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NO HALF TRUTH

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I-T launches 'Op Clean Money'-II: 60,000 people under I-T scanner

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The Income Tax department has identified over 60,000 "high risk" persons for a probe under the second phase of the 'Operation Clean Money' which was launched Thursday to detect black money generation post demonetisation.

The CBDT said the category of people who will undergo "detailed investigations" as part of the next phase of the operation include businesses claiming cash sales as the source of cash deposits, like petrol pumps and other essential services like hospitals, which is found to be excessive compared to their past profile or industry norms during the notes ban period.

It will also probe those government or Public Sector Undertaking employees who made "large cash deposits", people who have undertaken high-value purchases, those who "layered" or laundered funds by using shell companies and those who did not respond to taxman's queries under the first phase of the said operation.

A senior officer said there is no threshold of deposits that has been identified under the latest operation and all suspicious and similar inter-related transactions have been chosen and brought under it.

"The deposits under the scrutiny of the latest operation are no doubt high-value ones," he said.

The officer added that while the initial communication to these 60,000 people will go via the online medium, the taxman will also undertake search and survey action and also seek physical documents from the assessee as part of the operation.

The threshold under the first phase of the operation, that began on January 31 and ended on February 15, was kept at deposits made to the tune of Rs 5 lakh and above.

"More than 60,000 persons, including 1,300 high-risk persons have been identified for an investigation into claims of excessive cash sales during the demonetisation period.

"More than 6,000 transactions of high-value property purchase and 6,600 cases of outward remittances shall be subjected to detailed investigations," the CBDT, policy-making body of the department, said in a statement.

"All the cases where no response is received shall also be subjected to detailed enquiries," it added.

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PEPSI TO SELL BOTTLED WATER AT SAME MRP ACROSS INDIA

Hoteliers overcharging in name of service charge to face the music

DHIRENDRA KUMAR

NEW DELHI: Cracking the whip on errant hoteliers for overcharging in the name of service charge, the government has decided to issue an advisory to all state governments soon. The Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs has sent a draft advisory to Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for the final approval.

"The ministry is hopeful of getting the PMO's approval on the advisory as it is in the interest of consumers. The restaurants or food outlets are charging for serving the food, which is against the provisions of consumer law. The service charge is a voluntary component and should not be imposed upon consumers," said Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan.

"The government will not bring any law to regulate it, but yes, there will be some



advisories that the hotel industry would have to follow. It's a known practice that when a customer is treated well at any food outlet of the country, they voluntarily offer a tip to the waiter, but restaurants can-

not make it mandatory that a certain percentage would have to be levied as service charge. It is a violation of consumer protection law," Paswan added.

Some hoteliers have approached the Supreme Court for relief in the matter after the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission's order came in the government's favour.

In another major development, Pepsi has decided to sell packaged mineral water Aquafina at the same maximum retail price (MRP) across the country, while Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has also ensured that bottled water would be sold at same MRP in all of its cricket stadiums. The decision in this regard has been taken after Paswan's push for the same MRP for packed food and beverage. The minister opined that after Pepsi's move, other may also follow suit in the larger interest of consumers.

THE US DROPPED BIGGEST NON-NUCLEAR BOMB AT 7.30 PM ON THURSDAY TARGETING ISIS CAVES

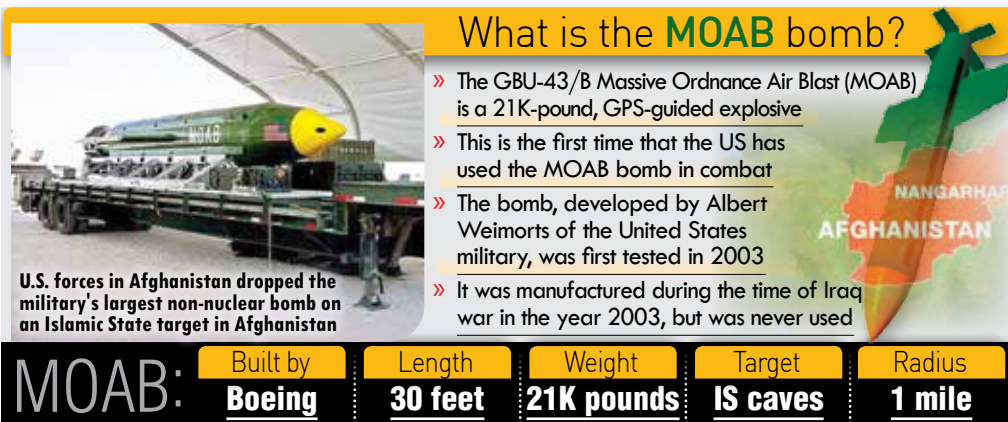
'Mother of all bombs' kills 36 ISIS militants

KABUL: The attack on a tunnel complex in remote eastern Afghanistan with the largest non-nuclear weapon ever used in combat by the US military left 36 Islamic State group fighters dead and no civilian casualties, Afghan officials said today.

The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that several IS caves and ammunition caches were destroyed by the giant bomb, which terrified villagers on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border with its "earsplitting blast."

The US military headquarters in Kabul said the bomb was dropped at about 7:30 pm local time Thursday on a tunnel complex in Nangarhar province, where the Afghan affiliate of the Islamic State group has been operating. The target was close to the Pakistani border.

"I was sleeping when we heard a loud explosion. It was an earsplitting blast," said Shah Wali, 46, who lives in the village of Goor Gari, 15



U.S. forces in Afghanistan dropped the military's largest non-nuclear bomb on an Islamic State target in Afghanistan

What is the MOAB bomb?

- » The GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB) is a 21K-pound, GPS-guided explosive
- » This is the first time that the US has used the MOAB bomb in combat
- » The bomb, developed by Albert Weimorts of the United States military, was first tested in 2003
- » It was manufactured during the time of Iraq war in the year 2003, but was never used

MOAB:	Built by	Length	Weight	Target	Radius
	Boeing	30 feet	21K pounds	IS caves	1 mile

kilometres from the border with Nangarhar. "I jumped from my bed and came out of my home to see what has gone wrong in our village."

Gen. Daulat Waziri, the spokesman for the Afghanistan Ministry of Defense, said the death toll of IS fighters could rise. He said the bombing was necessary because the fortification was extremely hard to

penetrate, with tunnels as deep as 40 meters.

The US estimates 600 to 800 IS fighters are present in Afghanistan, mostly in Nangarhar. The US has concentrated heavily on combatting them while also supporting Afghan forces battling the Taliban. President Donald Trump called Thursday's operation a "very, very

successful mission."

The bomb, known officially as a GBU-43B, or massive ordnance air blast weapon, unleashes 11 tonnes of explosives. Inamullah Meyakhil, the spokesman for the central hospital in eastern Nangarhar province, said the facility had received no dead or wounded.

More reports on P10&11

BJP national executive: Party to focus on states crucial for its fortunes in 2019

NEW DELHI: Having reclaimed power in Uttar Pradesh after 15 years, the BJP will now turn its focus to the states where it has been traditionally weak but which are critical to determine its fortunes in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls as its national executive meet begins in Odisha

on Saturday.

Gaining strength in the eastern states is on the top of BJP president Amit Shah's to-do list now. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, besides Shah himself are likely to give a call for pushing the party's expansion in the new territories.

After arriving in the city,

Amit Shah paid tributes to dalit icon Bhim Rao Ambedkar on his birth anniversary and later joined his state party colleagues in celebrating the Odia new year. The BJP organised a motorcycle rally to welcome him.

He was also presented with a garland of 74 "victory flow-

ers", a reference to the majority mark in the 147-seat Odisha assembly.

The BJP has also planned a virtual road show for Modi when he arrives here on Saturday. He is likely to be greeted at several places on his road travel from the airport to Raj Bhavan. **MPOST** **See P7**

এসো, এসো, এসো হে বৈশাখ।
তাপসনিশ্বাসবায়ে মুমূষুরে দাও উড়ায়ে,
বৎসরের আবর্জনা দূর হয়ে যাক ॥

শুভ নববর্ষ ১৪২৮

Hearty greetings and best wishes to all the people of the state on the occasion of Nabobarsho

Mamata Bandyopadhyay
Hon'ble Chief Minister, West Bengal

Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of West Bengal

ICA-742(22)/2017

Strangers can help you choose BETTER PROFILE PICTURES

According to researchers, people make poor choices when selecting flattering images of themselves for online profile pictures, which affects other people’s perception of them

Want a new Facebook profile picture? Let a stranger do the choosing, say scientists who found that people are not good at picking out flattering pictures of themselves for online profiles.

In the first study to investigate the process by which people choose their profile pictures, researchers from University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia found that images selected by strangers convey more favourable first impressions than images people select for themselves. The findings which were published in the journal Cognitive Research appear to contradict previous research which showed that people tend to portray themselves more favourably than others.

“Our findings suggest that people make poor choices when selecting flattering images of themselves for online profile pictures, which affects other people’s perception of them,” said David White, from UNSW.

“This effect is likely to have a substantial impact on online interactions, the impressions people form and the decisions they base on them, including whether to employ, date, befriend or even vote for someone,” White said.

“Previous work has shown that people make inferences about an individual’s character and personality within a split second of seeing a photograph of their face, so our results have clear practical implications,” he said.

“If you want to put your best face forward, it makes sense to ask someone else to choose your picture,” he said.

To find out whether selecting one’s own profile picture might have a positive or negative effect on first impressions, the researchers asked 102 students to select two out of 12 photos of their own face that they were most or least likely to use as a profile picture in three online network contexts: social networks, dating sites and professional networks.

Participants were then asked to do the same for 12 images of a randomly selected stranger who had participated in the study previously.

The researchers found that people



tend to select images that highlighted positive personality traits in line with the context of the website that the image was for.

“Our results demonstrate that people know how to select profile pictures that fit specific networking contexts and make positive impressions on strangers: dating images appear more attractive, and professional images appear more competent,” said White. However, when researchers showed these images to strangers they had recruited via the internet and asked them to rate how attractive, trustworthy, dominant, confident or competent the person in them appeared, they found that the images people had selected for themselves made a less favourable impression than images selected by others.



Smartphone addiction may create personal, SOCIAL PROBLEMS



PEOPLE WHO use smartphones in excess may experience personal, social and workplace problems, warns new research.

In the study, participants who identified themselves as “addicts” and “fanatics” exhibited signs that could indicate depression, social isolation, social anxiety, shyness, impulsivity and low self-esteem.

“Our smartphones have turned into a tool that provides short, quick, immediate satisfaction, which is very triggering,” said Isaac Vaghefi, Assistant Professor at Binghamton University-State University of New York.

“Our neurons get fired and

dopamine is being released, and over time this makes us acquire a desire for quick feedback and immediate satisfaction. This process also has contributed to developing shorter attention spans and being more and more prone to boredom,” Vaghefi said.

The umbrella term “technology addiction” refers to addictive behaviour related to social media, excessive texting, information overload, online shopping, gambling, video gaming, online pornography and overall smartphone usage.

According to the study, seven per cent were identified as “addicts” and 12 per cent as “fanatics.”



Both groups experience personal, social and workplace problems due to a compulsive need to be on their smartphones, according to the study published in the Information Systems Journal.

Females were most likely to exhibit susceptibility to addiction. “While self-identified ‘addict’ users were in the minority, I predict technology addiction will increase as technology continues to advance and application, game and gadget developers find new ways to ensure users’ long term engagement with technology,” Vaghefi said.

The researchers said that if you constantly check your smartphone, even when it does not ring or vibrate, or you get paranoid when the smartphone is not with you, seeking professional help might be a good idea.

Moreover, if you use technology as a way of escaping problems or relieving feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety or depression, or you ignore what is happening in real time in favour of what is happening virtually, you might then be a right candidate to seek professional help, the researchers said.

Married LGBT adults healthier, happier: Study

FOR YEARS, studies have linked marriage with happiness among heterosexual couples. A new study now shows that the benefits of marriage extend to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) couples as well.

In the study, published in the journal The Gerontologist, LGBT participants who were married reported better physical and mental health, more social support and greater financial resources than those who were single.

For the research, Jayn Goldsen from the University of Washington, and her colleagues used survey data from more than 1,800 LGBT people, aged 50 and older, in locations where gay marriage was already legal in the US in 2014.

About one-fourth were married, another fourth were in a committed relationship and half were single.

Married respondents had spent an average of 23 years together, while those in a committed, unmarried relationship had spent an average of 16 years.

Among the study participants, more women were married than men.

Researchers found that, in general, participants in a relationship, whether married or in a long-term partnership, showed better health outcomes than those who were single.

But those who were married fared even better, both socially and financially, than couples in unmarried, long-term partnerships.

Single LGBT adults were more likely to have a disability; to report



lower physical, psychological, social and environmental quality of life; and to have experienced the death of a partner, especially among men, the findings showed.

FILM REVIEW

Poignant but flawed

‘AFTERMATH’
Director: Elliott Lester;
Cast: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Scoot McNairy, Maggie Grace, Martin Donovan, Hannah Ware, Kevin Zegers;
Rating: ★ ★ ★



Aftermath is a slow-moving, grim drama inspired from true events. It follows the lives of two men who fall into a deep depression after two planes collide in mid-air.

The duo: Roman Melnyk is a Ukrainian immigrant construction worker who loses his wife and daughter in the plane crash, and Jacob Bonanos, often referred to as Jake, is the air traffic controller who was on call during the accident.

After the accident, distraught and depressed, Roman abandons his job and spends his days watching his family videos and recollecting his happy days. All he wants by way of compensation is an apology from the person responsible for the accident.

On the other hand, Jacob suffers from guilt pangs and finds himself unable to lead a normal life. He retreats into a shell after the exterior of his house is painted with accusatory graffiti.

In his depression, he suffers a nervous breakdown and nearly serves his son raw eggs for breakfast. His wife Christina suggests that they spend some time apart. So, he moves to a new town under an assumed name, Pat Dealbert, and a new job profile. But then Roman and Jacob’s paths would soon intersect, is apparent from the very beginning.

Both actors convey grief and loss with plenty of raw emotions on display. Arnold is surprisingly convincing as the old man Roman in perfectly costumed tacky, tucked-in, loud-print shirts and a weathered leather coat. With a stubble and moist eyes on the edge of tears and madness, he has never looked so good onscreen. But on the emoting front, he is limited as an actor. Scoot McNairy as Jacob delivers a fantastic performance. He is aptly supported by Maggie Grace as his wife Christina. Their chemistry is palpable and you feel sorry for the family.

While the film manages to engage and invest in its characters as they head towards their respective fates, the real problem with “Aftermath” isn’t the acting or directing, it is the script.

The script hardly delves into the mind of its characters, particularly Roman’s, which makes some of his actions towards the end seem implausible and never lets the audience fully understand what really led up to his actions at the end.

The story of a brothel

BEGUM JAAN
Director: Srijit Mukherji;
Cast: Vidya Balan, Chunky Pandey, Gauhar Khan, Sumit Nijhawan



Set in the backdrop of late Indian Independence period of 1948, Begum Jaan is Hindi remake of the Bengali film Rajkahini (2015). It is a story of eleven prostitutes who refuse to part ways with their brothel and each other during the partition between India and Pakistan. The local king has taken them under his wings and that’s a relationship Begum loves to flaunt. The locals are scared of her, so is the administration. Her crumbling mansion is her kingdom. Nobody dares talk to her in a mocking tone. However, her inner self is much mellowed and benevolent than what she cares to show and she knows what it means to be a sex worker.

MAPPING THE GROWING CAPITAL

OUR CORRESPONDENT

“In the era of digital Google maps which are accessible to all, people have forgotten the significance of maps. Maps are an important channel to know a city even when you’re far away from it; existence of maps lies beyond its navigation abilities: they are symbolic of power, government and marking the borders is a political act,” said Pilar Maria Guerrieria in her opening statement at the recent launch of her first book Maps of Delhi.

The book presents an exquisite study of the maps of Delhi, from the onset of the 19th century to the master plan of 2021. It is first of its kind, a collection of maps of the city, a breathtakingly illustrated cartographic history of the capital. Manosi Lahiri, author of the book Mapping India mentions that it must have taken Dr Pilar sheer amount of hard work in collectivizing and compiling all these maps together and dealing with National Archive. She further mentions that first few maps in the books are those historic maps prepared by British cartographers



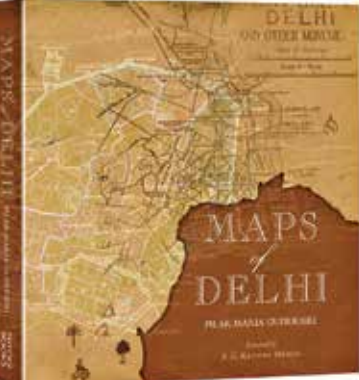
back in those days for the purpose of understanding the city for better governance. The copies were created of those maps: one was sent to London; and other kept in India for the purpose that if the ship might sink, all the work doesn’t go in vain.

“The book was a part of my PhD program and it was done out of necessity, and it was a great working experience in Delhi,” said Dr Pilar, the author of Maps of Delhi. Through maps one can understand the human interaction of the time.

If you look at Shahjahanabad, it’s an airy, open, healthy city with

lots of garden all around. It is built according to British standards, and so is Bangla road. But if you look at Patel Nagar, the construction of this part of the city brings out a post-independence understanding; it’s built according to a rationale pattern of economically using the available space to accommodate people. The book presents its readers not just the maps, which are on the ground but also master plans and expert pieces of town planning which if executed and implemented can make Delhi a better place and more organised city.

“The process of finding the maps



has been an incredible life experience. Took a very long time to collect, select and put in order all the maps scattered in several Indian archives. Dealing with chaotic and diverse archives, handle bureaucracy, time spent getting the right information and patience used to keep going, have been the main challenges of the research process,” recalled Guerrieria, who holds a PhD in Architectural Design, Architectural Composition, Criticism and Theory.

Guerrieria said that after getting access to archives, she sat there for

months, patiently hunting for maps and documents that could unveiling the story of the capital. The National Archives of India, the Delhi State Archives and many others institutions, the author said, hold incredible treasures whose true value needs to be appreciated.

The author further shared that the book unveils the development of the capital, showing the most important changes in its urban planning over two hundred years.

“I believe it is an interesting book for both academics and non-academics. For the first ones, given the amount of valuable primary sources information, is an important detailed specific reference point. Instead, for the second ones, I believe the book provides a fascinating sense of growth and expanse of the city, kick starting the curiosity of exploring hidden historical treasures,” maintained the author.

Referring to the capital as “City of Cities,” the author added that Delhi is a city of distinct parts – each with its distinct characters and features – so distinct that we are actually able to identify those parts as micro cities within the city.



Pilar Maria Guerrieria

No plan to link AIIMS to its Jhajjar campus by Metro rail



YOGESH KANT

NEW DELHI: “There is no proposal to provide metro connectivity between AIIMS New Delhi and AIIMS campus-II at Badsa, Jhajjar, Haryana,” announced the concerned agencies. The country’s premier institute demanded metro connectivity to AIIMS out-reach OPD at Haryana, but it came to no use. Moreover, the centre wants Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to carry out a feasibility study

of the project in the first instance. Speaking to Millennium Post, Medical Superintendent of AIIMS Out-Reach OPD Dr Shakti Kumar Gupta said, “We have already sent the requested copy to present Chief Minsiter Manohar Lal Khattar and Bhupinder Singh Hooda and expected that this project will come to play.” He also stated that due to no connectivity to AIIMS – II Jhajjar , in the upcoming days, patient are going to face several problems to reach the

hospital. “All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has plans to establish several super-speciality and world-class research facilities at Badsa. “The National Cancer Institute is proposed to be set up at an estimated budget of Rs 2,100 crore. The National Cardiac Care Centre is also proposed at Badsa,” he added. Also, this hospital will not cater patients from Delhi but also from across the country, stated Dr. Gupta.

According to an official, a large chunk of medical staff including doctors, nurses and paramedical personnel spends around four hours travelling between AIIMS campus in Delhi and Jhajjar daily which can be avoided by Metro connectivity. “The fatigue is bound to have an impact on the efficiency of the personnel posted there. Considering the circuitous road route, the metro project would reduce the travel distance by nearly half and travel time to 45 min-

utes flat,” said the official. In a letter to Delhi Metro Corporation, Dr Gupta said, “The corridor would pave the way for efficient inter-hospital referrals between the two AIIMS facilities as well. “This is even more pertinent when the safety of the patients is considered as the metro would provide a far safer mode of transport to the patients suffering from various ailments.” The new campus is running OPD services in pediatrics, gynecology, medicine, surgery, orthopedics and ophthalmology from 9 am to 1 pm for which staff is transported daily from the workplace and back. Presently, All India Institute of Medical Sciences is around 17 km from Gurugram and the travelling time between AIIMS and Gurugram location would be about 40 minutes. The distance from the residential quarters of AIIMS faculty in Vasant Vihar is 35 km and 22 km from Indira Gandhi International Airport.

AAP to focus on ‘positive’ issues instead of attacking PM Modi

Defer civic polls till VVPAT-equipped machines can be arranged, demands Kejriwal

ROUSHAN ALI

NEW DELHI: In a major strategy shift for the coming Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) polls, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has decided to shift its focus from targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ‘positive campaigning’. It will resort to what it did during the 2015 Delhi Assembly polls—convince the electorate about the positive work done by the government, said a senior party leader.

On Friday, a day after the Rajouri Garden by-election results were announced, Delhi Chief Minister and AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal also demanded that the municipal polls be “post-poned” by a month or two till arrangements are made to use VVPAT-equipped machines along with EVMs. He met the Delhi State Election Commissioner and alleged that “redundant” pre-2006 electronic voting machines (EVMs) that had been “junked” and can be “hacked even by a child” are going to be used in the April 23 municipal polls. “He (the SEC) said he will write to the Chief Elec-



tion Commissioner. But there is just one week left for the polls. So there is no possibility of replacing the machines or bring VVPAT machines. So I told him to postpone it by one-two months by writing to the CEC,” Kejriwal told reporters. AAP’s move to change the MCD election campaign strategy came in the wake of party’s ‘poor’ performances in both the Punjab and Goa Assembly

polls. While the party could win just 20 of the 117 seats in Punjab, it drew a blank in the 40-member Goa Assembly.

MCD POLLS

“We have seen the outcome of a positive campaign in the 2015 Assembly polls and will continue to do so for the MCD polls,” said the leader. “We are adopting the same strategy

used by the party in which we went to the people to convince them about the positive work done during our first 49-day government in Delhi.”

According to some insiders, AAP’s other reason for not targeting Modi personally in the MCD polls is the massive victory the BJP recently scored in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Delhi has a sizable voter population that comes

from these two states. The AAP leader pointed out that attacking Modi directly during the MCD poll campaign might backfire.

The essence of AAP’s strategy change can also be seen in Kejriwal’s remarks in the wake of the party’s disastrous performance in the Rajouri Garden by-poll.

He attributed the party’s loss to the people’s unhappiness over MLA Jarnail Singh leaving the seat to contest the Punjab polls. Kejriwal, however, stressed that this result would not impact AAP’s performance in the coming MCD elections.

“There were several reasons why Jarnail Singh left the seat and went to fight the Punjab Assembly elections. He has done a lot for the Sikh community. But the people of Rajouri Garden did not like his act of leaving the seat,” he said.

“Even I was getting feedback that the people of the constituency were unhappy over Jarnail leaving in the middle of his term,” Kejriwal added.

He, however, said that this defeat would have no impact on the MCD elections scheduled to be held on April 23.

Graft has declined under two years of Kejriwal rule, says CVC report

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: According to a Central vigilance Commission (CVC) report, the corruption has come down during the last two years of AAP government’s rule.

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia find the drastic reduction in number of corruption complaints against the Delhi government on level of satisfaction.

Sisodia said it was mainly due to zero tolerance against corruption at the top echelons of government as part of which even ministers have been “shown the door” in the last two years.

Our party had come riding on the plank of anti-corruption. There is zero tolerance against corruption. The CVC report reflects the truth.

“There has been a dramatic reduction in the number of complaints of around 81 per cent during 2015-16. It shows the level of satisfaction among people,” Sisodia told a press conference.

The number of complaints against those under government of National Capital Territory of Delhi has declined to 969 received last year as against 5,139 in 2015, the

CVC has said in its annual report tabled in the Parliament recently.

Projecting it as an “achievement” of the AAP government, Sisodia contrasted the figures with that of the Centre where, the report says, complaints have gone up by 67 per cent over the previous year.

When asked why the Rajouri Garden poll results did not reflect the “satisfaction” among the people, Sisodia said the party’s loss was mainly due to anger over sitting MLA Jarnail Singh quitting to contest polls in Punjab.

Singh himself has spoken about the need for the party to go for an honest and deep introspection.

When queried, AAP Delhi Convenor Dilip Pandey said the party will introspect on the other aspects behind the loss stressing that the primary reason was the decision to field Singh in Punjab.

A majority of citizens in the capital said that they didn’t have to pay bribes to government officials in past two years of Aam Aadmi Party government, according to a survey conducted by citizen engagement platform local circles.

Congress promises 5 lakh licences to street vendors

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Friday promised to provide licences to 5 lakh street vendors and implement the Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending Act, 2014 if it wins the upcoming civic polls.

In an interaction with street vendors in Jahangirpuri in outer Delhi, Delhi Congress president Ajay Maken said that as per the Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending Act 2014, 5 lakh street vendors (i.e. 2.5 per cent of the city’s total population) should have been given licenses after identifying spaces for them, but “nothing has been done so far.”

He also hit out at the BJP-ruled civic bodies for not



taking any step for implementation of the Act.

“The street vendors should have been given spaces after identifying special vending zones, which would have freed them from harassment by the municipal authorities and the police.

“But the AAP government in Delhi and the Municipal

Corporations of Delhi have not taken any action to implement the Street Vendors’ Protection Act,” he said.

With the MCD polls covering 272 wards of three municipal corporations due on April 23, the Congress is leaving no stone unturned to reach out to all sections of people, including street vendors.

MCD Polls: Voters to have their left ring finger inked

NEW DELHI: The voters will have their left ring finger inked after exercising their franchise in the Delhi municipal polls on April 23, said the State Election Commission. The move has been necessitated in the event of back-to-back Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) polls and Rajouri Garden Assembly by-elections in the city. The Commission had earlier issued directions to returning officers of Ward 5S to Ward 8S falling in Rajouri Garden Assembly Constituency to put an indelible mark to the voters’ “left middle finger” during the MCD polls. “However, the Election Commission approved putting an indelible mark on the left middle finger of the electors of Rajouri Garden for the bye-election held on April 9,” the State Election Commission said. “It is hereby ordered that the indelible mark is made on the left ring finger of electors in all the three municipal corporations of Delhi during the MCD elections to be held on April 23,” it said in a recent order. The DSGMC polls were held on February 26 and results were announced on March 1. The Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) had won the election, bagging 35 out of 46 wards.

MPOST

BJP CHIEF ATTACKS AAP, CONGRESS

Both AAP, Cong have been rejected by voters: Tiwari

Workers of both parties (AAP & Congress) are now disenchanted and dispirited, he said

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Buoyed by win in Rajouri Garden bypolls, Delhi BJP President Manoj Tiwari on Friday claimed that both Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal and Congress led by Ajay Maken have been vehemently rejected by the people.

The analysis of the result of Rajouri Garden Vidhan Sabha by-election shows that it is a situation where both AAP and Congress have lost their stand in Delhi politics.

Tiwari stated that there is a total disenchantment amongst workers of AAP and Congress. Also, on a daily basis, the workers of other two parties are approaching the saffron party in an aim to join them.

“The way Arvind Kejriwal has gone into shell and Ajay Maken is speaking aloud since yesterday’s (Thursday’s) defeat it shows that Kejriwal is a Hitler who takes responsibility for only success while Ajay Maken is happy to bask in false glory despite knowing the fact that even the people living in his neighborhood don’t support



him,” he said. Also, “The candidate of AAP has lost his security deposit while the Congress candidate has lost not only in the ward she lives in but even on the polling booth where Maken lives,” added Tiwari.

According to Tiwari, the allegations leveled in a police complaint by the leaders of Mahila Congress of torture and harassment speaks volume on the Congress culture. “This is more or less similar to the treatment let out by Kejriwal party to their women volunteers,” he said. Also, Tiwari condemned the efforts of AAP to find a scapegoat in ex-MLA Jarnail Singh to cover up the total rejection by

the masses in Rajouri Garden by-election.

“Ex-MLA Jarnail Singh never resigned at his own will, it was Kejriwal Party’s decision to field him in Punjab. It was AAP which fielded him in Punjab, he did not individually quit the party to fight as an independent. Jarnail was Kejriwal’s lead face in Punjab.

“Now he is trying to misguide the people by putting up posters with misleading facts like BJP will increase water power rates if it wins MCD polls. Apart from this the posters of asking voters to choose between Arvind Kejriwal and Vijender Gupta too are misleading,” added Tiwari.

Three arrested for stabbing security guard

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police arrested three snatchers who never hesitated in stabbing their target if offered resistance from them. The three accused stabbed a man after dragging him out of the bus in Sangam Vihar.

On April 11, a security guard was dragged outside a bus after he gave resistance to three snatchers who tried to loot him. Following this, the three criminals dragged the man outside the bus and stabbed him on the left side of his stomach. They soon fled the spot.

The cops formed several teams to nab the accused who have caused nuisance in DTC buses and also on roads in South-East Delhi. After this, the police succeeded in arresting



Mohit who led to the arrest of the other two Sanjay and Vasu. The gang mostly operated in the areas of Sangam Vihar, Govindpur and Pul Prahladpur in South East district where they mostly targeted passengers of buses.

“The accused have confessed in the investigation that they carried button knife, which has been recovered,” said Romil Baaniya, DCP South East.

Two-day Food Truck Festival to end today

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

NEW DELHI: As the national capital witnesses a rise in the food truck trend, the city has turned host for the Delhi Food Truck Festival – a two day food extravaganza that brings an array of local, national and international cuisines served by the top food trucks in the NCR region.

Organised at the Jawahar Lal Nehru stadium, the food festival is a perfect blend of scrumptious food coming from more than 50 stalls along with soothing music, shopping stalls, live band performance, RJ and celeb talks, stand - up comedies to bring life to the festival.

CT scanner on the blink at DDU Hospital

YOGESH KANT

NEW DELHI: Hundreds of patients along with their attendants are facing inconvenience at Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital as the lone CT scanner has been out of order for last few weeks.

“This is the third time in less than two months when CT scanner has gone out of order. And if sources are to be believed, it is not likely to be repaired for another 10 to 12 days,” said an official.

As many as 80 to 100 CT scans are conducted everyday. But now patients are being referred to the nearby hospital or private diagnostic center as the machine is out of order.

An official from the hospital administration said, “While the scanner is out of order, the patients are referred to the private clinic. We are trying to ensure that no one face any inconvenience.”

But the patients’ attendants who are facing a lot of inconvenience differ to opinion.

“It is not easy to wheel critical patients in and out of the hospital for CT scan,” rued Anuradha Kumari, attendant



of a head injury patient, adding that the long wait at the DDU for scan adds to the patients and attendants’ woes.

Additionally, a senior resident doctor at the emergency ward informed that in-house and casualty patients at the hospital are being referred to the private diagnostic center for the ultrasound too as the diagnostic unit closes by 6 pm every day.

Meanwhile, during a visit to the emergency ward on Friday afternoon, it was revealed that the CT scanner was being repaired.

“There is a major problem with the machine, which will not be resolved so easily. It will take many days,” remarked a worker tending to the scanner.

Okhla plant complying with specified parameters: NGT

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Okhla waste-to-energy plant, which was cleared by NGT, is functional and complying with all the specified parameters, the National Green Tribunal has been informed.

A joint inspection team comprising officials from Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) told a bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar that the incinerator

plant was meeting all the prescribed norms.

“The joint inspection report in relation to waste to energy plant at Okhla has been filed. As per the report, the plant is functional and is complying with the specified parameters. In view of that, no further orders are called for.

The points/deficiencies of non-functional part of plant should be made functional by the project proponent in all respect,” the bench said.

Earlier, the NGT was informed that almost 90 per

cent work at the Okhla waste-to-energy plant has been completed and it will be fully operational by February 28.

The green panel had earlier directed CPCB and DPCC to inspect the waste-to-energy plant on February 22 and 23 and submit a report on it.

On February 2, the tribunal had allowed Okhla waste-to-energy plant, located in south Delhi’s Sukhdev Vihar, to run after noting that it was non-polluting but imposed an environmental compensation of Rs 25 lakh for its deficient operation earlier.

It held that the project proponent is liable to pay EC of Rs 25 lakh in terms of provisions of the NGT Act for the pollution resulting from deficient functioning/operation of plant and its stack emissions being in excess of prescribed parameters upto the period of December 18, 2014.

The tribunal’s verdict had come on a petition filed by residents of Sukhdev Vihar alleging that the plant was releasing “toxic” emissions which had affected their health.



Edu dept slaps notice on 277 pvt schools, threatens to scrap licenses

PIYUSH OHRIE

GURUGRAM: The Education Department of Haryana Government has sent notices to 277 private schools in Gurugram district for not disclosing the number of seats under section 134-A, education act by Haryana Government.

The department has asked the schools to reply to the notice within a week. If they failed to do so, the department would cancel the school's license.

Among the 277 schools in Gurugram district that have

been served the notice, 156 schools is in Gurugram block, 28 schools under Farukhnagar block, 52 schools under Sohna block, 41 under Pataudi, 17 under Firozpur Jhirka block.

In total, over 4,750 private schools in Haryana which have been served with notices by the Education Department of Haryana Government.

Under section 134-A, the private schools have to disclose the number of seats available so that around the twenty-five percent of the seats can be reserved for Economically Weaker Section (EWS)

students.

Yet, despite several reminders by the department most of the private schools in the Gurugram have flouted the rules.

According to reports, only 53 private schools in the district have provided online information to the Education Department regarding the number of seats available.

Already under controversy for charging hefty school fees, these private schools are blamed for flouting the rules to avoid the admissions of economically backward students.

The reluctance of these

Under section 134-A, the private schools have to disclose the number of seats available so that around twenty-five percent of the seats can be reserved for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) students

schools to not keep the reserved seats have resulted in most of the EWS students availing education through non-registered schools. Thereby, not they are barred from availing the benefits mentioned by the government.

Meanwhile, already miffed with the approach of private schools towards the hike in

school fees, the parents again lashed out over the functioning of private educational institutes.

"Most of the private schools in the city today are charging hefty fees because they want to justify that they are bearing losses due to the reservation of seats for EWS students. However, the notice by the edu-

cation department shows that how these private schools are making a mockery of not only middle-class parents but also the public system," said Devendra Kumar, one such parent.

He also stated that even though they have been assured in the past that the government will soon conduct the audit to ensure transparency, most of



Parents protest against the hefty fee structure of private schools

the parents remain skeptical.

"If the private schools have not been able to provide information to the government that is required per law, then what is the guarantee that they will allow the audit to ensure more transparency?," added Kumar. A large number

of private schools in the city are facing agitation from parents for charging hefty fees.

Recently, a private school did not allow two sisters and one brother to not enter the classroom as they did not pay the increased component of school fees.

Commission for SC/STs to be formed in Delhi soon , says Kejriwal

ROUSHAN ALI

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said a Commission will be formed for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes(SC) and the Scheduled Tribes(ST).

"Delhi government will form an SC/ST Commission for the welfare of the community," said Kejriwal.

The Aam Aadmi Party convener made the announcement while paying tributes to the main architect of the Indian Constitution Bharat Ratna Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar on his 126th birth anniversary in the Delhi assembly premises.

The move is initiated to woo the Dalit community and sanitation workers ahead of the MCD polls scheduled on April 23. As per the figures published in the Delhi Statistical Handbook 2015, the total population of Scheduled Castes is

28,12,309 in 2011.

People from the SC and ST communities play a vital role in deciding the fate of any political party during elections.

Kejriwal's promise comes a day after the Aam Aadmi Party received a humiliating defeat in the bypoll to the Rajouri Garden Assembly seat that had fallen vacant as its legislator had resigned to contest in the Punjab Assembly polls.

"In Delhi, there are several Commissions, but no dedicated body for the SC and ST communities. After MCD polls, we will bring a law to form a Commission for SC and ST in order to provide justice to the people of these communities," said Kejriwal.

To bring the new law, the AAP government will first have to table a proposal in Delhi Assembly and once it is passed by the House, the proposal will be sent to the Centre through



the Lt Governor for approval.

In the bypoll result to Rajouri Garden seat announced on Thursday, the AAP finished a distant third with its nominee Harjeet Singh bagging 10,243 votes though the party said it would not impact the upcoming MCD polls.

Earlier in the day, Kejriwal said, "The party lost the Rajouri Garden bypoll as people were unhappy over MLA Jarnail Singh leaving the seat to contest Punjab polls but stressed that this result would not impact the MCD elections."

The party's vote share declined to 13 per cent as against 47 per cent in 2015

Assembly polls. He also played an important role in drafting India's Constitution, which is a masterpiece and best among all the constitutions in the world, Kejriwal said.

"Bharat Ratna Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar was a staunch advocate of equality and social justice, he added.

Kejriwal further stated that Baba Saheb was the chief architect of the Indian constitution, which is unique in the world.

Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel and Deputy Assembly Speaker, Rakhi Bidiyal also paid floral tributes at the Statue of Dr BR Ambedkar. MLAs and other dignitaries were also present on this occasion.

Speaking on the occasion the Speaker Ram Niwas Goel stated that Dr Ambedkar was posthumously honoured with the prestigious Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: In two separate incidents recorded in the Capital, two minor girls were raped.

But, the common factor in both incidents apart from the nature of the crime is that in both cases neighbours of the victims were involved.

The first incident was reported from Outer Delhi's Nangloi area on Tuesday night where the neighbour took the girl to his house and then raped her.

In the second such incident, an 11-year-old from Mayapuri was raped by her neighbour who took her to his friend's house in Hari Nagar. Both the accused have been arrested by Delhi police.

Following the complaint of the 11-year-old girl, a case was registered under POCSO Act who told the cops that

In the second such incident, an 11-year-old from Mayapuri was raped by her neighbour who took her to his friend's house in Hari Nagar. Both the accused have been arrested by Delhi police

she was raped by one of her neighbour.

The girl also stated that she was going to her school near Hari Nagar Ghanta Ghar when she was offered lift by the neighbour on a bike.

The unsuspecting girl was later taken by the accused Naushad to her friend's house in Jhuggis in Hari Nagar.

She alleges the man of raping her in the room.

Following this, the 20-year-old man dropped the girl to school and also threatened her not to reveal anything to family or report the matter to the police.

"The medical examination

has confirmed the rape and we have arrested the accused Naushad, who has confessed to his crime," said a top cop.

In the second case, a girl was raped by her neighbour when she returned early from a Jagran in Outer Delhi's Nangloi. The girl found her house to be locked and decided to wait for her parents.

During this time, she was then lured by one of her neighbours who took the 16-year-old to the rooftop and sexually exploited her.

After her parents came back, she told them the incident after which the cops were informed.

Teacher set on fire by husband, in-laws over dowry, critical

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GHAZIABAD: The husband and in-laws of a teacher tried to set her on fire over alleged demands for a dowry of Rs 25 lakh, said police on Friday. On Thursday, the victim Sangeeta was preparing dinner at her in-law's house in Vasundhara residential locality under Indrapuram when her husband Sanjeev Nagar, father-in-law and mother-in-law tried to burn her by pouring diesel on her. Also, they staged the incident as a case of accidental fire. The neighbours came to her rescue and she was taken to Safdarjung hospital.

The FIR stated that Sangeeta told her mother that her husband had been demanding Rs 25 lakh for a month.

Her condition is stated to be critical. The accused are on run.

Fugitive couple kidnapped and raped two minor girls, arrested

Accused live-in couple revealed that they committed a similar crime with another minor

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: After almost two months, the Delhi Police has arrested the absconding couple who was responsible for raping and selling a 15-year-old girl from Nizamuddin.

Also, the accused revealed that they committed a similar crime with another minor.

With the help of Delhi Commission for Women's (DCW), the victim was rescued on February 2, and also few of the co-accused were nabbed.

The accused, Arman and Hasina, both live in partners were arrested from Sarai Kale Khan.

On sustained interrogation, both have confessed to their crime.

They have also disclosed of having committed similar crimes with one more victim.

The cops have launched their search for the girl. The couple has been taken on two days of police custody remand.

In the October 2016, one minor girl from Chhattisgarh came to New Delhi Railway Station after fighting with her



Accused couple Arman and Hasina were arrested from Sarai Kale Khan

parents.

Following this, she met Armaan who promised her of good employment and marriage. But, his evil plans soon came into play when he kidnapped her.

After this, the victim was also raped with the help of Hasina who was Armaan's live-in partner.

On the victim's resistance, she was confined to a room by the couple.

Three accused who were involved in raping after taking her out of Delhi were already arrested by the Delhi Police.

Mohd Afroz was arrested on February 3 near Nizamuddin Railway Station, Pappu

Yadav was arrested from Faridabad on the same day. The third criminal, Mohd Zakir was arrested on February 4 from a rickshaw stand near Nizamuddin Railway Station.

During interrogation, they confessed to their crimes. Hasina and Arman both left their rented place in Sarai Kale Khan and were on run.

The victim was rescued when BSF personnel informed 181, Women Helpline.

"We have focussed our efforts to trace second minor girl whom the couple has allegedly sold to other persons," said DCP South, Romil Baaniya.

Unitech directors granted three-month interim bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: A local court on Monday granted interim bail to real estate company Unitech's Managing Directors Sanjay Chandra and Ajay Chandra for three months. The Economic Offences Wing had booked Sanjay and Ajay Chandra for allegedly cheating buyers and siphoning off clients' money.

Additional Sessions Judge Raj Kapoor granted three months' interim bail to the Chandra brothers asking them to furnish a bond of Rs 70 lakh each. The court has directed them to submit their passport to the investigating agency and not to leave the country without prior permission.

On April 6, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ashu Garg, rejecting the bail plea of the Chandras, had remanded them to judicial custody till April 20. They were booked for cheating buyers as Unitech first failed to complete a real estate project in Gurugram's Sector 70 on time and then did not refund the money to buyers.

They were arrested from their residence in Gurugram on April 1 by the Economic Offences Wing of Delhi Police and a court here had sent them to two-day police custody the same day.

There are 90 complaints against the brothers in connection with the projects. It was started in 2011 without getting environment clearance. Unitech

On April 6, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ashu Garg, rejecting the bail plea of the Chandras, had remanded them to judicial custody till April 20

obtained environment clearance in September 2013.

Even though it did not have environment clearance, the accused continued booking the flats without giving the real picture to investors and thus misrepresented facts to the investors.

The project was to be completed by 2014.

The accused were booked on charges of criminal breach of trust, cheating and criminal conspiracy.

The police had told the court that Unitech had collected Rs 363 crore from 557 customers for Anthea Floors residential project.

In 2015 also, the court had issued a non-bailable warrant against them in a misappropriation of funds case, though it was cancelled later. Sanjay Chandra is also facing trial in the 2G spectrum allocation case and currently he is out on bail in that matter.

Noida cops refuse to file gang-rape victim's FIR: DCW comes to her aid

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NOIDA: A 20-year-old hailing from Bihar who sold in Noida by her husband was gang-raped repeatedly by seven-eight men before she managed to escape.

Following the escape, the victim reached a certain police station in Noida to seek help.

The cops instead of registering a case against the accused forced her to just go to her relative's house in Delhi.

The courageous victim called the 181 Women Helpline.

A counselor from the Mobile Helpline programme (MHL) reached Noida who helped her in registering a FIR against the accused.

Reshma (name changed) fell in love and got married to a man hailing from Bihar.

Her husband then brought her to Noida on the pretext of work where they stayed for three months.



One day, he locked her in an unconscious state in the house and left her.

After gaining conscious, she realised that her husband had sold her to another man who raped her.

After this, she was gang raped her several times by seven to eight of his friends.

Also, she was tortured and brutally assaulted. The tragedy came that she got pregnant but the assaults did not come to an end.

On 2 April, she somehow managed to escape and approached Noida police for help.

The cops instead of registering a FIR sent her to her uncle's place in Delhi.

The victim called on Women Helpline num-

ber 181 of the Delhi Commission for Women for help.

A Delhi Commission for Women counselor then got a FIR lodged in Noida with the help of Delhi Police.

Delhi Commission for Women Chairperson, Swati Maliwal said, "If the Noida Police can refuse to help a gang rape victim then what would be the condition in the rest of the state?"

She also stated that she would write a letter to the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath, urging him to take strict action against the concerned police officers for their apathy and negligence.

Also, she would demand assistance to the victim.

JNU names its central library after Ambedkar

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) officially named its central library after B.R. Ambedkar on the occasion of the latter's birth anniversary on Friday.

Speaking at the event, JNU Vice Chancellor M. Jagadeesh Kumar termed the library as a "lifeline of our students" and Ambedkar as the "greatest architect of modern India".

"In the beginning of 2016 when I first joined the university, there was a 'dharna' going on in the Administrative Block but when I visited the library...I found it jam-packed. That's real JNU," said Kumar while addressing officials and students on the occasion.

He also stated that after India's independence the biggest question was how to achieve modernity and that our Constitution was the most important text which helped us in our struggle. "Constitution is

Vice Chancellor Kumar termed library as a "lifeline of our students" and Ambedkar as the "greatest architect of modern India"

our only scripture...(and) B.R. Ambedkar is the main architect of this scripture," he added.

A bust of Ambedkar was also unveiled by Milind Kamble, Founder Chairman of the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICC) on the occasion. The renaming of the library has come after a series of protests by student groups belonging to minority sections that are studying in the university.

Lying defunct for 4 years, Bandhwari waste treatment plant to resume operations soon

A case has also been filed against the MCG in National Green Tribunal for not effectively segregating and recycling the waste at Bandhwari landfill site

PIYUSH OHRIE

GURUGRAM: Lying defunct for four years as a waste treatment plant, the Bandhwari landfill site may soon resume operations of converting energy from the waste.

The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram and the Urban Department of the Haryana state Government have contracted a Chinese green energy company Eco Green energy for converting energy from the waste at the landfill site.

According to sources, certain minute details are being worked upon and the Chinese company will soon resume its operations at the landfill site. Chinese green energy company will coordinate with the officials of MCG in collection and treatment of garbage.



There are over 90 trucks that come daily and dump garbage at the 30-acre landfill site

"For long the public officials in the city have been facing the barrage of criticism from the green activists for not setting

up a waste treatment plant at the landfill site," said sources.

A case has also been filed against the MCG in National

Green Tribunal for not effectively segregating and recycling the waste at Bandhwari landfill site.

Large amounts of garbage are being dumped daily at the landfill site from Gurugram as well as Faridabad. There are over 90 trucks that come daily and dump garbage at the 30-acre landfill site.

Commissioned in 2008, Bandhwari landfill nestled in the green belt of Aravallis site was created with an objective of segregation and recycling of waste generated from Gurgaon as well as Faridabad.

Set up with an investment of 300 crores the investment the objective was to operationalise a power plant and plastic recycling at the site.

However the plans did not materialize and 2013 citing heavy losses, the contrac-

tor Irfan Furniturewalla Hanjer abandoned the project of recycling the waste of the area.

Four years since then since then even as the officials claimed there were lot of negotiation with other contractors there was no progress. Meanwhile, the green activists have alleged that officials at MCG were trying to extend the area of

Besides the green activists, villagers close to the landfill site have often complained that how the vast amount of garbage piled up in the area is causing a health hazard for residents nearby.

The villages close to the landfill sites have cited that how the groundwater of the area has become contaminated and thereby causing water borne diseases to most of the residents nearby.

13 people held on Thursday under Operation Durga

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM: On Thursday night, cops involved in Under Operation Durga held 13 youngsters from the MG road area in the city. Also, they were under the influence of alcohol.

The youngsters were found misbehaving with women police officials who pretended to be normal women coming from pubs and bars.

On the first day of the operation, 14 were caught including 10 from MG road.

Under Operation Durga, The Police officials functioning under CM flying squad are acting against people who misbehave with women like stalking or making lewd comments at them. The Gurugram cops are not involved directly in Operation Durga. However, in the past the cops had carried out a drive where various stalkers have been held.

Law on triple talaq only after consensus: Naqvi

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI: A law on the practice of 'triple talaq' among Muslims would be formulated only after there is a consensus among the stakeholders, Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said here on Friday.

"Triple talaq is a serious issue. Non-serious players should not destroy the positive, constructive debate over it.

Reforms should start from within the community, not from outside," Naqvi, who was in the city to attend a programme at the Haj House, said.

He said suggestions on 'triple talaq' were pouring in from different sections of the society and discussions were underway with all the stakeholders.

"Some people are supporting while some are opposing. It is all part of a healthy democracy. As far as the government is concerned, we will wait for a consensus before forming any law on triple talaq. It (the law) will not be sudden. The process is on," Naqvi said. "Whatever the government does, will be done within the framework of the Constitution, but a consensus on triple talaq remains a priority for us," he added.

The Centre had, earlier this week, told the Supreme Court that the practices of 'triple talaq', 'nikah halala' and polygamy had an adverse impact on the social status and dignity of Muslim women.



Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi

Ayodhya dispute, triple talaq on AIMPLB agenda

LUCKNOW: The Ayodhya dispute and triple talaq will dominate the agenda of the 2-day meeting of All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) beginning on Saturday. "The executive meeting of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board is scheduled to be held at Nadwatul Ulama in Lucknow on April 15-16," AIMPLB secretary Zafaryab Jilani said.

AIMPLB member Maulana Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahali had earlier said that the meeting will discuss the Ayodhya dispute against the backdrop of the Supreme Court's suggestion for an out-of-court settlement and the issue of triple talaq. MPOST

CVC concerned over slow disposal of corruption cases in courts

NEW DELHI: The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has expressed concerns over slow disposal of corruption cases registered by the CBI and pending in various courts, some for over 20 years.

A total of 6,502 cases registered under Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act were pending trial, as on December 31, 2016. Of these, 209 were pending for more than 20 years, 1,424 for more than 10 years and up to 20 years, and 1,974 for over five years and up to ten years, as per CVC's annual report tabled in Parliament recently.

As many as 955 cases were pending for more than three years and up to five years, and 1,940 were pending for less than three years, it said. "The Commission is concerned about the slow progress of disposal of the large number of cases pending trial in different courts for long periods, at times for over twenty years," the report said.

Such inordinate delays in dispensation of justice defeat the very purpose of efficient vigilance administration and are an impediment to the fight against corruption, it said.

The Commission has been emphasising that effective measures are required to be taken to increase the disposal of pending PC Act cases under trial/appeals/revision in order to effectively combat corruption.

The pendency of these cases have been brought to notice of the authorities concerned with a request for such appropriate action as are possible to expedite the finalisation of such cases, the report said. The probity watchdog also highlighted corruption cases pending with CBI, a few for more than five years, due to "too much of workload" and "inadequacy of manpower" among other reasons. AGENCIES

630 mn people in SE Asia, India using water from faeces-contaminated source: WHO

NEW DELHI: Around 630 million people in the South East Asian countries, including India, use a faeces-contaminated drinking water source, the WHO on Friday said.

Worldwide, the global health body said, almost two billion people use a source of drinking water contaminated with faeces, putting them at the risk of contracting cholera, dysentery, typhoid and polio.

In a new WHO report, published on behalf of UN-Water - the United Nations inter-agency coordination mechanism for all freshwater-related issues, including sanitation, it asserted that the nations worldwide were not increas-



ing their spending fast enough to ensure water and sanitation targets, under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030, are met. According to the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)

2017 report, the countries have increased their budgets for water, sanitation and hygiene at an annual average rate of 4.9 per cent over the last three years. Yet, 80 per cent of the countries report that water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

DR B R AMBEDKAR'S 126TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED ACROSS NATION

BJP targetting me for raising voice on EVM tampering: Mayawati

OUR CORRESPONDENT

LUCKNOW: BSP supremo Mayawati on Friday accused the BJP of targeting her for raising a voice against alleged EVM tampering and said she was not averse to shaking hands with other parties in her fight against the saffron party on the issue.

"I'm being targetted under a conspiracy so that I stop speaking on EVM tampering by the BJP..but I'm not going to withdraw from this fight to save democracy," she said at an Ambedkar anniversary function of her party here.

"Our party will continue to fight against the tampering of EVMs by the BJP. For this BSP now has no reservations in taking the help of anti-BJP parties in its fight against EVM tampering and the BJP as it is the democracy which comes first...we have to keep democracy alive," she said.

"It is in the interest of the party that EVM tampering is checked at the earliest for which we are ready to use venom against venom," she said.

"The BJP gained power in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections by tampering EVMs... but we realised this only in the recent elections," she said,



BSP supremo Mayawati addressing supporters on the 126th birth anniversary of Dr B R Ambedkar in Lucknow on Friday

adding that EVMs were tampered with in some 250 seats of 403 in the state. "On other seats they thought they will win anyway," she said. The BSP chief who had announced that her party will hold protests on every 11th of the month on the issue said this programme has been put on hold as the matter is now in the apex court.

Addressing the first programme of her party after a dismal show in the recent Assembly elections, Mayawati, in a major announcement, also appointed her younger brother Anand Kumar as the party's vice president.

"I have decided to give important responsibility to

my brother Anand Kumar, that of party's national vice president, with the condition that he will work selflessly and never become an MP, MLA, minister or chief minister," she said.

Elaborating on the reasons for giving her brother this responsibility, Mayawati said as she has to spend maximum time in Lucknow she needed someone in Delhi for sharing her burden. "I had to rush to Delhi every four to five days for signing papers but since our party constitution provides for same signing rights to the vice president, it will save party's money," she said. Stressing that her brother

will continue to do his business as before so that he is not dependent on anyone financially, she also allowed him to bring any other member of the family, having a missionary zeal, in the party fold.

Speaking for the first time before party workers on her medical condition which she said has forced her not to speak loudly. She said she has instead been advised to read written texts by doctors.

The BSP chief has been under fire following a recent decision of the Yogi Adityanath government to order a probe into sale of sugar mills and construction of memorials under her government.

"It is being projected as if I'm responsible whereas I have never held either of the departments...the sugar department was headed by Naseemuddin but he did not take the decision to sell it, it was taken by the Cabinet," she said.

"A thorough inquiry should be conducted into the Rs 1,100 crore scam. If necessary, the state government would also recommend a CBI inquiry into the issue," the chief minister had said when presentations about sugarcane development department were made before him last week.

SC should decide triple talaq issue: BSP chief

LUCKNOW: BSP supremo Mayawati on Friday said the Supreme Court should decide the issue of triple talaq as per the Constitution to ensure justice for Muslim women.

"Our party wants the Supreme Court to take a decision on the issue of triple talaq as per the Indian Constitution, keeping the state and central governments out," she said while speaking at Ambedkar Jayanti function of the party here. "From media reports, it does not seem that senior persons associated with the Muslim personal law boards are serious about Muslim women getting justice on the issue of triple talaq...we do not feel that the board will be able to ensure justice for Muslim women soon...the apex court should ensure justice for them," she said.

In October last year, Mayawati had criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his stance on the issue, saying such matters should be left to the Muslim community and not be

raked up, specially on election eve, for political gains.

"The prime minister and the central government instead of interfering in the issue of triple talaq should better leave it to the Muslim community to form a common opinion," she had said. Raising a question mark on the functioning of the Yogi Adityanath government, Mayawati said its policies are hollow.

The closure of slaughterhouses has forced those involved in its trade to knock the doors of the court, she said.

On demands to close down liquor shops in populated areas, she said her party supported it but termed as unfortunate the BJP government's silence on the issue for its economic gains and capitalist mentality. They have maintained silence as they know that the areas where there are liquor shops are inhabited by Dalits, backwards and the poor among the upper castes whom this government wants to harm though liquor shops, she said. MPOST

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Friday hailed B R Ambedkar as one of the greatest icons of Modern India and said his life is a guiding light to all Indians who want to live together.

Greeting fellow citizens on Ambedkar Jayanti, Gandhi said 'Babasaheb' was indeed one of the greatest icons of Modern India and his contribution to the making of India as a nation shall always remain undisputed. "Dr B R Ambedkar's life is a guiding light to all us Indians who want to live together, united and under the shade of our Constitutional laws and ethos. The Indian Constitution is a living affirmation of the inclusive cohesiveness and guarantee for equality that Babasaheb envisaged," she said in a statement.



Paying tributes to one of the greatest sons of India and a champion of social equality and democracy, Gandhi said that the path of social democracy shown by Babasaheb shall forever remain relevant.

Party vice-president Rahul Gandhi also remembered Ambedkar on his birth anniversary and said, "Babasaheb's life and his work embody the struggle for the conscience of a nation."

Congress launches 'Quest for Equity', a website on Ambedkar

NEW DELHI: On the 126th birth anniversary of the Dalit icon Dr B R Ambedkar, Congress on Friday launched a website 'Quest for Equity', that hosts Babasaheb's work and provides a platform for data, research and legislation on issues related to SC/STs.

The website launched by the party's scheduled caste cell hopes to encourage critical analyses of contemporary socio-economic and political issues.

"This occasion is an opportunity for us to further Babasaheb's dream of making the promise of India

more accessible to all. In this quest, AICC s SC Dept has launched <http://www.questforequity.org>, which hosts Babasaheb's work and data and reports on equity issues," the party said in tweet.

It is designed to serve as the definitive platform for data, research and legislation on issues related to Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST).

"Congress is proud to launch on Friday a platform designed to deepen our understanding of Babasaheb's thoughts," Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi tweeted. MPOST

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NAGPUR: Taking forward the BJP's aggressive dalit outreach, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday flew into Nagpur to pay homage to Bhimrao Ambedkar at 'Deekshabhoomi' where the architect of the Indian Constitution had embraced Bhuddhism 61 years ago.

Modi, who has often profoundly praised Ambedkar for his struggle, and claimed the previous Congress governments failed to give the dalit icon his due for his contributions to nation building, paid floral tributes to him at Deekshabhoomi to mark his 126th birth anniversary.

It was at Deekshabhoomi in 1956 that Ambedkar had led



Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying tributes at Deekshabhoomi, Nagpur, to mark Ambedkar Jayanti on Friday

his followers in converting to Buddhism against the oppressive and discriminatory caste system in the Hindu society.

Modi stood at the place, which has become a shrine for

dalits and neo-Buddhists, with folded hands for a few minutes in prayer.

The Prime Minister's visit to Nagpur is being seen as an extension of his and BJP's efforts to reach out to dalits, a move which helped the party shore up its performance by leaps and bounds in the key cow belt state of Uttar Pradesh where it formed its government after a hiatus of 15 years.

Ahead of his visit, Modi tweeted on Thursday that he was "extremely honoured" to be visiting Nagpur on the "very special occasion" of Ambedkar Jayanti. In Nagpur, the seat of the RSS, BJP's ideological mentor, Modi inaugurated a raft of development projects, including an IIIT, IIM and AIIMS.

हिमाचल वासियों को 70^{वें} हिमाचल दिवस के पुनीत अवसर पर हार्दिक बधाई

“यह 69 वर्ष विकास और खुशहाली के साक्षी रहे हैं। मेरी सरकार ने सदा यह प्रयास किया कि विकास के लाभ सभी तक पहुँचें और सभी स्वावलम्बन की राह पर आगे बढ़ें। आंकड़े गवाह हैं, हमने वायदों से अधिक निभाया। भविष्य में भी प्रदेश सरकार पारदर्शिता और ईमानदारी से अपना कर्तव्य निभाती रहेगी। आप सबके सहयोग के लिए आभार और हिमाचल दिवस की पुनः बधाई।”

आपका अपना,
चिरंजीवी
(वीरभद्र सिंह)
मुख्यमंत्री, हिमाचल प्रदेश

वायदों से अधिक निभाया	वर्ष 2012-2013	वर्ष 2017-2018
सामाजिक सुरक्षा पेंशन	₹450	₹700
80 वर्ष से अधिक आयु के व्यक्तियों की पेंशन	₹800	₹1250
दिहाड़ीदारों की दिहाड़ी	₹150	₹210
आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ताओं का मानदेय	₹300	₹1450
गृह रक्षकों का दैनिक मानदेय	₹225	₹571
पंचायत चौकीदारों का मानदेय	₹1650	₹2550
सिलाई अध्यापिकाओं का मानदेय	₹1600	₹2600
विभिन्न कल्याण योजनाओं का लाभ प्राप्त करने की आय सीमा	₹20,000	₹35,000
आवास कल्याण योजनाओं की उपदान राशि	₹48,500	₹1,30,000

सूचना एवं जन सम्पर्क विभाग, हि.प्र. द्वारा जारी

5 held for assaulting CRPF men; new disturbing J&K videos spark row

MPOST BUREAU

SRINAGAR: Five people were arrested on Friday in connection with the assault on CRPF men during bypoll to the Srinagar parliamentary seat on April 9, while two more disturbing videos went viral, sparking a fresh row in the restive Kashmir valley.

After receiving a complaint from the CRPF, five persons were arrested, and a hunt was on for others seen in the video shot in Budgam district, police said. Budgam accounted for the death of seven of the eight protesters during the poll-day violence.

The video surfaced a day after the polling in which some CRPF personnel were seen walking down a street while being heckled, kicked and punched by youths, setting off a nationwide outrage. There was no retaliation by the security personnel, who quietly walked to their camp as they were under instructions to not open fire, sources in the paramilitary said.

The CRPF had strongly protested with the Jammu and Kashmir police as its personnel and polling staff had abandoned the polling station early, officials said.



Jammu and Kashmir Police chief S P Vaid on Friday lauded the restraint shown by the CRPF jawans and said, "Any armed force in the world would have retaliated with force".

"We have registered an FIR in police station Chadoora against the ruffians who heckled the CRPF personnel. They will be dealt with as per law," Vaid told a news agency.

The DGP said an FIR has also been lodged after a video surfaced in which an ITBP personnel was seen shooting right in the head of a stone-pelting protester outside a polling station in same area.

"A case has been registered in connection with that incident also. It is a matter of investigation and action will be taken against whoever is found guilty," the DGP added.

Officials of the central paramilitary force claimed the local police had abandoned the polling station, leaving the ITBP jawans without any non-lethal riot-control weapon.

The third video showed a youth in Beerwah being tied to an army jeep, ostensibly to be used as a human shield against stone-pelting by rampaging protesters.

The video triggered an outrage, with former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah terming it as "shocking".

The video was reportedly shot in Beerwah, Omar's assembly constituency. "This young man was TIED to the front of an army jeep to make sure no stones were thrown at the jeep? This is just so shocking!" Omar wrote on Twitter.

Will look into Kashmir video issue: Rajnath

KOLKATA: Home Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said he will look into the issue of the videos shot in Kashmir, including the one showing a man tied to an army jeep, which has gone viral on the social media.

"Whatever incident happens anywhere, we will look into the issue. I do not have any information on the video as of now," he told a press conference here. The video showed a man tied to an army jeep, purportedly as a human shield against stone-pelters, in the Beerwah area of Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on April 9. Singh said, "I have already asked for filing an FIR on the incident (of) CRPF jawans (being heckled) while carrying electronic voting machines."

In that video, a CRPF man on polling duty was seen being heckled by protesters in the Chadoora area of Budgam district. Another video shows a stone-pelting protester purportedly being shot dead from close range by security force personnel outside a polling station in Kashmir.

MPOST

Omar's failure to check stone-pelting in 2010 led to current situation: Mehbooba

MPOST BUREAU

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Mehbooba Mufti on Friday said the "failure" of the previous Omar Abdullah government to deal with the issue of stone-pelting had led to the unrest last year and the situation in the Valley at present.

Her remarks came as a response to National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah, who had on Thursday said the Mufti government was "financing stone-pelting". "There was no measures taken with regard to the youths, who took to the streets to hurl stones (in 2010). What steps were taken at that time to check stone-pelting?"

No treatment was done. "It is because of the failure to take steps to treat the ailment. It churned lava (in youths), which exploded sud-



denly last year and till now, we have not been able to stop this," Mehbooba said.

On Abdullah's charge, she said: "The NC had in 2010 said the PDP, which was in the opposition at that time, was giving money to stone-pelters. Now, Farooq Abdullah is saying the PDP government is paying boys and youths for throwing stones. "Some time ago, Farooq sahab himself said they all (stone-pelters) are nationalists and now he is saying all those nationalists are being paid by the PDP government to resort to stone-pelting. I think Farooq sahab is confused."

No revolt against me, no demand for sacking minister: Dhinakaran

MPOST BUREAU

CHENNAI: Rallying behind embattled Tamil Nadu Minister C Vijayabaskar, AIADMK (Amma) faction leader TTV Dhinakaran on Friday said no demand has been made by Chief Minister K Palaniswami or his colleagues to drop him.

Dhinakaran also termed as 'rumours' the reports of a revolt against him by some ministers and ruled out any immediate shakeup in the two-month old Palaniswamy cabinet.

"There is no such information, it could be a rumour," he said. The AIADMK (Amma) deputy general secretary's comments came amid reports in a section of media that Palaniswami and some other ministers wanted the Health Minister Vijayabaskar to be



dropped following the Income Tax searches at his premises here and in Pudukkottai.

The IT searches against Vijayabaskar, a Dhinakaran's loyalist, and against actor-politician R Sarath Kumar of AISMK, an AIADMK ally, has prompted the opposition to mount a strong attack on the ruling dispensation.

DMK Working President M K Stalin has petitioned Governor Ch Vidyasagar Rao seeking dismissal of Palaniswami

and Vijayabaskar, whose names were reportedly linked to money distribution to voters before the now-cancelled R K Nagar Assembly bypoll.

Election Commission had cancelled the April 12 polls, necessitated due to of Chief Minister Jayalithaa's demise, citing use of money power in the constituency here.

The AIADMK deputy general secretary, who is steering the party in absence of the jailed party chief and his aunt V K Sasikala, also indicated all was well in the party.

"He (Vijayabaskar) has said there is no mistake on his part. Opposition parties will keep making demands (for his sacking). When there is no mistake on his part, how can he be removed (from the cabinet)?" Dhinakaran asked reporters.

NATION BRIEFS

KHADI INDIA'S CP OUTLET MARKS ITS 62ND FOUNDATION DAY

NEW DELHI: Amid much fervor and gaiety, the 62nd foundation day of erstwhile Khadi Gramodyog Bhawan now known as 'Khadi India Showroom' at Connaught Place was celebrated here on Thursday. This flagship outlet of KVIC was established in the year 1955. Paying rich flowery tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on this occasion, KVIC chairman Vinai Kumar Saxena also felicitated as many as 12 employees of the showroom – who had completed 25 years of service with this organisation by offering shawls to them.

3 KILLED, 2 HURT IN J&K ROAD MISHAP

BHADARWAH (J&K): Three persons, including an employee of the Forest Department, were killed and two others seriously injured when a vehicle they were traveling in skidded off the road and fell into a 100-feet deep gorge near here in Jammu and Kashmir's hilly Doda district. The accident occurred near Pounra village here late last night when the vehicle was on its way from this town to Manthla, police said.

PARTY DEFENDS RJD CHIEF LALU YADAV FROM BJP CHARGES ON LAND DEALS

PATNA: Under attack from BJP over alleged land deals by Lalu Prasad's family, RJD on Friday fielded its leaders to defend its chief and attack the saffron party senior leader Sushil Kumar Modi "to stop the fictitious game of exposure." RJD national spokesman Manoj Jha accompanied by Bihar state party president Ramchandra Purbe battled for Lalu Prasad while addressing the press at the party office here to refute Sushil Modi's allegations. Jha denied any kind of irregularities by Prasad's family in the land deals and said all the details have been furnished in the income tax return.

CHLORINE GAS LEAK IN GUJARAT VILLAGE; 19 HOSPITALISED

VADODARA (GUJ): Atleast 19 people were hospitalised following the leakage of chlorine gas in a small village on the city outskirts, district officials said on Friday. The incident took place last night due to leakage in the valve of a chlorine gas cylinder, when the process of chlorination in a drinking water tank located in Por village was underway, they said. Those affected after their exposure to the gas were admitted to the state-run Sayajirao hospital here when they began complaining of eye and throat irritation, Vadodara District Collector Lochan Sehra said.

MPOST BUREAU

LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh government will award contracts through e-tendering to remove "mafia and criminal elements", chief minister Yogi Adityanath said on Friday as he pitched for digital payments to eliminate corruption.

"All the contracts will be awarded through e-tendering.

This will remove the mafia and criminal elements from the contract chain, as these elements do not want transparency. The quality of these contracts was very bad and there were no DPRs (detailed project reports)," the chief minister said. It was due to these factors that there were cost escalations for projects, delays in completion, besides inconvenience to the public, he said.

"The UP government is committed to keep these elements (mafia) away from the contracts," Adityanath said.

To bring transparency there is need to adopt the new cashless systems, he said adding that 60,000 service centres in UP have been linked to 'Digi Dhan'. "Efforts should be made so as to bring more and more people under the ambit of digital payment. This will help in eradicating corruption from the society," Adityanath said, while addressing a gathering at the 'Digi Dhan Mela' being held



here. He added that IT Parks would be established in the state. The Uttar Pradesh chief minister also lavished praise

on Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that before Modi took over, people had "no faith in their representatives".

"But after PM Modi assumed office, an atmosphere of trust has increased in the country," he said. Adityanath reiterated that by November 2018, all the villages and households in the state will get electricity supply. "Earlier damaged transformers languished for 3-4 months awaiting repair. But now the government has instructed the energy department to ensure that damaged transformers in rural areas are repaired in 48 hour, while those in urban areas are repaired in 24 hours," the CM said.

UP govt, Centre ink pact for 24x7 power supply

MPOST BUREAU

LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh government and the Centre on Friday entered into an agreement which promises to provide 24x7 power supply to all the households in the state.

The 'Power for All' pact was signed in the presence of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power Piyush Goyal at 5 Kalidas Marg, the official residence of UP Chief Minister. Deputy

Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma, UP Energy minister Shrikant Sharma and state minister for Power Swatantra Dev Singh were also present on this occasion. The state government also announced that it is expanding the ambit of helpline Dial 1911 through which the consumers in rural areas in coming days could communicate their grievances pertaining to power and electricity. The Centre's undertaking Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) will install 10,000 energy efficiency solar-

panel pumps will be distributed.

It was also agreed upon to distribute to energy consumers energy efficiency bulbs, tube-lights and fans at cheaper rates. Apart from this, the rural consumers will also get the facility of making digital payment through e-bhugan. As many as eight sub-stations of UP Power Transmission Corporation Limited worth Rs 331.69 crore and 12 sub-stations of UP Power Corporation Limited worth Rs 75.60 crore were also unveiled.

Now, BJP to focus on states crucial for fortunes in 2019

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The city of Bhubaneswar is decked up for Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) conclave with hoardings having posters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with his trusted lieutenant and BJP president Amit Shah. About 300 plus BJP functionaries, including PM Modi and party chief, will be meeting in Odisha's capital for a two-day brainstorming session on the party's "Mission 2019".

The BJP national executive meeting is scheduled to begin on Saturday at Janata Maidan, wherein the efforts of party workers would be hailed for winning recent assembly elections. The emphatic victory in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand would be showcased to motivate the workers of Odisha for taking on ruling party in the state – Biju Janata Dal (BJD), a former ally of NDA. As all Cabinet ministers, Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled states would mark their attendance at the meet, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj is likely to skip the meet on health grounds.

"Sushmaji will not be able to attend the national executive meeting on health grounds. She has been advised rest by doctors," said Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan, who has been tasked to organise this mega show.

"Swaraj's presence and



About 300 plus BJP functionaries, including PM Modi and party chief Amit Shah, will be meeting in Odisha's capital for a two-day brainstorming session beginning from Saturday

guidance would be felt at the meet. Union ministers, chief ministers of 13 BJP-ruled states and three deputy chief ministers will attend the meet," Pradhan told reporters while inaugurating the media centre, set up for the conclave. According to Petroleum Minister, party veterans LK Advani and MM Joshi will also attend the national executive meet.

"The Prime Minister is scheduled to arrive at the Odisha's state capital by 3.30 pm on Saturday. The PM will proceed to the Raj Bhavan before attending the national executive meet at Janata Maidan at 5 pm," Pradhan said.

BJP president Amit Shah, who reached Bhubaneswar on Friday, garlanded the statue of BR Ambedkar at AG Chhak, near the secretariat. Shah is also slated to attend a programme

at the state BJP headquarters to celebrate the Odia New Year.

Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar has turned into a fortress ahead of the PM's two-day visit as massive security arrangements have been made to avoid any untoward incident.

"The way we prepared the security arrangements for the BJP's national executive meeting, it is nothing less than Rath Yatra preparations. During Rath Yatra, we deploy around 4,000 police personnel at Puri. For the security and traffic management on April 15 and 16, we will mobilise at least 3,000 cops," said a senior police officer.

Police said that Modi's security is being looked after by the Special Protection Group, whereas Z Plus security arrangements will be made for the 13 chief ministers.

BJP to make its Odisha lab for welfare schemes: Pradhan

OUR CORRESPONDENT

BHUBANESWAR: The BJP on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has decided to make Odisha the laboratory of welfare schemes for the poor.

Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said "While Prime Minister Modi's acceptability has increased in Odisha, the people are annoyed over the ruling BJD. People have changed their mind as they voted in favour of BJP in large number in the panchayat polls than the previous general elections in 2014."

Stating that the BJP is holding its national executive meeting here after a gap of 20 years, Pradhan said the central government led by Modi is committed to fulfil the aspirations of the people.

He said BJP president Amit Shah has been strengthening the party.

The BJP-led NDA government has already allocated Rs 5,200 crore for railway development in Odisha during the last three years, while the amount was dismal during the Congress-led UPA government. During the UPA's tenure, maximum allocation was Rs 1,000 crore in one rail bud-

get, Pradhan said.

"The allocations made to Odisha in railway development indicated Prime Minister Modi's responsibility towards the state," Pradhan said adding, Odisha has been the biggest beneficiary from the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission.

He said the Centre has allocated Rs 3,000 crore for rural development in Odisha.

"While 1,600 km National Highways were constructed in Odisha during Atal Behari Vajpey's tenure, Modi has planned to build 4,800 km of NH in the state," Pradhan pointed out.

He said Modi has planned construction of 450 km coastal highway from Gopalpur in Odisha to Digha in West Bengal, which will help boost Odisha's industries and tourism sector.

He also said the number of LPG consumers in the state has already increased to 43 lakh this year from 23 lakh in 2014.

Claiming that Modi's popularity has increased manifold across the country and abroad, the Union Minister said the people of Odisha have accepted the Prime Minister's plans and programmes.

Imposing only fine on woman convict in serious case unfair: SC

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has held that imposing only a fine in serious offences, which entail award of jail terms and fine both, on women convicts would lead to "unfair" and "unjust" consequences.

Observing this, the apex court set aside the Himachal Pradesh High Court verdict imposing only a fine on a woman, who was convicted of drugging and taking part in robbing a man, and said leniency cannot be shown beyond what has been allowed in the statutory scheme.

A bench, comprising Justices A K Sikri and Ashok Bhushan, who wrote separate but concurring verdicts, said the convict was already shown leniency by the trial court on the ground that she has three minor kids. The trial court awarded her a two-year jail term and a fine of Rs 6,000.

The High Court raised this fine to Rs 30,000 and allowed the woman to walk free.

Justice Sikri said "In the present case, two mitigating circumstances which are pressed into service by the respondent (accused) are that she is a woman and she is having three minor children. This has to be balanced with the nature of crime which the



respondent has committed.

"As can be seen, these circumstances were taken into consideration by the trial court and on that basis, the trial court took a lenient view by awarding imprisonment for two years in respect of each of the offences under Sections 307, 328 and 392 of the IPC, which were to be run concurrently.

"There was no reason to show any further mercy by the High Court. Further, as found above, removing the element of imprisonment altogether was, in any case, erroneous in law," the judge said.

Justice Bhushan was harsher in his observations and said, "Appellate Court cannot exercise its power under 386(b) (iii) to alter the sentence of the imprisonment and fine into a sentence of only a fine, which shall be contrary to the statutory scheme.

"In event, such power is conceded to Appellate Author-

ity to alter a sentence of imprisonment and fine with sentence only of a fine, the consequences will be unfair and unjust."

Justice Sikri, however, said though gender is not a mitigating circumstance in awarding sentence, in Indian context, a woman can be shown leniency in some cases as the impact of jail term on her kids cannot be lost sight of.

"Insofar as Indian judicial mind is concerned, I find that in certain decisions of this Court, gender is taken as the relevant circumstance while fixing the quantum of sentence. I may add that it would depend upon the facts of each case, whether it should be treated as a relevant consideration and no hard and fast rule can be laid down," he said.

The verdict came on an appeal against the High Court order which modified the trial court order and imposed the fine only on her.

Apex court asks Centre to mull extending finance benefits to para forces

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has asked the Centre to re-think on the issue whether paramilitary forces –CRPF, BSF, ITBP, CISF and SSB –can be given monetary benefits like the 'organised services'.

The apex court was hearing a batch of appeals including one filed by the Centre against the Delhi High Court's September 2015 verdict asking the government to consider all paramilitary forces as "organised services".

The high court had said officers of paramilitary forces should be given the benefits including non-functional financial upgradation (NFMU), earlier available to 'Group A organised services', from 2006 in terms of the 6th Pay Commission.

Under NFMU, if all the officers of a particular batch cannot move up the ladder owing to lack of vacancies but only one does, the others will automatically get financial upgradation like the one who has been

promoted.

Solicitor General Ranjit Kumar, representing the Centre, told the apex court if the paramilitary forces were declared as organised group 'A' services, there cannot be any deputation and no one from IPS cadre can come on deputation.

The apex court said it perceives that the paramilitary forces personnel were grieved by the non-grant of 'equal pay for equal work', a benefit granted to the organised services, and if the conferment of monetary benefit can assuage their grievance, the government might think over it.

"In the ultimate eventuate, we think it apt to say that if the conferment of monetary benefit can assuage the grievance of the respondents, the Union of India may rethink over the matter without disturbing its sense of discipline as it conceives," a bench comprising Justices Dipak Misra and M M Shantanagoudar said. AGENCIES

NATION BRIEFS

ANDHRA CM NAIDU LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR RS 100-CR AMBEDKAR PARK

AMARAVATI: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday laid the foundation-stone for the Rs 100 crore Dr B R Ambedkar Smriti Vanam (memorial park) at Inavolu village here, marking the 125th birth anniversary of the architect of Indian Constitution. He also laid the foundation-stone for a 126-ft statue of Ambedkar that will come up in the park, spread over a 20-acre site. The Smriti Vanam will have a multi-purpose Convention Hall with a seating capacity of 3,000 persons. The state government has allotted Rs 97.64 crore for the project that is expected to be completed in 24 months. This includes Rs 25 crore for the 126-ft statue.

HIMACHAL PRADESH TO CELEBRATE 70TH STATEHOOD DAY TODAY

SHIMLA: The hilly state of Himachal Pradesh celebrates its 70th anniversary on Saturday. It was on this day in 1948 that Himachal came into existence after merger of 30 odd princely hill States. Congratulating the people of the state, CM Virbhadra Singh said, "I felicitate entire populace of the State and pay my respect and gratitude to the great sons and daughters of the soil, who toiled hard to secure for Himachal a separate entity, and make it a distinct identity. I pay my special respect to Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar, the architect and first Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh."

PM'S WIFE JASHODABEN VISITS TEMPLE IN TELANGANA

HYDERABAD: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's wife Jashodaben on Friday visited a temple in Vikarabad town (Telangana), about 70 km from Hyderabad, and offered prayers. When contacted, Prahlada Rao, Vikarabad district BJP chief said she came to the town on an invitation by one Ramesh, a former municipal councillor of Vikarabad. "She came along with her brother and two others last night. They stayed in Ramesh's house. On Friday morning, she visited Santoshi Mata Temple in Vikarabad town and offered prayers," Rao said.

THREE TN MINISTERS BOOKED FOR 'OBSTRUCTING' I-T OFFICERS

CHENNAI: Three Tamil Nadu ministers and two others were on Friday booked by police on charges of threatening and obstructing Income Tax officers from performing duties during searches, including at a minister's residence, here last week. An FIR has been filed against ministers Udumalai K Radhakrishnan, R Kamaraj and Kadambur Raju and others on a complaint by the Income Tax department, police said. Others named in the FIR include Thalavai Sundaram, Tamil Nadu special representative in Delhi, police said.

NIGHT CURFEW CONTINUES IN BHADRAK, 146 ARRESTED FOR VIOLENCE

BHADRAK (ODISHA): Night curfew continued in Bhadrak on Friday despite the town returning to normal, while the number of arrests rose to 146 in connection with the violence sparked by alleged abusive remarks against Hindu deities on social media. "Normalcy has returned to violence-hit Bhadrak town, but curfew, which was relaxed for 12 hours on Friday, will remain in force during the night," Bhadrak Superintendent of Police Anup Sahu said. Curfew was relaxed from 6 am till 6 pm following considerable improvement in the situation and was re-clamped from 6 pm on Friday till 6 am on Saturday, Sahu said.

Massive fire in forest area near Mount Abu

OUR CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR: A major fire broke out in the forest area near Mount Abu in Sirohi district, prompting the Indian Air force to deploy an MI-17 chopper to douse the flames.

The fire broke out in the morning and spread over several kilometres. The administration is making use of a modified MI-17V5 helicopter to put out the blaze, District Collector Abhimanyu Kumar said. The affected area is close to Mount Abu, the sole hill station in the state, where a large number of tourists arrive in the summer season. However, tourist activities remained unaffected in the area, a police official said.

A defence spokesperson said: "The helicopter unit at Phalodi in Jodhpur swung into action on receiving a call from the state government, seeking help in dousing a massive forest fire in the hills fast progressing towards the inhabited areas assisted by winds."

A suitably modified MI-17V5 helicopter with a bambi bucket reached the site and conducted a quick aerial recce before the operation. It drew water out of Nakki lake in the middle of Mount Abu.

The IAF team managed to push in seven sorties dropping close to about 20,000 litres of water over the spread of fire dangerously close to inhabited area, he said.

Editor-in-Chief of Sudarshan TV gets bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SAMBHAL (UP): Editor-in-Chief and Chief Managing Director of a news channel, who was arrested for allegedly promoting enmity between different groups here, was on Friday granted bail by a court here.

District Magistrate of Sambhal Bhupendra S Chaudhary said Suresh Chavhanke was produced before junior division judicial magistrate, where he was granted bail.

Chavhanke on the other hand termed police action against him as improper and was initially reluctant to take bail. But, after administrative officials convinced him, he relented, officials said.

Superintendent of Police Ravi Shankar Chhavi said, "Cases were registered against

Chavhanke, Itrat Hussain Babar and Sanjay Shankhdhar for promoting enmity between different groups, inciting fear among the people and disturbing the communal unity."

Chavhanke was arrested on April 12 night by Sambhal police with the help of Lucknow police from the Chowdhury Charan Singh Airport, when he was about to leave the city.

An FIR was lodged against him under various sections of the IPC including those dealing with promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth and over content to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to the public, or to any section of the public and other sections on April 10 in Sambhal.

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Mercury rose in many parts of northern India and hovered around the 40 degrees Celsius mark as Odisha continued to sizzle and normal life was affected in Rajasthan due to heat wave in parts of the state.

It was a hot day in the national capital with the mercury crossing the 40 degree Celsius mark in some parts of the city.

The Safdarjung observatory, whose recording is considered the official figure for the city, recorded a max-



Women cover faces to protect themselves from heat wave in Amritsar on Friday

imum temperature of 40.6 degrees Celsius, five notches above the season's average.

Areas under Palam, Ayanagar and Ridge registered a maximum temperatures of 42.4, 40.8 and 41.4 degrees Celsius respectively while it was 39.2 degrees Celsius at Lodhi road, a MeT department official said.

Normal life was affected in Rajasthan due to heat wave sweeping parts of the state with Jaisalmer being the hottest place recording a maximum temperature of 45.6 degrees Celsius.

Barmer sizzled at 45.4 degrees Celsius, while Severe heat wave condi-

tions prevailed in the western part of the desert state.

Bikaner, Churu, Kota and Jodhpur recorded maximum temperatures of 44.5 degrees Celsius, 44.2 degrees Celsius, 44.1 degrees Celsius and 44 degrees Celsius respectively, the MeT department here said, adding day temperatures at other stations were below 44 degrees Celsius.

Hot weather conditions intensified in Odisha on Friday with the mercury hovering above 40 degree Celsius in at least 13 places in the state and Titlagarh remained the hottest at 43 degrees Celsius.

UPPCB, Cantonment Board to pay for Mathura pollution: NGT

NEW DELHI: The UP pollution control board (UPPCB) and Mathura Cantonment Board have been directed by the National Green Tribunal to pay Rs 5 lakh and Rs 10 lakh respectively for causing pollution in the temple town.

"The problem of MSW is not confined to Mathura Cantonment Board or Mathura city but it is a national problem. It requires collective, progressive and effective steps to be taken before the MSW is managed and disposed of in accordance with the law in force," a bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar said.

The green panel castigated UPPCB and the Cantonment Board, which works as a municipal body, for failing in their constitutional duties and causing continuous air and water pollution.



"We have no hesitation in holding that the UPPCB as well as the Mathura Cantonment Board have miserably failed to protect the environment and discharge their statutory and public law obligation in accordance with the law in force. For this reason, they are liable to pay Environmental Compensation (EC) in terms of Section 15 and 17 of the NGT Act."

"Thus, we direct that UPPCB shall pay Rs 5 lakh as EC while Cantonment Board shall pay Rs 10 lakh for causing continuous air, water, ground

NGT slaps Rs 50 L fine on Tehri Hydro Development Corporation

NEW DELHI: Development does not mean destroying nature, the National Green Tribunal has said while slapping an environment compensation of Rs 50 lakh on Tehri Hydro Development Corporation (THDC) for throwing debris of its Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project in the Alaknanda river.

Coming down heavily on THDC, a bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar, held it responsible for polluting the river and restrained it from throwing any "muck, soil and stones" by carrying out blasting in the floodplains of the water body.

water pollution... They have also failed to seek permission for the use of trenching ground under the law in force and operating it without the consent of the Board or without any authorisation and in complete violation and disregard of the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2016,"

the NGT said.

It also directed both the authorities to pay the compensation to the Central Pollution Control Board within two weeks and asked the Board to submit application for consent to operate and for authorisation within two weeks to the UPPCB.

WB HIDCO
e-Tender notice No.3 of 2017-2018
e-tender is invited for "Maintenance of Golf Course within Eco Park, New Town, Kolkata. (For Twelve months)." in the manner as described in the detailed e-tender notice available on WBHIDCO website-www.wbhidcoltd.com in e-tender portal Last date of Bid submission closing (on line)-22.04.2017 upto 2.00 P.M. Detailed may be seen in our website at www.wbhidcoltd.com.
ICA/T 769(3)2017 General Manager (Engg.)-IV

WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED
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CIN: U30109WB0670560115473, cscppm@wbsecl.com, www.wbsecl.in
The Addl. C.E. & Zonal Manager, Midnapore Zone, WBSECL, Administrative Building, Power House Complex, Burdga Town, Midnapore, Dist. Paschim Medinipur invites e-Tender in two parts (Part I: Techno-Commercial, Part-II: Financial) from the experienced, resourceful, bonafide and working agencies of WBSECL/WBSETCL/ WBPDCL/Central Govt./ State Govt./ Semi-Govt./Undertaking for the following work - **NIT No.:** MZ/Civil/Tender/8/17-18/03 **Date:** 11.04.17; **Name of work:** Construction of cable trench at Vidyasagar Park; **Est. Cost:** Rs. 13,08,84,312/-. For other details, including qualifying requirements, visit www.wbsecl.in and www.wbtenders.gov.in ICA/T 779(3)2017

WB HIDCO
e-Tender notice No.113(2nd Call) of 2016-2017
e-tender is invited for "Repair, restoration & strengthening of the existing Service Road from Link canal to 1st Rotary including drain line works in AA-I, New Town, Kolkata. Length of Work - 300.00mtr." in the manner as described in the detailed e-tender notice available on WBHIDCO website-www.wbhidcoltd.com in e-tender portal Last date of Bid submission closing (on line)- 18.04.2017 upto 2.00 P.M. Detailed may be seen in our website at www.wbhidcoltd.com.
ICA/T 770(3)2017 General Manager (Engg.)-IV

EDITORIAL

No guarantees

There will be much concern among foreign policy mandarins in New Delhi after the recent US-China summit, in which Chinese President Xi Jinping and his American counterpart Donald Trump took part in lengthy discussions on a whole host of issues. Top of the pile, however, was the threat posed by a nuclear weapons-armed North Korea and trade. After their meeting, US President Donald Trump tweeted: "I explained to the President of China that a trade deal with the U.S. will be far better for them if they solve the North Korean problem!" What followed soon after was an affirmation by Trump that Washington no longer considers China as "currency manipulator"—a significant about-turn from the rhetoric he peddled during his bid for the US presidency. He backed this stunning assertion with the rationale that it was not as if the Chinese currency is deliberately kept "weak", but that the American dollar is "getting too strong". This fact received confirmation from a US Treasury spokesman. This major concession is a complete break from the promise Trump had made during his election campaign. In an interview with the Wall Street Journal, Trump argues that if the US officially deems China to be a currency manipulator, it would jeopardise any attempt to resolve the threat North Korea poses. While both sides remain divided on how to deal with North Korea and there is little clarity on how they will move ahead on trade-related concerns, recent developments indicate that they have arrived at some common ground. There is a definite change in Beijing's tone with regards to North Korea. If the North Korean government of Kim Jong-Un goes ahead with a test of either an intercontinental ballistic missile or a nuclear device, Beijing has promised to take stern action. In an editorial in the State-backed *Global Times* on Wednesday, it was argued that North Korea must rein its nuclear ambitions, or else China would "severely limit" oil supplies. China even recently decided to abstain from voting on a UN Security Council resolution condemning last week's chemical attack on civilians in Syria, and not back Russia by vetoing it. At a time when New Delhi's relationship with China has hit new lows, it would be interesting to see how far Trump will back Indian interests when push comes to shove. For the uninitiated, Beijing's desire to undermine India's security and strategic interests on multilateral forums at every possible turn and New Delhi's subsequent response in playing the "Tibet card" has soured relations. One could even argue that issues of US-China trade or the North Korea problem are entirely different from India's concerns over its hostile neighbour and that the Trump administration will deal with these matters separately. It is hard to tell which way the wind will blow, but one thing is for certain. New Delhi must not take the previous Barack Obama administration's claims that the US-India ties "will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century".

Pak's tryst with blasphemy

In an event that should shake the conscience of any reasonable individual, a vigilante mob in Mardan, Pakistan, on Thursday thrashed and then killed a university student and seriously injured another for alleged blasphemy. Both students of mass communication at the Abdul Wali Khan University were accused of promoting the Ahmadi faith on social media. The incident occurred in the presence of local police, who were outnumbered by the vicious mob. Reports from Pakistani media paint a rather horrific picture of what took place during this incident. For nearly a century, members of Ahmadiyya community have suffered ostracisation for an interpretation of Islam that differs from traditional orthodox positions of the majority Sunni community. "Ahmadis are prohibited from declaring or propagating their faith publicly, building mosques or even referring to them as such, or making the call for Muslim prayer," according to Human Rights Watch. Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code, which is popularly known as the blasphemy law, has been used to target religious and sectarian minorities.

"Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine," reads Section 295-C. It was under the dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq in the 1980s when Pakistan passed down a series of orders to create and sharpen blasphemy laws. It was under General Zia that narrow and bigoted religiosity became state policy. What began during Zia's tenure did not end with him. The vicious attack on minorities, their place of worship, and subjecting people to incarceration on the mere suspicion of blasphemy, are regular occurrences in Pakistan today. One is not surprised by the arrival of an Islamic State-like ideology into mainstream public discourse. This has raised serious concerns that sectarian violence could further intensify in an already strife-ridden Pakistan. According to Hussain Haqqani, the former ambassador of Pakistan to the United States and a leading South Asia expert, there is already broad support for such an ideology. "While many Pakistanis might be troubled by the violent ramifications of global jihad within the country, broad sympathy in Pakistani society for jihadis remains a reality," he writes in an academic paper titled, *Pakistan and the Threat of Global Jihadism: Implications for Regional Security*. "Most Pakistanis support Sharia rule, an Islamic caliphate, and an Islamic state, even if they disagree on the definition of those concepts."

It is an unfortunate reality that has played itself out in massive public support for Mumtaz Qadri, who was executed on February 29 last year for the assassination of Punjab Governor Salmaan Taseer in 2011. Days before the first anniversary of Qadri's death earlier this year, thousands of people had prepared to converge at Islamabad to commemorate him. Millions of Pakistani Rupees were collected from all over the country to construct a shrine in memory of the assassin. For the uninitiated, Qadri was working as Taseer's bodyguard when he shot him 28 times after the Governor spoke out against the country's controversial blasphemy law. Qadri was sentenced to death by Pakistan's highest court and subsequently executed. Many of Qadri's supporters believe that he had done a service to his religion by killing Taseer. Despite the government's decision to bar Islamist organisations from staging rallies commemorating a killer, it is an unfortunate reality that widespread support for such a violent ideology persists. There are tragic consequences for a country that fails to maintain the distinction between religion and governance. "In Pakistan, post the 1970s Muslim attitudes towards blasphemy allowed theological ideas to be enshrined in law increasingly. What resulted was chaos as a host of groups, using religion as his authority, challenged the state itself. Like India's current cow hysteria, rumours around blasphemy and Quran desecration often result in violence that the state is either unable or unwilling to control," says a recent editorial in *Scroll.in*. Similar fears are coming to light in India with cow protection laws, cow vigilante murders and unconditional support from influential sections of the political class for those who engage in such acts of violence. India's political class would be well advised to observe what is going on in Pakistan in the name of religion.



AMULYA GANGULI

Beef, for instance, is kosher in Kerala, Goa, and the Northeast. Not long ago, V Muraleedharan of the BJP's Kerala unit had said that his party had "no intention to protest against people eating beef". More recently, a BJP candidate in the Muslim-dominated Malappuram constituency promised to provide "good quality" beef if he was elected

Quote martial

Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



SAMAR LAHIRY

There is a need to evaluate the land use pattern of Central Ministries and Departments. Identification of idle land under these ministries should be made quickly to create land banks. It is desirable to start stocktaking of land that is locked up with closed/sick PSUs

Under the judicial lens

BJP's expanding political footprint will also allow for contact with unfamiliar lifestyles and gastronomic partiality in various regions

There was a slight lull in the murderous antics of the *gau rakshaks* or cow protectors after Narendra Modi said that a majority of them were anti-socials. After the BJP's sweeping victory in UP, however, the rakshaks have regained their righteous anger against the suspected killers of cows, especially if they are Muslims.

This fateful religious identity where the Hindu Gestapo is concerned motivated the killers of Pehlul Khan, who was leading a group of dairy farmers, mostly Muslims, transporting cows from Alwar, Rajasthan, to Mewat, Haryana. It was a rerun of an earlier murder of a suspected beef eater in Dadri near Delhi. Even as Union minister of state for parliamentary affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, one of the BJP's token Muslims, tried to pretend that nothing had happened, the Rajasthan home minister equated the assailants with the victims by saying that both were guilty.

However, the Hindutva camp may not be able to continue with such equivocations since the Supreme Court has now intervened, asking the Centre and several BJP-led state governments about the steps they have taken – or failed to take – against the cow vigilantes. The scope for deliberate or inadvertent official and political inaction, therefore, has been severely limited.

If the BJP chief ministers are compelled to crack down on the *gau rakshaks* or ask them at least to lie low for a while, it is likely to be considered a serious impediment by the Hindu Right to pursue its divisive objective. If the depredations of the vigilantes are stopped or at least curtailed, the Sangh Parivar's dietary agenda relating to beef will suffer a setback.



Representational Image

The focus of the agenda was clarified with admirable candour by the Gujarat Chief Minister, Vijay Rupani when he said after the passage of a law prescribing life sentence for the killer of a cow that he wanted the state to become vegetarian. As of now, this order cannot be enforced. It can only be an obiter dictum, to use a legal term. But the manner in which the UP results have emboldened the hardliners can be seen from this directive and also from the Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh's threat, delivered with a smile, to hang those who kill cows.

Never before, not even during the Ramjanmabhoomi

movement, was the BJP so forthright about its obsession with the cow and the culinary prescriptions for the citizens of Hindu Rashtra in the making. The judiciary's decision to ask questions will make the Parivar aware, however, of the difficulties of imposing its wish list.

As it is, political imperatives have come in the way of enforcing the list. Beef, for instance, is kosher in Kerala, Goa and the Northeast. Not long ago, V Muraleedharan of the BJP's Kerala unit had said that his party had "no intention to protest against people eating beef". More recently, a BJP candidate in the Muslim-dominated Malappuram con-

stituency promised to provide "good quality" beef if he was elected.

Goa's Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar also said not long ago that what one ate was a matter of "individual opinion". The Shiv Sena's Uddhav Thackeray, too, had urged the BJP to "stop peeping into homes to see if people eat beef", adding that it is "ghastly to kill people because they consume beef". Since the BJP had assured the north-eastern states before the recent elections that it would not impose a beef ban, it is unlikely that it will do so even if it opens up the party to the charge of speaking with a forked tongue.

It is not only the Supreme Court's castigation of the cow vigilantes which will impede the BJP's efforts to mould the people's food habits in accordance with its own Brahminical ideas of the Hindi belt, the party's expanding political footprints will also make it come into contact with unfamiliar lifestyles and gastronomic partiality in various regions. Yet, the need for widespread support in these previously unexplored territories cannot but compel it to bow to the local preferences even if they are antithetical to what the party practices and preaches in its areas of influence in northern and western India.

Various factors, therefore, including Modi's development agenda with its need for law and order are making an exclusionary party come to terms with the inclusive and pluralistic "idea of India". It is also noteworthy that the saffron Parivar nowadays routinely condemn violence because, as the RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat, has said, it defames the cause. This is a welcome change from the time as after the 2002 Gujarat riots when the supporters of the BJP said that the Muslims had been served right and that the outbreak denoted the rise of the Hindus.

Even then, since the cow and beef are central to the BJP's worldview, any retreat is bound to create fissures in the monolithic Parivar with the more militant groups like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal straining at the restraining leash. Time will tell whether Modi and Bhagwat will succeed in controlling them – or whether their denunciation of violence will be seen as being for the record only.

(The writer is a political analyst. Views expressed are strictly personal.)

dear EDITOR

DIGITISING THE WAY AHEAD

This initiative by this government is without a doubt one to take India to greater heights. By integrating various departments, Digital India will ensure quicker and effective implementation of decisions. But given the latest reality of India, this initiative can seriously aggravate the socio-economic divide among people. One of the core components of the initiative is to ensure digital literacy. This very component is going to decide the success of this initiative. If not, this initiative will only enlarge the gulf between the digital haves and the have-nots, and engender a fresh problem. The demonetisation drive is only proving this point in distressful ways.

VINEETA Via email

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Tapping unused government land

Assessment of land acquisition and allotment for infrastructure projects are needed to eliminate the possibility of creating surplus, unproductive land

As a natural, immovable, and non-renewable asset, land is a distinct resource essential for production. While the demand for land is increasing with growing population and economy, its stock is limited. India has sufficient land for all uses—agriculture, industry, human dwelling, infrastructure and others—if used with prudence.

There is a need to assess land acquisition and allotment for infrastructure projects, to eliminate the possibility of creating a surplus and unproductive land.

Accounting for unused land

Looking for rapid growth in India, new enterprises were set up by the government. This led to the acquisition of vast tracts of land for establishing large- and medium-sized public sector industries as per the Industrial Policy Resolution, 1948. State governments also created developed industrial infrastructures for attracting entrepreneurs. A sizeable investment was incurred in expanding roads, railways, and ports. Similarly, state governments have established industries in backward areas for attracting industrial investment apart from setting up of State PSUs.

However, a significant amount of land acquired by governments for this purpose remains unused. Over 2.35 lakh acres of surplus land is available with 58 underperforming CPSUs which have faced losses of Rs 56,845 crores (DPE annual survey, 2013-14).

Similar large-scale infrastructure projects have been sanctioned by other government units like Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion. These growth centres have failed to attract entrepreneurs, and only 53.6 per cent of the developed plots were occupied (Planning Commission, 2002).

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) also face a similar fate. Barring a few, the majority of such centres remain



Representational Image

unoccupied. There are also large tracts of vacant land with Central Ministries especially Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Civil Aviation. It is observed that significant quantum of land has remained idle and become unproductive in the absence of proper land resource management.

There is a need to evaluate the land use pattern of Central Ministries and Departments. Identification of idle land under these ministries should be made quickly to create land banks. A realistic assessment of quantum of surplus land with various CPSUs would need to be worked out by the Dept of Public Enterprises (DPE). It is desirable to start stocktaking of land that is locked up with closed/sick PSUs.

It is reported that the government will first use unutilised land in existing industrial parks. A committee under

the CEO of NITI Aayog is now working out details of the master plan. DIPP is planning to sell the huge chunk of idle salt land to public sector enterprises or state governments at market rates.

The situation in the states is no different. It is reported that five states, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat acquired 572,793 acres in their industrialisation drive but of this, 255,471 acres (around 45 per cent) have not been allotted to any industrial projects. Even in Gujarat, billed as India's premier destination, only 50 per cent land of the 103,784 acres has been allotted.

Maharashtra, for instance, despite its land bank of 100,000 acres of land was in the midst of acquiring land for its ambitious Delhi Mumbai Industrial corridor. In Uttar Pradesh, UPIDC has reported 35 per cent of its 49,000 acres

lying vacant. It is also reported that in 2012, Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation had 139,000 acres of land, of which 50,000 acres were not allotted, and 23,000 acres of the allotted land was unused.

There is an urgent need for a concerted effort of landowning agencies to tap into vacant and unproductive land which is necessary given the controversial nature of land acquisition in a largely rural society like India. The vast amount of unproductive industrial land can be absorbed by better managing the existing land resources, develop land banks faster and tighter monitoring.

(The writer is former Adviser, Planning Commission and Chief Executive, Haryana Environmental Management Society. Views expressed are strictly personal.)

Role of teacher as a moral educator

Teaching is a calling where one has the power to impart not just knowledge but skills and right attitudes



In order to be called educated, one must be able to preserve and expand their cultural heritage. The practice of Vedic knowledge can assist us immensely in many ways including character-building by proper development of the moral feeling

Moral education is one of the most ubiquitous terms used equivocally both by students and teachers. The term takes the shape through ordinary and informal contacts we have with other people. Morality is a progressive process that takes shape over a period of time.

In one of those poignant moments when I had sought to question whether the new found “scientific” education systems in schools and colleges is doing more good than harm, I was reminded of an anecdote, that I heard from my maternal grandfather, who was a strict disciplinarian. Even at 93, he is not only self-dependent but is also a great source of strength for many. His zest for life is unmistakable!

He had once passionately spoken about his school and college days. In fact, he had inculcated his strong values from his teachers who were his role model during his college days at the famous DAV College in Lahore. Reminiscing his college days, he had said that on the first day of college, he was greeted by an ordinarily dressed person at the college gate. Later he learnt that he was the Principal of DAV College but from his appearance, he could have been easily mistaken for a college peon. The fact that the principal of the college was standing at the gate, greeting all new students, left a deep impression on his mind. Simplicity with a deep sense of discipline and honesty is how we might describe Shri Mehar Chand. He probably had only two sets of clothes – one to be worn and the other to be washed.

Every fortnight, the principal used to call the barber to the hostel and get his hair trimmed. However, his routine was unshakable and it took time for us to realise that we, the students also must follow suit. We soon realised that his ordinary lifestyle coupled with ‘unspoken’ actions were actually meant to instill in students ‘morals’ that education otherwise cannot teach. My grandfather remarked that ‘majority of us developed a deep sense of admiration for Shri Mehar Chand, and aped his minimalistic and simplistic lifestyle. As a result, the education we received includes moral education as well.’

The principal and teachers not only knew all the students but also addressed them by their first name. The very thought of private tuitions by external tutors was shunned as the teachers took upon themselves to ensure their individual learning capabilities. As a result majority of students scored a minimum first class in and only a handful secured high second class. There were absolutely no third divisions and the question of failing never came up.

Continuing with his college sojourn, during the Second World War, my grandfather recalls that the college was once visited by a senior officer from the British Army. The officer freely interacted with the stu-



dents with the objective of motivating them to join the Army. The officer also lured the students with a healthy stipend that would be paid and that they could complete their degree along with their stint in the Army. Just when it had caught the attention of a few students, Shri Mehar Chand called for an urgent assembly and to the utter astonishment of the British Army Officer, advised the students against joining the Army. Shri Mehar Chand emphasised the importance of completing education first, before starting a career. He fearlessly told the British Army officers that the parents have trusted him and the college and have send their children to give education and therefore, before a student decides to avail the offer, he needed a written consent from the concerned parent. He also highlighted the paramount importance of parents’ advice in a child’s life.

Even after retirement, Shri Mehar Chand continued his selfless service as the warden of the college hostel. He shared the same food and also stayed in one of the hostel room meant for the students so that he could get insight into the difficulties faced by the boarders. He even continued with the same modus operandi of disciplining students! In his tenure as the hostel warden, few students had once scaled the roof of the hostel building to play cards. When Shri Mehar Chand came to know about it, he had no intentions of catching them red-handed or scolding them for their act. Rather, he wanted the student to realise that breaking rules or an act of indiscipline is incorrect.

Without a word, Shri Mehar Chand simply took a cot and laid it at the exit point from the roof, waiting for the students to climb down and confess after realising their mistake. On the other hand, when the students came to know that Shri Mehar Chand was there, they waited so that he tires out and leaves. However, they could not defy his patience. Accepting defeat, they climbed down and vowed never to repeat such an act of indiscipline.

Having been a teacher myself, this unique anecdote of my grandfather has opened up new doors of awareness. It is time we should begin to see how classroom work can be coupled with moral significance. There is need to infuse everyday classroom teaching with ways in which a lesson is taught that can contribute to the learning environment. These activities are generally not thought of as having moral significance. They are normally described as issues of classroom management, curricular focus, instructional method, and so forth. However, in actual practice, they embody ongoing moral lessons about how to treat other people, how to treat oneself, and how to regard the process of education. Teaching is not a mere profession but a ‘calling’, where one is given the power to pass not just knowledge but skills and right attitudes.

Vedic literature is supposed to be a part of our daily life and has nothing to do with employment opportunities. It would be relevant if we can have it as an essential subject in school. Vedic education is the core of India’s cultural heritage. To be called educated, one must preserve and expand his cultural heritage. Vedic ideals of education can help maintain discipline in modern educational institutes and create cordial relation between teacher and student. The practice and utilisation of Vedic knowledge can indeed assist us in many ways. Vedic education is the solution to all problems which we find in this world. Character-building by proper development of the moral feeling is the aim of Vedic education. Therefore, the aim of education, whether literary or professional, should be to make the student fit to become a useful member of society. Education ought to develop man’s ideal nature by giving him a sure moral feeling and enabling him to control his original animal nature. The aims and ideals of Vedic education were to promote simultaneous and harmonious development. Vedic education not only emphasised social duties but also promoted social happiness.

(The author is Chief Finance Officer, NIELIT. Views are strictly personal.)

Cow protection across India

Over 99% of India’s population lives in areas under cow protection laws, highlights Alison Saldanha

After the Congress split in 1969, over 80 per cent of the states that enacted new laws prohibiting cow slaughter did so under a Janata Party or a Bharatiya Janata Party government. Cow protection laws enacted or amended over the last 23 years in 10 of 11 states are especially more stringent

On March 31, 2017, the Gujarat state Assembly amended the state’s cow protection laws to extend the maximum sentence for cow slaughter from seven years to a life term and a fine of up to Rs 5 lakh. The amendment made offences under the Gujarat Animal Preservation Act of 1954, which criminalises cow slaughter as well as transportation of cows for slaughter and possession of beef, non-bailable.

After these amendments, Gujarat holds the mantle of the state with the strictest laws in the country to protect cows, bulls, oxes, and their progeny.

In an analysis of cow protection laws across the country, IndiaSpend found that:

- As of March 2017, cow slaughter has been prohibited in 84 per cent of India’s states and Union Territories (UTs), which account for 99.38 per cent of the country’s population.
- Laws banning cow slaughter in nearly half of these states are roughly 50 years old, enacted during the tenure of the Indian National Congress. The oldest bans on cow slaughter have been in place in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) and Manipur, promulgated by their former rulers in 1932 and 1936, respectively, prior to Indian Independence and the annexation of states.
- After the Congress split in 1969, over 80 per cent of the states that enacted new laws prohibiting cow slaughter did so under a Janata Party or a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government. Cow protection laws enacted or amended over the last 23 years in 10 of 11 states are especially more stringent.
- In 77 per cent or 24 states and UTs that prohibit cow slaughter, the offence is cognizable, and in more than half of these (13), it is non-bailable. Under India’s criminal proce-



cedure code, cognizable offences are serious crimes such as murder, rape, dowry deaths, and kidnapping. In such cases, the police can make an arrest without a warrant and start investigation without a magistrate’s permission.

Cow protection has a long history in Indian politics, dating back to pre-Independence times when it found support from mass organisations such as the Arya Samaj and a personage of no less than Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

1950-1968: Post-Independence and after India became a republic in 1950, cow protection enthusiasts were reigned in and a ban on cow slaughter was only included as a Directive Principle of State Policy, and not as a fundamental right as its supporters had demanded. Nevertheless, Congress governments enacted laws prohibiting cow slaughter in 15 states and UTs, until just before the 1969 Congress party split. The offence was made punishable with a prison term ranging from six months to two years. Madhya Pradesh, with a prison term of three years and a fine of Rs 5,000, had the strictest law of its time, after J&K.

1977-1979: After a gap of eight years, the enactment of cow protection laws saw a resurgence when the Janata Party, with its Hindu nationalist elements from the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (which later formed the BJP), came to power in 1977 and served a two-year tenure at the country’s helm. Laws came into force in the UTs of Goa and Daman & Diu and the state of Himachal Pradesh under a Janata Party government and Andhra Pradesh under Congress rule. Maharashtra, also under a Congress government, strengthened its cow protection law, replacing the Bombay Animal Preservation Act 1954 in force till then.

1994 to present: Coinciding with a spike in communal conflict across the country in the early 1990s, the promulgation of cow protection laws restarted in 1994, with the introduction of the Delhi Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act. The law made cow slaughter punishable with a five-year prison term and a fine of Rs 10,000—the strictest of its time after J&K. Since then, cow protection laws have been enacted and amended in

maximum fine of Rs 1 lakh.

In Jharkhand and Uttarakhand too, cow slaughter is punishable with a maximum sentence of 10 years’ rigorous imprisonment, but a lower fine of Rs 10,000. In contrast, restrictions on cow slaughter in Kerala and Sikkim are the mildest.

In Kerala, cow slaughter is prohibited in rural areas under the Kerala Panchayat (Slaughter Houses and Meat Stalls) Rules, 1964, and in urban areas as per a 1976 government order, but is allowed if the bovine is over 10 years of age. Offenders are fined Rs 1,000. Similarly, the 2008 Sikkim Police Act prohibits cow slaughter only in public spaces and provides for a monetary penalty only for unsanitary slaughter. The four states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland and the UT of Lakshadweep have no laws related to cow slaughter, according to this document from the central Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries. The document notes that DAHD receives numerous representations for banning cow slaughter across the country and declaring the cow as India’s national animal. While cow slaughter is banned in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Tripura, as mentioned in the DAHD document, there is limited information publicly available about their laws.

The law in Manipur is based on a 1936 darbar resolution proclaimed during the reign of Maharaja Churachand Singh, whose contours are therefore vague—it does not specify, for instance, if cow slaughter is a cognizable and non-bailable offence.

(In an arrangement with IndiaSpend.org, with whom Alison Saldanha is Assistant Editor. The views are of IndiaSpend.)



tweet
RETWEET



SHASHI THAROOR
@ShashiTharoor

Denial of consular access: India shld take legal action agnst Pakistan at @CIJ_ICJ for violating Art.36 of Vienna Convention 1963 #SaveJadhav



IMRAN KHAN
@ImranKhanPTI

Strongly condemn the US dropping a massive conventional bomb on Afghanistan that has vaporised everything within a mile radius.



FARHAN AKHTAR
@FarOutAkhtar

The footage of our soldiers being slapped and heckled is sickening.. their restraint admirable. Action must be taken immediately.



MIRZA WAHEED
@MirzaWaheed

Twelve-year-old boy Faizan was killed - 'shot in the back of his head' - by Indian troops in Kashmir.

US DROPS ‘MOTHER OF ALL BOMBS’ ON ISIS CAVES

‘Afghanistan was in loop when US bombed IS target’

KABUL: The Afghanistan government has said that it was in the loop when the US forces dropped the “mother of all bombs” in eastern Afghanistan to target the hideouts of Islamic State terror group.

At least 36 IS militants were killed when the US military dropped a massive GBU-43, a non-nuclear, 10-tonne missile powered by a wave of air pressure, on an IS hideout in Achin district of Nangarhar province on Thursday, Kabul’s Ministry of Defence announced. The Office of the President, ARG Palace, said on Friday that the strike took place in close coordination between the Afghanistan forces and foreign troops based in the country, reported *Khaama Press*.

“Precautions were taken to avoid civilian casualties with



In this May 2004 photo, a group gathers around a GBU-43B, or massive ordnance air blast (MOAB) weapon, on display at the Air Force Armament Museum on Eglin Air Force Base near Valparaiso

this airstrike,” President Ashraf Ghani said on Twitter. A large amount of ammunition and weapons were also destroyed

in the airstrike, said an official. The statement said that the Afghanistan forces will continue their fight to elimi-

nate terrorism and to maintain peace and stability in the country and around the world as they are on the frontline against

various terrorist groups.

The US Forces in Afghanistan in a statement said: “At 7.32 p.m. (local time) Thursday, US Forces-Afghanistan conducted a strike on an ISIS tunnel complex in Achin district, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan, as part of ongoing efforts to defeat the terror group in Afghanistan in 2017.” The command of the US forces in Afghanistan, General John Nicholson said: “As ISIS’s losses have mounted, they are using IEDs, bunkers and tunnels to thicken their defence.

This is the right munition to reduce these obstacles and maintain the momentum of our offensive against the group.”

US President Donald Trump called the bombing “another successful job.” AGENCIES

Spain saves 26 migrants from sinking boat in Mediterranean

MADRID: Spain’s maritime rescue service said it has saved 26 migrants, including one pregnant woman, from a boat that was taking on water as it tried to reach the European coast during the night. The migrants were 15 miles southwest of the Atlantic coastal town of Barbate, which lies between Cadiz and Gibraltar. The maritime rescue boat “Salvamar Gadir” found the struggling smugglers’ boat early on Friday. Emergency services for Spain’s southern Andalusia region say the 20 men and six women were all of North African descent.

AGENCIES

China warns: War could break out at any moment over North Korea

BEIJING/NEW DELHI: In response to rising tensions over North Korea’s nuclear program, China said a conflict could breakout any moment. As per reports from news agency AFP, China said in a statement, ‘Conflict could break out at any moment’ over North Korea. China also said there can be no winner in war over North Korea.

Earlier on Friday, China had said using force won’t help in resolving the issue. An influential Chinese newspaper had urged the North Koreans to pause its nuclear programme in return for Chinese protection.

Amid rising concerns of North Korea possibly conducting a sixth nuclear test in defiance of UN sanctions, US issued warnings that a policy of patience is no longer applicable. China had earlier called for talks that would lead to peaceful settlement and the denuclearisation of the peninsula.

The Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi, while speaking to media, had said, “Military force cannot resolve the issue”. The minister also added, “Amid tensions we will also find a kind of opportunity to return to talks”.

US President Donald Trump has put

North Korea on notice that any further provocation would not be tolerated, whereas officials have confirmed that Trump administration will focus its strategy on tougher economic sanctions.

Earlier North Korea’s vice foreign minister Han Song Ryo, while speaking to news agency AP said they will launch nuclear test whenever the supreme headquarters find it appropriate. Attacking the US, he further said, “Pyongyang won’t ‘keep its arms crossed’ in face of US pre-emptive strike.” He also took a dig at Donald Trump for ‘making trouble’ for posting aggressive tweets. President Donald Trump’s tweet read, “North Korea is looking for trouble. If China decides to help, that would be great. If not, we will solve the problem without them! USA.”

Meanwhile, US Vice President Mike Pence will visit Seoul on Sunday, in what his aides said was a sign of the US commitment to its ally in the face of rising tensions over North Korea’s nuclear program. This will be Pence’s first visit as vice president as it comes at a time when there are concerns that Pyongyang could soon conduct its sixth nuclear test.

AGENCIES

THE ‘EGG’ PLANT



Hundreds of Easter eggs decorate a locust tree at Blankenburger Strasse in Saalfeld, Germany. For decades, a couple from Saalfeld has been decorating a local apple tree with up to 10,000 painted Easter eggs. Due to their age, the couple stopped in 2015. Still, the tradition is continued by the city

PTI

North Korea condemns US for bringing ‘huge’ nuclear assets to region

PYONGYANG: North Korea denounced the United States on Friday for bringing “huge nuclear strategic assets” to the Korean peninsula as a US aircraft carrier group headed for the region amid concerns the North may conduct a sixth nuclear weapon test. Tension has risen since the US Navy fired 59 Tomahawk missiles at a Syrian airfield last week in response to a deadly gas attack, raising concerns about US President Donald Trump’s plans for North Korea, which has conducted missile and nuclear tests in defiance of UN and unilateral sanctions.

The United States has warned that its policy of “strategic patience” is over. US Vice President Mike Pence travels to South Korea on Sunday on a long-planned 10-day trip to Asia. A spokesman for the North Korean Foreign Ministry’s Institute for Disarmament and Peace issued a statement condemning the United States for the attack on Syria, while also calling for “peace by strength”.

“The US introduces into the Korean peninsula, the world’s biggest hotspot, huge nuclear strategic assets, seriously threatening peace and security of the peninsula and pushing the situation there to the brink of a war,” the North’s



KCNA news agency said on Friday, citing the statement.

“This has created a dangerous situation in which a thermo-nuclear war may break out any moment on the peninsula and posed serious threat to the world peace and security, to say nothing of those in Northeast Asia,” it said.

North Korea, still technically at war with the South after their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, not a treaty, has on occasion conducted missile or nuclear tests to coincide with big political events and often threatens the United States, South Korea and Japan.

On Saturday, it marks the “Day of the Sun”, the 105th anniversary of the birth of state founder Kim Il Sung. The dollar fell on Friday against a basket of currencies, on track for a losing week as tension over North Korea underpinned the perceived safe-haven Japanese yen.

China, North Korea’s sole major ally and neighbour, which nevertheless opposes Pyongyang’s weapons programme, has called for talks leading to a peaceful resolution and the denuclearisation of the peninsula.

“Military force cannot resolve the issue,” Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in Beijing on Thursday. “Amid tensions we will also find a kind of opportunity to return to talks.”

While Trump has put North Korea on notice that he will not tolerate any more provocation, US officials have said his administration is focusing its strategy on tougher economic sanctions. Trump said on Thursday Pyongyang was a problem that “will be taken care of” and that he believed Chinese President Xi Jinping would “work very hard” to help resolve the challenge.

AGENCIES

OPCW: Syrian chemical attack allegation ‘credible’

THE HAGUE: A preliminary assessment showed that the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria “was a credible allegation”, said the Hague-based Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on Thursday. Chairperson of the OPCW executive council, Ambassador Odette Melono of Cameroon, in consultation with the Director-General of the OPCW Ambassador Ahmet Uzumcu, convened a meeting of the council to discuss these allegations, *Xinhua* news agency reported.

“The Director-General shared with the council the immediate steps taken by technical secretariat experts to analyse the available information and their preliminary assessment that this was a credible allegation”, said the UN watchdog on chemical weapons. The OPCW fact-finding mission has collected samples, which have been sent to OPCW designated laboratories for analysis. OPCW experts are currently analysing all information gathered from various sources.

The Director-General called on state parties that are in a position to do so to share with the Secretariat any relevant information without delay and allow the experts to complete its work within the next two to three weeks.

On April 4, a reported toxic gas attack hit the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun in Syria’s Idlib, killing over 80 people and wounding scores of others. Two days later, the United States launched 59 cruise missiles against the Shairat military base in central Syria. AGENCIES

WORLD BRIEFS

INDIAN-ORIGIN DOCTOR IN US HELD FOR CHILD GENITAL MUTILATION

WASHINGTON: An Indian-origin female doctor in the US was arrested and charged with performing female genital mutilation on girls as young as six-yr-old. Jumana Nagarwala, 44, was charged with performing the procedure on six- to eight-year old girls at a medical clinic in Livonia, Michigan, reported WXYZ TV channel on Thursday. Nagarwala, who is an emergency room physician at a hospital, was investigated.

PUTIN TO ATTEND BEIJING’S BELT AND ROAD FORUM

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin will attend the Belt and Road Forum for international cooperation to be held in Beijing on May 14-15. Putin made the disclosure on Thursday when he met visiting Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli, who was here for meetings with the China-Russia Investment Cooperation Committee and with the Russian chair of the China-Russia Energy Cooperation Committee. China put forward the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, with the aim of building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa.

BRITISH TOURIST STABBED TO DEATH IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM: A British tourist was killed on Friday when an Israeli Arab stabbed her near Jerusalem’s Old City, officials said. The 25-yr-old woman from Britain was stabbed while travelling on a tram. The attack took place around 12.50 pm next to the walls surrounding the Old City. She arrived at a hospital in critical condition and was declared dead shortly thereafter, the hospital spokeswoman said. The stabbing occurred while hundreds of Christian pilgrims were recreating the Stations of the Cross on the Via Dolorosa to commemorate Good Friday.

INDIA, FRANCE TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN RAILWAY SECTOR

NEW DELHI: India and France on Thursday reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening their cooperation in the field of railways and agreed that mutual collaboration and exchange of expertise will benefit both countries. In a bilateral meeting, Ministers from both sides decided to share their experiences regularly “in order to address the common challenges”, a release said.

DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE WORKS , VARANASI- 221004

No. GT/T.NOTICE/IREPS/2017-18/02 Date: 11.04.2017
Global Tender Notice
E-Tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items:-
S.No.1. Tender No. 101710240, **Due Date** : 15.05.2017
Description: MACHINED PISTON PURCHASE SPECIFICATION NO. MISC-413 REV.NIL, DATED 07.04.2016 DRG NO.9562183 ALT Ja (PL No.16120073)
Quantity : 4220 Nos. **S.No.2. Tender No.** 101710220, **Due Date** : 16.05.2017
Description: NOZZLE RING As per Drg. No.40056838 ALT Aa, Purchase Spec. No. DLW/DES/Misc-279 R1 (PL No. 16080610) **Quantity** : 555 Nos. **S.No.3. Tender No.** 101710160, **Due Date** : 16.05.2017 **Description:** LUBE OIL STRAINER ASM to DRG NO.8435910 ALT Hb and Purchase specification No. DLW/DES/Misc-263 (PL No.16060118) **Quantity** : 124 Nos. **S.No.4. Tender No.** 101710200, **Due Date** : 16.05.2017 **Description:** SEAL RING ASSEMBLY As Per DRG NO.40052859 ALT Ac PURCHASE SPECIFICATION NO.MISC-496 REV.NIL (PL No.16080567) **Quantity** : 1150 Nos. **S.No.5. Tender No.** 101710250, **Due Date** : 18.05.2017 **Description:** Governor for 4500 HP (With inbuilt Surge Suppression device and female connector to PL No.16340140) As per Drg. No.40056145 ALT Nil (PL No.16340036) **Quantity** : 145 Nos. **S.No.6. Tender No.** 101710270, **Due Date** : 18.05.2017 **Description:** TURBO LUBE OIL SOAK BACK PUMP MOTOR (C) STR NO. DIE/STR1004 REV. Nil DRG. NO.4947308 ALT Mc (PL No.16060222) **Quantity** : 218 Nos. **S.No.7. Tender No.** 101710150, **Due Date** : 18.05.2017 **Description:** COVER ACCESSORY DRIVE As per Drg. No.9529285 ALT-Kd Purchase Spec. No. Misc-220 (PL No.16130224) **Quantity** : 166 Nos.

No. GT/T.NOTICE/IREPS/2016-17/117 Date: 11.04.2017
Global Tender Notice

E-Tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items:-
S.No.1. Tender No. 101670530 **Due Date** : 16.05.2017
Description: KIT HARDWARE - FORK ROD Purchase Spec. No. Misc-401 DRG NO. 8409745 ALT Nil and Cleaning Marking and Packing Specn No.MISC-424 (Part No.16210542) **Quantity** : 1862 Nos. **S.No.2. Tender No.** 101670580 **Due Date** : 18.05.2017 **Description:** KIT GASKET (CYLINDER HEAD) CLEANING PACKING MARKING SPECN. MISC-426, DRG.NO. 8479836 ALT Nil (PL No.16171366) **Quantity** : 1621 Nos. **S.No.3. Tender No.** 101670510 **Due Date** : 19.05.2017 **Description:** KIT GASKET (CYLINDER HEAD COVER) CLEANING PACKING MARKING SPECN. MISC-426, DRG.NO. 40052428 ALT nil (Part No.16171391) **Quantity** : 334 Nos. **NOTE:** For complete details of Tender Cost/EMD and downloading of Tender Documents, please visit Website: www.ireps.gov.in DLW is floating tenders through e-tender, Global e-tender and e-auction. Details may be seen on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in and our website <http://www.dlw.indianrailways.gov.in> in Class III digital signature and registration on IREPS website is required to participate in these tenders. Which should be ensured by prospective vendors in coordination with CRIS. P.R.O./DLW/S-05 Controller of Stores

"Serving Customers With A Smile"

Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Agency

Civil Lines, Raipur (CG)

No. /RC-4 /CGRRDA/2017 Raipur dated: 13.04.2017
Amendment No. - II

The following amendments are issued on press notice of NIT 185/CE/Tech/CGRRDA/2017 dated 22.03.2017 Balance Work (ADB) in the districts of Raipur and Balodabazar-Bharpadara for 04 number of Roads with Estimate Cost totaling Rs 1009.43 Lacs :-

1. The Previous Mode of invitation in the Press Notice was percentage rate Now read as **Item rate** instead of Percentage Rate.
2. The Other Conditions of NIT will remain same.

Chief Engineer(Tender Cell)

Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Agency

Civil Lines, Raipur (C.G.)

samvad80695/3

Chhattisgarh Rural Roads Development Agency

VIKASH BHAVAN, CIVIL LINES, RAIPUR (C.G.)

E-Procurement Tender Notice

NIT No. 188 /CE/TECH/CGRRDA/2017 Dated 13 /04/2017

The Chief Engineer (Tender Cell), CGRRDA on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh invites the **percentage rate bids** in electronic tendering system for construction of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Balance Work in the district of Bastar for 17 number of Roads with Estimate Cost totaling **Rs 4023.30 Lacs** including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors registered with **unified registration system (e-registration)**. Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement:19 /4/2017

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and should be submitted online in <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>. The bidder would be required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have a valid Digital Signature. Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities. The bidders are required to submit (a) original bid security in approved form and (b) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (a) (ii) of ITB with Chief Engineer, Tender Cell, CGRRDA, Vikash Bhawan, Civil Lines, Raipur C.G. on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the Bid, either by **Speed/Registered post**, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive.

Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement as per time schedule. For further details please log on to <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>.

Chief Engineer (Tender Cell)

Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Agency

Civil Lines, Raipur (C.G.)

samvad 80696/3

E-mail : cg-itno@nic.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD

Tender No. DRMC/AGRA/2017/01 Date: 07.04.2017

For and on behalf of President of India Sr. DCM, NCR- Agra invites open sealed tenders in single packet system for following works:-

1. Name and place of Work		Invite sealed open tenders in single Packet system for Installation of Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) at following Railway stations:-						
Sr. No.	Name of Stations	Category of Stations	No. of ATMs	Annual estimated license fee for the first Year (in ₹)	Total estimated license fee for 05 Years contract (with enhancement @ 10% every Year (in ₹)	Earnest Money @ 2% of 05 Years contract value (in ₹)	Cost of Tender documents (in ₹)	Area
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
1.	Agra Cantt.	A-1	01	₹456800/-	₹2788810/-	₹55780/-	₹3000/-	6x6 sqft.
2.	Mathura Jn.	A-1	01	₹397297/-	₹2425540/-	₹48520/-	₹3000/-	6x6 sqft
3.	Agra Fort	A	01	₹358357/-	₹2187805/-	₹43760/-	₹2000/-	6x6 sqft
4.	Rajia Ki Mandi	A	01	₹358357/-	₹2187805/-	₹43760/-	₹2000/-	6x6 sqft

2. Approximate Estimated cost: As per Para No. 1 column No. 5&6, 3. Cost of tender form: As per Para No. 1 column No. 8, 4. Name of Office from where tender form may be obtained: Office of the Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Divisional Railway Manager, Office-Agra Cantt. Agra, 5. Earnest Money Deposit: As per Para No. 1 column No. 7 in the form of DD/Banker Cheque/Pay order/FDR in original issued by any Nationalized/Schedule Bank in favour of Sr. Divisional Finance Manager N.C.R-Agra should be enclosed with the tender form other wise tender will be treated as cancelled. 6. Period for completion of work: 05 Years, 7. Last date & time for obtaining the tender forms: Tender forms may be obtained on any working day up to 17.05.2017 at 11.00 hrs. 8. Last date & time of Depositing of tender forms: Duly filled and sealed cover will be accepted up to 17.05.2017 at 11.30 hrs. 9. Date and time of Opening of tender: 17.05.2017 at 12.00 hrs. If tender acceptance and opening day is holiday the next working day will be the last day for depositing and opening of tender forms. 10. Place of Depositing & opening of tender: Office of the Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Divisional Railway Manager, Office-Agra Cantt.-Agra, 11. Description of Website and notice board: The Notice inviting tender, Tender form, Terms and conditions are also available on the website of North Central Railway "http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in" and as well as on Indian Government portal "www.tenders.gov.in". If the tender documents are downloaded from the website, then, the tenderer will have to attach the cost of tender form with tender form in the form of DD/Banker cheque/Pay order (in original) issued by any Nationalized/Schedule Bank in favour of Sr. Divisional Finance Manager N.C. Railway- Agra, otherwise the tender shall be rejected. The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the date of opening of the tender. Tender received after the date and time specified above shall not be considered. 12. Separate tender form should be used for each Station. 13. Railway administration keeps its right reserved to cancel any one or all the tenders without assigning any reason. 31717(R)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPRNCR

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता,
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकीय खंड,
राजनंदगांव (छ.ग.)

//ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट द्वितीय निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना//

एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से प्रपत्र-“एफ” में निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑन लाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

निविदा सूचना क्रमांक/ दिनांक	निविदा सिस्टम क्रमांक	कार्य का विवरण	अनुमानित लागत (रु लाख में)	निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि
02/TS/EE/ PHE/ Dn. Rajnandgaon, Date- 12.04.2017	17098	Design, Drawing, Construction, Testing and Commissioning of Two Nos. RCC. Master Balancing Reservoir of 165 KL. 25 mtr. Staging at Village Farhad and 165 KL. 25 mtr Staging at Village Samli 1No. 40 KL/10 m staging OHT in village - Nowagoon. 6 No. 40 KL/12 m. staging OHT in villages - Sundra,Farhad, Mahuabhatta, Parmalkasa,Birelhar, Magaralta. 1 No. 40 KL/15 m. staging OHT in villages - Khuteri. 1 No. 40 KL/16 m. staging OHT in villages - Thikwa. 2 No. 50 KL/12 m. staging OHT at villages - Manik, Kokrel. 1 No. 50 KL/15 m. staging OHT at villages - Sankara. 4 No. 60 KL/12 m. staging OHT in villages - Torankatta, Balgatala, Tedesra, Kopedih 2 No. 70 KL/12 m. staging OHT at villages - Indwani, Phuljhar. 1 No 70 KL/16 m. staging OHT at villages -Achanakpur-Bhatrapara. 2 No. 80 KL/12 m. staging OHT at villages Thakurtola, Dewada. 1 No. 90 KL/12 m. staging OHT in villages Dhiri. 1 No. 100 KL/12 m. staging OHT at villages - Ira 1No. 130 KL/12 m. staging OHT in village Samli. Including providing and fixing of double flanged C.I Pipes Class/Horizontaly casted conforming to IS 7184-1974 for Inlet, Outlet, scour and overflow delivering up to 3.0 meter away from R.C.C. outer columns of reservoir, C.I. double flanged heavy duty spigole and duck foot bends conforming to IS 1538-1976, and D.I. double Flanged Soft Seated valves etc. and providing and fixing of oil accessories such as lightning arrestor, water level indicator, R.C.C. stairs from ground level to tank floor level, steel, ladders from balcony to roof and aluminium ladder from roof to inside floor level of tank, ventilating cowls, shaft man-hole covers with frams and G.I. pipe railing for stairs and at roof flooring etc. all complete as per detailed specification on LUMP SUM basis. Under Group Water Supply Scheme for 24 Villages based on Dhuri outlet	266.85	29.04.2017

नोट:- उपरोक्त कार्य के निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, घरेलू राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विवरण, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानक. री ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट वेब पोर्टल <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> से दिनांक 19.04.2017 से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

कार्यपालन अभियंता

लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खंड

राजनंदगांव (छ.ग.)

G40287/6

1 killed, 3 injured in Atlanta transit train shooting



ATLANTA: One person was killed and three others were injured on Thursday in a shooting aboard a transit train in Atlanta, according to police with the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA).

Police say a suspect is in custody. The three wounded victims have been transported to a hospital. Officials said the suspect and victims are all adults in their 30s, according to CNN affiliate WSB-TV.

The shooting occurred about 4.30 pm (Local Time) near the West Lake MARTA station, west of downtown, said WSB. "Due to a Police action the Wst End Stn is close, there is no train or bus service at the station. A bus bridge is providing service," MARTA tweeted.

Rashad Caleb and his family were traveling to North DeKalb Mall for a family day when the shots rang out.

"Between HE Holmes and West Lake station I heard 'Pop' pop," Caleb told CNN by phone. "The train makes a lot of noise so you think it's just the train."

Shortly after the bursts, Caleb saw a number of people running from the train car behind his family. His first thought: bomb.

"I was waiting for a bang," he said. "That's just me watching too many movies," he added. Caleb said he yelled to other passengers to move to the front.

AGENCIES

Canada announces new sanctions against Syrian officials

OTTAWA: Canada announced new sanctions against Syria today in response to its alleged April 4 chemical weapons attack, freezing assets and banning transactions with senior leaders of the regime of President Bashar al-Assad.

The latest sanctions were Canada's first against Syria and Assad since 2014 when a conservative government was in office. Assad, his family, government and the Syrian military hierarchy have long been the targets of sanctions.

But the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau extended the sanctions to 27 additional high-ranking regime officials, said Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland. Among them were three generals — Adib Salameh, Jawdat Salbi Mawas and Tahir Hamid Khalil — accused of ordering attacks on civilian targets and torturing regime opponents.

"Today's (Friday) new sanctions against key officials are part of our continued efforts to increase pressure on the Assad regime to stop the violence

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau extended the sanctions to 27 additional high-ranking regime officials, said Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland

against innocent children, women and men," Freeland said. "Last week's chemical weapons attack in southern Idlib is a war crime and is unacceptable. Canada is working with its allies to end the war in Syria and hold those responsible to account," he added.

On April 7, the US launched 59 cruise missiles against a Syrian military airfield in response to the Assad's regime's chemical weapons attack. However, Russia, Iran and Syria unanimously regarded the missile strikes as an aggression.

AGENCIES

'WikiLeaks is non-state hostile intelligence service'

WASHINGTON: Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Mike Pompeo has slammed whistleblowing agency WikiLeaks, calling the organisation a "non-state hostile intelligence service".

In his first major public appearance since taking the top intelligence post in President Donald Trump's administration, Pompeo on Thursday took aim at WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and former National Security Agency (NSA) contractor Edward Snowden, who leaked confidential information about NSA surveillance to news outlets before seeking refuge in Russia, *The Hill* magazine reported.

"It's time to call out WikiLeaks for what it really is: A non-state hostile intelligence service often abetted by state actors like Russia," he said.

Pompeo said disclosures by Assange and Snowden have done "great harm to our



nation's national security and they will continue to do so in the long term", adding that the revelations have hurt the US's relations with foreign partners.

The Trump administration has been publicly critical

of WikiLeaks since inauguration, even though the President staunchly backed them as a candidate, reports the magazine. WikiLeaks targeted Trump's opponent, Democrat Hillary Clinton, throughout the

presidential campaign, publishing hacked emails from her campaign chairman and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) that led to damaging leaks. Trump declared on the campaign trail, "I love

WikiLeaks". On Thursday, Pompeo cited the intelligence community's January report concluding that the GRU, Russia's foreign military intelligence unit, used WikiLeaks to release hacked emails from the DNC to influence the presidential election.

Pompeo called Assange "a fraud, a coward hiding behind a screen", skewering him for exposing information about democratic governments rather than authoritarian regimes. Last month, WikiLeaks published purported CIA hacking tools in a series of releases called "Vault 7". Experts have largely described the content of the releases as unsurprising, noting that WikiLeaks has exaggerated what they reveal. But the releases have nevertheless inflamed the debate over government surveillance. Pompeo did not comment on specifically on those releases.

AGENCIES

SYRIA CHEMICAL ATTACK

Moscow, Tehran, Damascus seek on-site investigation

MOSCOW: Russia, Iran and Syria have proposed an on-site investigation into the use of chemical weapons in Syria, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Friday.

"We insist on conducting a meticulous, objective and unbiased investigation into the alleged chemical weapon attack by Syrian aircraft on April 4," Lavrov said at a joint conference after talks with his Iranian and Syrian counterparts, Mohammad Javad Zarif and Walid al-Muallem, respectively.

The trio said that the probe should be carried out by a well-balanced team of experts under the auspices of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the UN chemical weapons watchdog, reported *Xinhua news agency*.

Russia and Iran hailed the readiness of the Syrian government to accept such a mission, Lavrov said.

On April 7, the US launched 59 cruise missiles against a Syrian military airfield in response to the Assad's regime's chemical weapons attack that killed



at least 89 people in Syria's Idlib province. Washington blamed the Syrian government for the attack. But Russia said it might have been caused by the explosion of chemical weapons stored by rebels in a local depot during a raid by the Syrian Air Force.

Russia, Iran and Syria unanimously regarded the US missile strikes as an aggression in brutal violation of international law and the UN Charter, Lavrov noted.

"We insist that the US and

its allies should respect the sovereignty of Syria and abstain from similar actions," he said.

At the press conference, Syria's Muallem reiterated that his government no longer possesses chemical weapons and the destruction of its previous stockpiles had been confirmed by the OPCW.

"We do not use chemical weapons against terrorists or our own people. We condemn any use of chemical weapons," said the Syrian top diplomat.

AGENCIES

Over 200 children protest against Trump's immigration policies



WASHINGTON: Over 200 children along with other demonstrators staged a protest outside the White House against US President Donald Trump's immigration policies, the media reported.

According to the organisers, the group included children from Miami, New York, Colorado and the Washington D.C. area who began their journey to the capital last week to "send a message" to the President, *The Hill* magazine reported.

They stopped in Atlanta and the Raleigh-Durham area in North Carolina before ending their trip here. Under the slogan "We belong together", the protesters on Thursday gathered at Lafayette Park, in front of the presidential mansion, to "raise the community's awareness that we should be united". "The reason why

I'm here is that the President wants to separate families. He shouldn't do it, because it's bad to do that. We need for him not to do it," seven-year-old Nayahuari Mesa, who was here with her three-year-old brother and parents from New York, told *Eje news*.

Her mother, Felicia Martinez said that Nayahuari was aware of the situation and, although fortunately her husband was able to acquire permanent US residence just a month ago, after 12 years as an undocumented migrant, she wants to be part of the fight to prevent other families from suffering possible separation.

Legal immigrants and undocumented migrants, as well as families who were able to take advantage of the immigration relief plans pushed by former President Barack Obama, joined forces to make

clear to the Trump administration that they were not going to give up.

Rosana Araujo, from Uruguay, came in the caravan that drove up from Miami, as part of the Women Working Together organisation, said that she is one of those immigrants without papers who could be separated from her US-born son.

"We came with our children, we're a group of fathers, mothers and kids who - in (Easter Week) - want to send a message: that family unity exists," Araujo, who has been in the US without papers for 14 years, said. "Let the raids stop, let there be more protection for immigrants, for each community to become a sanctuary community, for our mayors, commissioners and representatives to support the community and not cooperate with the police," she said.

AGENCIES

Turkey in final referendum push as jihadists detained

ISTANBUL: The opposing sides in Turkey's tightly-contested referendum on expanding President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's powers made a last push for votes on Friday as the arrest of five suspected jihadists fuelled security concerns. Opinion polls - usually treated with caution in Turkey - have predicted a tight outcome on Sunday despite the considerable advantages of the 'Yes' campaign in both airtime and campaign resources.

The referendum will take place under a state of emergency that has been in place since last summer's failed coup which has seen some 47,000 arrested in the biggest crackdown in Turkey's history.

Analysts regard the referendum as a turning point in the modern history of the country that will affect not just the shape of its political system but also its relations with the West.

If the new system is passed, it will abolish the office of prime minister, enabling the president to centralise all state bureaucracy under his control and also to appoint cabinet ministers. Supporters see the new system as an essential modernisation step for Turkey to streamline government

but opponents fear it risks granting Erdogan authoritarian powers. Erdogan has raised hackles in the West throughout the campaign with his repeated denunciations of the European Union, which Tur-

key has sought to join for the last half century. "April 16 will be an answer to the European Union," Erdogan said in a TV interview late on Thursday.

He expressed confidence that the new presidential system would be approved, saying there were no longer undecided voters. "Yes' has gone up considerably, while 'No' has gone down," he said. A poll by the Konda group showed 'Yes' ahead at 51.5 percent but the Sonar group has projected a 'No' vote of 51.2 percent, and with other polling companies producing different figures the outcome remains uncertain. Erdogan to speak on Saturday in Konya, the Anatolian city seen as the heartland of conservative supporters who have benefited from his rule.

The leader of the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) Kemal Kilicdaroglu has called for a 'No' vote, arguing there was too much uncertainty over the consequences of the new system. "We will altogether write a legend of democracy (on Sunday) because our questions have been left unanswered," he said in Istanbul.

The referendum is taking place after a bloody year of terror attacks in Turkey blamed on jihadists and Kurdish militants.

Adding to security concerns, Turkish police on Friday detained five suspected Islamic State jihadists in Istanbul accused of planning a "sensational" attack.

AGENCIES

8 police officers killed by gunmen in Tanzania

DAR ES SALAAM: Officials say eight Tanzanian police officers have been ambushed and killed while returning from patrol outside the commercial hub of Dar es Salaam. The attack happened on Thursday night in an area called Jaribu.

Police chief Ernest Mangu said today the identities of the assailants are unknown. The gunmen first fired at the driver of the patrol vehicle before killing seven other officers and seizing their weapons.

President John Magufuli said in a message to the police chief that "I can't even describe how bad this is."

Home Affairs Minister Mwigulu Nchemba says he has increased the number of police to hunt down gunmen who have killed dozens of police and civilians in recent months.

In 2015, Gunmen killed seven people and seized weapons and ammunition in a raid on a police station.

Unknown attackers have been seizing weapons such as sub-machine guns in a series of raids on police stations across Tanzania over the past few years.

Security forces in east Africa are on alert.

AGENCIES

7,350 people start evacuating 4 Syrian towns

DAMASCUS: As many as 7,350 people have started evacuating four Syrian towns on Friday under a deal concluded between the Syrian government and rebels, a military source said.

A total of 60 buses carrying around 2,350 rebels and their families evacuated the town of Madaya and nearby areas toward rebel-held areas in the province of Idlib, the source told *Xinhua news agency*.

In return, around 75 buses and 20 ambulances carrying 5,000 people, including fighters, left the Shia towns of Kafraya and Foa toward government-controlled areas in



the city of Aleppo. The actual implementation of the deal started on Thursday, by a swap of detainees between the reb-

els and the government forces. The rebels in Idlib released four children and eight women they kidnapped from Kafraya and

Foa, and returned the bodies of eight government forces men in exchange of the release of 19 rebels detained by the pro-

government fighters in Kafraya and Foa. The low-scale swap took place through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC).

The deal, reached late last month, includes evacuation of rebels and their families from the besieged towns of Madaya and Zabadani, which are under the rebel control northwest of capital Damascus, as well as Kafraya and Foa, both pro-government towns besieged by the rebels.

Genuine political commitment to peace in Syria would be needed if 2017 was to offer any prospect other than the death and destruction of the past six years.

AGENCIES

Nation’s top bank SBI targets ₹1 lakh cr digital transactions

NEW DELHI: Country’s largest lender SBI on Friday said that it aims to reach 5.2 lakh Acceptance Touch Points and collectively do Rs 1 lakh crore transaction in 2017-18 to take forward government’s digital agenda.

The State Bank of India (SBI) said in a statement that it has implemented various initiatives as part of Digital India and Digi Dhan Mela campaign launched by the government. These, include adoption of 110 villages to develop digital eco system, and targeting deployment of 25,000 terminals at 12,500 villages under a NAB-ARD scheme.

“In FY 2017-18, the bank’s ambition is to reach 5.2 lakh Acceptance Touch Points which include 4 lakh Digital PoS (Bharat QR and Aadhaar Pay) and collectively will receive Rs 1 lakh crore of transaction value,” SBI said.

The bank’s Chairman Arundhati Bhattacharya said that with the Digital India initiative pursued collectively by the government, banks and technology companies, “India is transforming into a digitally empowered society and SBI is playing a pivotal role in the



“In FY 2017-18, the bank’s ambition is to reach 5.2 lakh Acceptance Touch Points which include 4 lakh Digital PoS (Bharat QR and Aadhaar Pay) and collectively will receive ₹1 lakh crore of transaction value”

process of digitalisation”.

Rajnish Kumar, MD of SBI said that UPI and Aadhaar pay are two very innovative platforms which will lead to efficiency in costs and provide convenience to customers. The bank further said that

it will continue the digital drive to bring in more innovative products and services for customer convenience. Online SBI, the bank’s web banking platform, is the fifth most visited financial site globally.

Digital transactions gallop 23 times since note ban to 64 lakh

NEW DELHI: Digital transactions increased by about 23 times in March to nearly 64 lakh, with total value of Rs 2,425 crore, from last November when demonetisation took effect. “Volume of all digital transactions increased by about 23 times with 63,80,000 digital transactions for a value of Rs 2,425 crore in March 2017, compared to 2,80,000 digital transactions worth Rs 101 crore till November 2016,” Niti Aayog said in a statement. Aadhaar Enabled Payments have increased from 2.5 crore in November 2016 to over 5 crore in March 2017, it said. After scrapping of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes on November 8, 2016, the government had launched two schemes to incentivise digital payments -- Lucky Grahak Yojana and DigiDhan Vyapar Yojana on December 25. The statement also said Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) transactions have also increased from 3.6 crore to 6.7 crore during the same period. In order to achieve the target of 2,500 crore digital transactions in the current financial year, the Prime Minister today announced about 75 townships spread all over India as ‘less-cash townships’, it said.

Brics bank plans to issue rupee, yuan bonds this year: Kamath

BEIJING: The New Development Bank (NDB) set up by the BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa plans to issue bonds this year in Indian rupee and Chinese yuan, its president K V Kamath said on Friday.

The bank sold its first three billion yuan (\$437 million) yuan-denominated bonds in China last year in July to fund clean energy projects in member-states.

Kamath, a former executive with India’s largest private lender ICICI Bank, told the state-run Xinhua news agency that after last year’s issuance of bonds, the preparation for the second batch of yuan-denominated bonds, possibly in the second half of this year, is expected to be more smooth. The size will be around



three billion yuan, similar to the last one.

He said the issuance will come after the bank is rated by international rating agencies.

Between \$300-500 million of rupee-denominated ‘masala’ bonds will be issued after July, added Kamath, who is based in Shanghai. ‘Masala’ bonds are rupee-denominated bonds

issued outside India. Kamath said the NDB plans to lend \$2.5-3 billion to fund 15 projects to member-states this year, up from \$1.5 billion for seven projects in 2016.

Most projects last year were connected to clean energy and transportation.

Kamath said the loans will go to more sectors this year.

For example, in India the bank will prioritise rural drinking water networks and infrastructure projects.

The BRICS bank was set up with an initial authorised capital of \$100 billion after leaders of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa signed a treaty for its establishment during the sixth BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil, in 2014.

It officially opened in Shanghai in 2015.

Irdai unveils portal for insurers to sell policies online

NEW DELHI: Insurance regulator Irdai has launched a web portal for insurers that will allow them to register and sell policies online.

The portal -- isnp.irda.gov.in -- is also open to intermediaries in insurance business, Irdai said in a circular.

Last month Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) issued guidelines on e-commerce for insurance sector.

Announcing the launch of registration portal for Insurance Self Networking Platform (ISNP), Irdai said insurance companies, brokers and corporate agents can sell and service insurance policies through this platform.

Insurers and intermediaries

can create a login credential for registration and submit ISNP application form on the portal.

In its guidelines issued in March, Irdai had said that companies may offer discounts to customers if their policies are sold through e-commerce websites.

This will help companies increase insurance penetration in the country, it said.

The ISNP portal will offer host of services including change of policy details like name and address, collection of renewal premiums, surrender or withdrawals, fund switching, policy revival or cancellation or transfer, duplicate policy, death/maturity claim and other policy specific services, it added.

Pakistan’s exports to India increased despite tensions

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan’s exports to India have grown despite border tensions and war of words between the two neighbours, according to a media report.

According to Dawn News, a recent report by the State Bank of Pakistan showed that Pakistan’s exports to India grew during the first eight months of 2016-17 fiscal while imports fell by 23 per cent.

During the period, the two countries were locked in bitter rivalry with terror attacks by Pakistan-based militant groups, Kashmir and border tensions impacting ties.

However, this seems to have had little impact on bilateral trade relations, the report said.

The trade balance was in favour of India, it noted.

Growing by 14 per cent, exports from Pakistan to India amounted to \$286 million in July-February. Imports from India fell by 23 per cent to \$958.3 million from \$1,244 million recorded a year ago.

People who are in favour of better trade relations with India have to face harsh criticism in Pakistan. The same situation prevails across the border, the media report said.

One reason for Pakistan’s improved exports to India is high cement demand in the neighbouring country. This has offset the negative impact of a decline in Pakistan’s cement exports to Afghanistan and South Africa, the report said.

The SBP said cement exports continued their downward trend, with the largest share in the year-on-year decline in the first half of 2016-17 originating from two markets -- South Africa and Afghanistan.

“A slight consolation was continued strong demand for Pakistani cement from India. This



partially offset the declines witnessed in the two other major markets,” said the SBP report.

For more than five years, the balance of trade has been in favour of India as Pakistan failed to create a market for its products in the neighbouring country. Political resistance to better trade relations continues to exist in both countries, it said.

In the first eight months of the current fiscal year, Pakistan recorded a trade deficit of \$672 million with India. The deficit was \$993 million in the same period of the last fiscal year.

Imports from India in 2015-16 were worth over four times the exports from Pakistan. In fact, imports from India were at a five-year high, although political and diplomatic relations with the eastern neighbour were at a low ebb, the report said.

Pakistan imported goods worth \$1.8 billion in 2015-16 compared to the exports of just \$400 million.

Anil Agarwal acquires over 11% shares in Anglo American

LONDON: Indian metals-mining magnate Anil Agarwal has acquired an over 11 per cent stake in British mining company Anglo American, according to a London Stock Exchange notice.

With an 11.44 per cent stake, the London-based Indian billionaire’s family-owned Vulcan Holdings investment firm becomes the second largest shareholder with voting rights in the company. The transaction for a total of 160,685,162 shares took place on Tuesday, the London Stock Exchange (LSE) notice said.

Last month, Vulcan Investments Ltd (“Vulcan”), the majority shareholder of Vedanta Resources Plc, had announced that it intends to make an investment in Anglo American Plc shares of up to 2 billion pounds, according to an LSE notice dated March 15.

“Anglo American plc is a great company with excellent assets and a strong board and management team who are executing a focused strategy to drive shareholder value. I am delighted to become a shareholder in Anglo American plc,” Agarwal had said.

Vulcan is a holding company wholly owned by the Agarwal family trust and the investment has been described as a personal investment made by the family trust.

‘China digital tech progress spurred India’s digitisation’

BEIJING: China’s rapid strides in digital technologies have indirectly inspired India to digitise its economy, TCS’ Asia-Pacific president has said.

In mobile payments and artificial intelligence, China is already leading and has shared its expertise with its neighbours, Girish Ramachandran said.

The Belt and Road Initiative will help China bring some of its world-class technologies to economies along the trading routes, he said.

“The initiative is a great opportunity for global trade, and to build connectivity,” Ramachandran has been quoted as saying by state-run China Daily today.

Chinese technologies are making inroads in India, exemplified by the export of Ant Financial Services Group’s wireless payment solutions to Paytm. The two signed an agreement in 2015 to create an Alipay clone in India.

India, like China, does not have an entrenched credit card culture. So with the right technologies and business models, jumping from cash to mobile payment is not difficult, he said.

Today, Paytm covers 150 million users in India and enables people to complete a variety of purchases and access

micro loans with a scan of their phones, he said.

“The demonetisation accords with the Indian government’s push to combat the black market, increase transparency and digitise the economy. Clearly China has played a significant role in this,” he said.

From the all-in-one app WeChat, to some of the nascent artificial intelligence start-ups, Ramachandran said China has exhibited huge potential in the global high-tech race.

It is now time for China to properly brand these technologies and make them available overseas.

“Most of the apps, technologies and services are being used in China only. Turning them into world-renowned brands would pave the way for China’s next phase of growth,” he said, adding that the Belt and Road Initiative would certainly drive that goal.

China’s high-tech giants have already entered the South Asian market. Tencent Cloud, the cloud business division of Tencent Holdings Limited, has established overseas services nodes in India and a data center in Singapore to provide “secure and cost efficient” IT infrastructure, the Daily report said.

Suzuki, partners to set up lithium ion plant in India

TOKYO: Japan’s Suzuki Motor Corporation has joined hands with Toshiba Corporation and Denso to set up a plant in India to produce lithium ion batteries, entailing an investment of 20 billion yen (nearly Rs 1,200 crore). The three Japanese entities have signed an agreement to form a joint venture, which is aimed at tapping into the growing popularity for electric vehicles in India. The JV firm will come up this year and move to manufacturing phase at the earliest, Suzuki Motor Corporation said in a statement.

“The initial capital expenditure will be 20 billion Japanese yen. The joint venture company will be capitalised at 2 billion Japanese yen, with the planned participation ratio of Suzuki (50 per cent), Toshiba 40 per

“The JV firm will come up this year and move to manufacturing phase at the earliest”

cent and Denso 10 per cent, respectively,” it added. The JV company will be

further examined in detail by the three stakeholders and will be subject to approval by respective authorities in accordance with applicable competition laws. On the rationale for such a move, Suzuki said higher attention is being paid to environment and new CO2 standards for automobiles are being planned to be introduced in India. In the Indian auto-

motive space where compact cars rule, introduction of sustainable technology suitable for such affordable cars is required, it added. The joint venture will ensure stable supply of lithium-ion battery packs in India in the course of promoting sustainable cars in the country and will contribute to Make in India initiative by the government, Suzuki said.

TCS, US university plan to set up facility for cutting edge research

PITTSBURGH: A prestigious US university and Tata Consultancy Services have collaborated to set up a state-of-the-art facility here which its promoters say would lay the groundwork for the fourth industrial revolution by conducting cutting edge research.

The collaboration comes more than a century after Jamshedji Tata came to this city known as the steel-making capital to understand technologies which he would later use to launch India’s own industrial revolution.

Top Indian industrialist Ratan Tata, joined by Carnegie Mellon University president Subra Suresh along with Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran broke the ground of the new TCS Hall at the university campus.

Supported by an unprecedented \$35 million grant from TCS, which is the largest ever industry donation the CMU, the building when complete by next year, would become the hub of CMU and TCS collaborations on promoting next generation technologies that will drive the 4th Industrial revolution, Suresh said.

“Today, we are not looking at heavy metal and millions of tons of steel. We are looking



Ratan Tata speaks at the ground breaking ceremony of TCS Hall in Pittsburgh on Thursday

at a collaboration of intellectual skills and the development of two countries together that might bring about global understanding between people,” Tata said.

Ratan Tata, Chairman emeritus of Tata Sons, described the CMU-TCS part-

nership a visionary collaboration of skills that will bring understanding between young people of India, the United States and other places in the world. “The wide-ranging multi-national partnership that is creating new research opportunities, new student aid, and a

brand-new facility for educational research that we are celebrating today has deep roots. In fact, the historical parallels and connections between the Tata Group of companies and Carnegie Tech and Carnegie Mellon make this new chapter in our partnership even more meaningful,” Suresh said.

“In the late 19th century - years before this university was founded - the Tata family patriarch, Jamshedji Tata, came to Pittsburgh - the steel capital of the world - to learn from expert steelmakers how to launch his own steel-making business in India,” he said.

Jamshedji Tata famously had four goals in life: setting up an iron and steel company in India, opening a world-class learning institution, building a unique cartel, and constructing a hydroelectric plant, he added.

“Years later, a company affiliated with one of Andrew Carnegie’s executives landed a contract to build the Tata plant in India, bringing to life the Jamshedji Tata goal that mirrored Andrew Carnegie’s life’s work: the great steel empire built here in Pittsburgh, and a great university, Carnegie Tech, now known as Carnegie Mellon as we celebrate it today,” he said.

NEW DELHI: Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) raised a staggering Rs 811 crore through initial public offerings in 2016-17, more than two-fold jump from the preceding fiscal.

The huge fund-raising can be attributed to reforms and initiatives taken by the government to encourage the SME sector. Funds raised through the issue were used for business expansion plans, working capital requirements and other general corporate purposes.

A total of 80 companies got listed with initial public offers (IPOs) worth Rs 811 crore in the last fiscal as compared to 46 firms which tapped the IPO route to garner Rs 304 crore in 2015-16.

In 2014-15, 37 firms made debut on the SME platform and raised Rs 271 crore. These companies are listed on the small and medium enterprise platforms of BSE and NSE.

“SME capital market is witnessing participation from wider class of investors and the trend is expected to continue. Even institutional investors have started showing interest in SME investing and the market looks up to them with expectation.”

“Most of the listed SMEs have added value to shareholder-



ers,” Pantomath Group Managing Director Mahavir Lunawat said. Geographically, Gujarat has proved its dominance in the SME listing by contributing 33 firms on SME bourses which is the maximum, followed by Maharashtra (15), Rajasthan (10), West Bengal (4) and Delhi (3).

Further, average issue size also increased during the past fiscal to Rs 10 crore as compared to Rs 7 crore each for the preceding two financial years.

Besides, institutional investors including banks and mutual funds have started showing interest in the SME’s public offers. Bohra Industries,

Momai Apparels, Agro Phos India, Maheswari Logistics and Nandini Creation are some of the companies that received participation from institutional investors. “Governance structures, improved credit rating, reduced finance cost, easy finances and branding are some of key benefits for listing on the SME platform. Besides valuation has helped listed SMEs to achieve speedy growth in systematic manner at early stage of their respective business life cycle,” Lunawat added.

The companies which got listed in the past fiscal are from sectors such as finance; media and entertainment; real estate

and infrastructure; manufacturing; agriculture; aquaculture; food and processing; and IT and IT-enabled service.

BSE and NSE had launched SME platforms in March 2012, becoming the only two bourses to offer such a segment in the country. Since then, several companies have got listed on them and some have even shifted to the main-board.

The platform provides opportunity to SME entrepreneurs to raise equity capital for growth and expansion. It also provides immense opportunity for investors to identify and invest in good SMEs at an early stage.

Japan's SoftBank powers Ola MF assets soar by 42% by ₹1,675 cr to take on US Uber to ₹17.5 trillion in FY17

NEW DELHI: Japanese investor SoftBank has pumped in about Rs 1,675 crore in fresh funding in Indian transportation startup Ola to give it more muscle to take American rival Uber head-on.

SoftBank subsidiary SIMI Pacific Pte picked 12,97,945 shares valued at Rs 10 at a premium of Rs 12,895 in ANI Technologies -- which runs Ola -- filings with the Registrar of Companies showed.

The allotment of shares was done in November last year, it added.

The latest funding, however, is believed to have come at a lower valuation.

According to sources, the move comes at a time when Softbank is working on selling Snapdeal, an e-commerce platform it invested heavily in India, to larger rival Flipkart.

The Bengaluru-based firm was aggressively looking at raising funds to compete with Uber, the world's most valuable start-up. After selling its Chinese business to Didi last year, Uber has now set sights on India making it one of its top priorities.

Though Indian Internet companies have seen a boom in user base, their valuations have come down as investors are now focussing on path to profitability and building a sus-



Earlier this week, India's largest e-commerce firm Flipkart raised \$1.4 bn from China's Tencent and US eBay and Microsoft in a round that saw its valuation dip from \$15 bn to \$11.6 bn

tainable business model. Flush with private equity and venture capitalist money, many startups continue to have high burn rate that has been a concern for investors. Earlier this week, India's largest e-commerce firm Flipkart raised \$1.4 billion from Tencent, eBay and Microsoft in a round that saw its valuation fall from \$15 billion to \$11.6 billion now. PTI

India, Japan discuss increase of bilateral trade, investment

NEW DELHI: India on Friday said Japan is a "natural partner" in achieving the goal of increasing the share of manufacturing in GDP to 25 per cent in the coming years. Both the countries discussed ways of increasing bilateral trade and investments during a day-long conference in Nagoya in Japan. A business delegation led by Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in that event. "India wants to increase the contribution of manufacturing sector to GDP to 25 per cent and Japan is a natural partner in our goals," an official statement quoting Sitharaman said here. Currently the manufacturing sector contributes about 17 per cent to the country's GDP. The government is taking steps such as improving ease of doing business and relaxing FDI norms to boost the sector. Sitharaman also met Governor of Aichi Prefecture Hideaki Ohmura in Nagoya. Hideaki acknowledged that the India Conference will further encourage the companies in Aichi Prefecture to invest in India. Japan said although it is the third largest foreign investor in India [\$25.2 billion during the April 2000 December 2016], behind Mauritius and Singapore, it can be considered a top investor as the other two countries are used by companies from across the world to route investments. PTI

MUMBAI: The assets under management (AUM) of the mutual fund (MF) industry saw an exceptional growth of 42 per cent at Rs 17.5 trillion in fiscal 2017 from Rs 12.3 trillion a year ago, says a report.

The quarterly average assets under management also registered a quarter-on-quarter growth of 8 per cent in the March quarter, rating agency Icmr said, quoting the data collated by the industry lobby Association of Mutual Funds in India.

Investors poured in an additional Rs 3.4 trillion across categories during the year under review.

Net inflows in liquid, income and equity (including equity linked savings schemes or ELSS) categories saw fresh investment of Rs 1.2 trillion, Rs 96,000 crore and Rs 70,000 crore respectively, Icmr said.

Equity funds (including ELSS) witnessed net inflows of Rs 8,216 crore in the March quarter, up from Rs 6,462 crore in February. During the quarter, assets of equity funds (including ELSS) reached an all-time high of Rs 5.4 trillion.

The category witnessed month-on-month jump of 4.5 per cent and a year-on-year growth of 40.7 per cent.

In fiscal 2017, the total inflow into the category stood at Rs 70,367 crore with net inflows in every month.

According to Amfi, the industry added about 6.2 lakh systematic investment plan accounts every month on an average during the year (till February), with an average ticket size of Rs 3,100 per account.

In the year gone by, the industry added 77.4 lakh new folios, or around 6.4 lakh new folios every month, despite volatility in the overall market conditions, the report said.

March saw the highest number of folios



Equity funds including ELSS witnessed net inflows of ₹8,216 crore in the March quarter, up from ₹6,462 crore in February. During the quarter, assets of equity funds reached an all-time high of Rs 5.4 trillion

added in a month in the entire fiscal at 10.1 lakh. The growth was driven by the ELSS category that added 3.2 lakh folios in the month.

Out of the 10.1 lakh folios, 7.4 lakh came from the equity (including the ELSS) category.

The folio count for the liquid category more than doubled in the year, suggesting that retail investors are looking at this route for surplus cash deposit. PTI

IAHE inks pact with New South Wales Univ for smart transport

NEW DELHI: Indian Academy of Highway Engineers has inked a pact with University of New South Wales for building an advanced transportation technology and systems.

"In line with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highway's vision to influence and adopt global innovation into the transportation sector, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry through the IAHE and UNSW to set up a CATTS," Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said in a statement.

The MoU was exchanged between the Director of Indian Academy of Highway Engineers (IAHE) V L Patankar and Vice Chancellor of University of New South Wales (UNSW) Ian Jacobs in the presence of Simon Birmingham, Australian Minister for Education, it said.

The vision for CATTS include accelerating the evaluation and adoption of new transportation technologies and explore market opportunities for them in India and Australia besides conducting research, development and training in the areas of transport system modelling and data for smart cities, it added.

This would be the world's first transportation centre involving two countries committed to seeing technological innovation for economic development through improved safety and reduced congestion, the statement said. PTI

Most newly listed firms deliver smart returns to investors

NEW DELHI: Four out of the five firms which got listed this year are trading above their issue price, giving smart returns of up to two-times to investors, helped by positive broader market sentiment.

So far this year, five companies have launched their IPOs. Out of this, four have yielded positive returns against the price at which they had issued shares to investors, an analysis of the performance of the newly-listed firms showed.

The BSE 30-share Sensex has gained nearly 11 per cent so far this year, with the index

Among gainers, shares of Avenue Supermarts have soared 2.62 times against the issue price of ₹299

touching its 52-week high of 30,007.48 on April 5.

Among the gainers, shares of Avenue Supermarts, operator of retail chain D-Mart, have soared 2.62 times against the issue price of Rs 299.

Shankara Building Prod-

ucts is trading 64.68 per cent higher than its IPO price of Rs 460.

In case of BSE, Asia's oldest stock exchange, its shares have zoomed 27.54 per cent from the IPO price of Rs 806.

Similarly, Music Broadcast is up by 7.64 per cent against the issue price of Rs 333.

In contrast, CL Educate saw its shares trading 15.19 per cent lower against the issue price of Rs 502. Last year, 26 companies collectively raised over Rs 26,000 crore through IPOs, making it the best one for public offers since 2010. PTI

Lucky Grahak: Mobile EMI fetches ₹1 crore bonanza for student

NEW DELHI: An EMI payment of Rs 1,590 for a newly bought mobile phone has earned a mega lottery of Rs 1 crore for 20-year-old engineering student Shradha Mohan Mengshette under the government's Lucky Grahak Yojana.

Mengshette, a second year student of Electrical Engineering from Latur district in Maharashtra, received the cash prize from Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a function in Nagpur on Friday.

She won the mega prize for making a transaction of Rs 1,590 through her Rupay card online.

The second prize of Rs 50 lakh under the Lucky Grahak Yojana, an official statement said, was won by Hardik Kumar

The second prize of ₹50 lakh under the Lucky Grahak Yojana was won by Hardik Kumar from Khambhat in Gujarat

from Khambhat in Gujarat. The 29-year-old is a primary school teacher who used his Rupay card for making a transaction of Rs 1,100.

Under the Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana category for merchants, the first prize of Rs 50 lakh was won by Anand Anantha-

padmanabhan for accepting a payment of Rs 300 at GRT Jewellers in Tambaram, Tamil Nadu. The second prize of Rs 25 lakh was won by Ragini Rajendra Uttkar, owner of a small beauty parlour in Thane, Maharashtra, the statement said.

She accepted a payment of Rs 510 which won her the amount, it added.

NITI Aayog's two schemes to incentivize digital payments -- Lucky Grahak Yojana and DigiDhan Vyapar Yojana -- was launched on December 25 last year. According to the statement, Rs 258 crore of prize money was won by 16 lakh winners, including customers and merchants belonging to different corners of the country and from varied walks of life. PTI

PM dedicates Koradi thermal power project to nation

MUMBAI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday dedicated 1980 MW of the Koradi super-critical thermal power project of state-run Mahagenco near Nagpur in Maharashtra to the nation.

The 1,980 MW capacity includes three units of 660 MW each, which are now completely operational, marking the completion of the last phase of expansion of the project.

The plant currently has one unit of 200 MW, two units of 210 MW each and with the addition of the three units of 660 MW each, its total capacity has increased to 2,600 MW.

With this, the total generation capacity of Mahagenco now stands at 12,977 MW, which includes coal-fired capacity of 9,540 MW, gas-based capacity of 672 MW, hydro-based capacity of 2,585 MW and solar capacity of 180



MW. Modi was accompanied by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Governor K Vidyasagar Rao, Union Roads and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Power Minister Piyush Goyal, Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar and state Energy Minister Chandrashekar Bawankule among others.

Modi, who was in the winter capital of the state on Friday, also paid tributes to Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Future Group puts in place C&D Lab for GeNext technology

NEW DELHI: The Kishore Biyani-led Future Group on Friday announced setting up of Future C&D (consumer and digital) Lab in Bengaluru backed by a Rs 100-crore Accelerator Fund.

"Future C&D will focus on the consumer and digital space to bring in next generation innovations using artificial intelligence, Big Data analytics, Blockchains, Internet of Things, robotics and allied technologies," Future Group said in a statement.

The research and development activities will be supported through a Rs 100-crore Accelerator Fund that will be set up to fund the operations, technology development and IPR creation by the teams working at the Lab.

Future Group founder and CEO Kishore Biyani said: "The Future C&D Lab is aimed at co-creating next generation technologies for the consumer space in India. We are creating an open environment of collaboration and co-creation with some of the best young Indian minds who are working with new technologies to create solutions that can impact the retail and consumer space over the next couple of years."

The Lab, the group said, brings together multiple teams and companies working on these areas, housed in a common, collaborative space set up in the IT city.

"These teams and companies have a ready

“We are creating an open environment of collaboration and co-creation with some of the best young Indian minds who are working with new technologies to create solutions that can impact the retail and consumer space over the next couple of years”

access to test, experiment and prototype their technologies across Future Group's brand and retail platforms that serve over a million customers everyday," it added.

Future Group Director Vivek Biyani is leading this initiative.

The Lab is tracking technology developments that will influence consumer experience in areas such as payments, unique consumer identification and development of one-on-one consumer conversations, analytics and predictive modelling as well as back-end functions such as supplier engagements, supply chain automation and infrastructure deployment.

GST: CBEC proposes e-way bill for goods worth ₹50k in transit

NEW DELHI: Moving goods worth more than Rs 50,000 under GST will require prior online registration of the consignment and securing an 'e-way bill' that tax officials can inspect anytime during the transit to check tax evasion.

The Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) has issued draft rules on Electronic Way (e-way) bill that require registered entities to furnish, in a prescribed format, GST-Network (GSTN) website information relating to any goods worth more than Rs 50,000 they intend to move within a state or outside.

GSTN will generate e-way bills that will be valid for 1-15 days, depending on distance to be travelled - one day being for 100 kilometres and 15 days for more than 1,000 km transit.

"Upon generation of the e-way bill on the common portal, a unique e-way bill number (EBN) shall be made available to the supplier, the recipient and the transporter on the common portal," stated the draft norms.

The person in-charge of conveyance will be required to carry the invoice or bill of supply or delivery challan, and a copy of the e-way bill or the e-way bill number, either physically or mapped to a Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) embedded on to the conveyance. The rules authorise the tax commissioner or an officer empowered by him on his behalf to intercept any conveyance to verify the e-way bill or the number in physical form for all inter-state and intra-state movement of goods.

Physical verification of conveyances can be carried out on specific information of evasion of tax, as per the rules.

The officer will be required to submit a summary report of every inspection of goods in transit within 24 hours and the final report within three days of inspection.

"Where a vehicle has been intercepted and detained for a period exceeding 30 minutes, the transporter may upload the said information in (prescribed form) on the common (GSTN) portal," said the guidelines.

Nangia & Co Director (Indirect Taxation) Rajat Mohan believes that the e-Way bill will give respite to countless transporters as now any transporter whose vehicle has been intercepted and detained for a period exceeding 30 minutes, he may upload the said information on the GSTN portal.

Analysts said this provision will act as a two-way sword as now accountability of the tax officer intercepting the vehicle will increase, but at the same time it will give opportunity to the transporter to file complaint. "I believe electronic way bills would be the final nail in the coffin for people dealing in black markets or in the unorganised sector," Mohan said.

These e-way bills will also come with a mechanism for self-check where every registered supplier will have to pre-inform the government about the location of goods to be transported, which will also be re-confirmed by the transporter, he added.

Although the draft e-way rules did not specify what documents will have to be filled in the bill, experts said the consigner will have to give the name and address of both the sender and receiver of the goods. Also, they will be required to give description of the goods, its valuation and weight. The government has already come out with nine set of GST rules earlier this month and today unveiled two set of rules for 'assessment and audit' and 'electronic way bills'. PTI

CORPORATE KALEIDOSCOPE



Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) paid homage to Dr B R Ambedkar on Friday on his 126th birth anniversary. DSP CEO A K Rath paid floral tribute at the statue of Dr Ambedkar at the steel township



Union Finance, Defence and Corporate Affairs Minister Arun Jaitley releasing the FLO Gender Parity Index: A Toolkit to Evaluate Gender Diversity & Women Empowerment in the Formal Sector of India, at the 33rd Annual Session of FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) in Delhi on Friday



WE'RE GOOD FRIENDS WITH INDIAN PLAYERS, SAYS DAVID WARNER

KOLKATA: Australia opener David Warner says he remains good friends with Indian cricketers despite a bitterly fought Test series which India won 2-1. During Australia's tour of India, Virat Kohli might have said that he was no more friends with the Australian cricketers, but Warner feels at the end of the day a cricketer always wants to play the game in the right spirit.

AIFF MAKES REQUEST TO FIFA TO ALLOT INDIA MATCHES TO NEW DELHI

NEW DELHI: The All India Football Federation has requested FIFA to allot India's group matches of the U-17 World Cup to Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. It will be held across six cities in the country from October 6-28. Usually, the host country is placed in Group A but when the schedule was announced, Mumbai's D Y Patil Stadium was to host Group A matches.

ASSISTANT COACH SIMON KATICH CREDITS UMESH FOR KKR'S WIN OVER KXIP

KOLKATA: Sunil Narine may have caught everyone's attention but Kolkata Knight Riders assistant coach Simon Katich on Friday gave credit to India star pacer Umesh Yadav for setting up their eight-wicket win over Kings XI Punjab. "It's never easy to walk straight into the side and turn around the game. Let's not forget he had a couple of weeks off," Katich said about Umesh.



Pollard spoil Kohli party as MI beat RCB by 4 wickets



RCB's Virat Kohli celebrates his fifty against Mumbai Indians. MI's Kieron Pollard (picture below) enroute his 70

BENGALURU: Kieron Pollard scripted Mumbai Indian's sensational four-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore with a blistering 70-run knock which overshadowed Samuel Badree's hat-trick in an IPL game here on Friday.

Chasing a 143-run target, Mumbai looked down and out with Badree's hat-trick that reducing the visitors to seven for four in the third over. It was first hat-trick of IPL-10.

It soon became 33 for five but the big-hitting West Indian and Krunal Pandya (37 not out) stitched a match-winning 93-run partnership to stage a dramatic turnaround. Mumbai went into the innings break having the upper hand after limiting RCB to 142 for five despite Virat Kohli striking a classy 62 off 47 balls in his first competitive outing in nearly a month. This was Mumbai's third win on the trot after losing their campaign opener against Rising Pune Supergiant.

RCB failed to capitalise on the good work done by Kohli, managing just 31 runs off the last five overs and lost four wickets. Kohli, out of action for almost a month with a shoulder injury he suffered during the third Test against Australia, opened the innings and he got into the groove in no time.

After mistiming a short ball off Harbhajan Singh



for a single in the second over of the innings, Kohli found his ominous touch. His opening partner Chris Gayle was the second highest contributor with 22 off 27 balls. However, RCB lost their way after Kohli's dismissal in the 16th over, struggling to 127 for five from 110 for one in a space of 17 balls.

Brief Scores: Royal Challengers Bangalore vs Mumbai Indians

RCB: Virat Kohli (62), Chris Gayle (22), Samuel Badree (4/9).

MI: Kieron Pollard (70), Krunal Pandya (37), Mitchell McClenaghan (2/20).

IPL Preview: KKR face SRH in battle for supremacy

KOLKATA: Buoyant Kolkata Knight Riders will look to continue their winning momentum when they face defending champions Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League here on Saturday.

It will be a battle between two top bowling sides of the IPL and Kolkata will hope to avenge their defeat in the Eliminator round last season.

After a win and a loss, the two-time former champions began their campaign at home with an eight-wicket thrash-



ing of Kings XI Punjab with 21 balls to spare on Thursday night.

Their 11th successive run-chase at Eden Gardens, which began in the triumphant 2012

season, was made possible by another Gautam Gambhir masterstroke in letting Sunil Narine open the innings as the duo killed their chase with their best ever Powerplay display of 76 runs. The KKR 'mystery' spinner showed his skill with the bat, slamming three sixes and four boundaries en route to a 18-ball 37 after regular opener Chris Lynn unfortunately aggravated his old shoulder injury.

The victory was no lesser than KKR's 10-wicket win in

the opening match against Gujarat Lions where Lynn and Gambhir shared a T20 record opening stand of 184. KKR's spirited run was halted by Mumbai Indians in their second match but last night's victory with Narine shining with the bat will boost the team which is struggling to find Lynn's immediate replacement.

In the transformed Eden Gardens track, India star pacer Umesh Yadav claimed four wickets in his comeback match after an injury layoff and it will

further boost their morale.

Yadav, who finished the season as India's third highest wicket-taker behind R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, got into the act especially at the death after conceding 11 runs in his opening over.

At a time when KXIP were fighting a score of 200, Yadav dismissed David Miller and Wriddhiman Saha of successive balls and took his fourth wicket in Axar Patel in the last delivery that restricted them to 170/9.

Mustafizur hopeful his off-cutters will work on Eden



KOLKATA: Since it's a day game and the wicket is expected to remain dry, Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman is hopeful his off-cutters will come good when defending champions Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) take on Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in an Indian Premier League (IPL) tie here on Saturday.

"Cutters depend on wicket. If the strip is dry and it's a day match, like it is tomorrow, yes there is a chance you will get to see them," Mustafizur, who is also called "The Fizz", told reporters on the eve of the match.

"I always try to give my best when I am playing. If I play, I will definitely try and give my best," the 21-year-old, who made heads turn with his superlative effort against India in 2015, said.

After not featuring in the first two matches due to international commitments as Bangladesh were playing Sri Lanka, Mustafizur returned to action for SRH whom he had joined last year. But the left-arm pacer had a bad day in office, conceding 34 runs off 2.4 overs without taking a wicket. "In the first match, what I wanted did not happen. There was a bit of length problem and I could not bowl in the areas I would have liked to," the off-cutter specialist said. Asked if pace-heavy SRH will have an advantage on the Eden turf which assists the quicks, Mutafizur said: "If the wicket is good, definitely we will do well. We have a strong pace bowling unit. Batting is also good." On a different note, Mustafizur said Mashrafe Mortaza will be missed in the shortest version of the game as he retired recently. "Not only for me, we all will miss him. when bhai (Mortaza) is around. He is of great support to us. Now he has retired from T20s. One dayers he will play till the time he can."

Mohun Bagan look for full points against Minerva

LUDHIANA: Title contenders Mohun Bagan would look to shrug off from the drawn result in their previous match and grab a win when they take on laggards Minerva Punjab in their I-League match here on Saturday.

Mohun Bagan are currently at the top of the table, tied on 30 points with Aizawl.

Yet, there were a lot left to be answered going by the sluggish performance (1-1 draw) against Shillong Lajong midweek.

The weary Mohun Bagan side need to recover real quick if they want to finish champions, twice in three years. Mohun Bagan will need their talisman Sony Norde to be back in the reckoning once more. "We are looking for a win because we only have three matches left. Aizawl and East Bengal are close and so you need to win if you want to win the championship."

It will not be easy and we have to work hard but we will play for three points," said Mohun Bagan coach Sanjoy Sen.

Jeje Lalpekhlua will be given a start after scoring a wonderful goal after coming off the bench and alongside Darryl Duffy should be a handful against Minerva.

Duffy and Jeje had scored twice each in Mohun Bagan's 4-0 thrashing of Minerva at home in the first leg. "We have to travel 14 hours from Meghalaya."

"Our players were tired yesterday but somehow we have to manage and there will be no excuses from us," said Sen.

Sen was not happy at the treatment meted out to his side, especially the training in the afternoon heat.

Kohli's return brings fans in droves to stadium

BENGALURU: The return of Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) skipper Virat Kohli to lead the host team against Mumbai Indians (MI) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) match brought thousands of his die-hard cricket fans to the Chinnaswamy stadium here in droves on a hot Friday afternoon.

Kohli missed this campaign's first three league ties, including two away at Hyderabad on April 5 and Indore on April 10 and one here on April 8, as he was recovering from the right shoulder injury he suffered in the Third Test against Australia at Ranchi on March 16. As Kohli walked into the middle to open the innings with Chris Gayle after Mumbai skipper Rohit Sharma chose to field first despite winning the toss, fans cheered him loudly and chants of "Kohli, Kohli" reverberated across the packed stands. "It's heartening to see Kohli play again, as his absence in the first three games made a difference to the team. He has been in great form and led India successfully in all the three formats of the game over the year with brilliant batting and captaincy," recalled Vinay Kumar, a sales executive, in the pavilion enclosure. True to his form and much to the delight of his fans, Kohli did not disappoint them, as he settled down early to play an anchoring innings and made 62 in 47 balls with five fours and two mighty sixes before he was out in the 16th over when the score was 110 for 1. Ahead of the crucial game, after RCB lost both the away games to Sunrisers Hyderabad by 35 runs and to Kings XI Punjab by eight wickets, Kohli said he was excited to resume playing.

KKR's Sunil Narine foxes one and all with his bat

KOLKATA: Sunil Narine is back for Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), this time with the bat. Just when it looked like Narine was no more a mystery after he rose to KKR's pinnacle in the wicket-taking column (105 in 78 matches), the West Indian has roared back with a typical spell 1/19 in four overs. But what surprised one and all was the way he batted.

Sans the services of Chris Lynn who is recuperating from a shoulder injury, KKR pulled a rabbit out of their hat by sending Narine along with Gautam Gambhir to open the batting. Chasing 171 for victory against Kings XI Punjab at the Eden Gardens, it was a move that left everyone talking and later, applauding.

First, it was whether the 28-year-old who averages 13.18 in T20s for the West Indies and 12.03 in T20 first class cricket has ever opened before.

Six overs later, Narine was dismissed by pacer Varun Aaron but not before cracking an 18-ball 37, featuring four fours and three sixes. Narine, who in six Tests, 65 ODIs, and 43 T20Is has never batted higher than at the eight spot (in Tests and ODIs) and sixth in T20Is, got a standing ovation from the Eden crowd as he returned to the pavilion.

"Actually we were quite surprised," Kings XI and India pacer Ishant Sharma told media persons after the game on Thursday.

"Then Maxi (Glenn Maxwell, Kings XI captain) told us in the CPL and Big Bash he opened the batting for a few teams. We didn't know how he is going to bat. We were thinking about Robin Uthappa, so when you see that you don't know what's going to happen," Ishant added laughing.

Playing regularly for India has helped me improve my line and length, says Umesh

KOLKATA: Playing almost all of India's Test matches at home has helped pacer Umesh Yadav improve his line and length also letting him know his strong points and areas to improve.

The Vidarbha pacer who picked up 17 wickets at an average of 23.41 in eight innings in the recently concluded India-Australia series has been the mainstay of India's bowling.

Yadav impressed with control and consistent pace throughout, but particularly in the final Test against Australia at Dharamsala.

On the liveliest of pitches used in the four-Test series, Yadav tormented the tourists to claim five wickets, also hinting that India now have the necessary fast bowling resources to clinch the deal on the hard



decks of Australia and South Africa.

For many, including former captain Sourav Ganguly, Yadav was the find of India's long home season.

"This is all due to my hard-work. In the last 8-10 months I am playing continuously (for the Indian team). The more you bowl the better you become," Yadav told reporters

on being asked if he was carrying his Dharamsala form in the Indian Premier League (IPL) as well, where he returned to duty for the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) with a four-for against Kings XI Punjab to help the purple brigade cruise to an eight-wicket win. "It's like a bowler's line and length is sorted with regular bowling. I think, the number of matches I have played has helped me better my line and length. Now I have come to know my strong points and the areas I need to bowl to," the 29-year old, who used to be wayward before, said. Narrating an incident of how Team India coaches, especially batting coach Sanjay Bangar has helped him understand the finer nuances of his game, like the run-up, Umesh said: "In

the last 10 months, our coaches Sanjay Bangar, Anil (Kumble, chief coach)sir who have a fair amount of idea about bowling have helped me a lot."Sanjay sir had told me that when you run in to bowl, sometimes you run faster than required in order to bowl faster. "Then you risk the chance of disturbing your line and length. You should enjoy you run up which will help you bring control to your bowling."

KKR have six more matches at the Eden Gardens, where Umesh looked to be in sublime form with the ball. The re-laid 22-year strip, the pacer said, was to his liking with a lot of carry and bounce. "The wicket is very good," Umesh, who missed the franchise's first two matches due to right hip and lower back soreness, said.

India to skip Sultan of Johor Cup hockey due to Pak presence



NEW DELHI: The Indian men's hockey team will not take part in the Sultan of Johor Cup in Malaysia for the second year in a row, citing the presence of Pakistan in the event to be held in October. Hockey India said since Sultan of Johor Cup is an invitational tournament it would continue its stand of not taking part in any series against Pakistan until it tenders an unconditional apology for the 2014 Champions Trophy controversy. Sultan of Johor Cup is an U-21 tournament and India won the title in 2015. It is not a global event held under the aegis of world governing body FIH or any continental body. In January, HI announced its decision not to play any tournament against Pakistan until they submit an unconditional written apology for lewd and unprofessional behaviour of the Pakistan team during the FIH Champions Trophy in India in 2014. Ahead of the 2016 Junior World Cup in Lucknow, Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) alleged that India did not want Pakistan to take part in the tournament. India had outrightly rejected the claim. "Though Hockey India and its players had let go of the hurtful incident in 2014, it was the recent allegations by PHF (during the Junior World Cup) that has resulted in India pulling out of this tournament.

"By not fielding the Indian team at the Sultan of Johor Cup, we have stood out

Hockey India said since Sultan of Johor Cup is an invitational tournament it would continue its stand of not taking part in any series against Pakistan until it tenders an unconditional apology for the 2014 Champions Trophy controversy

ground to not take part in any series against Pakistan until they submit an unconditional apology for what happened in 2014," said Hockey India spokesperson R P Singh.

"Since the Sultan of Johor Cup is not a mandatory tournament, Hockey India has decided that it will withdraw from the tournament. We had not brought up the bad behaviour on part of Pakistan during the FIH Champions Trophy in 2014 for a very long time.

"It is actually PHF who bring it up again and levy baseless allegations against Hockey India to hide their own incompetency.

It is about time PHF takes responsibility for its incapability," he added. AGENCIES

Manchester United, Ajax poised to reach Europa League semi-finals

MADRID: Manchester United, who drew 1-1 away at Anderlecht, and Ajax, 2-0 winners at home over Schalke 04, emerged the strongest in the Europa League quarter-final first leg.

The outlook is more complicated for Celta Vigo who on Thursday won but conceded two away goals to Genk, while Olympique Lyon prevailed 2-1 against Besiktas in a match that started 50 minutes late due to clashes between home-team supporters and travelling Turkish fans, reports Efe.

Henrikh Mkhitaryan scored in the 37th minute to stake Man United to a 1-0 lead in the match at Constant Vanden Stock Stadium in Belgium.

The visitors preserved their advantage until the 86th minute, when Leander Dendoncker equalised for Anderlecht, but the away goal means



Anderlecht's Leander Dendoncker scores his side's first goal during the Europa League quarter-final first leg match between Anderlecht and Manchester United in Brussels

United need only a scoreless draw in the second leg at Old Trafford to claim a berth in the semifinals.

Ajax were the most impres-

sive side of the day, dominating Schalke 2-0 at Amsterdam Arena. Davy Klaassen scored both goals. The first coming in the 23rd minute on a pen-

alty, the second in the 53rd with an assist from Justin Kluivert. Celta got off to a rocky start at Vigo's Balaídos stadium, conceding at the 10-minute mark

Rattled Dortmund seek solace after attack

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund face the difficult challenge of recovering from Tuesday's frightening bomb attack on their team bus as they prepare to host Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga this weekend.

Players and staff alike were badly shaken after their team coach was rocked by three explosions on the way to Signal Iduna Park ahead of their Champions League tie against Monaco.

Defender Marc Bartra underwent emergency surgery on a fractured wrist and to remove glass that became planted in his arm after the blast shattered windows on the Dortmund bus.

His team-mates also felt the psychological effects, losing 3-2 to Monaco after their quarter-final first leg was pushed back to Wednesday.

Many in the Dortmund squad said they had not wanted to play, while manager Thomas Tuchel railed at the decision to reschedule the match less than



24 hours after the planned kick-off. "Unless you experienced it, you can't understand how bad it was for us," said defender Sokratis Papastathopoulos.

"I am just happy to be alive, it was the worst day of my life," he added, referring to the night of the attack. Tuchel accused UEFA of treating Dortmund as if only a "beer can" had been thrown at their bus.

But European football's governing body rejected the claim, insisting that both clubs had

agreed to play on Wednesday. German police are still hunting the culprits and an officer was also hurt in the blast.

Tuchel is sure to rotate his fourth-placed squad to try to help give those worst affected by the attack time to recover.

"We must find a way of overcoming that. But we still don't know how that's going to happen," admitted Tuchel.

"Everyone must face up to it in their own way. No one felt it in exactly the same way.

"Some players saw the explosion... there were lots of different feelings and therefore many different ways of handling the trauma." Germany winger Marco Reus, sidelined for the past six weeks by a hamstring injury, is set to return for Dortmund but Bartra faces four weeks out. Frankfurt were quick to extend their best wishes to the Spaniard, but solidarity aside, Niko Kovac's men need the points on Saturday having dropped to ninth following a run of nine games without a win. As a result of the Dortmund attack, authorities are beefing up security across the country ahead of this weekend's fixtures. Runaway league leaders Bayern Munich, who are at Bayer Leverkusen, have for the first time introduced security checks at open training sessions. Bayern are 10 points clear of RB Leipzig but will again be without striker Robert Lewandowski, this time through suspension after he picked up his fifth yellow card

last weekend. The Poland star is the league's top scorer with 26 goals but missed Bayern's 2-1 defeat to Real Madrid in the Champions League with a bruised shoulder. Carlo Ancelotti will hope to have both Lewandowski and Mats Hummels (ankle) back in time for Tuesday's quarter-final return leg in Madrid. Leverkusen are desperately looking to stop their slide down the table after just one win in their last seven league games. Second-placed RB Leipzig are edging ever closer to finishing their debut Bundesliga season by qualifying directly for the Champions League but have a tricky trip to Freiburg. Freiburg, last season's second division champions ahead of Leipzig, have exceeded expectations this term by challenging for a Europa League place. Ex-Bayern striker Nils Petersen equalled the Bundesliga record of 18 goals off the bench when he came on to secure their 1-0 win over Mainz last weekend. AGENCIES

I-LEAGUE Preview: Aizawl eyes full points against Churchill

VASCO: Title aspirant Aizawl FC will be looking to garner full points when they take on Churchill Brothers in the crucial Round-16 match of football Hero I-League championship, to be played here on Saturday.

Earlier on Sunday, Aizawl FC suffered a jolt to their title aspirations when they went down to defending champions Bengaluru FC by a solitary goal scored in added time.

With three rounds to go, Aizawl FC is now tied on 30 points each along with Mohun Bagan at the top, and three points above East Bengal, who are on the third place. The match will be played at the Tilak Stadium.

Aizawl FC, who got relegated last year but got a chance to play this season after three Goan clubs - Dempo SC, Salgaocar FC and Sporting Clube de Goa - pulled out of the tournament, are in race for their maiden I-League title along with Mohun Bagan and East Bengal.

The team's coach Khalid Jamil is optimistic that his team can win the title.

In another match, Shillong Lajong will have their task cut out when they take on Bengaluru FC in their last home game of the I-League on Saturday.

Having snatched a point from table-toppers Mohun Bagan in their last home encounter, Lajong would like to settle for nothing less than full three points against Bengaluru in the Round of 16 match at the Nehru Stadium. A win on Saturday against the Bengaluru side will keep Lajong in the hunt for a top three finish. Bengaluru, on the other hand, come to the tie on the back of a hard-earned last minute win over Aizawl FC at home and would be desperate to bolster their reputation as a formidable I-League side. AGENCIES

Sharapova slams ITF for lack of doping warning

LONDON: Maria Sharapova hit out at tennis authorities on Friday for failing to warn her that a drug she had been taken had become a banned substance. Sharapova, a five-times Grand Slam champion, had an initial two-year suspension by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) reduced to 15 months after she tested positive at the 2016 Australian Open for meldonium. This was a medication the Russian had been taking when it was within the rules but which was later reclassified as a prohibited drug. "Why didn't someone come up to me and have a private conversation, just an official to an athlete, which would have taken care of the confidentiality problem they talked about later?" Sharapova told The Times. However, she did accept she had become "complacent", saying she was responsible for failing the drug test. "Ultimately the fault was mine," she added. "I had been getting clearance on everything I was taking for seven years and I became complacent," she said. AGENCIES

Different moods for top teams in weekend action

MADRID: La Liga leaders Real Madrid will go into their away game against Sporting Gijon in a far more positive frame of mind than Barcelona will approach their match at home against Real Sociedad in what could be another decisive week in the battle for the Spanish football league title and also to avoid relegation.

Saturday kicks off with Deportivo La Coruna desperate for a win at home against a Malaga side that has climbed away from the relegation zone, thanks to consecutive wins, reports Xinhua news agency.

Real Madrid are next in action with a trip to play Sporting Gijon, whose hopes of avoiding relegation have suffered a huge setback with two consecutive defeats that have left them five points away from safety.

Madrid travel north on the back of their 2-1 win away over Bayern Munich in the Champions League and with their morale sky high. Head coach Zinedine Zidane will possi-



Barcelona will be looking to bounce back after a shock defeat to Malaga while Real Madrid will take on Sporting Gijon in a far more positive frame of mind

bly rest some of his key players for the return leg of their European tie, but won't have that luxury in defence where Sergio Ramos and Nacho Fernandez are his only two fit central defenders.

Atletico are next up and aim to cement their place in third at home facing bottom of the table Osasuna, who nevertheless travel to the capital following consecutive wins, which will probably do little to help their campaign to avoid the drop. With only a

slender lead over Leicester City in their Champions League tie, Atletico coach Diego Simeone will also be tempted to make changes and will hope striker Kevin Gameiro is available to play. There is a different mood in Barcelona, after their 0-3 thrashing away by Juventus and the post-match criticism head coach Luis Enrique directed at his players. Barcelona entertain fifth-placed Real Sociedad, who have their sights set on a place in Europe. And with Asier Illaramendi

and David Zurutuza both fit for the visitors, Barcelona will have to improve on their mid-week showing in order to avoid an upset which would definitively end their title hopes.

Leganes suffered a body blow to their chances of avoiding relegation when they lost to Osasuna last week, but they still have a five-point cushion over Sporting Gijon, which they can add to win their home game against Espanyol, who maintain an outside chance of a top-six finish. AGENCIES

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.e-Tender-ESTATEKUR-02-2017, Date: 06.04.2017

Description: HOSPITALITY SERVICES (ROUND THE CLOCK) IN THE HIRED REST HOUSE ACCOMMODATION (3BHK) FOR OFFICERS OF EAST COAST RAILWAY AT FLAT No. 1003 (3 BHK) AT 10TH FLOOR OF ASHADEEP APARTMENT, HALLEY ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001 (FOR THIRTY SIX MONTHS).

Approx cost of the work: ₹30.28 lakhs, EMD: ₹60,570/-, Cost of Tender Form: ₹3,000/-. Completion Period of the work: 36 (Thirty Six) Months.

Date & time of Tender Closing: 16.05.2017, 1500 hrs. No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders, even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg./I) PR-11(B)/IT-18

Khurda Road

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD

TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender Notice No.: AGRA/ ELECT/OP/INIT/2017/03

Date: 11.04.2017

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/OP/North Central Railway, Agra, for & on behalf of President of India invites e-tenders for following works, closing date 17.05.2017 up to 16:00 hrs. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender any such manual offers received shall be ignored. S.No.1. Name of work : "Hiring of One Non-AC Motor vehicle TATA SUMO/Qualis Toyota/Tavera or similar (Capable of carrying not less than three persons and Driver & Guard line boxes) registration not earlier than 2014, in good working condition, including maintenance, minor/major repairs, fuel & Lubricants, salary of Drivers etc. for transportation of Crew with their line boxes to & fro nearby stations, for running 3500 kms per month & 500 additional Kms. per month (nature of work 24 hrs. Without any holiday/rest.)", S.No.2. Appx. Cost (in ₹) : ₹ 1164000.00. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in, tender can only be submitted through web portal www.ireps.gov.in, up to 16.00 hrs. on 17.05.2017. 318/17 (R)

24 x 7 Passengers Service Helpline No. 138

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

Name of work : Cleaning of fresh, return air filters, grills and condenser & evaporator coils in LHB and Non LHB AC coaches of Delhi Division for one year. Tender No. : 30-Elect/1-T/Chg/2017-18, Approx cost of the work in (Rs.) : Rs.1,50,69,468.60.

Cost of tender form : Rs. 5000/- By cash & Rs. 5500/- by Post. Address of the office: Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/Chg/Northern Railway, New Delhi. Earnest Money : Rs. 2,25,350/- . Period of completion of work : 1 Years. Date & time of submission of tender : 18.05.2017 up to 15.00 Hrs. And opening of tender : 18.05.2017 at 15:30 hrs. Website & notice board: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in & Sr.DEE/Chg/DLI 1054/17

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, ALLAHABAD

E-Tender Notice No. 02-2017 (Medical) Date: 06.04.2017

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Chief Medical Supdt. North Central Railway, Agra acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites "Open Tender" through on line only (E-Tendering) for the following work:-

Name of work with it's location	Approx Cost (₹)
Sanitation work of Railway Hospital old building, O.P.D., X-Ray Room, Casualty room, & Administrative Block, Office, Laboratory, & Toilets at Agra Cantt.	1083960/-

For Full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway Website www.ireps.gov.in. Bidder will be able to submit their original/revised bids through web portal "www.ireps.gov.in" up to 16:00 hrs. on 31.05.2017. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. 305/17(K)

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Deputy Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/Const./North Central Railway/Jhansi for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender with Single Packet System" through on line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

E-Tender No.	Name of Work	Approx. Cost (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)
JHS-SNT-0217	Hiring of two Non-AC commercial (Innova/ Ertiga/Xylo/Mahindra TUV/Honda BRV/Tata Safari/Scorpio or similar) for day to day work, dated 10.04.2017 per month @ 12 hours per day.	2455800.00	49120.03

Cost of Tender Form: ₹3150/- Date of closing Tender: 22.05.2017 Date of completion period from issue of acceptance letter : 36 Months. Tender on line can be submitted upto 15:00 hrs on 22.05.2017. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in. 309/17(K)

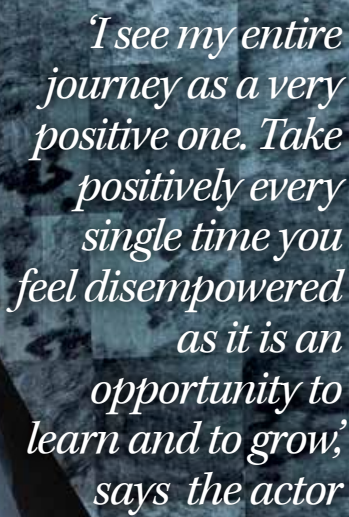
E-Tendering Tender Notice

Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction), North Central Railway, Gwalior for and on behalf of the President of India invites Sealed "Open Tenders" (Single packet System) through on line (e-tendering) for the following works:-

S. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Cost (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Date of closing Tender	Date of completion/ period from issue acceptance letter
1	CEN06 Gwalior-Sheopurkalan collection of field data to keep CL of proposed GC line as CL of existing NG line (including preparation submission of Gauge conversion work L-Section, Index Plan/Map, GADs, Land Plans etc.) in connection	47.92 Lakh	95850/-	3000/-	19.05.2017	04 months
2	CEN01 Hiring of 01 Nos. Non-AC multi utility 4-wheeler motor vehicle TATA Safari, Xylo, Innova, or similar make vehicle in good working condition for the use of Dy CE(C) Gwalior & other officials to inspect the work site under Dy CE(C) Gwalior.	05.02 Lakh	10050/-	2000/-	25.05.2017	12 months

Tender on line can be submitted upto 15:00 hrs on 19.05.2017 for SN-1 & 15:00 hrs on 25.05.2017 for SN-2. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in. 314/17(K)

North central railway www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPNCR



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 Jaltarang Bracelet ₹59,000	 Matte Flower Bracelet ₹47,000	 DNA Bracelet ₹50,000	 Ruli Bala ₹27,000 each	 Ball Kankan Bala ₹78,000	 Bishnu Bala ₹68,000	 Mayur Katai Bala ₹78,000	 Chitrangada Bala ₹46,000
 Sakuntala Bala ₹42,000	 Kriti Churi ₹39,000 each	 Matte Twisted Churi ₹36,000 each	 Tricolour Churi ₹48,000 each	 Brikhya Churi ₹48,000	 Overlapping Meena Churi ₹50,000	 Round Taar Churi ₹68,000	 Matte Filigree Chur ₹63,000
 Matte Cuff Chur ₹1,07,000	 Wave Chur ₹43,000	 Raaj Kankan ₹59,000	 Matshya Kankan ₹1,07,000	 Hangsha Padma Glass Chur ₹3,40,000	 Rose Mantasha ₹92,000	 Teen Phool Mantasha ₹69,000	 Pankha Haathphool ₹72,000
 Floral Haathphool ₹60,000	 Geometric Haathphool ₹40,000	 Twisted Leaf Bangle ₹50,000	 Classic Bangle ₹90,000	 Marquis Tennis Bracelet ₹1,00,000	 Rose Elegant Churi ₹1,00,000	 Sleek Churi ₹2,800 each	 Smart Bangle ₹4,800

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