



Violence breaks out at AMU

ALIGARH/LUCKNOW
Violence broke out on the Aligarh Muslim University campus on Wednesday as the row over Muhammad Ali Jinnah's portrait in the students' union office triggered a right-wing protest and clashes between students and protesters. A function to grant life membership of the union to former Vice-President Hamid Ansari was called off and Mr. Ansari had to return to Delhi.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

Criminal, accomplice shot dead in Dwarka

NEW DELHI
A 38-year-old criminal and his associate were shot dead in broad daylight in Dwarka's Bamnauli village on Wednesday morning. The incident occurred close to a government school. The police said they have identified three suspects.

DELHI METRO ▶ PAGE 1

DELHI METRO ▶ 6 PAGES

Collegium puts off decision on pressing Joseph's case

It may meet next week to decide on the issue and on the names from other HCs

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

The five-judge collegium led by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra on Wednesday deferred its decision on the government's objections to the elevation of Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court K.M. Joseph to the Supreme Court.

The collegium, which met briefly in the evening, parted on an inconclusive note. It has not recorded a date for its next meeting. However, one may be scheduled next week for discussing in detail "all issues" on the agenda.

Ravi Shankar clarifies

Later in the evening, Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the government's objection to Justice Joseph had nothing to do with the judgment he authored in 2016 quashing President's rule in Uttarakhand and restoring the Congress government in the State. "I wish to deny with all authority at my command. It has nothing to do with that at all. A proper government with 3/4th majority has been elected in Uttarakhand. Second that order (of Justice Joseph) was confirmed by Justice J.S. Khehar of the Supreme Court who had also

Matter of State	Kerala HC strength	Kerala judges in SC	Judge names (seniority ranking wherever available)
• The government objected to the elevation of Justice K.M. Joseph on these grounds: a) 41 High Court judges are senior to him, and b) there is already one judge from the Kerala High Court. Elevating one more would give excessive representation to a State with a Bench composition (HC strength) of only 47	11	2	Justices C.A. Vaidiyalingam, K.K. Mathew
	11	2	Justices K.K. Mathew, V.R. Krishna Iyer
	13	2	Justices V.Balakrishna Eradi, V.Khalid
	17	2	Justices T.K. Thommen, M. Fathima Beevi
	19	2	Justices K.S. Paripoornan, K.T. Thomas
	21	2	Justices K.T. Thomas, K.G. Balakrishnan
	29	2	Justices K.G. Balakrishnan, P.K. Balasubramanyan (38)
• Supreme Court sources countered these by pointing out several instances of judges being elevated regardless of seniority. Many times in the past, Kerala had more than one judge at the same time in the SC.	38	3	Justices K.G. Balakrishnan, Cyriac Joseph (12), K.S.P. Radhakrishnan (17)
	38	2	Justices K.S.P. Radhakrishnan, Kurian Joseph (29)

set aside the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act. Yet he became the CJI in the NDA government. Therefore, I deny these insinuations," Mr. Prasad said at a press briefing.

The collegium's agenda on Wednesday was "to re-consider the case of Mr. Justice K.M. Joseph, Chief Justice, Uttarakhand High Court, pursuant to letters dated 26th & 30th April, 2018, received from Ministry of Law & Justice" and to "consider the names of judges from Calcutta, Rajasthan, and Telangana & Andhra Pradesh High Courts for elevation as judges of the Su-

preme Court, in view of the concept of fair representation."

The collegium has not zeroed in on any High Court judges whose parents are the three.

The next meeting would also consider whether Justice Joseph's name, after reiteration, should be first sent back separately or in a batch along with the other recommendations from the three High Courts under consideration.

The source said judges of the Supreme Court have taken strong exception to the government "circulating" to the media its confidential let-

ter on Justice Joseph and breaching protocol.

If the collegium reiterates its recommendation of Justice Joseph, it would be binding on the government.

The collegium, also comprising Justices J. Chelameswar, Ranjan Gogoi, Madan B. Lokur and Kurian Joseph, had unanimously recommended Justice Joseph in a resolution on January 11. The government had recently cleared Indu Malhotra's name while returning Justice Joseph's file for re-consideration, though both names were sent together.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

Chhota Rajan gets life term for killing journalist J. Dey

8 others also given similar punishment by Mumbai court

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI

A special Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) court on Wednesday sentenced gangster Chhota Rajan and eight others to life imprisonment for the murder of journalist J. Dey in June 2011.

Special judge Sameer S. Adkar also acquitted journalist Jigna Vora and Paulson Palitara, who arranged for a global SIM card. The court convicted Rajendra Sadashiv Nikalje alias Chhota Rajan, Rohit Thangappan Joseph alias Satish Kalya, Anil Waghmode, Abhijit Shinde, Nilesh Shedge, Arun Dake, Mangesh Agawane, Sachin Gaikwad and Deepak Sisodia. All, except Sisodia, have been fined ₹27 lakh each. Kalya was asked to pay an additional fine of ₹35,000 after being convicted under the Arms Act.

In the 599-page judgment, the court said, "The prosecution has proved that the murder of Dey was committed in a well-planned manner and in pursuance of a criminal conspiracy. It was an organised crime committed by the organised crime syndicate of Rajan. Five bullets were fired at Dey. The murder was a cold-blooded act." It referred to two articles written by Dey on May

How it unfolded

A look into journalist Jyotirmoy Dey murder case that shocked the nation

2011

June 11: Jyotirmoy Dey shot dead in Mumbai

Nov. 25: Journalist Jigna Vora arrested under MCOCA

Dec. 11: Eight others arrested

2012

July 27: Vora gets bail

2015

Oct. 25: Chhota Rajan arrested in Bali

Nov. 6: Rajan deported to India



Dec. 8: Hearing begins

Dec. 18: Case transferred to CBI

2016

Aug. 31: MCOCA court frames charges against Rajan

2018

Jan. 29: Rajan records his statement

May 2: Rajan and eight others convicted; Jigna Vora and one more accused acquitted

5, 2011, and June 2, 2011, titled, "Did Rajan plan hit on Kaskar?" and "Fearing D-gang backlash, Rajan gangsters off to pilgrimages."

Angry with Dey

The judgment reads, "When the statements made by Dey in these articles are considered from the point of view of a criminal mind these articles would anger a criminal mind. On reading such news, a criminal mind will feel that he was undervalued, demeaned and was shown to be very weak in comparison to his arch rival. Ego would have been hurt. In so far as Rajan is concerned, it may be reiterated that prosecution has already proved that he was angry with Dey as he was giving

credit to others for the work done by him. Prosecution has also proved that Rajan suspected that Dey was working for Dawood Ibrahim. In the underworld, the slightest of suspicion about one's conduct can lead to his elimination."

"The articles written by Dey had the potential to affect the activities of the syndicate adversely as Rajan was shown to be not only in a very weak position but also desperate to show that he had a very strong hold on the underworld. Criminals and gangs thrive on the fear factor. In order to ensure their gang flourishes, they instil fear in the mind of others," the court said.

CHILLING MESSAGE ▶ PAGE 7

Cambridge Analytica 'ceasing operations'

British firm to file for insolvency

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Cambridge Analytica, the U.K. marketing analytics firm at the heart of the Facebook data scandal, announced on Wednesday it was "immediately ceasing all operations" and filing for insolvency in Britain and the U.S. "It has been determined that it is no longer viable to continue operating the business," the company, accused of misusing tens of millions of Facebook users' data, said in a statement.

CA, hired by Donald Trump's presidential campaign, said it had been "vili-

fied" in recent months over "numerous unfounded accusations", which had decimated its business.

It has vehemently denied exploiting Facebook users' data for the election campaign of Mr. Trump following revelations it gathered up profile information via a personality prediction app. Facebook has admitted that up to 87 million users may have had their data hijacked by the firm. CA claims it deleted data about Facebook users obtained in breach of the social network's terms of service.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

Shopper's stop



Transgenders buy 'thali' at temporary shops put up near the Koothandavar temple at Koovagam in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu. The 18-day Koovagam festival concluded on Wednesday after priests at the temple broke the bangles and cut the "thali" worn by the transgenders, symbolically turning them into widows. ■ T. SINGARAVELOU

2 injured after stones thrown at school bus

30 students were inside the vehicle; regional parties express outrage

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Two schoolchildren were injured after the bus they were travelling in was stoned by unidentified miscreants in Shopian on Wednesday, evoking outrage from regional political parties and the civil society in the Kashmir Valley.

Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti said the perpetrators "will face action."

"Miscreants threw stones on the school bus, resulting in injuries to Class 2 student Rehan Gorsai. He has been shifted to SKIMS Hospital in Srinagar with a head injury. It's complete madness how stone-pelters are targeting schoolchildren. These criminals will face the law," Director-General of Police S.P. Vaid said.

The bus of Rainbow International School, carrying



Rehan being treated at a hospital in Srinagar on Wednesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

over 30 students, was attacked with stones near Zavoora in Shopian in the morning.

Volatile situation

A police official said Shopian was volatile, with

stone-pelting reported from parts of the district for the past three days, after a civilian caught in the cross-fire between militants and security forces died a few days ago.

"Shocked and angered to

hear of the attack on a school bus in Shopian. The perpetrators of this senseless and cowardly act will be brought to justice," said Ms. Mufti.

Former Chief Minister and National Conference working president Omar Abdullah wrote on Twitter: "These attacks deserve our unequivocal condemnation. The amnesty granted to stone-pelters was meant to encourage more reasonable behaviour but some of these goons are determined to use the opportunity given to them to just pelt more stones."

The Congress also condemned the attack. PDP MLA, Shopian, Sheikh Abdul Rashid appealed to students to make education their priority and refrain from targeting their own colleagues.

SC takes cognisance of H.P. killing

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday took *suo motu* cognisance of the murder of a woman assistant town planner, who was shot dead by a hotel owner during a court-ordered demolition drive at Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh.

A Bench of Justices Madan B. Lokur and Deepak Gupta expressed shock at the death of Shailbala Sharma on Tuesday, saying this was a "serious issue" in which a government official had been killed for doing her duty in compliance with the order of the highest court.

DEMOLITION CONTINUES IN KASAUJI ▶ PAGE 10

HOW WAS SHE KILLED IN FRONT OF POLICE, ASKS SC ▶ PAGE 10

DELHI ☀️⛅️Timings

THURSDAY, MAY 03

☀️

RISE 05:39

SET 18:57

☾️

RISE 22:01

SET 08:03

FRIDAY, MAY 04

☀️

RISE 05:39

SET 18:58

☾️

RISE 22:51

SET 08:49

SATURDAY, MAY 05

☀️

RISE 05:38

SET 18:59

☾️

RISE 23:39

SET 09:37

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	38	27
Safdarjang	38	27
Palam	39	27

Delhi Palam Today
38°C Light drizzle may occur with strong winds. A hot afternoon is expected. Night is likely to be pleasant.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
39°C A hot and dry afternoon is likely. The sky will be partly cloudy. Evening and night will be warm.

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Gold seized

PRESS TRUST ON INDIA
IMPHAL

A Chennai-bound passenger was on Wednesday apprehended by CISF officials at the airport here for allegedly trying to smuggle gold bars worth about ₹41.23 lakh.

HC asks CPI(M) to produce documents

Party claimed many failed to file their nominations for polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday directed petitioner CPI(M) to produce documents of individuals who, the party claimed, had failed to file nominations for the panchayat polls in West Bengal due to extraneous intervention.

The CPI(M) has moved the appeal before a Division Bench of the court, praying for allowing such candidates to file nomination for the polls through e-mail, after failing to receive a favourable order on the plea before a Single Bench.

Statutory provisions
On a plea by the State Election Commission (SEC) counsel that statutory provisions did not allow filing of nominations through e-mail, the Division Bench said the commission should not have objections to the court asking for documents from the petitioner.

The Division Bench of Jus-

tices B. Somadder and A. Mukherjee said it had only asked the petitioner to submit documents in support of its claim and the SEC should not raise objections at this stage.

e-mail nomination
Claiming that intending candidates of the Opposition CPI(M) were prevented by hooligans from filing nomination papers in person at the designated government offices, counsel Shamim Ahmed prayed that the court direct the commission to accept their nominations through e-mail.

The Bench asked the petitioner to provide the names of the candidates who were allegedly prevented from filing nomination, documents showing that they had sent their nominations through e-mail and subsequent representations by them before the commission before the last date of nomination filing, if those were not considered.

The Bench adjourned the hearing in the matter till next Monday and directed the petitioner to provide copies of the documents, if any, to the commission.

‘No intervention’
Justice Subrata Talukdar had, on April 25, disposed of the CPI(M)’s petition, observing that no orders or intervention were called for from the court at that stage.

The SEC secretary had pointed out before Justice Talukdar that the provisions of the West Bengal Panchayat Elections Act, 2003, did not provide for any scope for acceptance of nominations in the manner as claimed by the petitioner, beyond the time schedule fixed by the commission for filing the papers.

Last date
The last date for filing nominations for the three-tier panchayat polls in the State was April 23, after being extended by the court.

‘No clear evidence of assault in footage’

No complaint lodged either by the couple or passengers, says Kolkata Metro

STAFF REPORTER
KOLKATA

Following widespread outrage against the alleged assault of a young couple by a group of commuters, the Metro Railway authorities on Wednesday said that “no clear evidence” of assault was found from CCTV footage.

They also said that no complaint has been lodged either by the couple or by any passenger so far. The alleged incident of moral policing, photographs of which have become viral on social media, took place on Monday night at the Dum Dum Metro Station in north Kolkata.

Officials said that the couple were allegedly “hugging

each other” and thus were assaulted by the commuters. The incident sparked a massive outrage in the State.

Inquiry ordered
“Video footage (of CCTV) was analysed but no clear evidence of assault can be noticed. Preliminary enquiry was ordered by Metro Railway into the matter,” Ajay Vijayvargiya, General Manager, Metro Railway, Kolkata, told journalists.

He also said that the CCTV footage only showed that about 10 to 12 people standing together but no assault seemed to be taking place. “At one point it seems that 10 to 12 people were standing together but nowhere in the footage it seems that an as-

sault was taking place. Within a minute they (the people seen in the footage) disbursed,” said Mr. Vijayvargiya.

Condemning the incident, he said that the Metro Railway, Kolkata, was “strengthening” its surveillance system and “procurement and installation” of additional CCTV cameras was in process.

‘No CCTV’
However, Munawar Khan, Senior Security Commissioner of Metro, admitted that the area where the alleged assault took place was not under CCTV coverage. “Unfortunately the place of occurrence (of the assault) was not under CCTV cover-

age,” said Mr. Khan. On Monday around 9.55 p.m. a young couple was assaulted at the Dum Dum Metro Station by some elderly commuters who took offence to the couple’s public display of affection. According to Metro Railway officials, the couple boarded from Chandni Chowk Metro Station at Central Kolkata in a Dum Dum-bound train.

Photographs taken by other commuters which are circulating on social media showed a group of elderly men with their fists raised and the youth pressed against a wall inside the station. The woman was seen putting herself between the youth and the mob to shield him from the blows.

BJD’s ‘save Mahanadi campaign’ from May 16

Party chief Naveen Patnaik to launch programme

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

The ruling Biju Janata Dal on Wednesday announced the launch of its Mahanadi Suraksha Abhiyan to create awareness about threat to 15 districts of the State by construction of barrages by the Chhattisgarh government.

The campaign will be launched in the districts of Bargarh and Jharsuguda by Chief Minister and BJD president Naveen Patnaik on May 16, senior party leaders announced at a press conference here.

A series of padyatras, public meetings and cultural programmes will be organised in all blocks and towns in as many as 45 Assembly constituencies spread over 15 districts of the State dur-



Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

ing the campaign.

The Chief Minister will also join the meeting at Paradip where the campaign will conclude, said BJD vice-president and Rajya Sabha Member Prasanna Acharya.

Thousands of farmers, fishermen and people from

all sections of society will take part in the campaign, Mr. Acharya added, while urging the people to take part in the save Mahanadi campaign.

Centre slammed
At a workshop organised by the BJD to discuss the Mahanadi water dispute last month, the Chief Minister had slammed the Centre and Chhattisgarh government for choking the water flow into Odisha and called upon the party workers to take the issue to the people.

The BJD had organised campaign in the past after the State government opposed construction of barrages over the Mahanadi by the Chhattisgarh government in 2016.

Bridge collapses in Odisha

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

Traffic between Odisha’s Berhampur and Nayagarh via Buguda was disrupted after a bridge over the Ambakhala nullah collapsed on Tuesday night.

No vehicle was damaged nor anyone injured when the mishap occurred. As it was a short route connecting Berhampur and Nayagarh, several vehicles were stranded at both ends of the collapsed bridge on Wednesday. Locals alleged that lack of proper maintenance was the reason behind the bridge collapse.

In another incident, a five-year-old boy named Priyansu Nahak died and three others were injured at Punand village under Shergarh block of Ganjam district, due to a roof collapse.

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Former Speaker of Bihar quits JD(U)

Slams NDA for ‘spurt in atrocities against Dalits, women’

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

Former Bihar Assembly Speaker and senior Janata Dal (United) leader Uday Narayan Chaudhary on Wednesday announced that he was quitting the party because of its ‘anti-Dalit policies’.

Senior JD(U) leaders said that Mr. Chaudhury’s exit would not “affect the party in anyway”.

Uday Narayan Chaudhury (65) has been two-time Speaker of the Bihar Assembly in the NDA government but, of late, has been critical of the party. He had slammed the NDA governments in the State and at the Centre for “spurt in atrocities against Dalits and patronage of capitalists”.

‘Capitalists promoted’

“I’d been in the JD(U) for the last 20 years and nurtured it since beginning, but I’m hurt over party’s anti-Dalit policies and atrocities against women... only the *dhan kubers* (capitalist class) are being patronised and promoted,” alleged Mr Chaudhury who has been an influential Dalit leader in the State.



‘I am hurt’: Uday Narayan Chaudhary

“The government recently stopped scholarship for Dalit students, kept silence over SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and reservation for Dalits in promotion... the government is also keeping mum over reservation of Dalits in judiciary... the attacks on Dalits too have increased in the State,” said Mr. Chaudhury. He added, “from today I’ve decided to break all my ties with JD(U)”.

Recently, Mr. Chaudhury had participated in a programme organised by former BJP leader Yashwant Sinha’s newly-formed Rashtriya Manch (National Forum) in Patna and had slammed the NDA government in Bihar and at the Centre.

He had also come out in

support of rebel JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav and participated in rallies and functions organised by several social organisations to protest against the recent Supreme Court verdict on SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Much to the embarrassment of his party, Mr. Chaudhury had also come out in open support of RJD chief Lalu Yadav saying he and his family members were being harassed as a “vengeful act by the NDA government”.

On his future political plan, Mr. Chaudhury said, “wait for some more days”. Political sources told *The Hindu* that Mr Chaudhury could join an RJD-led alliance group.

No impact: JD(U)

Meanwhile, ruling JD(U) leaders said that Mr. Chaudhury’s exit from the party would have no impact on it at all. “For last several months, Mr. Chaudhury has been in touch with leaders of other parties and nobody was taking any notice of him... his exit will make no difference,” said JD(U) leader and MLA Shyam Rajak, who himself is a Dalit.

A gathering storm



A massive, swirling dust storm looms over Bikaner on Wednesday. PTI

Male, female police recruits undergo medical test together

Another controversy mars M.P. Police recruitment drive

CORRESPONDENT
BHIND (M.P.)

In a shocking incident, medical tests of female and male candidates during the ongoing recruitment drive in the Madhya Pradesh Police were conducted in the same room at Bhind district hospital on Tuesday.

The matter came to light when a video footage of young male applicants stripped to their undergarments in front of a female candidate surfaced in social media.

“We have learnt orthopaedic surgeon Dr. R.K. Agrawal, surgeon Vinod Bajpai, ophthalmologist Dr. R.S. Kushwaha, ENT specialist Dr. R.N. Rajoria and gynaecologist Dr. Ranu Sharma examined 21 men and 18 women recruits together in the same room ahead of their formal induction in the police on Tuesday,” District



Orthopaedic surgeon Dr. R.K. Agrawal, hospital clerk Devendra Sharma suspended for dereliction of duty

DR. AJIT MISHRA
District Hospital Superintendent

Hospital Superintendent Dr. Ajit Mishra said.

Dr. Agrawal and a hospital clerk, Devendra Sharma, were suspended for alleged dereliction of duty. Dr. Mishra said Sharma was suspended because he had sent the recruits together to the room instead of calling them in one after the other.

Probe ordered

He said an inquiry has been ordered into the incident and show-cause notices have been issued to the five doctors. Senior doctor B.C. Jain will conduct the inquiry.

Dr. Mishra said some more constable recruits -- men and women -- were medically examined separately on Wednesday in the district hospital.

A controversy erupted last week in the State’s Dhar district when photos appeared in the media, showing aspirants for the post of police constables with caste categories inked on their bare chests.

The photographs carried in various newspapers showed aspirants with the terms “SC” (Scheduled Caste), “ST” (Scheduled Tribe) and “G” (General) marked with sketch pens on their chests as they queued up for their medical examination.

Dhar Superintendent of Police Virendra Singh has ordered an inquiry into the incident.

(With PTI inputs)

Labourers ‘unite’ to fight for higher minimum wages

Call for action to strengthen laws on food security, RTI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

Raising their voice amid the rural community activists, unorganised labourers of Rajasthan have pledged to struggle for higher minimum wages and cast their votes in this year’s Assembly elections for the political party which promises to increase the wages in proportion with inflation.

Hundreds of labourers working at the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) sites and with the private contractors joined the May Day celebrations of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) at Bhim in Rajsamand district on

Tuesday. The participants called for accountability in governance and action to strengthen the laws on food security and right to information.

Unorganised Labour Union’s secretary Norat Mal said they would launch an agitation for higher wages and fair treatment of unskilled workers. He demanded that the political parties give top priority to labour welfare.

The Hindi edition of the book on right to information, “The RTI Story: Power to the People”, by social activist Aruna Roy with the MKSS Collective, was released. The speakers recol-

lected ordinary people’s struggle, which had originated in Rajasthan, for transparency in governance that resulted in the enactment of the RTI Act. Ms. Roy said the agitation for RTI had made a nation-wide impact after a 44-day-long dharna in Beawar in 1996.

Baba Adhav, social activist from Maharashtra, said the change of government would not serve the objective of changing the system, unless it was accompanied by the spirit for public welfare. Dalit leader Bhanwar Meghwanshi said the RTI Act was the first legislation enacted as a result of people’s struggle.

IN BRIEF



Detective novelist Pushpanath no more

Kottayam Pushpanath, the detective novelist who played a crucial role in promoting the reading habit among Malayalees, passed away on Wednesday. The 80-year-old litterateur, who has penned over 300 popular cliffhangers, was keeping indifferent health for the past few years. His breakthrough came in the 1960s when his *Chuvanna Manushyan* was serialised in a weekly.

Kerala govt. to give job to Sreejith's wife

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM The Kerala Cabinet on Wednesday decided to provide employment to the wife of Sreejith, who died following alleged custodial torture at Varapuzha in Ernakulam district last month. The Cabinet also decided to grant an ex gratia of ₹10 lakh to his family.

Railway vendor fined after video goes viral

‘Water from toilet used to make tea’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA HYDERABAD

A vending contractor has been slapped with a fine of ₹1 lakh by the Railways after a video surfaced suggesting that water from a train toilet was being used to prepare tea and coffee, the South Central Railway (SCR) here said on Wednesday.

In the video, circulating in the social media for the past few days, a vendor was seen coming out of a train toilet with tea and coffee

Don't want PM's praise or abuse: Gowda

Modi's remark was magnanimous, and there is no need to read too much into it, says JD(S) leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had showered praises on him on Tuesday as a ‘magnanimous gesture’, national president of Janata Dal (Secular) H.D. Deve Gowda said. “I don’t want his praise or abuse,” he added, seeking to deflect attention from the controversy around Mr. Modi’s comments.

He told presspersons on Wednesday that Mr. Modi was an intelligent person and knew how to raise issues that suited the situation. He was a good orator. “Hence, there is no need to read [meaning] into the praises that he showered on me,” he said at a media interaction organised by the Press Club of Bangalore and the Bangalore Reporters’ Guild.

Mr. Gowda said, “Mr. Modi did not refer to either the Mahadayi issue or the agrarian crisis plaguing Karnataka at the rally held in Belagavi.” Recounting his experience of meeting Mr. Modi four times on issues concerning the State, Mr. Gowda said, “Understanding the importance



Clearing the air: JD (S) president H.D. Deve Gowda at a press conference in Bengaluru on Wednesday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

of keeping quiet over vexed issues, he remained silent throughout.”

Comparing Mr. Modi with the party’s tall leader, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the JD(S) supremo said, “Mr. Vajpayee is totally different from Mr. Modi. Gaurakshaks and RSS are active during Modi’s tenure.”

Criticises Rahul

Criticising AICC president Rahul Gandhi for making ‘unsavoury remarks’ about the JD(S), he attributed it to lack of experience as a political leader. “Mr. Modi knows the importance of a son of the soil becoming the Prime Minister,” he said, adding,

“there are no permanent friends or foes in politics.”

Asked whether the JD(S) would back the Congress minus Mr. Siddaramaiah as candidate for Chief Minister, Mr. Gowda said: “There is no question of aligning with anybody in case of a fractured mandate.”

Meanwhile, Congress leader Anand Sharma told mediapersons that Mr. Gandhi had not made any remarks on Mr. Gowda. “Instead, it was Mr. Modi who made derogatory remarks against two former PMs, Mr. Gowda and Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Prime Minister should apologise for that,” he said.

Will form govt. on our own: Gowda's son

NISTULA HEBBAR NEW DELHI

Janata Dal (S) Karnataka president H.D. Kumaraswamy on Wednesday told *The Hindu*: “We are going to form the government on our own, without either the Congress or the BJP.”

Denying any tie-up with the BJP, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s praise for the party’s national president H.D. Deve Gowda set off speculation, Mr. Kumaraswamy said his party has been the victim of a sustained campaign by the Congress and even the BJP to imply that there was a secret understanding between it and the BJP.

Minority support

He said this was aimed at damaging the minority support the JD(S) enjoys in parts of the State.

“On the one hand, the Congress says that there is a

solid minority consolidation behind them, on the other hand, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah gets Congress president Rahul Gandhi to say that we are the ‘B’ team of the BJP. This clearly demonstrates that the Congress is rattled by the support we command. Otherwise, what is the need to make such statements,” he said.

Mr. Kumaraswamy also said that too much was being made about his father’s statement that he would disown Mr. Kumaraswamy if he went into a post-poll tie-up with the BJP.

“That will never happen, because the question will never arise. We are forming the government on our own. The people of Karnataka have seen the BJP and Congress governments and aspire for a government that will truly serve them, which is the Janata Dal (S) government,” he said.



New agenda: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao in Hyderabad on Wednesday. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

KCR meets Akhilesh, discusses federal front

Aim to keep BJP, Cong. out of power

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

A meeting of Telangana Rashtra Samiti president and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav here on Wednesday discussed putting forth before the country the agenda of political parties that would come together in the run-up to elections in an attempt to keep the BJP and the Congress out of power.

Mr. Rao told reporters after the meeting that the agenda would be placed before the people in a couple of months after a consensus among the parties was reached. “The agenda will be our driving force. Anyone can join us. We have an open mind in forging unity among parties,” he said.

This is the fifth meeting of Mr. Rao with leaders of various regional parties to explore a federal front as an alternative to the Congress and the BJP at the Centre. He has met in the last couple of months West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool

ool Congress president Mamata Banerjee, Janata Dal (Secular) president and former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, former Chief Minister of Jharkhand Hemant Soren and DMK president M. Karunanidhi and its working president M.K. Stalin.

Mr. Rao said the aim was not to assume power but work for a quantum jump in the development agenda of the country.

Mr. Yadav said he had spoken to Mr. Rao several times over phone on the unity of regional parties and his coming here was to exchange views personally. He stressed on the unity of parties to stop the BJP from retaining power as it had left “unimaginable dissatisfaction” among people. The defeat of the BJP owing to the alliance of the SP and the BSP in the recent by-elections to Lok Sabha constituencies represented by the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister stood testimony to what the unity could do, he said.

‘Latvian was raped before being killed’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Senior Kerala police investigators on Tuesday said they suspected that two local ganja peddlers had raped Liga Skromane, a Latvian tourist who went missing in mid-March before they strangled her to death in a remote backwater locality close to Kovalam.

The Latvian national’s 40-day-old body was found in the mostly cut-off swampy Vazhamuttom area abutting the Thiruvallam lagoon.

Drug peddling

Officials said they had the suspects in their cross hairs. They have a criminal history of peddling drugs and preying on their foreign clients. The police were yet to charge them with the crime.

Investigators said that Liga, who was reported missing by her relatives on March 14, had gone to Kovalam first and later to Thiruvallam, possibly to procure marijuana from street peddlers.

The police believe that the suspects might have enticed her into following them to the secluded locality covered with thick shrubbery.

Earlier version

Their case, as of now, was that the accused doped Liga and then raped her. Her resistance to their sexual assault and fear that the foreigner would bring the law on them might have motivated one of them to choke her to death.

The police have dismissed the earlier version that the accused had killed Liga because she refused to pay for the drug.

Liga’s mortal remains will be consigned to flames at the Shanthikavadam Public Crematorium on Thursday.

Rich harvest



Innovative idea: A farmer sorting out cucumber cultivated at a water body in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu. Farmers cultivate crops in the tank whenever it goes dry after the monsoon failure. ■ L. BALACHANDAR

32 red sanders smugglers nabbed

19 logs, 20 axes and mini-lorry seized in Chittoor

STAFF REPORTER CHITTOOR

The Piler rural police and the Special Task Force (Anti Red Sanders smuggling) on Wednesday nabbed as many as 32 smuggling operatives from Salem district of Tamil Nadu, while they were loading red sanders logs into a mini-lorry at Chintakunta village of Yerravaripalem mandal, close to Seshachalam hill ranges.

Additional SP G.R. Radhika and Circle-Inspector (Piler Rural) K. Narasimha Murthy, addressing a press meet at Bhakarapeta circle office, said that Superintendent of Police S.V. Rajasekhara Babu obtained credible information about the movements of Tamil Nadu, smuggling operatives at the western side of Seshachalam hills.

The SP formed a special party with Piler rural police



Red sanders smugglers and seized logs being presented before the media in Chittoor district on Wednesday.

and special task force on Tuesday night, and it rushed to the spot.

Around 6.00 a.m., while the mini-lorry was about to leave the location, the police swooped on the vehicle.

Accused remanded

Surrounded by about 30 armed police party, the smuggling operatives were left with

no option but to surrender.

The police seized 19 red sanders logs, 20 axes and mini-lorry, worth about ₹20 lakh.

Sub-Inspectors of Yerravaripalem and Bhakarapeta also took part in the raids. All the accused were produced before the court at Piler, which remanded them at a local jail.

Tribal youth turn citizen journalists

Armed with smartphones and internet access, they are voicing their issues

S. HARPAL SINGH ADILABAD

Citizen journalism is fast catching up in the backward agency tracts in erstwhile united Adilabad district with youngsters from aboriginal tribes, literacy notwithstanding, making use of social media and messaging platforms to highlight problems in their villages.

Cheaper handsets and internet services are aiding the proliferation of citizen journalism. The only hindrance to the phenomenon spreading wider is the lack of accessibility in the interior hilly confines in the tribal belt.

Over the past five years, the rather passive tribal heartland has seen a marked change in terms of flow of information, and the level of activity shot up since the start of the movement for excluding the Lambada tribe



Adivasi youths collecting information and visuals at Jainoor PHC in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district. ■ S. HARPAL SINGH

from the list of Scheduled Tribes in the latter half of 2017.

The modus operandi of Adivasi citizen journalists, who operate in individual capacity or in small groups, is to meticulously take notes, click pictures or shoot videos relating to problems like

organised in Nellore in the first week of June and a meeting for minorities in Guntur on May 14.

These decisions were taken at the TDP coordination committee meeting chaired by national president and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

Word of caution

Evidently blowing the election bugle, Mr. Naidu made it amply clear to the leaders that complacency and negligence would not be tolerated. “I am not ready to pay for your mistakes. The people would respond and react in their way to our actions and deeds. Be watchful of your actions,” he said.

The development and the fight for the rights pushed

up the satisfaction levels among the public. The people were positive to the government, governance and its policies, he said.

The public satisfaction was 67% in March and touched 73% in April. “I have utmost satisfaction that the amount of work and development taken place during the last four years doesn’t match with any development taken place in 40 years of my public life,” he said.

The people should have the same positive feeling towards the party also. The public should favour the TDP in every constituency. The rank and file must work with unity. There was no room for dissent and disunity. The TDP must win all the seats, he said.

‘Getting attention’

“Never mind that, our work is already making a difference. We have been able to get the attention of authorities to our problems,” claims Athram Bhujang Rao, a media-savvy Raj Gond tribal teacher who leads a group of about seven Adivasi citizen journalists.

Bhujang Rao is right: the ‘stories’ on sufferings they put on social media are instantly being picked up by the conventional media. Take for example the report on water shortage at Gattepalli Tekidiguda which was lapped up by the local press.

“Perhaps, the administration can run a website which can give us the scope to voice our grievances through citizen journalism,” Mr. Rao added.

IN BRIEF



PM urged to waive GST on langar items
Chandigarh
Senior SAD leader and Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal has urged the Prime Minister to waive GST on ingredients used to make 'langars' in gurdwaras. In her April 26 letter to the PM, Ms. Harsimrat said she hopes that the religious institutions serving free 'langar' will be exempted from the GST. PTI

590 cartons of illicit liquor seized
JAIPUR
The police have seized nearly 590 cartons of illicit liquor worth ₹36 lakh from a truck and arrested three people in this connection in Rajasthan's Pali district, an officer said on Wednesday. The action was taken after the police intercepted the truck at a check post on NH-162 late on Tuesday night. The accused were identified as Mahaveer Bishnoi (25), Bhanwarlal Bishnoi (35) and truck driver Manohar Singh (29). PTI

Wanted Maoist arrested in Bihar's Begusarai
BEGUSARAI
A Maoist, wanted in more than a dozen criminal cases, was arrested from Bihar's Begusarai district on Wednesday, the police said. He was arrested from Bathauli village under the jurisdiction of Veerpur police station, they said. PTI

Family members of dead woman block road
MATHURA,
Traffic on Mathura-Vrindaban road was blocked for over an hour on Wednesday by the agitated family members of the woman who was found dead near a ghat here. The 19-year-old woman was found dead in Mahadeo ghat on Tuesday after she had left home to buy some books, the police said. PTI

Nature’s bounty



Reaped fresh: A woman walks with a basket filled with vegetables on the outskirts of Srinagar on Wednesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Protest against heritage site adoption scheme in Assam

Groups criticise move to hand over four sites in the State to corporate sector

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI
A Central government scheme that saw the Dalmia Bharat Group adopt the Red Fort in New Delhi has triggered protests in Assam, where four sites have been chosen to be handed over to the corporate sector as part of the plan.
Members of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) and other organisations on Wednesday protested against the 'Adopt a Heritage' scheme, a collaboration among the Tourism and Culture Ministers, the Archaeological Survey of In-

dia and the State government.
Four sites
The four sites chosen in Assam include the Kaziranga National Park, Rangghar, Asia's oldest amphitheatre, Kareng Ghar, a palace and Shiva Dol, a temple - all in Sivasagar district built during the 600-year reign of the Ahom dynasty before the British took control of the Northeast in 1826.
“The four sites selected are the pride of Assam. We will not let them be handed over to any private party for maintenance. The Centre should instead hand them

over to the local people if it cannot maintain them,” KMSS leader Akhil Gogoi said.
The AASU, in a statement, said officers of the ASI should be punished for failing to maintain the monuments entrusted to them.
The Opposition Congress too slammed the Centre. “This is condemnable,” State Congress president Ripun Borasaid.
Move defended
The Bharatiya Janata Party-led coalition government, however, defended the move saying it has been misconstrued.

“There is a misconception that the four heritage sites are being privatised. Private parties will, under corporate social responsibility, develop and maintain tourist facilities such as toilets, parking and cafeteria on the periphery of the area covered by the historic monuments,” said Jayanta Malla Barua, chairman, Assam Tourism Development Corporation Limited (ATDCL).
In the case of Kaziranga, he said, private firms would work only on the periphery and not in the core area managed by the Forest Department.

Dalit farmer goes missing; family provided security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BADAUN (U.P.)
The Dalit farmer, whose moustache was allegedly pulled out by some upper caste men and urine forced down his throat after he refused to harvest their crop, has gone missing, the police said.
The district administration has stepped up security for the family of the missing farmer Sitaram Valmiki.
“The security of the family has been increased. The four accused arrested were produced in the court and were sent to jail,” Additional Superintendent of Police Jitendra Kumar Srivastav said.
Valmiki is missing and his family members say that he might have gone to the place of his relatives. “We are trying to find him,” Mr. Srivastav said.

Scientist held for abusing minor girls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AGRA
A 62-year-old scientist has been arrested for allegedly sexually abusing minor girls by luring them with toffees and chocolates, the police said on Wednesday.
“Vishnu Dutt Sharma, working with Jalma Institute of Leprosy and Other Mycobacterial Diseases, was arrested on Tuesday night,” Shailendra Kumar, SHO, Taj Ganj police station said.
According to a complaint filed by father of one of the victims, the accused took young children to the terrace of his house and abused them.
Sharma is due to retire in September, he added.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: SKYMET (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rain is likely at isolated places over Odisha, Assam and Meghalaya. Thunderstorm accompanied with squall/hail/gusty winds is likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, interior Tamil Nadu and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala.....	—	33.0	23.0	Kozhikode.....	11	35.0	23.6
Ahmedabad.....	—	43.0	26.0	Kurnool.....	—	42.3	29.2
Aizawl.....	—	33.5	7.3	Lucknow.....	—	36.3	24.5
Allahabad.....	—	38.8	25.6	Madurai.....	—	40.6	27.4
Bengaluru.....	—	34.0	23.3	Mangaluru.....	—	35.9	27.8
Bhopal.....	—	42.5	29.8	Mumbai.....	—	33.1	24.0
Bhubaneswar.....	—	34.6	24.5	Mysuru.....	1.4	33.5	20.6
Chandigarh.....	—	34.4	28.0	New Delhi.....	—	38.3	27.0
Chennai.....	—	36.1	27.0	Patna.....	—	33.3	23.6
Coimbatore.....	—	33.8	25.0	Port Blair.....	22.2	31.7	25.7
Dehradun.....	—	33.7	22.3	Puducherry.....	16.8	34.2	21.4
Gangtok.....	33.3	21.8	11.4	Pune.....	—	38.7	23.6
Goa.....	—	33.7	26.3	Raipur.....	5.6	41.0	15.6
Guwahati.....	0.6	25.4	21.4	Ranchi.....	0.3	35.5	21.6
Hubballi.....	—	37.0	22.0	Shillong.....	19	19.3	—
Hyderabad.....	—	40.5	26.0	Shimla.....	—	24.5	15.3
Imphal.....	—	22.2	19.8	Srinagar.....	—	23.0	13.1
Jaipur.....	—	43.0	27.9	Trivandrum.....	—	34.9	27.4
Kochi.....	—	32.8	26.4	Tiruchi.....	—	41.3	28.6
Kohima.....	1	23.0	12.8	Vijayawada.....	8.4	39.0	25.2
Kolkata.....	—	34.6	25.8	Visakhapatnam.....	57.3	32.0	26.2

Pollutants in the air you are breathing						Yesterday	
CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE	
Ahmedabad.....	62	38	28	..82	—	■	In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Jodhpur, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 324 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Haldia, West Bengal recorded a healthy AQI score of 39
Bengaluru.....	14	26	29	..113	—	■	
Chennai.....	5	139	32	..136	—	■	
Delhi.....	9	22	24	..226	282	■	
Hyderabad.....	5	17	16	..63	..97	■	
Kolkata.....	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Lucknow.....	10	84	23	..153	—	■	
Mumbai.....	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Pune.....	64	26	44	..76	..95	■	
Visakhapatnam	17	68	34	..50	..111	■	

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease
(Individual pollutant data for various cities are averages for the previous day)

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IN BRIEF



'Sahara group helped Lalu's family buy property'

PATNA
Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi on Wednesday alleged that the Sahara group had helped Lalu Prasad and his family in buying a posh property from the Tata group through a shell company here, a charge denied by the RJD. When contacted, the Sahara group said it had nothing to do with the transaction, while the Tata group declined to comment. PTI

Two policemen killed in Chhattisgarh encounter

NAGPUR
Two police constables were killed in an encounter with Maoists in the Gariyaband district of Chhattisgarh on Wednesday. They were identified as Lekhran Maharam and Bhojising Jageshwarsing. The encounter took place between Odh and Amolar villages on the Chhattisgarh-Odisha border when personnel of the Gariyaband district police and the CRPF were carrying out a search operation.

CBI to file first chargesheet in PNB fraud case soon

NEW DELHI
The CBI will soon file the first chargesheet against 19 arrested persons in the Punjab National Bank fraud case, in which fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi, his uncle Mehul Choksi and other family members have been arraigned. "There is a deadline of 90 days for filing a chargesheet against the arrested persons, before which it will be submitted in the competent court," said an official.

Advt. hailing CM as god removed: T.N. Minister

CHENNAI
The advertisement that hailed Tamil Nadu CM as a 'god' and was being shown during intervals at cinema halls has been removed, Finance Minister D. Jayakumar said. The advertisement shows a woman asking a temple priest to do an *archana* in the name of Mr. Palaniswami, who she says is like a 'god' to her.

Student kills self blaming drunk father

P. SUDAKAR
TIRUNELVELI
A Class 12 student ended his life by hanging himself from an overbridge here in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. In a suicide note he wrote about the harassment he suffered in the hands of his drunkard father.
M. Dinesh Nallasivan, 17, of K. Reddiarpatti had lost his mother nine years ago. His father Madasamy, an alcoholic, married again. He, however, continued to harass his son under the influence of alcohol. On Tuesday evening, when the man took Dinesh's hard earned money to buy liquor, the poor teen could not digest it. He told his relatives that he was going to a nearby village, but he hanged himself from a rail overbridge on Wednesday.

Justice after more than 7 years

After acquittal, Dey's colleague Jigna Vora breaks down in courtroom

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI
More than seven years after veteran journalist J. Dey was shot dead by motorcycle-borne men near his residence, a special court brought justice to the family of the deceased.
As soon as special judge S.S. Adkar pronounced that Dey's colleague and journalist Jigna Vora, accused of giving Dey's photos, address and details of his movement to gangster Chhota Rajan, was acquitted of all charges, she broke down inside the courtroom.
However, when Rajan, who was depositing before the court through video-conferencing as he is currently



Journalists gathered outside the court on Wednesday. • VIVEK BENDRE

lodged in the Tihar Jail, was informed by the judge that he had been convicted, he kept a straight face and said, "*theek hain.*" Rajan did not say anything or show any expression even when he was told that he had been sentenced to life imprisonment.

The courtroom was filled with journalists, some of whom were colleagues of Dey, and had come to be a part of the hearing.
The corridor outside the courtroom was full of police officials. The judge announced the conviction in the first half and thereafter heard the final arguments on the quantum of sentence by the defence counsel and the special public prosecutor. All those convicted in the case were awarded life sentence in the evening.

Grief-stricken family
Deepak Sisodia's wife and son were standing anxiously outside the courtroom since 11 a.m. and did not move an

inch till 6 p.m. Sisodia was convicted for giving 25 bullets to Satish Kalya, the shooter, at the behest of Rajan. His wife was inconsolable right from the time the news of her husband's conviction was broken to her. Her son looked tense and kept inquiring about the sentence from journalists. Family members of those convicted were also distraught and grief-stricken.
The entrance of the court was crowded with a line-up of video cameras from different news channels waiting to talk to the prosecutor in the case. The other entrance was flocked by photojournalists, waiting to get a click of those acquitted.

Dramatis personae Roles played by those convicted and acquitted in the J. Dey murder case	Abhijit Shinde (Convicted): Present at the crime scene. Rode a bike used in crime	Sachin Gaikwad (Convicted): Assisted in fetching firearms. Was present at the crime scene. Drove a car used in the crime	Jigna Vora (Acquitted): Allegedly was Dey's professional rival. Accused of instigating Rajan to kill Dey Two absconding: Nayansigh Bista: He and Deepak Sisodiya gave the firearms to Kalya at the instance of Rajan
 Chhota Rajan (Rajendra Nikalje) (Convicted): He was unhappy with J. Dey as he was writing and publishing articles against him. Dey was murdered at his instance	 Rohit Joseph (Satish Kalya) (Convicted): Fetched firearms from Deepak Sisodiya and Nayansigh Bista. Fired five shots killing Dey	 Vinod Asrani (Abated): Called J.Dey to Uma Palace at the instance of Chhota Rajan Deepak	Ravi Rattesar: He gave global roaming SIM cards to Paulson Palitara
Anil Waghmode (Convicted): Assisted in fetching firearms. Was present at the crime scene	Mangesh Agawane (Convicted): Present at the crime scene. Rode a bike with Anil Waghmode as pillion rider	Sisodia (Convicted): Gave 25 bullets to Satish Kalya at the instance of Chhota Rajan	Paulson Palitara (Acquitted): Allegedly arranged global SIM cards at the instance of Rajan. Gave ₹2 lakh to Kalya
Arun Dake (Convicted): Present in the crime scene. Waghmode and Dake spied on Dey near Uma Palace Bar & Restaurant			
Nilesh Shedge (Convicted): Pillion rider on the motorcycle driven by Abhijit Shinde			

'Prosecution failed to prove Jigna's role'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
In acquitting J. Dey's former colleague and scribe Jigna Vora of any role in his murder, the special MCOCA court relied upon the testimonies of four witnesses – Pramod Sawant, Nikhil Dixit, Aariz Chandra and Rajesh Kadam.
The court said, "There is nothing in their evidence to suggest that she had instigated Rajan to commit the murder or that she had any other role in this offence. The court also recorded that the extra-judicial confessions

made by Rajan has not stated anywhere that he got Dey murdered because of the instigation by Ms. Vora or anybody else. The recovery of various mobile phones and the SIM cards of Ms. Vora and the relevant CDRs fail to connect Ms. Vora to the offence. Hence, she has been acquitted of all the charges against her."
The court said, "It is not necessary to analyse the sanction order under MCOCA with respect to Ms. Vora as the prosecution has failed to prove her involvement in the case."

Bid to send a chilling message to media

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
The special Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) court on Wednesday said with the murder of journalist J. Dey the Chhota Rajan gang was trying to send a clear message to the media.
The message was that "the organised crime syndicate of Rajan was very much alive and kicking, that nobody should dare to say anything against him and if anybody dared to do so, then he would meet the same fate as Dey." "Thus, the advantage

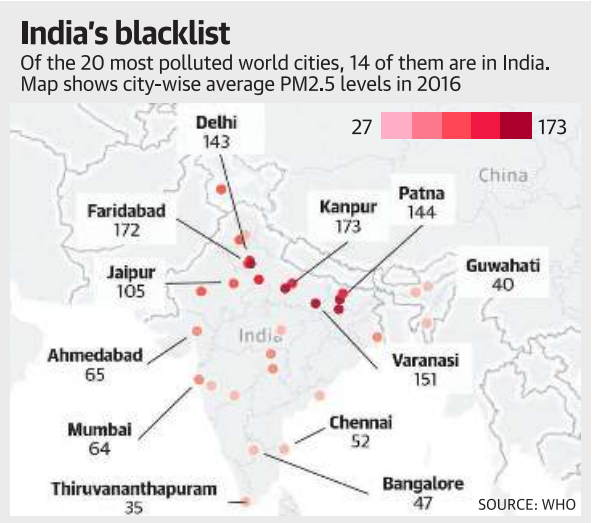
which was sought to be taken was to establish fear in the minds of the people and to show that Rajan's syndicate was still strong and active. This is one of the 'other advantage' which every organised crime syndicate seeks so as to ensure that due to fear the public and the opponents are wary of it," the court wrote in its judgment.
"The fear so created would further the cause of the syndicate. Therefore, if Rajan was shown to be in a weak position, people would not have feared him."

Pollution dipped in 2017, says Environment Ministry

Delhi is 6th most polluted city in world: WHO

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI
Responding to the air pollution data released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on Wednesday, the government claimed that various measures have led to pollution levels actually falling in 2017.

At 143 microgrammes per cubic metre, Delhi's PM (2.5) levels in 2016 – as reported by the WHO – made it the sixth most polluted city in the world. The government, citing Central Pollution Control Board data, said it was 134 microgrammes per cubic metre in 2016 and 125 microgrammes per cubic metre in 2017. "The government has made serious efforts to deal with air pollution. Data for the year 2017 for PM 2.5 shows improvement over 2016 and so far in 2018, it shows a further improvement, as compared to 2017," said a statement from the Environment Ministry.
The CPCB data, based on Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS), also noted that



PM (10) figures were 289 microgrammes per cubic metre in the year 2016 and 268 microgrammes per cubic metre in the year 2017. "Therefore, even PM 10 levels have come down in the year 2017 against 2016," the statement added.
The WHO had cited numbers from the CPCB, along with other peer-reviewed sources, to assess pollution levels in Delhi in 2016. WHO's global urban air pollution database measured the levels of fine particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) from more than 4,300 cities

in 108 countries, according to which ambient air pollution alone caused some 4.2 million deaths in 2016, while household air pollution from cooking with polluting fuels and technologies caused an estimated 3.8 million deaths in the same period. Kanpur and Varanasi led the list of the world's most polluted cities, with Faridabad, Gaya, Patna, Lucknow, Agra, Muzaffarpur, Srinagar, Gurugram, Jaipur, Patiala and Jodhpur also figuring in the 20 most-polluted cities in the world.
(With PTI inputs)

Taj discolouration: experts for more study before remedy

'Need to make sure there is a genuine problem'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
Experts say that the discolouration of the Taj Mahal – the 'browning', as observed by the Supreme Court on Wednesday – is due to a mix of weathering as well as industrial pollution, but thorough studies are required before remedial measures are implemented.
Beginning from the 1970s, activists and conservationists have raised concerns that there were various envi-

ronmental threats to the Taj – from sulphur dioxide emanating from the Mathura refinery to the constituents of the marble itself. This has, at various times, triggered restoration work as well as restrictions on the footfall and stricter restrictions on emissions. However, Agra remains among the most polluted cities in the world, according to the data made public by the World Health Organisation on Wednesday.
Most recently, in 2014, a study by Indian and U.S. researchers argued that the key culprits responsible for the discolouration were: particulate matter; carbon

from burning biomass and refuse; fossil fuels; and dust – possibly from agriculture and road traffic.
Conservationists caution that more research is required before hasty solutions are implemented. "We need to make sure that there is a genuine problem rather than just India's 'fair and lovely' mentality," said Ratish Nanda, CEO, Aga Khan Trust for Culture, in an email to *The Hindu*.
So far there wasn't convincing evidence that there were instabilities in the structure, and the discolouration was also due to a "natural ageing," he added.

Bihar SP's deputation to CBI cancelled

He was seen firing in air at his farewell

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA
The Bihar government on Wednesday ordered a probe and cancelled the deputation to the CBI of Katihar Superintendent of Police after a video showed him firing several rounds in the air from his pistol at his farewell party.
The video, which has gone viral, showed Siddharth Mohan Jain, Katihar SP, a Bihar cadre 2006 batch IPS officer, shaking his legs to a Bollywood number from the movie Sholay being sung by the outgoing District Magistrate Mithilesh Mishra, and firing several rounds in the air from his service pistol at their farewell party held at the Golf Course on Tuesday night.
"The Katihar SP's con-

duct is completely unacceptable... A probe into the incident too has been ordered," said Additional Director General of Police, S.K. Singhal.
Meanwhile, in another video, Munger's outgoing Superintendent of Police Ashish Bharti, too, was seen dancing with policemen and civilians on the road on a popular song at his farewell function. Similarly, a video of Vaishali SP Rakesh Kumar, who was transferred to Saharsha district, showed him celebrating his marriage anniversary while exchanging garlands with his wife at his farewell party on April 30.
The zonal Inspector Generals of police have been asked to probe the incidents and submit detailed reports.

Delhi court extends relief to Karti

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
A Delhi court on Wednesday extended protection from arrest to Karti Chidambaram till July 10 in two cases filed by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate connected with the Aircel-Maxis deal arising out of the 2G spectrum case.

Special Judge O.P. Saini extended the protection when the Directorate sought time to argue on Mr. Karti Chidambaram's application, seeking anticipatory bail in the matter.
The counsel for the Directorate sought adjournment of the hearing on the bail application, submitting that a related matter was pending before the Supreme Court and it would be taken up for hearing on July 2.
The CBI counsel concurred with the Directorate's argument and sought adjournment.
The court had on April 16 granted interim protection from arrest to Mr. Karti Chidambaram till May 2 as both the probe agencies had sought time to file replies to the bail application.
The CBI and the Directorate lodged cases against Mr. Karti Chidambaram in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

Joy as creche opens in SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
Pearly joy and rattling of new toys greeted Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra and his fellow judges inside the squeaky-clean creche inaugurated on Wednesday.
Usually host to a drab black and white of lawyers' gowns, the Supreme Court premises was decked up gaily with brilliant orange garlands to welcome its new entrants to the creche.
In a quick inaugural ceremony during the lunch hour, Chief Justice Misra led the procession

of judges, prominent among them being the newly-appointed Justice Indu Malhotra, to a red carpet welcome.
Guided tour
The judges, among whom Justice Ranjan Gogoi, who is the next CJI as per seniority norm and was actively involved with senior advocate Indira Jaising and advocate Anindita Pujari in the project, went on a guided tour of the facilities inside the creche.
It was Ms. Jaising and Ms. Pujari who filed a PIL petition for a creche

inside the Supreme Court to support working parents.
The creche was earlier located outside the Supreme Court premises in two rooms at the New Lawyers' Chambers building located opposite the road. The top court has now dedicated 2,000 sq feet of its space to children aged between six months to six years.
The creche has been functional from May 1 and can accommodate a total of 30 children of advocates, registered clerks and Supreme Court employees.



Delivering the goods

GST revenue increase suggests the indirect tax regime is overcoming teething problems

Collections from the Goods and Services Tax crossed the ₹1 lakh crore mark in April, according to data released by the Finance Ministry on tax receipts that accrued in March but were payable in April. To be precise, the total revenue from the new indirect tax in April was ₹1,03,458 crore, the highest recorded in a single month since its implementation in July 2017. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has called this a “landmark achievement” and a “confirmation of increased economic activity”. Separate data released last week suggest the number of registered tax-payers filing GST returns by the specified deadline has risen from 57% for July to nearly 63% for March. And since many had consistently failed to meet the deadline in the initial months of confusion over the online returns filing system, it is heartening to note that by the final month of the financial year, they had caught up on their past arrears too. Overall tax compliance for July 2017 is now over 96% of registered taxpayers who are required to file, and ranges from 92% to 80% for each month thereafter, till December. Further simplification of the returns, hanging fire for a while now, must be expedited to improve compliance. Though it referred to the record GST collections as a sign of an upswing in the economy, the government, to be fair, also stressed that this number may be driven by the human tendency to wrap up pending official dues at the last moment – which in this case is the last month of the financial year. Yet, even delayed compliance is a welcome ‘new normal’.

True, the revenue influx in April cannot be taken as a firm trend for the future. But given the tumult the GST caused in its initial months and the fear of high evasion levels that gripped officials when revenues tumbled after three months of ₹90,000 crore-plus collections, it is fair to say that the new tax system has ended its first three quarters on a robust note. By virtue of just the April inflows, the average monthly collection has gone from ₹89,885 crore in the first eight months to over ₹91,300 crore. This number is important, as by the government’s own reckoning the new regime needed to deliver about ₹91,000 crore a month to ensure that revenues lost by the Centre and the States under the earlier indirect tax system are covered. Fresh anti-evasion measures introduced in the past few weeks, such as the e-way billing to track movement of goods, could plug leakages to some extent. The government is keen to start matching tax credits claimed by businesses for inputs from suppliers. While these should boost GST revenues in the new financial year, nothing will beat fiscal stress better than a sustained revival in consumption and investment demand. Policymakers need to ensure that the uptick in car sales and demand for steel and cement is catalysed further.

Call to action

WHO highlights the air pollution crisis in urban India; things are no better in rural areas

A new report from the World Health Organisation highlights not only how widespread air pollution is in urban India, but also how deficient air quality monitoring is. The report, which summarised 2016 data for 4,300 cities, ranks 14 Indian cities among the 20 most polluted ones globally. While Delhi comes in at number six, Kanpur, Faridabad, Varanasi, Gaya and Patna are ranked ahead of it, by PM 2.5 levels. And yet, Kanpur, Faridabad and several other pollution-choked cities have only one PM 2.5 monitoring station each, while Delhi has several. WHO researchers get around this problem by using alternative data sources such as satellite remote sensing and chemical transport models, along with ground-monitoring stations. The outcome of this exercise makes it clear that air pollution is not a problem of large metropolises alone, even though they have traditionally been the focus of mitigation efforts. Such wide variations in data quality exist across the world. While Europe has the most extensive monitoring network, countries in Africa and the Western Pacific region perform poorly. This means data from these regions are of poor quality, and likely underestimates, resulting in an under-count of the disease burden as well. The report puts the global death toll from air pollution at seven million a year, attributable to illnesses such as lung cancer, pneumonia and ischemic heart disease. In 2016 alone, it says, around 4.2 million people died owing to outdoor air pollution, while 3.8 million people succumbed to dirty cooking fuels such as wood and cow dung. About a third of these deaths occurred in Southeast Asian countries, which include India. Once monitoring improves in these regions, the numbers will likely be revised upwards.

There are silver linings, however. The report had words of praise for India’s Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana scheme, which has provided 37 million women living below the poverty line with LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connections. Such schemes will also help cut the indoor air pollution that plagues much of rural India, which is not covered in the WHO analysis. It is important to remember, though, that rural India has problems beyond inefficient cook-stoves. As the recently published draft National Clean Air Programme noted, there are currently no air pollution monitoring stations in rural India. This does not mean outdoor air pollution is not a problem here. Studies have shown that ozone levels are higher in rural areas, as is pollution from insecticide use and crop-burning. The WHO has asked Southeast Asian countries to take swift action to tackle the twin problems of indoor and outdoor pollution. India must realise that its problems are larger than the WHO estimates, and take the call to action seriously.

When India and China meet

The message from Wuhan is: let us give each other space and rationalise our differences in a grown-up way



NIRUPAMA RAO

The path of India-China relations is strewn with the ghosts of summits past. The leaders of the two countries have met, expressed the loftiest of sentiments, gone their separate ways. No doubt, summits are good, nobody has a quarrel with them, the media at least loves them. The relationship has often benefited from such meetings.

A note of hope was therefore sounded when Prime Minister Narendra Modi flew into the Chinese city of Wuhan to meet with President Xi Jinping for an “informal” summit last week. The aim, as announced, was to build strategic communication and provide a long-term perspective for what is a complex and adversarial bilateral relationship.

Cautious optimism

For the duration of a day and a half, the leaders of the world’s two most populous countries held talks against a classic Chinese landscape of gardens and lakes, with and without aides. The optics were reassuring and optimism about the outcome of these conversations was implied. Only a year ago, on the high Himalayan plateau of Doklam on the borders of Bhutan, India and China, over-

looking the vital Siliguri Corridor connecting ‘mainland’ India to the Northeastern States, Indian and Chinese troops engaged in a tense stand-off lasting 73 days. The visit of the Dalai Lama, exiled in India for nearly six decades, to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh engendered deep Chinese resentment. The volatile Indian opposition to China’s flagship Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), especially the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) being developed in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, was also a source of serious friction. China’s growing inroads in the form of high-profile projects and support for anti-Indian political interests in India’s South Asian neighbourhood fuelled Indian distrust. Hawkish and hypernationalist voices in both countries raised tensions further, and the spectre of armed conflict on a shared but disputed frontier lurked in the shadows.

Last year was an annus horribilis for the India-China relationship. The Wuhan summit signalled that the two countries are working on restoring a much-needed equilibrium in a deeply disturbed relationship. This is a relationship in therapy. For Mr. Modi, whose scorecard on neighbourhood policy has been underwhelming, a detoxifying policy facelift with China is certainly advantageous both in terms of his domestic political image, with the 2019 parliamentary elections drawing near, as well as in improving his global profile.

The outcome statement from the Indian foreign office and from the Prime Minister’s social media



AFP

network speaks about Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi having forged a common understanding in Wuhan on the future direction of India-China relations “built upon mutual respect for each other’s developmental aspirations and prudent management of differences with mutual sensitivity”. These are words that can be variously interpreted. Their distilled essence is: let us give each other space and let us rationalise our opposition to each other and our differences in a grown-up way. The takeaway buzzword from Wuhan appears to be “strategic communication” by both leaderships in order to provide a more cogent sense of purpose and direction that helps heal the relationship.

Two statements

The Indian statement (the separate statement from the Chinese foreign ministry is not so full-bodied) also makes it known that the two leaders have “issued strategic guidance” to their militaries to strengthen communication in order to especially “enhance predictability and effectiveness in the

management of border affairs”. The intention is to prevent incidents in border regions of the Doklam variety, it is presumed. The situation bears watching. There are many pockets along the 3,500 km border between the two countries where the Line of Actual Control is disputed. Transgressions from both sides occur regularly and military establishments, Indian and Chinese, are trained not to yield an inch. Efforts to establish a clearly delineated Line of Actual Control have not succeeded, mainly due to Chinese reluctance. The summit at Wuhan coincided with news that India will build 96 more border outposts along the frontier with China.

The summit has apparently not yielded (and neither was it expected to) any significant reduction of differences on the CPEC. The Indian government can ill-afford to give the impression of any concession on this question to China given the Pakistan factor – a perennial trigger for public hysteria. The announcement that China and India will jointly work on a project (details yet to be announced) in war-torn Afghanistan is a first and unlikely to give Pakistan comfort, although China will no doubt provide undercover assurances to the former that its interests will not be harmed.

A sober prognosis for the future of India-China relations is warranted despite the euphoria of Mr. Modi’s visit to Wuhan. The potential for tension on the Himalayan piedmont is aggravated by the clash of Chinese and Indian ambition in

the maritime environment of the Indo-Pacific. The growing alignment of interest among three democracies – India, the U.S. (now termed an “indispensable” partner) and Japan – is a source for Chinese insecurity, just as China-Pakistan strategic cooperation and China’s inroads in South Asia make India uneasy. Twenty-first century Asia is not a pacific place. It is multi-polar and multi-aligned and a testing ground for the security architectures of the future.

Securing the Asian century

Decades ago, India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, famously said that the challenge between India and China “runs along the spine of Asia”. As India and China re-emerge from the shadows of history, hopes for the so far elusive dream of an Asia united will be centred on the progress and development of these two nations. At the same time, tension or conflict between the two takes away from the prospects of the Asian century that their leaders speak of. Perhaps it is this realisation that prompted the rendezvous in Wuhan. The world should have no quarrel with India and China beating swords into ploughshares. We need a regular pattern of more informal summits between the leaders of the two countries. The challenge across the spine of Asia does not one good.

Nirupama Rao is a former Foreign Secretary of India and Ambassador to the United States and to China. Twitter: @NMnenRao

The turning point in 1932

How separate electorates for Dalits could have prevented Partition



MOHAMMED AYOOB

In the current climate of Dalit assertion that has the potential to frustrate the BJP’s dreams of regaining power in 2019, it is relevant to revisit the era when the Dalits asserted their clout in Indian politics for the first time but were stymied by Mahatma Gandhi. This happened under the charismatic B.R. Ambedkar in the 1920s and 1930s and almost succeeded in gaining separate representation for the “Depressed Classes”, as they were euphemistically termed in British legalese, in the central and provincial legislatures. It is equally important to speculate what it would have done to the Hindu-Muslim equation, and therefore the prospect of Partition, if Ambedkar had succeeded in reaching his goal. This article attempts to answer this question.

Deep insecurity

The politics of the Muslim elite – and all politics in the run-up to Indian independence was elite politics – was driven primarily by a sense of deep insecurity. This tendency was accentuated when it became increasingly clear from the 1920s that the British would have to leave India sooner or later. The Muslim sense of insecurity was rooted in many factors relat-

ing to history, demography, lack of progress in English education and, probably most importantly, the shift of the centre of gravity of Indian politics from the heartland of northern and central India, where much of the Muslim elite, the *ashraf*, were concentrated, to Calcutta, Madras and Bombay and their hinterlands dominated by the new English-educated, predominantly Hindu elite.

Partition was the outcome in substantial part of this insecurity although other factors, including aggressive forms of Hindu nationalism advocated by the likes of V.D. Savarkar, K.B. Hedgewar and M.S. Golwalkar contributed to it in considerable measure as well. The soft Hindutva of many stalwarts within the Congress, including Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Vallabhbhai Patel, added to Muslim concerns, as did Jawaharlal Nehru’s disdain for what he termed the Muslim League’s “communal politics”.

The Muslim elite’s anxieties were centred largely on the demographic and, therefore, political disparity between Muslims and Hindus and the domination of India’s political and economic landscapes by the upper caste Hindu elite. Political parity between caste Hindus and Muslims, therefore, remained the primary goal of the Muslim League through much of its existence as a political party.

A landmark announcement in 1932 by British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald came close to removing these anxieties. He accepted Ambedkar’s demand that it



THE HINDU ARCHIVES

was necessary for the “Depressed Classes” to have separate representation in the central and provincial legislatures in order to protect their interests which ran counter to the interests of the dominant Hindu castes who also hogged most of the seats in the legislatures. This was the case because elections in British India were held under a very restricted franchise based primarily on property, income and educational qualifications. Only about 13% of the population had the right to vote. The Dalits lagged far behind caste Hindus in all the three qualifications that determined the right to vote and, therefore, were not only under-represented but also represented by members of those castes that were opposed to according equality to them.

The British Prime Minister accepted Ambedkar’s arguments and awarded separate electorates to the Depressed Classes on lines similar to those for Muslims. The Muslim League, recognising the import of this decision in that it had the potential to weaken the caste Hindu leadership’s hold on the entirety of the Hindu population, readily accepted the award. However, to everyone’s consterna-

tion, Mahatma Gandhi, who was seen as a leading advocate for Dalit rights, went on a fast unto death to persuade the British to repeal the award. To him, the award was a ploy to divide Hindu society that he found unacceptable. Initially, Ambedkar refused to bend to Gandhi’s coercive fast. However, when it became clear that Gandhi’s life depended on Ambedkar’s decision, Ambedkar was forced to give up his demand in return for reserved seats for Dalits but on the basis of a single Hindu electorate. Years later, Ambedkar came to bitterly regret his decision.

Equally, if not more important, Gandhi’s extreme reaction to the award of separate electorates to the Dalits convinced the Muslim elite that Gandhi and the Congress were bent on not giving Muslims their due share in the future political arrangement in India. Their reasoning was simple: if implemented, the Communal Award, as it was known, would have led to parity between caste Hindu and Muslim representatives in the legislatures, and the Dalits, who the Muslim elite did not find threatening and who they saw as potential allies against caste Hindus because of the common fear of upper caste domination, would have held the balance. This would have precluded the need for demanding Partition and in all probability kept India united.

This argument sounds plausible because for most of the 1940s Pakistan was but a bargaining counter for Jinnah and the Muslim League. This is why Jinnah accept-

ed the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946, which would have kept India united in the form of a loose federation, but which Nehru torpedoed. With the failure of this last-ditch British effort to keep India united, Jinnah was hoisted with his own petard and forced to accept what he called a “mutilated, moth-eaten Pakistan.”

More potent than 1937

It appears in hindsight that Mahatma Gandhi’s stance on the Communal Award – even more than Nehru’s refusal to enter into a coalition with the Muslim League in the United Provinces in 1937, which is widely seen as the turning point in Muslim politics in favour of separatism – was responsible for increasing the Muslim leaders’ distrust of the Congress that made Pakistan an attractive option for them. One could plausibly argue that Gandhi’s rejection of the Communal Award sent the message to the Muslim leadership that he and the Congress were more interested in promoting a monolithic Hindu bloc than in nurturing Hindu-Muslim unity or providing justice for the Dalits in the form demanded by Ambedkar. This increased their sense of insecurity and finally led to the demand for a separate state comprising the Muslim majority provinces of British India. The rest is history.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

To elevate or not

All the reasons given by the government for its opposition to the elevation of the Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court, Justice K.M. Joseph, to the Supreme Court hide its real intent (“A dangerous incursion”, May 1). The Law Minister, Ravi Shankar Prasad, has been unsuccessfully trying to defend the indefensible by taking cover behind the argument that the Congress has no moral right to criticise the government as it meted out “unfair treatment” to the judiciary, especially during the Emergency. While there is no denying his charges against the Congress, the Minister’s response is also a kind of tacit admission that the present government too believes in having a “committed” judiciary to

do its bidding. Nothing can be more damaging to the constitutional fabric than the elevation of judges of the High Court and the Supreme Court on the basis of their support to the ideology and policies of the government of the day. Hopefully, the collegium will reaffirm in one voice its original recommendation.

GOPAL GOKUL MENON,
Ernakulam

The writer has deployed his legal acumen to demolish the government’s arguments against elevating Justice K.M. Joseph to the Supreme Court. However, what he has avoided discussing is the opaque manner in which the collegium functions. Had the collegium been transparent in explaining, for instance, why certain judges were not considered

for elevation, the government would have found it very difficult to block Justice K.M. Joseph’s elevation. It would have also found it difficult if his nomination had been proposed by an independent multi-member body like the National Judicial Appointments Commission. Even if the present impasse is amicably resolved, such instances may recur because there is a conflict of interest when judges appoint judges.

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN,
Thiruvananthapuram

Two views

The interview of Professor Steven Pinker (“People are safer now than they were several hundred years ago”, May 2) read along with former Governor of West Bengal M.K. Narayanan’s article (“The rocky road to

2019”, May 2) depicts sharp contrasts. While Mr. Narayanan speaks of security issues, rapes and Dalit and agrarian unrest in the country today, Professor Pinker says issues of right-wing populism and terrorism are exaggerated. The Harvard scholar seems optimistic, while Mr. Narayanan seems more realistic. If Professor Pinker is to be believed, then Mr. Narayanan’s views, which are based on “news and headlines”, have to be corroborated by analysing quantitative trends over history in order to evaluate whether the apparent crises in the country are usual or something extraordinary.

VYOM BHARADWAJ,
Kansal, Mohali

Phones on airplanes
Will speaking on the phone

not disturb co-passengers? (“Soon, you can make calls, browse while flying in India”, May 2) Imagine someone who would like to take a nap on the flight and is stuck with someone who is keen on discussing for a long time a business deal? Airlines should ask passengers who want to avail of this service to pay an extra ₹300-₹500.

N. VISWANATHAN,
Coimbatore

Modi’s challenge

Good deeds ought to accompany good words. Prime Minister Narendra Modi might be a good orator, but the general public is only interested in knowing whether or not its issues will be resolved by the government (“PM hits back, throws Rahul a challenge”, May 2). For Mr. Modi to throw a challenge

to Rahul Gandhi to deliver a speech in any language for 15 minutes without reading from a piece of paper is ridiculous. Elections are not speech competitions. Some may not be wise in their speech, but could be wise in their deeds.

KSHIRASAGARA BALAJI RAO,
Hyderabad

Protecting the Taj

It is sad that the SC has to remind the government of its duties (“Taj Mahal turning brown and green”, May 2). The Taj Mahal earns India huge revenues, so what prevents the government from seeking the services of international archaeological experts? Lack of political will, not funds, is the problem.

K. S. SUNDARAM,
Coimbatore

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India’s role in ending the Korean war

How it reconciled the two Cold War blocs to restore peace through the Armistice Agreement



JAIRAM RAMESH

Dramatic events that were inconceivable a few months back are now unfolding rapidly in the Korean peninsula. The Korean war of the early 1950s had never formally ended and an uneasy truce has prevailed for well over half a century. What established the truce was the Korean Armistice Agreement, which was signed on July 27, 1953.

Executing the peace campaign

Numerous books have been written about the Korean war which directly involved the Soviet Union, the U.S. and China. But in none of these works have the indefatigable efforts of India to restore peace in that region been discussed. The first scholar to do so was a British historian, Robert Barnes, who accessed different archives and wrote a meticulously researched paper called ‘Between the Blocs: India, the United Nations, and Ending the Korean War’, which was published in *The Journal of Korean Studies* five years back. This is an academic journal with a limited circulation and therefore Mr. Barnes’s article never got the wider attention it deserves.

Mr. Barnes contends that India played a “much-overlooked but significant role” in bringing the Korean conflict to an end. Naturally, his main focus is on Jawaharlal Nehru, for whom this was a high point. But Mr. Barnes also highlights the role of others who helped Nehru craft and execute the peace campaign. Initially, India’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, B.N. Rau, was very active. India’s Ambassador in China, K.M. Panikkar, was the channel through which Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai communicated his views on the Korean conflict to the Americans as well as to the UN, since the People’s Republic of China was not a member of that body then. But the pivot of India’s efforts at New York from mid-1952 onwards, for over a year, was V.K. Krishna Menon, who was sent as Nehru’s special envoy. It is well known that the Americans hated Menon; what is less known is that he was quite an anathema to the Soviets as well. But finally on Decem-



“One of the follow-up actions to the Armistice Agreement was the establishment of a Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) which was to decide on the fate of over 20,000 prisoners of war from both sides.” (From left): P.N. Haksar and Lt. General K.S. Thimayya with members of the NNRC in Panmunjom in 1953. • NEHRU MEMORIAL MUSEUM & LIBRARY

ber 3, 1952, the Indian resolution was adopted at the UN with unanimous non-Soviet support.

Both Nehru and Menon realised that this was only a partial victory and more needed to be done to bring the Soviets and the Chinese on board. Stalin’s death on March 5, 1953, was a crucial turning point. Thereafter, signals from the communist camp were that a quick end to the hostilities would not be unwelcome. Menon submitted another proposal, which, however, was not acceptable to the Americans who came up with their own version. But they agreed to merge their resolution with Menon’s to move things forward. This was then to lead to the Armistice Agreement.

Follow-up action

One of the follow-up actions to the Armistice Agreement was the establishment of a Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) which was to decide on the fate of over 20,000 prisoners of war from both sides. India was chosen as the Chair of the NNRC, with Poland and Czechoslovakia representing the Communist bloc and Sweden and Switzerland representing the Western world. There was to be a UN Command led by an Englishman and a Custodian Force sent by India. Nehru selected Lt. General K.S. Thimayya as the Chairman of the NNRC and Major General S.S.P. Thorat as the

Commander of the Custodian Force India, as it was called. P.N. Haksar, then Krishna Menon’s aide in the High Commission in London, was appointed as one of the two political advisers in Thimayya’s team. Very soon he became the only one, since the other, I.J. Bahadur Singh, had to be repatriated from Korea quickly on health grounds.

Thimayyya became a hero at the end of the NNRC’s tenure in February 1954. He was feted both at home and abroad for having executed a most thankless task courageously, although he and Haksar had developed serious differences. Haksar felt that Thimayya was far too concerned with American opinion while Thimayya thought Haksar was too solicitous of the communists. The Commission’s reports were drafted entirely by Haksar and submitted to the UN General Assembly, one in December 1953 and another in February 1954. The Swedes and the Swiss wrote their dissent to certain paragraphs in both reports, showing how intensely polarised the NNRC was. At the end of its work, the NNRC was left with over 80 prisoners of war who resisted being handed over and expressed a desire to go to neutral countries. On humanitarian considerations, Nehru decided to bring them to India pending a final decision by the UN on where they would go. Most left immediately for other countries in Central and South Amer-

ica. But a few stayed back and got loans to start poultry businesses. Only one them, Kim Hyeong, now survives. His son too lived in India for over 30 years before taking his ailing father back for good to South Korea.

Incidentally, four years before his death, Haksar was reminded of his role in Korea by one Colonel Bhupinder Singh, to whom he wrote on March 24, 1994: “I must confess that I am intrigued by your invitation to me to join the members of the Indo-Korean War Veterans in welcoming the new Ambassador from South Korea... It is of course true that I spent some few months of my life in Panmunjom in my capacity as Alternate Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission of which General Thimayya was the Chairman and General Thorat was the Commander of the Custodian Forces of India. Our task [was] to ascertain the wishes of the several thousands of prisoners of war which the UN Command had handed over to us. A small number of Korean prisoners opted to come to India. I had the privilege of preparing the report on the entire operation which was submitted to the UN. Be that as it may, I find it awkward to be classified as a Korean War Veteran.”

Jairam Ramesh, a former Union minister, is a Member of Parliament belonging to the Congress. This article is derived from his forthcoming book, ‘Intertwined Lives: P.N. Haksar & Indira Gandhi’

Dilemmas in civil services selection

Despite a rigorous process, are we able to choose the right candidate for the job?



R.K. RAGHAVAN

About 1,000 young men and women got the nod a few days ago from the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for induction into the Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service, and other services. This was at the end of a tough three-stage selection process, in which more than 4,50,000 candidates appeared at the first stage, a written test called the Prelims. Only about 13,000 made it to the written main examination, and 2,500 to the final interview stage.

Selection process

We should be grateful that we have such a rigorous process to choose those who’ll occupy vital positions in the higher echelons of the bureaucracy. Some five decades ago, when I took the examination, only about 10,000 competed for a little less than 1,000 openings. Interestingly, a candidate can now take the examination in his or her native language. Surprisingly, this facility is availed of only by a few. This will not change as long as our university education remains English-oriented. Despite all this flexibility, the current examination is extremely tough to crack, and it holds many surprises to a candidate who appears for the first time.

It’s gratifying that the entire selection process has till now not been hit by any scandal, something very few other prestigious systems of recruitment in the country can claim. Also, the UPSC has had an enviable record of relative freedom from graft and politics, against the sordid image of most of the Public Service Commissions in the States, where jobs have often been sold.

We can certainly have a more representative bureaucracy. Given the skewed selection decades ago, when the urban elite and middle classes managed to hog the services, we have come a long way to recognise and respect the diversity that is Bharat. This year, many of those selected were from rural areas; 120-odd were from the minority communities. Who can take exception or be blind to this inclusive nature of selection? We would like to see more from these groups. Any attempt to prescribe quotas among



these groups will, however, be undesirable, apart from being unconstitutional. Of the successful candidates, 240 were women. We need to have a greater number of women.

Several fault lines

All this does not mean that we have a faultless system that offers no scope for improvement. A widely prevalent criticism is the pushing up of the age limit and the number of times a candidate may take the examination. Recent years have seen older candidates succeed. This has certainly had a negative impact on the utility of training.

I don’t want to undermine the talent or sheer perseverance of those who get appointed in their thirties. What is disconcerting is the baggage that these recruits bring and the possibility that they may not be receptive to new inputs offered by a modern training programme. Is there, therefore, not a case for lateral entry through another set of examinations, whereby older individuals with past job experience can still get into the civil services at appropriate levels?

There are two issues which are worrying. There is a certain lack of sensitivity to the needs of the common man, even among recruits from the lower economic stratum and those who have a rural upbringing. You will comprehend this harsh reality if you go to the grass-roots of village administration, including the police. It is precisely to extirpate this phenomenon of

bias against the rural poor that we welcomed the changing profile of the civil service. If the rural inductees to the IAS and IPS do not empathise with the villager, who will?

Public servant corruption is still a harsh reality in urban and rural settings. While the intensity of this evil has come down appreciably in the Central government, the picture remains largely unchanged in the States. A 33-year-old IPS trainee in Maharashtra was recently caught demanding a ₹3 lakh bribe through an agent. An even more strident complaint against young recruits is their lack of preparedness to cope with political interference in day-to-day administration. Here again the fault is more with our vague training inputs and the leadership. Until we have an honest and fearless civil service we will not have fulfilled the dream of Sardar Patel, to whom a strong bureaucracy was the sine qua non of democracy.

R.K. Raghavan, a former CBI Director, is currently India’s Ambassador to Cyprus. The views expressed here are personal

SINGLE FILE

Protect patents

The Delhi HC’s judgment revoking Monsanto’s Bollgard-2 patent is troubling

PRIYANKA PULLA



The Delhi High Court (HC) judgment revoking Monsanto’s Bollgard-2 patent is fraught with problems. Bollgard-2 is an insecticidal technology which uses a gene called Cry2Ab from the soil bacterium *Bacillus Thuringiensis* (Bt). When inserted into a cotton plant, the gene confers resistance against cotton pests. Monsanto’s 2008 patent on Bollgard-2 protects several aspects of this technology: the modification of Cry2Ab to make it compatible with the cotton genome, the process of introducing this gene at a specific location in the cotton genome, and the protein expressed by the plant containing the gene.

So, why did the Delhi HC reject this patent? The judge reasoned that Monsanto’s Bt gene was useless to farmers unless inserted into a cotton hybrid, which farmers could then grow to repel pests. This insertion is carried out by seed companies, who cross a Bt gene-containing plant (from Monsanto’s donor seeds) with their proprietary cotton varieties. The judge argued that this crossing of plants was a natural and biological process. This argument undermined Monsanto’s patent, because under Section 3(j) of India’s Patents Act, a seed or a plant, or a biological process to create a seed or plant cannot be patented. If this argument is correct, few plant biotechnology innovations would be patentable in India. This is a dangerous conclusion because the lack of patent protection would discourage crucial research by the agri-biotech industry.

The are two key steps in the process of creating a Bt cotton hybrid. The first is carried out by Monsanto, in which it modifies the Cry2Ab gene into a form which doesn’t occur in nature. Next, Monsanto inserts this modified gene into cotton seeds, again an unnatural process that cannot happen without human intervention. Such seeds, called donor seeds, are then sold to seed companies.

The second step is carried out by seed companies who hybridise cotton plants grown from the donor seeds with their own varieties. This hybridisation, as the HC said, is a biological process that cannot be patented. But that doesn’t mean the insertion of the modified gene into cotton seeds by Monsanto is a natural biological process, says Eashan Ghosh, a Delhi-based intellectual property lawyer. The judgment appears to have conflated a step involving human intervention with a step involving a biological process.

Transgenic technologies such as Bt cotton are an important part of India’s cotton production arsenal. They are not infallible. But this is true of all technologies, like antibiotics, that fail when used improperly, as was the case with Bollgard-2. The important thing for India is to keep incentivising the development of such technologies and to use them properly. Strong patent protection is a crucial part of this process.

The writer is with The Hindu in Bengaluru



CONCEPTUAL

Handicap principle

BIOLOGY

This refers to a hypothesis which states that members of a species might develop features that at first seem to expose their biological weakness in order to actually signal their strength. This principle has been used to explain why the peacock, for instance, developed a colourful but cumbersome tail even though it reduced the bird’s chances of survival. The hypothesis states that the cumbersome tail might actually signal biological strength as the peacock manages to survive despite the size of its tail. The idea was proposed by Israeli biologists Amotz and Avishag Zahavi.

MORE ON THE WEB



Sevagram: a reminder of Gandhi’s forgotten ideals

http://bit.ly/sevagram

FAQ

Regulating cryptocurrencies

The low-down on the RBI’s order

T.C.A. SHARAD RAGHAVAN

What is the RBI’s stance?

In the most direct action taken so far by regulatory authorities on the issue of cryptocurrencies, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), during its monetary policy announcement on April 6, directed all regulated agencies, including banks, to stop doing any business with “any person or entity dealing with or settling virtual currencies (VC)”.

What does this mean?

The circular says that banks have to stop all services to those dealing in VCs, including maintaining accounts, registering, trading, settling, clearing, giving loans against virtual tokens, accepting them as collateral, opening accounts of exchanges dealing with them and transfer/receipt of money in accounts relating to the

purchase or sale of VCs. In addition, the RBI gave its regulated entities three months from the date of the circular to exit any such relationship they might already be in.

Why did this happen?

This decision did not come out of the blue. The RBI and the government have repeatedly issued warnings to people dealing in cryptocurrencies, with the Finance Ministry even referring to them as “Ponzi schemes” in which investors stand to lose all their money. The fear among regulators and policymakers is that cryptocurrencies, being an alternative source of value to fiat currency, could be misused to launder black money or finance terrorist activities. It has also been reported that the RBI has constituted a committee to look into the merits and demerits of issuing a cen-

tral bank digital currency, which will have the status of a fiat currency. So, ring-fencing non-state cryptocurrencies could be the first step towards the issuing of a single, fiat virtual currency by the RBI.

What has been the effect so far?

Several cryptocurrency exchanges have said that though harsh, the RBI’s stance does not explicitly say that it is illegal to buy and sell cryptocurrencies, or that running a cryptocurrency exchange in India is illegal. Instead, this move only segregates cryptocurrencies from fiat currency. Most exchanges are going ahead with their cryptocurrency to cryptocurrency transactions. Some have filed writ petitions challenging the RBI’s order on the grounds that it violates their rights under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.

FROM The Hindu. ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 3, 1968

Surgeon’s negligence: damages upheld

The Supreme Court has held that a surgeon is liable to pay damages in case of professional negligence in treating a patient. Mr. Justice Shelat, who delivered the judgment of the Bench, was confirming the judgment and orders of the Bombay High Court awarding Rs. 3,000 as damages to a parent (respondent before the Supreme Court) who lost his son due to proved negligence of surgeon. Mr. Justice Bachwat and Mr. Justice Grover were the other Judges. The Supreme Court said that a medical practitioner must bring to his task a reasonable degree of skill and knowledge and must also exercise a reasonable degree of care. The court, however, said that law did not require either the very highest degree of care or a very low degree of care.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 3, 1918.

Labour Organisation.

(From an Editorial)

The idea of forming a labour union in the principal cities in India has been on the tapis for some time. The Bombay strike, followed by strikes in other towns, the present Railway strike in Bhavnagar for instance, have indicated that the relations between employers and employed, between labour and capital, are becoming strained, and that it is necessary to organize measures of some kind as a medium to arbitrate between the two, for the benefit of both. It is undesirable that things should be permitted to remain as they are.

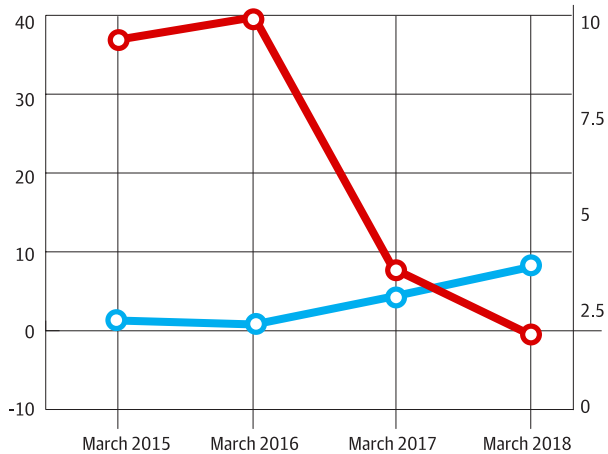
DATA POINT

Indians on the American campus

The number of Indian students actively pursuing a Masters programme in the U.S. was lower in March 2018 compared to March last year, while the number of students actively pursuing their PhD went up in the same period. The dip in the Masters programme came after huge increases in the preceding years

Y-o-y % increase in no. of students in Masters programmes (left axis)

Y-o-y % increase in no. of students in PhD programmes (right axis)



Source: U.S. Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)

FROM PAGE ONE

Collegium puts off decision on Joseph

Justice Malhotra is already functioning as a Supreme Court judge.

The government's request to re-consider Justice Joseph came after a delay of three months.

In its communication, the government had argued that Justice Joseph was "at serial number 42" in the All India High Court Judges' seniority list.

It had reasoned that 11 Chief Justices across various High Courts were senior to Justice Joseph and his parent Kerala High Court was already "adequately represented" in the Supreme Court and High Court chief justiceships.

"Taking into consideration the points mentioned above, the proposed appointment of Shri Justice K.M. Joseph as a judge of the Supreme Court at this stage

doesn't appear to be appropriate. It would also not be fair and justified to other more senior, suitable and deserving Chief Justices and sub puisne judges of various High Courts...This proposal for the reconsideration of Shri Justice K.M. Joseph has the approval of the Hon'ble President and Hon'ble Prime Minister," the government said in a letter to CJI Misra.

Mr. Prasad cited several Supreme Court judgments to argue that the government was well within its power to send back any name to the collegium.

"One thing I would like to observe is the commitment of this government to the independence of the judiciary and respect for the institution of judiciary and the judges is complete and uncompromising," he said.

Cambridge Analytica 'ceasing operations'

The company said it hired British barrister Julian Malins to conduct an independent investigation into the allegations, whose report it posted on its website on Wednesday.

"[The] report...conclud-

ed that the allegations were not 'borne out by the facts'," CA said.

"The siege of media coverage has driven away virtually all of the company's customers and suppliers," the firm added.

Cong. hits back at Modi over 'diatribe'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi called himself a Kaamdaar (worker) as opposed to a naamdaar (dynast), in a veiled reference to Congress president Rahul Gandhi during the Karnataka campaign, the Congress on Wednesday hit back by terming Mr.

Modi's idea of economics as 'all dialogue and no delivery'.

Congress's communication head Randeep Surjewala in a series of tweets said both workers and farmers are worse off under Modi government than they were during the UPA rule. "Modinomics" of 'All Dialogue & No Delivery'.

Violent clashes at AMU

Students injured; event to honour Hamid Ansari called off

STAFF REPORTER
ALIGARH/LUCKNOW

Violence broke out on the Aligarh Muslim University campus on Wednesday as the row over Muhammad Ali Jinnah's portrait in the students' union office triggered a right-wing protest and clashes between students and protesters.

A function to grant life membership of the students' union to former vice-president Hamid Ansari, scheduled for Wednesday evening, was called off and he had to return to Delhi.

At least six persons were injured when the police lobbed tear-gas shells to disperse AMU students demanding the arrest of the protesters who allegedly



Two groups clashed at AMU on Wednesday. •PTI

barred into the campus and burnt effigies of Jinnah and the AMU students' union.

Eyewitnesses said right-wing activists allegedly thrashed the security guards of AMU when they tried to prevent them from entering the campus. The students alleged that many of them, including AMUSU president M.A. Usmani, were thrashed

Maintain peace along China border, Army HQ tells troops

Instruction comes in the wake of Modi-Xi meeting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Army headquarters has issued fresh instructions to field formations along the China border to preserve peace while maintaining the sanctity of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between the two countries.

A senior officer said the instructions, issued in the wake of the Wuhan summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, have explicitly directed that there should not be any "aggressive behaviour at young officer level." It has also instructed the field formations that all their conduct should be within the protocol laid out in 2005.

According to the protocol signed between the two sides on "Modalities for the Implementation of Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field Along the

Towards peace

The four steps to be followed by the Indian and Chinese sides under the 2005 protocol

- Both sides shall cease their activities in the area, won't advance any further and simultaneously return to their bases

- Both sides shall inform their respective headquarters and, if necessary, enter into consultations through border meetings or diplomatic channels



- Throughout the face-to-face situation, neither side shall use force or threaten to use force against the other

- Both sides shall treat each other with courtesy and refrain from any provocative action. Neither side shall put up marks or signs in the area

Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas" on April 11, 2005, there is a set conduct prescribed to ensure peace and tranquillity.

"This was being violated with impunity in recent times," an officer said.

'Self restraint'

The protocol says if border personnel come to a face-to-face situation because of differences over the alignment of LAC they shall "exercise self-restraint and take all ne-

cessary steps to avoid an escalation of the situation."

As result of violations of the protocol there have been fisticuffs, stone throwing and other such rowdy behaviour along the border in recent years, threatening the long-held peace along the 4,056 km border.

According to Army sources, field formations have also been instructed that they "should not" contribute to any unnecessary events along the border."

Meanwhile, sources said

Security up for Amarnath yatra

Union Home Secretary has conducted meetings to put in place a robust cover

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

A detailed security plan is being worked out for the Amarnath Yatra in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir that spans nearly 60 days this year.

An official said all threats to the pilgrimage, including "stone-throwing," were being assessed.

In the past two days, a tourist and a school bus were stoned in south Kashmir.

An official said tourists and children were never attacked in the past.

Last year, eight persons were killed when a bus carry-

Civilian killed in encounter

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

One civilian, identified as Umar Kumar, was killed and at least 10 others injured in clashes between security forces and locals, as a group of local militants was zeroed in on by the Army in south Kashmir's Shopian on Wednesday afternoon.

ing Amarnath pilgrims from Gujarat was attacked by Lashkar-e-Taiba militants

near Batingoo in Anantnag district. The Union Home Secretary has conducted several meetings to put in place a robust security plan for the pilgrimage this year.

"A detailed security plan is made for the Amarnath Yatra, in conjunction with the Jammu and Kashmir police, the Army and all agencies [concerned]. The plan will take care of threats that are likely to arise. We have to make an assessment of all threats... and stone-pelting is one of them," said R.R. Bhatnagar, Director-General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Army Chief General Bipin Rawat met on Wednesday to review steps to be undertaken in the wake of the Wuhan summit between Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi during which the two leaders agreed to issue "strategic guidance to their respective militaries" to improve the situation along the border.

Border meet

The post-Wuhan initiatives to improve the situation was also visible on Tuesday, when to mark the Labour Day, a Special Border Personnel meeting was held at the Chusul-Moldo point on the Chinese side.

An Army officer said troops and families of both armies were part of the celebrations which were conducted in "an atmosphere of bonhomie and friendship."

The officer said such meetings "indicate the upward trend of relations between the two nations and building of trust between the two armies deployed on the border."

The CRPF deploys the largest number of personnel for the pilgrimage from June 28 to August 28.

As per the norms, pilgrims have to be registered with the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) and should move as part of an elaborate security convoy. In 2017, around 2.6 lakh pilgrims visited the Himalayan cave shrine located at a height of 3,888 metres.

On Monday night, a bus carrying tourists from Kerala came under attack from stone-throwers at Pahalgam in Anantnag, famous for resorts and holiday homes.

SC questions passage of Aadhaar Act as Money Bill

Constitution Bench counters Centre

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned the government's justification for passing the Aadhaar Act as a Money Bill.

Countering the Centre's argument that the sole intent of the Aadhaar Act is to act as a weapon for delivering subsidies to targeted beneficiaries, the Constitution Bench led by Chief Justice Dipak Misra pointed to Section 57 of the Act.

This provision contemplates the use of Aadhaar card as an identification document not only by the government but also by "any body corporate or person."

"A body corporate? That is as far as you can go away from the concept of a Money Bill," Justice Chandrachud challenged Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal, representing the government.

Section 57 says "nothing contained in this Act (Aadhaar Act) shall prevent the use of Aadhaar number for establishing the identity of an individual for any purpose, whether by the State or any body corporate or person..."

Mr. Venugopal submitted that the Act's Preamble itself encapsulates its objective as a legislative "tool" to provide "good governance, efficient, transparent, and targeted delivery of subsidies, benefits and services." The expenditure for these welfare activities would be drawn from the Consolidated Fund of India.

Below poverty line

Mr. Venugopal said the Act might have several "ancillary provisions," but taken in its entirety the Aadhaar Act comes within the ambit of the definition of Money Bill under Article 110 of the Constitution.



The AG countered that the Act contemplates the plight of 300 million people in the country living below the poverty line. "Money has to come necessarily from the Consolidated Fund of India to cover the expenditure of the delivery of targeted subsidies. Not a single provision in the Act is unnecessary or unrelated to the main purpose/pith and substance of the Act, which is giving subsidies," Mr. Venugopal argued.

The AG was countering arguments raised in a petition by Rajya Sabha member Jairam Ramesh that the Aadhaar Act of 2016 was passed as a Money Bill to "by-pass the scrutiny of the Rajya Sabha."

Six circumstances

Mr. Ramesh, represented by senior advocate P. Chidambaram, had earlier argued that a Bill is declared as a Money Bill only in six specific circumstances or matters incidental to them as enumerated in Article 110. The Aadhaar law does not relate to any of these circumstances.

The petition had termed the passage of the Aadhaar law a "constitutional fraud." On March 11, the Aadhaar Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha after the Speaker ruled it as a 'Money Bill'. It was then transmitted to the Rajya Sabha. The Upper House had on March 16 returned the Bill with five amendments moved by Mr. Ramesh.

'Include ahimsa in Constitution'

It will be the greatest tribute to Mahatma Gandhi: Patnaik

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday suggested that the word *ahimsa* (non-violence) be added to the Preamble to the Indian Constitution as the "greatest tribute" to Mahatma Gandhi, as the nation plans to celebrate his 150th birth anniversary.

"I believe the greatest tribute India could pay Gandhiji on his 150th anniversary is to include the 'uniquely' Indian ideal of ahimsa, of non-violence, in the Preamble of India's constitution," Mr. Patnaik said. "This will ensure that future generations, not just Indians but people around the world, will be reminded of the pro-



Naveen Patnaik

found truth of this principle."

He made this suggestion here at the first meeting of the National Committee for Commemoration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, which

was chaired by President Ramnath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, key Union Ministers, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, senior BJP leader L.K. Advani and a host of Chief Ministers attended this meet.

Sources said the first meet was to elicit opinions on how the anniversary should be celebrated. Clean India and Gram Swarajya – with a focus on open-defecation-free villages with basic infrastructure like power – are expected to be focus areas, a source said.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu – whose party recently left the NDA – skipped the meet.

Congress slams bullet train project

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Congress Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat Ahmed Patel has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleging that "constitutional rights of farmers are being bulldozed" while acquiring land for the high speed bullet train between Ahmedabad and Mumbai.

In a two page letter, Mr. Patel said the Gujarat government was not following prescribed norms like holding public consultation with farmers.

"Instead of the Land Act, 2013 passed by the Lok Sabha, the acquisition of land is being carried out under the diluted version of the Act passed subsequently by the Gujarat Assembly," he said in his letter.

Demolition of illegal constructions in Kasauli continues

Police 'clueless' about the whereabouts of the son of a guest house owner, who fatally shot at the official while she was supervising the drive

VIKAS VASUDEVA
DHARAMPUR

A day after the firing incident near Kasauli in which a woman government official was killed after being allegedly shot by the son of a guest-house owner while she was supervising demolition of unauthorised constructions, the Himachal Pradesh Police is still clueless about the whereabouts of the accused even as his mother said, "My son lost mental balance as he couldn't bear to see the guest house being pulled down."

"I'll commit suicide," he (Vijay Singh, the accused) said to me soon after the incident as he left the spot in hurry," Narayani Devi, the mother, told *The Hindu*. She added, "He was just asking for more time from them (the officials) to vacate, but all his requests were in vain."

Acting on the Supreme Court's order, the Himachal Pradesh government had started a drive to demolish the unauthorised construction of 13 hotels which fall in Kasauli town planning.

On Tuesday, the Assistant Town and Country Planner Shail Bala was heading one of the four teams that were constituted to demolish illegal constructions. While she was supervising the sealing process at the Narayani Guest House on the Dharampur-Kasauli road, the guest house owner's son Vijay Singh, after an altercation, open fire, resulting in Shail Bala's death.

State of shock

The neighbours of Vijay Singh, 54, who is employed with the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board



Anti-encroachment drive: A demolition squad razing an illegal floor of Narayani Guest House near Kasauli. • AKHILESH KUMAR

(HPSEB), are also in a state of shock. "It is difficult to imagine that he could commit such a crime. We know the family very well. I don't

know what made him take such a step," said Mrs. Bindu, a neighbour. While the demolition process continued at the spot of the crime on

[IN FOCUS: CORRUPTION]

Graft shrouds all sides of political divide

If BJP has rehabilitated the Reddy brothers who were accused of illegal mining, Cong. too has made room for tainted names

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU

In one of his first rallies in the State, Prime Minister Narendra Modi famously called the Siddaramaiah-led Congress government a “10% commission sarkar,” pitching corruption as one of the major planks of the BJP’s campaign in the 2018 Karnataka Assembly elections. In response, the Chief Minister questioned the moral right of the BJP to raise this issue considering that many candidates – including its chief ministerial candidate B.S. Yeddyurappa – are not beyond question on this count.

Though allegations have been flying fast and furious between the two parties, corruption has been rendered a non-issue in this election as there seems to be no difference between the BJP and Congress.

This is a far cry from the 2013 campaign when the Congress pitted Mr. Siddaramaiah’s clean image against Mr. Yeddyurappa, who had to resign in 2011 as his position as Chief Minister became untenable after he was named in an illegal mining scam.

Case file

Prominent leaders with criminal cases

D.K. Shivakumar

- Congress - 2 cases. One under the Prevention of Corruption Act and another in special economic offences court

B. Nagendra

- Congress - 26 cases. All related to illegal mining and export of iron ore

C.T. Ravi

- BJP - 3 cases. Two of them under the Prevention of Corruption Act

R. Ashoka

- BJP - 2 cases. Both under the Prevention of Corruption Act

G. Somashekhar Reddy

- BJP - 1 case. Accused of bribing a CBI judge

Hothur Mohammed Iqbal

- JD(S) - 2 cases

Chief ministerial candidates and the criminal cases against them:

Siddaramaiah

Congress - NIL

B.S. Yeddyurappa

BJP - NIL

H.D. Kumaraswamy

JD(S) - 11*

*7 cases, 4 related to illegal mining and 3 related to denotification of land

Corruption allegations against Congress (2013 - 2018)

Arkavathy layout re-modification scheme:

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was accused of denotifying over 900 acres of land. Later, a judicial inquiry cleared his name

Luxury watch controversy:

Siddaramaiah was accused of receiving a ₹80 lakh worth luxury watch as bribe. He claimed it was a gift and handed it over to the Assembly Speaker. No case was filed

Kickback for steel flyover:

An alleged diary entry found during an IT raid at Congress MLC Govindaraj's house showed an entry that the party had received ₹65 crore for construction of a steel flyover

In his initial days as Chief Minister, Mr. Siddaramaiah was so conscious of his image that he refused to take on several senior leaders as Ministers in his Cabinet as they were “tainted.”

A year on, every leader who had been kept out was made a Minister.

‘Big betrayal’

It’s been downhill since then, said anti-corruption crusader S.R. Hiremath. “Siddaramaiah’s tenure as Chief Minister is a big be-

trayal of the trust of the people. He not only failed to implement the Lokayukta report on illegal mining, but has welcomed many of the accused into his party today and given them tickets. He also weakened the Lokayukta institution, damaging anti-corruption struggles in the State,” he said.

However, while Mr. Siddaramaiah was unable to live up to his “clean image” (he was accused of accepting a ₹80 lakh luxury watch and denotifying 900 acres of

land), the BJP’s campaign against him and several of his ministerial colleagues have failed to stick with no substantial proof. Mr. Yeddyurappa’s two corruption exposures against Ministers D.K. Shivakumar and M.B. Patil during the campaign fizzled out.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yeddyurappa today has no corruption case pending against him. All the FIRs against him have either been quashed or stayed by the Karnataka High Court. However, appeals

against these decisions are pending before the Supreme Court and any adverse decision there would lead to 20 cases of corruption being reopened.

“Yeddyurappa stood trial in only one case till date and he was acquitted by the CBI court. But the rest of the FIRs stayed or quashed by the High Court were decisions made on purely technical grounds and not based on the merits or demerits of the cases. Two petitions are pending in the Supreme

Court to reopen all these cases,” said advocate and activist K.N. Balaraj.

Sources say it was the BJP leadership led by Amit Shah that chose corruption as a poll plank for the election. Mr. Yeddyurappa was not comfortable with this as he foresaw the embarrassment he would face.

Kumaraswamy’s cases

JD(S) chief ministerial candidate H.D. Kumaraswamy, too, suffers from the same problem of lack of credibility when it comes to corruption. He has seven corruption cases pending against him.

Illegal mining, which toppled the BJP from power in 2013, no longer appears to be a contentious issue. Even G. Janardhan Reddy, the kingpin of the “Republic of Belary” is back in action and campaigning for the party.

Siddaramaiah too has welcomed B.S. Anand Singh and B. Nagendra, former close aides of Mr. Reddy and accused of illegal mining into the party, and given them tickets. The Congress is also fielding Anil Lad, Santosh Lad and Satish Sail, also accused of illegal mining.

POLL POURRI



Trial run: Traffic congestion on Jagat Road in Kalaburagi on Wednesday. •ARUN KULKARNI

Rehearsal woes

KALABURAGI

With campaigns reaching a feverish pitch in the run-up to the elections, traffic snarls have become par for the course. In Kalaburagi, motorists found themselves stuck for 45 minutes on Wednesday on account of a rehearsal for Thursday’s rally by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. To ensure hassle-free movement of escort vehicles, security personnel blocked all the roads leading to Nutan Vidyalaya Grounds in the city. People abandoned buses and auto-rickshaws in an attempt to walk home only to be told that even the pavements had been closed.

Wikipedia war



BENGALURU

Barely a few moments after Prime Minister Narendra Modi taunted Chief Minister Siddaramaiah by calling him a “sleeping CM” (referring to viral pictures showing him asleep during programmes) on

Wednesday, the Wikipedia page of the incumbent CM was changed to ‘Niddaramaiah’ (Nidda means sleep in Kannada). According to the Wikipedia page, the term had been inserted thrice by 5.15 a.m. on Wednesday. Within an hour, it was spotted and changed.

There's money in sting



BENGALURU

At this time of the year, every politician claims to be Mr. Clean. One cynical MLA candidate refuses to buy into this narrative. Ravi Krishna Reddy, an Independent candidate from Jayanagar seat in Bengaluru, has announced ₹50,000 to “any patriot” who captures candidates or their lackeys distributing “cookers to women and liquor to men.” This, he says, is part of his crusade against corruption.

Dear PM @narendramodi
ji, I challenge you to speak about the achievements of B S Yeddyurappa's Govt in Karnataka for 15 minutes by looking at a paper.
Sincerely Siddaramaiah.

SIDDARAMAIAH | CHIEF MINISTER

How naive of @siddaramaiah to ask for my govt's achievements! Why don't you refer to our timeline to see our Govt's contributions in various sectors. Your awareness level has stooped below 10%...

B.S. YEDDYURAPPA | BJP STATE CHIEF

Vote for water



Raichur's oasis: Elections have come and gone, but Raichur’s drinking water scarcity continues. Women and children have to trek long distances to collect water from a pond near a highway. •V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

[ONE DAY WITH... B.S. YEDDYURAPPA]

The saffron man’s green promises

VEERENDRA P.M.
SHIKARIPURA

8 a.m.: B.S. Yeddyurappa begins the day by offering prayers at Huchurayaswamy and Guru Raghavendra temples in Shikaripur town. By the time he returns to his residence in Malerakeri for breakfast, a large posse of party workers from neighbouring Haveri district have gathered. They want him to visit a few Assembly segments there where the party is weak. After a breakfast of fruit and rice gruel, he heads in a SUV towards Hosur village on a tar road that is also used as a threshing and drying yard for maize, paddy and ragi in harvest season.

9.45 a.m.: At Nallinakoppa, he visits the house of Eshwarappa Gowda, a maize grower who had incurred losses owing to drought. He as-



BJP’s chief ministerial candidate B.S. Yeddyurappa campaigning in Shikaripur.

ures farmers there that, if elected to power, he would strive to provide permanent irrigation facility.

11.15 a.m.: At Hosur, he is welcomed by the BJP workers by bursting firecrackers. The women do the customary *aarti* and apply tilak on his forehead. He again speaks about the implemen-

tation of the Tungabhadra lift irrigation project and on conferring title deeds for bagair hukum farmers.

1.30 p.m.: By the time he returns to his residence, the heads of booth-level committees of the Shikaripur segment are gathered there for a brainstorming session.

2.45 p.m.: After a meal of jowar roti with green gram sprouts curry, he telephones a party activist from Shiralakoppa who is upset about being “neglected”. He requests the activist to campaign actively and assures him a suitable “political opportunity” in future.

3 p.m.: At Bendekatte taanda, a settlement of Banajaras, he and his son B.Y. Raghavendra speaks a few words in Banajar dialect. At Dinda-

dahalli, Mr. Yeddyurappa meets Ramavva, a 92-year-old woman who had actively campaigned for him in his first two elections (1983 and 1985). He snacks on mandakki (puffed rice) and mirchi bajji with jaggery tea at a roadside eatery.

5.45 p.m.: At Sanklapura village, he lashes out at the Congress government for not procuring maize after its price fell. Like elsewhere, he signs of by reminding the voters that they are voting for a candidate whom the BJP has declared as its chief ministerial candidate.

8.30 p.m.: As he returns home, a few leaders from Davangere and Dharwad districts are waiting for him with a request to convince the rebels in their places to withdraw the nomination.

[Q & A]

Corruption has become a non-issue, says Justice Hegde

Holds both BJP, Congress guilty

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU

Former Lokayukta Justice N. Santosh Hegde's report on illegal mining in 2011 not only toppled then Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa from office but also played a role in the State's electorate voting out the BJP government in 2013. The Hindu spoke to him on whether corruption is a poll issue in 2018. Excerpts from an interview:

Will corruption play as important a role in the 2018 Assembly elections as it did in 2013?

No, I don't see corruption as an issue at all in this election. Unlike in 2013, today there is no perception of any difference between political parties over the issue. In 2013, the Congress, which was in the Opposition, promised to implement the report on illegal mining. The first thing it did after it came to power was to begin weakening the Lokayukta by forming an Anti Corruption Bureau which works under the government and robbing the Lokayukta police of the power to investigate cases under the Prevention of Corruption Act. It did nothing to implement the illegal mining report.

B.S. Yeddyurappa had to resign after your report on illegal mining in 2011. He is back as the chief ministerial candidate of the BJP.



His choice as the chief ministerial candidate clearly indicates a crisis of leadership in the party and also smacks of an attitude that “it doesn't matter.” Yeddyurappa claims he has no case pending against him. But appeals against the setting aside of FIRs by the High Court on technical grounds are still pending in the Supreme Court. The stigma is still there.

The Reddy brothers and others involved in illegal mining are back in the political fray. What are your views on this?

The BJP has given tickets to seven people from the Reddy camp. Amit Shah's claims of distancing the party from Janardhan Reddy ring hollow. But the Congress is not lagging behind. It led a padayatra from Bengaluru to Ballari over illegal mining, but has taken into its fold Anand Singh and B. Nagendra who are accused of illegal mining and given them tickets. This shows that political parties will promise anything to come to power and do anything to retain it.

Policy for domestic workers ready

Onus will be on States to set up boards to register them and fix their wages

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

The draft national policy for domestic workers, likely to be announced this month, will leave it to States to set up boards to register workers, to bring them into the social security net and to notify minimum wages and work timings, according to a senior official at the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Domestic worker unions and NGOs, who have been demanding a Central legislation, providing for inter-State registrations of domestic workers, with Centrally-



A file photo of a protest by domestic workers.

set norms for wages, working hours and social security benefits, expressed disappointment at the draft. “There is no Central board being proposed,” the

senior official said, adding that boards of registration could be set up at State, district, or even residents’ welfare association level. These boards would administer social security benefits for workers, including Provident Fund contribution by employers and medical insurance, said the official.

Nod in two weeks

The official said the draft policy would make recommendations on working hours, leave norms and wages, but would leave it to States to notify them in accordance

with their legislations. The States should also set up mechanisms to register and regulate placement agencies for domestic workers, said the official, adding that the draft is likely to be approved within the next two weeks.

A national policy for domestic workers has been discussed for at least a decade. “We need a Central legislation, as this is an inter-State issue,” said Subhash Bhatnagar, one of the conveners of the National Platform of Domestic Workers. “90 per cent of domestic workers today are migrants.”

Investment limit hiked for elderly

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved increasing the investment limit from ₹7.5 lakh to ₹15 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY), aimed at senior citizens.

It also extended the time limit for subscription from May 4, 2018 to March 31, 2020.

According to the government, 2.23 lakh senior citizens are availing of benefits under the PMVVY as of March 2018.

Govt. approves sugarcane subsidy of ₹5.5 per quintal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government has approved a subsidy of ₹5.5 per quintal of sugarcane crushed in the 2017-18 season to help sugar mills clear more than ₹19,000 crore in dues to cane farmers.

The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday, an official statement said.

The assistance will be paid directly to the farmers on behalf of the mills. It will be adjusted against the Fair and Remunerative Price

(FRP) of ₹255 per quintal set by government as the rate that mills must pay to cane farmers, as well as the arrears of payments pending from previous years.

Any subsequent balance will be credited into the mill's account, the statement said, adding that assistance will be provided to those mills which fulfil the government's eligibility conditions.

‘More steps needed’

The subsidy will work out to ₹1,550 crore to ₹1,600 crore for the current season, said Abinash Verma, director-

general of industry body, Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA). He welcomed the decision but added that “this can be taken as a first step towards various other initiatives and financial assistance that the government has to take very soon” to help the mills and the farmers.

Sugar production has hit record highs this year leading to a crash in prices. The ISMA estimates that wholesale sugar prices have fallen by ₹9 a kg over the past five months, and the mills are now incurring a loss of ₹8 a kg of sugar.

ELSEWHERE



Pro-Brexit MPs ask May to drop customs proposal

LONDON

Pro-Brexit lawmakers heaped pressure on British Prime Minister Theresa May on Wednesday over her future customs plans with the European Union. They called on her to drop one of her proposals for a customs partnership, which would see Britain essentially act as the EU's tariff collector. REUTERS

'U.S. troops will stay in Korea even after treaty'

SEOUL

South Korea said on Wednesday that the issue of U.S. troops stationed in the South is unrelated to any future peace treaty with the North and that American forces should stay even if such an agreement is signed. "U.S. troops stationed in South Korea... has nothing to do with signing peace treaties," said spokesman Kim Eui-kyeom, citing President Moon Jae-in. REUTERS

17 States file suit over emissions standards

SACRAMENTO

California and 16 other States sued the Trump administration on Tuesday over its plan to scrap auto-emissions standards that would require vehicles to get significantly higher gas mileage by 2025. At issue is a move to roll back 2012 rules aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions. AP

12 dead in attack on Libya electoral commission

TRIPOLI

Suicide attackers killed at least 12 people at Libya's electoral commission in the capital Tripoli on Wednesday, authorities said. Four armed assailants attacked the building, said a senior security official in Tripoli, Mohamad al-Damja. AFP

South Asians victimised by U.K.'s 'hostile immigration' regime

They are protesting against rejection of their applications for right to remain

VIDYA RAM

LONDON

Nisha, originally from Mumbai, has lived in the U.K. since 2008, first as a student, then as a researcher on a Tier 1-Highly Skilled visa. However, her hopes of making a life in the country were upended in 2016 when Britain's Home Office rejected her application for an indefinite leave to remain. The reason given was errors in tax filing by her accountant, which were subsequently rectified by a new accountant and accepted by the tax office. Such changes are considered part and parcel of any tax-filing system, and would ordinarily have had no impact on an individual's life once the corrections were made and accepted.

Tax filings

A campaign group, largely comprised of South Asians in Britain, believe that Nisha is one of a growing number of highly skilled professionals who have had their application to remain rejected or delayed because of amendments made to their tax filings. Campaigners say that with increasing regularity, a clause within Britain's immigration legislation – which focusses on a person's character and is intended to prevent the settlement of criminals – is being used to reject applicants. Over a hundred protesters, including Nisha, wearing the t-shirt "STOP Hostile Environment; Highly Skilled" gathered outside Parliament on Wednesday. It is one of several protests held by the group since the



Nisha, among those denied the right to remain; and right, a protest for the rights of the Windrush generation. •

'Many face the plight of Windrush migrants'

VIDYA RAM

LONDON

Indians are among those caught up in the Windrush controversy, rocking the British government, Dianne Abbott, the Labour Party's spokesperson on Home Affairs said during a debate in Parliament. Those from India, Pakistan, West Africa and other parts of the Commonwealth are also facing the same plight as many from the Caribbean, she said during a debate called by the Labour party. "This is an issue that has resonated across the Commonwealth... There is a whole series of Commonwealth migrants who unless the Home Secretary does what it takes will suffer the same humiliation that the Windrush generation did." The debate comes amid more and more revelations about the impact of Britain's tough immigration regime. Last week it emerged that hundreds of non-EU doctors, including from India, had been denied visas even after being recruited by NHS trusts. A separate scandal is brewing over the treatment of foreign students. *The Financial Times* estimated that up to 7,000 students may have been deported after wrongly being accused of faking English tests.

start of the year, as Britain's immigration regime faces increased scrutiny. Aditi Bhardwaj, one of the leaders of the campaign, believes that the use of this mechanism by the Home Office is part of its wider "hostile environment" approach, intended to help it meet the government's ambitious immigration targets.

Ms. Bhardwaj pointed to some of the Subject Access Requests – internal working notes – that members of the group had requested access to following unsuccessful applications. She believes these documents showed that decisions were based on policy priorities rather than the merits of a particular case. "They show they've made their decision and are just looking for any excuse to justify their policy."

The Windrush trigger

The campaign has been building over the past year but has gained increased attention in the wake of revelations around Britain's treatment of the Windrush generation. Ms. Bhardwaj is hopeful that several test cases – including Nisha's – facing judicial review in coming months could help provide direction to the Home Office on the issue. She believes time is of the essence. "Many of these people face terrible hardship. They have no right to work, or to rent, they may have their driving license revoked... most have to go to reporting centres," says Ms. Bhardwaj. Nisha has pushed for a judicial review at great expense. Unable to work in the U.K. and facing considerable financial hardship, she is horrified by the situation she and others have found themselves in. "I'm incredibly passionate about the work I've been doing. I've been here so many years, and given my life to this country. This situation is just killing all of us from the inside," she says.

Abbas' views on Jews draw disapproval

He blamed the community's profession for their persecution

REUTERS

JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Mahmoud Abbas of anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial on Wednesday after the Palestinian leader suggested in a speech that historic persecution of European Jews had been caused by their conduct. Jewish groups also condemned Mr. Abbas' comments, made in a speech on Monday to the Palestinian National Council, that Jews had suffered historically not because of their religion but because they had served as bankers and moneylenders.



Courting controversy: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at the Palestinian National Council meeting in Ramallah. •AFP

'A Holocaust denier'

"It would appear that, once a Holocaust denier, always a Holocaust denier," Mr. Netanyahu said on Twitter. "I call upon the international community to condemn the grave anti-Semitism of Abu Mazen (Abbas), which should have long since passed from this world." Mr. Abbas said in his speech that Jews living in Europe had suffered massacres "every 10 to 15 years in some country since the 11th century and until the Holocaust". Citing books written by various authors, Mr. Abbas argued: "They say hatred against Jews was not because of their religion, it was because of their social profession. So the Jewish issue that had spread against the Jews across Europe was not because of their religion, it was because of usury and banks." Mr. Netanyahu's criticism was echoed by Jewish leaders around the world. "Abbas's speech in Ramal-

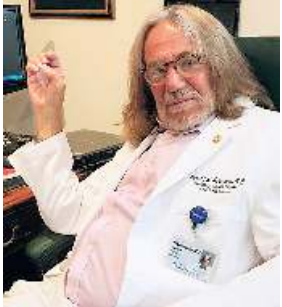
lah are the words of a classic anti-Semite," said Marvin Hier and Abraham Cooper of the U.S.-based Jewish human rights organisation the Simon Wiesenthal Center. "Instead of blaming the Jews, he should look in his own backyard to the role played by the Grand Mufti in supporting Adolf Hitler's Final Solution," they added. They were referring to Muslim Grand Mufti Haj Amin Husseini, a Second World War ally of Adolf Hitler. 'No relativisation' U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman tweeted that Mr. Abbas had "reached a new low in attributing the cause of massacres of Jewish people over the years to their 'social behaviour'". German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas and the foreign service of the European Union, the biggest donor of aid to the Palestinians, also condemned the comments. "We reject any relativisation of the Holocaust," Mr. Maas told *Die Welt* daily. The European External Action Service in Brussels said in a statement: "Such rhetoric (about the Jews) will only play into the hands of those who do not want a two-state solution, which President Abbas has repeatedly advocated." Mr. Abbas, 82, made his remarks in the West Bank city of Ramallah at a rare meeting of the Palestinian National Council, the de facto Parliament of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which he heads. In 1982, Mr. Abbas obtained a doctorate in history at the Moscow Institute of Orientalism. His dissertation, entitled "The Secret Relationship between Nazism and the Zionist Movement", drew widespread criticism from Jewish groups, who accused him of Holocaust denial.

'Trump dictated his own health report'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

NEW YORK

As a presidential candidate, Donald Trump quoted a letter from his former personal doctor gushing about his apparently excellent health – a note the physician now says the President "dictated" himself. Speaking to CNN on Tuesday, New York doctor Harold Bornstein said Mr. Trump "dictated that whole letter. I didn't write that letter". "I just made it up as I went along."



Donald Trump's doctor Harold Bornstein.

'Healthiest candidate'

In December 2015, the Trump campaign released the glowing missive, which said that "if elected, Mr. Trump, I can state unequivocally, will be the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency". Mr. Bornstein's comments come as the physician finds himself back in the spotlight after he told NBC that a bodyguard visited his Park Avenue office

last year and confiscated Mr. Trump's medical records. "They must have been here for 25 or 30 minutes. It created a lot of chaos," Mr. Bornstein told NBC, saying the February 3, 2017 incident made him feel "frightened and sad". Mr. Bornstein said the original and only copy of Mr. Trump's medical charts, including lab reports, were taken. But White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said the incident was "standard procedure".

Mueller could have subpoenaed President

REUTERS

NEW YORK

Special Counsel Robert Mueller, in a meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump's lawyers in March, raised the possibility of issuing a subpoena for Mr. Trump if he declines to talk to investigators in the Russia probe, a former lawyer for Mr. Trump said on Tuesday. John Dowd said that Mr. Mueller mentioned the possibility of a subpoena in the early March meeting. Mr. Mueller's subpoena warning was first reported by *The Washington Post*, which cited four people familiar with the encounter.

President's reticence

"This isn't some game. You are screwing with the work of the President of the United States," Mr. Dowd said he told the investigators, who are probing possible collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia. Mr. Dowd left the legal team

about two weeks after the meeting. *The Post* said Mr. Mueller had raised the possibility of a subpoena after Mr. Trump's lawyers said the President had no obligation to talk with federal investigators involved in the probe. After the March meeting, Mr. Mueller's team agreed to provide the President's lawyers with more specific information about the subjects they wished to ask Mr. Trump, *The Post* reported. With that information, Mr. Trump's lawyer Jay Sekulow compiled a list of 49 questions the President's legal team believed he would be asked, according to *The Post*. That list, first reported by *The New York Times* on Monday, includes questions on Mr. Trump's ties to Russia and others to determine whether the President may have unlawfully tried to obstruct the investigation.

'Slavery for 400 years sounds like a choice'

Rapper Kanye West enrages the music world with his off-the-cuff remarks

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

NEW YORK

Rapper Kanye West, on the receiving end of criticism in the music world after backing U.S. President Donald Trump, sparked fresh outrage on Tuesday when he called slavery "a choice". Mr. West made the comments in passing during one of two free-flowing interviews he gave as he promotes two upcoming albums. "You hear about slavery for 400 years. For 400 years? That sounds like a choice," Mr. West told TMZ Live. He elaborated little on his statement but appeared to be drawing a parallel to how he is presumed to hold certain views as an African-American artist. "We're

mentally in prison. I like the word 'prison' because slavery is too direct to the idea of Blacks. Like Holocaust is Jews, slavery is Blacks," he said. The remarks immediately sparked an uproar on Twitter and he was taken to task live by a TMZ employee who said he was "appalled". The 40-year-old rapper re-emerged last month after a year-long absence that followed a purported mental breakdown. Praise for Trump He enraged many fellow artists as he praised Mr. Trump, who has since cited the rapper's words as evidence of minority support. In a separate interview with radio host



Kanye West. •AP

Charlamagne tha God, Mr. West said he had not followed Mr. Trump's policies but, "When I see an outsider infiltrate, I connect with that." Mr. West is one of the few prominent African Americans to support Mr. Trump. Speaking to Charlamagne tha God, Mr. West said he

was upset that Barack Obama invited other rappers to the White House such as Kendrick Lamar and Jay-Z. Obama's comments Mr. Obama, in off-record small talk with a reporter in 2009 that was leaked, called Mr. West a "jack***" after the rapper disrupted the MTV Video Music Awards to say that Taylor Swift did not deserve her prize. "You know, he never called me to apologise," Mr. West said, explaining that Mr. Obama had met him and his mother before being elected President. "The same person who sat down with me and my mom, I think should have communicated with me directly."

MARKET WATCH

	02-05-2018	% CHANGE
Sensex	35176	0.046
US Dollar	66.66	0.13
Gold	32130	-0.21
Brent oil	73.02	-2.37

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	401.10	-6.20
Asian Paints	1222.30	20.60
Axis Bank	523.75	6.45
Bajaj Auto	2965.35	13.35
Bajaj Finserv	5436.90	-45.70
Bajaj Finance	1905.10	-2.60
Bharti Airtel	408.45	-1.10
BPCL	380.95	-6.40
Cipla	612.00	4.60
Coal India	280.50	-4.50
Dr Reddys Lab	2118.20	8.35
Eicher Motors	30522.25	-666.35
GAIL (India)	323.70	-1.40
Grasim Ind	1095.75	2.05
HCL Tech	1000.50	-52.25
HDFC	1910.60	27.35
HDFC Bank	1969.50	25.20
Hero MotoCorp	3664.10	-68.15
Hindalco	228.05	-7.60
HPCL	297.40	-7.10
Hind Unilever	1471.55	-36.95
Indiabulls NPL	1208.05	-7.30
ICICI Bank	276.90	-7.30
IndusInd Bank	1868.30	-29.70
Bharti Infratel	313.80	0.70
Infosys	1197.05	-2.45
Indian OilCorp	161.15	-1.15
ITC	287.25	5.80
Kotak Bank	1256.85	45.75
L&T	1403.15	2.25
Lupin	800.55	-11.00
M&M	863.15	-10.15
Mauriti Suzuki	8744.50	-70.45
NTPC	170.40	-1.75
ONGC	180.05	-0.50
PowerGrid Corp	205.15	-2.70
Reliance Ind	972.70	9.40
State Bank	241.00	-5.40
Sun Pharma	515.20	-13.20
Tata Motors	336.05	-4.35
Tata Steel	574.50	-20.45
TCS	3499.75	-32.35
Tech Mahindra	662.55	-8.05
Titan	964.50	-17.30
UltraTech Cement	4016.50	-92.35
UPL	733.40	3.55
Vedanta	283.40	-15.00
Wipro	275.55	-3.20
YES Bank	354.25	-7.75
Zee Entertainment	596.30	8.25

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 02

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	66.46	66.78
Euro	79.75	80.14
British Pound	90.63	91.07
Japanese Yen (100)	60.51	60.80
Chinese Yuan	10.45	10.50
Swiss Franc	66.72	67.05
Singapore Dollar	49.75	49.99
Canadian Dollar	51.77	52.02
Malaysian Ringitt	16.88	16.99

Source:Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI

May 02 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses

Retail Silver (1g)	42.8	(42)
22 ct gold (1 g)	2960	(2966)

IndiGo net dives 73.3% on expenses

Forex loss, fuel costs trigger slump; cognisant of challenges, taking steps to address them, says Bhatia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

InterGlobe Aviation, which operates low-cost air carrier IndiGo, posted a 73.3% fall in March-quarter profit on Wednesday, hit by higher expenses as increased fuel costs and foreign exchange losses took a toll on its bottomline.

While net profit fell to ₹117.64 crore for the three months ended March 31, from ₹440.31 crore a year earlier, revenue from operations rose about 20% to ₹5,799.1 crore. Last week, Indigo had announced the departure of its president and whole-time director Aditya Ghosh.

‘Income climbs’

The company’s total income in the fourth quarter of 2017-18, however, climbed 17% to ₹6,056.84 crore.



Turbulent skies: IndiGo has hired people with expertise to solve issues with neo engines, says CEO Bhatia. ■R.V. MOORTHY

The board declared a dividend of ₹6 per share.

IndiGo, which had to cancel hundreds of flights in March due to engine issues with some of its A320neo planes powered by Pratt & Whitney engines, recorded a

rise of 30.2% in its total expenses to ₹5,890.64 crore in the latest quarter. IndiGo’s Chief Financial Officer Rohit Philip said during a conference call to discuss the financial results that the lower quarterly profit was mainly

due to a rise in fuel costs, foreign exchange loss and lower yield. On the incoming A321neos, Mr. Philip said, “These will have 15% less seat mile cost, which will help.”

‘Utilisation drops’

The CFO also said aircraft utilisation was down to 12.5 hours a day this quarter, lower than 12.6 hours a day earlier due to the grounding of the A320neos. IndiGo’s total consolidated income stood at ₹23,967.74 crore for last fiscal, compared with ₹19,369.57 crore in 2016-17.

“We have reported our highest ever annual profits [35.1% rise to ₹2,242.37 crore] for fiscal 2018. We continue to execute on our growth plans and are putting in place the management team to execute our plans,” IndiGo co-founder and inter-

im CEO Rahul Bhatia said.

“We are cognisant of challenges we face and are taking steps to address them,” Mr. Bhatia added. On the neo engine issues, the interim CEO said it would take some time to get resolved. “We have hired people with domain expertise to solve the issue,” he said. Mr. Philip said IndiGo received money from Pratt & Whitney in this quarter as compensation but the amount was not divulged.

IndiGo said its total capacity for the year was 63.5 billion Available Seat Kilometres (ASKs), an increase of 16.4% compared with the previous year. “Our total capacity for the fourth quarter was 17.1 billion ASKs, an increase of 20.9%,” he said. “This is lower than the capacity... previously guided due to the grounding of some neos [in] the quarter.”

Manufacturing growth improves slightly: PMI

Spurred by rise in new orders: Nikkei

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

India’s manufacturing sector activity improved marginally in April, driven by a rise in new business orders amid favourable demand conditions, and easing inflationary pressures, a monthly survey showed.

The Nikkei India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI), rose from 51.0 in March to 51.6 in April, indicating faster improvement in the health of the manufacturing economy than in the prior month.

Soft input cost increases

Inflationary pressures moderated for the second month in a row, with the softest increases for input costs and output charges reported since September 2017 and July 2017, respectively, the



Inflationary pressures moderated for the second month in a row. ■REUTERS

survey revealed.

“The Indian manufacturing economy started the quarter on a slightly stronger footing as growth picked up from March’s five-month low, buoyed by stronger demand conditions,” said Aashna Dodhia, Economist at IHS Markit, and the author of the report.

Fed holds rates, says inflation near target

Central bank on track for June hike

REUTERS

WASHINGTON

The Federal Reserve held interest rates steady on Wednesday and expressed confidence that a recent rise in inflation to near the U.S. central bank’s 2% target would be sustained, leaving it on track to raise borrowing costs in June.

Job gains ‘strong’

The Fed also downplayed a recent slowdown in economic and job growth, saying that activity had been expanding at a moderate rate and job gains, on average, had been strong in recent

months. In a statement, the Fed said inflation had “moved close” to its target. The Fed’s decision to leave its benchmark overnight lending rate in a target range of between 1.50% and 1.75% was unanimous. Investors had all but ruled out another increase at this meeting. The Fed had raised interest rates in March.

The Fed’s overall confidence in the economic outlook was also highlighted by its assertion that business fixed investment had continued to grow strongly. It added that risks to the outlook appear roughly balanced.

EPFO stops services provided at CSCs

‘No data leak; checking vulnerability’

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

The Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Wednesday said it had discontinued services provided through Common Service Centres (CSC), “pending vulnerability checks”. However, it added that no data had been leaked.

The statement follows reports alleging theft of subscriber data by hackers from the website ‘aadhaar.epfo-services.com’, operated by CSCs, which comes under the Ministry of Electronics and IT.

“Warnings regarding vulnerabilities in data or software is a routine administrative process based on which the services which were rendered through CSC have

been discontinued from March 22, 2018,” EPFO said in a statement.

‘Advance action’

It added that no confirmed data leakage had been established or observed so far. “As part of the data security and protection, EPFO has taken advance action by closing the server and host service through Common Service Centres pending vulnerability checks.”

EPFO, which has been seeding Aadhaar data with Universal Account numbers, said it had been taking necessary precautions to ensure that no data leakage takes place. A senior IT ministry official said the Ministry would take action ‘to plug any gaps that exist’.

Taxpayers may file GST Tran-1 by May 10

High Court order cites tech glitches

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court has extended the deadline for filing of GST Tran-1 by 10 days after it was highlighted that technical glitches made it impossible for many to make the submission before the due date of April 30.

“... interest of justice would be served if we extend this date of 30th April, 2018 in relation to filing of TRAN-1 and which filing was not possible due to technical glitches / IT related glitches. We extend it to 10th May, 2018,” said the bench comprising Justice S.C. Dharmadhikari and Justice Anuja Prabhudesai.

It was clear that this facility was extended only to those taxpayers who could



not access the system due to technical glitches, added the judgment.

It also said taxpayers would have to provide proof of their inability to access the portal due to technical glitches. GST Tran-1 is a filing that is required to avail credit in lieu of the taxes filed before the roll out of the Goods & Services Tax.

@Estore33_com

‘Telecom revival key to \$100 bn goal’

Restoring financial health imperative to meet policy’s investment target: industry

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

Restoring the financial health of the telecom sector will be crucial for attracting investments of \$100 billion as envisaged in the new national telecom policy draft, according to the industry.

The draft ‘National Digital Communications Policy 2018’, released late on Tuesday evening, envisions attracting \$100 billion investments into the country’s digital communications sector, providing broadband access for all with 50 mbps speed and creating 40 lakh new jobs in the sector by the year 2022.

Data protection regime

The draft policy also stresses on the need for a comprehensive data protection regime for digital communications to safeguard privacy, autonomy and choice for individuals. It lists ensuring “net neutrality principles are upheld” as a key objec-



The draft policy has taken into account inputs from all stakeholders. ■K.K. MUSTAFAH

tive. The policy, which was drafted after consultation with all stakeholders, has largely been welcomed by the industry and analysts. However, they have raised concerns over its implementation.

“The policy has taken into account inputs from all stakeholders. It really is a good policy document... The next step is to make sure it is implemented,” COAI Director General Rajan Mathews said.

Asked about challenges to the implementation of the final policy, Mr. Mathews said: “The policy talks about investments of \$100 billion. The telecom industry is going to be the principal engine that is going to attract that type of funding. Therefore, the sooner the industry’s financial health is improved, the quicker we can go about attracting that investment.”

“Given the present plight of the sector, it is very difficult to get anybody who is interested in our networks and our companies,” he said, adding that much of what has been articulated in the policy depends on the robust nature and quality of the networks.

The draft proposes to review the levies and fees – including License Fee, Universal Service Obligation Fund levy and spectrum usage charges – which is expected to help the debt-laden telecom sector.

Mahesh Uppal, Director at consultancy firm Com First, said the draft policy was “aspirational” and “progressive” but should have included a broad framework on how the government plans to achieve the objectives.

Crucial challenges

The policy’s success would depend on implementation which he said posed some challenges. “Firstly, some of the proposals will require tinkering with the current license regime which will impact the current players. Secondly, reduction in levies to have any meaning will have to be substantial, which will mean loss of revenue to the government, at least in the short term.”

Mr. Uppal also pointed out that a lot of the objectives listed in the draft policy are not entirely in the hands of the government and would require private participation, including the provision of broadband access for all.

IN BRIEF



Air Asia India's Abrol to return to parent firm

NEW DELHI
AirAsia India announced on Wednesday that its MD and CEO Amar Abrol would be moving back to the parent firm AirAsia Group. Mr. Abrol would be joining the company's headquarters in Malaysia "to work on Group Strategic Projects effective June 2018," the airline said in a statement

IndoStar Capital's IPO to open on May 9

MUMBAI
IndoStar Capital Finance will soon enter the capital market with an initial public offer (IPO) for close to ₹1,850 crore, which will open on May 9 and close on May 11. The company has fixed a price band of ₹570-₹572 per equity share. The company plans to use the proceeds for augmenting its capital base to meet future capital needs. IndoStar Capital offers structured term financing to corporates and loans to SMEs in India.

Kotak Securities unveils 'free' intraday trading

MUMBAI
Kotak Securities has unveiled 'Free Intraday Trading', allowing investors to trade intra-day without paying brokerage charges. Investors can do intra-day trades across cash, future and options segments at an annual subscription of ₹999. They also get free access to the brokerage's research and technology platform for executing transactions. Intra-day trading refers to trades in which investors buy and sell the shares within the same trading session.

NCLT tells Binani lenders to consider UltraTech's new offer

'CoC must also consider the Dalmia combine's bid if it improves its current offer'

INDRANI DUTTA
KOLKATA
In its order on the Binani Cement Ltd. case, NCLT Kolkata on Wednesday directed the resolution professional to accept UltraTech Cement Ltd.'s revised offer for BCL within three days and place it along with the resolution plan before the Committee of Creditors.

The Division Bench, comprising Members Judicial Jinan K.R. and Madan B. Gosavi, directed the CoC to consider this revised offer, along with UltraTech's resolution plan. The CoC has also been directed to reconsider the resolution plan of Rajputana Properties Private Ltd., if it was willing to improve its current offer. Rajputana is the lead member of the Dalmia Bharat combine which is



Payout time: With UltraTech, legitimate claims of all creditors will be met without haircuts, says Sameer Kaji. ■ REUTERS

ying with UltraTech to take over BCL. If both bidders were willing to participate in the process then the CoC is expected to allow both and choose the best for the revival of the company, Justice Jinan said.

Dalmia Cement (Bharat

Ltd. expressed surprise at the order, saying the RP and the CoC had followed the due process of law in approving the plan of RPPL. "Any revised offer from an unsuccessful resolution applicant outside the resolution process cannot become a basis

of setting aside the decision of the CoC," the company spokesperson said. The NCLT also ordered the resolution process for BCL to be concluded before June 24.

'All creditors to benefit'
The spokesperson for the Binani Operational Creditors Forum said the order would provide a fresh lease of life to 3,000 operating creditors, to whom BCL owes about ₹700 crore in principal amounts.

Sameer Kaji, senior adviser, Binani Industries, said, "UltraTech's offer at about ₹8,000 crore is good for all creditors, secured and unsecured. Everybody will get 100% of their legitimate claim, without... haircuts as compared to Dalmia's offer." *(With inputs from Piyush Pandey, Mumbai)*

Hero Moto net rises 35%

Firm to benefit from recovery in rural demand, say analysts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Hero MotoCorp Ltd., the country's largest two-wheeler maker, reported a 35% jump in fourth-quarter profit on robust sales growth.

Net profit rose to ₹967.40 crore in the three months ended March 31, from ₹717.75 crore a year earlier.

Net sales climbed 23.7% to ₹8,564.04 crore. The company sold more than 20 lakh two-wheelers in the quarter, a 23% increase from the year-earlier period. The company registered 22% volume growth in the motorcycle segment and 34% growth in the scooter segment.

The results were in line with expectations, Abhishek Jain, analyst at HDFC Securities, said.

"With 50% of sales coming from rural markets, we believe Hero is likely to benefit from rural recovery, with strong brand equity in



Growth trajectory: Hero MotoCorp's new models will provide support to volume growth, says Abhishek Jain. ■ KAMAL NARANG

the economy and executive segments," Mr. Jain said. "The company is rolling out 2 new models (Maestro Edge 125 and Duet 125) in next 3-4 months. This will provide much-needed support to volume growth," he added.

EV focus
Pawan Munjal, chairman, MD and CEO, Hero MotoCorp, emphasised a push towards electric vehicles.

"Hero MotoCorp has

made an investment of ₹201 crore in Ather Energy to acquire about 30% equity. Ather will soon start retailing its smart electric scooter S340," he said in a statement.

The firm, he added, "marked its entry in the premium motorcycle segment as we unveiled two new 200cc motorcycles – 'XPulse' and 'Xtreme 200R' – at Auto Expo 2018. The sales will begin in FY19," Mr. Munjal added.

Rane Engine Valve loss widens on GST impact

Aim to stabilise operations: chairman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI
Rane Engine Valve Ltd. has reported a net loss of ₹8.8 crore, after exceptional items, for the quarter ended March 31 compared with a loss of ₹28 lakh a year earlier.

It attributed the loss to the negative impact of the implementation of the GST on the after-market business. Total net revenue in the quarter fell to ₹101 crore from ₹104 crore. "The turnaround of REVL is under way and likely to take another 18-24 months," said group chairman L. Ganesh.

"The management is pur-

suing... initiatives to stabilise operations and become profitable," he said. The quarter numbers included exceptional items. The company reported profit of ₹94 crore on sale of land and loss of ₹3.57 crore on sale/retirement of assets on rationalisation of facilities.

Sales to Indian original equipment manufacturers grew 10% and those to international customers rose 6.5%. This was driven by ramp up in business with a major European customer partially offset by lower off-take in international after market business, the company said in a statement.

Tata-Mistry case: NCLT to rule June 12

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
The Mumbai Bench of the NCLT has reserved orders in the Tata-Mistry case for June 12. The case was filed by former Tata Sons chairman Cyrus Mistry's investment arm Cyrus Investments Pvt. Ltd. against Tata Sons Ltd. and others for oppression and mismanagement. The Division Bench of the NCLT had adjourned the matter by consent of both the parties.

"The tribunal has sought clarifications from the parties and now the matter is reserved for the order in the second week of June," the tribunal said.

HCL Tech Q4 net falls 9.8%

IT company forecasts FY19 revenue growth at 9.5-11.5%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

HCL Technologies on Wednesday posted a 9.8% decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹2,230 crore for the quarter ended March.

The profit was lower on account of a one-time benefit from a tax reversal in the January-March 2017 quarter when the net profit stood at ₹2,474 crore (as per Indian Accounting Standards).

Total income at the Noida-based software services firm grew 2.2% to ₹13,480 crore in the fourth quarter of 2017-18, from ₹13,183 crore in the year-earlier period.

"We had a strong performance in the quarter and year, backed by broad-based



C. Vijayakumar

growth across verticals, robust client additions and accelerated revenues from mode 2 and 3 services," HCL Technologies president and CEO C. Vijayakumar said.

He added that the deal pipeline for fiscal 2019 looked "similar [to] or better than last year."

In a statement, HCL Technologies said it expected revenue to grow 9.5-11.5% on constant currency basis in FY19. This would be slower than the firm's FY18 guidance of 10.5-12.5% growth.

Meets guidance
In constant currency terms, the company posted a 10.5% increase in revenue to \$7.8 billion for the last fiscal, meeting its guidance.

The company's shares fell 4.79% to ₹1,001.05 apiece on the BSE. The board of directors declared an interim dividend of ₹2 per equity share.

For the full year 2017-18, net profit rose 1.3% to ₹8,722 crore, while total income grew 6.4% to ₹51,786 crore.

Adani Group unit hires Anil Sardana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
Adani Transmission, part of the Adani Group, has appointed former Tata Power MD and CEO Anil Sardana as its MD and CEO with effect from May 1. Mr. Sardana had started his career with NTPC and had worked with BSES and Tata Group companies in the power and infrastructure sectors over three decades, the firm said in a statement.

"He joins us at a critical phase when the company has... entered the power distribution space with the acquisition of the Mumbai GTD business," said group chairman Gautam Adani.

Delhi Daredevils weathers a Buttler onslaught

Pant, Shreyas and Shaw come good with the bat for the host, Mishra does the trick with the ball



Jos Buttler threatened to end Delhi Daredevils' campaign in the 11th season of IPL prematurely but the host managed to survive his assault to live and fight another day with a four-run victory (DLS method) at the Ferozeshah Kotla here on Wednesday.

It took some inspired bowling from veteran Amit Mishra and some not-so-quick work behind the wickets by Rishabh Pant, to stump Buttler, who smashed 67 off just 26 balls. RR, chasing a stiff 151-run target in 12 overs, faltered towards the end despite the blazing start from Buttler, who added 82 for the opening wicket with D'Arcy Short.

Once he fell the rest of the batting simply failed to provide the acceleration needed.

Earlier, Delhi Daredevils made 196 for the loss of six wickets in 17.1 overs – the game having been reduced to 18-overs a side after the start was delayed by 1.5 hours by an initial spell of downpour – when covers were rushed in even as the umpires waited for a decision review. It finally went in favour of RR, with Glenn Maxwell adjudged out leg-before off Jofra Archer, but by then the players and officials



Punishing mood: Daredevils' Rishabh Pant uncorked shots of all hues, conventional and unconventional, as he took the Royals attack apart. • SANDEEP SAXENA

had all rushed back to the safety of the dugout.

DD had taken complete control of the game, the youngsters in its side bringing all their aggression and attitude to the fore after being asked to bat. It got its best first-six overs score of the season (62 for the loss of one

wicket) despite Colin Munro failing, yet again, going for a duck in the very first over.

But Prithvi Shaw, Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant couldn't care less. Shaw, specially, was in imperious form, making full use of a life after being dropped by Dhanu Kulkarni on 18 off his

SCOREBOARD DELHI DAREDEVILS VS RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Delhi Daredevils: P. Shaw c & b Gopal 47 (25b, 4x4, 4x6), C. Munro c Buttler b Kulkarni 0 (1b), Shreyas c Tripathi b Unadkat 50 (35b, 3x4, 3x6), R. Pant c Stokes b Unadkat 69 (29b, 7x4, 5x6), G. Maxwell lbw b Archer 5 (5b), V. Shankar c Tripathi b Unadkat 17 (6b 2x4 1x6), L. Plunkett not out 1 (2b); Extras (lb-1, w-6): 7; Total (for six wkts. in 17.1 overs): 196.
Fall of wickets: 1-1 (Munro, 0.4 overs), 2-74 (Shaw, 7.2), 3-166 (Shreyas, 14.3), 4-172 (Pant, 14.6), 5-191 (Shankar, 16.2), 6-196 (Maxwell, 17.1).
RR bowling: Kulkarni 3-0-37-1, Archer 3.1-0-31-1, Gowtham 2-0-27-0, Unadkat 4-0-46-3, Gopal 2-0-26-1, Stokes 3-0-28-0.
Rajasthan Royals: D. Short c Avesh b Maxwell 44 (25b, 2x4,

4x6), J. Buttler st Pant b Mishra 67 (26b, 4x4,7x6), S. Samson c Munro b Boult 3 (5b), B. Stokes c Avesh b Boult 1 (2b), R. Tripathi run out 9 (8b, 1x4); K. Gowtham (not out) 18 (6b, 2x4, 1x6); J. Archer (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (lb-1, w-3): 4; Total (for five wkts. in 12 overs): 146 (Revised Target: 151 in 12 overs).
Fall of wickets: 1-82 (Buttler, 6.4), 2-92 (Samson 8.1), 3-100 (Stokes 8.6), 4-118 (Short, 9.4), 50141 (Tripathi, 11.4).
DD bowling: Nadeem 1-0-13-0, Boult 3-0-26-2, Avesh 2-0-36-0, Plunkett 3-0-37-0, Mishra 2-0-12-1, Maxwell 1-0-21-1.
Toss: RR.
Man-of-the-Match: Pant.
Daredevils won by four runs via DLS method.

Points table

Team	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Chennai Super Kings	8	6	2	12	0.553
Sunrisers Hyderabad	8	6	2	12	0.514
Kings XI Punjab	7	5	2	10	0.228
Kolkata Knight Riders	8	4	4	8	0.110
Royal Challengers Bangalore	8	3	5	6	-0.301
Delhi Daredevils	9	3	6	6	-0.450
Rajasthan Royals	8	3	5	6	-0.726
Mumbai Indians	8	2	6	4	-0.059

*till the DD-RR match on May 2

A battle of the batsmen

KKR needs to grab wickets in the PowerPlay

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

Batsmen may dominate the scene when Kolkata Knight Riders hosts table topper Chennai Super Kings at the Eden Gardens here on Thursday.

Both sides were engaged in a high-scoring thriller when CSK played the host about three weeks ago.

The experienced CSK batsmen flexed their muscles to overhaul a tough target of 203.

CSK has crossed the 200-mark four times and has recorded a lowest total of 169 to underline its authority with the bat this season and ensure 12 points from six wins.

The consistent Ambati Rayudu, an in-form M.S. Dhoni, the accomplished Shane Watson and the reliable Suresh Raina have scored in excess of 200 runs individually to propel CSK's heavy duty performances. Dwayne Bravo and Sam Billings have also lent support.

KKR, which has scored less than 160 just once, has amassed double hundred aggregates twice to show that it



Crucial player: Andre Russell, taking a breather during practice on Wednesday, has contributed with both the bat and the ball for KKR. • K.R. DEEPAK

Today's match

■ KKR vs CSK, 8 p.m.

is capable of putting up big totals.

Some fine chases have enabled the fourth-placed host to pick up eight points.

Flamboyant opener Chris Lynn, captain Dinesh Karthik and the dependable Andre Russell, who has also made significant contributions

with his medium pace bowling, have gathered more than 200 runs apiece, apart from Robin Uthappa (who has collected 199), to serve KKR well.

It has also benefited from crucial knocks of Nitish Rana and all-rounder Sunil Narine. However, Rana's lower back issue may be a cause of concern for the host.

In bowling, CSK manages to check the opposition. Experienced hands such as Bravo, Watson, Harbhajan Singh, Imran Tahir, Ravindra Jadeja and youngsters including Shardul Thakur, K.M. Asif and Lungi Ngidi provide flexibility.

KKR's bowling unit has got variety – including spinners Narine, Kuldeep Yadav and Piyush Chawla, who hold the key, and a mix of pacers in Russell, Tom Curran, the seasoned Mitchell Johnson and under-19 World Cup-winning sensation Shivam Mavi.

They need to grab wickets in PowerPlay overs to give the team an upper hand.

The Eden Gardens, where the home side has registered some big scores, may get divided between the loyalists of KKR and MSD.

Great to see Super Kings' batting unit play freely and with authority

HARBHAJAN SINGH

Getting a chance to send down a crucial over in the debut match is a big occasion for any bowler and the way Lungi Ngidi executed the plans he discussed with captain M.S. Dhoni showed that we at Chennai Super Kings will get better with our bowling as we progress into the business end of the tournament.

Though I was happy with my spell, we as a bowling unit can still get together.

For the kind of score we put up after some sensational batting from Shane Watson, the game went very close than we thought it would. I

must say that Delhi Daredevils' Rishabh Pant batted well and Vijay Shankar's sixes later in the innings made the game very interesting.

The big total we raised came in handy, thanks to Watson, who set the tone in the PowerPlay overs. Though we lost two quick wickets, the solid foundation laid by him helped the middle-order batters to play freely. Once again Dhoni and Ambati Rayudu batted responsibly.

Rayudu has been on top and Dhoni is always there to finish off things. It was great to see our batting unit playing freely and with so much of authority.

I thought we bowled really well in the first six overs, taking two wickets, and then reduced Delhi to 74 for four in the ninth over. Though the target was difficult to close in, Delhi actually did well to get to 190-odd runs.

Young K.M. Asif is a good prospect and he will learn the more he plays. He bowled really quick early on and got us two wickets, which helped us to put the brakes on Delhi.

Tough on bowlers

It is tough to be a bowler in this competition as boundaries are getting smaller and every batsman is looking to hit

yourself at all time.

It is challenging to play Kolkata Knight Riders at the Eden Gardens. This is a very busy week for us with three games in a space of six days, including travel. It is always challenging as a player, but you just need to make sure to rest well and eat right.

One good part of IPL is that you can have your family and loved ones around. It is important because you can always come back to them, spend some quality time, forget about the game gone by and be ready for the next one.

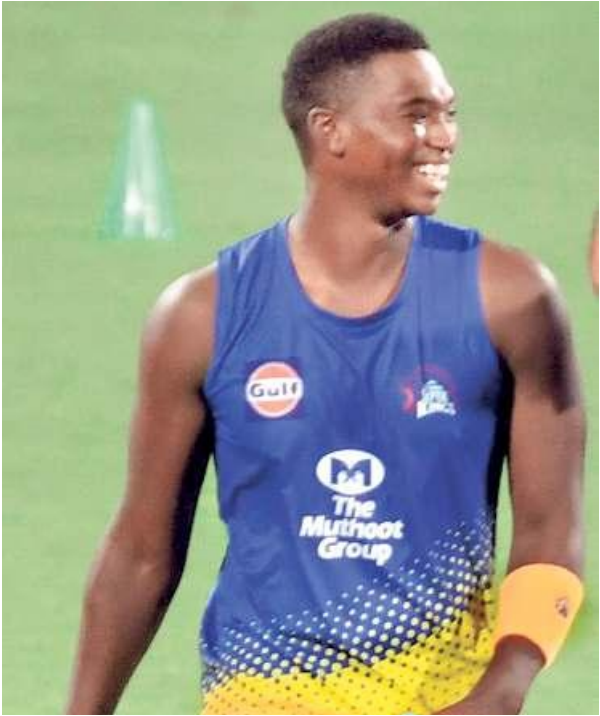
Professional Management Group / ESP



basics right, be very clear with your thinking and back

Ngidi — CSK's quick and present danger

Speedster offers much with his ability to vary the pace and change the length as required



Lungi Ngidi...making an impact. • K. PICHUMANI

S. DINAKAR
CHENNAI

Out of Africa, he's a bold new force. Lungi Ngidi not just delivers thunderbolts, but bowls them with control.

And he's lion-hearted. It's never easy to bounce back from a personal tragedy but the manner in which Ngidi flew back to South Africa following the death of his father Jerome and then returned to represent Chennai Super Kings in the IPL underlined his strength of mind.

With his rhythmic run-up that culminates in an explosive, open chested release, Ngidi made an immediate impact for CSK that had been struggling with its new ball combinations.

Restrictive bowling

The 22-year-old's pace and execution of plan with the

new ball – his ploy was to bowl either short or back of a length – hustled the Delhi Daredevils batsmen at the start of the innings. And he made scoring hard on a belter in Pune by denying batsmen the width to free their arms.

With Daredevils chasing an imposing score, Ngidi's first two overs for just seven runs made a winning difference. Numbers do not reveal the significance of the contribution.

And when he came back right at the end, Ngidi mixed the short-pitched stuff with yorkers – took out the threatening Rishabh Pant with a lifter – and then when 17 were required off the last three, conceded just three singles. His toe-crushers were on target.

Bowling different lengths at various stages of the in-

nings, changing his pace, and being able to move the ball, both in the air and off the seam, Ngidi offers much to the CSK bowling.

Story of courage

Put him in a tough situation and you can trust him to find a way. His has been a story of courage and resilience.

Son of domestic workers in Kloof, close to Durban, he shattered several barriers during his cricketing journey.

And when he made his Test debut at Centurion earlier this year, Ngidi, undaunted by either the occasion or the opposition, blew away the Indians in the second innings with an inspired six for 39.

CSK did well in picking him. And the man from the land of the big cats is on the prowl.

We adapted well: Southee

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA
BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bangalore's bowlers have suffered much punishment in the closing stages of innings this IPL season but they finally delivered on Tuesday, leading their side to an important victory over Mumbai Indians.

Tim Southee, who along with Mohammed Siraj saw RCB home in the death overs, felt the side's seamers had assessed the conditions well, resisting the urge to try cutters and slower deliveries when the ball was new.

"First and foremost, we went to our strongest skill set and that's trying to swing the ball...and we were able to take those early wickets. Once it stopped swinging, we adapted to that, bowling the cross-seam deliveries which were holding the surface. We were reasonably smart as a bowling unit and we assessed the conditions really well."

The 20th over of the RCB innings, when Colin de Grandhomme clobbered three sixes off Mitchell McClenaghan, was a turning point in the game, Southee felt.

Shane Bond, Mumbai's bowling coach, felt three bad overs in the first innings had cost his side the game. "I think the total was 15 runs above par. We bowled three overs (20th - 24 runs, 10th - 20, 4th - 22) that were terrible. When you do that on a wicket that is difficult it's always going to make it tough," he said.

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 & SS Select 1 (SD & HD) 8 p.m.
UEFA Europa League: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD) 1 a.m. (Friday)

IN BRIEF



Mohd. Hafeez cleared to bowl in intl. cricket

DUBAI
Pakistani off-spinning all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez has been cleared to resume bowling in international cricket following remedial work to his action, the ICC confirmed on Wednesday. Hafeez, who had been suspended from bowling due to an illegal action three times, has remodelled his bowling style so that the amount of elbow extension now falls within the 15-degree level of tolerance permitted under the ICC regulations. **IANIS**

Dynamos part ways with head coach Portugal

NEW DELHI
Delhi Dynamos has announced it has parted ways with head coach Miguel Angel Portugal of Spain by mutual consent following the team's disappointing outing in the last ISL. The club finished eighth in the league standings and was beaten in the qualifying rounds of the inaugural Hero Super Cup. **PTI**

'Dwarf giant' emulates Mayweather

NAKHON RATCHASIMA (THAILAND)
Thai boxer Wanheng Menayothin clinched his 50th straight victory on Wednesday, stopping Panamanian Leroy Estrada in the fifth round to hold onto his WBC minimum-weight belt, and tie the undefeated record of boxing great Floyd Mayweather Jr. **AFP**

Real survives a siege

The Spanish side makes the final for the third year in a row



Decisive moment: Karim Benzema pounced on Bayern 'keeper Sven Ulreich's howler to score his second goal. **•REUTERS**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MADRID

Holder Real Madrid reached the Champions League final for the third year in a row after Karim Benzema scored twice in a 2-2 draw with wasteful Bayern Munich on Tuesday to win its semifinal, second leg 4-3 on aggregate.

Bayern defender Joshua Kimmich had put the visitors ahead after three minutes but Benzema levelled with a free header in the 11th.

A goalkeeping howler from Sven Ulreich then allowed Benzema to tap in Madrid's second just after the break.

James Rodriguez, on loan from Madrid, equalised for Bayern in the 63rd to set up a gripping finale but Real held on despite waves of pressure to become the first team since Juventus in 1998 to reach the final for three years in succession.

"This club's DNA pushes you to fight until the end. We knew how to suffer together," Real captain Sergio Ramos told reporters.

"They had more possession but overall we were better. This team deserves to be

Match stats		
2	Goals	2
9	Total attempts	20
3	Shots on target	8
44	Possession (%)	56
334	Passes completed	519
113.9	Distance covered (km)	117.2
41	Balls recovered	45
2	Tackles	2
10	Fouls committed	10

Into the attacking third

	Delivery	Solo runs
Real	36	9
Bayern	56	18

Into the penalty area

Real	8	3
Bayern	25	3



Zidane is the first manager to reach three consecutive Champions League finals since Marcello Lippi between 1996 and 1998.

It's a terrible thing for a player to live through. Ulreich got confused, had a little black-out. He didn't know if he could pick it up, realised he couldn't, got nervous and that's what happened.
JUPP HEYNCKES, Bayern coach

in Kiev."

Real rode its luck to win the first leg in Munich 2-1 after Bayern had missed a slew of chances and Zinedine Zidane's side made the most of its few opportunities.

Bayern head coach Jupp Heynckes, who bowed out with the semifinals, admitted not many 72-year-olds get to experience "such an adventure".

"I'll never go back to the

bench in a Champions League game. Not many people get to go on such an adventure at the age of 72. I don't feel the emotion 'yes, now it's over', I'm just disappointed with the result, especially for the players."

The result: Semifinal (second leg): Real Madrid 2 (Benzema 11 & 46) drew with Bayern Munich 2 (Kimmich 3, Rodriguez 63).

Real Madrid won 4-3 on aggregate.

FIH comes up with Hockey Series

Will replace the HWL as an Olympics qualifying event

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has launched what it calls the Hockey Series, as one of the ways to qualify for Olympics 2020 and future World Cups starting 2022. It will replace the Hockey World League, the erstwhile qualifying competition that existed for four years as an experiment with few takers.

It would provide a qualifying route apart from the elite Hockey Pro League (HPL) and the continental events. For India, not part of the HPL, it would be the only way to book a ticket for Tokyo if it fails to triumph at the Asian Games.

The tournament would be divided into Hockey Series Open and Hockey Series Finals – similar to the first and last two stages of HWL respectively – and would be played over the preceding two years of an Olympics or World Cup, culminating in a series of Olympic/World Cup Qualifiers.

The Open competition would be continental, open to all countries not part of the HPL, and varying in the number of participants. Fifteen teams would advance from the several Open events – there could be more, the details haven't been finalised yet – to be held between June-September 2018, for three Finals

events and would be joined by the top nine nations as per world rankings not part of the HPL.

Each of the Finals – to be held between May-June 2019 – would have eight teams. The finalists from each – six teams in all – would then be joined by the top four nations from the HPL and the next two highest-ranked nations.

The 12 teams – in both men and women – would compete for six Olympic spots. The remaining six would go to the five continental champions and host Japan.

If all that sounds confusing, there is more – the 12 teams would not play in a

single qualifier but six different Qualification Events, each featuring two nations playing two back-to-back matches.

The draws would be based on team rankings at the end of all the continental championships with the team scoring the highest aggregate score over the two games qualifying!

"We have been working with a large number of stakeholders for a number of years to create a portfolio of events that help grow the sport at all levels. For emerging nations, the Hockey Series Open will provide a challenging and inspirational environment," new FIH CEO Thierry Weil said.

Bengaluru FC brooks no resistance

But, it may miss out on knockout round despite blanking Aizawl FC 5-0

AFC CUP

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Bengaluru FC (BFC) whipped Aizawl FC (AFC) 5-0, but its hopes of clinching a AFC Cup inter-zone playoff semifinal berth hangs by a thread. Despite the easy three points gained here on Wednesday, BFC is likely to lose out to group-topper New Radiant in the race to enter the knockout round.

For BFC to advance, the side needs a victory over Abahani Dhaka (on May 16), and New Radiant needs to drop a couple of points against lowly AFC.

In front of a sparse 1,500-odd crowd, BFC simply ran over a listless AFC. Spaniard Daniel Segovia recorded a brace, while Sunil Chhetri, Udanta Singh and Daniel Lalhlimpuia scored a goal each.



Slotting in: Bengaluru FC's Daniel Segovia beats Aizawl FC goalkeeper Lalawmpuia to find the net. **•G.P. SAMPATH KUMAR**



Chhetri opened the account in the 16th minute, when AFC goalkeeper Lalawmpuia stuck his hand out needlessly and brought down the striker. Chhetri slotted the resulting penalty into the side-netting.

Just a minute later, Australian import Eric Paartalu slid a pass through to an un-

marked Segovia in the box, who squared his shoulders and found the target at the far-post.

Paartalu helped set up BFC's third as well, when he released Chhetri with a perfect lob from the half-line. Chhetri carried the ball deep into enemy territory, before generously passing it off to

an unmarked Udanta. A simple poke was enough to put BFC 3-0 ahead at half-time.

Segovia's perfect header and Daniel Lalhlimpuia's late strike brought more joy to the home fans.

After the final whistle – in what is likely to be BFC's last home game of the season – BFC head coach Albert Roca received thunderous applause from the spectators. "We want you to stay, Albert Roca, we want you to stay," rang the chants.

Roca's contract expires soon, and it remains to be seen if the Spaniard will extend his contract. "I don't want to comment on my future plans, but I can say that I'm very proud to be a part of the JSW family," Roca said.

The result: BFC 5 (Sunil Chhetri 16, Daniel Segovia 17, 62, Udanta Singh 30, Daniel Lalhlimpuia 89) bt AFC 0.

Draft Constitution: SC seeks suggestions again

BCCI and State administrations pleasantly surprised by the apex court decision

G. VISWANATH
MUMBAI

Virtually the entire cricket administration in India – at the BCCI and State level – that have vehemently opposed the radical reforms recommended by the Justice Lodha Committee and validated by the Supreme Court on July 18, 2016 are pleasantly surprised at the apex court offering them another opportunity to come up suggestions for the BCCI's Draft Constitution.

The discerning wonder why another attempt to get the views of the office-bearers and member associations when the apex court has already received suggestions from the present office-bearers comprising acting-president C.K. Khanna, acting-secretary Amitabh Choudhary and treasurer Anirudh

Feedback sought on the following policies

- One State, One member, One Vote
- Reverting to the conventional five-member selection committees
- Variable full-membership status of the Ranji Trophy playing teams

Chaudhry.

There is speculation that suggestions have been asked only on three specific policies: 'One State, One member, One Vote', reverting to the conventional five-member selection committees and the vexing, variable full-membership status of the three Ranji Trophy playing teams in Maharashtra (Mumbai, Maharashtra, Vidarbha)

and Gujarat (Gujarat, Saurashtra, Baroda), Services, Railways and non-Ranji Trophy playing members All-India Universities, Cricket Club of India and National Cricket Club.

The present members, though, would go to the Amicus Curiae Gopal Subramaniam as proposed by the apex court, with a bigger wish, including the one to remove restrictions placed on the tenure clause (cooling-off period of three years after each term of three years and an accumulated tenure of nine years), age cap of 70 and most importantly, the distribution of powers to the elected office-bearers and the CEO.

By its order dated July, 24, 2017, the Supreme Court had given clear indications that it was inclined to look at the

'One State, One Member, One Vote' policy accepted by a CJI Bench comprising Tirath Singh Thakur and F.M. Ibrahim Kalifulla on July 18, 2016.

The Court, while drawing up the agenda for a BCCI SGM scheduled last July, had said: "All concerned shall implement the recommendations of the Lodha Committee report as far as practicable, barring the issues which have been raised pertaining to membership, number of members of the selection committee, concept of associate membership, etc."

By another order served last October, the court had asked the three office-bearers Khanna, Amitabh and Anirudh to give their suggestions on recommendations they find are not practicable.

It also said that once the

suggestions are submitted, the claims of Railways, Universities and Services and the other cricket associations, that are of the view that the concept of 'One State, One vote' should not be applicable keeping in view their contribution to the game of cricket, shall be considered."

Amitabh, claiming the backing of 13 members, listed in the 'not practicable' category, three clauses which include 'nine-year cumulative term and cooling-off period'.

This would not allow the Gujarat Cricket Association president Amit Shah (the BJP chief and MP), vice-president Parimalbhai Nathwani and joint-secretary Jay Shah (Amit Shah's son) to continue in office.

FED CUP

A JOSEPH ANTONY
CHITTOOR

Punjab Police overcame Hissar Club 91-73 in their men's group B match of the senior Federation Cup basketball championship at the Chittoor District Sports Authority stadium court on Wednesday night. On court 1, ONGC toyed with Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh 74-42.

The Punjab squad exploited a porous Hissar defence, Sukhdeep in particular scoring almost at will.

Earlier, Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) Chennai staved off a stiff challenge from Madras Engineer Group (MEG), Bengaluru 85-70. When the tall and wiry Manu Thomas mopped up the defensive rebounds, there was a sharp decline in IOB's scoring from 30-18 in the opening 10 minutes to 39-36 by half-time.



Amal James.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Induction of the seasoned Vineeth Mathew proved hugely beneficial for the bankers as he combined with Siva Balan to score steadily from the paint area.

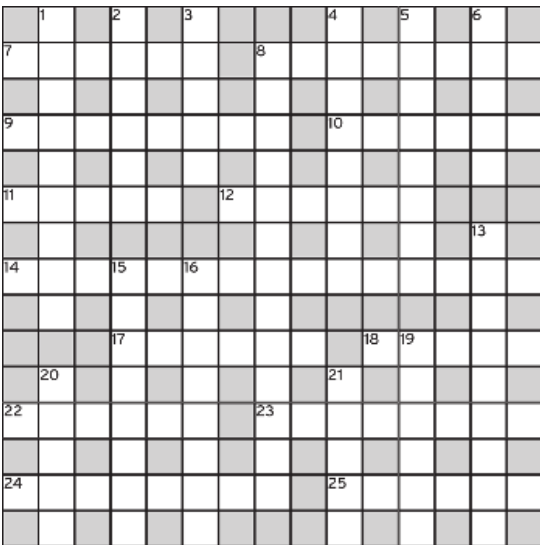
For MEG, Amal James' scorching solo runs found him invariably within firing range of the opponent's backboard. When the semi-circle proved hard to breach, he deployed three-pointers while being spot-on

from close quarters too.

The results: Men: Group A: Customs & Central Excise 78 (Nikhil K.R. 22, Basil Philip 15) bt BSF 54 (Bharathdeep Singh 19, Gurvinder Singh 18); ONGC bt SAAP 74 (Arjun Singh 12, Yadwinder Singh 14, Muin Bek Hafeez 20) bt SAAP 42 (C. Naveen 19). **B:** IOB 85 (G. Siva Balan 15, Aravind Annadurai 13, Vineeth Mathew 13) bt MEG 70 (Rahul Sharath 17, Amal James 25, Jijin Joseph 8); Punjab Police 91 (Dilpreet 19, Sukhdeep Pal 26, Satnam Singh Bhamara 9, Ranbir Singh 16) bt Hissar Club 73 (Vikas Kumar 24, Deepak Rathee 22).

Women: A: Karnataka 69 (Priyanka P. 16, Navaneetha 16) bt Chhattisgarh 55 (Sakshi Pandey 27, Gulabsha Ali 16); TN 46 (S. Rajeshwari 13) bt AP 26 (N. Padmavati 9). **B:** Eastern Railway 57 (Madhu Kumari 10, Salma Devi 9) bt Delhi 21 (Vidhi 7); Maharashtra 55 (Sruithi Menon 22, Mughda 9) bt Telangana 26 (Mrunalini 8, Manasa 7).

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12307



ACROSS

- 7 Gets mad about America reinforcing support (6)
- 8 Close scrutiny of poorly grasped English you used once, maybe twice (5,3)
- 9 Glee from silly spat starting to go wrong (4-4)
- 10 Secret to treasure over concealed rock (6)

DOWN

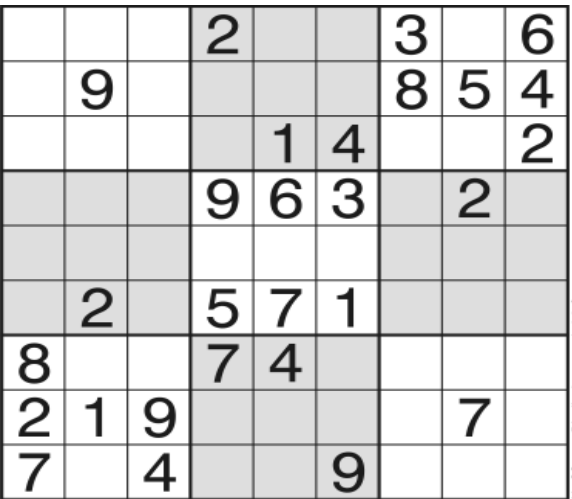
- 1 Already decided to make caddy turn (3,3,3)
- 2 Prepared his pitch for a goddess (6)
- 3 Havens put up for pet (5)
- 4 Pole tuning guitars grooves in the snow (8)

(set by xChequer)

- 11 Coloured and gilded gold ornament (5)
- 12 Hoover's lacuna (6)
- 14 Shed core aspiration with loss of air supply? 'ear, 'ear! (4,4,7)
- 17 Former yield reportedly better (6)
- 18 Stupidly looks 'within' empty spaces (5)
- 22 Left in own, bottomless, recurrent void (6)
- 23 Pointless note sent in, that is brazen (8)
- 24 Bailiff lists recovery of excess fine (8)
- 25 Servant's need to be called important (6)

- 5 Mess city created affecting all parts (8)
- 6 Memory blocks released by pieces of eight? (5)
- 8 Bankrupt son's conviction is mind-boggling (7,6)
- 13 Clerk providing pound tip for pretty escort (3-6)
- 15 Count possibly short, cannot be matched (8)
- 16 Pet to display say, collars and ties (8)
- 19 Sailor on vessel gets spirit away (6)
- 20 Pulled up zip tags to poison (5)
- 21 Minor beats up lad, going unnoticed in these days (5)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12306



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



FAITH

Veil of illusion

The story of Chitraketu, narrated in the Bhagavata Purana, helps to put in focus the actual plight of every jivatma who is bound to the cycle of birth owing to the veil of illusion that is cast on creation. The very name 'Chitra Ketu' is representative of the jivatma who leads his life trying to fulfill his dreams and desires and getting attached to his family, friends, kith and kin, pointed out Swami Paramasukananda in a discourse.

Until such time when one becomes enlightened, there is no hope of relief from samsara. Hence countless jivatmas continue in the cycle of birth and it is held that to even roughly estimate how many births an atma takes as is impossible as trying to count the grains of sand. Chitraketu, the king is sad that he is childless and then is blessed by Sage Angirasa to have a son. The sage warns him that the son will be as much a cause of joy as of sorrow. The son is born but is unfortunately killed by the jealous wives of the king. Chitraketu is unable to bear the sorrow and then Sages Angirasa and Narada visit him and console him. They enlighten him about the nature of the jivatma in a very convincing way. They make the dead son appear before the parents and when the parents express their concern for him, the son does not recognise them, having passed through many births when he has had many parents. All relations, enemies, friends, cousins, etc, in one's lifetime are transitory and hence it is not wise to attach oneself or get involved in these. The atma alone is eternal and subtle and its welfare alone should be the focus. The Lord's Maya is difficult to cross even by the most determined. It is achieved only by one who is resolute in this regard and also is a recipient of God's grace.

IN BRIEF



Asiad will be tougher than CWG: Neeraj Chopra

NEW DELHI
Commonwealth Games javelin champion Neeraj Chopra says the competition at the Asian Games will be tougher than in Gold Coast. “I will have to work harder for the Asian Games as it is tougher and I have to do better than my personal best (of 86.48m if I have to win a gold. In Jakarta, there will be Taipei’s Asian record holder Cheng Chao-tsun and Ahmed Bader of Qatar. P.TI

Malaysian badminton players banned

KUALA LUMPUR
Two Malaysian badminton players — former World junior champion Zulfadli Zulkiffli, 25, was banned for 20 years and fined \$25,000, while Tan Chun Seang, 31, was barred for 15 years and fined \$15,000 after being found guilty of corruption and match-fixing, the Badminton World Federation said on Wednesday. The were found guilty of breaching the BWF code of conduct in relation to “betting, wagering and irregular match results.” AFP



CA chief Sutherland sees way back for Warner

SYDNEY
Disgraced David Warner still has a future in Australian cricket, Cricket Australia’s CEO James Sutherland says, handing the explosive opener a lifeline. “Their own personal redemption story is very much in their own hands now. I feel sympathy for them and I want to see them all come back and play their best cricket. Part of the design within the sanctions was to allow them to stay connected with the game”. P.TI

Lakshya sets up clash with Lin Dan

Praneeth, Jayaram and Sameer also make the second round

NEW ZEALAND OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AUCKLAND

Indian teenager Lakshya Sen is set to play the biggest match of his nascent career when he will lock horns with the legendary Lin Dan in the second round of the New Zealand Open badminton championship on Thursday. The 17-year-old defeated June Wei Cheam of Malaysia 21-11, 21-16 in his opener, while the Chinese great got the better of Takuma Ueda of Japan 21-13, 21-12.

In other matches on Wednesday, B. Sai Praneeth, Ajay Jayaram and Sameer Verma also recorded victories.

Praneeth made short work of Israel’s Misha Zilberman 21-11, 21-19, while Sameer beat Indonesia’s Sony Dwi Kuncoro 21-8, 21-10.

Jayaram upset fourth-seeded Hsu Jen Hao 21-23, 21-12 21-18.

In women’s singles, J. Vaishnavi Reddy and C. Sai Uttejitha Rao lost their openers. Vaishnavi lost to Hsuan-Yu Wendy Chen of Australia



Good start: Teenager Lakshya Sen scored a straight-game win in his opener on Wednesday. • FILE PHOTO RANJEET KUMAR

21-16, 21-19, while Uttejitha lost to qualifier Yukino Nakai of Japan 21-14, 21-13.

The results:

Men: Lakshya Sen bt June Wei Cheam (Mas) 21-11, 21-16; Sai Praneeth bt Misha Zilberman (Isr) 21-11, 21-19; Sameer Verma bt Sony Dwi Kuncoro (Ina) 21-8, 21-10; Ajay Jayaram bt Hsu Jen Hao (Tpe) 21-23, 21-12, 21-18; Abhinav Manota (Aus) bt Sourabh Verma 21-19, 14-21, 21-19; Tomy Sugiarto (Ina) bt Subhan-kar Dey 21-18, 21-10.

Doubles: Manu Attri & B. Su-meeth Reddy bt Jonathan Cur-tin & Dhanny Oud (NZ) 21-14,

21-15; Akbar Bintang Cahyono & Moh Reza Pahlevi Isfahani (Ina) bt Shlok Ramachandran & M.R. Arjun 21-12, 21-14.

Jiting He & Qiang Tan (Chn) bt Rohan Kapoor & Shivam Sharma 21-13, 21-13; Sabar Ka-ryaman Gutama & Frengky Wi-jaya Putra (Ina) bt Francis Alwin & K. Nandagopal 21-15, 21-13.

Women: Hsuan-Yu Wendy Chen (Aus) bt J. Vaishnavi Reddy 21-16, 21-19; Yukino Nakai (Jpn) bt C. Sai Uttejitha Rao 21-14, 21-13. **Doubles:** J. Meghana & S. Poorvisha Ram bt Erena Calder Hawking & Jasmin Chung Man (Aus) 21-17, 21-14.

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Nine-member team for World Race Walk announced

Manish Kumar Rawant rested

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A nine-member Indian team will take part in the IAAF World Race Walk team championship to be held in Taicang, China, on May 5 and 6.

K.T. Irfan, Vikash Singh and Neeraj Kumar will compete in the 20km section, while Sandeep Kumar and Ji-tendra Singh will compete in

the 50km category.

In women’s 20km walk, Khushbir Kaur, B. Soumya, Ravina and Shanti Kumari will represent the country.

The Indian team for the Asian Games will be selected based on their performanc-es in China.

Manish Kumar Rawant – sixth with a time of 1 hour 22 minutes and 22 seconds in the Commonwealth Games

in Gold Coast – has been rested and his time in Aus-tralia will be considered for selection.

Selection criteria

However, it may be noted that the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) had set a selec-tion criteria of 1:22:00 for men and 1:34:54 for women in 20km and 3:55:00 for men’s 50km race.

Long and triple jumpers to train in India

Many athletes travelling abroad for Asian Games preparations

STAN RAYAN
KOCHI

Just like their training prior to the Rio Olympics, the quartermilers and the relay runners will be going to Spa-la in Poland as they prepare for the Asian Games in Jakar-ta in August.

The javelin throwers will be travelling to Finland while the distance runners and steeplechasers are likely to go to Bhutan.

They will go abroad, re-turn for the inter-State Na-tionals in Guwahati (June 26 to 29) and will go back to their foreign bases, only to return a few days before the Asiad.

“They will go by May 10. That is the tentative plan,” said deputy chief National coach Radhakrishnan Nair. The proposal has been sent to SAI for approval.

But the long and triple jumpers will not be going anywhere. They will be training in India, at least till the inter-State Nationals.



Nayana James. • FILE PHOTO: VIPIN CHANDRAN

Except for male triple jumper Arpinder Singh, the others disappointed in Gold Coast.

Though V. Neena and Nayana James, the Asian Championships silver and bronze medallists in Bhuba-neswar last year, qualified for the CWG final, they could manage only , 6.19m and 6.14m respectively. Nayana (6.51m) and Neena (6.42) had far superior season bests.



V. Neena. • FILE PHOTO: V. RAJU

Rakesh Babu, another male triple jumper who had also qualified for the final, was thrown out of the Games’ Village in Gold Coast after a syringe was found in his bag.

Three days ago, long and triple jumps National coach Bedros Bedrosian said he was not aware of any foreign trip for his trainees.

“I don’t know yet, I’ll have more details tomorrow,” said the Romanian.

But on Wednesday, he said they were not going anywhere till the inter-State Nationals.

“I had planned for Uzbe-kistan and Kazakhstan but I realised that it would be Ra-madan time there and get-ting proper food could be a problem for athletes,” Be-drosian told *The Hindu*. “I think we can go to Malaysia after the inter-State meet for training and competition be-fore the Asiad.”

Bedrosian also revealed that national long jump re-cord holder Ankit Sharma, who suffered an injury last year, is expected to regain full fitness in about two weeks while Rakesh is yet to join the national camp.

“I don’t know what the committee (to look into the CWG syringe incident) has given in its report and I have not heard anything from the federation regarding it. But Rakesh has not joined the camp and I don’t know when he will join,” he said.

Ankita goes down fighting

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU
ANNING, CHINA

Ankita Raina went down fighting 6-7(4), 5-7 to the second seed Wang Yafan of China in the pre-quarterfi-nals of the \$125,000 WTA tennis tournament in here on Wednesday.

The results: \$125,000 WTA, Anning, China: Pre-quarter-nals: Wang Yafan (Chn) bt Anki-ta Raina 7-6(4), 7-5. **Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals:** Elitsa Kostova & Aleksandrina Naydenova (Bul) bt Xun Fang Ying (Chn) & Prarthana Thombare 7-5, 4-6, [10-7].

€ 561,345 ATP, Munich: Pre-quarterfinals: Ivan Dodig (Cro) & Rajeev Ram (US) bt Fabrice Martin (Fra) & Purav Raja 5-7, 6-2, [10-6].

€ 486,145 ATP, Istanbul, Tur-

key: Pre-quarterfinals: Marcin Matkowski (Pol) & Divij Sharan bt Radu Albot (Mda) & Nikoloz Basilashvili (Geo) 7-5, 6-3.

\$25,000 ITF men, Abuja, Nige-ria: Pre-quarterfinals: Suraj Prabodh bt Kento Takeuchi (Jpn) 5-7, 6-3, 5-3 (retired); Arjun Kadhe bt Mirko Martinez (Sui) 6-3, 6-7(3), 6-1; Jelle Sels (Ned) bt Dalwinder Singh 6-3, 6-4. **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Ronnie Schneider (US) & Arjun Kadhe bt Emmanuel Audu & Michael Ju-nior Michael (Ngr) 6-1, 6-3.

\$15,000 ITF men, Kampala, Uganda: First round: S.D. Praj-wal Dev bt Boris Aguma (Uga) 6-1, 6-1; Kaza Vinayak Sharma bt Vasisht Cheruku 7-6(5), 7-5. **Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals:** Goran Markovic (Srb) & Kaza Vi-nayak Sharma bt Ansu Bhuyan & Jayesh Pungliya 6-2, 6-2.

\$15,000 ITF men, Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam: Pre-quarterfi-nals: Jumpei Yamasaki (Jpn) bt Niki Poonacha 6-4, 3-6, 6-1.

Doubles: Quarterfinals: Niki Poonacha & Abhinav Sanjeev Shanmugam bt Alexios Halebian (US) & Nitin Kumar Sinha 7-6(8), 3-6, [10-5].

\$25,000 ITF women, Tbilisi, Georgia: Pre-quarterfinals: Ekaterine Gorgodze (Geo) bt Rutuja Bhosale 6-1, 6-0. **First round:** Rutuja Bhosale bt Zoziya Kardava (Geo) 6-4, 6-1. **Dou-bles: Pre-quarterfinals:** Ani Amiraghyan (Arm) & Sadafmoh Tolibova (Blr) bt Barbara Bonic (Srb) & Rutuja Bhosale 7-5, 6-4.

\$15,000 ITF women, Hua Hin, Thailand: Pre-quarterfinals: Zeel Desai bt Natasha Palha 6-2, 6-2; Xinyu Cai (Chn) bt Sowjanya Bavisetti 6-2, 6-4. **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Bunyawit Tham-chaiwat (Tha) & Zeel Desai bt Patcharin Cheapchandej (Tha) & Alexxandra Walters (Aus) 6-4, 6-4; Lorraine Guillermo (US) & Natasha Palha bt Sowjanya Bavi-setti & Ramya Natarajan 6-4, 6-3.

Trouble in Mohun Bagan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Mohun Bagan Club was thrown into turmoil as 15 members of its executive committee resigned citing lack of commitment and transparency in function-ing of the club.

The objective of this re-signation is to force the general secretary Anjan Mi-tra to act in resolving an imbroglio that has risen be-cause of the players not re-ceiving their payments for the last three months and the club unable to decide on the squad. Mitra has summoned a meeting of the executive committee on Friday.

IN BRIEF



Disney plans new app aimed at millennials

NEW YORK
Disney has announced that it will launch a free video app with original content aimed at millennials. The app — called “Oh My Disney” — will be a variation of the site of the same name, which publishes editorial content and short videos on the world of Disney, Mickey and Marvel superheroes. AFP



1,374 dancing drones set Guinness record in China

BEIJING
A Chinese drone company has broken the Guinness World Record for most drones flown simultaneously. The new record showcased a 13-minute flight that involved 1,374 drones spread over a kilometre. Chinese UAV firm EHang Egret surpassed the record set by Intel, which flew 1,218 drones during the Winter Olympics. REUTERS



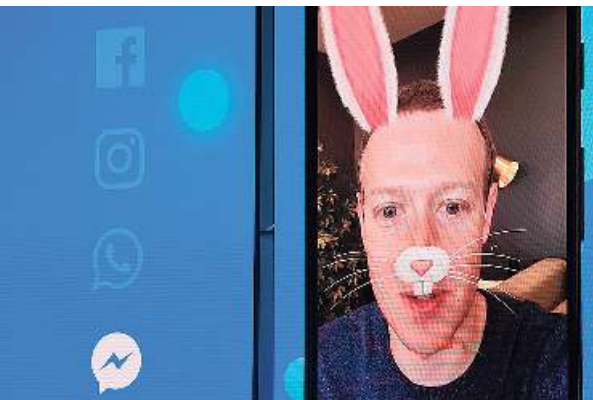
Nigeria bans codeine cough syrups

ABUJA
Nigeria has banned cough syrups containing the painkiller codeine because of concern about misuse and addiction, the government said. Health Minister Isaac Adewole said the ban was introduced because of “the gross abuse codeine usage has been subjected to in the country”. AFP

Facebook to offer dating service

Users will be able to create a separate profile not visible to their network of friends

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SAN JOSE
Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg announced on Tuesday that the world’s largest social network will soon include a new dating feature — while vowing to make privacy protection its top priority in the wake of the Cambridge Analytica scandal.
Mr. Zuckerberg unveiled the plans as he addressed Facebook’s annual F8 developers conference in San Jose, California — emphasising that the focus would be on helping people find long-term partners. “This is going to be for building real, long-term relationships, not just hook-ups,” Mr. Zuckerberg said in presenting the new feature, noting that one in three marriages in the U.S. start online and that some 200 million Facebook users identify as being single.



Filtered fun: Mark Zuckerberg is seen with bunny ears on-screen during the developers conference in San Jose. •AFP
Under the new feature, users will be able to create a separate “dating” profile not visible to their network of friends, with potential matches recommended based on dating preferences. It will be free of charge, in line with Facebook’s core offering. The announcement sent shares of the online dating giant Match.com tumbling, finishing the formal trading day down 22%.
The 33-year-old CEO also said the dating offer was built from the ground up with privacy and safety in

mind, as he underscored the firm’s commitment to boosting privacy protections.
Global scrutiny
Facebook’s closely-watched developer conference comes as the giant faces intense global scrutiny over the mass harvesting of personal data by Cambridge Analytica, a British political consultancy that worked for Donald Trump’s 2016 election campaign.
Facebook has admitted up to 87 million users may have had their data hijacked in the scandal, which saw Mr. Zuckerberg grilled at length by the US Congress last month.
“We need to make sure that never happens again,” Mr. Zuckerberg told the audience.
In a related move, Facebook announced an upcoming feature called “Clear His-

Macron’s faux pas?

Calls Australian First Lady ‘delicious’

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SYDNEY
Was it a Freudian slip by French President Emmanuel Macron? A joke linked to French gastronomy? Or even, a week after his visit to Washington, a parody of U.S. President Donald Trump’s infamous comments about Mr. Macron’s wife?



Whatever the case, Mr. Macron raised eyebrows in Sydney on Wednesday by calling Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull’s wife “delicious.”
“I want to thank you for your welcome, thank you and your delicious wife for your warm welcome,” Mr. Macron told Mr. Turnbull.
Despite Mr. Macron’s deadpan delivery, some observers felt he may have been making a joke. Mr. Turnbull had just mentioned Mr. Macron’s imminent lunch with members of Sydney’s French community, and had followed with comments about French gastronomy and wine.
Others felt Macron may simply have slipped up in his use of English, since the French word for delicious ‘delicieux’ also translates as “delightful.”

Tiger cub dumped near U.S. border

Smugglers fled back to Mexico after attempting to cross into Texas



Long journey: The tiger cub found stuffed in a duffel bag at the U.S. border near Brownsville, Texas, and, right, recovering at a veterinary clinic in a Texas zoo. •U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION/AP



ASSOCIATED PRESS
BROWNSVILLE
Smugglers left behind a live tiger cub in a duffel bag when they fled back to Mexico after attempting to cross the Rio Grande into Texas.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials on Tuesday said the male tiger, believed to be three or four months old, has been placed at the Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville.
Border Patrol agents patrolling on Monday along the river near Brownsville saw three people trying to enter the U.S. illegally.
An agency statement says the trio abandoned a bag

10,000 endangered tortoises rescued in Madagascar

They were crammed into a home with no food or water

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JOHANNESBURG
International conservationists in Madagascar have been treating more than 10,000 critically endangered radiated tortoises that were seized from traffickers who had crammed them into a home with no access to food or water.



Cruel trade: The tortoises were kept in unsanitary conditions at a home in Madagascar. •TURTLE SURVIVAL ALLIANCE

The Turtle Survival Alliance and other groups are caring for the tortoises at a wildlife facility in the Ifaty region of the Indian Ocean nation, though hundreds have died from illness and dehydration.
Sick tortoises are being given subcutaneous fluids to

rehydrate them and antibiotics if needed.
The alliance says the radiated tortoises were found by police at a home in Toliara on April 10 and that they likely had been collected for the illegal pet trade, possibly in Asia.
Radiated tortoises are coveted for the star pattern on their shells.

‘Glow-in-the-dark algae may be a sign of global warming’

Scientists study phenomenon in northern Arabian Sea

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI
The phenomenon of Mumbai’s beaches glowing in the dark maybe a consequence of global warming and not industrial pollution, according to a year-long investigation by Indian and American scientists.
The *Noctiluca* algae, commonly known as sea sparkle, is a parasite and occurs in patches or ‘blooms’ in the northern Arabian Sea. Their bioluminescence has earned them the name ‘sea sparkle’.
However, these patches ring an alarm bell for ecologists because the algae compete with fish for food and choke their supply. *Noctiluca* devours one of the most important planktonic organisms at the base of the fish-food chain, namely diatoms, and also excretes large

amounts of ammonia, which is linked with massive fish mortality.
Earlier, the increase in algal patches was linked to coastal pollution from major Indian cities along the west coast. However, researchers from the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) — a Ministry of Earth Sciences body — and the U.S.’ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration say that “global warming conditions” may be instead be responsible.
A warming ocean means greater temperature differences among layers of the sea water.
This slows the upward transport of nutrients like silicate from the ocean bottom, lowering its concentration at the surface. Diatoms

Royal ride



Gleaming coach: Martin Oates, senior carriage restorer, polishes the Ascot Landau, which will be used in the case of dry weather at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. The wedding is set for May 19. •REUTERS

Islamabad’s new airport inaugurated

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD
Pakistan’s biggest and first greenfield airport here was inaugurated on Wednesday by Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi after years of delay.
The Islamabad International Airport became operational when its first commercial flight, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) PK-300, landed from Karachi.
PIA spokesman Masood Tajwar confirmed that the national flag carrier safely landed at the airport. “The New Islamabad International Airport spans over an area of 4,238 acres of land, and it is the first greenfield airport in the country. The airport is equipped with the latest technology and best services for the passengers,” Pakistan’s press information department tweeted.

Globe-trotters flock to Peru’s remote ‘Rainbow Mountain’

Tourism has provided a much-needed economic boost to this region populated by struggling alpaca herders, but ecological sustainability is a challenge

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PITUMARCA
Tourists gasp for breath as they climb for two hours to a peak in the Peruvian Andes that stands 5,000 metres above sea level. They’re dead tired, but stunned by the magical beauty unfurled before them.
Stripes of turquoise, lavender and gold blanket what has become known as “Rainbow Mountain”, a ridge of multicoloured sediments laid down millions of years ago and pushed up as tectonic plates clashed. It’s only within the last five years that the natural wonder has been discovered by the outside world, earning it must-see status on Peru’s burgeoning backpacker tourist circuit.
“You see it in the pictures



Stunning layers: A view from the Rainbow Mountain in Pitumarca, Peru. •AP

and you think it’s Photoshopped but it’s real,” said Lukas Lynen, an 18-year-old tourist from Mexico.
The popularity of Rainbow Mountain, which attracts up to 1,000 tourists each day, has provided a much-needed economic jolt to this remote region populated by struggling alpaca herders. Environmentalists, however, fear the tourists could destroy the treasured landscape, which is already

coveted by international mining companies.
“From the ecological point of view they are killing the goose that lays the golden eggs,” said Dina Farfan, a Peruvian biologist who has studied threatened wildlife in the area just a few hours from the Incan ruins of Machu Picchu.
Rapid change
As proof, he points to dirt trail climbed by tourists to reach Rainbow Mountain that has badly eroded in the last 18 months, scarring the otherwise pristine landscape. A wetland once popular with migrating ducks has also been turned into a parking lot the size of five football fields that fills each morning with vans of mostly European and American visitors.
There are more serious threats, too.
Camino Minerals Corp., a Canadian-based mining company, has applied for mining rights in the mineral-rich area that includes the mountain. The company did not respond to a request by The Associated Press for comment on its plans.
Yet the flood of tourists has meant jobs and hard cash for the local Pampachiri indigenous community, which has struggled with high rates of alcoholism, malnutrition and falling prices of wool for their prized alpaca. Many have abandoned nomadic life for dangerous gold mining jobs in the Amazon.
Now, they charge tourists

\$3 each to enter their ancestral land, netting the community roughly \$400,000 a year: a small fortune that has triggered a tax battle with an impoverished, nearby municipality, which has seen no part of the windfall.
The surge in tourists also comes with a responsibility to be good stewards of the environment and their new guests, and Pampachiri community leader Gabino Huaman admits he is not sure they are ready to fully handle it. “We don’t know one word in English,” he said. “Or first aid.”
Despite the challenges, roughly 500 villagers have returned in the last couple of years to take up their ancestral trade of transporting goods across the Andes. The difference is that now they are hauling tourists on horseback.
Living in harmony
Mr. Farfan, the biologist, said he hopes the Pampachiri can learn from other sustainable tourism endeavours in Peru.
It was the success of one such project, in the nearby town of Chillca, that first put Rainbow Mountain on the map.
For much of the past decade, a group of shepherds had been quietly taking small groups of tourists to the mountain as part of a five-day hike around the fast-melting Ausangate glacier.
Over time, and thanks to the stunning photographs posted on the internet, the secret got out.