

# TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

SUNDAY

● APRIL, 29, 2018  
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WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	28.0	10.1
JAMMU	38.1	22.6
LEH	17.2	6.6
KARGIL	20.6	00

SUNSET SUNDAY: 07:13 PM  
 SUNRISE MONDAY: 05:45 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR  
 Partly cloudy Sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 27°C & 09°C respectively.

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BHUVNESHWAR KUMAR'S BOWLING ART: DECEPTION LIES AT THE HEART OF HIS CRAFT

## No possibility of the transfer of Kathua case to outside JK after filing of charge sheets: Legal experts

'Affidavit of JK HC, report of District Judge Kathua likely to be taken more serious than BCI report'

Srinagar, Apr 28: Legal experts in Jammu and Kashmir have said that the affidavit of Jammu and Kashmir High Court and the report of district and sessions judge Kathua will be taken more serious than the controversial report of the Bar Council of India. The legal experts also said that apparently there is no possibility of the transfer of the Kathua rape and murder case to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as the investigative agency Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir police has already produced charge sheet before the trial court.

Talking to Kashmir News Service (KNS), senior advocate of Jammu and Kashmir High Court and leading constitutional expert of the state, Zafar Ahmad Shah said "the affidavit of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court and the report of district and session judge Kathua in the eyes of law is

most likely to be taken more serious than the controversial and contradictory report of the Bar Council of India. The Bar Council of India is just a group of lawyers but the Jammu and Kashmir High Court is the apex court in the state and district and sessions judge Kathua is the presiding officer of the trial court. As far as the shifting of case to any place outside Jammu and Kashmir is concerned I personally believe it would be in the interests of justice to

shift the trial court from Kathua to Ramban the neutral place between Srinagar and Jammu."

When contacted another senior advocate of Jammu and Kashmir High Court Zaffar Ahmad Qureshi told Kashmir News Service (KNS) "the report of the Bar Council of India is full of contradictions and blunt lies and I believe the Supreme Court of India won't take the report of Bar Council of India more serious than the affidavit of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court and the report of



## 28 youth join militant ranks this month in South Kashmir

Srinagar, Apr 28: At least 28 youth from South Kashmir have joined militancy this month—the largest ever number since the death of popular militant commander Burhan Wani in June 2016. Highly placed sources said that

since April 1, the day when in three different encounters at Shopian and Anantnag, 13 militants and 4 civilians were killed, at least 28 youth from Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian have joined militant ranks. Majority of them hail from Pulwama district.

Sources added that no youth from Anantnag district has joined the militancy this month. Most of these youth have joined militant outfit Hizbul Mujahadeen followed by Jaish-e-Muhammad. Contrary to their belief and per-

ception, Security Agencies have started showing concern over the new trend of youth mostly educated ones joining militancy. A security official wishing not to be named said that they have already taken up

## Move offices close at Jammu, Chief Minister arrives at Srinagar

Srinagar, Apr 28: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti arrived here today from Jammu after the Civil Secretariat and other move offices closed yesterday at Jammu.



On her arrival here, the Chief Minister was accorded a formal reception at the airport by Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Baseer Ahmad Khan; Inspector General of Police, Kashmir zone, S P Pani; Deputy Commissioners and SSPs of Budgam and Srinagar districts and other senior officers.

▶ See **Move...**Pg 02

## MEHBOOBA INAUGURATES SEVERAL BUILDING COMPLEXES AT CLUSTER UNIVERSITY, JAMMU

Srinagar, Apr 28: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today inaugurated several building complexes at the Cluster University, Jammu.

The Chief Minister, who is also the Chancellor of the University, inaugurated two buildings of School of Sciences, building of School of Social Sciences, School of Teacher Education, School of Humanities and Liberal Arts and

▶ See **Inaugurates...**Pg 02

## MEHBOOBA CONGRATULATES CIVIL SERVICES QUALIFIERS FROM J&K

Srinagar, Apr 28: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti has congratulated this year's civil services qualifiers from the State. The results of UPSC conducted civil services

▶ See **Mehbooba...**Pg 02

## 2016 Kashmir Civilian Killings: SHRC SEEKS REPORT FROM CHIEF SECRETARY AND POLICE CHIEF

Srinagar, Apr 28: Jammu Kashmir Human Rights Body has sought a detailed report from State Government about the 2016 Kashmir killings.

Notices were issued to Chief Secretary and Director General of Police and they were directed to file a detailed compliance report about the 2016 civilian killings before the State Human Rights Commission.

Kashmir witnessed mass killings in 2016 after the death of popular militant commander Burhan Wani.

SHRC's response came against a petition, filed by Chairman, International Forum for Justice Human Right

▶ See **SHRC...**Pg 02

## Govt. Decision to take holistic view on New Job Policy Significant: PDP

'State treading towards stable, prosperous future, transparency replacing anarchy'

Srinagar, Apr 28: Peoples' Democratic Party on Saturday termed the Government decision of providing the 7th pay commission benefits to the SRO-202 appointees as significant, stating that the pro-people decisions being rolled out at present have given new hope to the people to witness remarkable and transparent governance ahead.

In a statement issued to KNS, PDP's Srinagar district President and Upper House

Member Mohammad Khurshid Alam said the confrontational attitude with the employees had become a norm in Jammu and Kashmir's administrative set-up, however, at present the trend is being reversed by virtue of humane, objective and compassionate measures.

The PDP leader also underscored the vital and progressive decisions being taken by the present government including the implemen-



tation of the 7th pay commission to more than five lakh government employees, asserting that the state government is the first in entire

India that has achieved such a remarkable milestone. Alam said that such scenes of pro-people governance were alien to the state which was reeling under the chaotic, anarchic and nepotistic rule since decades.

He said that the government decision to move the appointees under SRO-202 to a new framework as also to extend the benefits of pay revision under 7th pay

▶ See **PDP...**Pg 02

## FAMILY OF MBBS STUDENT WHO'S MISSING IN ODHISA RUES J&K GOVT'S COLD RESPONSE

Srinagar, April 28: Almost three months have elapsed since Kashmiri MBBS student Suhail Aijaz went missing in Odhisa but his whereabouts remain unknown.

While his father Aijaz Ahmad continues to battle for life in SKIMS after meeting an accident in which two of his cousin brothers were killed, the dejected family on Saturday rued "cold response" by the state government in finding Suhail, a resident of Marsari, Chowkibal in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

"Nothing is being done by the government," Azhar, younger brother of the missing student, told GNS. He added: "We have heard nothing after March 6 when Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti tweeted that she has urged her Odhisa counterpart to take swift action in tracing out

▶ See **Family...**Pg 02

## Hakeem Yaseen concerned over UNCIRF report about deteriorating religious freedom in country

Says selective application of law bound to increase alienation, hatred

Khansahib, Apr 28: Cautioning against the latest report of the US Commission for International Religious Freedom (UNCIRF) that conditions for religious minorities, in India have been fast deteriorating due to multifaceted campaigns by Hindu-nationalist groups like RSS and VHP to alienate non-Hindus, Chairman PDF and MLA, Khansahib Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen has called upon all secular minded and peace loving social, political and religious organisations of the country to unitedly fight this dangerous scourge before it was too late to control it.

He said the Commission has observed that Hindu extremists were trying to curb



the religious freedom of non-Hindus and safronise the country through violence

▶ See **Yaseen...**Pg 02

## CONDUCT OF EXAMS: FOR CURRENT YEAR, GOVT TO CONTINUE WITH NOV SESSION

Srinagar, Apr 28: The School Education Department has decided to continue with the existing system for conduct of examinations in November session for the current academic year.

According to a notification issued by the School Education Department, the decision, if any, on shifting the examinations to the March session shall be taken in due course of time after thorough deliberations with the stakeholders, general public and the educational experts.

It said the Education Department had initiated the proposal for change of academic session from November to March on the demand of parents and the students. "To take a considered view of the issue, an expert committee

▶ See **Conduct...**Pg 02

## Darbar move: Altaf Bukhari visits Civil Sect, inspects dispatch of official record process

Says peace, development and good governance to remain prime focus of Govt



Jammu April 28: Minister for Finance, Education, Labour and Employment today visited civil secretariat and inspected the

dispatch of official records for the bi-annual darbar move from Jammu to summer

▶ See **Altaf...**Pg 02

## DESH BAGHAT UNIVERSITY DEMANDS THREE CRORE FINE FROM KASHMIRI STUDENTS

Chandigarh, April 28: The Kashmiri students pursuing in various courses at Desh Baghat University Punjab have alleged that they are facing several harassment issues from the administration of Desh Baghat University, Mandi Gobindgarh Punjab, under which they are being asked to pay the fine of Rs 3 Crore (approx) on different pretexts.

The Kashmiri students talking to Kashmir News Bureau (KNB) stated that they have been fined Rs 3 crore on account of late fees and other fine realms, creating abnormal internet charges, and bogus registration issues.

Even if via online medium the fees is deposited on time still it is shown under late date to extract hefty fine from the students of Kashmir.

▶ See **Desh...**Pg 02

JRL condemns 'assault' on Malik

## 'Police behavior against Malik is clear indication that Kashmir is a police state'

Srinagar, Apr 28: Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL) including Syed Ali Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Saturday strongly condemned the 'police assault' and use of 'derogatory language' against JKL chairman, Mohammad Yasin Malik by police at Khanjara when he was on way to Jamia Masjid to lead a peaceful protest.

JRL in a statement issued to KNS said that "police re-



sorted to manhandling and hooliganism against a leader

who has prominence across the State for representing peoples' aspirations."

The leadership said that police behavior against Malik is a clear indication that Kashmir is a police state where police has been given a free hand to run its 'writ and high-handedness' and in a situation no Kashmiri is safe.

"When a people's representative like Malik is

▶ See **Malik...**Pg 02

## Pay Anomaly: CLERICAL STAFF CONTINUES TO PROTEST

Srinagar, Apr 28: Clerical staff from all the three regions from Jammu and Kashmir Saturday organized a protest rally against latest government decision to constitute a new committee to look into the demand of clerks to remove pay anomaly.

The clerical staff who are on strike from past one week said that they will do Secretariat Gherawo on the opening of Darbar Move in Srinagar on May 7 next month.

"Government had already constituted two committees while yesterday it was shocking for us to learn that government has now constituted third committee. It is only a time buying tactic and nothing else," said Ghulam Jeelani

▶ See **Staff...**Pg 02

# DIV COM REVIEWS TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT IN KASHMIR

'Every passenger bus to ply according to strict timetable'

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Bascer Ahmad Khan today held an extensive meeting with various stakeholders from across the Kashmir valley to review the steps taken to streamline the traffic.

The meeting was attended by IG Traffic, Traffic Advisor, SP Traffic Rural, RTO Kashmir and representatives of various transport unions. The Div Com said that various initiatives taken in Srinagar have started to yield results and the same will be replicated in all other districts. He directed the Traffic Police and ARTOs to work in tandem to curb traffic violations.

The Div Com said that every passenger bus will ply according to a timetable and ARTOs will strictly check and take action if any bus plies



too slow or stops frequently causing inconvenience to the general public particularly students and office goers. He said that passengers buses will need to display fare list and the driver and conductor will have proper uniform. He directed the

passenger buses to stop immediately if any male person occupies seat meant solely for women and refuses to vacate it. He also banned any kind of music in the buses immediately.

The Div Com also gave strict

directions with regard to eradicating overloading and plying of school buses for ferrying passengers.

The Transporter unions raised various concerns in the meeting and the Div Com gave directions for their immediate redressal. He said un-

necessary check-posts on rural roads will be removed to help transporters. He also directed all DDCs to audit the space for bus terminals and parking in their districts and submit reports to his office. He also directed the respective district offices to start massive sanitation drive at bus terminals in every district.

The Div Com directed the RTO to compile a weekly report with regards to action taken for streamlining of traffic on weekly basis. He also directed tippers and truckers to cover their load of construction material with tarpaulin or face a heavy fine.

The Div Com empowered BDOs and Naib Tehsildars to check the document of passenger vehicles and see whether they are plying on their designate routes or not.

# DC KUPWARA REVIEWS DEVELOPMENTAL WORKS AT KACHAMA

KUPWARA, APRIL 28: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara Khalid Jahangir today visited Kachama village to get a first-hand appraisal of various developmental works executed by different departments during 2016-17 and current fiscal under Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub Plan (SCA to TSP) and Border Area Development Programme (BADP).

Concerned officers from various line-departments accompanied the DC on the occasion.

During his visit, the DC inspected GHS building Meelyal and various bridges and link-roads including Meelyal-Kachama road wherein on spot directions were issued to Executive Engineer R&B for initiating the process of blacktopping the said road within a week's time.

He also inspected Manzard Panchayat Ghar and Health Centre building that is under construction and issued direction for its completion within two months time. He also inspected the FCS&CA godown at Kachama and directed the ACD for expediting the pace of work so that it could be put to use at an earliest for the benefit of the people.

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### KATHUA

the District and Sessions Judge Kathua. The five member team of the Bar Council of India has deviated from the points of reference given to it by the Supreme Court and has supported the demand for CBI enquiry. Instead of protesting and blocking the filing of charge sheet the lawyers could have filed a suit before the Jammu and Kashmir High Court as the lawyers in Kashmir had done in the case of 2006 sex scandal and 2010 murder mystery of two Shopian women Asia and Nefeer. As far as the issue of transfer of the case to any place outside Jammu and Kashmir is concerned I don't think it will be in the interests of justice to shift the trial of the case to any court outside Jammu and Kashmir including Chandigarh. We have a bitter experience of the 2006 sex scandal case the trial of which was transferred to Chandigarh Court where all accused got the acquittal. It would be in the interests of Justice if the case is transferred to any place in Jammu region excepting Kathua and Jammu."

### YOUTH

the matter with New Delhi and means and ways are being devised that could repel youth from militancy. "Of course, it is a serious issue that needs to be tackled. We had thought that Kachidooora and Dragadh encounters will make youth re-think of joining any militant organization but everything has backfired," he told news agency CNS.

Reliable sources said that a large number of youth who are keen to join militancy are unable to do so because militant organizations have been facing acute shortage of weapons. "The weapon snatching incidents indicate that militant outfits are facing shortage of arms. This weapon snatching scenario can be viewed from other angle as well. Usually, new entrants are being tasked to snatch rifles from security men. Recent incident, in which new recruits from Hizbul Mujhadeen snatched four assault rifles from security men guarding a temple near Hyderpora, Srinagar proves our point," the official said.

If sources are to be believed, security agencies have been facing another challenge on part of general public who usually engage near encounter sites to ensure militants break the cordon. "In such a scenario, civilians get killed which is a grave concern. Killing a man, holding an AK-47 assault rifle can be justified but civilian killings can't be justified, though most of the civilians get killed near encounter sites are chronic stone-pelters."

Besides, cease fire violations from Pakistan, in the first four months of the current year, there has been already 35 gunfights in which 141 persons including 51 militants, 46 Forces personnel and 44 civilians have lost their lives. Out of the 46 Forces personnel who were killed, 26 were Army soldiers, 13 policemen, 3 CRPF personnel and 4 BSF Jawans.

### MOVE

The Civil Secretariat would open here on May, 07.

The Government has made elaborate arrangements for the transportation of official records, employees and their welfare.

### INAUGURATES

School of Engineering.

Mehbooba Mufti, on the occasion, wished the students, scholars and management of the University well on getting new infrastructure. She hoped that with this the academic activities at the University would get a new push.

Since its inception the university, besides routine academic activities, is running eight integrated honours courses and four more are being introduced this year. Among these, the two are being offered for the first time by any university in the State.

Earlier, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, Prof. Anju Bhasin gave a resume of the activities of the university since its inception. She said the curriculum adopted by the university matches the best in the country like Delhi University, Aligarh Muslim University and Banaras Hindu University.

Minister for Education, Syed Altaf Bukhari, who is also the Pro Chancellor of the University; Minister of State for Education, Priya Sethi; Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Dr. Asgar Samoon; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, Hemant Sharma; Vice Chancellor, Jammu University, Prof. RD Sharma; Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu, Prof. Ashok Aima; academicians, intellectuals; scholars and students were present on the occasion.

It may be recalled that the State Government had carved out two Cluster Universities, one each at Srinagar and Jammu, in 2016 to further strengthen the higher education in the State.

### MEHBOOBA

examinations were declared yesterday in which more than ten boys and girls from Jammu & Kashmir have made it to the country's prestigious civil services.

In her message to these successful candidates, the Chief Minister said with their well-deserved success these young

boys and girls have given the entire State a reason to rejoice and cheer. "I have always believed that our youth are full of potential, talent and enterprise. There is no dearth of that. But it is only a matter of opportunity and platform to display that talent", she said in her message.

Mehbooba Mufti said year after year the young boys and girls are giving Jammu & Kashmir a reason to smile which should make us ponder that if we all rise above the petty divides and channelize our potential in positive direction we can take the State to new heights of prosperity and excellence. She asked the young students to take a cue from the hard work and steadfastness of these civil services qualifiers.

The Chief Minister hoped that these young officers-designate would carry on with the same urge and serve the State and the country in the same spirit in which they cracked this prestigious examination.

Mehbooba Mufti has conveyed her warm greetings to the families, parents and teachers of these successful candidates as well.

### SHRC

JK, Muhammad Ahsan Untoo.

The petition filed by petitioner reads: "Besides killings in 2016, countless civilians were severely injured, disabled and even blinded due to use of excessive force including pellet guns and bullets by Security Forces. Killing spree resulted into a vicious cycle of more protests, killings and excessive use of force which was uncontrolled and government failed to curb the situation."

The petition further reads that: "the killing of civilians in Jammu and Kashmir by police or security forces is unjustified and the perpetrators should not be pardoned and must be dealt strongly within the realms of law. The civilians were intentionally targeted with live bullets and pellets."

The petitioner, Muhammad Ahsan Untoo in his petition has prayed that State Human Rights Commission should pass instant and appropriate orders for the investigation of the civilian killings during 2016 uprising and allow proper investigation to find out the reason behind the killings.

The petitioner has asked the Commission to direct the concerned authorities to compensate the victims and the families of all the injured persons and the killers of these innocent civilians be brought to justice while security forces be directed to explain the procedure of protest and crowd control.

Taking cognizance of the petition, the member of the Commission Dilshada Shaheen issued notices to Jammu Kashmir Chief Secretary and DG Police asking them to file a detailed compliance report.

Besides Petitioner, Additional Advocate General MM Khan and Chief Prosecuting Officer Mumtaz Salim were present while the Commission listed the case for next hearing on June 2 this year.

### PDP

commission to all such employees right from January 1, 2016 is an indication of how the present regime is rigorously pursuing its agenda of addressing the woes and concerns of each and every section of the society. "On all fronts, this government has scanned new horizons and it has prioritized its efforts when it comes to giving voice to the unrepresented class, protecting and safeguarding the most vulnerable sections of the society or in providing the new avenues of dignified and honourable means of livelihood to the youth of the state," Alam said.

He maintained that contrary to the decisions of the past regimes during which the youth used to be pushed to the wall and underling the sufferings of non-affluent had become a norm, the present government is in a forefront undoing the blunders committed by the past rulers and giving the people of the state plethora of reasons to hope for a prosperous and incorruptible tomorrow.

Appreciating the finance minister for fulfilling the commitments made to the employees, Alam said that despite the financial constraints, the chief minister Mehbooba Mufti remained in a forefront to accord benefits of the 7th pay commission to the SRO-202 appointees. He said that it is the outcome of the earnest efforts of the chief minister that a Lecturer, appointed under SRO-202 who was getting Rs 20100 will now get Rs 52000 monthly salary, while Junior Engineer, getting Rs 13500 will be entitled to Rs 35400 and a teacher getting Rs 8300 to Rs 11170 will get Rs 29200 per month.

### MBBS

my brother."

Mehbooba had tweeted: "Concerning reports coming in about a Kashmiri student, Suhail Aijaz of Kupwara being kidnapped in Odisha. I request the authorities to investigate & take swift action. @CMO\_Odisha @Naveen\_Odisha," she had tweeted.

Suhail's mother issued an appeal to the Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti to find out her son. "Mere tweet is not enough. The government needs to take concrete measures to trace out my son," she said, adding, "My husband is still unable to make

any movement after he was removed from the ventilator at SKIMS. The government must act and something concrete must be done to trace out my son".

Suhail's father was returning home along with his two cousin brothers from Odisha when the car they were traveling in met with an accident at Unisoo along Srinagar-Kupwara highway on March 18.

Two of his cousin brothers Liyaqat Kataria and Mushtaq Ahmad Kataria sons of Alif Din Kataria were killed in the mishap while Suhail's father remained on the ventilator for a month and has been shifted in an observation ward at SKIMS Soura.

Anup Sahu (IPS), Deputy Commissioner of Police Bhubaneswar, who has joined recently, told Srinagar-based news agency GNS that a team of Odhisa police was deputed to Gurgaon New Delhi and it returned without any success.

"Kindly call me during working hours on Monday and I would accordingly inform you about the status of the case," he added.

Suhail Aijaz, a resident of Marsari, Chowkibal, Kupwara of north Kashmir, pursuing MBBS since 2016 at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bhubaneswar, Odisha, went missing on February 9, two days after his parents transferred some money in his account on his asking.

### HAKHEEM

, intimidation and harassment of non-Hindus.

Addressing a public gathering at Kaachwari Hillnar in Khansahib constituency, Hakeem Yaseen said that the forced attempts to safronise the country was fought with dangerous repercussions to vitiate age old communal harmony of the country and to disintegrate it.

He said forced safronisation of the country has confronted all the minorities to biggest ever challenges ranging from acts of violence, intimidation, loss of political space and disenchantment, which all the secular forces have to fight untidily.

He said, if we fail to curb the growing activities of communal forces at this stage, the posterity will never forgive us.

He has also denounced deliberate attempts to communalize the tragic and shameful rape and murder case of an 8 years old poor nomadic girl, Asifa in Rasana village of district Udhampur adding that it was most regretting and unfortunate that even a team of the Bar Council of India was influenced by Hindu extremists to play a partisan role and give a clean chit to those Lawyers of the Kathua Bar Association who have brazenly obstructed filing of charge sheet in the court by the Crime Branch against the identified criminals.

He said any attempt for selective application of the process of law will only increase alienation among the minorities in the state besides feeding a feeling of mistrust against judiciary.

Hakeem Yaseen, accompanied by a team of the senior officers of the district administration and concerned engineers also conducted on the spot inspection of various ongoing development works in the area.

He directed the concerned officers and engineers to expedite the pace of work so that development projects are completed in stipulated time frame and people could take benefit at the earliest.

He asked the engineers to ensure that standard quality material used in works adding that people should also help to monitor works in their respective areas.

### CONDUCT

headed by Chairperson JKBOSE was constituted by the Government with Directors of School Education Jammu/ Kashmir and Experts from University of Jammu/Kashmir as Members," the notification said.

The Committee, it said, held several rounds of deliberations on the subject and also took note of the views expressed by various quarters on the issue through the media. "The report submitted by the Committee has been taken into account by the Government and it has been felt that the issues raised during its deliberations need further and wider consultation before any final decision is taken on the matter in the larger interest of the students," the notification said adding that the Government has now decided to continue with the present system of conducting examinations in November session for the current academic year

### ALTAf

capital Srinagar, here today.

Following its closure here in the winter capital yesterday, the civil secretariat and other move offices would start functioning from the summer capital in Srinagar from 7th May. For shifting of official record, the authorities have engaged a fleet of 107 vehicles which will be leaving today here from the civil secretariat.

Responding to queries of print and electronic media persons after the inspection, the Minister said that state government would continue to embark on its cherished agenda of restoration of peace, good governance and development. "The state government led by Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti is committed to good governance and the agenda will

be followed wholeheartedly hereon as well", the Minister asserted while listing the historical decisions taken by the government recently, like implementation of 7th Pay commission, moving of SRO 202 appointees to new framework and extension of pay revision benefits to them.

Commenting on the centuries old bi-annual Darbar Move practice, the Minister said it has strengthened and symbolized the unity of Jammu and Kashmir and it must go on.

Hoping for a bumper tourism season this year, the Minister said being world famous tourist destination Kashmir does not require any introduction. "What it needs is a positive projection out in the world. I hope that this time media will take lead in wiping out the negativity picture" the Minister said.

Later, the Minister also held a brief interaction with the officials associated with the record shifting process and sought the details about the fleet engaged and the onward journey schedule.

### DESH

A student at Desh Baghat University while pleading anonymity told Kashmir News Bureau,

"Each student has been fined at least Rs ten to fifteen thousand on several pretexts. It is a clear cut move against Kashmiri students aimed to muzzle us, and even the original charges are hiked once a student from Kashmir enters the campus. With just few days left to exam even our roll no slips are not given and every medium used to scuttle our voice. The university has turned into a minijail for us and resembles torture centre for us."

According to reports, several female students fainted in last few days while protesting the callous and cruel attitude of administration against the students of Kashmir.

The students have urged the state government of Jammu and Kashmir especially Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti to have a look into the matter and demanded necessary action in this regard.

Earlier on February, news has come on forth that Kashmiri girl students at Dsh Baghat University, Mandi Gobindgarh have alleged high-handed and torture type approach from their faculty.

### MALIK

manhandled by those who claim to be law enforcers what can a common Kashmiri expect from the police," JRL said.

The leadership said that Malik was on way to lead a protest called by the JRL but his vehicle was stopped and he was 'dragged, physically assaulted and abused' by the policemen at Khanyar by a senior police officer who also spoke venomously and made derogatory remarks on Kashmir's resistance leadership. The JRL said that "today's incident at Khanyar makes it clear that police is following the RSS diktats and the policy of repression to muzzle the genuine voices in Kashmir and their aspirations."

Meanwhile, despite 'assault' on JKLF Chief, many JRL leaders and activists assembled outside Jamia Masjid to stage a peaceful protest.

The protestors protested against killing of Kashmiri boys by forces, use of brute force against students by police and other forces and the illegal detention of dozens of resistance leaders by NIA. They raised slogans against 'a reign of terror' unleashed by the government forces across Kashmir.

The protestors strongly denounced the huge deployment of forces around educational institutions and use of pellets, teargas and pava shells against peaceful protesting students across Kashmir.

They said police and other government forces have choked every space for the peaceful protest and a military approach was followed to force the people into a submission. "Youth are pushed to the wall due to the iron fist policy of the ruling regime which is highly condemnable," they said.

The protestors while terming the arrests made by NIA and ED 'totally unjustified', demanded immediate release of Shabir Shah, Altaf Fantosh, Advocate Shahidul Islam, Ayaz Akbar, Peer Saifullah, Mehrajudin Kalwal, Shahid Yousuf, Farooq Dar, Nayeem Khan, Zahoor Watali.

The JRL said detention of these leaders is 'illegal' and that they should be released forthwith.

Those who participated in the protest include Gh Nabi Zaki, Sheikh Abdur Rashid, Umar Adil, Hakeem Abdur Rashid, Abdur Rashid Untoo, Gh Nabi Najar, Mushtaq Ah Sufi, Muhammad Shafi Khan, Muhammad Saleem Zargar, Muhammad Yousuf Naqash, Muhammad Yousuf Attai, Jaffar Kashmiri, Sahil War, Zahoor Ah Bhat, Prof Qudus, Muhammad Siddiq Hazar, Farooq Ahmed Sheikh and others.

### STAFF

Naik.

"Our demand is to remove pay disparity. This demand of ours has already been examined and recommended by two Pay Anomaly Committees Vyas Committee of 2007 and Khanday Committee of 2012 and now another committee has been constituted. This decision has rubbed salt on our wounds," he said adding that clerical staff will continue their agitation till their demanded is not fulfilled.

## Dy CM reviews functioning of PDD, Local Bodies department

KATHUA, APRIL 28: Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh today held a meeting with the officers of PDD and Local bodies department to review their functioning here at Basohli today.

Speaking at the meeting the Deputy CM said that in the past 3 years capacity of PDD has been augmented from 10 MVA to 30 MVA and Rs. 30 Crores has been sanctioned to revamp the power infra by strengthening the transmission and distribution network in Basohli. He also stressed on ensuring that the projects being implemented in the power sector are completed within the stipulated time frame and asked the concerned officers to regularly monitor the works on grounds so that set targets are optimally achieved.

Dr. Singh also added that 18 new transformers will be installed in Basohli besides 18 KM of 11 KV distribution line and normal distribution lines will be laid so that people would get 24x7 quality power supply. For achieving this target, the Government has already given obligation to install 2 receiving stations between Dhar Mahanpur and Karanwara besides up grading sub stations at Basohli, Mahanpur and Sheetal Nagar.

Dy.CM further said that it is the vision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to provide electricity to every household of the country and the Government would come to people's



doorstep to provide power connection to every household through the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA). Under this scheme the poorest of the poor can afford electricity in their homes, DyCM added and further announced that every un-electrified home will be electrified under this scheme before May, 2019 besides Rs. 13.25 Crore has been earmarked under this scheme for Basohli constituency.

To meet the challenge of shortage of transformers in the ensuing summer season, DyCM suggested maintaining buffer stock of transformers at Basohli to cater any emergency at far off places. He also advised to es-

tablish Basohli-Bani-Billawar as new division to provide better facilities to the people living in remote areas.

EO, MC Basohli briefed the meeting that 106 IHHLs are under construction in Basohli against the set target of 166 IHHLs. However, ADC Basohli said that Basohli will be made ODF by 20th October, 2019 as all out efforts are being made to achieve this target. Dy.CM exhorted upon the officers to conduct a survey among the students to know how many of them are left without IHHLs so that the statistics received after the survey can be put to use by constructing new IHHLs to realize the aim of ODF.

To revive the historical importance

and to improve the aesthetic looks of various towns like Billawar, Nagri-Parole, Hiranagar, Samba, Basohli etc. which are governed by Local Bodies department, DyCM directed the concerned officers to hire a consultant of national repute for complete makeover of these towns besides maintaining sanitation and hygiene.

Later, the Dy.CM took round of Basohli city and inspected various ongoing works including the toilet complex and directed the concerned officials to remove encroachment from the Bus Stand. He also enquired about the Solid Liquid Waste Treatment Plant, to which the ADC briefed that for Solid Waste treatment plant land has been identified at village Rehan.

Representatives from village Rehan, Mandla, Ghagrove, Madrakhi, Plahi, Plakh, Nagrota, Dhar Jankher and Jankher besides members of Beopar Mandal met with the Dy.CM and apprised him of their problems.

Dy.CM gave them a patient hearing and directed DC Kathua to immediately hand over the charge of Tehsildar Basohli to Tehsildar Mahanpur as the post of Tehsildar Basohli is lying vacant for some time causing inconvenience to the people.

Chief Engineer EM&RE, Ashwini Gupta, ADC Basohli, Sanjay Gupta, SE Kathua, Sandeep Seth, SDPO, Sunil Singh, EO, Engineers and members of civil society besides OSD, Shakti Pathak were present on the occasion.

## Naeem Akhtar tours Bandipora, addresses Gram Swaraj

Also reviews progress on Sumbal-Bandipora road work



BANDIPORA, APRIL 29: Minister for Public Works, Naeem Akhtar Saturday visited Bandipora and addressed a function of Gram Swaraj Abhiyan here. He also took stock of ongoing work on Sumbal-Bandipora road.

The District Development Commissioner (DDC), Bandipora, Khurshid Ahmad Sanai, Superintendent of Police, Assistant Commissioner Development, officers and a large number of people were present on the occasion.

The Minister said educated youth need to build consensus as to how they can rebuild their villages on modern lines. He directed DDC Bandipora to adopt at least two villages as model villages and ensure availability of all civic facilities there. For this, the Minister

announced every possible help from his constituency development fund. He said that nature has bestowed the district with natural resources like Ullar and Nallah Arin water bodies and it is we who need to protect and sustain them for future generations.

Earlier, the Minister took stock of progress on Sumbal-Bandipora road and directed the concerned executing agency to speed up the work. He was informed that pre-macadamization work on Safapora to Ajas patch is in progress at a cost of Rs 18.4 crore and macadamization work shall start in May, while as work on Ajas-Sunerwani stretch costing Rs 23.33 crore has been approved for which tenders shall be floated in May 2018.

## Kavinder conducts whirlwind tour of Gandhi Nagar Constituency

Inspects ongoing development works

JAMMU, April 28: Speaker of Legislative Assembly, Kavinder Gupta today conducted whirlwind tour of Gandhi Nagar Constituency and took stock of various ongoing development works.

During his visit, the Speaker visited Digiana area and inspected the ongoing construction work of nallah there.

Speaking on the occasion, Kavinder Gupta said that the completion of the nallah will mitigate the problem of water logging in the areas of Digiana, Rani talab and Akali Kour Singh Nagar and more areas including Nai basti and Shastri Nagar will also be included in this Rs 5.42 cr project.

The Speaker also conducted a series of public interaction sessions where the locals projected various demands pertaining to augmentation of essential public



utilities. Redressing the issue of water supply in Digiana, the Speaker assured the residents that the matter will be taken up to the concerned authorities and new pipeline will be installed to mitigate their problem.

Kavinder Gupta also assured the locals that their genuine concerns will be taken up on priority for early resolution and issued on spot instructions to the concerned officers to initiate the neces-

sary measures for early mitigation of public demands regarding development works.

Reiterating Government's commitment, the Speaker said that the present dispensation has put in resolute efforts to provide basic amenities to the people at their doorsteps. He said that the government is working with an agenda of equitable development to ensure the welfare of every section of society.

The Speaker also emphasized on the active public

participation in the development works initiated for their betterment. Stressing on regular monitoring of the ongoing works, the Speaker directed the officers of concerned executive agencies to properly check and monitor the quality of the material used in the projects.

The Speaker was accompanied by Senior Politician Rajinder Singh besides officers of the concerned departments and prominent citizens of the locality.

## Bali reviews functioning of GMCH, associated hospitals

Calls for close coordination among health institutions to improve health scenario

JAMMU, APRIL 28 - Minister for Health & Medical Education, Bali Bhagat today convened a meeting to review the functioning of Government Medical College, Super Speciality Hospital and Associated Hospitals of Jammu to improve the overall functioning of these institutions.

In the meeting, various issues related to the functioning of these institutions vis-a-vis difficulties being faced in rendering the day-to-day duties with regard to the requisite diagnostic equipments, essential medicines, articles of emergency nature, paucity of manpower including doctors and trained para-medics were discussed.

The issues with regard to delay in procurement of medicines, specialized equipments like Cardiac Monitors, Ventilators, liabilities on various accounts, diet to the patients, outsourcing of sanitation, hospital security were



also discussed in the meeting. The Minister called for close synergy among JKMSCL, GMC, SSH and associated hospitals for timely procurement of medicines and diagnostic equipments.

He said JKMSCL has the sole mandate of procurement of all kinds of medicines and equipments and it is mandatory on its part to meet out the timely requirements of all hospitals.

The Minister directed for nominating a Nodal Officer for sorting petty issues between the GMC and JKMSCL

for ensuring expeditious disposal of issues, especially related to the procurement of medicines and equipments.

In order to meet the emergency requirements, the Minister directed for utilization of 25 per cent of the annual budgetary provisions, but rest must be utilized by purchases through the Corporation which has been created for the said purpose.

For providing diet to the patients, the Minister directed for working out the proposal afresh according to the budgetary provisions and

actual requirements. He assured to address the issues relating to the outsourcing of sanitation and hospital security after the opening of darbar move at Srinagar.

Prominent among those present in the meeting included Principal GMC, Dr. Sunanda Raina, Managing Director, JKMSCL, Inderjeet Bhagat, Medical Superintendent (MS), SSH, Dr. Arun Sharma, MS, GMC, Dr. Dara Singh, MS, SMGS, Dr. R.K. Sangra, Dr. Rajeshwar Sharma from CD Hospital and officers from JKMSCL and GMC.

## Dr. Jitendra attends Gram Shakti Diwas at SAGY village Bhattan, Nagseni

Announces 50 lacs for Bhattan, 50 lacs for Toilet and development of Gompa at Machail

Kishtwar, April 28: Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region, Prime Minister Office, Personal Grievances and Pensions, Deptt of Atomic energy and Deptt of Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today attended Gram Shakti Diwas programme at village Bhattan Nagseni.

Minister of State for Transport, Sunil Kumar Sharma was also present on the occasion.

DDC Angrez Singh Rana, SSP Abrar Ahmed Choudhary, all district/ Sectoral officers were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion of Gram Shakti Diwas, Dr. Jitendra said that the adopted village Bhattan lacks "Shakti" in accordance to Gram Shakti diwas but the present government is in process of implementing many central and state sponsored schemes here. He directed DDC Kishtwar to give priority to the implementation of seven schemes like Ujjwala, Saubhagya, mission Indradhanush, PMJDY, PMJJY, SBM in the village on priority and ensure 100% completion in a time bound manner.

Dr Jitendra said we assure the people that all the basic amenities of life are provided so that the village becomes a model village. He also



enumerated the numerous welfare measures taken by the government in the past 4 years.

Dr Singh announced Rs 50 lakh for development of village Bhattan under M.P fund, 25 lakh for construction of toilets at Machail and 25 lakh for development of Gompa (Machail) and urged the district administration to make the oncoming Machail yatra completely ODF.

Dr Singh further added that the motive behind visiting the rural populace is the belief of government to redress their issues at door steps and ensure economic inclusion of all sections of the society on priority.

Sunil Sharma in his speech laid emphasis on importance of block

Nagseni because of its close proximity to district headquarters and said that it has been given priority by present government to ensure development of this area. Sharma said that we are on the job of providing better road facilities in every nook and corner of the district besides other facilities at doorstep of people.

He counted various achievements like completion of Cheerji road, Cherji to Sunna Bhatta road, Chignana road, Pular road, sanctioning of Sports college in Bhagna, adequate funds under NRLM for women employment, allotment of dairy project, milk van and other.

He further added that with the new Hydroelectric projects at Kiru,

Kwar, Pakal Dool, the employment opportunities of the area will increase manifold.

Earlier DDC Angrez Singh Rana elaborated on the achievements in village Dimgi Bhattan and other parts of the district and ensured people that the benefit of various schemes meant for welfare of people shall percolate down to each and every person in the

Later, the minister distributed the cheques and orders of various Pension schemes among the beneficiaries of social welfare department besides PDD deptt, regularised various household connection free of cost without depositing any security amount and also distributed LED bulbs.

## Forest department organizes plantation drive on Hariparbat

Addl. Principal Chief Conservator Forests inaugurates drive

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28: The J&K Department of Forests in collaboration with the National Society for Protection of Water Resources, Wetlands and Forests (NPWWF) today organized a plantation drive on Hariparbat aimed at promoting plantation of trees for cleaner and greener environment.

The drive was inaugurated by Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Nisar Ahmad who was the chief guest on the occasion.

Conservator of Forests Irfan Ali Shah, DFO Mukhtar Ahmad and Chairman NPWWF Nazir Benazir were also present on the occasion.

The plantation drive witnessed the participation of students especially from Green Land School, Model Institute of Education, SMI Mission School besides forest department officials.

The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests while addressing the students and department officials said in contrast to the past practice trees are now grown in poly packs thus can be planted round the year, which provides for increased plantation of trees and therefore helps prevent deforestation.



He said the Forest department aims to plant more conifers on Hariparbat as has been done on Shankar Acharya hills, adding that vegetation helps decrease pollution levels.

Irfan Ali Shah while speaking on the occasion said the department's sustained efforts have led to Shankar Acharya hills becoming lush green providing habitation to several kinds of wild animals including leopards and bears.

Chairman NPWWF said that the Forest department is playing an important role in urban forestry, adding that planting more trees in urban areas will help preserve cleaner and greener environment.

## DAILY Editorial Time and Us SRINAGAR J&K

### Under strain: on sliding value of rupee

The Indian rupee is again under pressure as rising oil prices have combined with higher U.S. bond yields to spur demand for the dollar. After a strong showing in 2017, when the rupee appreciated 6% against the greenback, the currency has been buffeted by crosswinds that have caused it to weaken by about 4.5% so far this year. With global oil prices continuing a steady climb on the back of tight output controls marshalled by the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Brent crude futures have gained almost 12% through 2018. This in turn has bloated India's crude import bill and widened the trade deficit appreciably. While merchandise exports shrank 0.66% in March to \$29.11 billion, the monthly bill for the import of goods, including oil, rose 7.2% to \$42.8 billion, widening the trade shortfall to \$13.69 billion. Foreign institutional and portfolio investors — who had pumped in close to \$30 billion into Indian debt and equity in 2017 — have turned net sellers, with the pace of outflows accelerating sharply this month to more than \$2.3 billion. The prospect of higher interest rates in the U.S., with the Federal Reserve having signalled last month that it is on course to raise the policy rate at least two more times in 2018, have now begun to firmly feed into investors' expectations as well. This was best exemplified this week when the yield on the benchmark 10-year U.S. Treasury debt rose above 3% for the first time since January 2014.

While the rupee is not alone among BRICS currencies to have depreciated against the dollar this year, with both the Brazilian real and the Russian rouble losing value, it remains particularly vulnerable to mounting oil costs given the economy's extremely high dependence on crude imports to meet energy needs. Saudi Arabia, one of the world's largest crude producers, is eyeing oil prices in the vicinity of \$80 a barrel so as to be able to comfortably balance its budget and have cash to spare to fund Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's ambitious socio-economic reforms. The spectre of fresh tensions involving Iran if President Donald Trump walks his tough talk over the nuclear agreement with Tehran is also almost certain to prevent any significant softening in oil prices even if American shale producers increase output. Signals from the dollar index — a measure of the greenback's value against a basket of six major currencies — too offer little reassurance to the rupee. The index is close to its highest level since mid-January, indicating that investors see assets undergirded by the dollar as a strong bet. For now, the war chest of forex reserves the Reserve Bank of India has accumulated, \$423.6 billion in all, remains the key bulwark against excessive currency market volatility.

# KATHUA RAPE CASE

## Disturbing division

By SHUJAAT BUKHARI

THE horrific rape and murder of an eight-year old girl from the Muslim Gujjar-Bakarwal community in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir has added to the festering problem of communalisation the State has been facing for a long time. The incident brought out a sinister side of the problem as at one point of time it looked as if rape were a legitimate weapon to take on the community. Although the whole of Jammu did not rally behind those who, in many ways, tried to protect the perpetrators of the crime, the silence of the majority gave an impression that the politics was well played. The turning point in the case came on April 9 when lawyers in Kathua tried to prevent the crime branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Police from filing a charge sheet in court in connection with the case. The Jammu Bar Association also called for a bandh on April 11 on the matter. Both these appalling developments displayed a high degree of insensitivity. The lawyers in Kathua and in Jammu echoed the "sentiment" of the newly formed Hindu Ekta Manch (HEM), which was riding on victimhood by saying that since the accused were Hindus, they were being "framed" by the Crime Branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which had many Muslim officers, including its head, Inspector General of Police Syed Ahfadul Mujtaba.

The horrifying rape and murder of a woman in Delhi in 2012 led to strong protests from all members of civil society and brought radical changes in India's anti-rape laws, but in the Kathua case, the child's assault and death are being used by Hindutva groups to communally polarise the State. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is part of the coalition government led by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), also played a role in giving "sanction" to communalising the rape and murder. But it had to bite the dust after tremendous public pressure at the regional, national and international levels forced it to ask two of its Ministers, Chandra Prakash Ganga and Lal Singh, to resign. Both the Ministers had joined a rally organised by the HEM.

Communal card  
The body of the eight-year-old child was found on January 17. She had been missing for a week, during which time she had been raped and murdered. Her family alleged that the police had done little to find her. After the Gujjar community erupted in protest, the case was handed over to the Crime Branch, which arrested two special police officers. One of them has been accused of direct involvement in the murder. However, the charge sheet filed by the Crime Branch states that the main accused in the case is 60-year-old Sanji Ram, a retired government employee. Four police officials have also been accused: special police officers Deepak Khajuria and Surinder Kumar, who have been charged with direct involvement in the crime, and a sub-inspector, Anand Datta, and a head constable, Tilak Raj, who have been accused of helping to cover up the crime.

The communal card was played by local Hindutva groups and political parties from the day the case was handed over to the Crime Branch. The HEM, which was formed to defend the accused, came into being on January 23. Its members had no qualms in announcing publicly that the crime was a Hindu ver-



sus Muslim issue and took out rallies to seek the release of the accused. It is unlikely that scenes in support of an alleged rapist, such as those seen in Jammu since January, have been witnessed elsewhere. A few women even held a hunger strike demanding that the case be transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Indeed, this is the prime demand of those agitating in favour of the accused. They claim that this will ensure that the investigation into the crime will be impartial. And this is where the fault lines become clear.

First, why is the Jammu Bar Association stressing on an investigation by an agency controlled by the Union government when the State's Crime Branch has already completed its investigation and even filed a charge sheet? Is the demand for a CBI probe to ensure a fair probe or to thwart justice? The Bar Association, which came under flak from both the Supreme Court and the Bar Council of India (BCI) for thwarting the process of justice, has suspended the strike but reiterated its demand for a CBI probe.

The BJP supported this demand. This was evident from the presence of Chandra Prakash Ganga and Lal Singh at the HEM rally on March 1. Both the Ministers had vociferously echoed what the HEM was saying and raised serious doubts about the Crime Branch probe, initiated earlier by its former head, Additional Director General of Police Alok Puri, who retired on February 28.

The BJP could not resist the temptation to ignite emotions on the basis of religion when the demand for a CBI investigation found support within the Union government. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, who is the Lok Sabha member from Udhampur, which includes Kathua, said in Jammu on February 22: "If people feel that they do not have faith in the police or Crime Branch investigation and the case needs to be handed over to the CBI, I don't think there is any problem in handing over the case to the CBI. If the State government does so and recommends it to the Centre, we will definitely act on it."

As late as April 17, he repeated the same position even as the BJP was trying to distance itself from the demand. "We have no problem in handing over the case to the CBI even today if the State government makes a reference to it," he told mediapersons in Jammu. This was in contrast to the BJP's assertion that it did not support Lal Singh's demand for a CBI probe. Lal Singh took out a rally on April 17, three days after his resignation, reiterating that the probe should be handed

over to the CBI.

What the BJP Ministers seem to forget is that the BJP is in power in Jammu and Kashmir and that the Crime Branch is the investigations wing of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which takes its orders from the State government. Additionally, the Crime Branch already has a professional team of officers dealing with the case, and the State police is headed by Shesh Paul Vaid, who is from Jammu. Ramesh Kumar Jalla, the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) who headed the team, has an unblemished record of professionalism to his credit. A response to the "fears" about the Crime Branch probe, however, came from the only female member of the Special Investigation Team (SIT), Shwetambari Sharma, who also hails from Jammu. She said that they completed the investigation against heavy odds, referring to the hurdles created during the process. "The people we believed were involved in the gruesome rape and murder of that eight-year-old girl, and their relatives and sympathisers, including a multitude of the lawyers, left no stone unturned to disrupt our investigation. They went to the extreme of our humiliation and harassment. But we stood our ground firmly till the end," Shwetambari Sharma, the Jammu-based Deputy Superintendent of Police in the Crime Branch, said.

Lal Singh and his colleagues also need to answer this question: If the Jammu and Kashmir police can be hailed for successful counter-insurgency operations in which they kill militants, why can't they be trusted to handle the Kathua rape and murder case?

The CBI investigated the Pathribal fake encounter case of 2000 and proved that five civilians who were killed by the Army after the massacre of 35 Sikhs in March 2000 were innocent. But the Government of India refused to prosecute the Army personnel. In the Kathua case, a Union Minister has supported the call for a CBI investigation. But given that the investigating agency comes under the Centre, how can it be ensured that action will be taken?

The motive

The rape and murder of the minor was to be used as a tool to harass the Gujjar-Bakarwal community in the area and "get rid of it". Sanji Ram, the alleged mastermind, had planned it "meticulously" and guided the gang, according to the charge sheet. He also paid a bribe of Rs.4 lakh to two police officers to cover up the crime by destroying evidence.

There has been animosity towards the Bakarwal community for a long time. The community members, who are mostly Mus-

lim in these parts of Jammu, are a small minority in Kathua district. In Rasana village, which lies in the Hiranagar area of the district, Hindu residents and Muslim herders regularly clash with each other, with Hindus alleging cow slaughter by Muslim herders and damage to their crops by the herders' livestock. The acrimony has already led to several cases in local police stations. But this case was to be used to teach them a lesson once and for all.

The charge sheet reveals that at least two among the accused are believed to have held personal grudges against the Bakarwal community. One of them is Khajuria, who had got into a "few scuffles" with the Bakarwals. The minor, too, had to take revenge as he had been beaten for his "unruly behaviour" by some community members.

Vote-bank politics

It is now clear that the major factor in the agitation in support of the alleged rapists is not about faith in the State police but vote-bank politics. This factor has driven politicians in the State to openly defend the accused. Almost all Jammu-centric parties, with their eyes on their vote banks, have remained non-committal on the matter, their silence obliquely endorsing the heinous crime.

Although the Congress has not officially made its stand clear on the matter, one of its spokespersons attended a meeting called by the Jammu Bar Association on April 8 in which all issues, including the demand for a CBI probe, were discussed and the call for a bandh was made.

It is also disturbing to see civil society in Jammu silent on the matter.

With condemnation coming only from Muslim areas of the Hindu-dominated Jammu division and from the Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley, the crime has become a perfect example of the communalisation of rape. Only a few voices from Jammu have called for justice in the case without looking at it as a Hindu versus Muslim affair. Some exceptions like Rekha Choudhary, a distinguished political scientist, made it clear that it was all about justice for an eight-year-old.

"This case has shaken the conscience of Jammu. Irrespective of religion or community barriers, people are expressing shock and horror. Time to say, no more politics and no more communal appropriation of the issue. Only empathy for the family and demand for speedy justice" she wrote on Facebook on April 14, triggering a debate. Others like Anuradha Bhasin, a journalist, and Ellora Puri, an academic, also came out in support of the campaign for justice. But a clear-cut opposition to those who openly came out in support of the accused on the premise of a CBI inquiry did not come. Many people linked the case to the "larger issue" of apprehension of a demographic change in Jammu. The lines were clearly drawn as to how it must be dealt with.

In a way, the situation is reminiscent of that in 2008, when Kashmir and Jammu were divided on similar lines over the Amarnath land row, which started after the State government decided to transfer forest land to the Amarnath Shrine Board. Land is an emotive issue, and one could understand the emotions at that time. The beneficiary in the Assembly elections held that year was the BJP. But in the Kathua case, the move to defend an alleged rapist and murderer has made the entire politics around it murky.

# ANATOMY OF A RESET

By Zorawar Daulet Singh

THE India-China relationship has always been too complex to classify under a single theme. Competition-cooperation-discord is an often-evoked term typology that reflects the contradictory nature of this relationship. Last year witnessed all these facets play out: India's trenchant critique of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the dramatic crisis in Doklam on the northern frontiers, the acceleration of multilateral cooperation in the BRICS format, and attempts to foster economic engagement. Yet, nothing exemplified the state of ties more than the Himalayan standoff, which was the closest both countries came to drawing blood in over three decades.

Build-up of negativity  
What led to this tailspin in India-China relations? We will not find the clues in some valley or a narrow stretch of road in the upper Himalayas. Rather, the main reason has been a systematic buildup of negative images of how each side viewed the other's foreign policies along with a collapse in geopolitical trust. For India, China's attempt to raise its

economic and political profile in the subcontinent was seen as an encroachment on, and an affront to, Indian authority in the neighbourhood. For China, India's pursuit of deeper military cooperation with the former's main strategic rivals — the U.S. and Japan — was viewed as a serious challenge to its future security. Convinced that only an assertive policy would work, both Delhi and Beijing over the past two years began exploiting levers and pressure points to keep the other side off balance. India tilted closer to the U.S., China towards Pakistan, and on a scale not witnessed even during the Cold War years.

Yet, neither side has been able to extract any concessions or improve the terms of their bilateral interactions. On a range of issues — the Nuclear Suppliers Group membership, Pakistan-sponsored terror and hydrological cooperation being the most prominent — India failed to receive any give from China. With India's boycott of the BRI, China too found itself confronting not only the only major holdout against its flagship international initiative but also its most suspicious and non-cooperative neighbour in Asia. Beijing also noticed that New Delhi was beginning to openly in-



volve external powers to collaborate with it in an anti-China strategy in South Asia and the Indian Ocean. Worse still must have been the spectacle of India brandishing its Tibet card. Such unbridled competition and rising costs to Indian and Chinese interests — and Doklam was the tipping point — appears to have persuaded both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping that their policies were producing zero-sum outcomes and required some kind of a course correction.

Sensibly, both leaderships have drawn the correct lessons and are reciprocating each other's moves towards a reset. The

traditional template, where India-China differences were handled in an overall framework of a politically stable and mature relationship, is being restored. The rhetoric from the recent meeting between Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi was instructive. The emphasis has shifted from a glass half-empty narrative to a glass half-full: "our commonalities outweigh our differences" (Indian Foreign Minister) or "our common interests far outweigh our differences" (Chinese Foreign Minister). To be sure, we have heard similar rhetoric before. But the context is new as

both leaderships hope to infuse stability back into this complex relationship.

The Modi government's decision to resuscitate the China relationship has aroused scepticism from the doubters in the strategic community who think the pendulum will shift towards appeasement after a period of doggedly standing up to China. But New Delhi is really adjusting a policy that has simply not worked. First, it is becoming apparent to the realists inside the government that an adversarial relationship with China brings no advantages and amplifies security problems that India can neither solve on its own nor address with the assistance of external powers who have shown little inclination to deflect Chinese influence in the subcontinent and its littoral.

Third, a contentious India-China relationship also reduces India's bargaining leverage vis-à-vis the U.S. and Japan. New Delhi must have also noticed that despite their differences with Beijing, both the U.S. and Japan truly value their interdependence with China. Sino-American cooperation on the Korean nuclear question and efforts to transform North East Asian geopolitics is just one example. Japan, with a \$300 billion

trading relationship with China, too wants to ensure it remains engaged with the world's second largest economy. Recently, Tokyo has even endorsed the prospect of a "case-by-case" cooperation with the BRI.

Finally, the Modi government is also recognising that the promise of economic cooperation with China can only translate into meaningful outcomes if there is overall geopolitical stability. Few economic actors will enter the fray if the forecast for bilateral ties is one of uncertainty and turbulence. Mr. Modi's original instinct to craft a grand "developmental partnership" with China got lost in the geopolitical headwinds after 2014. There now seems to be an effort to reclaim that pragmatic vision.

Since 2014, India's discourse on China's rise has swung back and forth from paranoia and deep suspicion to calmer assessments of its implications for Asia and the world economy. Fortunately, there is now a shared belief in both capitals that a posture of hostility has undermined Indian and Chinese interests. But an India-China détente will have to be built on more than just common sense. Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi have their task cut out for them.

## Modi, Xi agree to work on a joint economic project in Afghanistan: Sources

India and China will for first time implement a joint economic project in war-torn Afghanistan, officials said on Saturday at the end of the two-day informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping.

No details were immediately available about the project but it was learnt from people familiar with the decision that the two leaders reached consensus on working together for the development of Afghanistan and its people.

This is probably the first time India and China will work together on a developmental project in a third country.

India has for long had a presence in the development sector of Afghanistan and has provided billions of dollars for building and refurbishing vital infrastructure such as dams and highways.

China is emerging as a key player in Afghanistan, largely because of Beijing's security concerns linked to terror groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.

The path ahead for the India-China project will be diplomatically tricky as Beijing will have to convince its close ally Islamabad about it.



Pakistan has always opposed any Indian presence in Afghanistan and has tried to position itself as the main player in any peace or reconciliation process.

China and Pakistan were part of a quadrilateral process along with the US and Afghanistan that was involved in trying to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table. Despite several promises by Islamabad, it was never able to get the Taliban leadership to commit to any sort of peace process.

While India's leadership has never publicly spoken about involving the Taliban in a peace process, China

has openly advocated a key role for the militants in talks.

China, for the first time, held a trilateral meet with the foreign ministers of Pakistan and Afghanistan in December 2017 to narrow down differences between the two countries. It has also announced plans to extend its controversial China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to Afghanistan.

In December, Pakistan's proposal to establish working panels in politics, military, intelligence, economy and refugees with Afghanistan was supported by China.

"The three countries reaffirmed

their commitment to pushing forward the reconciliation process in Afghanistan, calling on the Taliban to join in the process. China and Pakistan expressed support for peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban," official Xinhua news agency reported after the foreign ministers of the three countries met in Beijing in December.

This is not the first time New Delhi and Beijing have mulled cooperating in Afghanistan. In 2010, the two countries discussed collaborating in projects and joint initiatives in the country ahead of then prime minister Manmohan Singh's visit to China.

Then national security advisor Shiv Shankar Menon and foreign minister Yang Jiechi had discussed launching joint projects in Afghanistan.

Even during former foreign secretary S Jaishankar's visit to Beijing, for the restructured India-China Strategic Dialogue, Afghanistan had emerged as common ground in discussions. Jaishankar had discussed the possibility of joint projects with Chinese officials.

At the end of the strategic dialogue, Jaishankar was quoted as saying that on Afghanistan, China's policies were in tandem with India's.

## Good days will come, Asaram allegedly heard saying in audio clip

A purported audio clip of Asaram, serving his life term at a Jodhpur jail, has surfaced online in which the self-styled godman is heard telling a person over the phone that his time behind bars is ephemeral and "good days will come".

According to Jodhpur Central Jail DIG Vikram Singh, the 15-minute audio clip might have been recorded during a telephone conversation Asaram had on Friday, two days after a Jodhpur court found him guilty and sentenced him to life in prison for raping a teenage girl in his ashram five years ago.

The call was made with permission from jail authorities. "Inmates are permitted to make a call over any two given numbers for 80 minutes in a month. He had spoken to a 'sadhak' at Sabarmati Ashram on Friday at 6:30 pm. May be this communication was recorded (then) and made viral," said Singh.

In a one-way communication, Asaram first extended his gratitude to his followers for maintaining calm and not coming to Jodhpur on the day of judgment.

"We should respect the law and order and the system. I also do so," he is purportedly heard saying in the audio clip.

He claims a few people are on a campaign to defame his ashram and want to take its control. "Do not get carried away by such



provocations or anything circulated on the letter head of ashram..." he says in the clip.

Referring to co-accused Shilpi and Sharat Chanda, who were handed down 20-year jail term by the special court, Asaram says he would first arrange for their release from jail "as it is the duty of parents to first think about their children".

"(Even if) more advocates will be required for the release of Shilpi and Sharat, that will be done. Afterwards, babu will make way out of the jail," he says.

"If a mistake has happened in the lower court, there are upper courts for rectifying those mistakes," he allegedly says.

"Truth has no cover and lie has no legs (to stand upon)... It is immaterial, what the allegations are," he says, adding, "good days will come".

At the end of the conversation, he makes Sharat speak, who says there's nothing to be worried about in jail.

## War memorial near India Gate to be completed by Independence Day

Brick by brick, India's first war memorial to celebrate soldiers who have sacrificed their lives since 1947 is being built around the national capital's India Gate.

Coming up on the lawns just behind the canopy, or chatri, the open memorial is expected to be ready by Independence Day, senior government officials involved in the project said.

The project, which will be in line with the central axis of India Gate that commemorates Indian soldiers who died in World War I, is being implemented by the defence ministry.

Designed in concentric circles, the memorial will be spread over approximately 40 acres, and have a 15-metre-high obelisk at its centre. "The national emblem will be placed on top of the obelisk, which will also carry the eternal flame, symbolising that sacrifices by soldiers are never forgotten," one of the officials



cited above said. A national war museum is also coming up in the adjoining Princess Park, which will be connected through a tunnel to the war memorial. The union government earmarked Rs 500 crore for both projects in the 2015 budget. The museum, however, will be completed much after the memorial.

The central congregation space at the war memorial will be below the ground level in order to conform to the height limit of the surrounding iconic structures

on the central vista.

After the obelisk, there will be four more landscaped concentric circles, depicting the journey of a soldier from birth to martyrdom. The second circle will have a shaded open gallery with a wall on one side. This will be called the Veer Chakra, or the circle of bravery. "It will have bronze murals depicting some of the major battles such as Longewala, Rezang La and Karachi harbour," said a second official.

The third and fourth

circle will be called Tyag Chakra, or the circle of sacrifice. These will have precast walls on which the names of about 26,000 martyrs from the army, navy and airforce will be inscribed on the granite tablets with golden letters. "The circular pattern of the wall is inspired by the ancient Indian war formation called 'chakravayuh'," the official said. Each of the soldiers, the official added, has been given a separate granite tablet.

"There are 4,000 blank tablets, which will take care of battle casualties in the next 40 years. On an average, India suffers 100 casualties a year," the official said. The fifth and the final circle will be called the Rakshak Chakra or the circle of protection. "It will have trees planted in a circular formation, with each tree symbolising a soldier who ensures territorial control and safety of the citizens of the country," the same official said.

## NIA arrests Maoist rebel in Ramesh Munda murder case

A team of National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Chaibasa Muffasil police on Friday arrested absconding CPI (Maoist) rebel Sushil alias Buddhu alias Chris alias Birendra Dange from Chaibasa in connection with the murder of former Jharkhand minister and JD(U) MLA from Tamar Ramesh Singh Munda.

NIA had earlier arrested former Tamar MLA and state minister Gopal Krishna Patar alias Raja Peter as the mastermind behind the murder and booked drealed CPI (Maoist) commander Kundan Pahan who had surrendered under state government's surrender policy last year as the executioner of the murder plot.

Police sources told 15-year-old Sushil was a member of the Kundan Pahan squad - operating in Tamar-Khunti-Silli area - and was a member of the team that went to Tamar and murdered Munda in 2008. Hailing from Dau village under Sonua police



station (PS) area of West Singhbhum district, Sushil had shifted to Chennai and later to Punjab where he was working as a labourer.

NIA sleuths had raided Sushil alias Chris's village house two days ago on a tip-off that he has returned to his parental house but had failed to arrest him. Friday morning, NIA team along with district police team led by Chaibasa Muffasil PS officer-in-charge (OC) Digbijay Singh arrested him from near the police station itself.

"We have arrested him and he has admitted of being a member of the team that mur-

Raja Peter possessed such a huge amount and who were the sponsors.

According to sources, the deal was struck between the banned CPI (Maoist) Politburo and Raja Peter. Initially, Rs 3 crore was paid in advance and Rs 2 crore was paid after Munda was killed. The remaining Rs 2 crore could not reach to the politburo of the CPI-Maoist as Maoist commander Balram Sahu escaped with the money. Balram too was later arrested by police.

Raja Peter had created history by defeating the then Jharkhand chief minister and JMM chief Shibu Soren in January 2009 by-election for the Tamar seat, which fell vacant after the murder of Ramesh Singh Munda.

Apart from Raja Peter, NIA had also arrested Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Sheshnath Singh in Munda's murder. Singh was Munda's bodyguard and he allegedly passed on information about the movement of Munda to Maoists.

## Siddaramaiah running away from Chamundeshwari to Badami, but will lose to BJP: Amit Shah

BJP president Amit Shah on Saturday took a dig at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for deciding to contest from two constituencies in the upcoming assembly elections, saying the person on whom the Congress was dependent was 'running away' and looking for a safer seat.

"The Congress depends on Siddaramaiah in this assembly election. He himself is running away from the Chamundeshwari assembly constituency to the Badami assembly constituency. How much can you escape? Our candidate B Srimanlu will defeat you," he said at a public rally at Gangavathi in Koppal district.

Referring to Congress President Rahul Gandhi posing questions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on national issues during his ongoing two-day campaign in the state, he said the ruling Congress should answer questions on its performance.

"I have come here to answer your

(Rahul) questions.... it is your party's turn to answer because this is an assembly election in a state which your party ruled for five years," Shah said. He said his party would give an account of every rupee spent when its five year tenure ends and the Lok Sabha elections are held in 2019.

He then asked the people whether they had 24-hour electricity, jobs, minimum support price for farmers and especially for sugarcane grown in abundance in Gangavathi, to which the crowd responded in the negative.

Shah then quipped that Siddaramaiah has some 'achievements' to his credit. "Siddaramaiah has made Karnataka a number one state in farmers' suicides, atrocities on women, unemployment and corruption," he said.

The BJP president also took a jibe at the chief Minister once sporting a Rs 40 lakh watch, saying he had not yet answered where he got it from and who gifted it to him.



Mired in a controversy over the luxury watch gifted to him, Siddaramaiah had on March 2, 2016 handed it over to the Speaker, declaring it a state asset.

Shah said Karnataka had received Rs 88,583 crore grants under the 13th Finance Commission when the UPA government was in power.

"But under the Modi government, the 14th Finance Com-

mission released a grant of Rs 2.2 lakh crore for various development works. Apart from it, another Rs 80,000 crore was given under various schemes," he said and wondered where all this money had gone.

Shah said people had only to compare the lifestyles of any Congress leader five years ago to the present day to see for themselves where the money had gone. "Those grants fell

prey to the prevailing corruption in Karnataka," said Shah.

The BJP leader then dwelt on the various welfare schemes introduced by the Modi government, including Ujjwala scheme, and enhancing of MSP, and urged the people to choose a committed government over a 'commission government'. Modi had described the Congress government in Karnataka as '10 per cent commission government'.

Shah, who kick-started yet another round of his election campaign in the state, visited Gavi Siddeshwara Math in Koppal and took the blessings of its seer Abhinava Gavisiddeshwara Swamiji. He also addressed a public meeting at Kukoor under the Yelburga assembly constituency of Koppal, where he denounced Rahul Gandhi for showing 'disrespect' for the national song 'Vande Mataram,' which anchored our freedom movement and for which so many Indians sacrificed their lives".

## 12 killed as van slams stationary truck in UP

Twelve people including two women were killed and four others were critically injured when an overloaded van crashed into a stationary truck on national highway 24 in Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh early Saturday morning.

The truck was parked at a roadside dhaba in Uchaulia. The van owned by a Shahjahanpur resident, was on its way to Sitapur carrying 18 people including driver Anoop Awasthi, his helper Kishan both of Shahjahanpur district and 16 passengers including the two infants.

Kheri district magistrate Shailendra Kumar Singh, superintendent of police Dr. S Channappa, deputy SP Vijay Anand, Pasgawan and Uchaulia police staff rushed the spot for rescue operations.

"The cab driver might have dozed off and lost control over his speeding vehicle which led to tragic accident," Anand told reporters. Kheri SP Dr. Channappa said an inquiry into the causes of accident was on.

Police said the driver and the helper were among the dead. Efforts were on to establish identity of others.

The van which was functioning as a cab was on its way to Sitapur from Shahjahanpur when it slammed into the rear of the truck. The collision was so intense that nine people including two women were killed on the spot.

A one-year-old girl and a three-month-old boy survived the accident. While the girl was rushed to Shahjahanpur district hospital where she was united with her grandmother and uncle Fahim who were among the four injured, the baby boy's parents could not be traced. The baby was handed to the custody of a local scribe.

The girl's grandmother Sabrin said they were going to Sitapur for a wedding. Her son Fahim and her one-year-old granddaughter were with her in the cab. Fahim is also under treatment. She could not describe how the accident took place. The accident has exposed once again the callous approach of taxi operators who overload their vehicles risking safety for monetary gain. There has been no visible effort by the transport department to deter taxi operators from overloading.

## Apna Ghar horror tales: How Jaswanti Devi kept her misdeeds secret

Jaswanti Devi, the in-charge of the Apna Ghar shelter who was sentenced to life imprisonment for sexual exploitation, allowed her family and staff to sexually abuse the inmates but managed to keep things quiet by isolating the victims. The inspection reports of the National Council

for the Protection of Child Rights (NCP-CR) details Devi's exploits and how she turned her shelter into a house of terror for the inmates.

The 53-year-old was arrested in 2012 after the NCP-CR conducted a raid of the shelter and rescued nearly 120 inmates. The raid uncovered

what is considered one of the region's worst sexual crimes. Inmates, who included minors, adults and disabled, were subjected to shocking sexual and physical abuse by Devi, several of her family members and staff. Devi's daughter Sushma alias Simmi, son-in-law Jai Bhagwan, brother Jaswant,

cousin Sheela, driver Satish, employee Ram Prakash Saini and counsellor Veena were convicted by a CBI court.

The report said no inmate was allowed to go outside the complex, even for a short while, restricting them to the shelter and their contact with the anyone outside.

While the children were not sent to school, most of the older inmates were either destitute or without support. Added to this, they were all terrified of Devi and their abusers, and thus didn't have the courage to tell any visitor about what was happening, the report added. During the court pro-

ceedings, several of Devi's victims testified to being used as prostitutes, being raped by her son-in-law Jai Bhagwan, and being sexually assaulted by the driver. The report said that police officers, especially station house officer of Gandhi Camp, was believed to be a frequent visitor at the shelter.

# FORTIS STUDY FINDS SUBSTANTIAL RISE IN COST OF TREATING DIABETES IN INDIA

New Delhi: A study on nationwide trends in the sales of anti-diabetic oral drugs and insulins has found that there is a substantial rise in cost of treating diabetes in India. The research was led by Dr. Professor Anoop Misra, Chairman, Fortis C-DOC Hospital for Diabetes and Allied Specialities and President, National Diabetes Obesity & Cholesterol Foundation (N-DOC). The research aimed to study sales trends of all top selling drugs (20 brands) for the past nine years (between December 2008 and December 2016), with emphasis on anti-diabetic drugs. The study assessed the overall trends in drug sales and changes in prescription patterns of older versus new OADs and insulins. Standard validation methods were employed for data extraction and computation. Data was extracted from All Indian Origin Chemists & Distributors Ltd.'s (AIOCD) pharma data platform.



It has about 60,000 distributors and seven lakh chemists under its fold in India. Sales records, including secondary sales were tracked every month from pharmaceutical stockists and distributors. Between 2008 to 2012, sales of insulins increased from INR 151.2 crores to 218.7 crores (44% growth). Primary reasons for this includes reduced inertia,

of patients and physicians to use insulin, more patients with diabetes related complications and aggressive marketing by pharmaceutical companies. In this context, it is also important to note that chronic kidney disease due to diabetes is more prevalent among Asian Indians, and increasingly being diagnosed, necessitating insulin therapy in a greater number of pa-

tients. Insulin sales continued to see an upward trend between 2012 and 2014 with sales more than doubling from INR 218.7 crores to 467.8 crores (114% growth) possibly due to increased availability and aggressive marketing of newer insulin analogues. Between 2014-2016, sales of insulin continued to see a substantial upward trend from INR 467.8 crores to 842 crores (80% growth) probably due to the availability of new basal insulin and newer premix insulin to the armamentarium.

From 2013 to 2015 the sales of OADs increased rapidly from INR 278.5 crores to 570.9 crores (105% growth). This was because of the introduction of new drugs, combination drugs, and more affordable drugs that were manufactured by

the Indian pharmaceuticals. Between 2015 and 2016 OAD sales went up from INR 570.9 to INR 700 crores (23% growth) mainly due to the aggressive marketing strategies that were employed by companies. Substantial spurt in expensive treatment of diabetes for both insulins and OADs is noteworthy. Primary attributable reasons are huge increase in the sale of newer and more expensive drugs and,

insulins and is incongruous with poor availability and accessibility of basic healthcare particularly for people among the lower socio-economic strata. Although listed by WHO in the essential list of drugs, only 35-63% of primary health centres stock the most basic oral drugs for diabetes. Dr. Anoop Misra said, "Increasing sales of high cost med-

ications as shown by our data are particularly worrisome since most Indians pay out of their pocket and nearly seven percent experience catastrophic expenditure for diabetes. Only a bare minimum patients are covered by health insurance and even here,

only the cost of hospitalization is paid by insurance companies. Indiscriminate use of newer oral drugs and insulins is often seen in India and here, Indian physicians should be made aware that newer and more expensive insulins and drugs may not always be better, and that older OADs and insulins may be equally effective if judiciously used, particularly in those who are financially challenged. Our study shows that there is substantial escalation in the overall cost of treat-

ing diabetes in India. While there is a distinct rise in the usage of newer oral drugs and insulin analogues, affordability and,

accessibility of anti-diabetic therapy to low socio-economic stratum remains inadequate. India has to take several stringent measures to ensure that there is a balancing mechanism in place, education of physicians, tighter regulations on price control and stricter norms for pharmaceutical companies around new drugs and marketing ethics."

A chronic condition, diabetes occurs when the pancreas is not able to produce enough insulin or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar.

A major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, stroke and lower limb amputation, diabetes cannot be prevented but can be controlled.

Healthy diet, regular physical activity, maintaining a normal body weight and avoiding tobacco use are some of the ways to prevent or delay the onset of diabetes.

According to the WHO, the number of diabetics has risen from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. Recent data highlight that deaths due to cardiovascular disease and diabetes are 27% and 4.0%, respectively, in South Asian countries. The number of people with diabetes in India is second only to China and is increasing rapidly due to economic, dietary, and lifestyle transitions. Besides urban,

areas, Type 2 diabetes is increasing at a worrisome rate in semi-urban and rural areas of India, particularly affecting people belonging to middle and low socioeconomic strata.

## EXTREME SWINGS IN BLOOD PRESSURE CAN BE DEADLY



Washington : Fluctuations in blood pressure can be just as deadly as having high blood pressure, according to a new study. The research that examined the systolic blood pressure of 10,903 patients revealed that if someone's blood pressure varied by as much as 30 or 40 over an extended period of time then they are more likely to die than those with less extreme variances in their blood pressure.

The systolic blood pressure reading (the upper number) indicates how much pressure blood is exerting against the artery walls when the heart beats. According to the American Heart Association, a normal systolic blood pressure is less than 120. High blood pressure is categorized as above 140.

Internal medicine specialist with the Intermountain Medical Center Heart Institute, Brian Clements said, "Blood pressure is one of those numbers we encourage people to keep track of, as it's one indicator of your health heart."

"The takeaway from the study is, if you allow your blood pressure to be uncontrolled for any period of time, or notice big changes in your blood pressure between doctor visits, you increase your risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney or heart failure, or even death," he added.

Commenting on the call to action, Dr. Clements advised patients to control their environment while measuring blood pressure and said, "Eat healthy foods, exercise regularly, and if your doctor has prescribed you medications for your blood pressure, be sure and take them consistently. Because any time your blood pressure is out of control, you're at higher risk of injury or death."

This can help clinicians work with their patients to better manage their heart health. The research was conducted at Intermountain Medical Center Heart Institute in Salt Lake City and the results were reported at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in Anaheim on Monday.

## Diabetic patients must stay alert to diabetic retinopathy

Bengaluru : With the number of diabetic patients going up fast in the country, people need to be vigilant not just to cut down their chances of contracting it but also watch out for allied medical ailments, if they already have this lifestyle-related medical condition. The number of people suffering from diabetes will go up to 10 crore by 2035 in India, according to International Diabetes Federation. This will be a quantum jump from about 6.5 crore patients that India has currently. "One of the foremost precautions for a diabetic person is to make regular visits to an Ophthalmologist or a Retina specialist. One must not buy new glasses as soon as one notices that things look blurry," said K.T. Rajan.

The vision may be blurry because fluid is leaking into the lens of the eye. This makes the lens swell and change shape. These changes make it hard for the eyes to focus, so things start to look fuzzy. People with diabetes are 60 percent more likely to develop cataract too. Blurred vision could just be a small problem caused by high blood sugar. High blood sugar or uncontrolled blood sugar can lead to problems like blurry vision, which affects the retina. Retina is a group of cells on the back of the eye that takes in light. They turn it into images that the optic nerve sends to your brain. Sometimes the retina can be badly damaged due to poor control of diabetes, before a person can notice any change in vision. High blood sug-



ar level damages the smaller blood vessels in the eye and the fluid starts leaking, leading to damage of the retina and causes diabetic retinopathy. A person with long standing diabetes is more likely to get diabetic retinopathy. If the blood sugar levels are under control, lower are the chances of developing such complications. Typical symptoms of retinopathy are - black spots in your vision, flashes of light, "holes" in your vision and blurred vision. Significant strides have been made in the treatment of diabetic retinopathy. Treatment such as laser, surgery or use of intravitreal injections is generally recommended depending upon the condition. Some intravitreal injections are recommended to be given every month and some intravitreal injections are given every three to four months. For this reason, a diabetic person should have his or her eyes examined regularly by an eye care professional. A full yearly check-up can help find problems early, when they're easier to treat.

## FIGHTING WITH DIABETES STAYING ACTIVE IS WHAT YOU NEED



New Delhi : World diabetes day is celebrated each year on November 14. There is a strong link between exercise and sugar levels in diabetes. Basic lifestyle changes and regular exercise can help you manage diabetes. Ranging from sugar control to weight management, staying active offers great benefits. Many studies aimed at finding an answer to this have, concluded the positive impact of exercise on your sugar levels. Exercise in diabetes type 1 is as important as in type 2, says Dr. Walia Murshida Huda (Senior Medical Officer, Healthians, MBBS, MBA(H.C.A), FICM). Sugar control is the main focus of diabetes management and exercise can help you with that. You must never miss it. Exercise in diabetes type 1 must be planned in accordance with insulin doses to avoid excessively low sugar levels. Regardless of the type of diabetes, regular exercises and being physically active can help to control blood sugar levels. It helps to reduce insulin resistance and improves effective use of glucose.

Stress is by and large known to trigger a rise in blood sugar levels. If you stay active and keep yourself busy with exercises or some physical activity, you are sure to enjoy an improved mood. Exercise works as the best stress management tool, also because it helps to release the feel good hormones, which you need to most to keep mood swings away. With exercises, be it strengthening, flexibility or aerobics, you can surely

improve your overall health. Exercises help to improve muscle and bone strength, giving you more toned muscles. It helps to improve your energy levels and also boost your immunity, thus protecting you from illnesses. Diabetes can make you susceptible to other illnesses, but exercises can keep you strong.

Uncontrolled blood sugar levels can lead to nerve damage, which is one of the major risks of diabetes. Strong muscles and controlled blood sugar help to prevent nerve complications of diabetes. It can also help maintain better sensations and improve nerve signalling.

If you have diabetes, an increased risk of nerve and muscle damage, can affect your balance. Falls or other injuries can cause problems in wound healing, which can sometimes worsen the case. But with regular exercise, you can improve your joint stability, balance and co-ordination. Sleep plays an important role in regulating your hormones. Inadequate sleep not only affects your hunger and food intake, but also has an impact on your blood sugar levels. Diabetics often complain about sleep problems. However, exercises can help you sleep better and ensure a regulated routine. With proper sleep you can be more alert and perform better during the day, which again helps to maintain healthy blood sugar. Complications of diabetes can affect major organs like kidneys, eyes, nerves, skin and feet. If you exercise regularly, your heart func-

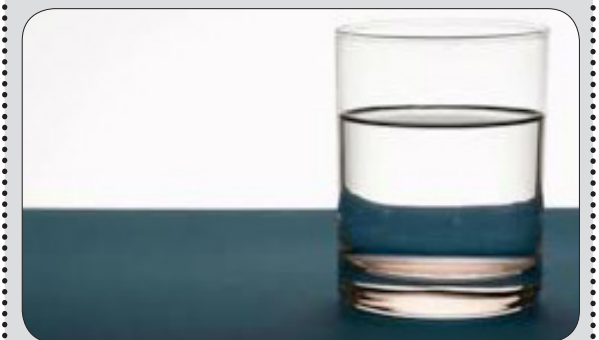
tioning and blood circulation improves to a great extent. This helps to maintain better health, improve healing and prevent skin, nerve and other damage.

Having diabetes increases the risk of other metabolic disorders, thyroid problems and autoimmune disorders too. Exercises help in better weight control and improved circulation, which reduces the risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart diseases, stroke and other diseases. Being overweight makes you prone to other lifestyle disorders. But with regular exercises you can keep a check on your weight. Losing few pounds too can have great impact on your blood sugar levels and reduce your overall health risks. According to Dr. Walia, people with type 2 diabetes need to take necessary exercise precautions and plan a healthy and safe schedule for themselves.

Adjust your exercises to avoid excessive drop in blood sugar. If you take medicines, make sure you have light snacks before or after exercising. You may have to check your diabetes often, to find out if the exercise schedule is safe. Check your blood sugar levels and go for advanced diabetes tests, if needed. Diabetes is a complicated health condition with various facets. However, simple lifestyle measures, diet control and regular exercises can help you deal with it effectively. Plan your exercise schedule and maintain healthy blood sugar levels.

## This water test can save India from crippling bone disease

Washington : A simple colour-changing test to detect fluoride in drinking water could in the future prevent the crippling bone disease, skeletal fluorosis, in developing countries such as India and Tanzania. Whilst low amounts of fluoride are beneficial for healthy teeth, high levels of fluoride can weaken bones, leading to skeletal fluorosis. This disease causes crippling deformities of the spine and joints, especially in children whose skeletons are still forming. When water passes over certain minerals, it can dissolve fluoride, which results in elevated levels of fluoride in drinking water sources in parts of East Africa, India, China and North America. Levels of fluoride in drinking water are routinely monitored and controlled at treatment works in developed countries. However in areas of the world where there is no piped water system or treatment works, people rely on drawing untreated water from wells, which can often be contaminated with higher than recommended levels of fluoride. The amounts of fluoride in the groundwater can vary due to weather events, with levels fluctuating hugely when there is a lot of rain. A research team at the University of Bath's Centre for Sustainable Chemical Technologies, and the Water Innovation and Research Centre (WIRC), led by Simon Lewis, developed a simple colour-changing test that detects high levels of fluoride quickly and selectively. Whilst the test is at the proof of concept stage, the team aims to develop it into a disposable test strip that is low cost and easy to use by anyone. Lewis said that whilst a small amount of fluoride is good for your teeth and prevents tooth decay, high levels are toxic and can cause crippling deformities that are irreversible. "Most water quality monitoring systems need a lab and power supply and a trained operator to



work them. What we've developed is a molecule that simply changes colour in a few minutes which can tell you whether the level of fluoride is too high," he added. "This technology is in the very early stages, but we'd like to develop this technology into test strips, similar to litmus paper, that allow people without any scientific training to perform a test that is low cost, rapid and robust." We anticipate that in the future it could make a real difference to people's lives. "Co-investigator Jannis Wenk said: "I am very enthusiastic about the newly developed indicator molecules and am convinced that they can be incorporated into an easy to use technology that is able to provide instant information on the safety of drinking water with regards to fluoride." The team is now looking for additional partners to take the technology forward and help develop the test.

# Bloated Air India on a hiring spree, to induct 270 co-pilots

Ongoing privatisation and mounting losses have not deterred the flag carrier Air India from adding to the already-bloated workforce, as it's in the process of hiring around 270 co-pilots in the reserved category.

Sources in the know of the development also say the airline has created a new post of chief pilot as well despite it already having two somewhat similar positions—director of operations and executive director of operations—being manned by two senior pilots.

Air India has, however, defended the hiring plan, citing operational and regulatory requirements.

The massive pilot recruitment comes on the back of hiring of 500 cabin crew by the state-run carrier weeks before government floated a preliminary information memorandum inviting bidders to buy 76 per cent stake.

Government will also exit the low-cost international subsidiary Air India Express and its 50 per cent stake in the ground handling joint venture AISATS. The rest of the stake is held by SATS or Singapore Airport Terminal Services.



"Air India is in the process of adding 270 co-pilots when such crew is already in excess. And this hiring is being done in the reserved category and that too at a time when there is a big question mark on the issue of retention of the workforce post-privatisation," airline sources said.

Air India has 11,214 permanent employees as of December 2017. These include 2,056 on deputation to other companies and agencies. It also has 2,913 on contract and 2,661 on deputation from other group companies

as per the government memorandum on privatisation.

Sources also alleged that the airline has recently created two ED-level posts in the IT and civil departments.

"The creation of a new post for civil (department) is beyond comprehension as the airline is in the process of getting rid of its real estate and it can't be understood why there has to be a post of for such work," they said.

Moreover, the airline is now creating the post of chief pilot though there

are already two occupants who are in charge of flight operations, sources alleged. "Interestingly, one of the three contenders for the post is a pilot who had failed the pre-and post-flight alcohol tests when he was the flight operations inspector and was suspended by the DGCA," they alleged.

Responding to the allegations, Air India in an e-mail told PTI that "the post of chief pilot is not a new and is named as 'fleet captain' as designated by the DGCA.

"The selection process for this post is carried out as per the regulatory requirements and company policy and interviews for the post were held on April 23, 2018," Air India chief spokesperson said in the e-mail.

On the hiring of so many pilots, the statement said that Air India being a state-run entity is governed by the Presidential directives.

"Keeping this and operational requirements in view, a special recruitment drive is on and the airline is in the process of filling up the existing backlog of vacancies of pilots," it added.

The statement also said "no new posts have been created," at the airline.

# India again on US priority watch list on intellectual property protection

India would continue to remain on the United States' priority watch list for longstanding challenges in its intellectual property framework and lack of sufficient measurable progress, the US trade representative said, alleging that the country remains one of the world's most challenging major economies in the area.

In its latest 2018 Special 301 Report, the USTR has placed 12 countries on its priority watch list. In addition to India, other countries on the list are Algeria, Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Indonesia, Kuwait, Russia, Ukraine, and Venezuela.

The IP issues in these countries will be the subject of intense bilateral engagement during the coming year, the USTR said in its report. The special 301 report identifies US trading partners that do not adequately or effectively protect and enforce IP rights or otherwise deny market access to its innovators and creators that rely on protection of their IP rights.

"India remains on the priority watch list this year for longstanding challenges in its IP framework and lack of sufficient measurable improvements, particularly with respect to patents, copyrights, trade secrets, and enforcement, as well as for new issues that have negatively affected US right holders over the past year," the USTR said.

It said the longstanding IP challenges facing US businesses in India include those which

make it difficult for innovators to receive and maintain patents in India, particularly for pharmaceuticals.

Among other issues include India's enforcement action and policies that are insufficient to curb the problem, copyright policies that do not properly incentivise the creation and commercialisation of content, and an outdated and insufficient trade secrets legal framework.

New and growing concerns, including with respect to reductions in transparency by India's pharmaceutical regulator through the removal of a requirement that applicants submit information about a product's patent status, continue to generate skepticism about whether India is serious about pursuing pro-innovation and pro-creativity growth policies, the USTR said.

At the same time, the report takes note of the several steps being taken by the Indian government to improve its IP environment. In 2017, India continued to carry out high-level initiatives involving IP, including the 2016 National IP Policy and Startup India, it said.

"While these and other Modi administration initiatives have acknowledged the important role innovation and creativity play in India's development, they have failed to draw a direct link to specific IP reforms that would best help achieve these goals," the USTR observed.

# Adani Green Energy, ReNew Power eye stock market listings: Report

Two Indian renewable energy firms are set to unveil stock market listing plans in the coming weeks, giving investors a new way to gain exposure to the sector at a time when India is pushing to make renewable power a bigger part of its energy mix.

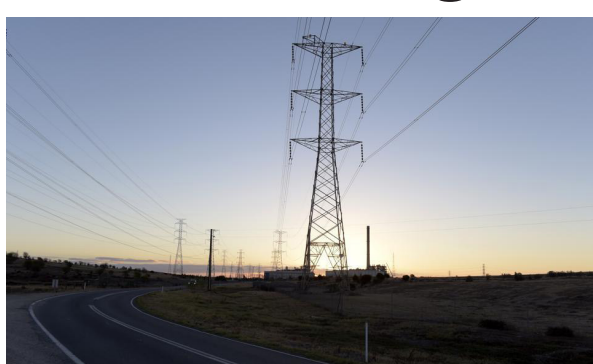
Adani Green Energy, a subsidiary of Indian trading firm Adani Enterprises Ltd, is expected to be spun out and listed on Indian stock exchanges within the next two weeks, said two bankers familiar with the company's plans.

Separately, ReNew Power, India's biggest company in terms of renewable energy assets, is expected to file papers with regulators for an initial public offering as early as next week, the two bankers said.

The two companies will be the first new pure-play renewable energy firms to list in India, since wind energy firm Orient Green Power's listing eight years ago.

The sector has in recent years drawn significant interest from large global sovereign funds and private equity firms including Warburg Pincus, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, Singapore's GIC and Macquarie Capital.

The listings will help investors gauge market interest and set a bar on valuations for rivals that may also explore listings, say bankers.



Adding over 100 gigawatts of renewable capacity will require "significant capital and private markets alone can't fund all of it," said Alok Verma, Executive Director of Investment Banking at Kotak. India will need over \$125 billion to fund its plan to add 175 gigawatts of renewable power to its grid by 2022. The clean energy industry is looking beyond domestic banks, which account for most of the industry's financing.

To put the financing requirement in context, researcher Mercom estimates corporate funding for the global solar industry was \$12.8 billion last year.

Investors are scrambling to raise money and capture market share in India's expanding green energy sector amid tight deadlines.

Another reason for firms seeking IPOs "may be also the promised exit to the investors," said Sunil Jain, chief executive of Hero Future Energies Ltd, referring to private

equity investors who typically look to sell stakes after a certain number of years.

Limited interest "Adani Enterprises plans to offload around a quarter of its stake in Adani Green," one of the bankers said, adding this will be followed by Goldman Sachs-backed ReNew's IPO.

"Creation of a dedicated entity for our renewable energy portfolio reflects Adani Group's commitment for the green energy," said an Adani spokesperson in an emailed response.

"Soon-to-be-listed venture Adani Green Energy Limited will continue to add renewable energy generation capacity in India, Australia and other geographies determinedly," the spokesperson said.

With operating assets of 3.6 GW and 2 GW under construction, ReNew is seen as "big enough to raise substantial capital" from the market, another banker said.

The company, which

counts Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and other big firms as investors, could raise up to \$900 million.

ReNew Power did not respond to an email seeking comment.

The companies are expected to be followed by several other companies aiming to raise funds. Sembcorp India, a unit of Singapore's Sembcorp Industries, ACME Solar and Mytrah Energy India also have plans for listing.

The three companies did not reply to emails seeking comment.

While the Renew and Adani Green listings are expected to garner strong valuations given the size and scale of the assets they control, bankers warn listings by smaller rivals may fail to attract strong interest.

"We're not going to see six to nine successful IPOs in the next two years. We might see one or two successful ones," said Rahul Goswami, Managing Director, Greenstone Energy Advisors, noting small new players have undermined economics of some assets by bidding aggressively at very low tariffs.

In India, firms seeking to win rights to set-up renewable energy assets enter a bidding process with the company offering to supply power at the lowest possible tariff winning the auction process.

# Fitch denies rating upgrade to India, says weak fiscal balances its Achilles' heel

Refusing to upgrade India's credit rating for the 12th year in a row, Fitch on Friday retained its sovereign rating at 'BBB-', the lowest investment grade with a stable outlook, saying that weak fiscal balances continue to constrain the country's ratings.

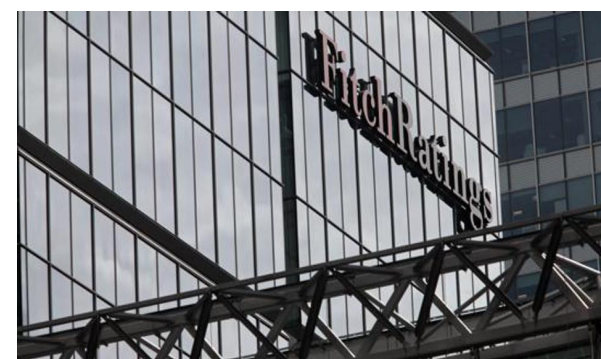
The government had made a strong pitch to Fitch Ratings for an upgrade after rival Moody's Investors Service last November gave the country its first sovereign rating upgrade since 2004.

Fitch had last upgraded India's sovereign rating from BB+ to BBB- with a stable outlook on August 1, 2006.

"Fitch Ratings has affirmed India's Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook," the rating agency said in a statement.

"India's rating balances a strong medium-term growth outlook and favourable external balances with weak fiscal finances and some lagging structural factors, including governance standards and a still-difficult, but improving, business environment," it said.

Fitch added that weak fiscal balances, the Achilles' heel in India's credit profile, continue to constrain its ratings. "General government debt amounted to 69% of GDP in 2017-18 fiscal while fiscal slipage of 0.3% of GDP in both FY18 and FY19 relative to the government's own budget targets of last year, implies a general government deficit of



7.1% of GDP," it said.

The government aims to gradually reduce its fiscal deficit from 3.5% of GDP in 2017-18, but would not hit the 3% ceiling of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act before March 2021, which is well beyond its current electoral term, Fitch said.

"The Indian economy is less developed on a number of metrics than many of its peers. Governance continues to be weak, as illustrated by a low score for the World Bank governance indicator. India's ranking on the United Nations Human Development Index also indicates relatively low basic human development," it said.

After the last rating upgrade on August 1, 2006, Fitch had changed the outlook to negative in 2012 and then again to stable in the following year, though it kept the rating unchanged at the lowest investment grade.

The Fitch review for annual sovereign rating follows India's rating upgrade by Moody's after a gap of 14 years,

while S&P retained its rating for the country.

While Moody's had raised India's sovereign rating in November 2017 from the lowest investment grade of 'Baa3' to 'Baa2', S&P refrained from upgrading the rating from 'BBB-' citing high government debt and low income levels. S&P has maintained 'BBB-' rating on India since 2007.

On rating drivers, Fitch said a favourable economic growth outlook continues to support India's credit profile, even though real GDP growth fell to 6.6% in the fiscal year ended 31 March 2018 (FY18) from 7.1% in 2016-17.

Fitch forecasts that growth will rebound to 7.3% in FY19 and 7.5% in FY20.

India's five-year average real GDP growth of 7.1% is the highest in the region and among 'BBB' range peers, it said. Stating that growth has the potential to remain high for a substantial period of time, Fitch said per capita GDP is the lowest among 'BBB' range peers and continued structural reform implementation

should enhance productivity. India has the highest medium-term growth potential among the largest emerging markets, according to a recent Fitch analysis.

The rating agency said Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is building a solid monetary policy record, as consumer price inflation has been well within the target range of 4% since the inception of the Monetary Policy Committee in October 2016.

Fitch expected inflation to average close to 4.9% in FY19, still almost double the 'BBB' range median of 2.5% for 2018.

"We expect the RBI to start raising its policy repo rate next year from 6% currently as growth gains further traction," it said. "Monetary tightening could be brought forward if recent government policies push up inflation expectations, including the decision to increase minimum support prices for agricultural goods to 1.5 times the cost of production and increased customs duties on certain products, including electronics, textiles and auto parts."

India's relatively strong external buffers and the comparatively closed nature of its economy make the country less vulnerable to external shocks than many of its peers. Foreign reserves equal 8.3 months of current external payments while gross and net external debt levels also compare well.

# Women in India earn 16% less than men, says report on gender pay gap

Women in India and the world over earn an average 16.1% less salary than men, as there are fewer women in higher-paying roles, says a Korn Ferry report.

According to the Korn Ferry Gender Pay Index, pay gap between men and women is real but the disparity becomes much smaller at the same job level, same company, same function.

Globally, while considering the same level at the same company, the gender pay-gap reduced to 1.5%. And when the male and female employees were at the same level and the same company and worked in the same function, the average gap amounted to 0.5%.

In India, when evaluating the same job level, the gap is 4%, and when considering the same level at the same company, the gap fell to 0.4%. When male and female employees at the same level and the same company worked in the same function, the gap fell to 0.2%.



Researchers analysed information from Korn Ferry's pay database to create the Korn Ferry Gender Pay Index. The Index is an analysis of gender and pay for more than 12.3 million employees in 14,284 companies in 53 countries across the globe.

"While there are still a number of organisations that pay women less

for the same role, on average, when we compared women and men in the same job, the gap is significantly reduced," said Bob Wesselkamper, Korn Ferry head of Rewards and Benefits Solutions.

Wesselkamper further noted that this pay gap issue can be remedied if organisations address pay parity across

the organisation and continue to strive to increase the percentage of women in the best-paying parts of the labour market, including the most senior roles and functions such as engineering and other technical disciplines.

The gender pay-gap in India is more than China, which stood at 12.1%. The pay gap in some of the representative nations like Brazil stood at 26.2%, France 14.1%, Germany 16.8%, the UK 23.8% and the US 17.6%.

"Pay parity is still a very real issue, but it's an issue that can be addressed if there is an ongoing effort to enable, encourage and select talented women to take on and thrive in challenging roles," said Reena Wahi, client partner, Korn Ferry Hay Group.

# India exported over 13 lakh tonnes of buffalo meat in 2017-18, up by 2%

India's buffalo meat exports increased by nearly 2% to 13.48 lakh tonnes in 2017-18 but fell marginally in value terms to Rs 25,988 crore, official data showed.

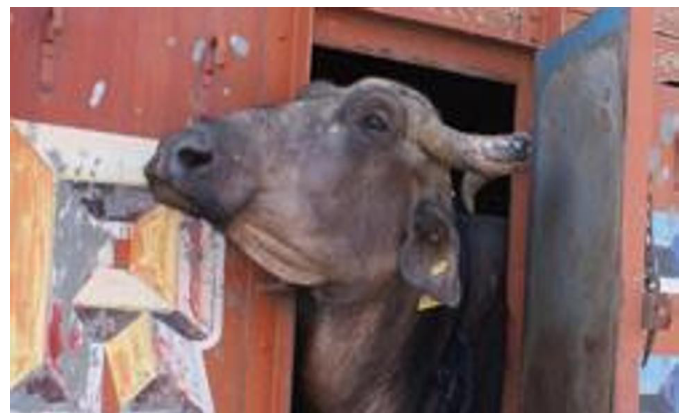
Vietnam, Malaysia and Egypt are the three major destinations for the country's buffalo meat shipments.

According to agri-export promotion body APEDA, the country exported 13,48,225 tonnes of buffalo meat for Rs 25,988 crore during the last fiscal.

In 2016-17, buffalo meat exports stood at 13,23,578 tonnes worth Rs 26,161 crore.

As per APEDA data, the total exports of agri and processed food products increased by 10.5% to Rs 1,18,819 crore during last fiscal from Rs 1,07,472 crore in 2016-17.

Basmati rice export rose to Rs 26,841 crore from Rs 21,513 crore. In volume terms, basmati rice shipments went up to 40,51,896 tonnes from 39,85,210 tonnes in 2016-17.



Non-basmati rice exports too rose sharply to Rs 22,927 crore in 2017-18 from Rs 16,930 crore earlier. Quantity-wise, exports jumped to 86,33,237 tonnes from 67,70,833 tonnes.

Out of the total exports in 2017-18, cereals contributed Rs 51,796 crore, while livestock products accounted for Rs 29,712 crore. Exports of fruits and vegetables stood at Rs 9,744 crore while shipments of processed fruits and vegetables were Rs 7,456 crore. Other processed food exports were worth Rs 18,939 crore last fiscal.

# Bhuvneshwar Kumar's bowling art: Deception lies at the heart of his craft

**NEW DELHI:** It would have been understandable if Bhuvneshwar Kumar weren't a successful limited-overs bowler. Critics have spoken about his lack of real pace and how the Indian conditions aren't conducive to swing bowling. Yet he has turned himself into one of the world's best bowlers. How? For one, Bhuvneshwar isn't military medium, though his lean frame suggests otherwise. But it works to his advantage. He is nippier than what the batsman thinks. Moreover, fast bowlers such as Kagiso Rabada, Mitchell Starc, and Billy Stanlake operate at around 140 kmph. Some of their deliveries zip across at 145 kmph, but that's not the norm. Yorker specialist Ben Laughlin clocks less than 130 kmph. Bhuvneshwar, meanwhile, touches 135 kmph comfortably — but, more importantly, he is preternaturally accurate.



Consequently, Bhuvneshwar has great command over his variations: the knuckleball, cutters and slow bouncers. His yorkers are laser-precise. He also has an effective yorker variation, one that lands way outside-off stump. Overall, he is a very canny bowler, who has the tricks, the control, and the awareness to decide his variations according to the state of the match and the type

of batsman. But variations would mean nothing if the bowler telegraphs to the batsman what's coming his way. Bhuvneshwar's art, then, is all about deception: how he conceals his variations from the batsman. There is no real discernible change in the arm speed, or in the release.

Bhuvneshwar has a high cricketing IQ. He mastered the knuckleball in just two months, which is incredible. Most top bowlers have spoken

about the years spent learning this variation. Bhuvneshwar has two kinds of leg-cutters — one he bowls at regular pace and the second one that is significantly slower. For the 'regular' leg-cutter, he keeps the wrist upright at the time of release. For the 'slower one', his hands are a touch wide at release and he virtually squeezes the ball out of his hand. This gives the ball backspin and a significant drop in pace. Moreover,

with the seam going in an anticlockwise direction, the ball bounces more than expected.

However, his most deceptive balls are the off-cutter and the slow bouncer. For both these balls, he uses his index and middle finger to hold the ball cross-seamed.

The thumb provides support to the ball. It's a very distinct and popular grip that bowlers use to bowl the off-cutter. Most international batsmen can easily see through this trick. But that's when Bhuvneshwar's deception kicks in. With the same grip, just by changing the length, he can come up with a deadly variation.

If he keeps the cross-seamed ball full, it turns out to be an off-cutter. But in case, just before the release, he uses his shoulder a bit more and bang the ball shorter, the batsman ends up dealing with a slower bouncer that cuts in. So, in case the batsman thinks he has picked the ball based on the grip, and pre-determines his response, he can still find himself in trouble.

The blockhole yorker is the most difficult to produce as it demands a lot out of the bowler. That's why you don't see them firing it too often. The trick for a deadly yorker lies in how late you release the ball. As in,

you have to extend the bowling arm away from the body, and release it a touch late, as compared to the length ball.

This slightly late release — or extension of that front arm at release — demands a lot of adjustments. The bowling stride has to be short — a longer stride hampers the body balance, more so when the arm is extended out and the release is late.

The more upright you are, the better the chances of nailing the blockhole.

The upper body won't lean forward too much, if the bowling stride is too long. Bhuvneshwar does all this really well and, as a result, pings the blockhole more often than not. Even with yorkers, his deception comes through.

He has two kinds of yorkers — full and straight, and the wide yorker. In the past, we have seen bowlers tend to go a lot wider at the crease to produce the wide yorker. Good batsmen pick it up early, and slice those past point. Bhuvneshwar doesn't give them that early notice. Even with the wide yorker, his back foot isn't all that wide from the crease — yes, a touch wider than the straight yorker, but not by much. Instead, at times, he gets his bowling arm a tad closer to the ear and fires it wide.

## Serie A: 'Ferocious' Inter Milan await title-chasing Juventus

**NEW DELHI:** If Juventus are angry after losing to Napoli in Serie A, then opponents Inter Milan are 'ferocious' after their long trophy drought, coach Luciano Spalletti said on Friday.

Inter have a chance to derail Juve's chase for a seventh successive title when the two sides meet at San Siro on Saturday and boost their own hopes of qualifying for the Champions League after a six-season absence.

Juve are angry after the Napoli defeat? And how must we be after seven years without winning anything?" Spalletti asked reporters on Friday. "We must be ferocious." Juve lead Serie A by one point after losing 1-0 to second-placed Napoli last Sunday and defeat by Inter will give their rivals a chance to go top. But, although Inter's fans would love to throw a spanner in Juventus' works, Spalletti was only interested in his own team.

"I'm interested in what the three points mean for us, not denying three points from Juventus," he said. Inter, who have not won a trophy since lifting the Coppa Italia in 2011, were top of the table when the teams met in December, then suffered a slump and have now stabilised.

Needing a top-four finish to reach the Champions League, they are fifth, one point behind AS Roma and Lazio. "Nobody handed us those results at the start of the season."

They came because of our abilities, then we learnt to deal with our limitations," said Spalletti. "Now, we're a more solid side compared to some months ago, we've dealt with adversity and got through it. We're more self-aware."

## TEJASWIN SHANKAR CLEARS 2.29M, BETTERS OWN INDIAN HIGH JUMP MARK

**NEW DELHI:** Tejaswin Shankar, who set the national record of 2.28 metres at the Federation Cup in March, cleared 2.29 metres at the Texas Tech Corky/Crofoot Shootout event in Lubbock, United States, on Friday. (AP)

India's rising high jump star Tejaswin Shankar has set a new national record, scaling 2.29m to better his previous mark of 2.28m achieved while winning the title at the Federation Cup athletics meet held at Patiala in March.

The talented Delhi jumper, who trains in the US, achieved the new standard while representing Kansas University in the Texas Tech Corky/Crofoot Shootout competition in Lubbock on Friday.

Tejaswin Shankar cleared 2.29m in his first attempt, finishing way ahead of the competition.

Landon Bartel of Nebraska was second at 2.11m with Trey Culver of Texas Tech University, who also cleared 2.11m, placed third.

Shankar began competition at 2.11m, and then cleared 2.16m. He also had no trouble at 2.21m, and cleared 2.25m in his second attempt. He then attacked 2.29m. The athlete, who tweeted his effort, didn't mention if he tried to go higher.

Ratifying the record, however, will be subject to a dope test being done after the competition. Without that the technical



committee of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) will not include it in the record books.

The effort should come as some consolation for the teenager, whose dreams of winning a medal at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games were dashed after he managed only sixth.

At his first major senior international meet in Australia, he could manage only 2.24m. The Texas performance would have

placed him fourth at the CWG, where Australia's Brandon Starc, brother of fast bowler Mitchell Starc, won gold at 2.32m with the silver and bronze winners tied on 2.30m. Shankar's next target is to win a berth for the Asian Games to be staged in Jakarta from August 18-September 2. His next meet in India will be the Inter-State Athletics, slated to be held in Kolkata from June 23-26 and the final qualifying competition for the Games.

## Mohamed Salah draws rare blank for Liverpool as Premier League relegation looms for Stoke City

**NEW DELHI:** Liverpool passed time between Champions League semi-final assignments with a 0-0 draw against Stoke City that nudged their opponents closer to relegation from the Premier League.

Mohamed Salah spurned a glorious early chance to net his 44th goal of the season and Danny Ings saw a goal ruled out for offside before half-time. Nevertheless, for all Jurgen Klopp's pre-match insistence upon the importance of their weekend engagement, it was a fitting showing from Liverpool, who will look to press home a 5-2 advantage over Roma in the Italian capital on Wednesday.

Stoke boss Paul Lambert continued his proud record of having never lost at Anfield in six visits and the well-drilled away team never looked likely to endure the sort of ordeal on the road that has seen them concede seven at Manchester City and five apiece to Tottenham and Chelsea this season. Nevertheless, anything other than victories over fellow strugglers Crystal Palace and Swansea is unlikely to save Stoke, who almost found an 88th-minute winner heavily against the run of play through captain Ryan Shawcross. At this stage, even that might not be enough. Anfield waited for the net to bulge in the fifth minute, but



the only sight more surprising than Erik Pieters darting out of his defensive line to give Salah the freedom of Stoke's half was the PFA Players' Player of the Year dinking a routine finish wide. Joe Gomez, one of five alterations to the XI that thumped Roma, made a shaky start and in the 20th minute his aimless lunge on Moritz Bauer allowed the Austria inter-

national to cross for Mame Biram Diouf to head wide at the far post. Gomez was playing at right-back as Trent Alexander-Arnold pushed into midfield to fill the void left by Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain's knee ligament injury and the latter youngster should have done better when he prodded Salah's pass at Stoke goalkeeper Jack Butland. There were chances at both ends

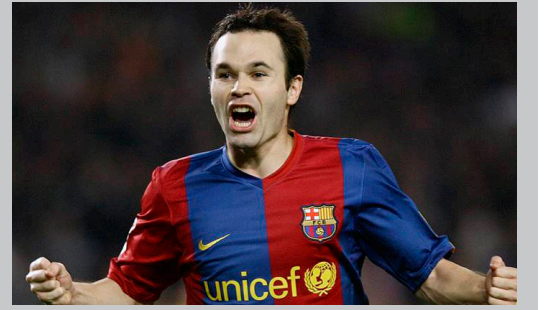
as ex-Liverpool man Peter Crouch just failed to get on the end of Xherdan Shaqiri's low centre, while Georginio Wijnaldum rippled the side-netting and Salah did likewise from a 34th-minute free-kick.

Ings thought he had given Liverpool the lead four minutes before half-time but strayed offside before rifling Wijnaldum's return pass into the roof of the net. A groin injury to centre-back Bruno Martins Indi came as a major blow to Stoke and Lambert's decision to send on winger Ramadan Sobhi underlined the Potters being in a situation where a 12th draw of the campaign would be of little use.

Stoke's Egypt international enjoyed a couple of forays, drawing a brave block from Gomez, but the visitors had faded as an attacking force. Liverpool's hoarding of possession was the main factor that made a home breakthrough more likely in a half that ambled past the midway point as Alberto Moreno drove wide from 25 yards.

There was late drama as Pieters fortuitously survived a penalty shout for handball before Shawcross, a Stoke mainstay since their promotion a decade ago, came agonisingly close to smuggling home the winning goal his club badly needed.

## Andres Iniesta exit deprives Barca of humble star who kept winning



**BARCELONA:** Andres Iniesta means so much more to Barcelona than the 30-plus titles he helped add to its trophy case. The Spaniard, who is leaving the club at the end of the season, was pure elegance with the ball, and a popular player off the field. As Barcelona president Josep Bartomeu put it, "Andres is the son any father would love to have." Lionel Messi has been the driving force that made Barcelona into one of the best teams to ever play the game. But more than any player at the Camp Nou in the last 15 years, Iniesta provided the human element that made him exemplify Barcelona's motto of being "more than a club."

In an emotional news conference on Friday, Iniesta did not reveal what his next club will be, only saying it won't be in Europe. Iniesta, who turns 34 on May 11, decided it was time to go out on top after likely securing a domestic double.

Wearing Barcelona's burgundy-and-blue, Iniesta scored in a 5-0 victory over Sevilla to claim a fourth consecutive Copa del Rey last weekend. That was his and Messi's club record 31st title with Barcelona, and the team just needs to win one of its last five matches to clinch the Spanish league title.

Iniesta's departure after 16 trophy-rich seasons will leave Messi as the last link to the group of players that started Barcelona's incredible winning era with a Liga crown in 2005.

Iniesta and Messi were rising talents on that team coached by Frank Rijkaard and featuring Ronaldinho and Samuel Eto'o.

Barcelona won the 2006 Champion League title, which started a golden era for Barcelona with Iniesta and Messi leading the way to three more Champions League titles and a collection of domestic trophies that displaced Real Madrid as Spain's top team. For a club which prides itself on producing the world's top playmakers and passers, there has been no one quite like Iniesta.

Deceptively sleek with his dribbling skills and uncanny knack for a game-winning pass, Iniesta was a master at unlocking opponents' best-laid defenses. He combined the smooth dribbling skills of Ronaldinho and the precision passing of former midfielder partner Xavi Hernandez.

While never a prolific goal-scorer, Iniesta has come through in the biggest moments for both club and country.

Ask any Barcelona fan what their favorite goal is and more than likely Iniesta's dramatic stoppage-time strike that stunned Chelsea in the 2009 Champions League will be mentioned. With Barcelona seconds from elimination, Iniesta's laser-beam shot with the toe of his right boot kept Pep Guardiola's side on course to the European title.

When asked by Spanish national television in February about that classic goal, Iniesta said it was "as if destiny wanted the ball to go in."

Iniesta was also in the right place at the right time to score in extra time to give Spain the World Cup title in 2010 with a 1-0 victory over the Netherlands. He also played a key part in Spain winning the 2008 and 2012 European Championships to complete an unprecedented run of dominance for Spain and its tiki-taka tactics modeled on Barcelona's ball-possession style.

His thoughtful character was seen when Iniesta dedicated his World Cup winning goal to the late Dani Jarque, his friend and Espanyol defender who had died of a heart attack.

This mix of grace and excellence earned him the respect of opposing fans when Barcelona was playing away from home. They regularly applauded him when he was substituted. Iniesta joined Barcelona's training academy at age 12 after leaving his village in southeastern Spain. He has become an unquestioned favorite of Barcelona's supporters, even with Catalans who sympathize with the region's secessionist movement. Iniesta never won the Ballon d'Or for the world's best player. He was second in voting behind Messi in 2010. France Football, the magazine behind the award, recognized that Iniesta had deserved to win in an editorial published this week by director Pascal Ferre entitled "Sorry, Andres."

But true to his demeanor, Iniesta has never complained. Instead, through the years, he has lost his hair, gotten married, become a father, and looked toward the future of his family by investing in a vineyard, "Bodega Iniesta," in the village where he was born. Last year, Iniesta became the first player to sign a lifetime contract with Barcelona, a deal that allowed him to keep playing for the club as long as he remained fit. But sensing the end was near, Barcelona paid a club-record 160 million euros (\$192 million) to buy Philippe Coutinho from Liverpool in January. Coutinho has settled in during his first four months with Ernesto Valverde's team, but the 25-year-old Brazilian has very big boots to fill. Once Iniesta plays his remaining five matches with Barcelona, Iniesta will head to Russia for this summer's World Cup in what could be the end of his glorious.