

TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

WEDNESDAY

● NOVEMBER, 22, 2017
 ● 03 RABI-AL-AWAL 1439 AH
 ● ISSUE: 273
 ● VOLUME: 03
 ● PAGES: 08

WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	12.9	-1.7
JAMMU	23.1	8.8
LEH	5.9	-10.2
KARGIL	8.6	6.6

SUNSET WEDNESDAY: 05:25 PM
 SUNRISE THURSDAY: 07:12 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR
 Generally Cloudy sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 13°C & 0°C respectively.

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

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MAKE TECHNOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS TO EXPEDITE EXECUTION OF WORKS: NAEEM TO

DALVEER BHANDARI ELECTED TO ICJ: MODI PRAISES SWARAJ, SHAH SAYS 'DIPLOMATIC

CARD TRANSACTIONS SOAR 84% IN SEP 2017 TO RS 74,090 CR: REPORT

KOHLI SLAMS 50TH TON AS SRI LANKA HANG ON FOR DRAW

PDP-BJP hold first CC meet since Mehbooba led Govt formed

Discussed governance, administrative issues: Madni, Meeting held in cordial atmosphere: Jugal

Srinagar, Nov 21: First time since the formation of Mehbooba Mufti led government, the PDP-BJP Coordination Committee held its meeting for better coordination among the coalition partners.

The Coordination Committee, headed by Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh, comprised Jugal Kishore Sharma, Shamsheer Singh Manhas, Thupstan Chhewang, all MPs and Dr Narinder Singh, State general secretary (all BJP), Abdul Rehman Veeri, Revenue Minister, Sartaj Madni, State vice president, Tarlok Singh Bajwa, former Rajya Sabha members and Dillawar Mir, former Minister (all PDP).

Sources privy to the meeting that the members discussed how to make better coordination between the alliance partners.

"The participants decided to tell ministers to work on the ground and resolve the issues of workers. They also discussed the implementation of the Agenda of Alliance," sources said.



This was the first meeting of the Coordination Committee of the coalition partners since the Mehbooba Mufti led government was formed in the state.

Senior PDP leader Sartaj Madni said that Coordination Committee discussed the governance and administrative issues in the state. "We discussed all these issues for better coordination between the coalition partners," Madni told KNS.

▶ See Meet....Pg 02

PDP HAILS GOVT FOR RECORDING HIGHEST GROWTH RATE IN INDIA

Asks opposition to end theatricality now

Srinagar, Nov 21: The ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) on Tuesday hailed the state government as it secured 2nd rank across India in terms of growth achieved in the vital sectors of Education and Environment.

The PDP has termed such an encouraging development as an eye-opener for the opposition that has been casting rhetorical jibes against the state authorities in a bid to score political points.

The party says those striving to fish in troubled waters would be now lost in the scramble for their own

▶ See PDP....Pg 02

3 militants and a soldier killed in twin gun fights in North Kashmir

Kupwara, Nov 21: On Tuesday morning, Government Forces killed three militants belonging to militant outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba in Magam Handwara area of North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

After receiving specific information about the presence of the militants in Kharmohalla, a joint operation was conducted by the CRPF, J&K Police and the Indian Army.

"We started operations at midnight on specific information of terrorists hiding. Militants, who were hiding in a house, were asked to surrender but they kept firing. Three Pakistani LeT militants were killed, and arms and ammunition recovered," IGP Kashmir Munir Khan told media.

"Pakistan is trying hard to push as many militants as they can across LoC and anytime snowfall will start. So, this is the time we should be very alert," Khan added.

Following the encounter, DGP J&K Police SP Vaid congratulated the security forces on Twitter.

Meanwhile, a Para-military commando was killed in the ongoing gunfight between government forces and the militants in Zurahama forests of North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

▶ See Militants....Pg 02

Bloody November: 21 MILITANTS KILLED IN 21 DAYS

Srinagar, Nov 21: In the first 21 days of current November month, 21 militants have been neutralized by government forces across Kashmir Valley. It means on average a militant has been killed a day.

This time the number of militant killings is the highest as compared to previous years. Former Lieutenant General Ata Hasnain who also served here in Kashmir Valley has already advised their successors to continue their anti-militancy operations in winters as according to him, militants are unable to move freely during winters.

Most of the militants who have been killed in the first 21 days of this month are non-locals and belonged to Lashkar-e-Taiba. In the first week of this month, army claimed it killed three militants, two in Baramulla and one in Kupwara districts of North Kashmir along Line of Control.

▶ See Killed....Pg 02

MEHBOOBA GOVT REDUCED TO A SUBSIDIARY MUNICIPALITY: NC

'Welcome MHA initiatives but why did Mehbooba need Delhi to remind her?'

Srinagar, Nov 21: While welcoming the orders passed by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs instructing the Mehbooba Mufti Government to shift juvenile detainees from various jails to remand homes and to consider amnesty for first-time offenders involved in incidents of stone-pelting in 2016, National Conference on Tuesday asked Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti to explain why her Government could not take these measures, that fall under the State's law and order jurisdiction, on its own initiative till now.

▶ See NC....Pg 02

Successive Central Govt's failed to engage with sentiment in Kashmir: Dr Farooq

'Moral duty of country's leadership to resolve Kashmir Issue'

Srinagar, Nov 21: National Conference President and Member of Parliament, Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Tuesday said successive Central Governments had failed to engage with the sentiment in Kashmir in a sustainable and reconciliatory manner. Talking to various public delegations that called on the Party President at the National Conference Head Office, 'Nawa-e-Subha' in Srinagar on Tuesday, Dr. Farooq Abdullah said there



never was and never would be an alternative to a broad-

based, nuanced and sustained political engagement with stakeholders in Kashmir and that it was the moral duty of the country's leadership to resolve the Kashmir Issue without any further, protracted delay.

"Sadly, successive Central Governments in New Delhi failed to engage with the political sentiment in Kashmir in a sustained, detailed and planned manner so that

▶ See Farooq....Pg 02

CDPO DOORU AND OTHERS IN VIGILANCE NET

Srinagar, Nov 21: Vigilance Organization Kashmir (VOK) has registered a case under Prevention of Corruption Act on outcome of Joint Surprise Check (JSC) Conducted into the allegations with the officers/officials of ICDS Dooru Anantnag have misappropriated huge amount under IGMSY scheme meant for welfare of pregnant and lactating ladies.

During the course of JSC it has been established that Shamima Akhtar CDPO Dooru Anantnag in the capacity as DDO ICDS Block Dooru under a well knit criminal conspiracy with other officials and private persons has fraudulently/dishonestly credited Government money from her two Government Accounts IGMSY and ICDS Schemes of ICDS Block Dooru in her personal account to the tune of rupees 650000 besides in the accounts of

▶ See CDPO....Pg 02

G A Mir for priority to drop out Haj aspirants, restoration of full subsidy

Describes new Haj Policy 2017 as 'unfriendly'

Srinagar, Nov 21: Describing the new Haj Policy 2017 as unfriendly & unbecoming on the part of Central Haj Committee and Central Govt, J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President G.A. Mir stated that adding no priority to those aspirants who have not been selected earlier for Haj Pilgrimage, is very discriminatory and biased saying that State Govt has even failed to convince the Central Haj Committee and Central Govt on this count.

In a statement issued to KNS, Mir also expressed serious concern over minimizing subsidy on Haj Pilgrimage terming it as a



wrong decision on the part of Central ▶ See Mir....Pg 02

CLASHES ERUPT IN PARIMPORA LOCALITY

Srinagar, Nov 21: Shopkeepers lowered their shops while transport disappeared on the road after dozens of youth amid pro freedom slogans hit to roads in Parimpora area of Srinagar city and pelted stones on deployed Forces personnel.

Pertinently, a Mugees Ahmed Mir, a militant from the area was killed on Friday evening in a gun fight at Zakura area in the outskirts of Srinagar city. A police officer Muhammad Imanar Tak of Udhampur was also killed in the gun fight.

Parimpora locality had witnessed shutdown for three consecutive days from Saturday to Monday.

Eyewitnesses said that on Tuesday dozens of youth resorted to stone-pelting while government forces chased

▶ See Clashes....Pg 02

Singapore to help JK in Water Management, Skill, Riverfront Development: Dr Drabu

Holds extensive deliberations with Ministers, Govt officials, experts in Singapore

Jammu, Nov 21: The Singapore Government has offered technical support to J&K Government for capacity building in three key areas of Skill Development, Riverfront Development and Water Management.

This was revealed by the Minister for Finance, Dr Haseeb Drabu on his return from 3-day official visit to Singapore.

Dr Drabu said during his visit, he held extensive deliberations with the Ministers, government officials and experts in Singapore on how best the expertise of that country could be utilized for capacity building in some



critical areas in J&K. ▶ See Drabu....Pg 02

3-tier mechanism put in place by DSEK for Career Counseling WE HAVE TO HELP STUDENTS MAKE RIGHT CHOICE AT RIGHT TIME: DR ITOO

Srinagar, Nov 21: In a significant decision, the Director School Education Kashmir, Dr G N Itoo today ordered constitution of Career Counseling Cells in all the Higher Secondary Schools of Kashmir division.

The Director School Education Kashmir has also asked all the Chief Education Officers and the Heads of Institutions to start organizing career counseling programmes with immediate effect.

"A three-tier career counseling mechanism is being

▶ See Itoo....Pg 02

Bukhari directs officers to draft comprehensive development plan for fruit nurseries

Flags off farmers group for training to Punjab

Jammu, Nov 21: Minister for Horticulture, Syed Basharat Ahmed Bukhari today directed officers to draft a comprehensive plan for fruit nurseries detailing parameters for functioning, operational guidelines, management, to ensure maximum benefit to fruit growers, farmers.

The Minister said this while addressing a group of farmers from Akhnoor and Chamb area at an event or-



ganized by the department at Government Fruit Plant Nurs-

ery Garhi, Mishriwala.

The event was organized to flag off a tour group of framers of Mango villages (Sungal and Malla Barode) of District Jammu for training outside state under the scheme CAPEX (Mango Village) 2017-2018.

Minister of State for Horticulture, Priya Sethi, MLA Chamb Dr Krishan Lal Bhat, MLA Akhnoor Rajeev Sharma, Director Horticulture

▶ See Bukhari....Pg 02

JK ON 2ND RANK IN EDUCATION

Qayoom Wani felicitates, congratulates teaching fraternity of state

Srinagar, Nov 21: Teachers Forum Tuesday felicitated and congratulated the teaching fraternity of the state on being ranked as 2nd in education by India Today in "State of states ranking".

President Employees Joint Action Committee, Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Teachers Forum, Abdul Qayoom Wani while chairing the meeting of Teachers Forum extended his felicitations and congratulations to the whole teaching of the education department.

According to the statement issued to KNS, he said

▶ See Rank....Pg 02

RS 106 CR SPENT ON ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS IN ANANTNAG DURING CURRENT FISCAL: FAROOQ ANDRABI

Seeks re-verification of households lacking toilet facilities to make Hillar Block ODF

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 21: The government has spent Rs 106 crore, out of a total approved outlay of Rs 205 crore, on various development works in district Anantnag registering an expenditure of 80%.

Minister of State for Hajj & Atqaf, Syed Farooq Ahmad Andrabi, informed this while chairing an officers meeting here at Verinag to review the progress on development works being executed by different departments under various state and centrally sponsored schemes.

District Development Commissioner, Mohammed Younus Malik presented a detailed description of the budget outlay for the year 2017-18 and expenditure made under different schemes and sectors.

The meeting was informed that a total of 59.90 km road-length has been macadamized in the constituency during 2017-18 under R&B sector. In addition, works to the tune of Rs 12 crore are under execution, of which, grade 2nd level has been completed on Ladoora-Kalmund Road, Dalwach-Mandi Pora Road whileas work is going on Nowpora-Shangran road and Nowgam Circular Road. Under NABARD, the department is executing work on R. Khushi Pora road and the construction of Tanjore Bridge. So far, 3 kilometer, out of 5 km of the road-length of Khushi Pora Road, has been macadamized.

The Minister, while reviewing the performance of RDD sector, was informed that there are 10564 job card holders in

Dooru constituency and 70528 man days have been generated, so far. In Shahabad block, 110 works have been taken up while in Hillar block, works worth Rs 1 crore have already been taken up while in Verinag block, works worth Rs 2 crore are in the execution process.

Meanwhile, the Minister directed for expediting the work execution and called for rationalization of work allotments in the panchayats so that holistic development is ensured. He directed the BDOs to prepare DPR of lanes and drains of Larkipora-Kapran road on priority basis. The Minister also reviewed the performance under 14th Finance Commission awards, Swachh Bharat Mission and Integrated Watershed Development Project.

The Minister sought re-verification of the households lacking toilet facilities, which have hitherto been excluded from the socio-economic Caste Census 2011, so that required measures are taken to make Hillar block Open Defecation Free.

The Chief Education Officer apprised the meeting that 3 buildings under state sector are under execution in the constituency including HSS Veerinag and Lukbawan. He also informed that land has been identified at Bakerwal Chek for construction of school building in the area. With respect to HSS Hakura, the concerned Tehsildar was directed to submit the revenue extracts to the Education Department so that work is taken up. The Chief Medical Officer informed that adequate facilities are

being developed at Model Hospital Dooru to cater to the healthcare needs of the area. Besides, sufficient stock of medicines is available at the PHCs.

The Minister, while reviewing power and water supply position, was informed that PDD is strictly adhering to the power curtailment schedules.

The Executive Engineer PHE said that upgradation work on WSS Dooru is expected to be completed in next two months. Besides, 4 water supply schemes are under execution in the constituency.

The Minister directed the concerned Exen to ensure the early completion of water supply scheme for the Bakerwal-Chek. He also asked the DFO to ensure adequate dumping of firewood so that people do not face any hardship on this

account during winter months. Besides, AD FCS&CA was directed to ensure adequate stocking of LPG and ration in the upper belt of Dooru constituency.

The performance of other departments like Agriculture, Horticulture, Forests, Industries, Animal and Sheep Husbandry and other departments was also reviewed. Among others present in the meeting were SEs of R&B and PDD, General Manager District Industries Centre, SDM Dooru, Exens of R&B, PDD, PHE, I&FC and RDD, ACD, CEO, CMO, CHO, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, CEO Social Forestry, AD FCS&CA, Tehsildar Dooru, BDOs of Hillar, Shahabad and Verinag, EOs of municipalities besides other district officers and filed officers.

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MEET

BJP leader Jugal Kishore said that the meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere. "We discussed how to make better coordination among the alliance partners. We also discussed how the ministers can work in a better coordination for the overall development of the state," Kishore told KNS.

Earlier, the Coordination Committee meeting had been called in Srinagar on October 28. However, due to delay in nomination of new members by the PDP, the meeting was postponed.

In 2015, when the PDP-BJP formed the government headed by late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, they formed the coordination committee. The 10-member coordination committee was formed to ensure the agenda for the alliance is implemented within the defined time-frame and all the policy issues adhered to in letter and spirit. The committee was headed then by Nirmal Singh, comprised of PDP President Mehbooba Mufti, BJP state chief Jugal Kishore, Muzaffar Hussain Beigh, Shamsheer Singh, Tariq Hamid Karra, Choudhary Lal Singh, Abdul Rehman Veeri, Cheung Dorjee and Naem Akhter.

PDP

gratifications as the government's earnest efforts for the state have begun to get recognized by one and all.

"Now the survey has been done on apolitical grounds by one of the most credible institutions of the country, the political parties in the state irrespective of the political affiliations must come forward and support the earnest endeavors of the Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti," PDP's Srinagar district president and Upper House member Mohammad Khurshid Alam said in a statement.

The PDP leader added that Mehbooba Mufti since the day of assuming office of the Chief Minister has been making all efforts to eradicate the institutionalized corruption that used to be a hallmark of the previous state governments. Alam said that at all levels the government is striving to make the vital intuitions of Jammu and Kashmir incorruptible and principled.

He added that on political, social and developmental fronts, the state of Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing the new horizons of prosperity and very soon peace and tranquility would become the inseparable features of the state.

Hailing the Education Minister Syed Altaf Bukhari's tireless efforts in getting the education sector of the state back on track, Alam said despite the sector witnessing sudden and tormentable hurdles, Bukhari's command and control not only took the education sector out of the dreadful crises but only made it the most efficient and well-organized sector in entire India. The PDP leader said the new transfer policy for the female teachers, introduction of job-oriented subjects and creation of new degree colleges would take the education of Jammu and Kashmir to the remarkable heights soon.

At an impressive growth rate of 14.7 percent in 2015-16, Jammu and Kashmir has been ranked 2nd in the latest India Today annual 'State of the States' ranking. The state has also been positioned itself at 11th in the overall ranking of large states.

J&K has achieved 2nd ranking in other two key areas including Education and Environment.

The state has been ranked 7th in the public health, 6th in law & order and 10th in both economy and infrastructure.

With accruing 9th position among the top states, with the lowest percentage of population below the poverty line, J&K has managed to be counted as one of the prosperous states in the nation. Currently state's 10.4% population is below poverty line as compared to the 5.1% of Goa, 7.1% of Kerala and 8.2% of Sikkim which have topped this category.

MILITANTS

Reports said that an Army soldier has also been injured. Police sources said that after the inputs about the presence of militants in forest area Government Forces cordoned off Gujarpatti and Zurhama areas.

The militants reportedly opened fire upon the search party, triggering encounter.

A police official said that combined forces including Army's 23 Para commandos, 160 TA, SOG and CRPF engaged the militants and a vast forest area has been sealed and search operation is going on.

KILLED

Some of the local militants killed this month include Mugges Ahmed Mir, Ashiq Ahmed of Palhalan and Taib Majid of Brat Kalan Sopore and Adil Ahmed Chopan of Larow Traj.

Authorities also claimed that they killed nephews of dreaded militant leaders of Pakistan Azhar Masood and Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi.

A political leader and seven government forces personnel including 4 Army soldiers, 2 policemen and Indian Air Force Commando have also been killed in the first 21 days of this month.

The political leader whose throat slit body was recovered

from South Kashmir's Shopain district was identified as BJP youth president Govhar Bhat.

Besides Sub-Inspector Muhammad Imran Tak killed in Zakura locality of Srinagar city another policeman Abdul Salam lost his life this month when militants attacked a police party outside Police Station Rajpora.

NC

"We welcome both these initiatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs and hope the State Government will finally be embarrassed into action it should have initiated long back under the powers of law and order that come under the State's jurisdiction and purview. It has now become evident beyond any doubt that the Mehbooba Mufti Government has been reduced to a subsidiary municipality as all policy and decision-making powers have been surrendered to the Central Government. These are initiatives that Mehbooba Mufti could have and certainly should have announced on her own and not under pressure from the Central Government. Had she taken these steps on her own in a timely manner, the situation in the Valley might not have continued to deteriorate", NC State Spokesperson Junaid Mattu said in a statement issued from NC Head Office, 'Nawa-e-Subha' on Tuesday.

The NC State Spokesperson said it was tragic that the Central Government had to remind Mehbooba Mufti of her duties to her own people and also the need to treat juveniles with fairness and tenderness. "Why couldn't our Chief Minister initiate these crucial steps and ensure fair and just treatment to juveniles under provisions of Juvenile Justice? It seems the Central Government has divested Mehbooba Mufti of all law and order decision making powers and is micro-managing every aspect of policy from New Delhi. It is also clear now that Mehbooba Mufti's rhetoric about reconciliation and rehabilitation is in stark contrast to her indifference towards the youth of the Valley", Mattu added in the statement.

"We hope the State Government's conscience is jolted by this intervention by the Central Government and the Chief Minister acts to save the situation in the State from deteriorating any further towards indifference and isolation. It is her duty to act in the best interests of the State and its people and she shouldn't require reminders and orders from the Central Government to take such necessary initiatives in a timely manner", the NC State Spokesperson further said.

FAROOQ

this issue could be resolved once for all. While various initiatives were announced and started at various junctures, almost all of them were plagued by a lack of political will and consistency. The effect of these initiatives is far more crucial to the welfare of our people than purely the intent and sadly these initiatives were left halfway or were half-hearted to start with. For any progress towards the goal of ushering the State and the region into a corrective era of peace and stability, this pattern needs to change", Dr. Farooq Abdullah said.

The National Conference President said the country's leadership was morally bound to find a sustainable solution to a political issue that had consumed thousands of lives and resulted in multiple military conflicts in the sub-continent especially detrimental to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "It is the moral duty of the Prime Minister and his Government to take every possible reconciliatory measure to initiate a process that would see the resolution of this issue as per the aspirations of the people. The Kashmir Issue has both internal and external dimensions and this makes sustained and comprehensive engagement with our neighbours equally important. Both internal and external engagement should go on simultaneously", Dr. Farooq added.

"We need to empathize with the victims of this conflict and understand their woes won't go away by our rhetoric and stentorian speeches alone. They need closure and justice and there can be no alternative to a political initiative that is serious, politically empowered and sustainable. The Central Government needs to explore every possible way to reach out to every quarter of opinion in the State irrespective of their political ideologies or rhetoric. We need to move away from entrenched public posturing on this issue and understand human lives are priceless and are far more important than our rhetoric. We owe the people of Kashmir our empathy and solidarity", the NC President said.

CDPO

Mohammed Hussain Sheikh of Badernuna Dooru, the then Statistical Assistant to the tune of Rs 1261325/-, Opinder Raina of Jagti Town Ship Jammu, Orderly CDPO Dooru to the tune of Rs 305000 and one private person Mst. Batoola Masoodi of Verinag District Anantnag, to the tune of Rs 309032 which in total amounts Rs 252536 and later on CDPO Shameema Akhter deposited back an amount of Rs 126300 into her Govt. Account while as an amount of Rs 12,62357 has been misappropriated thereby causing wrongful loss to State exchequer to the tune of Rs 1262357 and corresponding wrongful gain to accuses persons.

Accordingly a Case FIR No. 32/2017 section 5(1) (c), (d) of J&K P.C. Act, Svt; 2006 read with section 5 (2) of JK P.C.

Act Svt; 2006 in Police Station Vigilance Organization Kashmir was registered against accused persons namely Mst. Shamima Akhter W/o Nazir Ahmad Shah R/o Mumin-abad Anantnag, CDPO Doru Anantnag, Mohammed Hussain Sheikh S/o Ghulam Ahmad Sheikh R/o Badernuna Dooru, the then Statistical Assistant, Shri Opinder Raina S/o Mohan-lal Raina R/o Flat No. 18 Block 35 Lane 7 Jaqti Town Ship Jammu, Orderly CDPO Dooru Anantnag by abusing their official positions along with Mst. Batoola Masoodi D/o Ghulam Ahmad Masoodi R/o Verinag District Anantnag. further investigation was taken up.

MIR

Govt which need to be revoked and full subsidy must be restored to Haj aspirants.

Lashing out at Central Govt for change in Haj Policy, Mir today said that Govt must revoke the decision of not adding priority to those aspirants who have not been selected earlier whileas they deserve to get priority for Haj pilgrimage in coming year.

He said UPA Govt had framed policy of adding priority to Haj drop outs, thereby providing them opportunities to go on pilgrimage, besides ensured adequate subsidy to them, but the present dispensation at Centre is working in an opposite direction, rather than creating new opportunities for Haj aspirants, it has adopted discriminatory approach towards them.

Expressing serious concern over the new Haj Policy, Mir criticized State Govt for failing to come upto to the expectations of the people on this count also, as that, State Govt could not convince both Centre Govt and Central Haj Committee, saying that adding no priority and minimizing the subsidy on Haj Pilgrimage is a step taken in haste certainly going to create hurdles to the aspirants waiting for their turn to move on Haj Pilgrimage.

Recalling the Haj Policy of UPA Govt, Mir said that UPA IUPA II has taken various measures benefitting Haj Aspirants in shape of Priority, Subsidy or enhancing Haj Quota from time to time, but this Govt has not only minimized the subsidy, but cancelled the priority for drop outs, which need to be corrected forthwith.

Mir urged both Centre Govt and Central Haji Committee to revoke the new Haj Policy and restore the priority to drops out, besides ensuring subsidy they were enjoying.

CLASHES

them. The clashes disrupted life in the area while shopkeepers closed their shops.

A police official said that some miscreants tried to disrupt traffic but they were dispersed pronto.

DRABU

He said the three key areas identified for collaboration include Skill Development, Riverfront Development and Water Management for which the Singapore Government will be extending technical expertise to J&K.

The Finance Minister said after follow-up discussions at the official level, Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) would be signed between the concerned authorities in Singapore and the J&K Government to kick-start the collaborative mechanism in the identified areas.

He said the Singapore Government has already established a Skill Development Centre in Assam and has also signed an MoU with Odisha Government in this regard.

"A similar collaboration between J&K Government and Singapore will certainly step up the quality of our skilled youth," Dr Drabu said and added that as the J&K Government is in the process of developing human and social capital for enhancing the capabilities of its youth this partnership will go a long way in fulfilling this objective.

He said similarly Singapore has made he strides in Riverfront Development and Water Management under the country's Waterfront Rejuvenation programme and replication of such a programme could help J&K in speedy restoration and revival of its waterfronts. "Singapore as a separate Master Plan for Water-based Activities in the country and a similar concept could be implemented in J&K for rejuvenation of waterways and water resources," he said.

ITOO

put in place in the Education Department to guide the students about the vast career opportunities available in varied fields," said Dr Itoo adding that the career counseling will involve mentoring at the institution level, at the district level and at the provincial level.

He said at the institution level the career counseling will be coordinated by the heads of the respective institutions, at the district level it will be coordinated by the Chief Education Officers of the concerned districts and at the provincial level such programmes will be organized and monitored by the Directorate of School Education.

"As varied career options are available to the students nowadays, they need to be sensitized and apprised about the right career choice to be made at the right time," said Dr Itoo adding that experts in career counseling will be roped in to

help the students make the right and demand-driven career choice.

Dr Itoo said a career calendar will be notified by all the heads of institutions and the CEOs for the benefit of the students.

BUKHARI

Anuradha Gupta, Joint Director Horticulture Tarvinder Singh, besides other senior officers were present on the occasion.

The Minister said that Horticulture industry in the state has grown to contribute 8000 crore to the state economy, out of which lies with the hard work of farmers, fruit growers. He said that role of the department is only as a facilitator, to support these growers with timely interventions. For this, a new Horticulture policy is in pipeline that will build a strong foundation for state horticulture so that coming stakeholders can build on it, he added.

Elaborating on the new policy, the Minister said that it will take into account land strata into fruit production, requirements to account for changing weather and subsequent plantation patterns, besides considering varied topographical profiles into Horticulture production in the state.

The Minister also said that the government is committed towards streamlining and development of nurseries. In this regard, he directed the department to draft and submit a comprehensive nursery development plan at the earliest. He asked them to specify feeding areas for each nursery besides setting viable targets, land utilization models.

The Minister also directed the department to identify all nurseries with under-utilized land and asked to take appropriate measures in this regard.

The Minister asked for developing a visitor's area at the Garhi Nursery comprising a cafeteria, sitting area, information center so that this nursery can be developed as Horticulture tourism spot. He said that the local schools population should be encouraged to visit here for an educational cum recreational trip. He said that similar initiatives will be taken up at other such spots. During the tour of the nursery, the Minister while taking notice of underutilized land directed the department to undertake additional plantations, revive water well on the property.

The Minister, addressing the farmers heading for the tour, asked them to take this opportunity to learn about farming techniques being employed in these states and integrate these techniques in their local communities. He also asked the concerned HDO accompanying the tour group to submit a detailed report regarding the visit comprising details about their experience and new technical, logistical methods that they observe. Speaking on the occasion, Priya Sethi, legislators wished the farmer well for their training tour and asked them to take maximum benefit of this opportunity to learn new ways to increase their productivity.

The local MLA's put worth their demands including revival for nurseries in their areas, additional field staff, processing units for local produce, besides requested for increasing subsidies on tractors, water storage tanks, high density plants, bore wells etc.

Responding to the demands, Bukhari said that the cap on tractors purchase has already been lifted to accommodate demands of farmers from Kandi belts. The rest of the demands would be taken up and looked into on priority, he added.

RANK

sooner or later people have to accept the role and service of teachers in serving the society.

He made it clear that teachers have proved their mettle and worth and have worked hard during most challenging times and it is by the dint of their hard and selfless work that j&k has been ranked as 2nd in the "state of states ranking" during a survey by India Today.

Wani said that everyone who is working in the department right from peon has put his bit in bringing laurels to the department.

Wani also congratulated and hailed the efforts of Education Minister, Syed Mohd Altaf Bukhari and his team of capable and efficient officers like experienced worthy Secretary to School Education Farooq Ahmad Shah, worthy Director School education Kashmir Dr. G. N. Itoo, worthy Director Education Jammu Ravinder Singh, Director Tufail Ahmad Matoo, State project director SSA A. R. War and all the joint directors CEOs, Depos, ZEOs, ZEPOs, Principals and Head Masters and all the employees of the education department in general and teachers in particular.

While expressing his satisfaction on the achievement, Wani said the department can touch even more heights if the shortfalls and bottle necks are removed from the system.

Wani said that there is every scope for improvement and in this regard he wished that subject teachers would be made available in all the schools, infrastructure developed, least political interfere in the department and encouragement to the efficient and capable officers of the department is made, transparent transfer policy adopted besides resolving all the pending issues of teaching fraternity raised by teachers forum from time to time.

Works Minister reviews JKPC functioning

Make technological interventions to expedite execution of works: Naeem to Engineers

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 21 – Minister for Public Works, Naeem Akhtar has directed the officers of Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) to adopt modern technological advancements for creating durable, cost effective and attractive assets in the state.

Emphasizing that JKPCC is an executing arm of the state, the Minister said it should work as a corporate organization and model mechanical agency. The Corporation should take up five projects that become construction models for other agencies to follow, he added.

The Minister issued these directions while chairing a review meeting of the Corporation, here today.

Minister of State for Public Works, Sunil Sharma was also present in the meeting.

Commissioner Secretary Public Works (R&B) Sanjeev Verma, Managing Director, JKPCC Syed Nayeem Ahmad, General Manager, Kashmir Vikar Mustafa, GM Central Harkeval Singh, GM Jammu Nazir Ahmad Shah, DGMs and other officers of the Corporation were also present in the



meeting.

The Minister directed the officers to prepare a comprehensive revival plan for the Corporation and work out on the modalities for creating separate Divisions each for Bridges, Buildings, Roads and Mechanical Division.

To ensure transparency and accountability in the functioning of the Corporation, the Minister asked for developing software to keep an account of the activity of various Units of the Corporation. He asked the engineers of the Corporation to personally stand on the construction sites and ensure that the quality of work

is maintained.

Meanwhile, Sunil Sharma directed the officers to speed up the execution of works and complete them within the fixed timelines. He asked for bringing accountability reform in the Corporation and proper management of the inventory.

The Minister was informed that JKPCC has 24 Units in the state that have completed various prestigious projects including rehabilitation of old Zero Bridge, Chadoora Bridge, double lane Zangli Bridge in Kupwara, Pushwara Bridge, Manzgam Panzgam Bridge, Steel Girder Bridge at Tharomsa Pashkoum, double lane Nikki

Tawi Bridge, Ganpath Bridge in Doda, Govt Degree College in Nowshera, Govt Degree College Kulgam Women Degree College Pulwama, Library Block GCET Jammu, Block-B Distt Hospital Anantnag, Dental Hospital Jammu, Guest House GMC Srinagar, faculty rooms in SMHS Hospital Srinagar, District Hospital Rajouri, Community Hall in Daulatabad, Administrative Block of PEC at Gadoora, flats at Sarwal and Polytechnic Colleges in Reasi, Kathua and Samba.

The meeting was also informed about the ongoing projects being executed by the Corporation which includes Plapora Shalteng Bridge in Srinagar, Bridge in Rajbagh, Malroo Bridge at Batmaloo, Vethpora Bridge in Srinagar, Bridge in Takanwari, Shariefabad Bridge in Batmaloo, Naikkhai Bridge in Bandipora, Yachama Kangan Bridge in Ganderbal, Guzama Bridge in Shellwath, Akhal Bridge and Tangachatri Bridge in Kangan, Watalbagh Basipora Bridge in Ganderbal, Kangripora Bridge in Khansahib, Owngam Arwah Bridge in Beeru, Wanpora Shamshipora Bridge in Kulgam and various other projects.

Chief Secretary reviews winter preparedness, outstanding land issues in Ladakh region



JAMMU, NOVEMBER 21: Chief Secretary, B B Vyas, Tuesday held a video conference with Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, DC Leh and DC Kargil to review various issues relating to Ladakh region including winter preparedness.

Principal Secretary, Home, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Commissioner/Secretary, Revenue and other senior officers attended the meeting.

Various aspects of winter preparedness in Ladakh region including status of stock and supply of essential commodities, availability of electricity, status of road and air connectivity etc were discussed in the meeting.

Chief Secretary also reviewed the implementation of Border Area Development Programme (BADP) in Leh and Kargil Districts and status of outstanding land issues in both the districts including vacation of land in Lower Kurbathang plateau by Army.

A high-level team headed by the Chief Secretary is scheduled to visit Ladakh next week to take stock of the implementation of various developmental and welfare programmes in Leh & Kargil Districts. The team will also interact with Hill Development Councils and Defence authorities to address outstanding land issues such as transfer of Kurbathang plateau in Kargil.

Joint Secretary MRDD calls on Abdul Haq, appreciates for effective implementation of MGNREGA in JK

Union MRDD revisits MGNREGA target for the state; Says JK can generate 3 crore man-days

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 21: For the first time in history of Jammu and Kashmir, the state is all set to get a record allocation of funds under MGNREGA since the inception of this scheme in the state.

The Central Government has appreciated the effective implementation and subsequent creation of durable assets under MGNREGA in the state and has expressed its keenness to provide more funds under the scheme.

A 7-member team led by Joint Secretary Union Ministry of Rural Development Aparjita Sarangi is on a 4-day visit to the state to inspect and assess the implementation of MGNREGA in the state and during their visit the team praised the efforts of the state government for the effective implementation of the scheme.

After completing the tour of Jammu Division, the Joint Secretary called on Minister for Rural Development Panchayati Raj Abdul Haq Khan and had a detailed interaction with regard to the implementation of MGNREGA in the state.

During the meeting, she apprised the minister about the purpose of the tour and also shared her feedback and observations from her field visit to various blocks and Panchayats of the Jammu Division. The Joint secretary appreciated the efforts of the State Rural Development in effective implementation of the MGNREGA scheme in the state and creation of durable assets in villages for the benefit of general public besides providing employment to the unskilled and unemployed youths of the rural areas.



She said the centre is keen to provide more funds to the state under MGNREGA to expedite the process and enable the state to receive full grants provided the state continues to do good work on ground effectively.

She said keeping in view the performance of the state, the central government has doubled the target of man days generation under the scheme from 1.19 crore to 3 crores mandays and has asked the state that if it achieved the target before time, the same can be again revised.

The Central Government has released Rs 900 crores as central share under the scheme so far. However after the visit, the central government has expressed willingness to allocate funds upto the tune of Rs 2000 crore for the current year keeping in view the performance of the state.

The central team inspected various works in Jammu, Samba Reasi and Udhampur districts during their two day tour to Jammu. The team is expected to visit Budgam, Ganderbal, Baramulla and Srinagar in Kashmir Division.

While appreciating the central government for whole hearted funding under MGNREGA, Minister said despite the problems faced by the state, the department was able to

successfully implement MGNREGA scheme at the grass root level. He said for the first time the department started prioritizing works under MGNREGA for its effective implementation. He said the department had prioritized rural connectivity and flood protection works in past two years and a network of roads and bridges have been constructed in rural areas that has changed its developmental scenario.

The team also lauded the leadership of the minister in leading the team for grand success in implementation of the scheme wherein the state has bagged many awards at the national level. The team also lauded the performance of the state government for early implementation of E-FMS in the state. They termed the launch of e-FMS as a revolutionary step that will ensure that the beneficiaries not to move from one office to another for payment and instead the department will directly transfer wages to their already linked bank accounts. "This step will not only ease out the whole process of disbursing payment to the beneficiaries but also remove the hurdles and makes it paperless besides eliminating delays in wage payment".

Minister for RDD Abdul Haq assured the team that

the state will further improve the quality of work and said that they have taken it as a mission and assured the visiting team that his team will work religiously for effective implementation of the scheme.

Later the Central team held an interactive session with ACDs, BDOs and other senior officials of the state and received the feedback from them about the implementation of MGNREGA Scheme.

The state officials apprised the visiting team about various tangible works done under MGNREGA during past few years in their respective districts and the durable assets created under MGNREGA. They said preference is being given to rural connectivity in villages and bridges, culverts and roads are being constructed under the scheme for the benefit of the people besides working for flood protection, water conservation, Soil Conservation, Land levelling or development, link roads, irrigation canals, drains, Vermi-compost, ponds drainage sewerage, Play fields, micro irrigation, renovation of traditional water bodies, Flood protection works.

The team also sought suggestions from the field officers with regard to the improvement in implementation of MGNREGA schemes.

The secretary along with her staff visited various districts of the Jammu division to see the works under MGNREGA. The team interacted with people and the officials and expressed satisfaction with the cost effective works done under MGNREGA.

Kohli calls on Union Home Minister

Raises issues of nomads; Demands special funds for development of Rajouri, Poonch

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 21: Minister for Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries, Abdul Ghani Kohli today called on Union Home Minister, Rajnath Singh to discuss various issues including Border Area Development Programme and problems being faced by the people living in border areas of Rajouri and Poonch districts in Jammu division.

A delegation of the Gujjar and Bakerwal community of State also accompanied the Minister.

The Minister strongly demanded for grant of special compensation for the people of border areas of Poonch and Rajouri affected due to cross border shelling. He briefed the Home Minister that due to shelling in border areas, the education and road connectivity of these areas has been affected badly which needs to be addressed on priority.

Kohli also requested for grant of political reservation for Schedule Tribe (ST) population of State on the pattern of Schedule Castes (SC). He raised various issues including settlement of Nomadic population (Gujjar and Bakewals), reservation in promotions in all categories, opening of Eklavya Model Residential Schools in every district of State, telecasting of Gojari News on Doordarshan and inclusion of Gojari language in the State Board of School Education curriculum.

With regard to development of Kalakote constituency of Rajouri district, Kohli demanded special funds under Border Area Development Programme (BADP) for drinking water supply scheme at Lower Agrath and Kalakass enabling more than 7000 people of the hilly villages to get safe drinking water facility.

Kohli also demanded funds for construction of roads from Looorkote to Agrati and Dalgora to Padian and Panchayat at Ghar to Malgujaran, besides one 35 Mtr span steel Gardor Motorable Bridge at DhanwaKot (Sail Traar) for the ben-



efits of the local populace. The Minister submitted a charter of demands for nomadic populations including streamlining the education system, grazing field and transportation facilities, healthcare facilities during migration period, smokeless chullas, solar lights, veterinary dispensary facilities and proportional reservation in district cadre posts.

Kohli invited the Home Minister to have a visit of the border districts of Poonch and Rajouri including Kalakote to personally see the miseries of the people. Home Minister assured the delegation that he will visit the area in near future.

The Union Home Minister gave a patient hearing to the Minister and assured him that the genuine demands would be taken up and looked into for redressal in a time bound manner.

Farooq Andrabi reviews Milad arrangements at Anantnag

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 21: Minister of State for Hajj & Auqaf (Independent charge), PDD, PHE, I&FC and Industries & Commerce, Syed Farooq Ahmad Andrabi today reviewed the arrangements for Eid Milad un Nabi (SAW) here at Verinag.

The District Development Commissioner, Anantnag, Mohammad Younis Malik informed the Minister about the preparations made by the district administration for the auspicious days.

The Minister asked the Power Development Department to adhere to the curtailment schedule and ensure adequate number of generators as backup at the

shrines during these days. He also directed PDD to get the transformers repaired at an earliest, if the case be.

The PHE Department was also directed to mobilize the field functionaries to ensure availability of potable water round the clock. Besides, the Minister called for making necessary arrangements of water tankers at the shrines and mosques in addition to areas facing scarcity of water.

Regarding the cleanliness and sanitation, the Executive Officers of different municipalities were directed to mobilize the Safaiwalas in order to ensure sanitation around the shrines and

mosques, besides, the lanes and drains. They were directed to repair the street lights so that devotees do not face any inconvenience.

While taking stock of the rations, the AD FCS&CA was directed to ensure distribution of rice, sugar and kerosene among the consumers well in time. Besides, the Deputy Director, Fire & Emergency Services Department was also directed to keep the fire tenders readily available. The Chief Medical Officer Anantnag was instructed to keep the ambulances available at the shrines besides, ensuring the availability of doctors, paramedics and necessary medicines.

Mindset change key to reverse declining CSR: Zulfkar

RAJOURI, NOVEMBER 21: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and Tribal Affairs Department, Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali today stressed that change in mindset and perception of the society about the girl child is the key to reverse the declining Child Sex Ratio and women empowerment.

The Minister said this while speaking during a workshop organized under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.

The workshop was organised by District Social Welfare Officer in Baba Ghulam Shah University as a part of campaign initiated by district administration to address the issue of declining Child Sex Ratio in the district.

Addressing the participants, the Minister highlighted the need of gathering support of key stakeholders and

involving local champions and prominent local personalities to ensure effective mindset change in the community.

He deliberated on issues related to community mobilization, effective implementation of PCPNDT Act, promoting girl child education and effective monitoring of BBBP.

Zulfkar while appreciating the district administration for spearheading a mass awareness campaign under BBBP exhorted that there is further need to strengthen system for flow of information regarding girls being prevented from going to school, toilets for girls in schools, violence against women etc for visible results.

District Development Commissioner Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary while speaking on the occasion enumerated various innovative interventions the district administration has undertaken



like celebration of the birth of girl child, display of birth statistics through Gud-

diGudda boards, holding inspection visits, sealing of unregistered ultrasonography machines, consultation of all stakeholders, oath taking ceremonies among others.

He called upon the girl students and scholars of BG-BSU to join hands with district administration in carrying out a sustained campaign for protection and promotion of girl child.

Earlier, DSWO Dr. Abdul Khahir presented a detailed presentation reflecting the details of CSR in the district, major challenges and way ahead in the matter.

Many students and scholars of the university also spoke on the occasion and batted for adopting

innovative approaches arrest the declining trend in CSR and to give it an upward swirl.

Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA, M D Khan, Controller Legal Metrology R K Katoch, Dean School of Languages and Humanity Prof. G M Malik, Dean Management Studies Prof. Naseem Ahmad, AD FCS & CA Javid Iqbal, faculty members and girls students of the university participated in the workshop.

Later the Minister along with DDC and other concerned officers visited Gujjar-Bakarwal Hostel and laid down the foundation stone of academic block of the hostel.

The building comprising of class rooms, computer lab, laboratory, staff rooms will be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 3 crores. It will be utilised for establishing residential school for students of the hostel.

DAILY Editorial
Time and Us
SRINAGAR J&K

AN ABSURD CANVAS: ON PADMAVATI

The coalition ranged against the screening of Padmavati, a big-budget period drama, is growing more violent and absurd by the day. The Uttar Pradesh government has joined the ranks of the Karni Sena, a self-styled Rajput organisation that uses vigilante methods to uphold its notion of caste honour, to raise anxiety about the film's scheduled release on December 1. Lucknow has written to the Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry requesting that the Central Board of Film Certification be alerted of the "public sentiment" about distortion of "facts" in the film. Its release, the U.P. government has said, could disrupt law and order in the State, especially with the administration's energies focussed on the municipal elections in end-November. Governments are expected to enforce law and order, not buckle down in the face of threats — whether perceived or real. As the Supreme Court observed in *S. Rangarajan vs. Jagjivan Ram*, a mere threat to public order cannot be a ground to suppress freedom of expression. By harping on the question of "historical facts" in connection with a film based on a work of fiction, the government is tacitly endorsing random groups and persons using Padmavati to delineate their notions of Rajput honour and Hindu-Muslim enmity. Over in Rajasthan, a Minister, Kiran Maheshwari, has intemperately railed against the film. And the Karni Sena, which vandalised the sets on location in Rajasthan earlier this year and on Friday blocked entry into the Chittorgarh fort where the story is set, freely hands out threats to the life and well-being of those associated with Padmavati, especially Deepika Padukone, its lead actor. Even Congress politicians are counselling that "sentiments" must be heeded.

Sanjay Leela Bhansali, the film's director who is known for his lush sets and high emotion, has been at pains to give an assurance that he has not distorted history. Leave aside the fact that the story draws from a 16th century Sufi poem, 'Padmavat', and has over the centuries been retold across north India, and that there is no historical record of Padmavati's existence, the insistence on demanding accuracy in period dramas is anyway an infringement on creativity. Fictionalising the past is a longstanding way of understanding it, from K. Asif's *Mughal-e-Azam* to Oliver Stone's *JFK*. But the anxieties that are driving the Karni Sena and members of the Sangh Parivar are evident. That Alauddin Khilji, the Delhi Sultan who wages war in the story to try to win the beautiful Padmavati, could be humanised obviously disturbs the Hindutva narrative about 'evil invaders'. The visuals of the heroine singing and dancing evidently militate against the latter-day patriarchal telling of Padmavati's story, in which she is shorn of agency and is dutifully circumscribed by notions of purity and honour. In this, it is not just that the film is fuelling such worries: the film is being used to heighten such anxieties and consolidate a regressive and intolerant world view.

The Constitution conundrum

► Jayadeva Uyangoda

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and his team's attempts to change the Constitution have been facing a series of obstacles. President Maithripala Sirisena and his Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) are not enthusiastically backing the reforms initiative and almost all Buddhist monks are opposed to any constitutional change.

Mr. Wickremesinghe's constitutional reforms project envisages the abolition of the presidential system and return to a revised version of the Westminster model, replacement of the proportional system of elections with a mixed system, and greater devolution to provincial councils.

Attempts of the past
This is the second time that a serious attempt is being made to replace the 1978 Constitution enacted by J.R. Jayewardene, who became Sri Lanka's Prime Minister in 1977 and then the President upon the enactment of the new system. Chandrika Kumaratunga as President initiated a reform process in 1994, which ended in failure in 2000. Taking forward her politics of reform, President Mahinda Rajapaksa, in 2005 and 2009, promised to change the Constitution, but did not take concrete steps apart from appointing two committees to make recommendations. Nonetheless, Mr. Rajapaksa did an unusual thing by amending the Constitution in 2010 in order to enhance, not reduce, the powers of the President, despite the fact that 'executive presidency' was the darkest feature of the Jayewardene Constitution.

History appears to repeat itself. The most ardent opponents of the reform initiatives now are Sinhalese nationalist forces, led by Buddhist monks. Parliamentary opposition, led by Mr. Rajapaksa, is in the forefront of the secular campaign against constitutional reform. The opposition by Buddhist monks revolves around two points. One, further devolution would amount to giving in to the demands of the Tamil and Muslim minorities as well as appeasing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam diaspora and foreign powers. Two, abolition of the presidential system would weaken the Sri Lankan state. The Sangha leaders are also worried that the new Constitution might drop the "foremost place" position that is accorded to Buddhism as per the current Constitution.

Prime Minister Wickremesinghe seems to be aware of all this, which is why he has adopted the strategy of drafting the new Constitution through the Parliament acting as a Constitutional Assembly. The proceedings of the Constitutional Assembly were conducted in a low-key fashion with little controversy. Mr. Wickremesinghe seems to have thought, quite wisely, that avoiding political drama over the reform process would be the best option.

Political drama over reform



However, constitutional reform is nothing short of state reform being carried out partly to resolve the ethnic conflict politically, which its opponents, more than its proponents, are acutely sensitive to. This is why political drama over constitutional reforms, the very thing that Mr. Wickremesinghe wanted to avoid, has erupted.

Three weeks ago, an interim report of the Assembly's Standing Committee was released. It is neither a final report nor a constitutional draft, but a statement of the various positions of groups in Parliament on reform topics. However, the political debate it unleashed in Sinhalese society has conveniently ignored this fact. This too is for strategic reasons. The opponents appear to be determined to block any progress in the reform process beyond its present state of being confined to an interim report. Preventing a sober national discussion by unleashing an ideological war is a time-tested strategy.

A divided government
Meanwhile, something different seems to be happening in Sri Lanka this time around. The opponents to constitutional reform seem to have exhausted their energy and arguments, ironically amidst the government's own inertia and reluctance to publicly defend its positions. The government is divided on the nature and scope of reform. While the Prime Minister wants a new Constitution and abolition of the presidential system, President Sirisena wants only electoral reforms. Interestingly, the discord within the ruling coalition is paralleled by the loss of

political energy in the opposition campaign. These two unconnected developments appeared clear when the Constitutional Assembly debated the interim report. The best ideas that were contributed to the debate were from the proponents of reform. The joint opposition's speakers, led by Mr. Rajapaksa, lacked any new ideas.

Despite this, Mr. Wickremesinghe will still find it difficult to manage the politics of constitutional reform. First, there is the timing of the whole exercise. The government of 'good governance', as the Sirisena-Wickremesinghe coalition regime calls itself, is no longer as politically strong as it was a year ago. Corruption scandals, slowing down of investigations against individuals of the previous government, and economic stagnation have all seriously undermined the political credibility of Mr. Wickremesinghe's side of the coalition.

Also, personal and political differences between the Prime Minister and the President have surfaced in a manner that continues to baffle even the government's supporters. The Sirisena camp believes that Mr. Wickremesinghe has a secret understanding with the Rajapaksa brothers to prevent the SLFP from becoming a future electoral threat to Mr. Wickremesinghe's United National Party. The Prime Minister apparently believes that a divided SLFP would be to the UNP's electoral advantage. After two and a half years of working together, Mr. Sirisena and Mr. Wickremesinghe seem to have discovered that there are serious differences between

them. There are signs of them even trying to undermine each other in order to reconfigure the balance of power within the coalition.

Sensing the arrival of Mr. Wickremesinghe's weak moment amidst the corruption scandals, Mr. Sirisena has recently moved in the direction of further weakening the Prime Minister's position by asserting his own authority within the ruling coalition government. The balance of power between the two within the coalition regime may or may not change. Yet, the unfolding cold war is likely to further weaken the government's capacity to advance the constitutional reforms initiative. A weakened government with self-inflicted wounds can hardly be the agency for a crucial project of state reform.

Thus the biggest obstacle to the progress of the constitutional reforms initiative comes from within the government, not outside. This is the real political conundrum in Sri Lanka today. Although the 19th Amendment to the Constitution created a system of diarchy in the structure of government, the two centres of power managed to function in a spirit of cooperation. That relationship has been damaged. Unless the two leaders repair it, their relationship might even degenerate into competition and antagonism. That will not be good for Sri Lanka's democracy and political stability.

Jayadeva Uyangoda recently retired as professor of political science, Department of Political Science and Public Policy, University of Colombo

THE OTHER SIDE OF AN ELECTION

► Shiv Visvanathan

One of the biggest casualties of the Gujarat elections is memory. The manner in which the polity is remembered and the act of contestation visualised completely erases the riots of 2002. The clerically minded might say that the file is closed, and the Special Investigation Team's report has cleared Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was Chief Minister at the time. However, I do not think we are talking about the guilt of one man; rather, one is discussing the aftermath of an act of violence and how it filters into the layers of our memory, colouring everyday behaviour.

As one reads editorials, it is as if the riots never happened, or people write as if some great act of sublimation or exorcism has taken place. These riots were different. They affected ordinary life and even the mentality of Ahmedabad. In a sense it was a civic and cosmic catastrophe that is regarded as politically incorrect to talk about.

A few small stories from the aftermath might illustrate what I am worried about. The first comes from a concerned mother, a schoolteacher who asked me to talk

to her children. She was concerned about the new metaphors and attitudes that had infected them. She had two children, the older was a girl of 12 and the younger a boy of 10. She said every time the two fought, the boy would tell the girl, "If you do not listen to me, I will do to you what Hindus did to Muslims." The normalcy of rape and murder occupies a different colouration. One wonders whether a society recovers easily from such violence.

I remember a driver who was ferrying me around Ahmedabad, a gentle man, 30-ish and extremely informative and helpful. He drove us around the riot-hit areas and would keenly listen to our discussions about our interviews with victims and survivors. A few weeks later he was driving us across Ellis Bridge and he suddenly stopped midway. He said, "I have to tell you something. I was one of them. I joined the crowd during the riots. What should I do?" I was flabbergasted and yet impressed by the honesty of the man. At that moment, I sensed that Gujarat has never returned to normal after 2002. Instead it has followed an artificial process of normalisation, with the victim forced to abandon

his sense of loss.

A façade of normalcy makes the society feel surreal. It also reveals that 2002 was not an example of the usual ritual of a riot, where victims return to the neighbourhood after a while. Tens of thousands of people did not return to their homes. These riots were also extremist in nature. They sought the elimination rather than suppression of an ethnic group.

There has been an attempt to suppress the narratives of both victim and witness. I remember a woman being asked by a member of an audience in a TV programme why she did not return to normalcy and forget things. She answered, "I want to but you won't let me."

Probably one of the most ironic and poignant of these stories comes from R.B. Sreekumar, the police officer who took a courageous stand against the regime. He is a gregarious character who loves discussion. His wife told me that every time he went for a walk in Gandhinagar, bureaucrats in the park shied away from him. The stigma of bearing testimony is attached to witness and survivor.

How to move on?

I am not saying that one should not forget, that it is unhealthy to move on. Such memory erodes and can become acidic. But erasure and amnesia are not normal processes. They reveal the ailments of a society that is too quick to accept the logic and rationale of violence. Behind such normalisation is also a sense of fear, a sense that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is too powerful and the dissenter an easily disposable fragment of vulnerability.

Yet the communal card is not a tactic the BJP is going to forget, especially as the patina of development wears thin. As Congress Vice-President Rahul Gandhi becomes unpredictably impressive, as local politicians find usable issues, the BJP might begin to play its old games. In fact, ethnicity has almost been suppressed as an issue, and caste in its multifarious aspects has played out. In Gujarat today, there is a Dalit issue, a Patidar issue, and the BJP has long worked its spell around Mandir and Mandal. But as its Mandal charm wears thin, it might reveal its older and truer colours. In fact, one senses both a fear of talking about violence and a fear of such a violence. As politics changes and the current

stalemates wear out, the BJP is bound to be tempted to return to its ancestral self, its attempts at a civility of table manners worn out by this reassertion of its primordial historical self.

The Congress's abdication
There is a second failure of a more drastic kind, and it is the failure of the word secular. By tacit agreement, it is the new taboo word of Indian politics with the Congress, which once thrived on it, now completely wary of its use. Secularism as an electoral idea seems a nostalgia. It is as if the word secular is a ticket to doom and people are tired of the word and its connotations. The abandonment of the word secular is another epochal but unnoticed moment in this election. The wariness of Opposition parties to use this term is a tribute to the impact of the BJP in rewriting the discourse of politics, and it has also become an index of the cowardice and tiredness of an Opposition which has lost its chutzpah and imagination.

The silence of the lambs about broader issues and values has affected the quality of debate in many ways. The election is more a battle of interests rather than a debate about a future vision

of society. It is reduced to a numbers game. One senses it particularly around two other silences. First, it is the somnolence of the Gandhian imagination. By beating the Patel drum, a Gandhian frame almost seems secondary to Gujarat. Gandhi appears like a secondary figure in the BJP pantheon. One senses a failure of the Gandhian imagination in confronting Mr. Modi and even a readiness to be appropriated. Second, the silence around the global controversies surrounding the Adani efforts seems intriguing. The controversy around the Carmichael coal mine has become a major environmental and rights issue in Australia but it has created few questions in Gujarat. Worse, the slow appropriation of the coast line raises little tremor of doubt.

There is a final element in this narrative. People mention it almost as an afterthought. It is the fear and silences around politics. The BJP is not only majoritarian but seems inevitable for 2019. Dissenters, minorities, many democrats express a sense of fear but as footnotes. My fear is that these events that look like footnotes will one day determine the future of our politics.

Two 'rich, educated women' among beggars shifted to rehab ahead of Ivanka's Hyderabad visit: Cops

Educated and owners of posh apartments--that usually can't be said about beggars. But the Hyderabad Police found two such women as they were sending beggars to rehabilitation homes.

The police are preparing for the visit of Ivanka Trump, the daughter of US president Donald Trump, and found the stories of the two women who were arguing in English with authorities at a rehabilitation home.

Several women beggars from a dargah or shrine for a Muslim religious figure at Langar Houz on the outskirts of Hyderabad were brought to Ananda Ashram at Cherlapalli jail on November 11 after the police declared begging as an offence and banned people from seeking alms on the city's streets for two months.

Nearly 1,000 beggars have been shifted to the ashrams for Ivanka's three-day visit to Hyderabad for a high-profile entrepreneurship conference.

"We have brought 133 women beggars to Ananda Ashram at Cherlapalli jail. And all the male beggars have been shifted to a similar ashram



at Chanchalguda jail," ashram in-charge and Cherlapalli open jail superintendent K Arjun Rao told Hindustan Times.

"When we started enquiring about their background, we found two of them a little peculiar. They were arguing with our staff in fluent English and did not appear like beggars. Upon enquiry, we were shocked to know that they were, in fact, very rich and educated," Rao said.

Fifty-year-old Farzona claimed she holds a post-graduate degree in

business administration and had worked as an accountant in London before returning to India a couple of years ago. Her son is an architect in the United States.

"She has her own apartment at Anandbagh in posh Ameerpet area in the city. She was apparently mentally disturbed after the death of her husband some time ago. Following a suggestion from a godman, she took to begging at the dargah, which is known for providing shelter for psychologically disturbed people," Rao

said. The ashram authorities contacted her son based on the information provided by her. He was already in Hyderabad and was looking for his mother, they said.

"She was hell-bent on continuing begging at the dargah. We took an affidavit from her son and handed her over to him on the same evening," the jail superintendent said.

Another woman, Rabiya Baseera, from Defence Colony at Langar Houz also fought with the jail authorities for bringing her to the rehab centre.

"She claimed that she was a green card holder in the USA and had huge properties in Hyderabad. However, her brothers had allegedly usurped her properties," the jail official said.

"She lost her mental peace fighting to get back her wealth and following an advice from some of her relatives, she came to the dargah and was begging to get the mental peace," he added.

The 44-year-old Baseera stayed in the ashram for a day before she was handed over to her relatives by the authorities.

Bihar BJP chief 'regrets' remark to chop off hands of people criticising PM Modi

Allegations about a threat to break fingers and chop off hands was the result of "mischievous misinterpretation" of a metaphorical saying, Bihar BJP president and Lok Sabha member Nityanand Rai on Tuesday, even as he expressed regret for the comment.

Rai came under severe criticism from opposition parties and on social media a day after he was quoted as asking party workers to attack anyone who pointed fingers at Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"I used the expression of breaking fingers and chopping hands as a proverb to convey that we would strongly deal with those who rise against the country's pride. If it has hurt anybody I express regret," he said on Tuesday.

"What I had uttered and what appeared in some newspapers are not the same...it was a mischievous misinterpretation of what was said at a function in Patna on Monday. It has been twisted out of context," Rai added.

An HT reporter was present in the function on Monday when Rai said that people opposing the nation and all anti-nationals "should be dealt with sternly and their limbs should be broken".

Deputy chief minister Sushil Kumar Modi and ministers Nand Kishore Yadav, Mangal Pandey and Suresh Sharma were present at the meeting, organised to honour late Banshi

Sah alias Banshi Chacha, a prominent freedom fighter.

Though BJP leaders too defended Rai, they said the comments had harmed the image and opposition parties could derive advantage from it ahead of the Gujarat assembly elections.

Meanwhile, the opposition RJD and Congress attacked Rai for his alleged comments. Rashtriya Janata Dal spokesperson Shakti Yadav said Rai has exposed the "mindset" of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

"Do these words deserve any place in a democratic set-up like India? The BJP leader is behaving in this way to defend a dictator," Yadav said.

Bihar Congress president Kaukab Quadri said Rai has expressed the fear of his party. He said there were growing voices of protest against the three-and-a-half-year-old central government led by Modi.

"People have every right to raise their voice, finger or hands against the Prime Minister. We are living in a democratic country," he said. Bihar's ruling Janata Dal-United is, however, silent over the statement of its ally BJP leader. JD-U leaders have refused to comment on it. Earlier in November, Rai said that Modi was a reincarnation of Swami Vivekananda.

Dalveer Bhandari elected to ICJ: Modi praises Swaraj, Shah says 'diplomatic win'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi credited on Tuesday the efforts of external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj and foreign ministry officials for the re-election of Dalveer Bhandari to the International Court of Justice.

Amit Shah, the president of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, described Bhandari's re-election as a "huge diplomatic win" and applauded PM Modi and Swaraj. Congratulating Bhandari, Shah said his win was a reflection of a "strong and decisive" leadership.

Bhandari sailed through after Britain withdrew its candidature from a hard-fought race to the World Court. Bhandari and UK's Christopher Greenwood were locked in a neck-and-neck fight for re-election, as the UN could not decide between them after electing four out of five judges to the ICJ.

After the results came out, PM Modi expressed gratitude to members of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council for "their support and trust in India."

"Congratulations to EAM @SushmaSwaraj and her entire team at MEA & diplomatic missions for their untir-



ing efforts that have led to India's re-election to ICJ.

"Our deep gratitude to all the members of UNGA as well as UNSC for their support and trust in India."

BJP chief Shah tweeted: "With every step and effort of the Modi Government, we see the reflection of a strong and decisive leadership. I applaud Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj for this huge diplomatic win."

Bhandari, 70, received 183-193 votes at the General Assembly and secured all 15 votes in the Security Council to fill the final vacancy on the ICJ after separate but simultaneous elections were held at the UN headquarters in New York.

"Vande Matram - India wins election to the International Court of Justice. Jai-

Hind," tweeted Swaraj.

"Congratulations to Justice Dalveer Bhandari on his re-election as a Judge of the ICJ. Huge efforts by Team - MEA. Syed Akbaruddin @AkbaruddinIndia our Permanent Representative in UN deserves a special mention."

For its part, Britain congratulated Bhandari and said it will continue to cooperate closely with India at the United Nations and globally. Matthew Rycroft, Britain's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, said in a statement that his country decided to withdraw Greenwood's candidature.

"The UK has concluded that it is wrong to continue to take up the valuable time of the Security Council and the UN General Assembly with further rounds of elections," he said.

"We are naturally disappointed, but it was a competitive field with six strong candidates," Rycroft said.

"If the UK could not win in this run-off, then we are pleased that it is a close friend like India that has done so instead. We will continue to cooperate closely with India, here in the United Nations and globally," he said.

Rycroft said the UK will continue to support the work of the ICJ "in line with our commitment to the importance of the rule of law in the UN system and in the international community more generally".

Britain's withdrawal from the election to the prestigious world court would mean that there will not be a British judge on the UN's most powerful court for the first time in its history. Based in The Hague, the ICJ has a bench of 15 judges, five of whom are elected every three years for a nine-year term.

Established in 1945, the role of the ICJ is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by states and to give advisory opinions on legal questions.

Bhansali as guilty as those issuing death threats, says Yogi Adityanath

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath said on Tuesday Padmavati's director Sanjay Leela Bhansali is as guilty as those issuing death threats to actors and others involved in the film and asserted that if there is any action, "it will be against both the sides".

"He (Bhansali) is habitual of playing with people's sentiments. I feel if those who are issuing threats are guilty, action should also be taken against the filmmaker," Adityanath told reporters at Gorakhnath Temple in Gorakhpur. "No one has the right to take the law into own hands whether it is Sanjay Leela Bhansali or anyone else," he added.

Protests against the Rs 150-crore movie has been mounting as Rajput organisations have alleged that it distorts history and depicts an "amorous relationship" between legendary Rajput queen Padmini - portrayed by Padukone - and Delhi Sultan Alauddin Khilji - played by Ranveer Singh. The filmmakers have denied the charges on several occasions.

The movie is based on a 16th-century epic poem, Padmavat, about the Rajput queen



who chose to kill herself rather than be captured by Khilji. Historians, however, are divided over whether the queen even existed.

The chief minister said no one had the right to take laws in their hands when asked to comment about a senior leader of his Bharatiya Janata Party who offered a Rs 10-crore reward for anyone who beheaded Padukone and Bhansali.

"People should refrain from making such remarks and maintain harmony," he added. Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, both ruled by the BJP, have asked for cuts in

the film to remove "objectionable" parts that hurt the sentiments of the Rajputs. Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also said on Monday the film will not be allowed to be screened in the state if historical facts are "distorted".

"We have already made our stand clear by writing to the censor board. The Supreme Court has also clarified the situation. Ministry of information and broadcasting has also been informed about the objections. We will not allow anyone to hurt the sentiments of 22 crore people of Uttar Pradesh," he said.

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to stay Padmavati's release, saying the movie is yet to get the censor board's clearance. According to a three-judge bench led by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, the court could not stop a statutory body such as the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) from carrying out its duty.

The censor board returned the film to the producers, saying the application form was "incomplete". The movie was due to open on December 1 but its producers postponed the release amid violent protests and death threats.

RSS, Anonymous inspired AAP's social media strategy, says book

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) had its Twitter strategy in place even before the party was launched in November 2012. It wedded the social media game plan of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) with that of hacker-activist group Anonymous to make an impact in the virtual world.

This revelation is part of an upcoming book by Ankit Lal, founder and chief of AAP's social media cell. Titled India Social, it will be released by AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on November 24 - two days before the party's fifth founding day.

The strategy of the RSS - the ideological parent of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) - depended on using its "on-ground network to build an online support base", writes Lal. The AAP social media team was made privy to the right wing organisation's strategy by an RSS activist named Kapil Rishi Yadav, who volunteered to help the political party while it was still emerging from the shadow of an anti-corruption movement launched by social worker Anna Hazare, he adds.

According to Lal, the RSS held special training sessions to teach its



swayamsevaks (volunteers) how to create Twitter accounts and use the platform to promote its ideology. "I also took a cue from online hacktivist group Anonymous, (which happens to be) an Internet gathering with a very loose and decentralised command structure. I amalgamated the two strategies to create our Twitter approach," he says.

Lal and his team then went on to identify people whose tweets favoured AAP. "We did what the RSS did - create several teams across various cities in India - but based our strategy on the Anonymous model by finding sympathetic people through online chat groups and social media platforms," the book reveals.

The RSS' influence on Indian

politics runs deep, although it claims to be an apolitical cultural organisation. Both Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi were swayamsevaks before they became heads of BJP governments at the Centre. Most members of Modi's present council of ministers enjoy close links with the RSS.

The right-wing organisation has nearly 700,000 followers on Twitter, while the BJP has 7.7 million. Modi is the third-most influential political figure on Twitter with 37 million followers, bettered only by US President Donald Trump and Pope Francis.

While the BJP is in power at the Centre as well as 18 states, the AAP rules Delhi (with Kejriwal as the chief minister) and acts as the principal opposition party in Punjab. Its Twitter outreach far exceeds its boots on the ground, with 4.3 million followers. Kejriwal has nearly 13 million followers.

PM Modi is like 'Brahma', only he knows when Parliament will be convened: Congress

The Congress on Tuesday alleged the government is deliberately delaying the winter session of Parliament to avoid questions from the opposition benches which can hamper its prospects in the Gujarat assembly polls.

"They do not want discussion in Parliament so they are giving different excuses for delaying the winter session."

"If they convene Parliament session and hold discussion, then they will be exposed."

"So they are trying to convene the session after the Gujarat assembly polls," Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress leader in Parliament told reporters here at a joint press conference attended by party's floor leaders in Parliament.

He said whatever was happening under the Narendra Modi government was an "attack on democracy".

"Even ministers of this government and Speaker do not know when the session will be convened. Only one person knows about it -- who is 'Brahma'. You cannot be whimsical in running of a democracy," he said.

Earlier, speaking to reporters, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Ghulam Nabi Azad slammed the government for allegedly



shying away from facing Parliament.

He said the government is deliberately delaying the session to "hide its corruption and failures on the employment and economic fronts".

The Congress leaders hit out at the government a day after their President Sonia Gandhi accused Modi of delaying the winter session on "flimsy grounds".

Gandhi on Monday said the government in its "arrogance" has "cast a dark shadow on the country's parliamentary democracy".

Asserting that the government wanted to avoid questions and answers ahead of the Gujarat polls, she warned the NDA regime that it cannot escape constitutional accountability by "locking the temple of democracy".

This 15-minute test can tell you if you've been misdiagnosed with depression

A simple 15-minute electrocardiogram could help a physician determine whether a patient has major depression or bipolar disorder, suggests a study.

Bipolar disorder often is misdiagnosed as major depression. But while the symptoms of the depressive phase of bipolar disorder are similar to that of major depression, the treatments are different and often challenging for the physician.

In bipolar disorder, formerly called manic depression, a patient swings between an emotional high (manic episode) and severe depression. Treatment for the depressed phase includes an antidepressant along with a safeguard such as a mood stabilizer or antipsychotic drug to prevent a switch to a manic episode. A physician who misdiagnoses bipolar disorder as



major depression could inadvertently trigger a manic episode by prescribing an antidepressant without a safeguard mood stabilizing drug. The Loyola Medicine study found

that heart rate variability, as measured by an electrocardiogram, indicated whether subjects had major depression or bipolar disorder. Senior author Angelos Halaris

noted that having a noninvasive, easy-to-use and affordable test to differentiate between major depression and bipolar disorder would be a major breakthrough in both psychiatric and primary care practices.

He added that further research is needed to confirm the study's findings and determine their clinical significance. The Loyola study enrolled 64 adults with major depression and 37 adults with bipolar disorder. All subjects underwent electrocardiograms at the start of the study. Each participant rested comfortably on an exam table while a three-lead electrocardiogram was attached to the chest. After the patient rested for 15 minutes, the electrocardiographic data were collected for 15 minutes.

The study appears in World Journal of Biological Psychiatry.

Overweight women should undergo mammography more often

Overweight women should undergo mammography screen tests more frequently than women with lower BMI, suggests a new study.

BMI or Body Mass Index is a measure of body fat based on height and weight. An overweight person has a BMI of 25 or more, while a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. The research, presented in the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America 2017, stated that women with higher BMI face an increased risk of not detecting the breast tumour until it has become large.

"When a clinician presents the pros and cons of breast cancer screening to the patient, having high BMI should be an important 'pro' argument," said Fredrik Strand, researcher at the Karolinska University in Stockholm, Sweden.

"In addition, our findings suggest that women with high BMI should consider shorter time intervals between screenings." The

researchers studied 2,012 cases of breast cancer and looked for how disease progression was related to BMI and breast density.

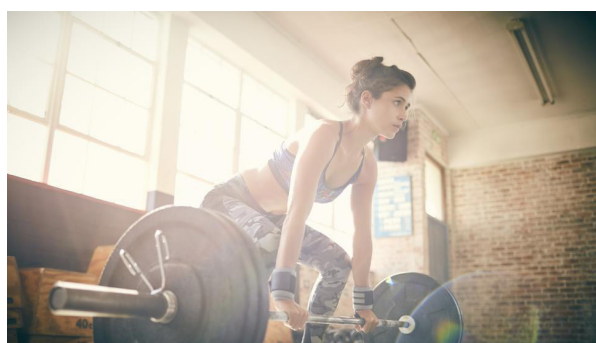
Researchers identified the risk factors associated with tumours that do not get detected until larger than two centimetres, or about the size of a peanut.

The two cm size is important because it is one of the parameters used to separate stage I and stage II cancers. In addition, tumour size is known to be strongly associated with prognosis, a medical term used for predicting the likelihood of a person's survival.

The results found that both the BMI and the breast density were associated with having a large tumour at diagnosis. However, for interval cancers, or cancers detected within two years of a normal mammogram, only BMI was linked with having a large tumour. Also, women with higher BMI had worse prognosis than women with lower BMI among interval cancers.

Here's why compound exercises are the secret to faster muscle gains

Most of us while working out tend to opt for a workout that involves training a single muscle in isolation. For example, we tend to train one body part a day, that is chest one day and back the other, and so on. While this kind of workout and schedule is perfect for someone whose primary aim to sculpt his/her muscles and focus on aesthetics. However, it's not ideal for someone whose target is to get fit and athletic, in a short span of time. This is where compound exercises come in; they can either involve single moves that include multiple muscle groups such as deadlift and lunges or two moves combined together to create one exercise like a shoulder press combined with bicep curl. We got in touch with fitness experts Amaresh Ojha and Jinnie Gogia Chug, who explain why you need to opt for compound exercises rather than isolation exercises.



1) Burn calories at a fast rate. Exercises that involve more tissues than one single tissue, require more oxygen. Therefore, compound exercises tend to burn more calories than isolation exercises and build more muscle in the process. 2) Enhances intermuscular coordination. It improves the function and coordination of various muscles around the joints. For example, the gluteal complex (the hip) consists of three muscles - gluteus maximus, medius and minimus. Together, they are the ones responsible for controlling the

span. Therefore, they provide the cardiovascular benefit without muscle loss.

4) Dynamically flexible. Flexibility doesn't always mean standing in a static position. When you stretch, that is holding your muscle in a lengthened position, you reduce tension in your muscle but it reduces your neurologic activity (body's ability to quickly respond), which is not recommended before any dynamic activity. Compound exercise improves your dynamic flexibility, which reduces muscle tension without hampering your neurologic activity.

5) Improves movement and posture. Ever wondered why bodybuilders move like robots? Isolated training reduces coordination between multiple muscle joints in your body. This leads to bad posture and rigidity in the body. Compound exercises lead to a better posture and better overall movement of the body.

Sleeve gastrectomy: This weight-loss surgery lowers women's booze tolerance

Ladies, if you are opting for gastric sleeve surgery to shed those extra kilos, then you may want to consider cutting back on the amount of booze you consume post-surgery.

A team of researchers at the University of Illinois and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis found that after undergoing sleeve gastrectomy, women could be legally intoxicated after drinking half the number of drinks than women who did not have this surgery.

Sleeve gastrectomy, similar to another weight-loss surgery, Roux-en-Y gastric bypass (RYGB), speeds up alcohol absorption to the bloodstream. After drinking, blood alcohol levels increase much faster and reach higher levels than what would be expected before surgery, explained study leader Marta Yanina Pepino.

"After having a sleeve gastrectomy, if a woman has a couple of drinks, she could be exposing her brain to blood



alcohol levels that are achieved in a woman without surgery when she consumes four or five drinks," added first author M. Belen Acevedo. "Drinking, such that it raises blood alcohol levels above legal drinking limits, is considered a binge drinking episode and has been associated with an increased risk of developing alcohol problems."

For the current study, 11 women who had sleeve surgery and eight who had RYGB surgery within 1-5 years before the study began, as well as nine women who had not had

either surgery, were evaluated in two sessions.

In one session the women consumed the equivalent of two standard alcoholic drinks over a 10-minute period. At another, they consumed non-alcoholic drinks. At each visit, the researchers measured blood alcohol levels by using gas chromatography and compared them to estimations of blood alcohol levels obtained from breath alcohol measures using a breathalyzer. They also used a questionnaire to determine the women's level of drunkenness.

For the women in the non-surgery group, blood alcohol contents peaked at 0.6 g/L about 26 minutes after they finished drinking. In those who had sleeve surgery and RYGB, blood alcohol contents peaked at 1.1 and 1.0 g/L about 9 and 5 minutes, respectively, after finishing the drink. The women who had sleeve surgery or RYGB also reported more intense feelings of drunkenness.

Another finding showed that breathalyzer values compared to those measured by gas chromatography, which Pepino calls the "gold-standard" technique, underestimated blood alcohol by 27%.

Because of this finding and the fact that breathalyzers must be used 15 minutes after the final drink of alcohol, Pepino pointed out that breathalyzers may not be a reliable way to get accurate alcohol levels from those who have had sleeve or RYGB surgery. The study appears online in the journal Surgery for Obesity and Related Diseases.

Now, a blood test that can detect disease in its earliest stages

Scientists have come up with a test, which they say could detect signs of a disease in its earliest stages.

The Purdue University researchers, including Jeffrey Rhoads, George Chiu and Eric Nauman, created microelectromechanical resonators, or small vibrating sensors, that can detect biological markers in small amounts of blood that they believe could be used to detect a myriad of diseases, infections and different medical conditions at early stages.

The plate-style resonant sensors allow sensitive, inexpensive detec-

tion of biomarkers that can signify disease, illness or trauma.

"The goal here is to find the disease so early that you can treat it without invasive surgery," Rhoads said. "The test looks for a particular protein related to a disease, so you could use this for the detection of many different diseases."

The sensors use a piezoelectrically actuated resonant microsystem, which when driven by electricity can sense a change in mass. The sensitivity of the resonator increases as the resonant frequency increases, making high-frequency

resonators excellent candidates for biomarker detection, Rhoads said. The method also is much faster and less expensive than other types of medical tests.

Rhoads said they discovered a way to conduct the test that identifies a minute amount of protein in a very small amount of blood. One of the first uses for the test could be the early detection of traumatic brain injury in athletes, particularly high school football and soccer players.

Research into the effects of repeated head impacts on high school football players has shown changes

in brain chemistry and metabolism even in players who have not been diagnosed with concussions, Nauman said. The newly-developed test can detect minute amounts of proteins, including protein from glial cells, which surround neurons in the brain. The proteins are secreted in relatively high concentrations in cerebrospinal fluid of victims of traumatic brain injury. Prior studies have found that a small amount of fluid leaked through the blood-brain barrier and got into the bloodstream of victims.

The test also is inexpensive so a

high school football team could do several mass screenings a season, Rhoads said. The test also could be used for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease, Nauman said. "You can basically look for general neurodegeneration, not just in athletes."

The researchers believe the test also could be used to detect countless other diseases. They are looking for licensees to use the test to search for other small amounts of protein that are early signs of disease. The paper is published in IEEE Sensors Letters.

PLAYING VIDEO GAMES MAY HELP REHABILITATE STROKE PATIENTS



A novel video game that will enable patients recovering from stroke to engage and play as a form of rehabilitation has been developed.

The video game called Balloon Buddies is designed to level the playing field by allowing healthy participants to support the less-abled player. The findings showed that the performance of the patient was boosted when they played with a healthy volunteer, compared to if they were playing the game on their own.

In addition, they found that the poorer a patient's single player performance was, the greater the improvement seen when they played with another during dual-player mode. This type of collaboration makes it more rewarding for the less-abled partner, more challenging for the better partner, and overall more fun for both, as they have to continuously work together to score points, the researchers said.

"Video games are a great way of providing repetitive exercise to help patients recover from debilitating illnesses," said lead author Michael Mace, from the Department of Bioengineering at Imperial College London.

The study, published in the Journal of NeuroEngineering and Rehabilitation (JNER), suggest that this form of rehabilitation through gaming may be beneficial to patients recovering from other illnesses such as musculoskeletal injuries, arthritis and cerebral palsy.

The researchers are aiming to further develop the game alongside new multi-player concepts and show that it can be used in different settings including patients training with their therapist or with other patients, in community centres or even remotely at home.

"The technology is still being developed, but we have shown that playing jointly with another individual may lead to increased engagement and better outcomes for patients," Mace added. Playing video games has been known to help reduce stress, boost memory in the young as well as in the elderly.

Healthy winter snacks: 9 foods that'll keep you warm and fit this season

As the mercury levels drop and winter approaches, the body's metabolism slows down to conserve energy and heat. Therefore, to stay healthy and active during the colder months of the year, ditch deep-fried snacks to satisfy your hunger pangs, and pack some healthy snacks like fox nuts, cinnamon cookies, oranges and carrots, say experts. Here's a list of crunchy melt-in-the-mouth healthy winter delights to consume in the months ahead.

* Stack some tilpatti in your bag. Made of jaggery and til (sesame seeds), tilpatti is sweet and a perfect snack to munch on in winter. The two ingredients help produce heat

in the body. While sesame seeds are loaded with antioxidants, jaggery helps fight iron deficiency.

* Gond ke laddu is one of the most popular delicacies enjoyed in winter. Gond is an edible gum extracted from the bark of a tree and produces so much heat that it is generally consumed only in winter. Ingredients such as gond, wheat flour, sugar, ghee, melon seeds, almonds, and elaichi are mixed well and made into round balls.

* Grab an orange, carrot or a guava. It is great to nibble on fruits and get that extra vitamin C and vitamin A, which will strengthen your immunity, eye sight and give you



great skin. * Dry roast and grind flaxseeds. Add a little jaggery to this powder, throw some crushed walnuts, magaz and pumpkin seeds. Tasty pan-

jiri is ready to curb those sweet cravings. No oil. No preservatives. Only Omega 3. * Chikki is the perfect combination of crunchy peanuts and jaggery. Winter is

the best time to gorge on these delicious bite-sized candies. Peanuts have a warm effect on the body and along with jaggery, give you an instant energy boost that will satiate your hunger as well.

* Break open an egg in a frying pan toss in some cut veggies. It is an anytime snack. It contains 7gm protein with added antioxidants, vegetables and spices.

* Cinnamon cookies: If you are allergic to jaggery or do not enjoy its sweetness, how about relishing cinnamon cookies this winter? Combine white sugar, flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, butter, egg, and vanilla essence to whip up a batch of delicious

cinnamon cookies. Apart from adding flavour, cinnamon is a perfect winter spice that boosts your health during the winter.

* Roasted nuts: Cashew nuts are a rich source of vitamin E and have anti-ageing properties that help your skin glow in the cold months. Furthermore, peanuts make you feel fuller for long and are loaded with essential vitamins and minerals. Having them roasted gives you a delightful sense of warmth and fullness

* Nibble on fox nuts (makhana). You can flavour the same by roasting in olive oil/coconut oil. Dust some chili flakes and oregano to enhance the flavour.

Mahindra roars into 'motor city' Detroit, unveils ambitious plans for future

It was a project crying to be executed, says Mahindra Group chairman Anand Mahindra about the company's North America headquarters and manufacturing facility inaugurated on Monday. The unit is located in the heart of the country's automobile hub, which had once become a desolate belt of decrepit factories and dispirited lives.

But Mahindra saw an opportunity there. And it is "so breathtakingly obvious, in hindsight, after we have done it", he told Hindustan Times in an interview.

It is in Detroit that the world's greatest resource of experienced engineering talent, rendered jobless by "certain recessionary reasons", lies waiting to be tapped. And Mahindra, an emerging automotive giant in the United States, counts itself lucky to have found it.

The expansion announced by Mahindra America is part of a \$230-million investment in Southeast Michigan, which also includes a recently opened warehouse and logistics operation in Pontiac and an existing prototype operation in adjoining Troy. By 2020, the company expects to invest \$600 million and create 400 more



jobs.

Local dignitaries, including lawmakers and civic officials, were unanimous in their appreciation of the new facility — a low-rise sprawling campus overshadowed by tall trees in the middle of fall — calling it historic, the first OEM (original equipment manufacturer, for those, like this reporter, did not know) in the area in 25 years.

"It's a privilege that I think is more of a responsibility," said Mahindra, who sometimes looks as if he would be more comfortable in a Formula One driver's suit than the exquisitely tailored bespoke suits successful men

tend to favour.

Clearing the air at a time when Indian companies are facing increased scrutiny with regard to the nationality of their employees, Mahindra said: "It's not an R&D facility where we are planting Indian engineers because we have — instead — come here to locate engineering talent. These are American engineers, American green card holders who have worked in auto companies, here."

Mahindra then spoke about the "head of the facility" Richard "Rick" Haas, who was part of the start-up team of California-based electric car maker Tesla. "That's why we are here."

Haas, a hulking bearded man who could be just as ease on a Harley Davidson, is the CEO of Mahindra America. He told Hindustan Times in a short interview that they were currently sifting through a pile of proposals that the new facility would process and build — "ground up" — and hopefully put on the road in the near future. Among them are Roxor, an off-highway vehicle that the company hopes to unveil in a few weeks, and a delivery van for the United States postal service should the company win the tender. To do so, it will have to beat back competition from four others on a shortlist that started with 15 entities and has now come down to five. The winner is expected to be announced in the summer or fall of 2018, and the van will be deployed in 2019.

The company, which is small by American automobile standards, is like a start-up. But Mahindra, talking to reporters later, rejected suggestions that it suffered from lack of scale. Instead, he invited them to consider — in the absence of a universally agreed path forward for an industry in flux — if they could actually be "looking at a footprint for the future".

Card transactions soar 84% in Sep 2017 to Rs 74,090 cr: Report

The debit and credit card transactions have jumped to Rs 74,090 crore in September this year, up a hefty 84 per cent as compared to the same month last year when it stood at Rs 40,130 crore, thanks to the government push for non-cash payments, says a study.

The transaction volume at all points of sale (POSes) clipped higher by 86 per cent over to 378 million in September this year over the same period last year when it stood at 203 million, European payment solutions provider Worldline said in a weekend report quoting the Reserve Bank data.

In September 2016 the number stood at 203 million, it added.

"With demonetisation, people were pushed to use non-cash modes of payment for everyday expenses. Even after the cash is back to the pre-demonetisation levels, there is a visible growth in card transactions," Deepak Chandnani, chief executive of Worldline South Asia & Middle East, told PTI.

The push to increase cards usage started with the Prime Minister Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) in August 2014, the survey said.

Total number of cards as of September 2017 stood at 853 million. Of this, 33.3 million were credit cards and 819.8 million were debit cards. There was a marked spurt, especially for debit cards, which shot by 39 per cent in 2015 because of the new Jan Dhan accounts. Post-demonetisation, growth has been averaging at 22 per cent, the survey added.

The growth of credit cards from 2016 to



2017 has been 24 per cent, higher than the average growth but consistent with the trend of the past few years, the study said.

Between 2011 and 2016, credit cards have seen a steady 9 per cent increase.

The study further said digital payment companies have seen a substantial jump in business following the government's push towards cashless transactions after the note-ban last November, and the major contributor to this growth was online payments.

According to RBI, after the note-ban, digital transactions rose 31 per cent from last November to this September.

Growth rate of the digital payments industry, which was earlier in the range of 20-50 per cent, has accelerated post-demonetisation to over 40 per cent.

As of September, the number of transactions on the unified payments interface (UPI) jumped 85 per cent in a month. The rise in UPI adoption is also facilitated by the rise in smartphone users and increased availability of 3G and 4G data (89 per cent of total mobile data), the survey said.

Sleuths find SBI Caps, Ambit guilty of Kingfisher loan 'fraud', seek CBI probe against officials

The Serious Fraud Investigation Office has found top officials at state-backed SBI Capital Markets and private firm Ambit guilty of helping the erstwhile Kingfisher airlines defraud lenders, the agency's probe report accessed by HT said. SBI Caps did not respond to HT's request for comment while Ambit denied any wrong doing.

Kingfisher, once India's second-biggest airline, stopped flying five years ago for want of cash, leaving its creditors, mostly state-backed banks, staring at nearly Rs 9000 crore in bad debts. Banks have also sought to have its flamboyant promoter Vijay Mallya, who moved to London last year, declared a "wilful defaulter".

At least one anti-corruption court has named him a proclaimed offender in India, which is seeking his extradition.

The SFIO began investigating Kingfisher for alleged financial irregularities in 2015. In its report, the agency has found Mallya, Kingfisher's former chief financial officer A Raghunathan and other board members of the UB Group such as AK Ravi Neungadi guilty of corporate mismanagement and financial irregularities.

It also brought charges of corporate fraud and violation of the companies act against Supratim Sarkar, executive vice president of SBI Caps, Ashok Wadhwa, managing



director of Ambit Corporate Finance Pvt Ltd and two former valuers of Grant Thornton LLP.

The SFIO report also names as suspect former chiefs of the State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Bank of India and IDBI for granting short-term loans to Kingfisher between 2009 and 2010 and for sanctioning a debt recast package.

"The then chiefs of IDBI and SBI, in total disregard to judicious banking prudence and fair banking risk, went out of the way to sanction loans of Rs 900 crore and Rs 500 crore respectively," the report said.

But as the SFIO deals only with violations of the companies act, it has recommended that prosecuting agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation and Central Vigilance Commission — can press corruption charges under the Indian Penal Code — be brought in to examine the role of and build cases against bank and government officials. Top sources in the government

said that the SFIO will soon file cases against the accused. SBI Caps' Sarkar, the report alleged, "fraudulently induced banks to convert part of debt into preference shares by deceptive projects". His debt recast plan for Kingfisher did not include inputs from any aviation expert, it said.

The report brought four charges against Wadhwa, including help in creating artificial business segments for Kingfisher and conspired in the company's wrong valuation during the acquisition of Air Deccan in 2007.

Wadhwa's Ambit, the report also alleged, "prepared inflated business plan and financial projection for SBI Caps for preparing information memorandum for debt recast package of Kingfisher."

HT's request for comment from SBI Caps over phone and email remained unanswered.

When contacted for his reaction, Wadhwa put HT in touch with his chief operating officer, who denied any wrong doing.

"In 2007-08, Ambit Cor-

porate Finance Pte Limited provided Investment Banking advisory services related to merger of Kingfisher Airline Limited with Deccan Aviation Limited. Our scope of services specifically excluded issuance of any valuation report," Gautam Gupte, COO of Ambit, wrote to HT.

The report also held two former valuers at Grant Thornton liable for their inflated brand valuation of Kingfisher at Rs 4111 crore in March 2010. It did not hold the company responsible.

Though not named as accused, the probe report raised questions about the role of former bureaucrats at the finance ministry in "pressuring" public sector banks to offer more loans to Kingfisher, despite its failing financial health.

"A set of officials of the then banking division of the ministry of finance came to the rescue of Vijay Mallya... Pliable top management of public sector banks succumbed to the pressure," it said.

Such pressure on state-backed banks for loans for Kingfisher continued between 2008 and 2011 when the airline's debt was recast on the basis of Sarkar's alleged fraudulent assessment, the report said.

The report also pointed to severe corporate governance lapses in Kingfisher. It questioned the role of independent directors on its board.

India has the ability to grow at 8.5% a year: Chief economic advisor Subramanian

India has the ability to realise its economic growth potential of 8.5% per year, chief economic advisor (CEA) Arvind Subramanian said in an interview, laying down two caveats for it to do so.

This is presaged on India overcoming challenges posed by weak demand and the twin balance sheet problem of highly leveraged corporate entities and bad-loan ridden banks, Subramanian said.

"And here the recapitalisation of the public sector banks that the government has recently announced is a very critical step forward," he said, a day after Moody's Investors Service upgraded India's sovereign rating for the first time in 14 years.

Earlier, Subramanian pointed out, the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had undertaken a rejig of the institutional framework for bankruptcy resolution.

The cleaning up of corporate balance sheets would revive investment demand and healthier banks would stoke a similar pick-up in credit offtake.

The CEA, however, cautioned that this has to be followed up with some hard-nosed reform initiatives in banking reform. "Here shrinking the fundamentally unviable banks, ensuring/creating risk assessment capability in the PSBs (public sector banks), and bringing in more majority private sector ownership



will be terribly important reforms," he said.

According to Subramanian, the roll-out of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) had initiated a very welcome recast of the federal polity of India and should serve as a template to address the overhang of development challenges. "I believe that the future of India lies in the virulent spread of cooperative and competitive federalism with the GST as the harbinger," he said.

In this, he believes the lead can be played by the government think tank Niti Aayog, successor to the Planning Commission. "The Niti Aayog can be for all development

issues what the GST Council has become to indirect taxes."

Referring to the recent GST Council meeting in Guwahati, Subramanian said the big message was the easing of the compliance burden which had been beginning to disrupt the supply chains in the economy.

"A committee led by GSTN (GST Network) chairman Ajay Bhushan Pandey will review everything relating to forms and the return filing frequency to see how the system can be made simpler and easier for everyone. A lot of simplification is still possible."

According to Subramanian, it was only a matter of

time before there was convergence of rates into three slabs and commodities like land are brought under the purview of the GST.

Separately, Subramanian stressed the need for tax laws to emphasise greater voluntary compliance. "We need to think more about instruments of policy that rely on incentives and voluntary compliance, build on that rather than cracking down on businesses that adds to uncertainty and raises the cost of doing business. I think that is a larger issue and mindset where we need more calibrated and less blunt instruments of policy."

Centre seeks Rs 13,000 crore surplus from RBI, no special dividend

The government has not asked the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to pay any special dividend and is only seeking Rs 13,000 crore of surplus lying with the central bank, economic affairs secretary Subhash Chandra Garg has said.

In August, the RBI had paid a dividend of Rs 30,659 crore for the fiscal ending June, 2017. It was less than half the Rs 65,876 crore it had paid in 2015-16.

The government had budgeted for a Rs 58,000 crore dividend from the RBI in its Budget for this fiscal year.

"There is no proposal at this stage to ask for any special dividend. What is being discussed is to only ask for what the RBI earned this year but did not distribute. That is about Rs 13,000 crore. That's what the government has suggested the Reserve Bank to transfer," Garg told PTI.

RBI's profit was about Rs 44,000

crore, of which Rs 30,000 crore has been distributed and Rs 13,000 crore retained towards risks and reserves. So the government has made a suggestion that the Rs 13,000 crore may also be transferred, he said.

The government had last month announced an unprecedented Rs 2.11 lakh crore capital infusion in PSU banks, which are grappling with high non-performing assets (NPAs).

Asked about the contours of the recap bonds, Garg said "the recapitalisation package is in the final stages. The Department of Financial Services is working on it and soon we would see all these aspects being addressed".

Of the Rs 2.11 lakh crore, Rs 1.35 lakh crore would be infused through recapitalisation bonds and the remaining Rs 76,000 crore through budgetary support and banks diluting equity in capital market.

Credit rating agency Moody's



had last week upgraded India's sovereign rating after a gap of over 13 years citing reform push and steps being taken by the government to solve the high NPA problems in the banking sector.

Bad loans in the sector have neared Rs 10 lakh crore.

Garg said Moody's has acknowledged the reform process and believes that India is in a position to control its debt and put its banking sector

in order.

"The kind and quality of reforms, the boldness of reforms, the structural, fundamental needs of reform is what has persuaded them to believe that India is now on a longer term high growth path... That (reform) process will continue and I don't see any slackening in reform effort," he said.

The US-based rating agency cited government efforts to reduce

corruption, formalise economic activity and improve tax collection and administration, including through demonetisation and GST, as well as improvements to the monetary policy framework and measures to clean up non-performing loans as reform steps which would foster sustained economic growth.

On privatisation of Air India, Garg said it is progressing "reasonably steadily" and the plan about how to privatise has also been broadly worked out.

Asked if it would happen in the current fiscal, Garg said, "I won't put a timeline on when this is likely. Air India is not just one company, there are other assets."

The government has 'in-principle' decided to disinvest the Air India group as a whole or its constituents fully or part thereof through the strategic sale with transfer of management control.

GSTN chairman-led panel to consult experts

The committee tasked with simplification of Goods and Services Tax (GST) returns filing will consult tax experts and trade bodies to make the process convenient for businesses that have minimal transactions, its chairman said today. GSTN chairman Ajay Bhushan Pandey-headed panel comprises VAT commissioners of Karnataka, Gujarat, Telangana, and senior officials from the department of revenue and the CBEC. "We are also discussing with experts and taking opinion from various other stakeholders as to what simplification could be achieved. The whole idea is that people who are nil filers, who have no sale/purchase transactions, have taken a registration for some future use, they should be able to file GSTR-1 and GSTR-3B by pressing just a few buttons. That is our ultimate aim," Pandey told PTI. As many as 40% of the businesses filing returns on GST Network (GSTN) portal have nil tax liability. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council had set up this committee on November 10 to suggest ways for simplification of the returns filing process. It has also decided to keep in abeyance till March 31 the filing of GSTR-2 (purchase returns) and GSTR-3 (the matching of sales and purchase returns). Now, businesses will have to file simplified initial GSTR-3B forms till March, along with sales returns GSTR-1. "The committee would look into simplification exercise because all GST returns are intricately connected," Pandey said, when asked if the committee would focus on only GSTR-2 and GSTR-3.

Kohli slams 50th ton as Sri Lanka hang on for draw

KOLKATA: Skipper Virat Kohli scored his 50th international century on Monday as India gave Sri Lanka a major scare before the first Test ended in a nerve-racking draw.

Sri Lanka were reduced to 75-7 — with paceman Bhuvneshwar Kumar taking four wickets — as they chased 231 for victory.

Under intense pressure, Dasun Shanaka (six not out) and Rangana Herath (0) nervously played out the final few deliveries before bad light at the Eden Gardens came to the rescue.

Kohli's 119-ball 104 not out had put India on top and allowed them to declare their second innings on 352-8. The captain hit 12 fours and two sixes as he flayed the bowling.

"Feels good," Kohli said of his 18th Test century, to add to his 32 One-day Internationals centuries for India.

"My journey hasn't been long but I want to continue contributing, especially in situations like these," the 29-year-old captain said. "If I can step up and perform, that will give me more pleasure than thinking about the number of hundreds I have. The mindset is always to go forward and help the team forward, and win Test matches."

Kumar struck in the very first over when Sadeera Samarawickrama chopped a delivery onto his stumps



and was out for 0.

Mohammed Shami then had left-hander Lahiru Thirimanne bowled for one as the visitors slipped to 2-2 in 3.3 overs.

Umesh Yadav, India's third seamer, joined in by trapping former Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews lbw for 12.

The match became even more tense when Shami bowled current Test skipper Dinesh Chandimal for 20 and Kumar, who returned impressive match figures of 8-96, trapped Niroshan Dickwella lbw for 27.

"He's grabbing his chances and is a massive contender to start every Test match for India. He'll do us good in overseas conditions and not just in home conditions," Kohli said of India's man-of-the-match. "He's going to be an important part of our plan going forward in all formats."

The hosts had resumed the day on 171-1 after Lokesh Rahul (79) and Shikhar Dhawan (94) staged a 166-run opening stand that saw India overcome a 122-run first innings deficit.

Sri Lanka's fast bowlers Suranga

Lakmal and Shanaka took three wickets each to rattle the Indian top and middle-order.

But Kohli displayed his class in taming the attack towards the end of the innings.

He let out a roar and pumped his fist after getting to 100 with a six off Lakmal, who ended with match figures of 7-119.

India's Cheteshwar Pujara, who fell to Lakmal in the morning session, joined an elite list to have batted on all five days of a Test.

Pujara, who was the top-scorer with 52 in India's first innings 172, put on his batting pads on each day of the game, which was marred by bad weather.

Only 32.5 overs were possible on the first two days before the weather cleared for the final three.

Sri Lanka's premier spin bowler Herath also made an impact — hitting 67 in Sri Lanka's first innings of 294.

"I'm really happy that Rangana scored the runs but unfortunately spinners didn't come into play. We'll have to learn to bat in the second innings," said Chandimal. "[Pace spearhead] Lakmal is unbelievable, especially over the last one or two years. He's one who you can trust as a captain."

The second of the three Tests start in Nagpur on Friday.

Why 'cult' of MS Dhoni is making Indian cricket a 'loser'

Sanjay Manjrekar, former India batsman turned commentator, says the 'cult' of MS Dhoni is coming in way of 'clarity' and 'honest discussion' in team selection, adding that in such a scenario Indian cricket stands to 'lose' out.

The topic of Dhoni's future has been doing rounds since the T20I series against New Zealand, when he failed to win a game for India despite scoring a 37-ball 49 in the second match at Rajkot.

Manjrekar wrote in ESPNcricinfo, "We are not quite there yet, but like it was with Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar, the cult of Mahendra Singh Dhoni seems to be coming in the way of clarity and honest discussion of team selection. It's in our DNA in India, isn't it?" "All this fanfare and worship is perhaps all right from a distance, but when they start influencing cricketing decisions, especially selection, it becomes a matter of concern," wrote Manjrekar, citing examples of how the legendary cricketers like Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar struggled too in their final days as India cricketers but no one could talk about dropping them.

"Indian cricket is the loser when such things happen. This is a different age and I would have hoped that we had evolved from the Kapil and Tendulkar days," Manjrekar opined.

Also citing how well Australia handles its champion cricketers, Manjrekar said reputation of a player should never 'be a factor in selection'.

"Forget opinions, look at numbers"

However, Manjrekar pointed out Dhoni's recent records arguing that the wicketkeep-



er-batsman presents a strong case.

Acknowledging that Dhoni still presents stronger case than Tendulkar of his final days in selection, Manjrekar wrote, "Well, when it gets tricky, forget opinions, look at numbers. Inspect Dhoni's recent record. What does it tell you? Let's look at his last 25 innings in ODIs and last ten in T20Is. (Just ten T20Is because not enough T20 internationals are played.)"

Manjrekar highlighted Dhoni's recent performances and wrote, "In the last 25 ODIs Dhoni averages 56.75 and his strike rate is 81.94. In his last ten T20Is Dhoni averages 33.80 and his strike rate is 131.01. Deeper scrutiny of these numbers and clinical observation of his performance on the field would reveal that he is not the game changer as often as he was in the past," he wrote.

"But the only change I see in his batting is that where earlier he could tonk four sixes off six balls at will, now he can hit only one. He now has to rely more on others to win games. But again I make the same point: any new young player with Dhoni's recent numbers would be an automatic pick," Manjrekar added.

Shakil Shaikh puts PCB under pressure to amend constitution for third term

KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has convened an emergency meeting of the Board of Governors for Wednesday, over a one-point agenda — which is to make an amendment in its constitution to allow an extended term to Shakil Shaikh as president of the Islamabad Cricket Association (ICA).

Dawn learnt on authority, however, that the bigwigs of the PCB are trying to resist this amendment which, if made, will allow the candidates to contest the elections for three or more tenures of any regional cricket association.

The immediate benefit to the amendment will go to Shakil who has orchestrated the entire move for the amendment and has been putting tremendous pressure on the PCB to hold this emergency meeting to unlawfully amend the constitution in this regard which will help him retain his position in the Board.

It may be mentioned that Shakil has already completed his two terms of three years each as ICA president and as per the existing PCB constitu-



tion, he is not allowed to contest for the third time.

According to sources close to the members of Board of Governors (BOGs), the PCB bigwigs are trying to resist this move from Shakil and his strong lobby which includes Rawalpindi Cricket Association's Naeem Akhtar Gilani who is also harbouring similar hopes of getting unlawfully elected for a third term through this back-door amendment.

In the civilised world, only the general body of any institution has the authority to make changes in the constitution but in the PCB, the Board of Governors do have the

sweeping powers to make such amendments.

Shakil, who was recently appointed as advisor to PCB chief on domestic cricket, recently ended his tenure as member BOGs but it seems that he is hell-bent on holding a key position in the Board and is ready to go to any extent to once again make himself eligible for the elections of the Islamabad Cricket Association for the third time.

In the past, Shakil has also enjoyed his stay in the PCB by performing key roles on different posts. It was on his recommendations that the PCB incorporated a clause in the constitution in 2013 under

which those regions whose teams finished among top four in the Quaid-i-Azam Trophy in 2013 could have their representatives in the BOGs.

As a result of this, Peshawar, Islamabad, Karachi and Rawalpindi — the top four regions — filled the places in the BoG for three years.

However, this time, a new formula of rotation basis has been adopted because Islamabad were not among the top four teams. Shakil was also made head of the cricket committee as a member of the BOGs when several committees were formed to run PCB affairs from 2014 to 2017 during the tenure of ex-chairman Shaharyar M. Khan.

Shakil has also earned a bad name for using his undue influence for the inclusion of his son Arsal Shaikh in the Pakistan Under-19 squad for the 2016 World Cup although his son had not played in the under-19 tournament that year. Arsal was selected, out of turn, by junior chief selector Basit Ali in a move that was widely slammed by critics and former players alike.

Manchester City not favourites for Champions League crown, insists Pep Guardiola

Pep Guardiola says Manchester City are still not among the favourites to win the Champions League despite their eye-catching form in domestic and European competition.

The Premier League leaders face Feyenoord on Tuesday unbeaten in 18 games in all competitions this season and with an increasing number of observers tipping them to challenge for Europe's biggest prize, which they have never won.

Napoli coach Maurizio Sarri and Leicester's well-travelled boss Claude Puel are the latest respected judges to name City as the best team in Europe but Guardiola is continuing to play down expectations around his side, who have already qualified for the Champions League's last 16.

"I say thank you very much to both of them," said Guardiola of the praise from his fellow managers. "For Manchester City, a team that still needs a history in Europe, it is a big win."

"That doesn't mean we are favourites to win the Champions League but it's nice. It



means we are doing some things very well.

"But obviously people usually say the favourite teams are FC Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and others. But that people put us there, is a big honour. That does not mean we have done anything because we haven't."

Guardiola has lost England defender John Stones for up to six weeks with captain Vincent Kompany, another centre-back, still edging his way back from injury.

With 13 games to play from Tuesday until their trip to Watford on January 2, Guardiola believes the coming

period will be his squad's biggest test of the season.

"We don't have a big squad," he said. "It is a big pity we lost a month-and-a-half of Vincent Kompany and now John Stones. To win the titles we need all the squad, especially important players like John and Vinny."

"On the other side, we have an opportunity. We have to play 12 games in a short space of time (until the end of 2017) with only three central defenders, and one of them is a risk in Vincent only just back."

The City boss, whose side are eight points clear of nearest challengers Manchester

United in the Premier League, said he wanted to assess how players would react and how adaptable they were.

"Always when you are champions, you have to handle the big situations, the tough situations," he said. "When everyone is ready and comfortable that is not when you get credit."

"We are going to see how we react in the most important moment of the season."

The congested fixture list could see Guardiola turning to youth, with England Under-17s star midfielder Phil Foden tipped for first-team action in the coming weeks.

Spanish midfielder Brahim Diaz, 18, and 20-year-old defender Tosin Adarabioyo have trained with the first team all season and could be pressed into action.

"They are ready," said Guardiola. "Otherwise they would not be training here every day with us. In the high level, we try to help the young players, but they have to have quality to train with us."

"It's not just to have fun or be gentle. They are there because they have a chance to play with us."

Lahore Blues, Karachi Whites score identical T20 wins

KARACHI: Lahore Blues and Karachi Whites both recorded identical victories by 19 runs on Monday to move in sight of the semi-finals in the Bright Paints presents Cool & Cool National T20 Cup at the Pindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi.

In the day's afternoon fixture, Karachi Whites were brilliant in defending a below-par total of 148 by strangulating Islamabad batsmen who mustered only 129 in their stipulated overs for the loss of five wickets.

Pakistan skipper Sarfraz Ahmed was at his tactical best in the field while his troops responded superbly to the task after Asad Shafiq had produced another workmanlike knock at the top of the order once Islamabad captain Zohaib Ahmed opted to bowl first.

Remarkably, Asad's 45 was the highest individual score of the game as the diminutive Test batsman adorned his 27-ball effort with five boundaries and two consecutive sixes in the second over

of the day as a wayward Umar Gul delivered successive no-balls — which were contemptuously hit for a four and a six.

After his 'maltreatment' at Asad's hands, Umar returned to concede 25 runs from his next three overs before finishing with 3-45, which were still a big contrast to his fellow Pakistan discard Mohammad Irfan's excellent figures of 3-25. After man-of-the-match Asad was removed by Adil Amin, it was left to Sarfraz to ensure his side posted a respectable score. The captain hit two fours and six in making 28 off 21 balls before being unluckily bowled by Umar as the ball rolled onto the stumps off Sarfraz's pad.

Islamabad, needing to score at a gettable rate of 7.45, were never allowed to express themselves with bat as openers Shan Masood (25 off 22 balls, four boundaries) and Nauman Anwar (34 off 33, three fours and two sixes) plodded to mere 28-0 in the Powerplay overs.



Rumman Raees Khan was spotted on with his immaculate control and his subtle change of pace hounded the batsmen as the Pakistan left-artermer gave away only 18 runs, while dismissing his

United Bank team-mate Saad Ali for a 20-ball 25.

Tabish Khan was a completely changed fast bowler from the one who was thrashed by Peshawar batsmen for 41 runs on Sunday

evening. This time Tabish went for just 19 runs in four overs in which he bagged Adil's wicket, while the experienced Zulfiqar Babar also made his presence felt with a tidy spell of 1-21.

Meanwhile, Lahore Blues' hopes of improving their net run-rate were badly dented by a late Fata resurgence in the evening match which at one time headed for a clinical rout of Hammad Azam's side.

Chasing 178, Fata were down and out for the count when the first four wickets fell in the space of 12 deliveries. Aizaz Cheema, the former Pakistan paceman now 39, rocked Fata's chase by sending back Mukhtar Ahmed (2), Naved Malik (8) and Hammad (first ball duck) in six balls to leave in real strife at 11-4.

Rehan Afridi also got out cheaply but Fata then staged a tremendous fightback from 30-5 in the sixth over and then 63-6 in the 11th through an outstanding knock from all-rounder Sohail Akhtar. The 31-year-old right-hander — who had never crossed 30 in any of his 11 previous T20 innings — hammered an undefeated 74 from 56 balls with 40 of the runs coming via four sixes and

as many fours.

Asif Afridi also played his part admirably in the gallant partnership of 85 in 54 balls with Sohail before the left-handed Asif (37 off 22 balls, three sixes and two fours) was run out in the final over that ended with Fata reaching 158-7.

Earlier, Hussain Talat dominated Lahore Blues' innings with a career-best 68 off 46 balls. The 21-year-old left-hander's unbeaten contribution included five fours and three sixes, while putting on 68 for the unbroken fifth wicket with Agha Salman (28 off 17, two sixes and two sixes).

Hussain and Aizaz were declared joint recipients of the man-of-the-match award.

At this point in time, Lahore Whites, Karachi Whites and Lahore Blues occupy the first three places in the eight-team standings with seven points apiece. But Karachi Whites have played six matches compared to both Lahore outfits, who both have still two games left in the league round.