

# TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

**SATURDAY**

- DECEMBER, 09, 2017
- 20 RABI-AL-AWAL 1439 AH
- ISSUE: 288
- VOLUME: 03
- PAGES: 08

WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	16.0	-3.0
JAMMU	23.9	8.0
LEH	7.6	-12.3
KARGIL	7.4	-7.2

**SUNSET SATURDAY: 05:24 PM**  
**SUNRISE SUNDAY: 07:27 AM**

**LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR**  
 Generally Cloudy sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 14°C & -3°C respectively.

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

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LIVERPOOL COMPLETE CL SWEEP FOR ENGLAND, RONALDO CLAIMS NEW RECORD

## Protests, partial restrictions mark US decision in Kashmir

Mirwaiz terms restrictions as 'Shameful Operating Procedure'

Srinagar, Dec 08: In view of the protest call given by the Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL), the authorities on Friday imposed partial restrictions in Srinagar parts.

The JRL comprising of Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Muhammad Yasin Malik had called for protests today against the US President Donald Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Officials said that the partial restrictions were today imposed in Srinagar parts including Nowhatta, Mahraj Gunj and Safa Kadal areas to thwart any possible protest against the US decision.

According to the KNS correspondent, authorities also barred the Friday congregational prayers at the historic Jamia Masjid today.

"The forces deployed in the area didn't allow us to offer the mandatory congregational prayers at the Jamia Masjid," the locals said.

Meanwhile, in view of the protest call, the Hurriyat Conference (M) chairman and Jamia Masjid head



cleric, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq was placed under house detention on Thursday evening.

Mirwaiz termed the restrictions imposed in Srinagar areas as 'Shameful Operating Procedure (SOP)'.

The Mirwaiz said that the 'authoritarian regime' has once again resorted to SOP and disallowed Friday congregational prayers.

"Muslims were barred to express their resentment against the US deci-

sion on Jerusalem issue," he said.

"Once again the authoritarian regime has resorted to its SOP #ShamefulOperatingProcedure of imposing restrictions and disallowing Muslims by force from offerings Friday prayers at #JamaMasjd and peacefully expressing their resentment against the US decision on #AQuadsAlSharief," Mirwaiz wrote on Twitter.

Meanwhile, the protest against the trump's decision was carried out

at various places in Kashmir including Zadibal, Hassnabad, Maisuma and Budgam during which the people raised slogans against Donald Trump, US and Israel.

The protest in Srinagar was carried out by JKLF leaders and activists.

JKLF leaders and activists including Noor Muhammad Kalwal, Muhammad Yasin Butt, Zahoor Ahmad Butt, Sheikh Abdul Rashid, Bashir Ahmad Kashmiri, Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, Ashraf bin Salam, professor Javed, Ghulam Muhammad Dar, Muhammad Haneeff and others along with other people gathered at Madina Chowk near Lal Chowk.

Displaying placards depicting slogans in favor of Palestinian people and against US move, and raising slogans against US decision of declaring Jerusalem as capital of Israel, protesters marched towards Budshah Chowk Lal Chowk where they sat on a peaceful sit-in.

The Sit-in was addressed by various JKLF leaders.

At other places in the Valley, the

▶ See **Protests...**Pg 02

## Div Com holds emergency meet to end Medico-Civil Admin. strife

Doctors had earlier threatened valley wide strike against SDM Zainapora

Srinagar, Dec 08: In a bid to pacify the escalating confrontation between the medics and state's civil administration, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir held a detailed meeting with the doctors and SDM Zainapora to avert any strike call issued by medics in near future.

The doctors had earlier threatened Valley Wide strike call if action is not taken by the government against SDM Zainapora who according to them misbehaved and used 'unofficial' language with the hospital staff during one of his visits to the sub-district hospital of the area. On the other hand, SDM Zainapora had refuted the allegations against him stating that he didn't mis-behave with anyone in the hospital.

Meanwhile, Director Health Services Kashmir Dr Saleem-ur-Rahman told KNS that he had written a detailed letter to the government asking it to resolve the issue in an amicable way. "Misbehaviour with the doctors is unacceptable. We need to nurture this fraternity that has been disc arching its duty with more professionalism and integrity," Dr Saleem told KNS, adding that he however wouldn't want the doctors to go on



strike and rather ways and means should be found to resolve the issue sans any delay.

Meanwhile, top government sources told KNS that a detailed meeting was chaired by the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir in his office here wherein the issue was discussed at threadbare. The confabulations, as per insiders, lasted for several hours and ways were discussed to end the crises amicably.

The aggrieved doctors had given 7 days time to the government to take against

▶ See **Div Com...**Pg 02

### POLICE ARREST CON FROM HANDWARA FOR PROVIDING FAKE JOB ORDERS TO PEOPLE

Handwara, Dec 8: Police in Handwara town of North Kashmir's Kupwara district have arrested a fraudster who duped dozens of people minted money from them after providing them fake job orders.

According to police the impostor namely Fayaz Ahmed (34), alias Zahoor, a resident of Vilgam Handwara used to pose as a government recruiting agent and giving people fake job offers from different government agencies including top officials of Police department.

"We arrested the cheater on a joint complaint filed by the victims that he grabbed money from them in the form of recruiting fee while all the job offers were fake," SDPO Handwara told CNS.

The accused is also a dismissed SPO who thought

▶ See **Police...**Pg 02

## Friday Following Eid-e-Milad observed across Valley

Srinagar, Dec 8, CNS: Amid restrictions in parts of old Srinagar city, thousands of devotees across Kashmir thronged the Hazratbal Shrine here on the Friday following Eid-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) to have glimpses of the Holy relic.

While the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was observed last Friday, devotees in the Valley also observe Friday following Eid-e-Milad with fervor. The Milad celebrations started on



1st Rabi-ul-Aawal of the Islamic calendar in Kashmir

and ended on Friday

While religious congregations were held at different shrines across the Valley, the main gathering was at Hazratbal shrine here that houses the Holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The holy relic was displayed after each prayer at the shrine, while as the religious heads threw light on the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) during the Friday sermon.

Officials said the

▶ See **Friday...**Pg 02

### PDD FORGETS ISSUING CURTAILMENT SCHEDULE THIS WINTER

People rue erratic supplies, Govt. says no power available

Srinagar, Dec 08: As Kashmir Valley reels under darkness due to the erratic power supplies all across, the PDD seems to be deep slumber preferring not to even make this year's curtailment schedule public.

In Urban as well as in rural areas of Kashmir Valley, common masses are ruing over the erratic power supplies and are up in arms against state's power department for massive load shedding amid the bone chilling cold at present.

▶ See **PDD...**Pg 02

## Stop encouraging crony-capitalism: NC to State Govt

'Institutions should not become economic wings of PDP'

Srinagar, Dec 08: National Conference on Friday expressed disappointment at the continued apathy of the State Government towards young entrepreneurs of the State and said the Government's arrogance and shameless patronage to crony capitalism was pushing thousands of young entrepreneurs against the wall. NC State Spokesperson Junaid Azim Mattu met a delegation of young entrepreneurs who called on him on Friday and said there was a pervasive atmosphere of crony-capitalism engulfing the State's economy as public institutions had practically become economic wings of the PDP.



"A young entrepreneur takes on unimaginable risks in a strife-torn State like J&K to add economic value and jobs in the system."

▶ See **NC...**Pg 02

### SMC COMMISSIONER REVIEWS ARRANGEMENTS FOR SNOW CLEARANCE

Says 4,000 officials, 16 loaders, 4 JCBS on stand by

Srinagar, Dec 08: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Commissioner, Riyaz Wani today took stock of the preparedness in the wake of forecast of snowfall.

The Commissioner reviewed the arrangements made for snow clearance. He expressed satisfaction over adequate preparedness.

The SMC has put men and machinery including six sucker machines and dewatering pumps for water logged areas on a standby to tackle any situation arising out of the snowfall, including dewatering.

Around 4,000 officials will be pressed into service

▶ See **SMC...**Pg 02

## Specially abled students meet CM

Mehbooba announces grant of Rs. 10 lacs for their welfare



Jammu, Dec 08: A group of specially abled students called on the Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti here today.

The students were part of various sporting events being organised these days by

▶ See **CM...**Pg 02

### PATIENTS SUFFER AS SDH TANGDAR FACES ACUTE SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS, PARAMEDICS

Wrote to higher ups, they didn't respond: BMO

Srinagar, Dec 08: The lack of doctors and paramedical staff at Sub District Hospital (SDH) Tangdar has come under severe criticism with the patients as well as their attendants, alleging it to be a reason of immense hardships.

According to KNS correspondent, Peerzada Aadil, the patients and their attendants said that the lack of doctors at SDH is putting their lives at risk.

They said that a few doctors remain present in the SDH to tackle the huge rush of patients.

Officials said that at least 27 doctors were posted at SDH Tangdar but 20 among them didn't join their duties here and managed to get posted at other place.

▶ See **Patients...**Pg 02

## People of Jammu and Kashmir worst sufferers of India-Pak confrontation: Bhat

Speaks at New Delhi seminar

Delhi, Dec 08: Senior PDP leader Nizamuddin Bhat said that friendship and understanding between India and Pakistan is an imperative for resolution of mutual issues and success of peace process in the region.

Speaking at a seminar organised at India International Centre, New Delhi by an NGO headed by prominent peace worker O.P Shah, Bhat said people of Jammu and



Kashmir have been worst sufferers of Indo-Pak confrontation

tion and the two countries cannot live in perpetual uncertainty and enmosity.

He sought the support of the participants from the two countries including politicians, journalists and peace workers from Kashmir to build an opinion in support of peace moves and building of a platform for engagement aimed at reconciliation and resolution.

▶ See **Bhat...**Pg 02

### HEALTH DEPT FAILS TO CONTROL DRUG ADDICTION IN STATE: CSFK

Says officials acting as mute spectator

Srinagar, Dec 08: Civil Society Forum Kashmir (CSFK) Friday expressed anguish and sorrow over the failure of Health Dept't in controlling drug addiction in J&K State.

"All the three regions Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh are suffering to the maximum, thousands of lives are getting wasted yet health Dep't is just a mute spectator," CSFK said in a statement issued to KNS.

The CSFK said that the pattern of drug addiction in J&K State is that an addict starts with psychotropic medicines like Corex, codeine and capsules and eventually reaches to the level of using heroine.

▶ See **CSFK...**Pg 02

# GOVT TO ESTABLISH DE-ADDICTION CENTRES IN ALL DISTT HOSPITALS: BALI

Hands over modern ambulance worth Rs. 14L to SDH, Sunderbani

RAJOURI, DECEMBER 08 - Minister for Health and Medical Education Bali Bhagat today said the government will establish de-addiction centres in all District Hospitals across the state within next two months.

While interacting with prominent civil society members, the Minister said that the hospitals in all districts will be provided with requisite equipments and technicians for carrying out dialysis at district level.

MLA Rajouri Qammar Hussain Chowdhary was also present on the occasion. Prominent members from Thana Mandi, Kalakote, Darhal, Koteranka, Kurliyan, Manjakote, Doongi, Nowshera, Choudhary Nar, Dassal, Lamberi and other areas met the Minister and apprised him about various issues pertaining to Health, PHE, PDD, Social Welfare and PWD (R&B).

The locals sought upgradation of Urban Health Centre, Sub-Centre Jawahar Nagar to NTPHC, CHC Thana Mandi and Kalakote to Sub-District Hospitals, renovation of District Hospital, Drug De-addiction Centre, dearth of staff and ambulances in health institutions, Trauma Hospital, mobiles units for nomads and completion of buildings of health centres.

The Minister directed the CMO to establish a Health Sub-Centre at Kurliyan within a week, besides formulating proposal for upgradation of UHC Rajouri and Sub-Centre Jawa-



har Nagar to NTPHC and establishment of PHC at Doongi Brahmana.

While responding to the demand of establishment of drug de-addiction centre, the Minister informed that the government will establish such centres in each district hospital of the state in next two months. He expressed concern over increasing incidences of drug abuse in the state and called upon the civil society members to contribute in saving the youth from this menace. He asked them to formulate Mohalla Committees to monitor and report the cases of drug abuses.

Assistant Drug Controller was directed to conduct inspections of supply records of the chemists to keep a check on the drug abuse whereas SSP was directed to take stringent action against habitual offenders under NDPS Act.

While impressing upon the concerned to prescribe only generic medicines, the Minister said the Prescription Audit Committee constituted by the government will carry out audit of all health institutions in the district once in six months and stringent action will be taken against the errant doctors for not prescribing

as per guidelines.

He also passed directions for preparing DPRs for filtration plants at Rajouri and Thana Mandi to ensure clean drinking water supply.

Director Health Jammu Dr. Gurjeet Singh, SSP Yougal Manhas, ADC A.V Chib, ACD Noor Aalam, DSWO Dr. Abdul Khair, AD FCS&CA Javid Iqbal, CMO Suresh Gupta, Deputy CMO Dr. Anees, district officers and all BMOs were present on the occasion.

Earlier, the Minister paid a surprise visit to SDH, Sunderbani and inspected the ongoing work of additional 50-bedded Block in the premises of the hospital. He asked the executing agency to execute the work in a time bound manner. He also handed over modern ambulance worth Rs. 14 lakh to SDH, Sunderbani.

During the visit, he also interacted with patients and assured them that the government will provide all basic amenities in the districts so that the people get healthcare facilities at their doorsteps. He also informed the patients about new initiative i.e "Free Diagnostic Tests" across all state government run hospitals.

A deputation of Hathal also met the Minister and apprised about their demand for New Ambulance at NTPHC, Hathal. He gave on spot directions to Director Health Services Jammu to provide new ambulance for NTPHC Hathal by replacing the old one.

# ADC CHAIRS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS MEET

POONCH, DECEMBER 08 - Additional Deputy Commissioner, Poonch Dr. Bashrat Hussain Inqlabi today chaired a meeting of officers of different departments to discuss the Disaster Response Management and overall preparedness to tackle the situation in view of the western disturbances which are likely to hit the state ahead.

The ADC, while chairing the meeting, directed concerned departments for prompt response during emergency like situations so that post disaster measures can be carried out effectively.

He called upon DDMA for establishment of permanent cell at the district Headquarters which shall liaise/coordinate with sub division Headquarters, Tehsil Headquarters and police control rooms round the clock in case of any emergency like situation so that damages can be minimized.

The meeting was informed that two vul-

nerable snow bound spots including Mughal road and adjoining villages in Buzliaz and area of Loran and Swajian in Mandi needs utmost attention.

The ADC said that these areas would be accorded top priority so far as snow clearance, availability of ration, drinking water, power restoration and other rescue operations are concerned. He directed the concerned to keep their men and machinery in a state of readiness in coming days.

Meanwhile, he also directed Fire and Emergency Department for prompt action in case of any emergence of fire and asked ADC for effective communication and coordination among all stakeholders during emergency.

The meeting was attended by Deputy SP Hqrs Shahid Nayim, EO Municipality, AD FCS&CA, Tehsildars, AEEs R&B, PDD and I&FC, besides officers and officials of DDMA, civil defence & fire and emergency services.

# CHIEF MINISTER MEETS GOVERNOR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 8: Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti met Governor N.N. Vohra at the Raj Bhavan here today. During the hour-long meeting, Chief Minister informed the Governor about her recent district wise tours in the Valley, issues relating to growth and development, internal and external security situation, rural and urban local body elections and other important matters. She



also briefed the Governor about the tentative schedule of the Budget Session in 2018.

Governor stressed the vital importance of ensuring the transparent and account-

able functioning of the administrative system, eradication of inefficient and corrupt elements and early establishment of urban and grass root democratic institutions.

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## PROTESTS

protesters were seen holding placards reading anti-US and Israel slogans.

The people of the Valley condemned the US decision and asked Muslim countries to forge unity and ask UN to intervene into the matter.

## DIV COM

the SDM in question otherwise they would be forced to go for a Valley wide strike.

Pertinently, Doctors and paramedics are holding protests, wearing black badges around their arms against the alleged misbehaviour of SDM Zainapora with a consultant surgeon on Saturday, last week, at CHC Zainapora, Shopian.

The call for protest was given by Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) led by Dr Suhail Naik and supported by J&K Doctors Coordination Committee, (JKDCC) - an amalgam of various doctors associations across the state.

In a statement, Dr Naik condemned the "ill treatment" of the doctor by SDM and sought action against the SDM.

The doctors have threatened of pen down strike if no action is taken against the erring official.

The strike will be followed by intensified agitation programme the onus of which will lie exclusively on government, he said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the convener JKDCC Dr M Yousuf Tak supported the stand of DAK and stressed upon authorities to take immediate action in the matter failing which the health personnel has no choice but to launch a state wide agitation.

## ARREST

of this illegal innovative plan and duped the victims by dialing fake phone numbers, pretending to be a frequent visitor to the offices of higher officials.

"The irony is that the accused provided job letters to some people on Jammu Kashmir Police Letter Heads even mentioning the names of top police officers with their fake signatures. When these police officers asked us to inquire the matter, everything became clear when we laid a trap and arrested the accused.

SSP Handwara Gulam Jeelani Wani confirmed the arrest of the accused. He said Manzoor Khan of Hygam Batapora Kupwara and Nazir Mir of Wasun Kupwara were his latest victims.

"The cheater has been booked and a formal case vide FIR number 387/17 under section 420, 467 RPC stands registered against him."

"Police Department requests the general public to remain cautious from such disguised cheaters and to abstain from such fraudulent activities," SSP Jeelani said.

## FRIDAY

congregational Friday prayers at Hazratbal shrine were joined by thousands of devotees that included children and women to catch the glimpse of the Holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The shrine, since Friday morning witnessed a huge rush of devotees from across the Valley.

Authorities had made special arrangements to facilitate movement of devotees to the shrine. Hundreds of private and SRTC vehicles ferried the devotees. Official sources said that besides transport, arrangements of power, drinking water, medical aid camps and sanitation were made for the convenience of people.

"A joint control room was also set up at Hazratbal for maintaining coordination between various departments engaged with the Milad celebrations," they said.

A police official said that around 5,000 Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) and 2000 Heavy Motor Vehicles (HMs) arrived in Hazratbal Friday, carrying devotees from different parts of the valley.

"We are thankful that the devotees followed the directions regarding the traffic plan," he said and added that the devotees kept visiting the shrine till late in the evening.

To cater to the heavy rush of devotees at the shrine, SSP

Traffic Srinagar city Tahir Saleem Khan on Thursday had issued a route plan for traffic movement leading to the Hazratbal shrine. They had requested devotees to abide by the route plan.

Besides Hazratbal, there were reports of congregational prayers from scores of areas of valley. Reports said that congregational prayers were also held at Asarisharif Kalashpora, Jenab Sahab Soura, Lal Bazar, Pinjoora Shopian, Khiram Sirhama in Anantnag, Seer Hamadan, Kaba Marg Qaimoh, Khanqah Faiz Panah Trial and Aham Sharief Bandipora in North Kashmir.

## PDD

More ironic is that contrary to its previous practise, the Power Development Department (PDD) hasn't till date made the curtailment schedule in metered and non-metered areas public. Earlier, PDD used to publish the curtailment schedule in local dailies of Kashmir Valley- informing its consumers about the timings of the power cuts in a week. However, this year, no such schedule has been drafted by the department.

Such is the plight of the PDD consumers that in metered areas, the load-shedding is witnessed for six hours every day and that is done three times on daily basis.

In non-metered areas, the supplies are as much erratic that people are subjected to day long and night long curtailments without any intimation. "Our children shiver during these cold nights and the electricity is nowhere visible in our area," says Altaf Ahmad hailing from south Kashmir's Pulwama.

People from the summer capital-Srinagar are also castigating the government over leaving them at the mercy of the turbulent situation soon after the annual Darbar Move.

Similar complaints are being received from Pattan, Kupwara, Uri, Hadwara, Ganderbal, Budgam, Kangan and several others.

The PDD has stated that there is no sufficient electricity available to put lid over the power paucity during winters in Valley. "The Kashmir Valley during winters need 1600 MWs of power but there are not even 1200 MWs available for distribution at present," a senior PDD official told KNS.

The power minister didn't pick any calls from this reporter.

## NC

First generation entrepreneurs who don't come from established business platforms and backgrounds are the engines of growth and deserve encouragement and facilitation from the system. Rather than being encouraged, these young entrepreneurs are being persecuted and humiliated in our government departments and institutions where a select list of crony capitalists close to the powers that be are calling the shots. There is open collusion between certain businessmen and the ruling dispensation and the Chief Minister is personally encouraging this collusion", the NC State Spokesperson said in a statement after meeting a delegation of young entrepreneurs from the Valley in Srinagar.

The NC State Spokesperson said there were brazen instances of collusion between some business houses, contractors and Ministers and leaders of the ruling dispensation and it was this system of collusion and crony-capitalism that was suffocating the local economy by cutting off credit to the unaffiliated, hardworking entrepreneur and depriving him of a fair and equal playing field.

"When it comes to an entrepreneur without any affiliation to the powers that be, he has to spend years in the vicious circle of the red-tape that has become a norm in our public institutions. On the contrary when it comes to the VIP list of businessmen and contractors supported by the Chief Minister and the political dispensation - our institutions bend their back backwards to extend every possible legitimate and illegitimate assistance and favour to them - most often than not in clear violation of laws, rules and merit. If the CM wants to patronize a system where entrepreneurs adding hundreds of jobs to our economy need to cower in fear and prostrate in

front of officers and leaders of our financial institutions - then she should openly declare this State as an aristocratic oligarchy", Mattu added.

"Mehbooba Ji has created a system where an entrepreneur's worth is not defined by the financial fundamentals or value addition of his business to our economy but by the quality of his political 'sifarish' from Ministers and PDP leaders. For all the tall claims of the Finance Minister, he continues to be an accentuating factor in supporting an exclusive list of businessmen while being dismissive of those young first generation entrepreneurs who deserve nurturing, support and facilitation through a legitimate, objective approach. If the Finance Minister feels his three years as the Finance Minister of the State has left him cynical - as expressed by him recently, he should know that precise sentiment of disappointment and cynicism is shared by the State's entrepreneurs and business community as they too have been left cynical due to his failure to convert his stentorian, starched rhetoric into a positive result. Our economy continues to shrink as thousands of small businesses and startups are at the verge of closure. One hopes against hope the Chief Minister contributes more than theatrics and photo-op events and devises economic initiatives to help our young entrepreneurs and not just a few business houses who are in collusion with her party and Ministers", the NC Spokesperson added.

"Contracts in various departments worth crores have been handed out to proxies of the PDP and close associates of the Chief Minister and there are numerous well-substantiated complaints of some sort of a political filter being used at our financial institutions where our widows, destitute, pensioners and employees deposit every penny of their hard earned salaries and savings. The Government should stop this brazen crony capitalism forthwith and initiate an inquiry into these dealings which could quite possibly collectively amount to thousands of crores - from which kickbacks could have gone up to the highest echelons of power in this Government. I have met some entrepreneurs who have handed over tangible and shocking proofs of this collusion", the NC State Spokesperson said in the statement.

## SMC

for manual clearance. Besides, 16 loaders and 04 JCBs will be made available for clearance of lanes and by-lanes.

The review meeting was attended by all concerned officers of the SMC.

The meeting decided to set up a Snow Control room, headed by Secretary of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation. Besides, a sub-control room will be headed by Chief Sanitation Officer of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

In case of any help, the general public can get in touch with the officers concerned.

These officials are Hilal Ahmad Deewani, Secretary SMC/ Head of Control Room 9419077007, Sofi Muhammad Akbar, Chief Sanitation Officer SMC 9906888105, Fehmeeda, Sanitation Officer East Zone (Ward No. 01 to 09) 9797192923, Issar Ahmad Bhat, Sanitation Officer North Zone (Ward No. 10 to 17) 9419552093, Abdul Ahad Rather, Sanitation Officer West Zone (Ward No. 18 to 27) 9419018259 and Syed Aijaz Hussain, Sanitation Officer South Zone (Ward No. 28 to 35) 9622744826.

## CM

J&K State Sports Council.

These children have participated in various events like mountain expedition and trekking under the auspices of the Council.

The Chief Minister expressed happiness on meeting these children and accepted their request to spend some time with them at their schools. She announced a grant of Rs. 10 lacs for upgrading facilities for these children adding that whatever required would be done by her Government for their welfare.

The Chief Minister also distributed prizes among these students on the occasion.

Secretary, J&K State Sports Council, Waheed ur Rehman Parra and other officials were present on the occasion.

## PATIENTS

"Out of 27 only seven doctors have joined their duties here while one among them has been sent to Primary Health Centre (PHC) Tetwal," they said.

Besides doctors, the paramedical staff at SDH Tangdar also didn't join their duties here. "At least 138 paramedics were posted here but only 74 joined their duties while the remaining 64 didn't," officials informed KNS.

The locals said that the lack of child specialist and eye specialist has added to the woes of patients. "We approached to the higher ups several times in this regard but unfortunately the sufferings of the locals didn't end," they said.

They said that Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti in her recent visit to the Valley promised upgradation of the health sector here but so far nothing has been done in this regard.

Block Medical Officer (BMO) Dr Muhammad Yousuf told KNS that he wrote to the higher ups several times in this regard. "The higher ups assured me several times but the promises are yet to be fulfilled," he said.

## BHAT

Bhat said in this process it is necessary that any initiatives taken at local levels are allowed to grow into sustainable exercise contributing to long-term understanding and civil action relationships.

Bhat said once that happens it will be easier for governments of India and Pakistan to reach a consensus on issues.

Bhat said two countries have squandered opportunities at the peril of the people of the region. "If they learn from mistakes they can emerge as a strong block and contribute to global peace and economy, besides giving their people a space to grow in free atmosphere," he said

Bhat said while scanner sections on both sides have to play a role in mitigating miseries and easing of tensions, onus is on two Governments to get together.

The participants in the seminar included former foreign minister of Pakistan Kasouri, Pakistan High Commissioner Suhail Mehmood, Mani Shankar Ayer, Kapil Kak, professor Saifuddin Soz, Kulkarni, prominent journalist Shujaat Bukhari, Asok Bhan, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami and Dr. Riyaz Punjabi, besides many other well known journalists and peace activists.

Kasouri while acknowledging that dialogue is must even as tensions or terrorism continues.

He observed that General Musharraf's four-point formula for resolution of Kashmir dispute offered hope.

He said the formula gets appreciation from peace lovers and what he called "deep state."

Kasouri's views were appreciated at the gathering by galaxy of speakers.

## CSFK

"If the health Dep't would have played a responsible role from beginning to control sale of such medicines over the counter and even in open markets, lots of lives could have been saved. But unfortunately health dep't continues its role as a mute spectator to the problems on our repeated request to health dep't. Since many years nothing prudential has been achieved," the statement said.

CSFK held health dep't completely responsible for the spread of drug abuse in J&K State.

They further demanded action against all those officials who are holding important chairs in health dep't and are acting just as mute spectators to this problem.

"Last six months have been catastrophic as there is a huge shift to use of heroine instead of psychotropic drugs. Heroine is one of most lethal drugs in the world yet our government is a mute spectator. Seventy patients are admitted in one hospital and eighty in other hospital who are addicted to heroin," they said.

CSFK further appealed government to save lives by controlling spread of drug abuse.

# Provide quality education, inculcate moral values in students: Altaf to teachers

Lal Singh urges parents to educate their wards for better future

KATHUA, DECEMBER 08 - Minister for Education, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari today asked the teaching fraternity to provide quality education and inculcate moral values in students so that they become responsible citizens of the country.

He said this while addressing the gathering during the Annual Day celebrations of Delhi Public School, Rajbagh here. The Education Minister was the chief guest while as Minister for Forests, Ecology and Environment Choudhary Lal Singh was the guest of honour in the function.

MLA Nowshera Ravinder Raina, Ex-MLA Kanta Andotra, Principal of the school Nirmal Mahna, Chief Conservator of Forests Farooq Gillani, Regional Director PCB Choudhary Showkat Ali, Regional Director Wildlife Sinthil Kumar besides students, prominent citizens, teaching and non-teaching staff members of the institution were present on the occasion.

In the function, several cultural programmes including skits, qawali, solo songs were presented by various groups of students which were highly appreciated by the audience.



The Minister appreciated the performance of the students and said that these functions provide a platform to students where they can showcase their talent. He said that the students of DPS Rajbagh are very talented and they have proved their mettle at national as well as international levels.

He further said that a place like J&K which has been a source of inspiration for knowledge in the entire sub-continent has to be revived as a hub of emancipation for our future generations.

The Minister also hailed the contribution of DPS Rajbagh for supplementing the government's efforts towards the improvement of education scenario in the state.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Forests, Ecology and Environment Choudhary Lal Singh said that the government has taken various initiatives to revive education sector across the State and is upgrading infrastructure in various schools so that students get benefitted.

He further said that it is firm com-

mitment of the government to ensure that this vital sector gets a fillip in all aspects as it forms the basis of a strong nation. He exhorted upon the school authorities to make sure that their institution serves as a vibrant center of excellence.

The Ministers also gave away the academic prizes, scholar badges and prizes to the meritorious students of the school. Earlier, Principal of the school, Nirmal Mahna presented the annual report highlighting the achievements of the current academic session.

# Panchayat Ghar Humhama to come up as state-of-art facility: Abdul Haq

Asks officials to expedite work on project, maintain quality

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 08: Minister for Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Law and Justice, Abdul Haq, today inspected the ongoing construction work of Panchayat Ghar cum Common Facilitation Centre (CFC) at Humhama in Budgam district and stressed on the officers to maintain quality while executing the works.

The Minister directed the executing agency, Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC), to expedite the work on the project to complete it within the specified deadline. The building is expected to be completed in June next year. The Minister said the building would be state-of-the-art equipped with all modern facilities available in the building for organising meetings, social gatherings and other conferences.

The Minister was accompanied by Director Rural Development Kashmir, General Manager JKPCC, ACD Budgam and other senior officers of the district. The Panchayat Bhawan-cum-CFC at Humhama is being constructed at a cost of Rs 9.28 crore under 13th Finance Commission award.

The officers informed the Minister that the Department has released Rs 8.95 crore to the executing agency and Rs 4.32 crore have been spent so far.

The officers of the JKPCC informed the



Minister that brick work on three-storeyed building has been completed while as 95 per cent of plaster work has also been completed. The work on truss, plumber related works inside and outside the building is in progress and will be completed soon. The work on the construction of auditorium is also going on.

Abdul Haq said the construction of Panchayat Bhawan is part of project 'CFC in every constituency' launched earlier last year and the building includes a Convention Hall having seating capacity of 150 persons, two VIP Rooms, eight Guest Rooms, an auditorium, pantry and a dining hall, besides car parking.

He said the building will become an asset for the area as it will serve as a multipurpose centre and would be beneficial for the people in rural areas in catering to their social gatherings, get together, discussion forum.

# Kavinder Gupta visits interiors of Bahu Fort area

Assures early action for upgradation of public infra

JAMMU, DECEMBER 08 - Speaker, Legislative Assembly and MLA Gandhi Nagar Kavinder Gupta today conducted an extensive visit to the interiors of Bahu Fort area, ward no 47, 48 and reviewed the status of public amenities available to the public.

During the visit, the Speaker visited various localities including Kacha Talab, Pakka Talab, Masha Mohalla, Gujjar Basti, Central mohalla, Gorakh Nagar, Sheikh Nagar, Press Morh and adjoining areas. He was accompanied by senior officers and officials of PHE, PWD, JMC, allied departments.

Taking note of necessary interventions required to upgrade the basic infrastructure in the locality including constructions of lanes, drains, roads, drinking water and other concerned departments.

Speaking to the people, Kavinder Gupta informed the locals that detailed project



reports are being prepared for execution of all these works. He said that a carefully calculated plan is being chalked out for phase by phase public infrastructure development of the area. The execution of these projects will be meticulously carried out in a phased and time-bound manner, he added.

Kavinder said that during the first phase of works, drainage across localities would be constructed/upgraded to meet the requirements of the local populace. During this phase, extensive sanitation measures will be taken to remove block-

ages/blockades in the drainage network and Phase-II will comprise of blacktopping/tiling in accordance with the feasibility study reports, he stressed. For his, he directed the concerned agencies to conduct detailed feasibility report in accordance with the topography, other factors to ensure durability, longevity of the works being undertaken.

He further said that these works will be executed on a war footing with special attention on the quality of works.

Taking note of poor cleanliness observed in these localities, the Speaker directed

JMC to maintain adequate sanitation, regular lifting of garbage, removal of solid waste from drainages etc. Responding to the reports received from locals regarding frequent absence of safai karamcharis in the area, the Speaker directed the JMC to monitor their attendance, performance on ground.

He also urged JMC, PWD, PHE, other departments to regularly interact with locals, local representatives to gauge the on ground performance of their respective departments and to keep channels of communication open for public.

# Govt committed to double farmers' income by 2022: Ganga

JAMMU, DECEMBER 08

- Reiterating the government's commitment to double farmers' income by 2022, Minister for Industries and Commerce Chander Parkash Ganga said the farmers are being encouraged to use all modern methods and steps are being taken to ensure that farmers get best possible facilities, be it seeds or fertilizers. The Minister was speaking during a special outreach programme on agriculture related schemes initiated by centre and state government. The programme was organized by Directorate of Field Publicity, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India (JK Region) at Jatwal in Samba.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said that identifying the strength of soil is the first step towards increasing its fertility. "The government has initiated many steps



to educate the farmers about modern techniques in farming to increase the farm production which will ultimately lead to doubling their income" he added.

He further said the government has introduced Soil Health Card to help farmers ascertain their soil nutrient content. The government has

also launched several schemes like Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Soil Health Card scheme, neem-coated urea and electronic national agriculture market (e-NAM) to achieve the target of doubling farmers' income.

The Minister asserted that there is a need to conserve water, incentivize agro-processing and promote balanced use of fertilizers in order to ensure higher agriculture productivity. There is need for better storage and marketing facilities for the farmers' produce so that they get better prices, he added. Additional Director General, DFP, MO I&B R.P. Saroj, Chief Agriculture Officer Samba, Narinder Mishra, Vice Chairman JK Advisory Board for OBC Rashpal Verma, MLA Hiranagar Kuldeep Raj, Publicity Officer, DFP, MO I&B Gulshan Raina, SDM Ghagwal Narayan Dutt, ADC Samba Tilak Raj and a large number of farmers were present on the occasion.

# Steps afoot for holistic development of Kargil: Haji Anayat

KARGIL, DECEMBER 08:- Chairman Legislative Council Haji Anayat Ali today said that the present dispensation is making sincere and concerted efforts for the progress and prosperity of Kargil district, and work is being done efficiently to move the district further.

The Chairman stated this while interacting with a number of public deputations during his extensive visit of Sankoo and Suru blocks of the district here today.

The Chairman said developmental projects are being executed in all blocks to ensure composite development of the district as a whole, besides schemes worth crores of rupees are undertaken on priority basis in less developed and unattended areas.

Acknowledging the need for collective and overall development of the district to realize its full developmental potential, the Chairman assured people concerted initiatives by the State Government to accelerate the region's progress. The Chairman said that the economy of the district will grow only when it is ensured that provision of basic amenities such as education, health, water and roads for the people is made available at their doorsteps and the Government is keenly pursuing this goal.

Haji Anayat said that the provision of basic amenities to all, particularly those living in far flung and hilly areas is the priority of the Government. He said that a massive development plan has been formulated to achieve it so as to facilitate people across the district.

The Chairman said that seven major projects involving construction of motorable and span bridges, im-



provement and upgradation of roads and other related works under CRF and NABARD is in full swing at a cost of Rs 108 crore. He further informed that the projects worth Rs 506 crore for construction, macadamization, improvement, blacktopping and upgradation of roads under the same schemes stand submitted to the government for sanctioning.

Referring to road projects under PMGSY, Haji Anayat said that work on 15 schemes is underway involving a cost of Rs 88 crore, besides for the upgradation of 22 roads projects at a cost of Rs 227 crore have been submitted and are waiting for the approval.

The Chairman said that a number of imambaras, shrines, gompas and other ancient religious relics in the Suru Valley and other areas shall be developed under the development of Buddhist and Sufi Circuit scheme under PMDP. The scheme, he added also includes shrine of Islamic missionary Syed Mir Hashim at Karpo Khar and the historical mosque nearby, shrine of Sheikh Hamza at

Faroon, shrine at Khaos Panikhar, and the Imambaras at Suru and Tikat.

Haji Anayat said that several steps are being taken up by the Government for expediting transport infrastructure development works to make Suru Valley conveniently accessible to tourists and pilgrims of the Amarnath Yatra. He said adding that a comprehensive project to popularize the areas including Shapath Nallah, Maitreya Buddhist Statue at Karpokhar, Nun Kun peaks and other scenic spots in the valley is under pipeline. The Chairman said that a helipad besides huts and cafeteria shall be constructed at Shapath Nallah so as to enable tourists to have an aerial view of the area. The Chairman said that the Government is also in the process of exploring possibilities for the construction of Kishtwar-Panikhar-Kargil Road to give boost to tourism in the area and to facilitate Amarnath Yatra through the route.

The Chairman said that under KREDA, DPR preparation of 12 small hydro projects of 23.5 MW capacity

worth Rs 230 crore are under process, work on which is expected to be kick started by August-September, 2018.

The Chairman said that the completion of these projects would usher in a new era of unprecedented progress and development in the district.

Meanwhile, the people delegations put forth a number of grievances and demands which included the establishment of Degree College, Tehsil Information Center, Fire Service Station, Taxi and Mini Bus Stand and Solar Power Plant at Sankoo, opening up of tailoring centers for ladies, relocation of HT lines, construction of community halls, up gradation of schools and health centers, construction of snow and flood protection bunds, deployment of doctors and paramedics in sufficient numbers, funds for compound walling of community halls and other related demands.

The Chairman assured the delegations that all their genuine demands would be considered on priority and steps for fulfillment would be taken in a phased manner.

He assured locals of providing funds out of his CDF for purchase of sewing machines and other requisite necessities for women SHGs in the area, construction of the compound walling of community hall at Printee Panikhar, besides the execution of other development works and provision of basic amenities.

While assuring the peoples delegation to ensure smooth provision of all basic amenities to them during winter months, the Chairman said that the concerned officers have already been directed to take requisite steps in this regard.

# Chief Secretary visits IIT Jammu, inspects ongoing construction work

JAMMU, DECEMBER 08 -

Chief Secretary, B.B Vyas today visited the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Jammu campus and inspected the progress of ongoing construction works at Jagti in Nagrota. Divisional Commissioner, Jammu Dr Mandeeep Kumar Bhandari, Deputy Commissioner, Jammu Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B), Additional Deputy Commissioner, ACR, Jammu, OSD, IIT Jammu Commodore, SEs besides senior officers from police and civil administration were present on the occasion.

During his visit, the Chief Secretary was informed that the construction work on various sections of the campus is in full swing and would be completed at the earliest. It was further informed that at present, 200 students are studying in IIT, Jammu and the institute offers four streams including Electrical, Mechanical, Civil and Computer Science.

The Chief Secretary also inspected the



works on Academic block, boys and girls hostel and other wings of the campus.

Reviewing the progress of works, he directed the concerned departments to work with utmost zeal and dedication to ensure timely completion of the project.

While inspecting the construction work of 8.5 km boundary wall of the campus, B.B Vyas directed the executing agency to expedite the work and complete the same by ending February, 2018. The Chief Secretary also visited the site for establishment of Indian Institute of Management in Nagrota and directed Deputy Commissioner, Jammu to expedite the demarcation of the land to start the work at the earliest.

# DSEK directs for sealing schools, private coaching centres violating winter vacation order

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER

08 - Directorate of School Education, Kashmir (DSEK) today conducted surprise visit of some private schools and issued instructions to seal all schools/private coaching centres that are running their activities in violation of the winter vacation orders issued by the government.

Responding to a number of complaints received from

parents, DSEK constituted a special team that visited various schools including Doon International School where it was found that full academic activities including that of lower primary classes are being run by the school in violation of the order.

Taking serious view of the matter, DSEK directed the CEO, Srinagar to initiate

action against Doon International School for violating the orders.

It also instructed CEOs to initiate action against un-registered private schools/coaching centres without delay, besides sealing schools/private coaching centres existing in their jurisdiction who have failed to publish their fee details/faculty details as required under law.

**Time and Us** Editorial

**UNWAVERING CAUTION — ON RBI HOLDING REPO RATE**

For the Reserve Bank of India there is just one economic indicator that dominates its policymaking calculus: price stability. With inflation-targeting as its main mandate — the consensus position that was articulated when the RBI Act was amended in May 2016 was that “price stability is a necessary precondition to sustainable growth” — the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has opted yet again to keep interest rates unchanged. It is not hard to follow the rationale. Price gains as measured by the Consumer Price Index had accelerated to a seven-month high in October and the RBI’s survey of household expectations for inflation over both the three-month and one-year horizons showed a “firming up”. The RBI’s bimonthly policy statement also spelt out the data points and trends that informed its decision-making. For one, the moderation in core inflation in the first fiscal quarter has largely reversed. Price gains excluding the volatile food and fuel categories are particularly at risk from “the staggered impact of HRA increases by various State governments” that could push up housing inflation in 2018 and generate second-order ripples. Given India’s reliance on imports for a bulk of its fuel needs, the latest OPEC decision to maintain output cuts to keep global crude oil prices from softening can hardly provide much comfort.

Taking into account all factors, including some that may lend respite, such as the wide-ranging cuts to the goods and services tax rate, the RBI raised its estimate for inflation over the third and fourth fiscal quarters by 10 basis points from its October projection: headline CPI inflation is now expected to accelerate and range between 4.3% and 4.7% in the second half. The MPC is, however, more confident about the prospects for growth, concerns over higher oil prices and shortfalls in kharif crop output and rabi season sowing notwithstanding. The Centre’s move to recapitalise public sector banks has won a vote of confidence from monetary policymakers for its potential to revive credit flows. Buttressing the confidence in the economy are the findings in the RBI’s survey, which posit an improvement in demand in the services and infrastructure sectors and an uptick in the overall business environment in the January-March quarter. Ultimately, though, the central bank has once again proffered a word of circumspection to fiscal authorities: taken together, the farm loan waivers implemented by some States, the partial reduction of excise duty and VAT on petroleum products and the GST rate cuts could result in fiscal slippage with accompanying consequences for price stability. For the RBI, caution continues to remain its credo.

**AS WE WERE FLUMMOXED BY THE UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR, WE WERE DULY INFORMED BY THE INSURANCE TEAM THAT THERE WAS SOME CONFUSION IN REGARD TO A CHANGE FROM THE INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF CONSERVATIVE TREATMENT TO SURGICAL ALTHOUGH ALL DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE WAS IN FAVOUR OF THE LATTER. SOME OF THE QUESTIONS PUT FORTH WERE, WAS MR X FIRST DIAGNOSED WITH THE DISEASE, WAS HE DIAGNOSED WITH EARLY-STAGE OR LATE-STAGE DISEASE? WHY WAS IT PLANNED AS A CONSERVATIVE PROCEDURE AT THE EARLIER STAGE?**

# Medical insurance challenges

There is a raging debate over health insurance and its impact and coverage. These insurance plans cover a finite list of diseases, which are tapered to the convenience of the insurance companies, given the limitations.

Since the time when the physician or general practitioner would carry his big shiny brown bag, the epitomé of bourgeois respectability, to do a home visit for the sick, to the present day of insurance first, treatment later, things have truly evolved on the medical care front.

**A LONG NIGHT**

My first-hand

experience with the health insurance started one such day when a loved one needed emergency surgery and was admitted to hospital. As he was insured, we had assumed it would be a smooth and a hassle-free ride.

No sooner had the thought crossed our mind than reality hit. While the initial process was a quick one, faster than I could procure my belongings, the final proceedings were extremely long and laborious.

During the course of the hospital stay, news of the progression of the disease from hopelessness to relief turned out to be the biggest discovery that cleared our doubts.

Amidst all this, to our amusement, we were periodically visited by a member of the insurance team with an ironic ‘get-well-soon’ card, like an intelligently cloaked insult.

On the day of discharge after a long and emotional stay, as we packed our bags and waited for what should have been a few hours, got dragged into an entire night.

As we were flummoxed by the unusual behaviour, we were duly informed

by the insurance team that there was some confusion in regard to a change from the initial assessment of conservative

treatment to surgical although all documentary evidence was in favour of the latter. Some of the questions put forth were, was Mr X first diagnosed with the disease, was he diagnosed with early-stage or late-stage disease? Why was it planned as a conservative procedure at the earlier stage?

**VOICE OF REASON**

Now, as the health condition looks different with regard to each person, one cannot predict the nature or course of a disease or condition. As a surgeon, I can comprehend the reasons behind these decisions, while the insurance company only showed ambivalence with regard to the second decision. What matters to them is how the disease correlates to their insurance status and so their treatment varies.

As the night crawled away, while Mr X awaited his discharge after what had been a long week of emotional and physical upheavals, the rest were skirting

across the floors to get a response from the insurance team. Oblivious to the mental stress caused, the team seemed to be moving at a snail’s pace and after an extended clarification cleared the discharge. There are countless stories such as this affecting people on a daily basis where the complicated interaction with the insurance company comes to the fore.

**ORIGINS**

Not all health insur-

ance is created equal. In India it is broadly divided between the rich and the poor. The government-sponsored health insurance programmes were designed to protect those who were vulnerable to impoverishment as a result of expensive hospital care. And so various schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana, the Employees’ State Insurance and Yashaswini were created.

With the liberalisation of the Indian economy, various private insurance companies made a push to tap into the large Indian market. Numerous plans were being dished out, and the options, as well as the premium rates kept rising.

Although we have the luxury to choose a plan, the process when one needs to use it is truly cumbersome.

Age waits for no one. Truly the one who needs the services most are the aged. Yet with a disease cap it is curtailing the basic care needed for them and causing discomfort to the family as a whole.

The next day, just as I sat musing among a stack of bills and trying to re-settle into my daily routine, I received a call from an insurance sales agent of the same group, spelling out excitedly the various benefits and uses for me of a policy. I grinned and informed him that he was knocking on the wrong age group.

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# UNPREDICTABILITY OF EXPECTATIONS

► K.A. Sumathi

“Are you thorough with all the lessons? Confident of getting a centum?”

I was taken aback when the student replied: “Am thorough with the ‘blueprint’ lessons. Out of 21 if I study 14 I will get centum.”

Alas! What do we teach them? Getting centum? Or knowing the subject? Whose fallacy is that? Whom should we blame? The system? The school? Society? Or the individual?

I recall my own school days. Neither the students nor the teachers discussed too much about the examination part. The planned timetable, though flexible, went on smoothly without any unnecessary changes. Teaching, the class environment, sports activities and extra-curricular activities were taken as serious issues and given equal importance, and examinations were a part of the curriculum plan.

Now, examinations occupy the whole of the plan. In my school

days I never saw a ‘blueprint’. Real learning can take place only in classrooms where each student contributes in one or the other way, directly or indirectly, towards learning the concepts. Having been groomed by the teachers of government schools in a village and in a small town in a pleasant way, today I am able to get through to children of 16-plus in a city school. What happened to this kind of infusion of confidence among children? Why do we stay behind marks and not at all behind quality? What should we immediately look into?

As teachers we also confront problems in class while teaching. When something is taught with the noble intention of making them get acquainted with it and when you go a little deep into it, they stop us saying it is not important enough to know, and the question won’t figure in the final examination.

In my younger days I heard that Tamil Nadu topped the charts in education. What is the status



today? We are way down in the list in spite of great hidden talents. Even now I rate the intelligence of students in Tamil Nadu very high! Due to the humdrum training for the examination-oriented system, they tend to lose the charm of learning and its applications.

The related move to be taken in this regard is to avoid granting centum in various subjects. Even if it is deliberately done, the standard of the individual is not disturbed in any way. The proportion will be maintained. The question paper should always be carefully crafted. Every question paper will be created with the average child in mind at any period of time. Hence, we are not doing any harm to any group of children by enhancing the standard of the question paper. As the question paper becomes tougher, the level of understanding and depth will go higher.

Unpredictability should be the hallmark of a question paper.

We now expect the so-called “expected questions” in various subjects. What happened to the old trend? Is this the kind of changes society and great scholars dream of?

Producing human machines and cowards cannot solve the nation’s problems. Education should focus on bringing forth good leaders and good citizens who can solve the problems of the nation, which are growing in this era. The present system puts on the younger generation great pressure, and encourages adoption of short-cut methods to accomplish things, and hence they are in a position where they find it difficult even to solve their own problems. It is high time we realised the situation and took steps to train and groom young minds so they come to use the accelerated positive potential of our nation.

Who is going to bell the cat?

*sumathi.arunachalam2@gmail.com*

# I care for farmers, not chair: PM Modi

BANASKANTHA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday asserted that he does not care for "the chair" and only wants to work for the farmers.

Addressing a rally here, the Prime Minister said, "When I had taken over as the Chief Minister (of Gujarat), farmers from Patan and Banaskantha met me and I told them

to focus on irrigation. People told me this approach will ensure you are defeated. I said - I do not care for the chair, I want to work for the farmers and want to work for Ban-

askantha, and Patan." The Prime Minister also said that Gujarat knows the difference between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress Party. He also point-

ed out that during Gujarat floods; it was the BJP that took up the relief work, while the Congress MLAs were relaxing in Bengaluru. "BJP leaders were providing

flood relief, whereas Congress leaders were relaxing in swimming pools in resorts in Bengaluru," Prime Minister Modi said. The polling for the two-phase

elections in the state will take place on December 9 and 14 and votes will be counted on December 18. The Gujarat Assembly has 182 seats.

## Aiyar 'ready to accept any punishment' Congress wants to give

NEW DELHI: Suspended Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar on Friday expressed remorse over the damage caused to the party's reputation due to his recent controversial remarks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said he was ready to accept any punishment handed to him.

"If any damage has been done to Congress because of what I said or did, then I am saddened by it. I had no such intention. I am ready to accept any punishment that the Congress party wants to give me," Aiyar told reporters here.

Owing to his comments' ramifications on the party's chances of victory in the upcoming Gujarat election, Aiyar said, "I am confident that under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, we will win Gujarat elections."

Yesterday, the political slugfest between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress Party reached a new low when Aiyar referred to Prime Minister Modi as a "neech aadmi" for appropriating Babasaheb Ambedkar into his election campaign for the imminent assembly polls in Gujarat.

Following the remark, Congress suspended Aiyar from primary membership of the party.

Later, the senior Congress leader said the word 'neech' holds different meanings and added he would want to apologise for the wrong translation.

"I meant a low-minded person when I said 'neech'. I tend to think in English when I speak in Hindi as Hindi is not my mother tongue. I never meant low-born. In English, there is a clear distinction between 'low' and 'low-born'. So if it has some other meaning or it means 'low-born' only, then I apologise for the wrong translation," he told media.

"He had, in January 2014, before the Modi-wave took the nation by surprise, said 'Modi would never become prime minister, but he was welcome to serve tea to Congressmen.'"

The BJP had then turned the Congress leader's attack into a campaign asset - "chai pe charcha".

To this end, Aiyar said he had never called the prime minister a 'Chaiwala', adding, "You can go on the internet and check all the videos."

## AAI official receives honorary fellowship award

NEW DELHI: Anuj Aggarwal, member (HR) of the Airports Authority of India (AAI), today received an Honorary Fellowship award from the Centre for Excellence in Project Management (CEPM) at the silver jubilee symposium. The award



was presented to Aggarwal by the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu, for the tremendous growth AAI has shown in recent months. Aggarwal believes it was the incorporation of the strong leadership, great ideas, efficient manpower and a project style execution, that has won him and his team this award. He said, "Since, India is into a growth trajectory and many of the transformations have to take place through a project mindset, each work has to be treated as a project. AAI is witnessing a tremendous growth and we are doing infrastructure development, manpower development and skill development." "We are doing it in a big way and all these things require a detailed planning in a project style. These are all to be done in a time-bound manner and proper

quality. This is what we are doing in AAI. Along with our team and the Ministry of Civil Aviation, we are doing large developments of the airports, infrastructure and manpower, in order to deal with these projects," Aggarwal said. Currently, India stands at seventh position among the largest global aviation markets. According to International Air Transport Association (IATA), India will displace Germany, Spain, Japan and the UK for the third place globally by 2023. "Once we are the third largest, we would be sort of a global leader and need to equip ourselves, both in terms of infrastructure, as well as manpower to be a world leader," Aggarwal added. India has taken giant strides in domestic civil aviation, with a growth rate of 21.5 percent per annum in the last two years. It is only behind the US and China in the race. The Airports Authority of India manages 125 airports, which include 18 international airports and 78 domestic airports. Many new airports are coming up, which will help to improve air connectivity in the future.

## SC adjourns plea against Nitish Kumar in murder case

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday adjourned a plea against Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar alleging that he did not disclose in his election affidavits about a First Information Report (FIR) against him in a murder case. Further hearing on this matter will be heard in the second week of January.

Earlier in July, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad Yadav alleged that Nitish Kumar is facing charges of murder in a case registered with Patna district's Pandarak police station.

Meanwhile, the ruling JD (U) retorted back at the RJD chief, saying, "Nitish Kumar is neither chargesheeted nor convicted in any case like Lalu who has been chargesheeted in some fraud case and also convicted in a fodder scam." "The murder case in which Nitish Kumar is one of the five accused persons is still pending before the Patna high court and it is in the judicial process. Nitish Kumar has already been declared 'dosh-mukt' (not guilty) in the police investigation and there is no adverse remark against the CM at any level of the judiciary," JD(U) senior and former minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh had told reporters while explaining the status of the murder case.

Giving details of the case, Singh said that a murder took place at Rally village under Pandarak police station area on November 16, 1991. An FIR was registered on November 17, 1991, in which five persons including Nitish were made named accused.

"After completing its investigation, police on January 31, 1993, filed charge-sheet against three accused persons and declared two other accused including Nitish as innocent", he added.

"On August 5, 2008, the ACJM court at Barh took cognizance against the three persons against whom charge-sheet was filed, and exonerated Nitish Kumar from the charges. One of the charge-sheeted persons Yogendra Yadav moved the Patna high court against the ACJM's order. The high court on April 22, 2009, ordered to stay 'further proceedings' in the case at the ACJM court," Singh said. Earlier on January 20, 2009; Ashok Kumar Singh, who was neither informer nor witness in the case, filed a protest petition in the court of the additional chief judicial magistrate (ACJM), Barh, and challenged declaration of Nitish as "dosh-mukt" (not guilty).

## Cong. respects the chair of PM, says Rahul Gandhi

UDAIPUR: Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi on Friday said his party respects Prime Minister Narendra Modi and therefore strict actions have been taken against Mani Shankar Aiyar.

Speaking at a public rally here, the senior Congress leader said, "the Congress respects the position held by the Prime Minister of India and by using the wrong words, nobody from the party can speak against him. Prime Minister Modi can say anything about us, that's why we took strong action against



Mani Shankar Aiyar".

However, continuing his attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Rahul added that the BJP has no manifesto prepared for the welfare of Gujarat.

"What BJP wants to do for you, they have not given you yet. The Manifesto has not been prepared. Whereas, Congress party within 10 days of winning the elections will make a policy for farmer loan waiver," he asserted.

Rahul confidently said the party is going to win the Assembly

elections in Gujarat.

"A storm is on its way," Rahul asserted.

Rahul today kick started the second phase of campaigning for Gujarat Assembly elections.

The first phase of campaigning ended yesterday evening where in BJP and Congress had launched no-holds-barred attacks on each other.

The two-phase Gujarat Assembly elections will take place on December 9 and 14, while the results will be out on December 18.

## 'Gujarat model' deceptive, claims Akhilesh

AHMEDABAD: Former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Akhilesh Yadav on Friday said the 'Gujarat model', as claimed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), does not exist and is a deception.

Speaking at a press conference here, "The truth has come out in this Assembly election that there is no such thing as the Gujarat model, the Gujarat model is a deception model. I have come here today to the people of Gujarat on the day before voting to advise them to not get deceived by the BJP".

He added BJP leaders say that they fight elections on the basis of development, "therefore, I decided that we should come see the 'Gujarat model'." "We made the metro in 2.5 years and an elevator road in Uttar Pradesh.

Pension was given to 55 lakh poor, but when we talked of development, BJP talked about caste and religion. They divided the people of Uttar Pradesh," Akhilesh said.

He further stated the Samajwadi Party provided electricity for 24 hours in the state, then the BJP said they will provide the same for '25' hours.

"Can somebody tell me are there 25 hours in a day? The BJP campaigns were based on lies," Akhilesh added.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister reached Ahmedabad on the day before the first round of Gujarat Assembly elections.

The two-phase Gujarat Assembly elections will take place on December 9 and 14, while the results will be out on December 18.

## Attacked for backing Hindutva: Swaminarayan Sect priest

JUNAGADH: The Swaminarayan Sect priest has said he was attacked because of speaking for nationalism and Hindutva.

Two unidentified assailants had attacked Bhaktiprasad Swami with iron rods on late Thursday night in Kotda village of Visavdar tehsil in Junagadh district when he was returning after campaigning for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Talking to ANI from hospital bed, Bhaktiprasad said, "The attackers were fumed because I propagate Hindutva and nationalism.

We are saints and if we won't speak on nationalism then will we speak on Pakistan? This attack is not only on me but on whole Hindu Sanatan sect."



He further added that "if being a nationalist is a crime then I would like to commit this crime time and

again". When asked about who was behind the attack on him, he didn't take the Congress party's name but

said, "This is election time and everybody knows who are against the BJP and Hindutva. But, I want to tell them that such attacks are not going to deter us from propagating Hindutva and nationalism." Recounting the attack on him, he said, "I was returning from conducting an election rally for the BJP. When we were going to Visavadar then all of sudden a car overtook and stopped in front of our car. By the time we could understand anything, the assailants smashed the windshield of our car with iron rod and started abusing us. When the passerby gathered there, the assailants fled the scene leaving behind their car." He said the police have taken his statement and promised to take strict action against the culprits.

## 'Will force SC verdict in favour of Ram temple'



RATLAM: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Tapan Bhowmik stirred a controversy on Friday by saying if the Supreme Court doesn't give a verdict in favour of Ram temple, then the apex body will be forced to pronounce a decision in support of Hindus.

While addressing a gathering here, Bhowmik said, "Ayodhya verdict will go in favour of Hindus. If it does not, we

will ensure it does. Hindus will do so. After this verdict, our people sitting in Lok Sabha will make rules; pass Bill to build a temple at the same spot".

If that does not happen, crores of Hindus will make that happen," he said.

Bhowmik was speaking in Ratlam town during an event to mark the release of a book titled "Kar Sewa Aankhon Dekhi", penned by journalist Tushar Kothari.

## Karti Chidambaram moves SC against CBI summon in Aircel-Maxis case

NEW DELHI: Karti Chidambaram, son of Congress leader P Chidambaram, on Friday moved Supreme Court challenging the summons issued by the CBI against him in the Aircel-Maxis deal case.

The top court said it will hear the matter in the second week of January. A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices AM Khanwilkar and DY Chandrachud asked Karti to serve the copy of the petition to the CBI counsel. During the brief hearing, special 2G case prosecutor Anand Grover complained to the bench that the CBI has taken the papers served to him by Karti.

Additional Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for CBI, said that Grover had nothing to do with the case as the probe agency was investigating the matter.

Grover said he is the court-appointed special prosecutor in the 2G spectrum case and needed a copy of the petition.

The bench asked the both the counsel to sort out the matter and deferred the hearing for second week of January.



The CBI had issued a summons in September to Karti asking him to appear before it for questioning on October 4 in the Aircel-Maxis case, which he has challenged.

The agency had earlier asked Karti to appear on September 14, but he had refused arguing that a special court had already discharged all the accused and terminated proceedings in the matter.

The CBI had contradicted the claim, saying the investigation was still on.

Karti had appeared before the CBI in another case related to the grant of FIPB clearance given to the INX Media at a time when his father was the Union finance minister.

## Amar Singh calls Aiyar 'habitual offender'

NEW DELHI: Rajya Sabha MP Amar Singh on Friday lashed out at suspended Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar's for his 'neech' against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while adding that the Congress veteran has insulted many politicians in the past including, former Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayalalitha and Union Minister Uma Bharti.

Singh while speaking with ANI Singh on Friday recalled an incident when he had a tiff with Aiyar.

"Iss desh ke anek neta Mani peedit hain, iss mein Uma Bharti ji, late Jayalalitha ji aur tamaam bade bade naam hain. Mai swayam bhi Mani peedit hoon (In this country many people have been troubled by Mani Shankar Aiyar. Aiyar has insulted many influential people like Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha. I too have had a sour experience with him )."

"Gujral saab (Satish Gujral, brother of former PM IK Gujral) ke niwaas par ek bhoj tha; madhyapaan karke, nashe mein choor madmast aadhe ghante itni kroor baatein wo kar rahe the ki humari aur unki ek etihaisik jhadap hui (Once there was dinner at Satish Gujral's house, after consuming alcohol he was saying such things that I had a historic argument with him," he added.

Singh further said at a time when he had



an argument with Aiyar, he gave him a befitting reply

"The tiff between me and Aiyar became famous across the country," he added.

Yesterday, Mani Shankar took the country to shock after he referred to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "neech aadmi".

However, Aiyar later clarified that the 'neech gaffe' happened due to his poor understanding of Hindi language.

Soon after his remark, the Congress suspended him from the primary membership of the party and also issued a show cause notice to him.

# Parents, beware! Your teen's lack of sleep may increase their risk of depression

With more and more youngsters complaining of sleep deprivation, researchers have warned parents that their sleep deprived teenager may be at an increased risk of developing mood disorders, especially depression.

Led by Peter Franzen from the University of Pittsburgh in the US, the study showed that teenagers with sleep deprivation may indulge more in risk-taking behaviour and addictions. The reason for this is that chronic sleep deprivation

reduces the proper functioning of putamen – an area of the brain that plays a role in goal-based movements and learning from rewards. Lack of proper sleep also leads to less activity in the brain's reward system.

For the research, presented in the 56th Annual Meeting of American college of Neuropsychopharmacology in California, the team studied the sleeping behaviour of participants aged between 11 to 15 years.



The team divided the total participants in two groups and allowed one group to sleep for four hours while the rest completed 10 hours of sleep.

While noting the MRI scans of the participants each time the team repeated the same sleeping patterns and interchanged it in between the groups. The participants were also made to answer questions while playing a game that involved receiving monetary rewards of \$10 and \$1, which measured their emotional

functioning and depression symptoms.

The results showed that when the participants were sleep-deprived and played the reward game for longer hours, the putamen was less responsive. While in the rest condition, the brain region did not show any difference between high and low-reward conditions. After a night of restricted sleep, the participants who experienced less activation in the putamen also reported more symptoms of depression.

## Disabled people can rely on fruits, veggies to fight condition

According to a study, eating a healthy diet consisting of fruits, vegetables and whole grains may lower disability and also reduce symptoms of multiple sclerosis (MS).

MS is a disease in which the immune system eats away at the protective covering of nerves. The symptoms include vision loss, pain, fatigue and impaired coordination.

The findings showed that people who took the healthy diet were 20 per cent less likely to have more severe physical disability, nearly 50 per cent less likely to have depression, 30 per cent less likely to suffer

severe fatigue and more than 40 per cent less likely to have pain.

A healthy lifestyle was defined as having a healthy weight, getting regular physical activity, not smoking eating a healthy diet with more fruits, vegeta-



bles, legumes and whole grains and less sugar from desserts and sweetened beverages and less red meat and processed meat.

"People with MS often ask if there is anything they can do to delay or avoid disability, and many people want to know if their diet can play a

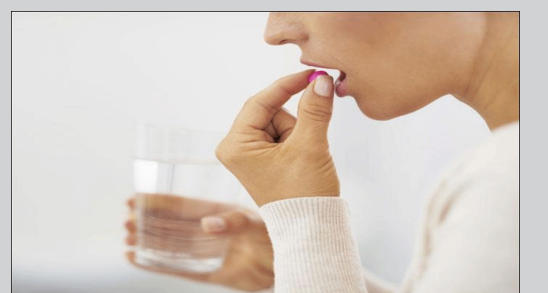
role," said Kathryn C. Fitzgerald, from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore.

"While this study does not determine whether a healthy lifestyle reduces MS symptoms or whether having severe symptoms makes it harder for people to engage in a healthy lifestyle, it provides evidence for the link between the two," Fitzgerald added.

The results, published in the journal Neurology, were true even after researchers adjusted for other factors that could affect disability, such as age and how long they had MS.

The study involved 6,989 people with all types of MS who completed questionnaires about their diet.

## Popping up painkillers may lead to obesity, poor sleep



If you are regularly in the habit of popping up painkillers, beware, you may be at risk of becoming obese as well as have poor sleep, a study has revealed.

Over the past 10 years, there has been a large increase in the prescription of medications such as gabapentinoids such as gabapentin, pregabalin and opiates, for chronic pain management including migraine, diabetic neuropathy and chronic lower back pain. The findings showed that people on opiates and cardio-metabolic drugs reported 95 per cent rates of obesity, 82 per cent "very high" waist circumference and 63 per cent hypertension, as opposed to those on cardio-metabolic drugs only.

These chronic pain medications should be prescribed for shorter periods of time to limit serious health complications, the researchers suggested.

"We already know that opiates are dependency-forming but this study also found patients taking opiates have the worst health. Obesity rates are much higher and the patients reported sleeping poorly," said lead author Sophie Cassidy, research associate at the Newcastle University.

Opioids act as a sedative which makes patients less active and they have been shown to alter taste perception with a craving for sugar and sweet foods. Opioids are also known to worsen snoring and untreated sleep apnea, as well as causing problems with nocturnal hypertension.

"These results add further weight to calls for these chronic pain medications to be prescribed for shorter periods," Cassidy added.

## How unhealthy weight gain could lead to dementia



In a recent research, a group of scientists have found that being overweight increases the risk of dementia by as much as a third.

According to Express.co.uk, being overweight reduces blood flow to the brain, starving it of oxygen and impairing mental function. People with a high Body Mass Index in their fifties are far more likely to develop the condition in their seventies, a study of more than 1.3 million people found.

The research shows each five-point increase in BMI raises the risk of dementia by between 16 percent and 33 percent.

Experts hailed the research as a wake-up call on the "life-threatening" health dangers of being fat. Tam Fry, of the National Obesity Forum, said, "Linking dementia to obesity may not remotely cross the mind of a chubby 30 or 40-year-old but, as this paper demonstrates, it certainly should. Ignorance is not bliss. In old age it can often be life-threatening."

Professor Mika Kivimaki, of University College London who led the research, said that in 2015 the number of people with dementia across the world reached almost 45 million, twice as many as in 1990. The study suggests that maintaining a healthy weight could prevent, or at least delay, the onset of the condition. Professor Kivimaki, of UCL's Institute of Epidemiology & Health, said this was because patients who had been overweight 20 years earlier often lost weight before their symptoms became apparent.

Kivimaki noted, "In this collaborative study of over 1.3 million adults from Europe, the US and Asia, higher BMI was associated with increased dementia risk when weight was measured 20 years or more before dementia diagnosis. But this association was reversed when BMI was assessed 10 years before dementia diagnosis."

This weight loss could be caused by cognitive impairment leading to impaired self-care and also a reduced appetite due to a decreased sense of smell.

## Expert advice: Here are tips to fight Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

Polycystic Ovarian Disease (PCOD), caused by imbalanced hormones, is an ailment a lot of women face. "The common symptoms among teenagers are obesity, irregular menstrual cycle leading to having periods 2-3 times a month, excess hair on face and body, and acne," says Dr Anuradha Kapur.

However, it can be combated by making a few lifestyle changes.

### The Right Diet

Cutting out on carbohydrates (potatoes, white rice, etc.), and adding high-fibre vegetables, lean proteins and anti-inflammatory foods like turmeric, tomatoes help.

Always prefer brown rice, whole wheat pasta, and whole wheat bread, over white rice, pasta, or bread. "One must not skip any meals.

Eating at regular intervals helps in balancing hormones.

A proper diet plan means heavy breakfasts and smaller dinners," recommends Nmami Aggarwal, celebrity nutritionist and dietician.

### Water your body

Keep yourself hydrated; try to drink 2-3 litres of water a day. Avoid alcohol, as many alcoholic drinks are high in sugar. Women with PCOD already have high blood sugar levels, thus alcohol is very harmful for them. Alcohol can even raise oestrogen levels.

### Avoid processed food

Foods like breakfast cereals, cheese, frozen food, tinned vegetables and juices are very unhealthy. You can have a small piece of jaggery

to satiate your sugar craving. It even helps in dealing with PCOD.

"High GI (glycemic index) foods such as sugar, flour, rice, white potatoes, and some fruits like bananas, grapes, cherries, watermelons, raisins, and many breakfast cereals, including puffed rice and corn flakes, should also be completely restricted," adds Aggarwal. GI is a measure of how quickly a food increases the blood sugar levels. Low GI foods help women facing PCOD in maintaining blood sugar levels.

### Exercise regularly

Like most other diseases, routine physical activity helps in PCOD as well.

When combined with the right diet, exercise can help in maintaining weight and reducing PCOD effects.

## Humans may have reached maximum limit for lifespan: Study

While human longevity had been limited to 115 years, a recent study had turned the tables by claiming that there was no limit to human lifespan. However, in a first-of-its-kind research that looked at 120 years worth of historical information, scientists have suggested that humans may have reached their maximum limits for height, lifespan and physical performance. They have explained that human have biological limitations and that anthropogenic impacts on the environment – including climate change – could have a deleterious effect on these limits. Despite stories that with each generation we will live longer and longer, this review suggests there may be a maximum threshold to our biological limits that we cannot exceed. Researchers studied trends emerging from historical records, concluding that there appears to be a plateau in the maximum biological limits for humans height, age and physical abilities. "These traits no longer increase, despite further continuous nutritional,



medical, and scientific progress. This suggests that modern societies have allowed our species to reach its limits. We are the first generation to become aware of this," said Jean-Francois Toussaint from Paris Descartes University in France. Rather than continually improving, we will see a shift in the proportion of the

population reaching the previously recorded maximum limits. Examples of the effects of these plateaus will be evidenced with increasingly less sport records being broken and more people reaching but not exceeding the present highest life expectancy. However, when researchers considered how environmental and genetic limitations combined may affect the ability

for us to reach these upper limits, our effect on the environment was found to play a key role. "This will be one of the biggest challenges of this century as the added pressure from anthropogenic activities will be responsible for damaging effects on human health and the environment," said Toussaint. "The current declines in human capacities we can see today are a sign that environmental changes, including climate, are already contributing to the in-

creasing constraints we now have to consider," he said. "Observing decreasing tendencies may provide an early signal that something has changed but not for the better," he added. "Human height has decreased in the last decade in some African countries; this suggests some societies are no longer able to provide sufficient nutrition for each of their children and maintain the health of their younger inhabitants," Toussaint said.

# Criteo studies emphasise on understanding consumer shopping patterns

Criteo S.A., a commerce marketing technology company unveiled findings from two studies commissioned by the company, highlighting the pressing need for retailers and brands to organise and apply data at scale to understand shoppers.

To this regard, Criteo is opening up an ecosystem that enables retailers and brands who participate to benefit from a much broader data set and more intelligent technology than they could acquire or develop on their own.

A Criteo-commissioned study, conducted by Forbes Insights, titled "The Commerce Data Opportunity: How Collaboration Levels the Retail Playing Field," highlights the value of data collaboration and pooling data to better meet customers' needs, drive value and compete. The "Shopper Story 2017" study, also commissioned by Criteo, highlights the rise of "omnishoppers" - those that use a variety of de-

VICES, channels and platforms to browse and buy products.

Overall, both studies reinforce the need for brands and retailers to innovate through collaboration and harness the collective power of data to engage with consumers at every moment and across any screen or device during the shopper journey.

To help retailers and brands deliver seamless and relevant shopping experiences across all devices and channel, Criteo announced its vision to build the highest performing and open commerce marketing ecosystem. As part of the company's commerce marketing vision, two new solutions - Criteo Audience MatchBETA and Criteo Kinetic Design with Video - have been made available across the Asia-Pacific region.

"Collaboration in an open ecosystem levels the playing field and paves the way for commerce companies to shape their future. This is especially crucial for Commerce

companies in Asia-Pacific where the market is expected to grow to more than USD 3 trillion by 2021. We have developed Criteo Commerce Marketing Ecosystem to unleash the value of collaboration and the power of data to all who participate," said Siddharth Dabhade, General Manager, Criteo India. The Forbes Insights highlights that the retail industry disruption is reshaping commerce. 50 percent of brands demonstrate concern that physical-digital giants will limit access to their products and 41 percent are concerned that they will not have access to information about their own customers and products. Retailers also worry that this trend will cause consumers to turn away from smaller retailers. Nearly four out of five brands and retailers include customer data as a key part of their business strategy. But while retailers have access to more data than brands, especially online, they are less confident than brands in their

ability to activate data into actionable insights

Further, brands and retailers see value in collaboration and pooling data assets to meet customer needs and drive value for their business. In fact, 71 percent of retailers are willing to contribute online search data to a pool. And, three-fifths of those surveyed are already part of a data cooperative, with almost seven out of 10 of those companies already happy with their collaborations as well as the data they receive.

Additionally, 72 percent of marketers cite "increased revenue" as a key benefit they experience from pooled data.

On the other hand, the second study highlights that more than 3/4 of shoppers globally engage in omnishopping, with majority going online to shop and buying in-store, and vice versa.

Webrooming and Showrooming are the norm, with 66 percent of consumers occasionally brows-

ing products online and then purchase at retail, with 24 percent making this a regular occurrence; whereas 74 percent of consumers occasionally make purchases online after seeing a product in retail, with 15 percent communicating they do this regularly.

As mobile continues to permeate everyday life, online is now a critical driver of point of purchase; with nearly half of all omnishoppers from various countries sharing that websites were the "last influence before purchase" and 62 percent of consumers reporting that they use their phone while in-store to research products online. Commerce marketers can use Criteo Audience MatchBETA to:

- Quickly execute cost-effective, paid display campaigns across a diverse set of marketing scenarios, including re-engagement of lapsed customers, promotion of seasonal offers, cross-sell of products related to previous purchases, and more.

- Drive unmatched advertising engagement through optimised ads, balancing brand-inspired design and ad performance through Kinetic Design.

- Synchronise perfectly with Criteo Dynamic Retargeting to ensure cross-campaign optimisation and attribution.

Criteo has also added video as a new channel and inventory source for commerce marketers. Criteo Kinetic Design with Video automatically optimises every visual aspect of an ad to inspire and engage a shopper. Kinetic Design already allows for more than 17 trillion variations from one base design in display ads.

This has been now expanded to incorporate video, creating personalized video ads that feature relevant products based on Criteo's complete understanding of the shopper. These video ads are created automatically, on-the-fly, and appear across web and mobile.

As consumer video consump-

tion continues to grow, Criteo's clients can now use video to relevantly re-engage shoppers without production time, resources, or costs. Video is delivered in a non-intrusive manner to provide a seamless browsing experience - in app, in feed or on a website. Criteo's video capability also allows marketers to take advantage of video ads on a cost-per-click basis.

"Understanding consumer purchasing behavior is challenging for retailers given that shoppers are on more platforms than ever before, with collected data being difficult to integrate and analyse, at scale. To help retailers and brands overcome this challenge, Criteo Audience Match and Criteo Kinetic Design with Video, as part of a robust suite of commerce marketing technologies, will support the full shopper journey, enabling brands to create relevant and engaging experiences for customers online and offline," said Siddharth.

## Amazon Web Services to achieve full empanelment to deliver public cloud services

Amazon Web Services (AWS) announced that Amazon Internet Services Private Limited (AISPL), an Indian subsidiary of the Amazon Group which undertakes the resale and marketing of AWS Cloud services in India achieved full Cloud Service Provider (CSP) empanelment, and successfully completed the Standardization Testing and Quality Certification audit from the Indian Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for cloud services delivered from the AWS Asia Pacific (Mumbai) Region.

This certification sees AISPL join a list of approved providers that meet pre-defined government standards of quality, availability, and security. With 52 global security certifications, attestations, assurance programs, and quality audits already achieved, such as ISO 9001, SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, and more, AWS is the first global cloud

service provider to earn this status in India. Starting today, government customers can develop their own terms and conditions to procure AWS Cloud services. The empanelment process includes compliance with new global security standards and guidelines ISO 27017 and ISO 27018.

MeitY advises government bodies and departments to procure cloud services only from the empaneled and audit-compliant CSPs. This includes departments under Central, State, and local Governments, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), autonomous institutions, statutory bodies, and Nationalised Banks within India who can now use AWS for their workloads. Government organisations can take advantage of the best-in-class technology from AWS Cloud to drive transformation, and to deliver highly innovative citizen-centric services at lower cost through flagship programs

such as Digital India, Skill India, and Smart Cities. AWS offers fully featured services for compute, storage, databases, IoT, networking, machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), and more, from 44 Availability Zones across 16 geographic regions globally.

"The Government of India has been driving the mission to promote e-Governance for empowering citizens, and enabling access to digital and cloud-enabled services for its nodal agencies and public sector organisations. The empanelment of the AWS Cloud is paving the way for innovation so that government bodies can serve citizens more effectively, achieve scientific breakthroughs, reach broader constituents, and invest more time and resources into their core missions," said Peter Moore, Regional Managing Director, Amazon Web Services, Public Sector - Asia Pacific

based in AWS Singapore office.

AWS public sector customers in India include Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC), Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), CSC e-Governance Services (set up by the Ministry of Electronics & IT), Gujarat Technical University, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati.

Since the launch of AWS Asia Pacific (Mumbai) Region in June 2016, more than 120,000 active customers including Tata Motors, NDTV, Lupin, Future Group, and Shoppers Stop have adopted AWS Cloud for a broad range of applications such as e-governance applications, website hosting, big data analytics, mobile applications, e-commerce platforms, mission critical business applications such as SAP, Oracle, and Microsoft, among many other use cases.

## Ace Turtle, CEVA partner to enable freight forwarding for International brands

Ace Turtle, an omni-channel platform company partnered with CEVA Logistics, a supply chain management company to manage global freight forwarding for International brands that the former will power through its cross-border solution in South East Asia.

Ace Turtle, with its proprietary platform Rubicon which integrates offline and online channels automating and optimising omnichannel fulfilment for brands will also be enabling cross border commerce solutions for International brands.

The cross border solution will enable brands to reach new customers in newer geographies where the local customers can shop within the same ecosystem of e-commerce which they are used to.

On the other hand, CEVA will handle international air-freight service, local transportation in origin and destination countries and manage custom clearance for the inter-

national brands.

Under the agreement, CEVA will provide international freight forwarding services for the following countries, US - Singapore, China - Singapore, China - India, India - Singapore, India - Malaysia, and subsequently from Europe to APAC region.

"In South East Asia, Cross Border e-commerce has a significant contribution in the total e-commerce sales. With the launch of Cross Border solution, our solution is now complete for South East Asia. Through our platform, brands will be able to expand their reach in South East Asia," said Nitin Chhabra, CEO, Ace Turtle.

Backed by Singapore-based Vertex Ventures and C31 Ventures, the venture capital arm of Capitaland, Ace Turtle's technology helps reduce the costs and complexity of omnichannel transformation for enterprise retail clients by using the existing framework of their legacy system.

## Deadline for Aadhaar-PAN linking pushed to March 2018

In lieu of the number of taxpayers yet to complete linking their Aadhaar and PAN card, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on Friday announced an extension in the deadline to March 31, 2018.

"It has come to notice that some of the taxpayers have not yet completed the linking of PAN with Aadhaar. Therefore, to facilitate the process of linking, it has been decided to further extend the time for linking of Aadhaar with PAN till 31.03.2018," an official statement from the Ministry of Finance noted. Under the provisions of recently introduced section 139AA of the Income-tax Act, 1961 (the Act), with effect from July 1, 2017, all taxpayers having Aadhaar Number or Enrolment Number are required to link the same with Permanent Account Number (PAN).

However, in view of the difficulties faced by some of the taxpayers in the process, the date for linking of Aadhaar with PAN was initially extended till August 31, and then further extended up to December 31.

With the new notification in place, taxpayers will be permitted to complete the process before March 31 next year.

## GoDaddy enhances online security offerings for small businesses in India

Cloud platform dedicated to small, independent ventures GoDaddy has launched GoDaddy Website Security and added McAfee protections to enhance its security offering for customers. Website Security powered by Sucuri, is a website protection service offering malware removal and website protection. GoDaddy SSL Certificates now are offered with added security protection with McAfee, and allows small businesses to display the SECURE trustmark on their websites to show credibility and build trust among customers.

"Use of the internet and connected devices is now an integral part for businesses, and has made small businesses a more frequent target for cyber intrusion. As part of our Online Security Awareness Program, we are offering these new security on-

line solutions to help further protect your online presence," said Nikhil Arora, vice-president and managing director, GoDaddy India.

"The McAfee integration with our SSL Certificates and security protection powered by Sucuri gives our customers access to robust and reliable resources of professional online security protection for small business websites," added Arora. GoDaddy Website Security offers website protection service to help keep customers' websites more secure and protected against malware. With continuous monitoring, fast response time and daily malware scanning, this solution detects known security holes or issues on a website. Key product benefits include:

Unlimited malware removal

and hack repair  
Emergency clean up: Ensures superfast malware removal service by security experts who will respond and fix the problems within 30 minutes of receiving a clean-up request

Continuous security monitoring: Offers proactive protection with daily malware scans and security monitoring that watches DNS record, SSL, uptime, etc and will alert you if something is wrong

Google blacklist monitoring and removal: Website Security monitors a number of blacklists such as Google, Norton, and McAfee to help ensure your company's reputation is protected Web Application Firewall (WAF) protection: Blocks malware from penetrating websites, and prevents malware re-infection after an attack so your site

remains secure and safe  
Content Delivery Network (CDN) accelerator: Boosts site speed and performance to help ensure pages load quickly, no matter where in the world customers are located

Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Mitigation: the advanced security monitoring and Web Application Firewall (WAF) prevents these types of attacks before they occur

GoDaddy's Website Security products are available starting at Rs. 275 per month

SSL Certificates with McAfee SECURE integration, strengthens online trust for small businesses by displaying the highly recognized floating McAfee trustmark. Key features and product enhancements include:

Build trust from the start: The HTTPS and lock icon along

with McAfee SECURE trustmark increases trust among customers. SSL certificates automatically creates a secure, encrypted connection with the customer's browser

Protect sensitive information: Ensures protection of customers' sensitive information transmission with strongest encryption on the market

Have confidence across devices: SSL Certificates work seamlessly on any device, from smartphones to tablets.

With mobile web traffic exceeding desktop traffic, having a strategy for mobile security is important to building consumer confidence

The certificates for single sites to multi-domain businesses online is available at different pricing options, starting from as low as Rs. 219.92 per month.

## NowFloats plugs demand for easily customisable technologies with 'ANA'

SaaS platform that enables SMEs to run all their online operations seamlessly via an app, NowFloats has developed the open source chatbot framework named ANA, which will streamline data aggregation, analytics and automating website functions.

The chatbot will be customised and deployed by early-stage venture capital firm Blume Ventures on its website.

ANA is a comprehensive chatbot framework that can be easily set up by developers in less than 30 minutes. It can be customised by conversation experts/content writers, deployed to almost any channel and tracked by built-in analytics algorithms.

The chatbot will help venture capital

companies automate its website functions like receiving business plans, company details such as founding members, stage of funding required, revenue stream etc. from start-ups applying for funding.

In addition, the chatbot will also allow applicants to submit their business plans at Blume Ventures. Ana's Open-Source Chatbot Platform has the following features:

- Conversation Studio: This will help in creating a chat flow and offer options to add or edit buttons and all kinds of input fields required to create a conversation.

- Simulator: This feature will be used to preview the chat flow, besides offering options such as memory display, agent

chat, analytics and chat export.

- Server: The ANA Chat Server will help in distributing the chatbot to multiple platforms without worrying about Architecture and Scalability issues.

- SDK: iOS and Android SDK will aid in integrating the chatbot with apps.

"Chatbots are currently at the top of the list when it comes to the trends in content marketing, and strategies adopted by brands across the globe. While chatbots have existed for decades now, it is only recently that the technology has come into its own with the rising demand for technologies and marketing tools powered by artificial intelligence," said co-founder and chief software architect NowFloats, Ronak Samantray.

## Shapoorji Pallonji's 'Joyville' enters Mumbai with its first project in Virar

The Shapoorji Pallonji Group, one of India's trusted and oldest real estate brands announced today the launch of its easy-to-own homes under the brand - Joyville in Mumbai with its first project in Virar.

This is the second project under Joyville brand the first being in Kolkata launched early last year. Joyville, Virar will feature over 1200 residences of different configurations spread across more than seven acres. The spacious and aspirational products come in configurations ranging from 1 BHK to 3 BHK.

The customers can avail of flexible payment plans offered by the developer for the first few customers.

Additionally the eligible customers can also avail the PMAY benefit to the extent of Rs. 2.67 lacs under the CLSS scheme. The project is coming up at a prime location in Virar making it not only an ideal address for buyers but also extremely affordable with close proximity to various social infrastructure like railway station, schools, malls, hospitals etc. The proposed state of the art Sports Complex and Athletics facility and the proposed Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation complex would be also very near this project.

Apart from the spacious residences in a gated community, the project boasts of cutting edge ame-

nities like clubhouse with swimming pool and gym, jogging and cycling tracks, sports-facilities for kids, recreation areas, parks and open spaces, banquet facilities to name a few. Mid-income housing is distinct from the Indian high-end real estate market, in terms of its market dynamics.

We see a huge demand and need across Mumbai for this category of homes. And we are confident that Virar as a destination is bound to transform this space given the region's affordability,

Connectivity to the city along with the planned infrastructure projects in the pipeline.

# Liverpool complete CL sweep for England, Ronaldo claims new record

**PARIS:** England has become the first country to have five teams in the knockout stage of the Champions League after Liverpool completed a sweep for Premier League clubs with a 7-0 thrashing of Spartak Moscow on Wednesday.

Liverpool, who have won Europe's top competition five times, clinched Group 'E' after Philippe Coutinho secured his first hat-trick for the club and were joined in the last 16 by former champions FC Porto, Sevilla and Shakhtar Donetsk.

That quartet completed the lineup on the final night of group-stage action that was also notable for another Cristiano Ronaldo's goals record in the competition. The Portuguese superstar scored his ninth in the competition this season in reigning champions Real Madrid's 3-2 win at home to Borussia Dortmund. In doing so, he became the first player to score in all six Champions League group-stage matches in a season while also equalling his Barcelona rival Lionel Messi's record of 60 group-stage goals in total.

Liverpool were one of four English teams to top a group, along with Manchester City, Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur. Chelsea completed the sweep, signalling a revival by English clubs after years of underachievement since the west London club were European champions in 2012.

Needing only a draw to qualify, it was all too easy for Liverpool at Anfield, where Coutinho led Liverpool's dismantling of Spartak with two goals in the opening 15 minutes before completing his first hat-trick for the Reds in the 50th. Sadio Mane scored twice and there



was one each for Roberto Firmino and Mohamed Salah as Liverpool's 'Fab Four' ran riot and they topped their group by three points from second-placed Sevilla. Spartak finished in third place and dropped into the Europa League. "Nobody could imagine that it would go like this tonight. It was an all or nothing game for both teams," said Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp after guiding the Reds into the last 16 for the first time in nine years. "We opened the game perfectly and after we took the lead we didn't have to defend. It was a nice night at Anfield." Spartak's defeat meant Sevilla were through regardless of their 1-1 draw with Maribor in Slovenia. In freezing temperatures, Maribor captain Marcos Tavares scored the opener with Paulo Henrique Ganso coming off the bench to equalise for the Spaniards. Ukrainian giants Shakhtar are through

to the last 16 in Group 'F' at the expense of Napoli after beating Pep Guardiola's Manchester City 2-1 in Kharkiv, ending the English club's unbeaten record in all competitions this season. Already guaranteed first place, City were caught on the break and failed to become only the seventh club in Champions League history to win every game in the group stage.

"The game didn't go as we expected, in the first half they were better than us and it was a deserved win for them," City midfielder Bernardo Silva said. "In the second half we tried to come back, had our chances, but we are not happy. Even though we had already qualified, we wanted the three points." Shakhtar, which finished runner-up, took the lead in the 26th minute when Bernard cut in from the left side of the box and curled a shot inside the far post, beyond the reach of goal-

keeper Ederson. Eight minutes later, Ismaili sprinted to beat Ederson to the ball before rounding the keeper and stroking a shot into the unguarded net. City's consolation goal came in added time when Sergio Aguero converted a penalty. It was City's first competitive loss since being beaten by Arsenal in an FA Cup semi-final in April. In the group's other game, Feyenoord rallied from a goal down to beat Napoli, who failed to join Serie A rivals Juventus and AS Roma in the knockout stage.

Napoli ended third and headed to the Europa League. Napoli had gone in front early on away to already eliminated Feyenoord through Piotr Zielinski, but Nicolai Jorgensen equalised. Jeremiah St Juste then made it 2-1 at the death for the Dutch champions after they had Tony Vilhena sent off. "Now we want to go as far as possible in the Europa

League," Napoli captain Marek Hamsik told Mediaset Premium. Porto also knew a win would take them through in Group 'G' and the two-time European champions ran riot against a hapless Monaco, hammering last season's semi-finalists 5-2. Vincent Aboubakar scored twice for the Portuguese club,

with Yacine Brahimi, Alex Telles and Francisco Soares also netting. Monaco replied through a Kamil Glik effort and a Radamel Falcao header against his old club, while Porto's Felipe and Rachid Ghezzal for the visitors were sent off after an altercation in the first half. Monaco reached the semi-finals of the competition last season by playing some scintillating attacking football. But it has been a very different story this season for the French champions and coach Leonardo Jardim's side were already guaranteed to finish last.

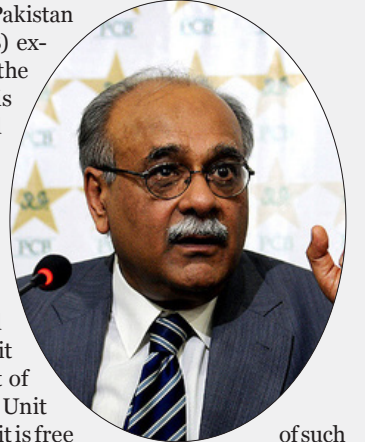
"It's sad not to be continuing in the Champions League but that's football. Now we have to focus on the league and the two domestic cups," Falcao said. "Our team changed a lot in the summer and we need time to get stronger."

Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo leaps to head the ball as team-mate Borja Mayoral and Borussia Dortmund's Raphael Guerreiro (R) and Marcel Schmelzer look on during the Group 'H' match at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu.

—Reuters Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo leaps to head the ball as team-mate Borja Mayoral and Borussia Dortmund's Raphael Guerreiro (R) and Marcel Schmelzer look on during the Group 'H' match at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu.

## PCB defends its stance on T-10 league

**LAHORE:** The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) explained its stance on the T-10 league which is scheduled to be held in the UAE later this month through a press release issued late on Thursday.



The Board pointed out that the ICC has not disapproved the league. "In fact it has lent the support of its Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) to it to ensure it is free of such problems, the Sri Lanka and Bangladesh Cricket Boards are fully supporting it with one team each of their players," the release said.

"The PCB has taken a fee of US \$400,000 from the league to allow only ten of its centrally-contracted players to participate in it. This money is being spent on game development in the country."

"The PCB BoG has agreed to support the League following a firm request from the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) that is a PCB partner in critical ways by hosting PSL and PCB bilateral cricket series. The apprehensions of two PSL franchises were resolved in a meeting on the subject earlier and there is no conflict of interest or competition between a 10 over league spread over four days only in one venue and PSL spread over 34 matches and six weeks in four venues," the press release further said.

"Players from six top cricketing national boards like England, West Indies, South Africa, etc have got NOCs to play in this league. These include Eoin Morgan, Shakib Al Hasan, Carlos Brathwaite, Dinesh Chandimal, Darren Sammy, etc. In fact, many current players from across the globe are featuring in the league which shows the PCB has released players in a competitive event."

The PCB, in its release, pointed out a significant fact the Anti-Corruption Laws of ICC will be applicable on the league games. "This means there will be an Anti-Corruption Unit set up for the event like in any international event or league to keep an eye on players, and keep the game free of corruption. Two PCB ACU representatives will also monitor the league." It further explained that with the gradual return of international cricket to Pakistan, the Emirates Cricket Board has to develop its own events that can sustain its cricketing infrastructure in the UAE and events like T10 that are in no competition with PSL enable the ECB to plan their future once Pakistan cricket fully returns.

## Indian Super League Confident FC Goa take on winless Kerala Blasters

**FATORDA:** A resurgent FC Goa will host Kerala Blasters, a side still looking for its first win of the season, in an Indian Super League (ISL) season four fixture here on Saturday. Historically, the two sides cannot be separated, having won three matches apiece from the six meetings between them.

But going by form, Goa will be buoyant after their 4-3 win over Bengaluru FC. As for the Blasters, Rene Meulenstein will be happy that his side ended their goal drought against Mumbai City, but will now look forward to three points. "Am I concerned? No.

Disappointed? Yes. But we have progressed over the last three games and this is another game for us to test where we stand.

It's different because we haven't played an away game yet. But more than anything, we focus on progressing," Meulenstein said. He also said that he has had a close look on the way FC Goa play and praised their "specific style of play" which could hurt other sides.

## IPL spending could hit \$96mn as wage cap rises

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian Premier League (IPL), one of the world's richest sports competitions, will let teams splurge up to \$12 million each on player salaries in 2018, an increase of 20 per cent. After a meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday, the IPL governing council also said teams will have to spend a minimum of 75 per cent of the salary cap each season.

The decision means the eight IPL teams are likely to spend anywhere between \$72 million and \$96 million on players alone for just eight weeks of cricketing action in 2018. "Whatever changes we have come up with are all in the interest of the players," IPL chairman Rajeev Shukla told AFP.

"We are also looking to increase the prize money for the players in future." While most of India's big name players are already attached to franchises, several players bagged lucrative deals in the IPL auction in February. England all-rounder Ben Stokes set a new record for a foreigner by joining the Rising Pune



Supergiants for more than \$2 million. England pace bowler Tymal Mills went to the Royal Challengers Bangalore for \$1.8 million,

even though he had only played four T20 Internationals before that. The attractions of last-ball winning sixes, extravagant switch-hitting and rapid-fire

centuries have made IPL a favourite of the masses, especially the younger generation. The IPL's 60 games are valued at roughly \$8.5 million each, not far off the estimated \$9.6 million per English Premier League match -- and well over the \$6.2 million price tag attached to home internationals in India.

## England have left 'scars' on Australia: Bayliss

**ADELAIDE:** England coach Trevor Bayliss says his team left "a few scars" on Australia in the Adelaide Test, suggesting the home side's second-innings batting performance will have some players feeling "nervous". The fighting talk came after England slumped to a crushing 120-run defeat in the second Ashes Test at Adelaide, leaving tourists trailing 2-0 and on the verge of losing the five-Test series.



Despite succumbing again, Bayliss was upbeat about his bowlers skittling Australia for 138 in the second innings, leaving England with a chance of chasing down a record 354-run victory target. "We have got a few scars there with the Australian team," Bayliss told the BBC. "There will be a few who have missed out and a few who will be nervous. They've got four good bowlers and we've shown we can compete with them for a period of time. We've just got to do it for longer."

"If we can perform to our ability for longer periods of time we'll win games. The belief in dressing room is definitely there." Bayliss said the team played well in final days of the Adelaide day-night Test, but they needed to make more than 220 runs in an innings to stand a chance in Perth. "If we do that well we can put more pressure on Australia than we did on this match," he said.

Australia head into the third Test with all-rounder Mitch Marsh recalled to the squad, with the home side conscious of protecting star fast bowlers Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins with the series still alive and three Tests remaining. Marsh, brother of Adelaide Test centurion Shaun Marsh,

last played a Test on Australia's tour of India in March and required a full shoulder reconstruction after an injury in the Bangalore Test. But he is confident he can contribute if selected, with middle-order batsman Peter Handscomb likely to be dropped if Australia opt for Marsh. "As an all-rounder in the Australian team with our attack I'm obviously not going to be bowling 30 to 40 overs a game," he said.

"But I've worked hard over the last eight months to get my body into a position where I'm now playing again as an all-rounder so that's really exciting." Bayliss clearly does not think that any more practice is the key for England's batsmen and on Thursday named only Moeen Ali from the side that lost in Adelaide in an England XI to face a Cricket Australia XI in a two-day tour match in Perth. The rest of the team is made up of the squad members who did not play in the second Test and six players from the England Lions team, who are training in the city.

## 'CIRCUS' FEARS AS STOKES NAMED IN ENGLAND ODI SQUAD

**SYDNEY:** Suspended all-rounder Ben Stokes was included on Thursday in England's squad for their One-day International series against Australia, with coach Trevor Bayliss bracing for "a circus" if he is cleared to play. Stokes is currently banned from international cricket while British authorities probe his alleged involvement in a late-night fight outside a Bristol nightclub, and it remained in doubt whether he would play. Batsman Alex Hales, who was caught up in the same fracas, was also named in the 16-man squad for the five-game series, starting in Melbourne on Jan 14.

Selectors said in a statement they were advised to name their strongest squad, and picked the pair accordingly. "Both Alex Hales and Ben Stokes are included, though their involvement remains subject to any relevant legal or disciplinary developments



in relation to the incident in Bristol in September," they said. Bayliss admitted Stokes'

for the team. "Whenever he comes back that's going to be a bit of a circus for sure," he told reporters after England lost the second Test in Adelaide on Wednesday. "Whether it's any more of a circus than it's already been, it's hard to say. If it happens, let's just get on with it and take it on the chin." He added: "We've got to adjust to that at some stage." New Zealand-born Stokes did not travel to Australia with the rest of the squad for the Ashes series, and has missed the first two in Brisbane and Adelaide, with England losing both.

But speculation that he is preparing for a dramatic call-up was fuelled by his decision to sign with New Zealand provincial side Canterbury as their overseas player in late November. In his first limited overs match for his birth province against Otago, he was bowled for two. He did better against Auckland on Wednesday, hitting 34 from 41 deliveries as he shakes off the rust.

## I-League 2017-18 East Bengal face upbeat Shillong Lajong

**NEW DELHI:** Winless from two matches, East Bengal will be under pressure when they host an upbeat Shillong Lajong FC in an I-League football fixture at the Vidyaagar Krirangan in Barasat on Saturday. Having suffered a defeat against arch-rivals Mohun Bagan in the last round, East Bengal will be desperate for their first win, while Shillong Lajong will look to continue their winning spree.

The Shillong outfit has kicked off its campaign with wins over Gokulam Kerala and Churchill Brothers at home and the aim would be to continue the momentum in the first away match of the season. It's early days in the I-League but East Bengal coach Khalid Jamil, who scripted a fairytale success with Aizawl last season, and forward Willis Plaza are facing the heat.

Jamil's 'blue-eyed boy' Plaza has been at his misfiring best, which led to their 0-1 loss to Mohun Bagan in the derby five days back. East Bengal had slipped away from a 2-0 lead against the defending champions, who restored parity in the last 15 minutes, as their defence showed complete lack of coordination with the goalkeeper. The 30-year-old Trinidad forward seemed to have left behind his scoring boots at home, missing plenty of chances up front, and the frustrated red-and-gold fans have already started shouting "go back" slogans at their training.