

TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

SUNDAY

- OCTOBER, 08, 2017
- 17 MUHARRAM 1439 AH
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- PAGES: 08

WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	27.4	9.1
JAMMU	33.6	20.0
LEH	22.0	2.1
KARGIL	23.2	5.0

SUNSET SUNDAY: 06:08 PM
SUNRISE MONDAY: 06:32 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR
 Partly Cloudy Clear Sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 27°C & 11°C respectively.

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

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MOEEN CALLS FOR GREATER ASIAN INVOLVEMENT IN ENGLAND

CM distributes scooties among deserving girl students at Kargil

Work on Zojila tunnel to start soon, Govt. keen on dev of Kargil, Leh: Mehbooba

Kargil, Oct 7: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today said that work on the construction of Zojila tunnel, connecting Ladakh region with Kashmir Valley, will start soon after conclusion of the necessary formalities. She said the Government is keen on the development and progress of both the districts of Kargil and Leh.

Addressing a function here after distributing scooties among the deserving girl students of Kargil district, the Chief Minister said ever since her taking over, the Government has flagged development and progress of Ladakh region as priority. She said she is herself supervising the development activities in the region and even comes to this place often to monitor the development activities.

Mehbooba Mufti said she is keen to have more interactions between



the people of different regions of the State to minimize misgivings and mistrust. In this regard she sought

support from the student community by joining more and more

▶ See **Mehbooba**...Pg 02

Rs 15 Crore CM package: LOCALS ACCUSE LAHDC OF DIVERTING FUNDS

Kargil, Oct 7: Locals from Poyen area of Kargil district in Jammu and Kashmir Saturday alleged that incumbent Chairman of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) has diverted the funds meant for town development to his own constituency that comprises group of villages.

The locals held a protest and demanded a probe into the alleged misappropriation of Chief Minister's Rs 15 Crore package.

"For the macadamization of roads

▶ See **Locals**...Pg 02

Braid chopping incidents spark protest and clashes



Srinagar, Oct 7: Mysterious braid chopping incidents sparked protest at several places in Kashmir Valley on Saturday.

The female students of Government College for Women MA Road assembled in college premises and staged a protest against unabated braid chopping incidents.

Asking authorities to nab the culprits and expose these criminal elements, the protesting students raised slogans against braid

cutting incidents. They alleged that police has miserably failed to nab the culprits and even those who are being captured by people are released after brief questioning.

Meanwhile in Chattabal area of Srinagar city intense clashes erupted after a braid chopping incident. The angry protesters hit to roads and pelted stones on government forces who responded with tear-smoke shelling.

▶ See **Braid**...Pg 02

AMID SHUTDOWN, TRADERS' STAGE PROTEST AGAINST ALLEGED POLICE EXCESSES

Anantnag, Oct 7: Amid shutdown, traders in South Kashmir's Anantnag district staged a protest against alleged police excesses on Saturday.

The protesting traders accused Station House Officer Anantnag of harassment and demanded his immediate transfer from the area.

"After clashes with protesters on Friday, the police party headed by Station House Officer not only lobbed tear-smoke shells inside the shops but also thrashed of the traders. The police also detained some of the shopkeepers at Reshi Bazar," the protesting traders told news agency CNS.

They said that if police excesses don't stop, they

▶ See **Traders**...Pg 02

CRPF sends 21k new AK plastic bullets to Kashmir to reduce pellets usage

MEERUT: The CRPF has sent 21,000 rounds of newly-developed and "less lethal" plastic bullets to the Kashmir Valley to tackle street protests, says a top officer of the force.

The bullets, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and manufactured by the Ordnance factory based in Pune, can be fitted in the AK series of assault rifles and will be an alternative to the much-criticised pellet shot-



guns. "Tests have shown that these plastic bullets are less lethal. This will reduce our

dependence on pellet guns and other non-lethal weapons used for crowd control," CRPF Director General (DG) R R Bhatnagar said.

He said this will be newest less lethal ammunition the force has introduced to tackle crowds and counter stone pelters in the Valley.

"About 21,000 rounds have just been sent for distribution to all our units," the DG said.

The Central Reserve Police

▶ See **CRPF**...Pg 02

CLASHES ERUPTED DURING CASO IN PULWAMA

Pulwama, Oct 7: Clashes erupted between government forces and locals after Army unit from 55 Rashtriya Rifles, 182 Battalion CRPF and SOG of Jammu and Kashmir cordoned off Belov village of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

Reports said that after receiving inputs about the presence of two militants in the village Cordon and Search Operation was launched in the village. As soon as the Forces started search operation, a large number of locals hit to roads and pelted stones on the armed forces.

Forces charged protesters with canes, however, as the clashes intensified, Government Forces fired tear smoke shells to disperse them. Locals alleged that a shell landed into the top storey of a house owned by one Ghulam Muhammad Dar, that caught fire.

▶ See **Clashes**...Pg 02

Article 370 reduced to only a pale shadow: CPI (M)

Jammu, Oct 7: CPI(M) Regional Committee, Jammu organized a one day convention today at Jammu highlighting the attempts made by those holding power to assault the constitutional provisions of special status under Article 370 of the Constitution of India. A large number of people participated in the convention.

While addressing the convention, Mohammad Yousof Tarigami, senior CPI(M) leader and legislator said that at a time when alienation of the people of Kashmir has reached to an unimaginable level, the response of Government of India should have been to understand and address this emerging chal-



lenge politically but unfortunately the RSS, core of the present government, is vehemently advocating the measures which instead of overcoming this sense of alienation is bound to further deepen it. The constitutional

▶ See **CPI(M)**...Pg 02

JAMMU MUSLIM FRONT PITCHES FOR COMMUNAL HARMONY

Srinagar, Oct 7: An emergency meeting of members of Jammu Muslim front (JMF) was held at its office chamber where the prevailing situation in Jammu was discussed at length and the point of communal divide and branding of arms sword were discussed at length and role of communal force to create a wedge was under discussion.

The meeting was chaired by its Chairman Shuja Zaffar and addressed by its President Qazi Imran, Habib Sheikh, Rashid Ahmed, Sadiq Bhat Coordinator, Bashir Qureshi Press Secretary.

Speakers have strongly condemned the Chowadi incident which was to flare communal divide and target way

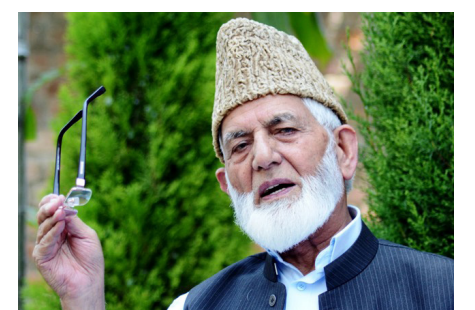
▶ See **Jammu**...Pg 02

Geelani concerned over human rights violations

Srinagar, Oct 7: Chairman all parties Huriyat conference, Syed Ali Geelani on Saturday said that people pursuing right to self-determination are facing worst type of state sponsored terrorism. Expressing his deep concern over human rights violations, Geelani said that unabated killings and brutalities are worst form of state terrorism.

Geelani in his appeal to UN General secretary and international organisations for human rights urged to take cognizance of rights violations and added that people in state are worst sufferers.

Pro-freedom leader said that it is unwise and undemocratic to affix movements pursu-



ing right to self-determination with terrorism and stressed civilised world to dislike and resent every form of terrorism.

▶ See **Geelani**...Pg 02

DEFERMENT OF ANANTNAG BY ELECTIONS BLOT ON PDP'S FACE

Exposes Chief Minister for ensuring deferment

Srinagar Oct 7: Lashing out at PDP for tactfully ensuring deferment of By Elections to Anantnag Parliamentary Constituency under the garb of deteriorating situation in South Kashmir, the J&K Pradesh Congress Committee today blamed Chief Minister for evading defeat in the elections, saying that PDP, which is fully responsible for deteriorating situation has lost ground miserably, as a result, the polls were deferred in connivance with the Centre Govt to save the dented image on the part of PDP

Commenting on the decision of holding elections in

▶ See **Elections**...Pg 02

Saving even one life is great contribution to humanity: DGP Vaid

Inaugurates 2 day workshop on live surgery at Police Hospital Srinagar

Srinagar, Oct 07: Highlighting the need of operating dial 108 Emergency Ambulance Service in the State like other states of country the Director General of Police, Dr. S.P Vaid has said that saving even one life is great contribution to humanity. Dr. Vaid was speaking on the inaugural function of the two day live demonstration on ENT surgeries programme titled Rhinoplasty and FESS at Po-

lice Hospital here today.

Dr. S.P Vaid who was the chief guest on the inaugural session said that the conferences like this are very inspiring and beneficial to the host hospital and to the attending delegates. He said that the police department acts as an emergency department in many situations. Because of the nature of the duties and in normal course police men and officers do also face health



issues. Keeping this in view we are making all efforts to provide better health care

facilities to our men and women.

While complementing organizers for the holding conference, he said that there is no dearth of talent in the State and hopefully in near future doctors and experts not only from the country but also abroad will visit Kashmir and take part in such conferences and events. He said that under a centrally sponsored

▶ See **DGP**...Pg 02

KCCI delegation calls upon JK Bank Chairman WE SHOULD CULTIVATE AND PROMOTE RICH CREDIT CULTURE: PARVEZ AHMED

Srinagar, Oct 07: The newly elected executive body of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) today called upon Chairman and CEO J&K Bank Parvez Ahmad at Corporate Headquarters.

The chairman felicitated the elected members led by President KCCI Javed Ahmed Tenga, for getting elected to the premier business chamber of valley in recently held elections.

Interacting with the office bearers, Chairman and CEO Parvez Ahmad said, "There is a lot of synergy between chamber and the bank. We would continue to work in

▶ See **Parvez**...Pg 02

ALTAF BUKHARI INAUGURATES AADHAAR ENROLMENT CENTRE FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

'Girlchild is honour, blessing for society'

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 7: Minister for Education, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari Saturday inaugurated Aadhaar enrolment centre for students, up to higher secondary level, of Srinagar at Kothi Bagh Girls Higher Secondary School on the institute's annual day celebration function.

On the occasion, Project Director Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Abdul Rashid War, who is also Registrar for Aadhaar enrolment of school children, informed that around 14 lakh students in Jammu and Kashmir are yet to be enrolled for the Aadhaar facility.

In this regard, as many as 100 Aadhaar enrolment centres have been set up in Phase-1 in six districts of the State which includes Shopian, Pulwama, Anantnag, Dodha, Kishtwar and Samba. The rest of districts will be covered in Phase-2 for which the necessary equipment, machinery and other measures are being undertaken.

The Minister, who was the chief guest at the annual day function, said



that through the enrollment process, teachers and their families who have

not yet availed the facility can be covered as well.

On the occasion, several cultural items, skits and programmes highlighting social and environmental issues, were performed by various groups of girl students and teachers of the Higher Secondary School which was appreciated by the audience.

Addressing the audience, Bukhari said that Girls are honour and a blessing for the society. He said that Kothi Bagh HSS has a huge contribution in the deliverance of education to girl students in Kash-

mir. He promised that this school will be developed in such a way so that it comes up as one of the fine schools of the State.

Commenting on braid cutting incidents, Bukhari said that the people should not take law into their hands and cooperate with the police and the administration so that perpetrators behind these acts are brought to book.

Later, the Minister distributed mementoes and certificates among the students who fared well in academics and various extra-curricular activities. He also announced Rs 5000 as a token of appreciation to music teacher, Ms Sabiha for the better guidance to the music students.

Secretary School Education, Farooq Ahmad Shah was the guest of honour. The function was also attended by Director School Education, Kashmir, Dr G.N Itoo, Project Director SSA, Abdul Rashid War, CEO Srinagar, Farooq Ahmad Dar, Principals of various colleges and other concerned officials.

TRADITIONS CONNECT US WITH OUR ROOTS, RICH CULTURE: PRIYA SETHI



JAMMU, OCTOBER 07: Minister of State for Education and Tourism, Priya Sethi, today hailed festivals as the essence of our tradition which connects people with their culture.

Speaking at a function organised to mark Karva Chauth celebration, she said this festival in which married women fast from sunrise to moonrise for the safety and longevity of their husbands reflects our rich culture.

"The enthusiastic participation of women folk depicts how strongly we are connected to our roots and are keeping age old traditions alive" she said.

The evening celebration on the eve was organised here at Geeta Bhavan. She was joined by political leader Yudhvir Sethi who was co-organiser. The impressive function attracted thousands of women who participated in different events in large numbers. The performers enthralled the audiences with

their folk songs, Dogri Pakhan, Bhangra and musical feasts.

Priya Sethi while congratulating women for celebrating this festival said this is how we stay firmly rooted in our rich culture. "As a culture minister and as a citizen of historic Jammu city, I believed that it is my duty to organise special events on such occasions and this is for the third consecutive year that we are celebrating this event with traditional gaiety and fervour", she said adding that this event creates a bonding between us all.

Special draws were held for participants on the occasion. Earlier, the programme started with lighting of Traditional Lamp by MoS Priya Sethi along with political leaders Ashok Koul, Yudhvir Sethi, Suresh Jamwal and Usha Chowdhary. Bodhraj Sharma president Sanatan Dharam Sabha, Geeta Bhawan was also present.

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MEHBOOBA

interactive sessions in which they come to learn from each other's regions in a better way.

Responding to the demands of the students, the Chief Minister said she has already directed providing buses to the students of local college and increasing the accommodation for students there. She also said that sports facilities for the students of the district would further be strengthened.

Earlier, Chairman, Legislative Council, Haji Anayat Ali also addressed the gathering and thanked the Chief Minister for taking keen interest in the development of Kargil district. He sought early start of work on the Zojila tunnel.

Minister for Public Works, Naeem Akhtar; MLA, Kargil, Asgar Karbalai; CEC, LAHDC, Kargil, Kachoo Ahmad Ali; executive councilors, LAHDC, Kargil; Deputy Commissioner, Gulzar Hussain and other officers of district administration were present on the occasion.

LOCALS

in Kargil town and other developmental works to be carried out within the Municipal limits, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti announced a package of Rs 15 Crore, but ironically that package is being used for the development of link roads and villages," the protesters told news agency CNS.

They alleged that LAHDC Chairman Ahmed Ali Khan Kacho and MLC Haji Anayat Ali have used major chunk of funds for their respective constituencies. "Funds have been utilized for the development of villages like Urubal, Apathi, Bodh Khurbo, Chutumail, Tumail that don't fall within the city limits. Surprisingly, the Poyen area that is in the heart of Kargil district has been ignored and even macadamization process was not carried out there," said the protesters.

They appealed Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti to order a thorough probe in this regard.

BRAID

The clashes disrupted normal life there while shopkeepers downed their shutters.

Eyewitnesses told news agency CNS that protests also erupted at Saidakadal area of Srinagar city where a woman foiled braid chopping attempt. Reports said that large number of people shortly after the incident hit to roads and blocked vehicular movement. Police rushed to spot and pacified the agitated protesters.

Reports from Narbal area of District Budgam in Central Kashmir said that unknown miscreants sprayed some chemical on the face of a non-local labor as a result he felt unconscious. The victim whom police identified as Muhammad Rafiq of West Bengal was shifted to JVC Hospital Bemina.

Protests were held in two villages of Pulwama district in south Kashmir after braids of two women were allegedly cut by unknown persons.

Reports said that people, mostly women, took to streets in Manghama and Pahoo villages after braids of two women were allegedly chopped off.

They said that the protesters raised pro-freedom and anti-government slogans.

The protesters alleged that the government has failed to provide safety to them.

Braid Chopping incidents were also reported from Sangarwani and Qalampora villages of the Pulwama district.

Pertinently, hair of several young girls and women in many parts of the Valley has been mysteriously found chopped during the past month.

TRADERS

will go for indefinite strike.

Shops and other business establishments remained shut in the district except KP road where shopkeepers did normal business.

Reports said that youth at Reshi Bazar, Mattan Chowk and Achabal Ada emerged in large numbers and pelted stones on government forces. Witnesses said that police lobbed tear-gas shells to disperse the protesting youth. Due to clashes and shutdown, normal life was disrupted in the town.

CRPF

Force (CRPF), deployed in counter-insurgency and law and order operations in Jammu and Kashmir, had ordered for the plastic bullets so that troops can just replace lethal metal bullets and use the new plastic ones.

Bhatnagar said both 47 and 56, the AK series of rifles, are used by the CRPF units deployed in the Kashmir Valley. The bullets have been prepared in such a calibre that it fits the barrel, he added.

"As soon as a crowd or stone pelting incident is encountered, the troops just need to change the bullets and fire," the DG said. Bhatnagar added that the force has not done away with other non-lethal weapons and is getting more pump action guns fitted with metal deflectors so that pellet injuries do not go above the waist.

"Even our specialised anti-riot unit RAF can use it at some point of time to render their duties. We will see how to go about it in the future," the DG said.

The usage of pellets in the Kashmir Valley had come under heavy criticism after locals suffered grievous injuries, including blindness in some cases, in the last few years.

The Union government had then ordered for the introduction of chilli-based PAVA shells to replace the pellet shotguns.

CLASHES

The house was damaged in the fire. A police official told news agency CNS that they will ascertain the cause of fire.

During the clashes several people were wounded. The police official said that the CASO concluded without any success.

CPI (M)

provisions under Article 370 guaranteeing autonomy to the state, which has been virtually reduced to a pale shadow of what it was in 1950, is being further desperately targeted day in and day out. Statements are regularly pouring in from those who are in authority suggesting the abrogation of Article 370 and removing of Article 35(A), the essence of this constitutional provision. What is the experience? It sufficiently demonstrates that the more attempts for over-centralization drive leads to more dissatisfaction among the vast sections of the people.

The problem with the Modi government is that it lacks inclusiveness. Promoting sectional and regional divisions will only encourage disruptive forces. A serious attempt is being made by those holding power to desperately pursue the agenda which can only result in trifurcation of the state on communal lines. The rights and interests of the people in all the regions can genuinely be protected only through the unity of people of all the shades in state. Harmonizing the relationship between the regions and communities should be the focus for all who cherish the values of brotherhood and plurality. Energies must be focused for preserving this unity and foiling the attempts of those who are mounting attacks on the very foundations of our plural ethos. Article 370 and 35(A) have provided guarantees for all the permanent citizens of the state to move together for a better future. Any infringement to this constitutional guarantee in any form is bound to undermine the basic interests of our citizens and will further create discord among the ranks of our people.

Sham Prasad Kesar, Jammu regional secretary of the party castigated the attempts being made by the divisive and communal forces to disturb the unity and brotherhood in the region by raising the issue of trifurcation of the state as the only panacea in given circumstances. Unity of people of all the three regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is the only guarantee for long lasting peace and prosperity of our state. Resolution moved by Kesar condemning the brutalities of RSS in Kerala claiming a large number of lives of CPI(M) cadre in last three decades was unanimously adopted.

JAMMU

side vendors to light the fire of unrest. The cautioned the Muslim community brethren not to fall prey to anti social elements who take undue advantage of opportunity to fan communal divide and are after cheap publicity.

Chairman of the Front said Jammu Muslim are peace loving and have no love for elements of communal divide. While speaking on the occasion he showed his concern on some law enforcing officers whose instead of performing in judicial ways are indulging in Hooliganism and are threatening peace loving citizens. He suggested to Govt. that such ill mannered officials should be retired who are blot on the good policy.

He also appealed that any people who try to take undue advantage or instigate help anti social elements for creating disturbances be brought to the notice of administration so that peace and communal harmony of the Jammu is not bitter.

While thanking the members of organization and other community members who participated in mourning procession to encourage the atmosphere of harmony and take the message of imam message to their respective community.

While thanking Raj Kumar Gupta President of Gua Shalla Jammu, Devanand Balmiki Samaj, S. Peter Chowhan Christian

social worker, Sardar Mohinder Singh Social Worker, in participating with Shia Sunni of Jammu to pay rich tribute to Imam Hussain grandson of Prophet. Who laid his life for peace justice and uphold the path of humanity.

JMF leaders said people of the state and administration should learn lesson from the esteem sacrifice of 72 of Karbala.

People having love for peace harmony should ensure and defeat the nefarious design of anti social elements who are bent upon creating an atmosphere of communal divide.

Shuja Zaffar, chairman of the front has appealed to the people of state to ensure peaceful atmosphere as many innocent lives have gone wasted.

GEELANI

Syed Ali Geelani expressed his deep grief and concern over the loss of precious lives in Islam Abad, Tral and Bijbaha, during past few days saying that killing on political differences is sheer violation of human and moral values and terming it very sad, added that it should never happen.

Appealing people to maintain discipline and avoid confusion and disorder, Geelani said during the campaign against braid choppers it is appropriate that we should not take any step which may provoke state forces for retribution and carry out violent means against the people.

Reiterating TRC Chalo call on October 14, Geelani appealed to make event a big success and asked people to demonstrate their political power and send a message to global assemblies while raising high pitched slogans in favour of right to self-determination, for which oppressed people offered immense sacrifices.

Geelani while lashing at Tihar jail authorities for their inhuman behavior against those arrested by NIA, including Hurriyat leaders Shabir Ahmad Shah, Altaf Ahmad Shah, Ayaz Akbar, Peer Saif u ullah, Raja Meraj-u-Din Kalwal, Nayem Ahmad Khan, Mohammad Aslam Wani, Shahid-ul-Islam, Farooq Ahmed Dar, Zahoor Ahmed, Javed Ahmed, Nazir Ahmed, journalist Kamran Yousuf and warned authorities, saying if any untoward happens to them, the local puppet rulers shall have to face consequences.

Geelani urged human rights organizations and Amnesty International to look into the serious matter, do everything possible to save the lives of these prisoners, saying, denying basic facilities like medical treatment was the worst violation of the basic rights specified for the prisoners and added that these detained leaders while facing worst character assassination campaign would emerge as victorious and innocents.

ELECTIONS

2019, The Party Spokesperson hit out at PDP for tactfully evading defeat, saying that deferment of By Elections to Anantnag has exposed tall claims of Chief Minister about her Govt's performance, indicating that this Party has lost the ground miserably, not in a position to face the electorate.

The decision of holding By Elections in 2019 shows the double standards & indifferent attitude of the Centre Govt about the wellbeing of the people, who continues to remain unrepresented in the Lok Sabha, he said.

He described the decision as very callous, undemocratic and as a ploy to undermine the authority of democratic Institutions in the State in order to benefit the ruling Party in the State. He said Centre and State Govt are doing experiments to get benefitted, but I want to tell both State and Centre Govt that people have lost faith in democratic process under the present regime, feeling isolated due to the callous attitude of both State and Centre, the day is not far, when both PDP & BJP will vanish completely from the State, he said.

He said how long Centre would keep PDP alive on oxygen, the fact matter is that, this party (PDP) is no more relevant in Kashmir valley, besides BJP has also lost the ground in Jammu miserably, as both the Parties have crossed all limits of betrayal and suppression, he added

Congress Spokesperson lambasted Centre Govt for supporting every wrong initiative of the State Govt stating that Centre is equally responsible for the crisis in Kashmir, resulting in deep alienation among the people in all the three regions of the State.

DGP

scheme dial 108 Emergency Ambulance Service have been started in whole of the country and at places the service has proved very beneficial. He said that if this scheme is launched in our state also we will be able to save a number of lives in road accidents, heart attacks and other accidents.

Director Health Services, Kashmir Dr. Saleem-U-Rehman while speaking on this occasion said that organizing such conferences is commendable as young doctors are exposed

to the experienced doctors of the country. While appreciating the efforts of the Police hospital he said that the hospital should continue such endeavors in future as well. He said that emergency care has become very necessary and we need to evolve mechanisms so that precious lives in road traffic accidents and other emergency cases where very less time is available for survival of patients are saved.

In his welcome address Dr. Bilal Raja Medical Superintendent, Police Hospital, Srinagar said that the programme is the 3rd of its kind during the current year which provided platform to the doctors from the hospital, city and periphery to watch very experienced and qualified doctors from other parts of country conducting surgeries and interact them live during the operation.

He thanked Dr. Sanjeev Sachdeva, Director ENT MAX Hospital and Dr. Varinder Gatsas for attending the conference and sharing their valuable experiences. He thanked the Director General of Police for over all support and assured him that such academic exercises will continue in future as well.

Dr. (Prof.) Rouf Ahmad, HoD ENT, Govt. Medical College, Srinagar who is the Organizing Chairman of the event said that these events are very necessary in the imparting practical knowledge to the doctors and paramedics. He said that pooling of specialist doctors in the peripheries is very necessary which will help in providing medical services to the people from far of places near to their homes.

The inaugural session was attended by ADGP Housing, A.K Choudhary, Director Health Services, Kashmir, Dr. Saleem-U-Rehman, IGP Crime, Alok Puri, IGP Kashmir, Munir Ahmad Khan, IGP Railways, Shri Mubarak Ahmad Ganie, IGP (Hqrs.) PHQ, Surinder Kumar Gupta, AIG (P&T), Sheikh Junaid Mehmood, AIG (Pers.) Mubassir Latifi, AIG (Comm.) Manoj Pandit, Commandants of Armed police, senior police officers and number of doctors and senior paramedics.

Dr. Sanjeev Sachdeva, Director ENT MAX Hospital and Dr. Varinder Gatsas conducted the live surgeries which were demonstrated live to the audience of doctors and paramedics.

PARVEZ

close coordination and explore and exploit the under-served and potential sectors of the economy to strengthen the economy and increase employment opportunities for the local youth".

"This elected body has taken over the reins of chamber at a crucial time and have to play an important role in reviving the economy of the state," he added.

Among numerous issues discussed during the meeting, Chairman announced to set up a coordination committee comprising of the Bank and KCCI members which shall oversee the issues faced by the traders and also to explore the common areas of interest. "Also a technical committee will address the issues faced by traders in validating the Detailed Project Reports (DPR)", said Chairman.

The chairman stressed upon the need to encourage entrepreneurship in those sectors which will strengthen local economy in the given circumstances like the potential available in import substitution, which has been estimated at Rs40,000 crore. "Let's encourage the young entrepreneurs to enter into franchise with reputed brands across India. At the same time, we need to cultivate a rich credit culture among the businesses in the state so that confidence based lending is strengthened. During the last one year, we have strengthened the credit portfolio in the state of Jammu and Kashmir which stands at par with rest of India".

"In line with our business strategy, our focus has been to exploit the potential sectors like horticulture, handicrafts and tourism. Our exposure in apple finance has increased to almost Rs.3000 Crore in last 3 years benefiting around 170000 growers.

The members of KCCI also apprised the chairman of the issues faced by tourism sector since the unrest of 2016 and requested for specific measures. "The negative publicity has to be countered by the tourism players and we will also like to play our part in helping the people associated with hospitality sector," said Parvez Ahmed.

The KCCI requested the bank to leverage the credit guarantee fund scheme in an improved manner and also urged the bank to bring more improvement in its customer service at various levels.

The meeting was also attended by KCCI Sr. Vice President Nasir Hamid Khan, General Secretary Dr. Gazala Amin, Joint Secretary Muzaffar Majid Jan, Junior Vice President Fayaz Ahmad Punjabi and Treasurer Sheikh Imran. Also Sr. President Abdul Rashid, President Abdul Rashid Shegan, President P K Tickoo and Vice President Fayaz Ahmad Zargar were present.

JK Chief Justice visits Anantnag

Directs digitization of records, speedy disposal of cases

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 07: Chief Justice, Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Justice Badar Durrez Ahmed today visited court complexes of Principal and District Sessions Judge Anantnag and Sub-Judge Bijbehara and Pahalgam to take stock of developmental works there and directed fast-tracking pending cases.

He was accompanied by Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, Principal Secretary to the Chief Justice, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Mohammad Younis Malik and SSP Anantnag, Altaf Ahmad Khan.

During the visit, the Chief Justice interacted with the lawyers who presented their demands including the upgradation of facilities for the litigants, filling up of vacancies of Munsifs, chambers for the lawyers and other relating issues.

"Ensuring fast-track disposal of court cases shall be our lasting contribution and every one of us needs to contribute in this regard," he told the lawyers.



The Chief Justice said that technological interventions need to be introduced in all the courts and in this direction e-courts have been established for speedy disposal of the court cases. He said that Anantnag will be the first district where the digitization of records shall be introduced which will be a step towards going paperless.

The Chief Justice expected the judges and lawyers to work in tandem for the expeditious disposal of court cases. He directed that cases pending over 10 years should be disposed off within a month followed by prioritizing the cases which are pending for over 5 years.

On the occasion, Justice Magrey said that "we are duty bound to provide

timely deliverance of justice and to mitigate the miseries of litigants". He said that 24 munsifs which have been recently appointed shall be posted which will to a large extent help in clearing the pendency of the courts. He also called upon the presidents of Bar Associations to encourage more lady lawyers in the practice.

Later, the Chief Justice visited the Sarnal area where 56 Kanals of land have been identified for construction of new District Court Complex. He directed the DC to submit the revenue documents to the Principal and District Sessions Judge, Anantnag so that DRP formulation and execution of work shall be taken up at an earliest.

On the occasion, Principal and District Sessions Judge, Syed Towkeer Ahmad, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Mohammad Amin Mir, Additional District Judge, Masarat Jabeen, all Sub-Judges of subordinate courts, Presidents Bar Associations of Anantnag and Bijbehara and lawyers fraternity were present.

Ganga inaugurates dev works at Ramgarh

'Town to achieve ODF status in 6 months'

SAMBA, OCTOBER 07: The Minister for Industries and Commerce, Chander Parkash today inaugurated a string of development works at Ramgarh town.

He dedicated three lanes and drains constructed by Municipal Committee Ramgarh to the general public. He also laid foundation stone of community toilet to be constructed at a cost of Rs 10.50 lakh by MC Ramgarh.

The Minister interacted with various public delegations who appreciated the quality of works being executed.

On public demand, the Minister directed EO Ramgarh to submit proposal for renovation of pond at Rajwal. He said that 300 toilets are under construction in the area and announced that Ramgarh town shall be 'Open Defecation Free' within next six months. He also informed that proposal for upgrading Ramgarh road has been sent for approval



under Central Road Fund (CRF) scheme and is expected to be sanctioned soon. He announced that one more community Facility Centre would be sanctioned for the town which shall cater to vast population of the area. He added that government has laid special focus on upgrading of rural infrastructure to provide people modern amenities under Health, PWD, Education and other sectors.

The Minister was accompanied by Executive Engineers of PDD, PHE, R&B, BDO Ramgarh, EO Ramgarh and other officials.

Kavinder reviews progress of development works in Chatta area of Jammu

Listens to people's issues

JAMMU, OCTOBER 07: Speaker Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Kavinder Gupta today inspected ongoing construction and repair works in Chatha area including renovation of facilities at the local Cremation Ground.

The Speaker directed the concerned executing agency to speed up the work for early completion.

Upon the request of the locals, the Speaker assured them that renovation of Cremation Shed, Entry Gate & other allied works would be undertaken at the earliest. He further assured that the demand for construction of pulley over local nallah and construction of pathway towards the cremation ground would also be taken into consideration. He also directed the officials to identify the land for parking purpose near



the cremation ground.

The Speaker said that it was prime responsibility of the government to keep such places in a good condition to avoid inconvenience to the people.

He further said that the repair and construction works of other cremation grounds

will also be taken up soon.

The locals also apprised Speaker about other problems faced by them.

Responding to the demands, the Speaker said that the process of improving the electricity supply, water supply, upgrading of lanes and drains has already been

taken up and left out issues would be resolved at the earliest. To strengthen drainage network, Kavinder directed the concerned officials for renovation of nallahs in the area.

Listing dev works taken up in the area, the Speaker said that he was making all out efforts to fulfill the demands of the people of his home constituency.

Asserting that welfare of the people was top priority of the government, Kavinder directed the concerned officials to redress public grievances in a time-bound manner. "Any carelessness in redressal of the just demands of the public shall not be tolerated" he asserted.

Senior officers of concerned departments, local residents, social and political activists were also present on the occasion.

Principal Secretary APD reviews NMSA progress

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 07: To review the progress made under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), a meeting of the empowered Committee was held at SKUAST-K Shalimar which was presided over by Principal Secretary Agriculture Department, Sandeep Kumar Nayak.

Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K, Nazir Ahmad, Vice Chancellor SKUAST-J, Dr. P.K. Sharma, Director Agriculture Kashmir, Syed Altaf Ajiz Andrabi, Director Agriculture Jammu, H.K. Razdan, representative of Director Horticulture and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

Director Agriculture Kashmir, who is also Mission Director for NMSA, gave a detailed presentation of action plan and various issues, prospects under NMSA. He highlighted the ongoing, as well as newly proposed activities/



programmes related to sustainable agriculture with a special emphasis on soil and Water conservation, water use efficacy, Soil Health Management and Rain, fed Area Development.

The meeting was informed that since the sustainable Agricultural productivity depends on quality and availability of natural resources like soil and water, therefore appropriate location-specific measures like establishment of Mobile Soil Testing Labo-

ratories, Water Harvesting Technology etc. need to be taken into consideration.

Director Agriculture also highlighted the need of intergraded/ composite farming system to make agriculture more sustainable productive and climate resilient.

Speaking on the occasion, the Principal Secretary took a detailed review of various components of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. During the meeting, Committee sanctioned two

Mobile Soil Testing Laboratories for central Kashmir, each for Leh, Kargil, Rajouri, and Poonch districts.

Meanwhile, the various proposals submitted by the Mission Director to the Committee were agreed upon in principle. Sanction was accorded to raise the allocation under rain fed area development programme from Rs. 1.10 crore to Rs 3 crore, besides allocating funds under different components of NMSA.

Dy CM lays foundation of Rs 3.96 cr sewerage project

Says Govt focused on development of Jammu city; Cautions people against misinformation

JAMMU, OCTOBER 07: Deputy Chief Minister Dr. Nirmal Singh today said that modern and quality infrastructure is essential for speedy development of an area and it is the endeavor of present dispensation to upgrade and strengthen the existing infrastructural edifice in the state. He was speaking after laying foundation stone of construction/ upgrading of Rehari Nallah downstream Jewel Chowk to its out fall (Phase-2nd) taken up under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) here today.

The 577 mtr long sewerage is being executed by UEED through Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) and would be completed at an estimated of Rs. 3.96 crore. The project would benefit residents of Jewel Chowk, Krishna Nagar, Rajinder Nagar, Company Bagh, Canal Road, M. A. Stadium and its adjoining

areas.

Legislators Rajesh Gupta, Sat Sharma, Commissioner Secretary Housing and Urban Development Hirdesh Kumar, Chief Engineer UEED Haneef Lone, Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu Arun Manhas, Joint Commissioner JMC Rajesh Sharma, Executive Engineer UEED Rajesh Gupta and other senior officers of concerned departments were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister informed that first phase of this project has already been completed and assured that the remaining work would be completed within stipulated time frame. He said that timely and quality completion of projects is priority of the state government which is prerequisite for accelerating economic, trade and social activities.

He maintained that under the leadership of Prime Minister Nar-



endra Modi the country is witnessing a tremendous improvement in all fields of development with emphasis on equipping the unattended areas with enhanced basic services.

While highlighting various upcoming and completed projects in the city, Deputy Chief Minister said that these projects are path breaking steps towards its development

on modern lines. He said these projects including multi-storey parking projects, Jammu Ring Road Project, upcoming ambitious general bus stand multi-facility centre, Maharaja Hari Singh Park, Multi Tier Parking City Chowk and one each parking projects proposed at Panjithri and on circular road aim at to give new look to Jammu.

Projects like Tawi River Front

Development project, Artificial Lake, development of heritage sites including Mubarak Mandi Royal Complex, construction of rope way project across River Tawi upto Mahamaya Temple provide all ingredients for projection of Jammu on global level, he said.

Dr. Nirmal Singh further added that move are a foot to make Jammu smart city with better roads, clean surroundings, high end basic facilities. He said with varied national level educational institutions established in here, the city is on way to emerge as a hub of education.

He said some political organizations who failed to bring remarkable change in the state economy during their tenure are trying to sabotage the pace of development to hide their failures adding that people are the real judges and they are acknowledging the work of the current dispensation.

Shafiq Raina reviews functioning of FCS&CA in Ganderbal

GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 07: Commissioner Secretary Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department, Shafiq Ahmad Raina accompanied by Director FCS&CA, Nissar Ahmad today reviewed the working of the Department in a meeting convened at DC office Ganderbal.

Threadbare discussions were held on various issues including stock and supply position of FCS&CA food grains, distribution of ration tickets, Aadhaar seeding and functioning of the Department in the district.

The Assistant Director FCS&CA, Ganderbal apprised the meeting about performance of the Department in district.

On the occasion, the Commissioner Secretary said that measures are afoot to ensure greater transparency and effectiveness in the functioning of the Department.

He directed the Assistant Director to rationalize the scale of distribution of ration and k.oil and to maintain uniform scale of ration per family throughout the district.

He asked the A.D food to ensure 100 percent linkage of Aadhaar numbers with respective ration cards.

The Director FCS&CA said that welfare of the consumers is the core policy of the Department. In this regard, he directed for distribution of ration cards on fast track basis, and asked the concerned A.D and TSO's to monitor the process. Besides, he called for intensifying market checking on regular basis for preventing food adulteration, profiteering and black marketing.

Chief Inspector Ganderbal, all TSO's, and other concerned officials of FCS&CA Department Ganderbal attended the meeting.

DEC Udhampur discusses modalities for Summary Revision 2018

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 07: The District Election Cell (DEC) Udhampur today discussed modalities for Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls-2018 here at a meeting of EROs and AEROS.

Deputy District Election Officer, Sapna Kotwal gave a detailed power point presentation regarding Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls which was followed by threadbare discussion on various issues and activities to be conducted for public awareness. It was informed that mass awareness camps

would be held at Booth level & polling stations, while people drum beating, Mobile awareness vans would be used for informing the eligible voters for filling of claims and objections. The meeting also decided to hold electoral awareness camps for chowkidars/Numberdars, door to door campaign by AWWs/AWHS, ASHA Workers & BLOs, awareness rallies, Rural Games, Nukkads, awareness workshop, slogan writing competition etc.

The concerned officers

were asked to work with dedication and zeal to make the programme a great success. The officers were also asked to maintain close coordination for spreading maximum awareness regarding the Summary Revision across the district to cover all eligible voters.

The meeting was attended by, ACR, Subash Dogra PO ICDS, Rimpay Ohri SDM Chennani Devinder Sharma, and other officers of various of departments, members of civil society were present in the meeting.

DDC Kupwara reviews model village project

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 07: District Development Commissioner Kupwara, Khalid Jahangir today chaired a meeting to review progress on model village project under Border Area Development Programme (BADP).

The meeting took detailed stock of action plan action plan for carrying out the developmental activities in approved Cluster Model Villages under BADP 2017-18 in Machil, Sarkuli, Diver-Andarbugh and Challengund of Lolab constituency in the district. It was said that an amount of Rs 63.60 crore have been proposed under the ac-

tion plan under which the villages would be developed on modern lines replete with all the basic facilities.

The DDC directed the executing agencies to start work on the cluster model village projects in accordance with the set action plan for providing tangible infrastructure besides creating income generating units. He urged them to ensure the quality of works and judicious use of funds. He also stressed on involving the public representatives, senior citizens and local skilled youth for carrying out the development works.

The officers and engineers

of Rural Development, PRI, Horticulture, Agriculture, Health, Education, R&B, PHE, PDD, REW, Forest, Soil Conservation, YSS, and BDOs attended the meeting. They discussed various developmental activities to be carried out in the model villages by these agencies and presented their works action plan for release of funds. The meeting also discussed convergence plan for the developmental activities within the Cluster Model Villages under approved plan of actions submitted by the concerned implementing and executing agencies associated with the developmental activities.

Wildlife Week observed at Dachigam National Park

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 07: Central Wildlife Division of Department of Wildlife Protection observed Wildlife Week-2017 at the Nature Interpretation Center of Dachigam National Park. An inter-school debate was organized for students on the theme 'Challenges faced by State in Wildlife Conservation', along with a field visit of the participants. Students from various government and private schools participated in the competition.

Director School Education Kashmir, who was chief guest, said that the objective of organizing the competitions is to bring awareness to the students about the climatic changes and gradual loss of wildlife from the environment.

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Editorial

Theory and practice

divergence of interests within a political party can take many forms. It is either raised to the level of an ideological divide that portrays the differences as a battle of ideas, or reduced to a clash of personalities that presents the differences as a struggle for power at the top of the organisational hierarchy. The fight within the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is essentially between the Kerala and West Bengal units. The tactical line at stake is alliance-formation, whether or not the party should be part of a larger broad-based alliance headed by the Congress at the national level. For the Kerala unit, whose principal rival is the Congress-led United Democratic Front, any such alliance is difficult to sell to the cadre. For the Bengal unit, which is ceding ground to the Trinamool and the BJP, the Congress is a natural ally. At present, the Kerala unit is stronger, and it got the CPI(M) Polit Bureau to veto a proposal to change the party line to allow for an alliance with the Congress and other secular opposition parties. The BJP is growing in Kerala, but the Congress remains the main adversary for the CPI(M) in the State. The efforts of party general secretary Sitaram Yechury to push through the proposal thus came to naught.

The pragmatic aspect to the differences within the party exists side by side with larger "theoretical" issues. For the CPI(M), this manifests itself in questions such as whether there exists a "fascist threat" in India, whether the BJP is a completely "fascist party looking to create an authoritarian state", and whether India is descending into "communal fascism". If the answer in the eyes of the party is that fascism has already arrived in India, then it is only logical for it to ally with social democratic forces to unseat the BJP. If the answer is more nuanced with caveats and qualifications, then it would enjoin the CPI(M) to pursue its own political goals independently of all so-called bourgeois parties. Clearly, the Polit Bureau did not view the BJP as a threat serious enough to reorient the party's political strategy and electoral tactics. But to the discomfiture of the CPI(M), the tussle within is also being perceived as a tug of war between Mr. Yechury and his predecessor as general secretary, Prakash Karat. The alliance issue now goes to the Central Committee, where Mr. Karat has greater support. Earlier, the CC had voted down an attempt by the Bengal unit to give Mr. Yechury a third term in the Rajya Sabha, marking an assertion of the Karat/Kerala faction over the Yechury/Bengal faction. However, as in 2004, the CPI(M) could still extend support to a Congress-led government after having fought the party electorally across the country. Any which way, the internal fights within the CPI(M) will have a bearing on the creation of a broad-based front against the BJP in 2019.

Draft rules and dissent

By AKSHA

ON March 31 this year, the Union government released the draft Right to Information (RTI) Rules, 2017, for public consultation. The draft rules, all 22 of them, were ostensibly proposed to implement the RTI Act in a better manner. However, within days of their release the rules became controversial, with civil society groups and opposition parties criticising them and an international non-profit even terming one of the rules a "death sentence" for RTI users.

But the criticism of these draft rules, which are yet to be notified, was not only limited to civil society and the opposition parties. Frontline has learnt that voices critical of the new rules have been raised within the government too. M. Sridhar Acharyulu, a serving Central Information Commissioner, has sent a 10-page response to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), the nodal government department that drafted and released the rules.

Acharyulu's response, accessed by Frontline, expresses the former law professor's suggestions and deftly worded criticisms about the draft rules in extensive detail. It raises questions about several problematic rules, seeks their withdrawal or redrafting, and flags at least one as "illegal".

The Central Information Commission (CIC), a 10-member quasi-judicial body, is the topmost adjudicating authority for all requests made by Indian citizens seeking information from public authorities under the RTI Act. Government officials are legally obliged to follow directions and orders passed by the Central Information Commissioners. However, the commission was not consulted by the DoPT when the RTI rules were drafted, even though their actual implementation is the chief responsibility of the commission itself. This is a fact that Acharyulu emphasises at the beginning of his response.

In recent years, dissenting voices from the CIC have been, at best, sporadic and rare. Acharyulu's detailed and nuanced response to the new rules is, therefore, significant for its straight talk to the DoPT, which reports directly to the Prime Minister's Office. The response may be broadly divided into two sections: the first contains his suggestions for the possible introduction of new, detailed procedures that are not there in the draft rules and the second comprises comments on the draft rules proposed by the DoPT. In the comments, Acharyulu raises questions and makes suggestions for rules he is evidently not impressed by.

Consider draft Rule no. 12, the most controversial one that the international non-profit organisation Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative referred to as a "death sentence" for RTI users. This draft rule is controversial for the following reasons. It specifies the conditions under which an RTI user can withdraw his appeal for information from the CIC. Section 1 of the rule empowers the CIC to permit withdrawal of appeals for information by RTI users and Section 2 states that the proceedings pending before it "shall abate" if the person making the appeal dies before a decision is arrived at. This has alarmed RTI users and pro-transparency campaigners who have pointed out that silencing and attacking those who ask uncomfortable questions could now become easier (See



"Diluting a right", Frontline, May 12, 2017, for a detailed explanation).

Acharyulu has supported section one but asked for the second section to be "deleted". Calling it "Ultra vires SS 19, 20", or beyond the powers of the sections 19 and 20 of the RTI Act, he explains his reasons for seeking the deletion thus: "Suppose before death of the appellant, Commission issues (a) show cause notice and explanation submitted warrants penalty, why should the PIO [Public Information Officer] not be punished if applicant dies? Or if the information has been directed to be disclosed, why can't compliance be enforced? In a civil case the rights do not cease to exist on death of parties. Right to Information is civil right, and RTI Act is not criminal law. If applicant is killed by mafia about whom the information was sought, why should it not be disclosed? Will law allow killing of applicant and also the appeal and RTI?"

Incidentally, a rule with identical sections was first proposed for incorporation in 2007 by the CIC itself. Repeated attempts to incorporate it failed as it was always controversial. The second United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government's tenure also witnessed a similar effort and controversy and the government yielded by withdrawing the rule.

DoPT officials told Frontline in mid-September that the government had taken note of the mounting criticism to Rule 12 and was likely to withdraw it. This will be reflected in the rules that finally get notified. A DoPT official said that a fresh draft of the rules, which excludes Rule 12, was already being discussed internally. The CIC was also being consulted, the official added.

Rule 12 is not the only one that has invited criticism from veteran RTI users and experts. It appears that the controversial Rule 17, which Acharyulu as well as the prominent RTI activist Subhash Chandra Agrawal has objected to, may still remain in the final list of rules to be notified. Rule 17 concerns "posting of appeal/complaint/non-compliance before the Information Commissioner". This rule seeks to empower the Chief Information Commissioner to direct a bench of two or more Information Commissioners to conduct a hearing in any given case of his choice, either at the request of any IC or on a suo motu basis.

Acharyulu has taken strong objection to this, calling it "illegal" and suggesting

that introduction of such a rule means that the executive wants to "dilute or reduce or destroy powers" of individual commissioners. He has suggested either fully doing away with the rule or redrafting it. "The Act did not provide for constitution of Division Benches or larger benches. Making rules for larger Bench, which is not provided by Act, is illegal and ultra vires RTI Act. If by practise or convention, constituting bench is felt appropriate by the Commission, for the same involves an intricate question of law or larger public interest, IC should be left with power to decide and only on his reference or request, the Chief can constitute larger Bench. Executive government cannot dilute or reduce or destroy powers of individual commissioner or enhance the powers of [the] Chief Information Commissioner against the law by Parliament," he said. There are six other draft rules which, though less controversial, have come under Acharyulu's scrutiny for their significant impact on citizens' ability to use RTI for getting information. One that directly impacts citizens is draft Rule 4, which details the fees to be paid by RTI users for accessing information. The Central Information Commissioner argues that the current Rs. 2 per page or Rs. 4 per sheet rate is "double than market" rate and that the "government cannot charge exorbitantly or double than a private commercial shop".

Draft Rule 6, another rule of similar nature, details the mode of payment. In his suggestions on this rule, Acharyulu has noted a practice among some PIOs that adds unnecessary bureaucracy and wastes taxpayer's money. He describes it thus: "Some PIOs are spending Rs. 100 in demanding Rs. 10, which is already paid to the Government of India on purchase of an IPO [Indian Postal Order]. If each PIO spends Rs. 100 demanding new IPO for Rs. 10 every day, imagine how much public money is wasted. Even if applicant gives fresh IPO in response, still state suffers loss of Rs. 90. The common sense also should be used along with legal power!"

To prevent this, Acharyulu has suggested adding a couple of clarifying sentences to draft Rule 6 to make it explicit that no application can be rejected if the applicant has attached an IPO with it.

Noting that Hindi and English, the languages mandated to be used for official proceedings of the commission, do not suf-

fice, Acharyulu has suggested that other "constitutionally recognised languages" be permitted. "If both the parties and the commission know either Telugu or Tamil, why should they not conduct in such language?" he asked.

The remaining three are draft Rules 10, 15 and 16. Rule 10 concerns certain conditions attached to the power of appeal. This rule is also not contained in the powers vested from the RTI Act. This could be left to the discretion of the Information Commissioner, Acharyulu suggested.

Rule 15 details the procedure for deciding what decisions to take about the complaints received from RTI applicants. Seeking the total deletion of this rule, the former law professor wrote: "It has to be left to CIC to deal with complaints in its own discretion. The Executive Government cannot interfere with this power specifically provided by RTI Act."

Rule 16 pertains to compliance with the orders of the commission. Arguing in favour of the deletion of this rule in entirety, he argued that since there was no official format for filing RTI applications, complaints and appeals, compliance with the commission's orders also does not need it.

While Acharyulu's comments and suggestions about the existing draft rules proposed in the RTI Rules, 2017, are exhaustive, his suggestions for making fresh rules to streamline everyday working of the right to information system are even more detailed. Covering vast ground, the Central Information Commissioner has sought the preparation of new rules and guidelines for the following: a) implementation of section 4; b) detailed rules for Central PIOs to effectively tackle RTI requests; c) comprehensive guidelines on dealing with first appeals; d) rules on staff and resources for the CIC and RTI wings of public authorities; e) rules to clarify determination of public authority under RTI Act; and f) rules on maintenance of records and missing files.

Acharyulu has applied his academic rigour and practical experience of adjudicating RTI appeals to the new draft rules released by the government. It remains to be seen if those who draft the final rules for notification stay true to both the letter and the spirit of the RTI Act, which is a landmark and historic piece of legislation that has empowered citizens in an unprecedented manner.

SYMBOLS OF A DEEPER STIRRING:
ON THE PROTESTS AT BHU

Krishna Kumar

The old and historically important university at Varanasi is passing through a significant moment. Educational institutions seldom serve as precise mirrors of historical change because pedagogic and administrative rituals keep their inner life tightly under control. Banaras Hindu University (BHU) is no exception. Rather, like Visva-Bharati, established by Rabindranath Tagore, BHU has maintained a veneer of normalcy governed by sacred customs and rituals that have nicely preserved an empty shell of a special inherited identity. The architecture too conveys a sense of permanent normalcy, like that of a temple. The decline in its institutional pride and standards had begun in the 1960s. Barring brief episodes of precarious recovery, descent into the shared hollow of higher education in the Hindi belt has been consistent.

The recent sequence of events at BHU has an element of surprise because it points towards a new kind of assertion and attempt to claim institutional rights. The administration seems unprepared for this turn of events. Its reflexes con-

stitute the time-tested moves to minimise, pacify and press forward. It does not seem to realise, and may not accept if it does, that it is faced with an unfamiliar kind of protester who refuses to be seen as a client. The young women who paid the price of mass protest by getting brutally assaulted and injured have already become symbols of a deeper stirring than the officials of BHU have the wherewithal and imagination to gauge.

BHU was the second university to be set up in the Hindi heartland, the first being Allahabad. The two institutions were quite different from the start. Allahabad University was created by the colonial government, initially as an examining institution like the other three set up in the mid-19th century. Only later did it acquire a unitary character. Once known as the Oxford of the East, the university's architecture and courses conveyed the British dream of creating a knowledge society after its own image in India. BHU, on the contrary, was intended to symbolise India's pride in its heritage of knowledge. Its financial independence from the colonial state and its residential character signified an assertion and a search. The colonial



model of affiliating universities was essentially that of a bureaucratic mechanism to examine, certify and thereby maintain legitimacy of the distribution of eligibility for government jobs.

Above all, BHU represented a vision — one of many competing visions in early 20th century — of what India's freedom might mean in the sphere of education. The monumental effort mooted and sustained by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to set it up was part of an intellectual struggle that did not last

long after Independence: the struggle to engage with colonial subjugation through education. The engagement covered basic issues and choices in language, knowledge, and the pedagogic ethos.

Allahabad signified no such exploration — although it was located in a city with pioneers in academic publishing and a literati that radically changed the dominant idiom of Hindi literature. BHU, on the other hand, provided an academic base where Hindi's development

as a modern language would benefit from archival and analytical research.

Although student activism has an older history, its eruptions intensified in the mid-1960s, disturbing the annual routine of life in many universities. The issues that triggered street processions and sit-ins were often localised, even trivial, but the restive spirit was real.

Many national and provincial leaders felt that campus disturbances indicated that the idealism of the freedom movement had waned. Some of them viewed youth discontent as a sign of deeper idealism. They were right in this estimation. To the generation born after Independence, just about everything had begun to look wrong. One of the first things to cause dismay was the calibre of people who became vice-chancellors. Those recruited to teach were the next major source of disillusionment and cynicism among the young.

Layers of disillusionment have sedimented. For the BHU Vice-Chancellor to attribute the recent turmoil to 'an incident of eve-teasing' is an insult to students. They belong to a new provincial ethos, subtly transformed by radical

increase in access to school education over the last 25 years. It has changed the social composition of the campus population, imparting it far greater plurality than what prevails in the teaching faculty. Recruitment of teachers now provides reservation for the lower and middle castes, but the dominance of upper castes and competition among them continues to shape the campus ethos.

In this matter, BHU and Allahabad, despite their very different origins, have become identical. The same applies to male-centric ethos and policies. Young women are tired of homilies by university officials and political leaders who talk like grandparents. Equally tiring to the current generation of female students is the supervised freedom offered to them as a favour.

Their public fight is currently directed against gender discrimination. There is plenty of it to fuel their struggle. It is there in hostels, in admission procedures, in classrooms and laboratories, and in life outside the campus. But their anger is also about the role of caste in the selection of faculty and positions carrying public responsibility.

Narendra Modi arrives in Gujarat: PM's schedule for the two-day visit

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Jamnagar for his two-day visit to Gujarat on Saturday. He is expected to lay the foundation stones for several development projects, visit his birthplace Vadnagar and address public rallies during the tour.

Modi's visit comes after Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi toured the state in September with a three-day road trip, criticising the government for its economic policies and promising jobs for the youth.

Here is PM Modi's itinerary:

Day 1, Saturday

PM Modi will kick-start the two-day trip to Gujarat by visiting Dwarkadhish Temple, followed by laying the foundation stone for four national highways projects worth Rs 5,825 crore at Dwarka and addressing a public meeting there.

From Dwarka, he will go to Chotila in Surendranagar district where



he will lay the foundation stones for a greenfield airport at Rajkot. The PM will also dedicate a fully automatic milk processing and packaging plant and a drinking water distribution pipeline for Joravarnagar and Ratanpur area of Surendranagar, a PMO statement said. At Gandhinagar, Modi will

dedicate the newly-constructed building of IIT Gandhinagar and launch the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA).

Day 2, Sunday

PM Modi will visit his birth place Vadnagar on Sunday for the first time since becoming Prime Minister in 2014. There, he will visit the Hatkeshwar Temple and distribute e-tablets to health workers to mark the launch of ImTeCHO (Innovative mobile-phone Technology for Community Health Operations). In the afternoon, he will reach Bharuch and lay the foundation stone for Bhadbut Barrage to be built over Narmada River. Modi will also flag off the Antyodaya Express between Udhna (Surat, Gujarat) and Jaynagar (Bihar). He will address a public meeting in Bharuch before returning to Delhi.

Sushma Swaraj grants medical visas to two Pakistanis

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj has said that India will grant medical visas to an ailing Pakistani man requiring liver transplant and a three-year-old girl from the country who needs an open heart surgery.



Heading to a request by Uzair Humayun, a Lahore-based man, Swaraj said medical visa will be given to his daughter who needs an open heart surgery. Swaraj also responded positively when Noorma Habib asked for her intervention in granting medical visa to her father who she said needs an urgent liver transplant. Swaraj has been sympathetically considering medical visa applications from scores of Pakistani nationals notwithstanding strain in the relationship between the two countries over a host of issues.

No need for NIA probe in 'love jihad' case, Kerala govt tells SC

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Just days after the Supreme Court questioned the legality of NIA probe in the Hadiya 'love jihad' case, the Kerala government on Saturday told it that the investigation by the state police has not revealed any offences that warranted a probe by the federal anti-terror agency.

"The investigation conducted so far by the Kerala Police has not revealed any incident relating to the commission of any scheduled offences to make a report to the Central Government under section 6 of the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008," the affidavit by the Kerala's additional chief secretary, home department, said.

The case pertains to the alleged forced conversion to Islam of Akhila

Ashokan, alias Hadiya, and her marriage to Shefin Jahan.

The case grabbed nationwide attention after the Kerala high court annulled the marriage in May on a petition by Hadiya's father, Ashokan, who claimed that she was forcibly converted and would be sent to war-torn Syria like the 21 missing persons from the state believed to have joined the militant organisation Islamic State. In August the SC refused to stay the HC order and asked the NIA to probe the circumstances that led to their marriage. However, on Tuesday, the Supreme Court bench headed by the new chief justice Deepak Misra made a virtual U-turn questioning the legality of the NIA probe.

The bench also questioned the

legality of girl's father keeping her in his custody for last four months.

Now, the Kerala government claims that the "state police had done a detailed investigation into the incident surrounding the conversion of Akhila @ Hadiya to Islam and also the antecedents of Shafi Jahan".

The affidavit adds that the Kerala police "would have reported to central government if any scheduled offences found to have been committed during such investigation as per the NIA act". Two weeks ago Shefin Jahan had filed a fresh plea questioning the NIA probe. Similarly the State Women Commission also moved the apex court seeking its permission to meet Hadiya. The case will come up for hearing at the SC again on Monday.

Rahul Gandhi in Mandi highlights: Modi govt's economic policies have caused unemployment

MANDI: Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi, who returned to Delhi from three-day visit to his Lok Sabha constituency Amethi on Friday, addressed "Vikas se Vijay Ki Aur" rally in Mandi of election-bound Himachal Pradesh.



Gandhi backed Himachal Pradesh chief minister Virbhadra Singh, who has been facing cases of alleged corruption and disproportionate assets, and said Singh will be CM for the 7th term.

Using which the opposition BJP aims to pin him down.

In Amethi, Rahul Gandhi targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying: "The BJP government has completed three-and-a-half years and has only one-and-a-half years left. The prime minister should work now for employment generation and for farmers."

Here are the highlights of Rahul Gandhi's speech: The Congress vice president compares the Himachal Pradesh government with Gujarat's BJP regime, says Himachal witnessed more development in five years.

Rahul Gandhi alleges NDA government's economic policies caused unemployment. "Gujarat alone has 50 lakh jobless youth."

The Congress had proposed GST maximum limit at 18% but the Modi government fixed it 28%. Small and medium businesses will not be able to pay such a huge tax, says Congress vice president. PM Modi has hurt the economy first by demonetisation and then 5-slab Goods and Service Tax, says Rahul Gandhi.

The Congress vice president criticises Prime Minister Narendra Modi, says "the person who doesn't listen to people has no right to lead the country".

Rahul Gandhi says Virbhadra Singh will be chief minister for 7th term.

The only problem today before the country is unemployment: Rahul Gandhi at Bath in Himachal Pradesh. Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi begins speech in Mandi.

Researchers to revisit Harappan tech for modern use

NEW DELHI: A group of researchers from across the country are revisiting 5,000-year-old technologies used by Harappans, including water management, in a bid to learn from the lost Indus Valley civilisation for use in modern times.

The researchers claim that the Harappans had perfected most of the technologies such as stone-beading, crafts production, Indus ceramic technologies, metal and metallurgy, which are still used.

The researchers from Deccan College Pune, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) Varanasi, M S University Baroda, Allahabad University, JRN Rajasthan Vidyaapeeth Jodhpur, Archaeological Survey of India and Indian National Science Academy recently gathered in New Delhi for the purpose.

Prof D Balasubramanian, chairman of research council for history of science, said the researchers will relook at the science, technology and innovations that happened in ancient India in 3,000-4,500 BC or 5,000-6,000 years ago.

"Everybody talks about Italy having viaducts but we had it earlier than them," he said, recalling that people in in Gujarat had Baori or step-wells that were interconnected through viaducts 6,000 years ago.



Prof Vasant Shinde, vice-chancellor, Deccan College of Post Graduate Research & Training, Pune, said certain technologies continued from 5,000 years to modern times, "till 30 years back".

He highlighted the continuation of pottery-making, stone-making in Khambhat region of Gujarat besides the cold hammering technique in metallurgy.

On water harvesting, Prof Shinde said the present generation is doing a lot to deal with water scarcity but are not learning "from Harappan ancestors who had devised simple and effective tech".

"We can use water harvesting the way they did it. They dug underground water wells which were interconnected," he said.

The researchers said they would not require foreign collaborations and huge funding from abroad as they have access to better technologies and funds to conduct in-depth studies.

Police cannot be brute, will have to be civilised: Home minister Rajnath Singh

MEERUT: The 21st century police cannot be a "brute force" but will have to be a "civilised" unit, Union home minister Rajnath Singh said on Saturday and asked the police personnel to be patient in dealing with challenging situations such as riots and protests.

The minister also urged the police forces, both under the Centre and the states, to adapt new technology and psychological solutions to "control and divert the minds" of the rampaging crowds during a protest or a riots-like situation.

Singh made the remarks while addressing the personnel of the blue dungaree-donning Rapid Action Force (RAF) at their base here on the occasion of their silver jubilee (25th) anniversary. Singh urged the security personnel to keep an effective

check on the incidents in which attempts are made to break the country on the lines of casteism, religion or regionalism.

"The police of the 21st century cannot be a brute force. It will have to be a civilised force. Patience and control has to be practised and followed by police forces and the personnel on ground while dealing with hard and challenging situations like riots and protesting crowds.

"I understand sometimes police forces have to use slight force but in such situations too, prudence is required," he said. Singh said he has already asked the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) to look for "less-lethal" solutions to be used in policing tasks and crowd control. The head of the country's internal security mechanism asked



the forces to apply "minimum force" and obtain maximum results.

While lauding the efforts of the RAF, he said that five new battalions of the force will be made fully operational from January 1 next year.

The RAF, at present, has ten operational battalions and they are based in ten cities that are regarded as sensitive from the communal and the security point of view.

The home minister also declared that personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) will be granted an annual allowance of Rs 10,000 to get stitched uniforms and the practise of providing them ready-made uniforms has been discontinued. He said that he was "seriously" thinking about ways to ensure timely promotions to the about 10 lakh personnel of these forces.

Sanatan Sanstha denies involvement in Gauri Lankesh murder

PANAJI: The Sanatan Sanstha on October 7 denied involvement any of its members in the murder of journalist Gauri Lankesh.

Dismissing media reports hinting at such a connection, Chetan Rajhans, a spokesperson of the Goa-based outfit, told the media that no official of the Karnataka Special Investigation Team probing the murder had questioned any Sanatan Sadhak (member), nor visited its ashram.

The Sanstha is headquartered at Ramnathi village of Ponda taluk in South Goa.

He dismissed the media reports implicating the Sanstha's involvement as a "planned controversy to defame Hindu organisations" adding "some anti-Hindu forces are behind this".

"Sanatan Sanstha's name is being raked up often after the death of rationalists. It is because we are a soft target" Mr. Rajhans said.

He said that no agency of the Karnataka government had officially issued any statement naming any "missing" Sanatan Sanstha member as suspect. "No one has issued official press release. Home Minister has not issued a statement. So this claim is on what basis?" he said asserting that no SIT official visited the Sanstha ashram in Goa nor had any of its members been questioned.

Some media reports earlier this week had claimed that Sarang Akolkar alias Sarang Kulkarni, Jay Prakash alias Anna and Praveen Linkar were on the SIT radar in connection with Lankesh murder. The Sanstha spokesperson said that the outfit had condemned the murder and said that several angles had cropped up during the investigation, including theories involving Naxalites and family members and that of defamation cases slapped against the journalists.

"We have only one demand — that the investigation agencies should probe the case without any political pressure. If the investigation agencies seek co-operation, we are fully ready to cooperate," Mr. Rajhans said.

Draft Haj policy proposes abolishing Haj subsidy

MUMBAI: Abolishing subsidy for Haj pilgrims and allowing women devotees above 45 to travel in a group of at least four without a male are some of the key highlights of a proposed

Haj policy drafted by a committee appointed by the Centre, sources said.

The proposed Haj Policy 2018-22, by a panel headed by former secretary Afzal Amanullah, also recommends bringing down the number of embarkation points (EPs) from which pilgrims can take flights to Saudi Arabia from the present 21 to nine.

The draft was submitted to Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi here today.

"The 2018 Haj pilgrimage will be in line with the new Haj policy. It is a better policy, looking at the facilities proposed. It will be a transparent, people-friendly policy. It will ensure safety and security of pilgrims," Mr. Naqvi said.

The policy has been drafted in light of a 2012 Supreme Court order asking the Centre to abolish the Haj subsidy gradually by 2022, sources in the ministry said.

"The highlight of the policy is abolishing the subsidy. Besides, it proposes another major reform — of allowing women aged above 45 to undertake journey without male Mehram in a group of four," a ministry source said.

Till now, women devotees could not travel without a male mehram.

The term Mehram refers to a male a woman cannot marry at anytime in her life (i.e. father, brother or son etc)

Women aged below 45, however, will have to be accompanied by male Mehrams, according to the policy. It proposes to increase the quota for Mehrams from 200 to 500.

The cut in funds meant for subsidy will be used for educational empowerment and welfare of Muslims, a source in the ministry said.

The policy suggests sending pilgrims by ship, relatively less expensive than flights.

The policy says the Saudi government will be consulted regarding Haj travel by ship and thereafter floating an EOI (expression of interest) to gauge the market for such travel.

According to the policy, the nine EPs will be Delhi, Lucknow, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Cochin.

It also proposes to build suitable Haj houses at these EPs "to which states and districts will be tagged properly".

"EPs are being reduced keeping in mind ship journeys. It proposes inviting global expressions of interest from vessel owners having a capacity of 4,000 plus passengers... Even if 10 such trips are made to Saudi Arabia, 40,000 to 50,000 pilgrims can easily be ferried," the source added.

The proposed policy aims at rationalising distribution of the Haj quota between the Haj Committee of India and private tour operators in the ratio of 70:30 for the next five years.

It also stresses on breaking the cartel of contractors with a transparent bidding process.

India has an annual Haj quota of 1.70 lakh devotees. The policy also proposes to ensure the stay of all Indian Haj pilgrims in Saudi Arabia within Mina.

Sources said the report will be examined in the ministry and shared with all concerned for implementation of the accepted recommendations from Haj 2018 onwards.

Is watching sports harmful for health? Study says yes

A study says that watching a hockey game live or on television may lead to a rise in heart rate, that can have a substantial effect on the cardiovascular system.

The findings showed that there was a 75 per cent increase in heart rate in TV viewers and 110 per cent rise in heart rate from watching a game live.

These are equivalent to the heart rate response that occurs with moderate and vigorous physical stress, respectively.

Overall, the heart rate increased by a median of 92 per cent (almost doubled) across all spectators.

"Watching an exciting hockey game might trigger a cardiovascular event in an individual at risk," said David D. Waters, from Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, in the US.

"Viewing a hockey game can be the source of an intense emotional stress, as manifested by marked increases in heart rate," added Paul Khairy, Professor at the University of Montreal in Canada.



Further, the researchers found that pounding peak heart rates occurred most frequently during any scoring opportunity -- for or against -- and during overtime and not necessarily at the end of the game.

Previous studies have shown that cardiovascular events triggered by watching sporting events are more common in people with existing coronary artery disease, attributed to a disproportionate increase in markers of vasoconstriction and acute inflammation in those individuals.

The results should encourage doctors to speak to their patients about watching sports, the researchers noted.

Antibiotics for dental procedures may up superbug infection risk

If you are planning to visit a dentist, think twice. According to a study, antibiotics prescribed by dentists may contribute to the growing problem of Clostridium difficile (C. diff) -- a serious and potentially deadly infection that causes severe diarrhoea.

Dentists write more than 24.5 million prescriptions for antibiotics a year. And many of those antibiotics are likely unnecessary, the researchers said. Antibiotics kill bad and good bacteria in the gastrointestinal (GI) system. Wiping out the protective bacteria can allow the growth of C. diff bacteria -- one of the top three most urgent antibiotic-resistant threats identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"Dentists have been overlooked as a source of antibiotic prescribing, which can potentially delay treatment



when doctors are trying to determine what is causing a patient's illness," said lead author Stacy Holzbauer, from the Minnesota Department of Health

(MDH). "It's important to educate dentists about the potential complications of antibiotic prescribing, including C. diff. It is essential that they be

included in efforts to improve antibiotic prescribing."

In the study, presented at IDWeek 2017 in San Diego, California, the team interviewed 1,626 people with community-associated C. diff between 2009 and 2015.

Of those, 926 (57 per cent) reported they had been prescribed antibiotics, 136 (15 per cent) of those for dental procedures.

The study found patients who were prescribed antibiotics for dental procedures tended to be older and more likely to receive clindamycin -- an antibiotic that is associated with C. diff infection. Of those who had received antibiotics for a dental procedure, 34 per cent had no mention of antibiotics in their medical charts, illustrating the disconnect between dental and medical care.

Women, take note! Drinking 1.5 litres of water a day may keep UTIs at bay

Do you often suffer from urinary tract infections (UTIs)?

A new study suggests that drinking an additional three pints of water (almost 1.5 litres) may reduce the recurrence of UTIs in women.

According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, 40-60 per cent of women will develop a UTI during their lifetimes and one in four have a repeat infection unless precautions are taken.

"It's good to know the recommendation is valid, and that drinking water is an easy and safe way to prevent an uncomfortable and annoying infection," lead author Thomas M. Hooton, Clinical Director of the Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of Miami, said in a statement.

The study revealed that women have shorter urethra -- a tube that connects the urinary bladder with urinary meatus and removes the fluids from the body -- than men.

This enables the bacteria to travel from the rectum and vagina to the bladder, making women more vulnerable to



UTIs than men.

Therefore, drinking more fluids increases the rate of flushing of bacteria from the bladder and reduces the concentration of bacteria that enter the bladder from the vagina, at the same time, the researchers said.

"This reduces the opportunities for bacteria to attach to cells that line the urinary tract, which is necessary to cause an infection," Hooton added.

The researchers surveyed over 140 healthy pre-menopausal women.

Women who increased their water intake on an average suffered UTIs 1.6 times, while those with low intake were 3.1 times more affected with UTIs.

"If a woman has recurrent UTIs and is looking for a way to reduce her risk, the evidence suggests she should increase the amount of water she drinks," Hooton added.

Scientists develop smart bandage for better, faster healing

Scientists have developed a smart bandage that can precisely control the dose and delivery schedule of the medication tailored for a specific type of wound, leading to faster healing.

The bandage, developed by researchers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US, consists of electrically conductive fibres coated in a gel.

The gel can be individually loaded with infection-fighting antibiotics, tissue-regenerating growth factors, painkillers or other medications, researchers said. A microcontroller no larger than a postage stamp, which could be triggered by a smartphone or other wireless device, sends small amounts of voltage through a chosen fibre.

That voltage heats the fibre and its hydrogel, releasing whatever cargo it contains. A single bandage could accommodate multiple medications tailored to a specific type of wound, researchers said. While offering the ability to precisely control the dose and delivery



schedule of those medications. That combination of customisation and control could substantially improve or accelerate the healing process, said Ali Tamayol, assistant professor at University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"This is the first bandage that is capable of dose-dependent drug release. You can release multiple drugs with different release profiles.

"That is a big advantage in comparison with other systems. What we did here was come up with a strategy

for building a bandage from the bottom up," Tamayol said.

Researchers ran a series of experiments. In one, they applied a smart bandage loaded with growth factor to wounded mice. When compared with a dry bandage, the team's version regrew three times as much of the blood-rich tissue critical to the healing process.

Another experiment showed that an antibiotic-loaded version of the bandage could eradicate infection-causing bacteria.

Low calcium intake may lead to sudden cardiac arrest

Calcium is known to be one of the most important parts of our diet and if we do not take it a balanced manner, it can be responsible for many deficiencies in our bodies.

Now, according to a new study, it has been found that individuals with lower levels of calcium in the blood, are more likely to experience sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) than those with higher calcium levels.

Ninety nine percent of the total body calcium is in the bones and the remaining 1% is in the extracellular space. Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is fatal for over 90 percent of patients, and more than half of men and close to 70 percent of women who die of SCA have no clinical history of heart disease prior to this cardiac event. It is one of the leading causes of death in the United States and kills more people than any single cancer. Many patients who suffer SCA would not be considered high risk under current guidelines.

Lead investigator Sumeet S. Chugh, MD, Pauline and Harold Price Chair in Cardiac Electrophysiology, Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute,

Los Angeles, CA, said, "Our study found that serum calcium levels were lower in individuals who had a sudden cardiac arrest than in a control group. Patients with serum calcium in the lowest quartile (<8.95 mg/dL) had twice the odds of sudden cardiac arrest compared to those in the highest quartile (>9.55 mg/dL), even after controlling for multiple patient characteristics including demographics, cardiovascular risk factors and comorbidities, and medication use." Data from 2002 until 2015 were gathered from the Oregon Sudden Unexpected Death Study (Oregon SUDS). The goal of the Oregon SUDS is to improve understanding of who is at risk for out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest.

This study included 267 SCA cases and 445 control subjects whose serum calcium levels were measured during routine medical care. All SCA cases had had serum calcium levels measured in the 90 days prior to their cardiac arrest.

The Oregon SUDS collaborates with emergency responders and hospitals in the Portland, OR met-



ropolitan area to identify all cases of sudden cardiac arrest. This enabled researchers to collect comprehensive patient medical history from the time prior to their cardiac arrest.

Each patient's total serum calcium was corrected by their serum albumin level to estimate a more physiologically relevant corrected calcium level. SCA cases had a significantly higher percentage of African Americans and patients with diabetes mellitus, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and chronic kidney disease compared to the

control group. Cases were also more likely than controls to be on hemodialysis. In addition, diuretics, especially loop diuretics, were prescribed more for cases than for controls with no differences in the rate of utilization of beta blockers. Dr. Chugh noted, "Overall, it seems that further study is required to elucidate the mechanisms underlying the adverse associations with lower calcium levels and to determine whether controlling calcium levels improves the prognosis in the general population or in high-risk

patients." In India too, the intake of serum calcium is very low. Hirad Yarmohammadi, MD, MPH, post-doctoral fellow at Cedars-Sinai, currently training in the Cardiovascular Division, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA, explained, "Our study showed that lower serum calcium levels, even within the normal range of values, may increase risk for sudden cardiac death.

Although our findings may not be ready for routine clinical use in patients at this time, they are a step towards the goal of improving patient care by better prediction of risk.

"While these results should be interpreted with caution, Dr. Lee recommends that (1) serum calcium levels should be examined and followed longitudinally more carefully, (2) low serum calcium levels may be considered a potential risk factor for SCA in the community, and (3) more research is necessary to determine whether patients in the lowest quartile of serum calcium would benefit from higher dietary calcium intake or calcium supplementation.

Dear women, here's the most effortless method of keeping UTIs at bay

Doctors say that one in five women suffer from UTI at least once in their lifetime. Now, American researchers may have found a simple way to prevent urinary tract infections -- drinking an additional three pints (or 1.42 liters) of water a day could help keep the infections at bay in women who are prone to them.

Led by Thomas M Hooton, MD, clinical director of the Division of Infectious Diseases, University of Miami School of Medicine, the study looked at 140 healthy premenopausal women who had at least three UTIs in the last year and reported low daily fluid intake.

Women are more likely to suffer from UTIs than men partly because in women the urethra is shorter, meaning it is easier for bacteria to travel from the rectum and vagina to the bladder and cause infection. Half of the women were told to drink 1.5 liters of water a day (about three 16-ounce glasses) in addition to their usual daily fluid intake, while the other half served as the control group and continued their usual daily fluid intake. The women were followed for one year, with the researchers finding that on average, women in the water group increased their daily water intake by 1.15 liters (about 2-1/2 pints) and had a total daily fluid intake (including water and other beverages) of 2.8 liters. Women in the control group however did not increase the amount of water they drank at all, and had a total daily fluid intake of 1.2 liters. At the end of the one year, the team found that women in the control group had on average 3.1 UTIs. However, those who had been drinking extra water had 1.6 UTIs on average, a 48% reduction.

This also meant that as a result, women in the water group took fewer antibiotics to help combat infections, taking an average of 1.8 courses compared to 3.5 in the control group, a reduction of 47%.

As well as meaning the women suffered less from uncomfortable UTI infections, reducing the use of antibiotics is also important as it helps decrease the risk of antibiotic resistance. Hooton explained that drinking more fluids can help reduce the chance of a UTI by increasing how often bacteria are flushed out of the bladder, and by reducing the concentration of bacteria that enter the bladder from the vagina. "While doctors have long assumed this is the case and often recommended that women at risk for UTIs increase their fluid intake, it's never really undergone a prospective trial before," he added, "It's good to know the recommendation is valid, and that drinking water is an easy and safe way to prevent an uncomfortable and annoying infection."

Dear make-up lovers, 'soft lips' is the new beauty trend on international catwalks

Gone are the razor-sharp lip lines of old - this season is all about a less precise outline, resulting in more of a highly-pigmented stain, with slightly blurry edges for a sweeter, more 'lived-in' look. It could be seen at Missoni, where the strawberry-hued lip colour was smeared lightly

across the lip line, and at Chanel, where a layer of gloss kept things slightly wishy-washy. The bold plum colour worn by the models at Agnès b was equally bleary, while at Trussardi it appeared almost completely rubbed-off at the corners.

Vivienne Westwood took the concept to slightly more extreme lengths, rubbing scarlet lipstick out towards the cheeks and chin for extra impact. There are several ways to go about recreating this perfectly imperfect look - one, fill in your



lips using a lip pencil rather than a liquid colour or lipstick.

This gives a lower-impact coverage, which, when coated with a slick of lip gloss, results in the soft, elegant look required. Another method, as championed by Youtube beauty vloggers Sichenmakeupholic and Simply_Kenna, is to apply a bold coloured lipstick to the centre of the lips and then 'feather' it outwards using your fingers.

A second (or third) application in the very centre, as needed, will generate the faded edges that are so in fashion this season.

Modi on GST: Diwali has come early, don't want business class to get caught in red-tape

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the sweeping changes in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on Saturday to give relief to small and medium businesses, saying his government does not want the country's business class to get caught in red-tape.

Referring to newspaper headlines, the Prime Minister said he was happy that the changes made by the GST Council on Friday had been welcomed all over the country, as if Diwali had come early.

"You all must be busy preparing for Diwali, and in Gujarat, Diwali is celebrated with great enthusiasm, especially among businessmen,"

Modi said while addressing a public gathering in Dwarka, Gujarat.

Noting that "some very important decisions" related to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) have been taken, Modi said the government had earlier stated that it will study the GST for three months following its implementation and then fix the problems.

"(We had said)...Wherever there are problems in these three months, as in the areas of management, shortage of technology, problems related to rules, complaints regarding rates,

trouble in practical experience of business class, we will address it," he said. "We do not want the country's business class to get caught in red



tapism, files, bureaucracy, I will never want this," Modi said. The Prime Minister said that, based on the information the government had,

finance minister Arun Jaitley convinced everyone at the GST Council meet on Friday.

"I am happy that it has been

welcomed in one voice across the country," Modi said.

When there is trust in the government and honesty is seen behind decisions, then the country joins in despite difficulties, the PM said.

"I can experience this and I am thankful to the people of the country for the way they have welcomed our effort to make simple tax simpler," Modi said. Three months after the roll-out of the new indirect tax regime, the GST Council had made sweeping changes to give relief to small and medium businesses on filing and payment of taxes, eased rules for exporters and cut tax rates on more than two dozen items.

Indian Energy Exchange raises Rs 300 crore from anchor investors

Indian Energy Exchange today said it has garnered a little over Rs 300 crore from anchor investors, ahead of its initial public offering next week. The company would allot 18,19,501 equity shares to 23 anchor investors at a price of Rs 1,650 per share, Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) informed the stock exchanges. At this price, the total amount works out to be Rs 300.22 crore. SBI Mutual Fund (MF), Birla Sunlife MF, Birla Sunlife Trustee Company, ICICI Prudential MF and Nomura are among the anchor investors. IEX plans to raise Rs 1,001 crore through an initial share-sale offering. It has fixed a price band of Rs 1,645-1,650 per share for its public issue. The issue by which the company is selling 60,65,009 shares or 20 per cent of the post-issue paid-up capital would be open for public subscription during October 9-11. The IPO will see sale of equity shares by existing shareholders including Tata Power Company BSE 1.90%, private equity arm of Aditya Birla Group, Madison India Capital and Renuka Ramnath-led Multiples Alternate Asset Management.

Airtel offers fastest 4G, Reliance Jio LTE speeds increase as well: OpenSignal

OpenSignal, a third-party platform that tracks coverage and performance of mobile networks, on Thursday published a new report that reveals Airtel offers the fastest 4G and 3G speeds. OpenSignal reports an average of LTE download speeds at 9.2 Mbps and 3G downloads at 3.6 Mbps for Airtel. It also points out a spike in average download speeds on the Reliance Jio network.

In terms of average 4G download speed, Airtel dominated the market between June 1 and August 31. Vodafone and Idea grabbed the second and third spot respectively. Reliance Jio stood at the fourth spot with average speed of 5.81 Mbps. On parameters of overall speed, which combines both 3G and 4G, Airtel and state-run telecom operator BSNL grabbed the top spots. "Jio's average 4G download speed result climbed from 3.9 Mbps to 5.8 Mbps — an astonishing 49% increase. As the free-data period concluded, something clearly happened to ease the congestion on Jio's network," OpenSignal says in its report. "A likely explanation is that Jio customers began restricting their data usage once they found themselves paying for the gigabytes they consumed, though network upgrades or customer losses could also explain the shift in speeds," it further explains. The platform further says that the 4G coverage was growing in the country. According to OpenSignal, all four operators saw increase in LTE availability by 2% as compared the last six months. Idea and Jio, however, saw the maximum increase in their LTE coverage in the country. In our last India report, only a single operator had 4G availability greater than 60%. Now three of India's four nationwide 4G operators have surpassed that benchmark.

Sebi issues new rules to categorise similar mutual fund schemes to help investors

Markets regulator Sebi on Friday asked mutual funds to categorise all their schemes within five baskets, a move that will weed out the practice of multiple funds being launched on similar themes.

The schemes will be broadly classified in five groups — equity, debt, hybrid, solution oriented and other scheme, Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular. Sebi asked mutual funds to ensure that schemes devised under the new norms should not result in duplication of other plans offered by them. The move will ensure that an investor of mutual fund is able to evaluate the different options available, before taking an informed decision to invest in a scheme.

Only one scheme per category would be permitted except index funds, exchange traded funds (ETFs) tracking different indices; fund of funds having different underlying schemes; sectoral or thematic funds investing in different themes.

Mutual funds will be required to analyse each of their existing schemes in light of these categories and submit their proposals to Sebi after obtaining due approvals from their trustees as early as possible, but not later than two months. The fund houses will have to carry out the necessary changes in all respects within a maximum period of three months.



Sebi said it is desirable that different schemes launched by a mutual fund are clearly distinct in terms of asset allocation, and investment strategy. Further, there is a need to bring in uniformity in the characteristics of similar type of schemes launched by different mutual funds. The circular will apply to all existing open-ended schemes of all mutual funds; all such open ended schemes where Sebi has issued final observations but have not yet been launched; and all open-ended schemes in respect of which draft scheme documents have been filed with the regulator.

In order to ensure uniformity in respect of the investment universe for equity schemes, Sebi has decided to define large cap, mid cap and small cap. Top 100 companies in terms of market capitalisation will come under the large cap segment, while those 101st-250th firm will be mid-cap and 251st company onwards in terms of market capitalisation will be small-cap.

Raghuram Rajan's name in Clarivate list of Nobel Prize worthies

Eagerly awaited on Monday is this year's Nobel Prize in economics. Guessing the Nobel Prize winner is an old but tough game. There are always dozens of candidates. One more to enter the club of Nobel probables is former governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Raghuram Rajan.

Clarivate Analytics, a company involved in academic and scientific research, maintains a list of dozens of possible Nobel Prize winners based on research citations.

The Wall Street Journal has reported that Rajan is one of the six economists to make their way to the list this year. The reason for Rajan's entry into the list is his "contributions illuminating the dimensions of decisions in corporate finance".

Though the first non-western and the youngest at 40 to become the chief economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Rajan shot to big fame three years after he presented a counter-intuitive paper at a prestigious annual gathering of economists and bankers in the US in 2005.

He predicted a financial crisis, was made fun of but was proved right three years later when the financial crisis hit the US.

The conference was held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in the honour of then US Fed chief Alan Greenspan who had presided over a phase of rapid growth in the American economy. Rajan presented his paper, 'Has Financial Development Made the World



Riskier', which was not received well. Former treasury secretary made light of Rajan's warning and called him a luddite, the person who opposes innovation.

Rajan argued that the financial market had developed to become more complicated and less safe. He said financial instruments such as derivatives like credit default swaps were risky. Three years later, in 2008, credit default swaps brought the US economy down and Rajan was feted for being prescient. Many economists regretted not paying enough attention to Rajan in 2005.

Rajan's entry into the list of dozens of names does not mean he is a front-runner. It's just that he has become a probable who stands a chance to win. Rajan had expected to get the second term as the RBI president but was not offered to continue.

He later revealed he had severe differences with the government over several issues including demonetisation which he has criticised fiercely.

SKODA KODIAQ 2017 REVIEW: NOT QUITE THE VALUE PROPOSITION

We've driven the Kodiaq overseas, and when I first lay eyes on the Indian version, I'm reminded of the first thing that struck me about it the last time — the way it looks. It's not small, but it looks more compact than it is, and if you think that takes away from its SUV street presence, it doesn't. The narrow width and low height, relative to the immense length, means they had to get the ride height right to prevent it from looking too MPV-like, and it seems they have. You also get the company's 'butterfly' grille that's now bolder than ever. The details are striking — there's the sharp 'Czech crystal' headlights and tail-lamps, with the fog lamps getting their own angular pods below.

The 18-inch wheels are just about the right size.

So, what it lacks in outright size compared to, say, a Fortuner or an Endeavour, it makes up for with contemporary styling. The interior is decidedly less avant-garde, but that's not to say it's bad by any measure. It's just that it's a bit familiar now. You get the standard Skoda dials, steering wheel, stalks, window switches and air con controls, and there's the same beige and dark grey colour scheme as the other Skodas.

The climb into the middle row is easy, you get a separate third climate zone, and these 40:20:40 split seats fold down and can be slid back and forth by as much as 180mm.

They do not, however, tumble forward, nor can they be removed like in the Yeti. This means access to the rear is a bit cumbersome.

And it is a bit cramped back here, but by pushing the middle row halfway forward, you could actually fit seven medium-size individuals in this car.

The seats themselves are a touch firm, though they're far from uncomfortable. The front seats, with their wide range of adjustments, will hold you well, and thanks to the low dashboard, you get a good view out front even at the lowest setting.

The view backward, however, isn't so great. The boot is impressive, at 270 litres with all rows up, 630 litres with the

last row folded, and a massive 2,005 litres with the second row down too. It also holds a super-narrow space saver neatly packaged lower in the floor.

It's absolutely loaded with equipment too. The 8.0-inch touchscreen, the same one in the new Octavia, gets Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and even an impressive proprietary navigation system. Then there's the 10-colour ambient lighting system, the nice-sounding 12-speaker Canton stereo, and even a number of graphics that show you how economically you've been driving. Skoda's also added some clever little touches, like a little dustbin in the door pocket, a magnetised flashlight you can stick on the car while

you change a tyre, and my favourite — plastic 'bumpers' that pop out and protect the door edges when you open them! There's a massive panoramic sunroof and both front seats are powered with a memory function. It also has hands-free parking assist and a drowsiness sensor. I've also counted nine airbags! Skoda already uses two different versions of the 2.0-litre four-cylinder TDI motor in India — with 143hp in the Octavia and 177hp in the Superb, and now along comes the Kodiaq with a third, even newer version. This one makes 150hp and 340Nm, and though not the highest of outputs, when I sampled it in Europe, I found it to be more than adequate. As we

weave around the narrow roads near Kovalam, I can tell this motor is decently refined. The car feels very responsive at low to medium speeds. The good visibility, teamed with a light, responsive steering, and AWD means this feels exactly like a Skoda Superb to drive. At higher speeds, there's some hesitation, and it starts to feel a bit strained. The stability you get on the highway is just exquisite. Bump absorption is actually quite incredible, and only the really hairy ones make it through. On the somewhat broken roads around Kovalam, the suspension is handling things quite admirably. It genuinely feels like a sedan. The Kodiaq doesn't feel like an SUV, and I mean that in

the best way possible. It feels like a big premium car that you can take your whole family along in. The Kodiaq covers all the expected bases — long equipment list, plush interiors, space for passengers and luggage, and ride comfort. The price tag of Rs 34.49 lakh (ex-showroom, India) for the sole, fully loaded 4x4 TDI DSG version, makes it more expensive than the VW Tiguan, and even the Toyota Fortuner and Ford Endeavour. That's a lot of money even though you do get a lot of car for it.

So, while the Kodiaq upholds Skoda's core values of space, luxury, equipment and versatility with aplomb, it isn't quite the value proposition we hoped it would be.



Coach blames captain, seniors for Women's World Cup flop

ISLAMABAD: Sabih Azhar, Pakistan women's cricket team coach, has held skipper Sana Mir and senior players responsible for the team's disastrous show in the recently-held Women's World Cup.

A source in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) told APP on Wednesday that in the report submitted by Sabih, he has blamed Sana for adopting negative approach and of being completely self-obsessed during the mega event. Meanwhile, according to the report by a prominent cricket website, the coach had complained that team manager Ayesha Ashar paid most of her attention to senior players — Sana, Javeria Khan and Nain Abidi — and was "cold" towards the younger players.

"My humble view is if the set of these four — three players and manager — continue with the national team, there is absolutely no



chance of players' growth in the team," Sabih wrote in his report.

"The juniors need confidence of the seniors, but if they [juniors] are always criticised and face

negative remarks, it would shake their confidence very badly and we should forget growth of women's cricket in Pakistan," he adds. "The captain was so much

negative in her approach that she inculcated fear among other team members during team meetings on a number of occasions. She used to praise opponent players a lot

instead of backing her own players to do well. Eventually, the captain's negative approach did damage the confidence of our batters and bowlers and they couldn't play

their natural game during matches," Sabih was quoted as saying in his report.

Sabih further wrote that Pakistan's pre-tournament prep-

arations — a 30-day training camp in Abbottabad and a 15-day training camp in Leicester — had made him feel confident.

"We could have won our opening league match against South Africa before losing narrowly because the girls couldn't handle pressure at crucial moments. In the second match against England, our bowlers gave too many runs — 377 — and the match was over before our batters went in," wrote Sabih. "Against Sri Lanka and the West Indies, our team once again couldn't give the finishing touches and lost both the games. Overall, I believe we could have won at least three league matches — against South Africa,

India and Sri Lanka — but the team lacked finishing a proach at crucial junctures which cost us the games," the coach wrote in his report.

Moeen calls for greater Asian involvement in England

LONDON: Moeen Ali believes English cricket is missing a trick by not reaching out to more potential players from Britain's Asian communities. Moeen, whose hat-trick sealed England's 239-run win in the third Test against South Africa at The Oval on Monday, is the latest of several players of Asian descent to represent England, including former captain Nasser Hussain, with cricket deeply embedded in the life of many British Asian communities.

But Moeen, who was born and brought up in Birmingham, a city with one of Britain's largest Asian populations, said more work was needed if English cricket was to make the most of this enthusiasm for the sport.

"Now, a lot more south Asian people are thinking: 'Actually, I could make a good career from this now.' But it's also down to the counties to do more to help South-Asian kids," Moeen, who started his career with Birmingham-based Warwickshire before moving to Midlands rivals Worcestershire, told The Guardian on Wednesday.



"Look at Warwickshire. This is a big city of Asian people, so why can't you produce any south Asian players? I don't understand."

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has launched a south Asian initiative to help develop players from those backgrounds and Moeen said: "It's a very good step in the right direction to ask people how the ECB can help them. It's very positive because the pool of talent is vast.

"But the south Asian mentality

must also change. Cricket is not just batting and bowling. There's a lot of physical stuff, fitness, fielding, diet, discipline, being on time."

The bearded Moeen, a 30-year-old off-spinning all-rounder, is also one of the most high-profile practising Muslims in British public life and a representative of a community that has often felt stigmatised following recent terror attacks in Manchester and London. "There is such negativity in the media around Islam but

when I play cricket for England I don't have to say anything," Moeen added.

"I'm hoping people look at me and other Muslims and think: Actually, it will be all right. They're not too bad." Meanwhile Moeen, who made his name as a batsman, was hailed as an "unsung hero" by former England captain Alastair Cook.

England are now 2-1 up against South Africa ahead of the fourth and final Test. Moeen is the leading bowler on either side with 18 wickets — including a 10-wicket haul in England's series-opening win at Lord's where he also made 87. "It has been an amazing series for Mo, he is a legend," opening batsman Cook told BBC Radio Four's Today programme.

"He is the unsung hero in one sense. He came into the side a few years ago when I was captain as a guy who could balance the side and bowl a little bit of off-spin and now he is the leading wicket-taker in the series.

"His off-spin is actually very good, he's not [former England off-spinner] Graeme Swann but his record is improving all the time," Cook added.

Wladimir Klitschko announces retirement from boxing

BERLIN: Ukraine's former world heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko announced his retirement from boxing today to scupper any hopes of a November rematch against Britain's undisputed champ Anthony Joshua. Hamburg-based Klitschko, 41, hangs up his gloves as one of the all-time greats of the ring after a nine-and-a-half year reign as heavyweight champion, which was ended in 2015. Klitschko, who won super-heavyweight gold at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, was the undisputed world champion from 2006-2015, when he held several belts, before finally losing to Britain's Tyson Fury on points in 2015. Klitschko's last fight was in April when he was stopped by Anthony Joshua in the 11th round of the WBA title fight at Wembley Stadium in London in a hard-fought bout in which both fighters hit the canvas. Klitschko's retirement dashes a mooted blockbuster

rematch with Joshua possibly in Las Vegas in November. Such was the interest in Klitschko's announcement that the demand crashed his website today morning. "After my last fight against Anthony Joshua, I deliberately took the time to make a decision," said Klitschko, whose elder brother Vitali, 46, is also a former world heavyweight boxing champion. "I never thought I'd have such a long and incredibly successful boxing career, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart," he told his fans in a statement.

Klitschko bows out with a record of 64 wins and five defeats in 69 professional bouts. "I have achieved everything I dreamt of, and now I want to start my second career after sports," added Klitschko in a video statement. "27 years ago, I started my journey and it was the best decision I could have ever made."

Maria Sharapova withdraws from Stanford tennis with left arm injury

SAN FRANCISCO: Five-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova withdrew from the WTA Bank of the West Classic just before her scheduled second-round match Wednesday with a left arm injury, tournament officials announced. "We're sad to announce that @mariasharapova has withdrawn after doctor's advice regarding her left arm," a post on the tournament's Twitter feed said. Maria Sharapova played her first US match in more than two years on Monday, defeating American Jennifer Brady 6-1, 4-6, 6-0 in an opening-round match at the hardcourt event in Stanford, California. Toward the end of the Monday night's match, I felt pain in my left forearm," Sharapova said Wednesday. "After yesterday's scan, the doctor has recommended I don't risk further injury." The former world number one from Russia hadn't played in the US since March of 2015, before serving a 15-month doping suspension for the use of meldonium. Seventh-seeded Ukrainian Lesia Tsurenko advanced by walkover as a result of wildcard entrant Maria Sharapova's early exit. "Unfortunately, I have to withdraw from today's match," Sharapova said. "Monday night's crowd was so special and I wish I could continue playing but I have to make a preventative decision."

Maria Sharapova told supporters after her Monday match that her cheers meant a great deal to her. "I feel like I just want to hug everyone and say thank you," Sharapova said Monday. "It's my first match in the States in a really long time, and it's the closest thing to home for me." The latest injury brings into question whether or not Sharapova will be fit in time for the US Open, which starts August 28, as well as for another key tournament event in Cincinnati in two weeks for which Sharapova has also accepted a wildcard. Sharapova, 30, returned to competition in April, but her comeback was disrupted by a hip injury that forced her to withdraw from Wimbledon qualifying. Sharapova's ranking has fallen to 171 in the world. "I feel like I'm playing catch-up against everyone who has had a head start," Sharapova said after her match. "All that matters is that I keep playing." Tsurenko next faces American Madison Keys who survived a test from Caroline Dolehide to reach the quarter-finals, rallying from a set down for a 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 win. The other day session singles match saw No. 5 seed Ana Konjuh edge Natalia Vikhlyantseva 6-4, 7-5 to advance to the last eight, where she'll face Garbine Muguruza who cruised past American teenager Kayla Day 6-2, 6-0.

Umar Akmal remains out of favour of Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur

KARACHI: Senior Pakistan batsman Umar Akmal has been overlooked by the national selectors and head coach Mickey Arthur in the list of probables finalised to attend the training camp for the upcoming series against Sri Lanka national cricket team.

According to reliable sources, the selection of two more senior players, Muhammad Hafeez and Ahmed Shehzad in the Test squad is also unlikely. The selectors, Arthur and the PCB Director of Cricket, Haroon Rasheed recently held a meeting to finalise list of players who will be invited for the training camp for the Sri Lanka series.

"Unfortunately the selectors and Arthur still feel that Umar



needs more time to convince them he is ready for a national comeback," a source said.

Umar was initially picked in the ICC Champions Trophy squad but

later sent back home from England after failing a fitness test.

Even in April before the tour to the West Indies, the enigmatic batsman was not picked after failing a

fitness test. His fitness and attitude have been a reason of concern for the PCB, selectors and team management. Umar is presently in England training and undergoing a rehabilitation course to not only improve his fitness but also to overcome a knee problem.

The camp which will be set up from August 20 in Lahore is likely to also witness Hafeez and Shehzad restricted to only the ODI and T20 formats as the selectors and the head coach want to give another chance to left-handed opener Shaan Masood in the Tests. Masood was dropped after the first Test in the West Indies in April this year. The source said with the retirements of senior batsmen

Younis Khan and Misbah-ul-Haq, the selection committee and management is now banking on youngsters Haris Sohail and Usman Salahuddin to fill in their slots in the Test squad. They are a couple of other young players the selectors are keeping an eye on like Imam-ul-Haq the nephew of chief selector, Inzamam ul Haq for the camp while it has been decided to also give a try to off-spinner Bilal Asif in Test and ODI formats," the source added. The PCB dropped plans to have a boot camp in Kakul after around a dozen players including members of the Champions Trophy winning squad signed up to play in the Caribbean Premier League this month.

Australia pay war ends, ensuring upcoming tours

CANBERRA: Australia's bruising and protracted cricket pay dispute was finally resolved on Thursday with the players and management agreeing on a new "in-principle" deal, ensuring upcoming series against Bangladesh, India and England can go ahead. The players appeared to be the winners in the five-year agreement, worth an estimated US \$396 million, as they retained the revenue-sharing model they had been fighting for — with women cricketers also included for the first time. The bad-tempered stand-off had been rumbling for months, rattling the game and badly straining the players' relationship with governing body Cricket Australia. Some 230 cricketers had been unemployed since the end of June when their contracts expired, putting this month's Test tour to Bangladesh under serious threat.

"Today's agreement is the result of sensible compromises by both parties," said CA chief James Sutherland, adding that the "core issues" had been worked out. He said the five-year deal would "restore much certainty to the game of cricket."

"It will allow all players — state and international players — to be contracted immediately and it will also allow the all-important tour of Bangladesh to proceed as planned."

At the heart of the dispute had been the divisive issue of



revenue-sharing. CA wanted to scrap the model that has governed players' salaries since their first memorandum of understanding was brokered 20 years ago. Players have been paid a percentage of gross revenue for the past two decades, and they argued that changing the system would make them employees rather than partners with incentives to grow the game. CA wanted to pay them from a set pool instead, with only surplus revenue shared, to give it more cash to invest in grassroots programs and facilities.

In the end, it was the players who came out on top, with the revenue-sharing model retained.

Under the new deal, they will share up to 30 per cent of agreed revenue — 27.5pc of forecast revenue streams, and a 2.5pc performance pool. This is estimated to be worth Aus\$500 million over the next five years. Under the previous system, male players had been sharing up to 26 pc of revenues.

Relationships 'tested'

In a significant move, the format will also apply to female players in what the Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) said was "the biggest pay rise in the history of women's sport in Australia". Players also won a greater say on scheduling. "The new MOU is a great achievement for the players and the game," said ACA president Greg Dyer. "Like anything worthwhile it's been hard to achieve. But what has been agreed is groundbreaking for Australian sport. "One MOU for men and women, the maintenance of the partnership model, and record investments for grassroots cricket is what we wanted and it's what has been achieved." Steve Smith can now lead his team to Dhaka on August 18 with their futures secured. It also ensures that a one-day tour to India in September and October and the showpiece home Ashes series against England, beginning in November, are now safe.