

Want a good night's sleep?

TRY SIMPLE TRICKS

From 'millennial' bedtime stories, comfortable mattress to turning upside-down; you won't fail to catch forty winks the next time you lie down

Do you wake up in the middle of the night and keep staring at the ceiling thinking of ways to finally get some rest before the alarm rings? Are you tired of restless tossing and turning during sleep time? Do you wake up feeling tired in the morning? Try these simple tips to get a perfect good night's sleep.

Here are some sleep-inducing tricks from experts to try out the next time you fail to catch forty winks:

► **Listen to bedtime stories, millennial style:** Remember those good old days when you enjoyed listening to grandma's bedtime stories? Not only did her narrations transport you to lands of mystery and utopian countries, but they easily drifted you off to the world of slumber as well. Try the same technique now. Listen to stories or audio books as you tuck in and let your brain relax for a good night's sleep. There are tons of podcasts and ser-

vices that you can use for this purpose.

► **Choose the right mattress:** One main reason for your sleepless nights could be your uncomfortable mattress. The best way to address this trouble is to switch to a comfortable mattress that allows you to submerge in deep sleep and wake up in the morning without aches and pains. Look for a mattress that provide complete spine support and are designed keeping ergonomics in mind. Enjoy the compressed relaxation that the memory foam offers, which will make you feel that you have slept for a longer duration of time.

► **Block all blue light screens before bedtime:** It's imperative to create a calming ambience in your room to get the best quality of sleep. Block all the blue lights emitted from screens of cell phones, computers, tablets, televisions and other gadgets in your bedroom.

► **Listen to white noise:** Are the sounds of bikes and cars hampering your

sleep? The best way to ignore all these external disturbances during sleep time is to listen to white noise. White noise is an ambient noise produced digitally combining different sounds like rustling leaves, rumbling waterfall, etc. White noise works in the background and drowns out other disturbing sounds of traffic, snoring, etc. White noise has the ability to relax you and induce sleep. This is especially helpful if you live in proximity to main roads with higher vehicular traffic.

► **Drink cherry juice:** If you're struggling with a sleep disorder, then try sipping a glass of cherry juice before you're off to bed. According to several studies, cherries contain melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate sleep patterns.

► **Do a headstand:** Turning the body upside down is not an easy task. However, a headstand will supply enriched oxygenated blood to the brain cells and ward off all depressive thoughts. This exercise if done regularly can beat any kind of sleep disorder. A must try!

► **Place lemons in your room:** If you are prone to allergies or suffer from asthma or cold and find it difficult to catch good sleep, then simply cut a lemon and place it next to your bedside table. This will not only leave a fresh citrus scent in your room but will also help you breathe better and sleep well. IANS



DAY IN DAY OUT

What's on Around Town

TRANSITION ZONE

Exhibition 'Transition zone' is a manifestation of change, phenomenon and metaphor. At the same time, it is a variety of options and boundaries, a space of buffering, and a process that has the same dailyness as the density of the overcrowded city. Dimensional, multidimensional of points, lines, spaces, and time, which crosses visibility and non-visibility, but which is neither clear nor an uncommon issue.

WHEN: Till January 18
WHERE: Korean Cultural Centre India
TIMINGS: 9 am – 6 pm

LOST INNOCENCE OF THE CITYSCAPE

A solo exhibition by artist Meena Yadav, this series of art works will showcase the present environmental crisis our civilisation is facing. Meena uses the colours in her paintings, passionately and sensitively, as if the environment colours also have an emotional significance for her. The colours here show the inner tranquil mind of an artist, and how it wanders to create and reflect ones thoughts.

WHEN: January 4 – 8 **WHERE:** Indian Habitat Center **TIMING:** 11 am – 7 pm

SIZZLING SIZZLERS

It's time to dig into the exotic spread of vegetarian and non-vegetarian sizzlers such as Mix Meat Sizzlers, Aqua Sizzlers, Surf and Turf Sizzlers, Indi Barbeque Sizzlers, Sweet Sizzlers and much more at Lounge and Bar.

Served with perfect accompaniments like potato wedges, crispy salad and garlic crostinis; the unique mix of aromas and flavours of these piping hot plates will set your taste buds on fire.

WHEN: 5 January onwards
WHERE: Lounge and Bar, Eros Hotel, Nehru Place **TIMINGS:** 12 pm – 11 pm

DASTKARI HAAT

Dastkari Haat Samiti brings the 32nd Annual Dastkari Haat Craft Bazaar where art enthusiasts will get to see a mélange of colorful and traditional handicrafts, textiles and classical dance performances as artistes from India and Israel will come together to showcase their cultural legacy. **WHEN:** Till January 15 **WHERE:** Dilli Haat INA **TIMING:** 11 am – 9 pm

Natural sweeteners to fight your sweet tooth

We are all set to begin the New Year with new pledges and resolutions to stay fit and tune in to a healthy lifestyle. To beat a big hurdle in your healthy resolution – dieting boredom – one needs to keep the diet plan and healthy eating target as exciting and simple as possible. Nature has blessed us with a few natural sweeteners which can best fit into our healthy diet, says experts. Here are top four natural sweeteners.

Stevia-plant based, zero calorie, easy to use and safe sweetener

Stevia is getting popular across the world as a natural sweetener. There were certain misconceptions with its bitter taste as a majority of products were based on traditional stevia sweeteners offered in the form of high purity Reb A molecule. A recently developed variety of stevia tastes exactly like sugar, so that our taste buds should not be compromised. Given stevia can replace some unwanted sweetener calories, it can be one tool for cutting calories from your daily diet without affecting blood sugar



or insulin levels.

Sugarcane juice – Nature's superfluid and a great sweetener

Sugarcane juice has been a part of Indian culture for thousands of years. Ayurveda acharyas prefer the juice to be extracted from healthy canes and consumed in hygienic form. A great energy drink, skin toner, body cleanser and loaded with a variety of medicinal properties to fight a majority of diseases, sugarcane juice is unfortunately missing from our diet plans. One of the biggest reasons was the hygiene factor. Now, a bottled sugarcane juice or cold-pressed

sugarcane juice are good pick-ups for a healthy start.

Honey – Nature's best anti-biotic and great sweetener

Natural honey is loaded with nutrients and is an essential part of Indian home remedy solutions from ages. It has proteins, minerals, and vitamins. The plant enzyme amylase present in raw honey is effective in breaking down and helping the predigestion of the starches and also helps to raise the level of antioxidants required in the body. One teaspoon of honey is only about 20 calories.

Coconut sugar – lower glycemic index and great nutritional value

Coconut sugar is also called coconut palm sugar. It is a nat-

ural sugar made from sap, which is the sugary circulating fluid of the coconut plant. It is a good source of minerals like iron, zinc, calcium and potassium, along with some short chain fatty acids, polyphenols and antioxidants. Coconut sugar and coconut nectar contain a fiber known as inulin. This fiber may help slow glucose absorption, offering an alternative for those dealing with diabetic concerns.

So, go ahead with these natural sweeteners as there is no need to put an extra effort to fight your sweet tooth by eliminating sugar from your meals. IANS



Perfectionism in youngsters significantly increased

PERFECTIONISM – the craving to be perfect in body, mind and career – has significantly increased among today's college students compared with previous generations, and may be taking a toll on their mental health, a study suggests.

Researchers suggest that perfectionism entails "an irrational desire to achieve along with being overly critical of oneself and others."

They analysed data from 41,641 American, Canadian and British college students from 164 samples who completed the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, a test for generational changes in perfectionism, from the late 1980s to 2016. They measured three types of perfectionism: self-oriented – an irrational desire to be perfect; socially prescribed – perceiving excessive expectations from others; and other-oriented – placing unrealistic standards on others.

The study, published in the journal Psycho-

logical Bulletin, found that more recent generations of college students reported significantly higher scores for each form of perfectionism than earlier generations.

The rise in perfectionism among millennials is being driven by a number of factors, according to Curran. For example, raw data suggest that social media use pressures young adults to perfect themselves in comparison to others, which makes them dissatisfied with their bodies and increases social isolation.

The drive to earn money, pressure to get a good education and setting lofty career goals are other areas in which today's young people exhibit perfectionism.

In another example, Curran cited college students' drive to perfect their grades and compare them to their peers. These examples represent a rise in meritocracy among millennials, in which universities encourage competition among students to move up the ladder. IANS

Playing outdoor games could BOOST YOUR KID'S EYESIGHT

WORRIED THAT your kid's eyesight might deteriorate because of endless hours spent on smartphones, gaming consoles, computers and tablets? Take heart, spending just two hours a day outdoors, playing any sport in the sunlight, might help, experts suggest.

Myopia – also known as nearsightedness and shortsightedness – is a condition of the eye where the light that enters the eye does not directly focus on the retina, but in front of it.

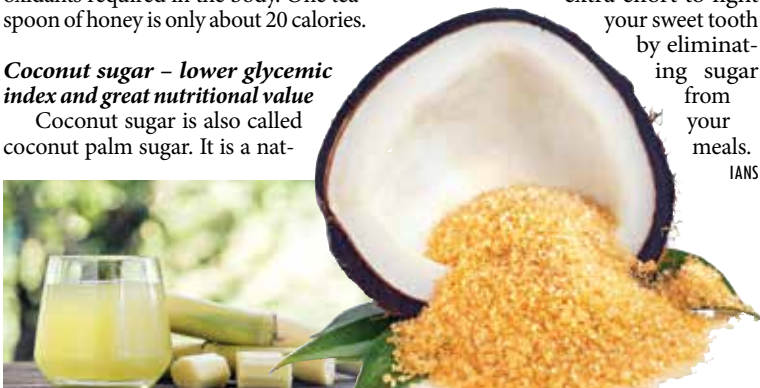
This causes the image that one sees – when looking at a distant object – to be out of focus. It does not affect focus when looking at a close object. According to experts, lack of natural light is the key behind the condition.

"The main factor seems to be a lack of exposure to direct sunlight, because children who study a lot and who use comput-

ers or smartphones or tablet computers a lot have less opportunity to run around outside and are less exposed to sunshine," said Annegret Dahlmann-Noor, consultant ophthalmologist at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.

While stopping or limiting screen time use may be a big task for parents, the best thing to do, say the experts, is to get children playing outside as much as possible. "We know that myopia or short-sightedness is becoming more common," Chris Hammond, professor at King's College London.

"Protective of myopia development is time outdoors – sport and leisure outdoors are protective of eyesight," Hammond said. "Probably on average across the week and the weekend, two hours a day outdoors is protective of becoming short-sighted in children," he noted. IANS



After Rajya Sabha snub, Vishwas declares war on CM

Says he has been rewarded in the form of punishment for over a year

SAYANTAN GHOSH

NEW DELHI: The rift in AAP widens as soon after the party announced its Rajya Sabha nominees, disgruntled AAP leader Kumar Vishwas on Wednesday attacked Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal saying that he has been punished for speaking the truth.

“In the last one-and-a-half years, I spoke the truth, whether it is Arvind Kejriwal’s decisions or issues like the surgical strike, irregularities in ticket distribution, softness towards extremists in Punjab, JNU incident, among others, and I have been rewarded in the form of punishment,” said Vishwas.

Vishwas was speaking following Aam Aadmi Party’s announcement of the three names for the Rajya Sabha seat. Among them are the prominent chartered accountant and former president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India N D Gupta, businessman and social activist Sushil Gupta



A section of leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party asserted that if Vishwas leaves the party, a number of MLAs might also leave with him

and party functionary Sanjay Singh. Rajya Sabha elections are scheduled to take place on January 16.

The rift between the party supremo Arvind Kejriwal and Vishwas deepened when in November last year his name

did not found mention among the list of speakers at the high-level party meet.

Vishwas was also troubled over the top leaders’ relationship with Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan.

Earlier, the party revoked the sus-

pension of Khan, who, after AAP’s debacle in the MCD elections, had accused Vishwas of being an “agent of the RSS” and trying to split the party. Rift also came in front when Kumar Vishwas was not chosen to campaign for Punjab elections.

A section of the leaders of the AAP asserted that if Vishwas leaves the party, a number of MLAs might also leave with him. A day before the announcement prominent people from social and political background also stood in the support of Vishwas.

Meanwhile, taking a dig at Kejriwal for nominating ND Gupta and Sushil Gupta to the Raya Sabha, Vishwas said that he wanted to congratulate AAP volunteers that their voice has been heard in choosing the “great revolutionaries.”

The AAP leader alleged that around one-and-a-half years ago Kejriwal had, in a party’s national executive meeting, said with a smile, “We will finish you, but we will not let you be a martyr”.

BJP, Cong slam AAP over RS candidates

SAYANTAN GHOSH

NEW DELHI: Starting from former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan to the final selection of two businessmen one of whom was previously a member of Delhi Pradesh Congress, the nomination of AAP for the Rajya Sabha got criticized in political and social sectors.

The state BJP, Congress and former party leaders slammed AAP claiming that the party has lost its basic principals of clean politics.

Delhi Pradesh Congress Chief Ajay Maken on Wednesday alleged that Sushil Gupta, who was selected by AAP as one its candidate for a Rajya Sabha seat, resigned from the Congress party after he was promised a seat in the upper house of Parliament supposedly by AAP.

Previously he had contested assembly elections in 2013 on a Congress ticket from

Moti Nagar which he lost. He resigned from the Congress party on November 28, 2017. However, the AAP has stated Gupta’s credentials as a social worker for this post.

“He is an educationist, agriculturalist and a social worker, with exemplary work in the field of Education and Healthcare. He has established and runs as a founder chairman, the following educational institutes providing education to more than 15,000 students. He runs five schools in Delhi and five each in Haryana and Punjab and five colleges of Engineering and Technology in Haryana,” the party noted in its statement.

The Delhi BJP also slammed the Arvind Kejriwal led AAP for selecting these candidates. “AAP which was made from the ashes of Anna Andolan, on the promise of representing the common man, has nominated two khaas aadmis, Narayan Das Gupta and Sushil Gupta, to the Rajya Sabha. Far

from ‘aam aadmi’ it is a party of ‘khaas aadmi,” said the leader of opposition of Delhi assembly and BJP leader Vijender Gupta.

Former founder members of AAP have also criticised the party for the names. The former member of AAP, Yogendra Yadav too expressed his shock at the announcement and said that he is “speechless”, “ashamed” and “numb” at AAP’s decision. “I used to say, whatever his other faults are but Arvind Kejriwal cannot be bought. Defended him against Kapil Mishra’s allegations. Now I don’t know what to say.

Speechless, ashamed and numb,” he said. Adding to his tone former AAP founder leader Prashant Bhushan said, “People who have not distinguished themselves in public service and have no expertise on anything to qualify for the Rajya Sabha.”

However, the leader of AAP have not responded to any other allegations.

Man from Assam dies in Delhi; family blames hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: A 42-year-old man from Assam died in a hospital in the national capital within hours of hospitalisation, after allegedly being given wrong medication, said family members on Wednesday.

Moreover, the family member of the deceased alleged that the hospital was operating without the licence and the patients were being treated by its staff impersonating as doctors.

The incident took place on November 16, 2017 after Utpal Saikia, working with a Delhi-based NGO, was admitted to SHL Hospital in Munirka of south Delhi by the paying guest accommodation owner as he was unwell.

“My brother (Utpal) was unwell on November 16 and was taken to the Munirka-located SHL Hospital by the owner of his paying guest accommodation as this hospital was nearby. Within hours of his admission, he became

unconscious after he was given some medication,” Mouchumi Saikia, sister of the deceased and who herself is a doctor with the Civil Hospital of Assam’s Lakhimpur, rued.

RK Yadav, who treated the patient at SHL Hospital, said the patient was brought to the hospital with complaints of severe stomach pain and vomiting.

“We just gave a Pantocid injection to the patient. His condition deteriorated thereafter,” Yadav said. Suspecting foul play, Mochumi and her husband, also a doctor, inquired about the doctors and the hospital and discovered that the hospital was operating without a government licence and that the doctors were fake.

According to Mochumi Saikia, Yadav had claimed that he was registered with the Goa Medical Council and his registration number was 1360. However, on checking, they found that the given registration number belonged to some other doctor.

24-yr-old on ventilator after botched up surgery in Ggn hospital



Paras Hospital also allegedly charged the patient Rs 82 lakh

PIYUSH OHRIE

GURUGRAM: Recent incidents of patients family coming out in open and complaining about city private hospitals have opened up a Pandora box and there are more serious allegations that are being levelled against the hospitals.

In an allegation that has been levelled by Jangbir, a resident of Hissar, has alleged that botched up surgery in Paras hospital has deteriorated the condition of his nephew who is now being put on the ventilator.

Adding more pain for the family he has further mentioned that a long duration of treatment for over six months have cost them Rs 82 lakh.

Meanwhile, Sunil Kumar, the 24-year-old patient continues to be in a serious condition.

The case of alleged medical apathy came to light when Jangbir complained about the hospital in the Chief Minister’s window which in turn resulted in the district health department to probe the case of medical negligence.

The ordeal for the family started in the month of June last year when Sunil who was taking bath in the village canal received serious injuries on his neck and head.

While he was able to receive treatment for neck injuries,

lack of proper medical facilities resulted in the family to take him to Gurugram for treatment.

In the Paras hospital, it was mentioned that the patient had suffered spinal injuries for which surgery was required. Yet, after the specialised operation, the condition of the patient became worse.

The family now alleges that they were given wrong advice by the doctors who instead wanted to make a huge profit from victim’s serious condition.

On Tuesday, chief medical officer BK Rajoura summoned the two doctors who provided treatment to Sunil. However, the management from the hospital replied that the two doctors are now not providing their services in the hospital.

Taking strict action against the Fortis hospital, the Haryana government revoked the licence of the bank of Fortis hospital, Gurugram.

After action on Fortis hospital in Gurugram, people who have been victims to the malpractices of other private hospitals in Gurugram, now want action on the management of other hospitals.

Not only Fortis but there have been other private hospitals in the city where recently shocking incidents of negligence and apathy took place.

Repair work on Lajpat Nagar flyover begins; to be carried out in two phases

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government’s Public Works Department (PWD) has started the repair work at Lajpat Nagar flyover.

PWD officials say the work will be carried out in two phases and will be completed by January end.

The six expansion joints have to be changed in each carriageway along with routine maintenance of bearings.

“For this, we will have to lift the sections of the flyover by providing support under it. During this period, vehicular movement is not possible. We



Repair work being carried out at Lajpat Nagar flyover on Tuesday

will complete the work on one carriageway in 15 days,” said a senior PWD official.

In the first phase, the carriageway from Ashram Chowk to Moolchand will be closed until January 14. Moolchand-

bound traffic will have to take the adjoining road beneath the flyover during this period, a traffic official said.

In the second phase, the carriageway from Moolchand to Ashram Chowk will be

closed.

Traffic officials say that people should take alternate routes like Mathura road, Ashram Chowk, Ring Road, Moolchand flyover/Lodhi Road, Bhishm Pitamah Road while commuting between south and central Delhi.

The traffic coming from Noida via DND flyway can take Barapullah elevated road to reach south and central Delhi.

PWD officials said that they got the permission from traffic police to start the work on Monday and the work will be completed in a timebound manner.



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Three cases registered by CBI against godman Virendra Dixit

Investigating agency forms Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the matter

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday registered three cases against self-styled godman Virendra Dev Dixit, after underage girls were found to be under confinement in his ashram in north west Delhi's Rohini.

Acting on the orders of the Delhi High Court, the investigating agency has also formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the matter.

Sources said CBI has registered the three cases on the orders of the High Court and has taken over the investigation of these cases.

The first of these cases was registered at Vijay Vihar police station in Rohini on January 19, 2017, under sections 376(2)(N), 506, 344 and 34 of the IPC against a private person for alleged rape, criminal intimidation and wrongful confinement.

The second case, dated November 12, 2017, was registered under sections 376(2)(N) and 506 of the IPC for alleged



Dixit's ashram in Rohini from where minor girls were first rescued

GIRLS RESCUED FROM ASHRAM

rape and criminal intimidation.

The third case, dated December 19, 2017, was registered under sections 186, 353, 332, 342 and 34 of the IPC for alleged assault, wrongful confinement, voluntarily causing hurt and obstruction of duty on the members of High

Court appointed committee.

"CBI has also constituted a SIT in the matter relating to Adhyatmik Vishwa Vidhyalaya Ashram, Rohini, on the orders of Delhi High Court. Further investigation is in progress," said a senior CBI official.

Delhi Commission for Women, along with Delhi Police and a group of lawyers, had inspected the Rohini ashram, from where several girls were rescued.

DCW Chairperson Swati Jai Hind had earlier claimed that the Commission had requested the High Court to inspect other ashrams run by Dixit, after which it was ordered that the Commission, along with Delhi Police and two senior lawyers will carry the inspections.

"We came to know about eight ashrams which can be in Delhi. We also suspect that suspicious things will be removed from them," said the DCW chief.

Coordinated work by Delhi Police, DCW and the lawyers resulted in 41 minors being rescued in December last year.

Jai Hind had earlier claimed that the ashram in Rohini had metal gates at every 10 metres and the roof was fortified with barbed wire to prevent the girls from escaping.

2,000 challans issued for public smoking, tobacco sale

ABHAY SINGH

NEW DELHI: Smoking in public places is not only dangerous for the smoker, but causes ill-effects on the health of the people nearby.

Taking note of the situation of public smoking in the city, Delhi Police have started taking action against people who are seen smoking in public places or selling tobacco within a radius of 100 yards of educational institutions.

The drive, which was held on December 30 and on Wednesday, has so far resulted in 2,000 challans being issued under the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

Police said the drive was started in South East Delhi on December 30, when all police stations in South East District went to public places and educational institutions. More than 1,100 challans were issued on that day alone.

The second drive, conducted on Wednesday, resulted in over 1,000 challans being



The drive was conducted in South East Delhi

REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

issued in the district.

Most of the 2,000 odd challans were issued under Section 4 of COTPA, which prohibits smoking at all public places.

Some other persons were challaned under Section 6 (B), which states that "no person shall sell, offer for sale or permit sale of, cigarettes or any other tobacco product in an area within a radius of one hundred yards of any educational institution."

The other sections in which challans were issued include Section 7 (pictorial health warnings on tobacco packs), Section 5 (prohibition of brand promotion of all tobacco prod-

ucts) and Section 6 (no person shall sell, offer for sale or permit sale of cigarettes or any other tobacco product to any person who is under eighteen years of age).

The city police plans to continue keeping an eye on people involved in such activities.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) Chinmoy Biswal told *Millennium Post* that they are conducting the drive to create awareness among the masses.

"This drive is going in the district as many people were in violation. More action is being taken against the violators," said the DCP.

Public toilets in south Delhi slums to be available 24x7

NEW DELHI: The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) on Wednesday proposed to make public toilets in slum areas round-the-clock facilities.

The south Delhi civic body said its proposal was based on lines of the 24x7 public convenience services run by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB).

The proposal now awaits the municipal commissioner's approval.

"Under the Swachh Bharat Mission it is the duty of all citizens to keep the areas in south Delhi clean," SDMC House Leader Shikha Rai said, reading from a resolution.

"Since defecating in the open is considered a crime. And, because the toilets run by the SDMC are operational from 7am to 2pm, and 2pm to 10pm, people are constrained to relieve themselves in the open," Rai said.

Since the DUSIB runs its facilities round-the-clock, the corporation felt a third shift can be brought in late night, to make the SDMC toilets available 24x7, she said.

"This House, therefore, resolves that like toilets under DUSIB, the toilets under the SDMC be kept opened from 7 am to 2 pm and 2 pm to 10 pm, and from 10 pm to 7 am (next day), so that the facility is available 24x7," it said.

Rai said the proposal is only for toilets build by the SDMC in slum areas under the DUSIB slum colonies.

"We will ask the authorities to give us an assessment as to when can it be started," she said.

AGENCIES

Ryan case: Juvenile sent to 14-day legal custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM: The 16-year-old boy, accused of killing seven-year-old Pradyuman Thakur at Ryan International School in Bhondsi, has been remanded to 14 days legal custody, after being produced in the sessions court on Wednesday.

However, there was no hearing as the judge was on leave. His judicial remand has now been extended to 14 more days and he will remain at the child correction home till January 17. The boy's bail petition will be taken up on January 6.

On December 20 last year, the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) had ordered that the juvenile - charged with the murder of Pradyuman - will be tried as

an adult.

The decision by the JJB was the second major setback for the juvenile. Besides his bail petition getting rejected earlier, the special court had also allowed the CBI to take his fingerprints of the accused.

The fingerprints, which were obtained by the premier investigating agency on Tuesday, will now be matched with the murder weapon that it had retrieved.

Ever since Pradyuman was murdered in the washroom of the school, there have been various twists and turns in the case relating to his death.

The case took a new dimension after the CBI trashed the probe by the Gurugram police and gave a clean chit to bus conductor Ashok Kumar.

Delivery boy used his biking skills to commit snatchings

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Unhappy with his job profile, a 20-year-old delivery boy for an e-commerce company, along with his friend, turned to auto lifting and robbery. However, luck ran out for Momin, after he was arrested on New Year's Day by South East Delhi Police.

Police said that Momin wanted to lead a lavish life, for which he and Ayaan first stole a scooter and snatched a mobile phone.

Momin, a resident of Okhla village in Jamia Nagar, was arrested during vehicle checking at CV Raman Marg by a team of police team from New Friends Colony police station on Monday evening.



20-year-old Momin worked for an e-commerce company PIC/MPOST

A country-made pistol and the stolen scooter were recovered from his possession.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) Chinmoy Biswal said that Momin had been working as a delivery boy in Okhla and was unhappy with the job, which required him to meet a target of deliv-

ering 80 packets per day and would pay him Rs 15,000 per month for it.

Looking to earn a quick buck, he met Ayaan at a birthday party and the two quickly became good friends.

Ayaan used to clean vehicles in a parking lot and the two began discussing ways to enter the world of crime.

For this, they first stole a scooter and arranged a pistol to commit robberies and snatching. "Momin had become an expert biker after working as a delivery boy.

"He knew how to speed up, had good knowledge of roads and was well aware of the dark spots where pedestrian are usually helpless and vulnerable," said the DCP.

Three arrested for thrashing man in Sangam Vihar

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: South Delhi Police, as part of its drive against criminals, has arrested three wanted criminals and recovered a semi-automatic pistol, a country-made pistol with one live cartridge, two daggers, a sword, a scooter and three iron and wooden sticks from their possession.

The arrested persons were identified as Javed alias Tinku, (22) , Sohan Jha (24) and Neeraj alias Sapola (25), police said on Wednesday.

On the intervening night of December 30 and 31, a quarrel took place in C-Block, Sangam Vihar between Rohit and Javed, both residents of the area.

The scuffle resulted in Javed severely beating up Rohit, who

sustained injuries.

A case was then registered at Sangam Vihar and an investigation was started.

On Monday, a trap was laid and around 8.45 pm, based on a tip, a police team intercepted Javed, who was on a white-coloured scooter.

On being searched, the country-made pistol with live cartridge and a dagger was recovered from Javed.

The two other accused were arrested on Tuesday.

"During interrogation, it was revealed that accused Javed alias Tinku is a habitual offender and was previously involved in many criminal cases," said Romil Baaniya, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South Delhi) on Wednesday.

Licence of pub in GK-I cancelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The license of the bar where a man was shot at in Greater Kailash-I area has been suspended by licensing branch, Delhi Police said on Wednesday.

Police added that they have also taken action against the concerned police personnel.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Romil Baaniya said that after the District Vigilance submitted its findings on the incident, five beat officers of M-block market of Greater Kailash-I area were sent to District Lines. Their explanation has been sought for the alleged misconduct.

"Show-cause Notice has been issued to the Station House Officer, Greater Kailash and division staff for the misconduct," said the DCP.

When asked about action taken against the bar, the senior official stated that their license has been suspended.

On December 31, a 30-year-old man was shot at after an argument over dance.

Police claimed that the accused was caught by the public and was later arrested.

The accused was identified as Umesh, who was beaten up by the public and handed over to the police who seized the firearm, said the DCP.

Police had also found empty cartridges at the spot. The victim, a resident of Jasola, had come to the pub with two of his office friends for a party in the bar.

Depression got better of ex-Army man who went on killing spree in Palwal

PIYUSH OHRIE

PALWAL: While law enforcement officials in Haryana are waiting for Naresh Dhankar to reach a stable condition to explain his stand, initial reports have highlighted how depression spoiled the life of bright NDA cadet and drove him to the extent of bludgeoning six men to death.

Not only was Dhankar a former Army man, who had passed out from National Defence Academy (NDA), he also had obtained a first division in Master of Sciences (MSc) in agriculture management from Hissar University.

His festering depression got the better of him and adversely

After taking early retirement from the Army in 2003, Naresh Dhankar joined the Agriculture department of Haryana government, where incidents of him having fits of anger were reported

affected his career.

According to sources, citing 60 per cent disability, Dhankar had to take early retirement from the Army on medical grounds in 2003.

He later joined the Agriculture department of the Haryana government, where incidents of him having fits of anger were reported.

An FIR had also been filed against Dhankar in 2015 after

he got into a violent tiff with a police official.

Even his personal life was affected by his depression, as his wife and children were not staying with him.

As Dhankar receives treatment at Safdarjung Hospital, it is his brothers who are at present attending him.

On Tuesday, in the span of two hours, Dhankar went on a violent spree and killed any-

one whom he could find at that time.

Around 4.00 am, the police received a call that a killer was on loose and targeting people at will, which resulted in great urgency among law and enforcement officials to arrest him.

Dhankar was finally caught at around 7.00 am at Adarsh Nagar, but not before he targeted certain police officials who were there to get him.

The case became more complex, as he became unconscious after being arrested.

Around 9 am, he was admitted to a hospital in Faridabad, where his CT scan revealed that he had suffered from brain hemorrhage.

Two on bike injured after car hits them in Hauz Khas

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Two persons were injured after the motorcycle in which they were traveling was hit by an crossover utility vehicle (XUV) in Hauz Khas area on Wednesday.

Delhi Police officials claimed that the injured persons have been hospitalised and are out of danger.

According to police, the victims were identified as Kalicharan and Narayan, who were hit by the speeding XUV.

The incident was reported on Wednesday night and the

two victims were taken to a hospital by the driver of the car himself, who left the vehicle behind.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Romil Baaniya stated that both victims are under treatment and doctors claimed that their condition is not very serious.

When asked about the owner of the offending vehicle, a senior police official claimed that they have called in the owner for questioning. "He left his car at the spot and took the injured to hospital in an auto-rickshaw," police said.

Elevation of Sanskrit Centre to Sanskrit School draws flak at JNU

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Elevation of the Special Centre for Sanskrit into the School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies has widened the ideological fault lines at the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

There is growing disenchantment among the JNU faculty over imposing decisions which, they claim are taken without "wider consultations".

Alleging open violation of the decision-making processes, Executive Council (EC) mem-

bers alleged that there are no wider consultations on matters of academic importance.

Recently, the EC had invited views over email after the School for Sanskrit and Indic Studies was approved. A section of the varsity's faculty has reacted sharply to this.

A professor at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning School of Social Sciences said, "The proposal was not exposed to wider consultations while pushing for the School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies. The administration has

made a mockery of the decision making process."

Another EC member argued that "there was always a consideration of changing the Center of Indian Languages into a school of the Indian language, and Sanskrit could have been a part of that. But the current move is driven by ideological motives, which believes Sanskrit is more than a language, it is a philosophy".

Sources at JNU confirmed that an EC meeting did not take place, but views were invited over email for the new school.

CITY BRIEFS

WATER SUPPLY TO BE CURTAILED IN HALF OF GURUGRAM FOR TWO DAYS

GURUGRAM: Residents of Gurugram will be in for a difficult couple of days as water supply to half of the city will be curtailed on January 4 and 5, on account of laying of new water pipeline. Among the major areas that will be affected are Sector-14, Sector-27, all five phases of DLF, Sector-17 and Sector 56. Residents are advised to store adequate water so that they do not face difficulties. For long the residents of Gurugram have been facing water woes. Quick to cash in on the problem are the private water tankers, which charge hefty amounts from troubled residents. Gurugram residents have highlighted that most private tankers charge anything between Rs 1,000 and 1,500 to fill up a single water tank. There have also been complaints that most private tankers do not completely fill the tank, citing shortage of water.

PRODUCER'S BMW BROKEN INTO, VALUABLES STOLEN IN GOLE MARKET

NEW DELHI: A producer's BMW car windscreen was smashed and his belongings were stolen by unidentified men in New Delhi's Gole Market on Tuesday. The incident took place when Kunal Sharma and his friend Mritunjay had gone to their office in Gole Market around 8 pm and parked the vehicle nearby. When they returned, they found the car's window to be smashed and some personal belongings missing. "Two bags, my friend's ID, some hotel membership cards and Rs 1.5 lakh cash were stolen," said the car's owner Sharma. Police have registered a case under Section 379 and are looking for the culprits.

63rd National School Games inaugurated in Delhi

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Education department of Delhi government on Wednesday threw open the 63rd National School Games 2017-18 at different venues across the city, which will go on till January 9.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said that the Delhi government will promote sports activities

in all its government schools, in order to ensure overall personality development of school children.

The games would be attended by more than 8,000 school children and officials from different states and Union Territories.

The various sporting events will be organised in different sport complexes/sports grounds all over Delhi.

Sisodia - who also holds

the portfolio of Delhi Education minister - spoke about the government's scheme under which it will provide free sports coaching to budding sports persons in Delhi government schools.

The coaching will be provided by private sports academies, sports clubs and private coaches.

They will be allowed to utilise the sports infrastructure of Delhi government schools,

Sisodia added.

31 sports have been included in the scheme, such as athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Chess, Cricket, Football, Hockey, Judo, Kabaddi, Karate, Kho-Kho, Rugby, Shooting, Squash, Table Tennis, Taekwondo, Volleyball, Wrestling, Tennis, Softball, Netball, Cycling, Skating, Carrom, Kurash, Rope Skipping, Yoga, Gymnastics, Wushu and Baseball.



Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia at the inauguration

PIC/MPOST

Narcotics Bureau gets new chief

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: IPS officer Abhay has taken charge as the new chief of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), officials on Wednesday said.

The 1986-batch police officer of Odisha cadre took charge as the Director General (DG) at the NCB headquarters in Delhi on Tuesday, they said.

Abhay, who goes by a single name, was till now working in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as Additional DG (Training).

He has had a seven-year stint with the CBI in the past apart from heading the crime branch and special branch of the Odisha Police.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, had recently approved his appointment to the post till November 18, 2019, which is his scheduled stint in central deputation.

The post of the NCB DG was lying vacant since April last year when the incumbent R R Bhatnagar was appointed as the CRPF DG.

Special Secretary in the home ministry Rina Mitra was handling the additional charge of NCB DG since then.

The NCB, under the command of the Union Home Ministry, is the apex coordinating and enforcement agency in the country against drug crimes and for countering drugs abuse.

I-T officer held taking ₹1L bribe

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI: The Central Bureau of Investigation has arrested an Income Tax officer for accepting a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from a woman here on Wednesday.

An official of the premier investigating agency said that earlier the accused had allegedly demanded a bribe for completion of assessment of income of the complainant's sister for the financial year of 2009-10.

The officer said the ITO allegedly asked the complainant and his sister to come at his office on December 29 with regard to the assessment of her income tax where he handed over the assessment order and demanded Rs 1.25 lakh for favours shown to her in the order. After negotiation, the accused agreed to accept Rs 1 lakh. CBI laid a trap and caught the accused while accepting the bribe of the money.

The sleuths of the agency conducted search at the office and residential premises of the accused in Mumbai. The accused will be produced before a court on Thursday, the official said.

Cabinet approves ₹6,809-cr Zojila tunnel project in J&K

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday approved the Rs 6,809-crore strategic Zojila pass tunnel project in Jammu and Kashmir to provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh, which remains cut-off from the rest of the world during winters due to heavy snowfall.

Zojila pass is situated at an altitude of 11,578 feet on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh National Highway which remains closed during winters (December to April) due to heavy snowfall and avalanches cutting off Leh-Ladakh region from Kashmir. "The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval to the construction, operation and maintenance of 2-lane bi-directional Zojila Tunnel with Parallel Escape (Egress) Tunnel excluding approaches on Srinagar-Leh section connecting NH-1A at Km 95 and at Km 118 in Jammu and Kashmir on engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) mode," the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said in a statement.

The statement said apart from providing all weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh, the project will bring about all round economic

Govt tables amended OBC bill in Lok Sabha

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday tabled in the Lok Sabha the crucial OBC bill, proposing to negate the amendments proposed by the Rajya Sabha in the last session, with the ruling BJP asserting that it underscored the government's commitment to empower backward classes.

The bill, which proposes constitutional status for the OBC commission, carries most of the provisions it had in its original version passed by the Lok Sabha before the opposition got amendments passed in the Upper House in the last session.

However, the discussion on the Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill 2017 had an abrupt end due to heated exchanges between union minister Giriraj Singh and TMC member Kalyan Banerjee, which led Speaker Sumitra Mahajan to adjourn the House till tomorrow.

Singh objected to Banerjee's accusation that the BJP of not taking the views of other parties on the matter and suggested that the OBCs had opposed it in the Gujarat polls.

A BJP member accused Banerjee of giving wrong information while Singh alleged that the TMC member had called him names. Rejecting the charge, Banerjee said the opposition was being threatened, following which a din erupted in the House leading to its adjournment.

Earlier, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot tabled the bill which, he said, seeks to reject the amendments inserted in the original bill by the Rajya Sabha.

The bill also says that the proposed National Commission for Backward Classes will give its report concerning a state to the state government and not to the Governor as said



A view of the Rajya Sabha in New Delhi on Wednesday

PTI

The bill, which proposes constitutional status for the OBC commission, carries most of the provisions it had in its original version passed by the Lok Sabha before the opposition got amendments passed in the Upper House in the last session

in the original bill passed by the Lok Sabha in the Monsoon Session.

Gehlot said opposition parties in the Rajya Sabha had demanded that the Act should make provisions for a woman and a member from minority communities in the commission.

He said he had agreed to make provision for including a woman in the commission in the rules, which will guide its functioning, but there was no need for a quota for minority communities as a Minority Commission already exists.

The opposition then moved an amendment to delete the Clause 3, which dealt with its composition, and it was carried by the Rajya Sabha, he said,

proposing to restore the clause.

Rajiv Satav (Congress) said there should be a separate ministry to deal with issues involving OBCs, which make up for over 52 per cent of population, and demanded that there should be more than five members in the commission to make it more representative.

The government should adopt good suggestions given by the opposition parties, he said.

Ganesh Singh (BJP) said the government has proved that it was for empowering the OBCs and the bill underscored this commitment. He asked Gehlot to make the census data public so that population of different OBC communities could be known.

19 killed, 18 injured in two separate road accidents in Rajasthan

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SIKAR/JAIPUR: At least 19 people, including four women and two children, were killed and 18 others injured in two separate road accidents in Rajasthan, police said on Wednesday. Eleven people were killed on Wednesday and 12 others injured when a Rajasthan Public Transport service (RPTS) bus collided head-on with a truck on National Highway 11, they said.

The bus driver was trying

to overtake another bus when it collided with a speeding truck coming from the opposite direction, the police said.

The victims were taken to a nearby hospital in Fatehpur where 11 people, including a woman, were declared brought dead, they said.

Eight of the deceased have been identified as Barkat Ali, Mani Ram, Sirajuddin, Noparam, Rajendra, Gopiram, Shakeel and Surendra, the police said.

Of the 12 injured, three crit-

ically, were referred to a hospital in Jaipur, they said.

Sikar collector Naresh Kumar Thakral, Superintendent of Police Vinit Kumar and other officers reached the spot.

In another incident, eight people were killed and six others injured when their tempo collided with a truck in Renwal area in Jaipur district on Tuesday night, the police said.

The victims were returning home in Chomu town after attending a wedding function, they said.



and socio-cultural integration of these regions.

"The project has strategic and socio-economic importance and shall be an instrument for the development of the economically backward districts in Jammu and Kashmir," it said.

The construction period of the project is seven years.

"The civil construction cost of the project is Rs 4,899.42 crore. The total capital cost of the project is Rs 6,808.69 crore. It includes the cost towards land acquisition, resettlement and rehabilitation and other pre-construction activities as well as maintenance and operation cost of tunnel for four years," the statement said.

The project aims at construction of 14.15 km long two-lane bi-directional single tube tunnel with a parallel 14.2 km long egress tunnel excluding approaches between Baltal and Minamarg in the state.

The project will be implemented by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H) through the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).

The main objective of the project is to provide all whether connectivity to strategically important Leh region in Jammu and Kashmir which at the moment is limited to at best 6 months because of snow on the passes and threat of avalanches.

"This project along with other ongoing projects like 6.5 km long Z-Morh tunnel at Gagangir would ensure safe, fast and cheap connectivity between the two regions of Kashmir and Ladakh," the statement said.

It will further increase the employment potential for the local labourers for the project activities, it added.

The government said on

completion, it will lead to enormous boost in employment as local businesses get linked to National market and the beautiful region is able to receive round the year tourist traffic.

IL&FS Transportation last year in July had said it has emerged as the lowest bidder for Rs 4,899 crore Zojila pass tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir. "We wish to inform that the company has emerged as the lowest bidder for the aforesaid (Zojila tunnel) project. The company had quoted an amount of Rs 4,899.42 crore to be constructed in a period of 2,555 days (7 years)," IL&FS Transportation said.

Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had earlier said, "We understand the plight of the people in Leh and Ladakh region who face severe crisis during winters when they are cut off from the rest of India for six months. We are committed to undertaking the project."

On March 1, 2016, the transport ministry had ordered "re-bidding" for the project, which had been awarded to IRB Infrastructure.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting, chaired by Gadkari, after Congress leader Digvijay Singh alleged that guidelines were violated while awarding the contract.

The ministry, however, had denied the charges.

14,400 bunkers to be constructed for border dwellers in Jammu

OUR CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU: The Centre has given sanction for construction of over 14,400 underground bunkers at a cost of Rs 415.73 crore for safety of people living along the LoC and the International border in Jammu division.

Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, who is minister-in-charge (Home), said this in a written reply in the Assembly.

She said the Union home ministry gave sanction for construction of bunkers in December last year and steps have been initiated to fulfil various conditions before taking up the construction work.

The Union ministry has asked the government to specify building norms for all areas up to five kilometre from the border and priority be given to bunkers which are nearest to the existing Border Out Posts.

The other conditions included that every bunker should be within three kilometre from the border and first line of sight from the IB and the LoC first priority (zero to one kilometre), second priority (one to two kilometres)



and third priority (two to three kilometres), the chief minister said. She said the Centre has also said that the project would be funded on reimbursement basis through security-related expenditure (rehabilitation and relief) as it relates to relief and rehabilitation of individuals besides it must be ensured the work has not been funded by any other source or scheme of the government.

The Centre has also demanded that the work would be executed as per norms, due procedure be followed during execution and central agency like Central Public Works

Department (CPWD) and National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) be engaged, Mehbooba said.

In response to another part of the question about clearance of liabilities on account of previous constructed bunkers, the chief minister said there is no pending liability on this account.

"As reported by divisional commissioner, Jammu, against the approved outlay of Rs three crore for construction of 60 bunkers in Jammu district, the project has been completed and an amount of Rs 2.945 crore stands spent, she said.

Hardeep Puri files nomination for RS seat

OUR CORRESPONDENT

LUCKNOW: Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday filed his nomination as a BJP candidate for the by-election to a Rajya Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh.

The seat fell vacant following the resignation of Manohar Parrikar, who quit as defence minister after he became the Goa chief minister. His term was to end on November 25, 2020.

A career diplomat-turned-politician, 65-year-old Puri was sworn in as a minister in September and was allocated the housing and urban development ministry.

But since he was not a Member of Parliament, he has



to enter either the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha within the stipulated six months of taking oath.

His election is all but certain in view of the BJP's massive strength in the 403-member UP Assembly. Puri was accompanied by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and BJP state chief Mahendra Nath Pandey.

Speaking to reporters, Adityanath said, "Hardeep

Singh Puri is an able person and has a long administrative experience".

Puri said that he had come to know about his candidature during the chief minister's recent Noida visit and added that he would be happy to represent UP in the Rajya Sabha.

"I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party president Amit Shah for making me minister and now giving me a chance to represent the state in the RS as a BJP member," Puri said. An IFS officer of the 1974 batch, Puri has served as India's permanent representative to the United Nations. The Election Commission announced the elections last Friday. The last date for filing nominations for the election is January 5.

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DP/0802/18

Don't worry if name not in 1st NRC draft: Sonowal

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI: Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Wednesday said all those excluded in the first National Register of Citizens draft should not worry as no one will be discriminated against on the basis of caste and community and will be given opportunities to prove citizenship.

Sonowal also said that a mechanism has to be devised "humanely" by the central government on what to do with those who are found to be illegal immigrants after finalisation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), a list of the state's citizens.

"There is no question of discriminating against anyone whether he or she is a Hindu, Muslim, Bengali or Nepali," Sonowal said.

No one will be victimised on the basis of caste and community, he asserted.

"All will be treated equally and given opportunities to prove their citizenship so that their names could be incorporated in the subsequent drafts of the NRC," Sonowal said.

The chief minister said the NRC has given an opportunity to segregate the bona fide citizens from illegal immigrants and it is a "win-win situation" for those who have been living under the stigma of "suspected illegal immigrants" for the last four decades.

"The government is work-



Assam, which faced influx of people from Bangladesh since the early 20th century, is the only state having an NRC, first prepared in 1951

ing reasonably as per the Supreme Court order. Those who will be found to be illegal immigrants after the final list will also be treated humanely. A mechanism has to be evolved by the central government on what to do with them," he said. The part draft of the NRC was published on the intervening night of December 31 and January 1 where names of 1.9 crore people out of the 3.29 crore applicants were incorporated.

The massive exercise aimed at identifying illegal immigrants in the state that borders Bangladesh is being carried out in Assam following a deci-

sion in 2005 after a series of meetings between the central and state governments and the influential All Assam Students' Union (AASU).

Assam, which faced influx of people from Bangladesh since the early 20th century, is the only state having an NRC, first prepared in 1951.

The current exercise, started in 2005 under the then Congress regime, got a major push only after the BJP came to power in the state with illegal immigration from Bangladesh as a poll plank.

The Supreme Court, which is monitoring the entire process, had ordered that the first

draft of the NRC be published by December 31 after completing the scrutiny of over two crore claims along with that of around 38 lakh people whose documents were suspect.

Of the 3.29 crore applications submitted, there was confusion over the inclusion of 29 lakh people who had submitted certificates issued by 'gram panchayats' as proof of identity, after a Gauhati High Court order in February had deemed 'panchayat' certificates invalid, an official said.

The Supreme Court set aside the High Court order and upheld the validity of the certificates as identity proof if they were followed up with proper verification. The apex court also asked authorities to stick to the original deadline for the publication of the draft NRC and include names of those whose claims were verified.

When the NRC was first prepared in Assam way back in 1951, the state had 80 lakh citizens then.

The process of identification of illegal immigrants in Assam has been debated and become a contentious issue in the state's politics.

A six-year agitation demanding identification and deportation of illegal immigrants was launched by the AASU in 1979. It culminated with the signing of the Assam Accord on August 15, 1985, in the presence of then prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Disgruntled Guj Fisheries Minister Solanki skips Cabinet meeting

AHMEDABAD: Unhappy over the allocation of portfolios in the new BJP government in Gujarat, state fisheries minister and Koli leader Purshottam Solanki on Wednesday skipped a cabinet meeting. Demanding that "good" departments be allocated to their leader, Solanki's supporters, led by his brother and former BJP MLA Hira Solanki, gathered at the minister's residence at Gandhinagar on Wednesday.

He told reporters that his community feels that he should be given some more portfolios.

"I have not called the Koli community leaders. They came here on their own to express solidarity. The Koli community feels that I should be given some more portfolios," Purshottam Solanki told reporters at his residence.

After meeting his brother, Hira Solanki said the Koli community will convey its feeling to the BJP leadership. "Koli community is confident that justice will be done," he said.

Earlier on Tuesday, Solanki had expressed displeasure over the department allocated to him and demanded "better" portfolios. He claimed that despite being a five-time MLA, he was ignored by the leadership while several "juniors" have been given "good portfolios".

The Koli community strongman has been given fisheries department as a minister of state. Solanki held the same portfolio as an MoS in the previous government under Chief Minister Vijay Rupani.

Court to ED: Don't pick & choose, big fish should be also caught

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: A special court today came down heavily on the Enforcement Directorate (ED) saying the agency should not adopt a pick and choose policy and catch only small fishes but also act against the key accused in the Rs 5,000 crore money laundering scam.

It was hearing the bail plea of Delhi-based businessman Gagan Dhawan in connection with the laundering case.

"The entire system is corrupt. You (ED) are only catching small fishes while I am surprised why till date no officials of the accused company (Gujarat-based pharma firm Sterling Biotech Ltd), the chartered accountants and others are arrested? Don't do pick and choose," Additional Sessions Judge Sidharth Sharma said while reserving his order on bail plea for tomorrow.

The court was critical of the fact that except Dhawan, other accused were still at large in the "huge scam".

Special Public Prosecutor Nitesh Rana, representing the ED, opposed Dhawan's plea saying he was damaging country's financial health by helping others in committing offences of such a vast magnitude and enlarging him on bail will have serious consequences.

He told the court that investigation was at a very crucial stage and Dhawan may flee from justice and divert the proceeds of crime if granted bail.

"The ED has to recover entire proceeds of crime worth



Rs 5,000 crore. Attachment of properties are taking place and the bail plea must be dismissed," Rana said.

In the bail plea, Dhawan, arrested on November 1, has sought the relief saying he was not required for further investigation since the charge sheet has already been filed and no purpose would be served by keeping him in custody.

The charge sheet was filed against Dhawan on December 23, last year.

Dhawan was sent to judicial custody on November 15 by the court after the probe agency said he was not required for further custodial interrogation.

The ED had alleged that Dhawan had facilitated the directors of SBL in the purchase of several properties and helped in misuse and diversion of the credit facilities of several bank totalling Rs 5,000 crore.

"Rs 1.5 crore was received by the accused from the SBL group. Prior to that, the amount of bank loans was rotated in various group companies of SBL group," the ED had claimed.

The trial court had on

November 14 issued non-bailable warrants against two other persons-- SBL directors Nitin and Chetan Sandesara. The agency had told the court that Sandesara might have left the country.

Dhawan was arrested in an alleged bank fraud case involving the SBL under sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The firm and Dhawan were also being probed by the ED for allegedly bribing senior Income Tax department officials in an earlier criminal complaint.

The CBI had booked Sterling Biotech, its directors Chetan Jayantilal Sandesara, Dipti Chetan Sandesara, Rajbhushan Omprakash Dixit, Nitin Jayantilal Sandesara and Vilas Joshi, chartered accountant Hemant Hathi, former director Andhra Bank Anup Garg and some unidentified persons in connection with the alleged bank fraud case.

It had alleged that the company had taken loans of over Rs 5,000 crore from a consortium led by Andhra Bank which had turned into non-performing assets.

Jaganmohan Reddy PMLA case: ED attaches ₹117.74 cr assets

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday said it has attached assets worth Rs 117.74 crore in connection with its money laundering probe in a case against YSR Congress chief Jaganmohan Reddy and others.

Official sources said the central probe agency's zonal office in Hyderabad issued a provisional order for attachment of these properties under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED said it has attached "movable and immovable assets worth Rs 117.74 crore under the PMLA of companies of I Syam Prasad Reddy, Indu

Projects, Embassy Property Developments and Vasantha Projects in the Indu-APHB (Andhra Pradesh Housing Board) case related to Y S Jaganmohan Reddy."

In a statement, it said this case pertains to a "quid pro quo investment where I Syam Prasad Reddy made huge investments in the companies floated by Y S Jaganmohan Reddy for the favours received from erstwhile government of Andhra Pradesh by way of allotment of 8,844 acre of land for Lepakshi Knowledge Hub Private Limited, 250 acres of land at Shamshabad for Indu Techzone Private Limited and various housing projects to Indu Group, when late Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, father of Jagan-

mohan Reddy was the Chief Minister."

It said I Syam Prasad Reddy "paid bribe amounts" to Jaganmohan Reddy through the companies of Nimmagadda Prasad in the form of investments at "exorbitant premiums."

The agency said in lieu of the quid pro quo payments made by I Syam Prasad Reddy, he was illegally favoured by the then government of Andhra Pradesh by awarding housing projects at Kukatapally (65 acres), Bandlaguda (50 acres), Gachibowli (4.57 acres) and Nandyal (75 acres) by "deviating all standard norms and without examining the technical/financial capabilities".

Stating the role of others who were named in the attachment order, the

ED said Jitendra Virwani of Embassy Group "assisted" I Syam Prasad Reddy in "grabbing housing projects by placing a non-relevant project for getting eligible for awarding projects and benefited to the tune of Rs 50.16 crore under guise of profit on investment, service compensation and sale of villas."

The agency began its probe against the politician and his associates on the basis of a CBI FIR.

The FIR had stated that since "May 2004, Jagan floated number of companies wherein quid pro quo investments have been made by beneficiaries from decisions of the state government in various forms like SEZs (special economic zones), irrigation contracts,



relaxation/permission for real estate ventures, mines among others."

2,300 'fake' madrassas on verge of losing govt recognition in UP

ARUNAV SINHA

LUCKNOW: Nearly 2,300 madrassas in Uttar Pradesh run the risk of losing their recognition for not submitting their details on the website of UP Madrasa Board, UP minority welfare minister said today.

The state's minority welfare department is considering a proposal to treat these Islamic institutions as "fake", State Minority Welfare Minister Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary said. "In Uttar Pradesh, there are 19,108 madrassas, which have been recognised by the state Madrasa Board. Of these, 16,808 madrassas have submitted their information on the website of the board. There are no details submitted by nearly 2,300 madrassas," Chaudhary told PTI in an interview here. "Now where are these madrassas? We are considering them as fake. There is a possibility that action may be taken against these madrassas by end

of January," Chaudhary said.

However, he added, the government will wait till month-end for them to furnish information on this regard.

"The government-recognised madrassas, which have not furnished their relevant details on the website can approach the government in case they face any difficulty. If they tell us their problems, we may help in resolving them," he said. With that said, the minister also made it clear that no student of the registered madrassa will be deprived of the opportunity to appear for any examination.

"We had extended the last date for submission of details by madrassas on the web portal of the department a number of times. Dates were extended on July 15, 2017, July 30, 2017 and on August 15, 2017. But, surprisingly no student, teacher, principal or manager of any of the 2,300 madrassas approached us," he said. PTI

Demonetisation badly hit FICN, hawala trade: Govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes had instantly wiped out Pakistan-printed high quality fake Indian currency notes besides hitting hawala transactions, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Home Affairs Hansraj Ahir said according to reports, demonetisation also resulted in significant positive impact in most theatres of violence in the country.

"Demonetisation also led to instant extinguishment of Pakistan-printed high quality fake Indian cur-

rency notes. It also adversely affected the hawala operators," he said replying a written question.

Ahir said Left Wing Extremism cadres have deposited illegal money into the accounts of the sympathisers or simple villagers. Nearly Rs 97.75 lakh were seized from various LWE groups post demonetisation and the red ultras also protested against the note ban drive, indicating their discontentment, he said.

"Since illegally held cash forms the major chunk of terrorist funding, after the demonetisation, most of the cash held with the terrorists turned worthless," he said.

KOLKATA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
e-NIT NO SE(EB)/T-10(R) of 2017-2018
e-Tender is invited by the Superintending Engineer(EB) (W&S) KMDA, Unnayan Bhavan, 6th Floor, DJ-11, Block-A, Sector-11, Salt Lake, Kolkata-700091 from reliable, experienced and resourceful agencies for the works:- **Name of Work, Estimated Amount, Earnest Money (₹) :** Design, Construction of Intake Jetty and Jetty Mounted Pump House for 20 MGD capacity and Sub Station etc. including Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning and One year Operation and Maintenance of the Electro-Mechanical Equipment of the Raw Water Pump House at Goabaria near Nazirguni, Howrah. Rate to be Quoted by the tenderer, 2% of the quoted rate. **Cost of Tender Documents (₹):** ₹ 15,000/- **Time of Completion :** 18 months. **Online Bid Submission Last Date & Time On :** 05/02/2018 up to 6 PM. For details contact the above office or visit our both websites. KMDA/T-966/GAPL(4)/17-18
Visit KMDA website : www.wbtenders.gov.in/KMDA or www.kmdaonline.org

WEST BENGAL MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Company wholly owned by the Government of West Bengal)
Swasthya Sathi, G N-29, Sector V, Salt Lake, Kolkata 700091
Memo No: WBMSC/ENG/6/NOTIF/17/004 Date:02.01.2018
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
West Bengal Medical Services Corporation Ltd. is inviting electronic bids for Quotation of Comprehensive Annual Maintenance for ETP System installed at College of Medicine & Sagore Dutta Hospital, Kamarhati, as per details indicated in the table below:

Sl. No.	Item	Bid Ref. No.	Last date of submission of online bid
1	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for ETP System installed at College of Medicine & Sagore Dutta Hospital, Kamarhati.	WBM-SCL/NIQ - 127/2017 dated- 30.12.2017	29.01.2018 at 04.00 P.M

Interested Bidders may download the tender document and / or submit their bids online at the website www.wbtenders.gov.in. The tender document may also be downloaded from the websites www.wbmcs.gov.in.

Sd/-
Managing Director
WBMSCL

KOLKATA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
e-NIT No. 12/KMDA/CIVIL/SE(CRS)/E&AM OF 2017-18
Suptd. Engr., CRS Circle, E&AM Sector, KMDA, 8th floor, Block-A, Unnayan Bhawan, Salt Lake City, Kolkata-700091 invites ONLINE e-TENDER from reliable, resourceful, bonafide, eligible firms/companies/individual/joint venture agencies for the work. **Name of Work:** Widening and strengthening of existing road from the junction of E-M Bye-pass (near Calcutta International School) upto the IT Park, Nonadanga under EKAD Project. **Estimated Cost:** ₹1,69,57,077/- **Earnest Money through online (Net Banking/NEFT/RTGS) :** ₹339,142/-**Time of Completion:** 03 months. **Last Date & Time for online request for the tender is** 27.01.2018 upto 3.00 PM. For details please contact the above office or visit KMDA/Govt. of West Bengal Websites. KMDA/T-967/A/TC(3)/17-18
www.wbtenders.gov.in or www.kmdaonline.org

WBHIDCO Ltd
Memo No : 4378/HIDCO/Admn-3031/2015 (P-I) Dt : 26/12/17
With reference to Memo No. 3311/HIDCO/Admn-3031/2015 (P-I) dated 12/9/17 the last date of submission of Bid including EMD for allotment of WBHIDCO land at Fintech Hub within CBD area of New Town, Kolkata on 'Lease - hold' basis, invited from intending IT & ITeS firms especially engaged in Financial Technical Services / Infrastructures have been extended upto 31/01/2018 upto 14:00 hours
For details please visit official website of WBHIDCO Ltd: www.wbhidcoltd.com .
T6674(3)/2017/ICA **General Manager (Administration)**
The Executive Engineer, Krishnagar Division, Social Sector, P.W. Dte. Govt. of W.B. invites 2(two) nos. e-tender for the following works.
Tender Ref. No. : **WBPWD/SS/EE/KNG- 36(e)/2017-18**
(1) Landscaping In front of Birla College & Birla Research Building & Drainage Arrangement by providing Double wall corrugated High Density poly ethylene pipes in the campus of WBUAFS, Mohanpur In the Dist. of Nadia. (2nd Call) **Tender ID: 2018_CB_146298_1 Rs. 11,74,912.00** and
Tender Ref. No. **WBPWD/SS/EE/KNG/MSCL-02(e) of 2017-18**
(1) Construction of a New Plant cum Manifold room for Medical Gas Pipeline Systems of Tehatta Sub Divisional Hospital at Tehatta in the District of Nadia (2nd Call) **Tender ID: 2018_CB_146336_1 Rs. 15,89,371.00**
Bid Submission closing date is 16/01/2018 upto 2:00 P.M. each
Details are available in the website <https://wbtenders.gov.in>.

Government of West Bengal
Office of the Deputy Director of Health Services (E&S), WB
Central Medical Stores, 141, A J C Bose Road, Kolkata — 700 014
Phone No (033) 2265 4418/4417/4419
Email: ddhs_cms@wbhealth.gov.in, cmswbhealth@gmail.com
Notice inviting E-Tender
NIT NO. HST/4T-20- 2018/ED/2018-20/054 Dated: -03-01-2018
E TENDER IS HEREBY INVITED FOR PROCUREMENT OF ESSENTIAL GENERAL DRUGS FOR SUPPLY IN GOVERNMENT RUN HOSPITALS IN THE STATE FOR A PERIOD OF 2(TWO) YEARS FROM THE DATE OF ISSUANCE OF WORK ORDER. INTERESTED MANUFACTURERS OR DIRECT IMPORTERS OF DRUGS MAY VISIT THE WEBSITE "<https://wbtenders.gov.in>" OR "www.wbhealth.gov.in" FOR FURTHER DETAILS.
CLOSING DATE: 29.01.2018 — 31.01.2018 (AS PER GROUP MENTIONED IN BID DOCUMENT) PRE BID MEETING: 15.01.2018, AT 12 NOON, IN THE SWASTHYA BHABAN AUDITORIUM.
SD/-
DDHS(E&S), WB

2018 will see biennial elections in 8 LS seats

SIMONTINI BHATTACHARJEE

NEW DELHI: Like last year, 2018 too will see some buzzes with upcoming polls and political developments. It will start with the biennial elections in 8 Lok Sabha seats across the country including Bihar (1), Jammu & Kashmir (1), Rajasthan (2), Maharashtra (1), Uttar Pradesh (2), and West Bengal (1). Meanwhile, the political corridor is abuzz with Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) chief Mayawati's candidature from Phulpur Lok Sabha constituency of UP, after Keshav Prasad Maurya took the MLC route.

It is speculated that she could be the joint candidate of non-saffron parties, while the political observers opined that it would be the litmus test for the "United Oppositions", ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

After her angry walkout from the Rajya Sabha, the BSP chief had hinted many times that she is not afraid of facing the electorate. However, it is also indeed a fact that Mayawati has not faced any direct elections for almost a decade. When she became chief minister of Uttar Pradesh with an



absolute majority in 2007, she did opt for nomination to the state legislative council.

BSP has just four members, including party general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra, left in the Rajya Sabha, who all be completing their tenure in April. In fact, total 58 members are slated to complete their term and retire during the same tenure from the Upper House. Of these 58, at least 10 members have to be elected from UP and after humongous mandates in the UP, Gujarat, and Himachal Assembly polls the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is riding towards 'Mission 2018' which pertains to elections to all 58 seats of Rajya Sabha.

After losing to Samajwadi Party (SP) in 2012, the veteran politician chose to enter the Upper House of the Parliament. Her term will end in April next year, and her party now even does not have numbers to ensure the victory of even one candidate in biennial elections for the council of the states. Thus, she has to be the joint candidate of SP, BSP and Congress.

On the contrary, in the last Assembly polls BJP and its allies convincingly won all five assembly seats in the Lok Sabha constituency, which has been politically significant sending Congress nominees till 1984. From this constituency the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, won in 1952, 1957 and 1962. In his final electoral contest (1962), Nehru defeated socialist ideologue Ram Manohar Lohia.

In 1967, Nehru's sister Vijay Laxmi Pandit won the seat defeating Janeshwar Mishra. The Congress domination later ended by Janata Dal's Ram Pujan Patel's win in 1986. Later in 1996, BSP founder Kanshiram contested and lost from this seat.

Meanwhile, the caste divi-

sion of the most populous state is another key issue for all intense political gazes. Mayawati's core voters, Dalits share 20 per cent of the demography and another significant population of OBCs—Kurmis (Patels) have been getting divided between SP, BSP and BJP since 2014.

Yadavs, another OBC caste, have also been getting divided between SP and BJP and reportedly they have also voted largely in favor of BJP in the last elections.

Kushwaha, Maurya and Mallah votes have traditionally got divided between BJP and BSP, but these castes shifted in a big way to the saffron party in 2014, when Maurya contested the seat.

The constituency also has 15 per cent Muslims voters and the traditional vote bank of SP. Among upper castes, Brahmins have around 10 per cent of vote share in Phulpur and they are more tilted to the saffron party traditionally. But interestingly, the BSP chief became UP CM in 2007 on the back of a Dalit-Muslim-Brahmin alliance.

The biennial elections would be held earlier this year, sources said.

Fewer trains running in late than flights in fogs: Goyal

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Lesser number of trains are running in late than flights due to fog this year because of constant efforts for computerisation of the signalling system, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal said on Wednesday. "Due to our constant efforts, fewer trains were running in late in comparison to flight during fogs," the minister claimed during Question Hour in the Lok Sabha.

Goyal said that a committee has been set up to review the flexi-fare system and recommend best options, keeping in mind the interests of passengers and the railways. The minister said the railways have given highest priority on safety and highlighted the public transporter's focus on computerisation of the signalling system, which continues to run through the old system started before independence.

Goyal said that the ultimate solution to the railways' problems was a capital investment, which has been highest in the last three years. "Rs 1.20 lakh crore will be invested this year and the amount will be more next year. Our aim is to make a new Indian Railways by 2022 and works are going on in this regard," the minister said.

Govt mulling stringent norms to penalise dishonest businessmen

DHIRENDRA KUMAR

NEW DELHI: In a move aimed at providing a friendly ecosystem for honest entrepreneurs, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) is mulling to make penalty provisions for offenders more stringent by making major changes in the existing rules.

According to sources, the move has been initiated to encourage fair trade practices in a holistic manner and build a confidence among honest businessmen in the country. The government is also identifying 'suspicious' activities of 'big sharks' to take necessary action against them for giving a message that unfair practices would not be accepted anymore, the sources added.

"The proposed penal provisions would be so 'harsh' that defaulters wouldn't even think to break the rules," sources said,



adding, "The government is working to make operational part of companies a human-interface free affair to prevent unfair practitioners from taking advantage of the 'vulnerable' system."

The government is aiming to bring transparency in the whole process so that honest businessmen should not feel cheated in comparison to those who follow unfair practices to promote their businesses such as using shell companies to park their assets, etc, the

"It's a hard fact that those who follow right ways to pro-

mote their businesses, they find it very difficult to carry out their operations, which means there are flaws in the system and it needs to be rectified. The government is working in this direction," the sources said.

"The passage of insolvency (amendment) bill is another bold step in this direction as the Bill proposes to relax the norm for disqualifying a promoter from bidding for a company undergoing insolvency resolution," the sources said.

The ordinance had barred promoters whose companies have had their loans declared NPAs by banks for over a year from bidding for these. The year is counted from the declaration of a loan as an NPA till the invitation of bids.

The Bill proposes to calculate this period of one year till an application of insolvency is accepted by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

Now get SMS delay alerts at halt stations

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Passengers awaiting the arrival of their trains at halt stations along the route will now get SMS delay alerts if their train is more than an hour late, the Railways said on Wednesday, extending the service to cover 1,104 more trains.

The service was started for 102 premium trains on November 3 last year and was extended to 157 more trains later. It was restricted to people boarding at the departure station only.

Now, travellers boarding at halt stations all along the route will also receive alerts.

"Passengers at halt stations too can now anticipate when the train will arrive at their destination, making planning travel much easier," said a senior official of the Railway Board.

Quantum of punishment to Lalu likely today



OUR CORRESPONDENT

RANCHI: A special CBI court here on Wednesday served contempt notices to senior leaders of the RJD and the Congress for criticising the December 23 conviction of RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav in a fodder scam case on television.

CBI judge Shiv Pal Singh directed senior RJD leaders Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, Shivanand Tiwari and Lalu Prasad's son Tejashwi Yadav and Congress leader Manish Tewari to personally appear before the court on January 23.

Tejashwi Yadav is leader of opposition in the Bihar Assembly.

The court which was scheduled to pronounce the quantum of punishment to Lalu Prasad

and 15 others on Wednesday is likely to announce it on Thursday, a CBI advocate said.

The case did not come up on Wednesday due to a condolence meeting held during the day to mourn the death of two lawyers, he said.

The RJD chief and the 15 others who were brought to the court in the morning were taken back to jail.

The court had on December 23 convicted Lalu Prasad and the other 15 in a fodder scam case, 21 years after it had surfaced. Six others, including another former chief minister, Jagannath Mishra, were acquitted.

The case pertains to fraudulent withdrawal of Rs 89.27 lakh from the Deogarh Treasury between 1991 and 1994.

'Allow use of domestic coal in plants run on imports'

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The government should consider allowing domestic coal to be used in imported coal-based thermal power plants to reduce the dependency on the dry fuel bought from other countries, says a Parliamentary Committee report.

"The Committee has noted that the use of indigenous coal by the imported coal-based thermal power plants is dependent on policy interventions by the government," Standing Committee on Coal and Steel said in its latest report.

It observed that government's intervention is needed for allowing use of domestic coal along with imported coal as the existing consent is only for the use of imported dry fuel.

"The committee has therefore desired that the government should earnestly address this issue to bring down the import of non-coking coal," the report said. The committee also suggested that all out efforts be made to reverse the trend of importing coking coal by steel units by enhancing the domestic output or acquiring coking coal mines by Coal India overseas.

Coal India overseas.

Rajini calls on Karuna, seeks his blessing



CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI: Days after announcing his entry into politics, top actor Rajinikanth met DMK chief M Karunanidhi at his residence here on Wednesday evening and sought his blessings.

DMK sources described it as a courtesy call. Clad in a white shirt and black pant, the actor extended his New Year greetings and apprised the DMK president and his aides of his political plunge.

Rajinikanth also enquired about the veteran leader's health. DMK working president MK Stalin was present on the occasion, the sources said.

Karunanidhi is the first

political leader Rajinikanth is meeting after announcing his entry into politics on December 31.

The meeting assumes significance as DMK is the main opposition party in the Tamil Nadu assembly. Rajinikanth has said it was his desire to create a political revolution in Tamil Nadu, a "historic" state that facilitated major changes.

"It is my desire to start from here a political revolution," he said yesterday. Future generations will live better if a change was facilitated now, the actor said. The actor has launched a mobile app, website and a Twitter account as part of efforts to mobilise cadres for his proposed party.

TENDER NOTICE

GOVT OF WESTBENGAL

NT No 426 of 2017-18
OF S.E. & R.H.C.
(Under Plan head)
email - seachciv@gmail.com
Phone No. 0333-2468527

Fulbaridanga to Adarsh Ratanpur Road from 0.00 KMP to 2.63 KM, Strengthening Work under Cooch Behar Highway Division in the district of Cooch Behar during 2017-2018. (2nd Call)

Rs. 4,54,26,286.00

The detailed NIT is available at <https://etender.wb.nic.in>

Sd/-Superintending Engineer, North Bengal Highway Circle, Siliguri

INFORMATION WANTED



This is the Photograph of Umera Khatoon W/o of MD. Ayula Khan of 35/3/D, Topsia Road, Kol-39 who has been missing Since 19-12-17 Who has been deposited at..... description of this missing person is:

Age 40 years, Complexion Shyama, Height 4'-10" Wearing Green Color Salwar Kamiz & Jampar, Language..... Identification Mark.....

Please inform whereabouts of the missing person please contact to the O/C, Missing Persons Squad, Lalbazar Kolkata-700 001 .

ICA(10/2)2018

INFORMATION WANTED



This is the photograph of Bandana Singh D/o Rajesh Singh of Bankra Mishrapara, PS - Domjur, Dist - Howrah who has been missing since 01.11.17 from Mishrapara, PS - Domjur, Hawrah, WB.

Description of this missing person is: Age - 15Y, Complexion- Fair, Built Thin, Hair -Black Height - 4'8", Wearing - Red colour churidar and black colour pant. Religion - Hindu, Mother Tongue - Hindi/Bengali.

Please inform whereabouts of the missing person please contact to the Spl. Siptd. of Police. CID (WB), Bhawan Bhavan, Kolkata - 700027, Phone No. (033) 2450-6120.

ICA(18/2)2018

WEST BENGAL STATE LOTTERY

Results of NEW YEAR Bumper Draw, 2018 held on 03.01.2018 at 3.00 P.M. at Tarapada Memorial Hall, 37, Ganesh Chandra Avenue, Kolkata-700013.

JUDGES PRESENT •

1. Smt. Sweta Das
2. Smt. Tiyasha Das

1st Prize: One: ₹ 1,01,00,000/- (Common to all Series) E-700/29
2nd Prize: One: ₹ 5,00,000/- (Common to all Series) C-1208/23

3rd Prize: ₹ 5,000/- each (2 in 10,000 tickets)
(Gold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

27785 34425 33176 58652 10012 72548 18522 51845 96148 17240
38644 60190 14451 93547 45840 22798 16839 62933 32849 11636

4th Prize: ₹1,000/- each (5 in 10,000 tickets)
(Gold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

06810 05710 80896 21466 72787 93878 92035 30378 34104 99026
62257 46019 14359 22202 85821 34529 75809 19988 82728 96609
71654 16822 33524 54787 78958 72358 34840 12452 12448 20011
99852 98705 46510 69285 10333 76222 89099 41720 30748 71363
67725 49048 73149 44782 31107 57410 02170 75094 03516 75836

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

13789 17777 72752 34728 24114 84881 72955 49280 02996 12890
38340 68343 78466 14255 08147 58511 28991 11476 93523 92725
81664 19527 59166 81607 80439 18701 13094 28471 70196 98990
93838 76517 84950 18793 98135 82703 43441 52525 38035 88076
75882 23198 05743 56274 45491 74613 99819 94335 09201 85482
93384 28490 67799 67187 25786 49714 77228 86357 58685 08449
99176 94342 68642 11779 31566 67405 26927 24109 15370 96948
24959 08566 84983 92946 48527 48387 49846 81432 18212 88002
13025 04850 96554 45712 43016 18223 03202 76468 17106 06989
68432 09036 14253 85176 15980 45822 70560 12483 93839 67231

6th Prize: ₹ 200/- each (5 in 1,000 tickets)
(Gold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

1022 6152 4681 8433 8180 7888 8422 8171 1626 6495
5975 8130 0222 9493 5582 8265 9470 2941 3116 8076
8046 8569 1727 7731 5967 8265 4080 1986 1306 2809
5669 7727 2128 2957 2619 5133 8136 9835 3648 2920
6168 9336 8337 5837 5518 18223 2538 4722 4167

7th Prize: ₹ 100/- each (6 in 1,000 tickets)
(Gold Tickets ending with the following numbers)

7062 4850 7292 5906 9845 4018 2203 5915 4616 1070
2481 0214 8476 8088 8384 8795 6440 8723 5513 7064
1910 0123 2088 8809 7740 1247 7557 8884 1444 4621
5352 0256 0492 4188 3319 2088 4857 1830 4900 0786
2766 4907 7296 2946 4110 7785 9608 7082 8506 5781
8608 8429 9219 4319 9212 4888 7366 0444 4618 1727

Claim by 01.02.2018. Claim for prizes above ₹5,000/- shall be received and paid by the Directorate of State Lotteries, Govt. of West Bengal, 49, Ganesh Chandra Avenue, Kolkata-700013 Phone No. 2236-4689/99. Rest by the Distributor.

Official Result Sheet is FINAL. Terms & Conditions apply.

ICA(14/1)2018

Joint Director, State Lotteries, Government of West Bengal.

515th Banganukulmi Draw, on 10.01.2018.

243th Bangore Super Draw, on 17.01.2018.

Official Result Sheet is FINAL. Terms & Conditions apply.

ICA(10/2)2018

ICA(18/2)2018

ICA(10/2)2018

ICA(18/2)2018

ICA(10/2)2018

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ICA(18/2)2018

ICA(10/2)2018

ICA(18/2)2018

Puppet show on Vivekananda's life held in Parliament

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: A puppet show based on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda was organised by the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi in collaboration with the Bharatiya Lok Kala Mandal, Udaipur in the Parliament Library Building on Wednesday.

Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan and other members of the house watched the show.

The puppet show depicted various incidents and stories from the life of Swami Vivekananda known in his pre-



monastic life as Narendra Nath Datta.

The unique show, with high-class background music and special effects, conceptualized colourful performances by life-like puppets through the nimble fingers of the dedicated team of puppeteers which enlivened the message of the great saint.

Some of the incidents depicted included: Narendra's mother pouring water on the child to cool his irrepressible energy; his ignoring a warning of an elderly neighbour while swinging from a tree; Narendra managing a situation with the help of policeman when a friend falls ill during a boat ride; and Naren-

dra serving an injured seaman, who had volunteered to help boys lift a trapeze, and so on. The puppet show was commissioned to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda in the year 2013. Since then, the show has been staged in different parts of India and world.

INFORMATION WANTED



This is the Photograph of Chullapilil Ramakrishnan Rathasan S/o Lt. p. Rama Kishnan of 18/27, Bidhu Bhusan Sen Gupta Road, Kol-34 who has been missing since 15-12-2017 From Residence Who has deposited at description of this missing person is:

Age 56 years, Complexion Shyama, Height 5'-5" Wearing Light Blue Color Full Shirt & Dark Blue Full Pant, Language..... Identification Mark.....

Please inform whereabouts of the missing person please contact to the O/C, Missing Persons Squad, Lalbazar Kolkata-700 001 .

ICA(13/2)

EDITORIAL

Decoding Trump

How do you solve a problem like Donald Trump? To many, including some even in his Cabinet, this would seem to be the proverbial million dollar question. But, just as he loves to boast, “This is a first in US history,” every time he signs an executive order, he is unlike any President since George Washington himself. Indications were there during his 2016 campaign of how erratic, inconsistent, irresponsible and vindictive he could be in the statements he made to his audiences. For the major part of the campaign, he was the underdog in opinion polls. But that did not deter him from making tall and unconventional promises to the sort of fans who lapped up all that came to them. He also broke from tradition by condemning countries like China, Mexico and North Korea, among others. The condemnation came in a language that left his speechwriters stumped. The media was not spared. He coined a new phrase by branding them as “fake” simply because they reported on his unusual methods of conducting himself in public. It is, of course, another story that American elections are a different cup of tea when it comes to declaring the victor. He lost to his opponent by over three million “popular” votes but triumphed by the Electoral College system. The other disconcerting factor in this coast to coast election is the fact that since the election of Dwight Eisenhower, after the Second World War, a little more than 45 per cent of the electorate has chosen to stay away. Their absence does make a significant difference. It certainly did during the Trump victory. Did his win make a difference in his ways as an ‘elected’ President? By no means. He continued from where he left with a vengeance. Some features were added to his style. As some senators from both sides of the aisle chose to put it, his behaviour was like that of “a middle schooler”. His latest outburst to his North Korean counterpart that his nuclear button “is bigger and more powerful” is a case in point; and, this when the North Korean dictator asked for the hotline with South Korea to be activated. This, ironically, was what the US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, had been working for, to open a channel for negotiations. Trump had tweeted, “You are wasting your time, Rex!” That implied that his original threat of annihilating North Korea was the only option left. How could he forget what one of his great predecessors, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, had once said, “Never fear to negotiate but never negotiate out of fear”? During the campaign, by his own admission, his daughter had asked him to be more “Presidential”. Even today, when he sits in the Oval Office, he is anything but “Presidential”. In the one year that he has been President, he has done plenty that he should never have stepped upon. Relations with old US allies have come under strain. Washington does not seem to be as committed to the NATO as it had been since it was set up. Relations with even the most trusted and special ally, Britain, is under the scanner. Both Conservative and Labour parliamentarians do not, in the least, seem eager to have him pay the scheduled State visit later this year. Trade relations have already been affected. His first New Year tweet to Pakistan ought to be lauded, true, but he had been talking about this for quite some time. As far as his decision on recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is concerned, it has not gone down well with most member states of the United Nations. On the home front, he has not merely threatened but also has made no secret of the fact that he wants many immigrants out. These include even those that had come as infants with their parents. Called ‘Dreamers’, these immigrants, who are all grown assets in their own right to the US, have managed to get through to the President. A representation of theirs had detailed talks with him at the Trump Towers in New York and he was reported to be very happy with them. And, now, comes the bombshell that they could be deported soon. A large chunk of the ‘Dreamers’ comprise of brilliant minds of Indian origin. Such doublespeak has its own negative manifestations. Much like the condemnable statements he had made on women and their genitalia in a video recording during the campaign. 13 women have, since, come out with accusations that they had all been sexually assaulted by him, some time or another. Predictably, he has denied the allegations. But, at a time when everyone accused of sexual harassment is being punished, getting hauled up or even losing elections, such allegations assume alarming proportions. At a time when peace is at a premium the world over, Trump has been raving and ranting with a threat thrown in occasionally. As “the leader of the free world”, he certainly could do better. Irrespective of what eventually surfaces from the Mueller investigations into the alleged ‘collusion’ of the Trump transition team with the Russians, President Trump must try and prevail not just as a good and fair leader of his people, but one that others in the ‘free world’ can look up to.

Maharashtra marred

Maharashtra was torn apart by caste violence on Tuesday, as celebrations of subverting caste identities ironically backfired to become a debacle in the quest for wresting power. The bi-centenary celebrations of the Bhima-Koregaon battle, a clash between the upper caste Peshwas and the colonial rulers represented by the Dalits, was markedly reduced in its memorable intensity, as mob violence raged the streets of Maharashtra, bringing the state to a standstill. The government was left befuddled over the ‘correct method’ to arrest such an incidence while being sensitive to the concerns of each caste that was at loggerheads with each other. January 1, 1818, had witnessed a historic battle as the British troops represented by the Dalits, clashed with Peshwa Bajirao II’s forces at Koregaon along the Bhima River, a little off Pune. Though outnumbered severely by the powerful Peshwas, the fight ended with Bajirao’s troops withdrawing themselves to fight another British contingent impinging upon the Pune territorial boundary. To commemorate this symbolic victory, the British had set up and obelisk that carried the name of 22 Dalits, known as the Mahars. Maharashtra witnesses annual celebration among the Mahars to celebrate this historic event that had alternated caste superiority and witnessed the totemic victory of ‘good over evil’. Remembered time and again as an important event in the Dalit dictionary, this year witnessed about 10 lakh supporters who gathered to voice their power that would not succumb to the pressure of casteism. Yet, ironically, a day that should be celebrated across India, and not just by the Dalits, as an overcoming of mythical caste structures, was severely reduced in its valour and meaning as violence erupted among the mob with Dalits claiming that they were attacked by men from the right-wing. The situation rapidly escalated as 25 vehicles were torched by members who opposed this gathering that has been a routine affair since the last several decades. Stones were hurled, further damaging public property and ultimately a young 28-year-old bypassing the protests on his way from office fell prey to the violence and succumbed to his injuries. While activists and governments are at loggerheads to pinpoint the source of the mishap, hoping to capitalise upon the miscreant and enter another battle emerging from differences in caste and colour—the unquestionable fact remains this: 200-years since the British lent a hand of support to the Mahars, we are still living in a society that is deeply fragmented and difference is celebrated with animosity far before a hand of comfort is extended. The upliftment of Dalits will not only assign victory to that community, it will mark the victory of our entire country.



AMIT KAPOOR

Like China, it is critical that India works upon building an enabling and conducive environment for innovation to take place. This includes, but is not limited to, access to technology required for scaling, availability of funds, leadership and skill, and also a market for all of this

Quote martial

Tourism is the biggest industry in the world

MARTIN PARR

The peak of the Vedic Civilisation was characterised by a stable monsoon and consistent temperature when all the texts revered by the present-day Hindus were composed. This civilisation also declined because of a weak monsoon period, according to the study

Accelerate innovation

With other economies pacing their growth strategy, India must not be complacent about strategising innovation



There is no time for complacency for India when it comes to matters of innovation

(REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE)

For all of this. As per the Global Innovation Index, India has shown consistent improvement since 2011 and its performance has been ahead of the average lower-middle and upper-middle-income countries of the world. However, the India State Innovation Report 2017 has brought out some interesting highlights on the state of innovation in India. First, on a national scale, India lags considerably behind the major economies of the world. As of 2015, India spent 0.88 per cent of its GDP on R&D while Brazil, the US and Japan spent 1.2, 2.8 and 3.4 per cent respectively. As for patents, India had filed 17 per million people while Brazil, China, the US and Japan were at 34, 541, 910 and 3,716 respectively. Finally, India’s share of the global publications stood at 4.2 per cent while China and the US were at 20.2 and 25.3 respectively. Therefore, there remains a vast gap for India to cover if it is to catch up with the global economies in the field of innovation. It is not a preposterous argument to make that the economy which stays ahead in the race for innovation will dictate global dominance. As things have panned out over the last year, USA seems to have been ceding that ground to China. Denying realities like climate change to support industries of yesteryears like coal and closing doors on the very people who built the country, seem inimical to the innovative spirit that has come to define America. A huge vacuum will probably be left behind, and India needs to grasp the opportunity while the time is ripe. Second, coming to the sub-national level, India shows a very mixed performance. Delhi, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra were the most innovative states in 2017. A three-way categorisation was also done based on the classification of developmental stages of economies by Michael Porter, considered the guru of competitiveness. Delhi, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh turned out to be the leading states in their respective stages.

A striking feature of the state performance on innovation is that there is a clear demarcation running across India where the western and southern belt of states scores considerably better than the rest of the country. This belt of states also performs economically better than the rest of India, but per capita income explains only 60 per cent of the innovation scores. Higher industry presence and better prevalence of institutes of higher education along with improving linkages between the two has a substantial impact on making the environment conducive to innovation across these states. However, there is a multitude of challenges faced even by these states in undertaking innovation. The first and most basic one is that the university system in India lacks focus on research and innovation. Inadequate funding dedicated to education does not help in building adequate facilities for research either. Second, the patenting process is quite cumbersome in India and a significant amount of resources need to be devoted towards it, something which the industry typically lacks. Finally, India lacks stringent regulations and IP laws, which hinder any innovative activities. It is a telling fact that in the International IP Index released by the US Chamber of Commerce, which ranks 45 economies based on patents, trademarks, copyrights, enforcement and international treaties, India ranks 43. There is simply no time for complacency for India when it comes to matters of innovation. The country has a perfect opportunity to get on board the innovation train that is swiftly chugging away beyond its reach. Almost 15 per cent of the start-ups in Silicon Valley have been founded by Indians. We clearly have the capability to do the same in India. Only the enabling factors are lacking. IAMS (Amit Kapoor is chair, Institute for Competitiveness, India. Chirag Yadav, researcher at this Institute, has contributed to the article. The views expressed are strictly personal.)

BOOSTING TOURISM

Kudos to our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who has been earnestly trying to develop various places of West Bengal, especially in riverine areas that have tourist attractions. The Gangasagar is a place that has both religious significance and natural beauty. Her endeavor to make a bridge on the swelling Muriganga river to mitigate the constraint of communication on this island of national importance is commendable. Many districts have non-descript tourist attractions that can fetch more revenue to the government and provide employment if efforts are made to encourage weekend tours or jaunts.

SAMIR CHAKRABORTY Via email

dear EDITOR

millenniumpost.in

Log on to write letters to the editor or send them to letter2editor.mp@gmail.com You can also send your comments to The Editor, Millennium Post, Pratap Bhawan, 5 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110 002

Roots of Climate Change

New study claims that Vedic Civilisation declined due to weak monsoon in the Indus region, leading to migration towards the Ganga basin, writes Akshit Sangomla



Declining monsoons had propelled de-urbanisation in the Indus Valley Civilisation

(REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE)

Naturally occurring climate change has been influencing human civilisation since its inception. Changing climate, partly, brought about the rise and fall of several ancient civilisations, like that of the Mayans and old Egypt, according to a NASA report from 2014. It had also said that climate change-induced droughts were adept at changing the course of human society. Now, scientists from the US and China have found further evidence in this regard. In a research paper published in the journal, Science Advances, on December 13, 2017 suggests that variations in monsoonal rainfall over the past 5,700 years may have influenced major developments in the ancient Indian civilisations, including expansion and de-urbanisation of the Indus Valley Civilisation, the rise and fall of the Vedic Civilisation and downfall of the Tibetan Kingdom of Guge in the 17th century. The Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM), is the annual phenomenon that collects moisture from the Indian Ocean and spreads it over the Indian sub-continent in the form of rainfall. It influences climate in the region on a large scale and is crucial for the prevalence of annual weather patterns. A sizable population in the region, which is engaged in agriculture, depends on monsoon for their livelihood and survival, even in the present time. The study proves that the phenomenon was no different during ancient times. Changing climate impacting ancient civilisations The changing character of the ISM had affected atmospheric temperatures and the flow of rivers originating in the Himalayas, according to the study. Both changing temperature and the changes in river flow would have influenced the crops that were grown in the region. As these civilisations were completely dependent on agriculture, the changing cropping pattern affected their lives, hence, pushing them to look for new avenues and methods of civilisation. The scientists studied the occurrence of an oxygen isotope—a variant of oxygen with different numbers of neutrons—in limestone formations (stalactites and stalagmites), in Uttarakhand’s Sahiya cave. Such formations are highly sensitive to climatic change as their chemistry gets altered. The changes in their chemistry are tracked over thousands of years to know how climate changed over time. Earlier studies of a similar nature had not been able to establish, with conviction, a relationship between climate and societal changes. This was mainly due to the lack of high-resolution climate records corresponding to the periods when major upheavals in human society took place. But, the current study provides us with an analysis of high-resolution data over the period when these ancient civilisations existed. Migration from the Indus Valley It was already known that the Indus Valley Civilisation evolved in three distinct phases: the early phase was mostly agrarian, centred on villages; the later phase was characterised by the development of cities, and the third phase was one of de-urbanisation, where several cities were abandoned. The study explains that in the first two phases, the climate was warm and wet due to a stable monsoonal pattern, which was better for growing crops. A stable climate ensured a surplus of agricultural produce during these phases slowly leading to the evolution of cities.

The downfall of the civilisation or the emergence of the de-urbanisation phase, in turn, was marked by a decrease in temperature and decline in monsoon rainfall in the region. Around the same time, evidence from other research areas suggests, the flow of the Indus River also reduced which led to the migration of people further east towards the River Ganga. This conclusion is also consistent with the changing cropping pattern of the region during the same period. This migration of the Indus valley people towards the further east meant that the Indo Aryan group of people could move into the Indus valley and mark the beginning of the Vedic Civilisation. The early phase of this civilisation had a stable temperature and strong monsoon rainfall. The Vedic Civilisation also shifted east during a weak monsoon period in the Indus region. The peak of the civilisation was characterised by a stable monsoon and consistent temperature, when all the texts revered by the present-day Hindus were composed. This civilisation also declined because of a weak monsoon period, according to the study. The study concludes that these changes in civilisations would have had the involvement of anthropogenic and local climatic factors as well, which is where further studies are required. DOWN TO EARTH (The views expressed are strictly personal.)

Bitcoins may not be a flash in the pan

Institutional safeguards have not prevented IPOs going up in smoke



G. SRINIVASAN

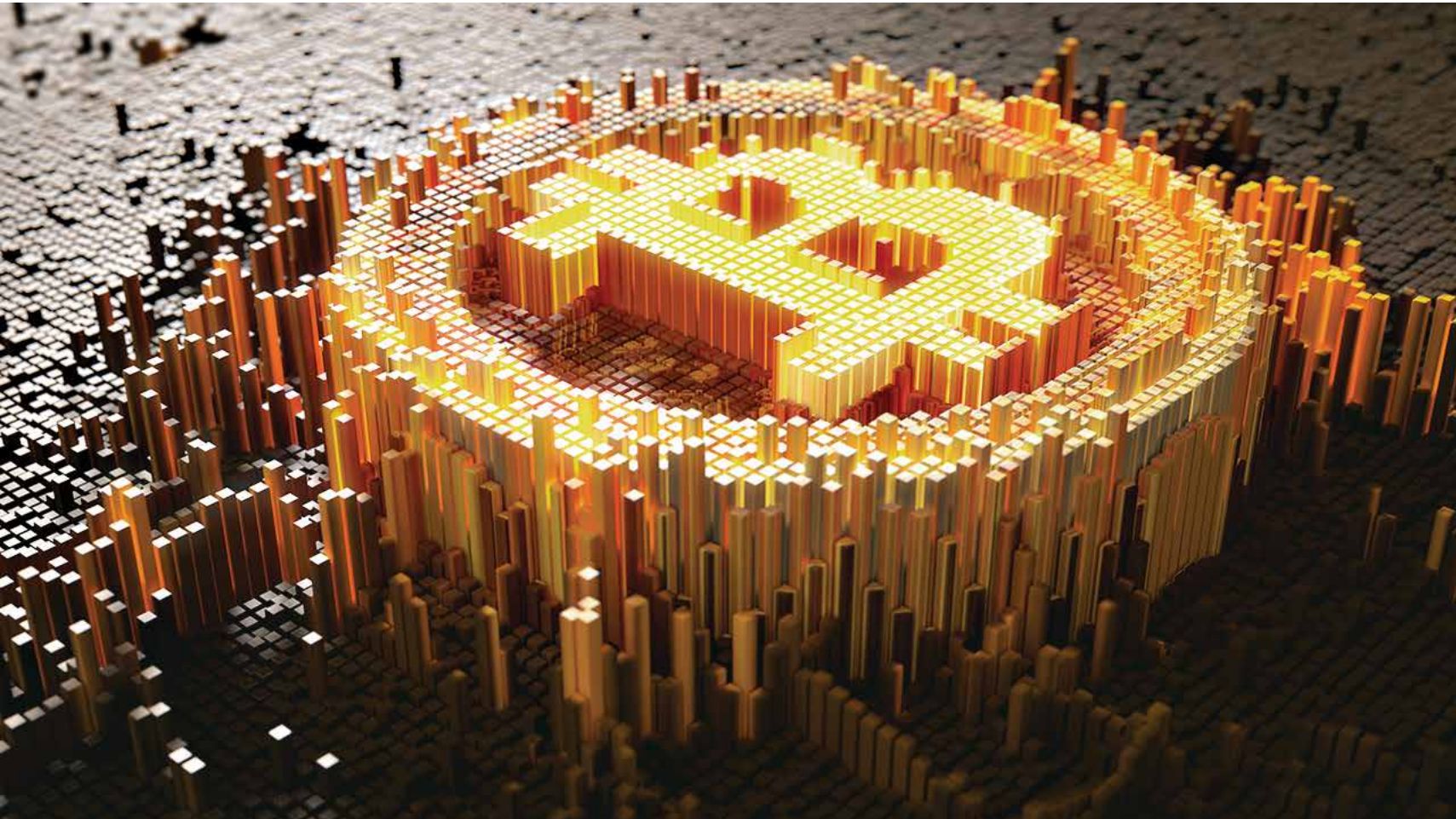
Bitcoin has generated high demand in America and this mania has wrought an explosion in other cryptocurrencies with about a fifth of the 1000 plus cryptocurrencies in circulation having been created in the second financial half of 2017! While many cryptocurrencies would end up being nugatory like the dotcom bubble of 2000, many are betting that bitcoin would emerge the strongest survivor from the wreckage

With traditional investment avenues not guaranteeing even plausible returns and the equity markets stymied by the greed and recklessness of firms floating even initial public offerings (IPOs), leave aside those established ones not living up to their reputations for fair-play, it is small wonder that legions of even ill-informed Indians scramble to trade in virtual currencies (VCs) such as bitcoins! In desperate times, there is a tendency to seek desperate remedies and the latest bonkers is for bitcoins whether such people are from the tinsel world or ordinary middle-class people who plump for cryptocurrencies of various hues, particularly bitcoins.

The Finance Ministry's latest cautions to people against risks in investing in VCs which are like "Ponzi" schemes and that both the Government of India and the apex bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), have not authorised any VCs as a medium of exchange are but understandable. In its defense, the Government said VCs are "stored in digital/electronic format, making them vulnerable to hacking, loss of password, malware attack etc., which may also result in permanent loss of money. As transactions of VCs are encrypted, they are also likely being used to carry on illegal/ subversive activities, such as terror-financing, smuggling, drug trafficking, and other money-laundering acts".

Be that as it may, notwithstanding the wild volatility of bitcoin prices, which peaked a record of 19,511 dollars on December 18, 2017 and traded at 13,624.56 in New York on the evening of the New Year on January 1, 2018 or close to nine lakh of Indian rupees for one bitcoin, the reasons behind this swing is ascribed to speculation and the entry into the market of numerous people hired by the lure of quick and easy profits. Indian investors with an appetite for risks have naturally followed the universal pattern. This is despite the government's warning, which came close on the heels of three precautionary flags hoisted by the RBI way back from 2013. Bitcoin exchanges do not concur with the government's contention to trading in cryptocurrencies as a Ponzi scheme. No doubt, bitcoin prices are volatile, but that does not make it Ponzi because Ponzi is something where someone guarantees a return. Here no one guarantees any return to the traders of bitcoins and countries such as Japan and the United States, which allow bitcoins trading with the latter recently opening trading in bitcoins derivatives in Chicago Board of Exchanges (Cboe), are not running a Ponzi scheme!

A little background is in order as to the origin of this new investor craze—be it for trading, speculation or accumulation of wealth! Bitcoin is a stateless digital currency that was created a decade ago by an anonymous coder or congeries of coders, who went



Indian authorities should not resort to any knee-jerk reaction in condemning Bitcoin

(Representational Image)

by a bizarre nomenclature Satoshi Nakamoto. Abruptly, the new-fangled financial exoticica has generated high demand in America and this mania has wrought an explosion in other cryptocurrencies with about a fifth of the 1000 plus cryptocurrencies in circulation having been created in the second half of 2017! They all promise to become a new medium of exchange enabling transactions sans such as a bank or a fiat currency such as the dollar/pound/rupee! While many cryptocurrencies would end up being nugatory like the dotcom bubble of 2000, many are betting that bitcoin would emerge the strongest survivor from the wreckage!

Economic analysts contend that the more turbulence plunges the world—be it from the 'Trump Presidency in the US, Brexit, the secessionist conflict in Spain or the unsettled conditions in the West Asian region with ISI wrecking the Middle East peace policy by its medieval tactics, the greater the allure of a currency not bound to any single institution or government! To boot, bitcoin is also benefitted by its relative scarcity. There are now 16.7 million bitcoins in circulation, with the supply being fixed at 21 million. With only

a fifth left to be issued, the scarcity spawns value. As more digital currencies are paid for with other digital currencies, basically bitcoin, the price of the latter surged with many holders recycling their gains into new cryptocurrencies, thereby augmenting turnover and letting others to buy in. So the value of bitcoin, which was 771 dollar in December 2016, zoomed to 14,965 dollars in December 2017 at a particular comparable point The aggregate value of all bitcoins in circulation as reported in authentic western media is 250 billion US dollars!

The potential features of cryptocurrencies—both as a medium of exchange and as a store of value—is still being studied with giant tech firms such as IBM fostering their own cryptocurrency platforms to expedite cross-border transactions in a safe, secure and transparent fashion. Alongside, there are also moves afoot to widen regulatory watch of the VCs market with South Korea recently unveiling legislation to either solidly regulate exchanges or debar them outright!

Indian authorities should not resort to any knee-jerk reaction in condemning bitcoin lock, stock, and barrel without intensi-

fying the existing institutional safeguards for investors who have been left high and dry for being prudent enough to put their nest-egg savings in IPOs or brownfield expansion of firms for modernisation and technological upgradation. India should also be circumspect enough to differentiate between cryptocurrencies and the blockchain technology they are based on.

Bitcoin is the best-known application of blockchain, a technology with implications that may go much beyond one wildly fluctuating currency. Blockchain is a decentralised, digital public ledger that logs peer to peer transactions in a system secured by complex cryptographic conundrums. It is immutable and logged on hundreds and thousands of computers across the universe. While it is true that the blockchain that underlies bitcoin has seldom been hacked, cyber criminals have fobbed off billions from the online wallet where people hold their digital cards and the exchanges where bitcoin and other currencies are traded. It is time that efforts were made to build safeguards against digital thefts so that confidence of the users in the digital economy gets reinforced.

This is par for the course and crucial in an emerging economy like India, where the authorities are starting to link everything from pension and bank accounts to mid-day meals for school children and Amazon deliveries to a humongous pan-India biometric database. While extreme centralisation is welcome from the authorities, viewpoints in tracking things and rectifying mistakes of leakage such data analytics permit, blockchain is fostering its opposite. There are many wise people who hold the belief that customer's data should be owned by the customer and not by any intermediary and that is the reason why Microsoft Corp and IBM are leading the battle in backing a decentralised digital ecosystem to ensure that individuals are in control of their information. But this is a greater debate entailing the sovereignty of nations. But cryptocurrencies do hold the potentials to vastly enhance the payments machinery manifestly transparent and to the extent let us not throw the baby out with the bath water.

(The author is a freelance commentator on economic issues. Views expressed are strictly personal.)

Pak's all-weather friend

Islamabad reaps political dividend out of a provocative Trump



SANKAR RAY

Pakistan and the USA friendship was established by Muhammad Ali Jinnah to block the Soviet Union and Socialism. Pakistan dexterously performed this job and earned tons of hard cash. And now, Pakistan services are not needed anymore, therefore the total balance of dole-out ledger is shown

The 45th US President Donald John Trump's 50-word tweet, accusing Pakistan of siphoning US \$ 33 billion-plus aid to Afghan terrorists giving them 'safe heaven' and 'given us nothing but lies & deceit' has been volleyed back by Pak Minister of Foreign Affairs Khawaja Asif in twitter: "He can hire a US-based Audit firm on our expense to verify this figure & let the world know who is lying & deceiving." This rebuff was expected as Special Assistant to the Pak Prime Minister Dr. Musadik Malik assured that Islamabad would respond to the US in line of international diplomatic norms. But keeping up diplomatic dignity, the Pakistan Foreign Office summoned US Ambassador David Hale and lodged its protest against President Trump's tweet.

Trump's bumptious-as-usual stance united Pakistan's ruling and the Opposition parties against the provocative statement from the White House. Former Pak Ambassador to the USA and ex-minister Sherry Rahman, a senator representing Pakistan's People's Party, reminded Washington that the 'coalition support funds have NEVER been counted as AID in any accounting by Pakistan, nor will it be seen as part of assistance. It was compensation on expenses incurred in joint action on border'. In her tweet, the chair of the non-politicised think tank stated in a bantering tone that Pakistan "never promised a rose garden next door in Afghanistan, nor can it create one. The problem lies in expecting such while zigzagging American policy goalposts with a new toggle jack".

PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, participating in the tweet war, claimed that the PPP government launched Pakistan's first, most extensive and most successful anti-terror operations adding, the US is "no



US President Donald Trump

longer interested in defeating terrorism."

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader took a jibe at Trump telling "the world's strongest military force has nothing to show off its 16-year long presence in Afghanistan but failure and is incapable even of a graceful exit".

The outward restraint notwithstanding, things get undesirably hardened in and around, thanks to the stupidly myopic obstinacy of Trump administration, which blocked an already-delayed \$255 million military aid to Pakistan. US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, who is known to often out-Trump the President, promptly informed that the US was withholding \$255 million in aid for Pakistan for the latter's failure to cooperate fully in America's fight against terrorism.

Cashing in on the patriotic response from the Opposition—apparently smelt by the government, Islamabad chooses not to walk into Trump's provocative assertions, a construct of 'baseless allegations'. The tactical stance is the outcome at an urgent meeting of the National Security Committee of the Pak federal Cabinet, chaired by PM

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at his residence, attended by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Interior Ahsan Iqbal, Defence Minister Khurram Dastgir, Minister for Defence, Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, his second-in-command General Zubair Mehmood Hayat, Chief of the Naval Staff, Air Chief Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, Chief of the Air Staff Marshal Sohail Aman, the PM's advisor on finance, revenue and economic affairs Miftah Ismail, National Security Adviser, Lt. General Nasser Khan Januja, Pakistan's Ambassador to the US Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry and other top senior civil and military officials.

At the end of the lengthy deliberations, the extended NSC observed amid serious disappointment that the close interaction with the US leadership, anticipated as a sequel to the initial pronouncement of the policy on South Asia by the new boss at the White House for a better understanding of each other's perspectives, as the best way forward to achieve durable peace and stability in Afghanistan. This was reaffirmed by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Defence Secretary James

Norman during their visits to Islamabad. The recent statements and articulation by the American leadership, the meeting concluded, are completely incomprehensible as they contradicted facts, struck with great insensitivity at the trust between two nations built over generations, and negated the decades of sacrifices made by Pakistan. The NSC handout was issued by the Foreign Office stating that a consensus is that Pakistan would remain committed to playing a constructive role towards an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, not just for the sake of its own people, but also for the peace and security of the region and international community.

Hardliners, albeit minority, are not mum. Former Minister during the Musharraf regime, Jahangir Khan Tareen, born in Comilla, now in Bangladesh, interpreted Trump's tweet a reflection of 'complete bankruptcy and hollow leadership of Pakistan today. These lackeys of the Sharifs are responsible for the manner in which the US has treated us today'.

A very interesting feedback came from an activist of the Progressive Writers Association and freelance writer Kha-

lid Mahmood to this scribe. "Pakistan and the USA friendship was established by Muhammad Ali Jinnah who sent his Finance Minister Malik Ghulam Mohammad to the USA for aid and arms. The Pak American friendship was established to block the Soviet Union and Socialism. Pakistan dexterously performed this job and earned tons of hard cash. And now, Pakistan services are not needed anymore, therefore the total balance of dole-out ledger is shown. Secondly, President Trump, like our many home-grown demagogues, is not a student of history. Whatever USA doled out to Pakistan had been wisely reciprocated to save American vested interests. Not a penny of US aid was spent for the welfare of masses. If the USA does not create anxiety among our hawks, it is very unlikely in the current circumstances to buck up Taliban and hardliners. Symbolically, New Year Eve celebrations at Lahore and Karachi Bahria Towns passed off without any suicide attacks by the Taliban".

Based in Gujranwala, Mahmood thinks, "China would not enter this sort of scuffle." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang's reaction endorses this point. Beijing is happy to see Pakistan engaging in international cooperation, including counter-terrorism, on the basis of mutual respect so as to contribute to regional peace and stability. "China and Pakistan are all-weather partners. We stand ready to promote and deepen our all-round cooperation so as to bring benefits to the two sides. We believe as neighbours China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan are closely linked not only geographically but also in terms of common interests. It is natural for us to enhance communication and exchanges." IPA

(The views expressed are strictly personal.)



tweet
RETWEET



KAVITA KRISHNAN
@kavita_krishnan

India Gate commemorates Indian soldiers who died fighting for the British. Is it anti national to light the 'amar jawan jyoti' there? Don't think so? Then why are Dalits commemorating #BhimaKoregaon as victory over Peshwa Army that excluded Dalit soldiers, being vilified?



KAUSHIK BASU
@kaushikbasu

One reason the world is in turmoil is the rules of the game of life are rapidly evolving. What was rewarded earlier is no longer valued. Imagine doing body-building all your life to be told the prize is not for weightlifting but for solving crosswords. You will want to lash out.



SRIJAN : KALAM WAY
@srijanpalsingh

My tributes to the first woman teacher in the country, #SavitribaiPhule, on her birth anniversary today. She campaigned for girls' education, widow remarriage and fought against social evils such as untouchability.



RAMACHANDRA GUHA
@Ram_Guha

Menachem Begin, the former Prime Minister of Israel, once said that "professors are a misfortune for the world". I rather fear that our PM thinks likewise.

Iranian Gen declares 'end of the sedition'

Before 2017, there was an eight per cent partial eclipse on December 31, 2009, but the last total eclipse of a Blue Moon happened all the way back in March 31, 1866. AGENCIES

Trump to Kim: My button's bigger than yours

WASHINGTON DC: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday warned that his "nuclear button" is "much bigger and more powerful" than the one controlled by North Korea's Kim Jong Un, as the White House said it was keeping all of its options on the table to curb Pyongyang's atomic programme.

Trump's response followed a New Year's Day address by Kim, who said that North Korea's nuclear weapons can reach anywhere in the US and threatened that he has a nuclear button on his desk.

The two leaders have threatened one another's countries with nuclear weapons repeatedly over the last year.

"North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un just stated that the Nuclear Button is on his desk at all times. Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!" Trump said in a tweet.

In a televised address to the nation, Kim had said the entire area of the US mainland is within North Korea's nuclear strike range.

In the same address, the North Korean leader also said his country needs to mass-produce nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles and accelerate their deployment.

The White House called North Korea "a global threat" and asked countries to step up pressure against it.



"The focus here is to apply maximum pressure on North Korea and the US wants other countries to join it in this," White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told reporters.

"This is a global threat, which is why we're calling on everybody to step up and do more and we're going to continue working with a lot of different leaders and other countries to help do that," she said.

Sanders said the US is keeping all its options "on the table".

Earlier, Trump said the US-led international sanctions and "other pressures" are beginning to have a big impact on the authoritarian North Korean regime after its leader Kim called for a breakthrough in

relations with South Korea and said Pyongyang might attend the 2018 Winter Olympics to be held in the South Korean city of Pyeongchang.

South Korea welcomed the North Korean offer and proposed holding high-level talks with Pyongyang.

Sanders said the developments would not change US relations with South Korea "which remains stronger than ever".

"We're going to continue to work with South Korea to put maximum pressure on North Korea and work towards the ultimate shared goal that we both have," she said in response to a question.

North Korea last year increased the pace of its mis-

sile programme. Since February, Pyongyang has fired off 23 missiles. On November 29, the North Korean leader said that his country had achieved full nuclear statehood after what he said was the successful test of a new missile capable of striking anywhere in the United States.

Fears of a catastrophic conflict between the US and North Korea spiked as the leaders of the two nations taunted each other, with Trump calling the North Korean leader 'Rocket Man'.

The US and its allies, including Japan and South Korea, have put increasing economic pressure on North Korea in an attempt to halt the reclusive regime's nuclear and missile development.

AGENCIES

Will announce most 'dishonest and corrupt' media awards: Trump

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump who shares a bitter relationship with the mainstream American press has said he will announce the "most dishonest and corrupt" media awards next week.

Trump has been at loggerheads with several US mainstream media outlets, including the CNN, ABC News, The New York Times and the Washington Post among others.

He has quite often described these popular media houses as "fake" media.

The term is now popularly related to news with which one does not agree with.

"I will be announcing THE MOST DISHONEST & CORRUPT MEDIA AWARDS OF THE YEAR on Monday at 5:00 o'clock," Trump said in a late-night tweet.

"Subjects will cover Dishonesty & Bad Reporting in various categories from the Fake News Media. Stay tuned!" Trump said.

He, however, excluded Fox News, his favourite news channel.

In November, he tweeted about a competition among news networks for the "Fake News Trophy", excluding Fox News.

AGENCIES

Palestinians say won't be blackmailed after Trump threat to withdraw US aid

RAMALLAH: Palestinian leaders said on Wednesday they will not be "blackmailed" after US President Donald Trump threatened to cut aid worth more than \$300 million annually, his latest provocative move that could upturn years of careful diplomacy.

Relations between Trump's White House and the Palestinians were already tense after the US president's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital last month.

The December 6 announcement concerning the disputed city led Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas to say the United States could no longer play any role in the Middle East peace process.

Trump's threat in a tweet on Tuesday to try to force the Palestinians into negotiations led to further outrage, though Israeli ministers lauded the move.

The Palestinians rely heavily on international aid, with many analysts, including Israelis, saying such assistance helps maintain stability in a volatile region.

"We pay the Palestinians HUNDRED OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS a year and get no appreciation or respect," Trump tweeted. "With the Palestinians no longer willing to talk peace, why should we make any of these massive future payments to them?" It was not immediately clear whether Trump was threatening all of the budget, worth \$319 million in 2016, according to US government figures. The United States has long provided the Palestinian Authority with much-needed budgetary support and security assistance, as well as an additional \$304 million for UN programmes in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel receives more than \$3 billion in military aid per year from Washington.

Abbas's spokesman said they were not against negotiations, but that talks should be "based on international laws and resolutions that have recognised an independent Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital".

"Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the state of Palestine and it is not for sale for gold or billions," Nabil Abu Rudeina said.



Senior Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi said in a statement that "we will not be blackmailed".

"President Trump has sabotaged our search for peace, freedom and justice," she said.

"Now he dares to blame the Palestinians for the consequences of his own irresponsible actions!"

However, several Israeli ministers voiced support for Trump, with the country's right-wing government having seized on the US president's support to push ahead with initiatives seen as dealing further blows to remaining hopes for a two-state solution. Culture and Sport Minister Miri Regev, from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party, said "you cannot on the one hand receive \$300 million in American aid per year and at the same time close the door on negotiations".

AGENCIES

Inter-Korean hotline reopens after Seoul proposed talks



SEOUL: Pyongyang said on Wednesday it will restore a hotline with the South, after Seoul proposed high-level talks in response to Kim Jong-Un's calls for better relations and suggestion his country might attend the Winter Olympics.

Kim also welcomed Seoul's support for his overtures, a North Korean official told state television. In his New Year address, Kim warned the US that he has a "nuclear button" on his table, but extended an olive branch to the South, saying his country might take part in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics next month. In response, South Korea's unification minister Cho Myoung-Gyon on Tuesday offered to hold high-level talks on January 9 to discuss the North's participation in the Olympics as well as other matters of mutual interest. "By upholding a decision by the

leadership, we will make close contact with South Korea in a sincere and faithful manner," the Yonhap news agency quoted Ri Son-gwon, the head of North Korea's agency handling inter-Korean affairs, as saying.

It reported that the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (CPRK) said it will discuss practical matters involving the participation of North Korean athletes at the Pyeongchang Games.

Kim "expressed welcome" after South Korean President Moon Jae-In said he supported Kim's offer of seeking reconciliation, Ri said on North Korean state TV monitored in Seoul. Meanwhile, host South Korea is well prepared should North Korea decide to take part in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, with a cruise ship ready to transport and accommodate its athletes, organisers said.

AGENCIES

Suu Kyi govt ups minimum wage as Myanmar economy staggers

YANGON: Myanmar is set to raise the minimum wage to around 3.60 a day, state media announced on Wednesday, as Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government struggles to project economic progress after almost two years in power.

The new daily figure of 4,800 kyats represents a 33 percent increase on Myanmar's first-ever minimum wage introduced in 2015 by the previous army-backed administration.

"The new minimum wage will be applied across all regions and states to all businesses with 10 or more workers," the state-backed Global New Light of Myanmar reported.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD), which took power in April 2016, made the economy a central plank of its campaign. But critics say it has failed to make real progress, struggling to pass laws that make Myanmar an easier place to do business or articulate a clear economic vision.

Myanmar saw GDP growth in 2017 slow to 5.9 per cent, the International Monetary Fund said in November, estimating a rebound to 6.7 per cent this year.

Supporters of the government contend it is too early to judge an administration which inherited a battered economy in one of Southeast Asia's poorest countries.

AGENCIES

Ethiopian govt to release all political prisoners, close camp

ADDIS ABABA: In a surprise move, Ethiopia's leader on Wednesday announced plans to drop charges against political prisoners and close a notorious prison camp in what he called an effort to "widen the democratic space for all".

This is the first time the government has acknowledged holding political prisoners.

Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn's comments came after anti-government protests engulfed much of the restive Oromia and Amhara regions in recent months, bringing many businesses, universities and transport networks to a standstill. The sometimes deadly protests, the most serious since the current government came to power in 1991, spread into other parts of the East African country, leading to a months-long state of emergency that has since been lifted.

"Political prisoners that are facing prosecutions and are already under arrest will be released," Hailemariam said. "And the notorious prison cell that was traditionally called Maekelawi will be closed down and turned into a museum."

It was not immediately clear how many political prisoners were being held across the country, a close US security ally. Ethiopians were quick to respond, even with social



This is the first time Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn led government has acknowledged holding political prisoners

media sites currently blocked.

"I'm writing you this struggling with my tears," wrote renowned blogger and former detainee Befegadu Hailu. "All these pledges need to be implemented immediately."

Rights groups and opposition groups in Ethiopia had been calling for the release of political prisoners, saying they were arrested on trumped-up charges and were being punished for their points of view. Ethiopia's government has long been accused of arresting critical journalists and opposition leaders. Some of the prominent politicians currently in cus-

tody include opposition leaders Bekele Gerba and Merara Gudina. A number of journalists also remain in detention.

The months of protests demanding wider freedoms began in late 2015 and led to hundreds of reported deaths and tens of thousands of arrests while disrupting one of Africa's fastest growing economies.

"The crackdown on the political opposition saw mass arbitrary arrests, torture and other ill-treatment, unfair trials and violations of the rights to freedom of expression and association," rights group Amnesty International has said.

AGENCIES

Autopsy reveals Sherin died of 'homicidal violence'

HOUSTON: The much-awaited autopsy report in the death of 3-year-old Sherin Mathews says she died of "homicidal violence," US media reported on Wednesday, nearly three months after the adopted Indian girl was found dead in a culvert in suburban Dallas.

Sherin went missing from her home in Richardson on October 7 and her body was found on October 22 in a culvert in suburban Dallas by a cadaver dog after an intense search. The toddler's body was identified days later using her dental records.

Sherin died of "homicidal violence", a law enforcement official in Dallas, Texas, confirmed to WFAA TV station, indicating the manner of death for the girl.

A cause of death could not be determined due to extensive decomposition, the official said.

Steven Kurtz with the Dallas County medical examiner's office said that Sherin was a victim of homicide, the Associated Press reported.

An earlier report had said that the autopsy report of Sherin has been handed over to the attorneys for the adoptive

Indian-American parents of Sherin - Wesley Mathews and Sini Mathews.

During a child custody hearing in late November, a doctor testified before a court that Sherin, who was adopted from India, had broken bones and had injuries in various stages of healing, indicating abuse.

Initially, Sherin's foster father Wesley told police that he put her outside their home at 3 a.m. to discipline her for not drinking her milk.

His story changed after her body was found in a culvert, telling police that he "physically assisted" with pouring the milk down Sherin's throat and then moved her body after he realised she had choked and died.

Wesley also admitted to police that he removed Sherin's body from the home after changing his story multiple times on the events leading up to her death. Wesley and his wife Sini also left Sherin home alone the night before her disappearance, according to an arrest warrant affidavit.

Wesley, 37, is charged with injury to a child, while the



adoptive mother, Sini, 35, is charged with abandoning or endangering a child. Both are currently lodged in a Dallas jail.

The attorney representing Sini Mathews said the report, received on Tuesday evening from the Dallas County District Attorney's Office, does not implicate her in Sherin's death.

"There is nothing in the autopsy results that indicate

home by CPS officials after Sherin went missing.

The couple can either forfeit their parental rights during Wednesday's hearing, or the court could decide a date for a civil trial to possibly terminate their rights, the report said.

Wednesday's hearing would mark the third CPS hearing for the Indian-American adoptive parents of Sherin.

Last month, the couple, hailing from Kerala, temporarily lost their rights to see their biological child, who has been placed with a family member in the Houston area.

During the hearing, both Wesley and Sini pleaded the fifth amendment in court in response to pointed questions about their alleged involvement in Sherin's death to avoid self-incrimination.

Wesley is still being held on a \$1 million bond. Sini had her bond reduced from \$250,000 to \$100,000 in December. If she is indeed released, she will be required to wear an electronic ankle monitor, as she is said to be a 'flight risk' who could try to flee to India.

Richardson Police have scheduled a press conference

later on Wednesday to release more details of the case.

Meanwhile, a community group in Richardson has thanked the Richardson Police Department for its ongoing investigation into Sherin's death.

A group made up of Richardson residents presented police with a plaque on Tuesday, thanking them for their response and hard work in the complex and high-profile case that had attracted international media attention.

Bill Allen, who lived near where Sherin's body was found, presented the special plaque to the police department. With his neighbours, they formed an informal group to express gratitude for all the investigators. They also dedicated a bench in Sherin's memory this past weekend, FOX4News.com reported.

"To have the community come together and come to us and acknowledge the good work that the men and women of this police department have done means so, so much to us," said Richardson Police Department Chief Jimmy Spivey.

AGENCIES

BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED
O/o Dy. General Manager, Telecom Projects
2nd Floor NIB Building Telephone Exchange Kaiserbagh, Lucknow

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
For Optical Fibre Cable Construction works

NTT: DGM-TP/LW/ Lucknow-Satirikh-Barabanki/ T-9(1-4)/2017-18/5 dated 01/01/2018

On behalf of BSNL, E-tenders are invited by the DGM TP Lucknow for OFC Construction works of "Lucknow-Satirikh-Barabanki". The bidders may go through e-tendering process, registration & digital Signature Certificate etc. as detailed in tender documents. The last date for submission of e-tender is 25/01/2018 upto 13.30 Hrs which will be electronically opened at 14.00 hrs of same date. For details, log on to website www.bsnl.co.in & www.tenderwizard.com/BSNL D.E.T.P(Survey), LKO

SEWERAGE MAINTENANCE DIVISION, CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPT.
NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
ROOM NO. 220, SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH PLACE, NEW DELHI

e-Procurement Tender Notice
Tender ID No. 2018_NDMC_143007_1

Name of work : Augmentation of sewer line in NDMC area during 2017-18.
Sub Head : Providing & Laying of 200mm dia sewer line for newly constructed PTU near PSOI Club Satya Marg and I-Avenue, Sarojini Nagar.

Estimated Cost : Rs. 17,14,990/-
Date of release of tender through e-procurement solution : 03.01.2018
Last Date/Time for receipt of tenders through e-procurement solution : 12.01.2018 upto 3:00 PM

Further details can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
Note : To participate in e-tender in NDMC registration with e-tendering system, Government of NCT of Delhi is mandatory.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer (S/M)

Earnings through railway ticket sales up by over ₹2,000 cr in FY17



NEW DELHI: Railways earned an additional Rs 2,000 crore through sale of tickets in 2016-2017 as compared to the previous fiscal, the government told Parliament on Wednesday.

Minister of State for railways Rajen Gohain told Lok Sabha that in 2015-2016, the national transporter earned Rs 17,204.06 crore through booking of tickets online and Rs 28,119 crore in offline booking while in 2016-2-017, it earned 19,209.28 crore in online booking and 28,468.81 crore in offline booking.

The revenue generated through tickets in 2015-2016 was Rs 45,323.93 crore while in

the corresponding period next year it increased by Rs 2354.16 crore.

This refers to the fiscal year ending March 2017.

"With a view to facilitating convenient booking of unreserved tickets by passengers without having to stand in long queues to purchase railway tickets, Indian Railways has introduced facility of booking paperless unreserved tickets, season ticket and platform ticket through mobile phone in some stations in Central, Western, Eastern, Southern, South Eastern, South Central and Northern Railways", Gohain said. PTI

Consumers used 1.6 GB data per month in Sept 2017

NEW DELHI: The average monthly data usage per subscriber has seen a manifold growth to 1.6 GB in September 2017 from around 70MB three years ago, helped by strong growth in subscriber base across the country, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

There has also been a significant growth in adoption of digital payments and electronic delivery of services, IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

"(As per Trai), the average data usage per subscriber per month was at 70.10 MB in June 2014. This grew to 1600 MB in September 2017," he said.

The total internet subscriber base also grew from 259.14 million in June 2014 to 429.23 million (including 129.41 million in rural areas) in September 2017, he added.

The total base of wireless subscribers stood at 1.18 billion, while that in rural areas was 498.28 million in September 2017, the Minister said.

"The number of digital payment transactions per month has increased from 60.7 crore in December 2015 to 153 crore in October 2017," he noted.

Prasad said Common Services Centres (CSCs) are taking digital services to every corner of India, especially in rural areas.

As on November 30, 2017, a total of 2,71,311 CSCs were active and transacting for delivery of e-services across the country, among which 1.73 lakh were at Gram Panchayat level. PTI

India signed defence deals worth ₹2.40 lakh cr in last 4 years

NEW DELHI: India has inked 187 contracts involving Rs 2.40 lakh crore with foreign and domestic firms for procurement of various military platforms and equipment in the last four years.

Replying to a question in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre said 119 contracts involving Rs 1.62 lakh crore have been signed with Indian vendors

while 68 procurement deals worth Rs 1.24 crore have been signed with foreign vendors.

The value of total contracts signed in the last four years comes to Rs 2.40 lakh crore.

He said the expenditure on capital acquisition in 2014-15 was Rs 65,862 crore while the figures for 2015-16 and 2016-17 were Rs 62,235 crore and Rs 68,252 crore respectively.

Bhamre said value of



defence production by Ordnance Factory Board and other defence public sector undertakings during 2014-15 was Rs

46,390 crore while it was Rs 52,960 crore in 2015-16.

In 2016-17, the value of defence production by these government entities was Rs 55,890 crore, he said.

Bhamre said the budget estimate for disinvestment in 2017-18 is Rs 72,500 crore.

"This comprised Rs 46,500 crore from disinvestment of CPSEs (central public sector enterprises) and Rs 15,000

crore from strategic disinvestment and Rs 11,000 crore from listing of insurance companies," he said.

Meanwhile, a top Israeli arms firm has confirmed that India cancelled a \$500 million deal to develop Spike anti-tank guided missiles and expressed "regret" over the decision just ahead of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's first visit to the country. PTI

'CIL examining feasibility of producing methanol'

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday said state-run miner Coal India Ltd (CIL) is examining the feasibility of producing methanol and other chemicals.

"Also, CIL (Coal India) is exploring techno-commercial feasibility of production of methanol and other chemicals," Coal Minister Piyush Goyal said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. These initiatives, he said, are under feasibility study stage at present.

Asserting that CIL is exploring alternative uses of fossil fuel, the minister said that the PSU, through a joint venture with GAIL, Rashtriya Chemical Fertilizers Ltd (RCF) and Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd (FCIL) is involved in a venture to set up a coal-based fertiliser plant at the site of the defunct Talcher unit of FCIL.

This, the minister said, is in line with approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, whereby revival of the Talcher unit of FCIL was awarded to a consortium of CIL,



GAIL, RCF and FCIL on nomination basis. Goyal further said that the methodology for auctioning of coal mines for sale of fossil fuel under the provisions of the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 and the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 is under government's consideration.

Meanwhile, a Parliamentary Committee report has said that the government should consider allowing domestic coal to be used in imported coal-based thermal power plants to reduce the dependency on the dry fuel bought from other countries.

"The Committee has noted that the use of indigenous coal by the imported coal-based thermal power plants is dependent on policy interventions by the government," PTI

Corporate bond investment limit oversubscribed, FPIs bid for \$2.5 bn

NEW DELHI: Corporate bonds attracted bids worth \$2.5 billion from foreign investors in an auction on Wednesday as against the debt investment limit of \$2 billion on offer, exchange data showed.

The investment limit for such securities has been receiving a good response from foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in the recent past.

The auction was conducted on the BSE's e-bidxcham platform from 3.30-5.30 pm, after the market hours.

Foreign portfolio investors bid Rs 15,961 crore (\$2.5 billion) for investment limits in corporate bond as against Rs 13,756 crore (\$2.16 billion) on offer, showed the data with stock exchanges.

Of the 49 bids, as many as 42 were declared successful.

The debt auction quota gives overseas investors the right to invest in corporate debt securities up to the limit purchased. PTI

Sebi eases 'scheme of arrangement' standards for listed companies

NEW DELHI: Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday relaxed disclosure, promoters' share lock-in and listing related compliance requirements for listed firms undertaking 'schemes of arrangement' such as mergers and demergers, including those involving subsidiaries and their divisions.

The decision has been taken after Sebi received representations suggesting improvements to the existing regulatory framework, the Sebi said in a circular.

The markets watchdog has relaxed certain disclosure requirements. The listed entities are no longer required to submit certain documents to the stock exchanges following the sanction of the scheme by the High Court or National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

These documents are copy of the High Court/NCLT approved scheme; result of voting by shareholders for approving the scheme; statement explaining changes, if any, and reasons for such changes carried out in the approved scheme vis-a-



vis the draft scheme. The regulator said that the promoter's shares locked-in can now be transferred 'inter-se' among promoters.

Besides, such locked-in shares can be pledged with any scheduled commercial bank or public financial institution as collateral for loan granted by such bank or institution "if pledge of shares is one of the terms of sanction of the loan".

Under the rules, shares held by promoters up to the extent of 20 per cent of the post-merger paid-up capital of the unlisted issuer, should be locked-in for three years from the date of listing of the shares of the unlisted issuer. Further, the remaining shares should be locked-in for one year.

Govt nod to revised concession pact for PPP projects at ports



NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday approved a revised model concession pact for projects based on public private partnership (PPP) design at major ports to make the investment climate more investor friendly.

The revised Model Concession Agreement (MCA) includes providing an exit route to developers by way of divesting their equity up to 100 per cent after completion of two years from the Commercial Operation Date (COD), similar to the MCA provisions of the highway sector.

"The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved amendments in the Model Concession Agreement to make the port projects more investor-friendly and make investment climate in the port sector more attractive," the Ministry of Shipping said in a statement.

The amendments in the MCA envisage constitution of the Society for Affordable Redressal of Disputes - Ports (SAROD- PORTS) as dispute resolution mechanism similar to provision available in highways sector.

The government said under provision of additional land to the concessionaire, land rent has been reduced from 200 per cent to 120 per cent of the applicable scale of rates for the proposed additional land.

"Concessionaire would pay royalty on "per MT of cargo/TEU handled" basis which would be indexed to the variations in the WPI annually," the statement said.

This will replace the present

procedure of charging royalty which is equal to the percentage of gross revenue, quoted during bidding, calculated on the basis of upfront normative tariff ceiling prescribed by Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP).

The government said this will help to resolve the long pending grievances of public private participation (PPP) operators that revenue share is payable on ceiling tariff and price discounts are ignored.

The problems associated with fixing storage charges by TAMP and collection of revenue share on storage charges which has plagued many projects will also get eliminated.

The statement said concessionaire would be free to deploy higher capacity equipment/facilities/technology and carry out value engineering for higher productivity and improved utilisation and/or cost saving of project assets.

In the new agreement, "actual project cost" would be replaced by "total project cost".

The new definition of "change in law" will also include imposition of standards and conditions arising out of TAMP guidelines/orders, environmental law and labour laws and increase and imposition of new taxes, duties, etc for compensating the concessionaire.

Since the viability of the project was affected, concessionaire will now be compensated for the increase and imposition of new taxes, duties etc except in respect of imposition/increase of a direct tax, both by central and state government. PTI

India Inc raises over ₹46,000 cr via QIP during April-Nov 2017

NEW DELHI: Indian firms mobilised over Rs 46,000 crore by issuing shares to institutional investors during the April-November period of the current fiscal, nearly 11-fold rise from the year-ago period.

In comparison, they had mopped-up Rs 4,318 crore in the first eight months of 2016-17 fiscal.

As per the latest data available with the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the capital garnered by the listed companies through the Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) route stood at Rs 46,675 crore in the first eight months of 2017-18.

It was also more than five times the total amount raised in the entire 2016-17 which stood at Rs 8,464 crore.

The funds have been mobilised for business expansion, refinancing of debt, working capital requirements and other general corporate purposes. PTI

Govt extends compulsory jute packaging for foodgrains, sugar

NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday extended the mandatory packaging of foodgrains and sugar products in jute bags for the year ending June 2018.

"This decision mandating 90 per cent of food grains and 20 per cent sugar products to be packed in jute bags will benefit nearly 3.7 lakh workers and 40 lakh farmers," Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani tweeted.

She said the Jute mill workers will not be deprived of their statutory dues as a special mechanism will be set up in consultation with state governments to link production control and supply order to ensure timely payment.

"Underlining the importance of diversification of jute industry, emphasis will be given to diversification by



incentivising use of jute geotextiles and promoting jute as eco-friendly fibre both in domestic and global markets," Irani said in a tweet.

The decision will help sustain the core demand for the jute sector and support the livelihood of the workers and farmers dependent on the sector in eastern and

north-eastern regions of the country particularly in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya and Tripura.

"The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has extended the mandatory packaging norms under the Jute Packaging Material (JPM) Act, 1987," an official statement said.

As per the norms, it is compulsory to pack 90 per cent of foodgrains and 20 per cent of sugar products in jute bags. It will benefit nearly 3.7 lakh workers and 40 lakh farmers

As per the norms, it is compulsory to pack 90 per cent of foodgrains and 20 per cent of sugar products in jute bags.

The decision also mandates, in the first instance, the entire requirement for packing of foodgrains would be placed in jute bags thus, making a provision for 100 per cent packing of foodgrains in jute bags subject

to the ability of the jute industry to meet the requirement, the statement added.

Jute industry is predominantly dependent on government, which purchases jute products worth more than Rs 5,500 crore every year.

Considering nearly 3.7 lakh workers and approximately 40 lakh farmers are dependent for their livelihood on the jute sector, the government said it has been making concerted efforts for the development of the jute sector.

With a view to boost demand in the jute sector, government has imposed Definitive Anti Dumping Duty on import of jute goods from Bangladesh and Nepal with effect from January 5, 2017, which has provided scope for additional demand of 2 lakh MT of jute goods in the domestic market. PTI

Average number of Indian export trucks 12 per day at Wagah in Nov

NEW DELHI: The daily average number of Indian trucks laden with export goods at Attari-Wagah border has come down drastically to about 12 in November last year as compared 105 in the same month previous year, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

"The daily average number of Indian export trucks at Attari-Wagah border was around 12 in November 2017 as compared to 105 in November 2016," Minister of State for Commerce and Industry C R Chaudhary said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

He also said that instances of quarantine-related difficulties for export of some perishable goods to Pakistan have been brought to the notice of the government. PTI



"The issue has been taken up with the government of Pakistan through the High Commission for resolution," he added.

In a separate reply, he said a major factor affecting India's bilateral trade with the neighbouring country is the pre-

vailing political relationship between the two countries.

It also affects the policy framework of the bilateral trade.

The two-way commerce between the countries declined to \$2.27 billion in 2016-17 from \$2.61 billion in the previous fiscal. PTI

Govt to infuse ₹7,577 crore in six weak public sector banks

NEW DELHI: The finance ministry has approved proposal for infusion of Rs 7,577 crore in 6 weak public sector banks (PSBs) as part of the recapitalisation plan to bolster capital adequacy ratio.

All these banks, which got capital support, are under prompt corrective action of the Reserve Bank of India.

The funding comes under Indradhanush plan of the government which promised Rs 70,000 crore over period of four years ending March 2019.

Lenders, which will receive capital through preferential issue of shares, include Bank of India, IDBI Bank and UCO Bank. The actual fund infusion will take place in the next few weeks after they get necessary regulatory approval, including nod from shareholders.

Kolkata-based UCO Bank on Wednesday announced approval of board for the proposal to issue equity shares on preferential basis to the government against capital contribution of Rs 1,375 crore subject to necessary approval.

Besides, Central Bank of India said the capital raising committee of the board



approved raising of equity capital by allotting up to 3.88 crore shares at the issue price of Rs 83.15 per unit aggregating to Rs 323 crore.

At the same time, the government has decided to infuse Rs 2,257 crore in the Bank of India, Rs 2,729 crore in IDBI Bank, Rs 650 crore in Bank of Maharashtra, and Rs 243 crore in Dena Bank.

While the government decides the mode for recapitalisation of all state-run banks, it advanced the release of funds to these six banks to help them meet their equity requirements and enable them to resume normal business and help them come out of prompt corrective action.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in October had announced

an unprecedented Rs 2.11 lakh crore two-year road map to strengthen PSBs, reeling under high non performing assets (NPAs) or bad loans. Their NPAs have increased to Rs 7.33 lakh crore as of June 2017, from Rs 2.75 lakh crore in March 2015.

The plan includes floating re-capitalisation bonds of Rs 1.35 lakh crore and raising Rs

58,000 crore from the market by diluting government's stake.

The government is working on the modalities for issuing the recapitalisation bonds as it aims to front-load the infusion with an aim to strengthen the state-owned banking sector, sources said, adding that the announcement in this respect, including detailed guidelines, will be made during this month.

Jaitley had also announced that banks would get about Rs 18,000 crore under the Indradhanush plan over the next two years.

Under the Indradhanush road map announced in 2015, the government had announced infusion of Rs 70,000 crore in state-owned banks over four years, while they will have to raise a further Rs 1.1 lakh crore from the market to meet their capital requirement in line with global risk norms, known as Basel-III.

In the last three-and-a-half years, the government pumped Rs 51,858 crore capital in the public sector banks. The remaining Rs 18,142 crore will be injected into the banks over the next two years.

All 650 branches of IPPB to be launched by April, says Sinha

NEW DELHI: The government expects to roll out all 650 branches of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) by April, 2018, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

In a written reply to Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Communication Manoj Sinha said IPPB has launched 2 pilot branches on January 30, 2017 at Raipur (Chhattisgarh) and Ranchi (Jharkhand) in 2016-17. However, no branch was rolled out in the current financial year, Sinha said.

RBI granted licence to IPPB on January 20, 2017 to carry out payments bank activities.

The minister said IPPB aims to have a pan-India reach and subject to feasibility, all post offices (approximately 1.55 lakh) across the country will progressively become its access points to provide banking products and services as per RBI guidelines on payments bank.



In reply to a separate question on IPPB, Sinha said the payments bank proposes to tie up with banking and other financial institutions and expressions of interest for tie-ups have been received.

Also, preliminary discussions are on in this regard.

"IPPB has entered into an MoU with Punjab National Bank (PNB) and PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Ltd," Sinha said.

IPPB was incorporated on August 17, 2016 under Companies Act, 2013 as a public limited company with 100 per cent Government of India equity under Department of Posts, he said.

Cement demand set to be muted in FY18, may pick up next fiscal



MUMBAI: The lingering sand shortages and slowdown in real estate activities will leave cement companies with a muted volume growth in the current financial year ending in March, while the next fiscal year may see demand picking up steam with around 5 per cent growth, says a report.

On the demand front, based on the current trends, cement demand is expected to show a very thin growth of 1-2 per cent in FY18 and show a modest recovery only from the March quarter, rating agency Ibra said in a note on Wednesday.

"A pick-up in affordable and rural housing segments and infrastructure, including roads and irrigation projects, is likely to improve cement demand to grow 4-5 per cent in FY19. However, capacity overhang and moderate demand will continue to keep capacity utilisation levels between 60 and 65 per cent over the medium-term," it said. Cement demand remained weak in the first seven months of the year due to sand short-

age, slowdown in real estate activities, drought (in Southern states) and transitional issues related to the rollout of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority Act and goods and services tax, the report said. The report also warned that higher prices of pet coke, coal and diesel could put pressure on margins and debt metrics of cement companies in the coming quarters.

Cement companies have experienced rising energy and freight costs on the back of higher pet coke, coal and diesel prices in the first half of the fiscal 2018, it said, adding most of the large cement companies (barring the South-based ones) passed on the rising costs.

"Pet coke prices rose around 32 per cent in the first half. This, along with a 44 per cent jump in coal prices resulted in higher power and fuel expenses in H1 and the 7 per cent spike in diesel prices lead to higher freight cost for companies. All these put pressure on the operating profit H1.

Trai invites inputs on new telecom policy

NEW DELHI: The telecom regulator Trai on Wednesday invited public views on inputs for the proposed National Telecom Policy (NTP), which is under formulation by the government.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) will give its inputs on the matter to the Telecom Department, which hopes to finalise the new policy by March 2018.

Trai on Wednesday released a consultation paper on 'Inputs for Formulation of National Telecom Policy- 2018'.

The regulator, in a statement, said that its inputs have been prepared based on preliminary discussions with multiple stakeholders including telecom operators, equipment manufacturers, industry bodies, and cloud service providers "in line with the technological advancements in the sector and customer aspirations for digital services".

The National Telecom Policy 'objectives' outlined in Trai consultation paper include achieving 900 million broadband connections at a minimum download speed of 2 Mbps, developing 10 million public wi-fi hotspots, attaining average speed of 20 Mbps for wireless Internet connectivity, and placing India among top-50 nations in global rankings of network readiness, communications systems, and services.

Other objectives include enabling access for connecting to 10 billion Internet of Things and Machine-to-Machine sensors and devices and attracting \$100-billion investment in the communications sector.

The Trai paper said this can be achieved through strategies like review of license fee and spectrum charges, and working towards One Nation One License for services, and making available finance for communication infrastructure projects on par with that of connectivity infrastructure sectors like roadways and railways.

It said that the policy could



Trai will give its inputs on the matter to Telecom Department, which hopes to finalise the new policy by March 2018

NTPC records power generation of 67,781 million units in Oct-Dec

NEW DELHI: State-run NTPC on Tuesday said its power generation was the highest in October-December at 67,781 million units. "NTPC with installed capacity of 51,383 MW has recorded its highest ever quarterly generation of 67,781 MUs (million units) during Q3 of 2017-18, which is 10.39 per cent more than the generation of 61,400 MUs recorded during the corresponding period last year," a company statement said.

The NTPC has also achieved commercial declaration of 4,415 MW capacity during the first nine months of current year itself (April-December, 2017).

In line with Government of India's thrust on Renewable energy, the company is also increasing its green footprint and has already generated 912 Million Units from its solar and wind stations during the year which is around 3 times its renewable generation during corresponding period of last year, it added. With more than 20 GW capacity under various phases of construction, the NTPC is all set to continue energising India's growth in the coming years, it said.

CIL e-auction fetches 76% premium in Q3 FY18



KOLKATA: Riding on rising demand, Coal India's average premium from e-auction of coal rose to 76 per cent over the average notified price during the third quarter of FY18.

"In the Q3 period (Oct-Dec'17), the average premium over the average notified price was up 76 per cent against 23.6 per cent in the corresponding quarter of 2016-17," a senior Coal India official said.

The miner allotted 28.6 million tonne of the fossil fuel in the Q3 period of the current fiscal, marginally lower than the corresponding quarter's quantity of 28.8 million tonne.

October 2017 saw a drop of 40 per cent in coal offering in e-auction platform as there was diversion to power plants owing to sudden rise in demand.

An official tracking Coal India e-auctions said that average realisation for November and December is working out at around Rs 2,056 and Rs 2,064 per tonne, respectively.

Till December, Coal India had offered around 80 million tonne of coal through spot and forward e-auctions.

However, with some indications of easing of power prices in power exchange, there may be some effect on the premium in e-auction.

Coal India had earlier indicated that it was aiming for about 25 per cent more realisation from e-auctions.

It is to be seen whether Coal India will be able to stem the declining trend of profitability in the last few quarters.

The recent wage agreement will see some Rs 5,600 crore extra outgo on account of a 20 per cent hike in workers' salaries.

Sugar output increases by 26% in Oct-Dec of current season: ISMA

NEW DELHI: The country's sugar output rose by 26 per cent to 103.26 lakh tonnes in the October-December period of current season compared to the same period of previous year, according to industry body ISMA.

Mills had produced 81.91 lakh tonnes of the sweetener in the same period of 2016-17 season (October-September).

The Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) has pegged total sugar output at 251 lakh tonnes in the ongoing 2017-18 season, as against 202 lakh tonnes last year. Consumption is estimated to be 250 lakh tonnes this year.

Releasing the latest data, the ISMA said the increase in sugar output so far is basically from two major producing states -- Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Sugar output in Uttar Pradesh has increased to 38.80 lakh tonnes in October-December of this season from 26.78 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period. The average recovery rate of the sweetener remained higher in the state at 10.15 per cent. In Maharashtra, the output rose to 38.24 lakh tonnes



lakh tonnes, Tamil Nadu at 1.70 lakh tonnes, Bihar at 1.65 lakh tonnes, Haryana at 1.80 lakh tonnes, Punjab at 1.60 lakh tonnes, Uttarakhand at 1.20 lakh tonnes and Madhya Pradesh at 1.30 lakh tonnes.

With regard to import of 3 lakh tonnes of raw sugar permitted by the government in September 2017, ISMA said 2.35 lakh tonnes of raw sugar has been imported so far, of which 2 lakh tonnes has been refined.

The sugar prices which had fallen in the last couple of months is witnessing an improvement in some parts of the country. As per the report published by Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India, the wholesale sugar prices have improved in some parts of North and West India by Rs. 30 to 100 per quintal of sugar. Sugar sales is also witnessing a slight improvement in the last few days because of buying interest shown by the sugar traders.

The industry body said that sugar prices, which had fallen in the last couple of months, are witnessing an improvement in parts of the country.

Digital economy: Par panel for data privacy law

NEW DELHI: A parliamentary committee on Wednesday suggested that the government should come out with a legislation on data privacy at the earliest, as the country moves towards digitalisation of economy.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, headed by senior Congress leader M Veerappa Moily, also suggested to create a coordinating authority, reporting directly to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), to deal with issues related to information infrastructure.

The report titled Trans-

formation Towards A Digital Economy, which was tabled in Parliament, also expressed concern over lack of trained professionals to deal with rising cyber challenges.

The report said that India should have a sound consumer privacy and data protection law "lest we become a digital colony with global entities having virtual control over data".

The committee said the country "now urgently needs a data minimisation, data privacy and data residency law to ensure security of public and private data".

The panel has urged the



government to bring such a data protection legislation before Parliament at the earliest.

The committee also found it "rather disconcerting" that even as the country moves towards a digital economy, transactional hassles and grievances of users, including ATM frauds such as cloning, have also been increas-

ing manifold.

"Ordinary customers are then left high and dry, extremely helpless and clueless about the next course of action for a remedy and redressal of grievance," the report said.

It suggested that customer/user should be provided with an "empowered and responsive" common helpline (SOS) number, which he or she can approach whenever required.

The report further said as the cyber space expands and intensifies with implications for national security, monitoring/surveillance and protecting the national information infra-

structure needs to be included in the national agenda on priority basis.

"The Committee, therefore recommended due consultations with domain experts and industry and creation of a duly empowered coordinating authority, with status at par with Space and Atomic Energy Departments with adequate budget, reporting directly to the PMO," the report said.

It also stressed that government needs to substantially rationalise digital transaction costs and provide incentives, especially for the lower value of transactions.

Indian Oil Corp takes up 2018 as 'Year of Trust'

NEW DELHI: Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the nation's biggest oil firm, has adopted 2018 as the 'Year of Trust' as it earned belief in the delivery potential in programmes like PMUY, and decision of early implementation of BS-VI fuel norms.

Every second Indian is served by the company as it commands half of the auto fuel and cooking fuel market share.

"From Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) to daily price revision of petrol and diesel, to the decision to leapfrog BS-VI fuels supply in Delhi by

April 1, 2018, two years before its actual implementation date, are a few instances where policy makers trusted the delivery potential of IOC," the company said in a statement here.

PMUY scheme was launched in May 2016 to provide free cooking gas connection to poor women.

Unveiling the corporate theme for the New Year, IOC Chairman Sanjiv Singh said the observance of 2018 as the 'Year of Trust' is a unique opportunity to sustain the company's trust among its customers and

stakeholders by enhancing its capabilities and integrity.

"Backed by our inherent strengths as a team and as an organisation, it would be a great project to make 'trust' an enduring value across our supply chain. "Our core val-

ues inspire us to give our best. Among these, 'trust' is the key-stone and the active DNA of our organisational culture," he said.

The decision follows the tradition started by the company in 2016 of adopting calendar year based on IOC's corporate val-

ues of 'Care', 'Innovation', 'Passion' and 'Trust'. Year 2016 was the 'Year of Core Values', while 2017 was observed as the 'Year of Innovation and Technology'.

The resolution to adopt 2018 as 'Year of Trust' comes at a time when India joins countries like France and China to stand by the accord to meet the challenge for a low-carbon sustainable future in the COP-23 Bonn Summit held in November 2017.

For India, moving in consonance with the commitment would mean an increased share of natural gas and renewables in

the future energy mix. "Being a market leader, IOC will be once again leading this national agenda in the coming years," it said. IOC said starting from refineries and pipeline networks to bulk storage terminals and fuel stations, adoption of smart technologies, e-portals for customer convenience and efficient use of SAP have resulted in greater efficiency.

"Now, a full-fledged CRM (customer relationship management) solution is being implemented to engage more closely with customers," it said.





MUNRO BLASTS RECORD CENTURY AS NEW ZEALAND CRUSH WEST INDIES

MOUNT MAUNGANUI: Colin Munro smashed his way into the record books as New Zealand crushed the West Indies by 119 runs in the final Twenty20 here to sweep the series. Munro, with a rollicking 104 off 53 deliveries, became the first player to hit three centuries in international Twenty20 cricket as New Zealand posted an imposing 243 for five, their highest Twenty20 total.

BLIND CRICKETERS TO WAIT TILL JAN 5 FOR GOVT APPROVAL

BENGALURU: Association for Blind in India (CABI) president G K Mahantesh said the national team will wait till January 5 for clearance from government to travel to Pakistan for the fifth World Cup to be held from January 7-21. "We will wait till January 5 for clearance from the government to travel to Pakistan for World Cup."

NORTHEAST UNITED SACK COACH JOAO DEUS AFTER DISMAL ISL SHOW

GUWAHATI: NorthEast United FC have sacked their Portuguese coach Joao de Deus after their dismal show in the ongoing Indian Super League season. The John Abraham-owned side have won just one match out of seven they have played so far. They have lost five, the most among the 10 teams, and drawn one, and are at ninth spot in the league table spot with four points.



Mohun Bagan appoint Shankarlal Chakraborty as chief coach



KOLKATA: Mohun Bagan on Wednesday elevated Shankarlal Chakraborty to the chief coach's post till the end of season in less than 24 hours after Sanjoy Sen resigned.

Chakraborty, who has been with the team as assistant coach since July 2014, was at the helm of affairs during the Calcutta Football League Premier Division 2017, where they were pipped to the title by bitter foes East Bengal. Mohun Bagan senior team will resume training on Thursday and post-training Chakraborty will interact with media, a statement read.

Sen stepped down after they succumbed to a 1-2 defeat to a 10-man Chennai City FC, their first defeat of the season that came at their home ground.

"The club management would like to thank Sen for all the hard work he has done being in charge of the team for the past three years. We wish

him all success for his future endeavors," the statement said. Mariners have slipped to fifth place after three draws and a loss as they next face defending champions Aizawl here on December 7.

AGENCIES

Vijay: More open-minded in my preparation than last time

CAPE TOWN: Flexibility is the key while preparing for a difficult assignment and that's precisely the reason why senior opener Murali Vijay has done his homework with an "open mind" compared to his previous tours of South Africa.

"I am preparing myself to be a little more open-minded than I was last time. You cannot have a set pattern you cannot go into a Test thinking that you are going to leave so many balls. You also have to be in a frame of mind to score runs," Vijay said during a media interaction after training session.

"If they bowl in good areas, then you have to try and counter that and come out stronger as well. These are the things I think which will be critical for us to move forward.

I just want to go out there and whatever is thrown at me, I just want to play my 'A' game and do well for my country," Vijay added.

The bouncy tracks of South Africa has been the talking point of India's upcoming Test series but Vijay reckons that managing the bounce is easier for an opener compared to swing where a batsman tends to lose his shape.

The pitch at Newlands has liberal covering of green promising good bounce and carry throughout the game.

AGENCIES



Office of The Executive Engineer Temp. Construction Division (E/M) U.P. Jal Nigam, Moradabad SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE Letter No. : 2291 / निविदा / 96 Date : 28.12.2017

E-Tenders are invited on behalf of U.P. Jal Nigam Lucknow from registered contractor in class A & B in Electrical & Mechanical works including supply and installation of pumping plant in U.P. Jal Nigam for S.I.T.C of Submersible pumping plant and its accessories for different Rural Water Supply Scheme District Sambhal & Amroha. The tender document shall be available on e-procurement website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from dated 09.01.2018 at 10:00 am onwards Interested contractor can download the above tender document and upload their tender duly filled from dated 09.01.2018 to 14.01.2018 up to 05:00 pm on above e-procurement website. Tender shall be opened on dated 16.01.2018 at 11:30 am in the office of Executive Engineer Temp. Construction Division (E/M) U.P. Jal Nigam Moradabad in presence of intending tenderers if any. Tender cost Rs. 2000.00+12% GST (Non-refundable) in form of demand draft in favour of Executive Engineer Temp. Construction Division(E/M) U.P. Jal Nigam Moradabad will be uploaded with tender. Other terms and condition can also be seen on U.P. Jal Nigam website www.upjn.org.

Woakes out for England, Crane to make Test debut: Root

SYDNEY: Seamer Chris Woakes has been ruled out with a side strain opening the way for young leg-spinner Mason Crane to make his debut for England in final Ashes Test against Australia. Joe Root confirmed 20-year-old Crane will play following the injury set-back to Woakes. Woakes had scans on his injured left side and was ruled out as the tourists seek to win their first Test win.

AGENCIES

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED (See Section 82 Cr. P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that Vailsi S/o Arjun R/o F-1/59, Mangol Puri, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 263/13 u/s 147/148/149 IPC P.S. Mangol Puri, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Vailsi can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Vailsi has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Vailsi of FIR No. 263/13 u/s 147/148/149 IPC P.S. Mangol Puri, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 30.05.2018

By Order

Sh. Rakesh Kumar-II,

Metropolitan Magistrate, (North West),

Room No. 218, 2nd Floor, Rohini Courts, Delhi

DP/442/OD/17

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED GIRL

General public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo) namely Kamla D/o Sh. Phool Chand Kasoor R/o 13/32, 11th Floor, Tilak Nagar, New Delhi Aged - 15 Years has been reported missing/kidnapped since 17.08.2017 vide FIR No. 408/17, U/S 363 IPC dated 18-08-2017 registered at Police Station Tilak Nagar, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:- Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 5'2", Face: Oval, Built: Thin, Clothing: Black and white coloured shirt, black coloured leggi and chappal in feet. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing/kidnapped girl, may inform SHO, Tilak Nagar, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>



Kamla

Sd/-

Tele No. : 11-24368638 or 24368641 SHO, Tilak Nagar, Delhi. FAX No. : 11-24368639 Tel.: 011-25407800, 25409290 DP/7241/WD/17 Mob.: 8750871130

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that one female namely Nagma, D/o Mukhthiyyar, R/o H. No. B-98, Gali No. 6, Katariya Road, Prem Nagar, Phase-II, Delhi, Age 21 years, Height 4'8", Complexion Wheatish, Face Round. Wearing red colour Kamij, cream colour Salwar, black & white Sweater and red Sandel in feet has been missing since 26.11.2017. In this regard a D.D. No. 14-A, Dated 29.11.2017, has been lodged at P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the female but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

SHO

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph.No.: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi Ph.: 011-25961600, 25185393 DP/412/OD/17

MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one male, Namely: Rajesh Kumar, S/o: Sh. Ram Kumar, R/o: H. No. 9, Ambedkar Nagar Bye Pass Road, Near Police Post Ambedkar Nagar, Ghaziabad, UP, has been missing from G.B. Pant Hospital, Delhi, since 27.12.2017. In this regard, a Case Vides DD No. 22-PP, Dated 27.12.2017, has been lodged at P.P. LNJP Hospital, P.S. I.P. Estate, Delhi. Investigations have been carried out but despite best efforts, the male could not be traced. The description of the missing male is as under:



Rajesh Kumar

Name: Rajesh Kumar, S/o: Sh. Ram Kumar, R/o: H. No. 9, Ambedkar Nagar Bye Pass Road, Near Police Post Ambedkar Nagar, Ghaziabad, UP, Age: 35 years, Height: 5'2" Feet, Face: Round, Built: Strong, Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Grey Color Shirt, Green Sweater, Grey Lower and Black Shoes in Feet, Identification Mark: Mentally Weak. If anyone has any information about the missing male, then please inform P.S. I. P. Estate, Delhi.

email: cic@cbi.gov.in Fax: No.011-24368639 Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 DP/5144/CD/18.

S.H.O P.S. I. P. Estate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23370928, 23370999

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता, लोक निर्माण विभाग, रायपुर मण्डल क्रमांक 2 (छत्तीसगढ़) ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट निविदा सूचना "द्वितीय आमंत्रण"			
दिनांक 30.12.2017			
निम्नांकित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि 15.01.2018 है।			
स.क्र.	एनआईटी क्र./निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (रु./लाख में)
1.	NIT NO.161 Tender No. 25702	सरहाईपाली जिला-महासमुंद में विश्रामगृह, 2 नग 'आई' टाईप आवासगृह, आहता पहुँच मार्ग एवं बोरखनन, जलप्रदाय सेनेटरी फिटिंग एवं विद्युतीकरण कार्य सहित।	164.08
2.	NIT NO.173 Tender No. 25701	उपस्नाग लो.नि.वि. क्र.-2 महासमुंद के खल्लारी अंतर्गत आमाकोनी-चोरभट्टी मार्ग लंबाई 28/2 में स्थित गैटेडकाजवे क्षतिग्रस्त का विशेष मरम्मत कार्य।	9.98
3.	NIT NO.195 Tender No. 25700	लो.नि.वि. गरियाबंद में लेब्रोदरी रुम का निर्माण कार्य।	9.42
नोट :- सरल क्रं. 1 ठेकेदार की सक्षमता "स" श्रेणी एवं इससे अधिक एवं सरल क्रं. 2 व 3 ठेकेदार की सक्षमता "डी" श्रेणी एवं अधिक हेतु। उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, बराबर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञप्ति, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेब पोर्टल https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in अथवा विभागीय वेबसाइट https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।			
G46927/4		अधीक्षण अभियंता लो.नि.वि., रायपुर मं. क्र.-2 (छग.)	

No threat to India's No.1 status even if South Africa sweep Tests

DUBAI: India's status as the No.1 Test side in ICC rankings will remain intact irrespective of how the series against South Africa pans out, but the Proteas will join the visitors at the top if they win all the three matches.

Faf du Plessis's side is presently 13 points behind Virat Kohli's team, which is sitting on top of the table on 124 points.

However, both the sides will finish on 118 points if the South Africa side makes a clean sweep of the series which starts in Cape Town on January 5, the International Cricket Council said in a statement.

Even in that scenario, India will be ranked above South Africa when the points are calculated beyond the decimal point. In such a situation, India will be on 118.47 points, while South Africa will be on 117.53.

On the other side of the coin, if India win all the three Tests of the series, then they will move to 128 points while South Africa will slip to 107 points.

South Africa will be level on points with India at the top of the rankings if they sweep the series. South Africa will be level on points with India at the top of the rankings if they sweep the series.

Meanwhile, Australia have been guaranteed third place in after leading the series 3-0 with the fifth and final Test to begin in Sydney on Thursday. However, England will have to win the Test to avoid finishing in fifth place. If Australia win the series 4-0, then they will finish third on 104 points and England will end on fifth with 99 points, while a 3-1 series win for Australia will mean they will finish third on 102 points



DHAWAN FIT FOR FIRST TEST, JADEJA DOWN WITH VIRAL

CAPE TOWN: Shikhar Dhawan has been declared fully fit while Ravindra Jadeja is down with viral "illness" ahead of the first Test against South Africa beginning here on Friday. Dhawan, who had suffered an ankle injury before flying out to South Africa, is set to open alongside Murali Vijay in the series opener at Newlands. "India opener Shikhar Dhawan is fit and is available for selection for the first Test. Dhawan had suffered a minor ankle injury before the team's departure to South Africa," the BCCI said in a statement. Jadeja, however, is racing against time to be fully fit for the game and has been taken to the hospital for treatment.

AGENCIES

and England in fourth on 101 points. In the rankings for Test batsmen, second-ranked India captain Virat Kohli will aim to break the 900-point mark for the first time in his career. The in-form right-hander is presently on 893 points and

a solid performance will potentially see him join the select group of players with a rating of 900 or more, which in ranking terms is an indication of a player's quality, as to achieve it a player has to be among the very best over a protracted period.

Cheteshwar Pujara is 20 points behind Kohli in third place, while Hashim Amla of South Africa is the other player who features in the top 10, in seventh position. Among the bowlers, South Africa's Kagiso Rabada is breathing down

number-one ranked James Anderson's neck. Second-ranked Rabada is nine points behind Anderson and depending on how the two bowlers perform in the coming days, there could be a change at the top of the order.

AGENCIES

Kohli, Dhoni set to be retained by respective IPL franchises

MUMBAI: India skipper Virat Kohli and his predecessor Mahendra Singh Dhoni are among the top players who are set to be retained by their respective IPL franchises, Royal Challengers Bangalore and comeback outfit Chennai Super Kings respectively.

The retention list of players is to be announced by BCCI here on Thursday.

Kohli, yet to taste a triumph as captain in IPL in spite of his extremely successful run as national captain, and 2011 World Cup-winning skipper Dhoni are expected to be shoo-ins when RCB and CSK decide which players they are retaining in the squad for the next three seasons — 2018 to 2020.

Among other top Indians who are almost certain to be retained are Rohit Sharma, who led Mumbai Indians to their title triumph last season, exciting MI all-rounder Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, who is set to go back to CSK after playing for Gujarat Lions over the last two seasons, and Australian pocket dynamo David Warner for Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Another franchise making a return after serving a two-year suspension, Rajasthan Royals, will certainly go for Australia captain Steve Smith, considering the form he has been in.

Each team can opt for up to five players by virtue of a combination of Player Retention (Pre Player Auction) and Right to Match (RTM) (during the



Player Auction), according to the decision of the IPL GC at its meeting in New Delhi on December 6.

There can be a maximum of either three retentions or three RTMs at the discretion of the franchises and if there is no retention before player auction, then franchises can have up to three RTMs, as per the norms put in place by the IPL GC.

The break-up is: Maximum number of 3 capped Indian players, 2 overseas players and 2 uncapped Indian players each. The player pool available for CSK and RR for retention/RTM will be the players who played for them respectively in IPL 2015 and who were part

of Rising Pune Supergiant and GL squads in IPL 2017, as per the norms.

The salary cap has also been raised. For the coming season, it's fixed at Rs 80 crore and will increase to Rs 82 and 85 crore respectively in 2019 and 2020.

The minimum spend has been fixed at 75 per cent of the salary cap for each season.

The player retention price guideline for salary cap charged has also been set as Rs 33 crore (for 3 players pre auction), Rs 21 crore (for 2 players pre auction) and Rs 12.5 crore (for 1 player retained pre-auction).

Each squad can consist of a maximum number of 25 players (up to 8 overseas players) and a minimum of 18.

AGENCIES



Tai Tzu Ying is like some ninja warrior, feels HS Prannoy

LUCKNOW: In awe of women's shuttler Tai Tzu Ying, H S Prannoy has described the Taiwanese world no 1 as a "ninja warrior", whose strokes would be difficult to match even after practicing for a decade.

"Tai Tzu is one player who I think she like some ninja. She plays certain strokes for which you will have to probably practice for 10 years and still will not be able to get hold of them," said World No 10 Prannoy, who has so far notched up 10 consecutive wins in the Premier Badminton League.

"She has got unbelievable feel in her hands and is one girl who enjoys the most when she plays badminton that is what makes her a special candidate. I am glad I am with her in the team and I'm able to play against her in the practice session," he added. With five super series titles, Tai Tzu has been in stellar form this season and is currently unbeaten with three wins on the trot in the PBL with her last victory coming against India's Saina Nehwal who plays for Awadhe Warriors. Prannoy feels there is always something to learn from Tai Tzu, whether she is on the court or off it.

"She is always happy with whatever she is doing but and I think that is a very important thing. You need to be happy with what you have and you need not probably spend your time thinking I am not getting this or that," he said.

"I have learnt so much from Tai Tzu and I really glad that I am sharing the dressing room with her," the 2017 Indian National champion said. AGENCIES

Spain's Carreno, Czech Tomas tumble out of Qatar Open



DOHA: The Qatar Open second and third seeds — Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta and Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic — crashed out of the tournament in the first round on a night of shocks in Doha. Both seeds lost in third set tie-breaks.

Carreno Busta was beaten by Croatia's Borna Coric, 7-5, 2-6, 6-7 (8/10) in an enthralling match lasting 2 hours 41 minutes.

And Berdych went down 4-6, 6-1, 6-7 (4/7) in the match on centre court which followed against his fellow 6th 5ins opponent, Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff.

It means the tournament

has lost two of its top-ranked players after having already being shorn of three major stars — Novak Djokovic, Stan Wawrinka and Jo-Wilfried Tsonga — before it began, as they try to recover from injuries.

To complete a bad night for the seeds, number six seed Filip Krajinovic of Serbia also lost, in straight sets to Germany's Peter Gojowczyk.

Busta's match with Coric was the game of the tournament so far.

The 21-year-old Croat, who beat Andy Murray last year at the Madrid Open, saved three match points to progress and afterwards described it as a

"huge win".

"I think I played very good," he told reporters.

"I didn't know what to expect, it's the first match of the year, it's always a little bit tricky.

"But, I can say from the beginning that I was playing very good."

He added that however precious the win, it did not compare to beating Murray.

Coric is ranked 38 places lower than world number 10 Carreno Busta but said it was his aim to be more consistent and break into the world's top 20 this season.

"I think I can do it but I need to play very good for the whole season."



Coric had considerable success adopting a serve-and-volley approach and won 17 out of 21 points at the net in the deciding set.

Overall he hit 44 winners during the match.

He will play Nikoloz Basilashvili in the second round. The Georgian has won their previous two encounters.

Berdych, who beat Struff in the French Open last year, was returning to action after sustaining a back injury towards the end of 2017.

The former world number four, now ranked 19th, started slowly, struggling to cope with the aggressive tactics of the big-serving Struff, the world num-

ber 53.

"My coach and me were thinking about some tactics like playing aggressive, playing with passion. Yeah, it was great," said Struff.

"I played very aggressive in the tiebreaker and I was very happy after that one."

The number five seed, Frenchmen Richard Gasquet, was untroubled by the big names falling beforehand, trouncing Victor Estrella Burgos of the Dominican Republic, 6-0, 6-2.

Number one seed, Austria's Dominic Thiem, is safely through to the second round, winning his first match in straight sets on Monday. AGENCIES

Hockey India names 33-member squad for 2018 season

BENGALURU: Fit-again PR Sreejesh made a return after recovering from a long-injury lay-off as Hockey India (HI) on Wednesday announced a 33-member squad for the first national camp beginning here on Thursday.

Sreejesh will be vying to find top form after nearly eight months of break due to a knee injury. He had suffered a medial collateral ligament (MCL) injury during the Azlan Shah tournament earlier last year.

After ending the year with a bronze medal at the Odisha Hockey World League Final, Indian men's hockey team will report for the 10-day camp at the Sports Authority of India here to prepare for the busy hockey calendar this season.

Goalkeeper Krishan B Pathak, part of the winning team of 2016 Junior World Cup, finds himself in the group along with Akash Anil Chikte and Suraj Karkera who had promising outing at the Asia Cup and contributed to India's success at the Hockey World League Final.

Nilam Sanjeev Xess, the young defender from Sundargarh, Odisha who led the Indian team to U-18 Asia Cup win in 2016, has been elevated to the Senior Core Group.

He will train alongside stalwart Sardar Singh, Harmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Dipsan Tirkey, Varun Kumar, Rupinder Pal Singh, Birendra Lakra, Surender Kumar, Gurinder Singh in the back line.

The line-up of midfielders remains unchanged with Manpreet Singh, Chinglen-

sana Singh, SK Uthappa, Sumit, Kothajit Singh, Satbir Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Simranjeet Singh, Harjeet Singh in the group.

Young forward Sumit Kumar, who featured in the Indian Junior Men's Team in 2016, has been included for the camp with seniors' SV Sunil, Akashdeep Singh, Mandeep Singh, Lalit Upadhyay, Gurjant Singh, Ramandeep Singh, Armaan Qureshi, Affan Yousuf, Talwinder Singh.

The 2018 schedule includes Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in April followed by the Champions Trophy at Netherlands in July, the Jakarta Asian Games in August, Asian Champions Trophy in October and the much-awaited Hockey World Cup in Bhubaneswar starting in November. India, however, will begin the season with the Four Nations Invitational Tournament in Tauranga and Hamilton, New Zealand which will see Belgium, Japan and the hosts in fray.

"The camp will be short and we need to deal with the players who just played domestic matches which means we need to be careful in training considering we play eight matches in New Zealand," said Chief Coach Sjoerd Marjine.

"Like always, the evaluation of the previous tournament needs to come from the players so that's the first thing we do when we meet for this camp. I would like to understand what their experience was of the tournament and what they think needs to improve. AGENCIES

Quick-fire City back in the groove, Llorente fires Spurs



LONDON: Raheem Sterling scored the fastest goal of the Premier League season as leaders Manchester City got back on track with a 3-1 win against Watford, while Fernando Llorente put Tottenham on course for a 2-0 victory at his former club Swansea.

Sterling struck after just 38 seconds before Christian Kabasele's first-half own goal put Pep Guardiola's side in control at Eastlands.

Sergio Aguero made it three as City gave the perfect response after their 18-game winning run was ended in a goalless draw at Crystal Palace on Sunday.

Unbeaten City are 15 points clear of second-placed Manchester United as they continue to turn the title race into a lengthy coronation party.

Guardiola had complained that the hectic festive fixture schedule was a "disaster" after

City striker Gabriel Jesus suffered a knee ligament injury at Palace.

But Guardiola was able to replace the Brazilian with Sergio Aguero, while David Silva returned from a two-game absence.

City, playing their fourth match in 11 days, were ahead inside a minute as Sterling met Leroy Sané's cross with a near-post finish for his 18th goal this season. Having won 6-0 at Watford in September, City looked on course for another rout in the 13th minute when Watford's Kabasele sliced an attempted clearance into his own net from Kevin De Bruyne's cross.

Yet they had to wait 50 minutes to score again as Argentine forward Aguero netted from close-range for his 16th goal of the season. Andre Gray's 82nd minute goal for Watford came way too late to avoid a sixth defeat in their last seven league matches. AGENCIES

Halep reaches Shenzhen Open quarter-finals



SHENZHEN: World No 1 Simona Halep came from a set down to overcome China's Duan Yingying 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, reaching the quarter-finals of the Shenzhen Open tennis tournament here on Wednesday.

Halep broke Duan five times in the second and third sets after failing to have a break point in her opponent's first five service games, reports Xinhua news agency.

"I think she played really well in the first set. I think she got a little bit tired and also had the problem with her leg. It was not easy for her to move," Halep said. Halep will face Aryna Sabalenka from Belarus, who beat Montenegrin qualifier Danka Konvinic 6-1, 6-0 to reach the last eight stage.

Fourth seed Irina-Camelia Begu also came from a set down to defeat Russian Ekaterina Alexandrova, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2. Kristyna Pliskova from Czech Republic edged out Romanian Ana Bogdan, 6-4, 7-6(3). AGENCIES

Name Change
I, Priya Rani W/O Sh. Bhagat Singh R/O H.No. 143, Ward No. 7, Nangla Enclave, Prat-1, N.I.T. Faridabad, Haryana, Do hereby solemnly affirm and declare I have changed my Name from Priya Rani to Priya W/O Sh Bhagat Singh for all future purposes. Both are same and one person.

Yuki squanders chances galore in defeat against French Herbert

PUNE: Yuki Bhambri pressed the self-destruct button by squandering six break chances in the deciding set and crashed out of the Tata Open Maharashtra following a three-set defeat against eighth seed Pierre-Hugues Herbert here on Wednesday.

Bhambri's first serve let him down as he bowed out with a 6-4 3-6 4-6 defeat against the Frenchman, ranked 81, in the second round of the hard court ATP 250 event.

Bhambri, ranked 118, needed to play percentage tennis against a rival like Herbert but he struggled. His second serve hardly had any sting, making it easier for Herbert to attack.

Herbert, to his credit, got better and better after a shaky start. He soaked in the pressure and came out strong.

His body language remained strong while Bhambri could not assert himself despite being in advantageous position in the third set.

In the second game of the decider, Herbert was down 0-40 but the Indian youngster, who has won 11 matches in a row on these courts, could not take advantage of the situation.

Herbert came out serving big and his



returns too were very strong as he moved Bhambri on both sides of the court. It was the same story in the fourth game and in all, Bhambri let go of six break points.

At this level, if chances are not converted, progressing to the next round is not possible.

Bhambri's shoulders dropped and his body language was poor after missing those chances.

Herbert, serving for the match, came out with an ace at a speed of 204km per hour. And when he served a double fault

to be 15-30, he leveled the scored with a service which read 207kmph.

That was the difference between the two players. While Herbert used his service as a big weapon, firing as many as 13 aces, Bhambri's first serve deserted him on Wednesday. His first serve percentage read just 57 at the end of the match.

India's singles challenge is still alive with wild card Ramkumar Ramanaathan up against top seed and world number six Marin Cilic, later in the evening. AGENCIES

No feud with Neymar: Cavani

MONTEVIDEO: Paris Saint-Germain's Uruguayan striker Edinson Cavani has said he has no problem with Brazilian teammate Neymar, rejecting speculation of a feud between the two.

Cavani and Neymar appeared to argue over penalty taking duties in Paris Saint-Germain's 2-0 victory over Lyon in September and the forwards reportedly continued quarrelling in the dressing room after the match, reports Xinhua news agency. "With Neymar, there is nothing special in what happened," Cavani told Uruguayan magazine Ovacion.

"People exaggerated things that happened on the pitch or in the dressing room, and that's



ity. We are going to approach this World Cup the same way and hopefully history can be repeated," the 30-year-old added. AGENCIES

Hazard wins Belgian player of the year award

LONDON: For his sterling performances this season and the last one, Chelsea star Eden Hazard has been named the Belgian football federation KBVB's "Devil of the Year", seeing off competition from City's Kevin De Bruyne and United forward Romelu Lukaku. Hazard succeeded Dries Mertens, earning 10,280 votes in an internet poll, to become Belgian team's top man. That put him well ahead of De Bruyne, who polled 4,710 votes, with Lukaku third on 3,223. Hazard's Chelsea teammates Michy Batshuayi and Thibaut Courtois were also in contention for the award along with United's Marouane Fellaini, Napoli's Dries Mertens, Crystal Palace forward Christian Benteke, Tottenham Hotspur defender Jan Vertonghen and West Brom Albion's Nacer Chadli. AGENCIES

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that one male named **Surendra, R/o: S/o Sh. Dharampal, R/o NS-33, Mian Wali Nagar, Delhi, Age: 28 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Thin, ID Mark: Operation marks on front side abdomen, wearing Cream Colour Jersey and Black Pant and Red Colour Slipper, has been missing from the Ramlila Ground, Kamla Market since 26.12.2017. In this regard a DD No. 27-A, dated 26.12.2017 has been lodged at P.S. Kamla Market, Delhi.**

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

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/5145/CD/18

SHO
P.S. Kamla Market, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23230623, 23233743

Appeal for Identification



General Public is hereby informed that a male dead body **Name: Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 35 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Wheatish, Built : Normal, Face : Round, Wearing : Red Colour Shirt and Grey Colour Payjama & Jarshi, he was found dead at Shop No.2004, Chucha Challan, Chandni Mahal, Delhi on dated 31.12.2017. In this regard, a**

FIR/DD No. 11A dated 31.12.2017, has been lodged at PS Chandni Mahal, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this male but no clue has come to light so far.

Any, person having any information or clue about this male may kindly inform to the following.

SHO
P.S., Chandni Mahal, Delhi
Ph. : 011-23279338, 23271751
23263967

DP/5150/CD/18

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that a male (depicted in the photo) namely **Sunny S/o Parmjeet Singh R/o H.No. P-89, Raghuvir Nagar, Delhi Aged - 25 Years has been reported missing since 05.12.2017 at 10.30 am from his house vide DD No. 46A dated 17.12.2017 lodged at Police Station-Khyala, Delhi and information uploaded on Zipnet No.: MWD/KH/2017/193.. His physical description is as under:-**

Complexion: Wheatish, **Height:** 5'9" **Face:** Round, **Physique/Build :** Strong, **Clothing:** Wearing Blue Checkdar Shirt and Blue Colour Jeans and Red Colour Chappal. Any person is having any information/Clue about this missing male, may inform **SHO, Khyala, Delhi at E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> Tele No. : 11-24368638 or 24368641 Fax No. : 11-24368639**

SHO
P.S., Khyala, Delhi
Ph.: 011-25435550

DP/7238/WD/17

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Vivek S/o Sh. Rajender Kumar R/o H.No. 1116, Ground Floor, Rani Bagh, Sakur Basti, Delhi Age- 25 years, Height-5'9", Face-Oval, Complexion - Sallow, Built-Medium, Wearing: Blue Jeans & Shirt has been missing since 05.10.2017. In this regard a DD No. 20-A dated 06.10.2017 has been lodged at PS Rani Bagh, Delhi.**

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

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
SHO
PS Rani Bagh
Ph.: 011-27015329, 27020742
8750870225
DP/7223/NW/17

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo) namely **Aarti, D/o Shri Bhulai, R/o H.No. 10/46, Subhash Nagar, Delhi, Age 14 years has been reported missing / kidnapped since 16.12.17 at 09.30 am. In this regard a vide case FIR No. 711/17, dated 16.12.17 U/S 363 IPC registered at PS Rajouri Garden, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-**

Height : 5'5", **Complexion :** Fair, **Face :** Long, **Build :** Thin, **Clothing :** Wearing Red & black colour frock, black colour pajami and ladies chappal.

Any person is having any information or clue about this missing / kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail ID:cic@cbi.gov.in
Tele: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax: 011-24368639
SHO
PS: Rajouri Garden, Delhi
Ph.: 25453990, 25448885
DP/7233/NW/17

I've limited TIME, can't give 5 years to a film now: Prabhas

After giving five years of his life to Baahubali, the 38-year-old actor wants to build upon his success and take his career forward with projects that have universal appeal

NEW DELHI: He lived and breathed *Baahubali* for five years, a role that established him as India's latest heartthrob but Prabhas says he will not be able to devote so much time in a future project. The 38-year-old actor believes as a performer he has a shelf-life and taking such a risk again can have an adverse effect on his career.

"Actors have limited time. We also have a shelf life. I think I can't give five years to one project now. Even if I ever give that much time, I will simultaneously keep doing other projects because age is also a factor. It will not be good for my career," said Prabhas.

The actor said the two-part fantasy drama was a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" and he was aware that the grand scale of the project demanded a certain level of dedication. Prabhas wants to build upon his success and take his career forward with projects that have universal appeal, something that *Baahubali* achieved.

"Most of my projects now will have a universal appeal. Regional cinema is

different, so now I am trying to choose stories that cater to my audiences across the country. I will do stories which most of the audiences like."

Given his pan-India appeal, there has been a lot of speculation about Prabhas' Bollywood debut.

"I am definitely interested in doing films in Bollywood. And not only in Hindi, I am open to working anywhere in the country, even if it is Punjabi. I will do films in any of the languages, provided the script is good. The region and the language don't matter." The actor said his aim as an actor is to deliver mainstream entertaining fare.

"I want my films to be entertaining, not comedy, but something which is gripping. In future, I may do a dark film but currently entertainment is the main criterion." For the Hindi version of *Baahubali*, Sharad Kelkar dubbed for Prabhas but the actor is working on his diction and wants to use his own voice in future projects.

"Dubbing for myself in Hindi is a big



task. I know Hindi. I can read and write Hindi but I don't normally speak the language and that is very important. I still have that South Indian accent. But I am working on it. Hindi audiences should feel that I am speaking like them and should relate to me."

Prabhas, who is currently working on *Saaho*, which also stars Bollywood actor Shradha Kapoor, said the team has shot for around 50 days. The actor will be joining Shradha soon. The film is expected to release this year.

Will be a better actor in English: Saif

MUMBAI: Saif Ali Khan, known for films like *Being Cyrus*, *Omkara* and *Parineeta*, says he will be a better actor in English as it is his primary language. During an episode of online streaming service Saavn's upcoming show "Take 2 with Anupama and Rajeev", Saif spoke about his career, his daughter Sara and son Taimur, read a statement.

"One of the reasons why I got into films unfortunately, I'm being honest, is because I wasn't interested in my exams and academics and I just ran away from home and said 'Oh movies sound great'. But I didn't really know what I was talking about," said Saif.

"So, this desire and this understanding of acting came a bit late for me if it had always been there. If it had been there earlier maybe I might have chosen to struggle in the US, I don't know."

"But I think being sensible about it, you have more opportunities and again it's that nepotism thing again. Being mum's son (veteran actor Sharmila

Tagore) would give me a more chance here to meet people than in America. But I think in English I speak in English as a primary language, unless I'm speaking to someone who is working for me usually."

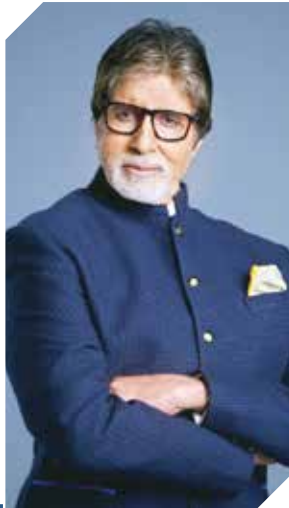
"There's a difference there, so I think I will be a better actor in English because I'll know when I'm lying whereas in Hindi I've never said to a girl 'aapki aankhein itni khoobsoorat hai' (your eyes are so beautiful) so I don't know whether that sounds genuine or not, I'm not used to saying that," he added. On his daughter Sara, who is gearing up for her debut film *Kedarnath*, Saif says he always knew she wanted to be an actor.

"I have seen her do a very funny advert when she was four and she's been like this all along. There was actor Aishwarya Rai on stage in New York with people going ballistic and Sara sitting on the floor behind the curtain saying 'This is what I want to do,'" said Saif.

Christopher Nolan is coming to India, says Big B

MUMBAI: Acclaimed filmmaker Christopher Nolan will be coming to India in a month, according to Hindi movie star Amitabh Bachchan. Big B, via his blog, revealed that Kodak will open its facility here by March.

"It is all about to change yet again Kodak, that largest name for film, is coming back. Many in the world of direction and production are finding values in the product done on film to be the more liked subject. So, like 'Dunkirk', the film by that renowned Christopher Nolan (who) uses only film for his picture."



"And in a month or so, the man himself Mr Nolan is coming to India to inaugurate or at least lend support to a few matters," Amitabh wrote. The cine icon, 75, is upbeat about the development as just last month, he was contemplat-

ing on why the movie world is still referred to as the "film industry" in the digital age. Hollywood, he says, is getting back to film, again.

"Firstly, the archival of films, their repairs and preservation, and secondly to support the Kodak world all over again. I believe that Los Angeles, Hollywood is already all back to film again. They say the quality and feel and colour of film is unmatched, so what happens to digital... It shall exist, it shall co-exist and film shot on celluloid shall be sent to the lab for its development, but all post-production work shall be digital. I mean what kind of times are we living in," Big B questioned.



PIC/NAVEEN SHARMA

Meyers to address sexual harassment scandal at Globes

LOS ANGELES: Seth Meyers, who will host the 75th annual Golden Globe Awards this Sunday, plans to address the sexual harassment scandals that have rocked Hollywood in recent months.

Meyers, 44, told *People* magazine that his focus would be more on the film industry than Trump, who has been a favourite subject of Hollywood comedians so far. "With the monologue, as far as talking about anything in the news right now, it seems like this year



more than ever Hollywood has its own internal politics that obviously deserve to be talked about," he said. "Going into it

our focus is far more on the worlds that make these films and less on anything that's happening in Washington."

But Trump is also going to get the mention even though Meyers admits "there are times where I wish we were talking about other things."

"He holds the keys to us not talking about him, which would be to be just behave differently. But while he continues on this path, we'll continue on ours." The 2018 Golden Globes are set to air on January 7.



EMILY FIGHTING Hollywood's gender pay gap

LOS ANGELES: Actor Emily Blunt says she takes "aggressive action" to fight Hollywood's gender pay gap.

"I took it on as my personal responsibility to make sure that I don't feel short-changed or less than... Especially in this new climate, I think that it's okay to reclaim the words 'making an aggressive deal' as a positive," *vanityfair.com* quoted Blunt as saying.

She added: "Usually, people are making so much money off your back that it comes down to a sort of justice thing for me. I make it a point to not be too con-

cerned with 'I hope they think I'm a team player'. The people who are calling and making the deals are business affairs. It's not the producer."

"It's people who are billed to f**k you up. To shortchange you... In a way, because we are inundated with those types of stories now, it has created a much safer climate to ask for what you want." She is known for "The Girl on the Train", "Into the Woods", "The Devil Wears Prada" and "Edge of Tomorrow". The star lives in Brooklyn, New York, with husband and actor John Krasinski and their daughters Hazel and Violet.



Jake Gyllenhaal's Hollywood 'excuses'

LOS ANGELES: Actor Jake Gyllenhaal says that he has spent a lot of his career making "excuses" for the "absurdity" of Hollywood. "You know, you think about 'Brokeback Mountain' - I've had people come up to me over the years and say how that movie changed their life or how it made them realise something - and you see the power of movies," Gyllenhaal told *hollywoodreporter.com*.

"I have spent a lot of time in my career making excuses for the absurdity of our world - Hollywood - and all of its confusion, apparent sickness over the past few months that we've discovered, the complications, the vanity."

"But what I will never accept is anyone telling me that movies aren't an extraordinarily powerful tool for communication and ultimately, in a small way, for change. And sometimes in a big way," he added.

Gyllenhaal's comments come after more than 300 Hollywood actors, writers and directors including Natalie Portman, Reese Witherspoon, Cate Blanchett, Eva Longoria and Emma Stone launched a campaign 'Time's Up' to help fight sexual harassment in the film industry and other workplaces.



Paris Hilton engaged to actor Chris Zylka

LOS ANGELES: Socialite Paris Hilton and actor Chris Zylka got engaged during a ski trip to Aspen, Colorado over the weekend. "I am so excited to be engaged to the love of my life and my best friend," Hilton told *People*.

"I have never felt so happy, safe and loved. He is perfect for me in every way and showed me that fairytales really do exist!"

The pair were posing for a photo on the slopes after grabbing lunch in the ski town when Zylka got down on one knee with the ring. Hilton, 36, said, "I was so excited and surprised! I immediately said yes!"

