

TIME AND US

DAILY

Srinagar, Kashmir

TUESDAY

- SEPTEMBER, 19, 2017
- 27 ZHUL HIJAH 1438 AH
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- PAGES: 08

WEATHER TEMPERATURE		SUNSET TUESDAY: 06:34 PM
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE ACT	MIN TEMPERATURE ACT
SRINAGAR	30.2	11.5
JAMMU	34.8	19.8
LEH	23.3	5.2
KARGIL	25.0	7.0

SUNRISE WEDNESDAY: 06:19 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR

Partly Cloudy Sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 31°C & 11°C respectively.

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

STATE | 3 GOVT TO DISTRIBUTE 20000 QTLS OF ADDITIONAL FOOD-GRAINS FOR MUHARRAM: NATIONAL | 5 WILL ALLY WITH CONGRESS, LEFT TO TAKE ON BJP IN GUJARAT, SAYS JD(U) SHARAD BUSINESS | 7 SUPPLIED 80% STEEL REQUIRED FOR SARDAR SAROVAR PROJECT: SAIL SPORTS | 8 SACHIN TENDULKAR SALUTES MS DHONI FOR SCORING 100 INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 50S

Mehbooba directs regulated supply of power, drinking water, food grains during Muharram

Directs immediate improvement of roads, street lights, sanitation, health facilities in Shia areas

Srinagar, Sep 18: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today reviewed the arrangements for the coming days of Muharram put in place by the State administration.

The Chief Minister directed availability of regulated power and drinking water supply besides availability of adequate quantity of food grains and fuel during Muharram days.

Muharram, which also marks the beginning of a new Islamic calendar, would be commencing by the end of this week.

Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Nirmal Singh; Chairman, Legislative Council, Haji Anayat Ali; Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Information, Choudhary Zulfkar Ali; Minister of PWD, Naeem Akhtar; Minister of State for Hajj & Auqaf, Syed Farooq Andrabi; Minister of State for Health & Medical Education, Asia Naqash; legislators, Syed Abid Ansari and Asgar Karbalai were present in the meeting.



The Chief Minister directed immediate repairing of street lights, ensuring of uninterrupted power supply to Imambaras and devising proper traffic management and diversion plans on the routes of religious processions. She directed improvement and macadamisation of roads in Shia inhabited areas particularly leading to Imambaras on immediate priority.

The Chief Minister also directed enhancement in the funds being released to respective Deputy Commissioners for the purpose.

Mehbooba Mufti also directed putting in place adequate arrangements for the Muharram observances in Ladakh and Jammu, Poonch, particularly Kargil, Jammu, Poonch, Ramban and other places.

The Chief Minister was informed that 193 ambulances, 1563 paramedics and 212 doctors have been detailed for duty by the Health Department near various Imambaras and Shia dominated areas during these days. Also, the meeting was informed, adequate transport diversion plans have been devised by the Traffic Police for ensuring hassle free movement on the routes of Azadari processions. Adequate number of buses has been detailed on the routes to Imambaras and places of congregation during late hours to ferry the faithful, the meeting was informed.

Regarding the power supply, the Chief Minister was informed that a buffer stock of 470 transformers has been created for meeting the requirement during the days. Also electrification of interior lanes and bye lanes has also been done by the PDD. Besides, in Srinagar city 800 street lights

▶ See **Mehbooba...** Pg 02

Rahul Gandhi is non-serious person: Nirmal Singh

'Congress playing politics, don't want BJP to complete tenure'

Srinagar, Sep 18: Calling All India Congress Committee (AICC) vice president, Rahul Gandhi as non-serious person, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh on Monday said that the Congress party is playing politics to hoodwink the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The senior BJP leader also said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has not destroyed Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state.

He, according to the KNS correspondent, was reacting to the statement made by AICC vice president; Rahul Gandhi wherein he had accused Modi led government of destroying the PDP in the state.

While replying to a query on the sidelines of the party function here at his residence, Dr Nirmal Singh said that BJP has not destroyed PDP. "The congress party is playing politics as they don't want the current regime should continue," he said.

Asked about the Congress's Policy Planning group's visit to Kashmir, Deputy Chief Minister said that as far as the democracy of



the country is concerned, everybody has right to met people. "I hope that they are not playing politics and hope their visit to the Valley will help in resolving the issues," he said.

He also welcomed the MLA Langate, Engineer Abdul Rasheed's statement wherein he had asked Congress to help Modi led government in resolving the Kashmir issue.

Meanwhile, BJP's National General Secretary, Ramlal while replying to a question over ceasefire on LoC said that the BJP government will take every step to ensure

▶ See **Modi's...** Pg 02

Interactive Session: JAMMU LAWYERS URGE FOR RETENTION OF ARTICLE 35-A.

Jammu, Sep 18: Veteran lawyers from Jammu region held an interactive session on the topic, "Different Facets of Article 35-A" in the High Court Bar Room in Jammu on Monday during which lawyers unanimously pitched for the retention of Article 35A.

Advocate Sheikh Shakeel Ahmed presented the welcome address and also introduced the topic of discussion.

Senior Advocate and Former Bar President A.V. Gupta initiated the discussion and laid much emphasis on the historical perspective of Article 35-A. The Senior

▶ See **Lawyers...** Pg 02

Don't believe or forward WhatsApp messages without verification: Rajnath Singh

New Union home minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said anti-national elements have been trying to foment tension in the society by posting unverified information on social media and asked people not to forward such messages without verification.

Singh said information and news, that was completely wrong or having no basis, was being regularly circulated on social media such as WhatsApp and many people



consider it to be true.

"I want to tell SSB jawans not to believe such messages and forward to anyone without verification as anti-national elements have been trying to foment trouble in the society. We all have to be careful before believing or forwarding them," he said after launching the intelligence wing of the Sashtra Seema Bal (SSB) here.

Lauding the role of the SSB, which guards the 1,751

fenced borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

"In an open border, the security-men do not know who is anti-national, which way a criminal is coming or who is carrying fake currency or fake drugs," he said.

Referring to his earlier announcement that the family of each martyred paramilitary soldier will get at least Rs one crore as compensation, the home minister said he

▶ See **Rajnath...** Pg 02

NOTE BAN, GST A DOUBLE WHAMMY ON GDP: MANMOHAN SINGH

Both demonetisation and GST have affected India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth adversely, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on Monday.

"Both demonetisation and GST have had some impact on GDP," Manmohan Singh, who has earlier said the Indian economy has been running on only "one engine" of public spending, told CNBC-TV18 channel.

"Both would affect the informal sector, the small scale sector that are responsible for 40 per cent of GDP... 90 per cent of employment is in the informal sector.

"So when 86 per cent of currency is withdrawn from circulation, plus GST, which was put in practice in haste.. lot of glitches are now coming up, it was bound to affect GDP growth adversely," he said.

▶ See **Singh...** Pg 02

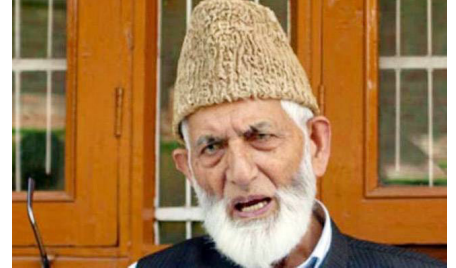
Geelani ask OIC to play effective role to solve Kashmir

'Every section of society should resent defamation campaign launched by NIA'

Srinagar, Sep 18: Syed Ali Geelani on Monday, asked OIC to play its active and effective role in resolving the issue faced by Muslim Ummah. Organisation of Islamic Countries has adequate resources to tackle problems and serve best for the betterment and upliftment of humanity.

In a statement issued to KNS, Geelani while welcoming the statement of OIC on Kashmir, said that they hope that this institution will leave no stone unturned and will play its effective and pivotal role in world politics.

"There is dire need to represent the divine



message of peace and righteousness of Islam and OIC is the best platform to promulgate and promote this message," added Geelani.

▶ See **Geelani...** Pg 02

ANGANWARI WORKERS FOR PERMANENT JOBS

Srinagar, Sep 18: Demanding regularization of their jobs, monthly pension and releasing of pending salaries, Anganwari workers of Kashmir Monday staged protest demonstration against the state and central government here.

They took to roads and blocked vehicular movement near Exchange Road here in Srinagar.

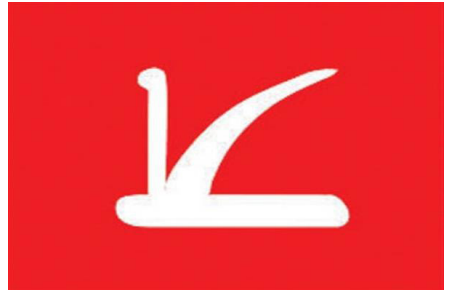
"We are being asked to leave the job. We were waiting for our regularization but instead the authorities are now telling us that they can't regularize us. It is injustice with us," they said.

▶ See **Workers...** Pg 02

Patient care a casualty at SKIMS: NC

Director SKIMS negligent in performing his duties

Srinagar, Sep 18: National Conference on Monday expressed serious concern over the unprecedented state of administrative chaos and mismanagement at the Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura. In a statement issued from NC Head Office, 'Nawa-e-Subha', NC Additional Spokesperson Sarah Hayat Shah lashed out at the State Government and Director SKIMS for the rapidly deteriorating patient care at the Valley's premiere tertiary care health institute and said hundreds of patients with serious ailments were suffering miserably due to the administration's arrogance and incompetence in dispensing their basic duties. The NC Spokesperson also lashed out at the Director



SKIMS for turning the office of the Director into a political liaison and PR cell for the CM's Grievance Cell In-charge and functionaries of the ruling dispensation.

▶ See **NC...** Pg 02

SITUATION IN INDIA EVEN WORSE THAN EMERGENCY: MAYAWATI

MEERUT: Targeting the Narendra Modi Government at the Centre, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati today asserted that the current scenario in the nation was worse than even Emergency.

Addressing a public gathering here after her resignation from the Rajya Sabha, she alleged that the Central Bureau of Investigation, Enforcement Directorate and other agencies were targeting leaders of opposition parties on the orders from the Centre.

Ms Mayawati said that some political parties tried to derive political mileage from the Saharanpur riots and alleged that it was the Bharatiya Janata Party which had masterminded the violence. "In Rajya Sabha, I was not

▶ See **mayawati...** Pg 02

Big wall created between Hindu Jammu and Muslim Kashmir: Civil Society Group

'Will unite people of all three regions to defend Article 35A in SC'

Srinagar, Sep 18: The Civil Society Coordination Committee, We The People, Monday said their job is to bridge the gap socially, politically, and geographically between Kashmir and Jammu as there is a lot of disparity that has been created between the two regions.

The group comprises five members Awami National



Conference Chief Muzzafar Shah, Advocate G N Shaheen,

Advocate Mir Javed, Sikh leader Jagmohan Raina and Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam.

According to the KNS correspondent, addressing a press conference here, Shah said this particular civil society group is of diverse opinions. "Our job is to bridge the gap. A big wall has been created between Hindu Jammu

▶ See **Society...** Pg 02

KAS Prelim Exam: DROPPED OUT CANDIDATES ACCUSE PSC OF VIOLATING COURT DIRECTIONS

Srinagar, Sep 18: The qualified candidates for Kashmir Administrative Services (KAS)-2016 preliminary exams who have been dropped by Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission after it came up with a new list of candidates following the controversy over wrong answer keys shown against 24 questions Monday alleged that JKPSM has been violating court directions and there are grim chances that they could be allowed to sit in the Mains Examination.

Court has already passed directions asking JKPSM to allow 429 candidates in the Mains Examination till its final verdict, however, the dropped out candidates claim

▶ See **Dropped...** Pg 02

GOVERNOR INAUGURATES INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL

Announces cash awards

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Governor N.N. Vohra inaugurated the 2nd International Yoga Festival cum International Yoga Sports Championship 2017, organized by the Yoga Society of Kashmir at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre. About 300 participants from various parts of India, Vietnam, Taiwan, Canada, Bulgaria, U.S.A. and Nepal are participating in this Festival. Mrs. Usha Vohra, First Lady, was present on the occasion.



quired mental and physical discipline which enables the practitioner to lead a wholesome, stress free and balanced life.

Welcoming the participants, Governor N.N. Vohra, complimented Sh. Shabir Ahmed Dar, Yoga therapist & Coach, for establishing the Yoga Society of Kashmir and organizing this Championship. He also complimented Sh. Altaf Bukhari, Minister for Education and Chairman of the Yoga Society for providing the required encouragement to Sh. Dar.

Observing that Yoga is enormously beneficial for the growth of a healthy mind and body, Governor emphasized that learning to practise yoga, especially from a young age helps in developing the re-

Governor wished all the participants a happy and comfortable stay here and suggested that the Organisers should take them, particularly the foreign visitors, on a sightseeing tour of the scenic Kashmir Valley.

Earlier, inspiring performances of rhythmic and artistic yoga were presented by a Yoga group from Jharkhand and Sh. Sourabh Singh from Amritsar. Governor, First Lady, Minister Bukhari and Dr. Shehnaz Ganai, MLC presented awards to the achievers and promoters of Yoga.

In appreciation of the yoga

performances which were demonstrated before the large audience Governor Vohra announced a cash prize of Rs. 31,000/- to be distributed among the 10 young yoga practitioners from Jharkhand and complimented their Coaches Pooja Rani and Nanda Dula Dutta. The Governor also announced a cash prize of Rs. 21,000 for the outstanding performance given by Sh. Sourabh Singh from Amritsar Punjab.

Sh. Altaf Bukhari, Minister for Education, stressed the importance of Yoga for a healthy life and said that very soon he shall enable yoga instruction to be given in various schools in the State.

Ms. Shehnaz Ganai, MLC, was present on the occasion.

PRIYA SETHI FOR BETTER UPKEEP OF PARKS

Stresses on developing better facilities and green patches

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 18: Minister of State for Education, Technical Education, Culture, Tourism, Horticulture, Floriculture and Parks, Priya Sethi today stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure proper maintenance of parks and green patches of Jammu region as Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits to the people.



The Minister was speaking at the meeting convened to review the development of parks in Jammu region here today.

Commissioner JMC M. Raju, VC JDA Rajesh Sharma, Director Floriculture Jammu Babila Rakwal, JC Works JMC Kushal Chand, Executive Engineer Patnitop Development Authority Ashwani Kumar Anand, Co-Convenor INTACH Dr. C. M. Sein, CEO Surinsar Mansar Development Authority Arvind Kotwal, Manager J&K Tourism Development Corporation Suresh Kumar, besides other senior officers of concerned departments were present in the meeting.

Threadbare discussion was held on various vital issues pertaining to developmental works and maintenance of parks. Priya Sethi asked the concerned departments including Jammu Municipal Corporation, JDA, Housing, Social Forest and other departments to work in close coordination with the Floriculture Department to ensure proper upkeep and beautification of parks.

She further stressed for preparing a road map and constitute a committee for ensuring timely maintenance and development of various parks in Jammu and also stressed for establishing playgrounds in some

parks for children's recreation.

Minister said that Floriculture department will provide the requisite assistance to all other organizations in shape of on job Training, landscaping expertise, providing composite manure etc to ensure better management of the parks.

She also asked to take up proper identification of parks held by various organisations by colour coding. She also stressed on setting up of a Committee of officers from concerned departments and to hold quarterly meetings to work in tandem to make

Jammu beautiful.

She directed the concerned agencies to ensure beautification of green patches alongside Airport to Satwari road adding that the tourists which come for Pilgrimage to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji and other tourism spots of the State playing through this road in large numbers.

Priya said that it is important that requisite facilities are provided to the people and specially children in these parks which act as lungs of the cities providing recreational space.

Continue from Front Page.....

MEHBOOBA

have been repaired or replaced, the meeting was informed. Also sanitation drives have been launched in Shia dominated areas and in close vicinity of Imambaras, the meeting was informed.

The meeting was informed that adequate stock of LPG, Kerosene oil and foodgrains is available for distribution. Additionally, the Food Supplies Department would be releasing additional quota of 2000 quintals of rice to Shia dominated areas for community utilisation. Also market checking by the concerned Department is being carried out during these days, the meeting was informed.

Regarding water supply, the meeting was informed that regular supply is being provided to 81 locations during these days besides availability of 21 tankers. Also more water PSPs would be installed this year, the meeting was informed. Also 142 works of urgent nature in Shia dominated areas are being undertaken by the R&B Department besides macadamization of many roads leading to Imambaras and Shia areas, the meeting was informed.

Besides, the meeting was also attended by Chief Secretary, B. B. Vyas; Director General of Police, Dr Sheesh Pal Vaid; Administrative secretaries of several Departments, Inspector General, Kashmir zone, Munir Ahmad Khan; Inspector General of Police, Traffic, Jagjit Kumar; heads of various Departments; officers of Srinagar district administration and other officers.

NIRMAL

the safety and security of people and border. "We will give befitting reply to Pakistan," he said.

Refusing to speak the party's stand over Article 35-A, Ramlal said the case is pending in the court, let the decision come.

He informed reporters that the party, which was held today, was called to discuss varied issues related to the people and the party.

LAWYERS

Counsel urged that Article 35-A was achieved due to the struggle launched in Jammu during Maharaja's Regime by two prominent personalities namely, Com. Dhanwantri and Lala Roop Chand Nanda

He also stated that for special rights to the state subjects, the Jammu had observed complete shut down for 7 days and because of the agitation the Constitution of J&K, 1996 BK was enacted and in the said constitution, first time the term state subject was defined and provisions were made that no outsider can acquire immovable property in State of J&K.

Mr. Gupta concluded his stance by saying that the people who are opposing Article 35-A cannot be the well wishers of Jammu and State of J&K as the said Constitutional guarantee was achieved by Jammuites after long struggle.

Former Senior Additional Advocate General S.C. Gupta echoed for retention of Article 35-A and submitted that the same needs to be further strengthened by the Indian Parliament. Mr. S.C. Gupta further submitted that any tinkering with Article 35-A will have an adverse effect on Article 370 of the Indian Constitution which accords special status to the State of J&K.

Mr. Gupta further stated that in the name of demographic change by certain vested interests the people of the state are being misguided and misled and a duty is cast upon the lawyers fraternity to educate the common masses about the political implications of the scrapping of the Article 35-A.

Former Member of Legislative Council, Advocate M.R. Qureshi while affirming the views of Mr. A.V. Gupta and Mr. S.C. Gupta stated that at the time of accession, certain commitments were made to the people of the State and by a design, the same are sought to be abridged.

Advocate Qureshi according to news agency CNS further submitted that Jammu province will be maximum affected by the tinkering of Article 35-A as maximum people from rest of the country are expected to settle in Jammu. He further pointed out that with the repeal of Article 35-A, there will be disintegration of the State of J&K resulting in chaos and

disturbance of law and order.

Former Assistant Solicitor General of India (ASGI) Mr. K.K. Pangotra contended that non-issue has been made an issue just to vitiate peace in State of J&K. Mr. Pangotra in his brief address stressed for retention of Article 35-A.

Advocate Pawan Kundal stated that Article 35-A is the soul of Article 370 and it should not be altered. Similar were the views expressed by Advocate A.M. Malik.

The discussion concluded with the decision to hold a massive awareness campaign by involving lawyers, intellectuals and people belonging to different shades of life so that people of the state are educated about the various facets of Article 35-A and its adverse effects on its being abrogated.

While concluding the discussion Advocate Supriya Chouhan referred to various historic facts responsible for the introduction of Article 35-A and she strenuously urged that the privileges enjoyed by the permanent residents will be taken away with the abrogation of Article 35-A. She further stated that J&K is a unique state within India and the spirit of Article 370 needs to be respected for the retention of the special status and she closed her views by stating that the people of the state had rejected the idea of Pakistan and had volunteered with Secular Indian State and the voices against Article 35-A are repugnant to the spirit of the special status enjoyed by the permanent residents of J&K State.

RAJNATH

was contemplating to "do something" for those serving personnel who face an emergency situation but are unable to cope up with it and need help.

"I am also thinking to do something and I will certainly do it," he said amidst applause from about 1,000 guests, mostly serving and retired personnel from different paramilitary forces.

Earlier, the home minister launched the the SSB's first-ever intelligence wing, which will gather information along the borders with Bhutan and Nepal, which are often used by criminals and Kashmiri militants returning from Pakistan.

The intelligence wing will have 650 field and staff agents to gather actionable information.

Due to the visa-free regime, India has with Nepal and Bhutan, there is a trans-border movement of criminals and anti-national elements which pose a major challenge, a home ministry official said.

As many as 230 former Kashmiri militants, based in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, have returned home through the Indo-Nepal border since 2010.

The Indo-Bhutan border is known to be frequented by the Assam-based insurgent group National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), which has even attacked Bhutanese nationals in the past.

The SSB has also been declared as the lead intelligence agency for both the borders. Thus, the central government felt that a well-knit intelligence network of the highest capability that can function and deliver would be the prime requirement for comprehensive border management.

This was essential as the SSB's operations are based on intelligence to prevent criminals and smugglers from taking advantage of the friendly borders with Nepal and Bhutan, the official said.

SINGH

Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan estimated earlier this month that the country's GDP had taken a hit of between 1 to 2 per cent due to demonetisation, which translated to a sum of around Rs 2 lakh crore.

GEELANI

OIC has a greater and pivotal role in international politics, asserted Geelani and stressed OIC authorities to play its assigned and outstanding role in resolving the issues related to Kashmir, Palestine, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Qatar, and issues related to genocide of Rohingya Muslims.

Denouncing the statement of India over OIC, wherein they have said that "OIC has no locus stand on Kashmir", Geelani said that India is deliberately overlooking the historical background and facts related to Kashmir issue and while hailing

OIC for its stand on Kashmir, urged to raise Kashmir issue in all international forums and use influence to highlight atrocities perpetrated by Indian authorities, arrest spree, uncalculated and unjustified use of brute force against peaceful and innocent citizens.

Appealing its member countries, Geelani urged to favour and present unanimous resolution in UNO for settlement of Palestine and Kashmir issues and urged to resolve all bilateral and political issues amicably.

Syed Ali Geelani while favouring peaceful political settlement and situations in Middle East, added that member countries should ask UN Secretary General to find ways and means to stop those oppressive forces responsible for prevailing bloodshed in the region.

Geelani while hailing the Bar Association for their moral support for its president, Advocate Mian Qayoom, said that each and every section of society should resent and resist sinister designs, and stand firm against unauthorized, baseless allegations and defamation campaign launched by NIA. Meanwhile, paying tributes to Shaheed Aijaz Dar on his 29th martyrdom anniversary, Syed Ali Geelani said that he was a great warrior and a front line soldier in freedom movement.

Geelani prayed for speedy recovery of ailing Haji GM Dar, father of slain commander.

WORKERS

They threatened to intensify protests in case their demands are not met.

Police tried to disperse them when they clashed with the women police. Some of the Anganwari workers were detained for some time.

Later in the evening, they assembled at Press Enclave here and alleged that instead of regularizing them, the government has been mulling to handover Anganwari projects to private parties.

NC

"The administration at SKIMS seems to be either completely inept or unquestionably arrogant by failing to ensure the patients receive the kind of medical care they deserve. In a number of cases patients with severe ailments, including young children, women and elderly, have been waiting for months altogether for critical procedures, the delay in which could result in potentially life threatening consequences. It seems to have become the norm that the quality of patient care is directly defined by the recommendations by certain PDP leaders. Those patients who are not politically connected to the ruling dispensation are not only mistreated but also left at the mercy of God", the NC Spokesperson said in the statement.

The NC Spokesperson also highlighted recent disturbing media reports wherein expired drugs were administered to patients at SKIMS. Earlier it was reported that the administration failed to take note of the expired Hepatitis C drugs resulting in an enormous wastage at the expense of the state exchequer. The NC Spokesperson castigated the Chief Minister's Office for undue and improper direct interference into even the technical aspects of the Institute's functioning and said it doesn't behoove the Chief Minister to turn such a vital health institute into political and familial subsidiary.

"Then there is also the matter of the gross suppression of merit at the hands of certain individuals of the Chief Minister's family who were incidentally and illegitimately, in violation of all forms of scrutiny, objectivity and propriety, involved in the selection process of certain top posts in the institution. It has also come to fore that the constitution and regulations of SKIMS are being violated by taking direct orders from the now extra-constitutional CM's Grievance Cell", the NC Spokesperson added.

"The Chief Minister seems to have become a vestigial entity in the scheme of the Institute's functioning as it was the CM's brother who was taking all important policy and administrative decisions instead of the Chief Minister who is the Chairperson for the Governing Board. While the Chief Minister might have accepted this aberration and has chosen

to remain silent, the stakes for the people of the State are far too important to be ignored. If the Chief Minister has unofficially surrendered her powers to her brother, she should do the people a favor and officially disengage from such constitutional duties and responsibilities so that people are not misled", the NC Spokesperson further said.

The NC Spokesperson said the Government should take immediate measures to address these issues that are plaguing the premiere health institute.

MAYAWATI

allowed to speak about Dalit atrocities in Saharanpur, so I resigned," she asserted. Ms Mayawati alleged that the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were tampered by the BJP in the recent state assembly elections and asserted this reason behind her party's defeat in polls. "Our party took the EVM issue to the apex court", she affirmed.

CIVIL

and Muslim Kashmir," he said. Shah said they will start a campaign and will reach to every nook and corner of the state and bring all the people beyond religious and political lines under one banner to fight the evils of abrogation of article 35A.

"We will pick up a full civil society which will comprise members from Jammu and Ladakh and Kashmir. This group will stand there in the Supreme Court and will be part of the all the SC deliberations on Article 35A. This is the job we want to do as a part of this committee. We have joined together irrespective of political views and religion."

They said the people of Jammu and Kashmir on this part of the ceasefire line take Article 35-A and Article 370 as the spirit of their identity till final resolution of the dispute on Jammu and Kashmir and would not like to disturb Article is sought to be disturbed by involving Supreme Court of politically sensitive which has potential to ruin the rot.

Therefore, it is the incumbent duty upon Indian National Congress to protect the Article 35-A and restore Article 370 in letter and spirit till final resolution of the dispute on Jammu and Kashmir, they added.

"The attempts to disturb or play with Article 35-A has united the people of Jammu and Kashmir in all the three regions i.e. Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, because nobody wants to play with it or allow anybody to play with it. We all stand in defense of Article 35-A, irrespective of our political belief, religious denominations, ethnic classifications and regional destinations. Let us suggest do not play with it," cautioned the members of the group.

DROPPED

that JKPSC has been dodging them and till date the Commission has made no correspondence with them in this regard.

"We were preparing for Mains exams after we were declared successful, but now they have dropped us from the list. It is sheer injustice. Even the court has asked PSC to allow us to sit in the Mains Examination but they are using dilly dally tactics," a group of aggrieved candidates complained to news agency CNS.

The candidates blamed Commission for making "mockery" of high level competitive exams. "We will hit streets if PSC didn't come clear on the issue. They must show us our OMR sheets through RTI," they said.

"The irony is that access to OMR sheets are denied to us even through Right to Information Act," said the dropped out candidates.

Pertinently, after a controversy, Public Service Commission in the fresh list dropped 429 out of 6925 candidates who were declared qualified earlier, citing they could not make to the revised cutoff merit of 277.275 marks after applying revised answer keys.

When contacted, In charge Chairman Public Service Commission, Mr Lal Chand said they are waiting for the final verdict of Honorable Court. "We will comply with the court orders and if it directs us to allow the dropped out candidates to sit in the Mains examination, we will surely oblige," he said.

Swachhata Hi Seva National Media Consultation held in Capital

Delhi, 18 August: Over 100 journalists, development agencies and community workers attended a National Media Consultation on the Swachh Bharat Mission in the Capital. The Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Parameswaran Iyer, presided over the consultation. In his opening remarks, Shri Iyer shared details of the nationwide mass mobilization drive, "Swachhata Hi Seva", which follows an impassioned call by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, ahead of the 3rd anniversary of Swachh Bharat Mission that falls on 2nd October. He said that the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign is seeing large scale mobilization of people from all walks of life to undertake shramdaan for cleanliness and construction of toilets, and cleaning up of public and tourist places. The participation has already begun in full swing, and has ranged from the President of India

to the common citizen, involving Union Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers, legislators, celebrities, faith leaders, and corporate leaders spearheading the campaign in their respective areas of influence. He particularly appreciated the tremendous efforts being made by school children, central police services and defence personnel.

The Secretary also shared a snapshot of the progress made by the Swachh Bharat Mission so far, mentioning that 5 States, nearly 200 districts and nearly 2.4 lakh villages across the country have already declared themselves as Open Defecation Free. 1.5 lakh villages have ranked themselves on the Village Swachhata Index based on the solid and liquid waste management in the villages. He also quoted an independent survey conducted across 140,000 households by the Quality Council of India, which found household toi-

let usage to be 91%. He concluded by calling upon the media to spread the message of sanitation and cleanliness during the fortnight and beyond. Mr Nicolas Osbert, Chief, WASH, UNICEF India, in his welcome address, spoke about the impact of lack of sanitation on the health and growth of small children. He said that it was heartening to note that, with the Swachh Bharat Mission and the personal leadership of India's Prime Minister himself, concrete action is happening on the ground with respect to changing old habits through genuine focus on behavior change.

He also shared with the media present, the results of an independent survey conducted by UNICEF across 10000 households in 12 States of the country, to measure the economic impact of sanitation at a household level. He said the survey found that, in fully ODF communities, considering the medical

costs averted, value of mortality averted, and the value of time savings, an average family that invests in a toilet will save Rs 50,000 per year. The cost-benefit ratio of a household found in the study was 430% in fully ODF communities. This meant that a single rupee invested in sanitation, allows a family to save Rs 4.30. He added that these benefits are the highest for the poorest quintile of the population in a community, which was encouraging as it established that improved sanitation helps the poorest of the poor the most.

Swachh Bharat Champions from the grassroots, Ms. Madhu Chauhan (Sarpanch, Bijnor district, Uttar Pradesh), Shri Rajneesh Sharma (Primary School Principal, Meerut district, Uttar Pradesh), and Ms. Deepa Joshi (ANM supervisor, US Nagar, Uttarakhand), also shared their experiences with the media on the occasion.

Appointment of DG, NIA and DG, SSB

New Delhi 18 August: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the following:

1. Appointment of Shri Y. C. Modi, IPS (AM:84), Additional Director, CBI as Director General, National Investigation Agency (NIA) for a period upto the date of his superannuation i.e. 31.05.2021, from the date of assumption of charge of the post or until further orders, whichever is earlier vice Shri Sharad Kunwar, IPS (HY: 79) (Retd.) on completion of his tenure on 30.10.2017.

The ACC has also approved the appointment of Shri Y. C. Modi as OSD in NIA with immediate effect, to ensure smooth takeover of responsibilities in NIA.

2. Appointment of Shri Rajni Kant Misra, IPS (UP:84), Additional DG, BSF as Director General, Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) for a period upto the date of his superannuation i.e. 31.08.2019, from the date of assumption of charge of the post or until further orders, whichever is earlier vice Smt. Archana Ramasundaram, IPS (TN:80) on completion of her tenure on 30.09.2017.

CM chairs BoD meeting of ERA

Chase project completion with all seriousness, stick to deadlines: Mehbooba to ERA

Rs. 56 Cr Rawalpora-Chanapora drainage project, Rs 43 cr Doodhganga distribution network likely to be commissioned soon

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today underlined the need for sticking to completion deadlines in case of mega projects as these involve multi lateral funding and are meant for very large chunks of population. She suggested encouraging the agencies which completes such projects in time.

Chairing the Board of Directors meeting of Economic Reconstruction Agency (ERA) here today, the Chief Minister asked the executives of ERA to chase the project completion with all seriousness and discourage the contractors who do not follow a strict schedule.

Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Nirmal Singh; Minister for Public Works, Nacem Akhtar; Minister for Education, Syed Altaf Bukhari; Minister of State for Forests, Mir Zahoor Ahmad; legislators, Rajesh



Gupta and Agha Baqir Rizvi were present in the meeting.

For future, the Chief Minister advised the officials of ERA to identify projects in drinking water augmentation, drainage, solid waste management and other such sectors with which the needs of a majority of population are linked. The meeting was given a brief about the projects already executed in the State by the Agency. Among those include Achan landfill site where the third cell has also been made operational and the entire patch of land has been fenced, mul-

tile parking slots at Lal Chowk in Srinagar and City Chowk in Jammu and other such projects.

The meeting was informed that Rs. 43 crore Doodhganga water supply distribution system is almost complete and likely to be commissioned before the autumn. Also the Rs. 56 crore Rawalpora-Chanapora drainage project is almost ready for commissioning and work on all pumping stations of the project stands completed.

The meeting was also informed that more than 500

kilometres of road widening besides completion of 30 bridges has been executed by the Agency in the State. Also more than 400 kilometres of drinking water distribution network has been laid by the Agency across the State besides commissioning of 53 reservoirs, 32 tube wells and five water treatment plants.

Rs. 25 crore worth machinery has been replaced at various water supply schemes of the State by the Agency while as Rs. 14 crore worth equipment for Solid Waste management has been handed over to municipal authorities, the meeting was informed. Among the major infrastructure projects under execution by the Agency include Rambagh flyover and TRC Grade Separator in Srinagar, a mega drainage project for Jammu city besides a Rs. 34 crore Sewerage.

Govt to distribute 20000 qtls of additional food-grains for Muharram: Zulfkar Ali

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Keeping Muharram arrangements in mind, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), and Information Department Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali today directed for distribution of additional 20000 quintals of food grains among consumers, especially in Shia inhabited areas.

The Minister issued the instructions during a departmental review meeting.

Speaking during the meeting, the Minister said that people, especially living in Shia dominated areas should be provided with an additional 20,000 ration supply at an earliest so that people in general, and Shias in particular across State do not face any kind of difficulty during holy month of Muharram.

Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali said Government is also working hard to procure additional sugar supply so that each household in Shia areas would be provided with one kg of sugar during the month. The Minister also direct-



ed for formulation of various market checking squads to keep a check on profiteering, hoarding and black-marketing during the month. To ensure that government prescribed rate list is followed in letter and spirit, the Minister said those found in dereliction from the same should be dealt as per the law.

The meeting also reviewed the status of 37228.32 lakhs funds released by Finance Department to FCS&CA. The Minister was informed that the department under various heads utilized a fair portion of the budget for various departmental works.

Reiterating need for owning departmental responsibility, the Minister said that it is imperative that department should make full use of allotted finances, especially salary revenue. He said the department should hire the services of competent authorities to fill up the vacant posts at an earliest.

Zulfkar Ali impressed upon officers to ensure that uniformity is maintained in the distribution of funds in both Jammu and Kashmir region.

Earlier, the Minister also held a "Consumer Commission" review meeting, where

issues of office accommodation, posting of stenographers, support staff, posting of deputy registrar, and provision of furniture for office were discussed.

The Minister also stressed for raising awareness on consumer protection act.

Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA Shafiq Raina, Controller, Legal Metrology Department Vipra Bahl, Director FCS&CA Jammu R A Inqalabi, Director FCS&CA Kashmir Nissar Ahmad Wani, Joint Controller LMD Amar Singh and other concerned were present in the meeting.

Kohli concludes extensive week-long tour to Leh, Kargil

Stresses for proper implementation of Govt schemes, achieving targets in time-bound manner

LEH, SEPTEMBER 18: Minister for Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries, Abdul Ghani Kohli today concluded a weeklong tour to various areas of Leh and Kargil district.

These areas included Kargil, Diskit, Shey, Turtuk, Drass, Khalsi, Nobra and Hunder villages.

During the extensive tour, the Minister took stock of various developmental works under execution in Animal, Sheep and Fisheries sectors in the twin district of Leh and Kargil. The Minister asked the concerned officers to work with utmost dedication and speed up the pace of work on all ongoing developmental works under execution in these areas and complete them in a stipulated time frame.

The Minister also inaugurated various developmental works in these districts and asked the concerned to ensure that the benefits of these projects should be reach to maximum people. He also asked the Officers of Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries Department to gear up their respective field functionaries and conduct frequent field visits to their respective areas and aware general masses about the programmes and schemes of the Government. He also instructed them to ensure medicines and other first aid facilities in all Veterinary Centres of twin districts.

During the tour, several deputations met the Minister and put forth their individual and collective issues. These included up-gradation of Veterinary Centres, sanctioning of incentives for establishing of Fish Farm, Sheep and Goat Units. The Minister gave them a patient hearing and as-



sured them that their genuine demands will be looked into. In some cases, Mr Kohli gave on the spot directions to the concerned for immediate redressal.

Interacting with the people at different places, the Minister said that the Government is committed to provide equitable development of all the three regions of the State. He said focused attention is given to develop the hilly and backward areas of the State with the aim to improve the living standard of the people living there.

During the visit to various areas in Kargil and Leh, the Minister was given warm well come by the people of these regions. Mr Kohli expressed satisfaction over the working of the Departments under his control. He, however, asked them to improve the

working and come up to the expectations of the people.

The Minister had also inaugurated Disease Surveillance Center (DSC) and Geographic Information System (GIS) laboratory of the Sheep Husbandry Department. The center was first of its kind in the area and was a long pending demand of the people.

Mr Kohli also said that Rs 21 crore mega Project of Department of Industries and Commerce has also been sanctioned by Central Government which would help Pashmina industry to grow, besides Rs 2 crore have been released to Sheep Husbandry by GoI for promoting high breed Pashmina goats in the region.

While wrapping up the four day tour, Minister said the Government

is committed for the development of Ladakh region and major schemes are on anvil to promote tourism, animal and sheep and fish farming in the region.

The CEC LAHDC Dr Sonam Dawa Lonpo thanked the Minister for developmental tour of the region and also appreciated the role of Animal and Sheep Husbandry department in launching various initiatives in the region.

During the tour, Commissioner Secretary, Animal, Sheep Husbandry Department, Director Fisheries, Director Animal Husbandry Kashmir, Director Sheep Husbandry Kashmir and other Senior Officers of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh and allied departments were accompanied the Minister.

CEO inaugurates 2-day training programme on ERO-NET

Says ERO-NET to be launched on Sept 19

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 18: Saying that with the launch of (Electoral Registration Officer) ERO-NET in the State, the electorate can upload their personal details at his or her own levels to register themselves as elector, Chief Electoral Officer, J&K Mr. Shaleen Kabra said the system will reduce the chances of mistakes in electoral rolls and Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) details.

The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) was speaking at the inauguration function of 2-day Training Programme held here

today by State Election Department in collaboration with Election Commission of India to sensitize about ERO-NET to the personnel who are directly involved with the election related activities in the State.

The Chief Electoral Officer said that the ECI time and again has initiated various measures to fine-tune the electoral rolls and has achieved in many of them. He said that ERO-NET is an initiative to provide error-free EPIC cards to voters, besides lessen the paper work as correct form filled at the entry level will be accepted through the system.

Mr. Kabra said that ERO-Net is a web-based app to facilitate the voters where people can get register themselves for EPIC card or can get changed their details of voter Identity card online. He said that the inaccuracy and duplicity of voters will be contained with the launch of the ERO-NET. The people can apply online throughout the years through this app, he maintained.

The Chief Electoral Officer directed the



concerned at district level to submit necessary infrastructure related reports required for effective implementation of ERO-NET besides ensuring internet facilities. He also asked them to conduct awareness camps in the district regularly to sensitize people about the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT).

Imparting the training through Power Point Presentation during the programme, Director, ICT, (ECI) Dr. Kaushal Pathak dwelt in details about various aspects of ERO-NET and National Voters' Service Portal (NVSP) system so that it could be implemented effectively in the State.

Pertinently, the ERO-NET will be launched tomorrow.

Deputy Chief Election Officer, District Election Officers, Deputy District Election Officers, District Informatics Officers, Election Naib Tehsildars and supporting staff of election department attended the training programme.

DAILY Editorial
Time and US
SRINAGAR J&K

TIME FOR CAUTION

India's external balance sheet may have improved significantly since the infamous taper tantrum of 2013, but there are now signs that warrant more caution from policymakers. Last week, the current account deficit (CAD) widened to a four-year high of \$14.3 billion in the first quarter of the current financial year, standing at 2.4% of gross domestic product, compared to 0.1% last year. The widening CAD was driven by a greater increase in merchandise imports than exports. A strong capital account surplus, however, has helped the country pay for its import bills without much trouble. Foreign investors starved of yield have been stepping up their investments in India, which remains one of the few places offering higher yields. Compared to last year, net FDI almost doubled to \$7.2 billion in the first quarter, while net portfolio investment jumped about six times to \$12.5 billion. The strong inflow of foreign capital has also led to a significant increase in foreign reserve holdings, thanks to the Reserve Bank of India which has been busy buying dollars to weaken the rupee. Forex reserves were at an all-time high of \$400.7 billion for the week ending September 8, while the rupee has appreciated by over 6% against the dollar this year. Low global oil prices over the last two years have also helped contain a good portion of its import bills.

All this might change with the impending tightening of monetary policy by the U.S. Federal Reserve and other central banks. After all, emerging Asian markets have been the biggest beneficiaries of loose monetary policy in the West, so any change in stance would most definitely affect them. Indian companies, for instance, have aggressively tapped into the market for rupee-denominated foreign debt, which can work against them if the flow of foreign capital turns volatile. The RBI has been regulating the amount and quality of such borrowings, so it may seem like things are under control for now. Further, India's total external debt declined by 2.7% during the financial year 2016-17, standing at \$471.9 billion, driven by a fall in external commercial borrowings and deposits by non-resident Indians. The World Bank, in fact, has said that India's external dynamics remain very favourable given the size of its economy and foreign reserve holdings. But a prolonged period of unfavourable trade balance when combined with volatile international capital flows can lead to unsavoury macroeconomic situations. According to a report by India Ratings & Research earlier this year, a 10% depreciation of the rupee combined with a 50 basis point interest rate hike can severely affect most Indian borrowers. It added that as much as 65% of foreign debt exposure of Indian companies may be unhedged. As the world looks to withdraw from an era of historically low interest rates, it would be wise for India's policymakers to be ready with an emergency plan to tackle a period of significant volatility.

NUCLEAR RHETORIC

By JOHN CHERIAN

The successful test-firing of an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) by North Korea on July 4 has added a new dimension to the crisis in the Korean peninsula. Donald Trump had pledged after taking over as the President of the United States that he would not allow Pyongyang to gatecrash into the elite club of nations possessing this kind of missile technology. "It won't happen," he tweeted in January. He followed it up by stating that North Korea "is a problem, a problem that will be taken care of", leading some commentators to speculate that Trump was weighing immediate military options. During his meeting with China's President Xi Jinping, Trump said that the U.S. would take care of the North Korea problem if the Chinese side was incapable of doing so.

But less than seven months into Trump's presidency, the North Koreans have conducted an array of successful missile tests. Many of the missile tests conducted last year failed for a variety of reasons. North Korea seems to have more than made up for those failures. Washington and Tokyo have reluctantly acknowledged that Pyongyang now has the capability to hit parts of mainland America and its intermediate-range missiles can easily target U.S. military bases in Japan and Guam. North Korea has now joined a dozen or more countries that have long-range missile capabilities.

The ICBM, named Hwasong (Mars)-14, launched on July 4 travelled more than 1,200 kilometres and was airborne for over 37 minutes. It reached an altitude of more than 2,800 km, according to the U.S. military's Pacific Command, which monitors such launches. (The International Space Station orbiting the earth is only 400 km above the earth.) American experts say that such a missile will have an actual range of around 6,700 km, which would allow it to reach the American state of Alaska. The Hwasong-14 uses solid fuel, which enables quick loading and firing. The North Korean official media hailed the ICBM launch as "a momentous event in the history of the country". The timing of the launch was not a coincidence. Kim Jong-un, North Korea's supreme leader, called it a "gift" to the U.S., which celebrates its Independence Day on July 4. "As a proud nuclear power that possesses not only nuclear weapons but also the most powerful ICBM that can target any part of the world, North Korea will root out the United States threat and blackmail of nuclear war and solidly defend the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula and the region," the statement from the North Korean government said.

At the beginning of his term, Trump had militarily threatened North Korea by emphasising again and again that "all options were open" against the country. In June, he dispatched an American naval armada, consisting of aircraft carriers and submarines, streaming towards the Korean peninsula. But as most observers of the region had predicted, North Korea did not blink. In the first week of June, North Korea successfully tested land-to-sea cruise missiles. In February, it successfully launched the Pukgusong-2 medium-range missile. Pyongyang claims that its long- and medi-



um-range missiles are nuclear capable and that it has miniaturised its nuclear arsenal. The Pentagon, as well as experts in Seoul and Tokyo, have doubted this claim, but they realise that it is only a matter of time before North Korean scientists achieve this goal too.

After the July test, Washington once again ratcheted up its threats to take recourse to military action. President Trump blamed China for not putting sufficient pressure on North Korea. After Xi Jinping's first meeting with Trump earlier in the year, Beijing had imposed additional sanctions on North Korea and even halted the purchase of coal. The export of coal is a source of much-needed hard currency for Pyongyang. But as recent history has shown, the North Koreans have a tendency to be more resolute and innovative in the face of adversity. China is the country's biggest trading partner. But when it comes to politics, the North Koreans have been hewing a lonely furrow for decades.

In a telephone conversation with the Chinese President after the North Korean ICBM launch, Trump once again warned that the U.S. would be willing to take unilateral action if China was not able to rein in its neighbour. "Perhaps China will put a heavy move on North Korea and end this nonsense once and for all," Trump tweeted. His administration then went ahead and imposed sanctions on a leading Chinese bank for having dealings with the North Korean government. Then the U.S. announced the sale of weapons worth \$1.4 billion to Taiwan and branded China as a "human trafficker". China did issue a statement condemning the missile test stating that it violated United Nations Security Council resolutions. However, China has not instituted the kind of harsh sanctions that the U.S. wants it to impose on its already impoverished neighbour.

In a statement issued immediately after the launch, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman urged all the parties involved in the Korean dispute to remain calm and stressed that the situation in the region "is complicated and sensitive". The last thing that China, which shares a long border with North Korea, wants is a war on its doorstep and U.S. troops on its borders. Besides, it

is aware that the U.S. and Japan are using the North Korea card to surround it militarily.

The recent stealthy installation of the THAAD anti-missile system in South Korea is an indication. China has demanded that the system be removed at the earliest. The newly elected South Korean President, Moon Jae-in, had strongly voiced his opposition against its installation during his campaign.

After a meeting between President Xi and President Vladimir Putin of Russia in the first week of July in Moscow, the two countries issued a joint statement calling on the major parties involved in the Korean peninsula to sign up to a de-escalation plan drafted by China. It envisages a moratorium on the North Korean ballistic missile programme coupled with a freezing of the frequent joint military exercises and missile tests that the U.S. military conducts with the South Korean army.

"The situation in the region affects the national interests of both the countries," the statement said. "Russia and China will work closely to advance a solution to the complex problem of the Korean peninsula in every possible way."

In the same declaration, Moscow and Beijing called for the removal of the THAAD missile systems from the Korean peninsula. The statement accused the U.S. of using the North Korean issue as an excuse to further its military infrastructure in the region and change the balance of power. "The deployment of THAAD will cause serious harm to the strategic security interests of regional states, including Russia and China," it said.

President Putin in an interview with the TASS news agency said that it was in the mutual interests of Moscow and Beijing that "there is a comprehensive resolution of the problem of the Korean peninsula in order to preserve lasting peace and stability in north-eastern Asia". The joint statement urged the "confronting parties" to sit down for talks, agree on the principles of non-confrontation and pledge to make the Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons. At the same time, the document stressed that the international community should take into consideration "the sensible concerns" of North Korea.

At a time when Trump is calling for a military response to North Korea's move, Moon Jae-in of South Korea made a dramatic offer in a speech he made in Germany ahead of the G20 summit. He said on July 6 that he was willing to meet Kim Jong-un for talks and proposed that the reunion of long-separated families from the two Koreas should start again. He also called for the demilitarisation of the border between the two countries. At present, it is the most heavily weaponised international border. The South Korean capital, Seoul, is within the artillery range of North Korean guns. Moon, who had promised during his presidential campaign to pursue peace talks with the North, said that sanctions should only be used as a tool to get the North back to the negotiating table. The U.S. has been using "sanctions" as a weapon to induce regime change in Pyongyang.

While running for the presidency, Trump had told a reporter that he would be willing to meet with Kim Jong-un and "do a deal". He still has not completely ruled out a meeting with the North Korean leader "under certain circumstances". But right now, the U.S. President is adopting a belligerent position, boasting that he is handling North Korea "very well, very firmly" without diplomacy. Ordinary South Koreans are worried about the war jargon that Trump routinely uses. Any attack on the North would evoke an immediate response. Much of the collateral damage would be borne by South Korea and Japan. Nearly half of South Korea's population lives less than 100 km from the border with the North.

The U.S. had considered a "surgical strike" on a North Korean reactor in 1994. But better sense prevailed after the Bill Clinton administration realised that it would lead to open hostilities resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands. The Clinton administration in its last years focussed on finding a diplomatic solution. A breakthrough seemed imminent after the then Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, visited Pyongyang.

The advent of George W. Bush and the "war on terror" brought the situation back to square one on the Korean peninsula. The North was put in the so-called "axis of evil" along with Iran and Iraq and on the list for regime change.

In the wake of the ICBM test, the U.S. may have to put the military option on the back burner for the foreseeable future, notwithstanding Trump's tough rhetoric. U.S. Defence Secretary James Mattis recently said that a war with North Korea "would be tragic on an unbelievable scale". North Korea is now a de facto nuclear power armed with delivery weapons.

Many prominent Americans, like former President Jimmy Carter, have been long urging a negotiated settlement. North Korea's basic demand is diplomatic recognition by the U.S. and the signing of a comprehensive peace treaty containing a guarantee that the U.S. will not attack it. North Korea had once disavowed its nuclear ambitions in exchange for nuclear reactors from the West and economic aid. It was only after Washington reneged on its commitment that Pyongyang chose its current course. It knows that a nuclear deterrent is the best guarantee against regime change.

A peep into the past

By AJAY ASHIRWA

IN 1973, Rashtrapati Bhavan officials received an uncommon request just ahead of the visit of Leonid Brezhnev, the general secretary of the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had just managed to neutralise the United States' tilt towards Pakistan, and India, therefore, viewed Brezhnev's "friendly-official" visit as a great possibility to strengthen its relationship with that country. Brezhnev had visited India in 1961 as the president of the CPSU, but this visit as the general secretary of the party was deemed much more important because of the unwavering support the Soviet Union extended to India during the Bangladesh war of 1971.

The unusual request was to place a "Lifebuoy" soap bar in every room. Lifebuoy was a soap which India manufactured and made popular among the masses. It was meant as a token of respect for India. Although bewildered, the officials put Lifebuoy soaps, along with other brands of soap, in each room.

Similarly, Premier Zhou Enlai of the People's Republic of China, during his visit to India in 1956, specifically asked

his staff to let India know of his preference for Indian coffee and Indian cigarettes, and also his aversion to goat meat, curd and cheese. Abode Under the Dome, authored by Thomas Mathew, Additional Secretary to the President of India, is full of such interesting anecdotes and documents the visits of state dignitaries who stayed at Rashtrapati Bhavan between 1947 and 1967. Brought out by the Publications Division, the book makes a significant contribution to understanding the building of a new nation, its values and its glorious tradition of hospitality. The author stresses that the philosophy of atithidevabhava (guest is akin to god) was taken very seriously by Rashtrapati Bhavan. The author has culled details from various sources, including news reports, archival photos and official papers, to create narratives that give readers a sense of India's initial diplomatic history. He does this successfully by providing a political context around each world leader's visit.

The photographs and the context presented in the book go well beyond the itinerary of every visit and build a diplomatic narrative by highlighting the great camaraderie India enjoyed with world leaders soon after it became independent. The stories clearly give the

reader the impression that India intrigued many leaders. They wanted to know, see and understand the cultural enigma that was India. For instance, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, during his visit in 1959, said that his desire to visit India was partly because he was intrigued by it. "The evincing of sudden interest was understandable. Until Independence, India was a colony, whose material and human resources could be harnessed at a short notice and at will, by orders from London. All this changed and an independent India could now voice its own opinion, support and oppose issues, positions and nations. This freedom exercisable on international issues was a new dimension that other powers had to factor in their strategic calculus. Equally important was the sustenance of the pluralistic political system in India, more so for the unpredictable consequences its failure could spawn," writes Mathew in the introduction.

In this context, a significant part of the book is devoted to India's role and leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). India after Independence asserted its right not to be part of the Cold War dynamics. At one level, it refused to be an ally of either of the superpowers, at another level it drew strategic support

from both to chart its own neutral path of development. As a result, world leaders were intrigued at the confidence that India showed. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, owing to his extensive knowledge of history and politics and a genuine interest in pure sciences, commanded respect like no other Asian leader did. His efforts to form a formidable front in NAM by uniting developing nations, which had a history of colonialism, drew praises from not just within but also outside the country. His statesmanship, impartiality and judiciousness were unquestionable even when world leaders differed with his opinions.

The visits of NAM leaders like Gamal Abdel Nasser, the president of the United Arab Republic (now two different nations, Egypt and Syria), and Josip Broz Tito, the Yugoslavian President, and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, therefore, became extremely important. These leaders were welcomed with great pomp and show that later became a normal practice whenever any world leader stayed at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Mathew writes about Nasser's visit thus: "After the welcome ceremony, President Nasser drove to Rashtrapati Bhavan in the Indian President's Mercedes Benz. The

10-mile drive afforded President Nasser a view of the enthusiastic crowds that had lined the streets. They waved paper flags and cheered as the motorcade drove past, adding to the joyous mood of the city that was in the grip of excited anticipation of the two important festivals of Dussehra and Durga Pooja that were fast approaching. Bunting and streamers welcoming President Nasser added more colour to an already festooned city and even Parliament Street which [is] not normally decorated had a paper arch of flowers."

In a similar vein, the book delves deep into India's initial efforts to find peace with aggressive nations like Pakistan and China. The six visits by Pakistan's Presidents and Prime Ministers and four visits by Zhou Enlai provide an astute understanding of the diplomatic initiatives India made. It was Defence Minister V.K. Krishna Menon who extended an invitation to the Chinese Premier during the Geneva Conference of 1954, which was held to bring an end to the Korean War. Zhou Enlai accepted the invitation, but his visit was kept a secret until he arrived. Nehru postponed his customary 10-day trip to Shimla that was planned during this time. In a welcoming gesture, India sent a special

aircraft to bring him and his 15-member entourage to New Delhi from Geneva. Because of such attempts, Zhou Enlai told the Indian press during his fourth visit to India in 1960: "The Chinese government holds that Sino-Indian friendship is of extremely great significance between the 1,000 million people of the two countries and to the Asian and world peace. This friendship should not be, nor can it be, jeopardised because of the temporary lack of settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question."

In 1950, when India's first President, Rajendra Prasad, invited Pakistan's first Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, to stay in Rashtrapati Bhavan, he readily accepted. His meeting with Nehru over contentious issues, especially over Bengal, which was torn apart by communal clashes, lasted over two hours. The book draws upon various documents which show that there was great optimism between the leaders and both tried to bridge the widening gap after Partition. Later, Pakistan's Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Bogra and Governor-General Malik Ghulam Mohammed also visited India. Mathew writes about the grand civic reception India gave to Bogra at the Red Fort in New Delhi:

PM Modi seeks support of celebs across fields to promote Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

NEW DELHI: As his pet Clean India campaign completes three years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has written to opinion makers across fields including industry, sports and cinema seeking their support to 'Swachhata Hi Seva' movement, saying it is the most noble service.

Modi, who had on October 2, 2014, picked up a broom to launch the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, or Clean India Campaign, to promote sanitation, has written personalised letters to iconic celebrities, prominent industrialists, sports persons, film stars, inter-faith leaders and other noted personalities to enlist

their support.

Introducing the subject of his short letter as something which was very close to Mahatma Gandhi's heart, Modi said, Babu believed strongly that Swachhata is for each of us to practice. "An inspiration to billions across generations and borders, Mahatma Gandhi recognised that our attitude towards cleanliness also reflects our attitude towards society. Babu believed in achieving cleanliness through community participation," he said in the letter seen by PTI.

Asking the opinion makers to pledge towards cleanliness, the Prime Minister said in the days



leading up to Gandhi Jayanti on October 2, "we can encourage widespread support for, and participation in cleanliness initiatives across India". He wrote, "Let us ensure that the coming days are about living the Mantra of 'Swachhata Hi Seva'." The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan aims to make India a cleaner place by emphasising on sanitation and health as also changing age-old attitudes towards hygiene. President Ram Nath Kovind last week launched the nationwide 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign to reignite the cleanliness movement by mobilising people support in the fortnight to October

2. "I personally invite you to lend your support to the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' movement and dedicate some time for the cause of a Swachh Bharat," Modi wrote adding their participation will further inspire others to be a part of the movement. Coming together for cleanliness would be a fitting tribute to Babu and work towards building a New India, he said.

"A clean India is the most noble service we can do for the poor, downtrodden and the marginalised. Unclean surroundings adversely impact the weaker sections of society even more," he wrote signing off with a "Jai Hind!"

Will ally with Congress, Left to take on BJP in Gujarat, says JD(U) Sharad faction

NEW DELHI: Acting president of the Sharad Yadav-led rebel JD(U) faction Chhotubhai Vasava said on Monday that his group will ally with the Congress and others like the Left parties while also exploring a tie-up with Hardik Patel to take on the BJP in the Gujarat assembly polls.

The six-time Gujarat MLA, who enjoys influence among tribals in parts of Gujarat, attacked the BJP, saying demonetisation and the GST have "destroyed" the economy.

He also claimed that the Sardar Sarovar Dam inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday would not be of much help to the common man. "We will ally with the Congress and also other parties like the Left. We will also try to have a tie-up with Hardik Patel," he told a press conference here. The state polls are slated for later this year.

The Yadav faction on Sunday declared the Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar's election as the party chief as void and appointed Vasava as its acting chief.

Asked about Kumar's position in the party, Vasava claimed he had left the organisation.

Javed Raza, a leader of the Yadav faction, said they had moved the Election Commission to stake claim over the party's symbol and sought four weeks time to supply it with documents to support their claim of having a majority support in the party.

With a big majority of the party's elected members and office bearers backing Kumar following Yadav's challenge to his leadership, Vasava claimed that MLAs and MPs have no role and insisted that his group has adequate support within the party.

Kumar and leaders supporting him have refrained from commenting on yesterday's developments.

They have already approached the Rajya Sabha chairman to disqualify Yadav and another party MP Ali Anwar over their alleged anti-party activities.

Yadav came out against Kumar after the latter dumped the RJD and the Congress and joined hands with the BJP in a matter of hours, saying that he could not run a government in Bihar with the RJD as its leader and then deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav had not come clean on corruption charges.

Govt initiatives to further improve health facilities across JK: Bali Bhagat

Hails centre for sanctioning Ayurvedic College for Jammu

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 18: Emphasizing on providing better medical facilities to the people, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Bali Bhagat today said that the Government has taken up several initiatives to further improve the health facilities across the State.

Health is the prime concern of everyone and the Government will continue to make efforts to strengthen this sector, he added.

The Minister was speaking at a function organized by the residents of Raipur-Domana constituency today to felicitate the Minister for his vigorous efforts for the revival of Government Ayurvedic College at Jammu after four decades.

The residents congratulated the Minister for his persistent efforts to get the much needed traditional



health and medicare institution sanctioned for Jammu by the Central Government.

Dedicating the Ayurvedic College to the people of Jammu, the Minister said that it was a long pending demand of the region which has been fulfilled.

He said that with the revival of

the College, the aspirants of BAMS from all over the state will be benefited as they need not to go outside the State for pursuing their degrees.

Describing the decision of the Central Government for sanctioning Ayurvedic College as historic, Bhagat said that the opening of the college will restore lost glory of the

process for the establishment of this much needed institution was set in motion.

The Minister informed that all important issues pertaining to arrangements of faculty, selection of candidates and infrastructural facilities were streamlined for the revival of the Ayurvedic College.

Ayurvedic healthcare in the region.

He said that arduous efforts were made to achieve this goal. He also hailed the Union Government for sanctioning the establishment of this College at Jammu.

He said immediately after taking the reign of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education,

the process for the establishment of this much needed institution was set in motion.

The Minister informed that all important issues pertaining to arrangements of faculty, selection of candidates and infrastructural facilities were streamlined for the revival of the Ayurvedic College.

He said that that the 1st Batch for BAMS course in the college will start from the current session. He further said that the State Government has already taken up the issue of selection of 50 eligible candidates for the course with the Board of Professional Entrance Examination (BOPEE) authorities.

Pertinently, the Government Ayurvedic College in Jammu, the only such institute in the state, was established in 1962 and now going to be revived after four decades.

Later, the Minister interacted with the medical team coming for 3-day medical camp to be organized in Raipur-Domana constituency. The team comprises doctors and medical students from Bihar, Gujarat, Banaras and other parts of the country.

5 years on, no chargesheet in Navruna murder case

MUZAFFARPUR: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is yet to file a chargesheet and has just one arrest to show in the sensational Navruna Chakraborty murder case, which completed five years on Monday.

Bihar's land mafia had on September 18, 2012 kidnapped 14-year-old Navruna, a student of class 7, from her residence on Jawaharlal Road in Muzaffarpur, and subsequently killed her. A skeleton recovered from the drain near her house on November 26 was believed to be hers. The land sharks were eyeing a chunk of six kathas land, which Navruna's father, Atulya Chakraborty,

wanted to sell and had even taken advance money of Rs 21 lakh for it from a property dealer. Having zeroed in on 10 accused, the CBI had on September 4 arrested Rakesh Kumar Sinha 'Pappu', a councillor of ward number 23 of the Muzaffarpur Municipal Corporation. Both Pappu and property dealer Brajesh Kumar have been evading brain mapping test, which the CBI has requested for. Of the 10 accused, four have undergone polygraph test, also called narco or lie detector test in common parlance, while four others have refused it. Though Pappu and Kumar have undergone the poly-

graph test, they have failed to respond to CBI summons for brain mapping. Having missed two previous deadlines — October 31, 2016 and March 31, 2017 — for completing investigations in the case, the CBI is now racing against time to meet the September 30 deadline — the third — fixed by the Supreme Court hearing the case. Peeved over the tardy progress of the probe, Navruna's parents have questioned the motive of the CBI. They alleged that it was trying to shield some politicians and senior administrative and police officials who were involved in the case. "When it has not done anything

in the last three-and-a-half-years since it took up the case, what will the CBI do in the next 12 days," wondered. Though Navruna's body has still not been recovered, the investigating agency has unofficially told Navruna's parents that the skeleton recovered from the drain near their house was that of their daughter.

The CBI has submitted the DNA test report, in a sealed cover, to the special CBI court in Muzaffarpur. The parents, who refused to buy the CBI theory, have been demanding a copy of their DNA test findings along with that of the skeleton.

Who is Maya Kodnani: Once rising star of Gujarat, convicted in 2002 riots

AHMEDABAD: BJP president Amit Shah on Monday appeared as a defence witness for Maya Kodnani, telling a special court that the former Gujarat minister was at the state assembly and a government hospital when the 2002 riots broke out in Ahmedabad. Kodnani stands accused of inciting a mob that killed 11 people in the city's Naroda Gam on February 28, 2002. Once a rising star in the Gujarat BJP, Kodnani, a gynaecologist by profession, was elevated to the minister of state for women and child development in the Gujarat government in 2007. In 2009, Kodnani was forced to resign after her arrest in the separate Naroda Patya rioting case.



Early life
A report in the Indian Express describes Kodnani's early life, studying in a Gujarati-medium school founded by her father in Deesa. After school, she enrolled in the Baroda Medical College to pursue MBBS, followed by a diploma in gynaecology and obstetrics. At the same time, she joined Rashtriya Sevika Samiti, the RSS women's wing.

She later moved to Ahmedabad and set up the Shivam Maternity Hospital in Kuber nagar in Naroda.

Political career
Her first brush with politics came in 1995, when the BJP fielded her as their candidate from Saijpur ward in Ahmedabad civic elections. The BJP

won and Kodnani was later elevated to the chairman of the standing committee. In 1998, Kodnani was elected as the BJP MLA from Naroda. She was also the general secretary of Gujarat Pradesh BJP Mahila Morcha and later, from 1998 to 2000, its chief.

In 2000, she became the first woman president of the Ahmedabad BJP, a position she retained till 2005. Narodya Patya and Naroda Gam massacres

The 2002 riots in happened during Kodnani's stint as BJP's MLA from Naroda. She was convicted for instigating rioters and orchestrating the Naroda Patya massacre on February

28, 2002, where 97 people, including women and children were brutally murdered by a mob led by the Bajrang Dal. Kodnani is also accused of instigating the Naroda Gam riots, where 11 people died, and of firing a pistol and distributing arms that she had transported to Naroda in her car.

After the riots
Kodnani's ascent to power continued after the riots. Mentored by BJP patriarch LK Advani, she won the 2002 elections with a huge majority. In 2007, she was appointed as the MoS for women and child development.

The case against Kodnani

A Supreme Court-appointed special investigation Team (SIT) made Kodnani an accused in the Naroda Patya case. She was declared an absconder after she failed to respond to SIT's requests for a deposition. Kodnani was arrested in March 2009, following which she resigned as minister of state for women and child development.

In August 2012, a special SIT court convicted and sentenced Kodnani to life, describing her as the "kingpin of the massacre".

In 2014, a Gujarat high court accepted Kodnani's plea for regular bail on 'health grounds'.

Educationists demand stricter laws to check school security

NEW DELHI: After a child was murdered and another raped on the school premises in the National Capital Region last week, educationists and lawyers say a stricter law to regulate schools' security as well as better monitoring of existing provisions are needed. Ashok Agarwal, a lawyer and the president of the All-India Parents Association, said the fundamental problem was that since private schools can be profit-driven, they can forget about involving the most important stakeholders — the parents.

Right to question
"Parents should be involved, not kept outside the school boundaries. There should be a shift of power from the school management. The Centre should enact a law giving 50% representation to parents in committees that run unaided schools," he said.

He added that currently parents account for just one member of the 22-member committees. Random inspections

"Guidelines don't ensure safety. There should be a proper law enacted by Parliament,

including the minorities' schools. A law empowers parents. What we are being offered is cosmetic," he said. Educationist and former principal of Laxman School Dr. Usha Ram said: "Random inspections by the Delhi government are common, maybe twice or thrice in a year, but these are just to ensure good academics and infrastructure in a school, like whether CCTV cameras are installed correctly or not." She added that schools should make sure that there are attendants at washrooms for students and separate washrooms for staff/parents and students, which Laxman School had done. Regular supervision

Ashok Pandey, the principal of Ahlcon International School, said that only bringing in more security measures would not be sufficient. "One activity is not sufficient. Security should take center stage and for that, we should renew our efforts to make students safe," he said. According to him, re-visiting facilities and regular supervision by authorities are required as just installing cameras or other security features is not enough.

PDS digitisation moving at snail's pace

NEW DELHI: The Narendra Modi government's claim to ensure end-to-end digitisation of the Public Distribution System (PDS) is coming to naught even after three years of being in mission mode. At least 11 States have not taken the elementary step of digitising fair price shops and nine other States, including Uttar Pradesh, have hardly made any

progress. The project was launched in 2012 at a cost of 884 crore to ensure that, at every step from field to fork, the government would be able to track the movement of foodgrains so that they reached the right beneficiaries. As part of the effort, all fair price or ration shops were to be digitised. But out of 5.26 lakh ration shops, only 51% have been digitised in three years, it was found at a review meeting chaired by the Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan, on Friday.

14-MONTH-OLD BRAIN DEAD TODDLER IS GUJARAT'S YOUNGEST ORGAN DONOR

After being declared brain dead, fourteen-month-old Somnath Shah has become the youngest organ donor in Gujarat by donating his heart and kidneys to two persons. Somnath, who hailed from Mubarakpur village in Siwan district of Bihar, was declared brain dead after he suffered a haemorrhage and multiple skull fractures.

Taking his family's consent, his heart was transplanted into Mumbai's three-and-a-half-year-old Aaradhya Muley, while kidneys to a 15-year-old boy from Banaskantha. The little one fell from stairs while playing with his elder sister near his house and hit his head and became unconscious. His parents took him to a local doctor, on whose advice, they rushed him to New Civil Hospital in Surat.

As per a report published in Indian Express, Niles Mandlewala, president of Surat-based Donate Life, an initiative for organ donation, said the hospital doctors informed them about Somnath. "He had a brain haemorrhage and multiple fractures in skull. Somnath was declared brain dead on Sunday night after which we explained organ donation



to the family. Besides working on organ donation, we also double up as counsellors," said Mandlewala. "The family finally agreed on Monday evening, and we started the process of finding the recipients," added Mandlewala. Somnath's father

said they that agreed for organ donation after the counsellors explained them its importance. "If the lives of other children can be saved by our son, what can be better than this? We are proud of our decision," said his father over telephone.

This simple test may help predict preterm births

Researchers at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have found that a simple test of cervical mucus may reveal pregnant women's risk of going into labour too early. Up to 18 per cent of babies born worldwide arrive before they are full-term, defined as 37 weeks of gestation. The study, published in the journal Scientific Reports, showed that cervical mucus from women who delivered their babies before 37 weeks was very different from that of women who delivered later. This type of analysis could offer an easy way to calculate the risk of early labor, potentially allowing doctors to try to intervene earlier to prevent preterm births. "Our prediction is that we might be able to identify risk for preterm birth ahead of time, before labour sets in," said senior author of the study Katharina Ribbeck, Associate Professor at MIT. Between 25 and 40 per cent of early births are believed to be caused by infections that occur when microbes reach the uterus through the cervical plug, which is made of mucus and



normally blocks access to the uterus. For the new study, the researchers decided to investigate the mucus's permeability to small particles. Mucus is formed from polymers known as mucins, and the composition and arrangement of these mucins determine how porous the gel is. The researchers collected samples from two groups of patients. The low-risk group included pregnant women who came in to their doctors' offices for routine visits around 30 weeks and ended up giving birth after 37 weeks.

This is how goggles prevent Type-2 diabetes – Read



Have you ever thought that by just wearing a pair of goggles, it would be possible to avert Type-2 diabetes? Researchers have found that type 2 diabetes could be prevented by using goggles that release bright light into the eyes, as per reports.

As per a report published in Deccan Chronicle, originally attributed to the Daily Mail, the goggles, called Re-Timer, have four small lights in the frame and are designed to help regulate the body clock. The special eyewear was originally

developed at Flinders University in Australia to help treat sleep issues. Light helps regulate one's body clock which regulates the release of certain hormones. The release of such hormones which control blood sugar levels, is "irregular in people with pre-diabetes," according to the report. "Light exposure can have profound effects on some of the body's hormones. It will be interesting to determine the effects of this light therapy on insulin sensitivity – although perhaps getting.

New app can replace ultrasound to measure heart health

Want to know how healthy your heart is? Now there is an app for that. Researchers have shown that the camera on your smartphone can non-invasively provide detailed information about your heart's health. With this app, what used to require a 45-minute scan from an ultrasound machine can now be accomplished by simply holding your phone up to your neck for a minute or two, according to a study published in the Journal of Critical Care Medicine. The team developed a technique that can infer the left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF) of the heart by measuring the amount that the carotid artery displaces the skin of the neck as blood pumps through it.

Echocardiography, however, requires a trained technician, an expensive ultrasound machine, and up to 45 minutes of a patient's time.

"What is exciting about this study is that it shows our technique is as accurate as echocardiography at estimating LVEF when both are compared to the gold standard of cardiac MRI," said senior author Mory Gharib, Professor at California Institute of Technology (Caltech).

"This has the potential to revolutionize how doctors and patients can screen for and monitor heart disease both in the U.S. and the developing world," Gharib said. LVEF represents the amount of blood in the heart that is pumped out with each beat. In a normal heart, this LVEF ranges from 50 to 70 per cent. When the heart is weaker, less of the total amount of blood in the heart is pumped



out with each beat, and the LVEF value is lower. LVEF is a key measure of heart health, one upon which physicians base diagnostic and therapeutic decisions. To test the app, clinical trials were conducted with 72 volunteers between the ages of 20 and 92 at an outpatient magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) facility. MRI is the gold standard in measuring LVEF but is seldom used clinically due to its high cost and limited availability. To measure LVEF using the technique developed at Caltech, doctors simply held iPhones against the volunteers' necks for one to two minutes.

Afterwards, the volunteers immediately received

an MRI examination, and data from both tests were compared. The measurements made by smartphone had a margin of error of around 19 per cent compared with those done in an MRI. By way of comparison, the margin of error for echocardiography is around 20 per cent. The app works because the walls of arteries are almost completely elastic - they expand and contract with each beat of the heart. That expanding and contracting can be measured and described as a waveform that encodes information about the heart. For the study, the team used an iPhone 5, but any smartphone with a camera would work, the study said.

WHILE TECHNOLOGY LETS YOU MEASURE HEART HEALTH, INCLUDE THESE FOODS TO STAY FIT

Considering the rise in the rate of cardiovascular diseases around the world, it is imperative to keep a track on your heart health every now and then. Looks like experts are going to make it easy for you. The camera in your smartphone may be able to non-invasively provide detailed information about your heart's health. According to the study, published in the journal of Critical Care Medicine, what used to require a 45-minute scan from an ultrasound machine can now be accomplished by simply holding your phone up to your neck for a minute or two.

The team has developed a technique that can infer the left ventricular ejection (LVEF) of the heart by measuring the amount that the carotid artery displaces the skin of the neck as blood pumps through it. "What is exciting about this study is that it shows our technique is as accurate as echocardiography at estimating LVEF when both are compared to the gold standard of cardiac MRI," said senior author Mory Gharib, Professor at California Institute of Technology (Caltech). Technology may help keep your heart health on track, but to keep yourself fit, it is essential to switch to healthy foods and a proper diet. Here's what you should add to your daily diet for a strong heart.

Omega-3 fatty acids are good fats that should



be included in your diet. Good sources of omega-3 fatty acids are walnuts, flaxseed oil, salmon and trout. Experts have long been suggesting cutting down on salt consumption as it leads to a rise in blood pressure levels, further causing heart issues. It is recommended to cut down on junk and processed foods that have a high amount of salt. Chocolate lovers, rejoice! Eating a little bit of dark chocolate daily can actually lower the risk

of heart diseases. Scientists have found that consuming flavanol-rich cocoa products such as dark chocolate may benefit cardiovascular health. Switch to green tea or green coffee. They have various antioxidants that help prevent blood clotting and heart ailments. Including vitamin C rich foods in your diet can actually help in lowering the risk of heart diseases because of its powerful antioxidant properties.

One more swine flu death reported, toll rises to 41 in Odisha

One more patient died of swine flu at SCB Medical College and Hospital on Wednesday, taking state's H1N1 death toll to 41. The deceased was identified as Kalpana Jena (55), a native of Damodarpatna village in Jagatsinghpur district. She was admitted to SCB three days ago and her condition was really critical. "She was kept on ventilator but her condition deteriorated, and the patient passed away at around 11am," said nodal officer of swine flu ward, Dr Manoranjan Pattnaik. This was the 14th swine flu death reported at SCB this season. "Most of the patients are coming to hospital in a

critical state as a result of which we are not able to do much to save their lives," said a doctor. He advised people to visit doctor immediately if they develop flu like symptoms. "We have noticed that as H1N1 has similar symptoms like flu people are ignoring it in primary stage. Once it affects the respiratory system then patients are coming to hospital. It's too late by then," said a senior doctor. Meanwhile, the rise in inflow of dengue patients has turned a cause of concern for SCB authorities. In the wake of sudden rise in number of patients, SCB authorities were forced to expand dengue ward.



'NOT A WOMAN'S CHOICE' INDIA'S ABORTION LIMIT PUTS WOMEN AT RISK, SAY CAMPAIGNERS

They didn't pop open boxes of sweets or send out excited phone messages when their first child was born at public hospital on a rainy Mumbai night in July. The couple had known from the 24th week of the pregnancy that their child would be born with Arnold Chiari Type II syndrome – a structural defect in the brain. Since abortions in India are allowed only up to 20 weeks of pregnancy, the couple petitioned India's Supreme Court to allow them a to terminate the pregnancy, which was by then 27 weeks. The court rejected their plea. The couple, who chose to remain anonymous in the much-publicized case, said in media interviews that they did not have the wherewithal – emotional and financial – to take care of the child, while doctors could not indicate the infant's expected life span. "There was no treatment available for the baby. Pus was flowing from the brain. The mother was home and cared for the baby for a month and a half,"

said Nikhil Datar, a Mumbai-based gynecologist, whom the couple consulted. Datar guided the couple to file the abortion petition in the Supreme Court citing the foetus's abnormality. "She [the mother] has now slipped into depression. We don't disturb her anymore," Datar told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. When India introduced the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act in 1971, it set a 20-week deadline for abortions, which campaigners say was an arbitrary decision then, and now ignores the medical advances India has made. The Indian government remains reluctant to change the law fearing its misuse for sex-selective abortions. But the 20-week deadline has hit victims of sexual assault, especially the very young whose pregnancies are detected late, campaigners say. In July, the Supreme Court rejected an abortion plea made by the parent of a 10-year-old rape victim who delivered a child in August. The court last week appointed a med-

ical board to study the abortion plea of the 13-year-old rape survivor who is now 31 weeks' pregnant, and will hear her plea this week. "It is unethical to put a victim of rape through the trauma of a full term pregnancy and then abandon the child," said Sangeeta Rege of the Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CeHAT), a health charity supporting the 13-year-old. These cases were among a string of petitions, backed by some of the country's best known doctors, health charities and lawyers, seeking abortions at India's top court. The court has approved more pleas than it has declined, but activists say suggested amendments to the 1971 act to extend the abortion deadline to 24 weeks and to train more doctors to carry out abortions should be passed in parliament to unburden the court and save women from unnecessary stress. "In 45 years, technological interventions have improved. Terminations are becoming safer and safer," said Datar, who is guiding at

least six patients currently on their abortion pleas. "Not a Woman's Choice" Abortions in India are a "conditional right," offered only if there is a substantial risk of the child being born with a physical or mental handicap or in the case of contraceptive failure. But the termination must be carried out within 20 weeks – unless the mother's life is in danger – and the final decision rests with the doctor, who will often consult the woman's wider family. "Abortion is not being understood as a woman's right. Women are asked to bring their spouse or in-laws if they are seeking an abortion particularly in the second trimester," said Rege. "So abortion is not a woman's choice, but that of the family." And doctors fear flouting another law – the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act – that aims to stop the widespread practice of female foeticide and sex-selective abortions in India, where boys are preferred over girls. So abortion requests in the second trimester of a pregnancy – which is when

fetal anomalies are detected – are often denied, despite studies showing that only a small proportion of these abortions are sex-selective. As a result many women visit small backstreet clinics to terminate their pregnancies, where the cost of the procedure is high but care is poor. It is estimated that about 10 percent of the nearly 45,000 maternal deaths in the country annually are due to unsafe abortions," said Subha Sri, chairperson of CommonHealth, a national coalition of health charities. "Studies have shown that the more desperate the woman for an abortion, the higher its cost." Proposed changes to the MTP Act have raised concerns in the Indian government that the amendment may increase sex-selective abortions, a concern campaigners say is not based on evidence. But the proposal is backed by the health ministry and is currently with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office for consideration, said a health ministry official.

Modi to meet Jaitley, top finance ministry officials on Tuesday to review economic situation



NEW DELHI: Concerned about slowdown in the economy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with finance minister Arun Jaitley and other top officials on Tuesday to take stock of the situation and discuss remedial measures to bolster growth.

Modi will threadbare analyse the economic situation with Jaitley and secretaries of the finance ministry and explore options to stimulate the economy, official sources said. The meeting comes days after government data showed GDP growth in the first quarter of the current fiscal slumping to a three-year low of 5.7%, from 7.9% in April-June of 2016 and 6.1% of January-March.

GDP growth has declined steadily for six straight quarters and the Economic Survey-II predicts that the economy may not be able to achieve the targeted growth rate of 7.5% owing to deflationary pressures.

Exports are facing strong headwinds and the industrial growth is the lowest in five years. The current account deficit (CAD) in the April-June quarter has risen to 2.4% of GDP, or \$14.3 billion, mainly on account of increased trade gap. CAD, the difference between inflow and outflow of foreign exchange, was 0.1% (\$0.4 billion) in the June quarter of

last fiscal. The figure compares with 0.6% (\$3.4 billion) for January-March 2017.

The teething troubles with the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), after-effects of demonetisation and the fiscal space available is likely to figure during the meeting.

To date, direct and indirect tax collections as well as projections for the year may be presented to the PM.

Disinvestment proceeds may also be put before Modi to give a fuller picture of government finances. Inflationary pressures, along with reasons for the lacklustre manufacturing growth of 1.2% in July, may also come up for discussion, they said, adding that the meeting may also take stock of spread of monsoon and its impact on agricultural economy.

Both wholesale and retail inflation rose in August. With demonetisation said to have dealt a blow to black money, steps being taken to prevent its generation may also be discussed at the meeting. Sources said the interaction may focus broadly on what ails the economy and the fiscal space available with the government. Steps to boost economic growth, create jobs and reviving private investment may be part of the discussion, they said.

Centre eyes cuts in spending as glitches in GST hit revenue

NEW DELHI: India could be forced to cut spending on key infrastructure such as railways and highways as lower-than-expected tax collections and sluggish growth have upset the government's budget calculations, two finance ministry officials said.

Tax receipts were about \$7.8 billion in July - a little over half the monthly target - mostly because millions of firms failed to comply with the new Goods and Services Tax (GST) system that harmonises all state and central sales taxes but is still a work in progress.

The big worry is that economic growth, which slipped to a three-year low in the last quarter, could take a further hit if the public spending that largely underpinned expansion were to be slashed. "There is a concern over lower tax collections," a senior finance ministry official said.

The revenue shortfall could be at least Rs 800 billion (\$12.5 billion) if the current trend continues until the end of the year, a second official said, forcing a re-think in government spending. He said receipts from individual and corporate income tax may slightly overshoot the target of Rs 9.8 trillion (\$152.8 billion) for the whole year, partly due to a crackdown on tax evaders. And in coming months, GST collections may pick up. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity. Without spending cuts, the second official said, the fiscal deficit could slip to 3.5% of GDP, from the target of 3.2% that the Narendra Modi government has set for 2017/18. The main problem has been the

introduction of the GST, billed as India's biggest tax reform in 70 years.

Ambiguous rules, an onerous return filing system and glitches with its IT back-end have made doing business far more complicated for many companies. Frequent changes in tax rates after the GST's launch have heightened business uncertainty, resulting in many firms failing to register for the new tax.

Manpreet Singh Badal, finance minister of the northern state of Punjab, told Reuters the new tax was launched in a "hurry resulting in a lot of chaos and pandemonium".

Punjab, for example, had suffered a revenue shortfall of about Rs 8 billion in the first month of the July-June fiscal year.

He said as the textile, engineering goods and other small industries were hit. The state expects to raise near Rs 395 billion (\$6.17 billion) in tax in 2017/18.

Under a GST deal, the central government has to compensate states if their receipts fall below an annual growth of 14% in taxes for the next five years.

India's GDP growth itself has slowed to 5.7% in the April-June quarter from 7.9% a year earlier, a slowdown also partly blamed on the introduction of the GST, adding to the pressure on the state coffers.

Dividends from state-run companies are expected to fall and a \$1 billion share sale programme is slowing down.

"If the revenues remain below target, then the government could cut spending on railways and road transport," the second finance ministry official said.

Aiming to boost growth, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley increased budgetary allocations for the railways by one-fifth to 550 billion rupees and by 24% for highways development to Rs 649 billion this fiscal year from a year

ago.

Complicating the finance ministry's budget arithmetic further, the Reserve Bank of India announced last month that its annual surplus, a dividend transferred by the central bank to the government each year, would be only \$4.9 billion, less than half the initial estimate, largely due to costs of Modi's shock "demonetisation" initiative last year.

"This is an abnormal year. A shortfall in tax and non-tax revenue could give a shock," said NR Bhanumurthy, an economist at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, a Delhi-based think-tank funded by the finance ministry.

He said the economy was still recovering from Modi's move to withdraw 86% of high value banknotes as part of a fight against graft.

TAX COLLECTIONS

A finance ministry spokesman said tax receipts were expected to improve as problems related to the new GST system and the technology underpinning it were tackled.

In his annual budget presented in February, finance minister Jaitley had projected a 17% growth in tax collections, while estimating spending of nearly \$335.05 billion in the current fiscal year. Jaitley also has to set aside funds for stressed state-run banks, which need nearly \$60 billion in extra capital to meet new international banking rules by March 2019 according to Fitch Ratings estimates.

Balancing those demands while trying to control the fiscal deficit would involve a cut in public spending, analysts said.

Soumya Kanti Ghosh, chief economist at State Bank of India, said in a research note this month that first quarter economic growth was supported by higher state spending but the need to rein in the fiscal deficit could force the government to cut expenditure.

Global debt may be understated by \$13 trillion, rise in interest rates could spark crisis: BIS

LONDON: The conundrum of stubbornly low inflation despite a pick-up in global growth and continued monetary stimulus is a "trillion dollar" question, the umbrella body for the world's leading central banks said on Sunday.

The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) said in its latest quarterly report that cheap borrowing rates and the rare simultaneous expansion of advanced and developing economies are driving financial markets higher, with signs of "exuberance" starting to re-emerge.

US corporate debt is much higher than before the financial crisis and a drop in the premiums investors demand for riskier lending has boosted sales of so-called covenant-lite bonds offering high yields.

The BIS said this raises a question over the potential for another crisis if there is a significant rise in interest rates. The body has called for a gradual return to higher rates, though central banks are being tentative because of persisting low inflation.

"It feels like 'Waiting for Godot,'" said Claudio Borio, the head of the

monetary and economic department of the BIS, referring to a play in which the main characters wait for someone who never arrives.

But the BIS says no one has yet worked out why inflation has remained so subdued while economies have approached or surpassed estimates of full employment and central banks have provided unprecedented stimulus.

"This is the trillion-dollar question that will define the global economy's path in the years ahead and determine, in all probability, the future of current policy frameworks," Borio said.

"Worryingly, no one really knows the answer."

Under-reported debt

The report also contained a study that showed global debt could be under-reported by about \$13 trillion because traditional accounting practices exclude foreign exchange derivatives used to hedge international trade and foreign currency bonds. Another said central banks need to do more work on digital or cryptocurrencies but that they could make it easier to implement sub-



zero interest rates, while a third said the shift to more domestically issued and longer-dated bonds in emerging markets could make them more resilient to external shocks despite the increase in overall debt levels.

There has been a doubling in outstanding government debt of emerging market economies since 2007 to \$11.7 trillion at the end of 2016. Government debt rose from 41 percent to 51 percent of GDP over the same period.

The main focus of the report, though, was the lack of inflation, the heady rally in financial markets, their ability to shrug off geopolitical

tensions and what the BIS called the "remarkable" low levels of market volatility. "We do not fully understand the factors at work. But surely the unprecedented gradual pace of monetary policy normalisation has played a role," Borio said.

"All this puts a premium on understanding the 'missing inflation', because inflation is the lodestar for central banks."

Debt trap

The BIS, as normal, used its report to flag potential areas of risk that may be developing.

Since the global financial crisis, global debt in relation to GDP has

continued to rise. Deleveraging has not really occurred and where private debt levels have adjusted, at least to some extent, public debt has taken over. "A defining question for the global economy is how vulnerable balance sheets may be to higher interest rates."

Certain indicators do also point to vulnerabilities. Property development, a traditional bubble blower, is helping to fuel booms in parts of Asia. Debt-service ratios, meanwhile, are only so low because interest rates have fallen so much.

"There is a certain circularity in all this that points to the risk of a debt trap," the BIS said.

The protracted decline in interest rates to unusually low levels, regardless of the strength of the underlying economy, creates the conditions that complicate their subsequent return to more normal levels, it added.

"Against this backdrop, the increase in the percentage of firms unable to cover their interest payments with their earnings - so-called 'zombie' firms - does not bode well."

Supplied 80% steel required for Sardar Sarovar Project: SAIL

NEW DELHI: State-owned SAIL on Sunday said it has supplied 80% steel required for the construction of Sardar Sarovar Project, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Once again partnering in one of the most prestigious and important national projects, Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) has supplied 80% steel required for construction of the Sardar Sarovar Project inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi today," the public sector firm said in a statement.

SAIL supplied around 85,000 tonnes of steel (TMT) for the entire Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd (SSNNL) project which comprises all the canals throughout Gujarat which are connected to Narmada River and Dam, the statement said.

The Sardar Sarovar project is the second largest concrete gravity dam (by volume) and has the world's third largest spillway discharging capacity.

The Sardar Sarovar Dam is a gravity dam built on Narmada river near Navagam, Gujarat, which will benefit four states - Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, the company said.

A part of the Narmada Valley Project, it will help in irrigation and electrical power supply.

The company said it is a part of a large hydraulic engineering project, involving the construction of a series of large irrigation and hydroelectric multi-purpose dams on the Narmada river.

One of the 30 dams planned on river Narmada, Sardar Sarovar Dam (SSD) is the largest structure to be built.

"The project will irrigate more than 18,000 m² (190,000 sq ft), most of it in drought prone areas of Kutch and Saurashtra. The total installed capacity of the power facilities is 1,450 MW," the steel major said.

SBI reviewing minimum balance charges for savings accounts

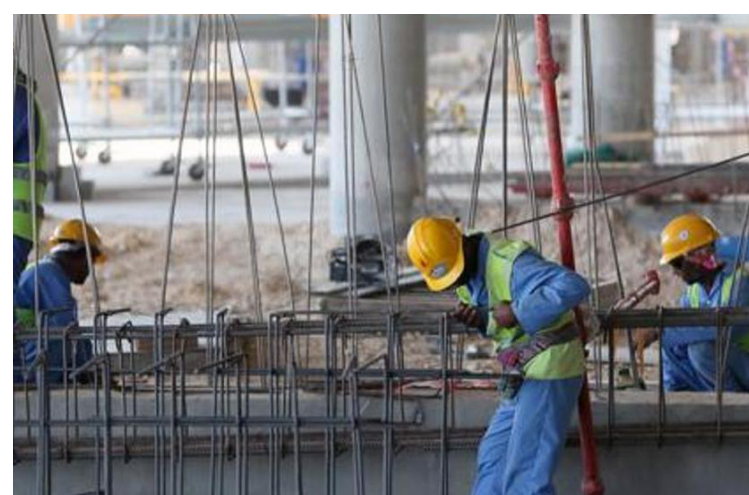
MUMBAI: State Bank of India (SBI) said it is reviewing charges for certain categories of accounts for non-maintenance of monthly average balance (MAB) after receiving feedback from customers. In April this year, the country's largest lender re-introduced charges on non-maintenance of monthly average balance (MAB) after a gap of five years. "We have received feedback from our customers on the issue and we are reviewing those. The bank will take into account those and make an informed decision," the banks managing director (national banking group) Rajnish Kumar told PTI. "We will internally debate whether any moderation for certain categories of customers like senior citizens and students needs to be done anywhere. The charges are never cast in iron." Meanwhile, United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella organisation of all banks unions, has sought finance minister Arun Jaitley's intervention to rollback the hike in charges imposed on customers. SBI Besides, the representatives of UFBU, at a meeting with the finance minister on September 15, also requested him to stop the merger of public

sector banks. With regard to rising bad loans, unions have made suggestion of declaring wilful defaulters as criminals, said All India Bank Officers Confederation (AIBOC) Joint General Secretary Ravinder Gupta. AIBOC is one of the bank officer unions of the UFBU. He further said, on the one hand banks are writing off loans of big corporates, on the other hand they are increasing charges on their customers. This is unfair and unions have requested the finance minister for his intervention. As per the list of revised charges of SBI, failure to maintain monthly average balance in accounts will attract penalty of up to Rs 100 plus goods and services tax (GST). In metropolitan areas, there will be a charge of Rs 100 plus GST, if the balance falls below 75 per cent of the MAB of Rs 5,000. If the shortfall is 50 per cent or less of the MAB, then the bank will charge Rs 50 plus GST. In rural areas, the monthly average balance requirement has been kept at Rs 1,000. Any shortfall in maintaining minimum balance in rural areas can attract penalty in the range of Rs 20 to Rs 50 plus GST.

Indias demography a goldmine, to drive third great wave of Asian growth: Deloitte

NEW DELHI: India will emerge as an economic superpower supplying more than half the increase in Asia's potential workforce over the coming decade in a developing scenario where demography is shifting the balance of power in Asia, according to Deloitte's "Voice of Asia" report. "India is among a handful of South Asian countries that sits on a demographic gold mine. India has a median population age of 27.3 years compared to that of 35 years for China and around 47 years for Japan," the Indian arm of British financial services multinational Deloitte said in a release here on Monday. "Demographic growth is significant as it is intrinsically linked to economic growth and, therefore, cannot be ignored," it said.

With about 12 million people added to the working age population every year, India will drive the third great wave of Asian growth after Japan and China earlier. India's potential workforce is set to rise from 885 million people now to 1.08 bil-



lion people in the next twenty years. Deloitte India Lead Economist Anis Chakravarty said: "India will account for more than half of the increase in Asia's workforce in the coming decade. The consequences for businesses are huge."

While India and some Southeast Asian economies are seeing an increase

in their working age population, most Asian nations are ageing, which will also generate a growth cluster of new business opportunities, according to Deloitte. "Ageing populations may well be challenging to some nations, but they will also present some incredible business opportunities within those same nations," it said.

By 2042 there will be more over-65s in Asia than the populations of Europe and North America combined. This will provide a target-rich environment of business opportunities arising from trends such as rising life expectancy, increasing relative health care costs and tightening public sector budgets.

Asia is ageing fast, with a billion people in the region to be aged 65 and over by the middle of this century, Deloitte said.

"The money being spent by and on ageing populations will grow even faster than Asia ages, because the impact of new technologies and the on-going management of increasing chronic conditions means health care costs will rise faster than most other costs," it said.

"Private sector opportunities will grow even faster still, because stretched government budgets mean the share of health-related costs borne by taxpayers is likely to decrease in the decades ahead," it added.

Sachin Tendulkar salutes MS Dhoni for scoring 100 international cricket 50s

MUMBAI: His critics may have been making sporadic demands for answers over his future, but MS Dhoni does not seem to be wrapping up anytime soon. On the other hand the former Indian cricket team captain, who has been a vital cog for Virat Kohli's side late in the batting order of late, has been on a record-making spree.

MS Dhoni on Sunday created yet another record when he notched up a fine 79-run knock against Australia at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.

Dhoni completed his 100 half-centuries in international cricket, becoming the fourth Indian batsman to do so. The 36-year-old has so far scored 33 half-centuries in Test cricket, 66 in ODIs and one in T20Is.

With 164 fifties, Sachin Tendulkar leads the list followed by Rahul Dravid (145) and Sourav Ganguly (106) in terms of making most fifties in international cricket across formats for India.



Sachin Tendulkar shared a memorable photograph of Dhoni from Sunday's match and congratulated him. Dhoni achieved the feat in the 472nd innings of a total of 470 international matches. He has also

scored a total of 16 centuries, with 10 coming in ODIs and the rest in Test cricket.

A few days ago, MS Dhoni had created the record of registering 100 stumpings as a wicketkeeper, becoming the first in

history of ODI cricket to do so. Dhoni had achieved the feat during the fifth ODI of India's five-match series in Sri Lanka earlier this month, in a mere 302 ODIs.

Former Sri Lanka cricketer Kumar Sangakkara is on the second position with 99 stumpings in a career spanning over 15 years and 404 ODIs. Dhoni played a match-winning role for India in the first ODI against Australia at Chennai. Walking out to bat with India tottering at 64 for four after 16 overs and slipping to 87 for five soon, he teamed up with Hardik Pandya to turn the game in favour of India.

MS Dhoni added 118 runs with the explosive Pandya who raced to a 66-ball 83, as India finished at a commendable 281 for seven in their allotted 50 overs.

Despite rain interruption resulting in long delays, India won the game by 26 runs via the Duckworth-Lewis Method restricting Australia to 137 for nine in 21 overs.

La Liga: Gareth Bale strikes in vital Real Madrid win at Real Sociedad

MADRID: Gareth Bale responded in style to his critics with a fine finish as Real Madrid got back to winning ways with a 3-1 win at Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Borja Mayoral rewarded a bright start by Real with his first Madrid goal before Sociedad's Kevin Rodrigues scored at both ends to give the visitors a 2-1 half-time lead. And Bale secured the three points as he sped past Rodrigues and dinked the ball over Geronimo Rulli for just his second goal of the season on the hour mark. Victory moves the European champions up to fourth and within four points of leaders Barcelona.

Bale had received stinging criticism from the Spanish press and Madrid fans for his underwhelming displays in Ronaldo's absence in recent weeks as Real dropped points at home to Valencia and Levante. "It's great to always score, but the most important thing was to get the three points for the team, get back on track and get back to winning ways," Bale told Spanish TV station Movistar.

"I just have to try to keep my head down and keep working hard and that's all I can do. I can't control what goes on, I can only control how hard I work on the pitch. You go through ups and downs in your career -- it is how you bounce back."

Without the suspended Cristiano Ronaldo, as he completed a five-game ban, and injured Karim Benzema, Zinedine Zidane handed 20-year-old Mayoral a shock start up front. And the Frenchman's faith was rewarded inside 20 minutes when Mayoral swept home a loose ball with a classy finish from close range. Mayoral's strike meant Madrid have now matched a world record of scoring in 73 consecutive games set by Pele's Santos in the 1960s.

Crazy 60 seconds

However, the visitors' joy lasted just nine minutes as Rodrigues levelled thanks to a blunder from Keylor Navas.

Rodrigues fired Alvaro Odriozola's cross towards goal on the volley, but the Real keeper should have made a comfortable stop rather than letting the ball slip under his grasp.

The match was then held up as a cameraman had to be stretchered off with his leg heavily strapped as he was injured from fans surging forward from a temporary stand behind the goal. Sociedad were defending. Once the game got back underway, a crazy 60 seconds for Rodrigues swung the match back in Madrid's favour.

The left-back was inches away from bagging a second when his looping effort came back off the bar.

However, Real broke straight up the other end and the unfortunate Rodrigues turned Mayoral's cross into his own net. Bale sealed the points after the break by scoring for the fifth straight match at Anoeta as his pace took him beyond the Sociedad defence before coolly chipping over the advancing Rulli.

Earlier, Alaves sacked Argentine coach Luis Zubeldia after just four games in charge as they slipped to the bottom of La Liga with a 3-0 defeat at home to Villarreal. Zubeldia failed to muster a point or even a solitary goal in his brief stint in charge with defeats to Leganes, Barcelona and Celta Vigo also sealing his fate.

India vs Australia: Both teams arrive in Kolkata ahead of 2nd ODI

KOLKATA: India and Australia today landed here this afternoon for the second ODI of the five-match series at Eden Gardens after their thumping win over the visitors in Chennai.

Dressed in white T-shirts, the 'men-in-blue' looked relaxed as they headed straight to the team hotel along with their support staff and chief coach Ravi Shastri.

"There's no practice schedule today and everyone will be resting," the local Team India manager said at the airport after both the teams landed via a chartered flight at 3.30pm.

Earlier, the BCCI had posted photos of the Indian team with Mahendra Singh Dhoni relaxing on the floor at the Chennai airport lounge while others including Virat Kohli, KL Rahul and Hardik Pandya sitting next to the former skipper.

India defeated the world champions by 26 runs by D/L method in a rain-curtailed ODI last night to draw first blood in the bilateral series.

Dhoni (79 from 66) and allrounder Hardik Pandya (83 from 66) shared a century stand to propel India to 281/7 in 50 overs after they were 87-5 inside 22 overs. Needing 164 from 21 overs



after a two-hour rain delay in Chennai, Australia lost their top four batsmen in eight overs as their run rate stalled to just above four runs an over.

Glenn Maxwell briefly gave rise to hopes of an unlikely victory when he hit 39 from 18 balls, including three consecutive sixes off left-arm wrist

spinner Kuldeep Yadav, but his dismissal paved India's win for a 1-0 lead in the series.

Indore, Bengaluru and Nagpur will host the remaining three ODIs while three T20Is will be held in Ranchi, Guwahati and Hyderabad in the limited overs series.

PV Sindhu may run into Nozomi Okuhara again at Japan Open badminton

NEWDELHI: With the Korea Open title in her kitty, PV Sindhu will now shift her focus to the \$325,000 Japan Open, the eighth Superseries tournament on the calendar that commences at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium on Tuesday.

Having made two finals in the last one month, Sindhu will be the cynosure of all eyes as she will take the court against local player Minatsu Mitani.

Though the Japanese lost to Sindhu in the quarter-finals in Seoul last week, she cannot be taken lightly at any cost. Minatsu was out of action for three months until Korea Open but the Japanese player knows how to win Superseries and Grand Prix tournaments, having done so in the past. Interestingly, she had also claimed the bronze at the 2014 World Championships along with Sindhu.

But on the positive side, fourth seed Sindhu has form and momentum

with her after claiming silver at the Worlds in Glasgow and then winning the crown in Seoul on Sunday -- her third Superseries title. To add to it, the World No 4 Indian has a 2-1 record against the World No 19 Minatsu.

If Sindhu moves ahead, she might run into another Japanese, the unseeded Nozomi Okuhara, for the third time in as many tournaments. The duo have shared quite a bit of time together on court and are 4-4 in career meetings, which also includes their last two epic meetings --- with the Worlds final going in favour of Nozomi and Korea Open to Sindhu.

On the other hand, Saina Nehwal will return to action after her bronze-medal winning campaign at the World Championships. The former World No 1 will open against Pornpawee Chochuwong, against whom the Indian has a 2-0 record.

If the London Olympic Games



bronze medallist moves past the Thai girl, Saina will face old nemesis and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin in the singles second round.

Seeded fifth here, the former world champion from Spain will be looking to exert her dominance and win her fourth match against Saina in eight meetings. This could also be their first

meeting in 2017. If Saina and Sindhu progress further against all odds, then we could have the two Pullela Gopichand protégés facing each other at the semi-final stage. Meanwhile, in men's singles, Sourabh Verma faces an uphill task against two-time Olympic champion Lin Dan of China. If the five-time world champion progresses,

he will take on another Indian in B. Sai Praneeth, who won the Singapore Open Superseries in April and will face a qualifier in his opener. Ace shuttler Kidambi Srikanth, who was on a roll after winning two back-to-back Superseries titles earlier this year, will face a big challenge in the form of world No 10 Tian Houwei, who has a 6-1 record against the Indian. If Srikanth manages to beat his Chinese opponent, he will be up against Anthony Sinisuka Ginting of Indonesia, who clinched the Korea Open crown on Sunday.

HS Prannoy and Sameer Verma will also return to action and will be up against Danish Anders Antonsen and a qualifier, respectively.

In doubles, Manu Attri and B. Suameeth Reddy (men), Ashwini Ponnapa and N Sikki Reddy (women) and Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Sikki have managed direct qualification for the main draw.

Abhinav Bindra may appear in film on shooting star's life

MUMBAI: Director Kannan Iyer, who is helming Abhinav Bindra biopic, hints that the Olympic gold medallist might appear in the upcoming film on his life. The yet-to-be-titled movie is being adapted from Bindra's autobiography -- 'A Shot at History: My Obsessive Journey to Olympic Gold and Beyond'. When asked if Abhinav Bindra would make an appearance in the film, Kannan told PTI, "Yes, possibly towards the end, it is a kind of tradition in sports biopics but we are yet to decide." The plot of the film, which features Harshvardhan Kapoor in the lead role, will pretty much pan out on the lines of the book, he says. "He has written a book, so we are going by that. He has loved the script and is always available for consultation." The "Ek Thi Daayan" director reveals Harshvardhan has begun his training under a trained shooter. Recently, the "Mirzya" actor posted a brief video holding a gun and listening to the instructions of an expert. "He will be training for some time under the world class shooter Suma Shirur, followed by sessions with Abhinav.

Ashes: Josh Hazlewood rules out chance of Australia using 4 pacers in opener

MUMBAI: Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood on Monday ruled out the possibility of his side fielding a four-pronged pace attack, for the opening Test of the Ashes 2017-18 at The Gabba in Brisbane.

The Ashes 2017-18 begins November 23 at the venue where Australia have enjoyed an impeccable record. Australia have not lost a Test at The Gabba since 1988 when West Indies had pummeled them by nine wickets.

While Australia are hoping to have a battery of pace attack ready -- which

includes Mitchell Starc, Hazlewood, Pat Cummins, James Pattinson and Jackson Bird -- by the time Ashes begins, the recent performances of their ace off-spinner Nathan Lyon has made him a strong force in the team's bowling attack.

Lyon finished with 22 wickets in the two-Test series in Bangladesh, following which Australia's head coach Darren Lehmann had declared that he was a certainly for the Ashes 2017-18 opener.

Hazlewood, who had bowled out of the Bangladesh tour in the first Test at Mirpur due to a side strain, had acknowl-

edged that it will be very difficult to keep Lyon out of the mix.

"The way Nathan has bowled it's been absolutely fantastic the last couple of years. Just for the balance of the team it's always handy to have a spinner there and probably only fit three quicks in," Hazlewood was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au. As the build-up for the Ashes 2017-18 intensifies, Hazlewood has thrown in his bit of observation about the England batsmen. He feels the visitors do not have enough experience in the middle order.