

# TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

MONDAY

- NOVEMBER, 06, 2017
- 16 SAFFAR 1439 AH
- ISSUE: 259
- VOLUME: 03
- PAGES: 08

WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	22.2	3.1
JAMMU	28.5	14.9
LEH	17.4	-6.0
KARGIL	16.2	-2.4

SUNSET SUNDAY: 05:36 PM  
SUNRISE MONDAY: 06:56 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR  
Mainly clear sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 22°C & 3°C respectively.

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

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GOVT COMMITTED TO PROVIDE CLEAN DRINKING WATER SUPPLY IN RURAL AREAS:

GUJARAT POLLS PRESENT A TOUGH PRACTICE GROUND FOR RAHUL GANDHI,

FICCI PRESIDENT URGES REFORMS IN REGULATION SECTOR

CROUCH EARNS STAKE SHARE OF SPOILS AGAINST LEICESTER

## CM reviews power, drinking water scenario in the Valley

Mehbooba directs regulated supply; availability of transformers, water tankers

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** In view of the continued dry spell leading to depletion of water levels in streams, canals and other reservoirs across the Kashmir Valley, Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today convened a high level meeting to review the situation and take measures for addressing the situation.

Taking a serious view of the reports of difficulties caused to common people due to occasional disruptions in power and drinking water supply, the Chief Minister directed ensuring a regulated supply to consumers in all areas. She asked the PDD authorities to strictly adhere to the curtailment schedule and make sure that it is widely circulated. Besides, she also directed sharing of the curtailment schedule with respective Deputy Commissioners and Police.

Mehbooba Mufti directed the PDD authorities to set up control rooms to function round the clock where consumers can approach with any com-



plaint or grievance anytime. She directed linking of these control rooms with Police Helpline-Dial 100-so as to reach out in all areas and make it more responsive. She directed constitution of a similar mechanism in PHE Department and availability of drinking water.

The Chief Minister also directed that power supply be ensured to people during critical times like Fajr prayers, morning and evening times. She also directed pressing tanker

service into action in areas where from shortage of drinking water is reported. She also directed exploring the possibilities of digging hand pumps and wells to identify new sources.

On the occasion, Mehbooba Mufti was informed that consequent upon her directions, a buffer of 200 transformers has been created across the Valley to replace the damaged ones at the earliest. This, she was informed, is in addition to the 200 transformers which are already in circulation in

the distribution system.

Also the Chief Minister was informed that around 1000 Water Supply Schemes across the Valley have been affected due to continued dry spell and efforts are on to stabilize and preserve the water resources. 160 hand pumps are being dug across the valley for which 15 rigs have been pressed into service, she was informed. Additionally 66 wells have been proposed to be dug to augment water

See CM...Pg 02

## Interlocutor to play a role for return of power projects: Govt

MOS POWER BLAMES STONE PELTING FOR POWER CRISIS IN KASHMIR'

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** As anger is growing among the people against the worsening power scenario in Kashmir valley, the government blamed stone pelting for hampering the developments in the power sector.

The government also said that return of power projects from centre was an important part of agenda of alliance in the BJP-PDP coalition government and that the recently appointed interlocutor will play an important role in the negotiations.

"Common masses of the valley must understand that from last two years these people did not let us to work during the working seasons. They have left the stones only in the month of August this year. If we really want power system to better, then everyone must cooperate with the government," Minister of State for Power Syed Farooq Andrabi who was in Delhi to meet union Power minister told KNS over Phone.

The Minister said that it is the fact that we have seen unrest everywhere in valley from last two years. "We wanted to develop the power sector and I can say that funds were available with the government, but it was unfortunate that in 2016 and even in this year these people did not allow us to work," the

minister blamed.

Blaming people for misusing the electricity, the minister told KNS that the curtailment schedule will remain in place during the months of winter. "See people are not using power judiciously. People have started the using all heating gadgets including the boilers, heaters, blowers and other heavy gadgets, which cause a lot of load on the present power system and accordingly the PDD department has mandatory to rest the system," the minister said.

The minister further added that people must not forget that in the months of summer this year, the PDD department provided them a better power facility. "We have the same Power available with us which we had in the months of summer, so because of the load, we have no option left except the curtailment," the minister maintained.

Commenting on the recent statement of union minister for power, in which he has stated that the return of power projects is not possible, the PDP minister maintained that the minister actually had not stated like that. "I was present there. He had said that negotiations are on over the issue with the state government," the minister claimed.

See Interlocutor...Pg 02

## No expectations from new interlocutor: Dr Farooq

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** National Conference President and Member Parliament of Srinagar Dr. Farooq Abdullah Sunday asked GoI to devise a sound Kashmir policy and termed the appointment of a new interlocutor to J&K as nothing new.

While addressing a well attended public gathering in Tangdar Kupwara, Dr Farooq

See No...Pg 02

## Interlocutor visit, Kara says identify stakeholders first

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** As the newly appointed interlocutor on Kashmir, Dineshwar Sharma is arriving on his maiden visit to Srinagar on Monday, Congress has asked Delhi government to remove the contradiction within, over his appointment and come clean about the mandate given to him.

In a strongly worded statement senior Congress leader and member of the Dr. Manmohan Singh led Congress Policy and Planning group on J&K, Tariq Hameed Karra on Sunday demanded that government must make it clear whether Sharma was being

sent to restore peace in the Valley or has the mandate to find out the resolution of Kashmir Issue.

Karra stressed, if Dineshwar's task was to work for restoration of peace, then meeting police officials and mainstream politicians and stage managed groups of people from different hues by certain police and civil administration officials makes some sense. But if he was appointed for resolving the Kashmir Issue, then it was imperative upon the government to identify the 'stake holders' first.

See Interlocutor...Pg 02



## Engineers, PSU Employees delegations call on Finance Minister

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** A delegation of State Joint Action Committee of Graduate Engineering Associations (an amalgam Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Graduates Associations) led by the Chairman Peerzada Hidayatullah (President JKCEGA), Er Firdous Ahad Bhat (President JKMEGA) and Er Farooq A Ganaie (President JKCEGA) called on the Minister for Finance Dr Haseeb A Drabu here today.

The delegation apprised the Minister about various long pending issues of the engineering fraternity.

The delegation while welcoming the Government's decision regarding implementation of Assured Career Progression (ACP) for en-

gineers demanded that the same should be implemented at par with the other professional services already covered under ACP.

The Finance Minister assured the delegation that engineers being the real architects of the nation and bring governance to the doorsteps of the general public will surely be brought at par with the other professional services of state as far ACP and approval of running grades is concerned.

The Minister also assured that other issues like removal of pay anomaly/disparity, enhancement of FTA, etc will be redressed before the implementation of 7th Pay Commission.

The delegation thanked the Finance Minister. See Engineers...Pg 02

## World is looking at India with hope: Bhagwat

**JAIPUR, NOV 05:** The world wants India to show the path to other countries and is looking at it with hope, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said today.

Speaking at a function here, Bhagwat said that the world is "fed up of experiments" and has expectations from India that it will lead the world.

"The world is looking at the east, towards India and China but there are doubts about China and the world is looking at India with a hope. The world wants India to lead," Bhagwat said.

For this, he said, there is a need to push good works within the country so that the nation can become a world leader in good works and deeds.

Bhagwat was addressing a gathering after inaugurating the new building 'Sewa-Sadan' of Sewa Bharti Samiti-Rajasthan.

He said 'sewa' or the service to people, society and the nation is something which should be done instead of publicising it.

He said the service should be 'done' and not just highlighted.

Bhagwat said RSS is See World...Pg 02

## Poonch-Rawalakot cross-LoC bus service likely to resume Today

**JAMMU, NOV 05:** The cross-LoC bus service on the Poonch-Rawalakot road between J&K and PoK, is likely to resume from tomorrow after remaining suspended for the past 17 weeks, an official said today.

The bus service was suspended on July 10 due to heavy firing and shelling from the Pakistani side. No bus has crossed the Line of Control (LoC) from Chakandabagh since then.

"Since both sides decided to resume the travel and trade at a meeting near the LoC on Friday, we are hopeful of resumption of the weekly cross-LoC bus service as per schedule tomorrow," custodian of LoC trade

See Poonch...Pg 02

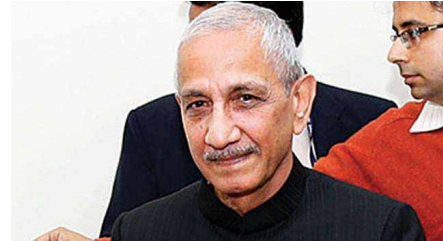
## No magic wand, but serious effort for peace: Sharma

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** Centre's special representative for Kashmir Dineshwar Sharma says he does not have a magic wand, but wants to be judged by his actions when he starts the process of talks in the Valley tomorrow.

"I do not have a magic wand but my efforts have to be judged with sincerity and not through the prism of the past," Sharma, 61, said.

The former Intelligence Bureau director added that no one should jump to conclusions before the process of talks with various stakeholders in Kashmir began.

"I would like to be judged by my actions," he said from Delhi.



Describing his work as a "serious effort", he added that "one should refrain from fishing in the desert".

"I am going there tomorrow to be with my people and understand their pain and See No...Pg 02

## Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa felicitates travel partners

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** The Khyber, Himalayan Resort & Spa, Gulmarg honoured Travel Agents with The Khyber Travel Agents' Excellence awards and celebrated partner success in an august gathering at Gulmarg.

Secretary Tourism, Sarmad Hafeez, Director Tourism, Mahmood Shah, CEO Gulmarg, Hanif Balki and MD Cable Car Corporation, Shamim Wani graced the occasion as Guests of Honour.

Speaking on the contribution by the travel trade for their ongoing support in promoting Gulmarg and the resort, Umar Trambo, MD, Pinnacle Resorts Pvt. Ltd, promoter of The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa, Gulmarg, said, "The Khyber Travel Agents' Excellence awards are an acknowledgement

See Khyber...Pg 02

## Amid ban, sand mafia loot Rambli Ara stream in south Kashmir

'Non-cooperation between various depts. a reason'

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** Famous Rambli Ara stream which passes through twin districts of Shopian and Pulwama in south Kashmir is presently being looted by the local sand mafia as there is no check on them.

The fast flowing stream rich in resources of stones, sand and boulders, is faces unabated loot as the illegal excavation is at its all time high.

While there is a blanket ban on illegal excavation of sand, stones and boulders from the stream, the sand and stones are being excavated from the area at a large scale.

This unabated large scale excavation has posed threat to the agricultural land around the large stream, besides creating apprehensions that if the floods again occur, it will create a catastrophe in the flood prone region.

Most of the illegal excavation takes place near Sagan -Achan strip-which is close to Lassipora Industrial estate.

Why the illegal excavation worth crores of rupees continues despite a ban, is a question the administration has failed to answer so far.

A thorough investigation reveals that the See Amid...Pg 02

## After Indo-Pak, panel to submit report on Sino-India ties: Tharoor

**NEW DELHI, NOV 05:** The parliamentary committee on external affairs plans to submit a comprehensive report on Sino-India ties next year, and is currently looking at the "extremely topical" Doklam issue, panel chairman Shashi Tharoor has said.

Tharoor said the panel wanted to take a comprehensive look at the India-China ties by understanding their trade and political relations, cooperation in international bodies and the Chinese attitude on India's membership bid for the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), on terrorism and Pakistan among

other aspects.

Right now the panel is looking at Doklam because it is "extremely topical", the former minister of state for external affairs said.

"Just as this year we submitted to Parliament a report on Indo-Pakistan relations, similarly for next summer we want to submit a report on Sino-Indian relations," he said. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs held two meetings on the Doklam situation last month.



See After...Pg 02

## Interlocutor arriving on Monday, Hurriyat asks like-minded to stay away

**SRINAGAR, NOV 05:** On the eve of BJP government's Kashmir interlocutor Dineshwar Sharma's maiden visit to Srinagar, the Geelani led Hurriyat Conference has reiterated that nobody from their camp will become part of the "useless talks" process.

"Hurriyat Conference rejects the facade of talks initiated to kill time," a statement issued by the Hurriyat (g) said. "We reiterate that no forum or party from Hurriyat camp will become part of the process."

"The dialogue that refers to the destruction in Yemen and Syria in a bid to threaten Kashmir, trying to

See Interlocutor...Pg 02

# ZULFKAR CHAIRS ROGI KALYAN SAMITI MEETINGS

**RAJOURI NOV 5:** The Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs and Tribal Affairs (Chairman, Rogi Kalyan Samiti) RKS Ch Zulfkhar Ali, today convened meetings of the governing body of RKS of CHCs Darhal and Kandi and PHCs Jamola, Tral, Budhal and Peeri here at Dak Bungalow Rajouri. District Development Com-

missioner Rajouri Dr. Shahid Iqbal, CPO Abdul Hamid, Tehsildars Koteranka abd Darhal, Dy. Director Dr. Chander Mohan, CMO Dr. Suresh Gupta, MS DH Rajouri Dr. Mehmood Bajjar, BMO Darhal Dr. Iqbal Malik, BMO Kandi Dr. Mohd Ashraf, executive engineers PWD, PHE & PDD apart from all the members of RKS of the health institutions attended the meeting. The Minister took a detailed

review of the physical and financial achievements of the institution and the status of development works being executed to improve facilities. The BMOs Darhal and Kandi (member secretaries RKS) and concerned medical officers apprised the chairman and members about the performance and financial achievements of these CHCs and PHCs up to the month of No-

vember, 2017. A threadbare discussion was held on the issues of shortage of staff, dearth of diagnostic equipments, encroachment of hospitals' land, tardy work on buildings of health institutions, non-availability of water supply lines, under-supply of laboratory reagents besides a plethora of issues. The minister directed the DDC to carry out the rationalization of

staff in the health department keeping the patients' rush to various health centers and sub-centers so that a reasonable patients-doctors ratio can be established in all health institutes across the district. He also impressed upon the deputy director to take up the matter with the directorate for provision of sufficient staff to cater the patient. He took serious view of 5 posts of consultants and

7 posts of medical officers out of 8 lying vacant in CHC Darhal and impressed the concerned to ensure filling of posts at an earlier date. The minister expressed serious concerns over the encroachment of hospital land by locals in CHC Darhal and called upon the tehsildar to ensure the eviction of the land within a week time. He also stressed upon the concerned to get the land and other property of

health department entered in the revenue records to keep a check on encroachment. Minister assured for provision of an ambulance under Tribal Sub-Plan for NTPHC Nadian. He also directed the X.En. PWD to macadamize the approach road and the parking space of CHC Darhal apart from directions for completion of compound wall on the NTPHC Dodaj.

## Continue from Front Page

### CM

availability in the Valley, the meeting was informed.

Mehbooba Mufti also directed Srinagar Municipal Corporation for pacing up anti-encroachment drive and clearing of footpaths in the city for the convenience of pedestrians. She also asked for popularising the use of car parking facilities at Lal Chowk for addressing the traffic congestion in the area.

Minister of State for Power, Syed Farooq Andrabi; Principal Secretary, PDD, Dheeraj Gupta; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Baseer Ahmad Khan; Secretary, PHE, M. Raju; IGP Kashmir zone, Muneer Ahmad Khan; heads of several Engineering Departments; Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed; Commissioner, SMC, Reyaz Ahmad Wani and other officers were present in the meeting.

### Interlocutor

The minister said that he is in New Delhi and has met the union power minister. "I have met the power minister here and discussed several issues regarding the developments of power sector the return of power projects.

Andrabi further said that the recently appointed interlocutor will play an important role in getting back of power projects. "We are committed on our agenda of alliance. I believe that the interlocutor will play an important role in the negotiations of return of power projects," the minister maintained.

The minister appealed people to use power judiciously. "We have given 1 crore to each of the constituencies of the state for improvement of power, but people have to play a great role by using the power judiciously, the minister said. (KNS)

### No

said, "I have very little expectations from this new interlocutor. Like it has been done before, he will come and meet people. In 2010, then UPA government appointed a group of interlocutors who visited the state and had detailed discussions with every section here. The process took more than two months and after they were done with meeting people, a report was compiled. What happened to that report? Did the government discuss that report in any forum including the Parliament? No. Instead it has been thrown into a dust bin somewhere in north Block. It was followed by a delegation comprising of parliamentarians who visited Kashmir. What happened to that delegation and their recommendations? Nothing happened. So I expect nothing to happen now as well."

Dr Farooq Abdullah rued the BJP governments Kashmir centric policy. "Ever since the Modi led government assumed power, their Kashmir policy has been swinging like a pendulum. The appointment of the new interlocutor is itself mired in controversies. Home Minister Rajnath Singh describes him as an interlocutor whereas the very next day another minister in the PMO designates him as a mere Spokesperson. So essentially when the mandate given to Mr Dineshwar Sharma is not clearly specified, then what is the fun in having deliberations with him?"

Describing Autonomy as core of the party's political agenda and a way forward towards resolution of the political issue of the State Dr Farooq said, "Our stand on resolving the issue of J&K politically is loud and clear which is the restoration of pre 1953 situation to the state."

Asserting that New Delhi was bound to make provisions to grant autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir, Dr Farooq said, "This was a guarantee that time and again has been clarified with number of deputations and representatives of the Government of India. Therefore for upholding the political dignity and rights of the people of J&K, restoration of Autonomy is a must."

Attacking the PDP led government in the state for its submissiveness to BJP, Dr Farooq Abdullah said, "It's a shame that an elected CM has to take dictations from lower rung BJP party functionaries who come from outside and dictate everything from governance to decision making. They in effect are the defacto CMs of this state."

On the occasion other party leaders including party Vice President Choudhary Mohammad Ramzan, Provincial President Nasir Aslam Wani, District President Kupwara Qaiser Jamsheed Lone, ex MLA Kafeel ur Rehman also spoke and highlighted the initiatives taken by the previous NC led governments in mitigating the sufferings of border dwellers. (KNS)

### Interlocutor

Karra while lashing out on the Union Government said, that in the name of appointment of interlocutor, the government of India was not only trying to befool and exploit sentiments of the countrymen but also attempting to mislead the International Community which has built tremendous pressure on it to open channels of negotiations with stake holders in the state, after Congress President Mrs Sonia Ghandi took a visionary initiative of constituting a high level Policy and Planning group on Jammu and Kashmir headed by two time former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh.

A spokesman for Karra quipped him saying that the government was trying to befool and exploit sentiments of the people across India in the name of initiating a dialogue so as to save itself from embarrassment at international level by resorting to 'non serious' cosmetic measures saning 'sincerity. He said the government had created willingly a huge confusion in this regard and it was still to clear who actually the interlocutor would rope- in for talks.

The Congressman said that BJP led government and the RSS backed BJP as party, were contradicting each other viz a viz, the task assigned to interlocutor. He said when Home Minister Rajnath Singh announced the appointment of interlocutor just two hours after, a junior minister in the Modi government sought to contradict Home Minister and said, there was no need of negotiations as there wasn't any issue as for as Kashmir was concerned.

According to Karra, the contradiction went even sharper when few hours later, the official spokesman of BJP during a prime time show on Times Now presented a new narrative to the term 'stake holder' and said, 'anybody who doesn't follow the constitution is not a stake holder.'

Karra ridiculed the BJP for contradicting their own senior most minister and former Party President Rajnath Singh and said even Deputy Chief Minister of the Jammu and Kashmir State had his own narrative to offer, saying, "talks would be held with Hurriyat also but only with those who have been jailed by NIA." The Congress leader questioned the motive behind the decision of sending 'interlocutor' to the state and said if Government of India can request Supreme Court to defer the hearing on Article 35-A in order to ensure an 'impediment-free' interlocution, why did not it held NIA back from raiding in Kashmir even after the announcement. He said the 'mockery' of BJP led government was at its high in Kashmir as it one side requests SC to defer the hearing but on the other side continue to unleash NIA terror to buckle down people for talks. He said such tactics won't work and BJP government would feel more pressure in coming days both internally and externally owing to its 'nefarious' and 'deceitful' policies.

He also doubted the seriousness of the government on the exercise and said the intentions and seriousness can be well gauged by the remarks of a senior RSS Ideologue that "the appointment of the interlocutor should be taken as lolly-pop to Kashmiris".

Karra further said that the government of India might have thought of further elevating Sharma to the all important Governor's post and this exercise might be a prelude to that game plan. He added, that assigning the task of interlocution without identifying the 'stake holders' might be to allow Sharma acquaint himself with the prevailing situation in the state before he actually possibly takes over as Governor

### Engineers

Minister for giving a patient hearing and assurance for redress of issues.

Meanwhile, a delegation of Public Sector Employees Federation also called on the Finance Minister here today and raised various issues confronting them.

The delegation comprised the representatives of JK Cements, SRTC, JKI, JK Handicrafts & Expo Corporation, JKHPMC and other Public Sector units.

### World

also engaged in serving people and society. "The work of the Sangh is of service or sewa. The service is done and not seen," he said.

Referring to the aid India provided to Nepal at the time of the massive earthquake in 2015, Bhagwat said technology has bridged the gap and it takes little time to reach out to those who are in need of help.

He also asked Sewa Bharti functionaries to create a positive atmosphere in the newly inaugurated building.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje said there is a need to enhance

social harmony, which has seen a decline in recent years, in the state by the way of 'sewa'.

She said the government has undertaken works of renovating temples and protecting historical monuments in the state. (AGENCIES)

### Poonch

(Poonch), Mohammad Tanveer said. Senior civil officials from Poonch and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) held a meeting at the crossing point on Friday and reached a consensus to resume the suspended bus service and trade between the two sides.

The bus service was started along the Srinagar- Muzaffarabad road in April 2005 and the Poonch-Rawalakot route on June 20, 2006 to facilitate easier trade and travel between the divided families of Jammu and Kashmir and PoK.

The trade between the two parts of Kashmir started in October 2008 on barter system.

After suspension of the bus service in July, the chances of resumption brightened on August 24 when senior Army commanders of India and Pakistan held a flag meeting at Chaka-da-bagh and agreed to keep the channels of communication open between local commanders along the LoC.

However, the scheduled meeting between the civilian officials on August 28 prior to the resumption of bus service could not take place as the other side did not turn up in view of fresh cross-border shelling.

"If everything goes well and the bus service resumes tomorrow, the suspended trade is also expected to resume on Tuesday," the official said, adding it all depends on the situation along the LoC.

As many as 119 passengers from both sides were left stranded in Poonch and PoK after the suspension of the bus service, leading to protests by guests from across the border on several occasions in support of their demand for early return to their homes.

Till August 1, there were 285 such violations by the Pakistan Army while in 2016, the number was significantly less at 228 for the entire year, according to the Army figures.

Eleven people, including nine soldiers, were killed and 18 injured in ceasefire violations by the Pakistan Army in July, according to the Army data.

There were as many as 83 ceasefire violations, one BAT (border action team) attack and two infiltration bids from the Pakistani side in June in which four people, including three jawans, were killed and 12 injured. (AGENCIES)

### No

suffering and find a suitable remedy to their problems," Sharma said.

Responding to criticisms which have appeared in sections of the media, he said in due course he would also meet intellectuals for their advice in achieving "this difficult national task".

Sharma, who is originally from Bihar and was a Kerala-cadre IPS officer of the 1979 batch, held the country's top-most post for a police officer from 2014 to 2016.

He said Kashmir was his "second home" as his professional journey in the premier intelligence unit began here in 1992.

"Nothing has changed since I was there for the first time. Kashmiriyat, which means compassion and brotherhood, has not changed even an iota. Therefore, I am hopeful that I will be at least able to contribute towards a new Kashmir, a peaceful Valley where prosperity will be the order of the day," he said.

Last month, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, while announcing that Sharma would be the interlocutor for Kashmir, had referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech from the Red Fort this year.

Modi had said on August 15, "Na gaali se, na goli se, parivartan hoga gale lagaane se (Only by embracing the people, and not with abuses or bullets, can there be a change in Kashmir)."

Asked about the course of action he would follow, Sharma said, "I do not have a magic wand to change the situation overnight. But having said that, I will like to emphasise during my proposed meetings beginning tomorrow, my every effort will be to work towards ensuring permanent peace in the state."

The special representative will meet political leaders, traders and other delegations tomorrow, according to a list drawn up by the state government.

However, he made it clear he had his own list of people whom he would meet as well.

To a question about a statement made by the Joint Resistance Front comprising separatist

groups including moderate and hardline factions of the Hurriyat and JKLF that they would not meet him, Sharma said the government's effort should not be seen through the "prism of the past".

"It is purely their choice whether they want to be a partner in peace or on the opposite side of the fence where destruction has been topping the agenda. My suggestion to everyone is that they should not see this effort of the government through the prism of the past," he said.

Efforts had previously been made by successive central governments too, he said.

"I have no idea what happened to them and, therefore, I would not like to comment. I can only talk about this initiative which has been done with a serious thought process and months of hard work by many," he said. (AGENCIES)

### Khyber

of the support and effort by our partners in the travel industry to promote Gulmarg and The Khyber.

"We are truly thankful to the state government for doing its utmost in promoting Kashmir at all the travel meets and for putting its heart and soul in to the promotional material that is being published across all media," he said.

Secretary Tourism Sarmad Hafeez in his speech said Gulmarg needed Khyber and not that Khyber needed Gulmarg. "Rather Kashmir needed Khyber," he said.

He said the Khyber is today an iconic resort not only in the state of J&K but is recognized for its excellence by guests from across the world.

The other guest speakers said that since its opening in 2012, Khyber broke a new dawn for visitors to enjoy the legendary beauty of the picturesque Kashmir valley in luxurious surroundings and have been a boon both for the State Government and Travel Agents.

Later, in a glittering ceremony at The Khyber, the management applauded the travel agents and partners from the Kashmir Valley recognising their efforts and felicitating them with The Khyber Travel Agents' Excellence Awards - 2016-17.

"We look forward to your continued support and hope that the situation in Kashmir improves in the coming months and we are back to attracting tourists from across the world to our beautiful destination- the warmest place on earth," Omar said.

Winners of the top honours: The Khyber Peerless Award: Mascot Travels

Voters Choice Award: Greengold Holidays Best Inbound Travel Agent: Distant Holidays Top Ten Travel Agents [on basis of productivity]: Mascot Travels; Honey Gold Tour & Travels; Mazda Travels; Shangloo Travels; Vacation Gateway; Ahsaan Travels; Peakmark Adventures; Dastan Tours; Earth Explorers and Shah Travels.

Leading in Group Business: Leapon Adventures

Promising Travel Agent: Green gold Holidays; Elizabeth Tour & Travels and Destination Paradise. (KNS)

### Amid

non-cooperation between the various departments like Irrigation and Flood Control, Fisheries, Geology and Mining, have over the years failed to save the stream from the open loot.

The official nexus also can't be ruled out, sources said.

Due to this unabated extraction of sand and boulders, the stream environs look like a bus stand in presence of huge number of tippers and dozers.

"We are surprised why the district administration is not looking into the issue. The stream has almost become dry. It would be difficult for us to irrigate our agricultural land in summers," said the locals.

Abdul Gani, an elderly says, after the 2014 floods, more and more illegal excavation of sand and stones have been taking place and people from other districts have set up their Bulldozers and other huge machines here to extract minerals.

"We fail to understand what stops the district administrations of Pulwama and Shopian to act. There can be two possibilities, either they are least bothered to stop this mafia or they are getting the due share out of it," the locals said.

The employees of Geology and Mining, and Fisheries departments deputed in the area to check and stop such illegal practice are allegedly in nexus with the mafia.

District Mining Officials of Pulwama, say it is difficult for them to stop the excavation from the stream as some people have got NOC from Flood and Irrigation Department to dredge out

the minerals, in addition the authority with their department to give permission has also been snatched from them under a recent SRO.

The officials said they have been verbally asked to check illegal excavation in the Rambi Ara as it has been banned, but there is no written document with them. (KNS)

### After

At the first meeting where the panel's members were briefed by Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar, Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi had raised questions on media reports of Chinese action in the Dokalam area, a member present at the meeting had said on the condition of anonymity.

The second meeting was briefed by Jaishankar, Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba and Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra.

The 73-day face-off between Indian and Chinese troops in Dokalam started on June 16 after the Indian side stopped the construction of a road by the Chinese Army. According to the external affairs ministry, the two forces "disengaged" on August 28.

On the Dokalam standoff, Tharoor said if the Chinese had "stopped doing something" that had triggered the reaction from India, then "clearly we had achieved something".

"If on the other hand, the stoppage is purely temporary and two weeks later they have started again, which is what we want to find out (during panel meetings), then there is some doubt as to whether the original portrayal of the incident as an Indian victory was accurate or not," the Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram said.

Tharoor said for the preparation of the report on Indo-Pakities, submitted in August this year, the panel had five or six hearings.

"Some with the foreign secretary alone, some with the foreign and defence secretaries and the military people, some with the commerce ministry, some with individual experts...We got everyone's view and we put it into a comprehensive report. So our approach on China will be the same," he said.

On the government's foreign policy, Tharoor said there was no doubt that relations with Pakistan were at a "pretty bad low" and with China they were "not much better".

"In both the cases we have come down a long way from the kind of bonhomie that characterised these relationships at different phases in the last decade, including during Mr Mod's initial years of prime ministership," he said.

"In fact, with Pakistan, one can truly accuse the government of inconsistency because there have been so many ups and downs," he added. (AGENCIES)

### Interlocutor

make Islam understandable to us is actually extension of the military operation that is aimed at forcing Kashmir leadership to talk," the statement said.

The Hurriyat (g) statement revealed that "some government representatives" were seeking an audience with the chairman at 10 pm on November 4. The said representative, the statement said, indicated that efforts were underway to pressurize Syed Ali Geelani to talk.

"These forced talks lack any moral or political grounds," the statement said.

The statement said that the Hurriyat leaders have spent 20-25 years in Indian jails and have survived series of assassination bids. "Syed Ali Geelani has always preferred the resistance movement and has spent 23 years, since 1962 in jails, has survived serious assassination bids, was tortured in jails and now his relatives are also being arrested," the statement said. "He has never compromised and will never compromise."

The statement came on the eve of Sharma's maiden visit on Monday.

Already, Sharma's office has extended invitations to most of the unionists parties. Reports said that the invitations were received by Congress, Engineer Rashid, Ghulam Hassan Mir and many others.

Sharma has been talking to various media in Delhi since his appointment. He has insisted that he will be talking to all the Indians in the state and he sees Kashmir's as his second home.

On Sunday he was quoted saying that he lacks the "magic wand" to alter the situation but wants to be judged by his actions. He has said he would make sincere efforts to understand the pain and suffering of the people and find a "suitable remedy". He will be working for "permanent peace". Asked if he meets the separatists, Sharam has said it is their choice.

# Govt committed to provide clean drinking water supply in rural areas: Abdul Haq



**KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 05:** Minister for Rural Development Panchayat Raj Abdul Haq on Saturday said the people in the rural areas especially women have suffered a lot in the past as they had to walk miles to fetch water despite scorching heat or chilling

cold. He said the current dispensation is committed to provide pure drinking water supply to them as steps are being taken to lay a Web of water Supply Schemes which can provide clean drinking water to the people.

The Minister said this during visit to

various villages of Kupwara district to review the functioning of various water supply schemes and get first hand information about the water supply scenario in the district. He was accompanied by Chief Engineer PHE and other senior officers of the district. They vis-

ited Sarkuli, Lashtiyal, Kalaroos, Czepora, Cherkoot, and other villages and interacted with the locals to get the feedback about water supply system. He said the government was duty bound to supply clean and pure drinking water to the people of the state and it has adopted a holistic approach to streamline water supply scenario in the state especially in rural areas.

Minister said the people in the rural areas especially women have earlier suffered a lot as there are many such areas where they have to walk miles to fetch water and that steps are being taken to provide pure drinking water supply to people in these areas. He said many Water Supply Schemes have been commissioned while many are under construction which will be soon dedicated to the people. The locals apprised the Minister about various issues regarding drinking water. Minister passed on spot directions for the redressal of their grievances. The Minister also visited various

under construction, Waster Supply Schemes and directed for early completion of the projects. He said Government is committed to ease the living of the people especially living in far flung areas and that Chief Minister has directed them to go to the doorsteps of the people to know their woes and provide relief to them.

## Govt for providing all-weather road connectivity in rural areas: Sham Choudhary

**JAMMU, NOVEMBER 05:** Minister for PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control, Sham Lal Choudhary, today said the government has taken various initiatives to provide all-weather road connectivity to people of the state with emphasis on rural and border areas.

The Minister was speaking after kick starting black-topping work on 3 km road from Nanowali to Magowali to be executed at an estimated cost of Rs. 41 lakh under macadamization of rural roads.

Spelling out government's endeavours of extending an expanded road network in every part of the state, the Minister said that during the regime of present dispensation the state has received substantial funding from the Centre under several schemes envisaging enhanced connectivity. "With expansion in existing road network the state is witnessing a notable growth and development in different spheres", he added.

The Minister, while counting government's achievements in other sectors, said that several works have been started to improve sanitation and healthcare facilities in the border villages. "The schemes launched for welfare of the people are yielding tangible results on ground", he added.

The Minister urged upon the people to come forward and take benefit of various government schemes being launched for their socioeconomic empowerment.

The Minister also exhorted upon the executing agencies and concerned officers to ensure that all development projects are executed expeditiously so that people gets benefitted in time.

## Dy CM chairs meeting of Rogi Kalyan Samiti

**NOVEMBER 05:** Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Nirmal Singh, chaired a meeting of governing body of Rogi Kalyan Samiti Community Health Centre (CHC) Billawar, here today. A threadbare discussion was held on procurements needed for the development of the hospital and providing better healthcare facilities to the patients. Stressing on the need for further improvement in existing healthcare services, Dy CM asked the concerned authorities to work out the actual healthcare requirements in the hospital so that it could be equipped with adequate diagnostic and treatment facilities.

Various issues pertaining to recruitment of Eye Surgeon, ENT Surgeon, Orthopedic Surgeon, Pathologist, Physiotherapist and other medical staff, updation of machinery and equipments at Blood Bank, requirement of new ambulance and updation of provincial medical stores, Labour Room/NICU, OPD Block, Dispensary, Laboratory, Ultra Sound and X-Ray instruments, dental equipments, BPMU, DEO NHM section, requirements at provincial medical stores, updation of Operation Theatre/Resuscitation section and other requirements for improving health care facilities were discussed in the meeting. Taking a detailed view of the agenda, Dr Singh approved the essential requirements to improve the functioning of the hospital. He directed the concerned officers to work in synergy to ensure proper utilization of available resources in the interest of patient care.

Citing healthcare as the top priority of present dispensation, Dr Singh said government is making determined efforts to provide better basic healthcare facilities to the patients.

Dr Singh asked the concerned authorities to put in their dedicated efforts towards patient care besides emphasizing punctuality of medical staff in view of their crucial role towards the health of ailing. Stressing on maintaining cleanliness in the hospital premises,

Dy CM said that a clean and hygienic environment is pre requisite for patient care. He said that it is a collective responsibility of the hospital authorities and the people to ensure proper sanitation in the hospital.

## DDC Kupwara visits Mawar, Langate, Handwara; takes stock of ongoing developmental works

**KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 5:** District Development Commissioner, Kupwara Khalid Jahangir, along with officers and engineers of different departments took stock of ongoing developmental projects at different places in Kupwara, Langate, Mawar, Hangah, Mugalpora, Zamanpora, Nowgam and Lawoosa to inspect the progress on these projects carried out by the different executing agencies.

The visiting dignitary impressed upon the executing agencies for timely completion of these projects under the instructions of Chief Minister's commitments during the recent visit to Kupwara. On the occasion, the DDC directed JKPC to complete the works

on District Hospital Kupwara, Government Degree College at Sogam, Auditorium within the month's time. The PHE department was directed to provide the drinking

water supply from Mugalpora-Zamanpora Water Supply Scheme. The Filtration Plants at Lawoosa, Langate were also inspected for repairing and revamping by DDC.

The DDC also inspected the Hot Mixed Macadam Plant at Nowgam and several issues were discussed with Beacon authorities. He directed concerned officials to complete the macadamization process of Chotipora-Nowgam road in stipulated time frame. The several public deputations also

met DDC apprised him about the problems and demands confronting to the public of the visiting areas. He gave them patient hearing and assured them redressal of grievances at earliest.

Khalid Jahangir also paid visit to Mawar Tulwari Langate to inquire about the implementation of instruction given to the Monitoring Committee constituted to oversee the illegal extractions in Nallahs,

which has been already restricted by the district administration on the guidelines of the High Court. Illegal extracting tools like spades and shovels were seized involved in illegal extraction of nalla produce during the inspection of the areas.

## JK PARTICIPATES IN 'DISCOVER INDIA TRAVEL EXPO' IN CHENNAI

**CHENNAI, NOVEMBER 05:** J&K Tourism participated in the 2-day 'Discover India Travel Expo' held in Chennai Trade Centre, in Nandambakkam to promote and project State's tourism products including food, art and craft. Deputy Director Tourism Kashmir, Peerzada Zahoor along with MD & CEO - Sivanesan Group of companies S. Sivanesan and Assistant Director of Tourism, Department of J&K Tourism Rupali Mahajan inaugurated the 2-day Travel Expo on November 4. The expo saw the participation of State Tourism Boards, Tour Operators, Resorts, Online Tour Guides, Airlines, Cruise Liners and converged world of travel into a single, easily accessible platform for travel enthusiasts. The Expo is one the leading travel shows in India to promote J&K's tourism products and market the state among holiday-makers and travel agents. Deputy Director Tourism, Peerzada Zahoor said the Expo received good

response from tour operators and travel enthusiasts who enquired about the JK's tourism products and holiday packages. At the J&K stall in Expo, the department,

distributed publicity materials among the visitors and screened shot movies during the occasion which mesmerized the participants and excited them to visit Kashmir for sightseeing and experiencing the local culture. During the Travel Expo, Food Festival was also organized which showcasing authentic cuisines of the participating states.

The participation in the Expo is a part of the department's tourism promotional campaign to attract travellers back to Kashmir. The department is also planning series of events in J&K including travel mart in Jammu, golf tournament in Srinagar, Snow Festival in Gulmarg and Pahalgam to promote state's tourism products and pitch the Valley for all season destination.

## Haji Anayat concludes Zanskar tour; announces 20 solar water heaters for Rangdum, adjoining villages

### Takes appraisal of public grievances at Rangdum, Suru Valley

**KARGIL NOVEMBER 05:** On the final day of his 4-day extensive tour of Zanskar Sub Division, Chairman Legislative Council Haji Anayat Ali today announced 20 solar water heaters out of his CDF funds in favour of the villagers of Tashi Stongday, Shakma Karpoo, Rangdum and Rangdum Gonpa hamlets. The Chairman also announced to provide CDF funds for purchase of generator set in favour of the inhabitants of Tashi Stongday besides kitchen set and 6 sewing machines for Farol Parkachik hamlet.

Deputy Commissioner Kargil Haji Gulzar Hussain, SSP Kargil Tsering Gyalpo besides other concerned officers accompanied the Chairman.

On the occasion, the Chairman interacted with a number of public delegations and took first hand appraisal of their issues and grievances. The inhabitants of Tashi Stongday, Rangdum and Shakma Karpoo highlighted their demands pertaining to installation of mobile towers, provision of

DSPT phones, repair of irrigation khuls, water reservoirs and flood protection bunds, availability of medicines for timely treatment of cattle diseases besides other demands.

Haji Anayat Ali gave patient hearing to their demands and assured of their fulfilment in a phased manner. The Chairman also directed the concerned officers to identify BPL families for provision of free LPG connections under PMUY scheme. He also underlined the need to provide training in cattle disease management and treatment to local youth in areas where there is no facility of animal and sheep husbandry centres besides to create a separate head 'honorary to paramedics' under district plan to meet out their honorarium. Meanwhile the officers of Kargil Renewable Energy Development Agency (KREDA) were directed to release the pending honoraria in favour of solar power plant operators.

Reiterating the commitment of the government towards the inclusive development of the far flung pockets of the state, Haji

Anayat Ali said that to connect these far off villages with the mainstream through mobile services, a number of mobile towers are being installed next year while as a proposal to connect Zanskar with Power Grid is also on the cards.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Farol Parkachik, Achambur, Tai Suru and Panikhar areas projected demands that included the immediate repair of major irrigation Khul and completion of the remaining works of footbridge at Achambur, the provision of DSPT phones, provision of adequate stock of medicare facilities for winter months, repair of water supply schemes and pipelines, opening of sheep husbandry center at Farol Parkachik among several other demands. The inhabitants of Tai Suru and Panikhar raised demands for the construction of a number of link roads between Dak Bungalow Tai Suru to Astana Khor and Pursa, construction of parking lot cum playground and ice hockey rink, bridge at Nam Suru, water reservoir at Goma Kargee, flood pro-

tection works at Maitaa Broq, blacktopping of road from Nam Suru bridge to Khaos besides other demands.

The Chairman while assuring the delegations of the fulfilment of all their genuine demands directed the engineers of PWD department to prepare DPRs for construction of bridges, roads, playground and other projects. He also directed them to carry out the repair works immediately so that the people do not face further inconvenience.

Moreover concerned officers were also directed to ensure stocking of medicines in three days time besides to conduct survey for opening up of Sheep Husbandry Center at Farol Parkachik.

The Chairman also inaugurated the renovated and face lifted Police post buildings at Sankoo and Panikhar.

Later Haji Anayat Ali expressed his gratitude to all the district and sub divisional officers as well as media persons for successful culmination of Zanskar tour.

## Protection of Forests, Wildlife; government's priority: Lal Singh

**KATHUA NOVEMBER 5:** Minister for Forests, Environment and Ecology, Ch. Lal Singh, said that government has prioritized the protection and preservation plan of forests and wildlife by taking up systematic demarcation of forest and wildlife land across the state.

The Minister, while speaking during a public grievances redressal camp at Kathua today, said that serious efforts are being initiated to preserve ecology and environment of the state.

The Minister said that government has initiated a process of demarcating the Forest and Wildlife land across the State and assured that strict action would be taken against the encroachers. He said that directions have already been issued to the officials of the department that there shouldn't be any compromise on the protection of wildlife, environment and ecology of the State.

The Minister called for a greater role of the civil society in raising awareness among the people of all sections, which would help in protecting forests and wildlife. He said that the vulnerable areas in the forests are being demarcated on priority and government is keeping a strict vigil over the forests and protected wildlife areas of the State.

Lal Singh also urged upon the people to take up plantation and swachhta drives to maintain healthy ambience for living.

Earlier, deputations from different parts of the district apprised the Minister of their demands and problems.

The Minister directed ADC Basohli to ensure time bound redressal of the issues projected by the people. DC Kathua Rishpal Singh, Ex MLA Kanta Andotra, ACR Kathua Jitendra Mishra and district officers were also present on the occasion.

## Ajay Nanda visits Bhaga Kotli, takes stock of public grievances

**REASI, NOVEMBER 05:** Minister of State for Finance and Planning, Ajay Nanda, today conducted extensive tour of Bhaga Kotli and adjoining areas and took stock of public grievances besides reviewing development works.

The people apprised the Minister of various issues related to welfare and development of their respective areas seeking an early redressal to the same. They sought his intervention in speedy execution of various development works in their areas.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister asked the people to remain connected with officers of various departments so that the welfare schemes and programmes of state and central government are effectively implemented for their larger interest.

The Minister said social security, basic facility to the poor and good governance are priorities of the government for which a vigorous campaign has been launched throughout the state.

It was informed that a total of 10505 accounts have been opened in different bank branches in the district, of which, 119 have been linked for Atal Pension Yojana, 672 for PMJJY, 1548 for PMSBY, 165 for PMSBY besides 15154 Kissan Credit Cards have been distributed among the beneficiaries.

The Minister further said that concerted efforts are being made by bank branches to link Adhaar numbers with the accounts in order to provide maximum benefit to the people in a transparent way.

Responding to improvement of 3 km stretch of Reasi-Katra road, the Minister said that the blacktopping work on it is in progress and is expected to be completed soon. The Minister assured the people that necessary action would be taken up to resolve their issues in a time bound manner. The Minister was accompanied by officers and local people of the area.

DAILY Editorial Time and Us SRINAGAR J&K

TEACHERS DON'T PREACH

Two facts speak volumes about the state of education in Haryana and the state government's attitude towards it. First, according to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2016, only one out of four Class III students enrolled in government schools in the state can read a Class II text in Hindi and only 27.7 per cent of them can do basic subtraction. Second, for six days from October 30 onwards, 91 government school teachers have reportedly been pulled away from their duties to act as pujaris (priests) in temples in Bilaspur during the Kapal Mochan Mela. That the BJP government sees fit to order its employees — especially teachers meant to fulfil secular pedagogical functions — to act in religious roles speaks to a disturbing set of priorities. The order is also symptomatic of a larger malaise — teachers in Haryana and elsewhere have become an all-weather labour force for government programmes, to the detriment of their core duties.

According to an ASSOCHAM report released last month, Haryana has 30,000 teacher vacancies and over 800 schools are functioning without principals. Even among the teachers present in government schools, absenteeism continues to be a menace, as does the low quality of teaching. This is reflected in the poorer learning outcomes revealed by ASER. Add to this the additional burdens placed on government schools and teachers, and a decline in the standards of education seems inevitable. Teachers collect data for the census, are on duty during elections and now, in Haryana, have to make up for a shortfall in temple staff. The state BJP's argument that such deputations occurred under the previous administration as well hold little water — a legacy of mismanagement is no excuse for continuing poor practices. Not surprisingly, like in many other parts of the country, the number of parents, including among the poor, sending their children to private schools and teaching shops is on the rise in Haryana.

Teachers' unions in Haryana have objected to the state government's move. The president of the Adhyapak Sangh has pointed out that using teachers in religious roles is a slippery slope. The ideological underpinning of school education in Haryana has been a concern since the BJP government assumed office. In 2015, then state education minister, Ram Bilas Sharma, said the government would "saffronise the education system". The state government made teaching the Gita and yoga compulsory in schools. In September, government schools spent a week organising events celebrating RSS ideologue Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. Instead of promoting ideology, religion and politics, the state government should focus on training teachers to ensure that children in government schools get the education they deserve.

THE STIMULUS AND AFTER

The recapitalisation of public banks is a welcome move but will be a lost effort without accompanying reforms

Ajit Ranade

The Financial Times of London described the recent recapitalisation of public sector banks in India as collecting used tiffin boxes. It said banks are like intermediaries, not unlike the dabbawalas of Mumbai who deliver home cooked meals to offices, and return used tiffin boxes back in the evening. Banks collect savings from depositors and give it to borrowers. The intermediaries have not been collecting their deliveries back (that is, the bad loans), and the clean-up is as messy as uncollected used tiffin boxes!

Low credit offtake

The metaphor is a bit mixed up but catches the imagination. A better metaphor would be "cleaning the carburettor" of the credit pipeline. Bad loans have clogged the pipes, and new credit has stopped flowing.

One of the most reliable leading indicators of economic growth is the growth of non-food credit. High growth in credit foretells healthy growth of GDP, since credit goes mostly into investment and building of new capacity. India is predominantly a bank finance-led economy, so when bank lending slows down, it surely impacts future growth. Bank credit growth has been at nearly a 60-year low. Even the growth of money supply is at a 55-year low. This stark metric tells us about the growth slowdown. Of course, there are many proximate causes as well, such as demonetisation and the roll-out of the goods and services tax (GST).

Credit offtake slowed down because of both demand and supply side factors. On the demand side is the fact that industry has low capacity utilisation rates (factories lie idle); domestic industry is losing market share to low cost imports, made worse by GST, which has tilted the field in favour of imports, and also by the strong currency. The corporate sector is also deleveraging and paying off its past high debts. All this means demand from the private sector for large-scale new credit is muted.

Burden of bad loans

On the supply side, the big constraint on fresh lending is the bur-



den of non-performing assets (NPAs). The NPA ratio has been deteriorating for more than six years, and worse is yet to come. The diagnosis of worsening NPAs reveals five different causes, not all caused by the bankers themselves. The first is the disproportionate share of loans that went to infrastructure. These projects are of long gestation and long payback period, so unsuitable for bank lending. That creates an asset liability mismatch for banks, since the liability side is of a short-term nature. During the UPA regime, public-sector banks were under pressure to fund the ambitious \$1 trillion infrastructure vision. Normally such projects ought to be funded by long-term bonds or developmental organisations like the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank, or the IDBI in its original avatar. But in the absence of those options of development finance, it fell to public sector banks to provide infrastructure finance. This led to over-exposure.

The second reason for deterioration of loans could be the impact of key judicial decisions like abrupt cancellations of coal mines and spectrum allocation. When the same were re-allocated through expensive auctions, it proved to be a fatal burden on respective business models of power, steel and telecom. The third reason for worsening NPA ratios could be the delays caused by land acquisition and environmental clearances. This reason for NPAs

was adequately documented in the Economic Survey. The fourth reason is the Asset Quality Review mandated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2015. This was much needed, since it put a stop to the "extend and pretend" culture around worsening credit.

To be fair, the RBI showed great regulatory forbearance in allowing lenders to work out remedies for genuine cases which faced a business cycle downturn. Various options were made available, including extending duration of loans, debt restructuring, swapping equity for debt and so on. But it does not seem to have made any significant difference. The NPA recovery process has since got a boost due to the new insolvency and bankruptcy law. The government too announced the Indradhanush scheme focused on banking reforms and recapitalisation of NPA-burdened banks. Two instalments of infusion in the past two years proved woefully inadequate as the NPA ratio continued to mount.

The fifth reason for worsening NPA is an omnibus called "malfeasance". This includes cosy relationships between banker and borrower, crony capitalism, political interference in lending decisions (a legacy of the past), a less than vigorous attempt to recover past dues, careless due diligence, etc.

There may be other reasons as well. The fact is that 10% of all loans have gone bad. No wonder that after provisioning, for many public-

sector banks their net worth would be completely eroded. Hence the days of piecemeal and feeble remedies are gone.

More reforms needed

In the light of this background, the decision to inject ₹2.11 lakh crore of capital into public sector banks is a welcome boost. This was also evident from the reaction of the stock market as some bank stocks soared by as much as 35%. It is somewhat a moot point that this injection could have been done at least one year ago.

The injection is clever because it has been done without busting the promised fiscal deficit target. It has been financed by the sale of recapitalisation bonds. Banks are currently flush with cash which was deposited after demonetisation. Much of that same cash will be used to buy those bonds. The proceeds of the sale of these bonds will be put back into the bank as fresh equity by the government. It's a neat roundtrip of depositors' cash coming back as capital. To that extent it is taxpayers who are funding this equity injection. More details are awaited. For instance, since banks are listed entities, should not other shareholders apart from the government also be asked to make a matching equity infusion? What about the windfall gains that arose as a result of this equity infusion? How will the bonds be repaid by the government? What will be their dura-

tion? Will they be traded? Would they instead be converted into perpetual bonds, never to be repaid, as was done to the 1992-93 bonds?

Suffice to say that this capital infusion provides banks with the much-needed room to make fresh loans. In the coming days of Basel-3 where much capital is needed for risk provisioning, the NPAs are a millstone which prevent fresh lending.

With this big bang recap effort, we can expect the growth pipes to be unclogged. Of course, the recapitalisation effort is useless without accompanying reforms which can prevent a recurrence. Those reforms are mostly about governance, meaning granting genuine autonomy to banks in their functioning, including all aspects such as lending, recovery, and recruitment decisions. Banks have to be accountable to shareholders, including the government, through their respective boards. That's the fourth crucial "R" that was part of this recap package — recognition, recapitalisation, resolution and reform. Without reform of credit functioning, culture, treatment of delinquencies and even ownership structure in banking, this recap effort will only be stopgap. Assuming reform is coming (witness the huge increase in India's global rank in ease of doing business), let's raise a toast to the bank recap.

Ajit Ranade is an economist

Where credit is due

Bibek Debroy

There can be an entire book of apocrypha based on what John Maynard Keynes is supposed to have written or said. On one occasion, Lord Keynes was reportedly asked, "How is your wife?" He replied, "Compared to whose wife?" Despite his marriage to Lydia Lopokova, given his proclivities, both the question and answer are unlikely. However, many things are judged on the basis of a relative, rather than absolute, performance.

Most people will remember the name of the first person to reach the South Pole, but may not remember that of the second. Whether it is the International Food Policy Research Institute's (IFPRI) Global Hunger Index or the World Bank's Doing Business Indicators, there is an obsession with ranks. Ranks are relative and ranks are also a function of the number of countries included. For instance, if the number of countries changes, it is possible for a country that has improved to register a decline in rank. Even if the set of countries is constant, an improved country can register a decline in rank because other

countries have improved relatively more. Underlying every rank is some score or index. If one wishes to track a country or economy's secular (over time) improvement, score/index is a better indicator. Unfortunately, most people are obsessed with ranks and prefer to use these for cross-country comparisons.

There is nothing wrong with that. After all, one wishes to benchmark against the best in the business. However, all cross-country comparisons are fraught with problems. The methodology must be impeccable. For the World Bank's Doing Business Project (DBP), it is anything but that.

As everyone probably knows, DBP is based on 10 heads included in the score/ranking: (1) starting a business; (2) dealing with construction permits; (3) getting electricity; (4) registering property; (5) getting credit; (6) protecting minority investors; (7) paying taxes; (8) trading across borders; (9) enforcing contracts; and (10) resolving insolvency.

For these, questionnaires are administered to entrepreneurs/professionals. Note that no question is truly objective. Every question carries with it a normative value



judgement about what is desirable, even if it is not explicitly stated. Note also that though these masquerade as representative of entire economies/countries, in practice, they are based on one or two cities. Thus, India's ranking is based on Mumbai and Delhi alone. Sample sizes are also hardly respectable. For some countries and some heads, sample sizes can be as gargantuan as two. Sometimes, those two or three respondents may not be entrepreneurs or professionals, but

people who work for the government. Stated simply, had it not been the World Bank, the methodology would have been crucified. Indeed, it has been crucified and the reading list of critiques will be fairly long. Methodologically, the World Bank's Enterprise Survey is more robust. In fairness, the Bank has altered its methodology periodically. What has just been published is described as DBP 2018 and has 190 economies. When DBP started in 2003, there were 133 economies. It has been

190 since last year. Repeating the point made earlier, across 11 heads (the labour head is not included in computing the aggregate), only 50 per cent of economies have more than six respondents overall. Thirty-five per cent have 3-5 respondents and 15 per cent have 1-2 respondents. Add the methodological change point and I don't think one should compare DBP 2018 with anything before 2015.

Does that mean DBP tells us nothing at all? Certainly not and

it will be churlish not to give credit to India's improvement in DBP 2018. The 30-spot jump in ranks to 100 since DBP 2017 is remarkable. However, the government's intention will understandably be to improve the business environment everywhere in the country, not just in Mumbai and Delhi, and for every entrepreneur, not just the limited liability company highlighted by the Bank. Stated thus, the goal of moving to the top 50 countries is a by-product, not the intended goal. In passing, the distance to frontier concept is in some sense the score, the distance from the best in the business, so to speak. There has been an improvement not just in the rank but also in this score.

Despite improvements, if one looks at the scores, relatively weak areas are dealing with construction permits, registering property, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency. (The ranks give a slightly different picture because they also depend on how other countries perform.) In some of these, and indeed under all heads, there will be improvements in DBP 2019 because of the reforms that have kicked in after June 2017 — DBP 2018 only covers the period until that cut-off date. If one sticks to

Mumbai and Delhi, I suspect registering property won't improve significantly without updating and digitising land records, improving titling and streamlining procedures on transfer of property. Construction is largely a municipal subject while enforcing contracts involves the judiciary.

This is what DBP 2018 says on construction permits: "India made dealing with construction permits less cumbersome by implementing an online system that has streamlined the process at the Municipality of New Delhi and Municipality of Greater Mumbai. The online system has streamlined the process of obtaining a building permit, thereby reducing the number of procedures and time required to obtain a building permit in India." And on enforcing contracts, "India made enforcing contracts easier by introducing the National Judicial Data Grid, which makes it possible to generate case measurement reports on local courts. This reform applies to both Delhi and Mumbai." Not that impressive but that also underlines the slack.

The writer is chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the PM. Views are personal.

# GUJARAT POLLS PRESENT A TOUGH PRACTICE GROUND FOR RAHUL GANDHI, CONGRESS TO COUNTER NARENDRA MODI IN 2019

**AHMEDABAD:** Ahead of the most crucial Gujarat Assembly election, the sentiment of the people of the state is caught somewhere between two extreme schools of wishful thinking — one believes that Congress is winning after 32 years of exile and the other thinks that there is no way Gujarat can dump Narendra Modi, either as the chief minister or as the prime minister.

Ironically, though neither of the two schools wants to go wrong. Those who think Congress will win don't want to take any chances and could be heard saying 'well there may be some hidden undercurrent for Modi'. Those who think that BJP will win are only a little more optimistic, though they too don't want to take any chances and could be heard saying 'well nobody is against Modi, the teething problems of GST and demonetisation are history'.

Any which way, the central theme is not Gujarat, it is Modi and his policies as the prime minister. The Gujarat Assembly election of 2017 is arguably a referendum of sorts on India 2019. While there is nothing new in saying this, it is also about one man who is preparing his ground for 2019 on the toughest turf: Rahul Gandhi. Rahul Gandhi in Vapi. Firstpost/Darshan Desai/Rahul Gandhi in Vapi. Firstpost/Darshan Desai/He is addressing Gujarat, but en route to Gu-

jarat, he is looking at India. He is trying his best and pulling out stops, but understands that if he loses Gujarat it is not a big deal compared to how it is for Modi. But if Congress makes BJP huff and puff for a victory in its prized invincible state, he sure has something to work on. So, what exactly is Gandhi doing? First and foremost Gandhi understands that he is not a match to Modi or his high-pitched practised oratory, his connect with the people, his event management skills and the BJP's organisational prowess.

So, he has to create a contrast. Gandhi's campaign strategy through his three-day sojourns to three regions in Gujarat has been to emerge as a simple, friendly person who is actually a common man. This was Modi's favourite theme that he was not actually a chief minister but a common man, like a pradhan santri. Similes and,

coinages are Modi's specialty something which Rahul is probably trying to emulate with Gabbar Singh Tax for GST. Albeit Rahul is not ascribing any such coinages to himself — again to create the contrast — but he uses taunts as he tells the crowds that a Congress government will listen to your mann ki baat and "not enforce our mann ki baat". After he returned from Rae Bareilly to check on the victims of the NTPC blast



midway through his three-day South Gujarat campaign, Gandhi called Congress leaders Ashok Gehlot, Ahmed Patel, Bharatsinh Solanki, Shaktisinh Gohil, Arjun Modhwadia, Siddharth Patel and others at a local restaurant, Giriraj Restaurant, in industrial town Vapi for dinner. And the restaurant was not vacated for him, many others continued with their food at the crowded noisy place. "We did not invite him to

join for dinner at the restaurant, he called us. It so happened that he prefers to stay at the Circuit House and he checked in there, and we all, me Ashok Gehlot others, stayed at a hotel. Gandhi asked a waiter at the guest house about a restaurant close by and he suggested Giriraj, so he sent us a message that we go there for dinner," recalls former state Congress president Arjun Modhwadia talking to Firstpost. "This is nothing,

When we were travelling in central Gujarat, just after he had finished a public meeting in Bodeli (tribal area in Chhota Udepur district), he said chai peete hain and we stopped at a typical roadside highway dhabba. He had pakodas and wafers there," Lalji Desai, a grassroots Congress worker, who is part of the organisation during Gandhi's election campaign, recalls.

Modhwadia says, "This was a thatched rural tea joint. He stopped the bus and got down first, then we followed."

He continued, "We were travelling to Vyara (tribal town in Tapi district (60 kilometres from Surat) in his campaign bus on the night of 1 November when Gandhi got the news of the Rae Bareilly incident. He was to stay at the Vyara Circuit House and proceed to Surat airport the next morning but we decided that he should stay at The Taj in Surat since it is closer to the airport."

"At The Taj, we booked a suite for him and we all took normal rooms. When Gandhi saw it, he immediately refused the suite and said he would stay in a normal room like others."

"He is scarcely seen taking the chartered chopper but prefers regular flights and takes the economy class with his laptop bag hanging on his shoulders. "On a recent trip, he came by Indigo and left by SpiceJet," a party leader said.

According to Desai, it has often happened that when there is no scheduled flight, Gandhi would stay put at night and take the next flight in the morning. "At the airport, I have seen him taking the common gate to enter," he adds.

The mode of the campaign also seems to have been strategically planned to ensure that his drawbacks of oratory and approach, unlike the heft and flamboyance of Modi, are contrasted by his simple and mild demeanour.

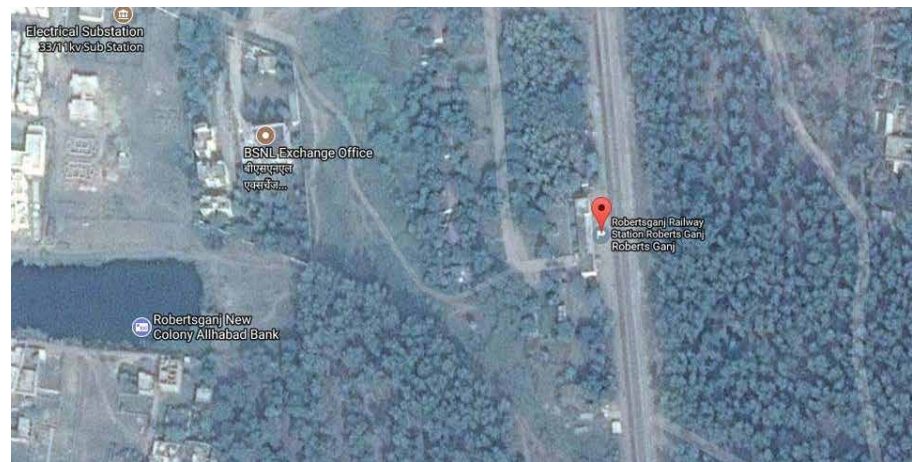
Through all his three three-day regional sojourns, which itself is new, the strategy was to have personal street corner interactions,

and chatting up with people and fewer public meetings since addressing the far sitting crowd is something he is still picking up.

"Going to people instead of calling them to you through crowd mobilisation is better," says a party insider. "When you can't better your opponent by something he is adept at and also overdoes it, you try to create a contrast," he smiled. It is a state election campaign,

but Rahul goes straight at the Modi government as though it is 2019 and tries to hit where it hurts the most — GST, demonetization, unemployment, Patidars, farmer distress and price rise. Published Date: Nov 05, 2017 10:17 am | Updated Date: Nov 05, 2017 12:28 pm.

## German national beaten by railway contractor in Uttar Pradesh



**NEW DELHI:** The incident comes days after a Swiss couple were attacked near the railway station at Agra's Fatehpur Sikri. A German national was allegedly beaten by a railway contractor at the Robertsganj railway station in the district, police said on Sunday. The incident comes days after a Swiss couple were attacked near the railway station at Agra's Fatehpur Sikri.

Holger Eerek was allegedly beaten by railway contractor Aman Kumar on Saturday after which the station master informed the police. Circle officer,

Vivekanand Tiwari said that the accused has been arrested. However, the railway contractor alleged that when he greeted Eerek by saying "welcome to India", he hit him. The victim refused to talk to the media. Not the first incident

On October 22, the Swiss couple from Lausanne in Switzerland, Quentin Jeremy Clerc (24) and his girlfriend Marie Droz (24), was chased and attacked with stones and sticks by a group of five youths in Fatehpur

Sikri, triggering widespread outrage. The couple was quoted as saying in a media report that they were strolling near the station at Fatehpur Sikri after a day in Agra when a group of youths started following them and later attacked. The couple said as they lay on the ground bloodied and bruised,

bystanders began taking videos of them on their mobile phones, the report said. All the accused were arrested and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had sought a report from the UP government on the attack.

Union Minister of State for Tourism K.J Alphonso had written to State Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath,

saying the incident could have a negative impact on the image of the country. UP Director General of Police Sulthan Singh had issued a list of guidelines, including deployment of policemen in plain clothes, more patrolling and installation of CCTV cameras, to prevent such incidents. The couple were also offered a free stay in 5-star hotel in the national capital as a "token of concern" by Mr. Alphonso.

## Congress demands Narendra Modi dismiss ministers for holding posts in think-tank run by NSA Ajit Doval's son

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress on Saturday sought to know from Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he will dismiss some of his senior ministers for allegedly holding the posts of directors in India Foundation, a think-tank run by NSA Ajit Doval's son Shaurya Doval.

The party also demanded that the prime minister should act against them by initiating an inquiry by the CBI against them for allegedly holding office-of-profit, conflict of interest and violating FCRA norms.

The ministers in question include defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman, commerce minister Suresh Prabhu and two junior ministers — Jayant Sinha of civil aviation ministry and MJ Akbar of external affairs ministry.

The party also said the ministers should resign as members of which ever House of they belong to and fight elections again. It also questioned the prime minister's silence on the matter. The attack by the Congress came after The Wire news website published an article on the issue.

The party alleged that BJP general secretary Ram Madhav and A Surya Prakash, chairman of the Prasar Bharti board, are also directors of India Foundation and investigation should be initiated against them as well. "FCRA says that no foreign contribution shall be accepted by any political party or office bearer. Ram Madhavji is an office-bearer and he is a general



secretary of the BJP, how can he be a director in India Foundation?" It is a violation. It will result in prosecution and imprisonment. How can these ministers be directors? This is a direct conflict of interest," said senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal.

File image of Congress leader Kapil Sibal. PTIFile image of Congress leader Kapil Sibal. PTISibal said if no action was taken against the ministers, then the party would approach the court or could resort to other possible mechanisms to prosecute them.

The Congress also pointed out that in March 2006, party president Sonia Gandhi announced her resignation from the Lok Sabha and

also as chairperson of the National Advisory Council following the office-of-profit controversy.

"Nothing can be a bigger case of crony capitalism, violation of law and corruption than this. Can a minister become director of an NGO?" asked Sibal.

"It is a cocktail of government, who are directors in the foundation, and private business of billions of dollars and sponsorship by the very companies who seek favours from the departments in which the ministers are directors," he added.

"So, it is civil aviation, commerce, defence and external affairs. Over and above, this is supposed to be a charitable organisation — a public

interest organisation. "How can there be public interest when government and business are on the same platform and they are talking to each other for the benefit of business?" Sibal asked. Sibal also said had any Congress minister during UPA rule been the director of Teesta Setalvad or Indira Jaising's NGO,

then there would have been disruptions in the Parliament, FIR by the CBI and preliminary investigations. He said: "Doval's son used to run a company named Zeus, whose turnover was close to \$1 billion. This company was later absorbed into Gemini Enterprises. He (Shaurya) is now a partner and shareholder in the company. So, he runs both India Foundation and Gemini Enterprises."

"This cocktail of interests has never been seen before in this country. The mix of the ministers along with business and public interest," said Sibal.

He further said: "Now, who sponsors them? Defence companies... Boeing, Israeli companies. So, defence minister is the director. There are Indian companies who have to deal with commerce ministry. So, commerce minister is the director."

"Now, since Boeing is involved, so civil aviation minister is the director. Since foreign companies deal with Ministry of External Affairs, so the external affairs minister is the director. Along with them both India Foundation and Gemini Enterprises are also there," he added.

# LONG WALK TO POWER: JAGAN EYES TESTED PATH IN AP, TO COVER 3000 KM IN 6 MONTHS

**HYDERABAD:** The father walked 1,500 km in summer of 2003 to wrest power in Andhra Pradesh the next year, the son is setting out to do 3,000 km, starting in the winter of 2017, eyeing his own success story.

If YS Jaganmohan Reddy, president of the YSR (Yuvajana Sramika Rythu) Congress Party, completes the 3,000-km padayatra (foot march) he is scheduled to start on November 6, it will be the longest walkathon by a politician in the state. Jagan intends to do his Praja Sankalpa Yatra (People's vow march) in six months. If he finishes it, he will beat a 2,800-km foot march record Telugu Desam Party (TDP) president and chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu set in 2013.

Naidu's record 'Vasthunna Mee Kosam' (I am coming to you) foot march over 108 days helped him return to power in the state after a gap of 10 years in 2014. He had lost power in 2004 to Jagan's father, YS Rajasekhara Reddy (popularly known as YSR).

Incidentally, YSR had ended Naidu's two-term stint as CM after his 2003 'Praja Prasthanam' (People's march) padayatra.

Jagan is taking a leaf out of his father's play-book. YSR, who died in a helicopter crash in 2009, used to go for darshans of Lord Venkateswara of Tirumala in Chittoor district,



setting aside his faith in Christianity. Jagan went to the temple on Saturday. After a darshan in the early hours, he took the blessing of Vedic pundits at Ranganayakula Mandapam within the temple premises. Jagan has been visiting temples frequently in the last couple of years. Rivals allege that his temple visits are engi-

neered with an eye on assembly elections due in 2019. Jagan's supporters, however, insist this is a true representation of his secular credentials. From Tirumala, Jagan will head for his family estate at Idupulapaya in Kadapa district, from where he will start his walkathon after paying respects at YSR's memorial. In the

next six months, Jagan intends to cover 125 assembly constituencies on foot, address 5,000 street corner meetings, hold 180 meetings with influential groups, and speak at 125 public meetings.

His walkathon is scheduled to end at Ichapuram in Srikulam district in May 2018. "On

an average, he will walk for 15-16 km every day and meet all sections of people. Our objective is to see that Jagan will have direct interaction with nearly two crore people during the padayatra," said YV Subba Reddy.

YSR Congress Party's Lok Sabha member from Ongole constituency, Jagan has engaged political strategist Prashant,

Kishor as his adviser to ensure his party's victory in the 2019 assembly,

elections. Kishor's team, Indian Political Action Committee (IPAC), is working on building up Jagan as a popular political brand during the padayatra.

The IPAC has coined a slogan — 'Raavali Jagan, Kaavali Jagan' (want Jagan to come, need Jagan for prosperity) — as a hallmark of his padayatra. "We are planning to take this slogan strongly to people during the walkathon," said an IPAC member who did not want to be named.

However, Jagan will have to take break from his walkathon for at least a day every week. He has to return to Hyderabad every Friday to attend a court hearing in a case against him for allegedly accumulating,

disproportionate assets. Jagan resigned from the Congress in November 2010 and founded his party in March a year later.

# FIVE SUCCESSFUL PANCREAS TRANSPLANTATIONS PERFORMED AT BGS GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HOSPITALS

Bengaluru (Karnataka) [India], Oct 31 (ANI): BGS Gleneagles Global Hospital, a part of Parkway Pantai, has recently achieved the rare feat of completing its fifth successful pancreas transplantation in Karnataka. Pancreas transplants are usually done for patients with Type 1 diabetes whose native pancreases do not produce any insulin. Dr Suresh Raghavaiah, Senior Consultant HPB and Multi-organ Transplant Surgeon and Director of the Pancreas Transplant Program at BGS Gleneagles Global Hospital said, "Type-1 Diabetes is a very serious condition which leads to a lot of complications. The patients are usually very young and by the time they are in their teens, develop one or the other complication. The most commonly affected organ is the kidney, leading to kidney failure. If these patients are given simultaneous pancreas and kidney transplant it not only cures the diabetes and prevents all of its complications, but also increases the life span of the transplanted kidney. Transplantation of the Pancreas is one of the most complex transplant operations. We are very happy that all five surgeries have been successful and the patients are doing well." One of the patients who underwent a successful transplant has been Praveen, 32 years of age. He was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes 17 years ago, and has been living with it since then. As a complication of diabetes, he developed eye problems. Four years ago, he was diagnosed with kidney failure and has had to undergo dialysis for the past three years. Finally, he came to BGS Gleneagles Global Hospitals seeking a kidney transplant. After examination and evaluation by the medical team at the hospital, they were of the opinion that the patient would be better served by a simultaneous pancreas kidney transplant. This would not only treat the kidney failure of the patient, but also treat the diabetes as well,



preventing the future development of complications of diabetes while also increasing the life of the transplanted kidney. The surgery took seven hours, but Dr Suresh Raghavaiah is happy to report that the patient withstood the surgery very well, and was able to be taken off insulin and dialysis immediately after surgery. Dr Anil Kumar, Senior Consultant, Nephro-Urology at BGS Gleneagles Global Hospital added,

"With time, type 1 diabetes can affect the kidneys, leading to kidney failure. Most often these patients undergo a kidney transplant alone. But this does not prevent them from all the other effects of diabetes like damage to the blood vessels, nerves, eyes and the heart. A Pancreas transplant not only arrests the development of these complications, but also has been found to reverse them in the early stages. All five patients had kidney failure due to diabetes and were receiving daily insulin injections as well as undergoing regular dialysis. All patients have received both a pancreas and kidney transplant. We are happy to report that our oldest patient has sustained these organs for more than 18 months now, and he continues to be free of diabetes and off dialysis. The most recent case of transplant occurred six weeks ago, and is doing well. One of the other major benefits is that the patient takes the same medication as he would have if he had a kidney transplant alone." "Pancreas transplants are relatively new to India", says Dr Suresh. "While more than 17000 pancreas transplants have already been performed in the USA, in India only around 60 transplants have been performed of which 5 have been in our hospital alone. Since the surgery is very complex and the patient needs a dedicated team of surgeons, physicians, anaesthetists and critical care experts, not many hospitals have attempted to do pancreas transplants and awareness even amongst the medical community is low. We hope that the success of these patients will encourage other patients to explore Pancreas Transplant as a treatment option". Thomas Mathew, COO, Gleneagles Global Hospitals, Bengaluru adds, "Pancreas transplant is one of the most complex surgeries and having a multi disciplinary team caring for the patient helps improve the outcomes."

## SEVERE HOT FLASHES MAY INCREASE RISK OF SLEEP DISORDER IN WOMEN



Washington : A recent study has said that severe hot flashes in midlife may increase the risk of sleep disorder in women. According to researchers, early diagnosis of sleep disorder is important to control risk of heart disease, stroke, depression and death. Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), which

is more common in men than women, occurs more frequently as women age, gain weight and reach perimenopause and postmenopause stage. Up to 80 percent of women in midlife experience hot flashes or night sweats. The findings indicated that perimenopausal and postmenopausal

women who experienced disturbed sleep showed that 53 percent had a sleep disorder such as OSA, restless leg syndrome, or both. The diagnosis of OSA in women can be more challenging because their symptoms are different from the more obvious ones that men experience, such as loud snoring. Symptoms for women include insomnia, headaches, fatigue, depression and anxiety. The identification of OSA is important because it is associated with a significantly increased risk of heart disease, hypertension, stroke, depression and death. For the study, 1,691 women from the Mayo Clinic completed questionnaires. Of these women, 24.9 percent were classified in the intermediate and high-risk categories for OSA. These women were likely to be older and have a higher body mass index with greater incidence of hypertension. Women reporting severe hot flashes in midlife were at a higher risk for OSA—1.87 times higher than in women with mild or no hot flashes. "Sleep disruption is a common complaint at menopause. It is important to recognize the high number of undiagnosed sleep disorders, including OSA," said study author Dr JoAnn Pinkerton. Early morning headaches or excessive daytime sleepiness should raise concern, for OSA and signal a possible need for sleep apnea testing, Pinkerton explained. The research is published online in the journal of Menopause.

## Moms-to-be should be tested more than once for Zika

Washington : When it comes to testing moms-to-be for the presence of Zika, a single negative result may not be enough. "We monitored a group of pregnant women with a confirmed diagnosis of Zika and tested their urine over a period of several months at intervals of about a week. In some of these women, the viral load in their urine disappeared and later returned," said principal investigator Mauricio Lacerda Nogueira from the FAMERP - Medical School of Sao Jose do Rio Preto, Sao Paulo State. The patients included 13 women in different stages of pregnancy (4 weeks to 38 weeks) who were receiving treatment at the Children's & Maternity Hospital (HCM) of Sao Jose do Rio Preto. According to Nogueira, the virus was detected in one patient's urine for as long as seven months. In five women, the test was again positive for Zika virus after their viral load had disappeared in previous tests. In all cases, the virus vanished from the women shortly after they gave birth. "These results suggest the virus continues replicating during pregnancy, in the fetus or the placenta, which must serve as a reservoir for the pathogen," Nogueira said. "However, viral load in the mother's fluids is intermittent and very low, almost at the detection threshold." According to Nogueira, if the result of a molecular test is negative, it should ideally be repeated at least twice at intervals of no less than a week. "We typically test urine samples because they're easier to obtain and because the blood viral load is lower and disappears."

## SLOW PROGRESS IN EFFORTS TO PREVENT CHILD DEATHS FROM PNEUMONIA, DIARRHEA REPORT

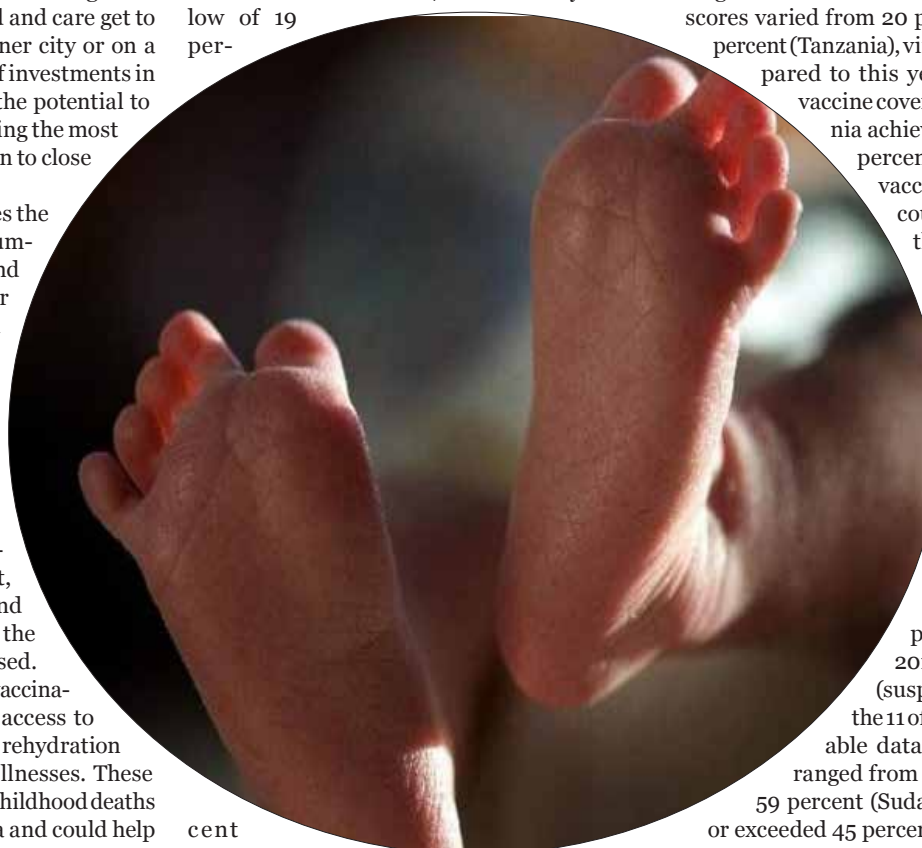
New Delhi : In 2016, pneumonia and diarrhea were responsible for one of every four deaths in children under five years of age. Figures released by UNICEF earlier this month show that progress against these illnesses has been stubbornly slow, despite these deaths being largely preventable with strategic investments in interventions such as vaccines, antibiotics, oxygen, breast feeding and hand washing. Released today, the 2017 Pneumonia and Diarrhea Progress Report: Driving Progress through Equitable Investment and Action sheds some light on the factors slowing progress against the world's two biggest killers of young children. The Progress Report is issued by the International Vaccine Access Center at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and provides an update on efforts to prevent and treat pneumonia and diarrhea in the most heavily burdened countries. This scorecard, released annually to mark World Pneumonia Day in November, finds countries are making progress in increasing coverage of vaccines and breastfeeding goals, but treatment targets seem still far out of reach for most. Efforts to work and invest more strategically in all three areas - immunization, nutrition and treatment - are critical to meaningfully reducing the nearly 1.5 million childhood deaths that still occur each year as a result of pneumonia and diarrhea. "The good news is that when we invest in child health, we save lives," says Kate O'Brien, MD, MPH, a professor in the Bloomberg School's Department of International Health

and IVAC's executive director. "Sadly, there are significant gaps in reaching global targets to make sure that medicines, food and care get to that last child, living in the inner city or on a small rural farm. The success of investments in these countries demonstrates the potential to vastly improve equity, prioritizing the most vulnerable and catalyzing action to close those gaps." In the report, IVAC identifies the 15 countries with the greatest number of deaths from pneumonia and diarrhea among children under 5 years of age. IVAC then uses a scoring method based on the integrated Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Pneumonia and Diarrhea (GAPPD) developed by the World Health Organization and UNICEF. A country's "GAPPD score" measures the use of interventions that protect against, prevent and treat pneumonia and diarrhea. The higher the score, the more interventions are being used. These interventions include vaccination; exclusive breastfeeding; access to care; and use of antibiotics, oral rehydration solution and zinc to treat the illnesses. These measures are known to prevent childhood deaths due to pneumonia and diarrhea and could help achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal target of reducing under-5 mortality

to at least 25 per 1,000 live births by 2030. GAPPD scores in 2017 varied widely from a low of 19 percent (Somalia) to a high of 69 percent (Tanzania), with all

15 focus countries falling below the 86 percent target for the overall GAPPD score. In 2016, the scores varied from 20 percent (Somalia) to 74 percent (Tanzania), virtually unchanged compared to this year's scores. Rotavirus vaccine coverage: Sudan and Tanzania achieved or exceeded the 90 percent target for rotavirus vaccine coverage. Ten of 15 countries failed to meet a threshold of 45 percent for this vaccine which prevents a substantial portion of diarrhea deaths and hospitalizations. This includes nine countries (Afghanistan, Chad, China, DRC, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Somalia) who had not yet introduced the vaccine and India, who began a phased introduction in 2016. Antibiotic treatment (suspected pneumonia): In the 11 of 15 countries with available data, antibiotic treatment ranged from 7 percent (Ethiopia) to 59 percent (Sudan). Two countries met or exceeded 45 percent of children with suspected pneumonia treated (Afghanistan and Sudan); nine countries did not, and data was not

available for four countries. All countries were low-performing on this indicator (covering less than 70 percent children with suspected pneumonia). ORS treatment (diarrhea): In the 14 of 15 countries with available data, ORS treatment ranged from 20 percent (Chad and Sudan) to 77 percent (Bangladesh). Four countries met or exceeded 45 percent of children with diarrhea receiving ORS (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Somalia, and Tanzania); 10 did not, and no data was available for China. All countries, except Bangladesh, were low-performing on this indicator (covering less than 70 percent children with diarrhea). Breastfeeding: There is strong evidence demonstrating that about half of all diarrhea episodes and about one third of respiratory infections could be averted by breastfeeding. The GAPPD target for exclusive breastfeeding within the first six months of a child's life is 50 percent coverage. Based on 2015 data, the report finds five countries met or exceeded the target (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Sudan, and Tanzania). Nine of the 15 countries did not meet the target; of these, five countries met a threshold of 25 percent, half the target (Afghanistan, China, DRC, Indonesia, and Pakistan) and three did not (Chad, Niger, and Nigeria). The report also captures the economic cost of the illnesses and sheds light on the complex relationship between childhood illnesses and poverty. Children in low-resource settings are at higher risk for illness; at the same time, pneumonia and diarrhea can contribute to the cycle of poverty. Costs of illness can include: lost wages for families.



# FICCI PRESIDENT URGES REFORMS IN REGULATION SECTOR

**NEW DELHI :** Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) President Pankaj Patel opined that the Centre should consider reforms in the area of regulators, as they would have a significant impact on cost as well as ease of doing business.

Addressing the 'India's Business Reforms' session here on Saturday organised by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion,

Patel lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his efforts to realise the 'New India' vision, following India's 30-place jump in the Ease of Doing Business index released recently by the World Bank.

However, Patel also highlighted that while the achievement "reflects the government's determination to take bold and far reaching reforms required to transform India," certain sectors of the economy still need improvement.

"There are number of areas where our rank may not have improved significantly, but at least the direction is there to make that process more efficient and simpler in terms of compliance.



Starting a business, construction permits, enforcing contracts, registering property and other such areas needs improvement for the efficient functioning of the business organisations," he said. The World Bank's recent 'Ease of Doing Business index' showed that India has risen as much as 30 positions to rank 100th

amongst 190 countries. As per the 2018 version of the Ease of Doing Business index, India has been amongst the world's top ten improvers worldwide and a leading regional reformer. "With the eight reforms enforced in the system, India made paying taxes easier by requiring, that payments be made electronically to the Employees Provident Fund and introducing a set of administrative measures easing compliance with corporate income tax," said the World Bank in a statement.

The report also mentioned the substantive changes implemented by the Indian Government in 2016-17 that included merging of applications for the Permanent Account Number (PAN) and Tax Account Number (TAN) for starting a new business.

For the unversed, the Ease of Doing Business report is based on how easy it is for companies to do business as well takes in account certain regulations based on ten parameters including starting a business, getting electricity, dealing with construction permits and paying taxes among others.

# India Post Payments Bank to operate in 650 locations



**NEW DELHI :** In a bid to drive the growth of financial inclusion, Union Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha claimed that the India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) is slated to be operational in over 650 locations across the country by April next year. Sinha, who was present during the recent launch of the Deen Dayal SPARSH scholarship scheme, had said that while such institutions are already operational in two locations- Ranchi and Raipur- many more such facilities will be made available to the nation, and will be linked to 1.55 lakh rural post offices

to carry out banking services. The Raipur and Ranchi branches of the IPPB were launched on January 30 this year as a Public Sector Bank under the Department of Posts with 100 percent government of India equity. IPPB currently offers Savings account up to a balance of Rs 1 lakh, along with digitally-enabled payments and remittance services of all kinds between individuals. In the near future, IPPB is expected to provide current accounts and access to third-party financial services like insurance, mutual funds, pension, credit products, and foreign.

# CCI CLEARS GIC'S RS 9,000 CR DEAL WITH DLF'S RENTAL ARM



**NEW DELHI:** The Competition Commission has approved Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC's plan to acquire 33 percent stake in DLF Cyber City Developers for Rs 8,900 crore.

Under the deal, GIC's subsidiary Reco Diamond will acquire 33.34 percent stake in DLF Cyber City Developers Ltd (DCCDL), held by the realty major's promoters -- Rajdhani Investments & Agencies, Buland Consultants and Investments, Sidhant Housing and Development Company. In a BSE filing, DLF said the Competition Commission of

India (CCI) has issued a letter dated November 3, 2017 to GIC which states that the regulator has approved the deal.

GIC recently approached the fair trade regulator seeking approval of its deal to acquire 33.34 percent stake in DCCDL, rental arm of DLF, for Rs 8,900 crore.

DCCDL has rent-yielding assets of 26.9 million square feet with annual rental income of over Rs 2,500 crore.

It has an under-development pipeline of 2.5 million sq ft with further development potential of 19 million sq ft within the portfolio

# Reliance Communications To Shut Voice Call Service From Next Month

**NEW DELHI:** Telecom operator Reliance Communications (RCom) will shut down voice call service from December 1 and its customers can move to other networks by the end of the year, as per a direction issued by telecom regulator TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) on Friday.

In its direction to all telecom operators, TRAI said that RCom on October 31, 2017 intimated it that "RCL (Reliance Communications Limited) shall provide only 4G data services to its customers and as a result will discontinue to provide voice services to the subscribers... with effect from 1st December 2017."

RCom informed TRAI that it is providing 2G and 4G services in eight telecom circles of Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, UP East and West, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. The Anil Ambani-led firm has informed TRAI that the company will be upgrading CDMA network of Sistema Shyam Teleservices,

which has been merged with it, to provide 4G services in Delhi, Rajasthan, UP West, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, West Bengal, Gujarat and Kolkata service areas.

The telecom regulator said that RCom has informed it has sent all the necessary information regarding closure of voice calls along with option to port out any operators in case subscriber do not



wish to continue with 4G data services of the company. The regulator has directed RCom to not reject any porting out request, of its subscribers and asked all telecom operators to accept request of RCom subscribers till December 31, 2017. RCom, reeling under debt of around Rs. 46,000 crore, decided to shut down its voice call services after it failed to close its

wireless business merger deal with Aircel in the beginning of this month. RCom and Aircel had in September last year signed a binding agreement to merge their mobile businesses. But RCom said the agreement lapsed owing to legal and regulatory uncertainties, objections by interested parties and delays in receiving relevant approvals.

# INDIA OFFERS GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR GLOBAL INVESTORS, SAYS NITIN GADKARI

**NEW DELHI:** India offers "golden opportunities" for global investors in sectors such as infrastructure, transport, agriculture and food processing, Union minister Nitin Gadkari said on Saturday.

Not only the country is going to offer a world class infrastructure in highways in two years, waterways and agriculture are also undergoing massive reforms that include 325 irrigation projects and massive river-interlinking programme, the Road, Transport, Highways, Shipping, Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation minister said. Addressing the World Food India 2017 conference on the 'Opportunities in Infrastructure Technology & Equipment', Gadkari said, "There are golden opportunities for investors in food processing, agriculture, water transport, highways, shipping and other sectors." "We are bound to create a world-class infrastructure in coming two years. Of the 32 logistic parks, 24 have already been identified on National Corridors to be built at a cost of Rs 2 lakh crore. These parks will cater to key production and consumption



centres accounting for 45 per cent of India's road freight," the minister said. He said the work has already been started at Chennai, Bangalore, Vijaywada, Hyderabad, Surat and Guwahati for logistic parks that are designed to house cold storages and warehouses. Besides, government's another major initiative Sagar-

logistic parks is essential as India witnesses wastage of fruits and vegetables worth Rs 13,300 crore which account for about 35 per cent of the produce due to lack of infrastructure. Unfortunately, he said only 10 per cent of fruit and vegetables are processed in India whose participation is barely 1 per cent in global processed food. The government aims at enhancing the processing of fruits and vegetables to 20 per cent by 2019, he said.

He said construction of 44 economic corridors that include Mumbai-Kolkata and Mumbai-Kanyakumari will result in quick delivery of produce to markets besides reduction in logistic costs and enhancement in farmers' income.

Talking about highways, he said that Eastern Peripheral Expressway to decongest Delhi will be made operational by next month while electronic tolling on highways pan-India will result in seamless,

flow of traffic throughout the country and would contribute in reduction of logistic cost which is at 18 per cent in India as comparison to a mere 8 to 10 per cent in China.

# CV, LAP, MSME loan collections remain strong at 95-99% in Jul-Aug: Icra

**MUMBAI :** Despite concerns over the implementation of GST, the monthly collection ratios of loan pools of commercial vehicles (CVs), loan against property (LAP) and MSMEs remained strong at 95-99 per cent in July and August, says a report.

Since the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax from July 1, there have been reports about temporary disruptions in the performance of these loans as borrowers have been working overtime to make their businesses GST compliant on one hand and their working capital cycle getting stretched on the other, says the report of Icra.

The observed collection efficiencies are largely in line with the levels witnessed during the previous few quarters, it noted.

"While these are still early days, the initial performance suggests that the rated pools are demonstrating remarkable resilience. The monthly collection ratios at a median level in July and August have remained strong at 95-99 per cent for CV, LAP and MSME loan pools," Icra's structured finance head Vibhor Mittal said. He said there has been a small increase of 30-50 basis points in 30+ delinquency levels during this period for CV and LAP asset classes. But delinquencies in the MSME segment have only come down.

# AIR INDIA TO SELL 2 PROPERTIES TO SBI, MAY FETCH RS50 CRORE

**NEW DELHI:** Scouting for funds, Air India is in advanced discussions with public sector lender SBI for sale of at least two residential properties that could net nearly Rs50 crore, airline and banking sources said.

While the government moves ahead with the process for strategic stake sale, the loss-making airline continues to work on the strategy to divest non-core assets. Saddled with more than Rs50,000 crore debt, Air India recently sought loans worth over Rs1,500 crore to meet working capital requirements.

Against the backdrop of the severe financial crunch, the airline's talks with the State Bank of India (SBI) assumes significance in terms of raising additional monetary resources. The discussions between Air India and SBI are at an advanced stage with respect to sale of two residential properties in South Mumbai, sources told PTI.

While the final contours of the deal are being worked out, an airline source said the sale is expected to fetch around

Rs46 crore. Despite trying to dispose of such assets, so far Air India has managed to sell only four of its flats in Mumbai to SBI for Rs90 crore.

These properties are located at upmarket Peddar Road in South Mumbai. The carrier has been in possession of some properties which are lying vacant and unused for a long time. These include parcels of land as well as residential and commercial estate in India and abroad.

Among others, the carrier has leased out almost the entire space at its previous headquarters at Nariman Point to various government agencies.

As per the turnaround/financial restructuring plan approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) back in 2012, Air India is required to monetise its assets and generate Rs5,000 crore by way of sale,

leasing or developing an asset as a joint venture. Under the plan, the carrier is to get financial assistance to the tune of Rs30,000 crore over a 10-year period.



# CROUCH EARNS STOKE SHARE OF SPOILS AGAINST LEICESTER

**AGENCIE:** Former England striker Peter Crouch came off the bench to rescue a point for Stoke City in a 2-2 draw on Saturday, denying new Leicester manager Claude Puel a second consecutive win of his young managerial reign.

The 2015-16 Premier League champions are now unbeaten in six games in all competitions after early season struggles but will be disappointed they twice let their lead slip and in the end were indebted to goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel, who made a fantastic flying stop in the dying seconds.

Leicester parted company with Craig Shakespeare last month after slipping into the relegation zone but have recovered strongly under caretaker boss Michael Appleton and ex-Southampton boss Puel and were in 10th spot before a clutch of matches that kicked.

off later on Saturday. In an entertaining game Jamie Vardy and Riyad Mahrez posed a constant threat and winger Demarai Gray earned another start just days after signing a new deal at the club.

"I am happy with the attitude of my players, it was a good game, good intensity and passion," said Puel. "We had a lot of chances today. It is difficult to accept one point but Kasper saved well at the end so then OK, we take a point. It is an encouraging game which is important for the future." Stoke manager Mark Hughes praised



Crouch for turning the game around. "Peter Crouch was effective when he came on. He always gets himself in a good position and he understood what was required. He changed the game for us," he said.

Puel's side took the lead just after the half-hour mark when Vicente Iborra lashed home a half volley after the ball fell at his feet following a corner and Leicester had clear chances to stretch their lead. First, Jack Butland saved superbly from Shinji Okazaki, in for the injured Ben Chilwell, and Iborra headed over from another corner.

But Leicester were made to rue their profligacy six minutes after their opener when Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting played an incisive defensive-splitting ball first time into the feet of Xherdan Shaqiri, whose left-footed shot from the right side of the penalty area found the net via the inside of the post.

Mahrez put Leicester back in front with half an hour to go, moments after Schmeichel pulled off an impressive save from Ryan Shawcross.

But they were pegged back again when Crouch, brought on just three minutes earlier, headed in a Shaqiri corner in the 73rd minute to earn a point. Only three other players — Jermain Defoe, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Nwankwo Kanu — have more Premier League goals than Crouch as a substitute.

## AUSSIE BATSMEN HOLD KEY MCGRATH



**LONDON:** Legendary Australian paceman Glenn McGrath is fond of predicting Ashes whitewashes for his compatriots over England but this time round he is not so sure.

The 47-year-old, who brought the curtain down on his stellar Test career 10 years ago with a 5-0 clean sweep of England, told Saturday's Daily Mail newspaper everyone is expecting him to say 5-0. "Well,

it would be rude of me not to, wouldn't it?" joked McGrath. "If our bowlers can stay on the park and bowl well there could be a good chance of that again." It's always up to the bats-

men. Bowlers will win matches as long as the batsmen score enough runs. That's coming from a bowler."

However McGrath — who took 563 Test wickets in 124 Tests over a 14 year period — admits that prediction could be tempered by a couple of personnel issues the Aussies are facing.

"I think it will be a fascinating series and I don't think there's a real stand-out winner," said McGrath, not just a Test bowler but an integral part of the Australian side that won three successive 50-over World Cups. "Both teams have got issues, there's no doubt about that, and looking at the England

squad, half the guys I haven't really seen play before to be honest." I don't think the Australians have settled on their team. The No 6 position and the keeper are up in the air at the moment so we'll see what happens. It's still special. It's still the ultimate."

McGrath says the Ben Stokes affair has obviously affected the balance of power between the two sides.

Talismanic all-rounder Stokes has had to remain in England as he awaits the outcome of a police investigation into an incident in Bristol in September.

"Being vice-captain you do have to set the standards both on and off the field and what happened there was not good, you can't say anything but that," said McGrath. "The great shame of it is that he has the world at his feet. He's such a good player.

"He's two players in one so it's a big blow to England. I wouldn't be surprised if he's not here for the entire series.

"If he did come out here it will be interesting to see how the fans warm to him but there's a lot to happen first before we see whether that can happen.

"It could be a distraction. Of course it's a blow to the series. "You want to play against the best players. For Australia to win you want the opposition to be at full strength and that's the way it's always been." McGrath was speaking ahead of taking part in the New York Marathon on Sunday. He is running for The McGrath Foundation which raises money for cancer.

## PHF names squad for four-nation event in Australia



**LAHORE:** The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) on Saturday announced a 16-member squad for the four-nation International Festival of Hockey being held in Melbourne from Nov 8 to 12. Pakistan along with hosts Australia, New Zealand and Japan will vie for the title. Mohammad Irfan Senior has been retained as captain and Umar Bhutta as his deputy. Five new players have been selected in the squad

for the first time. They are Khizer Akhtar (Tando Jam, District Hyderabad), Sha-jeeh Ahmed (Sargodha), Hassan Anwar (Faisalabad), Hassan Anwar (Pir Mahal, District Toba Tek Singh) and Shan Irshad (Sheikhupura).

Seven players, who were part of the 18-member national squad which competed in the recently-held Asia Cup in Dhaka, have been dropped. They include Azfar Yaqoob, Ali Shan, Waqas Akbar,

Rizwan Senior, Rashid Mahmood, goalkeeper Mazhar Abbas and Mubashar Ali. Amjad Ali (goalkeeper), Mohammad Irfan (captain),

Abu Bakr Mahmood, Atif Mushtaq, Hassan Anwar, Ahammad Shakeel Butt, Tasawwar Abbas, Mohammad Rizwan Jr, Arslan Qadir,

Shajeeh Ahmed, Shan Irshad, Umar Bhutta (vice-captain), Atiq Arshad, Ajaz Ahmed, Bilal Qadir, Khizer Akhtar.

## Stoneman, Vince shine after Root, Cook fall cheaply

**PERTH:** Mark Stoneman and James Vince were in the runs but skipper Joe Root was dismissed cheaply as England made a solid start to their Ashes tour in Perth on Saturday.

Stoneman hit 85 off 113 balls while Vince compiled 82 off 129 balls as the tourists reached 349 for six at the close of the first day after winning the toss in their two-day game against a Western Australia XI.

But Root fell for just nine and experienced opener Alastair Cook was out on the second ball of the innings in setbacks for the England team ahead of the Ashes series.

Root looked annoyed when he was given out caught behind when it looked like the ball had flicked his leg rather than his bat. Stoneman fell 15 runs short of his century when he was picked up at second slip as he attempted to drive paceman Lance Morris. That ended a 153-run stand for the second wicket with Vince, who was caught at mid-wicket off Aaron Hardie. "It was good to get that time in the middle," Stoneman said. "There was enough there to keep the opening bowlers interested with the new ball and there's that bit of extra bounce here, which always has the catchers in play.

"It was nice once we got through that new-ball period to settle in and get into some rhythm. "Cook and Root are the bankers — it's a shame for them on a personal note but it gave other guys the chance to get time in the middle."

Vince had a charmed life and gave three chances in his knock on 47, 63 and 67, twice at slip by Nathan Coulter-Nile and at mid-wicket from a pull.

Dawid Malan and Gary Ballance spent valuable time in the middle with Malan scoring 56 and Ballance 51, before they both retired to give others further down the order batting practice. Malan was impressive in his time at the wicket. He stroked his first delivery through mid-off for four, and looked fluent on front and back foot and disciplined outside off stump. Jonny Bairstow (36) and Chris Woakes (25) guided the tourists to stumps. It was an underwhelming start to the Ashes



tour for former captain Cook, who was out for a first-ball duck to Ryan Harris the last time he played at the WACA Ground back in 2013. Cook prodded at a good ball from Ashes Test pace aspirant Coulter-Nile just outside,

the off stump and nicked to wicket-keeper Calum How. Coulter-Nile proved a handful for Stoneman and Vince in his opening spell before they settled into the groove. Coulter-Nile,

who finished the day with one for 43 off 16 overs, is attempting to force his way into the Australian squad for the first Test against England, starting,

in Brisbane on Nov 23. England decided to field 13 players in the tour match, with only Steven Finn (jarred left knee), Moeen Ali (side strain) and back-up wicket-keeper Ben Foakes missing from the 16-man touring squad.

## NBA: Kevin Durant, Stephen Curry lead Golden State Warriors over Denver Nuggets 127-108

**AGENCIE:** Kamal Haasan hits back at detractors: Since there is no space in jails, they want to shoot and kill us. Kamal Haasan hits back at detractors: Since there is no space in jails, they want to shoot and kill us. Who is Hiroto? Who is Hiroto? Akaiki? Padmavati: Deepika Padukone throws an impromptu party, Ranveer Singh in attendance. Padmavati: Deepika Padukone throws an impromptu party, Ranveer Singh in attendance. Kevin Durant scored 25 points, Stephen Curry had 22 and the Golden State Warriors rode a big third quarter to a 127-108 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Saturday.

Klay Thompson and Draymond Green added 15 points apiece for the Warriors. They have won six of their last seven, including all three during their just-concluded trip. Will Barton had 21 points off the bench to lead the Nuggets. None of Denver's starters reached double figures in scoring. Up by five at halftime,

the Warriors forced a decisive turn in the game with a 24-4 run to start the third, taking an 84-59 lead when Curry hit a fall-away 3-pointer from the baseline after poking the ball away from Mason,

Plumlee for a steal. The Warriors finished with 43 points in the third the most points allowed by the Nuggets in a period this season and took a 103-76 lead into the fourth quarter. Durant had 13 of his points in the period and Curry added 12 in the same span, helping Golden State lead by as many as 29 points and outscore Denver by 22 points in the quarter.