

TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

SATURDAY

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WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	25.0	6.4
JAMMU	33.6	17.5
LEH	10.7	6.9
KARGIL	19.0	3.9

SUNSET SATURDAY: 05:45 PM
SUNRISE SUNDAY: 06:52 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR
 Partly Cloudy Clear Sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 25°C & 06°C respectively.

STATE | 3

NATIONAL | 5

BUSINESS | 7

SPORTS | 8

CHIEF SECRETARY REVIEWS PROGRESS OF PMGSY

FRENCH DEFENCE MINISTER IN INDIA ON 2-DAY VISIT, HOLDS TALKS WITH

NET TELEPHONY TO TAKE CARE OF NETWORK ISSUES: RS SHARMA

SWISS TENNIS GREAT MARTINA HINGIS QUILTS FOR THIRD AND 'FINAL' TIME

Oct 27, 1947:

Kashmir shuts against landing of Indian Army

SRINAGAR, OCT 27: Kashmir observed a complete shutdown on Tuesday against the landing of army in Jammu and Kashmir on this day in 1947.

The call for shutdown was given by Joint Resistance Leadership comprising Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Muhammad Yaisn Malik who had urged the people to observe October 27 as "black day."

All commercial establishments, schools, colleges, and private institutions across Kashmir remained closed while attendance of employees in government offices was reported to be very thin. Traffic was largely off the roads.

Reports said that congregational Friday prayers were not allowed in the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar for the fifth consecutive Friday today.

Strict restrictions were in place in the old city area of Srinagar to thwart any protest as pro-freedom leaders



had called for shutdown against the landing of Indian army in Kashmir on same day 70 years back. Increased number of police and

other forces was deployed in the areas coming under seven police stations to implement the restrictions. Hurriyat (M) chairman Mirwaiz

Umar Farooq who addresses the Friday congregation at the mosque was placed under house arrest. See **Shuts...**Pg 02

Damaging property in J&K will now attract fines and prison term

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Governor NN Vohra has promulgated an ordinance making persons calling for strikes or demonstrations, which lead to damage of public property, liable for fines and imprisonment up to five years, an official spokesperson said on Friday.

The Jammu and Kashmir Public Property (Prevention of Damage) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017 amends the existing law relating to damage to public property and comes into effect immediately.

"It will more effectively discourage/prevent the deleterious activities of individuals/organisations which result in damage to public and private properties," said a statement.

This ordinance, the spokesperson said, has been enacted to achieve the twin objec-



tives of making such acts punishable and of making any person calling for direct action liable for abetment of such offence.

Whoever announces direct action in the form of strikes, demonstrations or other public forms of protests which result in damage

See **Property...**Pg 02

Cong policy planning group on JK to visit state on Nov 10

Srinagar, Oct 27: The Manmohan Singh-led policy planning group of the Congress on Jammu and Kashmir is scheduled to arrive in the state on a four-day visit on November 10, the party said in a statement today.

"The policy planning group will visit Jammu and Kashmir next month. The group will arrive in Srinagar on November 10," the party said.

The group had visited the state twice last month and held interactions with dozens

of groups, including representatives of political parties, traders and journalists, in Jammu and Srinagar, but the Ladakh visit of the group had not been finalized at that time, he added.

See **Cong...**Pg 02

Sonawari constituency a complete mess:

Political sycophants calling shots

Srinagar, Oct 27: Political sycophants have virtually controlled almost all the government departments in Sonawari constituency that falls in North Kashmir's Baniptora district. These workers who according to locals belong to a particular political party have been ruling the roost while the irony is that works in R&B and Irrigation and Flood Control Departments are being allotted at the signals of these political sycophants.

"The Sonawari Constituency is in total mess where not a single government officer can pass any order. Here orders are passed and works are allotted on the directions of political workers. Common people have to wait in queue

See **Political...**Pg 02

'Had Congress implemented interlocutors report, 2016 unrest may not have emerged' Talks will be fruitful if Hurriyat is engaged: Radha Kumar

Srinagar, Oct 27: A member of the former Jammu and Kashmir Interlocutors Group believes that the 2016 unrest may not have emerged, had the Congress government implemented their recommendations.

Academician Radha Kumar, who was part of J&K Interlocutors Group that submitted a report on the reasons behind that violence and ways to prevent its recurrence, be-



lieves that Congress part lost an opportunity by ignoring the group's recommendations when the UPA was in the power at the centre.

"The Congress party lost an opportunity by not implementing recommendations of our group. Had the Congress party implemented our recommendations, the situation would have been different today in Kashmir and the 2016 unrest may not have happened," Radha told KNS. "Unfortunately our report's recommendations especially on dialogue and cross LoC

See **Radha...**Pg 02

Dak appreciates installation of EEG facility at GB Pant Hospital

Srinagar, Oct 27: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) president Dr Suhail Naik Friday appreciated the installation of Electro Encephalography (EEG) Machine at lone Pediatric hospital, G B Pant which was today inaugurated by Pawan Kotwal, Commissioner Secretary Health, J&K.

Meanwhile Dr Irfan, Vice President, DAK & President, Resident Doctors Association (RDA), GMC, Srinagar said that it will play an important role in mitigating the miseries

See **DAK...**Pg 02

MISSING SOURA STUDENT TRACED BY POLICE AT SUMBAL

Srinagar, Oct 27: Police on Friday said a missing boy was recovered within seven hours in Soura area of Srinagar.

An official said that Ehsan Fayaz Zargar, a tenth standard student, went missing after

See **Missing...**Pg 02

No more authoritarian laws needed: Tarigami

Srinagar, Oct 27: Senior CPI (M) leader Muhammad Yousuf Tarigami Friday said that: "the Jammu and Kashmir Public Property (Prevention of Damage) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017" have a grave implication that it will trample the legitimate democratic rights of people because our past experience tells us that such laws have always been misused.

He said there are already enough laws in place to deal with law and order situations and how many more new laws are needed? If people protest for issues regarding education, health care, electricity food, water and roads etc, they are not being allowed. If unemployed



youth demand employment and employees, daily wagers, casual laborers, ASHA workers,

See **Tarigami...**Pg 02

CONGRESS POLICY PLANNING GROUP TO UNDERTAKE FOUR DAY VISIT OF STATE: G.A. MIR

SRINAGAR OCT 27: Congress Policy Planning group constituted under the leadership of Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh is undertaking four day visit of State from 10th to 13th next month. "This time the group will be led by Former Union Home Minister and Senior Congress Leader P. Chidambaram."

Earlier, the Group had visited Jammu on 10th and 11th and Srinagar on 16 and 17th of September and held interactions with dozens of Groups both political and Social, Trade Bodies, Business Community and various other social and political organizations both in Jammu and Kashmir provinces to take stock of the prevailing situation in order to restore confidence among the people, but the

See **Mir...**Pg 02

SEVERAL MILITANT HIDEOUTS BUSTED IN PULWAMA

SRINAGAR | OCT 27: Security forces on Friday claimed to have busted several hideouts of the militants in Naristan village of Tral in Pulwama district.

An official said that the hideouts were busted in a joint operation by the police, 180 BN CRPF and 42 RR of army. "No arms were recovered

See **Hideout...**Pg 02

Use Power looms, ban Shahtush detrimental to Pashmina: Nizam-ud-Din Bhat 'CM has been directing for taking all possible measures'

Srinagar, Oct 27: Vice Chairman Handicrafts and Handloom Nizam-ud-Din Bhat has expressed concern over the declining prospects for Pashmina Shawls weaving and Marketing.

Interacting with union leaders of Handicrafts industry, Bhat admitted that continuous and free use of power looms is coming as a setback to locally woven Pashmina Shawls, seriously impacting the morale of the weavers and



embroiders. of Handloom and Handicrafts He said while Corporation

See **Bhat...**Pg 02

NIA SUMMONS SALAHUDDIN'S GRANDSON

Srinagar, Oct 27, CNS: After arresting his son Shahid Yousuf, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has issued summons to grandson of Hizbul Mujhadeen Chief Syed Salahuddin in the alleged funding case.

Sources told news agency CNS that the agency issued summons to Muzamil Ahmed Khan, the nephew of Shahid Yousuf and the grandson

See **NIA...**Pg 02

J&K Bank
 Serving To Empower

CIN : L65110JK1938SGC000048

EXTRACT OF STANDALONE REVIEWED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER/HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2017

₹ in Lacs						
S. No.	PARTICULARS	Quarter Ended 30.09.2017	Quarter Ended 30.09.2016	Half Year Ended 30.09.2017	Half Year Ended 30.09.2016	Year Ended 31.03.2017
		Reviewed	Reviewed	Reviewed	Reviewed	Audited
1	Total income from operations (Net)	177146	181667	356199	360572	717866
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) from ordinary activities after tax	7164	(60240)	34001	(57952)	(163229)
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax (after Extraordinary items)	7164	(60240)	10183	(57952)	(163229)
4	Equity Share Capital	5570	4849	5570	4849	5215
5	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)	536981	579596	536981	579596	498953
6	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) (₹ 1/- each)					
	Basic :	1.29	(12.43)	6.11	(11.95)	(33.59)
	Diluted :	1.29	(12.43)	6.11	(11.95)	(33.59)
7	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) (₹ 1/- each)					
	Basic :	1.29	(12.43)	1.83	(11.95)	(33.59)
	Diluted :	1.29	(12.43)	1.83	(11.95)	(33.59)

NOTE: The above is an extract of the detailed format of the standalone reviewed financial results for the Quarter/Half year ended September 30, 2017 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The above disclosure is made as per revised SEBI guidelines. The full format of the Quarter/Half year ended Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites. www.nseindia.com, www.bseindia.com and on Bank's website www.jkbank.net

For and on behalf of the Board
PARVEZ AHMED
 Chairman & CEO

Place : Srinagar
 Dated : October 27, 2017

DIN : 03467232

Continue from Front Page.....

SHUTS

Restrictions were imposed in Rainawari, Safa Kadal, Nowhatta, Khanyar, Maharaj Gunj, Rainawari and Maisuma in Srinagar to prevent protests in these areas.

It is pertinent to mention here that on this day in 1947, Delhi airlifted its forces to Srinagar after the last monarch of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh "signed the conditional Instrument of Accession" with India.

"On this day, Indian forces landed in valley against the wishes of Kashmiris," separatists maintain. It is for this reason that separatist camp - fighting for the rights to self determination of Kashmiris - observe October 27 as "Black Day".

PROPERTY

to public as well as private property can be punished with imprisonment for a period of two to five years and can be imposed a fine equivalent to the market value of the property damaged or destroyed.

Moreover, the scope of the existing law which was earlier restricted to public property -- primarily government property or property owned by government entities -- has been enlarged to include private property.

The spokesperson said the amendment to the existing law has been made to implement directions given by the Supreme Court in the case, 'In Re-Destruction of Public and Private Properties vs. State of A.P (Andhra Pradesh) and others (2009)'.

As the state legislature is not in session, the governor, on the recommendation of Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, exercised his powers under Section 91 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir to promulgate the ordinance.

CONG

"This time, the group members, to be led by former Union home minister P Chidambaram, will visit Kargil and Leh also to hold interactions with various groups, political and social organizations, including trade bodies, to take stock of the overall socio-political scenario in the state," the party spokesperson said.

RADHA

trade were not implemented. It should not have happened," she said.

However, she welcomed the appointment of Dineshwar Sharma, the former IB director, as a special interlocutor to restart the dialogue process for a solution in Kashmir.

"New representative's appointment was very important. It should have happened earlier. Still it is good," she said.

Radha expressed hope that the recommendations of Dineshwar once submitted are to be implemented. "But unfortunately our political recommendations were not implemented. We have mentioned in our report that encroachments on article 370 should not have happened over the years," she told KNS.

The former interlocutor said there was a general feeling in Kashmir that government of India was not concerned about their sufferings.

"There is a need on reform in human rights violations and governance. It is not possible in one go but would take some time."

She said that the new representative should hold talks with all stakeholders including the Hurriyat.

"I always advocate talks with Hurriyat and will be fruitful. The Hurriyat leaders should come forward for the dialogue. They lost several opportunities in the past but not engaging in talks. If they are representative of alienation they should talk," she told KNS.

It is to mention here that In October 2010, Government of India had appointed a group of three interlocutors including Dr. Dileep Padgaonkar, Prof. M.M. Ansari, Prof. (Mrs) Radha Kumar to hold sustained dialogue with all sections of the people in Jammu and Kashmir.

The group of 3 was supposed to prepare a roadmap for settling the Kashmir issue.

They had held extensive deliberations with the State government, political parties, civil society, stakeholders at the State and national levels. They submitted their report to the Union Home Ministry.

The group had recommended speedy implementation of the recommendations of the Prime Minister's working group on CBMs, in particular, making the return of all Kashmiris, mainly Pandits, a part of State policy; facilitating the return of Kashmiris stranded across the LoC; establishing a judicial commission to look into unmarked graves, speeding up human rights and the rule of law reforms.

The group had also favoured creation of three Regional Councils, one each for Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

The Group had also suggested that there should be no change in Article 356, and if the State government is dismissed, elections should be held within three months.

Their report had made several recommendations to harmonise relations between people on both the sides of Line of Control, including a hassle-free movement of people and goods across the LoC, and a consultative mechanism, where elected representatives from both sides can deliberate on issues of common interests like water, economy, tourism and trade.

POLITICAL

for hours outside government offices controlled by these workers," said a group of people from Sumbal Sonawari to news agency CNS.

They said works are allotted without tenders. "Departments don't follow rules and regulations in presence of these political ruffians."

Locals said that a political leader from ruling party has been showering undue favours upon government officials. "An officer who is Assistant Executive Engineer Irrigation and Flood Control Division Sumbal, was recently demoted and transferred from the Division, but this political leader brought him back within a short span of one month and promoted him as Executive Engineer. This official has been ignoring all the contractors and allots works to those affiliated with that political leader."

According to locals, during the time of National Conference, such discrimination and corruption was not there. "There was little bit of corruption and favoritism then but the present scenario is altogether different. There is huge disparity, corruption, loot and nepotism and the anger among

people is brewing."

"From past three years, only 20 per cent work on Sumbal Bridge has been completed. The work has been abandoned in wake of lack of accountability. Officers didn't listen to people as they are backed by political scoundrels. There is so much loot going on. If Vigilance Commission will take note and act, it will unearth scams in every department of Sonawari Constituency," said an elderly man adding that benefits are being reaped by a particular political section.

"We not only appeal Chief Minister to find herself why people are unhappy with her government and party but also request Chief Vigilance Commissioner to initiate action into the bungling in government departments in Sonawari Constituency."

TARIGAMI

Anganwadi workers and others protest for their rights, force is being used against them. In all these protests, police comes forward to stop them instead of the concerned civil officials. If such laws are passed, it has the potential of creating erosion of the genuine rights of people. All this could have far-reaching implications.

"The Government of the day needs to answer that if people protest for livelihood issues, mis-governance and excessive use of force, will they also be booked under this new law? Many illustrations from the past reveal that such laws have often been widely misused. These are authoritarian laws which trample civil and democratic rights of the people. The urgency is softening of the older harsh laws to give people some relief. But instead, new authoritarian laws are being passed which will only lead to curbing the legitimate democratic rights of the people," he said.

MIR

Ladakh visit of the Group had not been finalized that time. This time the group will visit Kargil and Leh also to hold interactions with various groups, political and social organizations including trade bodies to take stock of the overall socio-political scenario obtaining the State.

This was disclosed by J&K Pradesh Congress Committee President G.A. Mir, who is currently in Delhi in connection with the PPG Meeting held yesterday in Delhi.

DAK

of parents whose kids are suffering from convulsive disorders. It is pertinent to mention here that earlier these patients were referred to SMHS hospital and was thus causing lot of hardships to parents of these children.

DAK also welcomed the step taken by the Govt. recently in which all the baseline diagnostic tests are done free of charge at hospitals, however DAK stresses the Govt. to include high end investigations like Computed Tomography (CT) Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and ultrasonography (USG) into it in future so that patients are benefited. Furthermore DAK also stresses upon the government that infrastructure in the rural hospitals must be upgraded so that the referrals are decreased and quality health care is provided at door steps.

DAK hoped that the demands are looked into which will in turn help in providing further better health care.

MISSING

he left his home in Hamza Colony Awantabawan Soura to meet his friend at Dulbagh Soura.

"But neither he had reported back to his home nor reached his friend and is missing since then. On this report, case FIR NO 90/17 under section 363 RPC was registered in police station Soura and investigation/search was started," said the official.

He said that police employed all efforts to trace the boy and finally he was traced from Sumbal Bandipora within seven hours of his missing.

He was brought to the police station and handed over to his family members after completing all legal formalities. Investigation of the case is on to unveil the facts behind the missing of the boy, added the official.

HIDEOUTS

during the operation. However, food and other commodities were found in these hideouts," he said.

The official said that police is investigating the role of overground workers who were helping the militants to stock up on food and other essentials.

BHAT

Corporations have very little role in sustaining of the local art and craft. The departments established for promotion of Handloom and Handicrafts will have to come to the rescue of the weavers and the craftsmen for protecting the industry. He said they will have to instill confidence among the people that Kashmir Art continues to hold prime place in our culture and economy.

Bhat said unfortunately ban o Shahtush also has squeezed the avenues for the artisans and the weavers and it will be in the interest of sustaining local Handicrafts and Handloom that the decision is revived.

He said that Directorates of Handloom and Handicrafts have several projects in hand which are aimed at weaving and manufacturing of traditional goods which used to earn fame to Kashmir Art. He expressed hope that appropriate activity will take place for manufacturing, weaving and business.

Bhat said both the departments have to take the unions and associations of artisans and weavers on board for seeking their support to sustain and promote Kashmir arts and crafts.

He said the Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti has been directing Industries Ministry to take all possible measures to encourage the weavers and artisans through proper training, facilities and availability of incentives. "It is on her directions that the industries ministry is on job to hold exhibitions for promotion and market avenues and also reach out to International market through expos and appropriate projection of Kashmir Art," he said.

Bhat said Chief Minister has also been generous in granting assistance to corporations of Handicrafts and Handloom for extending business avenues of the woven and manufactured items so that thousands of families involved in Art and Craft do get decadence and sustain interest in art and craft.

NIA

of Syed Salahuddin. Shahid Yousuf is already in the cus-

tody of National Investigating Agency in New Delhi.

"Yes, summons to Muzamil Ahmed Khan has been issued to probe the funding case," an NIA officer said.

Family sources of Muzamil Ahmed Khan said that he is not keeping well from past couple of months and doctors have advised him bed rest.

J&K BANK POSTS NET PROFIT OF RS 101.83 CR FOR HALF YEAR

Relentless efforts to continue uninterrupted to restore Bank's Glory - Chairman & CEO

Srinagar, Oct 27: J&K Bank today delivered a re-assuring performance by posting net profit of Rs 101.83 Crore for half-year ended September 2017, the results of which were declared and adopted today in its Board Meeting held at Corporate Head Quarters.

Chairman and CEO, Parvez Ahmed while expressing his satisfaction on the performance delivered by the Bank for past two quarters especially during the September quarter attributed the faster than anticipated turnaround to the coordinated efforts of Operations and Administrative Teams of the Bank across the geographies.

Market analysts too have rated the performance of the Bank as very positive and are expecting similar performance for remaining quarters of the year.

"We are sincerely trying to live up to our promise of providing the growth capital



Parvez Ahmed.

Commenting on the numbers the Chairman said, "The profit growth is largely driven by better liability management resulting in reduction in cost of deposit from 5.93% to 5.22%, increased focus on recovery of NPAs and credit growth in J&K state as we continue to leverage our strong footprint and franchise within the state".

Highlighting the position of advances and deposits for quarter ended September 2017, he informed that, "Deposits of the bank stand at Rs

70384.60 crore as on Sep, 2017 as compared to Rs 69884.88 crore as on Sep, 2016. Net Advances are at Rs 51341.32 crore as on Sep, 2017 as compared to Rs 47552.74 crore as on Sep, 2016. The traction in credit growth being observed especially in J&K state suggests that the envisaged credit growth of 25% in credit in the state is well within reach".

Thanking various Stakeholders especially Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Hon'ble Chief Minister and Finance Minister for much deserved hand holding during all this period, Chairman and CEO quoted their timely support as the back bone for facilitating Bank's recovery. Elaborating on the challenges ahead for the Bank, Parvez expressed confidence in Bank's ability to face every situation and assured of better performances for all the ensuing periods.

AS DARBAR SHIFTS, POWER WOES HAUNT KASHMIR

Students community worst hit, PDD says it's following notified schedule

Srinagar, Oct 27 (GNS): With the closure of annual Darbar move office here, the Power Development Department has resorted to prolonged and unscheduled power cuts in Kashmir Valley. The situation has equally worsened in rural Kashmir as well as townships and cities.

While it affects all walks of life, the frequent power cuts have become a major source of worry for students who have been preparing to sit for examinations, including the tenth and 12th class starting in few days.

"The power cuts have been affecting the study of my son who is now appearing for the matric examination," said Gulzar Ahmad, a resident of Lal Bazar. Abdul Ahad, a resident of Muqame-

Shahwali said that 'hide and seek' by PDD was proving detrimental for the interest of the students in the area.

"How can students prepare without electricity. The competition levels have touched new heights and if they are not provided proper electricity, it is a violation of their rights by the government," he said.

Reports said that the PDD has slashed the power supply in both metered and non-metered areas, adding to the problems of the residents'.

In the non-metered areas, the PDD resorts to several hours of curtailment per-day. The situation is more or less similar in metered areas but the outages are shorter than those in non-metered areas.

Locals said that the extended power cuts have surfaced as an unwritten rule in Valley no sooner Durbar Move shifts.

Sources said that the curtailment in metered areas is against the norms as PDD was bound to provide round-the-clock power supply. However, the PDD has attributed the outages to the increase in load capacity in winter. The department has already prepared and "notified" the new power schedule.

"The Power Development Department has already notified the power supply schedule and it is being followed," Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary PDD told GNS. "It has got nothing to do with the shifting of the move offices and its part of winter schedule," he added.

HC dismiss Dr. Javed Choudhary's petition challenging appointment of Principal GMC Srinagar

Present GMC principal possesses the prescribed qualification

Srinagar, Oct 27 (KNS): Dismissing the petition of a senior doctor over appointment of Principal Govt Medical College Srinagar, High Court Friday observed that the present GMC principal possesses the prescribed qualification.

Justice Alok Aradhe dismissed the petition filed by Dr. Javed Choudhary challenging the appointment of Principal Govt Medical College Srinagar and observed that the present GMC principal possesses the prescribed qualification with minimum 10 years teaching experience as Professor or Associate Professor in a Medical College out of which at least 5 years should be at least as Professor in Department, is required.

In his petition, Dr. Javed Choudhary was seeking quashment of cabinet decision dated 28.4.2017 along with Government order dated 8.5.2017, by which respondent no.6 has been appointed as Principal of Government Medical College, Srinagar.

The petitioner also sought direction to respondents to consider the case of petitioner for promotion against the post of Principal Government Medical College, Srinagar being the only eligible candidate and a direction to respondents to produce the records pertaining to the impugned selection.

"The main submission on

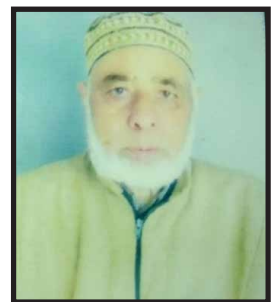
behalf of the petitioner is that his name alone was recommended for appointment by the Selection-cum-Establishment Committee and therefore, he alone should have been appointed and the respondent no.6 cannot be appointed as the same is in violation of the J&K Government Business Rules. No provision has been brought to the notice of the Court which provides that if a decision is taken by the Cabinet in violation of the recommendations contained in the memorandum placed before it, it provides for any consequences. In other words, the procedure prescribed in Part-II of the Government Business Rules is directory in nature. The State Cabinet is the creator of selection committee and it can scrutinize the recommendations and can either accept or reject the recommendations and from the perusal it is evident that the Cabinet did not accord to the recommendations of the Committee and returned the case for submission of service record of all eligible candidates," the court observed..

"The service records of all the eligible candidates were again considered by the Cabinet on 28.4.2017 and appointment of respondent no.6 on the post in question was approved. The petitioner has no legally enforceable right to seek appointment on the post in question merely on the

basis of recommendation made by the selection committee which is not statutory in nature. It is also pertinent to

mention here that the petitioner has not alleged mala fides against any person," it said.

Farooq family bereaved



It is being informed with utmost grief that the Sajjadanisheen of Ziyarat-e-Aaliya Peer Shamsuddin Farooqi passed away on Thursday morning (26th October, 2017) after a brief illness. Inna Lillaahi Wa Inna Laihir Raaji'oon. The deceased was very pious and God-fearing person. The congregational Fateha Khawani of the deceased will be held on Sunday (29th October, 2017) at 10:30 am at his ancestral place near Ziyarat-e-Sharief.

Chief Secretary reviews progress of PMGSY

2070 KM ROAD LENGTH BEING TAKEN UP FOR UP-GRADATION

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 27: Chief Secretary, B B Vyas Friday reviewed the progress of the flagship Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) being implemented across the state. Principal Secretary, Finance, Commissioner/Secretary, PW(R&B), Chief Engineers of PMGSY & R&B and other senior officers attended the meeting. Launched in the year 2000, PMGSY has proved as a catalyst in improving road connectivity to the unconnected habitations having population of 250 persons and above in J&K. Since inception, 2526 schemes/projects have been sanctioned in J&K from phase I to X, targeting 2840 habitations and involving construction of 13662 KM



of road length at an estimated cost of Rs 8151 Crore. In phase X, 542 schemes were sanctioned by the Union Ministry of Rural Development. While all 542 schemes have been tendered, 500 of these have been allotted to the lowest bidder and 42 are under tendering process. Out of the balance 146 uncon-

nected habitations that remain after phase-X, 105 are being proposed under Phase XI. Similarly, in phase XI, 2070 km road length will be taken up for up-gradation across the state at an estimated cost of Rs 2514 Crore. Chief Secretary stressed on strict adherence to the PMGSY guidelines in all road projects being undertaken across the state including proper maintenance of roads. In 2017-18, as part of the Annual Capex Budget, an outlay of Rs 500 Crore has been approved for maintenance of PMGSY roads. Similarly, for land/forest compensation, against the sanctioned Rs 750 Crore, an amount of Rs 710 Crore has been released ending March, 2017.

MVD organizes Motor bike rally

POONCH OCTOBER 27: A motor bike rally was organized by Motor Vehicles Department Poonch in collaboration with Awake India, a social organisation.

The rally was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner, Tariq Ahmad Zargar, in presence of Chairman Awake India, Ayaz Mughal, SSP and Additional District Development Commissioner from DC Office.

SSP, Additional Superintendent of Police, alongwith ARTO Poonch, participated in the rally alongwith the volunteers of Awake India namely Yasar Mughal, Sajid Qazi, Mukjhtar Khan, Tahir Zaman, Nishad Mughal, Rameez Ahmed, Arshad Khan and others. The objective of the rally was to raise awareness regarding safety measures to be followed by drivers in general and road users in particular. The rally passed through various routes including Qila Bazaar, Hospital Road, Jail Road and culminated at Dakbanglow Poonch. Speaking on the occasion, DC said that such awareness programmes shall be made a continuous process in the district for general awareness of people to reduce fatalities on roads. ARTO stressed the volunteers to become messengers of road safety measures so as to create awareness among people.

ADC holds public grievances redress camp

KATHUA OCTOBER 27: Additional Deputy Commissioner, Basohli, Sanjay Gupta today convened a public grievances redressal camp besides holding a meeting of officers to take stock of ongoing development works being executed in Basohli Sub Division.

During the meeting, Social Welfare Officer apprised the ADC regarding status of various pension cases associated with old age pension, widow pension, handicapped pension and pension under Social Security Scheme. He informed that a total of 3019 beneficiaries are getting pension under different schemes amounting Rs 30.19 Lakh.

ADC asked the Sub Divisional Agriculture Officer to organize awareness camps for farmers regarding State and Central Government schemes on regular basis. Besides, the BVO was directed to construct a cattle farm in association with Municipal Committee to check the number of stray cattle. BDO was directed to construct toilet complex near Atal Setu to facilitate the increasing tourist influx.

ADC informed that construction of 100 toilets within MC limit has been entrusted to an NGO under SBM.

Other issues deliberated upon in the meeting included early completion and renovation of water supply schemes, construction of Forest Guest House and PHC at Sananghat besides submission of DPR pertaining to inland waterways project from Mashka to Satwain.

Director reviews functioning of Horticulture deptt

JAMMU OCTOBER 27: Director Horticulture, Anuradha Gupta, today visited Samba to take an overview of departmental activities and plantation done under different schemes.

During the visit, the Director conducted an extensive tour of Government Fruit Plant Nursery, Vijaypur and inspected various components under PMDP scheme like installation of Solar pumping system, Drip irrigation system, Vermi compost unit, newly constructed approach paths as well as newly established mother blocks of Litchi, Peach, Pomegranate. Director Horticulture gave on spot instructions to the officers to promote the nursery on modern lines as a demonstration unit and promote the rare fruits which are vanishing from fields like Jamun, Galgal, Dates, Persimmon etc.

The Director also visited various orchards established by the farmers and checked activities being carried out under different Centrally Sponsored Schemes.



She interacted with progressive orchardists and distributed Jackfruit seedlings among the farmers of village Nud of Samba.

Chief Horticulture Officer Samba, C L Sharma, gave a brief review of different components being taken up under various schemes in the district.

Dy CM for undertaking cost-effective building techniques

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 27: Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh today called for effective use of cost-effective technology in constructions so that the cost escalations and other related things are checked and people provided with the viable alternatives as well to ensure putting in place speedy and economical infrastructure.

The Deputy Chief Minister was speaking while inspecting the Building centre at Bemina here today. Minister of State for Housing and Urban Development Ms Asiea Naqash was also present.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that adoption of cost effective technology is a need which needs to be properly propagated so that people can make economical dwelling units and other constructions so that the housing facilities become affordable to everybody.

He said the technological interventions in undertaking constructions would also address different other issues like costing and

other environmental and ecological factors.

While directing the officers of the housing department to actively involve the building centres in construction and procurement of the materials, the Deputy Chief Minister said this would considerably cut down the costs of constructions in constructing Government infrastructure and other developmental works. He said it will ensure the self-sustainability of these centres besides actively involving them in various developmental activities.

Dr. Singh also asked the Director of the Building Centres to undertake the training of the people associated with the construction in order to acquaint them with the latest interventions and technologies while carrying resulting in making the buildings cost-effective and also ensuring speedy construction.

Minister of State Ms Asiea Naqash also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the need for introducing cost-effective building techniques in carrying out constructions.

Govt constitutes STF to combat Dengue, Swine Flu disease

Div Com reviews preparedness

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 27: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Baseer Ahmad Khan, today convened a meeting to review the preparedness and measures to curb Dengue and H1N1 (Swine Flu) Influenza virus in Kashmir Division.

The meeting was informed that the Government has constituted Special Task Force (STF) under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir to combat Dengue and Swine Flu disease in the valley. Director Health Services Kashmir is the member secretary whereas Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Principal Government Medical College Srinagar, Director Urban Local Bodies Kashmir, Commissioner SMC, Mission Director National Health Mission, Chief Engineer PHE Kashmir, HOD Paediatrics Department GMC Srinagar, Director Estates Kashmir, State

Epidemiologist & State Malariologist, Joint Director Information, Director Doordarshan Kashmir, Director Radio Kashmir and all Deputy Commissioners are the members of the Special Task Force. It was further informed, there is no need to panic and Government had already issued health advisory in all leading newspapers. People are advised to follow this advisory in letter & spirit. Health institutions are already prepared to meet any eventuality.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir directed all Deputy Commissioners to hold meeting in their respective districts to address this problem. He stressed for involving CMO, District Health Officer and all BMOs to constitute district level teams to provide awareness camps in all schools, colleges, Government offices especially SMC and District Police lines in a phase wise manner. Div Com also sought involvement of teachers and Local NGOs for awareness drive to curb Dengue and H1N1 (Swine Flu) In-



fluenza virus.

He also directed health department to organize talk shows on Doordarshan, Radio, FM channels and local Cables to provide complete awareness about Dengue and H1N1 (Swine Flu) Influenza virus to the People. Div Com asked all concerned departments to work with close coordination so that Dengue and

H1N1 (Swine Flu) Influenza virus is controlled in the valley before the onset of winters.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Director Health Services Kashmir, Principal Government Medical College Srinagar, Director Urban Local Bodies Kashmir,

Commissioner SMC, Mission Director National Health Mission,

Chief Engineer PHE Kashmir, HOD Paediatrics Department GMC Srinagar, Director Estates Kashmir, State Epidemiologist & State Malariologist, Joint Director Information, Officers from Doordarshan & Radio Kashmir, Deputy Director Planning, Assistant Commissioner and other concerned officers were present in this meeting.

Special camp for electors enrolment to be held on October 29

UDHAMPUR OCTOBER 27: District Election Officer, Ravinder Kumar, today convened a meeting of Principals of Colleges and Nodal officers for Enrollment of Electors to chalk out activities to be conducted to encourage electors for enrollment during the Special Camp scheduled to be held on October 29, 2017 in all polling stations of assembly constituencies of the district. During the meeting, detailed discussion was held on activities to be organized on October 28, 2017, the date proposed for SVEEP activities.

It was decided in the meeting that Nukkad Natak, Road Show, Rangoli and Poster Making Competition would be organized in the district. Besides, Human chain, sports activities along with debate and painting competition would be held to popularize special camp to be held in all polling stations for maximum enrolment of eligible as well as left out electors on Sunday October 29, 2017.

DEO instructed all EROs and AEROs of the district to spread mass awareness among the people regarding summary revision and special camp. He also directed for making use of social media to share motivational clips and ideas so that eligible as well as left out electors can enroll themselves. The meeting was attended by Deputy District Election Officer, Sapna Kotwal, Naib Tehsildar Election, Abdul Latif and field functionaries of Election Cell.

Kavinder inaugurates public utilities complex at Railway Station

JAMMU, OCTOBER 27: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Kavinder Gupta today inaugurated public utilities complex at Railway Station here today. Member of Parliament Jugal Kishore Sharma, MLC Vikram Randhawa, besides representatives of Taxi Operator Union and a large number of people present on the occasion.

The construction work of toilet cum washroom has been completed at a cost of Rs 8 lakh under MPLAD and CDF.

Referring to several development and welfare works being done in the area, the Speaker said the government has prioritized improvement of basic services in every part of the state besides laying thrust on extending a more accountable, responsive and transparent administration to the people.

It is the endeavor of government to make the people equal stakeholders in growth and development of their respective areas," he maintained.

While appealing the people to monitor the works being executed in their areas, the Speaker said this will not only ensure effective implementation of developmental initiatives but also encourage the authorities to work hard and achieve the set goals in time. MP, Jugal Kishore Sharma asked the people to consider public assets as their own and take their proper care as cooperation of people is necessary for maintenance of public utilities.

The Speaker assured the Taxi Operators Union that their genuine demands would be redressed in a time bound manner.

Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board distributes compensation to owners whose ponies were killed in accidents

Srinagar, October 27: At a function held at Raj Bhavan here today, Mr Umang Narula, Principal Secretary to Governor, J&K, who is also the Chief Executive Officer of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB), gave away cheques valuing Rupees Twenty two lakhs and fifty thousand to 75 ponywallahs for the loss of their horses / ponies in accidental deaths during the Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2017. The pony owners were awarded compensation at Rs.30,000 for each pony / horse killed accidentally.

Mr Umang Narula interacted with the claimants and lauded their cooperation and contribution in facilitating the Yatris and making the annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra a successful event every year. He observed that ponywallahs are an important part of the pilgrimage and that on the directions of the Hon'ble

Governor, it has been ensured that the insurance claims payable to the ponywallahs are settled without any delay whatsoever. He further observed that ever since the Shrine Board decided in 2010 to provide insurance cover to ponies killed in accidents, compensation valuing about Rs.1.92 Crore has been disbursed in 626 accident cases so far.

Mr. Umang Narula informed that this year 2,60,003 Yatris paid obeisance at the Holy Shrine Cave and elaborate arrangements were made by the Shrine Board with the active support of various Departments of the J&K Government, NGOs and the local people, particularly the residents of Ganderbal and Anantnag districts. The security arrangements were provided by the Army, Central Police Organization and the State Police. For 2017, 8924 ponies /

horses were registered by the Animal and Sheep Husbandry Department for the use of pilgrims. Besides, 4188 Pithoos, 5372 dandiwallas and 7166 ponywallahs were registered by the Labour and Employment Department for providing services during this year's Yatra. CEO further informed that the Shrine Board has since 2010 been providing Group Insurance of Rupees One lakh to all Registered Yatris and Service Providers against death resulting from any kind of accident, natural or man-made, during the period commencing one month ahead of the Yatra till one week beyond the date of conclusion of the Yatra. This Group Insurance Cover was further enhanced to Rupees Three lakhs from Yatra 2017.

In 2010, an insurance cover of Rs. 20,000 was provided to the registered

ponies against death resulting from any kind of accident, natural or man-made. The Insurance cover for ponies was enhanced to Rs.25,000 in 2011 and further increased to Rs.30,000 from Yatra 2013 onwards.

Mr. Bhupinder Kumar, Additional CEO of the Shrine Board, gave details of the insurance claims of the pony owners who were presented insurance claim cheques.

Mr. R. K. Bhagat, Commissioner/Secretary Animal Husbandry Department; Dr. M.Y. Chapru, Director Animal Husbandry Department, Kashmir; Dr. Mohd Rafeeq Sheikh, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Ganderbal; Dr. Tahir Beigh, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Anantnag; officers and official of SASB and pony/horse owners were present on the occasion.

DAILY Editorial
Time and US
SRINAGAR J&K

PURSUIT OF GROWTH

The Centre's decision to infuse ₹2.11 lakh crore of fresh capital into public sector banks over the next two years, through a blend of financial mechanisms, should help revive the growth momentum. Saddled with bad loans as well as stressed assets of close to ₹10 lakh crore, India's banking sector has been naturally wary in recent quarters of extending fresh loans, as reflected in bank credit growth slipping to a 60-year low of just 5% this April. Since its first year in office, the government has been seized of what Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian calls the twin balance-sheet problem. If over-leveraged companies are unable to invest or borrow afresh, and banks are unwilling or/and unable to finance fresh investments, a private investment-led recovery is unlikely. However, it was only late last year that a new bankruptcy law was introduced, and over the course of this year the Reserve Bank of India has asked banks to invoke insolvency proceedings in the case of 50-odd accounts if settlements remain elusive. Banks, under pressure from the RBI to acknowledge the stress on their books, face the prospect of taking heavy haircuts to write off some of these loans at whatever residual value remains in the businesses. When combined with their need to scale up their capital base to comply with Basel III norms, public sector banks have naturally been in damage control mode rather than chasing growth like their private sector peers.

The three-part package for lenders includes ₹18,000 crore from the Budget, ₹58,000 crore that banks can raise from the market (possibly by tapping the significant room available to dilute the government's equity that remains well over 51%) and the issue of recapitalisation bonds worth ₹1.35 lakh crore. Though there are still many unknowns about the nature of these bond issues (whether they will affect fiscal deficit calculations or be off-balance-sheet sovereign liabilities, for instance), the overall plan gives banks a better sense about their immediate future. The bonds will front-load capital infusion while staggering the fiscal impact, which Mr. Subramanian expects to be limited to the annual interest costs on these bonds of about ₹9,000 crore. The Centre is betting this will strengthen the banks' ability to extend credit at a faster clip. RBI Governor Urjit Patel has said this is the first time in a decade that there is a real chance of meeting the banking sector's challenges. But it is still a long haul. While more details on this package are awaited, including how banks will be picked for funding and the possible interplay with proposed mergers of banks, equally critical will be the reforms that Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has promised as a necessary adjunct. Banks are where they are, not just because of capital constraints but also because of their inefficiencies and past lending overdrives.

Trump and the new world disorder

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's speech on relations with India on October 18 was ambitious in scope and sought to define it for the "next hundred years," when both countries will be "standing firm in defence of a rules-based order." The speech has been received with justifiable enthusiasm among well-wishers of India. There is absolutely no two opinion about the desirability of long-standing commitments between the two big democracies, notwithstanding the challenges of social frictions and illiberal tendencies that they both currently face.

On schedule
For some context to the speech by Mr. Tillerson, who is currently on a South Asian visit, it would be appropriate to recall the following. Five days earlier, on October 13, President Donald Trump destabilised an international agreement that the U.S., the four other UN Security Council members and Germany had reached with Iran; on October 12, Mr. Tillerson himself had conveyed to the head of UNESCO the U.S. decision to quit the organisation. In the first nine months of the Trump administration, other international commitments that the U.S. had unilaterally reneged on include the Paris climate agreement and the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. The North American Free Trade Agreement is gasping for breath; and treaty allies South Korea, Japan and Germany have been threatened for trade surplus with America.

The rest of the world might think that the world order has been designed to America's advantage but Mr. Trump has been categorical that he is committed to dismantling it — because he is convinced that America does not benefit from it. To understand his, and his administration's, views on the issue, and to look for signs of what to expect now, we need to take a collective view of three events that happened over the last four weeks. Mr. Trump's first speech to the UN General Assembly; the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF); and the Chinese Communist Party's 19th Congress in Beijing.

The UN, the World Bank and the IMF have been the instruments of American hegemony for decades. What is relevant to the current context is the last three decades. The collapse of the Soviet Union was validation for the U.S. of the power of market economy and liberal democracy. The globalising world required a gradual depreciation of the concept of national sovereignty, including the U.S.'s own, its liberals and conservatives agreed, though not from entirely overlapping perspectives. Promotion of market economy and democracy, defence of human rights and environment, etc were assumed to be part of the U.S.'s global hegemony. The U.N. and the World Bank-IMF became instruments of this American authority over the world. The World Bank and IMF through aggressive promotion of neoliberal economics, and the UN through its non-proliferation, climate



protection, and Responsibility to Protect doctrines expanded the rules of the new order that chipped away at national sovereignty. The U.S. and its camp followers bankrolled these institutions. Moreover, the U.S.'s own example of prosperity — "the shining city upon a hill," according to Ronald Reagan — would lead the rest of the world to accept its model of democracy and market economy, it was assumed.

Guided by the ledger
Mr. Trump calculates the price of everything and perhaps understands the value of nothing. "The United States is one out of 193 countries in the United Nations, and yet we pay 22% of the entire budget and more. In fact, we pay far more than anybody realises," he told the UNGA. It is national sovereignty — he mentioned the words 10 times — that will safeguard the world and not globalism, he declared, upending the U.S. gospel that guided the order. "For too long, the American people were told that mammoth multinational trade deals, unaccountable international tribunals, and powerful global bureaucracies were the best way to promote their success... Now we are calling for a great reawakening of nations."

In a foreign policy haze
At the World Bank-IMF meetings, the rift between the Trumpian world view and these institutions played out in a two-pronged fashion. The IMF is no longer advocating neoliberalism as its core credo, and called for more redistributive measures by governments, including higher taxes on the rich, to deal with the inequality created by market. These institutions have in recent years dogged back their trickle-down growth dogma. The Trump administration is meanwhile pushing for massive tax cuts, stuck

on the trickle down approach, putting it at odds with the IMF-World Bank approach.

Second, like in the case of UN, the Trump administration feels that America is paying too much for these institutions. U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin called on the World Bank to reduce lending to middle-income countries, four days before Mr. Tillerson spoke about providing alternative financing to countries that may be coming under Chinese influence for infrastructure financing. As strategic expert Alyssa Ayres noted, Mr. Tillerson "provided no further specific proposals to sketch out in greater detail how the United States and India should work together to provide alternative financing."

The World Bank was also upbeat about the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), on which India and the U.S. are expected to join hands in resisting Chinese manoeuvres. Bank President Jim Yong Kim, an American appointee, said during the annual meetings, "Two things that the world needs very much right now are strong leadership and an embrace of multilateral approaches to solving difficult problems, and [BRI] is both of those things."

It is in this context of Mr. Trump's rejection of multilateralism and adherence to a questionable economic philosophy that Chinese President Xi Jinping exhorted other countries to follow the Chinese model as opposed to Western liberalism, in his Make China Great Again speech last week at the party congress. Such a prospect is of concern for India.

Though Indian leaders repeatedly say that a strong U.S. and American leadership of the world are in India's interest, the history of that dynamic is more layered and nuanced. While American leadership and ability to arm twist other countries, includ-

ing China and Pakistan, have benefited India on occasions, the space for New Delhi's global ambitions come only from America's retreat. It was the U.S. that forced China to accede to Nuclear Suppliers Group waiver for nuclear commerce for India and forced Pakistan into resolving the Kargil conflict. But a relatively weakened U.S. is what took a more friendly view of India to begin with. "We are going to come down on those guys like a ton of bricks," President Bill Clinton declared at an Oval Office meeting the day after India landed a blow to his non-proliferation agenda, with Pokhran 2 in May 1998. But he could not stay the course of seeking to punish India, primarily because of domestic American issues.

The change in Washington
The Trump administration's disregard for the 'world order' would open opportunities for India's ambitions to be a 'leading power,' but a gradual retreat of the existing order is what could benefit India. The transition from a U.S. President (Barack Obama) who reminded India about its own Constitution to a leader (Mr. Trump) who does not bother much about even the U.S.'s Constitution could be welcome from the perspective of the Narendra Modi government's nationalist agenda.

However, any abrupt creation of a power vacuum in the event of American abdication of its global role would invite conflict and chaos. Having already demonstrated his inability to lead either America or the world, Mr. Trump still has the means to force his way on account of having the world's most formidable military. More than the reassurance of order, what India should be watchful of should be the threats of conflict.

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Going back to the basics

► Uma Mahadevan

On page 115 of the World Development Report 2018, the World Bank's new report which focuses for the first time on education, are two powerful images. They are MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) images taken in Dhaka, Bangladesh, of the brains of two infants aged two-three months. The growth of one infant was stunted while the other was not. The images show the stark difference in brain development between the stunted child and the one who is not stunted. The fibre tracts in the brain of the child who is not stunted are denser, and the connections more elaborate, than those in the brain of the stunted child. This is an example of how intense deprivation can hinder the brain development of young children.

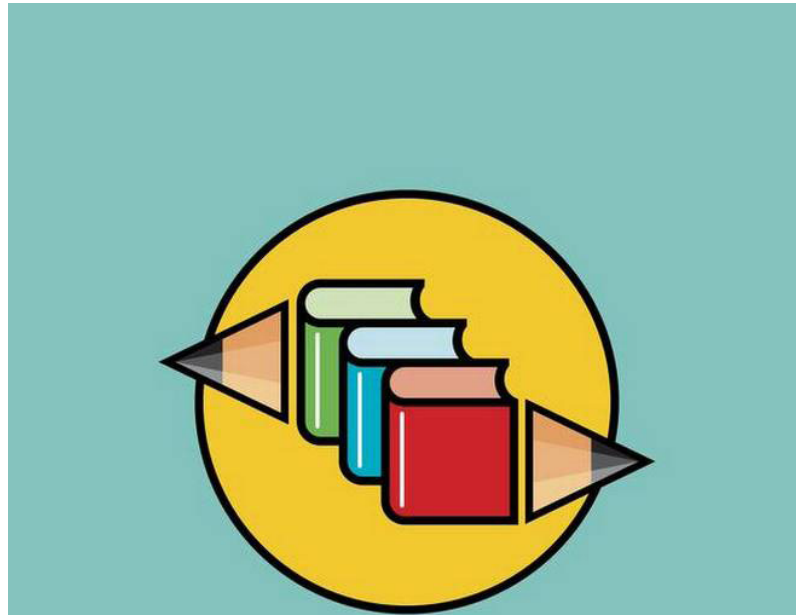
Impact of malnutrition
The report, titled "Learning to Realize Education's Promise", focusses on education. It is the first of the Bank's annual reports in four decades to do so. There are six main points to note about the report. First, it is good to see that it makes a moral case for education, with a rights-based approach, and sub-sections titled 'Education as freedom'; 'Education improves individual freedoms'; 'Educa-

tion benefits all of society'.

Second, one of the most important sections is not about education but about early childhood development. And rightly so, for the report discusses the far-reaching impact of poverty and chronic malnutrition on the physical and mental development of children.

Poverty undermines a child's learning. "Severe deprivations—whether in terms of nutrition, unhealthy environments, or lack of nurture by caregivers—have long-lasting effects because they impair infants' brain development." The effects of stunting in the early years on physical, cognitive and socio-emotional development prevent children from learning well in later years. "So even in a good school, deprived children learn less."

Childhood stunting
The report points out that in low-income countries, stunting rates among children under-five are almost three times higher in the poorest quintile than in the richest. The effects of childhood stunting remain into adulthood. If early childhood development programmes are to compensate for poor children's disadvantages, they need to be scaled up and resourced for nutritional inputs, along with a focus on antenatal and



postnatal care, sanitation, and counselling of parents for effective early child stimulation. Reduction of child stunting should be one of the major moral imperatives before nations today.

Third, it is good to see that technology is not regarded as a panacea in itself but as something that has the potential to enhance learning — and that the teacher-learner relationship is at the

centre of learning. "Technological interventions increase learning — but only if they enhance the teacher-learner relationship."

Fourth, the report acknowledges firmly that on the issue of public vs private schools, the results are still mixed: "There is no consistent evidence that private schools deliver better learning outcomes than public schools, or the

opposite...In some contexts, private schools may deliver comparable learning levels at lower cost than public systems, often by paying lower teacher salaries. Even so, lower teacher salaries may reduce the supply of qualified teachers over time."

Fifth, while the focus on learning is welcome, a wider and more nuanced exploration of the reasons for the learning crisis would have been useful. While school enrolments have increased significantly, massive teacher shortages persist. Further, beyond reading and arithmetic, any meaningful assessment of learning should also consider aspects such as comprehension, problem solving, critical thinking, and innovation. Beyond merely increasing assessment ("Just weighing the pig doesn't make it fatter," as the report itself remarks), it is equally important to fund the sector better; improve teacher training; support the continuing professional development of teachers; and help teachers to help the poorest children to learn.

The way forward
One would have liked to see greater focus on the continuing problems of access and equity, which are still the biggest problems in education. If there is one aspect of education which needs to

be quantified and measured in order to make our education systems function better for all children, it is equity. How fair and equitable are education systems? Where are the greatest gaps? Which kids suffer the most from inequitable systems? These questions should be asked as part of an ongoing process of assessment for equity.

As for access, over 260 million children across the world — equal to a third of the population of Europe — are not even enrolled in primary or secondary school. "In 2016, 61 million children of primary school age — 10% of all children in low-and lower-middle-income countries — were not in school, along with 202 million children of secondary school age."

And in a world fraught with conflict, schooling suffers. "Children in fragile and conflict-affected countries accounted for just over a third of these, a disproportionate share."

It is unconscionable that in the twenty-first century, so many children are still out of school.

Uma Mahadevan-Dasgupta is in the IAS. The views expressed are personal

How poor operational efficiency bleeds India's public bus transport undertakings

NEW DELHI: Travelling by public transport vehicles in India is not a pleasant experience, and for good reason. A majority of the buses run by its state road transport undertakings (SRTUs) is old, and there is a shortage of funds to replace or refurbish them. According to a government report, most SRTUs are unprofitable. The combined net loss of 47 SRTUs in 2015-16 was Rs 11,349 crore, 7.2% higher than in 2014-15. Topping the list was the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), with a loss of Rs 3,411 crore. It was followed by the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) at Rs 1,061 crore, and the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) at Rs 738 crore.

There are 54 SRTUs in India, of which 47 reported their physical and financial performance parameters to the Union road transport and highways ministry's transport research wing, which

prepared the report. The 47 SRTUs had 1.42 lakh buses in 2015-16, with the Maharashtra entity accounting for the largest fleet of buses (18,514).

Only seven such undertakings – including the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation, Karnataka SRTC, Odisha SRTC, Uttar Pradesh SRTC and Himachal Road Transport Corporation – are profitable. Poor vehicle productivity (in terms of the distance covered per bus per day) on account of old fleets, low fuel efficiency, high staff-to-bus ratio, fare concessions, and high operation and maintenance costs were cited as some of the main reasons for the poor financial performance of SRTUs. Some urban transport experts blame the central government's blinkered vision for the state of SRTUs. "You can't keep blaming the states, especially when little is being done to enhance the capacity of SRTUs. Though states



do not have the money to invest, the Centre can definitely help through incentives. The Centre is promoting Metro rail projects when laying tracks in a city like Bengaluru costs anywhere between Rs 500-600 crore per kilometre. Imagine the turnaround if an

amount this big is invested in a bus transport system.

It's not a question of finance but vision," said professor Geetam Tiwari, department of civil engineering, IIT Delhi.

Tiwari said Metro networks can only complement bus-based

public transport systems. "An efficient bus system will not only reduce congestion but also curb pollution levels," she added. Road ministry data suggests that a car consumes nearly 1.6 times more energy on an average than a bus. The figures are worse for two-

wheelers, which require about 2.5 times the same amount of energy, and three-wheelers, which consume 4.7 times more. However, inadequate funds and poor maintenance have led to a steady decline in public bus fleets across the country. Average vehicle productivity stood at 305.59 km per day in 2015-16, down from 308.60 km in 2014-15.

Many SRTUs continue to run old vehicles. For instance, almost the entire fleet of Bihar SRTC is old, with an average age of 12.85 years through 2015-16. The Tamil Nadu State Express Transport Corporation Limited accounts for the second-highest proportion of old buses (78%), followed by the Chennai Metro Transport Corporation (72.7%) and the Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (72.4%).

The Association of State Road Transport Undertakings recommends that a bus be run for eight years, or until it completes 5 lakh

kilometres, whichever comes earlier. In 2015-16, none of the SRTUs that reported an average vehicular age of over eight years figured among the country's profit-making entities. Many public bus fleets across the country also suffer from low-fuel efficiency. Among them is the DTC, which ironically runs its buses on eco-friendly CNG.

According to the report, many SRTUs have poor occupancy ratio. BEST topped the list at 47.98%, followed by Kadamba Transport Corporation Limited at 55.57% and the Calcutta STC at 57.18%. The operational efficiency and service quality of private bus operators – which constitute 85-90% of the intercity buses in the country – are far higher when compared to SRTUs, it added. However, Tiwari said private operators register profits at the cost of other factors. "They compromise on safety, violate speed regulations and cut labour to make more money."

French defence minister in India on 2-day visit, holds talks with Sitharaman

NEW DELHI: India and France on Friday held wide-ranging talks aimed at further boosting defence and security ties, with a focus on co-development of military platforms, and enhancing cooperation in the maritime sphere.

Defence Minister Nirula Sitharaman and her French counterpart Florence Parly deliberated on a host of key issues, including the regional security situation, transfer of critical technology for various defence projects and ways to ramp up overall strategic ties, an official said. All aspects of defence and security cooperation between the two countries as well as ways to enhance maritime cooperation were discussed in the meeting, the official added.

Parly, who is here on a two-day visit, will call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and meet National Security Adviser Ajit Doval. She is expected to lay the ground for French President Emmanuel Macron's upcoming trip to India.

Parley is also likely to push for a follow on order of additional Rafale fighter jets, after the delivery of 36 jets under a Rs 58,000 crore deal finalised last year.

The French Embassy had said in a statement on Thursday that Parly's visit is aimed at strengthening all aspects of France's "fast developing" defence cooperation with India, its foremost Asian strategic partner.

It said Parly's talks with Sitharaman will range from defence cooperation, in particular maritime security, joint exercises of the armed forces and counter-terrorism to industrial and technological partnership under the 'Make in India' initiative.



Gujarat election: BJP banks on PM Narendra Modi's appeal to ride past protests

AHMEDABAD: Faced with anti-incumbency and angry Patidars, the BJP is banking on its tallest leader with a pan-state appeal: Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Every BJP banner or pamphlet features the PM prominently and Modi has travelled to his home state at least 10 times in the past one year – the last five visits in a little over a month.

Most of his visits are designed to pack in launch or inauguration of at least one big-ticket project – dedication of Sardar Sarovar Dam to the nation and foundation laying of Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train in September being the most prominent ones. On the sidelines, he inaugurates hospitals, dairies, housing projects, diamond processing units, sports complex and drinking water supply to housing societies. At the same time, his visits are clubbed with national or international events like Indo-Japan annual summit (September 2017), Textile India Conclave (June-July 2017), annual general meeting of African Development Bank (May 2017) and National Conference for Women Sarpanchs (March 2017).

"The BJP state leadership is working hard on the ground and they have Modi's popularity to maintain its voter base.



Its campaign design revolves around Modi. At the same time, the Congress state leadership seems to lack network to reach out to the voters with valid issues like GST raised by Rahul Gandhi," said senior journalist and political analyst Jawalant Chhaya.

Experts say the BJP learnt its lesson from the December 2015 local body polls where the party suffered heavy losses in the countryside. It was the first major election after Modi left Gujarat and set alarm bells ringing.

But the yatra culminated in a grand fashion on October 16 as Modi made one of his three visits to the state this

month to address hundreds of thousands of BJP workers on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. "Gujarat was meted out grave injustice during the UPAs 10-year-old rule. The PM's visits are now trying to fill in those gaps.

He comes to inaugurate all these state projects because earlier foundation for same was laid by him," BJP spokesperson Bharat Pandya told HT.

While the BJP has called the PM's visit a push for their development agenda, the Congress has termed it nervousness of the BJP.

"The nervous BJP is left with no option but to fall back on the PM. Even

the Election Commission delayed poll announcement so that the BJP could complete all these functions," said senior Congress leader Arjun Modhwadia.

But the Congress has problems of its own – the complete lack of state-level leadership and a dependence on vice president Rahul Gandhi.

The Congress has had a crisis of leadership in the state since the Mahavsinh Solanki era came to end in the late eighties. Congress president Sonia Gandhi has led the assembly elections campaign since 2004, and this is for the first time Rahul Gandhi, who may soon become party chief, is seen taking the responsibility on his shoulders. The Congress posters feature state president Bharatsinh Solanki and others, including senior leaders Shaktisinh Gohil and Arjun Modhwadia, but Gandhi is featured prominently and it is only the 47-year-old who addresses large rallies. Modi didn't participate very actively in the initial phases of the October Gujarat Gaurav Yatra that covered almost 150 of the state's 182 constituencies over a fortnight. Several party leaders, including chief minister Vijay Rupani, deputy CM Nitin Patel and state BJP chief Jitu Vaghani, addressed what were mostly small-scale gatherings.

Don't deny PDS foodgrains to non-Aadhaar beneficiaries, Centre tells States

NEW DELHI: The Union government has instructed the States not to deny the public distribution system (PDS) benefits to any one who does not have Aadhaar or has not linked his ration card to the number and warned of strict action on violation of the directive.

The Centre also asked the State governments not to delete eligible households from the list of beneficiaries for non-possession of Aadhaar.

An instruction in this regard was issued this week to all the States, after a 11-year-old Jharkhand girl recently died of alleged starvation after being allegedly denied PDS ration.

Activists' charge Activists have alleged that the girl in Simdega district died of starvation as her family's ration card was cancelled since it was not linked to Aadhaar. In the directive, the food Ministry has clarified that deletion from the ration card database can only happen after a proper verification establishes "beyond reasonable doubt" that an entry pertaining to the cardholder is not genuine. State field functionaries have been asked to ensure that beneficiaries are not turned away on the ground of non-possession of Aadhaar, and all exceptions in this regard are recorded in a separate logbook. When contacted, Ajay

Bhushan Pandey, CEO of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), told PTI, "The intention is to ensure that no one is denied any food benefits for lack of Aadhaar, lack of linking, or technical difficulty in biometric authentication. As long as a person is genuine, he has to be given the benefit, in this case, ration." The States and the Union Territories will have to make arrangements to provide Aadhaar enrolment facilities to those without Aadhaar and link their Aadhaar numbers with their ration cards, the Ministry said. It cautioned that strict action would be taken if provisions of the notification are violated.

AP: 3 killed as state-run bus hits pedestrians, rams into vehicles in Vijayawada

HYDERABAD: Three people were killed and three others grievously injured when a state-run Road Transport Corporation bus hit them after its brakes failed on a busy road in Andhra Pradesh's Vijayawada city on Friday morning.

Police said the driver of the Metro Express city bus travelling from Wambay Colony at Gannavaram to the Vijayawada bus stand lost its control as it reached Ajitsingh Nagar near the bridge on Budameru rivulet. It rammed into an auto-rickshaw and four two-wheelers, besides hitting some pedestrians.

Officials said the damage would have been more if an alert truck driver ahead



of him had not blocked the road with his vehicle. The bus hit the lorry and came to a halt, they added.

Two pedestrians – Khurshed (40) and her son Hurshad (12) – died on the spot and four others received serious injuries. One of them succumbed while

being shifted to the government hospital on Eluru Road.

While the bus driver fled the spot, the agitated relatives of the victims set fire to the bus.

The police arrived at the spot and doused the flames immediately.

SC allows Centre to withdraw forces from trouble-hit Darjeeling

NEW DELHI: Telling the Marmata government that "law and order is your problem", the Supreme Court on Friday allowed the Centre to withdraw seven companies of the central police forces stationed in the restive Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts of West Bengal to be deployed in poll-bound States.

States like Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat are scheduled for polls in November and December.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra suggested that the Centre agree, as an interim measure, to withdraw seven companies of the central police forces, from the two districts while eight of the total 15 deployed

there stay back to protect the life of citizens. The government agreed to the court's suggestion.

The districts had witnessed a spate of violence following the resurgence of the Gorkhaland movement. Additional Solicitor General Maninder Singh, appearing for the Centre, said the situation is relatively calm now and it needed personnel for the upcoming elections. "It takes a long time for the movement of these troops," Mr. Singh conveyed.

The Centre had appealed the Supreme Court against a recent Calcutta High Court order restraining it from withdrawing any troops deployed in the two districts. "If all 24 high courts



start dictating to us where and where not to deploy troops there will be utter confusion. Deployment of troops is the executive's exclusive domain," Mr. Singh said. Chief Justice Misra stayed the proceedings in the Calcutta High

Court and recorded that the Supreme Court will comprehensively hear the issue. The Chief Justice observed that the apex court would decide on - one, whether courts can intervene in the placement of troops

and, two, can the courts intervene with the government in the placement of forces in order to protect the life of citizens. "We have to strike a balance between the two... there has to be some kind of arrangement. There is some problem in Darjeeling and Kalimpong. Steps have to be taken to protect the life of citizens. Citizens are at the zenith of our pyramid," Chief Justice Misra observed. Turning to the West Bengal government, the apex court said "law and order is your problem". "Peace must remain. Citizens must be responsible," Chief Justice Misra addressed the State government represented by senior advocate Rajesh Dwivedi.

Asthana elevated despite dissent note'

NEW DELHI: Chief Vigilance Commissioner K.V. Chowdary said on Thursday that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director Alok Kumar Verma had given an adverse comment against the elevation of Gujarat cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana. He told The Hindu that the five-member committee took note of the "frank views" made by Mr. Verma, but unanimously cleared the elevation of Mr. Asthana from Additional Director to Special Director, CBI. "It is not that if somebody says something, it has to go through. There are different levels and hierarchies," Mr. Chowdary said. Asked if it meant that the CBI Director's report had no value, Mr. Chowdary said: "He gave his views, he is entitled to be consulted. In the past there have been many instances [when the committee has not been unanimous]. One instance is that of [retired IPS officer] Archana Ramasundram. I cannot disclose what he said in his dissent note." The five-member Selection Committee headed by Mr. Chowdary and comprising two Vigilance Commissioners, Home and Personnel secretaries met on October 21 to decide on the promotion of senior officers of the CBI, which included Additional Directors and Superintendents of Police.

Vitamin D may reduce respiratory infections in the elderly

High doses of vitamin D are likely to reduce the incidence of acute respiratory illness in older adults, suggests a study led by an Indian-origin researcher.

The study found that among those who took higher doses of vitamin D, there was a 40 per cent reduction in acute respiratory illness — one of the leading causes of serious illness, debilitation and death among patients in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

"Vitamin D can improve the immune system's ability to fight infections because it bolsters the first line of defense of the immune system," said lead author Adit Ginde, professor at the University of Colorado, Denver, US.

"This is a potentially life-saving discovery. There is very little in a doctor's arsenal to battle ARI, especially since most are viral infections where antibiotics don't work. But vitamin D seems able to potentially prevent these infections," Ginde added. In older people that first line of defence is often impaired. But vitamin D can reinforce it and prevent illnesses like pneumonia, influenza and bronchitis, Ginde said.

It may also prevent infections and exacerbations of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) like emphysema.

Conversely, Ginde found that those who received higher doses of vitamin D also saw an increase in falls.



EAT CHEESE TO LIVE LONGER: STUDY

2016, also known as the Year of Doom™ and widely touted as The Beginning of the End, has one epic silver lining.

Vegans, clean-eaters and doom-mongers have long been espousing the evils of lactose, the high levels of fat and the negative impact of cheese on your skin / arteries / heart / stomach (delete as appropriate).

But the journal Nature Medi-

cine has published new research which suggests that eating cheese might actually help you live longer. According to the study, published online this month, a compound found in some cheese, known as spermidine, could be the key to longevity.

Initially in the study, spermidine was found to increase the average lifespan of the test mice and rats. Furthermore, the research

suggests that spermidine also boasts cardio-protective properties. It can actually help reduce thickening of the heart muscles (primarily associated with high blood pressure) and avoid abnormal pumping rhythm (associated with heart failure). In other words, cheese could actually be really good for your heart, as well as for your lifespan.

Out of 800 Italian human test

subjects (a traditional Italian diet features a good quantity of cheese), those who ingested more spermidine were found to have a 40 per cent lower risk of heart failure. They also had lower blood pressure and a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease in general.

Cheesy good news indeed — but we have to specify that spermidine is mostly found in aged cheese, whole grains and mushrooms.

HOW TO SHUN VIOLENT OR SEXUAL DREAMS

We are often disturbed by violent dreams, waking us up in the middle of the night and haunting us thereafter. There can be many reasons for these dreams, but the foremost reason for this could be watching violent or sexual content.

The media we watch during the day or just before sleeping, interfere with our dreams at night,

suggests new research.

Studies were conducted to analyse the effect of watching sexual or violent media separately. In fact, people watching media containing violent content before 90 minutes of going to sleep, are plausible to have violent dreams 13 times more than any usual person. On the other hand, people consuming sexual media are

probable of having a sexual-dream more than 6 times, found the study.

"The media we consume can have an impact on us even when we're sleeping," said co-author of the study Brad Bushman, Professor at The Ohio State University in the US.

A study conducted on approximately 1,000 residents of Turkey

found that media with more violence led to more violent dreams on a regular basis. A similar study was done for media with sexual content but the results weren't that strapping.

"Whether we looked at overall media use or media intake for just one day, the result was the same: The media we consume is linked to what we dream about," Jan Van

den Bulck, Professor at University of Michigan in the US.

As per the study published in the journal *Dreaming*, one of the most obvious way to avoid those violent and sexual dream is to avoid watching media with that content.

"It would be good to avoid media with violent and sexual content, especially right before bed," Bushman said.

200 Million Indians Have High Blood Pressure: Study

India is home to about 200 million adults with high blood pressure, according to the largest study of its kind which found that the number of people in the world with high BP has reached 1.13 billion.

The study, led by scientists at Imperial College London, shows that the number of people with high blood pressure across the world has nearly doubled in 40 years. Over half of the world's adults with high blood pressure in 2015 lived in Asia. Around 226 million people in China have high blood pressure, along with 200 million in India, the study published in *The Lancet* journal found.

Researchers studied changes in blood pressure in every country in the world between 1975 and 2015. They also found that men had higher blood pressure than women in most countries in the world in 2015. Globally, 597 million men had raised blood pressure, compared to 529 million women.

The study incorporated blood pressure measurements from nearly 20 million people, showing that while blood pressure has dropped sharply in high-income countries, it has risen in many low and middle-income countries, especially those in Africa and South Asia.

The country with the highest age-corrected proportion of men with high blood pressure in 2015 was Croatia (38 per cent of the population), while Niger had the highest proportion of women with high blood pressure (36 per cent).

While the UK had the lowest proportion of people with high blood pressure in Europe in 2015, South Korea, US and Canada were lowest in the world. "High blood pressure is no longer related to affluence - as it was in 1975 - but is now a major health issue linked with poverty," said Majid Ezzati, professor at Imperial.

Researchers said the reason for this finding is unclear, but it may be linked to overall better health and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables.

The condition is also caught more frequently and earlier, and managed with medication in high-income countries. These factors may have helped counteract rising obesity, which is a risk factor for high blood pressure.



E-CIGARETTES MAY DAMAGE YOUR GUMS, TEETH: STUDY

Electronic cigarettes, often perceived as a healthier alternative to conventional cigarettes, are as damaging to gums and teeth as smoking, a new study has warned.

The study by researchers at University of Rochester Medical Centre in the US is the first scientific study to address e-cigarettes and their detrimental effect on oral health on cellular and molecular levels.

Electronic cigarettes continue to grow in popularity among younger adults and current and former smokers because they are often perceived as a healthier alternative to conventional cigarettes.

Previously, scientists thought that the chemicals found in cigarette smoke were the culprits behind adverse health effects, but a growing

body of scientific data, including this study, suggests otherwise.

"We showed that when the vapours from an e-cigarette are burned, it causes cells to release inflammatory proteins, which in turn aggravate stress within cells, resulting in damage that could lead to various oral diseases," said Irfan Rahman, from the UR School of Medicine and Dentistry.

"How much and how often someone is smoking e-cigarettes will determine the extent of damage to the gums and oral cavity," said Rahman.

The study, which exposed 3D human, non-smoker gum tissue to the vapours of e-cigarettes, also found that the flavouring chemicals play a role in damaging cells in the mouth.

"We learned that the flavourings - some more than others - made the

damage to the cells even worse," said Fawad Javed, a post-doctoral resident at Eastman Institute for Oral Health, part of the University of Rochester Medical Centre.

"It's important to remember that e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is known to contribute to gum disease," said Javed.

"Most e-cigarettes contain a battery, a heating device, and a cartridge to hold liquid, which typically contains nicotine, flavourings, and other chemicals. The battery-powered device heats the liquid in the cartridge into an aerosol that the user inhales.

"More research, including long term and comparative studies, are needed to better understand the health effects of e-cigarettes," added Rahman.

The low-down on rising medical costs

In 2015, Singapore's medical inflation rate stood high at 15 per cent, compared with 10 per cent globally. Why do medical costs keep rising? As a private specialist, I will try to offer some perspectives and suggestions. First, let us look at some facts.

Most Singaporeans have private insurance plans for hospitalisation in the form of Integrated Shield Plans, and many buy plans with riders to cover various out-of-pocket expenses. Some feel this encourages the doctors to charge exorbitantly.

In its report last month on managing the cost of health insurance in Singapore, the Health Insurance Task Force (HITF) said that there are "natural" factors for rising costs, such as an ageing population, rising awareness, better access to medical facilities and advancement in research. The task force also noted that cost inflation in private hospitals outpaces that in public hospitals, and that patients with insurance tend to seek treatment in private hospitals.

In reality, doctors work in a very small circle. Information on what doctors charge is easily available. In my course of work, when I refer my patients to other specialists, I always find out how much my patients are charged, and their outcomes. I will not refer future patients to any doctor who charges prohibitive fees.

Reputation is a doctor's greatest asset. No reasonable doctor would like to be labelled as exorbitant.

RISING AWARENESS, BETTER TREATMENTS
Thanks to better health education, more people are seeking early treatment or diagnosis. Take colon cancer screening, for example.

The Ministry of Health recommends that Singaporeans above 50 years of age undergo colon cancer screening. Although screening via colonoscopy is costly, early detection saves lives. On balance, medical studies showed that colon cancer screening is cost-effective.

In the old days, we merely did a histological examination on a colon cancer specimen to confirm its cancer status, and that cost less than S\$200.

Nowadays, once we diagnose colon cancer, we would do a series of specific mutation analysis tests to determine which chemotherapy would work best on it. The cost of this mutation analysis can top a thousand dollars. Decades ago, an endoscopy — inserting a long, tube-like instrument to inspect the inside of an organ or body cavity — was performed without any sedation or anaesthesia. Patients often felt great discomfort during the procedure.

But in the last 20 to 30 years, endoscopies have been performed with patients sedated. Most do not feel any discomfort from the procedure. But the sedative may make them groggy for a few hours after the procedure.

Nowadays, some doctors perform an endoscopy under general anaesthesia. The advantage is that patients can resume their normal duties shortly after the procedure. The downside is, again, higher costs.

In the old days, patients with unresectable liver cancer — where it was not possible to surgically remove part or all of the affected liver — were given a few months to live. These days, new treatments such as live-donor liver transplantation, and even an oral chemotherapy drug, are available. They can prolong the lifespan of such patients. But both are costly, and treatments can run up to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The cost of running a medical practice has gone up tremendously over the past few years.

Two major hospitals started operations over the past two years. They are supposed to bring in more capacity and competition, and lower costs.

But an unintended consequence is the acute shortage of skilled medical personnel. Nurses, therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, attendants, radiographers and receptionists are suddenly in short supply.

My nursing colleagues were offered a big pay rise to join the new hospitals. In return, existing hospitals have had to match the pay rise to keep their staff.

The resale prices of private medical clinics have also gone through the roof. The price of a medical suite at established private hospitals is more than twice that of the most-expensive condominium on Orchard Road. All these increases in overheads will eventually lead to higher hospital facility fees.

WAYS TO CONTROL COSTS

So what can we do? Insurers can compare the charges among different hospitals to identify the "outliers" who charge more than others. They can also study their clinical outcomes to see if the higher costs among the outliers are justified by better outcomes, and make this data public. Insurers can also set limits on how much a patient can claim per diagnosis and per admission. The patient can fork out the difference if he or she insists on seeing the doctor.

Insurers can introduce incentives for its clients to stay healthy, for example, by offering discounts for future premiums for those who have not made a medical claim, much like how motor insurers offer a "no claim bonus". Can we also reward patients for choosing a cheaper hospital/doctor, or to be discharged early?

Finally, we can bring back the Singapore Medical Association Fee Guidelines as a benchmark. This is one of the recommendations made by the HITF.

As a medical doctor, I do believe most medical staff and hospitals want to deliver cost-effective healthcare to patients. Any doctor or hospital that charges unreasonably high fees will not be able to attract patients in the long run.

It takes all parties — the doctors, hospitals, patients, insurers and the regulatory bodies — to act together to achieve cost-effective health care.

Dr Desmond Wai is a gastroenterologist and hepatologist in private practice.

Net telephony to take care of network issues: RS Sharma

NEW DELHI: Telecom regulator RS Sharma has said that proliferation of Internet telephony in India would offer consumers the option of making calls even when there is no mobile network connectivity as it will allow calls over Wi-fi networks, thus taking care of issues like call drops due to holes in network coverage.

Sharma, chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai), also took pot shots at operators for seeking additional "months" rather than the usual "weeks" for submitting their views as part of the consultation paper on timing and pricing of airwaves in the next auction, which can see 5G bandwidth making its debut. Usually operators ask for weeks, this time they have asked for months... we do give them time but that's not an indefinite process, so we will accommodate as many stakeholders as possible, in terms of giving them time and file their inputs. That does not mean we will continue to give them indefinite time," said Sharma.

Any consultation process of Trai concludes with issuing recommendations to the government, which Sharma said in this case of auctions, should "conclude within this financial year" through March 2018.

The regulator is in the midst of holding multiple consultations on issues like spectrum auctions, international interconnect usage charge (IUC), data ownership, privacy and security, and earlier this week came out with suggestions for internet telephony - a matter which was under consultation for more than a year allowing consumers to use Wi-Fi network of any service providers to make calls over the internet, besides the traditional route of circuit switch network.

Quarterly results, new data show economy could be turning around

MUMBAI: Recent data, including some better-than-expected corporate results in the three months ended 30 September, may indicate that the economy is turning the corner, say economists. Meanwhile, the government's huge bank recapitalisation drive is boosting investor sentiment. The two - the second was announced only on Tuesday - are dispelling the sense of gloom that set in after economic growth decelerated to 5.7% in the quarter to June - the slowest pace in three years. On Thursday, the BSE's benchmark Sensex extended the lifetime high it hit the previous day, gaining 0.32% to 33,147.13 points.

Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL), India's biggest maker of packaged consumer goods and a good measure for consumption demand in the economy, beat analysts' expectations on Wednesday, reporting a 16.42% increase in net profit for the September quarter on the back of a 4% increase in sales volume. HDFC Bank Ltd, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd and Axis Bank Ltd, cement maker ACC Ltd, metals producer Hindustan Zinc Ltd and software exporters like Infosys Ltd have also reported robust second-quarter growth, reinforcing confidence that the growth momentum is accelerating. More macro data, including that showing a cooling of inflation, and a rebound in exports and factory output suggest a favourable shift in the economy, recovering from the disruption caused by the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax and last November's demonetisation of high-value banknotes.

The National Democratic Alliance government, which on Tuesday announced a Rs 6.92 trillion of investment for the construction of roads and a Rs 2.11 trillion recapitalisation package for state-run banks weighed down by bad loans, has been under pressure to boost economic growth and create more jobs ahead of crucial state elections, including in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat, and national polls in 2019.

Rajiv Kumar, vice-chairman of the federal policy think tank Niti Aayog, said the measures announced on Tuesday indicated the best possible approach. "It gives impetus to economic growth while maintaining fiscal stability. This comes as a pleasant surprise to the private sector and will stimulate private investments in the economy," Kumar said in an interview. The bank recapitalisation plan will help address the bad-loan problem at banks which is constraining the economy, credit rating company Standard & Poor's said on Wednesday. Experts are deriving confidence from a rebound in industrial production to 4.3% in August, the fastest in nine months, as the disruptions caused by GST waned. There are signs that revival of the growth momentum may be just around the corner. The reason for this optimism lies in the trends in exports and imports in September 2017," said DK Srivastava, chief policy advisor at EY, in a note on Tuesday.

Modi, Rahul square off on GST, 5 detained over attack on Swiss couple, BJP seeks OBC-Patidar support: Top stories

NEW DELHI: Japan to propose OBOR-like project with India, US to counter China

Japan is set to propose a strategic dialogue with India, the United States and Australia to build ports and high-speed road networks across Asia to Africa, a plan aimed at countering China's cross-continent "Belt and Road" plan. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is expected to propose the idea of the four-party dialogue to US President Donald Trump on November 6, foreign minister Taro Kono was quoted as saying by the Nikkei business daily on Thursday. The Japanese proposal will be significant for India. Building cross-border infrastructure with friendly countries could help New Delhi blunt the Chinese initiative which it sees as an influence-securing project that also runs through Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. Read the story here.

PM Modi, Rahul Gandhi square off on GST, state of the economy

The government and the main opposition squared off over the Goods and Services Tax on Thursday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailing it as consumer-friendly and Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi blaming it for unleashing "a tsunami of tax terrorism". India's new indirect tax regime has emerged as a big election issue in Gujarat, with the main opposition party seeking to tap into the BJP's traditional vote bank among traders and small businessmen by playing on their apprehensions about the ambitious tax reform that was rolled out to some teething problems in July. The Congress has made the NDA government's handling of the economy its main poll plank, in a bid to end the BJP's 22-year reign in the state. Read the story here.

Quarterly results, new data show economy could be turning around

Recent data, including some better-than-expected corporate results in the three months ended 30 September, may indicate that the economy is turning the corner, say economists. Meanwhile, the government's huge bank recapitalisation drive is boosting investor sentiment. On Thursday, the BSE's benchmark Sensex extended the lifetime high it hit the previous day, gaining 0.32% to 33,147.13 points. More macro data, including that showing a cooling of inflation, and a rebound in exports and factory output suggest a favourable shift in the economy, recovering from the disruption caused by the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax and last November's demonetisation of high-value banknotes. Read the story here.

Ahead of Gujarat election, BJP goes all out to win Patidar-OBC support

The BJP is preparing to allot a substantial number of tickets to Patidars in Gujarat, a



move aimed at blocking any shift to the opposition Congress. The community, which constitutes about 14% of the state's population and has been traditionally loyal to the BJP, has been on the boil over its demand for reservation in government jobs and educational institutions. Hardik Patel, a young Patidar at the forefront of the stir, has met Congress leaders and is likely to join hands with the opposition party. BJP sources sought to play down the significance of Hardik's move, claiming that the community was loyal and did not desert the party even at the peak of a revolt by one of its tallest leaders - former chief minister Keshubhai Patel, a Leuva Patidar. Read the story here.

Five people detained over attack on Swiss couple at Fatehpur Sikri

Police on Thursday detained five people, including three minors, for allegedly assaulting a Swiss couple at Fatehpur Sikri near Agra, an incident that raised serious concerns over security of foreign tourists in India. The attack with stones and sticks, allegedly by a group of people on Wednesday, left Quentin Jeremy Clerc (24) with a fractured skull and with the risk of permanent hearing impairment. His girlfriend, Marie Droz (24), had a broken arm, besides bruises. External affairs minister Sushma Swaraj, who sought a report over the incident from the Uttar Pradesh government, said on Thursday evening that Droz has been discharged from hospital while Clerc's condition was improving. Read the story here.

We are willing to align with Shiv Sena in 2019 polls, says CM Fadnavis

Despite the continued tussle between the saffron allies, Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Thursday his party was willing to align with the Shiv Sena and it was for Uddhav Thackeray to decide whether he wants to continue an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). But even as he spoke of accommodating the Sena,

his message to Thackeray was that playing a dual role of ally and Opposition would cost his party dearly. "We have to accept the political reality that we do not have a majority, so we have to work with our ally. That's the people's mandate. My sole advice to the Sena is its attempts to act as Opposition as well as a party in power. This dual position is a breach of people's trust", he said in an interview to Hindustan Times. Read the stories here.

SC asks WhatsApp to improve redressal system to curb circulation of rape videos

The Supreme Court has asked popular messenger service WhatsApp to improve its redressal system to make it easy for lodging complaints against circulation of videos showing sexual violence and also curtailing them. It also asked the government to create an administrative mechanism to receive information of any child pornography, rape or gang rape content being circulated. This centralised agency, to be set up under the aegis of the CBI or the ministry of home affairs, will maintain data of videos and hash-banks to identify hashes of all known child pornography, rape and gang rape imagery. The court also suggested expansion of keywords, which when typed would flash messages warning the user against the search as it could lead to child pornography websites. Read the story here.

Opinion: Politics in the age of Modi is a 24x7 exercise. Is Rahul really up to the challenge?

As the seasons change, there is a spring in the step of the Congress which suggests that a long and harsh summer in the political wilderness maybe ending. Rahul Gandhi is finally set to take over the party leadership, there is a buzz around the Congress' aggressive social media strategy, new anti-BJP alliances are being cemented in poll-bound Gujarat, demonetisation and GST have become

useful weapons to attack the government and open rebellion by senior BJP leaders like Yashwant Sinha has given further ammunition to the Opposition. But the truth is, while the Congress maybe scenting a comeback, in reality it is still a case of 'Dilli dur ast'. Read the column here.

Tillerson says quadrilateral talks an attempt to move ties with India to next level

The US offer for India, Japan and Australia to be part of the four anchors of security and peace in the Indo-Pacific region was also an attempt to move relations with India to the "next level", secretary of state Rex Tillerson told reporters on way home from his South Asia trip. Asked if the Indian side was excited or nervous about the offer, which he first made in a speech in Washington DC, Tillerson said, "Yes, but I would be the first to acknowledge it is a new approach as well, and I think that we've had a - the US has had positive relations with India for 70 years but it's never quite moved to that next level... From time to time, the other side has taken a step back from the relationship for their own reasons." Read the story here.

Twitter bans ads from two Russian media outlets, cites US poll meddling

Twitter Inc on Thursday banned advertisements from accounts owned by Russian media outlets Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik, citing allegations by US intelligence agencies that the two had tried to interfere with the 2016 US election. RT and Sputnik condemned the decision, saying Twitter had encouraged ad spending, while Russia's foreign ministry said the ban was the result of US government pressure and that it was planning a response. San Francisco-based Twitter said in an unsigned statement on its website that election meddling is "not something we want" on the social network and that it had also done its own investigations of RT and Sputnik. Read the story here.

One Indian cricketer tested positive for doping: 2016 WADA Report

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) report of 2016 has revealed that one Indian cricketer has tested positive for banned substances among the 153 BCCI accredited cricketers. The cricketer, whose name has not yet been revealed will be the second after former India U-19 player Pradeep Sangwan to have tested positive. Sangwan was playing for Kolkata Knight Riders in 2013 when he tested positive during that year's Indian Premier League. According to the 2016 Anti-Doping Testing Figures, 138 cricketers registered under BCCI were tested 'In Competition' (IC) in which one cricketer has tested positive.

Maruti Suzuki says will move to electric cars, still working on a roadmap

MUMBAI: Maruti Suzuki India, the country's biggest carmaker, said on Friday it planned to build electric cars as the government strives to electrify all new vehicles by 2030, though it didn't give a timeline for the process.

Maruti Suzuki's chairman said there was still no clear roadmap on how the government aimed to achieve its target and a lot would depend on that.

"We will make electric cars but I can't give you the date just now because it is all very much a work in progress," RC Bhargava told reporters, after the company posted a 3 percent rise in quarterly profit, beating analysts' estimates.

India is working on a new auto policy that promotes the use of electric cars, and a draft is likely to be made public before the end of the year. This is a shift from an earlier policy that promoted hybrid and electric vehicles.

Sales of electric cars in India remain negligible, however, mainly due to the high cost of batteries which make the

vehicles expensive and out of reach for many buyers in a country where cars are as cheap as 250,000 rupees (\$3,800). A lack of charging stations also makes the whole proposition unviable for now.

Maruti's parent, Suzuki Motor Corp, has electric car technology which it can provide, Bhargava said, adding the Japanese company was also in talks with Toyota Motor Corp to form an alliance which may include sharing technologies like hybrid and electric.

Maruti dominates the small car market in India and has been launching more premium vehicles as competition heats up with newer and planned entrants such as Kia Motors and SAIC Motor Corp. Maruti also manufactures hybrid cars, demand for which has taken a beating after the government raised sales taxes on them to as much as 43 percent. Bhargava said the future of hybrid cars in India would depend on the level of taxes and the company was in talks with the government to lower them.

GROWTH SLOWING

Bhargava said that while the company continued to expect double digit sales growth over the remainder of fiscal 2018, it would slow from the 18 percent posted in the second quarter.

Earlier on Friday, Maruti reported a profit of 24.84 billion rupees for the second quarter ended Sept. 30, versus 24.02 billion rupees a year ago, helped by higher sales of compact and utility vehicles.

Analysts, on average, had expected a profit of 22.29 billion rupees, according to Thomson Reuters data.

Maruti, which provides the bulk of Suzuki Motor's revenues, sold a total of 492,118 vehicles during the quarter, up about 18 percent from a year ago.

Sales of compact vehicles, which include the Swift and Baleno, rose 43.5 percent, while sales of utility vehicles like the Ertiga and Vitara Brezza climbed 27.6 percent.

Maruti shares closed slightly higher at 8,114.45 rupees.

Rupee to get boost from govt's PSU bank recap: Report

NEW DELHI: The rupee is likely to get a boost from the government's PSU bank recapitalisation programme which is expected to support private capex recovery and increase foreign investor interest in domestic equity markets, says a report.

According to the global financial services major, "stronger growth and INR correlations with equities are supportive of further currency gains". Besides reviving credit growth after a period of weakness post demonetisation, the recap plan will help banks wind down their Non Performing Assets (NPAs) or bad loans and take up fresh credit, which should help boost a private capex recovery in India, the report noted.

According to Morgan Stanley economists, the announcement is not expected to impact fiscal deficit position of the country and inflation number, but is likely to have a positive impact on the economic growth parameter.

They see upside to their growth projections of 7.5 per cent for 2018-19, while not seeing a risk to macro-stability in terms of the fiscal deficit and inflation from this announcement.

"INR (rupee) should receive support from India's push to growth via a USD 32.5 billion recapitalisation of its public sector banks," the report said, adding that stronger growth and INR correlations with equities are supportive of further currency gains.

The rupee is currently hovering around Rs 65 level against the US dollar.

"We think that INR remains a high-quality emerging market story showing low sensitivity to rising US yields," the Morgan Stanley report said. Moreover, the foreign investor interest in the domestic equity market is likely to increase.

"Foreign investor interest in Indian equities should recover, where FPI's have been sellers of USD 4.3 billion in equities over the past two months," the report said.

Uber appoints banking executive Laurel Powers-Freeling as first UK chairman

MUMBAI: Uber appointed Laurel Powers-Freeling, who has held a series of banking roles, as its first UK chairman just as it battles to retain its operating licence in London, its most important European market. Powers-Freeling, who has previously been chief executive of retailer Marks & Spencer's banking arm M&S Money and a senior adviser at the Bank of England, will take on the newly created role from

Nov. 1. "Uber is transforming how people get around and as a business it is also undergoing an important period of change," she said in a statement. "I look forward to working with the UK business to help them manage and implement that change," she said.

Uber is battling to keep its 40,000 London drivers on the road after the British capital stripped it of its licence, deeming it unfit to run a

taxi service. It cited its approach to reporting serious criminal offences and background checks on drivers.

The Silicon Valley firm can continue to take passengers until an appeals process is exhausted, which could take years. The first hearing in the case is due on Dec. 11.

But next week, the southern English city of Brighton will decide on the firm's application to renew its licence in the area which is due

to expire on Nov. 4, in what would be a further blow to the company if it were rejected.

Uber's British management has been criticised by London Mayor Sadiq Khan for employing an "army of PR experts and an army of lawyers" and not engaging well enough with the authorities.

Uber, valued at around \$70 billion with backers including Goldman Sachs and BlackRock, hopes the

newly created UK independent non-executive role will help provide knowledge and experience to its British team.

"With this new position Laurel will help us with the next phase of changes we want to make to our UK business," said Uber's UK interim general manager, Tom Elvidge.

"We're determined to learn from the mistakes of the past and make things right," he said.

Andile Phehlukwayo stars as South Africa beat Bangladesh by 20 runs in 1st T20I

BLOEMFONTEIN: All-rounder Andile Phehlukwayo made a key breakthrough to stop Bangladesh's most threatening challenge on their tour of South Africa in the first Twenty20 international at Mangaung Oval on Thursday.

South Africa won by 20 runs after scoring 195 for four but opening batsman Soumya Sarkar went on a ferocious assault at the start of the Bangladesh innings before falling to Phehlukwayo for 47.

Bangladesh lost momentum and finished with 175 for nine.

"We knew they would come out with guns blazing," said stand-in South African captain JP Duminy. "But the guys stayed calm and backed their skills and their

variations." Sarkar and Imrul Kayes put on 43 off 25 balls for the first wicket and although the tourists lost two wickets they were still in with a chance with the total 92 for two when Phehlukwayo struck with the first ball of the tenth over. Phehlukwayo successfully sought a review after Sarkar was initially given not out after being struck on the pads after a 31-ball innings during which he hit five fours and two sixes.

Phehlukwayo also claimed the wicket of Mahmudullah in a four-over stint in which he conceded only 25 runs. South Africa had two key partnerships.

Quinton de Kock (59) and man of the match AB de Villiers, who made 49 off 27 balls, put on 79 off 51



balls for the second wicket before Farhaan Behardien (36 not out) and David Miller (25 not out) thrashed Bangladesh fought back in the middle overs. Rubel Hossain bowled an unbeaten 62 off the last five overs.

an outstanding 15th over in which he conceded only three runs and took the wicket of De Kock.

Off-spinner Mehedi Hasan took the first two wickets and conceded a respectable 31 runs in his four overs. "We pulled it back in the middle overs but the last five overs cost us the game," said Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan.

"Then we made a great start but didn't capitalise. For the first ten overs we were right in there."

The sides meet in the second and final Twenty20 international in Potchefstroom on Sunday with Bangladesh hoping to end a streak in which they lost two Tests and three one-day internationals before Thursday's match.

Hasan Ali stars as Pakistan thrash Sri Lanka in first T20I at Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI: Hasan Ali starred once again as Pakistan recorded a convincing seven-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the first Twenty20 in Abu Dhabi on Thursday.

Hasan Ali, who took 14 wickets in Pakistan's preceding 5-0 white-wash of the one-day series, took 3-23 in 3.3 overs as Pakistan skittled Sri Lanka out for a paltry 102 in 18.3 overs. Only Seekkuge Prasanna (23 not out) and debutant Sadeera Samarawickrama (23) put some resistance against a varied Pakistan bowling attack. Pakistan did lose Fakhar Zaman (six), Babar Azam (one) and Ahmed Shehzad (22) but were sent through to the target by Shoaib Malik and Mohammad Hafeez with 16 balls to spare.

That gave Pakistan a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Malik hit four boundaries in his



31-ball knock while Hafeez's 23-ball innings had three hits to the ropes as the pair added 39 for the unbroken fourth wicket stand.

It was again Pakistan's bowling which led them to victory.

Sri Lanka lost wickets at regular intervals after looking to build the

innings at 51-2 in the ninth over. But they lost their last eight wickets for another 51 runs and were bowled out for their second lowest Twenty20 total against Pakistan.

All six Pakistan bowlers took wickets with spinner Mohammad Hafeez (2-10) and pacer Usman

Shinwari (2-24) supplementing Hasan to the best effect.

Skipper Sarfraz Ahmed praised his bowling. "The basic aim is to get wickets and that we are doing," said Ahmed, whose team has now bowled the oppositions all out for the 23rd time -- the most by any team in all Twenty20 cricket.

"It was a complete team effort and we are doing everything well," said Ahmed, who now has ten wins in 12 Twenty20 internationals as captain. Sri Lankan skipper Thisara Perera admitted his team was undone by Pakistan's superior bowling.

"If we look back we didn't score runs so we have to put a good total on the board to win, full marks to Pakistan's bowling which is one of the best in the world at the moment," said Perera, captaining Sri Lanka for the first time.

Sent into bat, Sri Lanka lost Dilshan Munaweera for nought off the third ball of the first over while Dashun Gunathilaka made 11-ball 18 with three boundaries.

Samarawickrama and Ashan Priyanjan (12) had added 22 for the third wicket but wicket started to fall in cluster and Sri Lanka could never recover. Just like in one-day series, Hasan was at his best in taking wickets, removing Sachith Pathirana (four), Isuru Udana (nought) and Vikum Sanjaya (four) to improve on his previous best of 3-49 against the West Indies in Dubai last year.

Perera made six. It was left to Prasanna to hit two sixes in his run-a-ball 23 to get past 100-mark.

The second match is also in Abu Dhabi on Friday before the teams fly to Lahore for the last match on Sunday.

Swiss tennis great Martina Hingis quits for third and 'final' time



LONDON: Swiss tennis great Martina Hingis announced her retirement on Thursday, signalling the end of a career which took her from 1990s teenage superstar to doubles world number one some 20 years later.

The 37-year-old "Swiss Miss" has retired twice before -- once after testing positive for a metabolite of cocaine -- but she said the ongoing WTA Finals in Singapore will be her last tournament. "Here we are for the third, and final time," Hingis posted on Facebook, after her 6-3, 6-2 doubles win alongside Chan Yung-Jan over Anna-Lena Groenefeld and Kveta Peschke. Looking back now, it's hard to believe that almost exactly 23 years ago I made my professional debut. "The years that followed have been some of the most rewarding years of my life, both personally and professionally, but I believe the time has come for me to retire, which I will be doing after my last match here in Singapore." Slovakian-born Hingis took the tennis world by storm when she won her first three major titles, the Australian Open, Wimbledon and US Open, in 1997 at the age of just 16, opening a period of dominance. She had five Grand Slam singles titles to her name when she first retired in 2003 aged just 22 because of injuries, before returning to the sport two years later.

Hingis's comeback was short-lived and she stepped away from the sport again after failing a drugs test at Wimbledon in 2007. She could still end her career on a high in Singapore, with a semi-final in prospect against Timea Babos and Andrea Hlavackova. But she has enjoyed considerable success since her reincarnation as a doubles specialist, and ends her career at the top of the rankings and with 20 major titles in doubles and mixed doubles.

Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane to miss Manchester United clash with injury

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane will miss Saturday's Premier League clash with title rivals Manchester United with a hamstring injury, manager Mauricio Pochettino confirmed.

The in-form 24-year-old left the field at Wembley holding his upper leg in the 87th minute after scoring twice in last weekend's 4-1 win against Liverpool.

Spurs confirmed on Twitter that the England forward has been diagnosed with a "minor strain to the left hamstring", and Pochettino said at his pre-match press conference on Friday that Kane will not be involved at Old Trafford. "We can't take the risk," the Argentine said. "The doctor and medical staff made the decision to not take the risk. There is no sense in taking that risk and making the problem bigger."

Pochettino acknowledged his disappointment at being without the prolific forward but insisted it was "only a small issue". "The players are not ma-

chines and it is so difficult to cope with international duty and playing every three days," he added. "It is not a big problem, only a small issue, but he is not going to play (on Saturday)."

"We don't need to prove ourselves (without Kane). I think last season, in the period he was injured, you can see the stats and the games we played -- win and lose with Harry, win and lose without Harry."

"I'm disappointed because he is our main striker and I think he is one of the best strikers in Europe, in the world, and always you are going to miss your best striker. I am not silly or stupid to talk in a different way."



Steve Waugh urges Steve Smith to control emotions during Ashes

SYDNEY: Steve Waugh, former Australia captain, has some advice for Steve Smith, urging the skipper to keep his cool during the upcoming Ashes series against England.

Australia will host rivals England in a five-Test series, starting in Brisbane on November 23, as Smith and the hosts attempt to wrestle back the urn.

It looms as Smith's first Ashes as captain of Australia and all eyes will be on the star batsman.

Who is known for his emotional and fiery demeanor, Waugh, however, wants the 28-year-old Smith to keep

his emotions in check against Joe Root and the tourists.

"The only advice I'd say for Steve this series is maybe not show so much emotion when you're in the field," Waugh -- who enjoyed eight Test victories over England and two as captain -- told cricket.com.au.

"The camera is always on you as a captain.

If you're negative in your body language or you're kicking the ground, it's going to be magnified 100 times.

"The only thing I'd say to him is keep your emotions in check a bit more."

Waugh continued: "I al-

most talked to myself when someone would drop a catch or the bowlers weren't doing well.

"You almost want to show something either verbally or physically but you know that there's every chance it would be replayed on the big screen and the whole team will be watching five seconds later.

"It's about staying in control, composed even if you're a bit ruffled or the steam is coming out your ears.

"Don't let anybody know that. You've always got to stay in charge because people look at you for guidance here, they look for you to lead the way."

Puducherry become new associate member of BCCI

MUMBAI: Puducherry are now the newest associate members of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) after the Committee of Administrators (CoA) accepted their proposal. The Cricket Association of Puducherry (CAP) will represent the Union Territory ahead of the Pondicherry Cricket Association - Kalaimani and Pondicherry Cricket Association - Velmurugan, who were the other two parties who had staked their claims for an associate membership. The final decision in favour of the CAP was taken by the Supreme Court appointed CoA.P Damodaran, CAP Secretary expressed

his excitement over CoA's decision saying that it would help the game to develop in Puducherry. "We are delighted with the CoA verdict that picked us above two other contenders. It is the right decision and will really help the game grow in Puducherry," Damodaran was quoted as saying to The Hindu. The decision to grant Puducherry the associate membership was granted at the BCCI's annual special general meeting (SGM) earlier in October. "The CoA is of the view that there is no reason not to accept the recommendation of the Affiliation Committee and grant affiliation to the CAP.

State Football League-2017: Police plays 1-1 draw with Maharaja Sports in Premier Div match

SRINAGAR: In the ongoing State Football League-2017, only one Premier Division match was played at Synthetic Turf TRC here on Thursday (Oct 27) between J&K Police XI and Maharaja Sports which ended in a 1-1 draw.

In the closely contested match, both the teams missed several scoring opportunities. Zaid opened account for the Maharaja Sports in 22nd minute of the match. After conceding a lead, Police XI players attacked the opposite goalpost several times, but they failed to send the ball into the goal post. However, in 35th minute of the play, Tanveer scored an equaliser for the Police team and the first half ended with score line reading 1-1.

After that both the teams tried their best to take the lead, but failed to do so. In the last minutes of the game, players from both the sides stepped up the attacks, but failed at the last hurdle. When the referee blew the final whistle the score line read 1-1. Zahid from Maharaja Sports was declared as player of the match.



Meanwhile, the State Football League, a mega event first of its kind in the history of J&K football, is going on at different venues of the state with full swing drawing huge crowds to the football venues. More than 500 football teams and clubs with over 12000 players and over 1500 team officials are participating in the mega event, the aim of which is to unearth the hidden talent across

the State. The event is being held across the 22 districts of the state these days and is being organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Football Association (JKFA) under the auspices of State Sports Council and on the directions of All India Football Federation (AIFF).

While B-Division League is already completed with IFC Nowgam winning the title, the A-Division

League has reached to the final stage with Fort View FC and Novelty FC qualifying for final. In Super and Premier Division leagues, more than 60 percent matches have been completed. The premier division teams include J&K Bank XI, Forest XI, Police XI, Food and Supplies XI, Accountant General's XI, Maharaja FC, Iqbal FC, I-League Lone Star KFC, I-League Real Kashmir FC, Power Development Corporation and State Football Academy are participating in the event. The DFA Srinagar, DFA Anantnag, DFA Baramulla, Sopore Zone and Pattan Zone, DFA Budgam, DFA Kulgam, DFA Shopian, DFA Pulwama, DFA Ganderbal, DFA Zone Kupwara and Handwara, DFA Bandipora Zone, Hajin Zone, DFA Kargil and DFA Leh will send their teams for Kashmir province after the culmination of district leagues. Similarly, DFA Jammu, DFA Kathua, DFA Samba, DFA Reasi, DFA Udhampur, DFA Rajouri, DFA Poonch, DFA Doda, DFA Ramban, DFA Kishtwar will send their respective teams from Jammu province.