

TIME AND US

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| WEATHER TEMPERATURE | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| STATION | MAX TEMPERATURE | MIN TEMPERATURE |
| | ACT | ACT |
| SRINAGAR | 30.1 | 12.6 |
| JAMMU | 33.7 | 24.8 |
| LEH | 22.8 | 5.5 |
| KARGIL | 25.2 | 7.2 |

SUNSET THURSDAY: 06:21 PM
SUNRISE FRIDAY: 06:25 AM
LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR
 Partly Cloudy Sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 29°C & 11°C respectively.

RNI NO: JKENG/2015/62397 • PRICE RS.3/- (AIR SURCHARGE FOR DELHI, JAMMU & LADAKH 50/- PAISA)

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Shoots of peace emerging in Kashmir, time right for talks to resolve problem: CM

Srinagar: Shoots of peace are "sprouting" in the terrorism-hit state of Jammu and Kashmir and the government is now working towards ensuring that the people in the state can be uplifted with dignity, state chief minister Mehbooba Mufti has said.

In an interview to PTI Monday night, the 58-year-old chief minister welcomed recent attempts by the Centre and the ruling party to reach out to Kashmiris, starting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day speech where he asked the countrymen to embrace Kashmiris.

This was followed by Union home minister Rajnath Singh's statement that the Centre is willing to hold talks with all stakeholders, then BJP leader Ram Madhav saying talks can be held with anyone. In his "Mann Ki Baat" speech on Sunday, Modi also praised a poor Kashmiri youth, Bilal Dar, for his attempt to clean up a lake, which became front page news in Kashmir and heavily discussed on social media.

"These are welcome signs" in Kashmir Valley where people are eagerly waiting for peace to return, the



chief minister said.

"The shoots of peace have started sprouting. They have to be watered and fertilized, and I am sure that the fruits of peace will follow," she said in the interview at her home, with a large portrait of her father, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, in the background. Mehbooba succeeded him as the chief minister a few months after his death in January 2016.

Mehbooba, whose PDP is in an alliance with the BJP in the state,

blamed the electronic media for making even minor incidents of violence into national events, portraying Kashmir as a region in perpetual flames. She said the high-pitched debates that follow end up vilifying Kashmiris. This in turn alienates Kashmiris against the rest of the country, and the country against Kashmir, which has a direct impact on tourism, the mainstay of the economy.

Mehbooba, who is also the tourism minister, gets a report on tourist ar-

rivals every evening, and the figures are grim - arrivals have now fallen to 4,000-5,000 daily from a peak of 10,000-12,000. Most hotels and houseboats are empty, taxi companies have virtually no business and shops are shut.

She said it is wrong to project the entire 70 lakh population of the Valley as pro-militants when intelligence figures show that there are only about 200-300 home grown militants.

"You talk about the 200 militants but don't talk about the thousands of Kashmiris in the Indian Army," she said. But she did not deny that there is a sense of alienation among Kashmiri youth, and even children as young as eight, because of severe security crackdowns that follow stone pelting incidents.

However, the recent statements from highest level are an opportunity to build peace and give Kashmiris back their dignity, Mehbooba said. "All that is required now is to hold their (people of Kashmir) fingers with dignity intact," she said.

Mehbooba, who is the first

CM unhappy with working of middle rung-officials

'Heads of departments asked to compile list of non performing officials for immediate action'

Srinagar, Sep 27: As Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti, is unhappy over the "poor performance" of middle rung officials of the state, it has been learnt that the chief minister herself has directed the heads of the departments to scrutinize the list of non performing officials for immediate action.

Reliable sources in the government told KNS that Chief Minister Office is receiving regular complaints from various departments about officials who either don't work at all or harass the public. "The Chief Minister wants to make the state administration transparent and accountable at middle-rung," one of the top government officials insisting not to be named told KNS.

He said that on the directions of the Chief Minister, the departments are asked to compile a list of honest and upright officers who would be posted in the important postings.

The Chief Minister before Darbar move wants the radical changes in the functioning

See **Unhappy...** Pg 02

NO INFORMATION ABOUT KOUL COMMISSION REPORT: MHA

Srinagar, Sep 27, CNS: In a startling revelation, Ministry of Home Affairs Government of India has maintained that it information about the recommendations submitted by Koul Commission that was constituted by previous Jammu and Kashmir government led by Omar Abdullah to probe the street killings of over 120 youth in Kashmir Valley during 2010 unrest.

The Ministry for Home Affairs Government of India in response to an application filed under Right to Information Act by Kashmiri social activist MM Shujah has said maintained that: "the information sought about Koul

See **MHA...** Pg 02

Need to change discourse around JK: Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI: There is need to "change the discourse" around Jammu and Kashmir as there is no such thing as the Kashmir issue, Union minister Jitendra Singh has said, stressing that the only "point of debate" is retrieving Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK).

The minister of state in the Prime Minister's Office said this after paying a pictorial homage to martyrs of Jammu and Kashmir Police and slain Army officer Lt Um-



mer Fayyaz here yesterday. Lt Fayyaz's Facebook page, letters during his Army training days as well as the photographs of slain J-K officers Mohammed Ayoub Pandith,

Feroz Ahmed Dar and others were on display at the event.

"There is need to change the discourse (on Jammu and Kashmir) for future generations. We have to change the agenda. There is no such issue as Kashmir issue. It is as much a part of India as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar or any other state.

"The only issue if at all is how to retrieve a part of Kashmir which is under the illegal occupation of Pakistan for

See **Jitendra...** Pg 02

Braid cutting: LOCALS ACCUSE ARMY OF RESCUING CULPRIT

Kulgam, Sep 27: Locals from Chimar hamlet of South Kashmir's Kulgam district Wednesday alleged that Army rescued a criminal after he chopped off the braid of a native girl on Wednesday morning.

According to locals, a criminal entered into the secluded house of one Nazir Ahmed Khan and chopped off the hair of her daughter Reenu Jan. "Shortly after the incidents, locals captured the culprit but to our shock, army men emerged within no time and resorted to aerial firing. A civilian Zakir Ahmed Laway son of Muhammad Maqbool was wounded and referred to Srinagar hospital.

See **Locals...** Pg 02

BJP claims LeT, other groups weakened after NIA raids

NEW DELHI: In clear hints that the BJP is all set to play up its perceived "strong anti-terror" policies, the saffron party will highlight government's "success tale" in taking on militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in the run up to the crucial Assembly elections in Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and few northeastern states.

"The hard stance adopted by the Modi Government has started yielding results... In Jammu and Kashmir, the surgical strikes and the actions on funding channel have weakened terror outfits," a key party leader said here.

Sources said at the BJP's National Executive meeting in Delhi on Monday, party General Secretary Ram Madhav told a closed door



meeting attended among others by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh that the situation has "improved" to a large extent compared to the ground realities since the 2016 "uprising."

See **NIA...** Pg 02

TRAL GRENADE ATTACK: ANOTHER CIVILIAN SUCCUMBS AT SKIMS, TOLL THREE

Srinagar, Sep 27: A civilian injured in Tral grenade blast succumbed at SK Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura on Wednesday, taking the civilian toll to three.

The deceased, Mushtaq Ahmed Sheikh (35), was a father of two minor sons.

He was grievously injured in the blast following which he was shifted to SKIMS.

Two civilians were killed and 35 others, including seven CRPF troopers, injured in the attack on the cavalcade of Works Minister Naem Akhtar on September 21 in Tral area of Pulwama district in south Kashmir.

See **Tral...** Pg 02

403 posts referred to JKSSB by Information, FCS&CA, LMD pending selection

Zulfkar expresses dismay over tardy pace of recruitment; Asks Board to complete selections by Dec 31

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 27: Jammu and Kashmir Service Selection Board (JKSSB) will by the end of this year complete selection process of 403 posts referred by Information, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) and Legal Metrology Departments (LMD).



ter FCS&CA and Information Department

This information was given to the Minis-

See **LMD...** Pg 02

Summoning of Scholar: ANTI-NIA PROTESTS ROCK KU AND IUST

Srinagar, Sep 27: Students of Kashmir University Wednesday protested for the second consecutive day against National Investigation Agency (NIA) for summoning its scholar Aala Fazli to New Delhi.

The protesting students threatened to "lockdown" the university if the "questioning" of Aala by NIA does not stop immediately.

Aala was summoned to Delhi on Monday and he is being "questioned" by the Indian Investigation Agency in connection with an alleged funding case registered

See **KU...** Pg 02

Major headway achieved in resolving vexed issues: Dy CM

Attends homage ceremony organized at IIC Delhi for Lt Ummer Fayaz, Ayub Pandit

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 27: Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh today said major headway has been made in resolving vexed issues confronting the country under the dynamic leadership of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi.

The Deputy Chief Minister was speaking at a function organized by Centre for Me-



dia Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on

the theme "Peace in Jammu and Kashmir - Challenges and Opportunities."

The function was attended by author and journalist, Tarun Vijay, besides diplomats, academicians from France and Japan, scholars and students also participated.

Dr Singh while referring to JK's history said the

See **Dy CM...** Pg 02

IFFCO celebrates golden jubilee LAUNCHES WELFARE PROJECTS FOR J&K FARMERS

Srinagar, Sep 27: Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Wednesday launched many welfare projects for farmers of Jammu and Kashmir and their children.

Speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebration program, the Managing Director Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO), Dr Ushay Shankar Awasthi unveiled Indian Cooperative Digital Platform, which is an online information database, for the farmers of J&K.

"The Indian Cooperative Digital platform is a first of its kind database of information to help farmers get the hand on information on everything related to farming

See **Welfare...** Pg 02

ASIEA NAQASH REVIEWS FUNCTIONING OF ISM DEPARTMENT

Calls for creating mass awareness about Homeopathy

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 27: Minister of State for Health and Medical Education, Housing & Urban Development, and Social Welfare Asia Naqash on Thursday reviewed the functioning of Department of Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) and took stock of progress of works at Government Unani College Nawab Bagh, Ganderbal. The minister also reviewed Projects under construction at Narkara, Bemina Kupwara and other places of the valley. While reviewing the current status of dispensaries and hospitals, at different districts, the Minister asked the officials to gear up to promote and implement various government sponsored

schemes in their respective areas for the benefit of people at basic level. The Minister asked the doctors to develop homeopathy as an alternate system of Medicine and create mass awareness about it. She also said that government is giving a thrust on Indian System of Medicine for it forms an important part of country's identity. In order to give a facelift to the AYUSH in the state of J&K, she said that the Unani Hospital at Shalteng would be made fully functional very soon and the hospital at Nawab Bagh would be completed by 31st March 2018. The Minister was informed that the Ganderbal Unani Hospital has been



constructed on 78 Kanals of land, with a capacity of 60 beds with clinical super specialty services. The meeting also discussed number

of units established for manufacturing the Ayurvedic products in the state and the amount spent on procurement of drugs separately under AYUSH, non-Plan and national health mission. On the occasion, Naqash was apprised that for proper functioning of the hospitals, creation of staff is imperative. The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr Pawan Kotwal, District Commissioner Ganderbal, Piyush Singla, Technical Secretary/Director Health and Medical Education, Dr Abdul Kabir besides ADMOs, BMOs of various Districts and other senior officials.

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CM

woman chief minister of the restive border state, said her government is in favour of holding talks with everyone as has been enshrined in the Agenda of Alliance between the PDP and the BJP.

She indicated that she is in favour of the peace talks strategy employed by the Vajpayee government in the early 2000s when Kashmiri separatist leaders were allowed to talk to Pakistan as part of peace building efforts, while New Delhi and Islamabad were also simultaneously engaged.

"There is a need to take the bull by its horns and finding a way out for bringing in a 'permanent' peace in the state," she said, adding that she is in regular contact with Home Minister Rajnath Singh, whom she described as "very supportive".

She noted that Ram Madhav, the BJP general secretary, also has a clear understanding of Kashmir and has been extremely supportive of the alliance government. "I am sure together, we will be able to steer the state to new heights."

Mehbooba said Modi's singling out 18-year-old Bilal Dar in "Mann Ki Baat" had sent a wave of pride among the young residents of the Valley.

"These steps have a tremendous impact on the psyche of the younger generation and their hope for recognition at national level is rekindled. They are not seen or labelled as mere stone pelters," she said.

Seventeen months into office, Mehbooba also feels that talks between India and Pakistan should begin at the earliest but she holds Islamabad responsible for the present tension.

"The Prime Minister made a wonderful gesture by stopping at Islamabad and meeting the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. But what happened after that? It was followed by attack at Pathankot and increased terror activities in the state," she said.

"However, there is a need to bring Pakistan to the negotiating table once again. After all, the relations between India and Pakistan have a direct bearing on Jammu and Kashmir. "Smooth relations between the two countries have always seen better life for people in the state," she said.

The chief minister blamed the Congress-led UPA for not carrying forwarding the "gains" from the peace process of the Vajpayee-era.

"I mean they were there for 10 years but could not make any headway. It was an opportunity that was never cashed in by them," she said.

UNHAPPY

of the state's overall administration. "Transparency in the government is the top priority of the CM. She (CM) wants to ensure that the common masses have accessible, transparent, accountable government," Another top officials of the government said.

Sources said that CM wants to place the right men at right places. "The idea behind all this is to make the middle-rung administration more efficient and responsive to the people so that concrete steps would be taken towards the development," Sources said that there were complaints that several officials at the lower level do not serve the general public properly and because of which the public is suffering.

Sources said that the CM has also directed all the administrative secretaries to provide transparent, effective and accountable governance to the people.

Sources said that the Chief Minister has also considered that there is a notion among the masses that no action is taken against officials for their non-performance. "The government is taking various steps to change this perception and also change the perception of the officials that poor performance or harassing the public would not impact their job," Sources quoting CM having said.

"I am observing that people come to meet senior officials and the ministers in the civil secretariat only when the district administrations fail. This reflects failure of officials at the district-level. But government will not excuse such officials who are not only lax but also fail to respond to needs and aspirations of the people," the Sources quoting CM as having told the officials.

Sources said that the CM has also directed not to disturb officials in their respective posts if they understand the aims and objectives of the government and discharge their duties honestly and effectively.

MHA

Commission is not available with us and therefore, the information may please treated as NIL."

The applicant had sought replies to different questions including: 'whether the State Government shared the Koul Commission Report with New Delhi and why it was not made public and he had also asked whether the Koul Commission recommendation will be implemented in letter and spirit or

not.'

Pertinently, the one-man judicial Commission that was appointed on June 19, 2014 had submitted its report to incumbent Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti after two long years in December 2016.

The 320-page exhaustive report makes several recommendations besides prescribing some operating procedures while dealing with law and order situations.

JITENDRA

the past 70 years and restore the Valley in the same format as was handed over by Maharaja Hari Singh," Singh said.

He underlined the central government's "proactive" steps in bringing development to the Valley, especially with respect to neutralising extremist forces.

"The border dwellers, in spite of the hardships they face, have asked us to take strong action against cross-border shelling. We have given our forces confidence and freedom to act on the borders, and the results are for everyone to see.

"We have been able to neutralise many terrorists and foil infiltration bids. Our crackdown on terror funding in the Valley is another step to step towards restoring normalcy in the state," he said.

Hitting out at the past political regimes for "mishandling Kashmir", Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Nirmal Singh, who was also present on the occasion, said the Modi Government was the only "ray of hope" for the people.

"In a first, the Centre and the state Government are on the same page with regard to dealing with terrorism and separatism," he said.

On questions being raised against the PDP-BJP coalition in the state, the Deputy CM said such an alliance was a "bold decision". "We had to leave a lot of issues dear to us for the larger interest of the state," he said.

Union minister Jitendra Singh said the foreign outreach by Prime Minister Narendra Modi was one of the major achievements of the current dispensation at the Centre.

"Many nations that were earlier not convinced with India's position on Kashmir have come around. It gives the country a major boost in putting forth its stand on the matter on a global platform," he said.

Talking about the return of Kashmiri Pandits to the Valley, the MoS said it was imperative to "create a conducive atmosphere so that the community members returns voluntarily".

Former MP Tarun Vijay, who was also present at the event, saluted the sacrifice of civilians, policemen and army personnel who laid down their lives while battling terrorist forces.

Lt Fayaz, an Army officer of Rajputana Rifles, was abducted and killed by militants in south Kashmir's Shopian district on May 9 this year.

Srinagar DySP Mohammed Ayub Pandith was lynched to death outside Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta on June 22 while Sub inspector Feroz Ahmed Dar was killed by LeT terrorists in Anantnag on June 16.

LOCALS

The army after resorting to firing rescued the criminal and took him along with them," said a group of villagers to news agency CNS.

The agitated locals hit to roads after the incident and pelted stones on government forces. The clashes left many people wounded. As per locals, the government forces used tear-smoke shells to disperse the protesters who shouted anti-India and pro-freedom slogans.

The clashes between protesters and the government forces created panic in the area. On the directions of Chief Medical Officer Kulgam, the Government High School was closed down for the day due to uncertain situation.

Reports said that protesters continued to protest demanding through investigation into the matter and registration of case against Army for rescuing the criminal responsible for the braid chopping act.

Pertinently, same allegations were levelled by locals on Army in Malwan village of the district.

Meanwhile, at Yamrach village of the same district, the braid of a young girl was chopped off during mid-night hours of Tuesday. The victim has been identified as Mahroofa jan daughter of Ghulam Ahmed Ganaie.

When contacted, a top police official from the district denied the reports that anybody has suffered any injury. He added that a hoax was created to malign the image of army. "After the incident, we asked people to record their statements but nobody came forward," he said.

NIA

Mr Madhav, who is also BJP central leader's pointman for J&K affairs, told the meeting that firm actions against "funding channel" has weakened the terror outfits and the

NIA raids and questioning of some top leaders have pushed groups like Lashkar-e-Toiba to the wall.

The general refrain among the BJP leaders from the state has been that "tough actions" have started showing results. According to sources, the BJP poll strategists in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh propose to highlight these as "achievements" of the BJP-led NDA dispensation.

A section of leaders from Gujarat have suggested all names of key terror group leaders those who have been eliminated during last few months must be highlighted and taken to the people.

"There will be twin benefits. One nationalistic feelings will always help the BJP and secondly this could also result in polarisation among hardliner Hindu voters as has been experienced in past assembly elections in 2002 and 2007," the source said.

Mr Madhav reportedly told party leaders that stone-pelting incidents have come down drastically compared to 2016 and therefore there is a need to the minimise the use of pellet guns in Kashmir Valley by security forces.

The Home Minister said his ministry is already exploring other methodologies to fight terror menace in the northern state. At the BJP National Executive meet, Mr Madhav and other leaders from the state insisted that there can be talks with separatist groups and others only under the ambit of the Indian Constitution.

According to sources, one senior representative of the government said there is no second opinion about that as "we all are servants of the Constitution".

Mr Ram Madhav on Tuesday lauded elimination of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Abdul Qayoom Najar who was killed in gunbattle with security forces in Uri sector. "Longest surviving terrorist of Kashmir Qayoom Najar killed today at LoC Lassipora Uri," he wrote in a tweet.

It is also worth mentioning that Mr Modi told the closed door meeting of BJP leaders on Monday that as many as 90 fugitives and terrorists would soon be brought back to India.

TRAL

Sheikh, a salesman at a grocery store at Bus Stand Tral, was at work when the attack took place.

As the news of his death spread, shopkeepers downed their shutters and traffic went off the roads at Bus Stand Tral.

LMD

Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali by Secretary JKSSB Tassaduq Hussain at a meeting here today.

The meeting was convened by the Minister to review the selection status of various posts referred to JKSSB by the departments of Information, FCS&CA and LMD.

Responding to the concern raised by the Minister over the delay in the selection process, Secretary SSB assured him that the selection process of all 403 posts referred by the Information, FCS&CA and LMD would be completed by 31 December 2017.

The meeting was informed that since 2005 Information Department has referred 205 posts under different categories to SSB, out of which selection process of 49 has been completed, while the process for the rest 156 is pending.

Likewise, the concerned officers from FCS&CA revealed that the selection process of 233 posts referred to the board is yet to be initiated. 14 posts of LMD are also pending with SSB for the selection, the meeting was informed.

Expressing concern over the inordinate delay in the selection process, the Minister said the present Government had strengthened the JKSSB to expedite the selection process of referred posts.

Expressing dismay over the delay in completing the recruitment process, the Minister said despite getting all the Government support, the delay in selection by JKSSB is unwarranted. He said such delays put a question mark on the functioning of entire recruitment system.

Asking JKSSB to expedite the recruitment process, the Minister said there are many unemployed youth whose career gets adversely affected due to delay in the selection process. Quoting some examples, the Minister said there are some, especially girls whose marriages got delayed for want of job. Zulfkar Ali said as a responsible body it is imperative that the JKSSB expedite the selection of the referred posts.

The Minister directed the concerned heads of Information, FCS&CA and LMD to designate a nodal officer from their respective departments who will coordinate with JKSSB so that the referred posts are filled within the stipulated time.

He also directed that the respective departmental boards of Information, FCS&CA and LMD would complete the recruitment of various posts mainly class forth, which they are authorized to do, within a period of 45 days.

Commissioner Secretary Information Department M H Malik, Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA Shafiq Raina, Director FCS&CA Jammu, R A Inquilabi, Director FCS&CA

Kashmir Nissar Ahmad Wani, Director Information, Muneer-ul-Islam, Special Secretary Information R K Katoch Joint Controller LMD Jammu V S Sambyal, Deputy Controller LMD and other concerned officers were present in the meeting.

KU

on May 30 this year. The protesting students of various departments raised slogans against NIA and India. They also shouted pro-azadi slogans while marching through the campus.

Meanwhile, the students at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) Awantipora also held protest against the NIA summon to Kashmir University Scholar Aala Fazli.

Holding placards and banners, the protesting students demanded immediate end to the "questioning" of Aala at the hands of NIA.

The protesting students also raised slogans against the recent grenade blast at Tral killing two civilians including an IUST student Pinky Kour.

DY CM

problem of Kashmir is full of complexities and confusions stretching more than 70 years and several vested interests have been creating further confusion by spreading falsehood and canards. He said since its inception, the current Government is trying its best to do away with the false notions which were being created by the neighbouring country and the thrust is to usher an era of accountability, empowerment and sustained development in the State.

The Deputy Chief Minister said it was due to the faulty policies being adopted that the State was pushed into an era of chaos and political disempowerment, which the current government is addressing the same steadfastly and results are also coming to the fore. He said the current Central Government is trying its level best to bring the Kashmir problem to a decisive end and it is because of focus shift policy on Kashmir under the leadership of Narendra Modi that the nefarious designs of the enemies of the country are exposed at every diplomatic level across the globe as a result of it many close aides have also started disowning them on every front.

The Deputy Chief Minister said the ongoing operations by the security forces in Kashmir have been very successful in neutralizing enemies of peace who are trying to disturb peace and push the State into chaos and confusion. He said the recent NIA raids have further broken the money laundering nexus resulting in sharp decline in the stone pelting incidents.

Dr Singh also attended the homage ceremony, organized in the memory of Lt Ummer Fayaz, Ayub Pandit, at IIC, Delhi.

WELFARE

and fertilisers," he said. Dr Awasthi also launched IFFCO Yuva, a skill and employment-based initiative for youth.

"This platform will connect youth with the IFFCO skill and job training. I would like to invite the youth especially those associated with farmer's family to join this program," he said.

Earlier, continuing IFFCO's Golden Jubilee Celebration programme, 120th programme was organised at the Kashmir Apex Society, Nowgam Bye pass. Dr Awasthi was the chief guest of this programme while Haji Ali Mohd Wani, Chief Patron Kashmir Apex, Altaf Ahmed Andrabi, Director Agriculture, Kashmir, Peerzada Hafizullah, Bashir Ahmed Bhat, Secretary Cooperation also attended this programme.

Muhammad Yousof Dar, President Fruit Association also attended this programme. Yoginder Kumar, Executive Director IFFCO Delhi also spoke to farmers and Cooperative members about the use of various new IFFCO product like Biofertilizers, Water soluble fertilizers and especially seaweed product Sagarika.

He discussed how to use them in fruit and field crops. "I urge farmers to use them for best productivity."

Altaf Ahmed Andarbi, Director Agri Kashmir explained about various schemes launched for benefit of orchardists and farmers. Bashir Ahmed Bhat Secretary Cooperation and Peerzada Hafizullah RCS J&K also talked about the present scenario and further initiatives taken for the development of cooperatives in the state. Some progressive farmers and co-operators also expressed their view.

The MD also addressed the farmers and co-operators and assured them that every effort will be taken to strengthen the cooperatives and also to increase the agriculture know-how of farmers.

On the occasion 10 best farmers and 10 best cooperative members were honoured by Dr Awasthi for their contribution in agriculture and cooperatives.

PIB Srinagar organizes 8th Rural Media Workshop/Vartalap at Leh

Leh 27 September: Press Information Bureau, Srinagar organized a one day Rural Media Workshop/Vartalap Wednesday at DC Office Conference Hall Leh aiming at sensitization of local media about various Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

The program was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Leh, Avny Lavasa, presided by former IIS officer and senior writer Shri Ab Gani Sheikh and included 40 eminent media persons, local officials and other district administration officers.

Smt Bharti Vaid ADG (M&C), Press Information Bureau Srinagar welcomed the guests and afterwards highlighted the role of media. Speaking on the occasion she said that active participation of media to highlight the different government sponsored schemes is important to spread awareness among the rural people so that they can get benefitted properly.

She maintained that Rural Media awareness is important at grass root level and reiterated that media should



not entirely focus on negative issues. "Constructive criticism is welcome, but at the same time the positive aspects should not be ignored," She said. Deputy Director, PIB Srinagar Shri Ghulam Abbass said that journal-

ism should act as a bridge between people and government. He said that media has a vital role to highlight different projects and schemes of the government so that the benefits reach to the deserving people.

Shri Morup Stanzin, President Press Club of Leh highlighted the problem of internet connectivity in Leh which hinders the dissemination of information to local people effectively.

ZEO Leh, Shri Paldan Tundup, BMO Leh, Dr. Mohd Iqbal, News Editor AIR Leh, Shri Kush Nahar, DIO NIC Leh, and Volunteers of Nehru Yuva Kendra also participated in the event highlighting different schemes of the government and the role of media for effective outreach.

Media persons hailed the efforts of PIB for organizing the program to highlight the benefits of Centrally Sponsored Schemes for rural people and the role played by the local media for awareness among the masses.

They expressed their views of organizing more workshops like this in future to get more information about different government related schemes.

The program concluded with the vote of thanks by ADG PIB Srinagar Smt Bharti Vaid.

Cabinet approves Agreement on "Cooperation in the field of Information, Communication and Media" between India and Ethiopia

New Delhi, September 27: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval to sign the Agreement between India and Ethiopia on "Cooperation in the field of Information, Communication and Media".

It aims to harness the growing power of Information, Communication and Media for information dissemination and enhancing outreach between the two countries for inclusive development. It will also enhance people to people contact through exchange programmes. It would also provide an opportunity for both the nations to share best

practices and new innovations in the field of Information, Communication & Media.

The Agreement will encourage cooperation between mass media tools such as radio, print media, TV, social media etc. to provide more opportunities to the people of both the nations and create public accountability.

The Agreement, through an institutional framework will facilitate exchange of delegations, personnel between the two nations, providing them opportunities to learn from each other's best practices, bringing in equity and inclusiveness.

Cabinet approves permanent transfer of land measuring 1899 sq.m. by AAI to Lucknow

New Delhi, September 27: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval to the permanent transfer of land measuring 1899 sq.m. by Airports Authority of India (AAI) to Lucknow Metro Rail Corporation (LMRC) at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, Lucknow.

The land is required by LMRC for the construction of Entry/Exit structure for Transport Nagar Metro Station which is an operational requirement of LMRC. This is a Public Utility Project of mass transportation to be used by the public at large, and will provide better connectivity and convenience to general public.

Cabinet approves signing of (i) Inter-bank Local Currency Credit Line Agreement and (ii) Cooperation Memorandum relating to Credit Ratings by EDIM Bank under BRICS Interbank Cooperation mechanism

New Delhi, September 27: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval to the signing of the (i) Interbank Local Currency Credit Line Agreement and (ii) Cooperation Memorandum Relating to Credit Ratings by Exim Bank with participating member banks under BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism. As both the Agreement and the MoU are umbrella pacts, and are non-binding in nature, the Board of Directors of Exim Bank has been authorized to negotiate and conclude any individual contracts and commitments within their framework.

The Agreements will promote

multilateral interaction within the area of mutual interest which will deepen political and economic relations with BRICS nations.

Signing of the Agreement will position Exim Bank in the international platform along with large development finance institutions, like CDS, VEB and BNDES. At an appropriate time, Exim Bank, leveraging this umbrella agreement, could enter into bilateral agreement with any of these member institutions to raise resources for its business. As and when an opportunity arises for co-financing in commercial terms, by any two member institutions (say India and South Africa), lending

in single currency by both the institutions would also be possible. Exim Bank finances, facilitates and promotes India's international trade. It provides competitive finance at various stages of the business cycle covering import of technology, export product development, export production and export credit at pre-shipment and post-shipment stages and investments overseas. The initial Master Agreement on Extending Credit Facility in Local Currency under the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism had a validity of five years, which has expired in March 2017. It is understood that some of the member banks

(like CDB and VEB; CDB and BNDES) have entered into bilateral agreements for local currency financing under the Master Agreement signed in 2012. Although the current conditions are not conducive to usage, it was useful to keep the same alive as an enabling feature in case a suitable opportunity materializes in future. Exim Bank raises resources in the off-shore market in diverse currencies and swaps to mitigate the risk. The umbrella Agreement would serve as an enabler to enter into bilateral agreements with member banks subject to national laws, regulations and internal policies of the signatories.

Cabinet approves umbrella scheme of Modernisation of Police Forces

New Delhi, September 27: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for implementation of umbrella scheme of "Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF)" for years 2017-18 to 2019-20. The financial outlay for the scheme over the three year's period is Rs.25,060 crore, out of which the Central Government share will be Rs.18,636 crore and the States' share will be Rs.6,424 crore.

Salient Features:

o Special provision has been made under the Scheme for internal security, law and order, women security, availability of modern weapons, mobility of police forces, logistics support, hiring of helicopters, upgradation of

police wireless, National Satellite Network, CCTNS project, E-prison project etc.

o Under the umbrella scheme, central budget outlay of Rs.10,132 crore has been earmarked for internal security related expenditure for Jammu & Kashmir, North Eastern States and left wing extremism affected States.

o Scheme of Special Central Assistance (SCA) for 35 worst LWE affected districts has been introduced with an outlay of Rs.3,000 crore to tackle the issue of underdevelopment in these districts.

o An outlay of Rs.100 crore has been earmarked in the North Eastern States for police infrastructure upgradation, training institutes, investigation facilities etc.

o Implementation of this scheme would bolster the Government's ability to address challenges faced in different theatres such as areas affected by LWE, Jammu and Kashmir and North East effectively and undertake development interventions which will catalyze in improving the quality of life in these areas and help combat these challenges effectively at the same time.

o New initiatives are being introduced to provide assistance to States for upgradation of police infrastructure, forensic science laboratories, institutions and the equipment available with them to plug critical gaps in the criminal justice system. Police Stations will be integrat-

ed to set up a national data base of crime and criminals' records. It will be linked with other pillars of criminal justice system such as 'prisons, forensic science laboratories and prosecution offices.

o The umbrella scheme also provides for setting up of a State-of Art forensic science laboratory in Amravati and upgradation of Sardar Patel Global Centre for Security, Counter Terrorism and Anti Insurgency in Jaipur and Gujarat Forensic Science University in Gandhinagar.

It is expected that the umbrella scheme, "Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF)" will go a long way to boost the capability and efficiency of Central and State Police Forces by modernizing them.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Belarus in the oil and gas sector

New Delhi, September 27: The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its ex-post facto approval for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Belarus in the oil and gas sector. The MoU was signed on 12th September, 2017 during the visit of President of Belarus to India.

The MoU will promote bilateral relationship between India and Belarus and it is envisaged to enhance the economic and commercial cooperation between the two sides in oil and natural gas sector. Under the MoU, both sides will work towards establishing cooperation in the areas of upstream and downstream activities, capacity building, technology transfer, enhanced oil recovery and development of mature fields in India.

The MoU shall remain in force for three years for the day of its signing.

Cabinet approves bilateral MoU between India and Afghanistan on Technical Cooperation on Police Training and Development

New Delhi, September 27: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for signing a MoU between India and Afghanistan on Technical Cooperation on Police Training and Development. The MoU will help in capacity building of Afghanistan National Police and improving the security apparatus in the region.

It has been approved for a period of 5 years from the date of signing the MoU and shall be extended for a further period of 5 years on the condition that are not further changes and or revision.

Background:

India and Afghanistan have friendly relations and the police personnel of Afghanistan National Police come regularly for training purposes in different training institutes of India.

India and Afghanistan have already signed an "Agreement on strategic partnership" between the two countries in October, 2011. A meeting was held between delegates of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, Afghanistan, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Afghanistan and officials of the Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D), MHA at New Delhi in October 2016 and Afghanistan delegates expressed their desire for assistance from India in the field of Police training, police development, law enforcement, strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan and building sustainable long term cooperation. In order to take this cooperation forward this MoU has been jointly agreed through diplomatic channels.

Dr. Harshvardhan Inaugurates Exhibition On Swachhata Hi Seva

New Delhi, September 27: Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and Environment, Forest and Climate change, Dr. Harshvardhan inaugurated an exhibition on Swachhata Hi Seva, organized by Ministry of Science & Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences and coordinated by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

The exhibition highlighted the technologies and products developed by these science ministries which are being used for Swachhata Abhiyan of Government of India. The exhibition comprised of demonstration of models, and technologies explaining scientific and technological intervention brought in by these ministries.

CSIR showcased the technology of Terafil and tiles made from plastic waste. Terafil is a low cost burnt red clay porous media (disc/candle), used for filtration & treatment of turbid raw water into clean drinking water for domestic/ community applications. It can be fixed with any container for purification of water. It operates without electricity, spent water and sludge management.

Tiles made from waste plastics were demonstrated. Novel features of these tiles include its high mechanical strength, flame retardancy, UV protection and anti-static response. These tiles can be used in designing of structure like Smart Toilets that will be beneficial for the villages and large section of the society.

Several posters depicting the technological intervention made for Swachh Bharat were also displayed. CSIR undertook the study of special properties of Ganga water which include medicinal and anti-bacterial properties. Rich and diverse population of bacteriophag-

es against various type of bacteria were observed in Ganga water. CSIR monitored sediment and water quality of river Ganga from Gomukh to Gangasagar at 70 locations and also 35 locations along river Narmada and river Yamuna for comparative study.

CSIR demonstrated, how mobile van developed by its Laboratory monitors air quality and provide instantaneous data relating to vehicular emissions. Data helps to identify the areas with high level of air pollution and suggest remedial measures to contain air pollution. CSIR also displayed technology for eco-restoration of mine through use of biotechnology.

CSIR has developed Phytoid Waste Water Treatment technology. The technology involves a constructed wetland exclusively designed for the treatment of municipal, urban, agricultural and industrial wastewater. The phytoid technology can be constructed in series and parallel modules / cells depending on the land availability and quantity of wastewater to be treated.

Multi-sector application of climate and weather informatics which is helpful for society and industries was also displayed.

CSIR-CLRI has developed and deployed the technologies for end-of-pipe treatment for the waste generated in leather processing and increasing the efficiency of the common effluent treatment plants.

The autonomous institutes of Department of Science & Technology (DST) exhibited the technologies they developed that are relevant to Swachhata Mission as part of 'Swachhata Hi Seva'.

The Institute of Nanoscience & Technol-

ogy, Mohali has developed a technology for low cost water purification system for domestic and industrial waste water treatment. It uses nano absorbents to treat water from toxic wastes.

The other technology is for recovering Nanostructured materials from the used batteries waste and industrial waste using environment friendly approach. The materials recovered include metal oxide, silica, sodium nitrate and sodium carbonate which can be used for treatments of organic pollutants in water.

National Innovation Foundation showcased ideal technologies developed by innovators for waste collection to fulfill the objective of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan". It can be boon for sanitation workers as it reduces effort and time but increases coverage and frequency of area being cleaned. The first one is Wrapper Picker, designed to collect light weight garbage except fine dust. It is battery operated device with an in-built provision to indicate the status of charge in battery. The other one is INSPIRE awarded innovation called Manual Waste Lifting and Dumping Device. It is helpful in providing manual and mobile waste tool with picking and dumping facility to make it more effective.

Vigyan Prasara showcased sanitation and hygienic practices in a very simplified manner that should be carried out in day to day lives by different sections of society.

Department of Bio-Technology (DBT) showcased a range of technologies like clean energy, river cleaning initiatives, technologies to clean up waste water, supporting bio-toilets and a range of other waste management &

utilization technologies.

India's first home grown technology to convert biomass to ethanol with speed and efficiency was developed by the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai. The rate of conversion of biomass to ethanol in this technology is faster than other technologies currently available in the international market. The technology has been transferred to BPCL and HPCL for building commercial scale biomass to ethanol plants expected by 2018

Novel bio-toilet technologies that promises cleaner India

Innovative bio-toilet ideas generated through Reinvent the Toilet Challenge India was launched by the Grand Challenges India framework. Under this initiative 6 new bio-toilet technologies have been supported. Around 100 toilets have been set up to demonstrate the technology. Several bio-toilets set up in schools of North Eastern States. The technologies focused on redesigning the toilet seat, making it more eco-friendly. Off-grid, self-sustained, modular, electronic toilet have been innovated for slums, with solar energy for Indian weather and integrated with mixed waste processing unit & water, energy/ fertilizer recovery. Septic tanks have been empowered by converting them into decentralized wastewater treatment system.

DBT collaborated with the Dutch to help clean Delhi's Barapullah drain. This initiative would later expand to efforts for cleaning Yamuna River. In the next five years, a wastewater treatment plant to make the filthy water potable is scheduled to be set up. The plant will also remove heavy metals from the water for reuse.

Cabinet approves revision of policy for providing Defence land to Communication Operators for construction of Shared Communication Towers and allied Infrastructure

New Delhi, September 26: The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved a proposal for revision of pol-

icy of Ministry of Defence for providing Defence land to Communication Operators for construction of Shared Communication Towers and

allied Infrastructure, based on experience in implementing the policy and guidelines issued by Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for

issue of clearance for installation of Mobile Towers. The revised policy will cover allotment of Defence land on lease and grant of permission

in Defence areas and Cantonnments to Access Service Licensees and Companies registered with DoT as IP-I for setting up shared communi-

cation towers and allied infrastructure. This will improve the quality of communication services in the Cantonnments and Military Stations.

DAILY Editorial
Time and US
SRINAGAR J&K

Power problem

Universal access to electricity has been a familiar and long-standing promise of governments at the Centre. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has signalled he is serious about providing this by owning responsibility for its realisation. Success, however, will require more than just budgetary fund allocation; it will depend largely on addressing structural issues that plague the broken power sector. The Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, or the 'Saubhagya' scheme, launched by Mr. Modi aims to make electricity accessible to every household by the end of 2018. Under the scheme, expected to cost a little over ₹16,000 crore, poor households that have no access to electricity will be provided electricity connections free of cost. This builds on previous work carried out under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana launched in 2015, and the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Viduytikaran Yojana launched by the UPA government in 2005, both of which also aimed to provide free electricity connections to the poor. In particular, it hopes to improve electricity access within villages that are already classified as "electrified", according to the criterion that 10% of households enjoy access to electricity. However, the Saubhagya scheme does very little to address the real problem of affordability. In fact, by failing to account for illegal connections taken by households which find it difficult to afford legal access to power, government data on electricity accessibility understate penetration.

A free electricity connection can ease the financial burden on the poor to some degree, but it will not address the recurring burden of power bills. The aim of improving affordability would require that supply be increased drastically to lower the price paid by retail consumers. Paradoxically, amidst the government's claims that India is a power-surplus nation, the power generation utilities remain vastly under-utilised. The plant load factor (PLF) of coal and lignite-based plants, an indicator of capacity utilisation of power generation units, has dropped consistently over the decade from 77.5% in 2009-10 to 59.88% in 2016-17, according to data from the Central Electricity Authority. This is due to demand for electricity from State distribution companies dropping in tandem with their deteriorating financial status. The Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), introduced two years ago to restructure the debt of State distribution agencies, has failed to make enough of a difference to this state of affairs. The outcome is not surprising, given that UDAY has failed to address the root problem of populism in the pricing of electricity. In the absence of the freedom to sell at a profitable price, distribution agencies have had very little incentive to demand more electricity from power generators, as evident in the constantly falling PLF. This in turn holds back investment in power generation units. Saubhagya, unfortunately, does very little to address the fundamentals of India's crippling power problem.

OF PARAMOUNT INTEREST?

► **Suhasini Haidar**

In June 1945, India's princely states sent a single representative to sign the Charter of the United Nations at the San Francisco conference, a charter that realised Alfred Tennyson's poem where he called for a "Parliament of man, Federation of the world." "There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe, and the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in universal law," Tennyson wrote in his work, 'Locksley Hall', spelling out his vision for a world where the "war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle flags were furled."

The poem was famously carried by U.S. President Harry Truman in his wallet, which he called his inspiration as the UN Charter was being drafted. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, then the Dewan of Mysore added prose to that poetry as he spoke on behalf of undivided India with the words, "There is one great reality... which all religions teach... the dignity of the common man."

A word war
As the bitterly divided Indian and Pakistani delegations stood up over the past week to face each other more than 70 years later, however, all those words rang hollow. Reality was in short supply, as even the photograph brandished by Pakistan's envoy Maleeha Lodhi as being from Jammu and Kashmir turned out to be from Gaza; religion became cause to divide rather than build a common understanding, and the dignity of the United Nations, let alone the common man, disappeared as each side used its multiple rights of reply for name-calling and rhetoric hurled at the other. Of course, the India-Pakistan word-war was outdone by the U.S. and North Korea who sparred over Pyongyang's latest provocations.

Secretary General's list
However, it wasn't the language employed that made the UN's 72nd General Assembly one of its most disappointing sessions, but the picture of the UN's ineffectiveness on each of the issues confronting the world today, that were spelt out by the Secretary General António Guterres in his speech on September 19. "We are a world in pieces, we need to be a world at peace," he said, listing the world's seven biggest threats: nuclear peril, terrorism, unresolved conflicts and violations of international humanitarian law, climate change, growing inequality, cyber warfare and misuse of artificial intelligence, and human mobility, or refugees. Even a cursory glance shows that each of these issues saw little movement at the UNGA.

To begin with, the UN's actions in response to North Korea's missiles and nuclear tests just amounted to another round of sanctions against the Kim Jong-un regime. Past history points to the slim chances of success of this tack. Since 1966, the UN Security Council has established 26 sanctions regimes, of which about half are still active. In some cases, the sanctions only squeezed the country's poor, as in Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) and DPRK itself, while not changing its belligerent positions. In most cases, the misery was heightened by



international military interventions, from Yugoslavia to Libya and Yemen. Even the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, against which the U.S. and Russia united to pass a slew of economic, political and travel sanctions in the 1990s, didn't change course on its support to al-Qaeda or its brutal treatment of women and minorities. The truth is that sanctions do not work on rogue states; they only help isolate their populations from the world, which in turn tightens the regime's stranglehold on its people, and strengthens its resolve to disregard the UN.

Lacking guarantees
In addition, to those who may just consider, as Libya did, to relinquish nuclear weapons, the fact that NATO destroyed Libya anyway is a disincentive. The UN has done itself no favours by failing to censure NATO on violating its mandate only to the responsibility to protect (R2P) and not for regime change in Libya in 2011. To other countries that may enter talks, as Iran did, the imminent threat from the U.S. of walking out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (P5+1 agreement) would make them question the efficacy of the UN in guaranteeing any deal struck. Other decisions of the Trump administration in the U.S., to walk out of the climate change agreement as well as threaten to cancel its funding contributions to the UN, have also seen little comment from the world body, which further reduces the respect it is viewed with.

Nowhere is that lack of respect more obvious than regarding Myanmar, where the military junta faced sanctions for years. Despite inviting former UN Secretary Gen-

eral Kofi Annan to prepare a report on Rakhine state, post-democracy Myanmar has been able to carry out one of the region's most frightening massacres just days after the report was submitted. On the basis of satellite pictures, and eyewitness accounts, the UN Human Rights chief called military action a "textbook case of ethnic cleansing", as half a million Rohingyas fled for their lives from Rakhine villages that were then burnt down, with landmines laid along the border to Bangladesh to prevent their return. The Security Council will now meet on Thursday to consider the situation, but it is short on ideas and late on action, and restoring more than a million stateless refugees to their homes seems a daunting task, even for a world-body that was set up expressly to ensure that such a displacement would "never again" be allowed to occur.

A similar impotency has been imparted to the UN on the issue of terrorism. India's grievances here are justified and are a symptom of the UN's powerlessness to enforce even the basic strictures against terrorists it sanctions, given that Hafiz Saeed and associates now plan to stand for public office in Pakistan, while others like Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi, who received bail despite UN financial sanctions, have simply disappeared. Meanwhile India struggles to convince China to allow the Security Council to sanction Masood Azhar, whose release in exchange for hostages in 1999 should have been proof enough of his perfidy.

Mr. Guterres's concerns about what he calls the "dark side of innovation" are valid, and the world is seeing an increasing num-

ber of cyber-attacks, especially from non-state actors. But the UN must do more to act on attacks carried out by states, especially those that are permanent members of the Security Council. Both Russia and the U.S. have been known to use cyber warfare — drones, robotic soldiers and remote killings — must see more regulation from the international community.

Each one 'first'
Solving the world's inequalities, the last point on his list, where Mr. Guterres pointed out that "eight men represent as much of the world's wealth as half of all humanity", will be a harder and harder task for the UN, where member countries speak only of putting themselves "first".

Clearly the vision of the UN dream by Tennyson or Mudaliar or any of the leaders over time has far to go. The important issue is the road it employs, and the respect the institution is accorded, not just as a structure at New York's 42nd Street, but a shared ideal. This was summed up best by the UN's first Secretary General, Trygve Lie, who ran an equally divided forum and finally resigned from his post in 1952 saying, "The United Nations will not work effectively if it is used merely as forum for destructive propaganda. Neither will it work if it is used only as a convenience when national interests are directly involved, and regarded with indifference, or bypassed or opposed, when the general world interest is paramount."

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What's past is present

► **Radhika Santhanam**

One of the biggest takeaways from the federal election in Germany is that the nation's culture of guilt about the Holocaust has not been able to act as a bulwark against populism after all.

The 2013-born far-right party, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), which has been gathering steam since 2015 for its sharp anti-Euro, anti-Merkel, and anti-refugee rhetoric, has performed much better than expected. It rode the wave of unhappiness following Chancellor Angela Merkel's decision to welcome refugees in 2015, and finished with an astonishing 13.3% of the vote in Sunday's election to Bundestag. With the refugee crisis being the defining issue this election, it is clear that the party's strong stance against integration helped it attract votes, although, surprisingly, as the Financial Times showed, in districts where support for the AfD is strongest, the share of population with a migration background is low.

It is pertinent that the AfD did well in the former East Germany. A poll this month found that 86% of

Germans thought their current economic situation as "good"; the country's unemployment rate of 3.7% is the lowest since October 1980. Unemployment is higher in East Germany, and living standards lower, compared to the wealthier West.

But did the AfD do well because of support for it or simply because people were tired of Ms. Merkel? While polls again show that 60% voted for the AfD because they were disappointed with other parties, the party believes otherwise. In June, Petr Bystron, Chairman of the AfD-Landesverband Bayern, told me that the lines between the ideologies of parties have blurred over the years (Ms. Merkel has often been accused of simply following public opinion while making decisions). "You can't tell one party from another," he said. "The AfD now is where the CDU was earlier — centre-right. We are liberal conservatives. We are the only alternative here."

Ghosts of the past
Whether the only alternative or not, this is a development that Germans have been dreading. When the AfD's head in eastern Thuringia, Björn Höcke, called Berlin's Holocaust Memorial a "monument of shame" early this

year, his statement rattled everyone. In the Dachau concentration camp in south Germany, months after the statement, Bernhard W. Schoner, a guide, explained to me why he has been tirelessly retelling the story of the Nazis for two decades. "My job is very important," he stressed, "because the younger generation tends to forget." For Barbara Ploch, 66, being a German could only be a matter of "half-pride" — the pride stemming from the fact that Germany welcomes refugees and the shame relating to the past. "But I like that it is an open society now," she said. But the AfD's Alexander Gauland seems upset precisely by that. After the results, he announced: "We will chase them down... Angela Merkel and whoever else... and we will take our country back."

Confusion now prevails in the AfD with Frauke Petry, the most well known face of the party, quitting what she calls an "anarchist party" with no credible plan to govern. Whether the party will be united and coherent in Parliament, or become fragmented given the early cracks, remains to be seen. But for a fractured Germany, the hope is that it is not revisited by the trauma of its past.



US congressmen move resolution in support of India's UN security council claim

NEW DELHI: Two Democratic congressmen have introduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives, seeking support for India for a permanent membership of the UN security council in recognition of its growing clout and an endorsement of democracies around the world.

It was introduced by Ami Bera, the longest-serving Indian American in US congress and member of the House foreign relations committee, and Frank Pallone, who founded the congressional caucus on India, which has grown into the largest country-specific caucus on Capitol Hill.

"The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council reflect the world as it was 60 years ago, and it's time we recognise India's role in increasing global prosperity," said Bera. "Se-

curing a permanent spot for India on the UN Security Council would strengthen democracy around the world." The UNSC is the world's top decision-making body, and its five permanent members — the US, UK, France, China and Russia — are the most powerful member-nations, with veto powers, the exercise of which by even one of them can stop or block an initiative supported by all the rest.

India is a leading claimant to a permanent seat on a reformed and expanded council, with Japan, Germany and Brazil, that had come together to form a pressure group pushing the world leaders and the body toward reforms, arguing that the present set-up is woefully unreflective of the changing world order. "It's in the interests of the United States and the world to have a UN Security Council whose



members combine military strength with respect for democracy and pluralism, and an appreciation of the dangers posed by rouge states

and terrorist groups," said Pallone in a joint statement with Bera. India belongs on the UN Security Council and it is imperative that

Congress makes this clear to the Trump administration and the world," he added. Pallone had moved a similar proposal in the last House

of Representatives in June 2016, but that had not made it through perhaps because of the paucity of time — there were only a few months left of that Congress, with the country focused on a bitterly divisive race for the White House.

If passed, the resolution will not become a binding obligation for the executive. It will only put the US House of Representatives officially on record in support of India's bid. The executive branch has already taken that call. President Donald Trump announced his administration's support for India's claim — which was first offered by President Barack Obama in a speech to Indian parliament in 2010 — during his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June. But while Trump came out in support of administrative reforms of the UN to cut its bloated

bureaucracy and chaired a meeting of most of the member nations to flag off the process, he uttered not a word about Security Council reforms. The Indian delegation to the UN noted this and spoke out. "On 18 September, there was a meeting here on UN reform," external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj said in her address to the general assembly pointing to the meeting chaired by Trump. "I participated. I witnessed an evident desire for change, to do something."

"But I do want to remind you," she added, "that at the 2005 World Summit there was a consensus that the early reform of the Security Council is an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations." There is still no "text" — a formal document that could form the basis for negotiations.

Congress has no credible leader in Gujarat, depending on Rahul Gandhi: CM Rupani

VADODARA: Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani has said the Congress has no "credible" local leaders so it is relying heavily on party vice president Rahul Gandhi for campaigning for the upcoming assembly polls.

The BJP chief minister also posed a series of questions to Gandhi, who is currently touring the state, where assembly polls are due by the year-end. "His (Gandhi's) visit (to Gujarat) is an admission that the Congress has no credible local leadership. Had they been strong and visible, he would not have had to come here," Rupani told PTI on Tuesday. "The Congress has no issues to raise and no (state) leader who could go to people and talk to them about important matters," he said. The chief minister was in Anand near here to attend a function where the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) dairy excellence awards were presented. Targeting Gandhi, Rupani asked him to explain why the Congress-led UPA government delayed permis-



sion to install gates at the Sardar Sarovar Dam, built across the Narmada river, at Kevadiya. "The delay in permission led to millions of cusec of the Narmada water flowing into the sea without being used," he said. Rupani also asked the Congress

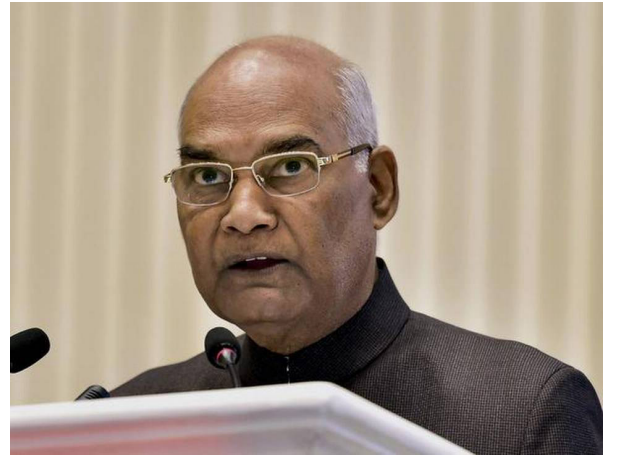
leader to explain the reason for so many scams occurring during the Manmohan Singh government.

He blamed the Congress for unemployment in the country and maintained this was a result of "mismanagement" by the UPA government

which was in power from 2004 to 2014. The chief minister said the Amethi MP should tell people what steps were taken by the UPA government during its 10-year rule at the Centre to address the issue of unemployment among the youth.

10 scientists receive Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize

NEW DELHI: Ten scientists were announced winners of the annual Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize, India's highest science award, at a function presided over by President Ram Nath Kovind here. The winners this year for the Biological Sciences are Deepak Nair at the Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Faridabad, and Sanjeev Das, National Institute of Immunology, Delhi; Chemical Sciences, Naresh Patwari, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay; Earth Sciences, Suresh Babu, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram; Engineering Services, Alok Paul and Neelesh Mehta, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru; Medical Sciences, Amit Dutt, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai, and Deepak Gaur, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and Physical Sciences, Nissim Kanekar, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Pune, and Vinay Gupta,



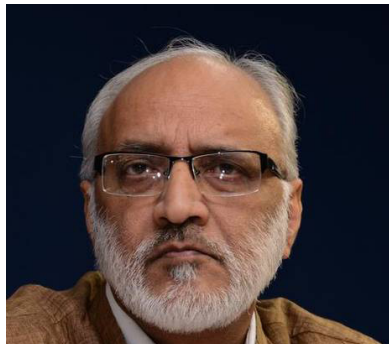
National Physical Laboratory, Delhi.

There were no awards this year for the mathematical sciences and, for the second year running, no women recipients. Every year 8-10 scientists, below 45, are selected across institutions by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and awarded for outstanding scientific work in the last five years. Since 2013 however, only two women have been awarded.

Economist Ashok Gulati declines to be part of NITI Aayog panel

NEW DELHI: Economist Ashok Gulati has declined to become part of a NITI Aayog panel on reforming the agriculture sector by 2020. He has reasoned that unless the earlier recommendations made by such committees are implemented, another similar exercise is unlikely to yield any results.

"The main reason is that there are already 3-4 committees who have made recommendations and hardly anything is implemented. So the question is, how



many more committees we want, there is nothing new." They should focus on 4-5 things they want to do and implement them well, rather than going in circles... committee after committee," Mr. Gulati said. He added that he was not informed, or asked if he wanted to be a part of the committee. "If you are forming an official committee, the minimum courtesy is to check with the member. Nobody checked with me and suddenly I found my name there," he said.

Former Army officer gets bail in Malegaon blast case

NEW DELHI: The Bombay High Court on Tuesday granted bail to retired Major Ramesh Upadhyay, an accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case.

Accepting Upadhyay's plea on the ground of parity — since the other prime accused in the case have been granted bail by the High Court and the apex court — a bench of Justices Ranjit More and Sadhna Jadhav granted him bail against a personal bond of Rs 1 lakh.

While the National Investigating Agency's (NIA) counsel Sandesh Patil opposed the bail plea, the HC said that its hands were tied in view of the apex court's directions on parity. The court also asked if Upadhyay's role in the blasts was larger than that of prime accused

Shrikant Purohit.

Upadhyay's counsel, however, denied the same and said, "The apex court had recently granted bail to Purohit and that the trial court in Mumbai had also let out two other accused persons in the case, Sudhakar Chaturvedi and Sudhakar Dhar Dwivedi. Thus, Upadhyay too must be granted bail."

The NIA, in its chargesheet, had cited transcripts of phone conversations between Upadhyay and Purohit as prime evidence against the former.

The Supreme Court had last month granted bail to Purohit in the 2008 Malegaon blast case.

Seven people were killed in a bomb blast on September 29, 2008 at Malegaon, a communally-sensitive textile town in Nashik district of north Maharashtra.

A special COCA court had earlier ruled that the ATS had wrongly applied this law against Sadhvi Pragya Thakur, Purohit and nine others.

Who said what at the India Mobile Congress

NEW DELHI: The maiden India Mobile Congress (IMC) kicked off at Delhi's Pragati Maidan with Minister of State (Independent Charge) Communications, Manoj Sinha, inaugurating it on Wednesday.

Telecom Secretary Aruna Sundararajan and top executives from the telecom industry converged at the programme, which is envisioned as a platform to make India a strong definitive voice in global communication forum. Here are the views made by key people at the three-day event: Minister Manoj Sinha:

"We are proud to say that our country is now hosting its own first-ever mobile, Internet and technology event — The India Mobile Congress. We are hopeful that this will be a huge platform for mobile and internet technology sector in the sub-continent.

"India is currently the second largest telecom market in the world with 1.2 billion consumers. Investment in the sector has increased 220 per cent in the last four years. Telecom creates four million direct and indirect jobs. Connecting the next billion Indians to the world-wide web is the single biggest opportunity in India. The world is digital, becoming synonymous with every aspect of our daily life." For India, 5G provides an opportunity for the industry to reach out to the global market. India has constituted a high level 5G forum."

Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology: "We don't want to miss the digital revolution."

Implement no-interview policy for group-C, D posts: Haryana chief secy

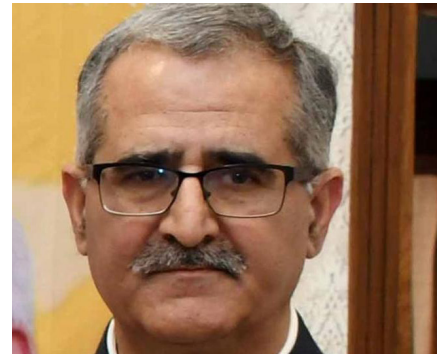
CHANDIGARH: Haryana chief secretary DS Dhesi has directed administrative secretaries to make necessary amendments in service rules of their departments to implement the state government's 'no interview' policy for recruitment in Group-C and D posts.

Recruitments will now be made on the basis of written examination and minimum educational qualification. Presiding over a meeting of administrative secretaries, the chief secretary said the interview system has been eliminated in recruitment to Group-C and D categories.

He said various departments will make amendments in service rules at their own level without taking approval from the cabinet, general administration department or finance department.

For Group-D posts in those departments where minimum qualification is just knowledge of Hindi or English, the minimum qualification will be Class 8 pass. However, in jobs where the minimum qualification is Class 10 or 12, the norms will remain the same. The chief secretary said the State Eligibility Test in Computer Appreciation and Application will not be applicable on other posts except for the post of clerk.

He said employees or persons already



having computer qualifications such as BCA, MCA, B.Tech or M.Tech in computers from reputed institutions, diploma in computers from government polytechnics, Haryana Knowledge Corporation Limited, Hartron, DOEACC or NIELIT will be exempted from the State Eligibility Test.

The state government has dissolved the selection committees constituted by the general administration department for conducting interviews of the candidates against the vacancies of Group-D posts with immediate effect. In its last meeting, the cabinet decided to do away with the interview system during the selection process in case of recruitment to Group-C and D posts.

Divergent views over judgment in Farooqui case

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court's judgment acquitting Peepi Live co-director Mahmood Farooqui has raised divergent views in the legal community on the grey line between sexual consent of a woman and rape. The judgment by Justice Ashutosh Kumar holds that in the modern world where equality is the "buzzword" and where both men and women are "initiators" of sexual acts, consent should not be mere hesitation or reluctance, but a clear and unambiguous "No." In short, there is no room for a feeble "No." Justice Kumar gave the benefit of doubt to Mr. Farooqui on the ground that he had no intention to rape her and it was unclear that she had refused consent. The court notes that since both Mr. Farooqui and the woman are "persons of letters," little or no resistance and a feeble refusal cannot be counted as actual refusal.

Former Additional Solicitor General, Indira Jaising, termed the judgment a "sophisticated but deeply flawed judgment on whether or not rape took place."

"The judgment creates a new defence in law for the rapist which does not exist in law. There is a double presumption — absence of intention to rape [by the accused] and non-communication by the woman despite a clear

'no' from her." Ms. Jaising said. She said the judge "has invented a defence for the accused, which the latter did not make or have in law. The case of the accused [Farooqui] was bare denial [of rape]. But the judge introduces his own belief that the woman did, in fact, consent. The burden of claiming such a defence, based on actual proof and evidence, was on the accused. Therefore, the judgment converted what was decidedly a defence for the accused into the presumed consent of the victim." Senior advocate K.T.S. Tulsi also agreed with the judge's conclusions. He said "sexual consent has to be categorical.

"Consent key in defining assault" The facts related in the FIR and the HC judgment show that the two had gone halfway. In such a situation, the woman's refusal should have been unambiguous. At that point, the burden shifts to the woman to make her refusal clear."

Supreme Court Women Lawyers Association president and senior advocate Mahalakshmi Pavani said the judgment presuming consent was "outrageous." "Why did the woman register an FIR, stand by her version through the trial if she had consented to the act? This judgment should be appealed against in the Supreme Court," Ms. Pavani said.



'Wearable robot' might help paralytic patients regain ability to walk

Scientists have designed a wearable lower-limb robot exoskeleton that features natural knee movement to help stroke and spinal cord injury patients regain ability to walk and strengthen their muscles.

Wearable "robot-assisted training" is quickly emerging as a method that helps improve gait rehabilitation.

Now, researchers from Beihang University in China and Aalborg University in Denmark have designed a lower-limb robot exoskeleton - a wearable

robot - that features natural knee movement to greatly improve patients' comfort and willingness to wear it for gait rehab.

The robotic exoskeleton is intended to help stroke patients strengthen their physical fitness, aid the rehabilitation training of paralysed patients, or to assist those who need help performing daily activities.

The team focused on the knee joint, one of the most complex mechanical systems within the human body and a critical player during gait. The knee

joint's motion is actuated by several skeletal muscles along its articular surfaces, and its centre of rotation moves.

Researchers wondered if a parallel mechanism similar to skeletal muscles would be useful for designing a bionic knee joint. "Our new design features a parallel knee joint to improve the bio-imitability and adaptability of the exoskeleton," said Weihai Chen, a professor at Beihang University.

The exoskeleton taps a hybrid serial-parallel kinematic struc-

ture consisting of a 1-degree of freedom (DOF) hip joint module and a 2-DOF knee joint module in the sagittal plane.

A planar 2-DOF parallel mechanism helps to fully accommodate the motion of the human knee - enabling rotation and relative sliding.

Movement transparency is critical when wearing a robot for gait rehab. When wearing the exoskeleton, its movement should be synchronised and consistent with a patient's natural movement.

"If not, it exerts extra forces on the human joint. And this extra force causes patient discomfort and unnatural movements," Chen said.

"To improve the transparency of the robot, we studied the structure of the human body, then built our model based on a biometric design of the lower limb exoskeleton," Chen said.

This design is the first known use of a parallel mechanism at the knee joint to imitate skeletal muscles.

"Our design goes beyond

solving the transparency problem in the knee joint - and it's a simple structure," Chen added.

"Unlike most previous exoskeletons, which simplified the knee joint as a pin joint, ours provides 2-DOF to make the exoskeleton's movement consistent with a patient's natural movement," said Chen.

The exoskeleton's main role will be to help stroke or spinal cord injury patients with their rehab, researchers said. The research was published in the journal *Review of Scientific Instruments*.

Cranberries may help fight bacterial infections: study

Eating cranberries may prevent bacterial infections and potentially minimise our dependence on antibiotics, new research suggests. Scientists from McGill University and INRS-Institut Armand-Frappier in Canada showed that cranberry extract successfully interrupted the communication between bacteria associated with problematic and pervasive infections.

The findings may have implications for development of alternative approaches to control infections, researchers said. Previous research has shown that American cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon* L) contains compounds - such as proanthocyanidins (PACs) - that provide antioxidant, anti-adhesion and anti-microbial properties that help fend off illness.

Researchers hypothesised that cranberries may also have an anti-virulence potential. They wanted to know if these cranberry compounds could help manage bacterial infections.

By feeding fruit flies - a commonly used model for studying human infections - cranberry extract, the team discovered that cranberry provided flies protection from a bacterial infection and they lived longer than their cranberry-free counterparts.

In essence, the cranberry extract reduced the severity of the bacterial infection. "This means that cranberries could be part of the arsenal used to manage infections and potentially minimise the dependence on antibiotics for the global public," said Nathalie Tufenkji, professor at McGill University.

"Cranberry PACs interrupt the ability for bacteria to communicate with each other, spread and become virulent - a process known as quorum sensing," said Eric Deziel, professor at INRS-Institut Armand-Frappier.

"The cranberry extract successfully interferes with the chain of events associated with the spread and severity of chronic bacterial infections," said Deziel.

Added to the evidence of cranberry's role in preventing recurrent urinary tract infections by blocking bacteria from sticking to cell walls, the current study suggests that PACs may help control the virulence or spread of potentially dangerous bacterial infections around the world. The study was published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

ALCOHOL MIXED WITH ENERGY DRINK CAUSES SIMILAR RISK AS COCAINE

Drinking highly caffeinated alcoholic beverages trigger changes in the adolescent brain, similar to taking cocaine, and the consequences last into adulthood, according to a recent research conducted at Purdue University. Lead researcher Richard van Rijn looked at the effects of highly caffeinated energy drinks and highly caffeinated alcohol in adolescent mice.

These alcohol studies cannot be performed in adolescent humans but changes seen in mouse brains with drugs of abuse have been shown to correlate to those in humans in many drug studies.

These energy drinks can contain as much as 10 times the caffeine as soda and are often marketed to adolescents.

But little is known about the health effects of the drinks, especially when consumed with alcohol during adolescence.

The study showed adolescent mice given high-caffeine energy drinks were not more likely than a control group to drink more alcohol as adults.

But when those high levels of caffeine were mixed with alcohol and given to adolescent mice, they showed physical and neurochemical signs similar to mice given cocaine.

"It seems the two substances together push them over a limit that causes changes in their behavior and changes the neurochemistry in their brains," van Rijn said.

Adding, "We're clearly seeing effects of the combined drinks that we would not see if drinking



one or the other."

With repeated exposure to the caffeinated alcohol, those adolescent mice became increasingly more active, much like mice given cocaine.

The researchers also detected increased levels of the protein, which is marker of long-term changes in neurochemistry, elevated in those abusing drugs such as cocaine or morphine.

"That's one reason why it's so difficult for drug users to quit because of these lasting changes in the brain," van Rijn said.

Those same mice, as adults, showed a different preference or valuation of cocaine.

Robins found that mice exposed to caffeinated alcohol during adolescence were less sensi-

tive to the pleasurable effects of cocaine.

While this sounds positive, it could mean that such a mouse would use more cocaine to get the same feeling as a control mouse.

"Mice that had been exposed to alcohol and caffeine were somewhat numb to the rewarding effects of cocaine as adults," van Rijn said.

"Mice that were exposed to highly caffeinated alcoholic drinks later found cocaine wasn't as pleasurable. They may then use more cocaine to get the same effect," he added.

To test that theory, Robins investigated if mice exposed to caffeinated alcohol during adolescence would consume higher

amounts of a similarly pleasurable substance - saccharine, an artificial sweetener.

They predicted that if the mice exhibited a numbed sense of reward, they would consume more saccharine.

They found that the caffeine/alcohol-exposed mice drank significantly more saccharine than mice exposed to water during adolescence, confirming that the caffeine/alcohol-exposed mice must have had a chemical change in the brain.

"Their brains have been changed in such a way that they are more likely to abuse natural or pleasurable substances as adults," van Rijn said.

The results were published in the journal *PLOS ONE*.

The Unnecessary Persistence of Tuberculosis

The World Health Organization has just released its annual Global Tuberculosis Report. The report shows that even as tuberculosis (TB) rates continue to fall worldwide, the epidemic is larger than previously estimated, with 10.4 million new TB cases globally in 2015; over 95 percent of TB cases happen in low- and middle-income countries.

14 years ago, the Global Fund was established to finance efforts to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria. It has since become the world's largest funder of programs aimed at fighting these diseases, investing close to \$4 billion annually. In the years since its inception, it has made tremendous progress. The last 15 years have seen a 37 percent decline in global malaria incidence, a 35 percent decline in new HIV infections and, lagging significantly behind, an 18 percent decline in TB incidence.

In the case of TB, gains against the disease had been driven by a 1.5 percent decrease in worldwide incidence every year since 2000. This falls far short of the 4-5 percent annual decrease that would be needed to reach the goals set by the "End TB strategy" for 2020.

I am big fan of John Oliver. And I have been following the news related to Opioid crisis not just in USA but worldwide very closely for the past 3-4 years now. And this is what shocks me, NO ONE, I mean absolutely No One is talking about the ruling that actually started all this.

If you look at the controlled substances act of USA or at the prescription drug practices before 2000 you will realize that iOpioids were restricted to those suffering from cancer-related pain. It is in 2001 that President Clinton signed the bill into law that allowed doctors to prescribe opioids to any one suffering from pain that can not be managed by regular analgesics. It was called THE DECADE OF PAIN CONTROL AND RESEARCH. This according to me is one of the biggest reasons why opioids are so easily available.

Huff post must have extremely low levels of credulity to believe that at night, some people in a car would stop their car, identify the castes of some passerby a simply by looking at their face, thrash them on spot, then kidnap them and then thrash them again.

TB is an airborne, infectious condition, most commonly affecting the lungs. Lung TB can be transmitted through coughing, spitting, or sneezing. It is an ancient disease.

Dating all the way back to prehistory, so old that the Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun was once thought to have suffered from it. Symptoms include fatigue, loss of appetite, chills, fever, and, when the disease is in the lungs, a bloody cough. However, our immune systems are often able to impede the growth of TB bacteria, and the disease can remain latent in the body for years, or even a lifetime, without causing symptoms, until weakening of the immune system allows the disease to reappear. TB is therefore most hazardous to people with weak immune systems and is the leading killer among HIV-infected populations.

As the new report makes clear, the success achieved thus far in TB, even if modest compared with the dramatic drop in malaria and HIV infection rates, may be in jeopardy. In 2015, 1.8 million people died from TB, an increase from 1.5 million in 2014. Approximately one million of those infected with TB were children, and nearly 200,000 children died of TB in the past year. TB also complicates the treatment of other diseases.

In 2015, fully 35 percent of global HIV deaths were due to TB. The disease is present in every part of the world, although it is particularly prevalent in the South-East Asia and Western Pacific Regions, where about 60 percent of new global cases can be found. But the burden of TB is heaviest in Africa, where, in 2014, the continent suffered from 281 cases per 100,000 people, markedly higher than the global average of 133 cases per 100,000.

It is important to stress that TB is curable. The treatment is antibiotics, administered regularly over the course of at least six months. Why, then, with a cure at our disposal, is our progress on TB so slow? The answer lies not in the treatment itself, but in our capacity to deliver treatment effectively, and in the broader conditions that weaken the health systems needed to help deal with the disease.

Chanda Kochhar, Shikha Sharma on Fortune's list of powerful biz women outside US

MUMBAI: Two Indians — Chanda Kochhar and Shikha Sharma — have made it to the rankings of most powerful women in business outside the United States drawn up by the Fortune magazine while Indra Nooyi featured in the top three on the US edition list.

The Most Powerful Women in Business outside the US list, which was topped by Banco Santander group Executive Chairman Ana Botin, placed ICICI Bank's Kochhar at the 5th spot while Axis Bank's Sharma has been ranked 21st. PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi came in at No. 2 on the US Most Powerful Women in Business list, led by General Motors Chairman and CEO Mary Barra. Lockheed Martin Chairman, President, and CEO Marillyn Hewson took the 3rd spot. On Kochhar, Managing Director



and CEO, ICICI Bank, Fortune said she has "led India's largest private lender for eight years, and under her stewardship ICICI Bank has thrived". About Sharma, MD and CEO, Axis

Bank, Fortune said "now that she has been reconfirmed as CEO, Sharma can focus on beefing up the bank's digital services, which includes expanding its digital payments app's

reach". The international list also includes GSK CEO Emma Walmsley at the 2nd place, followed by Engie CEO Isabelle Koher at the third slot.

This is the 17th year Fortune has ranked the most powerful women in business outside the US. The 50 global businesswomen represent 17 countries and many industries and had 11 newcomers this year.

The methodology involved four criteria: the size and importance of the woman's business in the global economy, the health and direction of the business, the arc of the woman's career (resume and runway ahead), and social and cultural influence. The US list comprised 26 CEOs controlling \$1.1 trillion in market cap, seven newcomers, one returnee, and nine women in the technology industry.

ICICI Lombard makes tepid debut after \$871 million IPO

NEW DELHI: Shares of ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company made a tepid debut at bourses today, falling nearly 2% from the issue price of Rs 661.

The stock listed at Rs 650, down 1.66% against the issue price on the BSE. It later slipped 3.45% to hit a low of Rs 638.15.

At the NSE, it debuted at Rs 651, a loss of 1.49%, compared to the issue price.

In terms of equity volume, 27.76 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 1 crore shares changed hands at the NSE during the morning trade. The company's market valuation stood at Rs 30,512.14 crore.

The initial share sale offer of ICICI Lombard -- the first for a general insurer -- was oversubscribed three times during September 15-19.



The non-life insurer had fixed the price band at Rs 651- 661 per share for the Rs 5,700-crore IPO. ICICI Lombard General Insurance is a joint venture between ICICI Bank and Canadian NRI Prem Watsa-promoted Fairfax Financial Holdings.

CLSA India Private, Edelweiss Financial Services and JM Financial Institutional Securities were the book running lead managers of the IPO.

RBI to keep rates steady in Oct, cut growth forecast: Reuters poll

NEW DELHI: The Reserve Bank of India will hold policy steady at its Oct. 4 meeting, and well past next year, amid weak economic growth and signs inflation may soon overshoot its target, a Reuters poll found.

Asia's third-largest economy started losing momentum after the government scrapped 86% of currency in circulation late last year, hurting demand in a cash-reliant economy, and the slowdown was compounded by the implementation of a new tax system.

In August, despite a neutral policy bias, the RBI cut the key policy rate after lowering its economic growth forecast in June to 7.3% from 7.4% for the current fiscal year. The latest poll of 60 economists showed although the RBI will hold its key repo rate at a seven-year low of 6% next week, it will downgrade its growth forecast again following disruptions caused by the new tax.

Introduced July 1, the national tax system caused confusion over product pricing and pushed activity in India's private sector into contraction.

Economic growth slowed to a three-year low last quarter, prompting some economists to lower their outlook. "RBI has already been highlighting downside risks to growth, and that bias should now crystallize in the updated forecasts," said Abhishek Upadhyay, economist at ICICI Securities PD.

However, lacklustre growth and inflation hovering below the RBI's 4% medium-term target - annual retail inflation was 3.36% in August - would not be enough to drive the RBI into action, economists said.

Nearly two-thirds of forecasters who answered an extra question said there was a chance consumer inflation would overshoot the RBI's medium-term target this fiscal year and medians suggest the Bank would hold policy until at least April 2019, the end of the forecast horizon. The reverse repo rate is expected to be left at 5.75% across the same period.

However, not all economists are convinced the RBI will keep policy rates unchanged.

Credit Agricole CIB, Geojit Financial Services and Trust Capital predict a 25 basis point trim in the repo rate next week. Over a quarter of economists polled expect a cut by year-end.

"Growth is below the central bank's expectations and they will react to that by their easing policy stance as strong annual growth is not achievable after what happened in the first quarter of this fiscal year," said Dariusz Kowalczyk, senior economist at Credit Agricole CIB. "So in order to stimulate aggregate demand, they will lower nominal rates and the time to do this is running out as inflation is rebounding."

4G coverage to beat 2G, data oxygen of digital economy: Mukesh Ambani

NEW DELHI: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani, who shook up the telecom sector with his free voice calling and data plans, said on Wednesday 4G telecom coverage in India will surpass that of 2G in a year. Ambani is optimistic that India, riding on the back of digital revolution, will grow to a \$7-trillion economy in the next 10 years, from \$2.5 trillion, and rank among the top three economies in the world.

"Data is the oxygen of a digital economy. We cannot deprive Indians of this vital life-sustaining resource. We have to provide ubiquitous access to high-speed data at affordable prices," he emphasised. Ambani made these remarks at the India Mobile Congress here on Wednesday.

The RIL chairman made the point that it has to be ensured every Indian has access to an affordable smartphone that connects him to limitless knowledge and on the power of the Internet. Reliance Jio, his telecom upstart that has captured more than 128 million users within a year of launch, will this week roll-out a basic 4G phone that will be available to its users on making a

refundable deposit of Rs 1,500.

India mobile market, Ambani said, is now overflowing with data and a robust digital circulatory system has to be created to carry data to the 1.3 billion Indians.

"4G coverage in India will become larger than the 2G coverage within the next 12 months," he asserted.

India, Ambani said, has leaptfrogged from a lowly 155th in mobile broadband penetration to being the world's largest mobile data consuming nation in just one year. He put down this jump largely to launch of Reliance Jio which during the promotional phase offered unlimited free data and after that at dirt cheap price, saying the pace at which the Indian mobile industry has grown is unparalleled in the world.

Stating that Indian telecom and IT industry has to play a foundational role in creating the digital infrastructure, the RIL chief said the country had missed out on the first three global industrial revolutions of mechanisation, mass production and automation, but has the opportunity to lead in the fourth industrial revolution fuelled by connectivity, data and artificial



intelligence. "Mobile Internet and cloud computing are the foundational technologies in the Fourth Industrial Revolution," he said. "Data is the new oil. India does not need to import it. We have it in super-abundance. It will be a new source of value and will create opportunities and prosperity for India and millions of Indians." The country's richest man pressed for using new technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, Big Data analytics, 3-D printing, blockchain and nanotechnology to create jobs and a new wave of wealth. Digital technologies, he said, can

be a boon for achieving national priorities of energy, water and resource security. "New sources of energy and new modes of transportation with unparalleled efficiencies have become possible, thanks to convergence of several technologies. India must embark on the task of connecting everything and everyone via the Super- Internet of Things. This will enable 130 crore Indians to collaborate directly with one another, democratising economic life never before," he said.

Digitisation of education, training and human resource development in a comprehensive manner must be regarded as a pre-condition for

the success of Digital India, he suggested. "To accomplish all these tasks, the telecom and IT industry will have to partner with every sector of the economy and the government, every business and every institution, from the biggest to the smallest," Ambani added.

To realise the Digital India dream, investments have to be made in building next-generation technology assets, and inefficiencies across the digital ecosystem must be rooted out, he pointed out.

"We must break silos and forge partnerships. No corporate, nor the government, can do it alone. Together, we can achieve the unimaginable," he said. Since its launch, Jio has been locked in a bitter market place battle with older telecom players led by Bharti Airtel. The older firms have accused it of using deep pockets to disrupt the market to create monopoly. "Let's not forget - India provides a big enough opportunity for all of us to grow and prosper - together. The opportunity to pave the path for our nation's progress and create a better quality of life for every Indian beckons us," Ambani said.

India slips one place, is world's 40th most competitive economy: WEF

NEW DELHI: India has been ranked as the 40th most competitive economy -- slipping one place from last year's ranking -- on the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness index, which is topped by Switzerland.

On the list of 137 economies, Switzerland is followed by the US and Singapore in second and third places, respectively.

In the latest Global Competitiveness Report released on Wednesday, India has slipped from the 39th position to 40th while neighbouring China is ranked at 27th.

"India stabilises this year after its big leap forward of the previous two years," the report said, adding that the score has improved across most pillars of competitiveness. These include in-



frastructure (66th rank), higher education and training (75) and technological readiness (107), reflecting recent public investments in these areas, it added. According to the report, India's performance also improved in ICT (information and communications technologies) indicators, particularly Internet bandwidth per user, mobile phone and broadband subscriptions, and Internet access in schools.

However, the WEF said the private

sector still considers corruption to be the most problematic factor for doing business in India.

"A big concern for India is the disconnect between its innovative strength (29) and its technological readiness (up 3 to 107): as long as this gap remains large, India will not be able to fully leverage its technological strengths across the wider economy," it noted.

South Asia index In South Asia, India has garnered the highest ranking, followed by Bhutan (85th rank), Sri Lanka (85), Nepal (88), Bangladesh (99) and Pakistan (115).

"Improving ICT infrastructure and use remain among the biggest challenges for the region: in the past decade, technological readiness stagnated the most in South Asia," WEF said.

The Maruti Suzuki car whose 20 lakh units have been sold since 1999

MUMBAI: Wagon R, the popular hatchback car from Maruti Suzuki has sold over 20 lakh units in India. This makes Wagon R only the third car after Maruti 800 and Alto to achieve this feat.

Wagon R, which began its life in 1993 as a Kei car in Japan was first introduced to the Indian market in 1999. It has sold over 30 lakh units in Japan and is showing a similar market dominance in India.

While most models show a tendency of decline in sales after some time, it has been opposite in the case of Wagon R. The car has shown a steady increase in sales with the passage of time.

According to a report by NDTV, the car crossed the 10 lakh unit sales in 2011, twelve years after its introduction. But it took only six years for the model to achieve the next ten lakh unit sales in the country. One main reason for this is the popularity the model has gained amongst large fleet owners and taxi operators. Another factor according to Maruti officials has been the preference given to the model by the first time buyers. As per the company, around 45 percent of the first time buyers in the market choose Wagon R over other models. They also claim that a fifth of their customers purchases the model multiple times.

RS Kalsi, Senior Executive Director, Marketing and Sales, Maruti Suzuki was quoted in a report by NDTV saying that, "Since its inception, Wagon R has been ahead of its peers. Its comfort seating, spacious interiors superior fuel efficiency, practicality and pleasure of driving have made it a popular choice. To keep it strong, Maruti Suzuki has systematically upgraded the brand with new design and features. Needless to say, Wagon R has continued to top the sales chart. Despite intensified competition in small car space, Wagon R continues to be the preferred choice of the practical car buyers."

The company has introduced several new features with Wagon R's new versions. The car costs around Rs 4.5 lakh and comes in petrol and CNG variants. Currently, it comes with both automatic and manual transmission options with upgraded safety features and dual airbags.

All Nokia smartphones sold in India to be locally manufactured: HMD Global's Pranav Shroff

NEW DELHI: HMD Global, the Finnish company that develops and markets smartphones and feature phones under the "Nokia" brand name, on Tuesday announced that all of its mobile phones that are sold in India will be locally manufactured. The company said that its latest smartphone, Nokia 8, will also be manufactured in India. HMD Global has entered into a partnership with Foxconn for local research and development (R&D), and manufacturing of its smartphones. "The response to Nokia smartphones has been encouraging. We are constantly ramping up our production so that we can meet the demand. Our products have been performing very, very well," said

Pranav Shroff, director, Global Portfolio and Product Management in HMD Global. Shroff pointed out that prior to the Nokia 8, Nokia smartphones such as the Nokia 3, Nokia 5, and Nokia 6 were priced between Rs 9,000 and Rs 15,000 to tap the budget category, which has 70% of the Indian smartphone market. It is worth noting that the smartphone market, especially the budget category, is dominated by Chinese brands such as Xiaomi and Lenovo-Motorola. Xiaomi's Redmi Note 4, which starts at Rs 10,999, saw over 2 million shipments in the second quarter of 2017, becoming the highest shipped smartphone in a single quarter in the history of the Indian smartphone, says

an IDC report released in August. "HMD accounts for 1.5% of the India handset market as of the second quarter, 2017," said Parv Sharma, an analyst at research firm Counterpoint. Shroff listed out the three key elements that the company is focusing on to stand out in a crowded smartphone market: "The first thing is delivering real-life experience; focus on areas that matter to consumers. The second thing is design and material. We are premium in every category we operate. And the third thing is pure Android. It's not just pure Android but pure secure and up-to-date Android. Now, a Nokia 3 consumer will get Android Oreo update before anyone else in that price point gets it. The Nokia 3,

Nokia 5 and Nokia 6 have already received a September update." On being asked about the possibility of launching a 4G feature phone like the JioPhone, Shroff said, "Our insight on 4G feature phones is that users in this category value elements such as battery life, ease of use, and simplicity. We are closely watching this space to see the consumer reaction to the phones on offer. If we feel that this is something that consumers would want and makes sense for them, we will evaluate the opportunity." HMD Global relaunched the Nokia brand in January this year. The company has so far launched four smartphones and four feature phones in India. The portfolio also includes the Nokia 3310

redux. HMD Global is banking on the brand recall and trust that the Nokia brand once enjoyed in the Indian market.

"Nokia still enjoys a good brand recall and connect with the audience. Nostalgia might not have a direct impact on the decision to purchase but helps brand placement. From then onwards, the purchase decision will be triggered by various factors including product details, distribution and after-sales services. Until now, Nokia has done well to leverage its brand connect to build its distribution structure and after-sales services right from day one, which for any other new brand would have taken significant time," said Sharma.

Umar Akmal may face Pakistan Cricket Board ban, fine for bad behaviour

KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board's inquiry committee has recommended a three-match ban and fine on batsman Umar Akmal after finding him guilty of breaching three clauses of the players code of conduct.

PCB official told PTI on condition of anonymity that the inquiry committee, headed by Director Cricket, Haroon Rasheed, had recommended a three-match ban and fine on Umar Akmal and also suggested suspending issuance of NOCs for foreign leagues for a certain period. "The committee, after interviewing Umar and others, found

the batsman guilty of breaching three clauses and it has now sent its recommendations to the PCB chairman Najam Sethi for further action," the official said. Umar Akmal had an altercation with Pakistan's head coach Mickey Arthur at the National Cricket Academy last month over practicing there. "It didn't reflect on the allegations made by Umar against Arthur. It has found the batsman guilty of breaching the code and left it up to the chairman to decide whether a larger inquiry is required for the allegations of use of abusive language by Arthur," the source added. "Umar breached three



clauses by going directly to the media and criticising the head coach," the source said. According to the official, it is now up to the chairman whether he accepts the inquiry committee recommendations of three-

match ban and a fine or go for the maximum punishment allowed for breach of relevant clauses.

"The maximum punishment for these breaches is a five-match ban and a fine of up to five million rupees. Najam Sethi also has the authority to reduce the penalties recommended by the inquiry committee," the official said. He later alleged in the media that Arthur had abused him. The official made it clear that the inquiry committee, which also included the legal advisor of the board, had only focussed on deciding whether Umar breached clauses of the players code of conduct.

MV Sridhar resigns from BCCI General Manager's post

NEW DELHI: Under the scanner on issues of propriety, the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI's) General Manager (Cricket Operations) M V Sridhar tendered his resignation on Wednesday, a decision that was accepted by the Committee of Administrators (COA).

It was learnt that MV Sridhar submitted his resignation during the COA meeting at the Cricket Centre Headquarters on Wednesday.

For the time being, CEO Rahul Johri will be the head of Cricket Operations supported by a three-member team comprising Mayank Parik (International Cricket, Logistics), KVP Rao (Domestic Cricket) and Gaurav Saxena (for ICC/ACC matters, co-ordination with other international boards and point person for the Indian men's cricket team).

"Please note that Dr MV Sridhar has decided to move on and tendered his resignation," Johri wrote in his mail to the office-bearers. "His resignation has been accepted today by the Supreme Court appointed Committee of Administrators (COA).

Dr. Sridhar has agreed to stay on till September 30, 2017 for smooth handover of work. We thank him for his services to BCCI. "Sridhar was under the scanner for quite some time now with allegations of financial impropriety in his home state association -- Hyderabad CA -- when he was heading the state body. "Sridhar was time and again told to relocate to Mumbai and operate from there.

However, he was shuttling between Hyderabad and Mumbai, which was not the best way to function for the head of Cricket Operations," a senior BCCI official, privy to the development, said. The incident that proved to be the last straw for the COA was appointment of a trainer called Sohni Desai at the NCA. Before that, he had irked a few top people in the board by scrapping the Duleep Trophy.

Duleep Trophy was later restored by the COA. Desai was working at current Team India strength and conditioning coach Shankar Basu's Chennai-based gym 'Primal Patterns' and there are allegations of Conflict of Interest against Basu as well. Sridhar had said that Desai was appointed after he came second in the trainer's test.

"The boy stood second in the test and there is no Conflict of Interest in this case," Sridhar had then told PTI. It was on September 15, that during a NCA meeting in the capital, acting president CK Khanna and treasurer Aniruddh Chaudhry had asked Sridhar about Desai's appointment.

"Who set the question papers?" Chaudhry had asked during the meeting in which Sridhar had named Basu. It was learnt that CEO Johri then independently verified Desai's credibility and found out that he didn't even appear for the test for recruitment of NCA trainers. "The COA were left embarrassed after the whole saga and it was a matter of time before Sridhar had to put in his papers."

Explainer: What the ICC's revised playing conditions mean

MUMBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday announced the addition of new rules, along with amendments to existing laws, to its playing conditions. The new rules will be effective in all series starting September 28 -- the first being the upcoming Test series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The revised ICC playing conditions incorporate relevant clauses from the 2017 Code of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) Laws of Cricket, meaning all playing regulations will be captured in one document for each format. Here's a look at the significant changes that the ICC has made to its rules and what each of the changes means.

Player send-off

In an ICC first, players can now be sent off the field for the rest of the match if umpires find them involved in serious misconduct. Level 1 to Level 3 offences will still be dealt with through the ICC Code of Conduct, but umpires can send off players after a Level 4 offence which includes:

- Charges of physically assaulting a player or any other person. Making inappropriate or deliberate physical contact with an umpire.
 - Threatening to assault an umpire.
 - Committing any other act of violence.
- The new rule -- applicable on all formats -- looks to ensure a higher standard of conduct amongst cricketers and to avoid altercations between two sides during a match.

Decision Review System laws

Decision Review System (DRS) laws have also been altered. Now a review will not be wasted in case an 'umpire's call' on a leg-before-wicket (lbw) decision is upheld following review.

Previously, teams were cautious about opting for a review in lbw situations in case the review was wasted because Hawk-Eye -- the software used to review lbw decisions -- found low margins for decision reversal and left the ultimate decision in the umpire's hand.

In Test matches teams will not get review top-ups after the first 80 overs have passed in each inning. The number of reviews in each inning will now be limited to two per side. Additionally, the DRS will also be introduced into T20 international matches.

However, each team will only get one review per inning instead of two. An umpire can recall a dismissed batsman at any time before the ball comes into play for the next delivery.

Previously, umpires did not hold the power to recall a batsman once they had left the field.

Runouts and stumps

Batsmen will now be considered not-out once their bats have initially made contact with crease while running between the wickets, even if the bat is in the air when the ball hits the stumps in an attempted run-out. The same rule applies to a batsman trying to regain ground in an attempt to avoid being stumped. Previously, batsmen were considered out if their bat was found to be up in the air inside the crease when the ball hit the wickets or they were stumped.

Thinner bats

The thickness of the bat's edges can't be greater than 40mm, and the overall depth is to be 67mm at the most. However, the width and length of bats remains unchanged.

Ben Stokes must 'grow up' says ex-England cricket skipper Nasser Hussain

LONDON: Ben Stokes must "grow up" or risk damaging his international career, former England cricket team captain Nasser Hussain has warned after the star all-rounder was arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm. The Durham player was Wednesday included in England's 16-man squad for the Ashes tour of Australia despite being dropped for the fourth one-day international against the West Indies at The Oval following his arrest in Bristol early on Monday. England national selector James Whitaker told the BBC that Ben Stokes, who was released without charge but is under investigation, would remain in his position of vice-captain to Test skipper Joe Root. But ex-England skipper Hussain and Michael Vaughan say the 26-year-old needs to take responsibility for his actions, especially with the high-profile Ashes tour looming. "Ben Stokes has the world at his feet and is well on the way to becoming a very special -- not to mention very well-rewarded -- cricketer," Hussain wrote in the Daily Mail. "But he cannot keep flirting with the self-destruct button while getting himself into such damaging scrapes.

"It has reached the point where it could damage the career of a potentially great England cricketer. He has to learn to walk away or not put himself



into an environment where this can happen." "Ben Stokes has to grow up," he added. The bottom line is, for all the advice and support he will be receiving right now, it's down to him. He just has far too much going for him to throw it all away. "Stokes has found himself in trouble in the past.

He was arrested and cautioned in 2011 for obstructing police on a night out and sent home from an England Lions tour to Australia in 2013 for flouting a ban on late-night drinking.

Vaughan believes Stokes must learn to be streetwise off the field.

"Ben Stokes can't say he was not warned," he wrote in the Daily Telegraph. "People have said to him, 'There is only one person who can ruin your career and that is you. Nobody else.' In time we could be describing him as a cricket-

ing genius. But he has to understand that if he wants to be a superstar, and go over to India, earn huge IPL contracts and keep them, he has to be careful off the field." "On the field he is a streetwise cricketer. But he is not streetwise off the pitch and that could be his downfall. I am hoping this is his lesson." Alec Stewart, another former England captain said "massive responsibility" comes with leadership. "He just needs to learn and learn fast," he told BBC Radio. "He's had a couple of hiccups when he was younger. Now he's just got to make sure we're not talking about this again in six months or even six years. "There are some sympathies with Ben. He is a high-profile sportsman, he will be recognised, there will always be someone who wants a cheap shot but he has to make sure he reacts in the right way."

David Warner rubbishes Rodney Hogg's favouritism accusation against Steve Smith

BANGALORE: David Warner, Australia's opening batsman, has brushed aside former fast bowler Rodney Hogg's accusation that skipper Steve Smith prefers to "pick his friends" in the national team.

Disappointed with Australia's poor run of form, Hogg has slammed skipper Smith, the selection committee and Cricket Australia. But Warner differed with Hogg's views.

"Everyone is going to have their opinions and they are entitled to have their opinions. I don't know from where all these theories crop up from. It is up to the selectors to pick the team and at the end of the day, if you are picked up, you go out there and give your best. That is how it always has been," Warner told reporters on the eve of the fourth ODI against India and Australia here. Hogg has accused Smith of picking his friends in the national team while



talking to SEN Radio in Australia. Smith shouldn't be a selector. (Ash-ton) Agar's been pushed through and (Hilton) Cartwright's still there. "They are picking their mates. We saw (Nic) Maddinson get se-

lected (he's) a mate, he's one of Steve Smith's mates. You can't pick bloody mates," Hogg said.

Hogg further said, "We have got to get fair dinkum. We are really off the ball a bit here, I think the captain's getting his own way." He also did not spare the selectors and Cricket Australia.

"All the way down, there is got to be question marks. All the way across Cricket Australia. (Jon) Holland has proven he can bowl people out; left-arm orthodox is a really hard. He is proven it and we are not seeing him," Hogg said.

Warner added, "Moreover, players do not have anything in their hands about getting selected or not selected, only thing they can do is to perform to their best of abilities." Australia trail the five-match series 0-3 with a possible whitewash hanging over their heads.

Wrestlers fail to impress as Pakistan end up 21st in Ashgabat

ASHGABAT: All hopes that Pakistan harboured about clinching some medals in wrestling at the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games were shattered on Tuesday when none of its six wrestlers could make it to the medal stage and got eliminated in the pre-quarter-finals here at the City Olympic Village.

Mohammad Inam in 86kg, Abdul Wahab in 61kg and Mohammad Bilal in 57kg all lost in the opening matches while the remain-

ing three wrestlers -- Azhar Hussain in 59kg, Shoukat Ali in 56kg and Mohammad Umair in 98kg in the Greece-Roman -- failed to impress and were beaten in the second round.

In the first bout of the last-day proceedings, the 30-year-old Mohammad Umair of Pakistan lost to 20-year-old Sukhroj Azizov of Tajikistan. Sukhroj, a youngster who had finished as the runner-up in the Asian Championship in Moscow, won the first round by



defeating Umair who is a bronze medalist from the last year's Commonwealth Championship and

fifth position holder of the Islamic Solidarity Games at Baku in 2017. In the second bout 21-year old

Aidos Sullangali of Kazakhstan beat 33-year-old Pakistani wrestler Azhar Hussain in just 44sec.

Aidos, the Asian Cadet champion and junior Asian champion, was in superb form and gave no time to Azhar to settle down.

In the last bout of the day, the 19-year-old U1 Yamato of Japan beat Shoukat Ali of Pakistan, also a 19-year-old, within 50 seconds and won the bout 10-0.

Before facing Shoukat, the Japanese wrestler had recorded

victory against a Philippines wrestler in the quarter-finals while Shoukat Ali had got a direct entry to the semis.

There were lots of expectations from the Pakistan wrestling squad keeping in view their experience but none of them could fulfil them. Some experts have called for younger wrestlers to be groomed for international events since almost all the wrestlers in the current squad except Shoukat have advanced in age and are not adept

with the modern techniques of the sport. "Pakistan should introduce younger, fresh talent rather than rely on old wrestlers," said an expert. "The game of wrestling has drastically changed now and slow and bulky wrestlers cannot move faster to match their competitors. Aerobics and modern techniques have been introduced in the world of wrestling and Pakistan should work on the same lines if it wishes to remain in the medals race in the future events," he said.