

TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

SUNDAY

- MAY, 20, 2018
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WEATHER TEMPERATURE

STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	20.8	10.5
JAMMU	37.3	24.1
LEH	20.1	7.6
KARGIL	16.6	5.4

SUNSET SUNDAY: 07:30 PM
SUNRISE MONDAY: 05:27 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR
Light rain/Thunder shower. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 23°C & 11°C respectively.

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

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BEN STOKES MAKES LOW-KEY IPL 2018 EXIT AFTER STRUGGLING WITH BOTH BAT AND BALL

On Srinagar soil, PM Modi says, 'Kashmir need hugs, neither abuse nor bullets'

'Ceasefire a "slam" to those who incite violence, misguided youth should return to mainstream'

Srinagar, Apr 19 (KNS): Stating that Kashmir issue cannot be solved by "bullets or abuses, but only by hugs, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday appealed the Kashmiri youth who have joined violence to return to their homes and live a life of dignity and peace.

"Atal Bihari Vajpayee was fond of Kashmiriyat and so is Modi. I have said it, neither abuses nor bullets will solve the problem Kashmiris are witnessing. The only solution is hugging and loving Kashmiris," said Prime Minister Modi while addressing an official function here at Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) here in Srinagar where he inaugurated the 330mw Kishenganga Hydel Project and also laid foundation of Srinagar Ring Road,

According to Kashmir News Service (KNS) correspondent, the Prime Minister appealed to those Kashmiri youth who have joined violence to return to their homes and live a life



of dignity and peace. "There is no substitute for peace and stability. I urge the youth who have lost their way to return to the mainstream. The

mainstream is their contribution to the development of Jammu and Kashmir. The responsibility of taking forward the development process and increasing the pride and honour of Jammu and Kashmir lies on this young generation. The state has so much of resources that there is no question that Jammu and Kashmir can stay behind other states, said PM Modi.

Without naming any country, he said that those who have been helping "violence in the state from across our borders are themselves disintegrated this time". "We have to respond to those vested interest powers, who incite the Kashmiri youth towards violence. We have to move ahead. The responsibility of taking forward the development process and increasing the pride and honour of Jammu and Kashmir lies on this young generation," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister claimed that ceasefire was a "slam" to those

Prime Minister lays foundation of Rs. 6809 cr Zojila tunnel



SRINAGAR, MAY 19: Prime Minister, Narendra Modi formally kickstarted commencement of work on the mega Zojila tunnel project here today. Governor, N N Vohra; Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti; Union Minister for Roads & Highways, Nitin Gadkari; Deputy Chief Minister, Kanvinder Gupta; Minister of State in PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh; Chairman, See Zojila...Pg 02

PM INAUGURATED PROJECT THAT WAS APPROVED BY UPA-II: SOZ

Says inauguration of Zojila Tunnel is good measure

Srinagar, May 19 (KNS): Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader, Prof. Safiuddin Soz on Saturday said that the project that was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi was approved by the UPA II.

In a statement issued to KNS, Soz said, "PM Modi's inauguration of Zojila Tunnel is a good measure and it is good news for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially for the people of Leh and Kargil regions. But, at the same time, it is an occasion to remind the people that the project was approved by UPA-II through a cabinet decision on 14th September, 2012."

See Soz...Pg 02

Mehbooba hopes PM would continue his efforts to find solution to wounds, pain of JK people

In last 70 yrs AoA has emerged as a consensus pol document, its implementation has solution for every problem

Srinagar, May 19: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today hoped that Prime Minister, Narendra Modi would continue his efforts to find a lasting solution to the pain and wounds of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion of inauguration of 330 MWs Kishenganga Hydro Electric Project and foundation laying of Srinagar Semi Ring Road project here today, the Chief



Minister thanked the Prime Minister for announcing unilateral halt on security operations in the State. "It certainly is a big step which needed courage and you have amply displayed that. Not only the political parties, every person in the State is grateful to you for putting the balms on their wounds", she addressed the Prime Minister adding that the people of the State are ready to walk ten steps in response to this on the road to peace and getting them out of quagmire of violence.

Mehbooba Mufti said the step taken by the Central Government has raised hopes and faith of State's people in the statesmanship of the Prime Minister. People here, she said, believe that it is he (the Prime Minister) who took this bold step and it can only be him who has the strength to move on and take the people of Jammu & Kashmir out of the present situation", she said while enumerating several

See Mehbooba...Pg 02

DEMOCRACY DEFEATED BJP IN KARNATAKA: G A MIR

Says Nation need to save Institutions

Srinagar, May 19 (KNS): Reacting to the resignation of B.S. Yeddyurappa before facing a trust vote in Karnataka Assembly, the J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President G.A. Mir today described it as the victory of India Democracy, saying that the Nation needs to rise to the occasion to save the Institutions.

It was a defeat of BJP and all those undermining the democratic Institutions strengthened by the Congress Party in the Country, although BJP which is in habit of resorting unfair means and horse trading, earlier formed the Govts in some States unconstitutionally without

See Mir...Pg 02

JRL's Lal Chowk march foiled, Mirwaiz, JKLF leaders detained

Valley shuts, restrictions imposed in Srinagar areas

Srinagar, May 19 (KNS): Authorities on Saturday foiled the Lal chowk march of separatist by imposing sealing the commercial Hub and imposing restrictions in Srinagar areas.

The Lal Chowk chalo call was given by Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL) comprising Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Muhammad Yasin Malik who had appealed people to march towards Lal chowk today to protest against the Modi's visit to the state.

Modi attended the commencement of work on Zojila Tunnel on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway at an event in Jive-tsal in Leh tomorrow. He also laid foundation stone for



Srinagar Ring Road and Jammu Ring Road at separate events at Sher-e-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC). Srinagar See JRL...Pg 02

DGP GRANTS SCHOLARSHIP TO 194 MERITORIOUS POLICE WARDS

Wards of SPOs brought under scholarship scheme Srinagar, May 19 (KNS): Director General of Police, Dr. S.P Vaid has granted scholarship of rupees 10.55 lakh in favour of 194 wards of serving police personnel, who have secured eighty percent and above marks in annual examination of class 10th and 12th during the academic session 2017.

The scholarship has been granted out of Central Police Welfare Fund for 116 meritorious students of class 10th and 78 of class 12th, which include 103 girl students also. Students from class 10th, having secured above ninety percent marks are granted scholarship of rupees

See DGP...Pg 02

Right-to-self-determination is within India's constitution: Er. Rasheed

SRINAGAR, MAY 19 (PTK): Defying strict restrictions by Police hundreds joined AIP's protest march led by MLA Langate Er. Rasheed on occasion of Prime Minister's visit to J&K to remind him of India's broken promises to resolve seventy yearlong pending Kashmir dispute. Protesters carrying black flags, Play cards and Black balloons surfaced near Municipal Park near Jawahar Nagar and marched towards SKICC.

Protesters were raising slogans asking New Delhi to stop genocide of Kashmiris and fulfill the promises made for resolution to Kashmir dispute. On the occasion black balloons were flown in the air as a mark of protest for New Delhi's continuous denial to resolve



the dispute. Talking to media persons on the occasion Er. Rasheed said that New Delhi is See Rasheed...Pg 02

HC STAYS DEFAMATION CASE AGAINST RISING KASHMIR Gives Kehwah Group 4 weeks to respond

Srinagar, May 19 (KNS): The Jammu and Kashmir High Court (HC) Saturday stayed the order of the Additional District Judge Srinagar restraining Rising Kashmir newspaper and its editor from creating any third party interest regarding its properties and assets.

The order was passed by Justice Ali Muhammad Magray in the appeal filed by Rising Kashmir Editor-in-Chief, Shujaat Bukhari.

Advocate Syed Faisal Qadri appealed on behalf of Rising Kashmir.

Hearing an appeal by the newspaper and its editor against the order, the HC sought the entire record pertaining to the case from the lower court.

See HC...Pg 02

Confrontation in ruling party leaders reason for absence of Rajouri mini-sect: Jan

Says Govt playing with lives of people by delaying residential quarters construction in hospital

Rajouri, May 19 (KNS): Terming confrontation between legislators and leaders of ruling BJP and PDP as a reason of absence of vital mini-secretariat in Rajouri, Youth wing of National Conference today accused state government for playing with the lives of masses by delaying construction of residential quarters in district hospital Rajouri which is a main health institution in entire Pir Pan-



jal region. Addressing a press conference in Rajouri Press Club, Youth NCP Provincial President Ajaz Jan said that 'Mini-Secretariat' is a vital institu-

tion and ensures easy approach for masses and proves vital in improving work culture also.

"It is unfortunate that mini-secretariat in Rajouri is yet to see light of the day and everyone knows that confrontation between ruling party leaders is the reason leading to this delay" Jan said.

He also said that during recent outreach programme See Jan...Pg 02

STEP SYMBOLIZES GOVT'S COMMITMENT FOR DEV OF LADAKH REGION: JASROTIA

SRINAGAR, MAY 19 (PTK): Minister for Forests, Ecology and Environment, Rajiv Jasrotia, today said that the flagging-off work on the Zojila tunnel symbolizes the firm commitment of the Government towards the overall development of the Ladakh region.

The Minister said this while addressing a public meeting at Hussaini Park here, which was held in connection with the foundation of Zojila Tunnel by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Leh. Chairman and Chief Executive Councillor Kargil Kacho Ahmad Ali Khan, Minister of State for Finance Ajay Nanda and MLC Vikram Randhawa were also present on the occasion.

See Jasrotia...Pg 02

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PM

who incite the youth towards violence. "Cases have been withdrawn so that these misguided youth live a dignified life and cease fire is to provide relief to the people," he said.

According to the KNS correspondent, taking about Jammu and Kashmir's tourism sector, PM Modi said, "Our government is working for the ecosystem that is required for the development of tourism. There will be an increase in tourists in J&K with a stronger ecosystem. The youths of the state will get new employment opportunity with it," he maintained.

"I want everybody to invest energy only in the development of Jammu and Kashmir. All problems, all differences have only one solution, development, development and development," he said.

The Prime Minister said that Central and the state government has the policy as well as the will to work for the development of Jammu and Kashmir and that they never fall back in taking any decision.

"Today, many youths of Jammu and Kashmir are becoming role models for the youth in other parts of the country. 125 crore people of the country are working on the New India project and Jammu and Kashmir can become the shining star of this New India," the PM maintained.

Narendra Modi further said that there are various rivers in the Valley which can serve as a great source of hydroelectricity. "This is that part of the country which can produce electricity not only for the state but for the other parts of the country as well. And keeping this in mind, we have been working on various projects since last four years," he said.

However he said that for bringing change in the lives of people of Jammu and Kashmir, the all-round development of all the three parts of the states, Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh is very essential.

According to the KNS correspondent, PM Modi, who laid foundation for the Srinagar's Ring road project, said that around 1200 crores will be spent on the construction of this 42 kilometer long road. This road will solve the problem of traffic jam in the city and will somewhat make your lives easy," he said.

"The government is working for providing electricity in each and every house of the state. Under the Saubhagya Yojana, we are working to provide electricity in areas where there is no electricity yet. This is also a good coincident that we all have come together here during the holy month of Ramzaan. Today, I feel blessed to dedicate the Kishanganga Hydropower project to the nation. This project is ready to add to the developments of Jammu and Kashmir. I congratulate all of you on this occasion," PM Modi said and added that 330 MW project will be helpful in reducing the problem of electricity to a large extent.

"After the floods in Jammu and Kashmir, I celebrated Diwali with the victims here. Besides this, I even got the opportunity to celebrate the festival of lights with the soldiers. And now, when the pious month of Ramzaan is going on, I am amidst you people."

He said that the People of Jammu and Kashmir know that how they have been deceived by forces inimical to peace. "We have appointed a special representative to speak to all elected people to find a way out of these difficult times, he said.

Complimenting the role of the security forces including the Jammu and Kashmir Police, the PM said that security forces have lent a helping hand to mitigate the sufferings of the people. "I want to inform you that the J&K Police would soon complete the recruitment process of 5,000 youth.

ZOJILA

Legislative Council, Haji Anayat Ali; Minister for Public Works & Culture, Naem Akhtar; Minister for Cooperatives & Ladakh Affairs, T. Dorjey; Member Parliament, Thupsen Chewang; Chairman, LAHDC, Leh, Thupsen Motup; Chief Secretary, B B Vyas; Director General of Police, Dr. S P Vaid; Executive Councillors; officers and a large number of people were present on the occasion.

The 14.2 kilometre long tunnel would be constructed at a cost of Rs.6809 crore and would be completed in seven years. On its completion, the tunnel would lessen the travel time on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh road from 3.30 hours to just 15 minutes.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti said the construction of the Zojila tunnel would cut down the psychological divide between people of different regions in the State by a great measure. She said the tunnel would not only increase the tourism activities in Ladakh region but also the communication between students, traders and common masses and it would give a major relief to local people who would be at the mercy of harsh winters during closure of the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh Highway in winters.

Mehbooba Mufti said her Government is committed towards the development of all regions in the State on equal footing and in this regard historic steps have been taken by her Government. She said construction of Zojila tunnel was the commitment of her Government towards the people of Ladakh and today she is happy to see that commitment getting fulfilled on ground. This is also a commitment made in the Agenda of Alliance which my Government is fulfilling, she added. She hoped the tunnel would get completed within the shortest possible time so that it not only bridges the geographical barriers between the regions but also the economic and psychological barriers between its people.

Paying rich tributes to late Koshak Bakula, the Chief Minister described him as the architect of modern Ladakh whose contribution in the social, educational and political development of the region can never be forgotten. She also complimented the people of the region for their honesty, hospitality and simple way of life.

Mehbooba Mufti said the region has a great scope for winter sports and the youth from Ladakh have displayed their sporting talent at ample times. She pitched for construction of two high quality indoor stadia at Leh and Kargil so that the sporting activity becomes a round the year affair in the region.

Earlier, the Prime Minister arrived at a day's visit to the State. He was received at the Leh airport by Governor, N N Vohra; Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti; Deputy Chief Minister, Kanvinder Gupta; Chairman, Legislative Council, Haji Anayat Ali; Minister for Public Works & Culture, Naem Akhtar; Minister for Cooperatives & Ladakh Affairs, T. Dorjey; Member Parliament, Thupsen Chewang; Chairman, LAHDC, Leh, Dorjey Motup; Chief Secretary, B B Vyas; Director General of Police, Dr. S P Vaid; Executive Councillors; senior officers and a large number of people.

SOZ

Earlier to that, the Minister of Road Transport and Highways C.P. Joshi had taken a meeting on 28th March, 2012 in which I was also present, apart from Lt. Gen. S. Ravi Shankar, VSM, DBGR, BRO, J.N. Singh, Member (Finance), NHAI, Vinod Kumar, DDG, BRO, Chaman Lal, Chief Engineer (P-I), Sanjeev Kumar, SE (P-I), Col. K.S. Malladi, Director B&T, DGBR and A.K. Gupta, Director Contract, he said.

"In the said meeting, it was decided that the BRO would provide the total Project cost for Zojila and Z-Morh tunnels before 31st March, 2012 and, to the best of my knowledge, all formalities were completed within that time frame and the cabinet approved the project on September 14, 2012," Soz added.

"All this was happening because of personal interest in the project taken by Rahul Gandhi. The cabinet had approved an expenditure of Rs. 9000/- crores for Zojila and Rs. 3000/- crores for Z-Morh Tunnel," he said, adding that it was Rahul Gandhi who inaugurated Z- Morh Tunnel on October 4, 2012. I was one of a dozen National and State public figures present on that occasion.

"It was a normal practice those days for the incumbent Government to make a reference to what had been envisaged and approved by the predecessor Govt. Now, the practice is different as the hype is that nothing worth mention has been done in the past, since Independence!," he said.

MEHBOOBA

initiatives the Prime Minister took in normalising relations with Pakistan in the past.

The Chief Minister said the Agenda of Alliance (AoA) of the present Government has emerged as a consensus political document in last 70 years to redress the issues and problems facing the State in a democratic way. "When you (the Prime Minister) and late Mufti sahib drew a roadmap for the State, it gradually became a consensus political document to redress the issues facing Jammu & Kashmir", she said adding that AoA has incorporated everything which it takes for redressing the issues of the people of the State. "Be it rehabilitation of refugees, opening of cross LoC routes, dialogue, opening of Sharda Peth, compensation of Indus Water Treaty losses, it has everything in it", she said while pitching for moving forward on its speedy implementation.

Being a sensitive State, Mehbooba Mufti said, political narrative always over shadows the developmental narrative and as such needed to be looked accordingly. She thanked the Centre for liberal assistance in terms of PMDP or other schemes which are aimed at fast pacing the development of the State. She hoped that soon work would commence on Vailoo-Singhpura tunnel and other tunnels like Sadhna and Rajdhani are also considered for execution.

Governor, N. N. Vohra; Union Minister for Roads & Highways, Nitin Gadkari; Deputy Chief Minister, Kanvinder Gupta; Union Minister of State for Power, R K Singh; Minister of State in PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh; Minister for Public Works & Culture, Naem Akhtar; Minister for Power, Sunil Sharma, other Ministers; former Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah; Member Parliament, Muzaffar Hussain Baig; legislators; Chief Secretary, B B Vyas; Director General of Police, Dr. S P Vaid; officers from NHPC, NHAI and State Government were present on the occasion.

Prime Minister, Narendra Modi inaugurated the 330 MW Kishenganga Hyro Electric Project which has come up at a cost of around Rs. 6000 crore. He also laid the foundation of Semi Ring Road project for Srinagar city which is expected to cost Rs. around Rs. 2000 crore.

Earlier, the Prime Minister was received at the Srinagar airport by Governor, N N Vohra; Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti; Deputy Chief Minister, Kanvinder Gupta; Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Abdul Rehman Veeri; Minister for Revenue, Ghulam Nabi Lone; Minister for PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control, Sham Lal Chaudhary; Chief Secretary, B B Vyas; Director General of Police, Dr. S P Vaid and other senior officers.

MIR

having appropriate numbers, but this time democracy has defeated the BJP in Karnataka. G.A. Mir said.

Expressing great satisfaction over the victory of democracy in Karnataka, G.A. Mir termed it as victory of people, saying that it should work as an eye opener to the BJP hell bent upon to erode the democratic institutions, from the day one to grab gaining power. Mir said

He also lashed out at those especially BJP allies for praising and appreciating falsehood and unconstitutional practices on the Part of BJP for power in the Country and cautioned that the Nation to wake up to strengthen and save the Institutions before it is too late.

He said Congress Party has always strengthened the democratic Institutional while having never allowed any individual or group to undermine these. GA. Mir added and said Democratic Institutions under BJP rule were facing tough times to deliver their legitimate duties towards the Nation, which has to be contained in the larger interests of the democracy, he said.

He said Karnataka Assembly Elections has exposed the hypocrisy on the part of BJP before the Nation, emphasizing that the Secular Forces in the country shall have to come together to defeat BJP RSS menace posing great threat to democratic set up of the Country.

JRL

and at General Zorawar Singh Auditorium in Jammu this same day.

In response of the call given by the JRL, the district administration Srinagar imposed restrictions in various areas of Srinagar and also sealed Lal Chowk area to thwart any possible protest rally against the PM's visit.

All the entry and exit points of the commercial Hub Lal chowk were sealed by the forces who were deployed in large number. Officials said that besides Lal Chowk, restrictions were imposed within the territorial jurisdictions of Khanyar, Rainawari, Nowhatta, Safakadal, MR Gunj, Nishat and partially in Maisuma and Kralkhud police stations of Srinagar.

Witnesses said that the government forces had erected temporary barricades on the roads, halting the vehicular as well as the pedestrian movement in the restriction bound

areas.

Besides, a complete shutdown was observed across the Valley to protest against the Modi's visit to the Valley.

All the shops, business establishments, educational institutions, petrol pumps and other things remained closed throughout the day while as the vehicular movement was also thin on the roads.

Meanwhile, authorities detained Hurriyat (M) chairman, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq after he tried to march towards Lal Chowk to protest Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Kashmir. Mirwaiz according to the Hurriyat leaders defied the house detention and tried to march towards Lal Chowk.

However, police contingent deployed outside his Nigeen residence prevented him to move towards Lal Chowk and detained him. He was later lodged at police station Nigeen, Hurriyat leaders said.

Authorities also detained scores of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) leaders and activists after they tried to carry out a protest rally towards Lal Chowk.

A spokesperson said that JKLF leaders and activists assembled at Budshah Chowk and marched towards Lal Chowk, but policemen already deployed there prevented them from marching ahead.

He said scores of activists and leaders were detained and were shifted to Kothi Bagh police station.

Police also foiled the protest march by the independent legislator Er Rasheed against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the region and detained him.

Rasheed was detained by police along with his supporters when they tried to take a protest rally from his Jawahar Nagar residence, but policemen deployed in strength took him into custody, reports said.

Besides, Muslim Khawateen Marakaz headed by Yasmeen Raja also staged protest in Srinagar's press enclave against Modi's visit to the Valley.

Meanwhile, a top police official said that the situation across the Valley remained peaceful and under control throughout the day.

DGP

six thousand each and the wards with eighty percent and above marks are given rupees four thousand each.

Similarly wards of class 12th with above ninety percent marks are given scholarship of rupees seventy-two hundred each and with eighty percent or above marks are granted rupees six thousand each.

Two wards of serving SPOs have also been granted meritorious scholarship of rupees six thousand each for securing the prescribed criteria of marks in class 10th and 12th. This was the first time that the SPOs have been brought under the scholarship scheme.

RASHEED

misleading the world and if PM Narendra Modi really believes in his words he must give up the arrogance and agree to Right-of-Self-Determination, as promised by India itself at United Nations. Kashmiris are not enemies of India but the way New Delhi has waged a war against them it becomes evident that it has nothing to offer. Let Prime Minister move beyond words and release all political prisoners and take notice of huge atrocities on Kashmiris by police, Army and CRPF. Let Modi Ji understand that seeking right to self-determination is by no means a solution outside Indian constitution, as Nehru being the custodian of Indian constitution had promised Kashmiris Right to Self Determination. Modi ji or any other Indian Prime Minister has no moral or legal right to undo the commitment of Mr. Nehru. The UN resolutions by no means contradict with India's interests and its constitution".

Er. Rasheed reacting to Narendra Modi's speech at SKICC termed it disappointing, misleading and distortion of facts. He said "It makes no sense and sounds ridiculous when PM says that solution to all problems lies in development. Calling those who have taken up arms in hands as misguided youth is nothing but an attempt to run away from the Kashmir dispute. Modi has not spoken even a word about the resolution nor has made any offer of talks to resolve the long pending dispute. Talking about those youth who have performed well at various levels makes no difference as PM kept criminal silence over Kashmiri youth being butchered by his forces. Rather praising J&K police he should have asked them not to act like goons and under stand the fact that J&K is a political problem and not a law and order issue".

Er. Rasheed lashed out at main stream parties and said that the criminal and apologetic silence of NC and PDP are emboldening New Delhi to take Kashmiris for granted. It looks strange that Farooq Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti could share a joint stage with Modi but never talk to each other and as usual have again brought shame to Kashmiris by representing and strengthening New Delhi's view point.

The protesters while marching to SKICC were stopped at Rajbagh by a heavy contingent of Police and dozens of protesters including Er. Rasheed, Zeeshan Pandith, Dr. Bari, Mohammad Yousuf Bhat , Prince Parvez, Sheeban Ashai, Javed Beigh and Fayaz Bukhari were arrested and detained in Police Station Rajbagh.

HC

The HC also gave a four week's notice to Kehwah Group. Rising Kashmir newspaper and its editor had moved High Court against the order of the Additional District Judge Srinagar restraining the newspaper from creating any third party interest regarding to its properties and assets.

The Additional District Judge Srinagar, in March, had passed an order to provide interim relief to Shiekh Imran, proprietor of the Kehwah Group, in his case seeking damages from the newspaper for a news story published in January this year.

The news story 'RBI asks J&K Bank to declare Kehwah Group fraud' gave the details of how the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had asked the Jammu and Kashmir Bank to declare the 'Kehwah Group' as a "banking fraud" on the pretext of its Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) to the tune of Rs 130 crore.

As per the news story, the Kehwah Group at that point had denied having any information but a top official in the bank and sources in the RBI had confirmed to Rising Kashmir that a letter had been sent asking for seizure of all assets of the 'Kehwah Group' operating in Kashmir and declaring

it as a "fraud".

In the appeal before the High Court, the newspaper had stated that the order of the Additional District Judge Srinagar is bad in law as the court has not considered three principles necessary to be followed while passing the order impugned.

"The trial court has failed to appreciate that while passing the order impugned, it was imperative that for grant of an interim relief in favour of the impugned order, it was required to establish that the respondents (including Sheikh Imran) had a prima facie case in their favour, whether the balance of convenience is in favour of passing the order of injunction and whether the respondents (plaintiff therein) would suffer an irreparable injury if an order of injunction could not be passed as prayed for," the appeal read.

The appeal stated that the case position of the appellants (including the newspaper) was more strengthened against the order as there had been no averment made in the suit or the interim application that the appellants were proposing to dispose of the assets belonging to them in order to avoid the benefit of relief which might be granted in favour of the respondent.

The appeal stated that the order of the trial court was "excessive in nature" as it had called for an attachment of the assets of the appellant.

The appeal while quoting the settled principle of law that states that before a person is entitled to an order of attachment before a judgement, he is required to prove that defendant is about to dispose of the whole or any part of his property.

The appeal then listed two more points which need to be proved before passing an attachment order, which in trial court had not followed while passing the said order.

"Therefore the passing of the order impugned is not only unjustified but also illegal and in violation of the procedure as envisaged under Rule 5 order XXXVIII of CPC," the appeal reads.

The appeal further stated, "It has been held time and again that an order of attachment before the judgement is a drastic remedy and power has to be exercised with utmost care and caution as it may be likely to ruin the reputation of the parties against whom the power is exercised."

The appeal read that the attachment before the judgement is not the process to be adopted because the suit is yet to be tried and the defence of the defendant is yet to be tested.

The appeal stated that the trial court while passing the impugned order does not disclose the reasons for reaching to the conclusion of passing the attachment order.

"The perusal of the impugned order would indicate that the trial court has only on the basis of presumption of an irreparable injury to the respondent passed the same (order)," the appeal stated. The appeal stated the order impugned does not deal with the principles - to be considered while passing such an order - and on this count deserves to be set aside.

The appeal stated that the impugned order has dented the image of the appellants (including the newspaper) as it (order) is being seen as an attachment order in the journalistic circles of the State. "The impugned order has caused irreparable damage to the appellants," the appeal read.

Taking into considerations, the prayers of the appellants, the HC stayed the decision of the lower court which has now removed the injunction on the appellants rights vis-à-vis his assets and properties.

JAN

of Chief Minister in Rajouri, when time was appropriate to end this delay, ruling party leaders played such role which led to suspension of threadbare discussion on this issue to bring a final consensus on construction of this vital institution.

Taking a dig at state government, Jan said that ruling party leaders are claiming that water supply network has been upgraded in Rajouri but situation has turned worst on ground in last three years and even at this moment, people living in most of the area's are without water and PHE Department is remaining on failure side to deal with the crisis and some senior officers also remain unavailable for people.

Accusing state government for playing with the lives of people of Pir Panjal region, YNC Provincial President Ajaz Jan said that previous government laid foundation stone and started work for construction of residential quarters of staff including doctors in district hospital Rajouri but present government failed to carry forward the project.

"Both BJP and PDP leaders, especially the legislators, should come forward and accept their failure in completion of project related to construction of residential quarters in district hospital" Jan said.

He added that district hospital Rajouri is a major health institution of entire Pir Panjal region and absence of quarters is leading to affect on public healthcare system with concept of 'Golden Hour' for patients feeling no caretaking in Rajouri due to absence of quarters.

He further hailed the approach of district administration by carrying out 'City Re-development Plan' and said that administration's working is appreciable.

Commenting upon process started by state government for upgradation of schools across state, Jan said that only two high schools and two higher secondary schools will be upgraded in each assembly segment which is not more than peanuts and government should raise this quota atleast to ten schools per segment and especially in hilly and far flung areas.

Others including NC leader S. Nirman Singh, Youth NC Provincial President Mati Ul Rehman, Naheem Bhat, Sharaz Malik Vice President and others were also present in this press conference.

JASROTIA

Jasrotia, while congratulating the people on the foundation of 14 kilometre-long tunnel project, said that the Government is fully conscious of the developmental needs and aspirations of the people of Kargil and issues like the expansion of Kargil Airport and other major projects shall be executed in a phased manner.

CEC Kacho Ahmad Ali Khan expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, Chairman Legislative Council Haji Anayat Ali and the state government for fulfilling the long pending demand of the people of the region by inaugurating the prestigious Zojila tunnel project.

Speaker attends attestation cum passing out Parade at STC BSF

Urges recruits to live up to expectations of nation

UDHAMPUR, MAY-19:- An impressive attestation cum passing out Parade for a batch of 451 recruit constables of Border Security Force (BSF)- the India's first line of defence, was organized here at its Subsidiary Training Centre (STC).

Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Dr. Nirmal Kumar Singh was the chief guest on the occasion. Member Legislative Assembly, Udhampur Pawan Kumar Gupta, MLA Chenani, Dina Nath Bhagat, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Krishan Lal, and other distinguished guests and senior officers from Army, CRPF, Air Force, Police and Civil Administration besides parents of the recruit constables and a large number of eminent citizens were present on the occasion.

Addressing the parade, the Speaker congratulated the recruit constables on successful completion of the tough training. He called upon them to display courage in the face of professional challenges. He extended his good wishes to all newly pass out recruits and expressed confidence that the recruits will live up

to the expectations of the nation. He also applauded the efforts put in by IG BSF, S.S Dogra and his team of dedicated instructors for moulding and shaping competent recruits.

Singh said that BSF is deployed on international border, LOC and also in different parts of the country to fight against militants in J&K insurgents in North East and Maoist in the Central India. He said that entire country is looking at these bordermen and expressed his confidence over the training imparted to those trainees by dedicated and professional team of STC, BSF Udhampur. He exhorted upon the new pass outs for showing dedication to duty and high degree of integrity while discharging duties on the border as well as in counter insurgency operations.

The chief guest inspected the passing out parade and took salute at the march past.

The parade was commanded by Recruit Constable Patil Vinayak Balaso. On the occasion, five trainees from each batch adjudged best in respective fields



were awarded by the chief guest.

Later, the chief guest also presented medals to achievers who excelled in their training. Earlier, IG BSF, S.S Dogra presented welcome address and congratulated the recruit constables on their successful completion of 44 week rigorous training which has transformed them from a youthful child to an iron willed borderman. He expressed his gratitude to parents of newly passed out recruits, who have sent their son in the service of the nation as a bordermen. He informed that during the periods of 44 weeks of

rigorous training these bordermen were trained in various aspects of physical training, weapon handling, Drill, endurance, counter insurgency training, Jungle training apart from most important task of guarding international border on Western and Eastern borders as first line of defence of the country to make them efficient bordermen so that they can effectively perform their duties on international border as well as internal security.

The meeting took feedback regarding reasons for abysmal performance

by the students in these schools so that remedial steps are taken to ensure improvement in the next session.

The meeting was attended by Chief Education Officer Lal Hussain, Headquarter Assistant to DC Mohammad Raiyaz, Principals and headmasters of various higher secondary and high schools.

The meeting pin pointed various reasons hampering the delivery of quality education, including shortage of teaching staff, non-cooperation of parents, lack of adequate infrastructure and frequent closure of schools along

LOC due to cross border shelling.

The meeting also embarked on the need to strengthen the education at primary level so as to have desired results in board exams. It was said that 'No detention policy' of the government needs to be relooked as promotion to higher grades is of no use if the student is not performing good in the primary classes.

The ADC assured that the administration will look into the issues raised by participants. He directed the CEO to carry out extensive exercise for rationalisation of teaching staff. He said that most of schools lacking won accommodation are being provided building under project 'Tameer' started by District Administration.

The CEO was asked to lay special focus on the low performing schools and make provision for remedial and extra classes during summer vacations by deputing subject experts. The participants were also impressed upon to organise parent teacher meets on regular basis to inform parents about performance of their children.

Bandh inspects Seed Multiplication Farm at Chinore

Stresses on use of latest cultivation techniques

JAMMU, MAY 19: Minister for Agriculture, Mohammad Khalil Bandh today inspected and reviewed the achievements at Seed Multiplication Farm Chinore during his visit to the border area of Gajansoo-Marh.

The Minister was accompanied by Vice-Chairman J&K Agro Industries Development Corporation, Rashid Ahmad and MLA Marh Choudhary Sukhmandan Kumar, besides Director Agriculture Jammu, Hari Krishan Razdan, Director Command Area Development, S. Jitendra Singh, Managing Director, J&K Agro Industries Dev Corporation, Rakesh Khajuria, K S Sambhal Joint Director of Agriculture (Inputs) also accompanied the minister during

the visit to the Farm.

The Minister said that there was much scope to boost production and productivity through intervention of latest farm cultivation techniques. Band also inspected the latest machinery being used at the farm like combines, seed drills, trans-planters, multi-crop threshers, tractors, potato planters, ridgers, offsets. He said that efficient use of the machinery should be ensured. He directed the farm staff to prepare plans for running the farm on modern scientific lines with utilization of latest machinery and available technologies to produce best quality seeds for the farmers.

The Minister stressed on to take all out steps to prevent encroachment and trespass-

ing of the farm land by unscrupulous elements. He impressed upon the officers to review the functioning of the farms periodically to identify the gaps and to bring innovations and improvements for enhancement of production and productivity.

The Minister was informed that the farm is spread over an area of 2586 acres of which 300 acres is irrigated. It was further told that the harvesting of wheat has been expedited with the usage of Modernized Combined Harvester during Current Rabi season.

Farm Manager Subash Panothra presented the overview of the seed production, developments made in the quality and making the farm a profit earning activity with

the introduction of the scientific management interventions and use of better technologies including linesowing through Seed-cum-fertilizer Drills, Paddy Transplanters, Plant Protection Measures and harvesting of crops by Combines. He also highlighted various problems and difficulties regarding shortage of staff fencing, repair of canal, construction of guest house and bunkers being located at vulnerable international border and having limitations of irrigation facilities.

The Minister assured of all possible help for carrying out fencing, augmentation of irrigation, meeting staff shortage and regularization of the casual staff working at the farm.

Govt has envisioned Jammu as independent tourist destination: Mehbooba

JAMMU, MAY 19: Hailing the people of Jammu for upholding the tenets of harmony, inclusive sense, amity and brotherhood, Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today said her Government has envisioned Jammu as an independent tourist destination for which many projects are in pipeline.

Speaking at a function to lay the foundation of 1000 MWs Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Power project and 52 kilometre Jammu Semi Ring Road project here today, the Chief Minister said in present day world Jammu represents a truly pluralist social system which has evolved as an example for all societies. She appealed the people of Jammu to uphold these tenets of tolerance and values for which the State has been known since ages. She said when many people left Kashmir Valley,



the people of Jammu not only opened their homes and hearths for them but also shared their resources, supplies and other facilities. Mehbooba Mufti said her

Government is keen to develop Jammu as an independent tourist destination for which many projects are in pipeline. She said Government is making efforts to retain the tourist footfall in Jammu which seems to have slipped ever since the direct rail connectivity to Katra. Many of such projects, she said, are being inaugurated this year alone and work on many more is apace.

Governor, N. N. Vohra; Union Minister for Roads & Highways, Nitin Gadkari; Deputy Chief Minister, Kanvinder Gupta; Union Minister of State for Power, R K Singh;

Minister of State in PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh; Minister for Public Works & Culture, Naeem Akhtar; Minister for Power, Sunil Sharma, other Ministers; Member Parliament, Jugal Kishore; legislators; Chief Secretary, B B Vyas; Director General of Police, Dr. S P Vaid; officers from NHPC, NHA1 and State Government were present on the occasion.

During the function, Prime Minister laid the foundation of 1000 MWs Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project. To be built in Kishtwar district, the project is expected to cost Rs. 8112 crore. He also laid the foundation of 58 kilometre Jammu Semi Ring Road project to be built at a cost of Rs. 2300 crore. The Prime Minister also threw open 7 kilometre long Tarakote Marg at Katra built by Shri Mata Vaishno Shrine Board.

TLSC Ramnagar organizes Lok Adalat

UDHAMPUR, MAY-19:- Tehsil Legal Services Committee (TLSC), Ramnagar today organized a Lok Adalat under the chairmanship of Sub Judge Anjum Ara here at the Court Complex.

The Lok Adalat took up 30 cases of compoundable civil, criminal nature of which 14 were settled on the spot. Besides, 26 Traffic Challans were taken up and all were disposed off and compounding fine of Rs-5850 was recovered on the spot.

Sub judge, who is also the chairman of Tehsil Legal Services Committee Ramnagar, made the locals aware about the Legal Aid being provided to the poor people, various acts and schemes launched by the government of India for the welfare of general public and urged the people to come forward and avail the benefits of the schemes.

Tehsildar Ramnagar, Ramesh Singh besides other prosecuting Officers and Bar members were present on the occasion.

Rajouri admin discusses measures for improving board results in Govt schools

RAJOURI, MAY 19: The district administration Rajouri discussed remedial measures to improve results in schools here at a meeting of principals and headmasters.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sher Singh chaired the meeting of heads of higher secondary and high schools where the overall board result for class 12 and 10 was recorded below twenty percent. The meeting took feedback regarding reasons for abysmal performance by the students in these schools so that remedial steps are taken to ensure improvement in the next session. The meeting was attended by Chief Education Officer Lal Hussain, Headquarter Assistant to DC Mohammad Raiyaz, Principals and headmasters of various higher secondary and high schools. The meeting pin pointed various reasons hampering the delivery of quality education, including shortage of teaching staff, non-cooperation of parents, lack of adequate infrastructure and frequent closure of schools along LOC due to cross border shelling.

The meeting also embarked on the need to strengthen the education at primary level so as to have desired results in board exams. It was said that 'No detention policy' of the government needs to be relooked as promotion to higher grades is of no use if the student is not performing good in the primary classes. The ADC assured that the administration will look into the issues raised by participants. He directed the CEO to carry out extensive exercise for rationalisation of teaching staff. He said that most of schools lacking won accommodation are being provided building under project.

Dr Kotwal reviews progress on Rajouri GMC project

RAJOURI, MAY 19: The Principal Secretary to the government Health and Medical Education Department Dr Pawan Kotwal today reviewed the pace of progress on Govt Medical College campus and associated projects.

Rs 139 Crore project comprising Rs 69 Cr Academic block, Rs 40 Cr Residential block for doctors, paramedics and students and Rs 30 Cr for upgradation of District Hospital into teaching hospital, will have an intake capacity of 1000 medical students.

Dr Pawan Kotwal accompanied by District Development Commissioner Rajouri Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, visited the site and inspected pace of work on various blocks of the college.

Others present were AC Revenue A Q Mir, Dy Director Dr Chandar

Prakash, Nodal Officer for execution of GMC Rajouri project Dr Geelani, Ex En PWD MA Raina, representatives of Vijay & Anand associates, the consultancy hired for designing.

A detailed presentation was made about the execution of work, safety and other specifications of the buildings besides physical and financial achievements. It was informed that 97% of RCC, retaining walls and foundation works have been completed and 35% of platform cutting work has been executed at overall expenditure of Rs 30 Cr.

Responding to the issue of Rs 7 Cr work done liability, Dr Pawan said there is no constraint of funds as the project is getting assured funding from the Govt of India. He said that Rs 41 Cr shall be released within a fortnight time. He further directed the concerned to speed up



the work to complete the project within set deadline to avoid cost overrun. He directed for use of high quality hollow blocks in construction work keeping in view the climatic conditions of the area. It was

decided that an auditorium shall also be constructed in the GMC.

Later, the team of officers also visited District Hospital Rajouri and discussed plan for its upgradation into Teaching Hospital with

addition of 200 bedded block to take the capacity to 500 beds as per MCI guidelines. The directions were issued for submitting a DPR for 2 Lecture halls, 1 hall each for dissection and library at the earliest. It was informed that this much infrastructure is prerequisite for getting letter of permission from MCI to start class work.

It was also decided that a committee comprising CMO, MS District Hospital and Nodal Officer for GMC Rajouri project, under the chairmanship of DDC Rajouri, shall review the DPR prepared for additional block and restrict it within Rs 30 Cr by considering the optimal utilisation of already existing space in the district hospital and also including pre-engineered structures. The committee was asked to submit the revised project within 15 days.

Rajouri: Dist admin to take action against absentee College teachers

Contests CTA's stand over competence of ADC

RAJOURI, MAY 19: District Administration Rajouri has taken strong exception to the stand of College Teachers Association (CTA) on the competence of ADC to take cognizance of college teachers found on unauthorised absence. In a statement, the spokesperson of the district administration termed a statement of CTA as unwarranted, unlawful and devoid of merits, terming it as undue trade-unionism to cover unauthorised absenteeism, and an uncalculated for interference in established Single Line Administration.

'The College Teachers Association in its press note had termed that Additional Deputy Commissioner is not competent to take cognizance of college teachers found on

unauthorised absence, on the false ground of pay scales a point which is far from reality and establishes legal procedure as well as Government orders in this regard as well as inherent powers of the officers' the spokesperson said.

The District Administration termed the stand of CTA as 'unlawful and contrary to the laid down rule position, adding that such unionism will not hamper the executive action.' 'The Single Line Administration established under the Govt Order No 2380-GD of 1976 Dated 14.10.1976, 2973-GD of 1976 Dated 28.12.1976 wherein in powers of Major Heads of Departments have been vested in the District Development Commissioner and the day to day functional and administrative control

of all departments vests in him. The Scheme was further strengthened vide Govt Order No 741-GAD of 1993 Dated 03.09.1993 and disciplinary /administrative powers including that of suspension of officers of Grade-I vests in the DDC, irrespective of any pay scales as claimed by CTA. There is no exception or immunity to the staff of the Govt Degree Colleges' the statement said.

It further cited that High Court of J&K has upheld the powers of District Development Commissioner to suspend and take disciplinary action against even senior officers recruited through state PSC acting as appointing authority under single line administration. The matter has been settled in SWP No 423 of 2007. The power of

Major HoD and administrative department for such matters vested in DDC upheld by highest court in state is a settled law. The SHRC observation cited by CTA has no effect or binding on the executive authorities, the statement reads. 'The arbitrary and unfounded claim of the CTA regarding pay scales can be seen as an imaginary castle in the air by bare reading of the J&K Warrant of Precedence which is the basic document defining the hierarchy of officers. As per the Govt order dated 16.07.2001 pursuant to the Cabinet Decision No 110/10 Dated 4th July 2001 Addl Deputy Commissioners (Addl Secretaries) are placed above many HoDs, all District Officers and other officers including principals of the

Degree Colleges. Its wrongful and wilful ignorance on part of CTA to have turned blind eye to established executive powers before jumping in support of officials found on unauthorised absence' the spokesperson of district administration claimed.

Supporting its claims further, the statement said that Chief Minister's secretariat vide No HCM/AS/2016-17/154-77 Dated 14.07.2016 communicated the minutes of meeting chaired by Hon'ble Chief Minister where detailed scheme for strong vigilance against absenteeism has been laid down and importantly Administrative Secretaries have been asked to endorse the decisions taken by the DDCs in this regard. 'The scheme of Single Line Admin-

istration has been strongly endorsed in the communication for enforcing discipline in Government offices' it added. 'Additional Deputy Commissioner in his inherent capacity, or capacity as District Vigilance Officer or deputed by DDC is well within his powers to inspect attendance in any Govt Degree College. He is vested with powers of District Magistrate under RPC' the district administration asserted further. Meanwhile, it said that the explanation of 6 officials found on unauthorised absence has been sought and in case of failure to furnish same further action as necessitated under the Rule 31 of the Jammu & Kashmir Civil Service (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956 shall be initiated.

Time and Us

Editorial
SRINAGAR
& K

Arbitrary, capricious: on the Karnataka Governor's decision

In summarily ignoring the claim of H.D. Kumaraswamy, Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala abandoned both propriety and common sense, acting in a politically partisan manner unbecoming of his office. Mr. Kumaraswamy was elected leader of the Janata Dal (Secular) Legislature Party and, with the declared support of the Congress, had the backing of a majority in the newly elected Assembly. The leader of the BJP Legislature Party, B.S. Yeddyurappa, offered no demonstrable proof of majority, but was invited to form the government, and given all of 15 days to prove he had the confidence of the House, solely on the basis of being the leader of the single largest party. Far from ushering in a stable government, the Governor unbolted the doors to allow room for the BJP to try to engineer defections. In situations such as these, the Constitution allows an element of discretion to the Governor, but this power was never meant to be used arbitrarily and capriciously. In defence of the Governor's action, BJP leaders have cited the Bommai judgment, which ruled on the course open for the Governor in the event of a Chief Minister losing majority in the House, but offered no opinion on a post-poll situation, where it said the Governor had to "invite the leader of the party commanding majority in the House or the single largest party/group to form the government." Nothing in the judgment privileges the single largest party over the largest group when it comes to being given the first shot at forming a government. The BJP leaders have now staked out positions that are at odds with those they adopted after the Assembly elections in Manipur and Goa, when the single largest party, the Congress, was denied a chance to form the government. Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had a weak defence on this turnaround: the Congress, he claimed, had not staked a claim in those two States. The Congress has taken the fight to the Supreme Court, which has asked the Attorney General to produce the letters written by Mr. Yeddyurappa to the Governor in support of his claim. When the members of the Congress and the JD(S) together constitute a majority in the House, it is unclear what letters Mr. Yeddyurappa could have presented to the Governor. No matter how things turn out from here on, the BJP has emerged as a bad loser. The party played a smart hand in Goa and Manipur to deny the Congress, but is unable to accept defeat in Karnataka when beaten at its own game. Politics is not always about reaching for power; sometimes it is also about learning to sit in the Opposition. After all, power is only one of the means of politics, not one of its ends. The BJP may have bested the Congress in Karnataka, but it may not have paid the price for this victory yet.

Former Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi, who represents some Karnataka BJP MLAs, arrives at the Supreme Court for a late night hearing of Congress and JD(S) petition challenging the State Governor's decision inviting the BJP to form a government, past midnight of May 16, 2018.

ARCHITECTURE OF THE MANDATE

► Gopalkrishna Gandhi

Mathematics is about numbers, and mathematics is an exact science. The addition, subtraction, division and multiplication of numbers in ganita is about getting problems right. Just that. Right. And a satisfaction is derived, both mathematical and aesthetic, in getting the exercise right. Precision is its sole dharma. Numbers, after a problem is done, stand still. They do not pull at each other, jumping from a plus to a minus, from the times or multiplication sign into an obelus or division sign. A sum does not try to or want to alter itself. The problem-solver or sum-beholder derives satisfaction from the purity of its precision.

Integrity of the arithmetic Elections too are about numbers and are an exact exercise. But only until the sum is reached. That is, until the Election Commission finishes its calculations and declares the 'sum'. The Election Commission counts and then announces the counts, and once it has done that, retires. After that has been done, the President in the case of Lok Sabha elections or the Governor in the case of Vidhan Sabha elections takes over. It is in their hands that the result of the counting converts itself into the pattern of seats in the elected House. The President or Governor then becomes the keeper of the sum's integrity and has to see that the pattern of the sum is honoured by the pattern of the seats. In other words, the architecture of the sum is retained by the architecture of their power. The keeper has to see that the integrity of that architecture is not garbled to create a house different in shape from the blueprint of the sum's design.

What was the blueprint of the design that the people of Karnataka drew? The blueprint came in four folds. All of us know them now only too well.

The first fold for the single largest party was the Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP's.

The second fold for the second largest party was the Congress's.

The third fold for the third largest party was that of the Janata Dal (Secular), or JD(S).

The fourth fold, which showed the first three in a pie, gave their relative shares: the first was smaller, if only slightly, than the second and third seen together.

We have to switch now from designs, graphs, squares and pies to what the Governor had to make of this four-fold design. We have to switch from arithmetic and geometry to a kind of algebra, the study of mathematical symbols, the rules for their handling, their groups, rings, fields. In other words, we have to switch now from how to move from the numbers to their mandate and see how a House is to be made from out of its mandate, a House for the mandate of the gana to dwell in. In this task, though working on and with numbers, a President or a Governor cannot function like



a calculator. His task is mathematics plus ethics.

The Governor's options

The Governor of Karnataka saw and may well have felt somewhat like this: If only Party One had just crossed the halfway mark and got a simple majority, his task would have been simple. He would have called its leader to form the government. But that did not happen. The people of Karnataka voted in greater strength against Party Number One than for it.

Former Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi, who represents some Karnataka BJP MLAs, arrives at the Supreme Court for a late night hearing of Congress and JD(S) petition challenging the State Governor's decision inviting the BJP to form a government, past midnight of May 16, 2018.

If only Party Two and Party Three had entered the election as a joint team, in what is called a pre-poll alliance, his work would again have been simple. He would have had to call that two-coloured rainbow to name its leader and invite him to take the oaths of office. But that too did not happen. The majority of the people of Karnataka voted against the BJP but they did not vote cohesively for the Congress-JD(S) combine.

So, the Governor did not get it all that simple. But was what he did get all that complicated? Not really.

Though not a pre-poll alliance, Parties Two and Three did get together with a verve and vim they did not show before the elections to become one, and not only drew up a joint list of the newly elected MLAs to be but also chose a joint leader, unconditionally. There is nothing in any electoral law or court verdict to say that a post-poll alliance is ab initio null, void and to be disregarded. True, a pre-poll alliance is a neater, more up-front arrangement, but a post-poll one is not out of order.

The numbers in Karnataka were clear. They showed the people's integrated will, albeit in two frames hinged together requiring Parties Two and Three to be

asked to form the government and seek the approval of the House by its users on its floor. If defeated, then ask Party One to try its luck.

That has not happened.

Had Party Two and Party Three not come together post-poll, Governor Vajubhai Vala could have ignored the fact that the non-BJP MLAs outnumber the BJP MLAs — and left it to the Chief Minister or the putative leader of the House to navigate his majority through the first confidence vote. But he has decided and that is that.

What now? With the two parties having come together, and out-numbering the BJP MLAs, the real test of their political integrity lies in their staying together and defeating the Yeddyurappa government in the first confidence vote. There is only one way in which they can do that. And that is by staying together, staying determined, and voting on vote day unitedly. Will they let their unity and determination, numerical strength, numerical integrity be diminished?

How may that be done? We know the way that happens.

The principle of it

With millions of other Indians I have a political position that opposes the ideology of the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). But I also have a sense, again with millions of others, of a political ethics that tells me if the Congress had been in the position of single largest party in Karnataka as the BJP is in, and if the BJP and the JD(S) had got together post-poll as the single largest group, and if Governor Vala, citing the single largest party line, had called the Congress to form the government, I would have said exactly the same thing I have said here — in the reverse.

The lesson of the Karnataka Kanda is this: the parties opposed to the BJP and RSS's ideology must work together from the word go, and not let the imperiousness of post-election decision-making imperil the will of the people.

(Courtesy: The Hindu)

BALANCING CONFLICTING CLAIMS

► C. Rangarajan

In the context of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the 15th Finance Commission (FFC), certain key aspects relate to (a) the mandate for using the 2011 population; (b) 'whether revenue deficit grants' be given at all; (c) the impact of the goods and services tax (GST) on the finances of the Centre and States; (d) the reference to 'conditionalities' on State borrowing; and (e) providing performance incentives in respect of some contentious indicators.

The southern States apprehend that they stand to lose under the so-called 'population criterion' if the 2011 population replaces the use of 1971 figures. State populations change not only because of their differential population growth but also due to migration. Using 1971 population data implies consciously using information that would be 50 years out of date by 2020-21, the first year of the FFC's recommendation period. Population data used by the successive Finance Commissions in different criteria have served as a 'scaling' factor — that is, the larger the size of the population, the larger is the magnitude of fiscal transfer. In principle, fiscal transfer is determined

in per capita terms and then scaled up to cater to the entire population living in the State. In deriving the per capita GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product), it is always calculated using current rather than dated population, as is done in the 'income distance' criterion. Scaling per capita transfer up only to an imaginary size of population such as the 1971 population for years beyond 1971 was always an artificial exercise. No other major federation uses such a practice. Major federations like Canada and Australia with well-established fiscal transfer principles use all relevant information that is up-to-date as much as possible.

Losses or gains depend on the relative weights attached to different criteria, and changes in other information including per capita GSDP. There is a case under the present circumstances to have a relook and lower the weights attached particularly to the population and income-distance criteria. It is interesting to note that the weight attached to the population criterion has varied from 25% to 10% and that attached to the distance formula from 62.5% to 50% from the 10th to the 14th FCs.

The reference in the ToR regarding

revenue deficit grants does not necessarily imply that grants given under Article 275(i) should be discontinued. This article enjoins the Finance Commission first to determine the 'principles' which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the State and then determine the 'sums' that are to be paid. Revenue deficit grants often did follow implicitly the gap-filling approach, even though moderated by application of some partial norms. This approach has been heavily criticised in the literature on fiscal transfers in India for the adverse incentives that it generates. In fact, there is a strong case to discontinue revenue deficit grants based on gap filling but continue to recommend grants under Article 275(i) based on more acceptable principles.

Most major federations follow an equalisation approach to determine fiscal transfers that is consistent with the objectives of equity and efficiency. In fact, just preceding the reference to 'revenue deficit grants' under Clause 5 of the ToR, the FFC has been asked to be 'guided by the principles of equity, efficiency, and transparency'. Under the principle of equalisation, transfers aim to 'equalise' fiscal capacities, enabling

States to provide services at comparable standards provided they make comparable tax effort after taking into account cost and use disabilities. Equalisation grants are policy neutral and need not be sector-specific although the 11th and 12th Commissions used the equalisation principle partially to provide sector-specific grants. It is the application of the 'equity' principle that has resulted in relatively well-off States losing their share. It has no other connotation.

In this context, one notable group consists of the mineral-rich States: Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Assam. These coal-rich States continue to carry a significant pollution load on behalf of the nation. They lost the opportunity of early industrialisation due to the Centre's policy of freight equalisation whereby the transport of coal was subsidised, thereby neutralising their main location benefit. With freight equalisation, many thermal power plants were set up in the southern States, powering their industrial growth. Although freight equalisation is now discontinued, environmental constraints beset setting up of industries in these mineral-rich States.

The Finance Commission has the

difficult task of resolving competing claims of different groups of States. This is best done by adhering to the most appropriate principles, including that of policy neutrality. The Finance Commission, which is ideally expected to provide a symmetric treatment between the Centre and States, is not the appropriate platform for promoting Central policy priorities. References in the ToR to the Centre's flagship schemes, 'populist policies' of States and conditionalities on State borrowing imply an asymmetric view of the Centre vis-à-vis States. In fact, as far as State borrowings are concerned, after the recommendation of the 12th Finance Commission, major States do not borrow from the Centre. In any case, too long ToR should be avoided. Finance Commissions know better.

The 14th Finance Commission raised the proportion of shareable taxes to states to 42%. It was at pains to point out that the increase was largely meant to 'enhance the share of unconditional transfers to the States'. In deciding on the share, it is necessary to take into account not only the constitutional responsibilities but also the perceptions of the people who look to the Central government for

remedies to all issues. It started with economic planning. Every economic issue is now laid at the door of the Centre itself. Perhaps, we are reaching a situation where the Constitution itself can be amended to fix the share that must go to States and leave Finance Commissions only with the task of horizontal allocation. Even as the share going to States gets increased, there is need to include 'contribution to Central taxes', suitably measured, also as a criterion in horizontal distribution as some of the taxes are vested in the Centre only on grounds of efficiency and economy. It is here that the relatively advanced States have a valid grouse.

Fiscal transfers in India have long been characterised by two major inefficiencies: the use of dated population figures and a 'gap-filling' approach. Implementing a comprehensive equalisation approach would overcome these deficiencies. This requires estimating States' fiscal capacities reflecting their tax bases. In the case of the GST, consumption rather than income would be a better tax base. This should be supplemented by the tax-bases of the non-GST taxes.

(Courtesy: The Hindu)

Will Yeddyurappa do a Vajpayee ahead of Karnataka trust vote? Here's what happened in 1996

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the single-largest party in the assembly elections in Karnataka this week, and staked claim to form the government. There was an alternative in place. The Congress and the Janata Dal (Secular) had come together in a quick post-poll arrangement and claimed they had the majority in the House. The governor Vajubhai Vala still decided to invite the BJP's legislative leader, BS Yeddyurappa, triggering a political-legal storm.

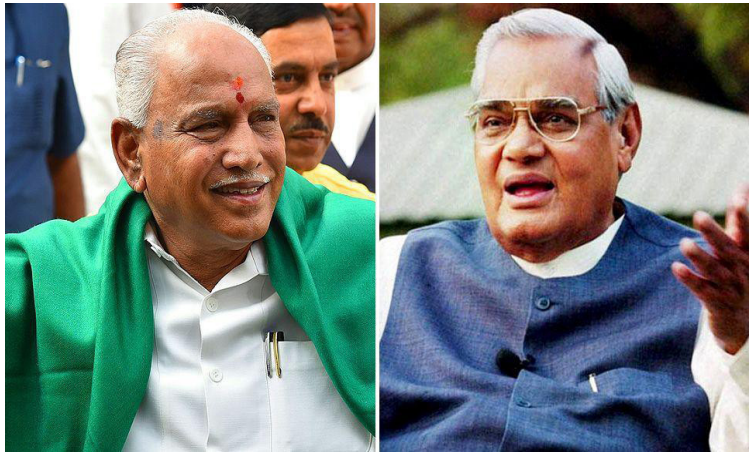
There are clear differences, but 22 years ago on the national stage, the BJP had emerged as the single-largest party and was invited to form what is famously known as the 13-day government.

HT reconstructs what happened then.

Context

The Lok Sabha elections were held five years after prime minister PV Narasimha Rao ushered in economic reforms, four years after the demolition of Babri Masjid, and months after the so-called Hawala scandal (where the Rao government implicated leaders from across parties, who later got acquitted).

The BJP declared Atal Bihari Vajpayee as its prime ministerial face. Riding on the promise of change, being a "party with a difference", aggressive nationalism, and its Hindutva agenda, at a time when the Congress was in disarray, the BJP emerged as the single-largest force. It won 161 seats, compared to 140 by the Congress.



But the regional parties and the Left held the key.

The house was fragmented, the game was open.

What happened

On the basis of being the single-largest party, the BJP staked claim to form the government. President Shankar Dayal Sharma decided to invite Vajpayee, swore him in as PM and gave him two weeks to prove his majority on the floor of the house.

The BJP attempted to stitch together a coalition wooing regional parties. But in 13 days, on May 28, Vajpayee - in what has become a landmark speech - resigned on the floor of the House, before the vote.

The resignation opened up the political field yet again. The Congress decided not to stake claim and instead supported the Janata Dal, the third-largest party with 46 seats, which formed the United Front with other

regional and Left parties.

This alliance internally asked former PM VP Singh to be their leader but he refused; they then asked the longtime CM of West Bengal and Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Jyoti Basu, whose party rejected the offer. Eventually, they made Karnataka leader HD Deve Gowda the PM face and managed to win the trust vote.

The government lasted a year before the Congress withdrew support. The UF then had another leader, IK Gujral, sworn in as prime minister. But differences with Congress once again led to the collapse of the government within a year.

Significance

The 13-day Vajpayee experiment was significant for several reasons.

One, for the first time, India had a prime minister who came from a staunchly Rashtriya Swayamsevak

Sangh (RSS) background, and had never been a part of Congress's mainstream politics. The government did not last but this generated sympathy -- at least in urban India, among the middle classes -- for the party they felt was being unfairly kept out of power.

Two, while elevating the BJP to the top, the brief duration also highlighted to the party the need to become more accommodating of allies, moderate its agenda, and become a big-tent formation. They used this lesson in 1998, when their government lasted 13 months with a wider set of allies, and in 1999, when the Vajpayee government was to go on to serve its entire five-year term.

Three, it opened up the question of the President's role in choosing a stable government. While Sharma stuck to convention and invited the single-largest party, two years later his successor KR Narayanan decided that he would only invite a leader when he was convinced that he had majority and thus asked for signatures of all supporting MPs. This debate played out on the governor's role even now.

And finally, for the anti-BJP parties, the 1996 lesson was that if they came together, they could keep the BJP out. But they had to provide stable, clean government, and not doing so would only bring back a stronger BJP. As Karnataka 2018 plays out, the Congress and Deve Gowda's son, HD Kumaraswamy, may want to look back at Delhi '96.

Didn't press for replacing Karnataka pro-tem Speaker after live broadcast order: Congress

The Congress on Saturday said it did not press for the replacement of Karnataka pro-tem Speaker KG Bopaiah after assurances in the Supreme Court that the trust vote proceedings would be broadcast live.

The Congress-JD(S) combine had challenged in the apex court Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala's decision to appoint BJP MLA Bopaiah as pro-tem speaker for holding the floor test for chief minister BS Yeddyurappa to prove his majority in the House.

Addressing a joint press conference, Congress leaders Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who represented the Congress and the JD(S) in the Supreme Court, said their entire aim of moving court was to ensure transparency during the confidence vote over government formation in the southern state.

Sibal also said whosoever wins or loses in today trust vote "democracy will win".

Taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sibal said, "The prime minister keeps saying na khaunga na khane dunga (will neither indulge in corruption nor allow it). He should also say na kharidunga na kharidane dunga (will neither buy, nor let anyone be bought over)."

There was no question of replacing the pro-tem speaker when live proceedings will be telecast and transparency will be ensured,

he added.

Singhvi said most of the prayers of the Congress-JD(S) before the court have been accepted.

"The time period for the trust vote was reduced, complete transparency during trust vote was ensured, no secret ballot was allowed and pro-tem speaker was disallowed to take any other agenda... The achievements of our petition before the court is holding the trust vote in 1.5 days against 15 days allowed earlier," he told reporters.

Asked why did the Congress move the petition if it had to withdraw its pleas, Singhvi said the offer to hold live telecast was given only after our petition.

He described the move of live telecast as "a virtue out of necessity".

Singhvi said, "We wanted safeguards to be in place on our apprehension. In a way most of our demands have been met."



Karnataka floor test: All our MLAs will be present to vote says state Congress leader

Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday said MLAs of his party would be present in the Karnataka Assembly where the BJP government led by Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa faces a crucial trust vote.

"Two Congress legislators Pratapgouda Patil and Anand Singh are yet to join us in the House. We are in touch with them and they will be joining us soon for the trust vote," Shivakumar told reporters at the state secretariat building.

The remarks came amidst reports that the two Karnataka Congress legislators were missing ahead of the floor test at 4 p.m.

The number of party's MLAs was intact, he said. He said Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) G. Somasekhara Reddy was also not present in the House yet.

"We are certain that the BJP will not win the trust vote," the Congress leaders said.

The 15th state Legislative Assembly's first session is



underway since 11 a.m. with the newly-elected legislators taking oath.

The oath-taking of all the legislators will be completed before 4 p.m. for pro tem Speaker K.G. Bopaiah to conduct the floor test to ascertain if the Chief Minister has a majority in the hung House, as directed by the Supreme Court on Friday.

Of the 222 seats where election was held on May 12, the BJP won 104, Congress

78, JD-S, 37 and one each by Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Karnataka Pragnyanantha Janatha Party (KPJP) and an Independent.

With one of BJP's legislators, Bopaiah being nominated as the pro tem Speaker and JD-S state president H.D. Kumaraswamy winning two constituencies he contested from and allowed to cast only one vote, the effective strength of the House becomes 220.

The BJP is still seven short of the 111 mark required to prove the majority.

Though Governor Vajubhai R. Vala directed Yeddyurappa to seek a vote of confidence on the floor of the House within 15 days from the date of assumption of office as the Chief Minister on May 17, a three-judge bench of the top court ordered the floor test on Saturday, rejecting his plea for a week's time to prove his majority.

SC orders live telecast of Karnataka floor test for transparency

The Supreme Court on Saturday ordered live telecast of the floor test in the Karnataka assembly where chief minister BS Yeddyurappa has to prove his majority.

The floor test is scheduled for 4 pm.

"Live broadcast of floor test will be the best possible way to ensure transparency in the proceedings," a bench comprising justices AK Sikri, SA Bobde and Ashok Bhushan said. The bench also made it clear that no other item in the agenda shall be taken up during the trust vote.

The bench said secretary of the Legislative Assembly will record the proceedings of the House.

It said that several local channels will be provided the live feed of the proceedings so that they can also be in a position to telecast simultaneously.

The bench termed as "fair" the suggestion of Karnataka governor's counsel that the floor test be telecast live.

The bench passed the or-



Opening the arguments, Sibal said as per convention the senior-most MLA should be appointed pro-tem speaker.

He said the governor has very limited discretionary power in appointing pro-tem speaker and "we would have no objection if pro-tem speaker only had to administer oath to the MLAs, the problem is here he is also holding the floor test".

der after recording the statement of additional solicitor general Tushar Mehta, who was appearing for the Karnataka government and governor Vajubhai Vala.

After the ASG's statement, senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Congress-JD(S) combine, which had on Friday night filed a petition challenging the appointment of BJP MLA KG Bopaiah as pro-tem speaker by the governor for conducting the floor test, did not press for the prayers.

In the order, the bench said, "Though a number of

prayers have been made in the application, it was not necessary to go into all the prayers in view of the statement made by Mehta that there will be live telecast of the proceedings.

"We may place on record that statement of Mehta is that there would be live telecast of the proceedings of the legislative assembly in respect of the floor test."

During the hearing, which commenced at 10:30am, the bench termed as "fair" suggestion of the Karnataka governor's counsel that floor test be telecast live.

The senior lawyer said appointing the senior-most lawmaker as pro tem speaker has been a practice in commonwealth countries.

However, the bench shot back "there have been earlier instances where senior-most MLA has not been appointed as pro-tem speaker".

"If you (Sibal) are casting aspersions on the pro tem speaker then we will have to issue notice to him and postpone the floor test," the bench said during the hearing and added "How can we direct governor to appoint pro tem speaker."

Hope you will not disturb us on Sunday, says Supreme Court on emergency Karnataka hearings

The Supreme Court, which had to conduct emergency hearings on the bitter power tussle in Karnataka, on Saturday apprehended that it might be forced to do it again if this legal fight is not put to rest.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Congress-JD(S) combine, at the outset expressed his regret to a three-judge bench headed by Justice AK Sikri for being forced to sit on the first day of summer vacation to hear its plea against pro-tem speaker KG Bopaiah.

"First of all, I must apologise to the bench for this inconvenience of assembling on a Saturday," Sibal

said.

When the bench, also comprising justices SA Bobde and Ashok Bhushan, was about to rise after ordering live telecast of crucial Karnataka floor test, another senior advocate AM Singhvi, representing the alliance, said, "We hope that we will not disturb the bench on Sunday."

"That is what we were also talking about," the bench said.

During the hearing, Attorney General KK Venugopal made a request to the bench to use microphones as the scribes standing behind in the courtroom were unable to hear the observations.



The bench promptly obliged the attorney general and all the three judges switched on their microphones.

Later, when the bench was about to dictate the order, Sibal again requested Justice Sikri, heading the

bench, to switch on the mike and said, "As politicians we know how to make ourselves heard..."

"But we are not politicians. We don't care," the bench responded.

In a historic pre-dawn hearing which started at 2:11am and concluded at 5:28am, the apex court on May 17 had refused to stay Governor Vajubhai Vala's decision to administer oath of office to BS Yeddyurappa as chief minister.

Last night, the alliance again moved a fresh plea for emergency hearing to challenge the appointment of Bopaiah as the pro tem speaker which got listed today on a holiday.

Saved only 5% lives in road accidents instead of 50%, admits Nitin Gadkari

Union road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari on Friday said he has been able to save only 5% of the lives threatened by road accidents instead of his personal goal of 50%, and this was an unfortunate blemish on his performance record.

Addressing an event organised by a news publication in Bhopal that evening, Gadkari said a road safety bill passed in the Lok Sabha to

curb road accidents has been pending in the Rajya Sabha for over a year now. The legislation is currently being scrutinised by a standing committee.

The minister maintained that his secretary went to meet the panel on nine occasions while he personally called on them three times. "I asked them to help me get the bill passed as people were dying," said Gadkari without naming



anybody in particular. "I couldn't do much, and I accept it. There is just one year left now, and it's a black spot on

me. But I am trying my best." Gadkari said as many as five lakh accidents occur on an average every year, killing 1.5 lakh people and injuring another three lakh.

The bill - aimed at effecting transparency in regional transport offices - was tabled in Parliament only after a committee headed by Rajasthan transport minister Yunus Khan submitted its report on the matter, the Union minis-

ter said. "But the states objected on the grounds that it would curtail their powers. They should understand that corruption has to be eradicated." Gadkari also stressed on the need to optimise the use of non-conventional fuel in motor vehicles instead of petrol and diesel. Such a shift would curb transport costs while benefiting the environment at the same time, he said.

Alleged IM operative Ariz confesses involvement in Lucknow, Varanasi blasts

Alleged Indian Mujahideen operative Ariz Khan alias Junaid has confessed to his involvement in a series of bombings that took place between 2005 and 2008, according to home ministry officials familiar with the details of his interrogation by counter-terrorism officials.

Ariz, 32, was arrested by Delhi police in February from near the Indo-Nepal border after he was picked up from the Himalayan country. Two months later, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) too took him into custody in connection with a case registered by it.

"Investigation in this case (registered by NIA) has revealed that accused Ariz Khan alias Junaid was involved in the serial blast at Delhi in the year 2005, serial blast at Varanasi in the year 2006, Uttar Pradesh Court blast in the year 2007, serial blast at Jaipur in the year 2008, serial blast at Ahmedabad in the year 2008 and serial blast at Delhi in the year 2008," an NIA statement released on April 18 said. NIA officials say Ariz, during his interrogation, confessed to his involvement in all these blasts.

In the 2005 Diwali-eve serial blasts, the Delhi police blamed Lashkar-e-Taiba operatives, but last year a court acquitted three of the accused who were tried in the case.

"Ariz Khan has also told interrogators that he planted one of the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) at Varanasi on March 7, 2006. Three IEDs were planted in the holy city and Ariz planted the one that exploded at the cantonment railway station," said a home ministry official familiar with details of his interrogation, on condition of anonymity. But the UP police charged Walliullah, an Imam from Phulpur, for sheltering a group of terrorists that had come from Bangladesh. Walliullah's trial is still on in a Ghaziabad court.

NEW MEDICATED SKIN PATCH MAY DISSOLVE YOUR 'LOVE HANDLES'

New York: Scientists have developed a new medical patch with microneedles that can burn off pockets of unwanted fat such as "love handles" and treat metabolic disorders like obesity and diabetes. The patch turns energy-storing white fat into energy-burning brown fat locally while raising the body's overall metabolism, according to researchers at Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC) and the University of North Carolina in the US.

Humans have two types of fat. White fat stores excess energy in large triglyceride droplets. Brown fat has smaller droplets and a high number of mitochondria that burn fat to produce heat. For years, researchers have been searching for therapies that can transform an adult's white fat into brown fat as a treatment for obesity and diabetes.

"There are several clinically available drugs that promote browning, but all must be given as pills or injections," said Li Qiang, assistant professor at CUMC. "This exposes the whole body to the drugs, which can lead to side effects such as stom-



ach upset, weight gain, and bone fractures," said Qiang. "Our skin patch appears to alleviate these complications by delivering most drugs directly to fat tissue," he said. To apply the treatment, the drugs are first encased in nanoparticles,

each roughly 250 nanometers (nm) in diameter. The nanoparticles are then loaded into a centimeter-square skin patch containing dozens of microscopic needles. When applied to skin, the needles painlessly pierce the skin and gradually release the

drug from nanoparticles into underlying tissue. "The nanoparticles were designed to effectively hold the drug and then gradually collapse, releasing it into nearby tissue in a sustained way instead of spreading the drug throughout the body quick-

ly," said Zhen Gu, associate professor at North Carolina State University in the US. The new treatment approach was tested in obese mice by loading the nanoparticles with one of two compounds known to promote browning in mice: rosiglitazone (Avandia) or beta-adrenergic receptor agonist (CL316243). Each mouse was given two patches - one loaded with drug-containing nanoparticles and another without drug - that were placed on either side of the lower abdomen.

New patches were applied every three days for a total of four weeks. Control mice were also given two empty patches. Mice treated with either of the two drugs had a 20 per cent reduction in fat on the treated side compared to the untreated side. They also had significantly lower fasting blood glucose levels than untreated mice.

Tests in normal, lean mice revealed that treatment with either of the two drugs increased the animals' oxygen consumption - a measure of overall metabolic activity - by about 20 per cent compared to untreated controls.

Two new cases of mosquito-borne chikungunya virus near Rome tested



Latina: Local health authorities on Friday confirmed two new cases and reported two suspected cases of the painful, mosquito-borne illness chikungunya in Italy's Lazio region. Health officials in the province of Latina, south of Rome, are informing mayors in the province to enable them to take preventative measures against the virus including disinfections. A special clinic and phone helpline has been set up at Latina's SM Goretti hospital where local doctors can refer patients they suspect of having Chikungunya, the local health authority said. At least 17 people in southeast Rome have been diagnosed with Chikungunya since the end of August,

and the local health authority on Thursday decided to suspend blood donations in affected areas of the capital to prevent accidental transmission of the disease. Rome Mayor Virginia Raggi on Wednesday signed an order for disinfections of the capital to combat the spread of chikungunya, which causes acute fever and joint pain. It rarely results in death but its effects can sometimes be disabling.

Carbohydrates may be key to better malaria vaccine Study

Melbourne: Scientists have for the first time found that carbohydrates on the surface of malaria parasites play a critical role in malaria's ability to infect mosquito and human hosts. The discovery may help improve the only vaccine approved to protect people against Plasmodium falciparum malaria - the most deadly form of the disease, researchers said. The study found that the malaria parasite 'tags' its proteins with carbohydrates in order to stabilise and transport them, and this process was crucial to completing the parasite's lifecycle.

"We found that the parasite's ability to 'tag' key proteins with carbohydrates is important for two stages of the malaria lifecycle," said Justin Boddey, from Walter and Eliza Hall Institute in Australia. "It is critical for the earliest stages of human infection, when the parasite migrates through the body and invades the liver, and later when it is transmitted back to the mosquito from an infected human, enabling the parasite to be spread between people," said Boddey, who led the study published in the journal Nature Communications.

Interfering with the parasite's ability to attach these carbohydrates to its proteins hinders liver infection and transmission to the mosquito, and weakens the parasite to the point that it cannot survive in the host, researchers said. Malaria infects over 200 million people worldwide each year and kills around 650,000 people, predominantly pregnant women and children. Efforts to eradicate malaria require the development of new therapeutics, particularly an effective malaria vaccine.

The first malaria vaccine approved for human use - RTS,S/AS01 - was approved by European regulators in July 2015 but has not been as successful as hoped, with marginal efficacy that wanes over time, researchers said.

"The protein used in the RTS,S vaccine mimics one of the proteins we have been studying on the surface of the malaria parasite that is readily recognised by the immune system," said Ethan Goddard-Borger from Walter and Eliza Hall Institute. "With this study, we have shown that the parasite protein is tagged with carbohydrates, making it slightly different to the vaccine, so the antibodies produced may not be optimal for recognising target parasites," Goddard-Borger said. He said there were many documented cases where attaching carbohydrates to a protein improved its efficacy as a vaccine. "It may be that a version of RTS,S with added carbohydrates will perform better than the current vaccine," Goddard-Borger said.

PROBIOTICS MAY HELP TREAT BOWEL CANCER STUDY



Houston: Alteration of the gut microbiome with probiotics may help prevent and treat bowel cancer by reducing inflammation and suppressing colon tumours, a study in mice suggests.

Researchers at Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Children's Hospital and Columbia University in the US found that administration of histamine-generating gut microbes reduced inflammation and tumour formation in mice which lacked that ability to produce histamine on their own.

These results suggest that alteration of the gut microbiome with probiotics may become a new preventative or therapeutic strategy for patients at risk for colorectal cancer associated with inflammatory bowel disease. "We are on the cusp of harnessing advances in microbiome science - the study of the microbes living in our body - that would facilitate diagnosis and treatment of human disease," said James Versalovic, Professor at Baylor College of Medicine. "By simply applying diet-based cancer pre-

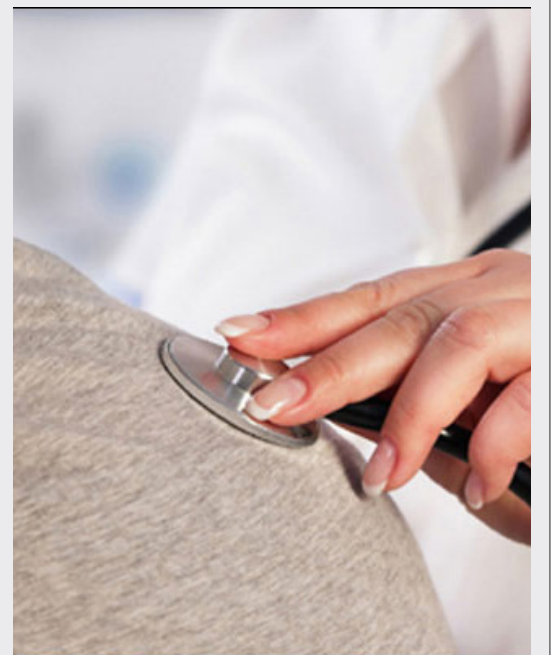
vention strategies, such as supplementing microbes that provide missing life substances, we can potentially reduce the risk of cancer," said Versalovic. Previous studies had shown that histamine, a chemical produced by the body that is well-known for its role in allergic disease, also may have a potential antitumour effect. In the new study, researchers investigated whether the probiotic L reuteri 6475, which is able to generate histamine, had the ability to reduce the frequency and severity of inflammation-associated colorectal cancer,

in mice that were not able to produce histamine on their own. The researchers conducted a series of experiments using mice that were deficient in histidine decarboxylase, the enzyme required to convert L-histidine to histamine. Experimental mice were orally administered L reuteri 6475, which has the gene for histidine decarboxylase to produce histamine; control animals received L reuteri that lacked the gene to produce histidine decarboxylase. The probiotic was ad-

ministered both before and after the mice received a single treatment to induce tumour formation. Fifteen weeks later, the mice were sacrificed and the tissues removed for study. The animals treated with L reuteri 6475 showed increased expression of bacterial histidine decarboxylase enzyme and of the amount of histamine in their colons. Positron emission tomography (PET) used to visualise the tumours showed that these mice had fewer and smaller tumours than control mice. L reuteri strains deficient in histidine decarboxylase activity did not provide protective effects; the mice showed increased numbers of "hot spots" indicative of tumour formation,

researchers said. Treatment with the histamine-generating probiotic also reduced inflammatory responses typically associated with increased risk of tumour development. "These observations are consistent with the conclusion that histamine-generating probiotic L reuteri may attenuate development of colorectal cancer in the animal model.

Mothers-to-be at increased risk of miscarriage if suffering from endometriosis!



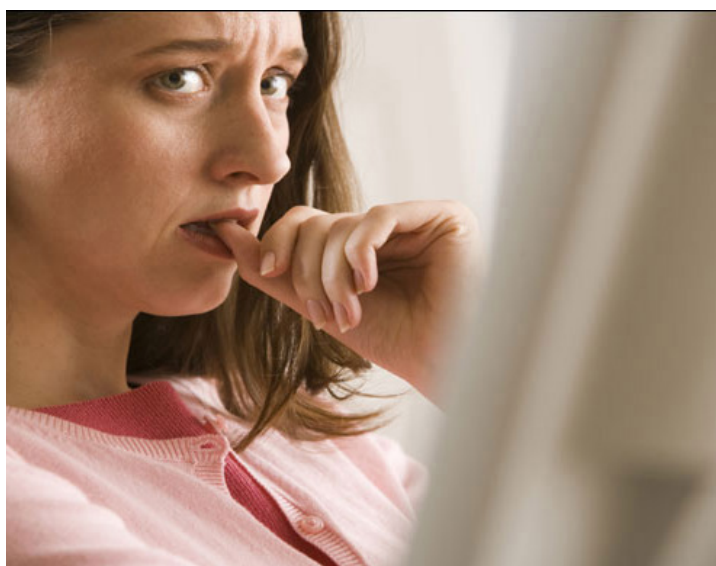
New Delhi: Endometriosis is a disorder characterised by severe lower abdominal pain, heavy menstrual bleeding, infertility, etc. It occurs when tissue that normally lines the inside of your uterus - the endometrium - grows outside your uterus. Women with endometriosis will also experience pain during or after intercourse. They may also have fatigue, diarrhea, constipation, bloating or nausea, especially during menstrual cycles. This disorder is often found in women who are struggling to conceive than in fertile women although the condition does not always cause infertility. A study has, however, put forward a warning for expecting mothers who are suffering from endometriosis, saying that they are at a greater risk of complications during pregnancy and at delivery.

The results revealed that the women with this condition were at a higher risk of preterm birth, miscarriage, cesarean delivery and placenta previa. Researchers from the Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University in the U.S. showed that endometriosis was associated,

with the birth of infants who were small for their gestational age. Researcher Vincenzo Berghella said that it is important that women with a history of endometriosis and obstetricians caring for them, are aware of this association between prior endometriosis and higher risks of miscarriage, preterm birth, placenta previa, cesarean delivery and a baby small for gestational age. Berghella added that these pregnancies deserve closer monitoring for these complications.

"Endometriosis is known to alter a woman's physiology in a way that could interfere with a number of stages of pregnancy," stated Berghella. From causing inflammation at the endometrium, to resisting the action of progesterone during implantation and throughout the pregnancy, there are a number of ways that endometriosis may affect the normal course of pregnancy, the researchers explained. The team analysed 24 studies, which comprised over a million women. "Studies like ours help clarify the findings by pooling the data from many studies, to give the field a more conclusive answer to a debated research question.

Brain stimulation through magnetic pulses can help overcome anxiety, phobias



New Delhi: The purpose of stimulation or sensory excitation of any sensory receptors in the human body is to evoke involuntary activity or guide intentions in action.

The various agents or forms of energy on receptors generate impulses that travel through nerves to the brain. A new study has shown that stimulating the brain with magnetic fields can help people overcome anxiety disorder and irrational phobias such as fear of heights or spiders.

Anxiety disorders and fears can sometimes affect people to a point that they are unable to follow a normal daily routine. "Cognitive behavioural therapy is an excellent treatment option," said Martin J Her-

rmann, from the Wurzburg University Hospital in Germany. This form of therapy deliberately exposes anxiety patients to the situations they feel threatened by - under the individual psychological supervision of an expert. However, current studies have shown that this type of intervention does not benefit all persons in equal measure.

Researchers from University of Wurzburg have been looking for ways to improve the patients' response to cognitive behavioural therapy - by using the transcranial magnetic stimulation. In fact, a positive effect was found on the study participants treated with this method. "We knew from previous studies that a specific region in the frontal lobe of the

human brain is important for unlearning anxiety," said Herrmann. Initial studies have shown that magnetically stimulating this brain region can improve the effectiveness of unlearning anxiety responses in the laboratory. The team investigated whether the method works for treating a fear of heights.

For the study, 39 participants with a pronounced fear of heights were taken to dizzying heights during two sessions - however not in real life but using virtual reality.

The scientists stimulated the frontal lobe of some of the anxiety patients for about 20 minutes before entering the virtual world; the other group was only administered a pseudo stimulation.

Saudi Prince Alwaleed, Ashkenazy sue Sahara US over New York Plaza hotel

Ashkenazy Acquisition Corp. and Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal's Kingdom Holding Co., the investors trying to buy New York's historic Plaza Hotel, sued the property's majority owner for allegedly renegeing on an agreement that gives the group the right to match another offer.

Sahara US Corp., which owns a 70 percent stake in the hotel, demanded a second deposit and has been negotiating with other parties, according to a complaint filed in New York state court Friday. Minority investors Ashkenazy and Kingdom earlier this month exercised their right of first refusal on a \$600 million bid for the property to instead try to purchase it on their own.

The clash between the investors is another twist in a years-long sales process for the 111-year-old building at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Central Park South. Sahara US is an entity tied to Sahara India Pariwar, which has been attempting to sell its stake amid troubles faced by its chairman, Subrata Roy, who has been ordered to return billions of dollars to investors.

Sandeep Wadhwa, president of



Sahara US, said the company disagrees with the allegations and will file a response in court.

Sahara earlier this month agreed to sell the Plaza to Shahal Khan, founder of Dubai-based family office White City Ventures, and Kamran Hakim, of New York landlord Hakim Organization. They agreed to pay \$600 million in a deal that was set to be completed on June 25, and talked up plans to use the hotel to launch a global brand.

Ashkenazy and Kingdom, which each own 12.5 percent of the Plaza, said in the complaint that Khan and Hakim have been soliciting financing for the purchase with Sahara's knowledge, which has interfered with their own ability to seek funding to purchase the hotel.

Ashkenazy is willing and able to fund the deal if Kingdom is unable to contribute, according to a person with knowledge of the matter, who asked not to be named because the transac-

tion is private. Some people close to the deal are concerned that Kingdom might not have access to capital after Alwaleed was detained at the Ritz-Carlton in Riyadh for 83 days through January, in what Saudi officials described as an anti-corruption crackdown.

Ashkenazy and Kingdom asked the judge to compel Sahara to sell them the property, as well as to execute an appropriate agreement for the sale on the same terms as the initial deal granting them right of first refusal. They also asked for a court order declaring a second deposit isn't required.

The chateau-like Plaza is a New York landmark, known as the home of the children's book character Eloise and the site of famous events such as the signing of the 1985 Plaza Accord that devalued the U.S. dollar. It has a long string of prior owners including now-President Donald J. Trump, who was forced to sell it to a group including Alwaleed more than two decades ago as part of a bankruptcy. Much of the hotel portion of the building was later converted to condominiums by another owner, Israel's Elad Group.

Currency situation normal, all ATMs functioning well: Finance ministry

The Finance Ministry on Friday said the currency situation had completely returned to normal across the country and there was no shortage of cash anywhere.

Economic affairs secretary Subhash Chandra Garg said that in fact the currency in circulation had decreased over the last four days by around Rs 4,000 crore as there were more deposits than withdrawals.

"The currency situation is completely normal now. For the last few days, in fact, we are seeing no net increase in the currency circulation," Garg told reporters here.

"There is actually a reduction of around Rs 4,000 crore in the last three to four days. It is available in sufficient quantity everywhere. There is no shortage," he said.

There were reports of cash shortage in the country last month with ATMs running dry in various locations which forced the government to increase printing of Rs 500 notes by five times.



Asked if the cash crunch had anything to do with the Karnataka elections on May 12, he said the demand for currency had historically increased in the first 15 days of May and then reduced over the last 15 days of the month, before again rising in October.

"So it could be because of that. It might also have some impact of elections. I cannot rule it out. But if you take it in historical context, this can be completely explained by a trend which has existed over a longer period," he said.

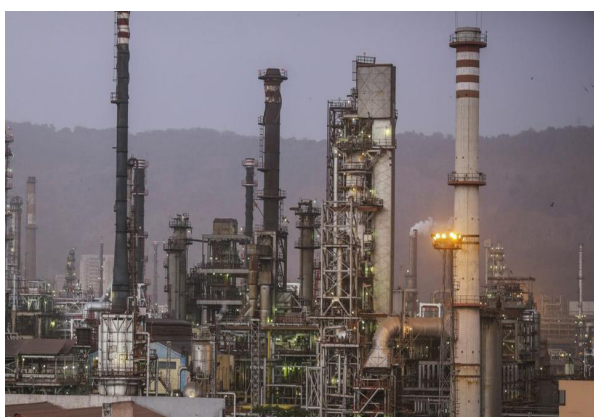
Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan asks Saudi Arabia for stable, moderate oil prices

With global crude prices touching \$80 a barrel, oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan has pressed OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia to keep prices stable and moderate, saying that spike in rates would have a negative impact on Indian consumers as well as the economy.

Pradhan conveyed India's concerns when Saudi Arabian Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources Khalid Al-Falih called him on Thursday evening "to discuss continued joint cooperation between the two countries and in particular the current oil market situation", an official statement said here.

Brent crude oil, which breached \$80 a barrel mark on Thursday, was trading at \$79.54 on Friday, the highest level since November 2014.

The rally is being attributed to a combination of factors -- renewed US sanctions on third-largest OPEC producer Iran, shrinking supplies from Venezuela and the International Energy Agency saying that a global surplus has finally been eliminated due to output cuts by the Or-



ganization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies. "Pradhan expressed his concern about rising prices and its negative impact on consumers and the Indian economy," the statement said. "Pradhan emphasized his desire for stable and moderate prices."

Al-Falih, on his part, assured that supporting global economic growth is one of Saudi Arabia's key goals.

"He reiterated his commitment towards stable supplies and that the Kingdom together with other producers will ensure availability of adequate supplies to offset any potential shortfalls and ensure that prices remain

reasonable," the statement added.

The rally in international oil prices and a weakening rupee against the US dollar has led to a spike in domestic retail prices of petrol and diesel.

Petrol prices have risen by about a rupee per litre since Monday when the state-owned fuel retailers resumed daily revision in retail prices after a 19-day pre-Karnataka poll hiatus. Diesel prices have gone up by Rs 1.15 a litre during this period.

Petrol price was today hiked by 29 paise, the second steepest increase since daily price revision was introduced in mid-June last year. It costs

Rs 75.61 per litre in Delhi, the highest in almost five years.

Diesel rates went up by a similar proportion to take the retail price to its highest ever rate of Rs 67.08 a litre, according to a price notification issued by state-owned firms.

To make up for the almost \$5 per barrel increase in price of benchmark gasoline (petrol) price since April 24, when the freeze on retail rates came into effect, a Rs 4 per litre increase in petrol price is warranted. Of this 98 paise has already been affected and the remaining is likely to be passed on to consumers in near future.

Similarly, on diesel, the benchmark rate has gone up by \$4.8 per barrel, necessitating an Rs 3.5-4 a litre increase. Of this, Rs 1.15 has already been affected.

The Saudi Minister updated Pradhan on his ongoing consultations with colleagues from major producing countries both inside and outside of OPEC, including Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak and UAE Oil Minister Suhail Al Mazroui, Minister, who is also the President of the OPEC Conference, the statement said.

Nirav Modi in London on Singaporean passport: Report

Despite Enforcement Directorate issuing summons to diamondaire Nirav Modi and his family members to join the investigations in the multi-crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud, they have chosen to ignore the directive by remaining abroad and out of immediate reach of the investigators.

According to ED sources, Nirav Modi is currently in London on a Singaporean passport while his brother Nishal Modi is in Antwerp on a Belgian passport. Nirav's sister Purvi Mehta also holds a Belgian passport and is said to be in Hong Kong at present.

Purvi's husband, Mayank Mehta (of Rosy Blue Diamond) has got a British passport and is shuttling between Hong Kong and New York, the sources said.

The ED has issued summons to Nirav Modi's father Deepak Modi, sister Purvi Mehta and her husband Mayank Mehta. "They were sent the summons through mail," an ED official said on condition of anonymity.

The PNB fraud was committed during 2011-17 by il-



legally issuing Letters of Undertaking (LoUs) and Foreign Letters of Credit (FLCs) and then rolling them over several times.

Deepak, Purvi and Mayank have been asked to appear before the ED investigators at its Mumbai office to record their statements in the case as the agency is in the process of filing chargesheet in a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court

in Mumbai.

The ED official said that Nirav Modi's relatives were summoned in the first week of this month and were given 15 days time to appear before it in the ongoing money laundering probe of over Rs 13,000 crore. The alleged banking fraud was committed by the diamond merchant, his group of companies -- Diamond R US, Solar Exports and Stellar Diamonds -- along with his uncle Mehul

Choksi and others.

Further notices would be issued to the three in case they fail to respond to the first summons, the official said.

Purvi is under ED's radar for her alleged role in round-tripping of Nirav Modi's laundered money via Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) back to India while her husband is suspected of supporting the diamond merchant in similar operations.

Continental Hospitals founder receives UK & ASIA Inspirational Business Leaders Award

New Delhi: Dr. Guru N Reddy, MD, FACP, FACC, FASGE, AGAF, Founder, Promoter and Director of Continental Hospitals, Hyderabad, India is presented with "UK & Asia Inspirational Business Leaders Award, 2018". He was presented with this Award on May 17th 2018 in London, UK at the Assembly Hall, Westminster.

The Inspirational Leadership award is presented to Dr. Reddy in celebration and accomplishments as an innovator, creator and entrepreneur. The citation also reads "Boldly envisioning, realization and substantiation of aspirations to create the future and transform the world". Dr Reddy was presented the Leadership Award by Ambassador

& Dy. High Commissioner UK, Mr. Dinesh K Patnaik, Lord Raj Loombe, Lord Swaraj Paul, Lord Karan Billoremia of UK Parliament amidst many CEO's and Founders from India and UK. Dr. Reddy is also felicitated as a notable pioneer to have demonstrated the desire and aptitude to earmark the presence with outstanding and distinguished contribution to the economy at large. Dr. Reddy was chosen among 200 leaders by distinguished jury of brands 360 and the editorial team of Leaders Asia Magazine.

Dr. Reddy has given back to India after thirty years of living in the US and having a glorious medical career, by building Continental Hospitals, "an iconic healthcare



institution" in the state of Telangana. He has received several awards these past five years including two "Lifetime Achievement Awards" in healthcare. Dr. Reddy also served in many coveted and distinguished

healthcare leadership positions in the US over three decades. He will be featured in WCRC Leaders Magazine in June 2018 issue.

Dr. Guru N Reddy has now become part of the small renowned

circle which very few Indians could achieve. Some of the previous "Notable Awardees" at UK & Asia Business Leadership Summit are Dr. Prathap C Reddy, Founder & Chairman - Apollo Hospitals, Mr. Satya Nadella, CEO - Microsoft, Mr. Niranjan Hiranandani, Founder & MD - Hiranandani Group, Ms. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Chairman & MD - Biocon Ltd., Mr. Ratan Tata, Chairman Emeritus Tata Sons, Dr. Habil Khorakiwala, Chairman - Wockhardt Group, Mr. Amitabh Bachan, Indian Film Actor, Producer & Television Host, Mr. Sachin Tendulkar, Cricketer & Politician, Ms. Madhuri Dixit, Film Actress, Ms. Lata Mangeshkar, Singer & Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, Noble Peace Prize Awardee.

Sensex sinks 300 points to close below 35k-mark

The benchmark Sensex slumped 300 points to end at 34,848.30 on Friday on across-the-board selling amid political uncertainty in Karnataka and negative global cues.

The broader NSE Nifty too cracked below the 10,600-level. No let-up in selling by foreign funds and surging crude oil prices in global markets dragged down the key indices.

Investors remained on the sidelines amid doubts whether the B S Yeddyurappa government in Karnataka will be able to prove its majority in the house tomorrow, brokers said.

The Supreme Court today ordered a floor test in the Karnataka Assembly at 4 PM tomorrow, reducing the 15-day window given by the Governor to Yeddyurappa to prove majority.

Yeddyurappa was sworn-in as the chief minister yesterday.

Falling for the fourth straight session, the 30-share Sensex opened lower and stayed in the negative terrain for the major part of the session, hitting a low of 34,821.62 before ending at 34,848.30 -- down by 300.82 points, or 0.86 per cent.

The barometer had lost 407.59 points in the previous three sessions.

The 50-share NSE Nifty settled 86.30 points, or 0.81 per cent, lower at 10,596.40. During the session, it moved between 10,589.10 and 10,674.95.

During the week, the Sensex lost 687.49 points, or 1.93 per cent, while the Nifty dropped 210.10 points, or 1.94 per cent.

State-run banks remained under selling pressure on disappointing quarterly results due to a jump in provisions for bad loans.

Despite challenging times, global business growth is on the rise, finds Epicor

New Delhi: Globally, manufacturing business growth has increased by 3.7 percent (to 103.7 index points) despite the fact that half of manufacturers admit they have grown under challenging circumstances. This is one of the key findings of the annual Global Growth Index, launched today by Epicor Software to promote business growth. Contributing to this

score is a significant growth in the number of manufacturers reporting strong sales or turnover in the last 12 months up five percent from last year to 70 percent overall. A similar trend was observed with profits and product ranges, with a 3 percent boost in the number of businesses growing in each of these areas compared to last year.

Comparing figures on a

global scale, the Global Growth Index shows a solid performance from India - with manufacturers in this country outperforming global average figures in terms of expanding product ranges (75%), profits (83%), workforce (61%), geographic expansion (65%), and exports (also 65%).

Apart from India, manufacturing businesses in Mexico and China came above

global average figures in all growth metrics, with the exception of workforce growth, which was reported by just 39 percent of Chinese businesses, compared to a global average of 48 percent.

European businesses have been most likely to experience growth in terms of geographic coverage and exports/overseas sales - French and Swedish businesses have led the

way here, with over half growing in these areas, compared to 44 percent of UK businesses and 46 percent of German businesses.

The Growth Index is designed to measure the state of business growth worldwide, by tracking the performance of manufacturing businesses in 14 territories. Taking last year's results as a base figure (100), it has found that busi-

ness growth across the globe has increased by 3.7 index points in the last 12 months, awarding the state of business growth with a score of 103.7. The table below illustrates the Global Growth Index results for 2018, compared to 2017. Percentages illustrate the median average number of businesses that have reported growth in each of the key growth metric areas.

Ben Stokes makes low-key IPL 2018 exit after struggling with both bat and ball

Ben Stokes cost the Rajasthan Royals \$10,000 for every Indian Premier League run he managed this year, making him a luxury even by the opulent league's standards.

Stokes, under pressure over a looming court case for a street fight, was voted the IPL's Most Valuable Player last year and was the top foreign signing for 2018 with a \$1.96 million deal.

But he left India this week having scored just 196 runs in 13 games.

By contrast New Zealander Kane Williamson, captain of table-topper Sunrisers Hyderabad, has bashed his 625 runs so far for less than \$725 each. And he is still going strong.

Many commentators believe England star Stokes' off-field troubles have blunted his performance on the pitch.

"Ben Stokes hasn't been that aggressive in-your-face cricketer in this tournament due to what's happened," said former New Zealand all-rounder Scott Styris.

"And part of that reason I think is because he has to keep a low profile. That's not his personality," Styris told AFP on the sidelines of his Star Sports show Select Dugout.



Stokes in a rut The Royals, coming back after a two-year corruption ban and struggling in the race for a playoff place, have badly missed the explosive batting and bowling that made Stokes one of the world's leading all-rounders. He managed just eight wickets with the ball.

"He needs to be that Ben Stokes the character who dominates the game," added Styris.

"He was the number one all-rounder in the world, he was MVP," the cricketer-turned-commentator said.

Stokes was picked up for \$2.16 million with Rising Pune Supergiant in 2017 and lived up to his reputation by hitting 316 runs and taking 12 wickets in 12 matches. It sealed him a big reputation in India, which is why the Royals took the risk.

Former Australia batsman Dean Jones said Stokes' relative lack of international cricket in recent months had affected his performance.

"Stokes was MVP last year and this year he has missed out and that's the game T20," said Jones, adding that Stokes should have played him-

self into this year's IPL pressure cooker.

"Don't go there and start smacking from the word go.

"It's all about momentum at the start. If you have scores under your belt then you relax in your job, but he hasn't got that."

It was another Englishman, Jos Buttler, who stole the Royals show this year. Buttler's showing was in stark contrast to Stokes' as he hit 548 runs in 13 games at a strike-rate of 155.4.

Like Stokes, Buttler has returned home to prepare for England's first Test against Pakistan at Lord's on May 24.

The English duo recorded a video message for Royals fans before leaving, in which they expressed hope that the champions of the IPL's opening 2008 season would at least make the final four.

Royals play their last league game against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Saturday.

The seven-week tournament has \$8 million in prize money, including \$4m for the team crowned champions at the May 27 final in Mumbai.

Maria Sharapova sets up semi-final clash with Simona Halep in Italian Open

Maria Sharapova stepped up her French Open preparations with a battling 6-7(6) 6-4 7-5 win over reigning Roland Garros champion Jelena Ostapenko in the Italian Open quarter-finals on Friday.

Sharapova, 31, will play top seed and world number one Simona Halep in the semis after the Romanian crushed Caroline Garcia 6-2 6-3.

Sharapova produced one of her best performances of the season to overcome her Latvian opponent in a gripping contest lasting three hours and 10 minutes.

Fifth seed Ostapenko saved a set point before edging the opener in a tiebreak but failed to maintain her level in the second as Sharapova forced a decider.

The Russian missed two match points at 5-3, allowing Ostapenko to draw level after 10 games, but Sharapova was not to be denied as she booked a semi-final spot in Rome for the first time in three years.

"It's great to be back at this stage," Sharapova said.

"My fans have been so loyal throughout



the years and for me to be able to produce this kind of tennis again in front of them is very special."

Estonia's Anett Kontaveit knocked out world number two Caroline Wozniacki 6-3 6-1 to record her second consecutive win over a top-10 opponent.

Kontaveit, who overcame Venus Williams in the last 16, struck 23 winners and broke her Danish opponent's serve six times to wrap up victory in just over an hour.

The world number 26 set up a semi-final battle with defending champion Elina Svitolina of Ukraine, who defeated former world number one Angelique Kerber 6-4 6-4.

Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic to renew rivalry in Italian Open semis

Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic will renew their rivalry in the Italian Open semifinals — and three-time Rome champion Maria Sharapova also reached the last four Friday.

Nadal, who holds a record seven titles at the Foro Italico, overcame a poor first set and a partisan crowd to beat Fabio Fognini 4-6, 6-1, 6-2. Then, four-time Rome winner Djokovic rallied past Kei Nishikori 2-6, 6-1, 6-3.

Nadal and Djokovic have played each other 50 times but their last meeting came more than a year ago, when Nadal won in the Madrid Open semifinals.

"Tomorrow is going to be the ultimate challenge on clay," Djokovic said. "Beating Rafa is a really difficult thing to do on this surface. But, I've done it before."

Djokovic leads Nadal 26-24 overall, but Nadal holds a 15-7 advantage on clay.

Nadal can replace Roger Federer at No. 1 if he lifts the Rome trophy for the first time since 2013. Federer is sitting out the clay season to prepare for Wimbledon, where he will bid for a record-extending 21st Grand Slam title.

Djokovic, who is returning from a persistent right elbow injury, hadn't reached a semifinal since before Wimbledon last year.

"This is what I was looking forward to," Djokovic said. "This is what I was hoping to achieve."

In the other half of the draw, defending champion Alexander Zverev extended his winning streak to 12 matches with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 victory over ninth-seeded David Goffin. He'll meet Australian Open finalist Marin Cilic, who beat 10th-seeded Pablo Carrero Busta 6-3, 6-3.

Sharapova required more than three hours to eliminate last year's French Open winner, Jelena Ostapenko, 6-7 (6), 6-4, 7-5; and defending champion Elina Svitolina defeated Angelique Kerber 6-4, 6-4 for her sixth straight victory over the former No. 1 player.

Svitolina will next face 26th-ranked Anett Kontaveit of Estonia, who beat Australian Open champion Caroline Wozniacki 6-3, 6-1.

Sharapova's semifinal opponent will be Simona Halep, who advanced with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Caroline Garcia that ensures she will keep the No. 1 ranking for another week.

Djokovic has now won 12 straight matches over Nishikori and the Japanese player didn't help his cause when he landed an easy overhead into the net early in the third set. Still, it remained tight with long rallies until the end.

"It was a fantastic match," Djokovic said. "We went toe to toe until the last point."

Fans were decidedly behind Fognini, Italy's top player, and Nadal was under pressure when Fognini won five straight games to cancel out a 4-1 deficit and win the opening set.

Michel Platini admits 'skulduggery' to rig 1998 FIFA World Cup draw

Disgraced Michel Platini has sensationally admitted to a "little skulduggery" in rigging the draw to ensure Brazil and France could not meet until the final of the 1998 World Cup, where he was organising committee president.

"We organised the schedule so, if we finished first in our group and Brazil first in theirs, the teams could not meet before the final," France great Platini told Radio Bleu Sport in an interview to be broadcast on Sunday, highlights of which the station tweeted on Friday.

The revelation comes at a time when Platini is banned from football for receiving a "disloyal payment" of two million Swiss francs (1.7 million euros, \$2 million) when he was head of UEFA from

disgraced former FIFA president Sepp Blatter.

The draw took place in Marseille on December 4, 1997 and was presided over by FIFA's then-general secretary: Blatter.

"Look, we were at home, you have to make the most of things, we weren't going to go through the bother of six years organising the World Cup if we could not pull off a few little tricks," said Platini, a former midfielder star for Saint Etienne, Juventus and France.

"Do you think other hosts didn't do the same at their World Cups?" A France-Brazil final "was everyone's dream," said Platini.

Brazil were placed in Group A and France in Group C, ensuring they wouldn't meet until the final, as long as both



won their group. 'European conspiracy' Not everyone was happy with the fairly transparent plan, though.

At the time, the selection process of top seeds for the eight groups had provoked accusations of a "European conspiracy" by then-Brazil

coach Mario Zagallo.

Following frantic negotiations behind the scenes, six European countries and two South Americans -- Brazil and Argentina -- were picked, with Africans Nigeria missing out.

Ahead of the draw, Zagallo had complained that

French organisers would "do everything to ensure Brazil are not world champions", insisting the seeding process was fixed to ensure the Selecao would face two European sides in the group stages; they drew Norway and Scotland, as well as Morocco -- a fairly easy draw by anyone's standards. But their bitter rivals Argentina drew the only group with just one European team, Croatia, as well as Jamaica and Japan.

France got Denmark, South Africa and Saudi Arabia, finished top and then beat Paraguay, Italy (on penalties) and Croatia en route to the final, playing both their quarter-final and semi-final at the Stade de France national stadium where the title-decider would also be held.

Brazil won their group and beat Chile, Denmark and the Netherlands (on penalties) before losing the final 3-0 to France.

While teams had been allocated to specific groups at previous tournaments, it had typically been to keep apart countries from the same continental federation.

At Italia 1990, when there were just 24 teams in six groups of four, the top seeds were assigned in a way that kept Italy in Rome and had the added bonus for organisers that England, and their notorious fans, were isolated in Sardinia.

England were placed in the "London group" at both the 1966 World Cup and Euro 96, ensuring they would play all their games at Wembley.

IPL 2018: How Delhi Daredevils stifled MS Dhoni's big-hitting prowess

Harshal Patel, the 27-year-old Delhi Daredevils' all-rounder, had contributed a vital 36* off just 16 balls to help Delhi Daredevils reach a competitive 162/6 against Chennai Super Kings at the Feroz Shah Kotla on Friday.

With the ball, he got the vital wicket of Ambati Rayudu for 50. At 70/2 in 10 overs chasing 163, Delhi Daredevils were on top. But Chennai Super Kings had MS Dhoni left, who had regained his finishing prowess of old in IPL 2018.

Patel, in combination with Amit Mishra, Sandeep Lamichhane and Trent Boult, delivered a stellar death overs performance to give Delhi Daredevils a 34-run win and stall CSK's bid to finish in the top two.

Speaking after the match, Patel, who won the Man of the Match award for his

all-round exploits, revealed the strategy in keeping Dhoni quiet. "We knew what his strong zones were. The plan was simple. We did not bowl in the zones where he could hit us. We wanted to bowl in the areas where he is not really comfortable. We came up with a plan to bowl slow and wide to him and we executed it well," Patel said.

At 102/5 after 15 overs, Delhi Daredevils were in danger of being restricted to a below-par score. However, Patel shared a 65-run stand with Vijay Shankar (36*) off 32 balls and DD blasted 60 runs in the last five overs which boosted them to a competitive score on a sluggish deck.

"We had a strategic time-out in the 16th over and basically we decided that if we get 140, it will be a fighting total. The way Vijay and I batted in the last

three overs was really special," Patel said.

Brave move by Iyer Chasing 163, Shreyas Iyer decided to give the second over of the powerplay to Nepal legspinner Sandeep Lamichhane and the youngster did not disappoint by giving away just two runs. Patel said the move by Iyer was a 'brave' one.

"The way the game was going, Lamichhane was bowling well. Shane Watson was finding it difficult to pick him. Iyer made a brave call and decided to give him the second over. Wickets early were important for us. That was the only thought," Patel said. Delhi Daredevils face Mumbai Indians in the last league game of IPL 2018 and a loss for Rohit Sharma's side will result in their elimination from the play-off race.

Rajasthan Royals opt to bat against Royal Challengers Bangalore

Rajasthan Royals opted to bat against Royal Challengers Bangalore in their crucial Indian Premier League (IPL) 2018 encounter at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium in Jaipur on Saturday.

RR have made three changes to their playing XI - Ben Laughlin and Heinrich Klaasen replaced Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes while Shreyas Gopal replaced Anureet Singh. RCB are currently on a three-match winning run and they went into the game with an unchanged side.

The match is a must-win

for both teams as the winner will take a big step towards qualifying for the IPL 2018 play-offs.

RCB's positive net run-rate is a big advantage while the hosts will need a big victory on Saturday to boost their NRR (-0.403) and with that their chances of qualifying for the knockout stages.

When these two teams faced each other earlier in the season, Sanju Samson was the star performer for Rajasthan Royals with a 45-ball 92 as they defeated Royal Challengers Bangalore by 19 runs



in Bangalore. RR will be missing the services of their star batsman

Jos Buttler and all-rounder Ben Stokes as they had to leave midway for national team duty.

Buttler, who scored 548 runs in 13 matches, was the star performer for the hosts and his five consecutive fifties played a major role in keeping his side in the play-offs race.

Ben Stokes, on the other hand, did not have a good show this year and he ended the tournament with 196 runs and 8 wickets to his name.

When it comes to their head-to-head record, both teams have won eight times but at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium in Jaipur, Royal Challengers Bangalore hold a 3-2 advantage over the hosts.

Teams: Rajasthan Royals (Playing XI) - Rahul Tripathi, Ajinkya Rahane (c), Sanju Samson, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Stuart Binny, Krishnappa Gowtham, Jofra Archer, Shreyas Gopal, Ish Sodhi, Jaydev Unadkat, Ben Laughlin

Royal Challengers Bangalore (Playing XI) - Parthiv Patel (wk), Virat Kohli (c), AB de Villiers, Moeen Ali, Colin de Grandhomme, Mandeep Singh, Sarfaraz Khan, Tim Southee, Umesh Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Yuzvendra Chahal