about taking the help of anti-BJP parties in its fight against EVM (electronic voting machine) tampering and the BJP as it is the democracy which comes first... we have to keep democracy alive." This public statement has ignited fresh hope on forging a united anti-BJP front. In fact, the Congress tried to get the SP and the BSP together to form a grand alliance in UP just as it did in Bihar but the traditional rivalry between the SP and the BSP blocked that effort.

But these are all only initial moves, and there is a long way to go and much more needs to be done if it is to be concretised. The first thing is who will head such a front? Sonia Gandhi had proved herself in 2004 by mobilising the non-BJP parties when UPA government was formed. However, she is not in good health and wants her son Rahul Gandhi to take over the party. Unfortunately, for Congress, Rahul has no credibility. Moreover, senior leaders like Sharad

Pawar, Mamata Banerjee, Nitish Kumar, Farooq Abdullah, and others may not be willing to work under him.

Rahul Gandhi reportedly held a meeting with Sharad Pawar recently and discussed the move. Pawar may be a good choice if he agrees and other parties agree to his leadership. The other two names are Mamata Banerjee and Nitish Kumar.

Secondly, while the arithmetic could work in favour of the opposition, the chemistry may be a problem. Except Congress and the Left (in pockets) the others are all regional parties headed by individuals with king-size egos. Such a front will be a combination of parties which have no common ideology or programme and finding common ground will be difficult but not impossible.

The third is the strategy. So far the BJP bashing or Modi bashing has not helped the opposition in elections. On the contrary, it has resulted in Modi becoming stronger. The other plank of secular/communal too seems to have failed with the Hindu polarisation taking place in favour of the BJP.

The Opposition has to spell out what they offer to the public in place of Modi's Hindutva and development by building a counter-narrative. The fourth is the communication. This is where the opposition is lacking as the BJP has been able to reach out to the voter much better than the opposition parties.

The first test will come in the upcoming Presidential and Vice Presidential elections. Will the opposition put up candidates for either post knowing that the BJP has the adequate number of votes to get its own candidates? So far the opposition has not given a thought to it. The final hope of a divided opposition is to wait and watch for the BJP to commit mistakes. It should keep in mind that among all the states which went to polls post-2014 only in Jharkhand the BJP has a slight edge over the combined vote-share of the opposition. Secondly, the BJP has already reached saturation point in the north. One week is long in politics and will the opposition be able to sustain for two years?

(The views expressed are strictly personal.)

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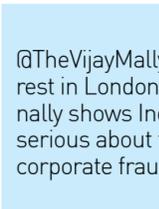
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PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI
@priyankac19



Just when I joined the media celebrating news of his arrest whr I hoped for swift extradition, I get to read he's got bail too! #VijayMallya

MINHAZ MERCHANT
@MinhazMerchant



@TheVijayMallya's arrest in London today finally shows Indian govt serious about tackling corporate fraud

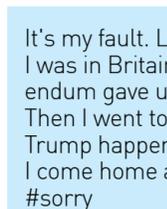


RAMESH SRIVATS
@rameshshrivats



What's the need to arrest Vijay Mallya? He has anyway spent most of his life behind bars. #SelfThoo

STEPHEN FRY
@stephenry



It's my fault. Last time I was in Britain a referendum gave us Brexit. Then I went to the US & Trump happened. Now I come home and... #sorry



OPPOSITION TO BREXIT PLAN BEHIND DECISION

British PM Theresa May calls snap election in June

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May on Tuesday announced a snap General Election on June 8, seeking a stronger mandate in talks over leaving the European Union (EU).



In an unexpected statement at Downing Street, May said she was starting the process of calling a vote, less than half-way through the government's term. *BBC reported.*

Britain needed certainty, stability and strong leadership following the EU referendum, she said. Explaining the decision, May said: "The country is coming together but Westminster is not." There will be a Commons vote on the proposed election on Wednesday — opposition Labour Party has said it will vote with the government. The Prime Minister needs Parliament's backing to hold a vote before the next scheduled date of 2020.

Explaining her change of heart on an early election, May said: "I have concluded the only way to guarantee certainty and security for years ahead is to hold this election." She accused Britain's other political parties of "game playing", adding that this risks "our ability to make

a success of Brexit and it will cause damaging uncertainty and instability to the country." "So we need a General Election and we need one now. We have at this moment a one-off chance to get this done.

In a statement outside Number 10, May said: "Labour had threatened to vote against the final Brexit agreement, the Liberal Democrats had stated they wanted to 'grind the business of government to a

standstill."

"...The Scottish Nationalist Party had said they would vote against the negotiations and 'unelected' members of the House of Lords had vowed 'to fight us every step of the way', she added. "If we don't hold a General Election now, their political game-playing will continue and the negotiations with the European Union will reach their most difficult stage in the run up to the next Gen-

Dutch, Danish and Irish leaders to hold Brexit meeting on Friday

LONDON: The leaders of the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland are to hold a meeting to discuss Britain's exit from the European Union on Friday, the Irish government said, in a sign the three pro-trade powers plan to coordinate their strategy on Brexit. The three countries, which Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny has said are likely to be the most negatively impacted by Brexit, have a similar outlook on free trade and competition issues and in the past have often allied with Britain. The 27 EU members that will remain after Britain leaves have repeatedly pledged to maintain a united front in negotiations with Britain and avoid divisions that could be exploited by London. *AGENCIES*

eral Election," she said.

The Prime Minister challenged the opposition parties: "This is your moment to show you mean it — to show you're not opposing the government for the sake of it, to show that you do not treat politics as a game. Let's tomorrow vote for an election — let's put forward our plans for Brexit and our alternative programmes for government and then let the people decide." Labour leader

Jeremy Corbyn said he welcomed the Prime Minister's decision, saying it would "give the British people the chance to vote for a government that will put the interests of the majority first". He said: "Labour will be offering the country an effective alternative to a government that has failed to rebuild the economy, delivered falling living standards and damaging cuts to our schools and NHS." *AGENCIES*

EU CALLS FOR TRANSPARENT PROBE

Turkish PM: Rumors of foul play an effort to undermine referendum

ANKARA: Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said on Tuesday rumors of irregularities in a referendum over the weekend were a vain effort to cast doubt on the result, after the main opposition party vowed to apply for the vote to be annulled.

"The people's will has been reflected at the ballot box, and the debate is over," Yildirim told his parliamentary group. "Everyone should respect the outcome, especially the main opposition." The EU has called on the civil authorities in Turkey to launch a transparent investigation into the referendum result granting the Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, sweeping new powers.

A spokesman for the European commission president, Jean-Claude Juncker, said claims from neutral observers of election irregularities had been "examined attentively" in Brussels. "In view of the observers' report, the close referendum result and the far-

reaching implications of the constitutional amendments, we call on the Turkish authorities to consider the next steps very carefully and seek the broadest possible national consensus in the follow-up to the referendum," the spokesman said.

"We call on all actors to show restraint and on the authorities to launch transparent investigations into these alleged irregularities found by the observers."

Significantly, the spokesman confirmed that neither Juncker nor the president of the European council, Donald Tusk, had spoken to Erdogan since his victory.

In contrast, the US president, Donald Trump congratulated the Turkish president personally on the phone on Monday in a conversation in which they discussed recent developments in Syria, the US response to the chemical attack in Syria and "agreed on the importance of holding Syrian president Bashar al-Assad accountable." *AGENCIES*

Pence reassures Japan as North Korea threatens 'weekly' tests

TOKYO: US Vice-President Mike Pence reiterated his country's commitment to the security of Japan on Tuesday, as North Korea intensified concerns over its weapons programme with a vow to launch missile tests "every week".

The North, which is intent on developing a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile capable of reaching the mainland United States, defied international pressure Sunday with a test that failed immediately after launch.

As fears grow that it may also be preparing for its sixth nuclear weapons test, Vice Foreign Minister Han Song-Ryol said that its programme would only escalate.

"We'll be conducting more missile tests on a weekly, monthly and yearly basis," Han told the BBC in an interview, threatening "all-out war" if the US took any action against it.

Arriving in Tokyo for talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Pence hailed the two countries' longstanding security ties. *AGENCIES*

N Korea: Ready to react to 'any mode of war' from US; vows to test missiles on a regular basis

PYONGYANG: North Korea will continue to test missiles on a weekly, monthly and yearly basis, Vice Foreign Minister Han Song-ryol has said. He said that an "all-out war" would result if the US took military action. "If the US is planning a military attack against us, we will react with a nuclear pre-emptive strike by our own style and method," Han said. The country is preparing for "any mode of war" triggered by US military action, Pyongyang's envoy to the United Nations warned on Monday, saying his country would respond to a missile or nuclear strike "in kind." The statement from North Korea's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, Kim In Ryong, followed warnings from US Vice President Mike Pence to Pyongyang not to test US resolve. "If the United States dares opt for a military action [...] the DPRK is ready to react to any mode of war desired by the Americans," Kim told a news conference at UN headquarters in New York. "We will take the toughest counteraction against the provocateurs," he said. N Korea has taken "self-defensive" measures in response to US threats of military action and these reflect Pyongyang's determination to "counter nukes and ICBM in kind," Kim said, referring to inter-continental ballistic missiles. Pence earlier told a news conference in South Korea that "the era of strategic patience is over" after N Korea on Sunday test-fired another missile and fears mounted that it may be preparing a sixth nuclear test. Pyongyang is seeking to develop a long-range missile capable of hitting the US mainland with a nuclear warhead, and has so far staged five nuclear tests, two of them last year. Kim also confirmed that a new nuclear test was under preparation, saying that the plans had been announced and that "it will take place." "As far as nuclear test is concerned, it was already announced to the public. It is something that our headquarters decided. At a time where headquarters deem necessary, it will take place," he said. *AGENCIES*

Deputy PM: Turkey extends state of emergency by three months

ANKARA: Turkey extended its state of emergency on Monday by three months starting from Wednesday, its third such extension after a coup attempt last July, a deputy prime minister said. The decision came after the National Security Council advised extending it, Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus told reporters in a press conference in Ankara. Emergency rule, first imposed in Turkey after an abortive military coup on July 15 and then extended in October, enables the government to bypass parliament in enacting new laws and to limit or suspend rights and freedoms when deemed necessary. Turkey has formally arrested more than 40,000 people during the investigation of the coup, which it has blamed on Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen and his followers. More than 100,000 people in total, including soldiers, police officers, teachers, judges and journalists, have been suspended. *AGENCIES*

At least 29 dead as Philippine bus plunges into ravine

MANILA: Bus passengers were screaming in horror as the driver repeatedly stepped on the apparently malfunctioning brakes before plunging into a deep ravine in the northern Philippines, leaving at least 29 people dead on Tuesday in one of the country's deadliest accidents in years, a survivor and officials said.

The rest of the more than 50 passengers were retrieved by rescuers who struggled with ropes to descend down the 24-meter (80-foot) deep ravine to reach the wreckage in Nueva Ecija province's Carranglan town, said disaster-response officer Mark Raymond Cano. Many of the passengers were hospitalized with serious injuries and parents separated from their children in the confusion, officials said. "One child here sat beside her mother. The mother was dead," said Dr. Napoleon Obana of the Veterans Regional Hospital, where some of the victims were taken. TV footage showed a line of rescuers and villagers, some holding on to a rope to climb up on a grassy slope with a victim on a stretcher. A throng of villagers waited in a clearing above them to help pull the victim to safety. Cano said a preliminary investigation showed that the bus "lost its brakes" and plunged down the ravine. Passenger Ralph Raymond Grajo said he saw the driver repeatedly stepping on the malfunctioning brakes as the wayward bus was speeding along a downhill road. *AGENCIES*

Weapons found after France attack plot arrests: Sources



PARIS: French authorities found guns and bomb-making materials on Tuesday after the arrest of two men suspected of plotting an "imminent" attack just days before presidential polls, sources close to the probe said.

The items were discovered during searches in the southern city of Marseille after the suspects — "radicalised" Frenchmen aged 23 and 29 — were taken into custody, sources said.

The sources asked not to be named because they were not authorised to speak publicly. Both men were said to have been radicalised in prison. Interior Minister Matthias Fekl said the attack was to be carried out in the "next few days" as France gears up to vote on Sunday in the first round of a two-stage presidential election.

"They had the aim of committing in the very short term, in other words in the very next days, an attack on French soil," he said. The DGSI domestic intelligence service is said to suspect the pair of plotting

an attack to coincide with the election. Eleven candidates will fight the first round on 23 April, with the top two qualifying for the run-off on 7 May.

Last week, photos of the two suspects were distributed to the security teams for far-right candidate Marine Le Pen and centrist Emmanuel Macron. "The photos were passed to my security service from Thursday," Le Pen told AFP, while an aide to Macron also confirmed his campaign team received the pictures.

Conservative candidate Francois Fillon was warned about the danger on Friday, an aide said.

France has been on high alert for more than two years following a string of terror attacks which began in January 2015, killing more than 230 people. Polls have shown that voters are more concerned about unemployment and their spending power than terrorism or security, though analysts warn that concerns could change quickly in the event of further bloodshed. *AGENCIES*

Australia urges China to rein in 'reckless' North Korea

SYDNEY: China has an obligation to use its "enormous leverage" to bring nuclear-armed North Korea back from the brink, Australia's prime minister said on Tuesday, toughening Canberra's position on the escalating crisis.

Malcolm Turnbull's remarks came after the North's latest failed missile test and ahead of a visit to Australia by US Vice President Mike Pence, who is in Asia to signal Washington's commitment to regional security.

"The North Korea regime is a reckless and dangerous threat to peace and stability in our region and, indeed, in the world," Turnbull told reporters in Canberra. "The real obligation — the heaviest obligation — is on China."

Beijing has "enormous leverage over North Korea" and "the ability... to bring, to pull North Korea back into at least the position where it is not threatening to rain down devastation on its neighbours," Turnbull said.

"So what we're now looking forward to is action from China." A close US ally, Australia nonetheless enjoys a good relationship with China, its biggest trading partner.

Beijing is under intense pressure, particularly from the US, to do more to rein in Pyongyang, which has defied international pressure over its quest to develop a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile capable of reaching the US mainland.

But China has long opposed dramatic action against the North, fearing the regime's collapse would send a flood of refugees across its border and leave the US military on its doorstep. Yet US threats to take unilateral action have rattled Chinese leaders. *AGENCIES*

North Eastern Railway Tender Notice			
Works Manager for Chief Workshop Manager, N.E. Railway, Mechanical Workshop, Gorakhpur - for and on behalf of President of India invites open tenders through on line (E-Tendering) for the following Work.			
S.N.	E-Tender Notice No. & Name of the work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money
1	IREPS Tender No. 021-Excavatorcumloader M/277/V/1/Excavator Cum Loader One time repair of Excavator cum Loader.	Rs. 4,40,050.81	Rs. 8,810/-
2	IREPS Tender No. 003-Double acting Door AC-3 M/244/IV/3/Fire Worthy Door Provision of Double Acting AC Compartment Fire Worthy Doors in AC Coaches.	Rs. 92,01,938/-	Rs. 1,84,040/-

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person **Rohit Acchu, S/o: Rajender Singh, R/o: L-232, Ragubir Nagar, Delhi has committed (or suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 189/12, u/s 356/379/411/34 IPC has been registered at PS Paschim Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Rohit Accchu cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Rohit Accchu has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant), Proclamation is hereby made that the said Rohit Accchu accused of FIR No. 189/12, u/s 356/379/411/34 IPC has been registered at PS Paschim Vihar, Delhi is required to appear before this Court or to me to answer the said complaint on or before 22.05.2017.**

By Order
Ms. Ritu Singh
Metropolitan Magistrate (West-7), Room No. 272,
DP/9540/OD/17
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSON ACCUSED

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Bablu, S/o Roshan Lal, R/o H.No.675, Gali No.8, Village Mandoli, Delhi. has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the Offence FIR No. 65/17 u/s 394/397/506/34 IPC at PS. Harsh Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Bablu cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the Bablu has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant), Proclamation u/s 82 CrPC is hereby made that the Bablu accused of FIR No. 65/17 u/s 394/397/506/34 IPC is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 20.05.2017.

By Order
Sh. Pankaj Arora,
Metropolitan Magistrate
Room No.56, Karkardooma Court, Delhi

US university supports Indian students post Trump's travel ban

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI: Against the backdrop of immigration rules proposed under US President Donald Trump, the Missouri State University in the US on Friday announced its support for Indian students and said that it wants Indian students to "stay on in the university."

"Missouri State University (MSU), a long-established university of mid-west US, announces that the university values the presence of all Indian students. MSU wants Indian students to be in the university, to be engaged in university activities, and to be successful," said a statement from the varsity.

It said that since the decision on travel ban in January, the university has been engaged in one-on-one inter-



actions with the international students and has been guiding and supporting them. "At Missouri State University, there are 2,500 international students, all of whom have been given thorough support in every aspect," the statement said. Crackdown on illegal immigration was one of the prominent promises of Trump during his election campaign. He had also proposed more than once to

ban Muslim immigrants into the US. "We have welcomed Indian students for over ten years and will continue to do so with the same zeal and enthusiasm," Associate Vice-President of the university's International Studies Department Stephen Robinette said in the statement.

In January this year, Trump signed an executive order clamping a travel ban on nationals of seven countries which comprised Iraq, Iran, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Somalia and Sudan for 90 days.

Several states in the US sued the administration against the ban, resulting in a court order which temporarily restrained the imposition of the ban.

The matter is still under judicial consideration. *AGENCIES*

WORLD BRIEFS

POLICE HELICOPTER WITH 12 ON BOARD CRASHES IN EASTERN TURKEY

ISTANBUL: A Turkish police helicopter with at least 12 people on board, including police officers and judges, on Tuesday crashed in eastern Turkey, local media reported. The chopper, whose passengers included two judges and seven policemen, crashed in the eastern province of Tunceli, the private NTV television said, without giving details on the cause of the crash.

108 MILITANTS KILLED IN PAKISTAN'S ANTI-TERROR OPERATION

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani security forces have killed 108 terrorists in a major anti-terror operation launched in February, the military said on Monday. The operation codenamed "Radd-ul-Fasaad," or "Reject Discord" in English, was launched after a series of terrorist attacks that killed over 100 people nationwide. The regular army and other law enforcement agencies are jointly conducting the intelligence-based operation. Sharing results of the operation, army spokesman Maj. Gen. Asif Ghafoor said at a news conference that about 4,500 suspects have also been taken into custody during the operation.

60 ISLAMIC STATE MILITANTS KILLED IN IRAQ'S MOSUL

BAGHDAD: Iraqi troops killed 60 Islamic State (IS) militants in Mosul, including a commander, a senior official said on Tuesday. Police forces, backed by Iraqi warplanes and artillery fire, were making progress in combating extremists in the al-Farouk area and in the vicinity of al-Nuri mosque in Mosul, Efe news reported. This mosque is a prime target for the government forces for its symbolic value as it is the site where IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi proclaimed the caliphate on June 29, 2014. During the last hours of fighting, the police destroyed five armoured vehicles, eight motorcycles loaded with bombs, six anti-aircraft batteries and dismantled three bombs placed in buildings.

SAUDI BLOCKS 68% OF 900,000 VIOLATED INTERNET LINKS

RIYADH: Saudi communication and IT authority revealed on Monday that 68 percent of 900,000 violated internet links were blocked last year, Al Arabiya local news reported. It said 92 per cent of those links were porn and more than 1,300 linked were with abusive nature against children. The authority also interacted with content providers to deal with 52,000 links to prevent the availability of porn contents.

'Sydney Opera House under threat of terror attack'

SYDNEY: A leading business organisation in Australia warned on Tuesday that the iconic tourism and entertainment precinct, the Sydney Opera House, is at threat of terrorist attack, a media report said.

The warning came after a multitude of vehicles were spotted driving up the pedestrian strip toward the world-famous landmark, *Xinhua news agency* reported.

Many were concerned about the potential of an attack similar to those seen in London, Nice and elsewhere around the globe if security was not improved.

Speaking to the local media, Patricia Forsythe, executive director at the Sydney Business Chamber said the lack of oversight at the iconic complex was concerning.

She said that a new agency was required to ensure the safety of all those who use the precinct. "It is timely that these agencies develop a complete approach to the future development of Circular Quay, which would include security," Forsythe said.



A resident who did not wish to be named, spoke of an incident that occurred earlier in the year that saw a work van appear out of nowhere and drive down the pedestrian promenade.

"All of a sudden there's a van coming behind us and there were people everywhere," the resident said. "They drove the entire length of the promenade ... it was scary."

The report said the New York Police Department is investigating the incident as a possible hate crime. Mayor Bill de Blasio tweeted in his support, saying "Harkirat Singh You are welcome here. What happened to you was wrong. You did the right thing by calling the NYPD."

Last week, Sikhs in the US launched a million-dollar awareness campaign aiming to inform Americans about the Sikh faith amid continuous incidents of hate crime against the community. Singh said he picked up three men

Sikh cab driver assaulted, turban snatched by riders

HATE CRIME YET AGAIN IN US AGAINST INDIANS

NEW YORK: A 25-year-old Sikh cab driver in the US was assaulted and his turban knocked off by drunk passengers, an incident the police was investigating as a possible hate crime. The incident took place here early Sunday morning and has left Harkirat Singh, an immigrant from Punjab who moved to the US three years ago, scared.

"I'm so afraid. I don't want to work," Singh told the New York Daily News. "It's an insult on my religion, also. An insult of my faith. It's horrible."

The report said the New York Police Department is investigating the incident as a possible hate crime. Mayor Bill de Blasio tweeted in his support, saying "Harkirat Singh You are welcome here. What happened to you was wrong. You did the right thing by calling the NYPD."

Last week, Sikhs in the US launched a million-dollar awareness campaign aiming to inform Americans about the Sikh faith amid continuous incidents of hate crime against the community. Singh said he picked up three men



and a woman - all in their 20s - around 5 AM Sunday from Madison Square Garden.

When they reached their destination in the Bronx, they began complaining that Singh had taken them to the wrong address. The passengers were allegedly drunk and could not give Singh a straight answer about where they wanted to go, leaving him "confused."

The passengers then began

hurling slurs and banging on the plastic partition in his cab, Singh recalled.

"They're using bad words, also," he said recalling that those used expletives and called him "Ali Baba." Singh told the group to pay USD 41.76 and find another cab. While the women gave him the cash after Singh called 911, one of the men got back into the cab and tried to smash the meter.

Then he punched Singh in the arm, he said. "After that, he picked off my turban from my head," he said. "He wanted to snatch my phone also...It was too horrible."

As the men became violent, Singh got terrified and began to cry, saying he pleaded with the man to calm down.

"Why are you doing this, brother? We can sit. We can talk," he recalled telling the

unruly passenger.

"At that time, I'm so afraid they can do anything to me. They're gonna kill me." With the police on its way, the group ran away from the scene with Singh's turban, a primary symbol of the faith. The incident occurred just hours after thousands of Sikhs had gathered at Times Square for the 'Turban day' event organised by a Sikh group to spread awareness about the faith.

The report said police sources described the suspect as a clean-shaven white Hispanic man in his 20s, around 5-foot-9.

Police say they are only seeking one suspect, though they'd like to speak to the other three passengers. Singh did not require a medical attention but filed a report with police. He was able to snap a photo of two of the passengers. Harpreet Singh Toor, the chairman of public policy and external affairs at The Sikh Cultural Society, said the theft reflected prejudice against Sikhs, who often targeted in anti-Muslim bias despite following a different faith.

Myanmar: 285 killed, 1,073 injured during water festival



YANGON: A total of 285 people were killed and 1,073 others injured across Myanmar during a four-day water festival, media reports said.

The deaths were 13 more than that of last year's event.

Meanwhile, a total of 1,200 criminal cases were also registered during the water festival, *Xinhua news agency* reported.

Among the deaths, 10 were in Nay Pyi Taw, 44 in Yangon, 36 in Mandalay, 26 in Sagaing region, 11 in Tanintharyi region, 37 in Bago region, 11 in Magway region, 20 in Mon state, 17 in Rakhine, 29 in Shan state and 28 in Ayeyawaddy region.

A total of 1,200 criminal cases were also registered during the water festival

The criminal cases were related to murder, car accident, drug-use, theft, arm possession and group violence respectively.

This year's traditional Thingyan water festival ran from Thursday to Sunday.

During last year's water festival, a total of 272 people were killed and 1,086 others injured.

Russia Metro blast's alleged organiser denies masterminding

MOSCOW: A man detained as a suspected organiser of the Saint Petersburg metro bombing denied on Tuesday that he helped mastermind the attack, but did admit indirect involvement in it.

Russia's FSB security service yesterday said it detained Kyrgyzstan-born Abror Azimov in a suburb of Moscow over the deadly April 3 blast that killed 14 people in Russia's second city. The FSB alleged Azimov was "one of the organisers" of the attack and had "carried out training" of the suspected 22-year-old suicide bomber Akbarjon Djalilov, who was born in Central Asian Kyrgyzstan.

At a court hearing on Monday to formally arrest him, Azimov admitted indirect "involvement" in the attack but denied organising it. "I do not oppose being arrested. But I did not say that I was involved in the blast," Azimov was quoted as saying by *Russian news agencies*.

"There was some involvement by me, but not direct. I was given an order. I did not understand that I was taking part in terrorist activity," he said.

US Supreme Court blocks executions in Arkansas

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected the state of Arkansas' request to execute the first prisoner in a tight schedule of eight death sentences before the end of the month, the media reported.

The nation's highest court took several hours to reach its decision, finally announcing at 11.50pm that it had declined to lift a stay on the execution of Don Davis, 54, imposed earlier in the day by the supreme court of Arkansas.

The court, in a brief ruling with no explanation, said it would not lift the Arkansas Supreme Court's order to stop the executions of two inmates who were to be put to death on Monday night, *NBC News* reported.

The ruling was the latest in a series of legal hurdles that the state has faced since it announced in February its plans to execute eight men in a 10-day span. But prosecutors surmounted a major roadblock earlier on Monday when the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a district court judge's ruling to stay all of the executions.

Inmates Bruce Ward and Don Davis, the first two men scheduled to die, had requested a delay last week, citing the need to wait for the conclusion of a US Supreme Court case.

Both inmates' lawyers claim that their clients are too mentally impaired to face capital punishment and were not offered proper mental health screening.

The state's highest court granted a stay on Monday afternoon.

The court issued its ruling at the very last minute - media witnesses were already seated to document Davis' execution, reports *NBC News*.

He was already moved to the Cummins Unit where the lethal injection gurney is located. Davis had even been supplied his last meal.

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson said he was "disappointed" by the ruling.

"While this has been an exhausting day for all involved, we will continue to fight back on last minute appeals and efforts to block justice for the victims' families," Hutchinson said.

Israel: No talks with Palestinian inmates on hunger strike

JERUSALEM: Israel will not negotiate with hundreds of Palestinian prisoners who launched a hunger strike to press for better conditions, a government minister said on Tuesday, adding that the organiser of the protest has been placed in solitary confinement.

If sustained, the strike led by Marwan Barghouti, a Palestinian leader jailed during the second Palestinian uprising, would be the largest in recent years. It could heighten Israeli-Palestinian tensions at a time of renewed US attempts to restart stalled peace negotiations.

Israeli rule over the West Bank and east Jerusalem, territories captured during the 1967 war and claimed by the Palestinians as part of a future state, reaches the half-century mark in June.

The Palestinian prisoners seek better conditions, including more contact with relatives, and an end to Israel's practice of detentions without trials.

Libya fishermen found 28 dead migrants in boat offshore

TRIPOLI: Libyan fishermen found the bodies of 28 illegal migrants who appeared to have died of thirst and hunger after their boat broke down off the coast of Sabratha city, a ministry of interior official said on Tuesday. Since Libya fell into chaos after Muammar Gaddafi's fall in 2011, the North African country is the main departure point for migrants hoping to reach Europe by sea. More than 150,000 have made the crossing to Italy annually over the past three years. Interior Ministry security unit commander Ahmaida Khalifa Am-salam told Reuters the 28 migrants, including four women, had been found after sunset by the fishermen who towed the vessel to shore. The victims were buried together in a cemetery for illegal migrants, he said.

US 'Facebook killer' commits suicide after brief chase

CHICAGO: The US man wanted for killing an elderly man in Ohio and then posting a video of the murder on Facebook fatally shot himself on Tuesday after a brief pursuit in neighbouring Pennsylvania, police said. Steve Stephens, 37, had been the subject of a nationwide manhunt in the wake of Sunday's killing in Cleveland.

The incident was the latest grisly crime posted on Facebook, reviving questions about videos posted on the world's largest social network, and how - or if - they can be monitored.

The footage was eventually taken down. Stephens "was spotted this morning by PSP members in Erie County. After a brief pursuit, Stephens shot and killed himself," Pennsylvania State Police.

The FBI had put Stephens on its Most Wanted list, and authorities were offering up to \$50,000 in rewards for information leading to his capture.

Stephens was accused of fatally shooting Robert Godwin Sr in Cleveland, Ohio as the 74-year-old grandfather was walking home from dinner on Easter Sunday.

Stephens is believed to have videotaped his actions and published it on Facebook, along with another video threatening to kill others and claiming he had already killed 13 people.

Authorities said Godwin is the only known victim despite an extensive investigation into Stephens' claims to have killed others.

UN: Civilians trapped in Mosul could face worst catastrophe in Iraq conflict

UNITED NATIONS: The fighting in the Islamic State-held Old City of Mosul, where hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians are trapped, could turn into the worst humanitarian "catastrophe" in the war against the militants, the United Nations warned on Tuesday. "If there is a siege and hundreds of thousands of people don't have water and don't have food, they will be at enormous risk," UN humanitarian coordinator for Iraq Lise Grande said in a telephone interview. "We could be facing a humanitarian catastrophe, perhaps the worst in the entire conflict," she added.

Mosul, the largest city in northern Iraq, was captured by the ultra-hardline Sunni Muslim fighters in mid 2014. Iraqi government forces have taken back most of it in a U.S.-backed offensive launched in October, including the half that lies east of the Tigris river. The militants are now surrounded in the northwestern quarter including the historic Old City.

Indians can visit Russia's far east without visas

MOSCOW: Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has announced that tourists and businessmen from India and 17 other countries can visit the country's far east without visas to boost tourism and investment in the region.

Medvedev said on Sunday that businessmen and tourists will not need to undergo the traditional procedure of Russian visas receipt.

According to the official site of the Russian Cabinet, the list of 18 countries comprises Algeria, Bahrain, Brunei, India, Iran, Qatar, China, North Korea, Kuwait, Morocco, Mex-



ico, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Tunisia, Turkey and Japan, *Tass news agency* reported. "I have recently approved the list of countries, whose nationals can take advantage of the preferential regime," Medvedev said.

nessmen "will promote growth of investment and tourist attractiveness of the far east," the prime minister said. The region will earn more money from tourist traffic growth, he added.

Eighteen countries from various regions selected by the reciprocity principle were included into the list, Medvedev said. "This is not because these states are situated at a closer or longer distance - we are appropriately introducing bilateral agreements on visa-free travel for those ready to use such an approach for us," he said.

कार्यालय चिकित्सा अधीक्षक
छत्तीसगढ़ आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान
(सिम्स चिकित्सालय)
बिलासपुर छ0ग0- 495001
FAX(0)-007752-237400, PHONE (0) 07752-230030

कमांक/ओ.अं.0/चि.अधी./सिम्स चिकि./2017-18/3098 बिलासपुर दिनांक: 18.4.17

//संशोधित निविदा सूचना//

सर्वजन को सूचित किया जाता है कि सिम्स चिकित्सालय, बिलासपुर के द्वारा आमंत्रित निविदा मेडिकल गैस हेतु (आक्सीजन, कार्बन डाई आक्साईड, एवं नाइट्रस ऑक्साईड) निविदा कमांक/2972/ओ0अं0/चि0अधी./सिम्स चिकि./2017-18, बिलासपुर दिनांक : 29.03.2017 के अनिवार्य शर्तों के कंडिका कमांक (2) तथा (3) में अंकित वर्ष 2016-17 को वर्ष 2015-16 पदम जावे। साथ ही कंडिका कमांक (6) में अंकित वर्ष 2015-16 को 2014-15 तथा 2016-17 को 2015-16 पदम जावे।

चिकित्सा अधीक्षक
सिम्स चिकित्सालय बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of Male **Age: 40 years, Height: 5'9", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Fatty**, was found at LNJP Hospital in unconscious condition on 06.04.2017. During the treatment Doctor declared him dead on 06.04.2017. Dead body has been preserved at MAMC Mortuary for 72 hours. In this regard a DD No. 19A dated 06.04.2017 has been lodged at PS IP Estate, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO
PS. IP Estate, Delhi
Ph.No.: 011-23370928, 23378387
Mob. 8750870426

DP/4594/CD/17

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(SECTION 82 Cr.Pc.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused person **Mohd. Bablu**, S/o Lt. Majid Khan R/o Village and post Sumera, tehsil and PS Galohana, Block Jalovan, District Aligarh (U.P.), has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case Ex. 23/3/16, registered at P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused person **Mohd. Bablu** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Mohd. Bablu** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Mohd. Bablu** in case Ex. 23/3/16, registered at P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi is required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on 27.05.2017.

By order
Ms. Sushila Bala Dagar
Metropolitan Magistrate, North-West District-02
Mahila Court, Room No. 18, Ground Floor
Rohini Court, Delhi

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

It is publically informed that, one male dead body namely Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, Age about 35-40 years, Height 5'7", Complexion Sallow, Wearing White striped shirt, black colour striped pant and one Sport marked sandal in right foot was found at Bawana Canal, Badli Jaal, Near Wazirabad Pipe Line, Delhi since 14.04.2017 at 11.55 a.m. In this regard a D.D. No.16-A, Dated 14.04.2017 has been lodged at P.S. Samaypur Badli, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to identify the dead body but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this male dead body please inform undersigned.

SHO
P.S. Samaypur Badli, Delhi
Ph.: 011-27854757, 27854799

DP/428/RD/17

Normal monsoon to boost farmers' income, feels MS

NEW DELHI: A normal monsoon in 2017, as predicted by IMD, will definitely boost the farm sector but good prices and market opportunities are equally important to ensure better income for farmers, renowned agriculture scientist M S Swaminathan said today.

"Normal monsoon will certainly help achieve the production goals. Better price for the produce and marketing opportunities are equally important," he told PTI.

Stating that one should not think monsoon in isolation, he said: "You have to think monsoon with market together."

Farmers try to manage even during bad monsoon if they get good price for their produce."

Swaminathan, regarded as father of India's Green Revolution, said more efforts need to be put to ensure farmers get good price during a normal monsoon. He said that farmers have reduced basmati rice acreage this year due to falling prices. "So, farmers' faith is determined by both monsoon and marketing."

Stating that normal monsoon forecast bodes well for the country, Agriculture Secretary Shobhana Pattanayak said that the government hopes for "a successive good foodgrain production" in 2017-18. A lot of efforts are being put into implementing certain agri-schemes like crop insurance and e-marketing, among others.

"The schemes will show



better results with good monsoon forecast," he said.

The government is hoping a record foodgrain output of over 272 million tonnes this year. The target for next year will be decided just before start of monsoon from June, he added.

Agri-economist and former CACP Chairman Ashok Gulati said: "After suffering two droughts, this is the second normal monsoon. I hope the country will do better. Hope farmers reap good harvest and get good prices. Hope the prices will not collapse the way they have this year."

ICRA Ltd Principal Economist Aditi Nayar said the volume, timing and dispersion of monsoon rainfall in 2017 would be quite crucial.

Higher rainfall in the early part of the monsoon may sup-

port sowing. However, adequate rainfall in the second half would be important for yields.

"Although reservoir storage exceeds the level in 2016, it may not prove to be adequate to shield the crop sector, if monsoon rainfall turns out to be appreciably weaker than the IMD's initial forecast," he said.

Reservoir storage is currently at around 31 per cent of full capacity, in line with the level in 2015.

"Notwithstanding the modest contribution of agriculture to the overall GDP, the monsoon outlook would have some impact on consumption sentiment."

"The impact of monsoon dynamics, as well as other inflation risks such as goods and services tax won't be clear for at least a few more months, which

Average monsoons: Analysts see farm GDP growing by 3-4%

MUMBAI: A normal monsoon season, as projected by the Met department (IMD) could help the agricultural GDP grow by 3-4 per cent this year, a tad lower than last year's, says a report. The IMD on Tuesday said there would be good distribution of rainfall across the country and it will receive 96 per cent of the long period average. "We believe that the agricultural GDP is most likely to be in range of 3-4 per cent, a tad low compared to 2016-17, if rainfall remains normal," an SBI Research said. It said even in case of deficit rainfalls there are instances where agri-GDP has in fact expanded and smartly grew in slightly more than normal rainfall in 2010 and 2011. In 2009, despite a 22 per cent decline in rainfalls, agri-GDP expanded by 0.8 per cent. The report said the current year's forecast is majorly important for the farm sector with initial reports pointing fingers at the El Niño which may happen during the later part of the year.

PTI

suggests a high likelihood of a prolonged pause for the policy rate. The RBI is likely to focus on liquidity management measures in the next few policies," he said in a statement.

Industry body ASSOCHAM said that the IMD forecast of monsoon this year is a relief as doubts were cast on whether the country would get normal rains for the second year in succession or not.

"In case the IMD forecast turns out to be correct, which it should, India would witness a robust agriculture growth continuously for two years, reaping a record 272 million tonnes of foodgrains (second advance estimates) during 2016-17. This would have several positives for the economy, including modest inflation and vibrancy in the GDP," said ASSOCHAM Secretary General D S Rawat.

PTI

TCS unperturbed by possible changes to H1-B regime: CEO

WASHINGTON: Unfazed by the possible changes to the H1-B visa regime, CEO of India's IT major TCS Rajesh Gopinathan has said the current discourse on the issue in the US is driven by emotions rather than economy and the best way to tackle it is through greater engagement.

Gopinathan favoured a policy of engagement with various stakeholders on the issue of H-1B visas in the US. He noted that the discourse is currently driven by emotions rather than economy.

"The best way to tackle that is greater engagement."

Because the way, sometimes, companies like us get characterised is very different from the reality of what we bring to the table," Gopinathan, who is in his mid-40s, said.

"Some of these engagements actually help get that message out also. People will understand us better for who we are, and I think engagement, communication and collaboration is the best way to deal with the political lack of understanding which comes. Democracy ought to deal with the emotional response that you see and you have to get over it and engage positively," Gopinathan said.

He said the US has been a "very welcoming market" for the IT major and has provided it with a fair, open and competitive environment.

"All said and done, the US has been a very welcoming market for us. So you keep aside the immediate issues, it's



TCS CEO Rajesh Gopinathan

TCS January-March net profit grows by 4.2% to ₹6,608 crore

MUMBAI: The country's largest software exporter TCS on Tuesday reported 4.2 per cent growth in net profit at Rs 6,608 crore for the quarter ended March 2017. The company had reported net profit of Rs 6,340 crore in the same period last fiscal as per Indian accounting norms. The Tata Group company, which accounts for more than 60 per cent of the group's overall profit, reported a revenue growth of 4.2 per cent at Rs 29,642 crore for the said quarter, up from Rs 28,449 crore a year earlier.

been a market that has been fair, it has been an open, competitive environment," Gopinathan said, exuding confidence that TCS would be able to successfully compete in any environment. Gopinathan said TCS has competed and has won against the best in the country.

"We have competed and we have won against the global best in this country, on equal

footing. So, it has been a market that has helped us grow in confidence as we have gone," he said but repeatedly refrained from having any complaint from the present system or the possibility of a new executive order that would adversely have an impact on his company's performance due to any action by the Trump Administration on H-1B visas.

PTI

RBI lets banks' exposure to REITs, InvITs be 10%

MUMBAI: The RBI on Tuesday permitted banks to invest up to 10 per cent of the unit capital of an Real Estate Investment Trust (REITs) or Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs).

The banks' exposure to REITs/InvITs will be within the overall ceiling of 20 per cent of the net worth permitted for direct investments in shares, convertible bonds/ debentures, units of equity-oriented mutual funds and Venture Capital Funds (VCFs). "Banks should put in place a Board approved policy on exposures to REITs/InvITs which lays down an internal limit on such investments within the overall exposure limits in respect of the real estate sector and infrastructure sector," the Reserve Bank said while issuing prudential guidelines in this regard.

It further said banks will not invest more than 10 per cent of the unit capital of an REIT/InvIT.

In addition, banks will have to ensure adherence to the prudential guidelines on equity investments, classification and valuation of investment portfolio, Basel III Capital requirements for commercial real estate exposures and large exposure framework.

In its first bimonthly monetary policy of 2017-18, the RBI had permitted banks to invest in REITs and InvITs. The move was aimed to help revive the cash-starved infrastructure sector.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has put in place regulations for REITs and InvITs and requested the RBI to allow banks to participate in these schemes.

PTI

India Inc's foreign investments jump 2-fold to \$3 bn in March

MUMBAI: Foreign direct investment (FDI) by Indian companies in their overseas ventures jumped over two-fold to USD 2.99 billion last month.

Indian firms had made investments of \$1.42 billion in their overseas joint-ventures/subsidiaries in March 2016.

Investments in March this year were much higher than the preceding month, February, at \$867.53 million, the Reserve Bank data showed on Tuesday.

Their investment came in the form of equities \$1.99 billion, loans of \$742.60 million and issuance of guarantee worth \$251.40 million.

Among major investors include Bharti Airtel with Ltd \$765.20 million and Tata International Ltd, \$179.22 million.

ONGC Videsh Ltd invested \$75.49 million and WNS Global Services \$53.78 million.

PTI

'Availability of cash-dispensing ATMs continues to worsen'

New Delhi: Cash availability at ATMs across the country has deteriorated again following a brief improvement in January even five months after demonetisation, shows a survey.

The ATM outage level, which had improved in January and February, is showing deterioration in April.

In a survey conducted by citizen engagement platform LocalCircles, 43 per cent citizens said they could not find cash in ATMs on April 13-16. This number has worsened from the 36 per cent who had faced problems in finding a cash dispensing ATM on April 5-8.

Over 8,700 citizens from across India participated in this poll sharing ATM experiences in their areas.

The survey further said RBI's move to lift withdrawal limits on March 13 could be a reason as people have been withdrawing cash in bulk from counters and banks have been forced to maintain high liquidity.

This has led to maintenance of ATMs and frequent cash replenishment taking a back seat.

Moreover, people have been withdrawing large amounts from ATMs as some banks levy a transaction fee after four such withdrawals.

PTI

Note ban shrinks securitisation in MFIs by 79% in H2 of FY17'

KOLKATA: The impact of demonetisation on microfinance securitisation volumes has led to a slump of 79 per cent in the second half of FY17.

"The decline is to the tune of 79 per cent in the second half of the FY17" at Rs 1,650 crore compared to Rs 8,000 crore in the six months of the previous year," ICRA Head Structured Finance, Vibhor Mittal told PTI.

The bold demonetisation measure was announced in November, 2016.

"After two years of rapid growth, volumes for micro loans securitisation transactions witnessed a trend reversal with around 20 per cent drop observed for the full 2016-17," a recent ICRA study said.

MFIs (including some erstwhile MFIs now small Finance Banks) raised nearly Rs 5,500 crore through the securitisation route in the first six months of FY17.

However, as per ICRA estimates only around Rs 1,650 crore was raised in the second half of the fiscal, resulting in total securitisation volumes of around Rs 7,150 crore for the full year.

In comparison, MFI securi-

New Sebi website launched

NEW DELHI: Expanding its digital presence, markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday launched its revamped website having several user-friendly features and compatible with all desktop and mobile devices. The revamped website will ensure a better user experience across various devices, including desktop and mobile, Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a statement.

PTI

tisation volumes had increased by 80 per cent to around Rs 9,000 crore in fiscal 2016.

PTI

Anti-dumping duty likely on a chemical imports from 6 nations

NEW DELHI: India may impose anti-dumping duty of up to \$118 per tonne on import of a chemical used by industries in applications such as corrosion control and paper bleaching from six countries including Korea, Indonesia and Pakistan. The move is aimed at guarding domestic players from cheap imports of Hydrogen Peroxide from Bangladesh, Taiwan, Korea, Indonesia, Pakistan and Thailand.

The commerce ministry's investigating arm - Directorate General of Anti-dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD) - in its final findings has concluded that the chemical was dumped

The commerce ministry's investigating arm — Directorate General of Anti-dumping and Allied Duties — has concluded in its final findings that the chemicals were dumped in India and impacted domestic industry. National Peroxide Ltd and Hindustan Organic Chemicals Ltd had jointly filed an application for the dumping probe

in India which has impacted the domestic industry.

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The DGAD in a notification "recommends imposition of

anti-dumping duty" to remove the injury to the domestic industry. It has recommended the duty in the range of \$16.91 per tonne to \$117.9 per tonne. While the DGAD recommends the duty, Finance Ministry imposes the same.

The import of Hydrogen Peroxide has increased to 67,300 tonne during April 2014 to June 2015 from 17,464 tonne in 2011-12. The chemical is used by various industries for corrosion control, paper and pulp bleaching. It also has therapeutic uses as an antiseptic and antibacterial agent.

Countries initiate anti-dumping probes to determine

if the domestic industry has been hurt by a surge in below-cost imports. As a counter-measure, they impose the duty.

These duties are in compliance to the rules of the global trade body World Trade Organisation.

The duties also ensure fair trade by providing a level-playing field to the domestic industry. They are not a measure to restrict imports or cause an unjustified increase in the cost of products.

Unlike the safeguard duty, which is levied in a uniform way, anti-dumping duty varies from company to company and country to country.

PTI

Volkswagen plans all-electric car for China next year

SHANGHAI: Volkswagen, Europe's biggest automaker, plans to launch its first pure-electric car in China next year as Beijing steps up pressure on the industry to promote alternatives to gasoline.

The announcement on Tuesday comes on the eve of the Shanghai auto show, which showcases industry efforts to create electric models with consumer appeal. General Motors Co's Buick unit and Ford Motor Co. also have announced new electric vehicles for China this year. The VW model will be the first in a range of electric vehicles in China, said Jochem Heizmann, head of VW's China unit. It is due to be produced under a new brand name with a local partner, state-owned Jianghuai Automotive Corp.

"This will be a new cooperation on pure battery cars," said Heizmann.

"Our challenging target is to come, already next year in 2018, to the market with the first car."



China has the world's most aggressive electric car goals.

Communist leaders are promoting them to clean up smog-choked cities and in hopes of taking the lead in an emerging technology. Regulators have jolted the industry with a proposal to require electric to account for at least 8 per cent of each brand's production by next year.

At the auto show, the global industry's biggest marketing

event of the year, almost every global and Chinese auto brand is showing at least one electric concept vehicle, if not a market-ready model. Heizmann said VW, which vies with GM for the title of China's top-selling automaker, expects annual sales of at least 400,000 "new energy vehicles" the government's term for electric or gasoline-electric hybrids by 2020 and 1.5 million by 2025.

The plan to create a new

brand for the VW-Jianghuai partnership follows an approach taken by Mercedes-Benz, GM and Nissan Motor Co. Foreign brands are under pressure from Chinese regulators to help local partners create indigenous brands.

Despite government subsidies and other encouragement, electric cars have yet to catch on with China's driving public due to concern about their limited range. Most Chinese automakers sell plug-in battery models but their range is usually no more than 120 to 150 kilometers (75 to 95 miles) too little to attract most buyers.

Sales of electric and gasoline-electric hybrids fell 4.4 per cent from a year earlier to 55,929 vehicles while sales of SUVs rose 21 per cent to 2.4 million.

Heizmann said the industry needs to find a way to create electric models that appeal to consumers. He said VW was trying to do that by developing vehicles for different market segments.

PTI

LG plans to make India export hub

NEW DELHI: South Korean consumer electronics giant LG is looking at making India its export hub, banking on good ties between the two countries at a time when its overseas shipments from China are declining.

According to LG Electronics India Managing Director Ki Wan Kim, one of the main reasons for the company to look at making India an export hub is due to tension prevailing between South Korea and China.

LG, which has two manufacturing units in India, exports to the Middle East and countries in the eastern coast of African continent.

Around 10 per cent of

sales of the company's Indian arm -- LG Electronics India (LGEI), are currently from exports.

Last year, LGEI had sales of Rs 22,000 crore.

"On the other hand ties between South Korea and India have improved. All Korean (companies) have started to see India as a strategically important manufacturing base not only for India but for other areas," Wan told PTI.

When asked if LG is scouting for more global markets for exports from India, he replied in the affirmative saying it is looking for countries where there is little or no manufacturing.

PTI

Ola set to zoom out to over 1 lakh driver entrepreneurs

BENGALURU: Cab aggregator Ola on Tuesday announced that it plans to reach out to over 1,00,000 driver entrepreneurs through 'Auto Driver Partner Melas' across all major cities and towns in the country.

This multi-city programme is an on-ground initiative to help thousands of aspiring auto driver partners to take the first step towards entrepreneurship and achieve their dreams, the company said.

The Ola Auto Mela will bring together a host of manufacturers, service providers, and financial institutions under one roof, to enable deep discounts and savings for their customers and build a large customer-base in return, it said in a release.

Ola held its first Auto Driver Partner Mela-Ola Baasha Mela- in Chennai

between April 8 and April 10 where hundreds of autorickshaw driver partners availed the opportunity of becoming micro-entrepreneurs by owning autorickshaws for the first time.

This initiative that will kickstart from Bengaluru, will move to Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Pune over the course of the next few months, the release said.

Ola Chief Operating Officer Vishal Kaul said, "with a multi-city initiative at such scale, we are enabling access to capital, consistent revenue as well as training for aspiring driver entrepreneurs." Ola said Driver partner Melas help it nurture micro-entrepreneurship in the ecosystem, creating a steady stream of supply to address the burgeoning mobility needs of the country.

PTI

Are foreign firms taking too much from Indian partners? Hind Shipyards sails to first operating profit in 35 years

NEW DELHI: A surge in royalty outflow has prompted the government to set up an inter-ministerial group to analyse payment norms and see whether there is excessive pay-out by Indian companies to foreign collaborators.

Royalty is paid to a foreign collaborator for transfer of technology, usage of brand or trademarks.

"Royalty outflow has surged in the recent past and it needs to be analysed. So, the government has set up this inter-ministerial panel," an official said.

The panel will be headed by an additional secretary level officer of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP). It also has representatives from departments of revenue, economic affairs and the Reserve Bank. It will submit its report by June.

The terms of reference includes scrutiny of the outflow and the present legal structure dealing with royalty payments and transfer pricing.

Earlier, the DIPP had raised serious concerns over the increasing outflow of such payments. The department had proposed re-introduction of restrictions on such payments by companies to their parent entities.

It had argued that the curbs would help increase the prof-



its of domestic companies, mainly in the automobile sector, prevent depletion of foreign exchange reserves, protect interest of minority shareholders and increase revenue for the government.

According to industry experts, it will be very difficult to assess the right quantum of royalty to be paid by domestic companies to foreign parent firms. The increase in outflow of these payments started after the government liberalised the FDI (foreign direct investment) policy in 2009.

It had removed the cap and permitted Indian companies to pay royalties to their technical collaborators without seeking prior government approval. The outflows on account

of trademark or brand name. Auto major Maruti Suzuki pays an average royalty of around 5.5 per cent of its net sales to its parent Suzuki. It has begun making payments to Suzuki in rupee instead of yen for new models starting with compact SUV Vitara Brezza to bring down royalty outflows.

Telecom companies too pay \$15 royalty for every mobile line. A single line ideally supports a single call at a given point of time.

Earlier, the DIPP had raised serious concerns over the increasing outflow of such payments. The department had proposed re-introduction of restrictions on such payments by companies to their parent entities.

FDI, which is critical to bridging the widening current account deficit, grew 22 per cent to \$35.84 billion during April-December of the last fiscal. Before 2009, royalty payment was regulated by the government and capped at 8 per cent of exports and 5 per cent domestic sales in the case of technology transfer collaborations and was fixed at 2 per cent of exports and 1 per cent of domestic sales for use

The outflows on account of royalty and fee for technical services, taken together, are estimated to be as high as 15-18 per cent of FDI inflows over 2009-10 and 2012-13

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As per available data, royalty payment increased to USD 4.1 billion in 2012-13, from USD 1.7 billion in 2008-09.

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VISHAKAPATNAM: For the first time in 35 years, state-run Hindustan Shipyards today reported an operating profit as well as net profit of Rs 30 crore in fiscal 2017, helped by a massive jump in revenue. In fiscal 2016, the company had reported a net profit of Rs 19 crore but an operating loss of Rs 45 crore.

"With the best measures and improved morale, we made an operational profit of Rs 30 crore in fiscal 2017 which is the first in the past 35 years," chairman and managing director LV Sarat Babu told reporters here.

Director for finance and commercial M Nagaraj explained that the shipyard had an other income of Rs 15 crore, during the year which helped it report better numbers. Babu said the overall revenue grew to a lifetime high of Rs 625 crore from Rs 593 crore in the previous year. The shipyard, which was brought under the administrative control of the defence ministry in February 2010, has an order book of over Rs 500 crore at present, Babu said, adding apart from this, the shipyard also has offers to build two strategic operating vessels called as Midgets amounting to Rs 6,000 crore.

Babu said the company will soon be entering into a deal with South Korean major Hyundai Heavy Industries to



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build a five-fleet support ships worth Rs 10,000 crore.

We will get the technology also with the agreement with the Korean company to be inked in a few days, he added.

Babu said the yard has making operational losses in the last 35 years barring the past two years.

The shipyard's revenue from shipbuilding stood at Rs 294 crore in 2014-15, which rose to Rs 593 crore in 2015-16 and to Rs 625 crores in 2016-17.

The revenue of Rs 625 crore in fiscal 2017 is the highest since its inception 75 years ago, Babu said, adding since then it has built 179 vessels and repaired 1,950 ships of various types.

The shipyard was also actively pursuing orders for construction of two cadet training ships and nine 25 tonne bollard pull tugs for the Navy and eight IPVs for the Coast Guard.

Solar power tariff hits all time low of ₹3.15 per unit at NTPC auction

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: Solar tariffs in India reduced to yet another record low at the NTPC-conducted auction of 250 MW at the Kadapa Solar Park in Andhra Pradesh. The project has been awarded to the Indian arm of French clean energy firm Solairedirect SA which quoted levelised tariff of Rs 3.15/KWh. NTPC broke the earlier record of Rs 3.30 per unit levelised tariff for Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Power Project in Madhya Pradesh.

At current rates, solar power generation cost is at par with that of thermal power generation. Solar power tariff has been declining on account of sharply declining prices of solar panels, better structuring of the project that reduces risk for project developers and better currency hedging deals that make financing available at competitive cost. This is a shot in the arm for PM Narendra Modi's vision of providing 175 GW of power through renewable sources by 2022.

J C Nakra assumes charge as Director (Projects) of EIL

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: JC Nakra has assumed charge as Director (Projects) of Engineers India Ltd (EIL) with effect from April 12, 2017.

In a career spanning about 36 years, Nakra has worked in a wide array of domains including Projects, Construction & Marketing. He joined EIL in 1983 as a Mechanical Engineer (Construction) in the Ocean Engineering Division. Subsequently, he served in various capacities in Marketing and Project Divisions.

Nakra has steered the marketing initiatives of EIL for business development in India and abroad and has also led project management teams for implementation of major projects.

Prior to joining EIL, he worked as a mechanical engineer in Jagat Jit Cotton Textile Mills (JCT), Fibre Division, Hoshiarpur from 1981 to 1983.



Nakra is a Mechanical Engineering Graduate from Punjab Engineering College, Chandigarh (1981 Batch) and also possesses a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management Studies from Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai.

Prior to this, he was holding the position of Executive Director - In-charge (Projects) in EIL.

Boeing to lay off hundreds of engineering employees in US

WASHINGTON: American multinational corporation Boeing has said that it will lay off "hundreds of engineering employees" in Washington state and other company sites on Friday, the media reported.

"We need to reduce our employment levels further," John Hamilton, Vice President of engineering at Boeing Commercial Airplanes, said on Monday.

"We anticipate (Friday's notices) will impact hundreds of engineering employees. Additional reductions in engineering later this year will be driven by our business environment and the amount of voluntary attrition," The Hill magazine quoted Hamilton as saying.

The Chicago-based company reportedly offered a round of voluntary buyouts in January, an offer that was accepted by more than 300 engineering and technical staff.

According to the Seattle Times, all the engineering staff who accepted the proposal will permanently leave Boeing on Friday.



Boeing has purportedly cut 1,332 engineering and technical jobs from its Washington workforce since January 2016.

The Seattle Times added that the aviation company issued an earlier round of layoffs in March, resulting in 245 involuntary layoffs, including 62 engineering staff, in mid-May.

The Washington Examiner said Boeing has terminated more than 9,000

employees over the past year, mainly through buyouts and retirements.

The company currently employs 74,200 people, it added, and reported \$95 billion in revenue last year.

President Donald Trump had criticised Boeing during his transition period over the cost of its replacement Air Force One programme, calling the price of two new 747s "out of control".

Rajasthan inks fresh MoU with HPCL for Barmer refinery

JAIPUR: The Rajasthan government today inked a fresh MoU of Rs 43,129 crore with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) for an oil refinery in Barmer district which will produce BS-VI fuel.

The state government will have 26 per cent stake in the refinery project while HPCL will have the rest shareholding.

The work for the refinery will commence in the current financial year and will complete in next four years, Union Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said.

It will be the largest industrial investment in the state, the minister said further.

Under the new terms and conditions, the refinery cost has come down to Rs 16,845 crore, which was Rs 56,040 crore in the previous MoU done by the Congress government in 2013, Pradhan said.

"It was a direct loss of Rs 40,000 crore to the state of Rajasthan in 15 years. In the previ-

ous MoU, the state had to give Rs 3,736 crore interest free loan every year for 15 years, which would have burdened the state finances," Pradhan told reporters after signing of the MoU.

Elaborating further about the upcoming refinery project, Pradhan said that HPCL, that had to spend Rs 37,230 crore under the previous deal, will now spend Rs 43,129 crore.

"Oil field permission had to end in 2020 but we have provided permission to the refinery to run for 10 more years.

Apart from 43,129 crore, additional Rs 27,000 crore investment will be made in the refinery, oil field and petrochemical complex.

"Overall, Rs 70,000 crore worth investment will be made in next four years, Pradhan said. According to the fresh MoU, the refinery will produce BS-VI emission norms compliant fuel. The government plans to move to BS-VI emission norms by 2020.

CORPORATE KALEIDOSCOPE



NMDC and Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL) signed an MOU on Tuesday at NMDC Head Office, Hyderabad. P K Satpathy, Director (Production), NMDC, and Dr Samir V Kamat, Director, DMRL, signed the MOU. Dr Narendra Kumar Nanda, Director (Technical), NMDC, and S K Jha, Director (Production & Marketing), MIDHANI, were also present during the occasion



NTPC-Telangana Unit-1 (800 MW) TG Foundation Concrete work started at 1.30 am on Tuesday. Concreting of 2140 m3 (cubic meter) will continue for approximately 50 hours



Team Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) participated in Inter Power Sector PSU Bridge Tournament organised by Sutlej Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) under the aegis of Power Sports Control Board (PSCB) at Dehradun from 27-29 March. Team DVC emerged champion among the teams. The prize was given away by P S P Mishra, CMD, SJVN



NHPCL Limited is celebrating the 100th anniversary of Champaran Satyagraha with great fervour and gaiety. K M Singh, NHPCL's Chairman & Managing Director inaugurated an exhibition dedicated to the life of Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, at its Corporate Office at Faridabad



NBPCC (India) Ltd bagged the Hindustan Ratna PSU Awards 2017 for 'Excellence in Innovation'. The Award was given away in New Delhi by Nitin Gadkari, Union Cabinet Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Shipping; Manoj Sinha, MoS for Railways; Piyush Goyal, MoS with Independent Charge for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines. CGM (PMG), Yogesh JP Sharma, received the eminent Award on behalf of the organisation

SAIL spends ₹64,562 cr on modernisation and expansion work



NEW DELHI: State-run SAIL has so far spent a total of Rs 64,562 crore on modernisation and expansion programmes, which also includes Rs 2,324 crore investment in first nine months of the last fiscal.

"Cumulative expenditure (by SAIL) for various modernisation and expansion packages till December 2016 has been Rs 64,562 crore, including expenditure of Rs 2,324 crore during the financial year 2016-17 till December 2016," according to a latest government report.

Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) has undertaken the modernisation and expansion of its integrated steel plants at Bhilai, Bokaro, Rourkela, Durgapur and Burnpur and special steel plant at Salem.

In the ongoing modernisation and expansion, the crude steel capacity is being enhanced from 12.8 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) to 21.4 MTPA.

The expansion of its plants -- Salem Steel, Rourkela, IISCO, Durgapur and Bokaro -- has

been completed, the report said adding the new facilities are under operation and production ramp-up.

At Bhilai steel plant, Universal Rail Mill for supply of world's longest single-piece 130-metre-long rail along with rail welding line for production of 260-metre-long rails has been completed.

"Other facilities like ore handling plant part-A, 2nd sinter machine in sinter plant-3 and coke oven battery -- 11 are in regular operation and balance facilities viz bar and rod mill, blast furnace-8, steel melting shop-III etc are at advanced stages of execution," it said.

The country's largest steel maker had earlier said it reached the last leg of its Rs 70,000-crore modernisation programme but expressed concerns that post modernisation there would be 60-70 per cent jump in production capacity, which is a challenge for the PSU as demand for domestic steel remained weak.



HYDERABAD KEEN TO GET BACK OJHA, RAYUDU, SAYS SECY

NEW DELHI: The Hyderabad Cricket Association wants to get back the services of Ambati Rayudu and Pragyan Ojha during the next domestic season. Newly-appointed secretary T Seshnaran said that the new body wants the two home boys back in their fold. Rayudu had left after some dispute with the erstwhile establishment while Ojha has been a part of Bengal set up.

THREE ARRESTED IN GOA FOR BETTING ON IPL MATCH BETWEEN KOLKATA AND DELHI

PANAJI: Three men were arrested from a resort in Goa's Anjuna beach village in the early hours of Tuesday, for accepting bets during the match between Delhi Daredevils and Kolkata Knight Riders. The men have been identified as Kiransinh Vaghela, 32, and Jayant Vaghela, 33, both from Ahmedabad, and Narendra Singh of unspecified age from Agra.

INDIAN SHUTTLEERS SHOULD TARGET BIG WINS, SAYS GOPICHAND

HYDERABAD: Indian shuttleers should look for consistency and target bigger tournaments such as All England and World Championship, said chief national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand. Gopichand expressed satisfaction over the recent performances of Indian shuttleers, including P V Sindhu and B Sai Praneeth, but said its time to step up to the next level.



Maxwell wants to repeat Rancho show in Ashes



MELBOURNE: Flamboyant all-rounder Glenn Maxwell on Tuesday hoped for a repeat of his performance at the Rancho Test against India, if he gets a game in the Ashes series against England later this year.

Maxwell, who is currently leading the Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League (IPL), scored his maiden Test century at Rancho before following it up with a top-score of 45 in Australia's second innings of the fourth Test in Dharamsala. Maxwell, however seemed clueless on the composition of the Australia squad for the Ashes, starting with the first Test at the Gabba this year. The Victorian acknowledged that given Australia's tendency to opt for a seam-bowling all-rounder in the top six for Tests on home soil, his spot is far from secure. "I'd love to say that I'd be a good chance, but I have absolutely no idea," Maxwell was quoted as saying by a private website. "I don't know which way they're thinking. We've seen in the past that they like to have a medium-pace all-rounder at No.6 and if they were to go that way in the first Test, I think that'd be fine." "But if I was to get an opportunity to play a Test at home, I'd love to take it the same way I did in Rancho and make the most of it. "But I'm not trying to get my hopes up too much. If it happens, it happens," he added. The dashing right-hander further said he would not take undue pressure on himself to get back to the side. "I'll still train and work as hard as I can to play, but I'm probably not putting as much pressure on myself as I probably did in previous years," he said. AGENCIES



Royal Challengers Bangalore batsman Virat Kohli in action during the IPL match against Gujarat Lions in Rajkot on Tuesday. PIC/PTI

Gayle, Kohli power RCB to 213-2

RAJKOT: Swashbuckling West Indies opener Chris Gayle returned to form with a blistering 38-ball 77-run innings to power Royal Challengers Bangalore to a massive 213-2 against Gujarat Lions in their IPL match here on Tuesday.

Invited to bat, Gayle and skipper Kohli gave Bangalore a blistering start as they amassed 45 in the first six overs and then went on to forge a 122-run opening partnership off 76 balls at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium. Gayle's innings was studded with five boundaries and seven massive sixes, while Kohli blasted seven fours and one six in his 50-ball innings. Kohli took the early initiative as he picked up a boundary each in the first two overs before picking Dhawal Kulkarni for a special treatment, blasting three fours of the

third over. Gayle, who has been out of form, meanwhile completed his 10,000 runs in twenty20 cricket with a single off Basil Thampi in the fourth over. The West Indies batsman then blasted one over mid-off to score his first six of the innings. He then sent young mystery spinner Shivil Kaushik for another maximum over long-off in the seventh over. Gayle then exploded with successive fours and a six off left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja. He also blasted the last delivery of the over for a maximum but he was brilliantly caught by Brendon McCullum at the long-off boundary. But the West Indies batsman survived after replays showed that McCullum's hat had touched the boundary line.

Gayle made Lions pay as he brought up his fifty with a massive six over long on into

the top-tier off Kaushik in the 10th over and then clobbered Dwayne Smith for another six as RCB reached the 100-mark.

The dashing opener sent Smith out of the park again for another six in the fourth ball over long-on as RCB picked 17 runs off the over. In the 13th over, Basil Thampi finally dismissed Gayle when he trapped him leg before to break the partnership. Kohli, however, continued to score runs and reached his 28th IPL fifty in the 15th over with a couple of runs off Kaushik. He then blasted a towering six over wide of long-on in the 4th ball.

Brief scores:
Gujarat Lions vs Royal Challengers Bangalore:
RCB: (Chris Gayle 77, Virat Kohli 64).
Lions: Thampi (1/31). AGENCIES

BCCI firm on Sreesanth's life ban

NEW DELHI: Tainted pacer S Sreesanth's plea for a review of his life ban has been "summarily rejected" by the BCCI, which says it will not compromise on its zero tolerance policy towards corruption.

The BCCI has informed Sreesanth of its decision in a letter. The letter was sent by BCCI CEO Rahul Johri after the cricketer wrote to the COA appealing for revocation of his ban in the 2013 spot-fixing scandal.

"The BCCI has informed him that his life ban stays and he won't be allowed to play any form of competitive cricket. He had also appealed in a local court in Kerala and our legal counsel will be replying," a senior BCCI official told PTI today.

"The BCCI has always maintained zero tolerance towards corrupt practices. No court has exonerated Sreesanth of fixing charges. It was charges of his links with Underworld that were dismissed by the lower court," the source said.

It was made clear that Sreesanth, who intended to play club cricket in UK, won't be allowed and the BCCI has now shut the case.



On Monday, the BCCI submitted a counter-affidavit regarding this issue before Kerala High Court in response to a petition filed by Sreesanth. The pacer had challenged the continuation of the life ban imposed on him by the BCCI despite being exonerated by a Delhi court from the charges of match-fixing against him.

In an affidavit, BCCI said "the decision of the Sessions Court to acquit the petitioner from criminal charges has no impact whatsoever on the decision of the internal disciplinary committee of the BCCI to ban the petitioner from play-

ing cricket tournaments organized by the BCCI and/or its affiliates."

The Board said the question before the Sessions Court was whether the petitioner (and other accused) was guilty of penal consequences under relevant criminal statutes.

On the other hand, the question before the BCCI Disciplinary Committee was whether the petitioner was guilty of match fixing, corruption and gambling and violation of the internal disciplinary rules of the BCCI, the Board said.

The standard of proof

required under a penal statute is much higher than the proof required for a disciplinary inquiry, it said.

Therefore, on an appreciation of the same evidence, one may not be guilty of criminal consequences but can be found guilty for violating the internal disciplinary rules of an organization, it said.

Admitting the petition filed by Sreesanth seeking a direction to the BCCI to allow him play for a Scottish club, the High Court had directed the Union Government and the BCCI to file their counter affidavits. AGENCIES

Desperate Delhi look to sort batting woes against Sunrisers

HYDERABAD: Delhi Daredevils will be aiming to display more impact in their batting department as they face a formidable challenge from defending champions Sunrisers Hyderabad in an IPL encounter, here on Wednesday.

It will be an arduous task for the Daredevils as they face a team that has both current 'Orange Cap' holder David Warner (235 runs) and 'Purple Cap' owner Bhuvneshwar Kumar (15 wickets).

Both teams met with contrasting fate during their previous encounters with Sunrisers edging past Kings XI Punjab in an exciting last over finish while Daredevils couldn't stop KKR from reaching the target in another final over face-off.

The points table is at a nascent stage with Sunrisers on six points from five games sitting at the third position while Daredevils is lying fourth with four points.

In a fast-paced league, a couple of matches can com-

IPL TURNS 10: MATCH PREVIEW

pletely turn things around. For Delhi, it will be important to have consistent impact in their batting.

They have had forceful performances at the start of the innings and at the end but the two games — vs RCB and KKR that they have lost has been primarily due to their inability to force the pace during middle overs.

Delhi boasts of some of the spirited batsmen in the tournament in its ranks in Sanju Samson, who scored a century the other day, Sam Billings, Rishabh Pant, Corey Anderson and Chris Morris.

Though the Delhi batsmen have been in good form especially Rishabh Pant, this edition's only centurion Sanju Samson and all-rounder Chris Morris, problem has been consistency.

The slowish pitch at the Uppal with an in-form Bhuvneshwar and Afghan sensation Rashid Khan could pose a few

problems. It will be interesting if an out of sorts Angelo Mathews gets a second game.

Delhi's bowling, comprising skipper Zaheer Khan, Morris, Shahbaz Nadeem and Pat Cummins, besides Anderson and Amit Mishra have played a vital role in the team's success so far.

They need to come up with another accomplished effort in order to stop an in-form Warner, who has shown a different side to his batting adapting to vagaries of sub-continental pitches.

For Hyderabad, Ashish Nehra may make a comeback in place of Barinder Sran, who was taken to task by Manan Vohra.

Yuvraj Singh would like to make amends for his last match's failure while presence of Moises Henriques as seamer all-rounder and Ben Cutting as the back-up lends the team much-needed solidity. AGENCIES

BCCI SGM Resolution: Don't touch 'Big Three' model till June

NEW DELHI: The BCCI units on Tuesday passed an unanimous resolution that they would ask the ICC Board to hold on to the 'Big Three' revenue model till its Annual General Meeting in London in June.

Any decision on India's Champions Trophy participation will be taken only after the ICC Board Meeting but most of the members present at the Special General Meeting of the BCCI today were against taking any extreme position.

It is learnt that Amitabh Chaudhary, the joint Secretary and Board representative will put the BCCI's point of view at the ICC's Dubai Board Meeting

on April 27 and 28.

"A resolution has been passed at the SGM that we will ask ICC to carry on with the existing model where Australia, England and India get the lion's share of revenue. We will definitely work out a new model during London meeting. This was today (Tuesday) unanimously passed by the forum," a top official who attended the meeting said.

Chaudhary, on his part, only said that protecting India's interest will be his primary objective.

"The COA has given a formula which is beneficial to India. We would take ingredients from it also," the joint Secretary said.

Asked if the CT pull out

BCCI doubles prize money to Rs 1 cr for Australia series win

NEW DELHI: The BCCI, at its Special General Meeting decided to double the incentive of the Indian cricket team from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore for their 2-1 series win against Australia at home. The decision was taken reversing the COA's decision of paying Indian team members Rs 50 lakh for the Test series triumph on a pro-rata basis (as per no of matches played). AGENCIES

was an option, Chaudhary said: "Only poets and philosophers can answer that question."

However, it was learnt that as per the resolution, Chaudhary will come back from Dubai and apprise the BCCI

of the ICC's stand and if it remains rigid, they will then revisit the old agreement signed in 2014.

Meanwhile, most of the members were of the opinion that the Board units

should cooperate with the COA rather than creating hindrance to them.

"There were a lot of anti N Srinivasan voices that wanted BCCI to strengthen COA stand and also not give a notion of infighting to ICC," the source added.

No member from Tamil Nadu Cricket Association or Saurashtra Cricket Association attended the SGM.

During the last meeting, Srinivasan and Niranjan Shah attended despite being above 70 years of age.

In Tuesday's meeting, the only 70-plus member was Odi- sha's Asirbad Behera.

There were also discussions on the appointment of Ombudsman. AGENCIES

Afridi gets unique retirement gift from Indian team

NEW DELHI: Despite the political tensions between India and Pakistan affecting bilateral cricket, there is no love lost among the players and this time it is the Indian team which presented a Virat Kohli shirt, signed by all the players, to former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi on his retirement from international cricket.

"To Shahid Bhai, best wishes, always a pleasure playing against you," India skipper Kohli wrote on the shirt.

A Pakistani journalist recently posted a picture of the jersey on Twitter.

The jersey had the signatures of Kohli, Yuvraj Singh, Ashish Nehra, Jasprit Bumrah, Suresh Raina, Pawan Negi, Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Ajinkya Rahane, Shikhar Dhawan, Ravichandran Ashwin, Hardik Pandya and former Team director Ravi Shastri.

The 36-year-old Afridi, who bid adieu to his 21-year-old career in February, was recently announced as one of eight Champion Ambassadors, along with India's Harbhajan Singh for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Champions Trophy, to be held in the United Kingdom from June 1 to 18.

The other ambassadors announced by the ICC are Bangladesh's Habibul Bashar, England's Ian Bell, New Zealand's Shane Bond, Australia's Mike Hussey, Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara and South Africa's Graeme Smith. AGENCIES

Sourav Ganguly, Ricky Ponting among star-studded line of commentators for Champions Trophy

DUBAI: Acclaimed international captains including India's Sourav Ganguly and Australia's Ricky Ponting are a part of a stellar line-up of commentators named by the ICC for the upcoming Champions Trophy scheduled between June 1-18.

Some of the other former captains in the line-up include Brendon McCullum of New Zealand, Kumar Sangakkara of Sri Lanka and Graeme Smith of South Africa -- all of whom will be making their ICC TV debut.

Shane Warne, Michael Slater, Nasser Hussain, Michael Atherton, Shaun Pollock, Sanjay Manjrekar, Ian Bishop, Ramiz Raja, Simon Doull and Athar Ali Khan complete the list.

On his association, Ponting said: "As a player, I always



looked forward to the Champions Trophy. Winning it on two occasions was a big thrill. This year, I am really looking forward to it being staged in England and being a part of the

commentary team."

"I am expecting Australia and England to make the final with Pat Cummins and Jason Roy, two guys to stand out across the two weeks. I

can't wait!" McCullum on his part stated: "Working with names like Ponting, Ganguly and Smith is going to be great fun and hopefully we can give the viewers a unique insight on the action unfolding out in the middle."

"The Champions Trophy is a special tournament which I loved playing in and I am honoured to have enjoyed success in.

Now, as a commentator, I am very much looking forward to being part of the tournament and watching the best players in the world go head to head," Sangakkara said.

"Most of the teams have a chance of lifting the trophy so it promises to be a fascinating three weeks of action," he said. ICC TV will produce live

coverage of all 15 matches, supported by production partner Sunset+Vine and equipment partner NEP Broadcast Solutions.

The eight-team tournament, which kicks off with host England playing Bangladesh at The Oval on June 1, will see a state-of-the-art coverage, which will include 34 cameras at every game, including eight ultra-motion Hawk-Eye cameras, front and reverse view stump cameras and a Spidercam.

In what is a first for cricket coverage, six Player Tracking cameras will be used in each match while the final at The Oval on June 18 will have additional pictures provided by a drone camera to supplement the broadcast coverage. AGENCIES

KXIP will regain momentum during home games: Vohra

HYDERABAD: Kings XI Punjab have lost their third match on the trot but batsman Manan Vohra feels there is no need to press the panic button just yet as the side will regain momentum during its home matches.

Vohra's 95-run knock went in vain against Sunrisers Hyderabad last night and the visitors went down by five runs in a chase of 160.

It was Punjab's third successive loss but Vohra denied that his team is under any pressure as of now.

"This is still early stage of the tournament. But we would like to get back the winning momentum once we are back to our home ground. Hopefully, by god's grace, things will happen," he said after the match. Punjab will be playing their first home game of the season in Mohali on April 28 against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Reflecting on the team's performance last night, Vohra said it was a good bowling effort to restrict Hyderabad to 160.

"...because the wicket was batting-friendly, it was slower on one side. Bowlers did their job as well as the fielders," he pointed out. "We just lost our way in between, in the early stages of the chase. I got a great opportunity to finish the game, but I could not do that. I am pretty sad about this," Vohra said in the post-match press conference. With seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar scalping five wickets, Sunrisers Hyderabad put up a superb all-round show after captain David Warner led with a 70-run knock. AGENCIES

Bengaluru strengthen grip on Group E top spot, beat Abahani 2-0

BENGALURU: Bengaluru FC took a step further in progressing from the 2017 AFC Cup, Group E as they saw the back of Abahani Limited Dhaka defeating the Bangladeshi side 2-0 at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium on Tuesday.

Nishu Kumar (40') broke the deadlock in the first half and inspired his teammates to pull another through Serbian Marjan Jugovic (82') to condemn the Sky Blue Brigade to their third successive loss in the tournament.

Last year's runners-up made four changes to the side that brushed aside Shilong Lajong in their previous game, in the I-League. Arindam Bhattacharya, Cameron Watson, Alwyn George and Marjan Jugovic were out, and in came Lalthuammawia Ralte, Lenny Rodrigues, Semir Len' Doungel and Daniel Lalhlimpia.

Abahani, on the other hand, named a side unchanged to the one that took the field against Mohun Bagan in their previous AFC Cup encounter.



Marjan Jugovic (Right) scored the second goal in the 82nd minute to hand Bengaluru FC the victory

The first real chance of the game came twelve minutes in when Len came close to heading the ball into an empty net. Juanan had played the ball into the box and the keeper Sahidul

Alam committed himself, but couldn't reach it. Len was steaming in from the right, and his diving header was just a bit too high.

In the very next minute, John Johnson had a great

chance as he rose the highest from a corner, but his header was inches high.

In the 25th minute, Abahani had a chance that should have given them the lead. A lack of communication in

defense meant that Mohammad Ziban sneaked past Salam Ranjan Singh and Juanan to go one-on-one against the keeper. But Ralte did superbly and came to close his angle down and eventually make the save.

With half an hour gone, Eugeneson Lyngdoh found Sunil Chhetri with a well-worked pass and the skipper played a one-two with Len, before playing another one-two, this time with Daniel, but the return pass was hit slightly behind him.

Ten minutes later, Bengaluru had their first goal.

Nishu Kumar, one of the best performers on the night, got on the end of Daniel's pass, and after taking a touch, smashed it past Sahidul.

Right before the end of the half, Juanan forced a double save from Sahidul who managed to keep the Bangladeshi side in the game.

The second half began sluggishly, until the hour mark, when Harmanjot Khabra had a glorious opportunity to double the lead.

He was played through by Eugeneson, and with the keeper at his mercy, he ended up hitting it straight at the keeper, spurning the chance.

Minutes later, Chhetri raced into the box and sliced a shot that had the keeper beaten, but the Abahani skipper Mamun Miah was on the goal line to hook it away superbly.

But the second goal looked inevitable and it did come in the 82nd minute via Marjan Jugovic. The Serbian was on the receiving end of Eugeneson's pass, who in turn was played in after good work by Malsawmzuala.

After a poor first touch, Jugovic eased the Bengaluru faithful's nerves with a thumping shot that hit the post, then the ground and came out. But the assistant referee's call meant that the goal stood. Bengaluru collected a well-fought three points on the night, and remain atop the group irrespective of what happens on Wednesday when Mohun Bagan face Maziya. AGENCIES

Bagan take on Maziya Sports in AFC Cup tie

MATCH PREVIEW



Glimpse of Mohun Bagan's last AFC Cup match against Abahani Limited Dhaka

KOLKATA: With an eye to the virtual title clash against Aizawl FC away in the weekend, Mohun Bagan will take on Maziya Sports and Recreation in their Group E AFC Cup tie at the Rabindra Sarovar Stadium here on Wednesday.

Bagan recorded a last-minute win over Minerva Punjab FC in their last I-League encounter to keep pace on Aizawl, who has surprised one and all this time to top the table.

With Haitian star forward Sony Norde scoring the solitary goal, the Sanjoy Sen-coached outfit are now dreaming of their second league triumph in two years' time.

The AFC Cup is a distraction for the green and maroon brigade and on Wednesday they won't be expected to field all their key players.

So far, Bagan have won one and lost the other of their matches against Abahani Limited Dhaka at home and Bengaluru FC away respectively.

Scottish striker Darryl Duffy has also been in good form for the hosts along with Japanese playmaker Yusa Katsumi.

Coming to their rivals, Maziya have been regular participants in the AFC Cup since 2013. However, the Maldivian outfit have never managed to go past the group stages.

The AFC Cup is a distraction for the green and maroon brigade and on Wednesday they won't be expected to field all their key players. So far, Bagan have won one and lost the other of their matches against Abahani Limited Dhaka at home and Bengaluru FC away respectively

Last year, Maziya were thrashed by Bagan 5-2 in Guwahati but drew 1-1 with Bagan in their own lair.

The visitors' new coach Sekulovski is keen on playing a more passing game. The team thrives on their strong backline with the new addition of Cordos.

His partner Amdan is also physically tough and good in air.

Skipper Abdulla Assadhulla will also be a player to watch out for being the top scorer in Maldives over the last three seasons. AGENCIES

Mridul Banerjee named East Bengal coach

KOLKATA: Santosh Trophy-winning Bengal coach Mridul Banerjee was on Tuesday appointed East Bengal coach less than 12 hours after Trevor Morgan stepped down following the team's I-League debacle.

The AFC-A license-holder was preferred over former Goan manager Armando Colaco, who was tipped to return to the red and gold camp on Monday evening.

"Mridul is our choice and has been appointed coach. He has been given a contract till the Federation Cup," East Bengal General Secretary Kalyan Majumdar said.

The 56-year-old recently



coached Bengal to a record 32nd title in the Santosh Trophy National Football Championship stunning Goa in Goa.

East Bengal are now third on the I-League table with 27 points from 16 fixtures, below title-contenders Aizawl FC and

Mohun Bagan.

East Bengal's hopes for the elusive I-League title went up in smoke after their 0-1 loss on April 16 to DSK Shivajians -- their fourth on the trot.

East Bengal's string of losses began with Churchill Brothers. They went on to be beaten by Chennai City FC.

The derby defeat was enough for the fans, who laid siege at the club last week demanding "Morgan go back".

The club gave Morgan a lifeline till Federation Cup but the under-fire Englishman sent the resignation letter to football secretary Santosh Bhattacharya. AGENCIES

Police arrest seven for murder of Panama midfielder

PANAMA: Seven persons have been arrested for their involvement in the murder of Panama international midfielder Amilcar Henriquez, local authorities said.

The suspects, three of whom are reportedly minors, were detained in or near the Caribbean port city of Colon, according to prosecutors on Monday, reports Xinhua news agency.

Henriquez and at least one other person were killed in a drive-by shooting on Saturday. A third person also suffered injuries, according to the police.

The prosecution statement gave no motive for the attack and are believed to have ruled out robbery as a reason.

Henriquez, who was capped 75 times for Panama, had recently rejoined his original club Arabe Unido in Panamanian football's top tier. The Pan American Football Federation (Fepafut) confirmed the death on Twitter, saying: "We deeply regret the death of our national team player Amilcar Henriquez. God receive your soul Mickey."

Panama's president, Juan Carlos Varela had condemned the incident. AGENCIES

Chelsea confirm captain Terry to leave club at season-end

LONDON: Chelsea announced on Monday that skipper and club legend John Terry will end his 22-year association with the capital football club at the end of the season after his contract expires.

Since his debut with the first team in 1998, Terry has worn Chelsea's jersey in 713 matches, in which he has scored 66 goals, reports Efe.

In a statement released on the club's website, Chelsea said: "John Terry and Chelsea Football Club jointly announce our captain will leave the club at the end of the season."

"Everybody at Stamford Bridge would like to express our enormous gratitude to John and wish him the very best of luck for the future," the club added.

Terry, who spent most of his career at the London side, said: "After 22 years there is so much to say and so many people to thank at this great football club.

"From coaches, team-mates and staff to the fans who have given me so much support down the years, I can't thank you enough. There will be opportunities for me to speak further about this over the coming weeks." Commenting on his future plans, the 36-year-old said: "I will decide on my future in due course, but for now I am committed to helping the team achieve success this season." The centre-back concluded by saying that he has always had a fantastic relationship with the club, which he said "will continue beyond my playing days".

Terry, Chelsea's most decorated player, won 14 major honours with the Blues, including one Champions League trophy, four English Premier League (EPL) titles, one Europa League, five FA Cups and three League Cups. The statement added that both the club and Terry look ahead to the possibility of him returning to hold other positions off the field.

"He is, as the famous banner reads, our captain, leader, legend, and we wish John the very best of luck in the next chapter of his magnificent career," the club said. AGENCIES

Sanchez, Ozil strike to end Arsenal away woes

MIDDLESBROUGH: Goals from Alexis Sanchez and Mesut Ozil ended Arsenal's run of four successive away defeats with a scrappy 2-1 victory over struggling Middlesbrough in their Premier League clash on Monday.

The Gunners' performance was far from convincing but will still bring some relief to their beleaguered manager Arsene Wenger.

There was a period after Alvaro Negredo scored an equaliser when Middlesbrough, who have won only four league games this season, looked capable of going on to claim their fifth scalp. Arsenal are new seven points behind fourth-placed Manchester City with a game in hand, while Middlesbrough lie six points from safety and have also played one game fewer than most of the teams above them. "It (the top four) is mathematically still alive," Wenger said. "We knew we needed to win. Now we have a little break with the FA Cup (they play Manchester City on Sunday in the semi-final) and then we come back again to the league." At least Arsenal's trip to Tees-side began far more smoothly



Arsenal's Olivier Giroud and Middlesbrough's Daniel Ayala battle for the ball during their English Premier League match

than their previous away game at Crystal Palace when they were caught in London traffic and arrived shortly before the kick-off. They reached Middlesbrough's Riverside Stadium with plenty of time to spare, yet there was still a lack of direction on the pitch as they searched for a route to goal in the opening stages. Wenger had made

the sort of selection decisions that he usually reserves for cup ties against teams from lower divisions. The French manager announced six changes from the team that lost 3-0 at Palace seven days earlier and, even more significantly, employed wing-backs alongside a defensive trio for the first time since 1997. AGENCIES

Fan dies in Argentine football violence

BUENOS AIRES: A football fan has died after being attacked by rival supporters during a match in Argentina's top division. Emanuel Balbo was taken to the Emergency Hospital in Cordoba after being beaten and pushed off the edge of a stand during the 1-1 draw between Belgrano and Talleres. He was left in a coma before being pronounced brain dead by doctors on Monday. "Club Atletico Belgrano is profoundly saddened by the death of Emanuel Balbo," Belgrano said in a statement. "This is not about giving effective speeches, but about in-depth action in the corresponding area," the club said. "That is the real and true commitment of this club. Our condolences to the family and friends. Rest in peace, Emanuel," it added. Another fan, Diego Frydman, also suffered injuries during the clashes, according to local media reports. The Argentine Football Association (AFA) offered condolences to Balbo's family and vowed to work with the police to find the attackers.

"This house rejects all these actions, which are those of criminals who deal so much damage to society as a whole

The fan, Emanuel Balbo attacked by rival supporters during a match in Argentina's top division. He was taken to the Emergency Hospital in Cordoba after being beaten and pushed off the edge of a stand during the 1-1 draw between Belgrano and Talleres

and particularly to the footballing family," AFA said in a statement. "We will offer all possible collaboration with the security services to determine those responsible for this inconceivable aggression, articulating the necessary measures to ensure that incidents such as this do not ever happen again in any Argentine football stadium." AGENCIES

'My focus in on maintaining fitness'

HYDERABAD: Newly-crowned Singapore Open champion B Sai Praneeth on Tuesday said he is focusing on maintaining his fitness level ahead of the upcoming Indonesian Open and Australian Open in June.

"I focused on my fitness and in Singapore Open I felt fitter than before. My focus in on maintaining fitness level.

As far as I know, if I am fit I could play at this level (Singapore). I am looking forward to Indonesian Open and Australian Open in June," he said.

"Obviously winning Super Series title is a big thing and I felt very happy. I am happy that I won. I was waiting for quite a long time to win a Super Series. I could make it in Singapore and I am very happy about it," Praneeth said.



B Sai Praneeth

Praneeth title-winning performance has given a big boost to his World Championship qualification which will be decided depending on the ranking list on April 27.

"It is a big tournament and I will try to perform my best," said the 24-year-old.

Praneeth burst onto the scene in 2010 after clinching a bronze at World Junior Championships and had some big

wins in his career over stars such as former World and Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat and World No.1 Lee Chong Wei.

"Beating the legends ... it always feels great," said Praneeth, who had clinched the Canada Open last year and reached the finals at Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold in January. Asked if he received any

special tips from Chief national coach Pulela Gopichand, Sai Praneeth said: "We are always focused on next tournaments. His advise for us is to concentrate on fitness and practise hard every day."

Reacting to a query, he said: "The Indian Badminton Men's singles they are in top but the lack of consistency is what we are working on and now we have good results coming in. Sameer and Ajay played finals. Srikanth also won and slowly consistency of players is increasing."

K Srikanth, who lost to Sai Praneeth in the summit clash of the Singapore Open, said: "I hope going forward there will be many more tournaments where two Indians will be (playing) in the finals. We missed Gopi sir that day." AGENCIES

Essien, Cole banned from playing in Indonesia without permits

BANDUNG: Indonesian authorities on Tuesday banned Michael Essien and Carlton Cole from playing until they get work permits after their new club did not obtain the necessary documents for the ex-English Premier League players.

The two were signed with great fanfare last month by Persib Bandung, one of the country's best clubs, in a boost for Indonesian football as it seeks to bounce back from a FIFA suspension and launch a new league.

But the government-backed Professional Sports Agency found the players did not have the required work permits.

The club admitted they had not finished processing the paperwork for the pair before they made their

debut in the country's new top-flight Liga 1 at the weekend. After calling in the players and Persib's management for questioning, immigration authorities said today the pair would not be able to play until they obtained the permits.

"Today we gave a strong warning to Persib in the form of a letter saying that as long as Persib had not completed the permits, which should be issued by the manpower ministry, we are banning Essien and Cole from playing," said Maulia Purnamawati, the immigration chief in Bandung, the city where the club is based. Persib said they would abide by the ban while working to get the permits. Joko Driyono, the secretary general of the country's

football association, said they would help the club in obtaining the documents. Persib said it had sought to process the paperwork a few days before the stars' first match on Saturday. AGENCIES

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Suryakiran Chawdhry S/o Sh. Yogendra Singh Chawdhry R/o 126, Street Jatwara, Pulmithai, Delhi-110006. I have changed my name from Suryakiran Chawdhry to Suryakiran Chawdhry for all future purposes.

Raveena seeks change in 'OUTDATED' CBFC RULES



'I can count films whose sense of humour was vulgar but there was no objection made. Now with Maatr, when we are showing the reality, objections are being raised. It is surprising,' says Maatr's leading actor

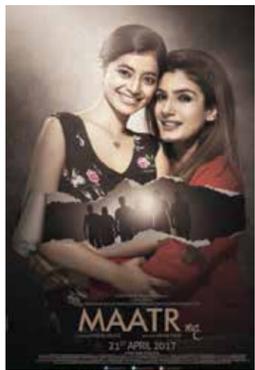
Actor Raveena Tandon whose upcoming film *Maatr* has landed in trouble with the censor board says it is bound by ancient guidelines. "CBFC is bound by certain laws that were made several years ago... Time has come for a change as we talk about progressive India. So there is a need for amendment in laws," she said.

"If we get 'A' certificate for the film then why there are so many cuts? It's like the audience would not understand what we are trying to show. It's time that we change the laws as per today's time," she said. "The plus-point is CBFC believes in (the film's) message as statistically crime against women is on the rise. 'Maatr' has a strong message and CBFC believes a film like this should be shown to people, but their hands are tied," she said. At the same time the National Award-winning actor said she failed to understand why Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) raised objections.

"I can count films whose sense of humour was vulgar but there was no objection made. Now with 'Maatr', when we are showing the reality, objections are being raised and it is surprising," she said. The film, which deals with the issue of rape, is reportedly refused certification owing to some gruesome scenes.

"As far as I know there was no objection for this (the scenes), the objection was to the language. There is a strong language in the film. We have tried to show reality in this film as we feel till the time you don't show the reality to people they will remain indifferent and the message will get lost," Raveena said.

Maatr is directed by Ashtar Sayed and features Raveena as a single mother. It is due for April 21 release, but the actor said she wasn't aware about the next move of its makers now. "Amol Palekar sir has approached the Supreme Court (over censorship) and even Shyam Bengal has submitted his report so we are hoping change will come," she said. Meanwhile, an official from the CBFC said, "They are yet to give certification to the film and they will come out with their decision soon." PTI



Actors should not endorse one skin tone over another: Sushant



MUMBAI: Reacting on the ongoing debate started by Abhay Deol over actors endorsing fairness cream, Sushant Singh Rajput said it is inappropriate to endorse such products. Recently, Abhay had criticised Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, Sonam Kapoor, Shahid Kapoor and John Abraham for featuring in campaigns that promotes and sells fairness creams.

Asked about his views on the same Sushant said, "As responsible actors, or responsible citizens we should not in anyways endorse or prefer one skin tone over another." Sushant said he feels nepotism does exist in Bollywood but he has never faced it.

"All the films that I did and will be doing in the next one and half year are the films that I really wanted to do. I had many options and I had the luxury to choose. So from personal point of view I cannot complain. "Having said that it is not like (nepotism) is not there it is

there everywhere in all sorts of industries and not just Bollywood," the actor said. Sushant added that if the industry is welcoming towards the talent from outside the Bollywood families there should not be any problem.

"Nepotism can peacefully co-exist with the fact that you also allow new talent from from outside to flourish and encourage them. But if you don't allow that (referring to giving chance to outsiders) then there is a problem. Then the whole structure of the industry will collapse."

Meanwhile, the 31-year-old actor has confirmed that his most talked about film *Paani* with Shekhar Kapoor is not happening. "We were working together on 'Paani' and unfortunately it did not get made. "The time I spent with him he not just one right way of looking or doing things. It depends on your perspective as anything could be right or wrong." PTI

Rishi Kapoor asks Kapil, Sunil to mend fences



MUMBAI: Veteran actor Rishi Kapoor has asked comedians Kapil Sharma and Sunil Grover to work together again. Rishi took to *Twitter*, where he shared that there is a look-a-like of Kapil in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

"IPL. There is a look-a-like of Kapil Sharma in the team of Sun Risers Hyderabad. Anyone finding Sunil Grover in any team? Mil jao yaaron (be together friends)!" Rishi tweeted.

Sunil was part of the hit ensemble of comedians on Kapil's popular show 'The Kapil Sharma Show', until came the news that Kapil allegedly assaulted and abused him in an inebriated state while on a flight.

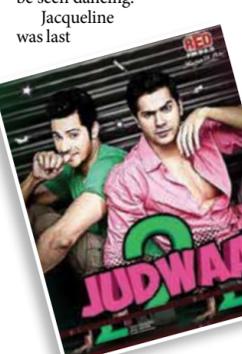
In response to Rishi, Sunil, who featured as Dr Mashoor Gulati and Rinku Bhabhi on the show, said, "Sir, I am not playing this season because I am retired, hurt. Best regards." IANS

Jacqueline trying to recreate *Judwaa* magic in *Judwaa 2*

MUMBAI: Actor Jacqueline Fernandez, who is playing Varun Dhawan's love interest in *Judwaa 2*, says that they are trying to recreate the same magic as the 1997 *Judwaa* as possible. Its 20 years down the line but we have the same director, it will be exciting," said Jacqueline, who was present at the launch of Raw Raspberry beverages where she was also made its brand ambassador.

She was responding to a query about the pressure she is feeling for *Judwaa 2*, an upcoming action-comedy film directed by David Dhawan, starring Varun Dhawan in a double role as estranged twins opposite Jacqueline and Taapsee Pannu.

"It's such a great team... The concept revolves around great cars, and robberies. It's interesting and quite glamorous and that's fun too" said Jacqueline. Anu Malik will recreate the two super hit tracks from the older movie - 'Oochi hai building' and 'Tan tana tan' on which Varun will be seen dancing. Jacqueline was last



seen in *The Flying Jatt* opposite Tiger Shroff. Other than *Judwaa 2*, her upcoming projects include *Reloaded*, *Drive* and *According to Mathew*. IANS



'Star Wars' author harassed on train: 'Terrified for my life'

LOS ANGELES: *Star Wars: The Perfect Weapon* (Short Story) writer Delilah Dawson, in a series of tweet, shared a harrowing experience she had on the Atlanta MARTA train.

Dawson said she was sharing the story to help herself process it, but also to remind her followers that "this is what women face every day," according to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

"I was riding north from the airport to the Sandy Springs station. Guy got on my car at Dunwoody station. Sat right behind me... Started with the usual harassment patter. "Hey, baby. You're looking good. I like your tattoos." So I said "Nope," got up, sat in new seat... She said the "only other people on the car were two women older than me and a



sleeping guy in his 60s" and none of them "said/did anything." "And he got up and followed me, so I got up and

backed away toward the door, hands up. "No thanks," I said. "I'm married. He got really aggressive, backing me up..."

"...The train was stopping, so I got off, hands still up. He followed, yelling, "B****, YOU WANT TO FIGHT? I DO. I'M GONNA CUT YOU. The other ladies on the train gave me apologetic looks and escaped out the other door as he followed me, repeatedly threatening to cut me."

She said a man walked up through the crowd with his teenage daughter and told the harasser to leave Dawson alone. After the harasser went up the stairs, Dawson called the police, who walked her to her car. She said she was shaking the whole way and was afraid that she would get stabbed. PTI



I always ask about the fairness of the pay: Jessica

LOS ANGELES: Jessica Chastain says before accepting any role in the film she always makes sure to ask the producers and concerned people about how much her male counterpart is getting paid for the same movie. In an interview with *Variety*, the Oscar-nominated actor spoke candidly about how she negotiates her contracts to make sure her wages are on par with her male co-star.

"I'm not taking jobs anymore where I'm getting paid a quarter of what the male co-star is being paid. I'm not allowing that in my life. What I do now, when I'm taking on a film, I always ask about the fairness of the pay."

"I ask what they're offering me in comparison to the guy. I don't care about how much I get paid; I'm in an industry where we're overcompensated for the work we do. But I don't want to be on a set where I'm doing the same work as someone else and they're getting five times what I'm getting," Chastain said.

"There was something huge that I recently turned down. For me, it wasn't about the money; it was an old-fashioned problem of the wage gap. I turned it down, and they didn't come back. I remember afterwards I was like, "What did I do? Maybe it was a mistake." But it wasn't, because everyone in the studio system heard what I did. So what you're doing is creating a reputation: Don't bring Jessica something where she's not being fairly compensated compared to the male actor. PTI

David Harbour teases about 'Stranger Things 2'



LONDON: Actor David Harbour has hinted about the arc of his character police chief Jim Hopper in the second season of 'Stranger Things'. The 42-year-old actor spoke about the upcoming installment of the science fiction-horror web series, reported *The Independent*.

Harbour described the first episode of forthcoming season as "fun and dark and complex" and added how his character has developed since the first season, while doing an Ask Me Anything on *Mogul*. In this bout, Hopper's character will now battle both his inner and outer demons.

He said, "He saved will and has found a renewed interest in life. So his arc for season two in my mind becomes more about butting up against the places where his hero fantasy can't take him."



"The places where that hero complex may force him to make the wrong decisions. It's a satisfying, completely different journey in season two." 'Stranger Things' season two airs on Netflix at Halloween later this year. PTI

James Arthur hasn't read his autobiography



LONDON: Singer James Arthur has revealed that he has not read his first autobiography, which was released shortly after he won 'The X Factor' in 2012.

The 29-year-old earlier said that he is planning to release a self-help inspired autobiography, but he says he has not read his first book, 'James Arthur, My Story: The Official X Factor Winner's Book', reports *female-first.co.uk*.

"I haven't even read that. I wouldn't want it in my Christmas stocking," Arthur told *The Sun* newspaper when asked about his first book. The 'Say you won't let go' singer revealed last month that he is planning to write a tell-all autobiography that he hopes will act as a self-help book for others.

"I want to help people to get to know my story, and really tell them in detail what I've been through. The album says a little bit about it but it doesn't really tell the full extent," he said. IANS