

# TIME AND US

DAILY SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

WEDNESDAY

- MAY, 23, 2018
- 07 RAMADHAN 1439 AH
- ISSUE: 120
- VOLUME: 04
- PAGES: 08

WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	28.5	10.4
JAMMU	40.5	24.3
LEH	24.3	4.6
KARGIL	23.6	0.8

SUNSET WEDNESDAY: 07:32 PM  
SUNRISE THURSDAY: 05:26 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR  
Mainly Clear Sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 28°C & 10°C respectively.

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

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WHERE ARE THE SPORTS GROUNDS, LAMENTS SACHIN TENDULKAR

CM reviews SHG scheme

## Mehbooba directs Departments to stick to 30% work allocation to SHGs

Asks JK Bank to formulate customized scheme to ensure credit availability to SHGs, directs raising of financial limits of SHGs, stresses on their capacity building

SRINAGAR, MAY 22: Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today directed strict compliance of Government directive of allocating 30% job orders by various Departments for members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the State. She also directed raising the financial limits of SHGs from present Rs. 60 lakhs to Rs. One crore besides corresponding enhancements.

Chairing a meeting to review the status of Self Help Groups in the State, the Chief Minister asked for making necessary amendments in the guidelines for SHGs to make them compliant with the needs of the day and the requirements of individual Departments. She specifically asked for engaging the SHGs in the maintenance and upkeep of various assets, facilities and machinery put in the Government particularly Health Department.

Minister for Finance, Labour & Employment, Syed Altaf Bukhari was present in the meeting.

Mehbooba Mufti expressed dis-



pleasure in respect of some Departments which have not made the outlined allocations for the SHGs while tendering out their works. She asked all the Departments to revisit their approach in this regard and involve these young technocrats in carrying out various jobs and works being executed by them.

In a significant direction, the Chief Minister asked the JK Bank to come up with a customized scheme within 10 days to provide financial support

to these young entrepreneurs so that they don't lag behind for want of credit availability. She also directed undertaking capacity building of these SHGs by respective Departments so that they are able to deliver effectively in tune with the requirements of the individual Departments.

The meeting was informed that by and large the SHGs have exhibited satisfactory performance in terms of quality of works undertaken by them.

Earlier, Secretary, Labour & Em-

ployment, Kifayat Hussain Rizvi briefed the meeting about the salient features of the scheme.

The Self-Help Group schemes, it may be recalled, was introduced in the State to provide job avenues to qualified graduates in various engineering disciplines by involving them with construction and upgradation of infrastructure taking benefit of their technical background and know how.

Chief Secretary, B B Vyas; > See **Mehbooba...** Pg 02

## Pak not mending its ways: Rajnath

NEW DELHI: Asserting Pakistan was not "mending its ways", Home Minister Rajnath Singh today sent out a strong message to it over the continuing spate of unprovoked firing incidents along the border saying the government will never seek answers from Indian forces on "how they chose to retaliate" to such actions.

Delivering the keynote speech at the Border Security Forces' 16th investiture ceremony here, he said, without naming Pakistan, that it was an "irony" that despite India wanting peace with its neighbours, a particular country was not "mending its ways."

"This (Pakistan's acts) can be a subject of research and these activities of the neighbour are hard to understand," Singh said.

He said that while the government has directed the Border Security Force (BSF) and other forces on the border like the army to never fire the first bullet, "no one will ask them how they chose to retaliate".

"If you (the BSF) are fired upon, then you have to decide what is the best course of reaction or action. You have done this with remarkable responsibility in the past," the minister told the personnel of the border guarding force.

He reiterated that the force was giving > See **Rajnath...** Pg 02



## Ramadan ceasefire thus far successful, claims DGP Vaid

Srinagar, May 22 (KNB): Ramadhan ceasefire is serving as confidence Building Measure for the violence hit Kashmir and on Tuesday Jammu and Kashmir police chief Shesh Paul Vaid stated that the recent Ramadan ceasefire announced by Union > See **DGP...** Pg 02

## IFJ&HR RELEASES REPORT ABOUT HAWAL MASSACRE

Srinagar, May 22, CNS: International Forum for Justice and Human Rights Tuesday released a report regarding Hawal massacre in which over 72 innocent civilians were killed by the Indian troops.

Besides International Forum for Justice and Human Rights Chairman Muhammad Ahsan Untoo, Muslim Khawateen Markaz Chairperson Yasmeen Raja, Muslim Conference Chairman Shabir Ahmed Dar, Sajad Gul were present on the occasion.

Before releasing the report, Untoo said that Government of India follows anti-Kashmir policies. He said India's intentions and strategy are against the people and it has so far miserably failed to book the culprits involved in the killings of innocent people. > See **Hawal...** Pg 02

## Impose Governor Rule in J&K: Farooq Abdullah

Srinagar, May 22 (KNB): Questioning the Mehbooba Mufti government's silence on the alleged involvement of BJP leaders in a land row in Jammu, former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah has called for immediate imposition of governor's rule in the state.

The National Conference patron and Lok Sabha MP said his party had never been a promoter of governor's rule but it appeared to be the only way to arrest growing unrest in the state, which he asserted is fast slipping into anarchy under the PDP-BJP government. "We feel it is the



right time for the governor to take over. Leave the assembly in suspended animation and let the people of the state enjoy the fruits of democracy," Abdullah told PTI. He referred to the contro-

versy over the purchase of land, through a company, by top BJP leaders, including state assembly Speaker Nirmal Singh and Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, near an Army ammunition depot in Nagrota in Jammu. "Why is there silence from the state government?" Abdullah asked. Nirmal Singh has begun constructing a house on a 2,000 sq metre plot, which is part of an estimated 12 acres bought in 2014, prompting strong protests from Jammu-based 16 Corps Commander Lt General Saranjeet Singh. Pertinently, Saranjeet Singh has said the construction is illegal and has implications on the security of a major ammunition storage facility as well as the safety of all personnel living in close vicinity of the ammunition > See **Farooq...** Pg 02

## Allegations: RAMKY USING SUB-STANDARD MATERIAL NOT APPROVED BY NHA

Srinagar, May 22, CNS: A couple of State and Central Departments have received a communiqué from a group of people who have alleged that executive agency of four lane project Banihal-Srinagar Expressway have been using sub-standard material that has not been approved by National Highway Authority of India.

The four lane project Banihal-Srinagar Expressway is being executed by Ramky Infrastructure Limited. The project has already missed a couple of deadlines.

A letter shot to Minister of Roads and Transportation, > See **NHAI...** Pg 02

## 'Adulterated food in markets galore' Concern officials directed to collect samples for checking: Minister

Srinagar, May 22 (KNS): The authorities here have failed to launch an effective campaign to check sale of adulterated and unhygienic foodstuff that is posing serious health threats to public.

Sources told Kashmir News Service (KNS) that though there have been task forces and committees galore to look into the issue of food adulteration but nothing much has come of these. "There are rampant complaints about sub-standard foods being sold in the state, however, the lack of coordination between the law enforcing agencies is halting to put curb on sub-standard food items," said sources. > See **Minister...** Pg 02



One of the doctors in the SMHS hospital here told KNS that increasing cases of stomach ulcers and intestinal ailments in valley > See **Minister...** Pg 02

## CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM KASHMIR NOT HAPPY WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF JLNH HOSPITAL

Srinagar, May 22, CNS: Civil Society Forum Kashmir (CSFK) paid a visit to Jawahar Lal Nehru Memorial Hospital (JLNH) Srinagar and took stock of many specialties.

The members of CSFK headed by its General Secretary, Omar Shafi Trambo inspected the facilities being provided by the hospital.

The team inspected the drug store of inpatient department at the hospital and found that there was moisture on the walls inside which is yet to be repaired.

"There is no refrigerator at the IPD drug store and the employees are not following any procedure while providing the drugs to the patients," said a Forum member who > See **Society...** Pg 02

## Women stakeholders of peace prosperity and development: Safina Baig

Anjum Fazili, Waheed Parra attended meeting at Ganderbal

Ganderbal, May 22 (KNS): On Tuesday, a meeting cum interaction was held by President Women's Wing Safina Baig at North Kashmir Ganderbal's Choohtawaliwar area.

Meanwhile, Baig was accompanied by MLA Anjum Fazili and J&KPDP Youth President, Waheed Ur Rehman Parra.

Addressing a composite gathering of women, youth and man who spoke different languages like pakhtoon, kashmiri, pahari and gujri, Safina Baig underlined the basic unity and to point out-what united them was their shared destiny, their yearning for peace > See **Safina...** Pg 02



and progress, provision of basic amenities > See **Safina...** Pg 02

## AS RAMADHAN BEGINS, NON-LOCAL BEGGARS SWARM SRINAGAR

Irregular commuters, shoppers, pedestrians

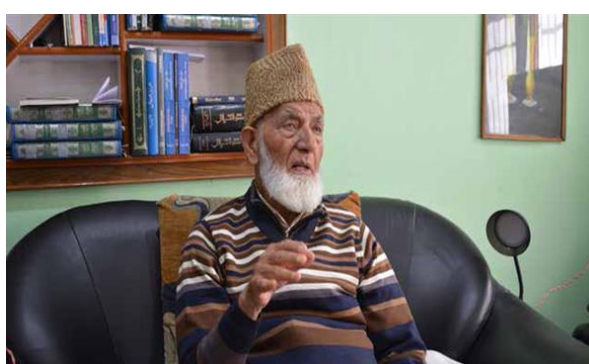
Srinagar, May 22 (KNS): The non-local beggars have again flocked to Srinagar during the sacred month of Ramadan, taking advantage of the Muslim ruling to give donations during the month.

The non local beggars including men, women, old and children usually place themselves at footpaths, four ways and shopping malls.

Women from distant lands can be seen holding small babies in their arms at virtually every busy intersection > See **Ramadhan...** Pg 02

## Geelani condemns firing on girls 'By organizing Iftaar parties, Army wants to wash off their hands drenched in our blood'

Srinagar, May 22, CNS: Strongly condemning the firing and seriously injuring 4 teenage girls in Sphoian, All Parties Hurriyat Conference Chairman, Syed Ali Geelani said that this is what the Indian army means by the much hyped 'ceasefire'. He said that it is the genetic nature of the oppressor that it inflicts the wounds first and then sprinkles the salt and pepper on them, to aggregate the pain and agony of the sufferer, so > See **Geelani...** Pg 02



that these sick-minded rulers get psychological and mental pleasure. Hurriyat Chairman said > See **Geelani...** Pg 02

## LEGAL METROLOGY DEPARTMENT SETTLES CONSUMER COMPLAINT

Srinagar, May 22, CNS: The Legal Metrology department received a complaint from a respectable citizen of the city Srinagar against a footwear showroom at Lal Chowk for selling him a pair of shoes for Rs 6295/-with the assurance that the shoes are water-proof and fit for tracking.

The complainant wore the expensive shoes for a couple of times and on one normal rainy day he found percolation of water into the shoes. He rushed to the retail-outlet and complained of the defect. The retail-outlet collected the shoes back for testing for leak/defect and returned the > See **Legal...** Pg 02

# KOHLI ATTENDS EVENT ORGANIZED BY BMVSS IN NEW YORK

Humanitarian efforts of 'Jaipur Foot' contributes in improving quality life of disabled in India & Abroad

SRINAGAR, MAY 22: Minister for Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries, Abdul Ghani Kohli has said that Bhagwan Mahaveer ViklangSahayata Samiti (BMVSS), also known as Jaipur Foot is doing a tremendous job for his humanitarian works and has given a much-needed boost to the self-esteem of people by improving the quality of life for the disabled.

The Minister was invited to New York (USA) to attend the event organized by BMVSS tracing 50 years of the Jaipur Foot as guest of honor.

Kohli participated in the exhibition of the world-famous and most widely used artificial limb, Jaipur Foot at the United Nations headquarters in New York from May 15 to 18. As part of the programme, an exclusive seminar on Jaipur Foot was also organized at the UN Gallery at the initiative of India's permanent representative Syed Akbaruddin.



India's permanent representative in U.S, Syed Akbaruddin, Counsel General of India in New York Sandeep Chakravarty, Rajya Sabha Chief Whip Narayan Lal Panchariya, President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations Vinay Sahasrabudhe, founder and chief patron of Bhagwan Mahaveer ViklangSahayata Samiti (BMVSS) R Mehta, Chairman, Jaipur Foot in USA Prem Bhandari, Ambassadors from 12 countries and many other dignitaries participated in the event.

Participating in the panel discussion organized at United Nations, the Minister said that he feels proud to be associated with Jaipur Foot. He praised for the organization for their dedicated efforts keeping humanity alive in the present world.

"Jaipur Foot has provided much needed assistance to those who are among the most affected and those who have very limited resources to seek the kind of assistance that is

needed by them", Kohli said.

By rehabilitating 1.7 million amputees and polio patients spread in 32 countries by providing free artificial limbs calipers and other aids and appliances, the Minister said that BMVSS is helping the needy people and making them able to live a respected life in the society.

Kohli urged Prem Bhandari, chairman, Jaipur Foot in USA to reach out to the state of Jammu and Kashmir and to help the disabled especially living in the remote areas of the state with providing them artificial limbs.

On the occasion, it was informed that the organization is now focusing on the development of an affordable artificial hand. Jaipur Foot is helping the BMVSS in that mission in collaboration with the University of Santa Clara.

The panel discussion was organized by India's Permanent Mission to the UN, along with the BMVSS and Jaipur Foot.

# SAT SHARMA FOR EARLY COMPLETION OF SRINAGAR MASTER PLAN, MAKING IT HOLISTIC

SRINAGAR, MAY 22: The Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Sat Paul Sharma today directed the officers to ensure the Srinagar Master Plan is finalized as early as possible and stressed for making it a holistic and comprehensive document which would address all developmental need of the city, besides catering to every section of society.

The Minister was speaking at a meeting convened to review the status of the Draft Master Plan Srinagar-2035 and to discuss suggestions and objections put forth by different quarters in this regard.

Minister for Relief, Rehabilitation, Javid Mustafa Mir, Minister for Finance Altaf Bukhari, Minister for I&FC Sham Chowdhary, Minister for FCS&CA Mohammad Ashraf Mir, Minister of State for Housing, PDD, Asiea Naqash, Minister of State for PHE, I&FC Mir Zahoob, Legislators Khurshid Alam, Noor Mohammad Sheikh, Financial Commissioner, Housing and



Urban Development, KB Agarwal, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Secretary Irrigation & Flood control M Raju, Commissioner SMC, VC LAWADA, DC Srinagar, Chief Town Planner and other senior officers were present in the meeting.

On the onset of the meeting a team of officers from Town Planning Organization Kashmir involved in the preparation of the Draft Master Plan Srinagar-2035 made a power point presentation detailing the project besides putting forth all areas of concern before the meeting.

During the meeting, deliberate discussions were held

to ensure a balance between rapid urbanization and the requirements for sound implementation of master plan proposals, land use thereof and rapid unhindered and unfeasible growth of residential, commercial and institutional activities.

Sat Sharma directed the officers to consult the local representatives and legislators and incorporate their suggestions and views to make the plan more holistic and also in tune with the demands of the areas. He said that the officers should hold regular meetings with them to remove the bottlenecks if any so that it is made broad-based and

area specific.

The Minister while deliberating on the master plan policy framework passed directions to the Financial Commissioner, H&UDD for early finalization of objections and suggestions. "We should show urgency for completion of the whole process involved in finalization of the master plan and complete it within the shortest possible time for submission of final Master Plan to the cabinet for accord of approval," he said.

The meeting expressed reservations for shifting of a few establishments of heritage character as envisaged in the Draft Master Plan-2035. It was further discussed that adequate steps are required to be taken for the safety of city dwellers from floods especially of the kind witnessed in 2014.

The Ministers also flagged certain issues and called for immediate incorporation into the draft besides undertaking modifications with regard to issues related to housing needs of the people of the city.

## Continue from Front Page

### MEHBOOBA

Financial Commissioner, Housing & Urban Development, KB Aggarwal; Administrative Secretaries of various Departments; Chairman, JK Bank, Parvez Ahmad; heads of Departments and senior officers were present in the meeting.

### RAJNATH

a "befitting reply" to these unprovoked incidents, especially those taking place along the India-Pakistan International Border (IB) in the Jammu region for the last few days.

So far, seven persons including two BSF jawans and an infant have been killed and 18 others injured in the latest ceasefire violation by Pakistan in the Jammu region.

Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a spurt in Pakistani shelling and firing along the IB and the LoC this year with over 700 such incidents being reported this year, which have left a total of 39 people, including 18 security personnel, dead and scores injured.

The home minister said the Modi government's ambitious plan to completely seal its borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh using technology gadgets and 'smart fences' is "work in progress."

"In few months, the work should get completed," he said. We are a peace loving country and want cordial relations with all the countries including our neighbours, he said adding India gave to the world the concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'the world is one family'.

The minister called the BSF as the 'first wall of defence' on the borders and said the troops of the force, owing to their valour and courage, have ensured that the Indian frontiers are safe under them.

Singh added that nothing can be "supreme" than the fact that a soldier lays down his life for the nation and everyone should ensure that the troops have high morale all the times. He added that his government, from early this year, has started providing the operational casualty certificate to the families of those Central Armed Police Forces personnel who are killed in the line of duty.

The defence forces also give the families of their killed troops such a certificate.

### DGP

government has been "successful and situation in south Kashmir has also eased".

Taking to social media website Twitter, Director General of Police Vaid said: "The Ramzan ceasefire has been successful thus far. The initiative of hon'ble PM has helped in general improvement in law & order. The situation especially in south Kashmir has eased & is serving as confidence Building Measure for families who want their boys to return back home."

### HAWAL

The report quotes various witnesses and carries the Names and addresses of at least 52 persons gunned down by the troops on 21st of May 1991 in Hawal area of Srinagar city.

The investigation by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police into the Hawal massacre of May 21, 1990, as per report has stated that some militants fired upon the CRPF men and in retaliation the troops fired in self-defence. But the investigation wing of the Human Rights Commission nails the police version and says that a CRPF court of inquiry has identified 15 of its troops that had massacred more than 50 mourners without any provocation. However, no challan in the case has yet been produced in the court nor have the guilty CRPF men been held accountable for the massacre.

On 21 May 1990, renowned cleric Mirwaiz Molvi Muhammad Farooq was killed by unknown gunmen at his Nigeen residence in Srinagar. As the news broke out, people rushed to Soura Institute of Medical Sciences to carry his body towards the Mirwaiz Manzil at Rajouri Kadal. When the procession reached Islamia College, the CRPF troops fired upon the mourners. The CID, that had submitted its report to the commission, has closed the case as 'untraced'.

As per the CID report, "curfew was imposed on the day and during curfew hours some unknown militants fired upon the CRPF men and in retaliation CRPF fired in self-defence in which some 35 civilians died on spot." The report further reveals that the investigation of the case was entrusted to Crime Branch of police and during the course of investigation

the case has been "closed as untraced as no clue was found".

But the investigation wing of the Human Rights Commission picked holes in the CID report and came up with a 12-page investigation report holding the CRPF troops of the 69 battalion who were stationed at the Islamia College responsible for killing of innocent civilians without any reason and justification. The troops were also held guilty by the court of inquiry constituted by the CRPF.

According to the investigation wing of the commission, it is not known what action has been taken against the CRPF personnel and whether criminal proceedings have been conducted against them or not. The CRPF, however, didn't cooperate with the commission.

It is to mention here that the investigation wing of the commission conducted an inquiry into the massacre in 2014. The investigation came after a petition by the Chairman of International Forum for Justice and Human Rights, Muhammad Ahsan Untoo.

### FAROOQ

depot.

While Nirmal Singh was former deputy Chief minister, Gupta was former speaker. Both have denied any wrong doing. The army has moved the Jammu and Kashmir High Court against the construction being undertaken by Nirmal Singh. According to Abdullah, all three regions of the state feel betrayed.

There is the feeling that there is no governance and nothing seems to move with projects held up, he said.

"Recently, you must have seen how an ex deputy chief minister and the then speaker have been involved in multiple land deals and other activities which are illegal. No action has been taken on it and no one except the army is speaking," Abdullah said.

The former chief minister said people felt things were on the right track during the three months of governor's rule from January till beginning of April in 2016 after the death of then chief minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed. "Files that had not moved, moved within days and there was equal treatment for everyone. There was a sort of fresh air that had suddenly emerged from darkness," he said.

### NHAI

Incharge Finance Department NHAI, Incharge TPT Department NHAI and Regional Officer NHAI by a group of people claims that no proper reinforcement (steel) has been used in different structures that could prove fatal in near future for the commuters.

"The executing agency Ramky Infr Ltd has not used standard steel in the structures. The material used in some structures has not been approved by NHAI and still they are using the same material in the balance structure work," the letter reads.

A local from Tokna village Fayaz Ahmed Chopan told news agency CNS that they have proper evidences about this fraud. "I in fact approached anti-graft road agency who assured me that matter will be probed. Even Ramky asked me to maintain silence. I was even offered a favour which I declined. My only concern is to make NHAI aware about the misdeeds of Ramky so that in future we can't witness fatal accidents like one happened in UP," he said.

Termining the allegations baseless, Project Head Ramky, Mr Chander Shekhar said that only standard material has been used in the piling structures.

### MINISTER

are often due to dangerous adulterants in food like lead oxide. "Though the consumers are complaining of the phenomenon, the concerned authorities have not planned a comprehensive crackdown against those involved in the devilry," said a doctor who has served in the SMC Srinagar.

Sources said that some restaurants, shopkeepers, bakers, fast food centres and vendors in the city have been selling unhygienic foodstuff in extremely unhygienic conditions mainly because none of the concerned government authorities is giving due attention to provision of hygienic and clean foodstuff to consumers.

"Unfortunately, not everyone is an educated consumer meticulously checking labels for ingredients and AGMARK/ ISI certifications before buying. It has been found that many homemakers in the lower middle class bracket were completely unaware of adulteration," said one of the social activ-

ists.

Pleading anonymity, one of the officials said that it is strange that the high-ups in the government have been elaborating a lot to improve healthcare services for public but doing almost nothing to eliminate causes behind ailments. It is ironical to take action on effects instead of removing causes.

The authorities have not planned any crackdown against those local hotels, shopkeepers and vendors selling unhygienic foodstuff while there is also no regular check on sale of food adulteration.

However the divisional administration said that they are working hard to check sale of substandard and adulterated foodstuff in the markets.

They added that the concerned staff is collecting samples of food items regularly in routine from markets and send those to laboratory for quality checking.

FCS&CA Minister said that the government is committed to curb the food adulteration in the state. "I have directed the field officials to regularly collect samples of various items and get these checked. We have intensified surveillance across the state and initiated a cross-verification of surveillance work by sending food safety officials outside their jurisdictions for inspection," the minister maintained.

Sources added that Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 were not being executed "properly" in the state.

The Act came into force across the country in August 2011. The Act was also to ensure improved quality of food for the consumers and censure misleading claims and advertisement by those in food business.

### SOCIETY

was part of the group. He said there are three drug stores and all of them are closed after 4 pm and no one is there to provide medicines for the patients after that.

The members found that there were only few medicines available at outpatient department drug store which was compelling the poor patients to get these from private shops.

"It was also found that the hospital is not following standard treatment guidelines for the procurement of the medicines," he said.

CSFK members said that there is shortage of manpower at the hospital. In the visit it came to the light that since 2013 there has been no creation of staff at the hospital.

"There is no drug counter for the patients. And there no qualified staff to lead the drug stores and the employees have not been provided any training since years," they said.

They raised eyebrows over the lack many facilities at the hospital like the defunct elevator and lack of a proper garbage disposal management due to which the patients were suffering.

They also met hospital's Medical Superintendent Dr Sameena Mufti and appealed her to address the issues being faced by the patients including the shortage of staff.

Regarding the defunct elevator, the MS in her reply said that the J&K Projects Construction Corporation has left the work due to some issues at the directorate level.

She also promised that they will open drug store at the hospital OPD after they get permission from the directorate. CSFK also donated some wheelchairs at the hospital, a move welcomed by the hospital administration.

### SAFINA

like education, health, drinking water and sport facilities for the youth.

Safina Baig promised that she will focus what is common amongst us and not what divide us. "The real fight is against poverty, peace and progress and for that purpose PDP will enlist the guidance and all possible help of Hon'ble CM for the betterment of this far flung area who bear a golden heart," Said Baig.

Meanwhile MLA Anjum Fazili while addressing the gathering said that it is an opportunity for common women of the state to grab the possibilities in various women related schemes already passed by Chief Minister of the state. She further emphasized and lauded the decision of the CM for abolishing the women stamp duty.

PDP Youth President, Waheed Ur Rehman Para while interacting with the youth of the area who presented a memorandum of demands which included issues like unemployment, playing ground facilities, and other issues.

Parra added, "Government will take all possible measures to improve the standards and engage youth in pro developmental activities."

On the demands raised by the youth of the area, Para assured them to look into their grievances and the area will have all necessary facilities.

Speaking on the occasion, Parra listed the recent youth specific initiatives of the Government. He further added that government has a lot of schemes for the empowerment of the youth and to see the better future they should rope in the schemes available with the various government departments of the State.

Youth representatives of the three areas including Sideeq Ah Mughal, Hilal Ahmad, Mohd Waseem Sajad and others were also present on the occasion.

### RAMADHAN

of the capital city pleading before motorists for alms. "These non-local beggars have made lives of local population miserable. They irritate us at every moment," a resident of Koker Bazar told Kashmir News Service (KNS).

He said that these non-local beggars mostly rush to the Valley in the month of Ramadan. "In this holy month, Muslims give away a part of their earnings as charity to the poor and needy people so, they come and take its advantage," he said.

"Ironically, most of the child beggars who come here with their parents are registered as tourists while they are annual summer visitors to Kashmir. They leave the valley with the first snowfall each year," said a delegation of residents from Mehjor Nagar area.

The number of non-local beggars is too high in the city that they are seen mostly at tourist places, mosques, shrines, bus stands and traffic signals.

Shopkeepers around the city centre, Lal Chowk, blame the authorities for their failure to curb the growing menace.

"In spite of being sufficiently armed with laws, the non-local beggars are roaming around shops that irk the customers. It has affected our business," said a shopkeeper at Lal Chowk. The crowd of such people usually comes in the month of April and left the valley in the month of October and November. Every year hundreds of beggars from outside the state through the valley in Ramadan and as well in the tourist season. A majority of them have set up colonies of tents on the outskirts of the city.

### GEELANI

their artificial love and affection with these bereaved families. He applauded and hailed the people of Shopian who opposed these fake gestures.

Hurriyat chairman said that when people of that area didn't want such an event, why these men in uniform forced their dictation on gunpoint and when people opposed they fired to silence them by bullets, -hounring and respecting their so-called 'ceasefire' Geelani said their army will continue to conduct such iftar parties to mingle with the people so that they could wash off their hands drenched in our blood, but people are cautioned to behave like their Shopian brethren and not to participate in such activities.

### LEGAL

same to customer after some time with the remark that the shoes are water-proof only up to 8 cm height.

The customer was plunged into deep mental agony and as a result lodged the complaint with the department for unfair trade practice adopted by the foot-wear show-room. After receiving the complaint, the field executives of Legal Metrology department on the instructions of Controller Legal Metrology Mr. R.K. Katoch under the supervision of Joint Controller conducted surprise inspection of the show-room to ascertain the genuineness of complaint. During the inspection, it was found that there was no mention on the wrapper/label of the similar shoes available at the premises that the shoes are water-proof only up to 8cm height.

Under Consumer Protection Act, it is an unfair trade practice if any trader makes a false/ misleading statement of usefulness of any goods. It is the mandate of the department to safeguard the interests of consumer from unscrupulous traders. The notice was served to the show-room for adoption of unfair trade practice while promoting his business. The management of the show-room confessed the lapse and took back the defective shoes and returned Rs 6295 to the aggrieved customer.

International Biodiversity day celebrated

# Jasrotia calls for collective efforts to preserve biodiversity

KATHUA, MAY 22: Minister for Forests, Environment and Ecology, Rajiv Jasrotia today called for streamlining collective efforts to preserve the rich biodiversity of the State.

The Minister was speaking at a function to mark International Day for Biological Diversity at Govt. Degree College Kathua. The function was organized by J&K State Bio-Diversity Board.

The Minister who was the chief guest on the occasion said that the State is gifted with natural beauty and our responsibility is to work collectively for its preservation. He said the first thing is to make people aware of the importance of forests and biodiversity in our life followed by their practical participation in its conservation. Highlighting this year's Biodiversity Celebration theme: 'Celebrating 25 years of action for Biodiversity', Rajiv Jasrotia said that the day is designed to promote the conservation

of biodiversity and to ensure the sustainable use and equitable sharing of genetic resources.

"Our biodiversity is very important for the well-being of our planet. And the celebration of this day seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services with the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including scientists, experts, indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community," said the Minister.

Terming students as the catalyst of bringing change, Jasrotia said that they can spread the message of environment conservation effectively and it further underlines the responsibility of the Forest department in engaging students in conservation efforts.

Underlining the need for expanding the ambit of the activities of State Diversity Board, the Minister asked the Members of the Board to work

wholeheartedly so that the purpose for which it was constituted is fulfilled. He said that role of PCB needs to be redefined and furthermore overall reforms are needed in Forest department to cater the emerging needs of the hour. The Minister further called for sustainable development of forests including strengthening of State Forest Corporation (SFC), Pollution Control Board (PCB), Soil and Water Conservation Department, State Forest Research Institute (SFRI), Forest Protection Force (FPF) and Social Forestry to achieve growth and progress of huge natural resources of the state.

DC Kathua, Rohit Khajuria also highlighted the significance of celebrating Biodiversity day and asserted that these celebrations should not become symbolic but a routine affair to create mass awareness among all the stakeholders regarding environment conservation and afforestation.

Earlier, the Minister inspected

the stalls established by various wings of Forest department highlighting rare Flora-Fauna of J&K. Information brochures/posters highlighting cross-LoC trade of important wild Flora-Fauna and rare species of wild animals in J&K was also unveiled during the celebration.

Later, prizes were also distributed among the students who participated in the symposium and painting competition held by the Forest department to mark the Bio-diversity celebration.

The function was attended by PCCF Manoj Pant, Chief Wildlife Warden Ravi Kesar, MD State Forest Corporation Suresh Chug, Chairman PCB, V. Sidharth, Director Soil and Water Conservation PK Singh, Director Social Forestry AK Gupta, Director SFRI BM Sharma along with Conservators, DFOs, senior officers of the department and students in large numbers were present during the celebration.

# Asiea Naqash Visits Hazratbal Shrine Assures rehabilitation of affected families



SRINAGAR, MAY 22: Minister of State for Housing & Urban Development, Social Welfare, Health & Medical Education, Asiea Naqash today visited Hazratbal shrine to review the progress on various components of Rs 45 crore Hazratbal Beautification Project.

The Minister also visited Sabzi Mandi and Dhobi Ghat areas of Hazratbal to identify the shops and structures that need to be repaired or removed. She said that the structures affected in this process would be properly relocated and rehabilitated.

She said that various vendors and fishermen families at Dhobi Ghat would also be relocated and rehabilitated and space will be used for public conveniences.

While taking stock of the developmental work, she said that the Shrine and its sur-

roundings are being beautified in such a way that it would become as one of the main centres of pilgrim tourism in the state.

She stressed for installing proper lighting system, landscaping and beautification in and around the shrine premises in accordance with scientific principles.

Naqash asked the officials to improve the ambience of this place by giving a facelift to the banks of Dal Lake around the shrine and landscaping the parks. Stressing on meeting the set deadline, the Minister directed the officials for employing synergized efforts to complete the project by the end of this year.

The Minister was accompanied by Vice Chairman of J&K Wakf Board Nizamuddin Bhat, DDC Srinagar, Vice Chairman LAWDA, Chief Engineers and other officers.

# Arora chairs DRSC-IV meet, reviews functioning of PDD, PDC

SRINAGAR, MAY 22: A meeting of Department Related Standing Committee (DRSC-IV) of Legislative Council was held under the chairmanship of MLC Ramesh Arora here today to review the overall functioning of Power Development Department (PDD).

Legislators, Ali Mohammad Dar, Saif-ud-Din Bhat, and Vibod Gupta attended the meeting.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on the current status of projects of solar energy, alternative energy in the state, regularization of daily wagers particularly working in State Power Development Corporation (PDC), and district wise details regarding the demands of electric transformers.

The Committee also discussed the power scenario in the state especially during peak summer season in Jammu division and in winters in Kashmir division and steps taken to improve it and district wise details of electrified and



un-electrified households in the state.

The Committee observed that the daily wagers were not regularized by the PDC and compliance report in this regard was not also filed as per the direction given by Chairman Ramesh Arora.

On the occasion, Arora directed the Executive Director (E) PDD, Ajay Gupta to file a compliance report in this regard.

Meanwhile, Vibod Gupta informed the Committee that Gulabgarh village in Tehsil Kalakote is yet to be electrified and the reply of the Department isn't correct regarding the same.

The Chairman directed for constituting a sub-committee comprising MLCs Ali Mohammad Dar and Vibod Gupta which will visit Rajouri and prepare a report about the working of IRCON and other contractors in the area and submit a detailed report to the Committee as early as possible regarding the list of un-electrified villages which are shown to be electrified in record of the department.

The Committee also directed the Chief Engineer, M&RE Wing Jammu, Ashwani Gupta to submit a report of criteria for installation of new transformers to the needy areas. It was also directed to

file a detailed report of last one year indicating how many transformers were installed in Jammu region and what criteria was adopted.

During the meeting, Arora expressed hope that PDD will work with added zeal and zest so that the maximum relief could be provided to the people.

Development Commissioner Power Asgar Ali Majaz, Special Secretary Council Secretariat Mohammad Ashraf Wani, Additional Secretary Legislative Council Ali Mohammad Rawat and other senior officers of PDD and Council Secretariat were present in the meeting.

# Workshop on "Ganga and its Biodiversity: Developing a road map for habitat and Species Conservation" inaugurated by Nitin Gadkari

New Delhi, May 22: Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Shri Nitin Gadkari released the report on "Status of Conservation of Select Aquatic Species" in river Ganga in New Delhi today. He also inaugurated a day-long workshop organized by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) on the theme "Ganga and its Biodiversity: Developing a Road Map for Habitat and Species Conservation". A database of Ganga Praharis, a self-motivated cadre, being created by Wildlife Institute of India (WII) was also launched by the Minister.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Gadkari emphasized the need to approach the challenges of cleaning river Ganga through an "integrated approach and with synergy between development and ecology. Mentioning successful examples like making paper from bamboo, Shri Gadkari said: "Such activities will not only generate employment in areas near river

Ganga but will also encourage local communities, some of whom have joined the clean Ganga mission as Ganga Praharis and Ganga Mitras, to ensure conservation of river's biodiversity. We are increasing activities like plantation on river bank, boating, construction of Mukti Dhams and Ghats. These will increase employment opportunities and will mobilise public participation of the local residents in the task of cleaning Ganga".

Shri U.P. Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation said: "Ganga still has about 2,000 aquatic species and with the participation of one and all the difficult task of restoring Ganga's biodiversity can be achieved." He also pointed out that both aviralta and nirmalta of river Ganga are important and the government is committed to achieve both.

Thanking Ganga Praharis and Ganga Mitras for their voluntary support, DG, NMCG Shri Rajiv Ranjan Mishra said: "I hope that these volunteers

which now number about 400 will increase to thousands and lakhs and Clean Ganga Mission will become a mass movement." He hoped that discussions during today's workshop between experts will yield some valuable suggestions and recommendations which will be fruitful for policymaking.

The Ganga Praharis, a self-motivated volunteer cadre from local communities have been trained and taken on board by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) to make Clean Ganga Mission a mass movement. This cadre has been created to ensure the sustainability of efforts in conservation of the biodiversity in river Ganga. So far, 427 Ganga Praharis across five main stem Ganga basin states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal have been involved in this project.

The first-of-its-kind report "Status of Conservation of Select Aquatic Species" which was released by the Minister

present the status of select species of river Ganga and synthesize the information from available literature as well as from the data generated through the rapid biodiversity assessment of the river. This would make valuable contribution for making a baseline for these species.

The Minister also released another publication "Ganga Biodiversity-At a Glance" which gives species with details, along with their depiction and maps.

These reports have been prepared by Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun as part of the "Biodiversity Conservation and Ganga Rejuvenation" project being sponsored by National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) under the aegis of the Namami Gange programme. The project aims to develop a science-based aquatic species restoration plan for Ganga by involving multiple stakeholders. The technical session focused on "Developing a Five and 10 year strategies for Ganga aquatic biodiversity conservation".

# Centre needs to help Southern States build infrastructure to tackle multiple disaster challenges: Vice President

New Delhi, May 22: The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that Southern parts of the country are prone to multiple disaster challenges - hence require Centre to help these states build infrastructure to tackle disasters. He was addressing the gathering after laying foundation stone for National Institute of Disaster Management, in Kondapavuluru, Andhra Pradesh today. The Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijjta, the Minister for Law & Justice, Andhra Pradesh, Shri Kollu Ravindra and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

The Vice President said that India needs a disaster resilient infrastructure and provide life-line services to the most vulnerable com-

munities. He further said that events of natural disasters are on the rise, and India is the most affected region. We have witnessed wide spread natural calamities in the past ranging from floods to earthquakes, landslides and cyclones like super cyclone of 1999, Gujarat earth quake 2001, South Indian Tsunami in 2004, Mumbai Flood 2005, Kashmir earthquake of 2005, Kosi flood in 2008, Sikkim earthquake of 2011, Phailin and Hud Hud in 2013 and 2014, he added.

The Vice President said that nearly 59% of India's land area is prone to earthquakes of moderate to very high intensity. Over 40 million hectares (12% of land), is prone to floods, about 5700 kms coast line is cyclone prone and exposed to

tsunamis and storm surges, 2% of land is landslide prone, and 68% of India's arable land is affected by droughts, he added.

The Vice President said that flooding in the cities and the towns is a recent phenomenon caused by indiscriminate encroachment of water ways, inadequate drainage system and lack of maintenance of the drainage infrastructure. He further said that these disasters do not only disrupt people's lives and directly affect the disaster-hit areas, but they also jeopardize the entire society and economy of the country. In fact, one single disaster can overwhelm the GNP of the country, he added.

The Vice President said that since 90 percent of the disaster-affected populations are in Asia, it is indeed

important for the population to be informed of potential disaster threats. He further said that they should also be equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to protect their lives and properties. Though we have been actively pursuing a paradigm shift in disaster management from a relief centric approach in the past to a holistic one, that encompasses preparedness, prevention, mitigation and risk reduction much needs to be done in the context of resilient infrastructure and life-line services to the most vulnerable communities, he added.

The Vice President said that as Disaster Management approach is a multi-disciplinary process, the Ministry of Home Affairs has been mandated to play role of coordina-

tion as the Administrative Ministry. He further said that the success of early warning and preparedness was demonstrated during the recent cyclones 'Phailin' 'Hudhud' in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh respectively. Warning messages, including coordinates of the impending cyclone's location and intensity, were communicated prior to the landfall, he added. The Vice President said that India is a party to the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-30), which has now provided us a more practical and useful document with people-centered preventive approach to disaster risk. This would contribute to the reduction of disaster risks and strengthen resilience of the poor and the most vulnerable, e added.

# Over 7 lakhs Foreign Tourist Arrivals in April 2018, registering a growth of 4.4% over April 2017

New Delhi, May 22: Ministry of Tourism compiles monthly Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) & FTAs on e-Tourist Visa on the basis of information received from Bureau of Immigration (BOI). The following are the important highlights regarding FTAs and FTAs one-Tourist Visa during the month of April, 2018:

Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs):

FTAs in April 2018 were 7,49,477 as compared to 7,17,899 in April 2017 registering a growth of 4.4%.

FTAs during the period January-April 2018 were 38,76,021 as compared to 34,98,969 in January-April 2017 registering a growth of 10.8%.

The percentage share of Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India during April 2018 among the top 15 source countries was highest from Bangladesh (24.32%) followed by USA (11.21%), UK (9.14%), Sri Lanka (3.48%), Australia (3.33%), Malaysia (3.06%), China (2.62%), Canada (2.53%), Germany (2.48%), France (2.33%), Japan (2.22%), Russian Federation (2.07%), Thailand (1.70%), Afghanistan (1.65%) and Nepal (1.64%).

The percentage share of Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India during April 2018 among the top 15 ports was highest at Delhi Airport (28.75%) followed by Mumbai Airport (14.46%), Haridaspur Land Check Post (11.40%), Chennai Airport (7.44%), Bengaluru Airport (5.81%), Kolkata Airport (5.58%), Cochin Airport (4.21%), Hyderabad Airport (2.64%), Gede Rail Land Check Post (2.63%), Goa Airport (2.30%), Ghoadanga Land Check Post (1.63%), Ahmedabad Airport (1.28%), Trivandrum Airport (1.21%), Amritsar Airport (1.06%) and Chitpur Railway Station (0.99%).

FTAs on e-Tourist Visa:

During the month of April, 2018 a total of 1,57,094 tourist arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 1,14,469 during the month of April, 2017 registering a growth of 37.2%.

During January-April 2018, a total of 9,18,792 tourist arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 5,81,783 during January-April 2017, registering a growth of 57.9%.

The percentage shares of top 15 source countries availing e-Tourist Visa facilities during April, 2018 were highest from UK (16.3%) followed by USA (11.0%), China (5.8%), Australia (5.5%), France (5.3%), Thailand (4.3%), Germany (4.0%), Canada (3.5%), Oman (3.2%), Russian Fed (3.0%), Malaysia (2.2%), Italy (2.1%), South Africa (1.8%), Spain (1.8%) and Republic of Korea (1.7%).

# Shri J P Nadda reviews Nipah Virus cases in Kerala

New Delhi, May 22: The Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Shri J P Nadda is closely monitoring the situation arising out of reported cases and deaths due to Nipah Virus in Kerala. He has reviewed it with Secretary (HFW) Ms. Preeti Sudan and DG (ICMR) Dr. Balram Bhargava and has directed for all support to be extended to Kerala in its prevention and management. Following directions of the Union Health Minister, a multi-disciplinary Central team from National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is presently in Ker-

ala constantly reviewing the situation. The Central team includes Dr. Sujeet K Sing, Director, NCDC; Dr. SK Jain, Head Epidemiology, NCDC; Dr. P Ravindran, Director, Emergency Medical Relief (EMR); Dr. Naveen Gupta, Head Zoonosis, NCDC; Dr. Ashutosh Biswas, Prof Internal Medicine, AIIMS; Dr. Deepak Bhatnagary, Pulmonologist, Safdarjung Hospital along with two clinicians and one expert from Ministry of Animal Husbandry.

The NCDC team visited the house in Perambra from where the initial death was

reported. The team found many bats housed in the well from where the family was drawing water. Some bats have been caught and have been sent for lab examination to confirm whether they are the cause of the disease or not. 60 different samples have been collected from the spot and sent for examination. There are two confirmed cases with history of contact with the index case. They were admitted in the Calicut Medical College Hospital and died due to Nipah virus.

The Ministry has mobilized a public health team from

NCDC Branch Kozhikode to assess the extent of problem, for risk assessment and risk management. They are assisting the State Level Team already deployed at the epicentre. So far, seven patients have been admitted in Baby Memorial Hospital and in the Govt. Medical College at Kozhikode and at the Amrutha Medical College, Ernakulam.

Union Minister for Health, Shri J P Nadda has urged citizens not to believe in rumours posted on social media and not to spread panic.

The field team has advised hospitals to follow intracra-

nial pressure (ICP) guidelines, use personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers and sample collection; assist in enhancing active fever surveillance in the community; strengthen contact tracing in close contacts of cases, relatives, health care workers; ensure isolation facilities, ventilator support and hospital infection control practices; and coordinate with animal sector and enhance surveillance for unusual illness and deaths in animals.

The Ministry has ensured availability of diagnostic kits, personal protective equipment

and risk communication materials. High quality personal protection equipment has been provided to health care personnel. A total of nine individuals are currently under treatment. Isolation wards have been opened in many hospitals in Kozhikode. Hospitals in public and private sector have been provided with personal protective equipment. Appropriate steps to contain this virus have been taken among domestic animals such as pigs. Since all the contacts are under observation and steps to avoid exposure through animal vectors.

### Miles to go for the new bankruptcy code

Good news has finally started to roll out of the refurbished bankruptcy courts. Tata Steel acquired 73% stake in the bankrupt firm Bhushan Steel for about 35,000 crore last week, making it the first major resolution of a bankruptcy case under the new Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). Bhushan Steel was one among the 12 major accounts referred to the National Company Law Tribunal at the behest of the Reserve Bank of India last year to ease the burden of bad loans on banks. The proceeds from the acquisition will go towards settling almost two-thirds of the total outstanding liabilities of over 56,000 crore that Bhushan Steel owes banks. While it may be unwise to read too much into a single case, the Bhushan Steel resolution is nevertheless an encouraging sign for banks because they typically manage to recover only about 25% of their money from defaulters. In fact, between April 2014 and September 2017, the bad loan recovery rate of public sector banks was as low as 11%, with non-performing assets worth 2.41 lakh crore written off from their books. The Finance Ministry now expects banks to recover more than 1 lakh crore from the resolution of the other cases referred by the RBI to the NCLT. If the banks do indeed recover funds of this scale, it would considerably reduce the burden on taxpayers, who would otherwise have to foot the bill for any recapitalisation of banks. Even more important, speedy resolution would free valuable assets to be used for wealth-creation.

The resolution of one high-profile case, however, should not deflect attention from the many challenges still plaguing the bankruptcy resolution process. The IBC, as the government itself has admitted, remains a work in progress. This is a welcome piece of legislation to the extent that it subsumes a plethora of laws that confused creditors; instead it now offers a more streamlined way to deal with troubled assets. But issues such as the proposed eligibility criteria for bidders have left it bogged down and suppressed its capacity to help out creditors efficiently. Also, the strict time limit for the resolution process as mandated by the IBC is an area that has drawn much attention, and it merits further review in order to balance the twin objectives of speedy resolution and maximising recovery for the lenders. To its credit, the government has been willing to hear out suggestions. It would do well to implement the recommendations of the Insolvency Law Committee which, among other things, has vouched for relaxed bidder eligibility criteria. Going forward, amendments to the bankruptcy code should primarily be driven by the goal of maximising the sale price of stressed assets. This requires a robust market for stressed assets that is free from all kinds of entry barriers.

# THE CLASSROOM AS THE INSTRUCTOR'S CASTLE

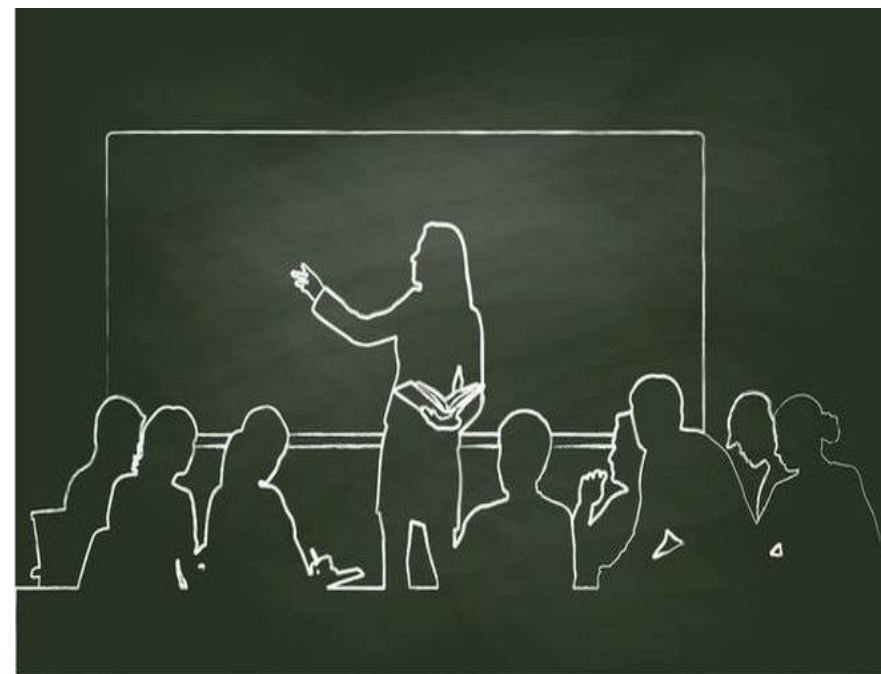
► Pulapre Balakrishnan

Some months ago, a global leader of the IT industry set sections of India's corporate-sector elite aflutter with the comment that Indians are not creative. It is possible to disagree with the criterion Steve Wozniak, a co-founder of Apple Computer, had adopted while at the same time agreeing with some of his observations. He had predicted that Indians are unlikely to create world-leading IT companies because they lack the creativity to do so and argued that this has to do with the education system.

While building global IT giants may have more to do with an appetite for growing a business rather than anything else, Mr. Wozniak's assessment of India's education system is sharp. He traced the lack of creativity to an education system that rewarded studiousness over independent thought. He also managed an anthropological take when he identified the 'MBA and the Merc' as the mark of success in India's corporate world. For good measure he likened this to the culture of Singapore, but here he may have missed a trick. The per capita income of Singaporeans is quite close to that of Americans. And that country has achieved much of what it set out to do when it struck off on its own, which was to turn a swampy colonial port into a prosperous city state proudly independent of world powers. Also, it has a national leadership more educated and responsible than what the U.S. has currently. Singapore's orderly society may not be everybody's cup of tea but its history suggests one way we could identify the creativity of a people as a whole. That is, a people are truly creative when they are able to collectively surmount the challenges that their country faces.

Crisis in higher education  
Actually, what India is experiencing in higher education today is far worse than merely the production of studious but creativity-challenged youth. There is abatement of a toxic productivity whereby our universities churn out youth with a poor grasp of the subject matter that they are expected to know and an even poorer understanding of the challenges that India today faces, for which they alone can provide the solutions. This is particularly troubling as public expenditure on education in India favours higher education far more than elsewhere in the world when schooling is severely neglected by comparison. In addition, this is a sector so micro-managed that it answers to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's description of the Indian economy in the 1990s as "overregulated and undergoverned" better than the economy itself. So, neither funding nor neglect can be blamed for the lack of vitality in India's institutions of higher education.

Universities are embedded in society and cannot be expected to naturally rise above them. Close to 50 years ago, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen had spoken of a 'crisis in Indian education' pointing to how India's educational policy had been shaped by the aspiration of its middle class. Creativity is unlikely to have been a part of it. However, it is precisely to ensure that there is no sectional capture of public institutions intended to serve a larger purpose that we have public regulators. While there is more than one regulator for the higher education sector



in India, for sheer reach the University Grants Commission (UGC) is unmatched. To say that it has a major responsibility in the state of affairs that we are experiencing in higher education would be an understatement. The government would be advised to follow email discussions of UGC regulations circulating on the Internet right now to garner a sense of how wide the resentment against the body is.

Journal publication  
The bone of contention is the basis on which the regulator identifies 'recognised' journals, publication in which alone earns credit for faculty. Having drawn up such a list a couple of years ago, the Commission appears to have now backtracked. Possibly stung by the claim that an astonishingly high percentage of the journals on its original list are of dubious distinction — the term for which is 'predatory' in that they either solicit articles to be published for a fee or follow no clear refereeing procedure — the UGC has suddenly trimmed the list. This has led to questions of the criterion that has been used.

While predatory journals are not a uniquely Indian problem, the problem appears to be more grave here, and has possibly been aggravated by the UGC's policy of soliciting recommendations for inclusion of journals in its approved list. The whole process has led to a severe diminishing of credibility for one of the most crucial regulators of the country.

To believe that the problem of dubious journals on the UGC's whitelist is the sole issue awaiting resolution in the university would be naive. This is actually quite recent and just another manifestation of the unaccountable regulation that has had a vandalising effect on the higher education space in the country. A small set of actionable points, not every one of them the responsibility of the UGC, would be as follows.

Revise the API  
The problem of predatory journals emerged after the UGC introduced a quantitative scoring system leading to an Academic Performance Indicator (API) in which publishing is a part. The activities approved for totting up a teacher's API are many, extending beyond teaching and research. This has led to a form of academic entrepreneurship that has very likely demoralised the less

entrepreneurial, who are often the more academic and therefore more deserving of being in the university to start with. For this reason, the contents of the API must be revised to include only teaching and research, thus also saving scarce administrative resources. Teaching input can be partly measured by the number of courses taught, but research assessment should avoid the quantitative metric. Instead it should be judged by committees that have reputed and recognisably independent subject experts on it. This is not foolproof but, in the context of the email discussion now on among India's academics, superior to a discredited list of approved journals.

Next, compulsory attendance, which goes against the spirit of learning, must be replaced by credit for classroom participation.

Third, introduce student evaluation of courses to be made public. It needs emphasis that this is meant to be an 'evaluation' and not some 'feedback' to be contemplated upon by the lecturer at leisure. However, it is important to see the process in perspective. Course evaluation is meant to instil in students both a sense of confidence that their view is being solicited and a sense of responsibility in wielding authority early on. It can effectively check truancy among faculty but there should be vigilance against its misuse.

Fourth, the UGC should remove all experience-related considerations to career advancement. The present system leaves the able to stagnate during their best years and the undeserving to believe that time served grants entitlement to promotion. There must be a drastic reduction in the number of hours faculty have to teach. While this may not be much in the research institutes and the Central universities, in India's colleges the teaching load is not merely taxing to the point of lowering productivity but leaves teachers no time to address the burgeoning literature in their disciplines.

Finally, once courses are evaluated by students, the classroom should revert to being the instructor's castle. A pincer movement of corporate interest and political pressure combined with regulatory overdrive have cramped the autonomy of the teacher. The state of higher education in India today partly reflects this.

(Courtesy: The Hindu)

While predatory journals are not a uniquely Indian problem, the problem appears to be more grave here, and has possibly been aggravated by the UGC's policy of soliciting recommendations for inclusion of journals in its approved list. The whole process has led to a severe diminishing of credibility for one of the most crucial regulators of the country.

# MAKING SENSE OF THE WUHAN RESET

► M.K. Narayanan

On the cards was a possible reset of ties between India and China in the wake of the 'informal summit' in Wuhan (April 27-28) between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. The outcome is uncertain, however. The choice by China of Wuhan, a city situated in the middle reaches of the Yangtze, though was not accidental. Wuhan is symbolic of China's resilience and economic might today. It was possibly chosen by Mr. Xi to showcase China's progress since Mr. Modi (as Chief Minister of Gujarat) had last paid a visit to the region. As Mr. Xi proceeds towards his next goal, 'Made in China 2025', he may also have wanted to demonstrate the wide gulf that seems to separate his programme from Mr. Modi's own struggles to make a success of India's 'Make in India' programme. The visit to the museum and the boat ride on the lake, in turn, were possibly intended to demonstrate the extent of China's soft power.

Trust-building exercise  
An 'informal summit' is different

from a regular summit. India clearly viewed this 'informal summit' as a trust-building exercise, hoping to quietly sort out problems that existed between the two countries, including the vexed border issue. Absence of any formal joint communiqué that is sacrosanct for any summit also enables each side to spell out its own impressions of any outcomes. India has already used this to project that India and China are on the same page in dealing with global problems. It cannot be certain though that China sees the world through this same prism.

Mr. Modi used the occasion to convey his ideas on what was needed to be achieved, viz. a shared vision, a shared thought process, a shared resolve, a strong relationship and better communication, between the two countries. He further emphasised the importance of a global leadership role for both nations — two major powers linked by history across more than two millennia. He provided his vision of the Five Principles defining the relationship: Soch (thought), Sampark (contact), Sahyog (cooperation), Sankalp (determination) and Sapne (dreams).

Enumerating the main takeaways, in the absence of a joint communiqué,

is not easy. One outcome was to have more such summits, alongside an agreement between the leaders for provision of greater 'strategic communications' at the highest level. Another was the opportunity it provided to give 'strategic guidance' to the respective militaries to build trust and understanding for 'prudent management of differences with mutual sensitivity'. A third was the agreement between India and China to work together jointly on an economic project in Afghanistan, with details to be worked out through diplomatic channels.

Both sides also reiterated the need to cooperate on counter-terrorism, and to strengthen the dialogue mechanism to deal with contentious issues and concerns. Both have agreed on the importance of maintaining peace and tranquillity in all areas of the India-China border. The claim by the Indian side that the two countries today have 'wider and overlapping regional and global interests' meriting sharper 'strategic communications' is, however, subject to interpretation.

On the border issue, the summit appears to have reinforced the validity of the April 2005 Document on 'Political

Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the Boundary Question', which was signed in the presence of then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. This document happens to be one of the very few that implicitly acknowledges India's claims to certain 'disputed' areas in the Arunachal sector of the India-China border. Ever since signing on to the 'Political Parameters and Guiding Principles' in 2005, China has been trying to reinterpret the contents of the document. If the informal summit, as claimed by the Indian side, has endorsed adherence to the letter and spirit of the 2005 Agreement, it marks an important milestone in the settlement of the border issue.

The wisdom of holding an informal summit when other, and possibly better, avenues of diplomacy are available is debatable. India's preference for an informal summit so as to be able to discuss contentious issues with China away from media glare and publicity — and the many trappings of diplomacy — is understandable. China's acquiescence in this form of diplomacy is less understood. At best, China could have hoped to extract

some concessions from India as the price for agreeing to an informal summit, viz. putting curbs on the Dalai Lama's activities in India or backing away from the U.S. policy of containment of China in Asia.

A pivotal moment  
China is today at a pivotal moment in its history, having embarked on preparations for a pole position in the global sweepstakes. The U.S. and the West are not ready to openly confront China, despite U.S. President Donald Trump's rhetoric. China currently has a vital role to play in the maintenance of peace in the Korean Peninsula, and in ensuring that the forthcoming Trump-Kim Jong-un talks are not jeopardised. The China-Russia equation today is much stronger than previously. China may be feared in East and South Asia, but no country here has the capacity to challenge China. It has established new equations in West Asia, including with Iran. In the South Asian neighbourhood, China is positioning itself as an alternative to India.

One must, hence, look for reasons elsewhere as to why China is adopting a less than belligerent attitude towards India. It appears that China is position-

ing itself for bigger things and to play bigger roles. This period is thus a defining one for China. Behind the rubric of a looming trade war between the U.S. and China — which is, without doubt, one of China's major concerns — is China's unstated struggle to redefine the rules governing economic and power relations worldwide. At a time when the U.S. is busy lining up the vast majority of Western democracies to checkmate China's advance, the latter is equally anxious to build support in its favour in Asia and elsewhere to counter the U.S.

The India-China reset talks must, therefore, be seen in this wider perspective and context. It cannot be seen in isolation. At about the same time, on the India-China reset talks, Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang was in Tokyo to meet his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe as part of a major two-stage initiative. The Li-Abe meeting has reportedly helped remove many of the cobwebs in China-Japan trade and strategic relations. Leaders of China, Japan and South Korea also met in Japan at about the same time to devise measures that were needed to move ahead with the Region. (Courtesy: The Hindu)

# Total income of 32 regional parties Rs 321 crore in 2016-17; Samajwadi Party richest: ADR report

NEW DELHI: The total income of 32 regional political parties in 2016-17 was Rs 321.03 crore, with the Samajwadi Party (SP) showing the highest amount of Rs 82.76 crore, says a report. These 32 regional parties declared a total expenditure of Rs 435.48 crore during the year, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said in a report on Tuesday. Of these total 32 parties, 17 of them showed Rs 114.45 crore collectively as unspent income.

"SP reported having the highest income of Rs 82.76 crore, which forms 25.78 per cent of the total income of all 32 regional parties, followed by TDP (Telugu Desam Party) with an income of Rs 72.92 crore and AIADMK Rs 48.88 crore," the Delhi-based think tank ADR said.

The total income of top three regional parties -- SP, TDP, AIADMK -- amounted to Rs 204.56 crore, which makes 63.72 per cent of overall receipts of 32 regional parties together, the report showed.

Out of 48 regional parties considered, audit reports of 16 are unavailable for 2016-17 on the website of the Election Commission of India (ECI). This includes some major regional political parties like Aam Aadmi Party (AAP),

Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC), Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD), it said. Hence, the report has analysed the income and expenditure of 32 regional political parties, which have submitted their audit report to the ECI for 2016-17.



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and expenditure of 32 regional political parties, which have submitted their audit report to the ECI for 2016-17.

Of the 32 regional parties, 14 have shown a decline in their income in 2016-17 as compared to 2015-16, while 13 have shown an increase in their income. Five regional parties have not submitted their Income Tax Return (ITR) to the ECI during 2015-16.

The total income of 27 regional parties that submitted ITR increased from Rs 291.14 crore in 2015-16 to Rs 316.05 crore in 2016-17, a jump of 8.56 per cent, it said.

A total of 17 regional parties have declared a part of their income as remaining unspent during 2016-17, while 15 have spent more than their income during the year.

The ADR further said that All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) and Janata Dal (Secular) (JDS) have shown more than 87 per cent of their total income as unspent, while the TDP had 67 per cent of its income remaining unspent during 2016-17.

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has declared spending of Rs 81.88 crore over its income, while the SP and the AIADMK declared spending Rs 64.34 crore and Rs 37.89 crore more than their total income, respectively.

The top three regional parties that incurred highest expenditure are the SP which had spent Rs 147.1

core, followed by the AIADMK Rs 86.77 crore and the DMK Rs 85.66 crore, the report said.

The total expenditure by the SP is 33.78 per cent of the overall expenditure (Rs 435.48 crore) as reported by 32 regional parties, it added. Expenditure incurred by the top three political parties is 73.38 per cent of the total expenditure as reported by the 32 regional parties. The due date for submission of annual audited accounts for the parties was October 31, 2017. Out of 48 regional parties considered, 12 had submitted their audit reports on time, while 20 have delayed their submission.

## KCR to skip Kumaraswamy's swearing-in, Congress says he is scared of BJP

HYDERABAD: Telangana Rashtra Samithi president and chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao will not attend the swearing-in ceremony of HD Kumaraswamy as Karnataka's new chief minister in Bengaluru on Wednesday because the JD(S) has partnered with the Congress. Though KCR initially wanted to attend the ceremony, he decided against it as an afterthought following the alliance between the JD(S) and the Congress, a TRS leader said on condition of anonymity.

"Though Kumaraswamy is the new chief minister of Karnataka, the majority partner in the government is the Congress, which is the main rival for the TRS in Telangana. How can we share dais with our rivals?" the TRS leader said. But since KCR is planning to rope JD(S) into his proposed federal front plan and had held talks with Deve Gowda last month, he has to maintain good relations with him. "Hence, he has decided to go to Bengaluru a day in advance to greet Kumaraswamy," the TRS leader said.

So KCR flew to Bengaluru Tuesday afternoon on a special flight to meet Kumaraswamy and greet him personally. The chief minister's office though, maintains that KCR's prior engagements won't allow him to attend Wednesday's function in Bengaluru.

"In view of important engagements on Wednesday, the chief minister will return to Hyderabad on Tuesday night itself," an official release from Telangana chief minister's office



said. The Telangana unit of the Congress, however, alleged that KCR was not attending the swearing-in ceremony because he did not want to antagonise the Bharatiya Janata Party. "KCR supported JD(S) thinking that it would have coalition with the BJP. But JD(S) joined hands with the Congress, which he does not like," senior Congress leader and former minister Marri Shashidhar Reddy said. He alleged that KCR's third front plan was aimed at weakening the Congress so that it would benefit the BJP.

"There are at least three investigations by the Central Bureau of Investigations pending against KCR. If he goes against the wishes of the BJP, the Centre would start hounding him with CBI cases," Reddy said.

Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu will be leaving for Bengaluru at 9 am on Wednesday to attend Kumaraswamy's oath-taking ceremony. JD(S) chief HD Deve Gowda had called up both KCR and Naidu personally to invite them for his son's swearing-in ceremony.

## 'No ban on day-dreaming,' says Javadekar on Rahul Gandhi's prime ministerial aspirations

MUMBAI: Union minister Prakash Javadekar on Tuesday took a dig at Congress president Rahul Gandhi's remark that he is ready to be the prime minister, saying there is no ban on "day-dreaming".

The Congress has lost 20 states and it is in power only in a couple of states now. "If on that basis, Gandhi is thinking of becoming the prime minister, then there is no ban on day-dreams in this country," Javadekar told a regional television channel, when asked about the Congress chief's remark. Gandhi had recently said he is ready to become the prime minister if his party emerges as the "biggest" party in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Asked if Gandhi could pose a challenge to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the parliamentary elections next year, Javadekar said, "A smart tweet or big talk is not politics. It is much more than that."

The BJP had only two MPs in the Lok Sabha in 1984 and it won 282 seats in the 2014 general polls. The Congress then had 400, which reduced to 44, he pointed out.

"There are lessons to be learnt by the Congress from our example," he said. Asked about the recent political scenario in Karnataka, he said the



southern state's governor had invited the BJP by acting within the constitutional framework.

"When we realised that we do not have the sufficient strength, our chief minister (BS Yeddyurappa) stepped down," he added.

On the Punjab National Bank scam involving diamond merchant Nirav Modi, the BJP leader said, "It happened during Congress period but we have arrested more than 13 people in connection with the case. We will seize their properties spread across the country."

On the BJP's slogan of 'Congress-free India', the minister said it means a country free of "crony-politics, lobbying and passing on benefits only

to selected people."

"The bad culture in politics, introduced by the Congress, is what we have been opposing," Javadekar said. Asked about Rahul Gandhi using a similar slogan of "Modi-mukt Bharat", he claimed that it does not have any appeal among people. "Being so anti-Modi is negative politics which will never be successful in the country."

Despite being a nationwide party, if the Congress was going to say it will only oppose (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi, then it is negative politics, he said.

Javadekar exuded confidence that the BJP will not only win the 2019 general elections, but its performance

will also be better than earlier in West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. "We will also retain our current base in the country."

To a query on how the Centre was going to check the black money and if any opposition leader from Maharashtra would face the heat, he said the Benami Property Transaction Act is going to be implemented from June onwards.

"You will see many leaders of the Congress, the NCP and many more will face its heat. The properties and bungalows purchased in the name of some servants or non-existing person, all are going to be confiscated," he said.

Highlighting the government's achievements and lauding its Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Javadekar said seven crore houses in the country got toilets.

"I have seen that women in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have given their toilets the name of 'izzat ghar' as earlier it was embarrassing for them to go out in public," he said.

There are some 400 schemes in the country having an outlay of Rs 3.25 lakh crore, which directly gets deposited into the bank accounts, he said.

## Pollution, insect excrement turning Taj Mahal yellow and green

AGRA: India's white-marble Taj Mahal is turning yellow and green as the 17th century mausoleum weathers filthy air in the world's eighth-most polluted city.

One of the seven Wonders of the World, the Taj Mahal flanks a garbage-strewn river and is often enveloped by dust and smog from belching smokestacks and vehicles in the northern city of Agra.

Tiny insects from the drying Yamuna River into which the city pours its sewage crawl into the Taj Mahal, their excrement further staining the marble, an environmental lawyer told the Supreme Court. The court slammed the government for not doing enough to preserve the monument, which was built by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his wife Mumtaz Mahal.

"If the Indian scientists and the (conservationists) can't do the things, they should be able to contact foreign experts or conservationists, those



who can come and they will be readily happy to help," said lawyer MC Mehta, who has been fighting to save the Taj Mahal from pollution for three decades.

Restorers have been using a paste of a clay mineral to clean the marble. It pulls away impurities from the surface and can then be washed off with water. Activists are also concerned that the falling water table in Agra

may be weakening the wooden foundations. Other worries include roads clogged with polluting vehicles and rampant construction around the mausoleum. Behind Taj's back, plastic bags and garbage pile up by the river as smoke billows from a chimney in the distance. Outside the Taj complex, a group of people gathered near a funeral pyre.

The change in colour has not come

out of the blue. Environmentalists and historians have long warned about the risk of soot and fumes from factories and tanneries dulling the ivory monument.

There was no comment from government authorities. Bhuvan Vikram, superintendent archaeologist for Agra, said he was not authorised to speak to journalists.

Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma, whose department oversees historical monuments, said the environment ministry was best placed to speak on the subject but the environment minister was not available. Tourists visiting the monument said they hoped steps would be taken to save it.

"I think the Taj Mahal is one of the biggest icons of India and I think the city would be better to be cleaner and for the government to do something about this," said Francesco, a tourist from Argentina who only gave his first name. "Because it is a shame, you know. Yeah!"

## Kejriwal to Mamata, CMs to attend Kumaraswamy's swearing-in ceremony

AGENCY: JD(S) leader Kumaraswamy's swearing-in ceremony will be a show of strength by opposition parties. Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi will attend Kumaraswamy's inauguration as the Karnataka chief minister on May 23.

The JD(S) has also invited BSP chief Mayawati and chief ministers Mamata Banerjee (West Bengal), V Narayanasamy (Puducherry), N Chandrababu Naidu (Andhra Pradesh), K Chandrasekhar Rao (Telangana), Pinarayi Vijayan (Kerala), and Arvind Kejriwal (Delhi).

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury are also likely to attend.

A Congress functionary, familiar with the developments, said the function will be short as only a few leaders from both sides are expected to take the oath of office.

The full-fledged cabinet expansion, however, will take place after Kumaraswamy wins the floor test he is expected to take within 24 hours after being sworn-in as the chief min-



ister for the second time in 12 years. Kumaraswamy was invited by governor Vajubhai Vala to take power after the three-day BJP government collapsed last Saturday after Yeddyurappa, unable to muster the required number for a majority, stepped down as the chief minister without facing the floor test in the assembly.

The May 12 Karnataka assembly polls threw up a hung verdict with the BJP emerging as the single largest party with 104 seats. The Congress was next with 78 and the JD(S) followed with 37. The BSP has one MLA and two seats went to Independents.

## INLD-BSP alliance: Dalit vote bank back in focus in Haryana

CHANDIGARH: The freshly brewed alliance between Om Prakash Chautala's Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has warmed the political climate in Haryana. The alliance has forced all political parties, including the ruling BJP, to rekindle their focus on the 19% scheduled caste vote bank in the state. Chief minister (CM) Manohar Lal Khattar dined at a Dalit's house in Salaru village of Indri assembly constituency recently and the Congress high command almost gave up thoughts of replacing the state Congress president, Ashok Tanwar, a Dalit leader. REASON D'ETRE

The tie-up with BSP, steered by the INLD, with an eye to consolidate Dalit voters in the state

is being seen as party's last ditch attempt to grasp power in the state after a decade-and-a-half hiatus. Primarily, the aim is to pocket the Chamar votes which account for about 50% of the scheduled caste (SC) voters in Haryana. The Chamar voters have shown a proclivity to tilt towards the BSP. The Balmikis account for about 19% and Dhanaks for about 12% of the scheduled caste vote bank. The Balmiki and Dhanak votes however get divided between the Congress and other parties.

"There are about 40 assembly seats (out of total 90) where the BSP holds a vote share between 7% and 8%. And there are about 60 assembly seats where the INLD has a vote share of about 30%. Thus, the INLD and the BSP alli-

ance can easily reap about 39 to 40% votes in the state and get a clear majority in the state assembly," said INLD leader and Chautala's younger son Abhay Singh.

PAST EXPERIENCE

The two parties have, earlier, also formed an alliance with good outcomes during the 1998 Lok Sabha elections. The INLD, which was known as Haryana Lok Dal (Rashtriya) in 1998 won four of the seven Lok Sabha seats it contested in Haryana, while the BSP won Ambala (reserved) seat out of the three it contested. The INLD won Sirsa (reserved) seat, Kurukshetra, Sonapat and Hisar LS seats in alliance with the BSP.

INLD'S SUCCESS IN SC SEATS

The INLD, known as a Jat-centric party, having strong base



in the rural constituencies, has traditionally done well in 17 assembly seats reserved for scheduled caste candidates in Haryana. The party won 13 reserved seats in 2000 assembly polls when it climbed to power. It won six seats (out of total 9) it won in the 2005 poll drubbing and got nine seats (out of 31) it won in 2009.

"Whenever the INLD did well in the reserved constituencies, it was due to the support of Jat voters," said an INLD functionary, who did not want to be named. In 2014 assembly polls, the INLD however could register win only in three reserved constituencies. The BJP emerged as the main aggregator of reserved seats in 2014

polls with a tally of nine followed by the Congress with four seats.

BSP, A NON STARTER

The BSP on the other hand has remained a non-starter in Haryana politics though in almost every assembly poll it bags a seat. The party does not have a sound organisational set-up in Haryana and has a poor record and inconsistent leadership. "Every election one sees new faces leading the BSP in Haryana. The party does not have a single leader of some stature and mass base," said a Congress leader from Haryana.

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Political experts say the INLD-BSP tie-up could prove to be double-edged sword for the INLD. "Jats and Dalits can never go together. I wonder how much the

INLD would gain politically from the BSP which itself does not have any standing in the state. What the INLD needs right now is to have a pact with a political force from southern Haryana to restore power balance in the state," said an INLD insider.

LONGEVITY OF THE ALLIANCE

The INLD has a poor track record when it comes to having tie ups. Even when it formed the government in 2000, the party had sour relations with its natural ally, the BJP. The INLD-BJP alliance fell apart after the 2004 Lok Sabha elections. Haryana watchers say that since it's still a long way to go for the Lok Sabha and assembly elections, whether the INLD can nurture the tie-up remains open remains to be seen.

# Saving the skin from UV damage and skin cancer

Ageing affects all living things and leads to diseases that eventually kill us. It's not surprising then that there's a global race to develop anti-ageing treatments to slow, halt or reverse biological ageing to look younger and prevent diseases such as heart disease, cancers and dementia, among others.

We begin to age the moment we are born but in physical terms, the process begins when structural changes accumulate in the body with age, leading to physiological decline: We stop building bone mass, add fewer neurons, lose muscle, hormone levels change, get wrinkles, etc. Nutrition, level of activity, lifestyle and the environment all play a role in how the body ages, both in terms of extrinsic skin ageing and loss of physiological function that leads to disease and death.

Nobel laureate molecular biologists, cancer specialists and researchers met in Split in Croatia for the first Ecobiol-

ogy Summit in April to discuss how skin ageing and damage — we'll talk about longevity next week — can be prevented by fortifying it to survive the constant environmental assaults from ultraviolet (UV) radiation, sleep deprivation, tobacco smoke and dust and other air pollutants.

The skin, they said, is a dynamic ecosystem that constantly interacts with the environment, be it external (air, sun and humidity) or internal physiology, determined by genes, health and lifestyle. So it's adaptability becomes our first defence against environmental assault.

Paris-based molecular biologist Miroslav Radman's work on protein oxidation and ageing is helping develop more effective therapies to reduce oxidative stress on the skin. His work explores the therapeutic dimensions that preserve the skin's natural functioning and fortify its resistance to UV radiation that underlies age-related degradation and



disease.

The first hurdle in cell recovery from UV radiation damage is functional damage to the proteome (proteins expressed by a cell, tissue, or organism) rather than to the DNA. "A healthy proteome can

reconstitute a transcription-competent genome from hundreds of DNA fragments after UV radiation and desiccation (extreme dryness) damage," said Radman. So with care, initial UV damage can be reversed.

A healthy diet and active ingredients in therapeutic doses can help the skin adapt to the harsh sun, temperature variations, air toxins and nutritional deficits. For example, Korean beauty care involves using between 15-30 products twice a day, when the skin can't utilise more than three at a time.

**Skin cancer**  
UV damage goes beyond surface tan, burns and wrinkles to cellular DNA mutations that lead to skin cancer. Though skin cancer is more common in the Caucasian population, it is more deadly in people of colour, who are more likely to be diagnosed in later stages and have poorer prognosis and survival rates, according to a study in *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*. For most people in India, covering up and staying indoors are the only forms of sun protection, which make most of us highly deficient in Vitamin D that the skin synthesises on exposure to sunlight.

Since skin health also includes interactions between skin cells and the body via the circulatory, nervous and immune systems, harmful free-radical damage can be lowered by reducing stress, increasing physical activity and eating a nutritional diet. Foods to go for are those high in plant antioxidants (carotenoids found in carrots, tomatoes, sweet potato and leafy greens; tocopherols found in nuts, legumes and wheatgerm; and flavonoids in fruits like apples, pears, plums, peaches, red grapes and apricots, nuts and legumes), vitamins A, C, D and E, essential Omega-3 fatty acids found in soybean, walnuts, flaxseed and fish oils, proteins in meats, egg, legumes, nuts and dairy, and lactobacilli in yoghurt.

"The skin reflects internal balance and we need to act on the causes of dysfunctions rather than overly compensating for their effects," said Bridgette Dreno, chairman of dermatology in University Hospital, Nantes, France.

## IS IT TRUE THAT FINASTERIDE INCREASES THE RISK OF PROSTATE CANCER DEATH?

A new study has found that finasteride, a common hormone-blocking drug, does not increase the risk of prostate cancer death.

During the initial study findings it was suggested that there could be a connection between using the drug and a more dangerous form of prostate cancer, however, long-term follow-up showed that this wasn't true.

"What we can now say is that finasteride not only significantly reduces a man's risk of prostate cancer, it is safe to use based on very long-term follow-up in our study," said Dr. Ian Thompson, Jr., principal investigator of SWOG's Prostate Cancer Prevention Trial, or PCPT.

Another study which was based on how food affects prostate cancer discovered that a typical Western high-fat diet such as cheeseburgers and fries could lead to prostate cancer becoming more aggressive and causing it to spread.

For the study, which was published in the journals *Nature Genetics* and *Nature Communications*, the team increased the levels of saturated fats - which are found in fast food cheeseburgers and fries in the diet of the test mice, because of which they started developing aggressive, metastatic tumours.

"In PCPT, we found no increased risk of prostate cancer death in men who took finasteride compared with men who did not. These results are transformational."

Thompson and his team began to determine if finasteride, which is used for treating symptoms of prostate enlargement and also male pattern baldness, could prevent prostate cancer in men who were above 55 years.

The PCPT randomised 18,882 men from 1993 to 1997 to finasteride or a placebo - which made it one of the biggest cancer prevention trials ever conducted. The trial intervention came to a halt in 2003 when investigators discovered that finasteride cut down on the risk of prostate cancer by 25%.

However, the study also showed that finasteride produced a tiny increase in the number of high-grade prostate cancers - a negative finding that led to a 'black box' warning posted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on prescription drug labels to flag potentially disabling or life-threatening side effects.

Subsequent SWOG analyses of PCPT data showed some unexpected benefits of finasteride. It improved the detection of prostate cancer in screening tests and biopsies. Still, despite proof of these benefits, the label warning made sure that till date very few men take the drug for lowering the risk of cancer.

Thompson and his team did a new analysis with regards to the study- they matched participants to the National Death Index, a centralised database of death record information which is controlled by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

With about 300,000 person-years of follow-up and a median follow-up of 18.4 years, they discovered that 42 deaths because of prostate cancer on the finasteride arm and 56 on placebo. Hence, there was no statistically major risk of prostate cancer death related to finasteride.

# This natural antioxidant found in our body could help improve heart health

Bilirubin, a natural antioxidant, may help improve your cardiovascular health, according to a study. Bilirubin is a yellow-orange pigment which is formed after the breakdown of red blood cells and is eliminated by the liver.

A recent analysis of health data from almost 100,000 veterans, both with and without HIV infection, found that within normal ranges, higher levels of bilirubin in the blood were associated with lower rates of heart failure, heart attack and stroke.

Several studies have suggested that bilirubin may have

beneficial effects, by acting as an antioxidant or interfering with atherosclerosis. The data from the veterans adds to this evidence, and specifically looks at people living with HIV and at an anti-HIV drug, atazanavir, known to elevate bilirubin. The researchers did not see an independent effect of atazanavir on cardiovascular risk.

Even if well-controlled by antiretroviral drugs, HIV infection has negative effects on cardiovascular health, said lead author Vincent Marconi. "We initially wanted to see if bilirubin and cardiovascular



disease had a different relationship in people who were HIV positive, compared to HIV negative," said Marconi. Marconi and his colleagues

examined data from the Veterans Aging Cohort Study, a nationwide look at HIV infection, supported by the National Institutes of Health.

VACS data included 31,418 HIV-positive and 66,987 HIV-negative veterans, almost all men and 48 percent African American. Their age was an average of 48 years.

The researchers divided study participants into four groups according to their bilirubin levels. Higher levels of bilirubin meant lower risk of heart attack, heart failure or stroke. The group with the highest level of bilirubin had 76 percent of the risk for combined cardiovascular events as the group with the lowest level, with effects seen even in people without liver disease.

"Large increases in bilirubin were not required to see an effect on CVD risk reduction," Marconi said. "Most of the change happened well within the normal physiologic range and specifically from the first to the second quartile."

Atazanavir is a HIV protease inhibitor, and is designed to stop HIV from processing itself. It has a side effect on an enzyme in human cells that is necessary for the recycling of bilirubin. There are some indications that the drug itself has negative effects, balancing out the benefits of bilirubin, Marconi added.

# Smoking marijuana in early teens can cause drug abuse later

People who start smoking marijuana in the beginning of their teens are at a higher risk of having a drug abuse problem by the age of 28, a study has found.

Researchers from by Universite de Montreal in Canada suggest that found that children in primary school need to be educated about the risks of starting pot smoking, especially now that the potency is much greater than it was in decades past and that public acceptance is being spurred by legalisation in many places.

The study found that those who started smoking pot between the age of 15 and 17 were at 44% higher risk of developing a drug abuse problem. However, the risk was higher at 68 per cent for those who started at an earlier age.

"The odds of developing any drug abuse symptoms by age 28 were reduced by 31% for each year of delayed onset of cannabis use in adolescence," researchers said. For the study published in the *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, researchers looked at data for 1,030 boys from some of the city's impoverished neighbourhoods begun in the early 1980s.

Every year between ages 13 and 17, the boys were asked if they had consumed cannabis at all in the previous year. At 17, and again at 20 and 28, they were



asked not only whether they consumed cannabis, but also other drugs, including hallucinogens, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, tranquilisers, heroin and inhalants. Then the data were correlated with the age at which they started using cannabis.

The results confirmed the researchers' suspicions: the younger they started, the more likely the boys had a drug problem later as young men. This is partly explained by the frequency with which they consumed cannabis and other drugs, but those who started before age 15 were at higher risk regardless of how often they consumed.

"The odds of developing any drug abuse symptoms by age 28 were non-significant if cannabis use had its onset at ages 15 to 17, but were significant and almost doubled each year if onset was before age 15," researchers said.

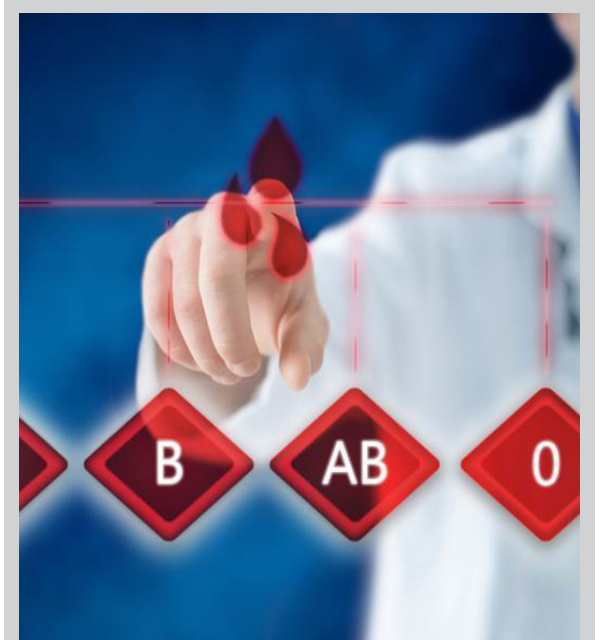
Even if those who start smoking can-

nabis at 17 years were at lower risk, frequent users (20 or more times a year) at age 17 had almost double the chance of abuse by age 28 than occasional users. The researchers also found that the earlier that boys were involved in gangs, drank alcohol, got into fights, stole or vandalised property, the earlier they used cannabis and the higher their odds of having drug abuse issues by 28.

Those who started drinking at 17 also were at higher risk of having an alcohol problem at 28. The finding that starting pot smoking between ages 13 and 15 increases the odds of developing a drug problem later on makes it all the more important to prevent or reducing cannabis use as early as possible, researchers said.

"It may be important to implement these programmes by the end of elementary school to prevent early onset of cannabis use," said Charlie Rioux, doctoral student at Universite de Montreal. "Since peer influence and delinquency were identified as early risk factors for earlier cannabis onset and adult drug abuse, targeting these risk factors in prevention programs may be important, especially since prevention strategies working on the motivators of substance use have been shown to be effective," said Rioux.

## THIS BLOOD GROUP IS AT GREATER RISK OF SEVERE E. COLI INFECTION



The bacteria *E. coli* is associated with travellers' diarrhoea and often afflicts children in underdeveloped areas of the world. A new study done by the Washington University in St. Louis shows that the bacteria causes more severe disease in people with blood type A, but not blood type O or B. The reason: the bacteria releases a protein that latches onto intestinal cells in people with blood type A, but not blood type O or B.

You are at greater risk of *E. coli* infection in summer, since there is a spike in the consumption of juices, cold drinks and water bought off the streets. And even ice samples have been shown to be spiked with *E. coli* bacteria.

"We think this protein is responsible for this blood-group difference in disease severity," said James Fleckenstein, Associate Professor at the Washington University. "A vaccine targeting this protein would potentially protect individuals at highest risk for severe disease."

For the study, published in *The Journal of Clinical Investigation*, the team gave healthy volunteers a dose of an *E. coli* strain. They observed the volunteers for five days and obtained data and blood samples from 100 people and found that people with blood type A got sick sooner and more seriously than those with other blood types.

More than eight of 10 (81%) blood group A people developed diarrhoea that required treatment, as compared with about half of people with blood group B or O. The researchers also found that the bacteria produces a specific protein that sticks to A-type sugars — but not B or O-type sugars — on intestinal cells. Since the protein also sticks to *E. coli*, it effectively fastens the bacteria to the intestinal wall, making it easy for them to deliver diarrhoea-causing toxins to intestinal cells.

The effect of blood group in people infected with this strain of *E. coli* was striking and significant, but it doesn't mean people should change their behaviour based on blood type, the researchers said.

# Nipah virus outbreak in Kerala: All you need to know about the infection

As the death toll in the virus-induced fever in north Kerala rises to nine, the National Virology Institute in Pune has confirmed that the deceased were infected with Nipah virus (NiV). This is the first time the virus, which has high fatality rate and spreads mainly through bats, pigs and other animals, has been detected in the state. The Union Health Ministry has rushed a team of experts to assist the state that is struggling to cope with the outbreak. Here's all you need to know about the virus:

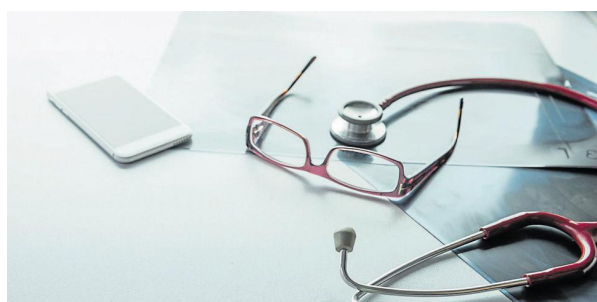
### THE VIRUS

Nipah virus (NiV) infection is a newly-emerging zoonosis (a disease which can

be transmitted to humans from animals) that causes severe disease in both animals and humans. The natural host of the virus are fruit bats of the Pteropodidae Family, Pteropus genus.

### FIRST OUTBREAK

NiV was first identified during an outbreak of disease that took place in Kampung Sungai Nipah, Malaysia in 1998. On this occasion, pigs were the intermediate hosts. However, in subsequent NiV outbreaks, there were no intermediate hosts. In Bangladesh in 2004, humans became infected with NiV as a result of consuming date palm sap that had been contaminated



by infected fruit bats.

### OUTBREAKS IN INDIA

Human-to-human transmission has also been documented, including in a hospital setting. India confirmed its first Nipah outbreak in Siliguri, West Bengal, in 2001, with 66 cases and 45 deaths. A second outbreak in Nadia

district in 2007 led to the deaths of all the five persons infected. The death rate in India is a high 70%, with 50 of the 71 people infected dying during the two outbreaks in West Bengal.

This is the first Nipah outbreak in Kerala.

### TRANSMISSION

The viruses jump the species barrier and infect a secondary animal host, transmission takes place through direct contact with infected bats, pigs, or from other NiV-infected people and people have been also cautioned that they should not consume fruits that have fallen on to the ground.

### SYMPTOMS

NiV infection in humans has a range of clinical presentations, from asymptomatic infection to acute respiratory syndrome and fatal encephalitis. NiV is also capable of causing disease in pigs and other domestic animals. Nipah virus primarily causes an encephalitic syndrome with

a high mortality rate. The characteristic MRI abnormalities are multiple, small (less than 5 mm), asymmetric focal lesions in the subcortical and deep white matter without surrounding edema.

### TREATMENT

There is no vaccine for either humans or animals. The primary treatment for human cases is intensive supportive care.

### PRECAUTIONS

Nipah virus infection can be prevented by avoiding exposure to sick pigs and bats in endemic areas and not drinking raw date palm sap and not consuming fruits.

# Oil conspires with politics to drive rupee toward record low

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the rupee face a similar predicament -- old foes have re-emerged to keep them in check.

Brent crude rose above \$80 a barrel last week for the first time since 2014, and is looking ominous for the nation's budget deficit, inflation and the currency. Meanwhile, Modi faces the prospect of rival parties uniting to block his re-election bid after their success at a recent state poll.

Together, elevated oil prices and political uncertainty have sent the rupee 3% below the year-end analyst consensus targets, and some strategists expect the currency to weaken past a 2016 record low of 68.8650 per dollar. The combination couldn't have come at a worse time, with rising Treasury yields spurring a sell-down of emerging markets.

"Bouncing oil prices will add to India's inflation woes and intensify market concern over the nation's trade and current-account deficits," said Qi Gao, a Singapore-based strategist at Scotiabank. He expects the currency to head toward 69 per dollar. The forecast is in the ballpark of the 69.63-to-70 range priced in by the onshore



and offshore forwards markets.

Every \$10 rise in the oil price worsens India's current-account balance by 0.4% of GDP, pushes up inflation by 30-40 basis points, and hurts growth by about 15 basis points, according to Nomura Holdings Inc.

The currency rose 15 paise against the US dollar to 67.97, paring some losses. The consensus forecast is for the rupee to trade at 66 by the fourth quarter, and even the most bearish of analysts like Westpac Banking Corp. had only seen the rupee at 68.5, the

estimates show.

FX intervention

Further weakness in the currency could hurt capital inflows and pressure the current account deficit, said Aditya Pugalia, Dubai-based director of financial markets at Emirates NBD PJSC. Global funds have pulled \$3.5 billion from Indian bonds so far this year, while flows into equities have shrunk to under \$600 million after withdrawals of \$1.6 billion since April 1.

The Reserve Bank of India prob-

ably burned through \$8.4 billion of reserves in the four weeks through May 11 to halt the drop, data from the central bank show. Investors should expect more measures, including monetary tightening, according to RBC Capital Markets LLC.

"All tools are on the table, including regular FX intervention, other market operations and monetary policy," said Sue Trinh, a strategist at RBC Capital in Hong Kong. She expects the rupee to trade at 65.20 to a dollar by the year-end.

The uncertainty spurred by an election-heavy year is also taking a toll. The outcome of this month's poll in Karnataka, where the BJP was outsmarted by an opposition alliance despite securing the most seats, raised the prospect of rivals uniting to keep the ruling party out at the national ballot in 2019.

"While we do not expect a 2013-style panic (tapertantrum), the rupee performance could be constrained by concerns over increased fiscal spending ahead of state elections," Nomura analysts including Craig Chan wrote, noting that the next key state elections aren't due until late in 2018.

# Govt may not sell Air India if it does not get adequate pricing, says aviation secy

Civil Aviation Secretary R N Choubey on Tuesday said the government could decide against selling state-run Air India if it does not get "adequate" price for it.

"The government has the right to sell or not to sell Air India if the bid price is found to be inadequate," Choubey told reporters in New Delhi, even as he expressed confidence that ailing airline will fetch a good price.

While the deadline for submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) ends on May 31, the Secretary said the Request for Proposal could be issued after June 15.

He said the highest bidder for the airline would be known by the end of August. But the highest bidder may not be the successful bidder, he said, adding the government intends to complete the divestment process by this year end.

"Though the transaction advisor (Ernst & Young) will assess the enterprise value, the right price for the airline will be decided by



us," he said.

Earlier, Choubey had said the divestment process in the national carrier has generated a great deal of interest.

The government had on March 28 kicked off the divestment process of the debt-laden national carrier with the issue of the preliminary information memorandum for the proposed sale of up to 76% stake in it along with management control to private entities.

The government also clarified that it would have the rights of a "minority shareholder" with 24% stake in Air India post divestment.

# NSE sues Singapore Exchange in dispute over launch of new futures contracts

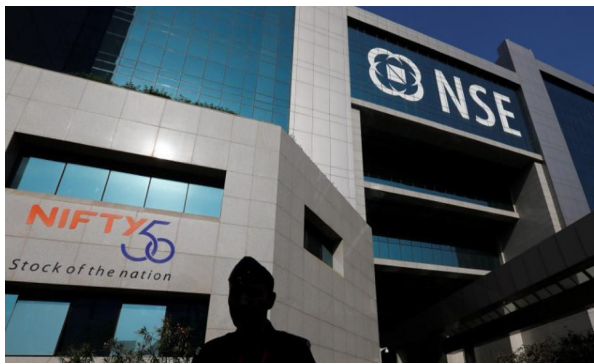
The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. sued Singapore Exchange Ltd. in a Mumbai court, escalating a dispute that threatens to leave international investors without one of the world's most widely-used offshore futures contracts.

NSE is trying to stop its Singapore counterpart from launching derivatives that could replace the Nifty 50 contracts that have traded in the city-state for 18 years and are used to hedge positions that foreigners take in one of Asia's biggest equity markets. Indian exchanges ended agreements that allowed offshore derivatives in February, leaving SGX and others scrambling.

"SGX has been notified by NSE of an application made in the Bombay High Court for an interim injunction on our new products," SGX said in a statement Tuesday. "We have full confidence in our legal position and will vigorously defend this action."

The Singapore bourse's stock tumbled on news of the lawsuit, falling the most since April 4.

Vikram Limaye, NSE chief



executive officer, declined to comment on the matter when reached by phone Tuesday. His exchange's move is another ratcheting up of tensions between bourses in India and Singapore amid efforts by the former to keep trading onshore. China and Malaysia are among other emerging economies in the region that have taken steps to keep control of capital flows even as they push to further integrate into global markets. In India's case, it's been promoting a tax-free trading zone in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hometown, known as Gift City, as an alternative to offshore centers.

"The principal objective is to prevent India's turnover from being affected by over-

seas venues," said Gopalan Sridhar, a Singapore-based fund manager at Aquarius Investment Advisors Pte. At the same time, "NSE is trying to increase access to international investors by increasing trading hours and allowing US clients to trade."

US regulators last week approved allowing NSE members to accept American customer funds for trading in futures and options contracts on the Mumbai bourse.

Shock move

In a surprise announcement in February, India's national exchanges said they would end all licensing agreements with overseas bourses and also stop providing live prices. The international community responded with alarm

and the move drew a rebuke from MSCI Inc., with the index compiler calling the move anti-competitive.

Singapore has become a hub of offshore trading for many markets, including China, Japan and Indonesia. In response to the February move, many analysts cut their ratings on SGX's stock. The company's shares fell as much as 2.4 percent in Tuesday trading.

SGX said last month it would launch India derivatives in June even as it continues to evaluate a venture with NSE in Gift City. In its Tuesday statement, the Singapore bourse said it's essential to maintain liquidity in overseas markets to connect international participants to Gift City.

"The case may drag on for years but it is the short term decision which matters most," Sandeep Parekh, founder at Finsec Law Advisors, said by phone. "SGX will be in a problem if court grants a stay; if they don't grant it, then NSE will be in a bind -- it is highly likely that NSE will terminate all its partnerships with SGX, including the proposed Gift City venture."

# Why Karnataka election results may worsen BJP govt's budget woes

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's loss of control in Karnataka will put pressure on his party to ramp up spending to woo more rural voters, pushing back plans to rein in one of Asia's largest budget deficits.

The budget was already under strain even before this weekend's events in Karnataka -- the southern state where the Bharatiya Janata Party failed to form a government. The fiscal target was breached in the 2018 financial year, while the goal for this year was widened to 3.3 percent of gross domestic product.

Add to that a surge in oil prices, the currency's more than 6 percent slump against the dollar this year, and a pickup in inflation, and India's outlook is starting to look gloomy.

"The Karnataka election is an additional source of uncertainty," said Suvoodeep Rakshit, senior economist at Kotak Institutional Equities in Mumbai. While there's usually a risk of fiscal slippage in the year before elections, the rise in oil prices is worsening the picture, he said, forecasting a budget gap of 3.5 percent



of GDP this year.

Bonds have taken a knock this year, fuelled by wider budget targets, faster inflation and a global sell-off of emerging market assets. Yields on the 10-year bond have climbed almost 50 basis points since the beginning of the year.

Pranjul Bhandari, chief India economist at HSBC Holdings Plc, said election pressures may prompt the government to cut excise duties rather than raise pump prices, pushing up the deficit. She estimates that for every \$10 per barrel rise in global oil prices, the fiscal gap would increase by around 0.3 percent of GDP.

India's rural areas are home to about 68 percent of the nation's 1.3 billion people,

and form a key voting bloc in the world's largest democracy. Modi has promised to increase the living standards of villagers and double farmers' income by 2022.

In the past six months, the BJP has faced stiff competition from the opposition Congress Party in Modi's home state of Gujarat and in by-elections in Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. While the BJP won more votes in Karnataka than in the last election, it fell short of an overall majority.

The Congress, which is set to form a government in Karnataka with a regional party, is likely to announce programs to appease farmers. More and more states are already offering to write off farm loans.

"The stance of the central and various state governments will turn more pro-rural and possible freebies will mean macro will remain under pressure," analysts at CLSA India Private Ltd. led by Mahesh Nandurkar wrote in a note. "Rural support is the need of the hour for the government given that rural wage growth has been quite weak at 4-6 percent over the last four years."

A recent working paper by the Reserve Bank of India shows growth in rural incomes have been decelerating in the past four years. That was partly due to two consecutive droughts in 2014-15 and 2015-16. In addition, the construction industry, which was booming during 2000-2012 and was a major driver of rural non-farm employment, had slowed down.

Economists at Nomura Holdings Inc. wrote in a report last week that they expect the BJP to focus on lifting rural incomes and alleviating farm distress in coming months given upcoming votes in states like Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and the 2019 general election.

# Nirav Modi's firm faked foreign buyers, misused loans: CBI chargesheet

The Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) chargesheet on the alleged fraud perpetrated by diamond trader Nirav Modi on Punjab National Bank has revealed, for the first time, that some of the purchases against which Letters of Undertaking (LoUs) were issued to Modi's companies were to be made from companies with connections to him, shedding more light on the modus operandi of the Rs 6,498-crore fraud.

The chargesheet, filed on May 14, also affirms a theory that has been articulated before, including in Hindustan Times, that some of the more recent LoUs were used to retire the older ones.

Finally, the chargesheet names former PNB managing director Usha Ananthasubramanian because the bank told the Reserve Bank of India 15 months before the fraud came to light earlier this year that there was no way SWIFT messages (which were also used to indicate that the LoUs had been issued) could go out without adequate authorisation because they were linked to the core banking solution (or enterprise software) of the bank.

Hindustan Times has seen a copy of the chargesheet which says that 43 LoUs were issued in 2011, 115 in

2012, 236 in 2013, 123 in 2014, 185 in 2015, 356 in 2016 and 150 in 2017.

The investigative agency's chargesheet lists 27 overseas supplier companies to whom these fraudulent letters were issued.

Two of these, Sino Traders Limited and Auragem Company, Hong Kong, the chargesheet said, were controlled by Modi.

The chargesheet adds that most of the overseas suppliers are located in New York, Hong Kong and United Arab Emirates and that they are being probed further. It also lists eight LoUs issued between February 9 and 14, 2017 and which were used for making repayments against earlier Letters of Undertaking issued in 2016.

Vijay Aggarwal, who represents five of the 22 individuals charged in the case, termed the chargesheet 'half-baked' since agency is yet to obtain prosecution sanction against accused public servants. "CBI has filed incomplete and half-baked



chargesheet only to defeat the right of the accused person in custody to get statutory bail. Various bankers against whom prosecution sanction has not been received, but still they have been included in the charge sheet and their sanction is awaited so the trial cannot begin in terms of right of joint trial of accused persons till the sanction comes."

Prosecution sanction is required under section 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act to initiate trial against public servants. There are 10 bankers including Ananthasubramanian named in the chargesheet and CBI is yet to receive sanction to prosecute them from the finance

ministry (PNB is state-owned and comes under the purview of the finance ministry).

The chargesheet also says almost 15 months before PNB knocked the door of the CBI asking it to probe the fraud committed by diamond trader Nirav Modi and his maternal uncle Mehul Choksi, the bank told the RBI that all its outward SWIFT messages were being sent after making entries into the core banking solution (CBS).

Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication that provides a network for financial institutions all across the world to send and receive information about

transactions in a secure and standardised manner.

In its probe, CBI found that all SWIFT system messages with regard to LoUs issued to Nirav Modi's firms were issued without making any entry into the CBS.

Nehal Ahad, then general manager of international banking division of PNB, told RBI on October 31, 2016 that with entering into CBS, no financial SWIFT message can be sent.

"Investigation revealed that there was no basis to support the above kind of misleading reply and undertaking by Shri Nehal Ahad as no specific instructions were issued to authorized dealer branches until December, 2016 and no action taken reports from field units," says the charge sheet.

Ananthasubramanian could not be reached for a comment.

On May 14, the CBI filed its first chargesheet in the case, naming 22 individuals and three firms.

A second chargesheet was filed on May 16 against 15 individuals and three companies belonging to Nirav's maternal uncle, Mehul Choksi. The CBI alleged that Choksi and his companies defrauded PNB of ~7,080 crore in issuance of LoUs and foreign letters of credit.

# Sensex halts 5-day slide in volatile trade, SBI gains 3.69%

Reversing a five-session slide, benchmark BSE Sensex rose over 35 points to end at 34,651.24 in see-saw trade on Tuesday as participants accumulated recently beaten down auto, metal, banking and realty stocks.

Asian markets ended mixed following a good show by US stocks as investors applauded easing of trade tensions between the US and China.

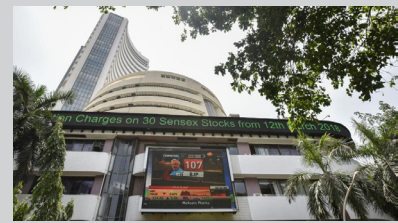
The 30-share Sensex opened in the green and hit a high of 34,754.60, but witnessed bouts of volatility. It finally settled at 34,651.24, showing a gain of 35.11 points, or 0.10%.

The index had lost 940.58 points in the previous five sessions as investors rushed to unwind bets following post-poll instability in Karnataka amid discouraging global cues.

The broader NSE Nifty, after shuttling between 10,558.60 and 10,490.55, finished the day at 10,536.70, showing a gain of 20 points, or 0.19%.

SBI rose 3.69% despite the lender on Tuesday posting a standalone net loss of Rs 7,718 cr in Q4 on mounting bad loans.

Meanwhile, domestic institutional investors (DIIs) made purchases worth Rs 1,190.56 crore while foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) sold shares worth a net Rs 496.03 crore on Monday, as per provisional data.



## India flexes IPL muscle in hunt for more TV riches

**NEW DELHI :** The head of the multi-billion dollar Indian Premier League (IPL) says the glitzy tournament is taking aim at football and basketball's heartlands as India strengthens its role as world cricket's financial powerhouse. The high-octane Twenty20 extravaganza -- which reaches the climax of its 11th season this week -- is doing "wonderfully well", IPL chairman Rajeev Shukla said as he set out the league's global ambitions. Bolstered by a five-year \$2.55-billion broadcast deal signed last year with Rupert Murdoch's Star, the IPL is one of the wealthiest leagues in any sport, helping to consolidate further India's dominance of world cricket. The South Asian giant contributes 70 percent of International Cricket Council's revenues.

The IPL boss is now eyeing viewers and earnings at the level of global broadcast giants such as football's English Premier League (EPL) and America's National Basketball Association (NBA). "We are not able to figure out where it (broadcast rights and sponsorship) will peak... but I think after the EPL, this is the most important league. It can match any league," said Shukla, a veteran politician and cricket administrator. The first step will be to expand the IPL market brand. "In cities where we don't host matches, we organise fan parks where we invite people to watch the match on the big screen. So 20,000-30,000 people are coming to the fan parks," the IPL boss said.

"Now we are planning to take it overseas, to places like Dubai, the UK and also America." There is some catching up to do. The IPL's 60 games over seven weeks earn about \$8.5 million per game in television revenues, just in India. According to industry figures, each EPL football match earns more than \$11 million in the UK, with millions more from foreign broadcast right. An average EPL match is watched by more than 12 million people around the world. The 2017 IPL final drew almost 40 million viewers -- in a country of 1.25 billion population, according to broadcasting surveys.

Neither can compete with the National Football League (NFL) in the United States which regularly tops 20 million viewers per match. What sets the IPL apart, however, is its rapid rise over the past decade, according to Aaron Smith, a professor of sports business at Loughborough University in Britain. "The IPL works so well because it was devised as a complete marketing ecosystem," he said. Smith called it "the perfect storm of sporting entertainment with elements of the Champions League, professional wrestling, and a touch of Bollywood." The IPL has acquired "unprecedented market reach" using star players, teams spread across India, and a slick television package, he added. Its chairman is confident the number of viewers will keep growing. "The fan following and the viewers are increasing every year. In terms of revenue, it's also doing wonderfully well," Shukla said. The IPL was broadcast in Australia and New Zealand for the first time this year by Fox Sports, which -- like Star -- is a Murdoch-owned company. "Now we are showing IPL throughout the world," said Shukla. India was a cricketing powerhouse even before the launch of the IPL and the glamour and riches of the tournament have boosted that even further. But not all are happy about it. An International Cricket Council report called the sport's reliance on Indian money a "weakness", upsetting India's cricket authorities. The South Asian nation's influence on world cricket was discussed during talks between the ICC and the Board of Control for Cricket in India last Thursday. The Indian cricket board's power was illustrated.



# WHERE ARE THE SPORTS GROUNDS, LAMENTS SACHIN TENDULKAR

**UNE:** "Sports grounds are becoming so rare, wherever there is free space, something is coming up. They should be considered as heritage," said Bharat Ratna and former cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, who was at Savitribai Phule Pune University on Monday to launch "Mission Young & Fit India".

Tendulkar, who was being interviewed by renowned sports reviewer Sunandan Lele about the paucity of sports grounds and what he felt about it, agreed grounds had indeed become few and getting fewer by the day. "Many times I see that we have constraints of space. Many grounds are not being used and even if they (schools) are using them, they are not allowing others to use. I think the policy should be, you also use and allow other schools to use," he said. Tendulkar recalled how for international matches also, the team had sometimes prepared without adequate facilities. "Until 2006 I think, indoor nets were not ready. I remember this series with Australia, everywhere it was raining. There was no chance to practice. So I padded up and went to play on this ground, which was full of muck. Even before the ball came on, the dirt used to fly in my face.

But it was fun, kind of reliving our childhood days. Unfortunately today, grounds are not being used much," said the master blaster. Lele spoke about the lifestyle changes that have come about today compared to the past when parents would reprimand children for playing on the field for too long vis-a-vis today when they have to push children to play physical sports. "It is a dangerous change. Even communication is getting lesser while people may not realise it. Sometimes I feel when technology wasn't there, it was better. Life was stress-free. Outdoor activity or any sport teaches you a lot in life," he said. Speaking about the lessons he learnt from sports, Tendulkar, who said he was attending the event as a



sportsman and not as a cricketer, said sports had taught him teamwork and selflessness by keeping the team above personal ambitions. "The most important lesson I learnt from sports was never taking shortcuts. I remember my first match, I had scored 24 runs. At that time, only if you scored 30 runs and above, your name came in the newspapers. I didn't know and when someone advised, we changed the runs. The next day my coach took me aside and asked me, how much did you score and I told him the truth. He told me that if you want to see your name in the papers, do it on your own merit and the satisfaction will be something else. Sports taught me to get back on my feet again and compete in the most com-

petitive manner," he said. On being told that Savitribai Phule Pune University had made sports an integral part of the curriculum for all first-year undergraduate students, he applauded the step. "I see in trial matches, certain selectors are doing only a formality. In that, many talented kids get ignored. Our structure needs to be formalised and that will make the process more responsible. If sports is taken as a formal subject in universities, then it will be taken more seriously," said Tendulkar.

He added that grading system should be followed by all universities and schools, where students should be given impetus for performing at district-, state- or national-level events by giving them extra marks

in academics, based on performance.

Over 250 management representatives and sports teachers were present at the event and Tendulkar urged them to play a more pro-active role in promoting sports on campus. "All parents are not supportive. That's why sports teachers play an important role. Students trust them, they share a bonding.

That's why the message being delivered through them becomes critical. Also once a sportsman, always a sportsman.

There are many retired sportspersons who are on desk jobs, passing files from one table to another, employed in schools and colleges. It is not good to waste their experience," he said.

## UNAI EMERY SET TO SUCCEED ARSENE WENGER AS ARSENAL BOSS - REPORTS



**London :** Former Paris Saint-Germain coach Unai Emery looks set to become Arsene Wenger's successor after 22 years as Arsenal manager, the BBC reported on Monday.

Emery, 46, won Ligue 1 and four domestic cups in two seasons in the French capital before departing earlier this month. However, the Spaniard paid for his failure to get PSG beyond the last 16 of the Champions League in his two seasons at the Parc des Princes. "Emery emerged as the unanimous choice following a recruitment process in which all candidates were spoken to," said the BBC. PSG had previously reached four consecutive Champions League quarter-finals following the Qatari takeover of the club in 2011, but Emery oversaw a hu-

miliating defeat to Barcelona in the last 16 a year ago, losing 6-1 at the Camp Nou after a 4-0 win in the first leg.

The club then committed to spending 400 million euros (\$483 million) on Neymar and Kylian Mbappe alone -- the two most expensive transfer deals in history -- last year, but Paris were eliminated in the last 16 again this year, going out to Real Madrid. "We lost against Real but they are showing that they are maybe still the strongest team in Europe," said Emery when announcing his departure. Emery previously enjoyed great success on the European stage at Sevilla, where he won three Europa League titles in three full seasons at the Sanchez Pizjuan. Arsenal have been looking for a new boss for the first time in

over two decades since Wenger announced last month he was stepping down at the end of the season. A sixth-placed finish in the Premier League, the Frenchman's worst-ever return, means the Gunners have failed to qualify for the Champions League for a second straight season.

Former Arsenal midfielder Mikel Arteta, who has formed part of Pep Guardiola's coaching staff at Premier League champions Manchester City for the past two seasons.

appeared to be the front runner in the past week. Arteta, who played 150 games for Arsenal between 2011 and 2016, even had Wenger's blessing. "He was a leader, has good passion for the game, knows the club and knows what is important at the club," Wenger told BeIn Sports. However, Arteta's lack of previous managerial experience appears to have.

seen him lose out to his compatriot. Emery's own playing career was a modest one, largely in Spain's lower divisions after failing to make the grade at Real Sociedad.

However, he established a reputation as a bright young coach at Lorca and Almeria before being handed his first big job at Valencia in 2008.

Despite severe financial problems as players like David Villa, David Silva and Juan Mata were sold, Emery led Valencia to third place behind Barcelona and Real Madrid for three consecutive seasons. A short, ill-fated spell at Spartak Moscow followed before he returned to his homeland at Sevilla in 2013.

## Manuel Pellegrini named new West Ham United manager

**NEW DELHI:** West Ham have announced the appointment of Manuel Pellegrini as their new manager. The 64-year-old has signed a three-year contract with the club, having left Hebei China Fortune on May 20.

West Ham joint-chairman David Sullivan said he is delighted to bring "one of the world's most respected football coaches" to London Stadium. "It was important that we appointed someone with knowledge and experience of the Premier League, who already has an understanding -- not only of the teams and players we face -- but of West Ham United and our ambitions," he told the club's website. "Manuel brings a reputation for attacking football and getting the best out of his players. We believe he will attract new talent to the London Stadium as well as improving the current squad.

"Above all, he is a winner, who knows what it takes to succeed at the highest level and is driven to continue that success. Manuel is the first West Ham United manager to have a Premier League.

## India play Chinese Taipei in Intercontinental Cup football opener

**MUMBAI :** Indian football team will take on Chinese Taipei on the opening day of the Intercontinental Cup which kicks-off at the Mumbai Football Arena on June 1.

The other two teams in the competition -- Kenya and New Zealand -- will play their first match against each other the next day.

The tournament, which will be telecast live, is being organised as part of the India's preparation for the AFC Asian Cup to be held next year in the



UAE. Indian team head coach Stephen Constantine has described the Intercontinental Cup as a "very important tournament for development".

"The Intercontinental Cup is a very important tournament for our progression and development.

It is good that New Zealand are coming as they have a strong team," he said.

"Chinese Taipei have improved in the last four-five months and the Kenyans will be strong and physical.