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AJAY OPENS MULTIPLEX IN RATLAM 10 VIVACITY



Survey charts Modi dream path

GDP pegged at 7% in Q1; concerns raised about tax receipts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

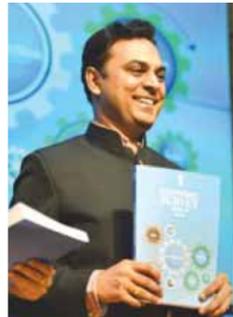
India's economic growth is set to reach 7 per cent from a five-year low of 5.8 per cent in the first three months of 2019, but concerns will remain on the fiscal front following the economic slowdown and its adverse impact on tax collections amid rising farms sector expenditure.

The pre-Budget Economic Survey presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to Parliament on Thursday said the fiscal deficit estimate for 2018-19 has been retained at 3.4 per cent of the GDP, same as projected in the interim Budget.

The country would need a huge boost in spending and reforms to accelerate higher rate of expansion to double the economy's size to \$5 trillion by 2024-25, the survey said, adding stepping up private investments, exports and job creation will be key to achieving the target.

The gross domestic product (GDP) growth is expected to rise to 7 per cent in 2019-20, it said. GDP growth was 6.8 per cent in 2018-19, down from 7.2 per cent in 2017-18.

Interestingly, the survey pointed out that since life expectancy has increased the retirement age has to go up. This could be music to the ears of the working class. "Since an increase in the retirement age is perhaps inevitable, it may be worthwhile signalling this change well in advance — per-



Chief Economic Adviser KV Subramanian during a Press conference on Economic Survey 2018-19 in New Delhi on Thursday

- Raise retirement age, merge schools as India ages fast: Eco survey
- Economic Survey suggests 'diplomatic'-type privileges for each district's top-10 taxpayers

haps a decade before the anticipated shift — so that the workforce can be prepared for it," the survey said.

"This will be key to the viability of pension systems and would also help increase female labour force participation in the older age-groups," it said.

The survey pointed out that countries such as Germany, France and the US are also hiking their retirement age. "Many countries such as Germany, the UK, and the US have signalled that they will keep increasing the retirement

Economic Survey 2018-19 Highlights

- GDP growth pegged at 7% for the fiscal 2019-20, up from 6.8% in 2018-19
- Focus on almost doubling the economy to \$5 trillion by 2024-25 through achieving an average growth rate of 8% per annum
- Growth in current fiscal to be driven by investment, consumption and simultaneous growth in demand, jobs, exports & productivity
- Private investment to be the key driver of growth, jobs, exports and demand
- Political stability augurs well for growth prospects
- 2018-19 ended with fiscal deficit at 3.4% of GDP and debt to GDP ratio of 44.5%
- Revised path envisages achieving fiscal deficit of 3% of GDP by fiscal 2020-21 and Government debt to 40% of GDP by 2024-25
- Foreign exchange reserves stand at US\$ 422.2 billion as of June 2019
- Foodgrain production to be 283.4 million tonne in 2018-19
- Need for redesigning minimum wage system for inclusive growth
- Focus to be on legal reform, policy consistency, efficient labour markets and use of technology
- Devising a national policy on resource efficiency

age according to a pre-set timeline," the survey said.

Investment rate, which was declining since 2011-12, seems to have bottomed out and is expected to pick up in consumer demand and bank lending, the survey said, adding economic slowdown impacting tax collections and rising State expenditure on farm sector may, however, put strains on the fiscal front.

India is currently the sixth-largest economy in the world with a size of \$2.7 trillion. It is expected to overtake Britain to

become the fifth-largest economy next year.

Authored by Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian, the Economic Survey said investment (especially private), is the "key driver" that boosts demand, creates capacity, increases labour productivity, introduces new technology, allows creative destruction and generates jobs.

At a media briefing, he said structural reforms such as ones in the labour sector are needed to bring in the much-need-

ed private investment. Also, micro, small and medium enterprises sector needs focus as the bulk of the job creation and growth support would come from this segment. He stressed on sticking to the fiscal consolidation path or risk crowding out investment due to large public borrowings.

The survey propagated the economics of "nudge" at the household level, judicial reforms to smoothen out enforcing of contracts, and investment reforms.

Continued on Page 4

Sea of devotees in Puri as Lords embark on Rath Yatra

CHARIOTS REACH GUNDICHA TEMPLE BEFORE SUNSET



SAROJ KUMAR MISHR ■ PURI

The atmosphere in the pilgrim town of Puri was charged with fervour and gaiety on the world-famous Rath Yatra day on Thursday as Lord Jagannath and His siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra embarked on their annual sojourn to the Gundicha Temple by riding their colourful chariots.

The three Raths which started rolling from the Shreeamandir reached the Gundicha Temple on the day and would camp for nine days there. To watch the Lords on board the three chariots rolling on the Badadanda, over half a million came to Puri from far and wide. Besides, many foreign nationals joined the celebrations.

Despite the huge crowd everywhere in the city, no untoward incident was reported with the festival passing off

smoothly.

The town had come under extensive police cover since Wednesday with installations of barricades on major crosses and marketplaces to control the crowd. No vehicle was allowed into city, with busses and other four-wheelers camping at the Malatipatpur stand. Pilgrims on foot entered the town from the roads linking to Konark, Bhubaneswar, and Satapada. For two-wheeler and three-wheelers, police had earmarked spaces outside the town, where people had to cover 2 km on foot to reach the Badadanda.

First was the turn of the Taladhvaj chariot of Lord Balabhadra, which was pulled from the Lions Gate at 2 pm and reached the Gundicha Temple at 5.30 pm, followed by the Darpadalan chariot of Devi Suwadra which reached the Gundicha temple by 6 pm. In the end, Lord Jagannath's chariot, Nandighosh, arrived at 6.45

pm before sundown.

Earlier, after completion of morning rituals, the Lords left the temple for the Lions Gate in Pahandi Bije. By 11.30 pm, entry of deities to chariots was finished. Gajapati Raja Divyasingha Dev came to the chariots on a decorated palanquin and accompanied his Cherapahara rites (sweeping with golden bloom). Jagadguru Shree Nischalananda Saraswati also offered prayer to the deities riding the chariots.

Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal viewed the festival near the Lions Gate. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who was present near the Governor, congratulated people on the occasion. Besides, Assembly Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro, Law Minister Pratap Jena and some MPs and MLAs joined the festival. DG of Police RP Sharma who was present supervised the law and order with dozens IPS officers.

Bacchus worshippers in India rise to 16 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With liquor consumption on the rise, alcohol has emerged as the most common psychoactive substance used by Indians followed by cannabis and opioids.

While over 16 crore people in the country consumed alcohol, around 3.1 crore used cannabis, and about 77 lakh people take opioids. Of them, more than 5.7 crore alcohol users, 72 lakh cannabis users, and about 77 lakh opioid users are addicted and need help.

In a calling attention motion moved in the Rajya Sabha over the use of drugs among schoolchildren, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot gave out these numbers and said the Government is also conducting a survey in 10 cities across the country to assess the pattern and profile of substance use among school and college students.

"Total sample size of schools and colleges would include 6,000 students and 2,000 college students. The report of this survey is expect-



ed to be received by November this year," he said. The study covers cities like Srinagar, Chandigarh, Lucknow and Ranchi.

Elaborating on various actions being taken by the Government to curb the drug addiction menace, Gehlot said it has prepared a National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) for 2018-2025.

As part of the NAPDDR, the Ministry is undertaking focussed intervention programmes in 127 high risk districts.

During 2018-19, the Government released Rs 112.33 crore for the programme while in the current fiscal an outlay of Rs 135 crore has been allocated, Gehlot said.

Patkura elections on July 20

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Elections to the Patkura Assembly constituency in Kendrapara district will be held on July 20 and counting of votes will be held on July 24.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) issued a notification in this regard on Thursday. With this, the model code of conduct came into force in Kendrapada district with effect from Thursday.

Notably, polling in the Patkura Assembly seat had earlier been scheduled to be held in the fourth phase of last elections on April 29. But the election was countermanded following the death of BJD candidate Bed Prakash Agrawalla on April 20.

The ECI, which notified that the Patkura election would be held on May 19, again postponed it for 60 days on Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's representation in view of the Cyclone Fani that hit the State on May 3. Now, the main electoral fight in Patkura will be between BJD candidate Sabitri, widow of Bed Prakash Agrawalla, and BJP nominee Bijay Mohapatra.

IN JAJPUR 2 die, 7 hurt as Rath touches live wire



PNS ■ JAJPUR ROAD

Two persons were electrocuted and seven others received burn injuries, two of

them critically, as a chariot made of iron came in contact with live electric wire at Kaliapani near here on Thursday.

The deceased were identified as Bichitra Lenka and Bharat Ray. All the injured were undergoing treatment at the Tata Mines Medical.

The chariot was kept ready for pulling at the Jagannath Temple near aerodrome field at Kaliapani when the mishap occurred.

Kalipani police station IIC Ramakanta Muduli rushed to the spot to take stock of the sit-

uation. But he refused to say anything about the incident. As police didn't allow anyone to visit the injured in the medical, actual number of casualties was not known.

Congress MLA held for mud attack on highway engineer

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Peeved by the "poor" condition of Mumbai-Goa highway, Congress MLA Nitesh Rane and his supporters on Thursday created a ruckus by pouring mud on Public Works Department's sub-engineer and briefly tying him to the railing of a bridge at Kankavli in Sindhudurg district.



Congress MLA Nitesh Narayan Rane and his supporters throw mud on engineer Prakash Shedekar at a bridge near Mumbai-Goa while they were inspecting the pothole-ridden highway in Kankavli on Thursday

Amid seven-hour-long drama that saw Prakash Shedekar, a sub-engineer with the PWD Department, lodge a complaint against him, Nitesh — under severe flak from various quarters — drove to the Kankavli police station along with five of his supporters and surrendered in connection with the mud slush hurling incident.

Continued on Page 4

Boy run over by chariot in Banpur

PNS ■ KHORDHA

A minor boy was crushed to death by the chariot during the Rath Yatra at the Palatana ground of Banpur in the district on Thursday.

The deceased was identified as eight-year-old Sunil Patra, nicknamed Pandya. He was a resident of Chianga village in the Banpur area.

According to sources, Sunil tripped while pulling the chariot and his head was crushed by the chariot's wheels.

He was rescued by other devotees and rushed to the nearest hospital in a critical condition, but he succumbed to his injuries.

Later, locals held a demonstration before the hospital demanding compensation for the deceased's family.

CZA to keep unruly Delhi Zoo on tight leash

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Months after the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) blamed the Centre for not acting against those responsible for various irregularities, including allegations of mismanagement in recording deaths of wild animals and their illegal procurement in Delhi Zoo, the Union Environment Ministry has transferred the latter's administrative control to the statutory authority engaged in regulating zoos across the country.

Spread over 176 acres, Delhi Zoo is the only zoo in the country to be administered directly by the Ministry — the others being under the supervision of the CZA.

Delhi Zoo from time to time had been in the news for all the wrong reasons. In January 8, 2019, in an explosive affidavit filed before the Delhi High Court, a panel led by then CZA member secretary DN Singh (who is retired now), pointed out several irregularities such as fudging of animal death data, not carrying post-mortem in case of unnatural animal death, concealing of animal deaths, and mysterious nature of deaths among others. The panel had sought action against the erring officials.

The panel was constituted in 2017 at the behest of the Ministry following above mentioned string of allegations over a prolonged period of time. Between 2016 and 2017, Delhi Zoo reportedly lost over 320 animals.

The affidavit had also alleged that no corrective action appears to have been

taken by the Environment Ministry against those responsible for irregularities observed in Delhi Zoo.

The Ministry's move to transfer the administrative con-

trol to the CZA has raised many eyebrows with the sources saying there is more than what meets the eye.

"Instead of taking action against the erring officials as

pointed out by the panel last year, the Ministry has passed the buck on the CZA. If they were really serious about the welfare of the animals of Delhi Zoo, they could have acted on the



panel's recommendations and taken action against those responsible about the mismanagement of Delhi Zoo as highlighted by the panel."

"The recent happenings in Delhi Zoo, as has come to the knowledge of the CZA, is shocking and it is not imaginable and acceptable in any zoo in the country, not to think of it in wild dream, also it should be happening in the national zoo of the country, which is identified as national centre of excellence," the CZA had said in the affidavit.

The affidavit was filed in response to a PIL moved by activist Ajay Dubey, who had sought a probe either by the CBI or any other competent agency on illegalities in Delhi Zoo pointed out by him. Acting on Dubey's complaint, the Ministry had in August 2017 constituted DN Singh-led committee to look into the matter.

The CZA submitted that the probe panel did not get the cooperation from the zoo officers and employees. Somehow, the enquiry was conducted and its findings were submitted to the Ministry in April last year, the affidavit said.

The enquiry found that monitor lizards were illegally caught (from outside) and released in the cell of the animal (inside the zoo).

"Based on the documentary evidence, it has been found that the death of many animals in the zoo was suppressed by the authorities. The dead animals have been subsequently replaced with illegally captured animals," it said.

It said eight tortoises (unidentified species) and three red sand boa snakes were missing from the zoo while the records pertaining to captive animals of the zoo have been manipulated.

Homeopathic colleges to face teachers crunch

College authorities suggest Govt to extend retirement age

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAM-BALPUR

The homeopathic colleges of the State are going to be bereft of teachers soon as a big chunk of them is on the verge of retirement.

But the State Government and the State Health Department in particular seem to be not very serious on the matter.

In view of the Government's failure to make

regular appointments, the college authorities have suggested to enhance the retirement age of the teachers so that there could be some solution for the time being.

They have given a clear picture to the State Government that there are 144 sanctioned strength of teachers in all ranks including principals, professors, readers and lecturers in all four Government homeopathic colleges of the State. But surprisingly enough, 116 posts

are lying vacant and only 28 persons are there who are also going to retire soon, adding to the problem.

"If the retirement age of the existing staff could be extended by five years i.e. to 65, then the present crisis could be solved to some extent," they wrote to the State Government in their request letter.

They have also cited the example of other States of the country where the retirement age of homeopathic teachers

They have given a clear picture to the State Government that there are 144 sanctioned strength of teachers in all ranks including principals, professors, readers and lecturers in all four Government homeopathic colleges of the State

If the retirement age of the existing staff could be extended by five years i.e. to 65, then the present crisis could be solved to some extent," they wrote to the State Government in their request letter

is 65 where as it is 60 in Odisha.

"Since the CCH has warned the homeopathic colleges of the State to derecognize them due to the shortage of

staff and also there is no possibility of recruitments in near future, enhancement of the retirement age of the existing teachers could help solve the problem," they suggested to the

Government.

The Government Homeopathic College Teachers' Association has meanwhile enclosed a letter to the Government of India where in it has categorically recommended not to take fresh admission in BHMS courses for the academic year 2019-20 for the Sambalpur Government Homeopathic College that is sure to create student unrest as well as public resentment.

INBRIEF

AMAR, SASMIT SWORN IN RS MEMBER



Bhubaneswar: Amar Patnaik and Sasmit Patra took oath as BJD Rajya Sabha members in New Delhi on Thursday. They were administered oath by Rajya Sabha Chairman and Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu. Earlier, BJD-supported BJP candidate Ashwini Vaishnav had been sworn in as a member of Rajya Sabha from Odisha.

COUNSELLING FOR NEWCOMERS AT ST XAVIER SCHOOL



Bhubaneswar: The St Xavier International School here organised a counselling programme for the newcomers of Class-XI on Wednesday under the chairmanship of school Principal Dr Gayatri Mishra. School managing committee chairman Dr Aryakumar Jnanendra, St Xavier Charitable Trust chairman and school's founder Dr Badrinath Patnaik attended as guests and interacted with the students. Among others, trust vice-chairman Dr Nibedita Patanikand teachers Pravat Mishra and Farjana Rehman were present.

TATA STEEL K'NAGAR JOINS WEF LIGHTHOUSE NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The Tata Steel Kalinganagar (TSK) has been included in the list of the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Lighthouse Network, a community of manufacturers which is applying Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies to drive financial and operational impacts. The TSK is the only Indian manufacturing plant to have the feat. The factories join a network of 16 existing lighthouses and serve as beacons to guide others to overcome challenges in upgrading systems and applying cutting-edge technologies. Company CEO and MD TV Ndrean expressed happiness over the achievement.

SC verdicts now to be available in Odia

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Supreme Court judgements written in English will be first uploaded on its website and the translated versions in at least six regional languages, including Odia, will be made available on its website a week later.

The initiative came after President Ram Nath Kovind had highlighted the idea at a conference in saying that there is a need for translation of the court judgements in regional languages for the non-English speakers and to be made available by the High Courts.

According to reports, the apex court judgements will be translated into six regional languages such as Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Assamese and Odia.

For this purpose, Chief

Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi reportedly has cleared a software indigenously developed by the Supreme Court's electronic software wing.

"It is important to not only take justice to the people, but also to make it understandable to litigating parties in a language they know. High Courts deliver judgements in English, but we are a country of diverse languages. The litigant may not be conversant with English and the finer points of judgement may escape him or her. The litigating parties will thus be dependent on a lawyer or another person to translate the judgement. This can add to time and cost," the President had said at the valedictory function of the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of High Court of Kerala in October 2017.

No toll exemption at Pipili for Rath Yatra

PURI: Contrary to an earlier announcement of no collection of toll at Pipili along NH-316 on the Rath Yatra, Bahuda Yatra and Sunabesha, now there will be no exemption of toll during these three days.

Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Chief Administrator Pradipta Mohapatra had earlier said about exemption of toll, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) now in a letter to Mohapatra has overruled his decision.

The NHAI in its communication has stated that the SJTA declared about the toll exemption without consent of competent authority of NHAI. The NHAI letter said, "In toll fee rules, there is no such provision for providing free access to commuters on such occasions.

The toll plaza at Pipili is being operated by a private contractor through competitive bidding and the toll operator is required to deposit the full quoted amount irrespective of traffic volume."

PNS

Naveen visits Puri on Rath Yatra



PURI: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Thursday visited the holy town to have a darshan of the Lords on the auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra.

Patnaik reached the Grand Road here amidst tight security cover and was welcomed by officials and sevayats to the office of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), where he released some books befitting to the occasion. Later, he distributed Tanka Torani (a liquid

made out of Mahaprasad) to devotees. Besides the Chief Minister, many other politicians also visited the town to have darshan of the deities who were set on their annual sojourn to the Gundicha Temple. Earlier on June 29, Patnaik had reviewed the Rath Yatra preparedness meeting and urged both the people and temple sevayats for proper coordination and cooperation during the grand event to make it a success.

PNS

'Hike ASHA, Anganwadi workers' pay'



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJD Aska MP Pramila Bisoyi on Thursday raised the issue of women empowerment in the Lok Sabha and demanded a hike in the remunerations

of ASHA and Anganwadi workers.

Bisoyi, who spoke in the House during the Zero Hour, said, "In September 2018, the Central Government had increased the remunerations

Pramila Bisoyi demands in LS

ASHA and Anganwadi workers to ₹4,500 per month, which is not enough.

Women working at the grassroots level of the society should get respect. I demand a hike in the remunerations of ASHA and Anganwadi workers to ₹15,000 per month and of Anganwadi helpers to ₹12,000 per month."

She ended her speech saying, "I wish everyone on the occasion of Rath Yatra. Jai Jagannath. Jai Odisha." Before she spoke, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had praised Bisoyi for her role in leading self-help groups (SHGs) in her constituency prior to her election as an MP.



Lord Jagannath is being taken out of the temple of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Bhubaneswar for the Rath Yatra on Thursday

BEd teachers demand security

Condemn Niali incident; threaten to hold stir

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State BEd Sikshya Sahayak Sangha has strongly condemned the recent brutal attack on Suchismita Muduli, a woman teacher of the Ambapada Primary School in Niali block of Cuttack district.

The Sangha while terming the incident as highly unfortunate blamed the Government's indifferent attitude towards the teachers being targeted by miscreants.

In more than 90 per cent of the schools, there are no boundary walls and gates, due to which antisocial elements are barging into classrooms during school hours and harassing and abusing teachers.

The teachers are feeling insecure in the schools. At night, feasts are being held by antisocial elements in the school premises with liquor and meat being consumed, the Sangha said.

Taking these into consideration, the Government must immediately take measures to construct boundary walls so that both teachers and students would feel safe and proper academic atmosphere would be maintained, the teachers' body stated.

The Sangha demanded a high-level probe into the Niali incident and stringent punishment to the accused involved in the attack. It also demanded

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Taking these into consideration, the Government must immediately take measures to construct boundary walls so that both teachers and students would feel safe and proper academic atmosphere would be maintained, the teachers' body stated

compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the victim.

The teachers' association also demanded that the Government pay salaries in time and regularise the jobs of the Sikshya Sahayaks, who have completed six years of their contract.

Otherwise, the teachers would be forced to take to the streets, said Sangha vice-president Saroj Kumar Panda.

'Set up steel plant in Keonjhar'

Chandrani places demand in Parliament



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

BJD Keonjhar MP Chandrani Murmu on Thursday urged the Union Government to set up a mega steel plant in her constituency.

Before raising the issue in the Parliament, Murmu, a first-time and the youngest among all MPs in the 17th Lok Sabha, greeted all the members on the occasion the Rath Yatra.

Making an argument in favour of her demand, Murmu said, "My constituency is enriched with various natural resources and iron ore is being

supplied from there to different parts of the country and abroad.

However, people, most of whom are tribals, are migrating to distant places in and outside the State in search of work."

She further claimed that Keonjhar fulfills all criteria, including availability of raw material, for setting up of a steel plant. "I want that the Centre establishes a mega steel plant in Keonjhar like one in Rourkela in order to provide jobs to local youths and for development of the region as well."

B'pur artist makes smallest Nandighos

Made up of wood, miniature chariot's height is 2.5 inch, width 2 inch

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Artist Satya Moharana of Brahmapur has created record with his miniature Nandighos (Lord Jagannath's) chariot, which is the smallest in the world, for the Rath Yatra.

Already having got an entry into the India Book of Records and International Book of Records for the artistic creation, Moharana claims that he would achieve more recognition for the piece of work.

According to sources, the miniature chariot is a lookalike of the Nandighosa Rath of Lord Jagannath as it maintains all artistic features of the latter. The chariot has two parrots



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and Dadhinauti atop and there are four horses in front of it. It has also 16 wheels.

But the interesting point is its size. While it is made up of teak and Gambhari

wood, its height is 2.5 inch and width, 2 inch.

The height of the Sarathi is 1.5 inch, while Lord Jagannath's height is 1 inch. Curiously, the weight of the whole chariot is just 8 gram.

Moharana worked tirelessly for four days to make the tiny chariot.

Rath Yatra celebrated at Shrivani Kshetra

Devadalan Rath pulled only by women

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Rath Yatra was celebrated amid religious fervour and gaiety at the Shrivani Kshetra of KISS here on Thursday.

More than 50,000 devotees participated in pulling of the three decorated chariots of Lord Jagannath, Lord



Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra. The wooden chariots were festooned with flowers, appliqué and mural paintings.

The Pahandi of deities were conducted after rituals like Mangala Arati, Mailama, Tadapalagi, Rosha Homa, Abakasha, Surya Puja and chariots inauguration.

The rituals were conducted as per the ethics and rituals of the Shree Jagannath Temple Puri.

KIIT and KISS founder

Dr Achyuta Samanta performed the holy ritual of Chherapahanra, the ceremonial sweeping of the Chariots. The special feature of Ghosayatra here is that, Devadalan, the chariot of Goddess Subhadra is pulled only by women.

A colourful atmosphere was also created during the festival as many temporary stalls, food stalls, minabazaar, etc., were put up near the Gundicha temple. Bhajan samaroh will be organised in every evening.

This chariot covers longest route of 11 km

Takes 5 days to reach destination

PNS ■ JAJPUR
Here this chariot covers the longest route of 11 km during the Rath Yatra. Also it takes five days to cover the distance. Flagged off by the chief priest of the temple Upendra Ojha on Thursday afternoon amidst chanting of hymns, the Rath from Chhatia rolled on for its destination at Badaghumari in Jajpur district. The chariot halted at many places and large numbers of devotees worshipped Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra on the roadsides. Earlier, the authority had denied us the permission to cover such a long distance due to bad con-



dition of road. But in 1999, the permission was obtained," said temple Managing Committee president Upendra Ojha. A huge crowd thronged the temple and then joined the procession as it began its journey under the watchful gaze of police personnel who had spread out through the journey routes including the National Highway 5. "The villagers and the Managing Committee members of the temple cleaned the designated roads for the smooth journey of the chariot. In the past, chariot used to stick at some

places due to poor condition of the road. But thanks to the good PMGSY roads now, chariot rolling has been smooth," said the Sarpanch of Chhatia Gram Panchayat. Meanwhile, the people here believe that Lord Jagannath from Puri will come to the temple at Chhatia at some time and will be worshipped from here. "As per the tradition of the temple, every day the priests and devotees of the temple do some kinds of construction works for the arrival of the deities from Puri," said noted social worker Srinibash Jena. "We repair the doors, windows and do small construction works in the temple as these works will only stop after the arrival of the Lord Jagannath from Puri to this temple," said Padmalava Das, a priest of the temple.

Prez, PM, CM wish people on Rath Yatra

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik greeted people on the auspicious occasion of the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath and his siblings. "Greetings and good wishes to fellow citizens on the auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra. May the blessings of Lord Jagannath bring peace, happiness and prosperity to everyone's lives," the President tweeted. In a message, Vice President Naidu said that Lord Jagannath is considered to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and the Rath Yatra of Odisha, depicting the annual journey of Lord Jagannath, witnesses the coming together of the entire community in celebration of the grace and divinity of Lord Jagannath. The splendour and grandeur of the Rath Yatra is truly unparalleled, he added. May the pious and noble ideals associated with Rath Yatra enrich our lives with peace and harmony, he wished. Similarly, PM Modi sought blessings of Lord Jagannath for good health, happiness and prosperity of people. "Best wishes to everyone on the special occasion of the Rath Yatra. We pray to Lord Jagannath and seek his blessings for the good health, happiness and prosperity of everyone. Jai Jagannath," he tweeted. Taking to the micro blogging site, Chief Minister Patnaik sought blessings of the deities for happiness and prosperity of people.

Rath Yatra held across Brahmapur Subhadra chariot pulled only by women

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR
The Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath and His siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra, was celebrated amid religious fervour at different places across the city on Thursday. Thousands of devotees thronged different temple sites and pulled chariots carrying the trinity to their Mausi Maa houses. Earlier, the deities were brought to Rath in Dhadi Pahandis amid chanting of Mantras and beating of drums and ghantas. After the lords were seated, Chherapahnara (sweeping ritual) was conducted on Raths. The car festival held at the Gosaninugaon Jagannath Temple witnessed huge numbers of devotees. Local MLA Bikram Panda, former MLA Dr Ramesh Chandra Chyaupatnaik, SP Pinak Mishra,



BDA Chairman Subash Moharana, Panchanan Choudhury and Patita Paban Choudhury were present. Devi Subhadra's Rath was pulled by women only. The festival was also observed at Bijipur Jatannath, Pateleswar Temple, Brahmanagar Temple, Mukteswar Temple, Bada Jagannath Temple and Sano Jagannath Temple at Big Bazaar, Kamapalli Gowlundi Jagannath Mandir, Ganjam Kala Parishad Raod Jagannath Mandir. District Collector Amrit Kulangi conducted Chherapahnara on the Raths at Alirigarh Jagannath Temple.

Rath Yatra celebrated in Paralakhemundi

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI
The auspicious Rath Yatra was celebrated with much religious fervour here on Thursday with thousands of devotees experiencing the holy moments. According to tradition, the priests mounted the deities on their respective chariots performing the rites of Pahandi and Chherapanhara, following which the chariots were pulled to the Mausi Maa temple. The chariot of Lord Balabhadra was ahead of those of Lord Jagannath and their sister Devi Subhadra. The district administration made elaborate security arrangements by deploying 11 platoons of police. District Collector Anupam Saha and SP Sara Sharma, SDPO Thakur Pratap Patra, other district officials and members of the Rath Yatra managing committee were present.



Rath Yatra passes off smooth in JSpur

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR
The annual Rath Yatra festival was observed with much fanfare in several places of Jagatsinghpur district on Thursday. In a unique gesture of communal harmony, people of all religious communities participated in the yatra at Paradip Port town by pulling chariot on Thursday. "God is one and one has the liberty to follow any religion of his choice. But some people with vested interests sow seeds of hatred," said Paradip Jagannath temple management trusty Baistamba Mohanty, while speaking on the unique cultural harmony in the port town. District Collector SK Mohapatra attended the Siddhal Rath Yatra and performed the sweeping ritual. Nearly, 10,000 devotees from surrounding villages had congregated at the place and chariot pulling was late due to rains in evening. A t women and adolescent girls from localities. Local gentleman Kedar Nath Biswal performed the ritualistic sweeping. In coastal Erasama block, the Rath Yatra was held at the Sarabanta Jagannath Temple in Gadaharishpur gram panchayat (GP), where a huge crowd had turned up to participate in the fest. At Paradip, PPT Chairman Rinkesh Ray performed the sweeping rituals where chariot pulling started after 4 pm. The most glittering Rath Yatra was observed at Kunjabihari Temple in Gadakujanga GP near Kujanga on Saturday, where the chariot is pulled a day after. On the day of the Rath Yatra, all rituals are performed but the deities take rest in the chariot till the next day. As per the tradition, the sweeping act was performed by Paradip MLA Sambit Routray Rout.



Rath Yatra celebrated in Pallahara

PNS ■ PALLAHARA
The Rath Yatra was celebrated with fervour and gaiety in Pallahara on Thursday. As per traditions, the priests mounted the deities on their respective chariots after performing the rituals of Pahandi and Chherapanhara. Later, devotees pulled the chariots to the Mausi Maa temple. The district administration made elaborate security arrangements for the event. SDPO Jasobanta Samal, Pallahara Sub-District Assistant Executive Engineer Akshya Sahu and other officials were present.



INBRIEF

'NABEEN' HOLDS LITTERATEUR PROG ON 90TH ANNIV
Brahmapur: Odia weekly 'Nabeen' celebrated its 90th anniversary here recently and organised a litterateur programme under chairmanship of its working president Dr Srinivas Dalei. Prof PC Sahu, Dr Kailash Dash attended as guests and inaugurated the programme. Among others, Nabeen library general secretary Dr Chandramani Sahu, poet Chinmay Ranjan Mishra, Soudamini Mishra, Kapil Chandra Mohanty and Sushant Kar were present.

JSPL POSTS RECORD PRODUCTION OF HOT METAL
Bhubaneswar: The Jindal Steel and Power Ltd. (JSPL) produced its highest-ever hot metal production of 10,845 metric tonnes in a single day at its Angul plant on Tuesday. This is the highest-ever production by any of the blast furnaces in India, said a company statement. The furnace is stable for the last one week and has continuously produced more than 10,000 metric tonnes per day, the statement added.

JUHI NOW MADHUKUNJ AGARVATI BRAND AMBASSADOR
Bhubaneswar: Noted Bollywood actress Juhi Chawla has become brand ambassador of the Shree Balaji Agarvati, producer of premium brand "Madhukunj" incense sticks. An agreement has been signed between Chawla and company directors Sajjan Agrawal and Ram Avatar Agrawal. Chawla, who was felicitated on the occasion, express happiness for being appointed as brand ambassador of the company, which is celebrating 25th Year completion.

2 women thieves arrested in Gunupur Gold, silver jewellery seized

PNS ■ RAYAGADA
The Gunupur police of Rayagada district on Thursday busted a theft racket and arrested two women near the railway station here and produced them before court. The police also seized 31 grams of gold jewellery and over 30 grams of silver ornaments from their possession. According to reports, the two women used to visit door to door to sell various products and steal valuable items from many houses taking advantage of the absence of inmates. A loot complaint had recently been filed at the Gunupur police station by one G Giribabu of Jagannathpur, following which police had begun an inquiry into the incident. On Thursday, acting on a tipoff, a police team conducted a raid and nabbed the two women near the railway station area, said Gunupur SDPO RK Das.

Rath Yatra held at Tulashi Kshetra



PNS ■ KENDRAPADA
The famous Rath Yatra of Lord Baladevjeev at Tulashi Kshetra of Kendrapada was celebrated amid religious fervour and gaiety on Thursday. Thousands of devotees from Kendrapada and adjoining districts participated in the festival. After completion of Mangalarati, Abakash, Sakaladhwa rituals, the Pahandi bije of three deities was conducted and they were seated in the chariot called "Brahma Taladhwa Rajath". After the Chherapanhara conducted by the Raj Purohit, devotees pulled the chariot, which halted at the Endowment office for the day. The Rath will be pulled to Mausimaa temple on Friday. The Ratha Yatra has been observed in the Tulashi Kshetra for more than 300 years. The temple was constructed in 1670 by the king of Kujang. Tight security arrangements were made to ensure the safety during the Ratha yatra. District Collector Samartha Verma and other senior officials monitored the Rath Yatra. The Rath Yatra was held at Righagada in a unique way with painting of three chariots in muruja. The Ratha Yatra was observed amid brotherhood at Keredagada in the Rajnagar area where people belonging to all castes, including Dalits, participated. Similarly, the Car Festival was organised at Harihara Khetra in Mahala, Banabiharjew Temple at Pentha, Dadhibabanjew temple at Choudakulat's Tamalasan, Jagannath temple at Amrutamanohi and Jagannathpur under the Pattamundi police station. The Rath at Kakatpur under Mahakalapada block was pulled with chains instead of coir ropes. It is an exception here.

Tension at Joda as locals shut mines' gate Demand jobs

PNS ■ CHAMPUA
The locals sat in dharna and closed the main entry gate of the Joda East Iron Mines of Tata Steel on Thursday. Sources revealed that there is a continuous row between the local tribal people of Joda Basti under Joda Municipality and the company over the issue of employment and encroachment of graveyard etc. Their specific demand is that Tata Company has built township by acquiring their land and a camp for the company's security personnel has been built by encroaching the ground meant for graveyard.



Besides, the locals alleged they are a victim of dust pollution and related problems. They said in spite of this, they have been extending their support to the company at the time of public hearing for expansion, but when it comes to employment, outsiders are appointed, ignoring the local candidates. Around 100 locals held the dharana and threatened to continue it till their demands are fulfilled. Tehsildar, Barbil, Khirod Kumar Behera rushed to the spot to control the situation. However, after his intervention in the matter, the strike was deferred to August 6 and it was agreed that till that time, the company will settle the dispute with the affected people.

Nonprofessionals practising architecture on rise

ULBs asked to verify certificates before accepting designs, plans
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
With complaints of nonprofessionals practising architecture gathering at the Council of Architecture (CoA), the State Governments have been advised to take appropriate steps to remain away from such entities and take action against them. CoA Registrar Secretary RK Oberai has written to the Government in this regard. The council continues to receive complaints about non-architects practising architectural works with fake certificates. The Council of Architecture, which is an autonomous body of the Union Government under the Architect Act, 1972, is the only authorised body to issue Certificate of Registration to each and every registered architect, an official said. The CoA has advised the State Government to direct all ULBs to verify validity of registrations of the architects before accepting any drawings, plans submitted by them for approval of the ULBs concerned. Oberai informed that the validity of certificates can be verified from the website www.coa.gov.in on the tab "Verify Your Architect" or through mail on the email ID-renewal-coa@gov.in.

IN UMARKOTE

No end to stray cattle menace

Civic body callous

PNS ■ UMARKOTE

The municipal authorities failed to check the menace of stray cattle on roads, leading to regular traffic jams, especially during peak hours here. As if unauthorised encroachment of pedestrian walkways was not enough, the presence of stray cattle on the roads often poses a problem for commuters as there is hardly any road here that is free of stray cattle. The problem gets compounded during the rainy season as the roads become slippery because of filth caused by the cattle. As there is no service



Stringent action against the cattle owners who leave their cattle to move freely on public roads is also often demanded, but the municipal authority never gives any heed," alleged Muna Padhy, a denizen of Bhaluguda

in place to catch the cattle, there seems to be no end to the woes of the commuters.

"There are frequent complaints of locals getting injured in attacks by bulls. Stringent action against the cattle owners who leave their cattle to move freely on public roads is also often demanded, but the municipal authority never gives any heed," alleged Muna Padhy, a denizen of Bhaluguda.

ILL-TREATING LAWYER IN B'PUR

Body urges SP for action against accused

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

The incident of a political activist misbehaving with lawyer Kedar Rout in the court premises on Tuesday has been strongly decried by the lawyers' fraternity here.

Members of the Ganjam Lawyers' Association on Wednesday met and urged SP Pinak Mishra to take strong action against the accused, Ramnath Panigrahi, at the earliest. Panigrahi, who had a quarrel with Rout in his village Karida on June 29, later came to the court and threatened to implicate him in a false case on

July 2, the lawyers informed the SP. They informed the SP that though Rout went to lodge a complaint at the Jorada police station, it was not accepted. In response, the SP assured that the Additional SP would conduct an investigation soon into their allegation and action would be taken accordingly.

Among others, association joint secretary Kiran Mandal, former president Mohan Singari, Pramod Panda, Pitabas Panda, Chiranjit Rajguru, Pradip Behera, Karunakar Panigrahi, Tara Prasad Patro and P Subash Patro were present.

9-day A'garh Bhajana Samaroh begins

Bhajana Amruta team led by Sricharan and Khushi performed Bhajan Sandhya

PNS ■ ATHAGARH

The Shree Jagannath Sevasanstha began organising a nine-day 38th Shreegundicha Bhajan Samaroh at Gundichabari (old bus-stand) here from the Rath Yatra day on Thursday.

In the evening of the festival, after the chariots pulled up to the Gundicha temple, the organisers distributed Adharpana among the devotees followed by free Anandabazar in the premises of Mausimaa temple. A Bhajana Amruta team led by Sricharan and Khushi performed Bhajan Sandhya.

On Friday, the Jay Matadi Bhajana Sandhya group will take the stage. On Saturday, Malika prabachana will be delivered by Pramod Kumar, while on Sunday Omm Sri Bhajan Sandhya group will sing Jagannath Bhajan.

On Monday, Bhajan Panchasakha will perform a programme while on Tuesday and Wednesday prabachana programme by Pandit Charan Kasinath Das is scheduled.

The Bhaktinaibedy group sang Jagannath Bhajan on Thursday while the Saisarthak group would hold its similar performance on Friday, said secretary of Shree Jagannath Sevasanstha Parthasarathi Pattnaik.

GST Day: Meet held in Rourkela

PNS ■ ROURKELA

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Day was observed jointly by the Central GST Commissionerate and State Tax authorities here on Monday. Rourkela Joint Commissioner of Central Tax Debjyoti Chakravarty presided over the programme.

Deputy Commissioner Pratap Panigrahi, Sehati Dandana, Chitrasen Dehuri, Rourkela Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Praveen Garg, General Secretary Rajesh Garg

and former General Secretary Alok Losalka attended and spoke about various aspects of GST since its implementation on July 1, 2017.

Rourkela Tax Bar Association president KK Panda and former president PK Prusty also spoke on good and bad aspects of GST.

Among others, Assistant Commissioner Debasis Kar, Pawan Kumar Meena, Debotos Chhaterjee, Udaya Sankar Singh, Superintendents Dharambir Kumar, Rajendra Toppo and Saroj Kant were present.

Vedanta launches anti-malaria drive

PNS ■ LANJIGARH

The Vedanta Lanjigarh kick starts 'Malaria Control Programme' to commemorate the National Doctor's Day here which would focus on the six core panchayats, namely Lanjigarh, Basantpada, Jagannathpur, Chhatrapur, Champadeipur and Balerlima including 15 schools.

During the programme awareness sessions, drawing, writing and essay competitions in schools as well as cleanliness drives in villages would be conducted.

On the day, the company organised various activities for the medical fraternity and saw participation of over 20 doctors from Kalahandi and Rayagada districts.

Rayagada District Malaria Officer Dr BL Prusty and Kalahandi District Malaria Officer Dr Nihar Kumar Panda



inaugurated the programme aimed to reduce malaria from six panchayats of Lanjigarh

block in the coming months. Vedanta Aluminium, Lanjigarh unit COO Rakesh

Mohan said the company seeks to drive the importance of health and sanitation across the

region and is committed to the fight against malaria and other seasonal ailments.

MICE road-show held at Swosti

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Recognising the potential of Odisha as a MICE destination in view of the excellent infrastructure available in cities like Bhubaneswar, the India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) with the support of Swosti Group organised a MICE Road-Show here on Wednesday.

The road-show was preceded by a visit to Chilika Lake on July 2 to showcase the MICE facilities at the Swosti Chilika Resort.

As many as 10 meeting planners from different cities including Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati, representing associations and corporate attended the event to meet the ICPB members.



Road-show included B2B meetings, presentation by ICPB, Tourism Department and Swosti Group

The Road-show included B2B meetings, presentation by ICPB, Tourism Department and Swosti Group. The event brought the buyers and sellers of the industry on a common platform to discuss MICE business opportunities, more options of venues, services of professional organisers to stimulate a more rapid growth of the industry.

Absconding murderer held in Baleswar

Had crushed uncle under wheels of dumper over property dispute

PNS ■ BALESWAR

The Baleswar police arrested an accused who was absconding after killing his uncle by driving a dumper on him over property dispute and forwarded him to court.

The accused, Ghanashyam Das (40), was apprehended from Baleswar bus stand after tracking his mobile phone, said Jaleswar SDPO Sudarshan Dash.

The deceased Sashikanta

Das (62) of Dahunda village under Bhogra block, a retired school peon, was returning to his home in a bicycle when he was hit by a dumper driven by Ghanashyam from rear resulting in his death.

The family members as well as the villagers alleging that it was a planned murder, had ransacked and torched properties and vehicles of Ghanashyam. They had demanded that the accused be immediately arrested.

Survey Charts...

From Page 1

It put the fiscal deficit for 2018-19 at 3.4 per cent, but analysts expected a short-term realignment of the fiscal consolidation map with the deficit targets being marginally raised for the current fiscal in the Union Budget for 2019-20 to be presented by Sitharaman on Friday.

While the survey has retained the fiscal deficit estimate for 2018-19 at 3.4 per cent, the general fiscal deficit - Centre and States combined -- has been pegged at 5.8 per cent in 2018-19, down from 6.4 per cent in the previous fiscal.

Former Finance Minister P Chidambaram said the Government appears to be pessimistic about the economy as there are no sector-wise growth projections. "It appears to me that the Government, speaking through the economic survey, is pessimistic about the economy," he said in a statement.

"The economic survey flags (1) slowing growth, (2) shortfall in revenue, (3) finding resources without compromising the fiscal deficit target, (4) impact of oil prices on the current account and (5) recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission on Central Government finances. I am afraid, none of these is positive or encouraging," he said.

The expansion in the economy will be driven by investment and consumption, with political stability auguring well for the growth prospects, it said adding that the upside and downside risks to growth are evenly balanced with monsoon rainfall seen tipping the scales.

But for India to become a USD 5 trillion economy (more than double the current size) by 2024-25, it needs to sustain a real GDP growth rate of 8 per cent, which international experience suggests is possible only through a sustained "virtuous cycle" of savings, investment and exports.

"The political stability in the country should push the animal spirits of the economy, while the higher capacity utilisation and an uptick in business expectations should increase investment activity in 2019-20," the survey said.

It said oil prices will decline in current fiscal, pushing consumption. Consumption accounts for about 60 per cent of the GDP. "However, downside risks to consumption remain.

Congress MLA held...

From Page 1

Having booked him and 40 to 50 of his supporters under Sections 353, 342, 332, 324, 323, 120(A), 147, 143, 504, 506 of IPC, the Kankavli police on Thursday evening placed Nitesh and five of his supporters under arrest. They will be produced before a court on Friday morning.

Nitesh, known for politics of arrogance and intimidation, is the son former Chief Minister and the founder-president of Maharashtra Swabhiman Party (MSP) Narayan Rane.

Reacting to the incident, Sr Rane disapproved his son Nitesh's act and said: "My son has done a wrong thing. I have apologised on his behalf. He has to also apologise. Let's face it, the actual act has been committed by Nitesh's supporters. But, as a leader of the agitation,

Nitesh has to own up his mistake. At the same time, cannot the officials see the potholes on the highway?"

Trouble broke out earlier in the afternoon, when Nitesh accompanied by Kankavli Municipal Council president and activists of the NDA-affiliated MSP drove down to the stretch of a bridge on the Gad River near Kankavli, to inspect the road repairs being carried out by the PWD officials on a stretch of the bridge.

Nitesh and his supporters questioned sub-engineer, Prakash Shedekar about the bad condition of the roads and told the latter that the people had to routinely potholed highway with mud slush.

"People are bearing brunt of the poor condition of the road every day. Now, it is your turn to experience it..." an angry Nitesh told Shedekar.

Light rain breaks 16-day dry spell in Capital

Monsoon likely in 2-3 days; shower drenches NCR; humidity soars

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Light rain broke a 16-day dry spell in the national Capital on Thursday with monsoon likely to make onset in the city on Sunday, officials in India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

IMD chief KJ Ramesh said, "We expect monsoon to come to Delhi in the next two-three days, around Sunday."

Various parts of the city witnessed short spells of rain of varying intensity which led to a marginal dip in the mercury, but pushed the humidity level up to 85 per cent.

With the monsoon expected to reach the national Capital this weekend, rain is expected over the next two days thanks to moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal, weather officials said.

The weather stations at Ayanagar, Palam and Jafarpur gauged rainfall at 17 mm, 5.8 mm and 5 mm.

The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides official figures for the city, recorded 0.4 mm of precipitation, according to the IMD data.

The city recorded a high of 38.6 and a low of 31.2 degrees Celsius. Humidity oscillated between 52 and 85 per cent.

It's the first spell of rain in Delhi since June 17, Mahesh Palwat of Skymet Weather, a



private weather forecaster, said. In June, the national Capital recorded just 11.4 mm of rainfall against the 30-year average of around 55 mm, Kuldeep Srivastava, senior scientist at IMD, said.

Rainfall in July will be marginally lower than the normal. Overall, it will be a normal monsoon. Normally, 60 cm of rain is recorded from June 1 to September 30 in Delhi, he said.

Gurgaon, Faridabad and Noida received good rainfall on Thursday. Conditions are favourable for monsoon to make an onset in the national capital in the next 48 hours, Palawat said.

Intermittent light rain is expected till July 10. Heavy showers are likely after that, he said.

Palawat said the onset of monsoon at a particular place in north India is determined by strong easterly winds, high humidity and good rainfall in neighbouring areas.

NOTICE

On 25-05-2019, I lost my important documents like sale deed of my property (Khatiyani Number - 187/25 and Plot Number - 763/1), Aadhar card, Pancard and other important documents, while going from my village to Fategarh by bike. I made a F.I.R at Fategarh police station via SDE NO - 5 on 30-05-2019. Recently, I planned to construct building on Plot Number - 763/1, Khatiyani Number - 0187/25 in Udayapur village by mortgaging the said property at UCO Bank, Khandapada Branch. If anyone have any objection regarding to the title on said property, then contact directly to UCO Bank Khandapada branch within 15 days.

Sd/-
Baikuntha Parida,
Near Jagannath Temple, At - Udayapur, P.O. - Jadunathpur
Via - Khandapada, Dist. - Nayagarh,
Odisha - 752077

LS passes Aadhaar Amendment Bill

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Aadhaar amendment Bill allowing voluntary use of Aadhaar as proof of identity for opening bank accounts and procuring mobile phones, with strong objections from Opposition parties accusing this will lead to breach of privacy.

The Aadhaar and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019, was passed by a voice vote after Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad assured the House that Aadhaar is voluntary and informed consent of the biometric identity holder has to be obtained before it is used. The amendments address the privacy and security concerns. It provides that no service or benefit of any scheme will be denied for lack of Aadhaar, Prasad said. The amended bill also provides for a stiff ₹1 crore penalty and a jail term for private entities for storing Aadhaar data.



"As many as 123 crore people are currently using Aadhaar... All safeguards are in place to prohibit misuse of Aadhaar biometrics. Iris and finger print data is stored in Indian machinery and it is safe and secure," Prasad said. Displaying his personal Aadhaar card in the House, the Minister said the card only discloses his name, father's name, date of birth, residential address and does not give out any information on medical records or details of caste, religion and community. He said

Aadhaar data can only be shared when there is a threat to national security or there is Court order. "Even if I, as an, Information Technology Minister, seek Aadhaar data, I will be subject to 3 years of punishment," Prasad said. He said the Government has saved ₹1.41 lakh crore due to Aadhaar and removed 4.23 crore and 2.98 crore bogus LPG connection and ration cards respectively. Prasad said the Bill is a wholesome amendment following the Supreme Court order. "Since

crores of poor people are benefiting by using Aadhaar, hence in emergency we brought the Ordinance," he said.

Opposing the bill, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, said the government used the ordinance route to bring in the legislation. He said the ordinance was issued by the last government (from 2014-19) and the current government has brought it as a legislation. Chowdhury said it was the UPA Government, which brought in the law, to which Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the NDA government gave legal status to Aadhaar. "You have loaned the concept of Aadhaar from us (Aapne Aadhaar udhaar liya hain)," Chowdhury said. He said the Supreme Court had also rapped the Government for violating privacy in Aadhaar. Prasad said, "Under you (the UPA), Aadhaar lacked any backing (Aadhaar niradhar tha). We made a law for it".

TMC MP Mahua Moitra said the bill speaks of a regulator which will govern various provisions. She said there are no details of the proposed regulator in the bill, which makes it opaque. She said the regulator should be integrated in the bill itself. Referring to the "Aadhaar ecosystem", she sought to know the legal recourse one can take if the ecosystem fails. "Without a data protection law, it is like putting cart before the horse," she said. Moitra claimed that Aadhaar was perceived as a system to enable the poor get services, but that now, it has turned into an "acquisitive" entity. Supriya Sule (NCP) said that "You are cheating common man... What privacy we are talking about?" Hitting out at the BJP, she said that "they are only growing on the programmes which UPA started." "Why is Aadhaar card compulsory? What is it? What is voter card then? We all have voter ID," she said.

Congress in fix after Rahul's resignation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leaders are in a fix after Rahul Gandhi's final word on his quitting the post. While a section of them is looking for change, another set of leaders is perturbed over the probable choice for Rahul's successor.

A top leader in the party said that the Congress' first family too is worried over the fragile condition of the party currently and the prospect of its further fragmentation, engineered by the BJP, ahead of Assembly elections in some States.

With Assembly elections to States like Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Haryana and Delhi approaching, many in the party feel the Congress has been thrust in a "blind spot". But some leaders said Rahul Gandhi's decision will augur well for a party that needs to reinvent itself and present a clear vision to again emerge as a credible alternative. "The Congress faces an existential crisis in the absence of clear leadership and such a situation does not bode well for the party which faces assembly elections in the states just a few months later," said a party leader adding Rahul's successor needs to be carefully chosen with a long term vision in mind and should be one who could rise above factions and nepotism to rejuvenate the party right from the grassroots level.

While Rahul in his first reaction post his resignation stated that he would work 10 times harder for the party, his sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi lauded his "courage" to quit the highest post of the grand old party.

Rahul Gandhi in Mumbai told reporters he will engage in the 'ideological fight' with the BJP and the RSS with 10 times more vigour than he did during the last five years. Priyanka on her part took to social media saying, "Few have the courage that you do @rahulgandhi. Deepest respect for

your decision."

The Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's highest decision making body, will meet next week to resolve the presidential issue. The Congress' future too will be chalked out at the meeting.

"The Gandhi family is integral to the Congress. The two cannot be separated. We look forward to their guidance in the coming times," said a party leader pointing to the continuing sway the first family of the party will have on the organization even if a non-Gandhi helms the affairs.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also refused to

contemplate a Gandhi-free Congress. "We will bounce back and Congress Party would continue to defeat the fascist forces under Rahul ji's dynamic leadership," he said, expressing the hope that Rahul Gandhi would lead the party with the "same zeal and spirit".

Karnataka Minister DK Shivakumar also said: "Without Gandhi family Congress can't be united, without Congress being united Congress can't be united. Gandhi family is the only strength to keep this party strong, united & rebuild this party to bring it back to power."

RSS defamation case: Cong alleges RSS participated in anti-India activities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As Rahul Gandhi appeared before a Mumbai court in a defamation case for his remarks against the RSS, the Congress on Thursday attacked the Hindutva organisation through a video on Twitter alleging that it "consistently participated in 'anti-India' activities".

Rahul pleaded 'not guilty' in the court in the defamation case after he accused the RSS of being responsible for the murder of journalist Gauri Lankesh. "Think you know what the RSS is all about, think again," The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has consistently participated in anti-India activities, including pledging loyalty to the British, instigating violence & assassinating Mahatma Gandhi," the Congress said on Twitter, using hashtag #RSSvsIndia.

"From the freedom struggle to the symbols of Indianness, the RSS has always opposed them. When freedom fighters were fighting the British, the RSS as an institution was bowing before the

British. Opposing the "idea of India" has been the policy of the RSS," the party also tweeted.

The one-minute video titled "RSS for Dummies" alleged that RSS founder 'KB Hedgewar ordered the Sangh not to participate in Satyagraha'. "Sangh leaders encouraged members to join the British civic guard... RSS' non-participation in India's Independence was complimented by their British masters... The Sangh opposed our national flag! Anti-national, much? Nathuram Godse shot and killed Gandhi," the party claimed.

It also alleged that "the RSS opposed liberalisation... In short and in shorts, the RSS is anti-development and fought against freedom when we fought for it".

The video also alleges that the RSS considers the 'Manusmriti' greater than the Constitution. The video comes a day after Gandhi formally resigned as Congress president while taking full moral responsibility for the party's Lok Sabha poll debacle.

Maha dam breach, DU cut-off issue raised in RS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Issues like the breach in a dam in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, killing more than 23 people, high cut-off list in Delhi University causing hardships to admission seekers, builders duping homebuyers and plight of rickshaw pullers of Kolkata figured in the Rajya Sabha on

Thursday.

Drawing the attention of the house to the Tiwari dam mishap, Husain Dalwai (Congress) demanded compensation for the victims and alleged that the breach took place as the local administration did not take timely action despite repeated warnings over the last few months.

The Congress leader demanded strict action against those responsible for negligence.

Dalwai said it was not correct that incessant rains in the region led to the breach of the dam. The district collector was on February 12 in writing informed of the dam requiring urgent repairs but it was never done, he said.



The dam, he said, was built in 2012 at a cost of ₹12 crore against the initial estimate of ₹2 crore.

Raising the issue of high cut-off in Delhi University, RK Sinha (BJP) suggested that all the colleges in the national capital should start evening classes also. It will allow more students to seek admission on the one hand and give employment to more teachers on the other, the BJP leader said adding students working part-time will also benefit from such a move. Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said high cut-offs speak of standard of education of Delhi University adding he is Chancellor of the varsity. Ajay Pratap Singh (BJP)

raised the issue of delays by builders in handing over houses to buyers and demanded strict laws to rectify the situation as the existing legal recourse was not effective.

Mahesh Poddar (BJP) said the practise of men pulling rickshaw in Kolkata was not a pleasant sight and wanted an immediate end to it. He said more than 20,000 rickshaw pullers were engaged in this endeavour and lead a tough life surviving on footpaths. Many MPs associated themselves with Poddar on the issue.

AK Selvaraj (AIADMK) wanted subsidy for farmers growing fruits and vegetables through drip irrigation be increased to make up for the additional cost incurred in high density farming and where higher intensity irrigation is required due to soil quality. Vijay Pal Singh Tomar (BJP) urged laws be made stricter to deter food adulteration.

Rajnath defends Bedi in RS, urges Opp to put issue to rest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A range of issues figured in the Lok Sabha on Thursday including the Government seeking to put to rest the controversy over Puducherry Lt. Governor Kiran Bedi's tweet which, it said, she "deleted" and also expressed regret over it besides Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra trying to raise the alleged false reportage and personal attacks on her by a TV news channel and its editor.

DMK members had on Wednesday objected to Bedi's alleged comments "insulting" politicians and people of Tamil Nadu. DMK leader TR Balu, for the second day, raised the issue again in the lower house and demanded action against her. Responding to the DMK's protest, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Bedi has already deleted the tweet and issued a statement expressing deep regret. He said when the matter was raised in Parliament by Baalu, the Ministry of Home Affairs took notice of it and took necessary action in this regard. Rajnath said she has expressed deep regret by saying, "What was written was a people perspective shared in my personal capacity, as it came at a time when people were hugely suffering for water in Chennai. However, I admit it

was avoidable. And I should not have shared it in public in this manner and I too realised it." "I have therefore deleted my sharing. I have the highest regards and warmth for the people of Tamil Nadu, like I have for the people of Puducherry," he quoted Bedi's statement. The Defence Minister said in view of the LG's statement, he would like to request members of the House to put the issue to rest. After Rajnath's statement, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury demanded the House should adopt a resolution condemning Bedi for allegedly humiliating the people of Tamil Nadu. As Zero Hour commenced, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said a privilege motion submitted by Moitra was under his consideration. Moitra said she wanted to highlight an important issue through a point of order. However, as soon as she took the names of the channel and the editor and tried to read out a statement, the Speaker asked her not to do so. The Speaker said he cannot allow name of any person, not a member of the house, to be mentioned in the house. Immediately, the Speaker asked another MP to speak which forced Moitra to take her seat without completing her statement. The 42-year-old, who is a former investment banker, trended on social media after her speech on June 25 during a debate on the President's address where she sought to detail "seven signs of fascism" in India. She was reportedly accused of plagiarism by a foreign-based publication to which she has expressed her surprise saying her source was clearly mentioned in her Lok Sabha speech. Moitra is a first-time MP from West Bengal's Krishnanagar. On another issue, the government said there is no evidence to show that buildings with glass facades utilise extra energy. Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri told the Lok Sabha that, in fact, a glass building when properly designed, can have benefits. Citing a study by IIT Delhi in July 2011, the minister said though glass facade leads to higher energy consumption in buildings, the actual quantum of consumption depends on various factors such as building type, glazing type, glazing orientation and climate type. BJP MP Hema Malini, for her part, raised the issue of attack on doctors, saying they are assaulted by "lynch mobs with impunity" and demanded a strict law to protect them.

DISABILITY PENSION ISSUE

Disabled war veterans' organisation writes to Army

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the recent Government decision to tax disability pension has led to unrest amongst the Services and veterans, a city-based organisation of war disabled and battle casualties has taken strong exception to the Army's endorsement of the move claiming it affects the morale. The Army on Tuesday maintained that disability pension was being misused and such cases were on the rise. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh last week had assured the Lok Sabha that he will look into the matter after the Congress raised a din over the issue. Disabled War Veterans (India), in a letter to the Army

said any "discrimination or invidious official" while making an official statement, affects the morale of the entire military community. In a series of tweets, the Army had said over the years, broad-banding and the compensation awarded for disability with income tax exemption had led to a rise in the number of personnel claiming disability even for lifestyle diseases. The issue was not of doing away with tax exemption but to put an end to the alleged wrong use of the disability pension thereby denying the facility to the more deserving cases, officials said. It was learnt the annual disability pension is about ₹50 crore or so. The Central Board of Direct Taxes in a directive

early last week informed that the disability pension for those personnel who serve full military service and then retire will not be exempted from income-tax. The Army's endorsement of the order had upset several veterans of the armed forces, some of whom had suffered grievous injuries in action. In its letter, the Disabled War Veterans (India) said, "It is also well known that disability in the military is on a rise all over the globe due to operational commitments, transfers and other stressors".

"Being at the forefront of issues related to the war disabled, we must put it on record that sensitivity must be displayed towards genuinely disabled with non-operational disabilities also," reads the letter sent by the organisation to ADGPI (Additional Directorate General of Public Information) of the Army. In the letter, dated July 3, the Delhi-based organisation also underlined that stress and strain of military service is known to "adversely affect" the health profile of troops. "Rather than attaching stigma to low medical personnel or negativity to disability compensation, we should be concerned about ensuring better medical care for our soldiers and ensuring a stress-free health and not payments," it said.

INSHORT

SC STAYS EXECUTION OF 7 DEATH ROW CONVICTS

New Delhi: Seven death row convicts who gangraped and killed a mentally challenged woman in Rohtak got an interim stay on their execution from the Supreme Court which agreed on Thursday to hear their appeals against the conviction.

SC WON'T HEAR TIKTOK PLEA TO TRANSFER CASES

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to hear a plea of Chinese social media app TikTok for the transfer of cases relating to ban on it from the Madras High Court to the apex court.

TOURISM MIN TO ADDRESS COMPLAINTS ON TWITTER

New Delhi: Tourists may soon be able to tweet their grievances to the authorities concerned for speedy redressal as the Tourism Ministry is planning to launch a dedicated social media-based platform on the lines of Twitter Seva Service of the Ministry of External Affairs.

MINING PLEA: SC SEEKS CENTRE'S RESPONSE

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Centre to file its reply in four weeks on a plea seeking quashing of allotment, extension or continuation of leases to firms for mining iron ore from over 358 mines across the country without any fresh evaluation.

HAREN PANDYA MURDER CASE VERDICT TODAY

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled on Friday to pronounce verdict on the appeals filed by CBI and the Gujarat Government challenging the acquittal of 12 persons facing charges of murdering former state Home Minister Haren Pandya in 2003.

GOVT SPENT ₹43.48 CR TO PROPAGATE HINDI

New Delhi: The Union Government has made "sustained efforts" to publicise Hindi and spent ₹43.48 crore over the past five years to propagate the language worldwide through diplomatic missions and posts, the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday.

Election to Vellore LS seat on August 5

Polling in Patkura Assembly seat on July 20

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday announced that the election to the Vellore Lok Sabha constituency, which was countermanded due to excess use of money power, will now be held on August 5 while bypoll for the Patkura Assembly of Odisha will be held on July 20. It was for the first time that the election to a Lok Sabha constituency was cancelled over use of money power. Earlier, the bypoll to the RK Nagar Assembly seat in Tamil Nadu was cancelled in April, 2017, following seizure of huge cash, allegedly meant for bribing voters. Similarly, the election to the Patkura assembly was postponed due to death of the candidate. Later the poll was postponed due to Fani cyclone. Polling for the Lok Sabha

seat was scheduled for April 18, along with the other constituencies of Tamil Nadu, but was cancelled on April 16 following the recovery of a huge amount of cash allegedly from an associate of a DMK leader. The EC also announced the election date to Patkura Assembly election under Kendrapara Parliamentary constituency. Polls to the seat, which was earlier postponed due to the demise of BJD candidate Bed Prakash Agarwalla, is now set to be conducted on July 20, while the counting of votes will be held on July 24, 2019. In an official release, the Commission said that the after taking into consideration various factors like, festivals, electoral rolls and others, it took the decision to hold the adjourned poll to fill the Patkura seat. Later, the ECI postponed the election further for another 60 days in view of cyclone 'Fani' that hit the state on May 3. With the notification, the model code of conduct came into force from Thursday.

Pak's crackdown on Hafiz Saeed a cosmetic step, says MEA



New Delhi: Pakistan is trying to hoodwink the international community with its "cosmetic" steps against terror groups, the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday.

The MEA's response came after Pakistan claimed that it had "booked" Mumbai attacks mastermind Hafiz Saeed and 12 of his close associates for "terrorism financing" in 23 cases, amidst growing global pressure on Islamabad to act against militant groups launching deadly attacks in India. "Pakistan is trying to hoodwink the international community on taking action against terror groups. "Let us not get fooled by cosmetic steps against terror groups by Pakistan," MEA spokesperson Raveesh Kumar told reporters here. PTI

SC seeks former Tata Trusts head Venkataraman's reply on Shapoorji Pallonji's plea



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from R Venkataraman, a former managing trustee of Tata Trusts, on an appeal of Shapoorji Pallonji Group challenging the quashing of its defamation case against him. "This is nothing but a corporate war," a bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Deepak Gupta said, while issuing notice to Venkataraman. Senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, appearing for Shapoorji Pallonji Group, said that the defamation complaint filed by the firm was quashed by the Bombay High Court

erroneously. The Bombay High Court had quashed a prosecution order issued by a magistrate court against Venkataraman in the defamation case. In October 2018, the magistrate's court at Ballard Pier had issued the process of summoning Venkataraman after the Shapoorji Pallonji Group filed the criminal defamation case against him. In the complaint, the Shapoorji Pallonji Group, which owns 18.6 per cent stake in the Tata Group, had alleged that Venkataraman had made some comments in a press note which were false and defamatory to the group. PTI

Special family pension for war veterans' family if death attributed to military service

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry has decided to grant Special Family Pension or Liberalised Family Pension (LFP) for next of kin of those personnel re-employed in military or civil and if their death is attributable to military service. Earlier, Ordinary Family Pension was authorised from the military or civil department wherever the veteran was employed. In the latest decision, the families will get ordinary family pension in addition to SFP or LFP. Giving details of the order issued on Thursday, officials said prior to January 2013, the Next of Kins (NOKs) of Armed Force Pensioner who got re-employed in civil department after getting retired from military service were authorised to draw Ordinary Family Pension (OFP) either from military side or from civil side whichever was beneficial to them. In March 2013, it was decided that the families of

Armed Forces pensioners, who got re-employed in civil departments or military after getting retired from military service and were in receipt of military pension till death, shall be allowed to draw family pension from military side in addition to the family pension, if any, authorised from the re-employed civil department. The Government was receiving grievances from various quarters for grant of dual family pension including Special Family Pension/Liberalised Family Pension where death of the re-employed government servant is attributable to government service. The matter has been examined in the Ministry and now was decided that Special Family Pension (SFP)/Liberalised Family Pension (LFP), would be admissible on death of a pensioner who was re-employed in military service and if his death is attributable to military service, in addition to Ordinary Family Pension.

PAPER WITH PASSION

Same old truisms

The Economic Survey recycles old tropes but does it actually provide a roadmap for a \$5 trillion economy by 2025?

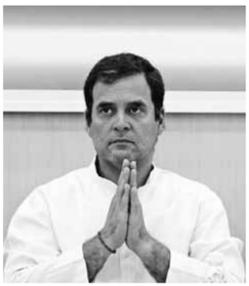


The Economic Survey for 2018-19 claims that it is different from previous editions because it has 'Blue Sky Thinking', which is belied by the sky blue colour theme of the cover. It is, as Chief Economic Advisor KV Subramanian argues, a roadmap to India becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2025, making us the world's third-largest economy behind the US and China. India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was \$2.7 trillion in 2018, behind those of France, Germany, Japan and the UK. But there is a problem, as the survey itself points out. Growth for the last quarter of 2018-19 dropped to 5.8 per cent, and the annual growth rate in 2018-19 was 6.8 per cent. In 2019-2020, the Economic Survey believes growth will touch seven per cent, but to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of becoming the world's third largest economy, India will then need to grow at an annual rate of eight per cent over the next few years. That will require a huge amount of public and private sector investments. While India has steadily invested in its infrastructure over the years, the real challenge will be in getting adequate complementary private investments across the country. Some of these shared infrastructure projects are already caught up in disputes and there has to be a time-bound resolution and smoothing of bottlenecks. But other than invoking a lot of religion, does the survey really draw up a roadmap for economic growth? Some facts are about stating the obvious for the umpteenth time. Like the dire need for labour reform. The possibly even more dire need for judicial reform. Or the necessity for private sector investments to be the major growth driver. So this data-rich tome, that correctly says that data will play a big role in the future development of India, is a bit short of policy ideas even though it says interventions are needed. It tries to provide backing for some terrible ideas like a shift towards electric vehicles and some references to religion and mythology are cringe-worthy.

Of course, the Survey does at a level realise that Narendra Modi has huge political capital and could achieve the oft-repeated labour reform thanks to it and a defenestrated Opposition. The fact is India does not have a choice but has to somehow drive high rates of growth if it is to gainfully employ the hundreds of millions of youth, who will join the workforce in the coming decade. There is one aspect that the Survey could have also looked at, the global scenario. Over the last few years, India has assumed that globalisation will continue. However, we are moving towards a multi-polar world and if India is to become one of the poles in that world, there needs to be a realisation of that reality in government and economic policy-making. It is apparent that Modi is taking the economy extremely seriously in his second-term because figures do not lie and economic activity has definitely taken a hit over the past couple of quarters. Some poor decisions such as demonetisation have also hurt growth in the past and India has very little wiggle room if growth has to be supercharged. The other challenges will include oil prices after Iran sanctions, low revenue from the Goods and Services Tax, sourcing funds for big schemes and meeting social sector targets like farmer's income and healthcare. While blue-sky thinking will be admirable towards that, there needs to be some cold, hard decisions taken if that \$5 trillion economy figure is to be achieved.

Who's listening?

Rahul Gandhi may want to be an ideologue and motivator but needs a convincing agenda to be one



Rahul Gandhi is a victim of the Gandhi legacy in the Congress and will continue to be its cross-bearing descendant. So no matter how honest, earnest and valiant he is or intends to be, his very public resignation letter only raised doubts about whether it was a proxy drama. And whether it was not akin to Sonia Gandhi bowing out of governance but conveniently holding its reins in her hand all those years ago. Some even wondered whether the resignation owning moral responsibility for the Lok Sabha defeat was about

claiming the high ground and creating a vacuum that would see the gradual ascension of his sister and make an honourable charioteer of a failed brother. The continuity and fortunes of existing family loyalists in the old guard and talk that the next party president would be from among them have not helped either. Neither has Rahul's gauntlet sufficiently jolted the party to step out of formulaic expectations and attempt the unthinkable, like putting talented people at the top of the organisation. Nor has it done anything to elevate him from his insipid epistolary skills. But it is not important what others think and Rahul himself knows that. This is his message to the Congress old guard in particular. Unhappy with them for staying on despite the party's debacle and privately assigning the blame to him and his young brigade for taking charge, the Gandhi scion has clearly mentioned in his letter that he would not have any say in appointment of party officials. The hidden frustration about nobody heeding his suggestion that the Congress needed an organic overhaul bottom-up and had to cut off the deadwood came out in the lines, "Rebuilding the party requires hard decisions and numerous people will have to be made accountable for the failure of 2019."

Of course, he wants to be a motivator, team player and an "ideological fighter" by engaging with the BJP and RSS and standing by the poor, farmers and labourers. Perhaps, he should have made these issues his campaign plank rather than the Rafale scandal, which, weak as the charges made, never got public traction. His insistence on schemes like Nyay and opposition to the Land Acquisition Act frittered away along the wayside. And he may be harping about institutional neutrality and the one-party dominance which may compromise the character of democracy but the reality is that the mammoth verdict has paled all criticisms that had held good so far. Rahul must realise that if he wants to be a responsible opposition to the BJP-RSS than a pinprick, then mouthing old campaign favourites won't work. He has to spell out concrete and actionable plans, socially, culturally and economically, and convince people about his alternative performing ability, something which is still under question and something which the Modi 2.0 regime will make good on with a highly performance-oriented second term. All is not lost as, despite its Lok Sabha rout, the Congress in Rajasthan bagged a majority of the seats in the panchayat samiti and zila parishad bypolls. Another of Rahul's young Turks, Sachin Pilot, can claim credit as he launched a door-to-door campaign. Rahul needs to do the same and inject the same grass-root enthusiasm among all young leaders, elevate the talented, turn scions into commoners, deconstruct dynasty for all time to come. While he is desperately seeking change, he first needs to free his mind from his encoded aura of a healer and get down and dirty. Ideology has no expiry date but its relevance does.

Don't deflect truths

For far too long, Indian politics has been about defending the indefensible even as optics warrant a certain obligatory introspection, if not a graceful acceptance



BHOPINDER SINGH

There have been two distinct ways of defending the indefensible in the Indian political narrative across partisan lines. Individuals/groups operating under larger political denominations or patronage have routinely and increasingly resorted to either the counter-accusatory distraction of whataboutery when exposed or have attempted to weave a creative context to justify their indefensible act. The society's deeply polarised and divided sentiment along partisan lines has disallowed the recognition of the indefensibility of the wrong act perpetrated. And, instead, remained satisfied in rattling counter-facts, attributable to their opponents, or worse, bought into the yarn of contextual "necessity" for the said act. With no higher authority calling the routine bluffs or the emergence of powerful societal voice of restraining the indefensible acts, the perpetrators often go scot-free, reading or misreading the "silence" of the leadership as being tantamount to encouragement. So while political tempers boil frequently, chicanery reigns supreme and ultimately, Indian society gets even more wounded and regressed. Concurrently, the symbols of the law of the land get diminished in the practical sense as individuals/groups take upon themselves the task of meting out "justice" by taking law into their own hands. This dangerously weakens and further discredits the required faith in sovereign institutions like policing agencies, judiciary and Governmental departments.

At an extremely pensive juncture of the national mood, the Prime Minister personally intervened to express his displeasure at the rote spectre of whataboutery and ready "contextualisation" of the indefensible acts. Recent times have seen multiple instances of individuals/groups (across all States with different political dispensations in-charge) usurping power to ostensibly deliver instant justice; whilst acting in shades of brazen vigilantism, mobocracy or sheer hooliganism. This time, the Prime Minister reacted with alacrity, seriousness and specificity when he termed the conduct of a certain lawmaker "unacceptable" and added for good measure, "no matter whose son."

The fact that the people called out were from the ruling party itself made the Prime Minister's act even more powerful, impactful and potentially transformational. The entire political drama across the country has been embroiled in competitive onepmanship with basic governance suffering from the lingering hangover of electoral passions.

The usual mud-slinging, name-calling or whataboutery that followed such acts made headlines for a few days but rarely acted as a deterrent. This time, the message seemingly was: Thus-far-no-more. This



augurs well for the country as a whole.

Certain people as also institutions should always be expected to be legally and morally above board — logically, the law enforcer (police forces), law interpreter (the judicial domain) and above all, the law-maker (elected Members of Parliament and State Assemblies). They are expected to be the first among equals of the citizenry to personify the Constitutional propriety, dignity and rectitude.

On assuming the leadership of NDA and the BJP parliamentary party, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had first bowed and respectfully touched his forehead on the Constitution of India — a symbolic move to register his reverence for the Constitution in the "temple of democracy." Sadly, the spirit of Constitutionality is not demonstrated by some law-makers in matching measure. This needs to be condemned outright, without fear, favour or selective bias. Given that any such reprehensible act also has an ecosystem that supports, breeds and actively encourages the perpetuation of such brazenness and lawlessness, it is imperative that the naming-shaming exercise extends to the entirety of such an ecosystem.

Therefore, the yeoman call to expel all those who partook in the unrepentant celebrations following the release of

the said law-maker from jail on bail, is far-reaching and very consequential in disabling such a regressive culture and ecosystem. For far too long, Indian politics has mastered the art of deflecting and defending the indefensible, even as *prima facie*, optics warrant a certain obligatory introspection, if not a graceful acceptance.

The heavily tilted mandate in the recently concluded elections naturally lends itself to either the undesirable possibility of domineering and presumptuous conduct by some of those in the majority group, or the overtly shrill, negative and combative behavior by those in minority — this in the functioning of participative democracy is often at the cost of reason, decorum and constitutionality. Therefore, given the fractured mood of Indian politics, it was imperative that the starting point of the "correction" was triggered by insisting on putting the ruling house in order so that the national leadership cannot be accused of any political bias or "conspiracy" in the condemnation. Simultaneously, it puts a moral pressure on all those in the Opposition, too, to follow suit.

The 34-year-old first-time law-maker in question represents not just his constituency or his party, but also a certain "generation" that seeks positive change, evolution and dynamism of fresh ideas in the India of 2019. The onus of

responding to the overwhelming mandate, trust and responsibility reposed in the youth cutting across the party lines of this "generation" of law-makers, ought to walk-the-talk of "tomorrow" and not that of "yesterday".

Indeed, there are glaring inefficiencies, sub-optimal competencies and ineptitude in the functioning of various governmental arms but the only thing worse than that itself is the smug conviction and the sense of entitlement in taking the law in one's own hand. It is in the legit functioning of democracy to ensure that the Opposition plays its invaluable role of opposing and questioning the Government of the day. Whereas, the Government itself needs to simultaneously address all concerns raised fairly and squarely, without attributing motives. However, the dance of democracy does not entitle the members of the ruling party or that of the Opposition parties to behave in a manner that is not befitting of their Constitutional expectation, irrespective of the party flag to which such erring members belong. Hopefully, this timely intervention by the Prime Minister himself will go a long way in changing the course and conduct of our elected lawmakers.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry)

“ AT AN EXTREMELY PENSIVE JUNCTURE OF THE NATIONAL MOOD, THE PRIME MINISTER PERSONALLY INTERVENED TO EXPRESS HIS DISPLEASURE AT THE ROTE SPECTRE OF WHATABOUTERY AND READY CONTEXTUALISATION OF INDEFENSIBLE ACTS ”

SOUNDBITE

It appears to me that the Government, speaking through the economic survey, is pessimistic about the economy.



Congress leader —P Chidambaram

If people hold something incredibly dear and think they know how it should be and it's not like that, it's fair for people to think they were done wrong.



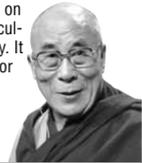
Actor —Daisy Ridley

Pakistan is trying to hoodwink the international community on taking action against terror groups. Let us not get fooled by cosmetic steps by it.



MEA spokesperson —Ravesh Kumar

There is a need to focus on preservation of Tibetan culture, religion and identity. It is no longer a struggle for political independence.



Spiritual leader —Dalai Lama

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Monsoon mayhem

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Maximum woes" (July 3). Heavy rainfall in the past few days has brought life to a standstill for Mumbaiers. With climate-change related calamities becoming an annual affair now, it is high time Governments take remedial measures to mitigate the many discernible negative fallout. With floods wreaking havoc on the lives and livelihoods of people in Mumbai, besides exposing the creaky infrastructure of our cities on a regular basis, scientific management of floods has assumed much significance than ever.

Karuna
Via email

Errant legislators

Sir — This refers to the report, "Modi slams assault & battery" (July 3). Taking serious note of the incident where BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya's son, Akash Vijayvargiya, who had beaten a municipal corporation official with a cricket bat during a demonstration drive in Indore, Prime

New Congress leadership must define contours

This refers to the article, "The deep slumber of varied opinions" (July 3) by Kalyani Shankar. Congress chief Rahul Gandhi has said that it is the Congress Working Committee (CWC) which has to decide on who will replace him. The grand old party will have to define the role of the Gandhis in the new apparatus before a non-Gandhi is appointed president for the success of a new leadership experiment. As things stand, three members of the family hold "controlling stake" and their "parallel power centre" could reduce the new party chief to a dummy of the Gandhis, who can hold reins without accountability. Such a situation will only make a farce of the experiment.

When Rahul Gandhi offered to resign last month, he said he would remain a party worker and focus on strengthening it by travelling around the country. This will mean that a new party chief will have to deal with a very powerful *karyakarta*, general secretary Priyanka and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi. In the last three decades, the Congress leadership has suffered thrice the consequences of parallel power centres. When PV Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister and Congress president, despite the glue of power helping him to unite



the party brass, Arjun Singh and others rebelled by projecting themselves as 'loyalists' of the Gandhi family, culminating in Rao's and the Congress' fall. In short, any appointment of a non-Gandhi Congress president, many feel, will not only test whether the grand old party can function without the leadership of the Gandhis but also whether the party's first family will be at ease without controlling it. The Gandhi trio will have to effectively send out a message of remaining "hands off" for the credibility and prestige of the new party president.

Padmini Raghavendra
Secunderabad

Rahul's soap opera

Sir — This is by no means the first, or even the worst electoral defeat the Congress has suffered in recent years but surely, it is the first time that Rahul Gandhi saw fit to mount the moral high horse and offer his resignation. While the move was commendable, his prolonged sulking is not. What does his resignation mean? Is it merely an admission of defeat or a larger course correction, implying that the party needs a better leader?

If Rahul's resignation stood out for its candid and earnest tone, it did not lift the curtain on an element of enigma that has always enveloped him. Rahul stepped into public life reluctantly but immersed himself in the battle. What was not clear was whether he was throwing down the gauntlet to those who had deserted him or if he was hoping to act as a countervailing moral force, operating outside the precincts of the party's organisational apparatus. All soap operas must lead towards a finale.

JS Acharya
Hyderabad

Minister Narendra Modi said that such incidents bring a bad name to the party; that misbehaviour and arrogance were completely unacceptable; and that such people, no matter whose son, should be expelled from the party. Akash was arrested by the police and sent to judicial custody after the incident but was later granted bail. Prime Minister Modi also called for the expulsion of Akash's supporters, who garlanded him on his release from jail.

Modi's stand is laudable. However, the vital question is whether BJP president Amit Shah will set an example for all political parties by expelling Akash and his accomplices from the party, thus sending a strong message to power-drunk legislators.

MC Joshi
Lucknow

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Pursue new-found ambitions

From being a tourist hotspot, the coastal State is all set to script a new role of becoming one of Asia's hottest start-up destinations



KEWAL KAPOOR

Breathtaking sea visuals, picturesque beaches and lip smacking food — when we think of Goa, what comes to our mind is a tourist-haven, inviting travellers with open arms. However, in recent years, the State has silently but steadily been working to create another parallel brand image for itself — that of being a start-up hub. And the efforts are paying rich dividends. Last December, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion named Goa as “one of the emerging destinations for start-ups” in the country. The ranking was based on a number of factors like start-up policies, seeding innovation, incubation hubs, regulatory changes, scaling innovation, communication champions and procurement leaders, among others.

Just a few months ago, on April 28, 2018, Goa launched its exclusive start-up policy and portal and commemorated the date as ‘Goa start-up day’. Former Union Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu had said that the start-up policy was established with the aim to promote Goa as one of the top start-up destinations in the country and that funds were being generated with the aim of offering financial incentives for start-ups to promote innovation and upskilling. Goa’s Minister for Revenue, Information Technology and Labour and Employment, Rohan Khaunte, said that the Government is focussing on creating and fostering a start-up culture where the youth become job-givers and not job seekers.

What are the factors that make Goa an attractive startup destination?

■ **Ease of doing business:** The willingness of the Government officials to listen to budding entrepreneurs has prompted many start-ups to make a beeline to the State. It is easy to get a licence and set up a business in Goa. Further, a healthy influx of tourists means that brands, that are starting out, have a very good opportunity to get a lot of traction.

■ **Road connectivity:** This is the most crucial aspect. Goa is strategically located and is accessible via road, rail, sea and airports, which makes it easier for entrepreneurs to setup bases here. A new highway has made sure that villages in this coastal State are safer to live in and do business from. Even roads that connect villages that are far apart are better than what one would find in most Indian cities.

■ **Cost of living:** Apart from the stellar connectivity Goa has to the neighbouring States, the lifestyle here is far better and cheaper than any other State. The quality of schools and the education system here is another reason why it has started attracting some major talent.

The department of Information Technology is waiting for an approval from a committee — comprising the Chief Minister, IT Minister, Chief Secretary, IT Secretary, Industries Secretary and four nominated expert from the industry — to disburse one crore rupees to start-ups in a phased manner. It is also seeking support from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for providing the necessary incubation support for local start-ups. This is in line with the Central Government’s ‘Start-up India’ initiative of 2015. Recently, the IT Ministry certified 53 start-ups of which over 90 per cent were of Goan origin and around nine per cent had offices in other States, but started a new office in Goa. The State has already disbursed ₹33 lakh in the form of incentives and the number is expected to go up to ₹1 crore in a short span of time.

On June 28, the IT department’s Start-up Promotion Cell (SPC) organised an event with CII, Goa, to connect emerging start-ups with established entrepreneurs and to find innovative solutions. The corporate start-up connect series was launched with the aim to provide mentoring to budding entrepreneurs, who have a potentially game-changing idea but need mentoring to turn it into a lucrative and sustainable business opportunity. The CII offers mentoring and co-working spaces for start-ups and helps them get the industry connect. They also help small businesses that would perish without the help of incubation support. Additionally, the Goa Government is planning to kick-start a capital grant scheme, where local industrialists, who are willing to set up co-working spaces, will get incentives from the Government. With the Government throwing considerable amount of resources towards upgrading the State’s infrastructure, Goa is all set to break the myth that the coastal sun-seagard-loving State is a place where you go to unwind and kickback as it emerges in tune with the entrepreneurial demands of the hungry and vibrant start-up ecosystem in India.

(The writer is director and creative strategist of an advertising and consulting agency)

LT GUV KIRAN BEDI HAS HUMILIATED THE PEOPLE OF TAMIL NADU AND PUDUCHERRY. A RESOLUTION SHOULD BE PASSED TO SACK HER.

—CONGRESS LEADER
ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY

POINT COUNTERPOINT



SHE (KIRAN BEDI) HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED DEEP REGRET OVER HER CONTROVERSIAL TWEET. THE MATTER SHOULD BE PUT TO REST.

—UNION MINISTER
RAJNATH SINGH

Muslim brotherhood

Former president Mohammad Morsi’s tragic death in captivity has once again highlighted the tense relationship of his Islamist party and the Arab World



NADEEM PARACHA

The sudden death of Mohammad Morsi, Egypt’s first elected Prime Minister, who was overthrown in a military coup in 2013 and was facing trial for various charges and a 20-year sentence, has once again brought the international media’s focus on the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) — the party Morsi was a member of. The MB was not a new party that had emerged from the rumblings of the so-called “Arab Spring” in 2011 — an uprising that saw the toppling of a number of authoritarian regimes across the Arab world. It was, and still is, one of the oldest mainstream “Islamist” outfits in the Middle East, which succeeded in coming to power in Egypt in 2012 through a general election.

The MB members also managed to win the largest percentage of votes — 37.4 per cent — during the 2011 Tunisia election as the Ennahda Party. Turkey’s Justice & Development Party (AKP), which has been winning elections since 2002, is often understood to be the Turkish version of MB. According to Fati Muedini’s *The Role of Religion in the Arab Spring*, the MB only played a “limited role” during the Arab Spring. Muedini writes that MB didn’t want to overplay its “Islamist” credentials during the unrest, which could have made it convenient for the state and Government in Egypt and Tunisia to denounce the uprisings as “Islamist.” This way, the protests may have lost international support.

As the ruling parties weakened and disintegrated during the protests, new parties emerged, but they were not as organised as the MB. Over the decades, the MB had established widespread political and social networks, which helped it win the largest number of votes during the first post-Arab Spring elections in Egypt and Tunisia. Professor Edip Asaf of Istanbul University writes in an essay that the MB looked towards Turkey’s AKP “as an example.” He echoes French political scientist and author Oliver Roy’s assertion that the AKP’s “Turkish model” became popular among Islamic outfits such as the MB in their bid to become part of the political mainstream, without overtly flexing their “Islamist” muscle.

Refuting the influential American academic Samuel Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilisations’ hypothesis — which could not find any cultural or political common ground between the ‘authoritarian Muslim world’ and the democratic West — the AKP and the MB responded with a new paradigm: Clash within civilisations. This differentiated between moderate, democratic Muslim forces and the radical and reactionary ones.

According to this paradigm, the friction and tension within the Muslim world (between the moderates and the radicals) had produced political phenomena such as Turkey’s AKP and later, the democratic coming to power of the MB in Egypt and the Ennahda Party in Tunisia. These were Islamic outfits, who agreed to become inclusive, and focussed more on addressing economic issues rather than on the imposition of religious laws.

But the AKP had evolved in a staunchly secular Muslim republic. The many movements, which preceded the formation of the AKP, were non-militant and accepted the principles of Turkish nationalism, established during the

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EITHER MB WILL LOOK TO FURTHER MODIFY ITS COURSE TO PROVE THAT IT IS NO MORE A THEOCRATIC THREAT OR A DEMOCRATIC RUSE, OR IT MAY RESTORE ITS MILITANT TENDENCIES. BUT I BELIEVE THE LATTER IS NOT POSSIBLE IN A WORLD WHERE THERE WILL NOT BE A SAUDI ARABIA OR A US WELCOMING ESCAPING MB CADRES FROM THE ARM OF THE EGYPTIAN STATE
”



formation of the modern Turkish republic in 1923 by Ataturk.

Even though the MB had decided to let go of its militant tendencies in the 1970s, it could not entirely alter the perception that the party remained rooted in the ideas of one of its most celebrated heroes, Sayyid Qutb, who was executed in 1966 for allegedly plotting the assassination of the then Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Interestingly, the MB was established in Egypt in 1928 as a movement inspired by Muslim Modernism and Pan-Islamism. Muslim modernism had been developing ever since the mid-19th century as a way to address the rise of European colonialism through the adoption of modern sciences and economics. Muslim Modernism advocated the readjustment of Islamic traditions and politics through “modernist” tools such as pragmatism, rationalism, science, capitalism and/or socialism.

Pan-Islamism, on the other hand, wanted to do this to help the Muslims gain ascendancy in colonial conditions, and once in, dismantle Western colonial supremacy and carve out a modern universal Islamic caliphate. According to Malise Ruthven, in *Islam in the World*, the MB became more conservative and militant once various reformist ideas of Muslim modernism began being adopted by various non-religious Muslim leaders and outfits.

By the 1940s, the MB was being accused for organising assassinations and bomb attacks against colonial British officials in Egypt and the country’s monarch. In 1948, an MB member assassinated the country’s Prime

Minister. However, in 1949, MB’s founder Hassan Al-Banna was killed in a retaliatory strike by Egypt’s secret police.

According to HM Hamouda’s 1985 tome, *Secrets of the Movement of Free Officers*, the free officers movement, which toppled the Egyptian monarchy in 1952 and ousted the British, was formed within the MB. According to an essay by Selma Botman in the 1986 edition of *Middle Eastern Studies*, anti-monarchy and anti-British Egyptian officers had used the secret network constructed by the MB to facilitate their attempt to take over power.

However, by 1954, the now-in-power free officers movement clashed with the MB, accusing it of trying to assassinate Nasser. MB denounced the new Government as being “anti-Islam” and “secular.” Hundreds of MB leaders were arrested and jailed.

One such leader was Qutb, an unassuming man, who had joined MB after returning from a trip to the US. Influenced by the writings of controversial French eugenicist and alleged Nazi sympathiser Alexis Carrel — who often attacked Western modernity — and by the prolific South Asian Islamic scholar Abul Ala Maududi, who had described modernity as modern-day “jahiliya,” Qutb advocated an armed social and political struggle against this jahiliya.

Many MB activists escaped arrest and were given asylum by Saudi Arabia. After Nasser’s death in 1970 and Egypt’s restoration of friendly ties with the US and Saudi Arabia, hundreds of MB members were allowed to return to the

country. MB decided to renounce violence and enter mainstream politics. Disagreeing with this resolution and angered by Egypt’s recognition of Israel in 1979, two groups separated from MB. They insisted on following Qutb’s teachings. One such faction assassinated Egyptian president Anwar Sadat in 1981.

Nevertheless, the MB as a whole continued on its “mainstream” path. But the MB is condemned by its own history. Those who came out to protest against the Morsi regime claimed that, no matter how “moderate” it pretends to be, MB’s end goal remains the enactment of a totalitarian theocracy. The opponents of this view bemoan that the coup against Morsi marked the end of a unique experiment in which a once-militant Islamist outfit was willing to take a more pluralistic and democratic path.

MB’s erstwhile backers, the Saudi monarchy, disagreed. In an environment of monarchy-backed reform within the kingdom, it now sees MB as a dangerous impediment, which can use its vast network across the Arab world to undermine Saudi influence and trigger populist uprisings, including one in the kingdom.

Either MB will look to further modify its course to prove that it is no more a theocratic threat or a democratic ruse, or it may restore its militant tendencies. But I believe the latter is not possible in a world where there will not be a Saudi Arabia or a US welcoming escaping MB cadres from the arm of the Egyptian state.

(The Dawn)

Dairy farming must sustain momentum

The Centre’s initiatives have led to an exponential growth in the dairy sector. For it to be able to tap its potential — generating employment and increasing farmers’ income besides empowering women — the productivity gap needs to be addressed



DILIP RATH

Amid all the noise arising from the recent farmers’ agitations, the remarkable growth story of the dairy sector seems to have escaped notice. Milk production has been growing at over six per cent per annum during the last five years, thus contributing to enhancing farmers’ income, reducing rural poverty, empowering women and strengthening farm resilience to climate change. It also ensures national food and nutritional security besides generating employment. With a total milk production of 176.3 MT during 2017-18 and a growing milk production base, it is natural to ask whether the six per cent plus growth is sustainable.

The growth of the dairy sector is primarily propelled by demand-led factors on account of increasing popu-

lation, urbanisation, disposal incomes and shift in dietary habits of an increasingly health conscious population. It also depends on the supply response from millions of small milk producers, aided by various public-funded programmes that are aimed at enhancing milch animal productivity and providing market access to a large number of milk producers through village-level producers-owned institutions (POIs). The focus in the next phase of growth should be on enhancing efficiencies, introducing innovative technologies and opening new opportunities for milk producers.

Recognising the role of animal husbandry and dairying in contributing towards the growth of farmers’ income and employment, the Government constituted a separate Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. This was a landmark move. The Central Government’s announcement of a ₹13,343 crore scheme to control and eradicate Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis through mass vaccination as also the creation of a Dairy Infrastructure Development

Fund with a corpus of ₹8,004 crore last year, is a testimony to the priority it accords to the dairy sector.

RELEVANCE OF POIS

As small animal holders constitute the bed rock of Indian milk production system, it is important that they get a remunerative price for a highly perishable commodity like milk. This is possible by organising village-level POIs so as to pool the milk procured from producing members in a fair and transparent manner. POIs help farmers get remunerative price for the milk and provide them assured market access. As per estimates by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), there are more than one lakh villages which remain to be covered by POIs. NDDB and its associate organisations have already initiated programmes in recent years to set up village-level institutions in less dairy developed regions. A time-bound action plan to provide market access to milk producers in less dairy developed regions, including aspirational districts, needs to be implemented in the next phase of dairy development.

As it is, it is the women members,

who take care of dairying. Their direct representation in POIs — both in governance and management — will not only strengthen gender participation but also encourage socio-economic change. The sterling performance of a large number of all-women village-level institutions as well as large dairy cooperatives/milk producer firms is testimony to the fact that women participation can promote sustained growth of the dairy sector.

PRODUCTIVITY GAPS

Animal breeding: Milch animal productivity in India is very low (total cows — 4.5 kg/day, indigenous cows — 2.9 kg/day and buffaloes 5.5 kg/day) as compared to other countries. This is particularly true for indigenous breeds, on whose development the present Government is focussing on in the interest of inclusive and climate-resilient growth of dairying. A majority of these animals are with small and marginal farmers, particularly in backward areas. Therefore, a multi-pronged approach to fast-track genetic progress of this class of animals should be taken up. This includes greater artificial insemination coverage; production and propagation of better genetics and germplasm; introduction of Advanced Reproductive Technologies such as in vitro embryo production and transfer; genomic selection of animals; indigenisation of sex semen sorting technologies; R&D efforts on cloning and synthetic gamete production. This will help in leapfrogging genetic progress of our indigenous breeds like Gir, Sahiwal and Tharparkar. The Government has already initiated these programmes under the National Dairy Plan and is now implementing the Rashtriya Gokul Mission.

Animal nutrition: Feed and fodder constitute about 75 per cent of the cost of milk production. Will natural resource constraints come in the way of our continuing march in milk production growth? The good news is that in our country, mostly crop residues and agricultural by-products are used as animal feed. There remains a huge untapped potential of unutilised biomass, which along with the adoption of better technologies in securing, enriching, densifying and conserving the existing biomass, can be a source

of nutritious feed to our milch animals. However, the Government should bring in a comprehensive “animal feed regulation” to ensure availability of quality and cost-effective feed.

Animal’s health is farmers’ wealth: It is time that a cost-effective and efficacious preventive and curative animal healthcare system is put in place to control and eradicate animal diseases through mass vaccination and promotion of Ethno Veterinary Medicines, based on ayurvedic principles to treat animal diseases. The Union Cabinet’s allocation of ₹13,343 crore to fully control FMD and Brucellosis in the next five years is welcome. These diseases have direct impact in declining milk production, adversely impact animal and human health and our dairy exports. Implementation of the scheme will require coordinated efforts.

Human resources and data-driven dairying: All interventions to expand market access and introduce productivity enhancement measures are not achievable unless POIs and veterinary institutions have trained and qualified human resources. If our dairy

sector has to grow, focus needs to be on training existing manpower and capacity-building of POIs on a sustained basis. Use of ICT tools and systems, both in creation of a national animal data base to ensure animal identification and traceability and to ensure transparent milk procurement systems, will make our small holder dairy system viable, efficient, transparent, accountable and sustainable.

Public funding: As the dairy and animal husbandry sector has the potential to play a significant role in driving growth, employment and incomes in rural India, adequate budgetary allocation is needed. Providing interest subventions to POIs to strengthen and expand their processing infrastructure and announcement of a major animal disease control scheme by the Union Cabinet are welcome measures. Sourcing ODA assistance from bilateral and multilateral funding agencies such as JICA and World Bank for our dairy sector can be explored by the Government to sustain the growth momentum.

(The writer is Chairman, National Dairy Development Board)

Bringing pvt investment across India real challenge: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's real challenge to build a robust and resilient infrastructure required to achieve the aspiration of a \$10-trillion economy by 2032 lies in bringing adequate private investment across the country with participation of the public sector, according to the Economic Survey 2018-19.

In a fast-moving world to maintain growth momentum, India has to develop its industry and infrastructure and it is necessary to clear the decks which are obstructing the way forward, said the Survey tabled in Parliament Thursday.

"In order to create a 10-trillion dollar economy by 2032, India needs a robust and resilient infrastructure. Public investment cannot fund the entire infrastructure investment requirements of the country," it said.

Further, the Survey said private players are usually eager to bring their capital into developed Indian states as compared to less developed states.

"Therefore, the real challenge lies in bringing adequate private investment across the country with the collaboration of public sector," it added.

The Survey said public-private partnerships are quintessential for addressing infrastructure gaps in the country. Giving a glimpse of how the industry and infrastructure fared in the previous fiscal, the Survey said industrial growth in terms of Index of Industrial Production (IIP) registered 3.6 per cent in 2018-19 as compared to 4.4 per cent growth rate in 2017-18.

The moderation in IIP growth was mainly due to subdued manufacturing activities in third quarter and fourth quarter of 2018-19, it added.

Road construction in kilometres grew at the rate of 30 km a day in 2018-19 as compared with 12 km a day in 2014-15, it added.

Rail freight and passenger traffic grew 5.33 per cent and 0.64 per cent, respectively, in 2018-19 as compared to 2017-18.

At the same time, total telephone connections in India touched 118.34 crore in 2018-19, while installed capacity of electricity increased to 3,56,100 MW in 2019 from 3,44,000 MW in 2018, the Survey added.

It, however, said along with physical infrastructure, provision of social infrastructure is also equally important as these two would determine where India will be placed in the world by 2030.

5G an opportunity for Indian industry to reach out to global markets: Eco Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The upcoming 5G technology is an opportunity for Indian industry players to reach out to global markets while building a digital payment, knowledge and services economy, according to the Economic Survey 2018-19.

The Government has plans to make India 5G ready by 2020 and conduct spectrum auction for providing radiowaves for 5G this year.

"For India, 5G provides an opportunity for industry to reach out to global markets," the Survey tabled in Parliament Thursday said.

It said 5G will provide opportunity for the consumers to gain with the economies of scale and citizens to reap the benefits of doorstep governance and availability of

services, medical support, benefits transfers, education, entertainment and build a digital payment, knowledge and services economy.

Telecom regulator Trai has recommended the auction of about 8,644 MHz of frequencies across eight signal bands, including in 700 Mhz, 800 Mhz, 3.3-3.4 gigahertz (Ghz), 3.4-3.6 Ghz etc, at an estimated base price of ₹4.9 lakh crore.

A joint study by ICRIER and BIF has claimed that the spectrum price recommended by Trai is high due to inconsistency in the principle applied by the regulator for calculating base rates.

The government constituted a high level 5G India 2020 Forum to articulate the vision for 5G in the country and submitted its report on "Making India 5G Ready" in August, 2018.

Economic Survey a blue print for growth and jobs over next 5 years: Debroy

New Delhi: Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) Chairman Bibek Debroy Thursday said the Economic Survey 2018-19 has laid down the blue print for growth and job creations over the next five years.

Debroy further said the EAC-PM welcomes the emphasis of the Survey on fiscal consolidation, fiscal discipline and investments.

He said focus of the Survey on federalism, expenditure reforms, policies for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), goods and services tax (GST) and reforms of direct taxes reflect the vision of the government.

Debroy also said there is a continuity between the policies from 2014 to 2019 and the expected policies from 2019 to 2024.

The EAC-PM chairman stressed that one novel and welcome aspect of this year's Economic Survey is its highlighting of judicial reforms and the role of data as a public good.

Overall, the Survey has provided insights and also signalled some break with the past by quoting from Sanskrit texts, including quotes in Sanskrit, he said.

There is a lot of information on good governance in those texts and the Survey needs to be complimented for not just quoting Kautilya but also Kamandakiya Nitisara, Debroy added.

He also said India should not deviate from the path of fiscal consolidation that was set out in the medium-term fiscal policy statement, articulated both in terms of fiscal deficit-to-GDP and debt-to-GDP ratios. "High deficits crowd out private investments, raise costs of private capital and pre-empt household sector financial savings," he said.

Debt recovery mechanism strengthened with IBC, claims of ₹1.73 lakh crore settled: Eco Survey

New Delhi, Jul 4 (PTI) The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) is one of the most important economic reforms of recent times and the debt recovery mechanism has strengthened with claims worth over ₹1.73 lakh crore settled so far under the new law, the Economic Survey said.

Till March 31, 2019, the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) yielded a resolution of 94 cases which has resulted in the settlement of claims worth ₹1,73,359 crore, it said.

"The NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) infrastructure requires to be scaled up so as to achieve timely resolution of debt recovery. The debt recovery mechanism strengthened with the enactment of IBC, 2016," the Economic Survey 2018-19 said.

It said the ecosystem for insolvency and bankruptcy is getting systematically built out with recovery and resolution of significant amount of distressed assets.

Also, as on February 28, 2019, 6,079 cases involving a total amount of ₹2.84 lakh crore have been withdrawn before admission under provisions of the IBC, it said.

Business Corner



Bank of Baroda a premier and leading Nationalised Bank and National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC) have signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for channelizing NBCFDC funds for economic upliftment and development of poorer sections of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) at concessional rates of interest on pan India basis for income generating activities and Educational Purpose



Beas Station of Firozpur Division, has added yet another feather in its cap. "Intact", which is a renowned international organisation, has recently conferred upon the Beas Station with Environmental Management System ISO 14001:2015 Certificate for providing basic amenities and allied services such as Reserved Lounge, Waiting Area, Retiring Room, Refreshment Area, Drinking Water, Ticketing Area, Enquiry etc



Ram Mohan Mishra, AS&DC (MSME) & CMD, NSIC received the Letter from ABRPL appointing NSIC as Marketing Partner of ABRPL — Bio Ethanol Project at Guwahati. (North East), Guwahati has been appointed as Marketing Partner by Assam Bio Refinery Private Limited (ABRPL). Under this project, Bamboo Chipping units will be paid for chipping of raw bamboo supplied by the bamboo growers as per their area of operations, wherein NSIC plays an important role by facilitating the selected Local Level Entrepreneurs to set up the necessary infrastructure for success of the mission/project



A new India report, 'Child Rights in India — An Unfinished Agenda', states that as per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), absolute number of rapes against children has increased approximately five times between 1994 and 2016, which is a cause of great concern to child protection in the country

CEA rejects Arvind Subramanian claims, says hard to create wrong narrative

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Economic Adviser K Subramanian on Thursday seemed to rubbish his predecessor Arvind Subramanian claim of India overestimating its growth rate, saying that it is very hard to create a narrative which is different from the truth.

Former CEA Arvind Subramanian in his research paper last month mentioned that India's growth rate between 2011-12 and 2016-17 was over-estimated.

He argued that methodological changes in calculating GDP had led to overestimating GDP growth by at least 2.5 per cent per year between 2011-12 and 2016-17.

"Let me tell you from my own observation that India is an economy where there are many many touch-points for policy and in the six months that I have been part of the government, I have been able to see it from close quarters because there are several touch points for policy, it is very hard to try and create a narrative which is different from the truth,"

Subramanian said when asked about concerns raised over the credibility of data. He also said there are many indicators that contradict claims of the critics of data credibility.

Pointing out that 8 per cent sustained growth is required for achieving \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25, he said that investment is going to be the key driver for pushing the economy to the top gear and boost job creation.

"Investment cannot go up unless the cost of capital goes down. One key opportunity we have is that the cost of capital internationally is very low, liquidity is very high there and as a result, there is an opportunity for both for firms and sovereign as well to think about going and raising money abroad," he said.

The Government is also thinking over liberalising foreign investment norms to further boost investment, he said.

The Government is expected to further ease the foreign direct investment (FDI) norms with a view to bridging the widening current account deficit (CAD), according to the Economic Survey 2018-19.

Sensex, Nifty extend gains for 4th day; all eyes on Budget

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks ended on a positive note for the fourth straight session Thursday after the Economic Survey projected India's economic growth rebounding from a five-year low to 7 per cent this fiscal.

Investors also remained optimistic that the Modi 2.0 government's first Budget, to be presented Friday, will propose measures to boost consumption and revive growth, analysts said. The 30-share BSE Sensex settled 68.81 points, or 0.17 per cent, higher at 39,908.06, while the broader NSE Nifty climbed 30 points, or 0.25 per cent, to 11,946.75.

Top gainers in the Sensex pack included Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, IndusInd Bank, Kotak Bank, Hero MotoCorp, Asian Paints and PowerGrid, which rose up to 2.53 per cent.

On the other hand, Yes Bank, HCL Tech, Vedanta, Sun Pharma, Tata Steel, L&T, HDFC Bank and NTPC fell up to 3.56 per cent.

Eco Survey calls for policy to boost farm water efficiency

Gross Value Added in 'Agriculture & Allied' declines from 6.3 per cent to 2.9 per cent

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Gross Value Added (GVA) in 'Agriculture & Allied' sector declined from 6.3 per cent in 2016-17 to 2.9 per cent in 2018-19. The crops, livestock and forestry sector showed fluctuating growth rates over the period from 2014-15 to 2017-18 while the fisheries sector has shown a rapid growth from 4.9 per cent in 2012-13 to 11.9 per cent in 2017-18.

Taking note of slow growth rate in agriculture and allied sector, the Economic Survey 2018-19 that tabled in the Parliament on Thursday, called for framing new policies to improve water use efficiency in the agriculture sector. "The GVA in agriculture improved

from a negative 0.2 per cent in 2014-15 to 6.3 per cent in 2016-17 only to decelerate to 2.9 per cent in 2018-19. However, the volatility of output growth as measured by the coefficient of variation has declined from 2.7 in the period of 1961-1988 to 1.6 during 1989-2004 and further to 0.8 during 2005 to 2018," it said.

Stating that farmer sector growth witnessed tapering in 2018-19, the survey said the share of farm sector in total GVA has been consistently falling and now stands at 16.1 per cent in the last fiscal. "The agriculture sector had investment rate much less than half of that of services and industry sectors," the survey added.

The Economic Survey said that the Ministry of Agriculture has projected 283.4 million tonnes of foodgrains in 2017-18. "There was a significant decline in food prices in 2018-19 as indicated by nearly zero per cent consumer food price inflation in 2018-19 with price contraction straight for five months in the year," the survey added.

The number of operational land holdings and area under operation have shifted towards small and marginal farmers. Expressing concern that India will be in the global hot spot for 'water insecurity' by 2050, it said the focus in agriculture should shift from 'land productivity' to 'irrigation water productivity'. "Therefore, devising policies to incentivise farmers to adopt efficient ways of water use should become a national priority to avert the looming water crisis," the survey added. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted near normal southwest monsoon this year. However, there was 33 per cent deficit in rainfall during June that led to less coverage of kharif crops.

Noting that the country's agriculture is highly dependent on water, the Economic Survey said there is a major concern whether the present practice of groundwater use can be sustained as the depth of the groundwater level continues to drop.

FinMin makes progress in strategic sale of 28 CPSEs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has made progress in strategic sale of 28 state-owned companies, of which three have already been sold off in the previous fiscal.

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) had raised about ₹85,000 crore from CPSE disinvestment in 2018-19, using a variety of instruments like Initial Public Offers (IPOs), Offer for Sale (OFS), Buyback, Exchange Traded Funds (ETF). This was more than the ₹80,000 crore target set in Budget.

HSCC was acquired by NBCC India at a consideration of ₹285 crore, while DCIL was bought by a consortium of four ports at ₹1,049 crore. Besides, NPCC was acquired by WAPCOS for ₹79.80 crore.

NCLAT clears ways for takeover of Essar Steel by ArcelorMittal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The NCLAT Thursday cleared the takeover of Essar Steel by ArcelorMittal after it rejected all objections raised by the shareholders of the debt-ridden company.

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), however, gave operational creditors equal footing into the proceeds of insolvency auction.

The two-member NCLAT bench, headed by Chairman Justice S J Mukhopadhyaya, rejected Essar Steel Director Prashant Ruia's contention that ArcelorMittal was ineligible to bid under insolvency and bankruptcy law because of allegedly holding shares loan defaulting companies.

The NCLAT had earlier reserved its order over a batch of petitions against ArcelorMittal's ₹42,000-crore takeover bid for Essar Steel as well as the distribution of funds among the creditors of the debt-ridden company.

MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one person, **Namely: Sandeep, S/o: Late Sh. Pramod Kumar, R/o: 3294, Gali No. 85, Sant Nagar, Burari, Delhi,** has been missing since 04.01.2019 from the area of Kadkadduma Court, Delhi. In this regard, a Case DD No. 60-A, Dated 06.01.2019, has been lodged at P.S. Burari, Delhi. Investigations has been carried out but despite best efforts, the person could not be traced. The description of the missing person is as under:



Sandeep

Name: Sandeep, S/o: Late Sh. Pramod Kumar, R/o: 3294, Gali No. 85, Sant Nagar, Burari, Delhi. Age: 34 years, Height: 5'6" feet, Face: Long, Build: Strong, Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Black Jacket, Black Pant & White Sports Shoes in Feet. If anyone has any information about the missing person, then please inform P.S. Burari, Delhi.

email: cic@cbi.gov.in
 Fax: No.011-24368639
 Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
 SHO P.S. Burari, Delhi
 DP/54/N/19.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Damini, D/o Shri Dinesh Mahto, R/o Jhuggi No. 291, Vishavnath Puri, Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped from the area of P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi since 20.06.2019. In this regard an F.I.R. No. 357/19, U/s 363 IPC, Dated 21.06.2019 has been registered at Police Station - Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:- **Age: 16 years, Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 4'6", Face: Round, Build: Thin, Clothing: Wearing red colour suit, cream colour pajami and rubber chappal in feet.**

Any person is having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped girl, may inform undersigned.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
 E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
 Ph.: 011-23015229, 23015218
 Ph.No.: 011-24368638, 24368641
 SHO P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi
 DP/400/ON/19 Ph.: 011-27811933, 27811934

RSDC COLLABORATES WITH ARMY BASE WORKSHOP FOR SAAMARTH

New Delhi: Rubber Skill Development Co-uncil (RSDC) has collaborated with the Army Base Workshop, Pune to re-skill their personnel in Rubber. A letter of Intent shared by Army Manufacturing Group with RSDC stated. The skilling drive was jointly inaugurated by Brig. IS Rathore, Comdt. & MD 512 ABW(Army Base Workshop) and Vinod Simon, Chairman RSDC. The training of Army personnel will be a part of the Saamarth project launched by RSDC for up-skilling of a million people in rubber sector. PNS

Banks see whopping 73% spike in frauds at ₹71,543 cr in FY19

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Banks have reported a massive 73 percent increase in incidents of fraud worth ₹71,543 crore in FY19, a senior Reserve Bank official said Thursday.

Till March 2019, the top five, 10 and 100 cases of frauds cumulatively reported constituted 24 percent, 34 percent and 70 percent of all frauds, respectively, a chief manager with the RBI Jayant Dash said.

In FY18, the banks had reported frauds worth ₹41,167 crore, he added.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Nisha Bano, D/O Hakimuddin, R/O N-90/137, Shyam Basti, Timarpur, Delhi.** The girl has been missing since 11.06.2018 from his house.



Nisha Bano

In this regard DD No. 31-A, dated 16.06.2018 has been lodged at P.S. Timarpur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the missing girl is as under: **Name: Nisha Bano, Age: 21 Years, Height: 4'8", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Build: Thin, Wearing: Pink Colour suit salwar.**

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/P.S. Timarpur, Delhi.

Email: cic@cbi.gov.in, Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
 Ph.: 011-23015229, 23015218
 Fax: 011-23011334
 SHO P.S. Timarpur, Delhi
 DP/8934/N/18 Ph. No. 011-23812734, 08750870129

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Nanki, D/O Sh. Kallu, R/O Gali No. 29, Jagatpur, Timarpur, Delhi.** The girl has been missing from the her house since 12.11.2018.



Nanki

In this regard DD No. 21-A, dated 19.11.2018 has been registered at P.S. Timarpur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the missing girl is as under: **Name: Nanki, Age: 19 Years, Height: 5', Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Build: Medium, Wearing: Red Colour Suit, Salwar and Hawaii Chappal in Feet.**

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/P.S. Timarpur, Delhi.

Email: cic@cbi.gov.in, Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
 Ph.: 011-23015229, 23015218
 Fax: 011-23011334
 SHO P.S. Timarpur, Delhi
 DP/9397/N/18 Ph. No. 011-23812734, 08750870129

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one male person namely **Deendayal Sharma, S/o Sh. K Prashad Sharma, R/o H.No. D-6/111, 2nd Floor, Sec-6, Rohini, Delhi** has been missing from the area of P.S. North Rohini, Delhi since 19.06.2019. In this regard D.D. No. 28-A, Dated 20.06.2019 has been lodged at Police Station - North Rohini, Delhi. His physical description is as under:- **Age: 40 years, Complexion: Sallow, Height: 6'0" Face: Round, Clothing: Kurta and Pajama.**



Deendayal Sharma

Any person is having any information/Clue about this missing person, may inform undersigned.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
 E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
 Ph.: 011-24368639
 Ph.No.: 011-24368638, 24368641
 SHO P.S. North Rohini, Delhi
 DP/3019/RD/19 Ph.: 011-27048210, 27048211

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. PC
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that two accuseds (1) Nisha Mark W/o Sh. Agnelo Mark and (2) Agnelo Mark S/o Sh. Paul Mark both R/o 168, Church Colony Ward No. 1, Mehrauli, New Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence of case registered vide FIR No. 836/17 at Police Station - Mehrauli, New Delhi which is punishable under section 420/34 Indian Penal Code and a warrants of arrest issued thereupon have been returned unexecuted stating that the said accuseds Nisha Mark & Agnelo Mark could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accuseds Nisha Mark & Agnelo Mark have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the warrants).
 Proclamation is hereby made that the said accuseds Nisha Mark & Agnelo Mark are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 05.08.2019.

By Order
Sh. Vaibhav Mehta
 Metropolitan Magistrate,
 South District
 DP/5524/SD/19 Room No. 210, Saket Court, New Delhi

Will fight 10 times harder, says Rahul

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after he resigned as the Congress president, Rahul Gandhi said here on Thursday that he was being "attacked" but he was enjoying it and that he would continue to fight the ideological battle with the BJP and Sangh Parivar "ten times" more fiercely than he did during the previous years.

Talking to media persons minutes after he pleaded "not guilty" and was granted bail by a Mumbai court in a defamation case filed against him by an RSS worker, Gandhi said: "This is an ideological battle. I am standing with the poor, farmers and labourers. I am being attacked. I am enjoying it".



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi leaves court in Mumbai on Thursday

PTI

Asked about his resignation as the Congress president, Gandhi said: "Whatever I wanted to say, I stated in my resignation yesterday".

nd CPM leader Sitaram Yechuri in response to summons issued to them in February in connection with a defamation case filed by Dhruv Joshi, a lawyer and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) worker, for allegedly linking journalist Gauri Lankesh's killing with the "BJP-RSS ideology".

and Yechuri pleaded "not guilty" in the defamation. Subsequently, the Mazgaon court granted bail to both Gandhi and Yechuri a surety amount of ₹15,000 each and also granted them permanent exemption from appearance before it during hearings in the case. The court has posted the matter for next hearing on September 21.

Rahul asks Mumbai Cong to take up issues faced during monsoon

Mumbai: Rahul Gandhi, who has resigned as Congress president, Thursday held a brief discussion with party leaders in Mumbai, in which he asked them to aggressively take up issues faced by citizens during monsoon.

Gandhi was in the city to appear in a local court in a defamation case. The 49-year-old leader, who had announced his resignation as the Congress president on Wednesday, also discussed the party's preparation for the upcoming Assembly polls in Maharashtra. Mumbai Congress president Milind Deora and party legislators from the city were present at the airport to receive Gandhi and see him off. A party leader, who was present at the airport after the court hearing at Sewree said, "Rahulji appeared relaxed and took updates from us about the preparations for the assembly

polls." He also asked us to aggressively take up the issue of problems faced by Mumbaiers during the monsoons. We told him about the issues raised by us during the just-concluded monsoon session of the state legislature," the leader added. Gandhi said the party should hit the streets to highlight the problems faced by citizens during rains, he said. The leader also said that the city unit informed Gandhi about the announcement by Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) to "give" 40 seats to the Congress for the assembly polls. "He told us that instead of focussing on the vote share of other parties like Vanchit Aghadi or MNS, it would be better if Congress leaders focus on improving its own vote share," another leader said on the condition of anonymity. PTI

TMC MP Nusrat dubs fatwa against her as 'baseless'



KOLKATA: Days after a fatwa was issued against her for wearing 'sindoor' in Parliament, Trinamool Congress MP and actor Nusrat Jahan on Thursday dubbed the dictate as baseless saying she is still a Muslim. "I don't pay heed to things which are baseless. I know my religion. I have been a Muslim by birth and I am still a Muslim. It's about faith. You have to feel it inside your heart and not in your head," Jahan told reporters. A fatwa was issued by a cleric against Jahan for sport-

ing "un-Islamic" attire on June 25, when she took oath as a Member of Parliament. "There is no political angle here, it's just the matter of faith and belief," she added. Several other leaders have also defended Jahan's stand including MoS for Women and Child Development Debashree Chowdhury. "As an Indian citizen, Nusrat has the right to do what she desires. This is not Pakistan, you can not issue a Fatwah against a member of Parliament," Chowdhury had said. Agency

Allahabad HC judge, who wrote to PM on nepotism, denied farewell party

Lucknow: Justice Rangnath Pandey of the Allahabad High Court, who wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleging 'favouritism, nepotism and casteism in the appointment of judges, was not given the customary farewell party when he retired on Thursday. The farewell party, known as full court reference in the legal parlance, which was scheduled to be held in the Chief Justice's Court at 3.45 p.m. was cancelled at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances. The Registrar notified the cancellation in a letter. None of the judges were willing to comment on the development. IANS had reported on Wednesday that Justice Pandey had stirred up the proverbial hornet's nest with his letter to the Prime Minister in which he had sought Modi's intervention in restoring the dignity of the judiciary. He had also pointed out the flaws in the collegium system of appointment of judges and also questioned that lack of transparency in the process.

Thursday's development came even after Pandey had gained the support of the Uttar Pradesh Bar Council. Bar Council chief Hari Shankar Singh said that the judge's letter should be treated as a public interest document and the government should act on it. He said that the lawyers supported the contents of the letter. At least, two other judges of the high court, who did not wish to be identified, said that they agreed with the contents of the letter and termed it unfortunate. A senior judge in the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court said, "Everyone knows about the malaise in the judiciary. Justice Rangnath Pandey is about to retire and hence, he could vent his feelings. I hope his letter will get the desired attention." Another judge in the same court said that Justice Pandey's letter echoed the sentiments of several other judges. "The process of judge selection needs to be overhauled if the dignity of the judiciary is to be maintained," he added. A retired IAS officer S.P.

Singh said that the letter confirmed that there is something seriously wrong with the judiciary. "There are three generations of lawyers becoming judges from the same family. Can this be justified?" he asked. Justice Pandey's letter dated July 1 calls the present process of judges' appointment "unfortunate". "In the last 34 years of my service as a judicial officer, I have seen people with no or poor knowledge of the law being appointed as judges. The appointment of judges takes place behind closed doors and over cups of tea... and favouritism is the only relevant factor for appointments," he wrote. He has also pointed out the flaws in the collegium system of appointment of judges and also questioned that lack of transparency in the process. "The whole process is secret and the names of judges are only disclosed after their appointments. Who gets appointed on what basis is kept under wraps and this process of appointments is very unfortunate," he wrote. IANS

Ex-Maha CM sorry for his MLA-son's attack on engineer

Mumbai: Maharashtra Swabhiman Party leader Narayan Rane on Thursday apologised for his MLA-son Nitesh Rane's assault on a deputy engineer. Nitesh Rane, a Congress MLA, was Thursday caught on camera pouring mud on a deputy engineer to protest the poor condition of the Mumbai-Goa highway. The incident took place at Kankavli in the coastal district of Sindhudurg. On a complaint filed by the engineer, Prakash Khedekar, an offence under IPC section 353 (assault on government servant) has been registered against Nitesh Rane and his supporters, police said. Further probe is on and nobody has been arrested yet, they said. As the video of the incident

went viral and caused an outrage, Narayan Rane, a Rajya Sabha MP from the BJP, apologised for his son's misconduct. "I apologise for my son's act of pouring mud on a government official. The protest (against poor condition of the highway) was for the local people," the former chief minister told PTI. In the video clip, Rane and Kankavli Municipal Council president Samir Nalawade are purportedly seen tying Khedekar of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to the railing of a bridge and pouring buckets of mud on him. Nitesh Rane, the MLA from Kankavli, and his supporters were protesting after finding potholes and mud on the busy highway. PTI

45 Japanese Encephalitis deaths reported in Assam

Guwahati: Forty-five people have died till July 3 since the outbreak of Japanese Encephalitis in Assam, the National Health Mission said Thursday. Most of upper Assam districts, including Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, and the lower Assam district of Kamrup have been affected by the mosquito-borne disease. "Assam is undergoing the transmission season for Japanese Encephalitis cases. A total number of 45 Japanese Encephalitis deaths have been reported till July 3, 2019, in the state," the National Health Mission (NHM) said in a statement. It, however, said the situation in the state is under close watch and all preventive measures are being taken to combat the situation. Diagnostic services for

Japanese Encephalitis with Elisa kits have been made available in all district hospitals and government medical college hospitals, awareness programmes intensified and fogging operations stepped up in areas from where Japanese Encephalitis cases have been reported. The NHM also said that free transportation is being provided to patients with suspected JE fever through 'Mrintunjoy 108 Ambulances'. The Assam government is ensuring that treatment and diagnostic cost at medical colleges and district hospitals are borne by the state while a certain number of beds there have been reserved for Japanese Encephalitis patients. A round-the-clock central control room has been opened to deal with and monitor the situation and all deputy commissioners have been directed

to step up surveillance activities. Health and Family Welfare Commissioner and Secretary Anurag Goel held a meeting through video conference on Wednesday with all the deputy commissioners and principal secretaries of the Autonomous Councils to review the Japanese Encephalitis situation in the state. He also interacted with officials of the National Vector Borne Control Programme, NHM Assam Mission Director J V N Subramanyam, Director of Health Services Assam Dr R Bhuyan, and other health department officials. On Monday, Additional Secretary Sanjeev Kumar, who led a four-member central team to the state, had said July and August it would be a challenge to contain the outbreak of the disease to the minimum in July and August. PTI

Swamy alerts Govt about revival of LTTE

Senior BJP leader Subramanian Swamy has alerted the Government of India about a plan to revive Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a banned organisation, in Tamil Nadu. In a letter addressed to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Swamy has said that the AIADMK Government in Tamil Nadu was "unwittingly" assisting in the revival of the LTTE and was giving money for the purpose. "On July 4, under the auspices of a pro-LTTE organisation FETA (Federation of Tamil



Nesan, a pro LTTE Catholic Bishop. But it is surprising that the Tamil Nadu Government is donating Rs 3 crore and has sent a 20-member delegation under the leadership of Ma Foi Pandiarajan, Tamil Nadu Minister," Swamy has stated in the letter. Swamy has also suggested to the union home minister that any attempt to revive the LTTE in Europe should be nipped in the bud. He concludes the letter by asking the Home Minister to hold enquiries with the Tamil Nadu Government about sending the delegation to the convention and also about the donation being made by the State.

There is nothing surprising in the appointment of Udhayanidhi to the present post as he was being groomed by Stalin and his close confidantes as the next party boss. Interestingly, Stalin was the youth wing secretary of the DMK for 35 years and stepped down in 2017 after his appointment as working president of the party. The importance of youth wing leadership could be understood from the fact that Stalin headed the organisation even after him becoming a grandfather. Saminathan, a close aide to Stalin was given the charge of the youth wing to keep the chair warm for Udhayanidhi.

Stalin's son appointed as DMK youth wing gen secretary

KUMAR CHELAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Politics in Tamil Nadu got enlivened as Udhayanidhi Stalin, the 41-year-old actor son of DMK chief MK Stalin was on Thursday appointed as the general secretary of the party's youth wing paving the way for his appointment as the successor to his father. Udhayanidhi, a popular film actor was one of the star campaigners of the party in the recently held Lok Sabha elections from the State which was swept by the DMK-led alliance. K Anbazhagan, the 96-year-old general secretary of the DMK said in a release on Thursday that he was appointing Udhayanidhi as the secretary of the youth wing under Rules 18 and 19 of the party. MP Saminathan, former Minister and MLA who was holding the position of the youth wing secretary has been relieved from the post, said the release.

M Karunanidhi, who held the post of DMK president for 49 years had groomed Stalin to take over after his exit from the scene. Udhayanidhi is popular in Tamil Nadu thanks to his career in the films. Even while acting in movies, he was a regular in DMK's official functions. "We are all happy that Udhayanidhi has been appointed as the youth wing chief and there is nothing surprising in it. He has endeared himself to the party cadre and general public through his affable manners. He is our future," said Dorai Murugan, deputy leader of the DMK in Tamil Nadu assembly.

Ravindran Doraisamy, political commentator and a DMK watcher for decades was of the view that the elevation of Udhayanidhi in the party is major event in the political history of Tamil Nadu. "Udhayanidhi is an articulate speaker and has shown his leadership qualities. Whether he would succeed as MP or MLA would be known only after his election. But he is the political leader to watch in Tamil Nadu," said Doraisamy.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Name of work and its location: 30-Elect-10-T-R2-19-20-E3. Comprehensive AMC of Johnson make escalators installed at PF No. 08 & 16 at DLI main, PF No. 14-15 at New Delhi PF No. 01 at HNZM Railway Stations for three years. Approx cost of the works: Rs. 50.39 Lacs. Address of the office: Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. Earnest Money: Rs. 1,00,800.00. Date & time of submission of tender: 29.07.2019, 15:00 Hrs. Opening of tender: 29.07.2019, 15:15 Hrs. Website & notice board: www.irps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. 2154/2019
Serving Customers with a Smile

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पत्रांक - 532/4/ई050/जोन-1/2019 दिनांक - 03/07/2019
निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
गाजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण की ओर से टेकेंदारों/फर्मों से सुसंगत नियमों एवं शर्तों के अंतर्गत राजनगर एक्सटेंशन क्षेत्र में मुख्य बन्धा मार्ग को छोड़कर शेष सड़कों पर चार माह हेतु साफ-सफाई का कार्य के सम्बन्ध में मुहर बन्द निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा सम्बन्धित विस्तृत निविदा सूचना प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.gdaghaziabad.com पर उपलब्ध है। विस्तृत निविदा सूचना के अनुसार कार्यों के निविदा प्रपत्र विजया बैंक से क्रय किये जा सकते हैं। निविदाएं अधिशासी अभियन्ता जेन-1 के कार्यालय में रखी निविदा बाक्स में विस्तृत सूचना अनुसार निर्धारित दिनांक को ही स्वीकार होगी। निविदा सम्बन्धित समस्त नियम शर्त एवं निविदा प्रपत्र सम्बन्धित जेन के अधिशासी अभियन्ता गाजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण के कार्यालय में किसी भी कार्य दिवस में एवं प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.gdaghaziabad.com पर देखा जा सकता है। निविदा में कोई भी शंकोधन/परिचालन/परिवहन मात्र प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट पर ही प्रकाशित किया जायेगा। अधिशासी अभियन्ता
Email: helpinegda@gmail.com, @gdagzb, @gdagzb
Helpline No.: 0120-3342433, WhatsApp: 9818988807, Website: www.gdaghaziabad.com
एक सुन्दर शहर.....हमारा संकल्प

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person Namely: Unknown S/o Unknown R/o Unknown Age: 50-55 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Cream colour shirt and pant has been found in unconscious condition on footpath, outside GGS Hospital, Delhi on 25.06.2019 lateron, expired during treatment in safdarjung Hospital, Delhi on 28.06.2019. In this regard a case vide DD No. 10-A dated 28.06.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Khyala, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this dead person may kindly inform to the following:-
SHO P.S. Khyala, Delhi West Distt., Delhi
DP/8322/WD/19 Ph. No. 011-28335696, 28335686

Appeal for Identification
General public is hereby informed that one male Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 40-45 Years, Height: 5'6", Sex: Male, Complexion: Fair, Built: Normal, Face: Round, Wearing: White Lining Shirt & Grey Pant was found dead on 30.06.2019. Place of Recovery Opposite 28/63 Main Road Kasturba Nagar, Delhi. In this regard FIR/DD No. 21A, dated 30.06.2019 has been lodged at PS Vivek Vihar, Delhi. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign.
SHO PS. Vivek Vihar, Delhi
DP/1113/SHD/19 Ph.: 011-22146040, 22150370

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby, informed to General Public that I/we Bipul Kumar Singh, S/o Sri Gopal Saran Singh, R/o Vijay Nagar, Ruknपुरा, Patna, Bihar, have lost the original Provisional Allotment Letter No. JCNKA A090506 Dated 18/02/2009 issued by Japrkash Associates Limited in respect to unit bearing no A6-506 in wish Town Classic project situated in Jaypee Greens, Noida on dated 15/06/2019. Anyone finding the said documents is requested to kindly return to me or to the company.
Bipul Kumar Singh Vijay Nagar, Ruknपुरा Patna, Bihar, Phone no: 7091404156 Email: Singhbkb2000@yahoo.com

DELHI JAL BOARD GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (NW) III
OVER HEAD TANK ASHOK VIHAR DELHI
Press N.I.T. No. 17 (2019-20)
S. No. Name of Work Estimated Cost Date of release of tender in E-procurement solution Last date / time of receipt of tender through e-procurement
1. Replacement of old/ damaged water line by P/L 100 mm, 80 mm, 50 mm dia D/I/GI water line at Jailor Wala Bagh JJC, Ashok Vihar Ph-II in Wazirpur Constituency, AC-17 under EE (NW) III. Rs. 44,67,322/- Tender ID No. 2019_DJB_175627_3 on 04.07.2019 at 12:32 PM 19.07.2019 Up to 3:00 PM
*Further details in this regard can be seen at https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in.
ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER) Sd/-
Adv. No. J.S.V 132/2019-20 EX. ENGINEER (NW)III

Trend Blazer

Arjun moved by Broadway

Actor **ARJUN KAPOOR** watched *To Kill a Mockingbird* on Broadway and said it punched him hard in the gut.

"As actors, we become numb to consuming other works because we know the process to a certain degree but every once in a while something comes about and punches you in the gut so hard... so I saw *To Kill a Mockingbird* on Broadway," Arjun wrote on social media.

The 34-year-old actor said he "felt humbled, felt emotional, felt a surge of anger, confusion, sadness and hope all together" after watching the play.

"It's based in America, post the Civil War but it is still relevant across the world even more so today... each and every actor was sublime," he added.



'One has to be blessed to have a voice that creates impact. I can only thank the Almighty for gifting me that. Until I started performing in public, when at the end of the concert people would come to me with teary eyes and say that my performance took them to a trance zone, I had no idea that I can create an impact with my singing.'

—Javed Ali



Actor **AJAY DEVGN** launched NY Cinemas, his new venture's first thematic multiplex, in Ratlam.

The new two-screen multiplex hosts Ratlam's biggest screen with a capacity of 460 seats, 3D-equipped 2K projection and 7.1 surround sound, bringing the latest in multiplex technology to the city. The biggest attraction is its railway-inspired interior which transports one through the different ages of the train.

It also introduces the concept of 'Photo Time Machine' where moviegoers can teleport themselves to different eras.



Halle bags role in *The Little Mermaid*

Singer **HALLE BAILEY** has been roped in to play Ariel in the remake of *The Little Mermaid*.

The reboot of the 1989 classic will be directed by Rob Marshall. After bagging the lead role in the film, Halle expressed her happiness on social media.

"Dream come true, the warrior," the singer captioned. Zendaya, who was earlier rumoured to play Ariel, congratulated Halle on the role.

"Yes!! Here for this," Zendaya tweeted sharing a link of a news article about the casting.



PLEASURE AND PAIN

A group of young girls is driving a conversation on female sexuality across cities, says **TEAM VIVA**

Women don't please themselves. May be the adventurous and experimental ones do. Or so goes the urban myth. Although the dark ages have passed by when self-pleasers were threatened with punishments like blindness, madness and impotence, there is a glaring discrepancy in the way male and female masturbation is referenced in mainstream conversation today. But women across cities are themselves taking charge of talking about their biological needs and cravings thereby normalising them as part of social habits.

#OMH (#OhMyHrithik), a platform that normalises female fantasies and eradicates the stigma around self-pleasure in the country, recently started discussions around it to make the act guilt-free. Founded by five 19-year-olds from different parts of the country, who happen to be classmates in their college in Mumbai — Kriti Kulshrestha, Mansi Jain (both from Jaipur), Kevika Singla (from Bathinda), Vaishali Manek (from Gujarat) and Suparna Dutta (from Kolkata) — the platform has been making waves online as well as offline as it has held sessions in Delhi, Mumbai and Jaipur.

Kriti says the idea emerged out of a random conversation with her group of friends. "We realised that people feel so shy to admit or talk about it even though they might not personally hesitate to do so. And it is not just about women but men as well to some extent. However, female masturbation gets the wrong, salacious attention because people don't expect women to be indulgent," she adds.

Until recently, even acknowledging that some women masturbate as an ordinary self-care ritual that was as routine as any exercise, felt odd. Part of that also happens to be the result of faulty sex education classes. Then there is the home ecosystem. Where fathers and sons have what is called a "man to man" talk, most women don't have any conversation between themselves or their mothers on selfie sex. As a result, for most women self-pleasuring is like a hidden truth or a forbidden territory. Therapists list many benefits of female masturbation



like decreased anxiety levels to increased immune response. They claimed that not only is it one of the most empowering experiences one can have, it helps in generating self-awareness about what women want and what they lack.

Latest studies are eye-openers. Around 95 per cent of males and 89 per cent of females revealed that they have masturbated. In fact, it is the first sexual act experienced by most males and females. In young children, masturbation is a general part of a growing child's exploration of his or her body. Psychology suggests that children, as old as nine, start to touch themselves as a part of their curiosity about their bodies. Most people continue to masturbate in adulthood, and many do so throughout their lives. However, the study further revealed that while they talked about it in the public space, there were judgements made around their character.

The study also revealed that while around 28 per cent of women fantasise about men with muscular thighs and abs, 64.6 per cent women fantasise about being dominated sexually. Fifty seven per cent women also fantasise about group sex. The girls tell us that they have observed



a common pattern during their sessions, which do not aim to do any therapy or motivate — women just want to have conversations and ease their minds over it. Kriti tell us, "We begin by sharing our experiences and the challenges we have faced while expressing ourselves. At first, they are a bit conscious but when they gradually start relating to our incidences and stories, they also open up. And eventually, it's just conversations that remain."

And when we look at Bollywood, it seems as though sexuality comes naturally to men. This is why when recently

actresses Kalki Koechlin (in *Margarita With A Straw*), Swara Bhasker (in *Veere Di Wedding*), Kiara Advani (in *Lust Stories*) and Shweta Tripathi (in *Mirzapur*) enacted self-pleasure scenes in their respective films, there was a controversy, trolling of the actors, censor cuts and 'A' certificates to the films too. However, it is also a positive sign that the Hindi film industry has at least begun to delve into female sexuality openly.

Kriti says, "It's good to see mainstream media and cinema taking up female sexuality and showcasing it as something that

is normal. It is inspiring. In fact, one of our inspirations was also Kiara's unfathomably mind-blowing role in *Lust Stories*."

She continues to add that the title of their initiative '#OMH' is just a name that replaces 'G' in 'OMG (Oh My God)' with 'Hrithik'. "Hrithik Roshan has been a Greek god and one of the most dashing actors in Bollywood. It does not say that it is 'just' about Hrithik but about all the men who women have fantasised about. We just use it as a term here to validate their fantasies and tell them — Women, it's normal."



First things first, there is no doubt that vehicular transportation is staring down the barrel of electrification, at least from an urban transportation point of view. But the Indian automotive industry appears to be staring down the barrel of a gun by the government which appears to be in a tearing hurry for electrification. The reasons to switch to electricity as the main mode of tractive power on vehicles are myriad. There is the dream to free the Indian economy from the vagaries of fluctuating crude oil prices as well as the huge amounts of money that India spends on importing crude every year.

Then there is air pollution. Vehicular pollution is a reality of life. It might not be as visible as the huge clouds of dust swirling around thanks to poor roads and never-ending construction projects, but it is a problem. Then there is that pipe dream of making India the 'Detroit' of electric-vehicle manufacturing, an argument that overlooks two things — Detroit's factories are rusting hulks right now and India has done nothing, nada, to secure the resources needed to make the batteries that electrifying India's roads will need. Policy wonks in the government talk of the need for private sector to step up, not even looking across the border at what China has done with regards to Lithium, Palladium and the Rare earths that mass-scale electrification will need. The government and policy think-tanks may not like it but this requires government intervention, not loud and rude sessions with Indian private sector manufacturers.

But the single-biggest elephant in the room is cost. And this will be evident with the Hyundai Kona, which is a Creta-sized electric SUV from Korea and the Audi e-tron, Audi's latest electric SUV, based on the Q5 long-wheelbase. Both these cars will be launched in India in the next few weeks. They will be very modern and full of the latest technology, the e-tron dispenses with standard outside rear-view mirrors and replaces with cameras projecting images onto screens mounted on the door trim. Electric cars have unbelievable running costs. A few months ago, I wrote about the BMW i3s that I drove that gave me a running cost, with the air-conditioner and everything, of



Electric is the future

Hyundai is launching the electric 'Kona' next week, Audi has its e-tron about to hit the market. But the electric future of vehicles is not as simple as launching a few cars and motorcycles

under a rupee a kilometre. The problem is that fixed costs of the vehicles are ridiculous, because batteries are expensive. And India has no battery megafactories, although Panasonic and Suzuki are in partnership to build the first.

Some problems are hyped up to be much worse than they are, the problem of charging infrastructure, for example, which actually can be fixed very easy. There is also the fallacy of there not being enough electricity in India, which is untrue. And even if the electricity is thermal, an electric car is somewhat cleaner in the long run than an internal-combustion engine car, though given India's energy mix, it has been shown that plug-in hybrids are the most carbon efficient vehicles in India at the current time. Also it has to be noted that India's energy mix will change going forward with more renewables and more nuclear power coming onstream. The problem with electrification is actually in the back-end, the requirement for three-phase power everywhere and the massive investments in transformers and smart grids that will be required. Given the precarious financial health of most of India's publicly-owned electricity suppliers, this is a hundred thousand crore question.

Back to costs for the consumer. There is one thing about the mad push for electric vehicles that I find disconcerting that even massive reductions in taxes and registration charges will not fix. The huge fixed costs of batteries. In a four-wheel electric car, the battery costs make up between 50-70 per cent of the overall vehicular costs. In a two-wheeler, the battery will make up between 70-90 per cent of the cost, because really metal and plastics are not that expensive. And if you have not noticed, a bulk of the vehicles on India's roads today comprise commuter motorcycles, the sweet-spot for the manufacturers being the ₹50,000 mark. However, this industry is suffering a sales downturn because costs of popular 100-125cc motorcycles will climb 10-15 per cent thanks to BS-VI emission norms, which will make Indian motorcycles the cleanest in the world. So, expecting the poor guy on the street to fork out ₹ 1.2-1.5 lakh for an electric two-wheeler is ridiculous.

Yes, there has to be some sort of government push, but the government also has to invest, they cannot expect the private sector to shoulder the burden of their myopia. In the West, and Norway, which the government likes to quote where 39 per cent

of the cars are electric, ironic for a country that makes it money exporting crude oil, subsidies on electric vehicles are huge. The FAME-II subsidies by the Indian government, on the other hand, are not even worth being called that. There needs to be far better thinking and thought put towards electrification. Some studies and pilot projects conducted have highlighted the issues that India will face, poor electrical infrastructure coupled with ambient Indian summer temperatures became a huge problem during one pilot project. Demanding the industry does one thing will not make these problems magically disappear.

Electrification will happen, and it might even happen sooner than we think in the natural scheme of things, a properly planned out build-up. With huge battery factories, better back-end electrical infrastructure and world-class vehicle manufacturing. A brainless 'Charge of the Light Brigade' style rush into electrification will be suicidal for the Indian automotive industry, which will be inundated with Chinese imports. Believe me, the Indian economy can afford that much less than the amount we spend on crude oil imports.



Kashyap defends Pannu in Twitter spat

The trailer of Kangana Ranaut and Rajkumar Rao's *Judgmental Hai Kya* is out and has been receiving praise from all over. Celebrities took to their social media to comment on it. Actress Taapsee Pannu was one of them and lauded it, saying, "This is so cool. Always had high expectations out of this one and this looks so worth it. *Judgmental Hai Kya*."

Rangoli replied, "Kuch log Kangana ko copy kar ke he apni dukaan chalate hain (Some people run their shop by copying Kangana), magar (but) please note, they never acknowledge her, not even a mention of her name in praising the trailer. Last, I heard Taapseeji said Kangana needs a double filter and Taapseeji you need to stop being a sasti copy."

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap defended Taapsee and said it was "really desperate" of Rangoli. "Come on Rangoli... this is going too far. This is really, really desperate. I really don't know what to say to this. Having worked with both your sister and Taapsee. I just don't get this. Praising the trailer means praising all aspects of it. Which includes Kangana."

But Rangoli didn't stop there. She wrote, "Sir, you can see it's not about mentioning Kangana so much. Clearly, a lot of people I have thanked haven't mentioned her, it's just that I am tired of people taking digs at her. Who is this Taapsee to claim that Kangana needs double filter. So now I am here showing everyone (the) mirror... I know you are working with her, but please don't get desperate without understanding the real issue... back off."



REVISITING A GLORIOUS PAST

SHAMBHAVI SURI takes a trip down the lanes of nostalgia with the flavours of DARYAGANJ and comes back satiated

When one thinks of Delhi, the first thing that crosses one's mind is the delectable food which the city is known for. The food culture of the city is certainly one-of-its-kind. While Delhiites can't thank the Mughals and the British enough for imparting distinct flavours to their cuisine, there is also the influence of the immigrant Punjabi population, especially that of restaurateur Kundan Lal Jaggi who contributed by inventing two iconic dishes — *Butter chicken* and *Dal makhani*. First served in the 1950s in a small *dhaba* in Daryaganj, these two dishes have gone on to become global favourites. However, the recipes of the two legendary dishes have changed and modified over time.

I sit at Jaggi's grandson, Raghav Jaggi's restaurant in Aerocity, Daryaganj, where he has partnered with his childhood friend Amit Bagga. The duo has recreated the era when the street food at Daryaganj was the most preferred outdoor meal for Delhiites. The décor here is modern yet antique as the seating arena and the partitioning between tables give the place a touch of the bygone era. With people chattering around and timeless Bollywood classics playing in the background, it is not hard to imagine even though momentarily that one is traversing the charming, narrow and winding lanes of the area which answers to the description of Delhi-6. And it's a nostalgic trail.

As some of the best *qawwalis* come on air, as if on cue, some kebabs are placed on my table. I am served the *Original tandoori chicken* and *Chicken malai tikka*. The *Tandoori chicken* is nothing short of a blast of flavours in my mouth. While its aromatic herbs and spices remind me of the authentic old Delhi flavours, the softness of the chicken makes it melt in my mouth. The yogurt marinade makes the *tandoori chicken*, a little acidic, but that also helps to cut through the spices and gives it a hint of creaminess, a quality that the *chicken malai tikka* is all about. Cooked simply with cumin and cream, this kebab is as tender as it can be and delicious. It also has a sweetness and nuttiness to it, probably from the ground cashews that are added to the cream.

Next up are the *Original mutton seekh* and the *Original mutton burrah*. As I take



IN MY WORLD VIEW, MIXED WITH THE SIGNATURE SAUCE, THE MAKHANI DAL CERTAINLY QUALIFIES FOR THE TITLE OF ONE OF THE GREATEST DISHES EVER INVENTED

a bite of the mutton *seekh*, I am taken aback. The *seekhs* have a chariness and smoky texture from the *tandoor* marks. However, the highlight of the *seekhs* is that one can distinguish between the flavours of almost all the spices. The dry roasted *garam masala* not only adds flavour but also a beautiful fragrance to the kebab. The meat for the *seekhs* is minced, yet there is a bite to it which makes it an extraordinary experience. On the other hand, the mutton *burrah* made of mutton chops, lightly coated with spices, cooked and smoked in the *tandoor*, is to die for. The meat falls off the bone and as you take that first bite, releasing all its juices. That truly takes you to heaven.

For the main course, I am served the *Original butter chicken* and *Dal makhani*. Dipping in my *naan*, I realise that the consistency of the butter chicken isn't the same as any other that are to be had in the market. The gravy of the original butter chicken consists of fresh crushed tomatoes with a bit of butter in which has been tossed *tandoori* chicken. The dish is garnished with cream. This butter chicken is light on the stomach, has a tanginess which comes from the pulp of tomatoes that aren't reduced to a puree. This gives the dish a freshness and preserves the tomato juices. This butter chicken is definitely the best of its kind. Taking a sip of the *Dal makhani*, I fell in love with the dish all over again. Unlike the ones I have tasted before, here the flavour of *urad dal* dominates and its earthiness adds another profile to the dish. In my world view, mixed with the signature *makhani* sauce, it certainly qualifies for the title of one of the greatest dishes ever invented.

Ending this beautiful journey of experiencing the original flavours of nostalgia, I dig into the desserts. First up is the Mughlai delicacy, the *Phirni*. Served in the traditional *matka*, this saffron flavoured, semolina pudding (as the English would call it) is delightful. Brought down and set to a thick consistency, this *phirni* seems like the yellow clouds that are seen after rains. On the palate, it feels the same — light and fluffy as a cloud. The *Mixed nuts kulfi* is nothing fancy. Served on a bamboo stick it transports you back to your childhood when you could actually taste and chew the dry-fruit in this frozen delight.

The taste of the food proves that the people behind Daryaganj are paying attention to each and every detail to recreate the recipes of yore. The restaurant uses no machines and sticks to the traditional tools of cooking such as the mortar-pestle, which brings out the best flavours.

With its ambience, experience and taste, one almost feels sitting in the original restaurant in Daryaganj, enjoying some exceptional kebabs and curries and enjoy the *qawwalis* being sung live in the yard just outside the restaurant. Aah, the pleasures of the days past.

Mix, shake and serve

The bartending industry has evolved over the years and broadened its horizons to include women in the profession

Aarti Mestry, 29, was one proud woman competing against 19 men in the finals of a bartending championship — an example of how women are slowly but steadily making their way into the male-dominated space in India.

Mestry, who competed at the Ultimate Bartender Championship, said the industry has evolved over the years, opening the doors for women in the profession. "My experience as a bartender has been very progressive. I love playing with cocktails and serve it in different ways to my guests. I never felt that this is the so called 'men's game'. I work at a place where I get equal opportunities as male bartenders," said she.

"I feel nobody can discriminate you if you have skills. In today's time, skills matter the most. If you are good at your job, people will definitely appreciate you, irrespective of your gender," said Mestry, who works at a bar in Bengaluru and has been a part of the industry since the last six years.

Ami Behram Shroff and Shabthi Basu are two names which come up almost every-time women bartenders are spoken of in the industry in India.

Pankaj Balachandran, India Brand Ambassador for Monkey Shoulder, said that there was a taboo that women can't work in bars, but it has completely changed now.

"An increasing number of women are getting into the hospitality industry. There are bars which have really good ladies bartenders. Four years ago, women in the bartending profession were only a handful, but now the number has increased," Balachandran said. However, there are factors that hamper their visibility in the industry. Safety is one prime reason.

According to Arijit Bose, who has been in the food and beverage industry for more than 10 years, hiring a woman as a bartender involves a lot of responsibility, and due to lack of facilities, standalone bars still resist working with females.

He recounted how the Jessica Lal murder case in 1999 in Delhi had sparked a debate regarding the safety of women bartenders in India.

He said, "Safety matters a lot, especially for women. Bartending is a long hours shift job. It looks easy from the surface level but there are a lot of complications. Employers hesitate to hire women because it becomes their duty to ensure proper safety for them. But no one can guarantee anyone's safety, right? And one mistake can shut down your whole bar. So that's why people still prefer to work with male bartenders."



From interacting with customers to maintaining proper cleanliness and making new types of drinks, a bartender has to do multiple tasks

Alisha, a Mumbai-based bartender who also competed at the Ultimate Bartender Championship, but couldn't make it to the top 20, said safety has never been a problem for her. "I know there are places which do not hire women bartenders but people who do hire them, ensure proper safety. At my workplace, there is a separate locker and toilet facility for women. Proper cab facility is also provided to female employees. Women's safety is a top priority at my workplace," she said.

Alisha said she was also lucky to get her family's support in her decision of following her passion for bartending unlike most people whose parents consider the profession 'non-serious'.

"There are many perceptions regarding our profession. People generally think we just know how to serve alcohol. But there is a lot more beyond it. From interacting with customers to maintaining proper cleanliness to making new types of drinks, a bartender has to do multiple tasks. It's not easy to be a bartender.

Our profession looks quite glamorous but it is also a serious job. Things have changed, but there should be more changes. I hope in the coming years, I see more girls coming in." she said.



Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Government of India
(Competition Commission of India)
Appointment of one Member

Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi invites applications from Indian Nationals for the one post of Member in the Competition Commission of India (CCI) with Law or Judicial Background. The Member shall be paid a consolidated monthly salary of Rupees four lakh only and shall not be entitled to house and car.

For application format, eligibility conditions, requisite qualifications and other details, log on to the web-sites of this Ministry (www.mca.gov.in), the Competition Commission of India (www.cci.gov.in) or Department of Personnel & Training (<http://persmin.nic.in>).

Applications in the prescribed format, duly completed should reach to Shri Rakesh Kumar, Under Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Room No. 520 'A' Wing, 5th Floor, Shastri Bhawan, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi-110001 latest by 25th July, 2019 (5:30 PM).

Davp/07101/11/0007/1920

NORTHERN RAILWAY
1st Corrigendum to the tender notice No. 448-ACS-C-P-Way-NL-TKJ dt. 03.07.2019

Name of work: Linking of BG track & turnout, Provision of glued joint & SEJ, dismantling of existing track & turnout, handling, lifting, loading, unloading and spreading of ballast, leading of P. Way materials and other misc. work, Fabrication, supplying & fixing in position Galvanisation Steel Channel Sleepers and Alumino Term welding of 60kg 90 UTS rails and combination joint with single shot crucible SKV process in c/w Rohtak-Meham New Line Work (km 5/200 to km 37/500) and shifting of Rohtak-Gohana-Panipat Line out of Rohtak City Elevated Portion (km 0.800 to km 5.650) in connection with New Line between Rewari-Rohtak.

The date of opening for the above subjected work tender may be treated as "29.07.2019 at 11.30 hrs" instead of 31.07.2019 at 11.30 hrs in S. No. 5.

The corrigendum is also available on Northern Railway website www.indianrailways.gov.in Tender Notice No. 448-ACS-C-P Way-NLTKJ dt. 04.07.2019 2161/19

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
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(Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)
NIFT Campus, Hauz Khas, Near Gulmohar Park, New Delhi-110016
Phone No. 011 - 26542159, 011-26542170

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Upgradation of Firewall Device with Buy Back of existing/old Firewall Device for More information please login <http://nift.ac.in/delhi/tenders>

EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

GLOBAL E-TENDER NOTICE

01) Name of Area: MM Deptt, ECL, Hqrs. 02) Tender No. and date: ECL/Hq/Pur/Global/11921021/2019-20/Dozer/026 & Date: 03.07.2019. 03) Name of Work: Procurement of 3 nos 310HP- 330HP (231.17 KW- 246.08 KW) Dozer with Guaranteed Availability & Guaranteed Spares for 03 (Three) years (01 year warranty period and 02 years thereafter) from the date of commissioning of the equipment. 04) Estimated tender value: Rs.8,37,00,000.00. 05) Document download start date: From 11.00 Hrs IST OF 12.07.2019. 06) Document download end date: At 11.00 Hrs IST OF 12.08.2019. 07) Tender Opening date & time: At 11.00 Hrs IST OF 13.08.2019. Note: Details of tenders can be seen in www.easterncoal.nic.in or <http://eprocure.gov.in> or <http://coalindiatenders.nic.in>.

VISIT US AT www.easterncoal.nic.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for Notice of the General public that a Political Party is Proposed to be registered by the name of BHARTIYA LOK NAYAK PARTY (Name of The Party). The office of the Party is Located at Nauwapali Chakara Siwan Bihar (Give full address). This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for Registration as Political Party under Section 29A of The Representation of People Act, 1951- Names/Address of the office-bearers of The Party as Follows:

President/Chairman: Sanjay Kumar Sah, Nauwapali Chakara Siwan Bihar.
General Secretary/Secretary: Raj Kishore Pandey, Dakhner, Paraiya, Gaya, Bihar.
Treasurer: Kripashankar Sah, Near Hasampur Stand, Siwan Bihar.

Id any one has any Objection to the Registration of Bhartiya Lok Nayak Party (Name of The Proposed Party) they may send their Objection with Reasons therof, to the Secretary (Political Party Election Commission of India, Niravachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of This Notice.

gorge us

The Ashok celebrates seasonal flavours with Mango Mania — *Koi aam festival nahin* — offering delicacies such as *Aam panna*, *Alphonso daiquiri*, *Dusherhi chaat* and *Mango cheese croquette*. Time: 12 pm to 10 pm Price: ₹300 onwards Date: Till July 15 Venue: The Samavar — The 24 hour Coffee Shop, The Ashok.

The Westin brings culinary festival — Flavors of Sardinia — at the hotel's Italian restaurant, Prego. Some of the dishes are *Carpaccio di salmone alla giardiniera* (marinated salmon with giardiniera salad in a light mandarin dressing); *Fregola di gamberi* (Sardinian couscous with prawns in a bisque). Time: 12 pm to 3 pm and 6 pm to 12 am Price: (for two) ₹2,700 Date: Till July 15 Venue: Prego, The Westin, Gurgaon.

RELIANCE HOME FINANCE LIMITED
Branch Office: 260-261, Dev House, Tribhuvan Complex, New Friends Colony (West), Ishwar Nagar, New Delhi - 110065
Corporate & Registered Office: Reliance Centre, 6th Floor, South Wing, Near Prabhat Colony, Santacruz (East), Mumbai - 400055

SALE CUM AUCTION NOTICE

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer (AO) of the Reliance Home Finance Ltd. (RHF), invites tenders/Quotations for purchase of the properties specified below of the below mentioned Borrowers, under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, for recovery of secured debts of Rs.1,77,81,751/- (Rupees One Crore Seventy Seven Lakh Eighty One Thousand Seven Hundred And Fifty One only) as on 30th June, 2019 plus interest and costs etc. of RHF. The Property/ies are proposed to be sold on "As is Where is" and "As is Whatever there is basis" and on without recourse basis.

Name & Address of Borrowers	Property/Security Interest Details	Reserve Price (Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Last Date & Place of submitting sealed quotations/bids	Date & Venue of Auction/opening quotations/bids
(1) Yatinder Kumar Chhoker, at H No. 823 Sec-14, Gurgaon- 122001 and also at Open Plot, Plot No-77, Sector-31, -32A, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001 (2) Yash Chhoker, at H No. 823 Sec-14, Gurgaon- 122001 and also at Open Plot, Plot No-77, Sector-31, -32A, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001 (3) Sudha Chhoker, at H No. 823 Sec-14, Gurgaon- 122001 and also at Open Plot, Plot No-77, Sector-31, -32A, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001.	Mortgage over following property: "Open Plot, Plot No-77, Sector-31, -32A, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001"	Rs 3,10,00,000/- (i.e. Rupees Three Crore And Ten Lakh Only)	Rs 3,10,00,000/- (Rupees Thirty One Lakh only)	3-August-2019, Time: 5.00PM. Bids to be addressed to: To the Authorized Officer, 260-261, Dev House, Tribhuvan Complex, New Friends Colony (West), Ishwar Nagar, New Delhi - 110065/Contact Person: Somesh Sundriyal Tel: (9910563402)	07-August-2019 at Reliance Home Finance Ltd 260-261, Dev House, Tribhuvan Complex, New Friends Colony (West), Ishwar Nagar, New Delhi -110065

Note: The AO may at his/her discretion permit inter-se bidding amongst the top three bidders.

Inspection of Properties Bidders/interested parties may inspect the properties/site between 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. From 15 July- 19 to 17-July -19. The interested parties may contact the Chief Manager, Reliance Home Finance Ltd., Contact Person Somesh Sundriyal Tel:(9910563402).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The interested parties may send/submit their quotation/bid in sealed covers superscripting on the envelope as "Quotation for Purchase of Property: "Open Plot, Plot No-77, Sector-31, -32A, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001 along with Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by way of Pay Order/DD, drawn in favor of "Reliance Home Finance Ltd.", payable at New Delhi.

- The EMD shall bear no interest, be adjusted in case of successful parties and shall be forfeited in case of default by such party.
- Tenders/bids incomplete in any respect or unsigned or not accompanied by DD/PO for the requisite EMD are liable to be summarily rejected at the sole discretion of AO.
- The successful Property/ies shall not be sold below the reserve price mentioned above.
- A successful party shall deposit 25% of the quoted amount, which amount shall include the EMD deposited, immediately on the same day by way of Pay Order / DD drawn in favour of "Reliance Home Finance Ltd.", payable at New Delhi, and remaining 75% shall be deposited within 15 days of date of the confirmation of sale or within the extended period as allowed by the undersigned in writing. The AO may at his/her sole discretion extend in writing the time for making the payments. In case of failure to make the required payments by the stipulated dates, the EMD and all amounts paid till then, shall stand forfeited without any notice and the Property/ies shall be resold.
- All such Payments to be made only in the form of Pay Order/ or Demand Draft drawn in favour of the Reliance Home Finance Ltd., payable at New Delhi.
- The Successful party would bear the charges/fees payable for sale/conveyance such as stamp duty, registration fees, taxes, levies, etc. as applicable as per law and also the miscellaneous expenses.
- The AO will not be responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Govt. or anybody in respect of the property/ies under sale.
- The AO reserves its right to negotiate with the highest bidder for improvement in the offer and has the absolute right to accept or reject any quotation or adjourn/postpone/cancel the auction/sale without assigning any reason therefor.
- The sale is subject to confirmation by the RHF.
- If the Borrower pays the amount due to the RHF in full before the date of auction/confirmation of sale, the auction/sale is liable to be stopped.
- To the best of knowledge and information of the AO, no other encumbrance exists on the above mentioned property/ies.
- This bid is not transferable.
- This publication is also a notice of 30 days to the Borrower and Guarantor/s of the intention of holding of sale on above mentioned date if the dues are not repaid in full. If the Borrower has any such proposal of selling of the property/ies to any person by private sale or by getting quotation, the same may be communicated to the undersigned within 7 days.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT, 2002

The Borrower/Guarantor are hereby notified to pay the total outstanding dues before the date of opening of bid failing which the secured assets will be auctioned and balance, if any, will be recovered with interest, cost and charges thereon from you.

Sd/-,
[Authorized Officer],
Name : Somesh Sundriyal
Reliance Home Finance Ltd.

Place: New Delhi
Date : 05-07-2019

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank
ICICI Bank Limited

Registered Office: ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakli Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodara- 390007, Gujarat.
Corporate Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai – 400051
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, AJC Bose Road, Kolkata 700020
CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

A notice is hereby given that the following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non Performing Assets (NPA). The notice dated were issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses as provided to the bank by them, that in addition thereto for the purposes of information of the said borrowers enumerated below, the said borrowers are being informed by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice/Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Swatantra Verma / Rashmi Sinha/ No F2 And G2 Jeevanshree, Second Floor- 239 Bidhan Nagar, Ps Tiljala West Bengal Calcutta 700039/LBCAL0002009427	Eco Village- 1, Flat No. 2001, Block - C2, Sector - 1, Unit No. R018C202001, 20th Floor, Gautam Budh Ngar (U.P) Greater Noida- 201303 Uttar Pradesh. Measuring An Area Of 1267 Sq Ft. Super Built Area	31-05-2019 Rs. 3136131/-	28-02-2019

The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (where ever applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of issuance of notice U/s. 13 (2), failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of issuance of notice U/s. 13 (2) dated mentioned above as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Date : July 05, 2019
Place : Noida

US tariffs must be lifted for a trade deal: China

AFP ■ BEIJING

US tariffs against China must be lifted for the two sides to reach a deal to end the trade war, the Chinese commerce ministry said on Thursday.



The countries have exchanged tariffs on \$360 billion in two-way trade and negotiations broke down in May after the United States accused China of renegeing on its commitments. Trump and Xi agreed at the G20 in Japan on Saturday to revive negotiations. The US leader said he would not slap new tariffs on Chinese exports and suggested he could take a softer stance on Chinese telecom giant Huawei, which he has moved to blacklist.

Iran will enrich uranium to any amount we want: Rouhani

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's President warned that Tehran will increase its enrichment of uranium to "any amount that we want" beginning on Sunday, putting further pressure on European nations to save its faltering nuclear deal and offer a way around intense U.S. Sanctions.



President Hassan Rouhani's threat, combined with Iran surpassing the stockpile limits of the 2015 atomic accord, could narrow the estimated one-year window it would need to produce enough material for a nuclear weapon, something Iran denies it wants but the deal sought to prevent.

recently shot down a U.S. Military surveillance drone.

But as tensions rise a year after President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the deal, it looks unlikely that Europe can offer Iran a way to sell its oil on the global market despite U.S. Sanctions.

"Be careful with the threats, Iran. They can come back to bite you like nobody has been bitten before!" Trump tweeted in response to Rouhani's warning.

All this comes the U.S. Has rushed an aircraft carrier, B-52 bombers and F-22 fighters to the region and Iran

is pushing the center of Iranian politics to the right at the detriment of the Iranian people and the entire region," said Ali Vaez, an Iran analyst for the International Crisis Group. "Rouhani is clearly at the end of his rope and has no choice other than green lighting further escalation."

Solution possible for China's Muslims, says Erdogan

AFP ■ ANKARA

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said a solution could be found to help Muslims interned in Chinese camps "taking into account the sensitivities" of both sides, in comments published Thursday.

He warned against those who sought to "abuse" the Xinjiang issue to create tensions with China, a key investor and trading partner.

Turkey is one of the only Muslim-majority countries to have criticised China over the detention of an estimated one million ethnic Uighurs and other mostly Muslim minorities in the restive Xinjiang province.

"This abuse is having a negative impact on Turkish-Chinese relations. It is necessary that we do not give opportunity to such abuse," Erdogan said.

But Erdogan struck a softer tone after meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday in Beijing.

He added that Turkey could "send a delegation to East Turkestan," the name given by activists to Xinjiang.

"I believe we can find a solution to the issue taking into account the sensitivities of both sides," Erdogan told Turkish journalists in Beijing before flying back to Turkey, according to Hurriyet daily.

The president's communications director, Fahrettin Altun, tweeted on Wednesday that the invitation came from the Chinese side.

Chinese state media claimed Erdogan said ethnic minorities live happily in Xinjiang, but he made no such

comments to Turkish reporters. Erdogan told his Chinese counterpart that Turkey's "sole wish was for Uighurs in China to live in peace and prosperity," Altun wrote. China denies holding people against their will in what it describes as "vocational education centres" aimed at steering citizens away from religious extremism.

Tripoli flights halted after strike by Libya strongman

AFP ■ TRIPOLI

The Libyan capital's only functioning airport suspended flights on Wednesday after an air raid claimed by strongman Khalifa Haftar's forces, airport authorities said in a statement.

The attack did not cause casualties or damage, a security source at Mitiga airport said.

But Ahmad al-Mesmari, a spokesman for Haftar's self-styled Libyan National Army, said that a "command centre for drones at Mitiga" was destroyed in the raid.

Haftar launched an offensive in early April to take the capital Tripoli, seat of the rival Government of National Accord. The GNA is recognised by the international community.

Over the past three months his self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA) has repeatedly targeted Mitiga airport. It says it is targeting "Turkish drones" which it claims take off from Mitiga to carry out strikes on LNA forces south of Tripoli.

UK keeping options open: Jeremy Hunt

PTI ■ LONDON

Britain is keeping its options open, including slapping sanctions on China over its treatment of pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt warned on Thursday, amidst the war of words between Beijing and London over the issue.

OVER CHINA'S TREATMENT OF PROTESTERS IN HONG KONG



Police officers try to keep apart a pro-Beijing supporter arguing with a pro-democracy supporter in the Legislative Council in Hong Kong on Thursday

Hundreds of thousands of Hong Kongers have taken to the streets in recent weeks over a proposed extradition bill which China critics fear would be used by Beijing to go after political dissidents in Hong Kong, a former British colony.

"Of course you keep your options open," he added, insisting the UK would not just "gulp and move on" if China cracks down on protesters in the former British colony.

On Monday, student protesters stormed and briefly occupied the city's legislature, causing widespread damage to the building before retreating.

Hunt said he "condemned all violence" but warned the Chinese government not to respond to the protests "by repression".

Beijing has hit out at the UK over accusations of "interference" in the domestic affairs of the semi-autonomous Chinese city, after British Foreign Secretary Hunt expressed support for Hong Kong protesters and said London would stand by the city in preserving its lim-

ited democratic freedoms. Reaffirming his tough stand, Hunt on Thursday warned China that it could face "serious consequences" over its treatment of protesters in Hong Kong. Hunt told the BBC that he was keeping his options open over how the UK could respond, and refused to rule out sanctions. Hunt said he would not discuss any potential consequences "because you don't want to provoke the very situation you are trying to avoid".

China, Britain wage war of words over Hong Kong

AFP ■ LONDON

China bluntly told Britain on Wednesday to "refrain from further interference" and London summoned Beijing's ambassador for a dressing down in a rapidly-escalating diplomatic feud over Hong Kong.

demning China's entire approach to its "special administrative region".

The protests sweeping the former British colony have also revived tensions inherent in the two sides' historic agreement on the global financial hub's handover to Chinese rule 22 years ago. Hong Kong was meant to continue enjoying broad freedoms under the "one country, two systems" approach first adopted by China in the 1980s.

Hunt called on Beijing not to use the protests as a "pretext for repressions" and warned of "serious consequences" if China breaches the commitments it made to London decades ago. His comments provoked a cascade of condemnations from China that began with its foreign ministry in Beijing and continued with its embassy in London.

But fears and frustrations over Beijing's gradual tightening of those rules spilled over into mass demonstrations against a now-stalled draft law on Hong Kong residents' extradition to China.

"He seems to be fantasising in the faded glory of British colonialism and in the bad habit of gesticulating while looking down on other countries' affairs", Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular briefing in Beijing.

They also saw UK Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt -- one of two candidates to become Britain's next prime minister -- take the global lead in con-

"I need to re-emphasise that Hong Kong has now returned to its motherland." The diplomatic offensive raged on at a hastily-convened press conference in London by Chinese ambassador Liu Xiaoming.

Migrant boat with 86 on board sinks off Tunisia, 4 rescued

AFP ■ TUNIS

More than 80 migrants have gone missing and only four were rescued after their boat capsized off Tunisia on its way from Libya to Italy, Tunisia's coast guard said Thursday.

Stromboli clears up ash after deadly volcano eruption

AFP ■ STROMBOLI (ITALY)

The village of Ginostra on Stromboli began sweeping away layers of ash on Thursday, the day after a dramatic volcanic eruption on the tiny Italian island killed a hiker.



Ash rises into the sky a day after a volcano erupted on the small Sicilian island of Stromboli, southern Italy on Thursday

Emergency workers brushed and scooped volcanic cinders from streets and the tiny harbour in the village at the foot of the still smoking volcano.

because of the risk of mini-tsunamis similar to those that previous eruptions have caused.

A veil of ash lay atop restaurant terrace tables and parts of the coastline.

Vulcanologists and locals told Italian media that the volcano was unlikely to erupt again in the near future.

Canadair water-bombing planes battled to put out fires started by two massive explosions which on Wednesday sent plumes of smoke two kilometres (over a mile) into the sky.

Around 1,000 tourists on Wednesday fled the island

The Red Crescent and the navy told AFP that three Malians and an Ivorian were rescued off Zarzis in southern Tunisia on Wednesday by the coast guard who had been alerted by local fishermen.

aboard ferries to the nearby Calabrian coast. Seventy people were evacuated from Ginostra on the volcano's south-west flank.

The Ivorian, however, died in hospital and one of the Malians has also been hospitalised in intensive care.

Many left without their identity papers and luggage. Sicilian hiker Massimo Imbesi, 35, was killed

Those rescued had told Tunisian officials that 86 people were on board their inflatable boat when it left from the Libyan town of Zuwara, west of Tripoli, on its way to cross the Mediterranean to Italy.

Wednesday when he was caught in the eruption's flow of hot rocks and fumes, while his Brazilian walking companion suffered from shock, emergency services said.

Several people suffered injuries, though none serious, they said.

The decision is a setback

Appeals court: Trump can't use Pentagon cash for border wall

AP ■ SAN DIEGO

An appeals court on Wednesday upheld a freeze on Pentagon money to build a border wall with Mexico, casting doubt on President Donald Trump's ability to make good on a signature campaign promise before the 2020 election.

for Trump's ambitious plans. He ended a 35-day government shutdown in February after Congress gave him far less than he wanted. He then declared a national emergency that the White House said would free billions of dollars from the Pentagon.

A divided three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco agreed with a lower court ruling that prevented the government from tapping Defense Department counter-drug money to build high-priority sections of wall in Arizona, California and New Mexico.

The case may still be considered, but the administration cannot build during the legal challenge.

"As for the public interest, we conclude that it is best served by respecting the Constitution's assignment of the power of the purse to Congress, and by deferring to the public interest as reflected in its repeated denial of more funding for border barrier con-

struction," wrote Judges Michelle Friedland, a Barack Obama appointee, and Richard Clifton, a George W. Bush appointee.

The US and EU have progressively imposed sanctions on Russia since its annexation

A freeze imposed by US District Judge Haywood Gilliam Jr. of Oakland in May prevented work on two Pentagon-funded wall contracts -- one spanning 74 kilometers in New Mexico and another covering 8 kilometers in Yuma, Arizona.

While the order applied only to those first-in-line projects, Gilliam made clear that he felt the American Civil Liberties Union was likely to prevail in their argument that Trump ignored Congress' wishes by diverting Defense Department money.

Putin meets pope, 'welcoming' populist Govt during Italy trip

AFP ■ ROME

Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Rome Thursday for a lightning visit including talks with the pope and Italy's populist government, which has called for an easing of sanctions despite Moscow's ongoing crisis with the West.

closed-door talks. Putin has arrived late for all three of their encounters, the last of which was in 2015 when the pope urged all parties to the conflict in Ukraine to make a "sincere effort" for peace.

Vatican and Moscow re-establish full diplomatic ties which were severed during Soviet times.

Rome's historic centre is on security lockdown for the visit with 50 streets blocked to traffic and Italian media reporting that mobile phone signals could be scrambled.

Relations have improved since the coming to power in the same year of Patriarch Kirill, who headed up the Russian Orthodox Church's diplomatic arm for years.

The Russian Orthodox Church has frequently accused the Catholic Church of proselytising in Russia, an Orthodox Christian country of 144 million.

Putin landed around an hour late at Fiumicino airport and his convoy drove into Rome and the Vatican City where he met the pope for

Pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine are mostly Russian Orthodox, while those they fight are Orthodox and Greek Catholic.

After meeting the pope, Putin will hold talks with Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and President Sergio Mattarella.

11th Century -- an event known as "The Great Schism."

Kremlin advisor Yuri Ushakov said on Wednesday that "for the time being a possible invitation for the pope to visit Russia is not on the agenda." The pope and Putin were to discuss matters including "preserving Christian holy sites in Syria," the Kremlin said.

Putin is being driven around in his six-metre-long (20-foot) armoured limo by a chauffeur who has been practising negotiating his way around the Eternal City's nar-

row streets. His talks with Italian leaders should be easier.

Far-right Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini has often expressed admiration for Putin, and his coalition government advocates reviewing EU sanctions against Russia.



Pope Francis and Russian President Vladimir Putin shake hands on the occasion of their private audience at the Vatican on Thursday



NACABASTE ENGLAND



FOR SA GAME, SOME PEOPLE SAY IT IS A DEAD RUBBER. THERE'S NOTHING DEAD ABOUT IT. IT'S ABOUT MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM OF WINNING AND THAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT FOR US
— JUSTIN LANGER

CricketCradle

TODAY LIVE

STAR SPORTS

Pakistan vs Bangladesh
3:00 pm IST
VENUE: Lord's, London

Ravindrasingh jadeja @imjadeja

Still i have played twice the number of matches you have played and i m still playing. Learn to respect ppl who have achieved.i have heard enough of your verbal diarrhoea.@sanjaymanjrekar

6:55 PM · 03 Jul 19 · Twitter for iPhone

Ravindra Jadeja hits out at former player turned commentator, Sanjay Manjrekar. Since India's loss to England, Manjrekar has been vocal in his criticism of a few players. The Mumbaikar also recently referred to Jadeja as a 'bits and pieces player'

Thumbs up MS
The image of former India skipper MS Dhoni spitting blood after the England game had fans losing sleep. After all, he is an integral part of the team and an injury to the thumb at the business end of the World Cup is the last thing that Indian fans would want. However, there is good news as the wicket-keeper has no injury threats as Team India prepares for the home stretch of the tournament. "Hai toh pahadi, woh yodha hai (he hails from the mountains and is a warrior). After more than 300 ODIs, do you think these little things even bother him? He has an amazing capacity to ignore pain. But more importantly, his finger is fine and there is nothing to worry about," a source said.

Class on Wheels
Going into the World Cup, the Indian team management was keen to travel to different cities in England by train as it not only saves time, but is also less tiring on the players. While their plea didn't cut ice with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and the Indian players have been travelling on bus, they have turned it into a classroom for the players. Speaking to IANS, sources said that the team management felt that it was apt to use the time travelling from one city to another by discussing strategies with players. "You can call it the class on wheels actually. While there is the share of fun and jokes and chilling, the support staff sometimes also has used this time to discuss strategies with the players and also address certain areas which they feel a player is struggling with. Nothing majorly serious, this is more about pep talks and discussions to clear the mind," the source explained.

Kohli on Chahal TV
Virat Kohli was in a good mood when he made an impromptu appearance in Yuzvendra Chahal's fun-filled gig 'Chahal TV' ahead of India's final group stage engagement with Sri Lanka on Saturday. Kohli was seen engaging in a light banter with Chahal who was interacting with opener KL Rahul in the video shared by the BCCI on its official Twitter handle. "SPECIAL: @yuzi_chahal & @klrahul11 recap Edgbaston win as captain @imVKohli makes a special appearance on our latest episode of Chahal TV," read the tweet. Kohli was in his element as he made funny gestures looking at the camera.

WC lacking feel
Indian football icon Bhaichung Bhutia said that the ICC should make 'serious efforts' to spread the game of cricket to other countries as the World Cup is lacking its charm. "I'm finding this World Cup completely 'South Asia Cup'... It's like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India only. Another 10 years and you will only see Asian teams with Bhutan and Nepal also qualifying," Bhutia said. There are 10 teams taking part in the ongoing World Cup, five of them being from Asia. "If we send three more teams, they will still make the semifinals. India should easily win the World Cup," Bhutia said, highlighting the lack of competition. "The 'world' feel is missing from the World Cup... You need the flavour of the 'world' thing."

AGENCIES

PRELIMINARY STAGE

Pos	Team	P	W	L	N/R	Net RR	Pts
1	AUS(Q)	8	7	1	0	+1.000	14
2	IND(Q)	8	6	1	1	+0.811	13
3	ENG(Q)	9	6	3	0	+1.152	12
4	NZ	9	5	3	1	+0.175	11
5	PAK	8	4	3	1	-0.792	9
6	SL	8	3	3	2	-0.934	8
7	B'DESH	8	3	4	1	-0.195	7
8	RSA	8	2	5	1	-0.080	5
9	WI	8	1	6	1	-0.335	3
10	AFG	8	0	8	0	-1.418	0

Big gap between Kohli and rest

PTI ■ NAVI MUMBAI

West Indies batting great Brian Lara on Thursday likened Virat Kohli to a run machine, avowing that the India skipper is way ahead of rest of the world when it comes to batting across formats. Indian batting great Sachin Tendulkar remains Lara's all-time favourite but in today's era, he said it is Kohli, who is the best. "He (Virat Kohli) is a (run) machine. But sorry to say Sachin Tendulkar is my (choice)," he said. "But getting back to your question, no doubt there is a huge gap between Virat Kohli and the rest of the world in all forms of the game. Rohit Sharma might have got four centuries in this World Cup, (Jonny) Bairstow or whatever, if you want somebody to bat in T20, T10, 100 balls (cricket) or Test cricket, it is going to be Virat Kohli today," added Lara, who still holds the record for highest score in Tests.



Virat Kohli acknowledges crowd after completing his fifty against England

Lara, who scored 22358 (11953 in ODIs) in international cricket, said if today Indian batsmen are doing well in away series, it is because of Tendulkar, who instilled such confidence in them. "The (impression) Sachin left on the game is just unbelievable, because he sort of bridged that period, where you felt that when Indian batsman leaves Indian soil, Indian pitches, they are not that good. But Sachin Tendulkar was good on every surface and all of the Indian batsman are good on every single surface today, I think simply because they took a page out of his (Sachin's) book," added Lara. Meanwhile, Lara was pained to witness the plight of the Caribbean cricket. The West Indies have already been knocked out of the World Cup semifinal race. "We have been turned to a corner. Every country, every sports team goes through a little bit of cycle, but we seem to be in the same position for quite some time, which is unfortunate."



Kane Williamson falls as he attempts to play a reverse sweep shot against England

Kane hopes break sparks NZ revival

AFP ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson hopes an upcoming break provides his side with a chance to revive their faltering World Cup campaign. The Black Caps suffered their third straight defeat of the tournament in a thumping 119-run loss to England on Wednesday. Had they won, it would have been New Zealand and not England who were assured of a place in the semi-finals. But they were rarely in the hunt and New Zealand, who won five of their first six games in a sequence that included a washout with India, had to accept another defeat following losses to Pakistan and Australia — the team that beat them in the 2015 final. The consolation for Williamson's men is they are all but certain of a place in the semi-finals given their huge net run-rate advantage over Pakistan. And Williamson, whose team won't play again until next week if they make the last four, believes group form will count for little now that the tournament is heading into the knockout phase. "If we are fortunate to be in a semi-final, then we do have a little bit of a break," he said. "If you are in a knockout stage where it's a semi-final opportunity, anything can happen. "We know that we haven't put out our best performance yet and we know when we do it gives us the best chance of beating anybody, without a doubt. "It is important for us to perhaps have a couple of days away. We sort of have a bit of a break now." New Zealand's chase against England saw them lose their top four inside 17 overs with just 69 runs on the scoreboard. From then on it appeared the Black Caps were involved in damage limitation, even though they were still bowled out for 186 with five overs to spare. But Williamson was adamant his side had not been trying to manipulate the run-rate. "We were trying to win the game, but we didn't do a very good job of it," he said. "We just needed a couple of big partnerships, certainly from the top order and it wasn't there." New Zealand were hampered before the start when leading fast bowler Lockie Ferguson, who has taken 17 wickets in seven games this tournament, was ruled out because of tightness in his hamstring. But the 28-year-old should be fit in time for Tuesday's semi-final at Old Trafford. "He's been outstanding throughout this whole tournament and a real point of difference for us," said Williamson. "Did we miss him? Yes. But we'd miss him more if we didn't have him, hopefully, in another game's time. "He should be fine. It's a fairly minor injury, sort of a light hamstring thing, and he should be okay."

Eoin excited about Edgbaston

AFP ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

England captain Eoin Morgan said it felt "pretty cool" to be in the World Cup semi-finals as the hosts look forward to playing their last-four clash at Edgbaston. Morgan's men secured a semi-final spot — England's first at the World Cup since 1992 — with their impressive 119-run thrashing of New Zealand at Chester-le-Street. Victory meant they are guaranteed to finish third in the 10-team round robin and so take part in the second semi-final at Edgbaston on July 11. England beat India, their potential last four opponents, by 31 runs at the Birmingham ground on Sunday and they have won their last 10 matches in all formats at Edgbaston. "It's a place that we really like playing," said Morgan. "If we had a choice of where we would play our group-stage games, Edgbaston, the Oval and Trent Bridge would probably be the three grounds where we would have played the nine games. "It is comforting that we are going to one of those three grounds." England's total of 305-8 against New Zealand, made after Morgan won the toss, was built on a third successive century stand between openers Jonny Bairstow and Jason Roy. Bairstow's 106 was also his second successive century after the Yorkshireman's 111 against India. "We knew that these two games were must-win games if we were to give ourselves the best opportunity to get into the semi-finals because we knew the performances in the last couple of games hadn't been up to scratch," said Bairstow. "So to play the way we have in the last two games and hopefully in the semis is pleasing." Bairstow and Roy's 10th century partnership ensured England made the most of good batting conditions on a pitch that deteriorated sharply as the game went on. Morgan, asked if the openers made the rest of the team feel calm, replied: "It is not really calmness, it is more excitement. "The guys are buzzing, laughing, smiling at how ridiculous some of the shots the two guys are playing, good balls being hit for four or six, how difficult they are to bowl at. You have got to laugh at it." England's big-match temperament was called into question after back-to-back group defeats by Sri Lanka and holders Australia. "Whatever the way you play, it should be the extremity of that on the day because you don't get another chance and it's taken us time to get to grips with that," said Morgan. "We do stick to our mantra the whole time and not actually be cagey, or desperate, or anything in those sort of regards. It doesn't work for us and it won't win us the World Cup." England, who have never won the



Mark Wood, left, celebrates with captain Eoin Morgan after dismissing Matt Henry

World Cup, now have more than a week off before the semi-final, but Morgan doesn't think that will be a problem. "I can't wait to do nothing, or get distracted by other things that I enjoy doing," he said. "I suppose we have rode the roller-coaster of playing well, playing terrible and playing good again, so particularly our bowlers, they need a rest, they need to get away. "And our batsmen need to get away from the game and hopefully come back fresh." All of England's three defeats this World Cup have come batting second, suggesting the toss is becoming a key factor. "Before the tournament started I thought that might be a trend, the toss, being a huge deciding factor in the game, but I thought it would have been the other way around," said Morgan. "I thought the ball might have swung a bit more if conditions were cloudy and there was a bit of rain around and everybody would have bowled first and chased. "It's been the complete opposite, so it shows how much I know!"



AFP ■ LONDON

They live in a right-handed world, historically stigmatised and challenged by tasks as simple as using scissors — but when it comes to taking wickets at the World Cup, being a south-paw seamer is a distinct advantage. Mitchell Starc leads the way at the top of the World Cup bowling charts, with 24 wickets in eight matches so far and has Pakistan's Mohammad Amir and New Zealand pacer Trent Boult for company in the top six. Beginning with Australian Gary Gilmour's famous rout of England in the semi-final at the inaugural World Cup in 1975, lefties such as Wasim Akram, Starc and Boult have confounded their opponents again and again at the World Cup. The secret is in the different angles that left-armers create, giving batsmen an extra headache and forcing them to re-calculate. "I think lefties challenge the batsmen in their side-on stance and even with a straight ball, because the angle creates problems, especially for right-handers," said Akram, whose three wickets helped win the 1992 final for Pakistan against England. Egged on by a packed crowd in Melbourne, Akram came from around the wicket to create beguiling angles that bewildered first Allan Lamb and then Chris Lewis. Remembered as "magical deliveries", they helped Pakistan beat England to win the World Cup for the first time. Akram was man-of-the-match and ended as the tournament's leading wicket-taker, with 18 dismissals. Since then, left-arm bowlers from New Zealand to Sri Lanka have repeatedly proved their value, becoming the leading wicket-takers in four of the six World Cups since. The 2015 World Cup had a glut of left-armed fast bowlers, with Starc, Mitchell Johnson and Boult leading the pack. Pakistan, still buoyed by Akram's bowling performance 27 years later, have benefited more than most from the power of lefties. **PAK LEFT-ARM POWER** Only about 10 percent of the global population are estimated to be left-

Left is right

course it's pleasing when you hear that the left-armers follow me." Pakistan's 2019 World Cup squad boasts Wahab Riaz, highly promising teenager Shaheen Shah Afridi and Amir, whose career was interrupted by a five-year ban for spot-fixing. Amir, who was selected in the squad despite a poor run of form, has been a revelation at the tournament in England and Wales, with 16 wickets so far. Former India opening batsman Aakash Chopra said Pakistan's left-armers gave them an advantage. "Facing a quality left-arm fast bowler is a challenge in itself because they make a straight ball look like it has done something spectacular due to the angle they create," he wrote in a column for cricinfo.com. But if left-arm bowlers are so common, why do they still catch batsmen off guard? Pakistan batting great Javed Miandad believes the more a batsman faces left-armers, the easier it becomes but he says they get more practice against right-armers. "Most batsmen develop their technique against right-arm bowlers, throw down and bowling machines from the same angle, and they neglect the left-arm angles," he said. A good batsman should pay attention to the details and practice from all angles, he added. That will help to "counter the threat left-armers pose."



Mohammad Amir bowls during India game



naoaste ENGLAND



WE WOULD HAVE LOVED TO HAVE QUALIFIED FOR THE LATTER STAGES. BUT THE VICTORIES HAVE BEEN VERY GOOD. CERTAINLY, THE EARLY VICTORY WITH SOUTH AFRICA, AND WEST INDIES
— STEVE RHODES

Improbable task for Pak

They need to win against the Tigers by minimum of 311 runs to secure semis berth

UPNEXT

VS

LIVE ON

3:00 pm IST

STAR SPORTS

PTI ■ LEEDS

Their semifinal chances reduced to just a mathematical possibility, former champions Pakistan will need an improbable win over Bangladesh to have a shot at making the semifinals of the World Cup when the two sides clash here today.

Pakistan's resurgence in the World Cup looked eerily close to the 1992 Cup-winning edition before India's loss to England dented their hopes of a semifinal spot and when New Zealand went down to the hosts last night, it was almost over for them.

The road to the knockout stage for Sarfaraz Ahmed and his men is just an improbable mathematical calculation and that too provided Pakistan win the toss and bat first.

If Pakistan lose the toss and are asked to field, their minuscule semi-final hopes will be over even before the first ball is bowled at the Lord's.

New Zealand finished their engagements at 11 points from nine matches after their 119-run loss to England but despite the massive defeat, the Kiwis are way ahead in terms of their net run-rate, which is +0.175, compared to Pakistan's -0.792.

Currently placed fifth with nine points from eight matches, Pakistan face the challenge of beating Bangladesh by 311 runs after posting 350 or by 316 runs after scoring 400, something which is practically impossible.

Following their loss to arch-rivals India, Pakistan staged a remarkable comeback with wins over South Africa, New Zealand and Afghanistan, riding on some impressive performances by Babar Azam and Harris Sohail in the batting department.

Left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi's five-wicket haul against New Zealand was also a big positive as it added firepower to their bowling led by Mohammad Amir.

Bangladesh, on the other hand, will rue their missed chances and would hope to bring some cheer to their fans back home with a solid performance against Pakistan, a team they had defeated in the 1999 edition.

At present, placed seventh, Bangladesh have been impressive in their wins against South Africa, Afghanistan and West



Bangladesh's Soumya Sarkar, left, listens to batting coach Neil McKenzie after batting in the nets during a training session

QUOTE UNQUOTE

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT. 316 RUNS IS A BIG MARGIN. ONLY IF YOU'RE BATTING FIRST, IF YOU SCORE 500-600 RUNS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE STUDY IS BEHIND THIS, BUT I CAN'T DO ANYTHING
— SARFARAZ AHMED, PAKISTAN CAPTAIN

WE WOULD HAVE LOVED TO QUALIFY FOR THE LATER STAGES. IN THAT SENSE, THAT'S A DISAPPOINTMENT. BUT THE VICTORIES — SA & WI HAVE BEEN GOOD. THE AFGHANS PLAYED WELL AGAINST US. A PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THEM WAS NEEDED, AND WE GOT. SO THAT WAS A GOOD VICTORY.
— STEVE RHODES, B'DESH COACH

XFACTOR

- Pakistan's pace attack
- Shakib Al Hasan's all-round performance
- Fakhar Zaman and Imam Ul Haq's opening stand
- Imad Wasim and Soumya Sarkar's role as handy gamechangers
- Babar Azam's brilliant run with the bat
- Liton Das, Mushfiqur Rahim and Sabbir Rahman's batting in the middle overs

Mahmudullah Riyadh, Sabbir Rahman, Mehidy Hasan Miraj, Mosaddek Hossain, Mohammed Saifuddin, Mustafizur Rahaman, Rubel Hossain, Liton Kumar Das, Abu Jayed, Mohammed Mithun.

HEAD TO HEAD

	Played	Pak	B'desh
Matches	36	31	5
Day matches	11	9	2
Last 5 matches	5	1	4

HIGHEST TOTALS

Pakistan	385-7 in 50 overs	21-06-2010
at Dambulla		
Afghanistan	329-6 in 50 overs	17-04-2015
at Dhaka		

PERFORMANCE IN WC

Team	P	W	L	T	N/R	Success%
Pak	78	44	32	—	2	57.69
Afg	39	14	24	—	1	37.17

FAISEL FEATURES

BANGLADESH WILL RUE THEIR MISSED CHANCES AND WOULD HOPE TO BRING SOME CHEER TO THEIR FANS BACK HOME WITH A SOLID PERFORMANCE AGAINST PAKISTAN, A TEAM THEY HAD DEFEATED IN THE 1999 EDITION

score 500 runs and claim 10 wickets in World Cup history.

Led by Shakib, Bangladesh have consistently crossed the 300-mark this World Cup but it is their bowling which has let them down, especially the lack of form of skipper Mortaza.

Mustafizur Rahman's variations, which fetched him five wickets, and Mohammad Saifuddin's fifty helped them give India a scare in their last match and Bangladesh will hope for a stronger show against Pakistan.

SQUADS

Pakistan: Sarfaraz Ahmed (captain), Fakhar Zaman, Imam ul Haq, Babar Azam, Harris Sohail, Hasan Ali, Shahdab Khan, Mohammed Hafeez, Mohammed Hasnain, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Wahab Riaz, Mohammed Aamir, Shoaib Malik, Imad Wasim, Asif Ali.
Bangladesh: Mashrafe Mortaza (captain), Tamim Iqbal, Soumya Sarkar, Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim (wk),

Indies. They have shown the stomach for a fight even in losses and Mashrafe Mortaza and his men will hope for a good outing against Pakistan on Friday. Bangladesh have been too dependent on star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who has become the only cricketer to

MEN WHO MATTER

BABAR AZAM (PAKISTAN)

Pakistan's No.3 has been remarkably consistent all tournament. He has a calm and mature head that allows for clarity in thinking as well as the right shot selection for the right situations.



MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN (BANGLADESH)

The left-arm pacer's array of cutters and other variations came in handy against India as he helped Bangladesh restrict them to 314 despite a powerful start. Pakistan's line-up is filled with some big-hitters, and Mustafizur's battle against the likes of Fakhar Zaman and Harris Sohail could make for some riveting viewing.



SWOON SIDE UP

Friday should be sunny and rain-free. Lord's traditionally has offered swing for the faster bowlers early on, but don't expect teams to depart from the proven bat-first formula.

'PAK'S PERFORMANCE NOT BAD'



Facing the ire of critics and fans alike, the Pakistan cricket team found an ally in former captain Moin Khan, who believes the 1992 champions did not have a disastrous World Cup campaign despite standing on the verge of ouster. Pakistan's hopes of sealing a semi-final berth were trampled when arch-rivals India and New Zealand lost to England, leaving the road to the knockout stage for Sarfaraz Ahmed and his men just an improbable mathematical calculation. They will take on Bangladesh in their final group stage match at the iconic Lord's in London today. "Look if we win against Bangladesh we would end the World Cup with five wins out of nine with one match abandoned which is not a bad performance by my standards. So, whatever the PCB does it needs to think very carefully because just changing faces or positions will not help," Moin said.

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Poor WC show

Former Pakistan speedster Shoaib Akhtar has been left utterly disappointed with the "quality of cricket" being played at the ongoing World Cup in England and Wales.

England, Australia and India have sealed their spot in the semifinals, while New Zealand is almost there in the knockout stage of the tournament, despite their loss to England in their last group stage encounter.

"I am not happy with the quality of cricket being played in this World Cup," said Akhtar on his YouTube channel.

"The quality of cricket has gone down immensely. It has become very easy to score runs. The bowlers

don't have the quality, the pace and the spin, which bowlers in 1990s and early 2000s used to have."

"There are three powerplays and two new balls which has made it very easy to score runs," he added.

Speaking about Wednesday's game where England thrashed New Zealand by 119 runs to seal their spot in the semis, Akhtar said that the Black Caps played like "amateurs".

"I was disappointed with the way New Zealand played against England. They didn't give any fight and meekly surrendered before

THE QUALITY OF CRICKET HAS GONE DOWN IMMENSELY. IT HAS BECOME VERY EASY TO SCORE RUNS. THE BOWLERS DON'T HAVE THE QUALITY, THE PACE AND SPIN, WHICH BOWLERS IN 1990S AND EARLY 2000S USED TO HAVE
— SHOAB AKHTAR

England. They played like amateurs. They didn't play quality cricket," said Akhtar.

With England's win, Pakistan are technically out of the contention of making it to the semis. In order to make it to the knockout stage, Pakistan needed India or New Zealand to defeat England in their last two matches. However, it didn't happen.

Akhtar, 43, feels Pakistan have no one to blame but themselves for their disappointing campaign in this edition of the World Cup. "The match against West

Indies cost us badly. Then their match against Sri Lanka got abandoned. After that, they lost the game to Australia which they should have won. These three matches made it very difficult for Pakistan. They themselves have got out of the tournament. Nobody else is responsible for their loss."

He, however, wants Sarfaraz Ahmed's men to play for their pride against Bangladesh in their last group stage fixture at Lord's today.

"All is not lost still. We have to play for our pride against Bangladesh. Pakistan have to make sure they don't get humiliated and therefore they should play good cricket against Bangladesh," he insisted.



Sarfaraz Ahmed returns to dugout after getting out against Afghans

Courtesy: © ICC Business Corporation FZ LLC 18



nacabaste ENGLAND

I HAVE LEARNT IN THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS THAT IF I HAVE TO PERFORM CONSISTENTLY FOR THE TEAM THEN I HAVE TO ADAPT ACCORDING TO THE WICKET
— KL RAHUL



Nicholas Pooran, right, and Jason Holder, center, stand between the wickets during World Cup match against Afghanistan

Late surge lifts WI to 311

Holder and Pooran adds 111 runs in last 10 overs to take Caribbeans beyond 300 run mark

AP ■ LEEDS

Afghanistan will have to make its biggest score at this Cricket World Cup to finish the tournament with a win after West Indies posted 311-6 at Headingley on Thursday.

After the early departure of Chris Gayle (7) in the last World Cup innings of his career, West Indies bounced back through half-centuries by Evin Lewis (58) and Shai Hope (77).

Some late big-hitting from Nicholas Pooran (58 off 43) and Jason Holder (45 off 34, including four sixes) in the middle order helped to take the Windies beyond 300 in the last over, the kind of total that has been beyond Afghanistan this tournament.

The Afghans' highest score in their opening eight group games was 247-8 against England in Manchester. The average score for teams batting second has been 234.

Rashid Khan, Afghanistan's most famous player, continued his disappointing form at the World Cup with bowling figures of 1-52 and he also dropped Hope - on 5 - at midwicket. He finishes the tournament with six wickets in total, at

LATE BIG-HITTING FROM NICHOLAS POORAN (58 OFF 43) AND JASON HOLDER (45 OFF 34, INCLUDING FOUR SIXES) IN THE MIDDLE ORDER HELPED TO TAKE THE WINDIES BEYOND 300 IN THE LAST OVER, THE KIND OF TOTAL THAT HAS BEEN BEYOND AFGHANISTAN THIS TOURNAMENT

an average of 69.

Summing up an often sloppy display in the field by Afghanistan was a bizarre incident off the final ball of the innings, when captain Gulbadin Naib was lining up to attempt a catch off Carlos Brathwaite's shot at long off. At the last minute, Gulbadin pulled out of the catch - seemingly blinded by the sun - and the ball bounced right next to the rope and dribbled over.

Gayle needed 18 runs to top Brian Lara (10,348) as West Indies' leading scorer in ODIs but after mostly scratching around in his crease, sometimes playing and missing, he advanced and tried to smash Dawlat Zadran to the fence on the offside off his 18th ball. He ended up nicking it behind.

"The Universe Boss" - as the 39-year-old West Indies opener calls himself - trudged off, briefly holding his bat up to the crowd on his record-tying 295th ODI appearance for the Windies, matching Lara's haul.

Instead, it was Holder who provided the most entertainment for the Windies, smashing four sixes and a four on a sun-kissed day in northern England.

That helped West Indies to rack up 65 off the last five overs and

SCOREBOARD

West Indies	
Chris Gayle c Ikram b Dawlat Zadran	7
Evin Lewis c Nabi b Rashid Khan	58
Shai Hope c Rashid Khan b Nabi	77
S Hetmyer c (sub)Noor Ali b Dawlat	39
Nicholas Pooran run out (Ikram/Shirzad)	58
Jason Holder c Dawlat Zadran b Shirzad	45
Carlos Brathwaite not out	14
Fabian Allen not out	0
Extras (b 0, lb 4, w 9, nb 0, p 0)	13
Total (6 wickets; 50 overs)	311
Fall of wickets: 21-1 (Chris Gayle, 5.3), 109-2 (Evin Lewis, 24.5), 174-3 (Shimron Hetmyer, 34.5), 192-4 (Shai Hope, 37.4), 297-5 (Nicholas Pooran, 49.1), 297-6 (Jason Holder, 49.2)	
Bowling	
Mujeeb Ur Rahman	10-0-52-0
Dawlat Zadran	9-1-73-2
Sayed Shirzad	8-0-56-1
Gulbadin Naib	3-0-18-0
Mohammad Nabi	10-0-56-1
Rashid Khan	10-0-52-1

maybe take the game away from last-place Afghanistan, which has yet to register a point this tournament. It only claimed one win in six games in its World Cup debut in 2015, and that was against Scotland.

West Indies started the match in next-to-last place on three points, courtesy of a solitary win over Pakistan and a washout.

Jos ready to battle



England's wicket keeper Jos Buttler trains during practice session

AFP ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

we're really excited for that challenge."

Buttler's form with the bat has slowed somewhat since his centuries against Pakistan at Trent Bridge four weeks ago. But at Chester-le-Street he influenced the game in other ways, taking a stunning catch down the leg side to dismiss Martin Guptill and also showing some quick thinking and hands to run out Ross Taylor from Adil Rashid's throw.

And the 28-year-old vice-captain is hoping he can come good again on the biggest stage of all.

He added: "We stood up and played our brand of cricket under that pressure.

"That breeds a lot of confidence for the group, that our way is the best way and gives us a lot of chance of performing. That's what we have resorted to in the two must-win games and shows that we must continue that.

"I've been a bit disappointed not to have contributed as much as I'd like, I haven't quite executed or made the right decision and have found ways of getting out. Luckily I still have another chance for another innings or two in the World Cup.

"For the country, it's very exciting that we are in a semi-final and we have had some fantastic support all the way through the tournament. We are very excited for the atmosphere for a semi-final in a home World Cup."

Maxi feels better than ever

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Glenn Maxwell insists he's not out of form, just out of form, declaring he's never felt better with bat in hand as Australia approach the pointy end of their sixth World Cup title tilt.

With the reigning champions' top-order dominance largely consigned to late-innings cameos, Maxwell has faced just 75 balls but spanked 143 runs at a tournament-leading strike-rate of 190.66.

The right-hander has admittedly passed up opportunities against West Indies, Pakistan and then New Zealand on Saturday to put together a more substantial innings, but he says he isn't stressing about not yet putting together a big score.

"I feel like I haven't hit the ball better in my career, I just haven't got runs," the right-hander, whose highest score is the unbeaten 46 he hit against Sri Lanka, told reporters in Manchester ahead of Australia's final group game against South Africa on Saturday.

"It's nice to be relaxed when I go out in the middle. Runs just haven't come the way I would have liked, but I don't think they're far away.

"If I was out of form and out of runs, I think I'd be a little more nervous.

"It's about not over-complicating it and not reinventing the wheel at training. I've stuck to the way I've gone about my training ... and making sure you're not clouding your head even further."

The 30-year-old admits his calm outlook on his own performance has been something he's had to develop over time.

Maxwell spent time out of the ODI team in the years after his successful 324-run 2015 World Cup campaign, but believes he's benefited from earning the faith of selectors in the lead-in to this edition of the tournament.

"It is a bit of maturity and growth and trust in my preparation. I think I would have been searching for something a couple of years ago, whereas now when I go out to bat I have been doing the right things and training the right way," said Maxwell.

"To trust going in without a lot of runs behind you does take a few years to learn from that and grow from that.

"You might not get the time out in the middle like the top order does.



Glenn Maxwell attends Australian team practice session

"But when you go get out there you've got to make the most of it. To have the faith the selectors have had in me to be here and be the sole spinning allrounder in the squad is nice."

While a hayfever-induced sneezing fit at training on Wednesday masked it, Maxwell may be in fact the most familiar of all the Australians with the western foothills of the Pennines.

He spurned the lure of a lucrative Indian Premier League stint earlier this year to instead play for Lancashire, the

county side that owns Old Trafford.

"What a place Manchester is," said Maxwell. "Having that month here, getting used to conditions, getting my technique right for these conditions has been a great benefit for me.

"I'm hoping to cash in at the right time of the tournament. Australia, having already guaranteed themselves top-four berth, can sew up top spot by defeating the Proteas and ensure they play their semi-final at the same venue.

Maxwell conceded staying in Manchester would be a major mental (and logistical) boost for the Aussies, having earlier in the tournament travelled 700 kilometres and played four games in a gruelling nine-day stretch.

"I would love to stay here. The incentive to finish top would be great," said Maxwell. "To get as much time as you can in one place, you don't have to pack your bags again.

"It feels like we did a lot of that early on in the tournament. We had four games in nine days at one stage where it was pack, unpack, pack, unpack - repeatedly.

"To not have that at this end of the tournament would be nice."

Wood hopes his luck holds

AFP ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

England fast bowler Mark Wood hopes his World Cup luck holds after his fortunate run out of New Zealand captain Kane Williamson helped take the hosts into the semi-finals.

England thrashed the Black Caps by 119 runs at Durham quick Wood's home ground of Chester-le-Street after posting 305-8 batting first.

Jonny Bairstow was named man-of-the-match for his second successive hundred, but Wood also played his part, taking 3-34 and delivering a significant contribution that was something of a fluke.

When Ross Taylor struck a drive down the ground, Wood just managed to get fingertips to the ball and divert it onto the non-striker's stumps, leaving star batsman Williamson - who had been averaging 113.50 for the tournament prior to this match - run out for 27.

"He doesn't know how unlucky he is because I've got the smallest hands for a bloke you've ever seen," said a grinning Wood.

"I managed to just get a fingertip to it. The umpire wasn't sure if I'd tipped it, and I said 'I swear to God I did. I knew it had flicked the end of my finger.

"He was one of the best players I've ever bowled at so to get him out any way you can is pretty important. It saved me bowling at him any more so I was pretty pleased.

"In big games, in big moments, you need those moments. I'm just pleased that in such a big game I managed to be so lucky."

Meanwhile Williamson, asked about his freakish dismissal, said: "Is it luck or lack of it? It is one of those things.

"The English bowlers put us under pressure and I don't know whether that run-out came from that, but you move on."

Tom aims to go a step further than dad

PTI ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

New Zealand wicket-keeper Tom Latham is aiming to go one better than his father Rod by taking the Black Caps to an ICC Men's Cricket World Cup final.

Despite losing by 119 runs to England, New Zealand have one foot in the last four with Pakistan needing a highly improbable margin of victory over Bangladesh to oust them.

Rod Latham was part of the New Zealand squad who reached the semi-finals of the 1992 World Cup before losing to eventual winners Pakistan.

Latham junior said: "I've spoken to him a lot over the years about that tournament - it was the same format as this one and hopefully we can go one better than they did."

Left-hander Latham, 27, made his first half-century of the tournament having previously not passed 14 and he admitted: "It was nice to spend time in the middle and get familiar with the things that I do well but weren't on the right side of the result."

The Black Caps vice-captain was batting in familiar surroundings at the Riverside, having played two seasons for Durham in 2017 and 2018.

He said: "It was nice to come back and see a lot of familiar faces. It was a great day here in the north-east."

He praised his bowlers for restricting England after their openers' blistering start, saying: "I don't think the toss was hugely important. The wicket did slow up a little bit but I think the way they



ROD LATHAM WAS PART OF THE NEW ZEALAND SQUAD WHO REACHED THE SEMI-FINALS OF THE 1992 WORLD CUP BEFORE LOSING TO EVENTUAL WINNERS PAKISTAN

played at the start did put us under pressure.

"The way we managed to pull things back and restrict them to 300 was outstanding. Unfortunately we kept losing wickets at regular intervals. If we are in that situation again hopefully we can correct a few things."

Latham said that New Zealand's players will start preparing for the semi-finals even though they will not know for sure they have qualified until Friday.

He said: "We'll have a couple of days off which will be nice for the guys to regroup. Then it'll be about going back to basics and doing the things we do well to be successful.

"One you get to the semis it doesn't matter who you play you've got to play two good games of cricket to win the final.

"Hopefully we can get a little bit of confidence in those two training sessions and then hit the ground running in the semi-final."



nacabaste ENGLAND

ONCE YOU ARE IN THE TOP FOUR IT IS ONLY A CASE OF HAVING TWO GOOD DAYS AND ANYTHING PRIOR TO THAT WILL BE SWEEPED UNDER THE CARPET — JIMMY NEESHAM

NZ should face Aus with confidence

Silver Fern



By DANIEL VETTORI Former New Zealand captain

For the second game running England have produced an incredible performance under pressure so hats off to them.

Jonny Bairstow and Jason Roy set the tone at the top of the order, and probably deceived everyone into thinking this was a 360-run pitch.

New Zealand did well to restrict them, but the last 20 overs of their innings were probably a better reflection of the wicket.

Then I thought that Chris Woakes and Jofra Archer were exceptional with the new ball. Their lines and lengths were impeccable and New Zealand just lost too many wickets early to have any chance of chasing it down. There will be some frustration at the way those top four went, all four wickets were avoidable and that ended their hopes.

From a New Zealand perspective, it is not ideal to have lost three in a row, even if they are still pretty much assured of a semi-final place.

The fortunate thing for them is that they go into a knockout game at Old Trafford, which is traditionally a very good wicket.



Kane Williamson chats with Australian opener David Warner after the end of group stage match at Lord's ICC/Twitter

The way they have played over the last couple of years against Australia, who they could end up facing, should give them plenty of confidence.

In this game against England, I thought that James Neesham bowled very well and played a big role in New Zealand pulling it back with the ball.

Kane Williamson probably would not have expected to use Neesham as much as he has with the ball but he's been a stand-out. He's been accurate and that has been crucial not just for his economy rate but also in terms of wicket-taking.

I've also got to pay tribute to Trent Boult, he was fantastic again and the knuckle ball to dismiss Jos Buttler was a highly-skilled piece of bowling.

Boult has now taken more wickets in ICC Men's Cricket World Cups than any other New Zealander which is a remarkable feat considering this is only his second.

He is obviously a supremely talented bowler, but it is also testament to the hard work he has put in to become the complete package as a bowler.

At the top of the order he is a left-arm

fast swing bowler who can take wickets, and then when Kane needs someone in the middle overs to attack, he turns to Boult. He's also got that ability to reverse the ball in the death overs, when he is an attacking and defensive option.

There are not many bowlers who offer that set of skills throughout world cricket. That comes from his natural skill as well as the work ethic to improve his game.

New Zealand missed Lockie Ferguson in Durham, particularly because of the way he fits into the structure of the game. Kane likes to use him as a first-change bowler in short 2-3 over spells. With him out, that meant they had to shuffle things around a little.

If he is back for the semi-final, that will give New Zealand a lot more certainty around how they go about their 50 overs.

Despite the three straight losses, I don't think it will affect the team too much, particularly knowing some of the guys well. They have six or seven individuals who can win a game for them, and that is a pretty exciting way to think about it.

Courtesy - © ICC Business Corporation FZ LLC 2019

OTHER SPORTS

Federer, Barty continue to roll



Roger Federer acknowledges crowd gestures after beating Jay Clarke in the men's singles second round match AP

AFP ■ LONDON

Eight-time champion Roger Federer eased into the third round of Wimbledon on Thursday, beating British wild card Jay Clarke 6-1, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 to equal American legend Jimmy Connors's record of 17 appearances in the last 32.

The 37-year-old Swiss great's rival Rafael Nadal is unlikely to have such an easy ride later on Thursday as he faces the fiery but talented Australian Nick Kyrgios.

"I struggled to take care of business a bit from the baseline," said 37-year-old Federer who has now reached the third round at the Slams for the 70th time.

"Thankfully I played a pretty good breaker, I had some help from him as he gave me a couple of unforced errors."

Federer and Nadal's half of the draw lost two of the potentially more awkward customers in big serving duo John Isner and Marin Cilic.

Ninth-seeded Isner, who played in the epic semi-final last year with Kevin Anderson which lasted over six hours, fell in five sets to unseeded Kazakh Mikhail Kukushkin 6-4, 6-7 (3/7), 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 in just over three hours of play.

Cilic, the 13th seed and finalist in 2017, lost in straight sets to Portugal's Joao Sousa, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

There were no such upsets in the women's singles.

Ashleigh Barty's bid to become the first woman since Serena Williams in 2015 to win the French Open and Wimbledon in the same year stayed on track with a 6-1, 6-3 second round victory over Belgium's Alison van Uytvanck.

The 23-year-old Australian world number one will play British wild card Harriet Dart for a place in the last 16.



Sloane Stephens celebrates after beating Yafan Wang in the second round match AP

Barty said she would not be concerned by taking on a home hope in front of a partisan crowd. "I wouldn't be playing a British crowd; I'm playing against Harriet," said Barty.

"Yes, she'll get more support being in Britain, as I would if we were in Australia. It's no different."

Barty, only the second Australian woman after Evonne Goolagong Cawley over 40 years ago to be number one in the world, said the most pleasure she has had in her new status is when she speaks to her niece back in Australia.

"Over and over she tells me you can go to infinity and beyond," said Barty.

"She's an incredible little girl who gives me so much inspiration. It's been a very nice journey for myself, my team, my family, everyone. To be where we are now is really special."

Barty, who if she achieves the Roland Garros-Wimbledon double will be only the eighth woman to do so, said she would not be watching the blockbuster men's singles match between Nadal and her compatriot Kyrgios later on Thursday.

"I think I'll be watching the cricket this afternoon," she said, referring to the second Ashes match between England's women and Australia.

Dart, for her part, could not contain her excitement at playing the world number one.

"Super exciting," she said. "A great opportunity for me."

"I have nothing to lose. I actually met her a few weeks ago at an LTA schools visit."

"Lovely girl, great champion." However, Dart, ranked 182 in the world, had to be reassured about the Australian's recent exploits.

"She won the French Open, and she won Birmingham, right?"

Also easing through was 2017 US Open champion Sloane Stephens who took the first eight games against her Chinese opponent Wang Yafan before winning 6-0, 6-2.

Stephens, seeded nine, will play British 19th seed and French Open semi-finalist Johanna Konta in the next round.

Home fans appetites will be sated when former world number one Andy Murray plays in the men's doubles — months after life-changing hip surgery — with French partner Pierre-Hugues Herbert against Marius Copil of Romania and Herbert's compatriot Ugo Humbert.

Murray's mixed doubles partner, seven-time champion Serena Williams will also be in action facing Slovenian qualifier Kaja Juvan.

Williams is chasing a record-equaling 24th major at the Wimbledon.

Lampard returns to Chelsea as head coach



Frank Lampard during his presentation ceremony AP

AFP ■ LONDON

Frank Lampard was appointed Chelsea head coach on Thursday, confirming a dramatic return for one of the club's greatest ever players.

Lampard has signed a three-year contract with Chelsea, where he spent 13 years and became the team's all-time leading scorer with 211 goals.

The former England midfielder succeeds Maurizio Sarri after just one season in manage-

ment, having led Derby County to the Championship play-off final in May, when they were beaten by Aston Villa.

"I am immensely proud to be returning to Chelsea as head coach," Lampard said in a club statement.

"Everyone knows my love for this club and the history we have shared, however, my sole focus is on the job in hand and preparing for the season ahead."

"I am here to work hard, bring further success to the club and I cannot wait to get started." Chelsea said Lampard has a "fantastic relationship" with the club's supporters and he will certainly lift the mood after a fractious season under Sarri.

Despite finishing third in the Premier League and winning the Europa League, Sarri was criticised for his eccentric approach and rigid style of play.

Chelsea director Marina Granovskaia said: "It gives us great pleasure to welcome Frank back to Chelsea as head coach."

"After 13 years with us as a player, where he became a club legend and our record goalscorer, we believe this is the perfect time for him to return and are delighted he has done so."

"We will do everything we can to ensure he has all the support required to be a huge success."

He is expected to bring Jody Morris with him to Stamford Bridge. Morris also played for Chelsea and worked as Lampard's assistant at Derby.

Joao Felix completes Atletico move

AFP ■ MADRID

Atletico Madrid on Wednesday signed 19-year-old Portuguese striker Joao Felix for Benfica for 126 million euros (\$142 million), the clubs announced.

The fee is a record for a Portuguese club and for Atletico Madrid and makes the teenager one of the five most expensive players in history.

Atletico tweeted a video of the player in the Prado

gallery in Madrid contemplating paintings by old masters, with the phrase, "enormous talent", before he turned and smiled at the camera with the caption: "Welcome Joao Felix, pure talent."

Felix has reportedly signed a seven-year contract.

He is a potential replacement for Antoine Griezmann who scored 133 goals in five seasons at the club. Atletico have

already said the French striker is leaving. He is expected to join Barcelona when his release clause, which dropped to 120 million euros on Monday, is activated.

The Felix signing came on a busy day for Atletico.

Earlier on Wednesday, the club confirmed the signing of Mexican midfielder Hector Herrera from Porto while another midfielder, Rodrigo Hernandez, left Madrid for Manchester City for 70 million euros.

AFP ■ LYON

Extra-time winner

The Netherlands' rise as a force in women's football continued on Wednesday as Jackie Groenen's extra-time strike saw them edge out Sweden 1-0 in a gruelling World Cup semi-final in Lyon, taking the European champions through to this weekend's final against the United States.

After a goalless 90 minutes, midfielder Groenen — a former judo European Championship Bronze medalist as a youth who recently agreed a move to Manchester United — broke the deadlock in the 99th minute of a tense contest, breaking Swedish hearts in the process.

When Daniëlle van de Donk's pass was touched into her path, Groenen sent a low shot from 20 yards beyond the reach of goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl and into the far corner.

Having knocked out Italy and former winners Japan in the previous two rounds, the Dutch are now just one game



Dominique Bloodworth, left, and Sari Van Veenendaal, right, celebrate after winning the semifinal match AP

away from adding a first World Cup to the title they won at Euro 2017 as hosts.

"We never knew this would be possible. It's one more match and we might possibly be world champions," said a beaming Groenen.

Getting this far is a remarkable achievement for the "Oranje", appearing at just

their second World Cup, but they will need to improve drastically if they are to stand any chance of defeating the holders.

The Netherlands have long been a force in the men's game, but they had never even been to a major women's tournament until a decade ago.

"I think the potential has been in the Netherlands for a longer period of time but the

facilities were not there," said Dutch coach Sarina Wiegman, pointing to the start of the Dutch league in 2007 as the catalyst.

"It's the whole development in the Netherlands and also the individuals that made bigger steps. "Now they have been in a couple of tournaments so they are very experienced now too and they believe they can perform really well."

AFP ■ PORTO ALEGRE

Peru stunned defending champions Chile 3-0 to reach the final of the Copa America for the first time in 44 years.

Goals from Edison Flores, Yoshimar Yotun and Paolo Guerrero handed Peru a deserved win which sends them into a final against Brazil at the Maracana Stadium on Sunday.

The stunning upset prevented Chile's golden generation from challenging for a third straight title, following their wins over Argentina in 2015 and 2016.

Instead the finalists from the previous two editions will meet in Saturday's third-place play-off in Sao Paulo.

Little was expected of Peru in the knock-out stages after they ended the group phase with a humbling 5-0 thrashing by Brazil.

But after riding their luck — and being saved by VAR three times — to beat Uruguay on penalties in the quarter-final, they were a completely rejuvenated outfit in Porto Alegre.

Goalkeeper Pedro Gallese, the villain of that 5-0 defeat, was again faultless, as he had been in the quarter-final when decisively saving Luis Suarez's shoot-out penalty.

He again saved a penalty and made a number of other vital stops. From the start Peru dominated the reigning champions, Flores took advantage of an Erick Pulgar slip in midfield to dart towards goal but he dragged his weak shot woefully wide.

But a minute later he was alone at the back post to lash home left footed from an Andre Carrillo flick on from Cueva's cross.

Yotun doubled the lead on 38 minutes after punishing Chile goalkeeper Gabriel Arias's rush of blood to the head.

A 2-0 half-time lead was the least Peru

Champions sent packing



Paolo Guerrero dribbles Gabriel Arias to score goal AP

deserved after an enterprising performance against tentative opponents.

Peru should have put the game to bed on a rapier counter-attack on the hour but Guerrero and Cueva passed rather than shooting and Yotun ballooned over from six yards with the goal gaping.

Peru started sitting deeper, inviting Chile to attack and Aranguiz sent a rasping shot whistling past the top corner with Gallese a mere spectator. But Guerrero put the icing on the cake in injury time after rounding Arias, but Gallese had the last word from the penalty spot.

Willian to miss final

AFP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Brazil's attacking midfielder Willian will miss Sunday's Copa America final against Peru after injuring his hamstring, the tournament hosts said on Wednesday.

The 30-year-old Chelsea player was a second half substitute in Brazil's 2-0 semi-final victory over arch rivals Argentina, coming on for winger Everton.

A Brazil football federation (CBF) spokesman said Willian had felt "pain in his hamstring" and was sent for tests on Wednesday afternoon where it was found that he had a "pulled muscle." Brazilian media said he was injured during Tuesday's match.

The CBF spokesman said the recovery time needed meant Willian would miss the final.