

# TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

FRIDAY

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WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	27.2	9.3
JAMMU	36.5	18.9
LEH	16.0	0.3
KARGIL	20.4	4.6

SUNSET FRIDAY: 07:23 PM  
SUNRISE SATURSDAY: 05:33 AM

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

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BUSINESS | 7

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PRESIDENT KOVIND BECOMES FIRST PRESIDENT OF INDIA TO VISIT SIACHEN IN 14

NEPAL VISIT REFLECTS GOVERNMENT'S 'NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST' POLICY: PM MODI

OIL PRICES GAIN AS MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS FLARE AFTER TRUMP EXITS IRAN DEAL

IPL 2018: HOW ISHAN KISHAN POUNDED KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS AT EDEN GARDENS

## Azadi not possible, you can't fight us: Bipin Rawat to Kashmir youth

New Delhi: Indian Army chief General Bipin Rawat has said the youth in Kashmir must not get "carried away unnecessarily" and understand "azadi" is not possible as the security forces will always fight those who want to secede, the Indian Express said on Thursday.

Gen Rawat told the Indian Express in an interview that he was concerned that the youth in the strife-torn state are picking up guns and "those who tell them (that) this path will bring azadi... misleading them".

"These numbers (of militants who are killed in gunbattles with the army) don't matter to me because I know this cycle will continue. There are fresh recruitments happening. I only want to stress that all this is futile, nothing is going to be achieved by them. You can't fight the army," Gen Rawat said.

He added that the security forces



"don't enjoy" killing but if anyone wants to "fight us then we will fight you with all our force".

"Kashmiris have to understand that the SFs (security forces) haven't been so brutal — look at Syria and Pakistan. They use tanks and air power in similar situations. Our troops

have been trying their level best to avoid any civilian casualty despite huge provocation," he said.

"I know that the youth are angry. But attacking security forces, throwing stones at us isn't the way," he said. He also expressed concern over people flocking to sites of gunbattles

and "inciting security forces by pelting stones at them to disrupt the operations... They are inciting security forces to become more aggressive."

"I don't understand why people are coming out in huge numbers to disrupt our operations. Who is inciting them? If they want that the militants aren't killed, they should go and tell them to come out without their weapons so that nobody is killed... We will halt our operation. We can't allow people to disrupt our operations and help terrorists to flee," he told the Indian Express.

The general said the army, which has been criticised for using extreme force in the state, "did try a soft approach too" and pointed out the violence in 2016 after Hizbul Mujahideen's Burhan Wani was killed in a gunfight with security forces.

"... Until June 2016, everything

## Army Chief's threat to bomb us like Syria is real: APHC

Srinagar, May 10, CNS: Reacting to the latest statement of Indian Army Chief on Kashmir the APHC has said that would the head of the British forces who colonized integrated India and ruled for more than 100 years killing thousands of Indians and committing massacres like Jallianwala Bagh ever concede that Indians will get

freedom? The British forces like the Indian forces of today had all the means and methods to keep India occupied. But yet they had to abdicate because the will and desire of people to be free to choose their destiny and be masters of their fate is far stronger than every military power.

APHC said the Indian army chief needs to ask of

his political bosses the basic question that is asking. Why does a regular army need to be stationed here in gullies streets villages on roads outside people's homes in such huge numbers? Why are people supporting and sacrificing their life for young boys who leave bright careers and pick up arms? Why are

See APHC...Pg 02

## Army chief Gen Bipin Rawat's 'Azadi' remark illogical: Yasin Malik

Srinagar, May 10, CNS: Terming army chief General Bipin Rawat's remarks that 'Azadi' isn't possible as "illogical", Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman Yasin Malik on Thursday said he "needs to revisit basic historical facts before issuing such threats".

In a statement issued here, a JKLF spokesperson quoting Malik said: "General Rawat needs to revisit basic historical facts before issuing such threats to a nation that has resolved to achieve freedom".

See Malik...Pg 02

## Army chief befooling people of India: Muslim League

Srinagar, May 10, CNS: Reacting to Army chief's statement in which he said 'I want to tell Kashmiri youth that freedom is impossible and we will fight against those demanding freedom' Jammu Kashmir Muslim League in a statement said that Army chief is befooling the Indian population.

Castigating army chief spokesperson Sajad Ayubi said: Rawat's statement is without substance and contrary to

See League...Pg 02

## MOST TRANSPARENT SYSTEM ADOPTED FOR ALLOTMENT OF PG SEATS: BOPEE

SRINAGAR, MAY 10: The Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (BOPEE) today made it clear that a transparent system of counselling has been adopted for allocation MD/MS/ PG Diploma seats to the candidates on the basis of the NEET score.

In a statement issued here today a spokesman of BOPEE said the Board has transformed the whole process of counselling which is visible from the fact that the first online list was notified just few hours after the judgement of the Division Bench on 01-05-2018. "Ordinarily, it would have taken two weeks together to prepare the list which is a cumbersome and tedious exercise," it said adding that the candidates have been facilitated by way of sending

See BOPEE...Pg 02

## Mehbooba terms opposition as buffer between people, Govt., says their role critical for democracy

SRINAGAR, MAY 10: Terming the role of the opposition as critical in strengthening democracy, Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti today said it has to act as a buffer between Government and the people by channelizing dissent.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly after the election of Dr. Nirmal Singh as the new Speaker, the Chief Minister said the opposition by bringing to fore the dissent of the people actually helps the Government in its due

discharge of duties. She said yesterday at the All Party Meeting also she appealed the opposition to help the Government by reaching out to people in their own way and channelize their grievances to the Government.

Mehbooba Mufti reminded the House of her role as the opposition leader during which she reached every corner of the State which indirectly helped the Government of the day to further improve their service delivery and address the issues. Likewise,



she added, the opposition at present should play its role by becoming a bridge between

people and the Government to put across their grievances and difficulties so that these are discussed at appropriate fora like Assembly. For this, she assured whatever support required from the Government would be extended.

The Chief Minister said dissent is the essence of democracy and people in both Government and opposition should be tolerant enough to criticism and opposition. She said the position of Presiding Officer of the House demands

See Mehbooba...Pg 02

## BANGLADESH MBBS: ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD FOR KASHMIRI STUDENTS

Rameez Makhdoomi

Srinagar, May 10 (KNB): "I recently visited Bangladesh, the infrastructure there in the government colleges is good, but the infrastructure in private college is not to say the least. Some of the private MBBS colleges are no better than animal shelters and sheds; the faculty also is much below par. The overall infra and human resource, space available in these Private MBBS colleges is disgusting and simply treachery towards students.

The parents, students should research well while heading to other parts of the world for education," stated Jaffar Allie, an educator, while talking to the Kashmir News Bureau.

See MBBS...Pg 02

## Civilians who danced during CM's election rallies being killed: Mir

'Contradiction in PDP-BJP approach will remain cause behind volatile situation'

Srinagar May 10 (KNS): A delegation of Senior Congress Leaders led by its President, G.A Mir participated in the All Party Meeting convened by the Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday and held detailed discussions about overall security scenario of the State, especially Kashmir valley and placed it's serious concern before the APM.

According to the statement issued to KNS, the Delegation also held detailed discussion over the mis-governance by PDP-BJP coalition and its failure on all counts, saying that the contradiction in the approach of PDP-BJP with regard to Kashmir situation will remain the cause behind extremely volatile situation.



Apart from G.A. Mir, the delegation comprises Senior Congress Leader Taj Mohi U

See Mir...Pg 02

## POLICE ARRESTS ATM FRAUDSTER

Srinagar, May 10, CNS: Police in South Kashmir Thursday arrested a fraudster for fraudulently exchanging the ATM card of a person and thereafter withdrawing cash from his account.

A complaint was registered at Police Station Achabal by Habibullah Teli of Uttresso stating that while withdrawing cash from ATM at Shangas, Achabal, one unknown person in the garb of assisting in withdrawal of cash exchanged his ATM card and then withdrew Rs 36,000 from his account.

"It was a blind case as the fraudster was not visible in the CCTV footage. He had hidden his face with the help of cap. We called all the suspects and finally detained the real one who was identified as Imran Sheik of Hardu-Sichen

See Police...Pg 02

## Nirmal Singh elected as speaker of JK legislative Assembly, CM, greets him

Says JK Assembly most powerful, Opposition has to play important role

Srinagar, May 10 (KNS): Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh was Thursday elected as Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

Though the opposition has nominated Usman Majeed as the opposition candidate, Dr Singh got the maximum votes.

According to KNS correspondent, Minister for Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Syed Basharat Ahmed Bukhari moved the motion for election of Nirmal as the Speaker which was seconded by Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta.

Deputy Speaker legislative Assembly,



Nazir Ahmad Gurazi, who chaired the proceeding, sought the consent of the House on voice vote for election of Singh as the new speaker of the Lower House.

Members of PDP-BJP and its allies voted

See Nirmal...Pg 02

## PARENTS PROTEST AGAINST 'TIMES NOW' FOR PROJECTING THEIR CHILDREN AS STONE-PELTERS

Srinagar, May 10, CNS: Scores of parents from Safadal area of old Srinagar city Thursday staged a protest against a Mumbai based news channel for projecting their sons as stone-pelters on its prime time show.

The channel in question was 'Times Now' which according to protesting parents displayed the photographs of over 8 youth, labeling them as terrorists and stone-pelters.

"This Channel is infamous for its biased reporting. The shameless and biased channel ran 2008 and 2010 visuals and related those incidents to present and even labeled our sons as terrorists and stone-pelters," said protesting parents to news agency CNS.

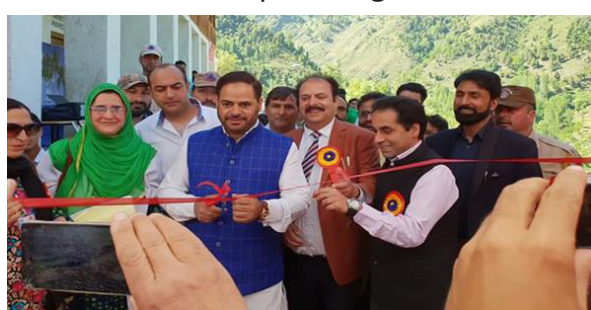
The protesters assembled here in Press Enclave and

See Pelters...Pg 02

## Congress fulfilled promises made with people: Vikar Rasool

Inaugurates Mega health awareness camp at Doligam Banihal

Banihal, May 10 (KNS): Congratulating people of Pogal area on fulfilment of their long pending demand of Higher secondary school, senior congress leader and MLA Banihal Vikar Rasool Wani today said that over the past two years several historic pro-people decisions has taken which have immensely benefited people in the Banihal.



According to the statement issued to KNS, Wani on reaching at Pogal was accorded a warm welcome where thou-

sands of villagers from Pogal, Maligam and other adjoining areas took out a massive celebration rally on foot in Pogal where participants raised slogans in favour of Congress party and Vikar Rasool and hail his effort for fighting for the rights and demands of the people of Pogal Paristan.

Addressing a huge

See Vikar...Pg 02

## ESCAPING AFTER RAMMING THREE MINORS, MAN IN NORTH KASHMIR CRUSHED BOY TO DEATH

Mir Arif

Baramulla May 10 (KNB): An untrained driver in north Kashmir Rafiabad area Thursday after ramming two minors tried to run away wherein crush another boy to death, creating panic in the area.

Reports reaching Kashmir News Bureau (KNB), that a man who was driving a vehicle to learn driving was arrested for crushing one boy to death and ramming their vehicle into another three children injuring them critically in Khahmoh Rafiabad.

The two children were walking at Khahmoh Rafiabad where the person namely Tariq Khan S/O Yousuf Khan was practicing driving.

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## BIPIN

was fine. What is that incited people so much because of that one encounter? Everything was turned upside down in a few days' time. The entire South Kashmir was out in the streets, throwing stones at us, attacking our posts," he said.

He said he was getting messages that people in the state were saying "azadi dur nahi hai (azadi isn't far away)" by October-November that year.

"Somebody was feeding this to people, telling them Azadi was around the corner. Our posts were being regularly attacked. Stones were being pelted at our men ... We had to bring the situation under control. We couldn't afford all that. We needed to tell people Azadi isn't happening. We had to establish the writ (of the state)".

"(The Burhan Wani encounter) wasn't the first such encounter in Kashmir ... I am still trying to understand where did all that anger come from. The youth have gotten themselves in Pakistan's trap. They are being consistently incited to attack us," he said.

Gen Rawat said he understands that "there isn't a military solution to this issue" and wants politicians and political representatives to talk to people, especially in south Kashmir.

"But they are scared that they will be attacked. It will happen once there is calm. And we are hopeful that people will soon realise that all this is futile and start thinking differently," he said.

The army chief said he is "ready to suspend" military operations to avoid civilian casualties.

"But who will guarantee that there won't be fire at our men, at our vehicles? Who will guarantee that policemen, political workers, our men returning home on leave aren't attacked, aren't killed?" he asked.

He added that youngsters, who have picked up guns, and terrorists aren't a big challenge for the army and that the army has repeatedly asked people not to come to disrupt their operations and throw stones at security personnel.

"Recently, we left an operation unfinished at one place. We withdrew our men so that the situation doesn't turn bad. But as we left, our men came under fire from another house at a different place. A JCO (Junior Commissioned Officer) was injured. He is still in hospital," he said.

General Rawat said he recently tried to reach out but nobody came forward to reciprocate.

"When I spoke (on April 15), that very evening we were attacked. People have to reciprocate so that we can move forward," he said.

"Young people are getting excited by IS flags. Do you know what that means? Do you want to Talibanise Kashmir? Do you want Kashmir to turn into such a society? Do you want to live in such a society? These young people do not understand the meaning of it all. Somebody is inciting these young people".

Gen Rawat said that the people in Kashmir must understand the turmoil is taking a toll on the development of the state and that tourism has been adversely affected.

"Houseboats and guesthouses are empty. What will those people eat if they don't earn?" he asked.

"We will have a train connecting the Valley to the rest of the country soon - imagine how it will change the fortunes of people. The apple grower in Sopore can send his apples anywhere in the country without any hassle. People have to recognise this development and be thankful. It has to be a two-way process".

## APHC

the educated boys who know the strength and number of the forces still choose to take this path? Why are his men being made the cannon fodder and paying the price with their life in an issue which he too admits is not military?

The Indian armed chief acknowledges that killing one resistance youth with arms will make ten others pick it up why?

The APHC said his threat that to bomb us like Syria is real but so is the resilience of people to stand by their commitment to achieving the universal right to freedom and self determination for which they have been consistently struggling for the last 70 years and hugely sacrificing. Army chiefs come and go. But the commitment made by both Indian and Pakistani leadership at the UN and ratified by the world to the people of Kashmir stands and gives the current situation its context.

The Kashmir conflict is a real political and humanitarian problem and can be addressed politically and with compassion. Military solution will only make it more chronic.

## MALIK

"From boasting about Indian military might to talking about trains, fruit business and tourism, General Rawat wants Kashmiris to surrender before Indian might without even realizing that many generals before him failed to achieve this..." he said.

"Today the so-called biggest democracy called India is using its military, police and forces have choked every little space on peaceful political activities, pushed our youth in political movement to the wall by torturing them and humiliating their families in police stations and camps and hence leaving no other option for them but to go for an ultimate sacrifice," he said.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, spokesperson said Kashmiris have resolved to free their nation and pledged to never surrender. "Our reply to General Rawat is same that was given by Gandhi Ji to a British envoy who had posed same type of question to him that how can poor Indian fight British military might and survive as an independent state without British help, Gandhi had replied that he would prefer a non-competent poor independent country over a competent and wealthy illegal occupation and slavery," said the spokesman.

He said that if assertions of army chief on 'Azadi' contained any ingredient of reality, more than half of the world, including India, would have been still reeling under foreign occupations today.

Malik, who continues to be under detention, was today taken to a hospital in Srinagar for medical checkup. "Doctors took samples of his blood and performed many other investigations regarding his health. He has been shifted back to police station after the checkups," said the spokesperson.

## LEAGUE

facts. He said Kashmiris are determined to carry their struggle to logical end from last 70 years and have never bowed before brute. Owing to their courageousness, even the

presence of ten lakh troops with black laws have failed to crush them.

Furthermore, army chiefs say; we will fight is acceptance of defeat as they are fighting from last 70 years but failed in bringing about any change in determination of people.

Reacting to intimidation of making Kashmir, the Syria, Sajad ayubbi said; it depicts army chief's militarily mindset .That's why every other day he issues hawkish statements. Else, the Kashmir issue that has become pestering soar and is consuming lives day in and day out, and in Kashmir where people with bright career jettison fortune and sacrifice lives ,such statements can be expected only from politically immature and person with ostrich syndrome.

Sajad Ayubi said that Army chief must refrain from such aggressive and provocative statements that further alienation. Moreover, Army chief should not hoodwink Indian population with regard to ground situation of valley. There is no denial to the fact that Kashmir issue has to be resolved in anyhow and for that substantial, sincere approach is only the way out. Otherwise, Kashmiri are ready to sacrifice everything to break the chains of slavery and ready to struggle ceaselessly.

## BOPEE

them SMS/e-mails on different occasions reflecting the transparency prevalent in the Board

It said the Board shifted to offline counseling during second round due to internet issues which cropped up due to the prevailing circumstances for which provision is available in the NEET Brochure.

It said the process for physical round of counselling was elucidated in detail and the candidate has to be physically present at the time of availability of the seat. "During the upgradation round also on 07-05-2018 the seats were allotted purely on the basis of merit cum preferences and availability of the seats at the relevant point of time," it said adding that even the candidates were given an option to upgrade in case a seat of their choice became available at a later point during the day of counselling considering the superior merit of the candidate, which ordinarily is not permitted.

According to the statement, the counselling of PGD Pathology ended at 8.32 pm when the seat was allotted to an available candidate at Jammu and no other candidate was available in Srinagar. The counselling forms reflect the time of allotment of the seats also to the candidates. Any candidate who had left the Board office and did not chose to participate in the process and wait for the seats which were duly reflected on the monitor available in the BOPEE Office cannot claim under any circumstances that his/her merit has been ignored. Such a candidate must have chosen to leave the Board office on his/her own choice. Board cannot go by whims and wishes of such candidates.

According to the statement, on 09-05-2018 some miscreants barged into the BOPEE office and damaged the cable wire to ensure that seats are not displayed. "But during the counselling the candidates were offered all the seats available. It is a concocted story that any seat has been hidden by the Board to favor any particular candidate, which is reflected from the seat matrix available," it said adding that the seats which become available during the course of counselling on minute to minute basis are being reflected in the updated seat matrix on the monitor.

"The Board has serious reservation to the view that kith and kin of Board officials/officers are provided seats, which is ill conceived, mischievous and far from the truth and is only aimed at maligning the institution and erode its credibility," it said adding that no candidate who is eligible to compete in the process can be stopped notwithstanding his/her relationship.

According to the statement some reserved category candidates had alleged that the category seats cannot be converted into open merit, which is far from the reality and the rules governing the allotment of seats. "Since the reservations to the medical colleges/institutions is governed by the State laws, which amply provide for filling up of unfilled category seats from the open merit category," it said adding that the Board has given sufficient time to eligible category candidates to avail the facility. Conversion of seats can take place even during first round of counselling if seats remain unfilled.

It said during the physical rounds also when a Committee of Officers comprising representatives from medical institutions and officers of the Board are available at Jammu and Srinagar for the counselling which takes place simultaneously through video conferencing. The allegations leveled that the physical counselling should have been done at one place only would only cause hardships and inconvenience to the candidates and their parents forcing them to move frequently from one region to other. During the physical round the merit position is maintained and the seats are displayed on minute to minute basis on the monitors available in the Board office.

Further any recruitment in service and admission to professional colleges are entirely two different things and are governed by different provisions of reservation act/rules, it said.

## MEHBOOBA

that the voice of every section and thought be heard and addressed appropriately which needs patience and tolerance.

Complimenting Dr. Nirmal Singh on assuming the responsibility of the Speaker of the House, Mehbooba Mufti said over the past more than three years he discharged his responsibilities without any prejudice and with utmost tolerance. She said being a man of letters, Dr. Singh earned respect and accolades from every section of the society. She hoped that he would further elevate this position with his knowledge, genteel behavior and accommodative attitude.

The Chief Minister also had a word of appreciation for the former Speaker and now Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta. She praised the maturity and wisdom with which he conducted the business of the House during all this time.

Mehbooba Mufti also complimented Deputy Speaker, Nazir Ahmad Khan for his acumen and understanding while discharging his responsibilities.

Earlier, Dr. Nirmal Singh was elected as the Speaker of Legislative Assembly.

## MBBS

Thousands of students leave Kashmir for different parts of the world to educate themselves in different streams and make their dreams true. On an average, 700 to 800 students leave Kashmir to study MBBS at South Asian country Ban-

gladesh. Stakeholders also say rising living costs and not so impressive infrastructure in Bangladesh complicates things for the Kashmiri students.

A student, while pleading anonymity stated - "The infrastructure here in Bangladesh is very down especially in private colleges. When we compare it to other countries like Russia, China, and Kyrgyzstan and it is nowhere. The students, parents should properly research while undertaking studies outside Kashmir especially in a critical field like MBBS. Bangladesh is not a good option at all."

Javid Khan, a career expert states - "Amid commercial hubs like Shopping complexes are the small and infra less medical colleges set in Bangladesh, who have zero concept of quality education and lag quality libraries and laboratory."

With rising number of students leaving Kashmir the monitoring of outside opportunities for students of Kashmir is need of the hour.

## MIR

Din, MLC Vice President G. N. Monga, MLA, General Secretary Usman Majeed, Senior Leader & Treasurer Krishan Kumar Amla.

Participating in the debate, the J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President G.A. Mir told the meeting that Govt has failed on all counts, saying that Kashmir is burning due to the negligence and mis-governance of PDP BJP Coalition, who have never been on the same page, the contradiction in their approach about the Kashmir situation has added chaos to people.

He suggested certain measure to reach out to people to restore peace and confidence among them, as that, loss of civilians has damaged the peace very badly.

G.A. Mir said that the agenda of alliance as agreed by both parties has not been implemented so far, even an iota of the agenda of alliance has not been implemented or discussed even after passing of 1100 days of the coalition Govt, what the people got after voting for PDP in valley, he questioned the APM.

He told the Chief Minister in the meeting that PDP & BJP have never been on the same page with regard to Kashmir, for the fact, she herself has not been able to make her coalition partner to have even discussion over the Agenda of Alliance, in which much has been promised to people after securing votes from them, but every promise made by them have fallen flat, he told APM

He told the Chief Minister that those who have danced during her elections rallies in 2014 Assembly Elections were being killed and there is no end to violence in Kashmir valley, the irony is that She has not been able to ensure end to civilian killings, even She has not been able to ensure restraint by the Forces while dealing the situation, as a result, dozens of civilians were killed, adding anguish and agony to people. He told the Chief Minister that Kashmir is burning due to negligent attitude and mis-governance on the part of PDP BJP.

He told both PDP & BJP in APM that they have betrayed and back-stabbed people for power and all the promises they made to people have fallen flat, as result there is great anguish and agony among the people across the State especially in Kashmir valley, leading to the extremely volatile situation.

Mir also told APM that the ruling dispensation was hell bent upon to erode the democratic institutions of the State for personal benefit, as a result, there is a great disillusionment among the people on tis count also

G.A. Mir emphasized to Chief Minister that she being Head of the UHQ should ensure restraint by the Forces while dealing with the situation, so that there is no loss of civilians, the UHQ has to ensure restraint by the Forces in the larger interest of peace and stability, he told the meeting.

G.A. Mir further told the APM that Congress being the constructive Opposition have supported every initiative of the Govt contributing towards peace and normalcy in valley and it will remain committed on it's stated position of working for peace and tranquility and safety of people, for the fact, the safety of people will remain on top of the agenda and one among the great concerns of the Party.

## POLICE

Dialgam was identified and subsequently detained," said a police official.

He said that during the course of investigation it came to fore that the said cheater has duped a lot of people fraudulently during the past few years impersonating himself as ATM Guard in the different ATM booths. He would tactfully exchange a dysfunctional ATM card when some person would seek his help in withdrawing cash."

The police official said that the at least five cases stand registered against him at Police Stations Achabal, Bijbehara, Mattan and Ram Munshi Bagh Srinagar.

The said person has been found involved in the following cases of different Police Stations.

The spokesperson said that the investigation was carried out on scientific lines and it was headed by Station House Officer Police Station Achabal Javid Ahmad.

"People are requested not to share their PIN and bank details with strangers," the official said.

## NIRMAL

in support of the motion. However opposition camp abstained from the voting.

Singh, who was earlier seated with the BJP MLAs, was escorted to the chair by chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti and Law Minister Syed Basharat Bukhari. Immediately after the election, the Speaker commenced the proceedings of the House.

Congratulating the Speaker, Chief Minister said that there is no doubt that the JK Assembly is a most powerful in the country. "We have different situation here. In our state the government has its role but the opposition has to play important role. I am hopeful that the Speaker will facilitate all in the house and will lead the house with full responsibility," the CM said.

She said that in democracy one cannot ignore the opposition, "Mufti said, adding, "The opposition must say what they want to say."

She said while the speaker should give time to ruling party but also do justice with the opposition.

Congratulating Singh, BJP senior leader and Housing Minister, Sat Sahrma spoke about his "statesmanship" as Deputy Chief Minister of the state.

Senior NC leader, Mian Altaf, in his address, congratulated the newly-elected Speaker.

He said there would be situations when the Speaker has to rise above party lines and take decisions for the welfare of the state.

He also expressed hope that the Speaker would provide equal opportunities to all the Members to highlight the issues of public interest.

MLAs MY Tarigami, MLA Langate, Er Abdur Rashid also congratulated the new Speaker and wished him success in running the House smoothly, while respecting the sentiments of the members in raising issues of public concern.

The Speaker expressed his gratitude to all the Members of the House for unanimously electing him to the Speaker's Chair.

He assured the members that he will try his best to come up to their expectations by way of strengthening the credibility of the Speaker's institution.

It is to mention here that opposition had raised question over the notification issued to elect the speaker.

NC leader Shafi Urvi had suggested that since there are problems in the system and conduct of rules, elections can be deferred about which has happened in past as well. But the ruling coalition moved ahead and sought the votes.

## PELTERS

raised anti-Times Now slogans. They alleged that the channel has been doing propaganda against innocent youth to save the police driver who mowed down young Adil of Safakadal.

"We will register an FIR against this Channel and will even question those who have sent the photographs of our sons to the channel. Without any verification and investigation, how can this channel put up pictures and project them as stone-pelters and terrorists," they said.

"It's irony that the biased and communal anchor even accused state police of shielding stone-pelters and he in a way was inciting State to get all the youth arrested. Do police spare any stone-pelter? This Channel is rubbing salt to the wounds of people of Kashmir and it should be banned in Valley," they said.

## VIKAR

gathering at Pogal bus stand, Wani asserted that he has cherished dream to make the Banihal constituency as a model constituency throughout state and he is tirelessly working on his mission and granting higher school status to Pogal high school and foundation stone of newly sanctioned community hall cum rest place is part of his mission.

Addressing gatherings of people, Wani said that people of Banihal has witnessed major change in the developmental scenario of this mountain locked constituency in shape of infrastructural facilities including basic civic amenities including sufficient schools, health centers, safe hygienic drinking water facilities and road connectivity were at their minimal. Condition of people living in far flung rural areas

Wani said that after getting elected as MLA from Banihal constituency during year 2008 assembly elections, it remained my mission to work day and night for providing not only the best basic amenities but also to get sanctioned major infrastructural projects for Banihal.

"Today, Banihal is on the path of growth, development and prosperity. People are fully empowered with establishment of successful Panchayati Raj system and creation of new tehsils, niabats and blocks. By grace of God, I also met successfully another big challenge of bringing peace and brotherhood among all regions of my constituency and got restored regional and communal harmony among all sections of society. Today they live peacefully like brothers and sisters despite of a number of unsuccessful attempts made by different political parties who want to divide the area for their dirty politics," he said.

He added Banihal constituency has witnessed a revolution during his tenure as MLA and minister with opening of a medical facilities, trauma hospital, new SDM, new Tehsils, hospital building, sports infrastructure, new degree, ITI and DIET colleges, a number of new higher secondary schools and hundreds of new primary schools opened up during this period. With commissioning of a number of major water supply schemes, people getting safe and hygienic drinking water, new ration stores have been opened up even in far flung areas. The whole constituency, today, is connected through a network of roads and bridges.

Secretary Congress JK, Intiyaz Ahmed Khanday also said that now the main focus shall be only to make vast untouched areas connected with road and promote tourism potential of the area.

He urged upon the people to give tough response to political leaders who are trying to befool the innocent people for their political gains.

Congress working Distt president Farooq Ahmed Katoch said that "few forces are, hell, bent upon to polarize our society on the lines of region and caste. I warn such forces to desist from their misdeeds and keep this thing in their vicious minds that people of pogal paristan, this time also, teach them a great lesson and repel their malicious designs with a great force by casting their votes in favour of Congress party."

After concluding the public rally, Wani laid foundation stone of community hall cum rest place at Pogal.

Earlier, MLA Banihal inaugurated Mega health awareness camp in Doligam area of his constituency in presence of CMO Ramban Dr Saif Ud Din khan and programme organizer Dr Asmat Jahan.

## ESCAPING

"When he rammed two children he panicked and instead of applying brakes he used accelerator and tried to flee from the spot and after crossing few meters in very high speed he rammed and crushed another two children who were playing outside their home" told locals while talking to Kashmir News Bureau.

Soon after the incident all the four children were rushed to District Hospital Baramulla where one boy namely Moin Ahmad Khan S/O Parvez Ah Khan was declared brought dead and another three injured children were shifted to SKIMS Soura for further medical treatment.

Pertinent to mention here that one girl who sustained major injuries is still in very critical condition and is being treated at SKIMS Soura.

Police has arrested the man and a case has been registered Vide No 32/2018 u/s 279,337,304A in police station Panzalla and further investigation has been taken up.

# Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani inaugurates 15th Asia Media Summit in New Delhi

Time to put rules to ensure that no one player dominates the industry, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani. Emphasises the need to attract, retain and develop talent which frees good content from the trappings of revenue needs

New Delhi, May 10: Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting and Textiles, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani today said that time has come to put laws, ethics and rules into place which will help in balancing the media industry so that one dominant player cannot rule the roost. Inaugurating the 15th Asia Media Summit (AMS) 2018 here today, she said that India will have around 966 million internet users by 2021 and Indian media industry looks upon the digital world not only as a challenge but also as an opportunity. How do we attract, retain and develop talent which frees good content from the trappings of revenue needs and brings about a balance in media institutions, the Minister further asked.

The 15th Asia Media Summit is being hosted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, jointly with the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi and Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited (BECIL), from 10th -12th May, 2018 in New Delhi. The theme of this year's Summit is 'Telling Our Stories - Asia and More', which would encourage regional and bilateral dialogue

and cooperation to respond to challenges to the broadcasting sector in the region.

Giving perspective of the expanding Indian media industry, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani said, "India is the fastest growing advertising market expected to touch 10.59 billion US Dollars by the end of 2018 and the mobile spend is estimated to grow to 1.55 billion US Dollars in the year 2018. We have a vibrant media industry which has a direct established impact of Rs 1.35 lakh crore and indirect and induced benefits of Rs 4.5 lakh crore, with close to 4 million people associated with it."

The Minister expressed hope that the Asia Media Summit will throw up new ideas so that we can look at pathways to strengthen media institutions for a better mankind.

Addressing the inaugural session, Minister of Information from Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu, outlined six complex challenges the world faces today, namely - poverty, gender disparity, terrorism, ICT revolution, climate change and uneven globalization. Expressing concern at cybercrimes, he stressed upon the need to fight a war against cyber-

criminals to keep the media safe and expanding.

Minister of Information from Cambodia, H.E. Dr. Khieu Kanharith, said that, "We are trying to improve the state of the press in Cambodia, we seek to maintain strong relationships with the fourth estate."

Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director, UNESCO, New Delhi Office talked about the role of media in creating peace and partnership on the planet. Quoting from the UNESCO constitution - "Since the war is created in the minds of men, we have to build peace in the minds of men", Mr. Aoyagi called upon the media to tell stories responsibly and in a very constructive way.

Dr. Abbas Naseri Taheri, Director General, International Department and Advisor to President, IRIB, Iran emphasized the need for innovatively using social stories in the Asian cultures to create a bond between the past and the present.

Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General, UN spoke via a video message and asked to bridge digital divide in the world so that everyone in the community is able to participate meaningfully. She also highlighted media's role in building

a sustainable planet.

Mr. Sam Seog Ko, Commissioner, Korea Communications Commission said that media has an important role to play in today's world and it should be used to make a better world.

Shri Vineet Jain, MD, Times Group discussed regulatory reforms for a fair market place that benefits consumers. Talking about data protection, he said that data is being siphoned by global platforms today and we must proactively protect our national interest by ensuring that data stays within India and that it is protected.

In his welcome address, Shri Sitanshu Kar, DG, PIB talked of India's strong traditions of storytelling in its 23 major languages and around 720 dialects. He said that due to emerging technologies, we are at the cusp of revolutionary shifts in the way we think and how we tell our stories.

This is the first time that Asian Media Summit is being held in India. Over 220 foreign delegates representing 39 countries (SAARC, ASEAN, East Asia, Africa, Oceania, Europe, Syria, Uzbekistan, USA, China) and senior officials of the Government and members of Indian media industry are participating in the event.

# President Kovind becomes first President of India to visit Siachen in 14 years

Addresses soldiers posted there; says every Indian is grateful to them and stands by them and their families

New Delhi, May 10: The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, visited Siachen Base Camp today (May 10, 2018) and addressed the soldiers posted there. He also visited the Kumar Post. President Kovind is the second President of India to visit Siachen. The previous visit was undertaken by President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in April 2004. This makes President Kovind the first President to travel to Siachen in 14 years.

Addressing the soldiers today, President Kovind said that as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and as the President of India, he has come among them carrying the gratitude of the entire country. The President noted that Siachen is the world's highest battlefield and it is difficult to live even a normal life in the extreme climate. In such a situation, it is extraordinary for soldiers to

stay in a state of constant mobilisation and combat readiness. Their determination and dedication is worthy of the highest praise - and their allegiance to the defence of India is an ideal for all our fellow citizens.

The bravery and valour of soldiers deployed in Siachen over the past 34 years, the President said, has given every Indian the confidence that our borders are safe and secure. The President said he had come to Siachen to iterate to the troops posted here that all citizens of India and the Government of India were always with them and supportive of their families. The President also paid his respects at the Siachen War Memorial, which is a symbol of the sacrifice of 11,000 soldiers and officers who have been martyred since the Indian Army began Operation Meghdoot on the Siachen Glacier on April 13, 1984.

# Advisor Mattoo meets Governor

SRINAGAR, MAY 10: Prof. Amitabh Mattoo, Advisor to the Chief Minister, met Governor N.N. Vohra at the Raj Bhavan today.

Prof. Mattoo briefed Governor about the initiatives which were underway for advancing the higher educational interests of J&K which included providing scholarships for bright students to study Public Policy for one year in some of the best Universities in USA, Singapore and Australia.

Governor urged Prof. Mattoo to focus on the crucial importance of well-planned initiative being implemented to nurture and advance the aspirations of youth and, side by side, safeguarding the functioning of educational institutions at all levels. He also pointed to the crucial importance of ensuring against the academic schedules of students being recurrently disrupted by unrest and disorder.

# Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad addresses the Plenary Session on 'Media Regulation Policies: Ethics, Rules and Laws', at the 15th Asia Media Summit 2018

New Delhi, May 10: Union Minister of Electronics & IT and Law & Justice, Sh. Ravi Shankar Prasad said today that for the Indian Government, freedom of media is integral to polity, duly recognized by the Constitution and reinforced by Judiciary in series of judgements. Addressing the 15th Asia Media Summit here today, Shri Prasad said that the media has full right to inform, circulate, criticize, advice and counsel. The rights of Media under the Constitution are also subject to reasonable restrictions.

On misuse of data, the Minister said India will not allow the country to become a centre of data pilferage, and that data commerce through collusive methods cannot be used to influence its electoral process. Shri Prasad said all the online companies which are in the business of data commerce must understand the nuances of accountability. He said that when the recent controversy surrounding data privacy surfaced, the Government took a very firm stand on these issues. Shri Prasad further said that accountability is integral to democracy and all institutions - the Government, the Judiciary, the Legislature and the

Media - have to adhere to this principle. Referring to India becoming a very big centre of data analysis, he said that there is a need to have a proper coordination on data availability, data utility, data innovation, data anonymity and data privacy. He said that a committee headed by a retired Supreme Court Judge is looking into these issues and soon the Government would enact a data protection law.

Dwelling upon the issue of Ethical Journalism, the Law Minister said that it must be fair, true, properly presented highlighting sights and counter sights and empowering the consumers of news in a decent and independent fashion. The Minister wondered whether the media today, under the garb of sensationalism, paid news, fake news, too much of other insidious practices is addressing this large issue. This is a matter of debate, the Minister added.

Supporting the principle of self-regulation by the media, Shri Prasad said that the IT act mandates that the content going through the intermediary is not dangerous, libelous and does not impinge upon the security and integrity of the country nor should it encroach upon the copy-

rights. On sanctity of privacy, the Minister noted that the Supreme Court had upheld privacy as part of the Fundamental Rights. But, he added that the plea of privacy cannot become a shield for the corrupt and the terrorists. The Minister elaborated that on the issues of terrorism, propagation of hatred and communalization and on the issue of promoting extremism, there has to be a global consensus that needs to be properly enforced.

Dwelling on the challenges of social media, Shri Prasad said that the Government is committed to the freedom of press but there is a need to segregate the real from the dangerous. He said many in the Government today had fought against the emergency where freedom was trampled upon. The Minister said that the Government respects social media as it empowers the common man but the language used sometimes in this medium is a cause of concern.

Shri Prasad further said that the internet cannot become a tool of neo-imperialism. Referring to internet as one of the finest creations of human mind, he said that it cannot remain the monopoly of a few. He said that if Internet has to be global, it must have linkages with local ideas and culture. Other dignitaries presenting their views on Media Regulation during the session included H.E. Mr. Hasanul Haq Inu, Minister of Information, Bangladesh, H.E. Dr. Khieu Kanharith, Minister of Information, Cambodia, Mr. Sam Seog Ko, Standing Commissioner, Communication Commission, Republic of Korea and Justice C.K. Prasad, Chairman Press Council of India. The session was moderated by Dr. Venkat Iyer, Barrister, UK. In all the presentations, there was a consensus on a host of issues including ensuring freedom of expression and healthy development of an independent media, while respecting individual privacy. At the same time, all the speakers highlighted the challenge of fake news and misuse of expanding cyber space for propagating cyber crimes and terrorism. The speakers also underlined the issues of cyber piracy, patent and copyright violations and a consensus was reached to tackle these problems through cooperative dialogue among different countries.

# Water storage level of 91 major reservoirs of the country goes down by two percent

New Delhi, May 10: The water storage available in 91 major reservoirs of the country for the week ending on May 10, 2018 was 33,186 BCM which is 20% of total storage capacity of these reservoirs. This percentage was 22 for the week ending on May 03, 2018. The level of water storage in the week ending on May 10, 2018 was 88% of the storage of corresponding period of last year and 92% of storage of average of last ten years.

The total storage capacity of these 91 reservoirs is 161,993 BCM which is about 63% of the total storage capacity of 257,812 BCM which is estimated to have been created in the country. 37 Reservoirs out of these 91 have hydro-power benefit with installed capacity of more than 60 MW.

**REGIONWISE STORAGE STATUS:-**  
**NORTHERN REGION**  
The northern region includes States of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan. There are six reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 18.01 BCM. The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 3.19 BCM which is 18% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs. The storage during corresponding period of last year was 24% and average storage

of last ten years during corresponding period was 26% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs. Thus, storage during current year is less than the corresponding period of last year and is also less than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

**EASTERN REGION**  
The Eastern region includes States of Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal and Tripura. There are 15 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 18.83 BCM. The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 5.85 BCM which is 31% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs. The storage during corresponding period of last year was 37% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 25% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs. Thus, storage during current year is less than the storage of last year and is also less than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

**WESTERN REGION**  
The Western region includes States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. There are 27 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 31.26 BCM.

The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 6.36 BCM which is 20% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs. The storage during corresponding period of last year was 25% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 25% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs. Thus, storage during current year is less than the storage of last year and is also less than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

**CENTRAL REGION**  
The Central region includes States of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. There are 12 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 42.30 BCM. The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 10.94 BCM which is 26% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs. The storage during corresponding period of last year was 34% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 23% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs. Thus, storage during current year is less than the storage of last year but is better than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

The Southern region includes States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, AP&TG (Two combined projects in both states), Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. There are 31 reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 51.59 BCM. The total live storage available in these reservoirs is 6.85 BCM which is 13% of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs. The storage during corresponding period of last year was 8% and average storage of last ten years during corresponding period was 18% of live storage capacity of these reservoirs. Thus, storage during current year is better than the corresponding period of last year but is less than the average storage of last ten years during the corresponding period.

States having better storage than last year for corresponding period are Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tripura, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, AP&TG (Two combined projects in both states), Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. States having lesser storage than last year for corresponding period are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand, Odisha, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana.

# Mir Zahoor reviews progress on JTFRP, I&FC Deptt functioning

7 irrigation schemes worth Rs 299Cr on anvil

SRINAGAR, MAY 10: Minister of State for PHE, Irrigation & Flood Control, Mir Zahoor Ahmad, Thursday chaired a meeting to take stock of the progress made under Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) and functioning of the I&FC department.

Chief Engineer I&FC, M. M. Shah Nawaz, Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers of Irrigation and Flood Control Departments of Kashmir Valley attended the meeting.

The meeting was informed that Rs 399.29 crore flood recovery project was taken under Prime Ministers Development Package (PMDP). It was informed that the dredging and desilting of River Jehlum have almost been completed.

It was disclosed that out of Rs 399.29 crore, an amount of Rs 142.33 crore has been paid as land compensation of Flood Spill Channel (FSC) at Shariefabad and Naidkhai, Rs 82.00 crore for Re-Sectioning of FSC, while Rs 35 crore have been expended for construction of 2 bridges on FSC at Shariefabad and Naidkhai.

With regard to dredging of River Jehlum in various stretches, Rs 46



crore has been spent so far, while as Rs 73 crore for flood protection works on River Jehlum and vulnerable spots from Khanabal to Baramulla and Rs 20.96 crore have been spent on other project sub-heads.

The Minister said that the amount has been spent on the works pertaining to flood protection, anti-erosion, widening of the river, raising of embankments, re-sectioning, desilting and dredging of the river under the flood management plan.

The meeting was informed that the Flood Control Department has taken up 15 schemes under state sec-

tor at a cost of Rs 113.50 crore under Flood Management Programme (FMP) in various parts of the Valley for flood protection.

While reviewing the status of ongoing Irrigation schemes, the Minister was apprised that seven major to medium Lift Irrigation Schemes (LIS) worth Rs 299 crore have been taken up by the Department. The LIS Tral is targeted to be completed during this year while as Rajpora and Lar Khul Shopian LISs are completed and will be commissioned soon. The work on other major schemes is in progress.

It was given out that the depart-

ment has taken up 175 minor irrigation schemes at an estimated cost of Rs 859.86 crore in the Kashmir Valley of which 32 schemes at a cost of Rs 220 crore have been completed while as 62 are expected to be completed during this year.

Mir Zahoor directed the concerned authorities to plug in the remaining loopholes and breaches occurred during September-2014 flood on river banks.

While taking stock of other Irrigation schemes, the Minister stressed on the need for speeding up the pace of works to complete the on-going lift irrigation schemes within the stipulated time frame. He emphasized the need for maintaining the quality of works strictly as per the specification and judicious use of funds.

Mir Zahoorsaid instructions have been issued to the officials concerned to pay special attention to the rural pockets to ensure adequate irrigation facilities to farmers besides regular water supply to the consumers.

He directed the Chief Engineers and SEs to personally monitor the execution of works so that targets are achieved on time.

# Top 30 Innovations of the Atal Tinkering Marathon Showcased

New Delhi, May 10: In an effort to identify India's best student innovators, Atal Tinkering Labs of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog, organized an Atal Tinkering Marathon, a six month long nationwide challenge across six different thematic areas, namely, clean energy, water resources, waste management, healthcare, smart mobility and agri-tech.

On the eve of the National Technology Day, ATL Marathon's Top 30 Innovations were showcased through a booklet compiling the work done by the children, the mentors, teachers and schools. The booklet was released by the Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog, with Shri Ramanan Ramanathan, Mission Director, Atal Innovation Mission.

"This booklet is dedicated to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who took oath for the first time as Prime Minister of India on May 16. He believed that the future of this country lies in the hands of its children and the Atal Innovation Mission, named after his legacy, translates his dreams into reality", said Dr Kumar. "A very new era is coming where we will become an innovative society rather than an imitative society."

The Top 30 teams are being awarded with several prizes including a three month-long

ATL Student Innovator Program (ATL SIP) in partnership with industry and start-up incubator. The goal of the Student innovator program is to test the innovations in the community. Students will be trained on business and entrepreneurship skills, including intellectual property, effective communication, making an elevator pitch and so on. Additionally, ATL schools will be offered a participation voucher to World Robotics Olympiad (WRO), which is a global innovation challenge.

From over 650 innovations received, Top 100 were shortlisted based on novelty and prototype functionality. There 100 teams were then given a month to further refine their prototypes and rework their presentations. Following this, their innovations were judged by an esteemed panel of judges including industry and academia experts to select the Top 30 innovations. These top 30 innovations have been identified from 20 different States and Union territories from across India, full details of which are available on the AIM website. Atal Tinkering Labs under the Atal Innovation Mission of NITI Aayog, is based on the philosophy that incentives and prize awards are a great beginning to create an exponential wave of innovation and entrepreneurship amongst school children.

## Time and Us

Editorial  
SRINAGAR  
J&K

### For a fair trial: on shifting the Kathua rape and murder case

In shifting the case of the abduction and gang rape of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua district in Jammu and Kashmir to Pathankot in the neighbouring State of Punjab, the Supreme Court has taken the first necessary step towards ensuring a fair trial. It is unfortunate that despite the horrific nature of the crime, which took place over several days in January, when the girl from the nomadic Bakherwal community went missing, some sought to see the incident along sectarian lines. Contradictions on communal and political lines came to the fore. The formation of a Hindu group in support of those arrested by the J&K Police Crime Branch, and the action of some lawyers in Kathua in heckling the police when they came to file the charge sheet, contributed to the impression that the atmosphere in the town is too vitiated for the conduct of a fair trial. In addition, sections of society, including political parties and lawyers, demanded that the Crime Branch investigation was not fair and that it should be handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation. Fortunately, the Supreme Court has not countenanced this demand. Considering that the investigation was conducted in a fairly quick manner and the charge sheet was ready within two months, there is no legal reason for the probe to be taken out of the hands of the police and handed over to another agency. In the normal course, only deliberate inaction on the part of the State police is a reasonable ground for shifting the probe to another agency.

The transfer of a criminal trial from one State to another is an extraordinary step that the Supreme Court alone is empowered to take. The State out of whose jurisdiction the case is taken may have reason to feel aggrieved as it is seen as a reflection of its handling of law and order. However, in this case, the reason for transferring the Kathua case to Pathankot is no reflection on J&K. It has been done solely in the interest of a fair and speedy trial. The court has reasoned that for a genuinely fair trial, "there has to be a free atmosphere, where the victims, the accused and the witnesses feel safe". In addition, the court has passed directions necessary to ensure a speedy trial too: day-to-day hearings, no unnecessary adjournments, and no delay between the examination of witnesses and their cross-examination. In a departure from the rule that the prosecutor is appointed by the State to which a case is transferred, the apex court has allowed J&K to appoint a public prosecutor to conduct this case. The trial will also be in camera. The court's directions should inspire confidence in the justice system and instil courage among the witnesses. It is now up to the investigators and prosecutors to ensure that the guilty are punished.

# REVIVING 'NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST'

► Rakesh Sood

Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi's critics acknowledge his uncanny ability to take bold decisions and this reflects in his foreign policy initiatives. Interestingly, he is also demonstrating an ability to undertake course corrections. The informal summit at Wuhan, China, last month and a visit to Nepal this month reflect a change aimed at reviving the 'neighbourhood first' policy announced in 2014. The big challenge, however, will be providing a sense of direction to the policy on Pakistan which has oscillated between 'jhappi' and 'katti'.

The China outreach Mr. Modi had received Chinese President Xi Jinping in September 2014 in Gujarat reflecting his personalised diplomacy even though the ongoing stand-off in Chumar in eastern Ladakh cast a shadow on the visit. The personalised diplomacy was reciprocated the following year when Mr. Modi visited China and Mr. Xi received him in Xian, but its limits soon became apparent.

In mid-2016, China blocked India's bid to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) despite a meeting between the two leaders in Tashkent on the margins of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. This was followed by China vetoing Masood Azhar's listing as a terrorist in the UN Security Council even though the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) is a banned entity. China's veto continued even after the Uri Army camp attack by JeM cadres later that year, adding to India's growing annoyance. Hydrological data sharing stopped amid reports of diversion of Brahmaputra river waters. The 73-day stand-off at Doklam last year and accompanying rhetoric reflected a marked downturn. India responded through all this by voicing scepticism regarding Mr. Xi's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), stepping up maritime engagement with the U.S. and Japan and reviving the Quad (with Australia) in Manila last year.

Both leaders soon realised the risks of the downward spiral of confrontation and were pragmatic enough to understand the need to restore a degree of balance to the relationship. Mr. Xi had emerged stronger after the 19th Communist Party Congress and the decision by the Central Committee to remove the restriction of two terms for a President made it clear that he would continue beyond 2023.

Significant messages were carried by Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Politburo member Yang Jiechi last December during their visits to Delhi. Follow-up visits to Beijing by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman earlier this year prepared the ground for the informal summit meeting in Wuhan last month. The leak of the government circular advising officials to stay away from events commemorating 60 years of Dalai Lama's exile in India and declining Australia's suggestion to participate in Malabar naval exercises indicated Indian interest in a reset.

The Wuhan summit was projected as 'informal' (something the Chinese have engaged in with U.S. Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump), without an agenda. Over



two days, the two leaders met for 10 hours, four times one-on-one and twice with their delegations. Instead of a customary Joint Statement, there were separate briefings by Mr. Gokhale and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou indicating the key take-aways. It is clear that messages have gone out to the Army to improve communications and understanding and prevent the stand-offs that were becoming frequent. Both sides have agreed to undertake a joint project in Afghanistan. No softening of Chinese position on the NSG or India's reservations on the BRI was visible though these issues would have figured in the discussions. However, with three more meetings likely during the SCO, G-20 and BRICS summits later this year, it is clear that there is an effort to bring the relationship on track.

Rebuilding trust with Nepal A similar exercise appears to be under way with Nepal. Mr. Modi's visit in 2014 had generated considerable goodwill but subsequent decisions queered the pitch. India's public display of unhappiness with Nepal's new Constitution and support for the Madhesi cause created ill-will. The economic impact caused by the disruption of supplies of essential items such as liquefied petroleum gas, petroleum products and medicines fed the anti-Indian sentiment which K.P. Oli effectively exploited to score a decisive electoral victory late last year. Clearly, Delhi was disappointed with the election outcome but decided that the relationship with Nepal was too important to let past misunderstandings fester. A new beginning was necessary.

A couple of phone calls between Mr. Modi and Mr. Oli followed in December-January and Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj was in Kathmandu even before Mr. Oli was sworn in as Prime Minister to convey congratulations and an invitation from Mr. Modi to visit India. Mr. Oli responded positively and much was made of the fact that in keeping with tradition, he made Delhi his first foreign destination last month. A surprise one-on-one meeting with Mr. Modi on the first day provided the two leaders an opportunity to clear the air about the past and rebuild a degree of trust.

A return visit by Mr. Modi to Nepal within a month (on May 11-12) indicates that both sides are keen to show positive movement. Expectations are being kept low key but the optics of positive messaging are evident. Included in the itinerary are a visit to Janakpur to offer prayers at Janaki Mandir and a public address which will announce the inauguration of the Ramayana pilgrimage circuit linking Ayodhya and Janakpur. The same idea had been shot down earlier when

the Nepali authorities had cited 'security issues'. In addition, Mr. Modi will visit Mukti-nath and the pension paying office at Pokhara, highlighting the historical, cultural and religious ties between the peoples of the two countries. Undoubtedly, the fact that he begins his visit to Nepal by landing in Janakpur, capital of the sole Madhes-ruled province will give comfort to the Madhesi community, but Mr. Modi realises that his challenge is to repair ties with the wider Nepali community.

The Pakistan challenge With Pakistan, after the opening when then Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, visited Delhi in 2014 and Mr. Modi dropped in to have tea with him in Lahore in December 2015, relations stalled in 2016 following the Pathankot and Uri attacks. Firing across the Line of Control (LoC) has intensified leading to higher casualties on both sides, both civilian and military. In September 2016, India launched 'surgical strikes' as retaliation for the Uri attack but this has not reduced infiltration. Since Burhan Wani's death, local recruitment by radical groups is also on the rise. India has successfully stalled the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit since 2016 and Mr. Trump's tweets criticising Pakistan have given Delhi satisfaction. But limits to the policy of isolating Pakistan are also apparent.

Elections are likely in July and the Army would prefer to keep Mr. Sharif's PML(N) out of power. Mr. Sharif's dismissal and disqualification for life from politics by the Supreme Court makes it clear that the Army is determined to control the political transition. Pakistan Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa has, on more than one occasion, emphasised the need for improving relations with both India and Afghanistan.

The resumption of the stalled Track II Neemrana Dialogue last month in Islamabad indicates that a shift may be likely. Pakistan realises that the time frame for a shift is limited before India goes into election mode. The question is whether Gen. Bajwa can make good on his suggestion by showing forward movement on the issues flagged by India — curbing the Lashkar-e-Toiba and JeM, the Kulbushan Jadhav and 26/11 trials, etc. Faced with a similar situation, Gen. Pervez Musharraf had gone in for an unilateral ceasefire on the LoC in 2003. The guns fell silent, tensions were defused and Pakistan hosted the SAARC summit in 2004.

A change in the Pakistan policy may well be the reset to enable Mr. Modi to reclaim his 'neighbourhood first' policy.

(Courtsy: The Hindu)

## WE CAN NO LONGER IGNORE THE RISE IN ELDER ABUSE CASES

► Mala Kapur Shankardass

Recent studies, research by HelpAge India and Agewell Foundation, the recently published book Elder Abuse and Neglect in India, to name a few, indicate the increasing number of elder abuse and neglect cases. These numbers are likely to grow with an expanding elderly population.

Elder abuse and neglect, which was until a few years ago seen as a developed world phenomenon, is now visible in developing countries, including in India, where family care and reverence for the elderly is supposed to be the norm. Elder abuse is an unacceptable attack on human dignity and human rights. Ignoring the rights of older people makes the senior citizens vulnerable to the risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and marginalisation.

The World Health Organization (WHO) statistics reveal that around 4-6% of older people experience some form of maltreatment at home, with the numbers being much more in institutional

settings. But, there is also acknowledgement by gerontologists and care workers for the aged that elder abuse is often unreported and under-recognised. WHO, in 2002, offered the most consensual definition of elder abuse, being used in many parts of the world since then: "A single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person."

In India, a universal definition of elder abuse and neglect is missing, but in general those working with in this field classify elder abuse in five broad categories: physical, emotional or psychological, financial exploitation, neglect, and sexual abuse. It refers to actions against elders perpetrated by someone who is trusted. Frequently, besides these five, abandonment, isolation, intimidation, fiduciary abuse, extortion, unreasonable confinement, active versus passive neglect and coercion are also identified as forms of elder abuse.

Across the world, it is now recognised that while efforts to address elder abuse



and neglect are increasing and more resources are being used towards a societal response to combat it, the realities of a rapidly growing older population, along with prevailing attendant ageism, individualism and breakdown of traditional support systems suggest that older adults will continue to be at risk of being abused and neglected, and potentially at younger ages than in previous generations.

With feminisation of ageing, older

women are living longer than men and also sex ratios favouring older women, happening in many countries, including India, puts women at a greater risk of abuse. Especially ageing widows and frail, disabled older people are at a greater risk to abuse and neglect not only by family members but also by non-family members and unknown people. Widows becoming victims of property grabbing and abandonment is common despite various laws to them.

Initially research on elder abuse and neglect by family members indicated caregiver stress as the cause for the problem, but recent studies reveal many other characteristics of the perpetrators, such as mental health and behavioural problems, drug abuse, family disputes, intimate partner abuse, etc. With regard to non-family abusers, untrained and unscrupulous caregivers, financial exploiters and petty criminals are being recognised as people of whom older people have to be careful. At the community level, prevailing ageism is seen to devalue and exploit older people leading to their abuse in various situations and circumstances.

We need effective preventive strategies to reduce the risk to abuse, and strong laws and policies to address these concerns. In the 21st century, many positive developments in different countries have led to the formulation of legislation to protect older people from abuse. But, despite the rights-based perspective in legal reforms, rights-based action in implementing measures is missing. Most national legal systems stipulate punish-

ment for the perpetrators of elder abuse, but have no adequate legal instruments to detect and report abuse of different forms and, more important, to rehabilitate the victims. Many legislative measures deal with maintenance from family members as a recourse to tackle the problem but do not call for inclusive policies for the elderly or for creating enabling environments for older people.

Significantly, when older people report a case of abuse against them by their children, legal recourse helps in getting a monetary sum from the children for meeting daily financial needs, but overlooks their consequent state of loneliness, lack of available caregivers, threat of emotional insecurity, depression, etc.

Rights-based mechanisms to provide comprehensive support to victims of abuse and neglect are missing from a national action plan. The State's responsibility to combat elder abuse in ageing societies is not only imperative but also pertinent to older people being able to exercise their right to a life of dignity and respect.

(Courtsy: HT)

# Nepal visit reflects government's 'neighbourhood first' policy: PM Modi

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday described his two-day visit to Nepal as a reflection of his government's commitment to "neighbourhood first" policy, and said as the Himalayan state entered a new era, India would continue to remain its steadfast partner.

Modi will visit the Himalayan nation on Friday and it will be his third visit to that country as Prime Minister. "It reflects the high priority, India, and personally I, attach to our age-old, close and friendly ties with Nepal," the PM said in a statement.

He said his visit closely follows the state visit of Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli to India last month.

"These high-level and regular interactions reflect my government's commitment to the 'neighbourhood first' policy, in consonance with the motto of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas,'" the statement said.



Modi said the two countries have completed several bilateral connectivity and development projects in the last few years, and initiated transformational initiatives for the benefit of their people. "Prime Minister Oli and I will have the opportunity to take

forward our recent wide-ranging discussions in New Delhi on issues of mutual interest, and to advance our cooperative partnership across diverse sectors," he said.

"As Nepal enters a new era of consolidating gains of democracy and

achieving rapid economic growth and development, India will continue to remain a steadfast partner of government of Nepal to implement its vision of 'samridha Nepal, sukhi Nepal' (prosperous Nepal, happy Nepal)," read the statement.

In addition to Kathmandu, Modi said he was also looking forward to visiting Janakpur and Muktinath. Both these places attract a large number of pilgrims every year.

"They are living testimony to the ancient and strong cultural and religious ties between the peoples of India and Nepal," he said.

The Prime Minister said he was also looking forward to meeting the political leaders and friends in Nepal.

"I am confident that my visit will further cement our people-centric partnership with Nepal on the basis of mutual benefit, goodwill and understanding," Modi noted.

# Bengal panchayat polls: SC to hear state poll panel's plea today

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will hear the West Bengal State Election Commission's plea, challenging the Calcutta High Court order directing it to accept the nominations of candidates who have filed their papers electronically within the stipulated time for the panchayat elections, at 2 pm on Thursday.

The State Election Commission (SEC), which approached the apex court on Thursday, has sought a stay of the operation of yesterday's order, saying it would suffer "irreparable loss and injury" that cannot be compensated.

Anticipating the SEC's move, the state's main opposition CPI(M) and BJP have filed a caveat before the top court saying that no ex-parte orders should be passed.

Caveat is a legal notice to a court or public

officer that certain actions may not be taken without informing the person who gave the notice.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud was told by senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for BJP's West Bengal unit, that the copy of the SEC's petition was supplied to them and the court may list the matter for hearing on May 11.



# Can BJP headwind breach Naveen Patnaik's citadel in Odisha?

In April 2014, when most of India was in the midst of a Modi wave, Odisha was among the few states that remained largely untouched. That was primarily due to a wall called Biju Janata Dal (JD), led by the wily chief minister, Naveen Patnaik. The regional powerhouse — the most successful one in the history of Odisha — won 20 of the 21 Lok Sabha seats, while in tribal-dominated Sundargarh, former Indian hockey team captain, Dilip Tirkey gave a scare to union tribal affairs minister, Jual Oram, before the BJP could scrape through with just one seat.

Four years later, much water has flown through Odisha's biggest river Mahanadi, but the BJD is still looking formidable. The BJP still appears to be a pretender to the throne, despite some electoral successes for the saffron party in the recent past.

In February last year, the BJP's fortunes changed after it increased its vote share from 15% to 32% in the panchayat

polls. The saffron headwind, which Patnaik managed to beat in 2014, appeared to have finally arrived to jolt him.

A nine-fold jump in zila parishad seats and a drubbing of the BJD in tribal districts were enough to signal the arrival of the BJP as the main opposition, nudging Congress out. Juxtaposed against the assembly and Lok Sabha seats, the panchayat poll results would have meant that the BJP can win 7 of the 21 Lok Sabha seats and 45 of the 147 Assembly seats.

The victory was enough for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to announce Odisha as his party's next battleground in the national executive held in April last year. The party started aggressively poaching leaders from both the BJD and the Congress and tried expanding its base with help of new turncoats. In September last year, BJP national president Amit Shah outlined the party's game-plan when he unveiled the Mission 120 plan (winning 120 of the 147

assembly seats).

But six months is a long time in politics. The 71-year-old Patnaik -- now in the 18th year of his chief ministership -- seems to have snatched the initiative, as he quietly reinvents himself to stop the saffron surge in the state.

"The biggest factor in Odisha politics is Naveen himself. The BJP may be expanding its footprint all over the country, but it will find it difficult to beat a politician like Naveen who after four terms in office has an unshakable reputation. Simply attacking him would not get the opposition any votes," said Brundaban Satpathy, professor of political science in Utkal University.

It was Bijuapur, an assembly constituency in the western Odisha district of Bargarh, famous for being the state's granary, which showcased why Patnaik stands in the way of the BJP's expansion drive. Buoyed by last year's performance in the panchayat polls, when it notched up unex-

pected success, BJP billed the February 2018 assembly by-poll in Bijuapur as the semi-final before the 2019 election. After an acrimonious campaign -- marred by a slipper attack on the CM, a murderous attack on the kin of BJD minister and a cow dung attack on the house of Patnaik's private secretary -- the BJD won by a massive margin of around 42,000 votes. While a wounded BJP appears to have withdrawn into a shell after the by-poll defeat, a wily Patnaik has stepped up his efforts to connect to the masses.

Acutely aware that the perception of him being a distant politician fuelled the BJP's rise in the panchayat polls, Patnaik has been on a people-connect drive, regularly interacting with panchayat functionaries through a programme called Ama Gaon Ama Vikash (My village, my development). Though it's a video-conference programme, Patnaik's sanctioning funds for development works on-the-spot seems to be a hit.

# Rahul Gandhi can pose a challenge to BJP in 2019: Sena

Mumbai: The Shiv Sena on Thursday praised Congress president Rahul Gandhi for being dignified while attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his speeches and said he could pose a challenge to the BJP in 2019.

The BJP should have welcomed Gandhi's declaration of his prime ministerial ambitions, the NDA ally said, adding that it was against democracy to make fun of Gandhi over his remark.

The BJP should have challenged him to defeat it in the 2019 general polls.

Gandhi had said two days ago that he was ready to become the prime minister if his party wins the most seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, making known his ambition for the top executive post.

Reacting to the comment, Modi asked whether the country would ever accept such an "immature and naamdar (famous)" leader for the post.

Rebuking the BJP for criticising Gandhi's comments, the Sena said people would



decide if the Congress president would become the prime minister in 2019 or face defeat. "However, saying that he (Gandhi) is eager to become the prime minister or making fun of him is against democracy," it said in an editorial in the party mouthpiece 'Saamna'.

"If there is democracy left in the country, the BJP should have welcomed Gandhi's statement and challenged him to defeat it in 2019," the Sena said.

become a strong-minded person after bearing criticism. He can pose a challenge to the BJP in 2019 and the Gujarat assembly polls have proved this."

The editorial said the BJP uses "derogatory" language against Gandhi but he has never stooped to those levels to attack Modi and has "respected" him as the prime minister.

Gandhi's opponents have to agree that he has maintained a "certain degree of political class", the Sena said.

Taking a jibe at Modi, it said, "The PM has started

remembering his 'alliance dharm' now. We are happy to hear that."

It said the BJP thinks there is no dialogue between the Congress and its allies. But what has been the BJP's level of interaction with its coalition partners and how many decisions in the interest of the country have been taken by working together, the bickering ally sought to know.

Allies were being "stabbed in the back" with the sword of power, which the BJP got due to the collective efforts of NDA partners, the Marathi daily said. If the BJP asks how Gandhi can be the contender for the prime ministerial post when there are seniors in the Congress and UPA allies, then BJP stalwarts like L K Advani and Murlidhar Joshi will be the right persons to answer, the Sena quipped.

"Similarly, Modi and (BJP chief) Amit Shah appointed the (country's) president without talking to NDA partners," the publication claimed.

## MANOHAR PARRIKAR RESPONDING WELL TO TREATMENT IN US, SAYS SURESH PRABHU



Panaji: Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar is responding well to his treatment in the US, Union civil aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu said today.

Prabhu spoke to the chief minister and expressed hope that he would return soon to resume his responsibilities of "developing Goa as a leading state".

Parrikar, 62, is currently undergoing treatment for a pancreatic ailment at a hospital in the US.

The former defence minister left for USA in the first week of March.

Prabhu wished a speedy recovery to Parrikar in a twitter post on Thursday.

"Spoke to @manoharparrikar, who is responding well to medical treatment in the US. Wishing him well for speedy recovery so he returns to India soon to resume his responsibilities of developing #Goa as leading state," the Union minister tweeted.

BJP president Amit Shah is expected to visit Goa on May 13 to address the party workers near Panaji.

Before leaving Goa, Parrikar had formed a cabinet advisory committee to guide the state administration on governance and other issues, in his absence.

The committee comprises Sudin Dhavalikar (of the Maharashtra Gomantak Party), Francis D'Souza (of the BJP) and Vijai Sardesai (of the Goa Forward Party).

The MGP and the Goa Forward Party are allies of the ruling BJP in the coastal state.

# Bill to strengthen Indo-US defence ties gains traction

Washington: A key bill to accord 'real teeth' to India's recently designated status as a 'major defence partner' and grant it the same access to defence purchases as America's closest military allies such as NATO members, Israel, Australia and a few others, passed a crucial stage in the US Congress on Wednesday.

But its route to final passage remains uncertain, according to an administration official who declined to be identified.

The legislative measure was moved by Eliot Engel, the senior-most Democrat on the foreign affairs committee of the House of Representatives as an amendment to the International Security Assistance Act 2018, which was a among bunch of bills reported to the full House in a process called mark up.

"The bill adds real teeth to the designation (of India as a major defence partner) at a time when our relationship with India is more important than ever," said Ami Bera, Indian American Democratic Congressman, in remarks supporting Engels amendment. But Bera also expressed concern at the lack of progress on the issue since the first move, the designation, in 2015 and its subsequent codification into law in 2017.

The next stage in the legislative process is a vote on the floor, which, according to officials, was a decision for the Republican leadership to take. There have been missed opportunities in the past despite bipartisan support for India, as recently as last month when a similar measure had failed for unrelated reasons.

The amending bill requires the President to add a country designated as a 'major defence partner', which is India as no other country has been accorded that status by the US yet, to a list of countries afforded speedy clearance of certain defence purchases under the Arms Export Control Act by the state



department. That list specifically and only includes member countries of NATO, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Israel, and New Zealand.

Former President Barack Obama declared India a 'major defence partner' of the US in 2015 to pave the way for speedier and smoother defence trade ties between the two nations. In 2017, the US Congress codified that administrative decision into law, by including it in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the defence budget.

But there has not been much progress on it since. The law had mandated, for instance, the appointment of a senior official at the level of a political appointee to manage and oversee defence trade ties, across agencies. That hasn't happened.

Bera pointed out in his brief but blunt remarks that even the limited purpose of securing an agency-wide definition of 'major defence partner' that was hoped, has been elusive.

In the meantime a perception gained ground that the NDAA designation was

a well-meaning and wholesome expression of intent but lacked specificity and "teeth" and that something else such as a concurrent provision for the state department which is the final authority in clearing the export of sensitive defense technology was needed to complete the circle.

The amendment by Congressman Engel, who is a long-time champion of stronger Indo-US ties, is yet another attempt to fix that gaping hole.

He has support in his party. Congressman Joaquin Castro pledged himself to strengthen ties with India. "The US-India defense and security relationship is an anchor of our engagement in the Indo-Pacific," he said. "This should be welcomed and I look forward to greater cooperation with India that this act will enable."

But Engel would need Republican support for his bill to go through. That should not be difficult if the Republican leadership were to look at this issue as one about India only, unencumbered by myriad other Congressional issues.

## Yemen blast victim regains vision after eye reconstruction surgery in Kochi

Thiruvananthapuram: Islam Hussein lost both his hands and eyesight in September last year after he accidentally stepped on a mine laid by warring groups while walking on a street near his home in war-torn Yemen.

The 21-year-old man travelled to India with the hope of seeing again and doctors at the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS) in Kerala's Kochi have made his wish come true. Islam got his sight back in his left eye after an eight-hour-long corneal transplant surgery at the hospital. When the first ray zipped in the 21-year-old could not control his emotions and hugged the doctors who performed the surgery. "It is beautiful to see again. It is a rebirth for me. I had given up all hopes. Indian doctors gave me a fresh lease of life," Islam said.

"I was planning to become an engineer but after witnessing a medical miracle now I want to be a doctor. I want to treat people who lost all hopes," the resident of a small town Taiz in central Yemen added.

The surgery that involved the complete reconstruction of Islam's left eye was led by a team of ophthalmologists led by Dr Anil Radhakrishnan.

"Islam's right eye was beyond any recovery as the structure behind the lens was badly damaged so we focused on the left eye. We reconstructed the shattered eye structures, conducted corneal transplant and reconstructed the eye again," Dr Radhakrishnan said and added that they were not sure whether the surgery would work.

"But it was joy all around when, a day after the surgery, Islam opened his eye and could see his mother in front of him," he said. Islam's mother Dikshara Hussein said her son was good at studies but the blast last year changed his life. She said the blast severely injured the Class 11 student's hands and legs, disfigured his face and mangled his eyes. He was rushed to a hospital, but lost vision in both the eyes, she said. Doctors advised that Islam's legs should also be amputated but his father refused to give up and moved him to a hospital in Egypt where both his hands had to be amputated below the elbow after an infection.

Doctors there were not capable of helping him further but one of them recommended treatment in India.

Islam and his parents arrived at in Kochi's AIMS in December last year after undergoing a plastic surgery on his foot in Rajasthan's Jaipur. Doctors at AIMS said a palm transplant would be more feasible after he regained his vision.

## Dark chocolate enriched with extra virgin olive oil may improve heart health: Study



New Delhi: Chocolates play an important role in the lives of those who harbour a deep love for the sinful treats. Unfortunately, their sugar content makes many control their cravings. While some are quite good at playing the will-power game, there are those who give in to temptation and indulge in a bite or two, because let's face it – chocolates are hard to resist.

The dark variant of the sinful delight, however, has been known to harbour numerous health benefits and has previously been shown to be good for diabetics as well as for the heart. In a new study, scientists have said that dark chocolate coupled with extra virgin olive oil may improve your heart health by increasing good cholesterol levels and preserving the 'repairing cells' critical for maintaining blood vessels. A healthy diet is

known to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease," said Rossella Di Stefano, a cardiologist at the University of Pisa in Italy. "Fruits and vegetables exert their protective effects through plant polyphenols, which are found in cocoa, olive oil, and apples," Di Stefano added.

"Research has found that the Italian Panaia red apple has very high levels of polyphenols and antioxidants," he said. The study tested whether consumption of dark chocolate enriched with extra virgin olive oil or Panaia red apple was linked to atherosclerosis – fat build-up in the artery walls – in healthy people who had cardiovascular risk factors.

The study included 26 volunteers (14 men, 12 women) with at least three cardiovascular risk factors (dyslipidaemia, smoking, hypertension or

family history of heart disease) who received 40 grammes of dark chocolate daily for 28 days. For 14 consecutive days it contained 10 percent extra virgin olive oil and for 14 consecutive days it contained 2.5 percent Panaia red apple. The two types of chocolate were given in random order. Progression of atherosclerosis was assessed by metabolic changes, lipid profile, blood pressure and circulating endothelial progenitor cells (EPC), which are critical for vascular repair and maintenance of the cells inside blood vessels. Urine and blood samples were collected at baseline and after the intervention. Urine samples were analysed by proton nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy for endogenous metabolites. Circulating EPC levels were assessed with flow cytometry. Smoking status, body mass index,

blood pressure, glycaemia and lipid profile were also monitored. After 28 days, the researchers found that the chocolate enriched with olive oil was associated with significantly increased EPC levels compared to both baseline and after consumption of apple-enriched chocolate. Olive oil-enriched chocolate was associated with significantly increased high-density lipoprotein or "good" cholesterol and decreased blood pressure compared to baseline. "We found that small daily portions of dark chocolate with added natural polyphenols from extra virgin olive oil was associated with an improved cardiovascular risk profile," said Di Stefano. "Our study suggests that extra virgin olive oil might be a good food additive to help preserve our 'repairing cells', the EPC," researchers said.

## A mere selfie could help detect pancreatic cancer – This is how

New Delhi: Have you ever imagined that by just clicking a selfie, you can easily screen for pancreatic cancer and other diseases. Scientists have developed an application that allows people to identify pancreatic cancer and other diseases by just clicking a selfie. One of the earliest symptoms of pancreatic cancer, as well as other diseases, is jaundice, a yellow discoloration of the skin and eyes caused by a buildup of bilirubin in the blood, researchers said.

The ability to detect signs of jaundice when bilirubin levels are minimally elevated – but before they are visible to the naked eye – could enable an entirely new screening programme for individuals at risk, they said.

The BiliScreen app, developed by researchers at the University of Washington in the US, uses a smartphone

camera, computer vision algorithms and machine learning tools to detect increased bilirubin levels in a person's sclera, or the white part of the eye. The team developed a computer vision system to automatically and effectively isolate the white parts of the eye, which is a valuable tool for medical diagnostics.

The app then calculates the colour information from the sclera-based on the wavelengths of light that are being reflected and absorbed and correlates it with bilirubin levels using machine learning algorithms. To account for different lighting conditions, the team tested BiliScreen with two different accessories: paper glasses printed with coloured squares to help calibrate colour and a three dimensional (3D) printed box that blocks out ambient lighting.



## Women, take note! Statins may reduce breast cancer risk



New Delhi: As per a recent research, women who take statins – cholesterol lowering drugs may be at a lower risk of developing breast cancer. The findings showed that compared to those without high cholesterol, patients with high cholesterol had a 45 per cent reduced risk of breast cancer, and if they did develop breast cancer, a 40 per cent reduced the chance of death.

This gives a strong indication that statins produce this protective effect in breast cancer. "Showing that patients with high cholesterol have a lower risk of developing breast cancer and subsequent mortality in a longitudinal study like this provides the strongest evidence for a protective effect, which is likely related to statins," said Rahul Potluri, from the Aston University, in the UK. "Statins have some of the best mortality evidence amongst all cardiovascular medications and their use in patients with a diagnosis of high

cholesterol is likely the reason this diagnosis appears to be protective against the development of breast cancer and subsequent mortality," added Paul Carter, from the varsity. For the study, the team followed 1.22 million women aged 40 or more with, and without, a diagnosis of high cholesterol and compared the development of breast cancer and subsequent mortality rates in the two groups. The results, presented at the European Society of Cardiology Congress in Barcelona, confirms that women with a diagnosis of high cholesterol have strikingly lower rates of breast cancer with improved death rates and survival.

"Patients with breast cancer who have high cholesterol, people at high risk of cardiovascular disease, and those with established cardiovascular disease should be given statins according to current guidelines," Carter suggested.

## Indian-American helps with life-saving medication during hurricane harvey

Houston: When a Texas hospital called to request a rare disease medication, an Indian-American CEO of a pharmacy firm got it shipped by to Houston from Orlando by sending his employee to pick it up as all logistics company were unable to deliver overnight due to Hurricane Harvey.

Harish Katharani, founder and CEO of Southside Group of Companies, explained Impavido – only oral treatment drug used for critically ill patients with Leishmaniasis – costs about USD 49,000 and hence is not readily stocked by pharmacies. Mr Katharani sent one of his employee to get the drug shipped to Texas Children's Hospital in the midst of Harvey, the most powerful hurricane to hit the US mainland in 13 years. Harvey has left a trail of destruction across Texas, pummeling the region with heavy rains. Around 13 million people have been battling "catastrophic" flooding in Texas.

In another incident, Medicare Advantage provider TexanPlus contacted Southside's Texas Medical Centre to inquire if the firm could provide services to their patients during the hurricane weekend. Despite not being contracted by this health maintenance organisation, Southside readily volunteered to provide healthcare services to their patients during this

crisis.

Hurricane Harvey.

The Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston's Executive Director Jagdip Ahluwalia stated that he was proud that one of their Chamber members was going above and beyond the call of duty to serve the community in this hour of need.

Southside is a pharmacist owned and operated company established in 1992. They ship speciality medication to over 35 states. Their pharmacies will remain open during the weekend's regular hours but their pharmacist and nurses are on call 24/7 to help Texans tide over the troubles case by the hurricane. Mr Katharani, who came to the US in 1972, is a generous donor to various charitable organisations such as MS Society, Hep-C Clinic, Liver Foundations as well as to Cancer and HIV research institutions.



TexanPlus circulated an internal memo letting their case workers know about Southside's availability during

## SCIENTISTS DEVELOP 'RAPID ALGORITHM' TO SWIFTLY DIAGNOSE HEART ATTACKS

New Delhi: Scientists have developed a new rapid algorithm that can effectively identify if a patient is undergoing a heart attack. Patients with symptoms of heart attack or myocardial infarction account for about 10 per cent of all emergency department consultations, researchers said. Rapidly identifying AMI, which may be life-threatening, can help initiate treatments in time. The system allows the timely detection and treatment of alternative causes of acute chest pain – many of which are benign, in which case patients can be reassured and sent home. The study evaluated the diagnostic performance of the algorithm using pooled data



from 4,350 patients, who came to emergency departments with acute chest pain. Researchers, including those from University Hospital Basel in

Switzerland, found that the algorithm was safe and effective. It correctly identified patients who were eligible for coronary angiography, and those who were not undergoing heart attack over 99 per cent of the time. "With this large multicentre analysis using central adjudication we were able to address concerns regarding the suitability of the algorithm for routine clinical care," said Raphael Twerenbold, from the Cardiovascular Research Institute Basel in Switzerland. "Safety was excellent in the largest ever tested population of patients presenting within the first three hours after chest pain onset," said Twerenbold.

## Cinnamon: The super spice that could potentially halt the build-up of belly flab!

New Delhi: Obtained from the inner bark of several tree species from the genus Cinnamomum, cinnamon is used in both sweet and savoury foods. A culinary staple, cinnamon has been known around the world for containing properties beneficial to health and numerous studies over the years have proved its efficiency, especially with regard to weight loss. Now, adding another property to the already healthy spice, a study has said that cinnamon has the potential to reverse the effects of a high-fat diet by stopping build-up of belly-fat. The results of the

experiments conducted in the study showed that the spice slowed down the fat-storing process and reduced the risk of heart disease. According to a report in the Deccan Chronicle, the study saw researchers examining the effects of cinnamon on rats where they fed the rodents cinnamon supplements for 12 weeks along with a high-fat diet. They discovered that rats who ate the spice weighed less, had less belly fat and healthier levels of sugar, insulin and fat in their blood compared to those who were not fed cinnamon supplements.

# Kalyan Krishnamurthy, the CEO who helped deliver Flipkart's online shoppers to Walmart

The outlook for Indian online retailer Flipkart was decidedly gloomy when Kalyan Krishnamurthy became chief executive officer in January 2017. The startup's valuation was dropping, fundraising was more difficult and Amazon.com Inc. was pledging \$5 billion-plus to siphon away customers.

So the 46-year-old former hedge-fund manager took some risks. He fired senior managers, set more-aggressive sales targets, boosted spending on promotions and promised to dominate India's festival-season shopping.

His strategy worked, and now comes the return on those risks -- a \$16 billion initial investment from Walmart Inc. in Flipkart Group that helps cement the company's lead against Amazon and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. in the world's fastest-growing major economy. Online shopping in India is projected by Morgan Stanley to reach \$200 billion within the next decade, compared with \$30 billion now.

"His relentless focus and his aggressive execution changed Flipkart's fortunes," said Anil Kumar, CEO of RedSeer Consulting in Bengaluru. "He brought the edge that Flipkart was missing."

The deal announced Wednesday is the biggest-ever by a foreign buyer in India, and it represents a significant part of Walmart's overseas expansion efforts. Since entering Mexico in 1991, the world's largest retailer has closed money-losing operations in Germany and South Korea.

Two years ago, Walmart sold its Chinese e-commerce business, Yihaodian, in return for a financial stake in JD.com Inc., the smaller rival to Alibaba. The number of Walmart's international stores hasn't budged from about 6,000 since 2013, and it's had to shutter outlets in Japan and Brazil.

Krishnamurthy will remain CEO of Flipkart, Walmart said. The company, founded in 2007 by Binny Bansal and Sachin Bansal, is the most valuable of 10 unicorns in India, according to CB Insights, and backers have included Tiger Global Management, SoftBank Vision Fund, Tencent Holdings Ltd., eBay Inc. and Microsoft Corp.

Krishnamurthy declined to comment for this story.

"For Flipkart, this deal is more than just money," said Satish Meena, a New Delhi-based senior forecast analyst at Forrester Research Inc. "This deal with



Walmart can provide Flipkart the expertise of running offline stores, access to sellers and manufacturers, supply chain and the know-how to get into the grocery segment."

Krishnamurthy spent seven years in eBay's Asia finance operations before joining Tiger Global as its finance director in 2011. He first arrived at Flipkart in early 2013 as its interim chief financial officer to support the Bansals, who each spent time as CEO. They are not related. Yet their company struggled to main-

tain relevance against the behemoth Amazon, which was shut out of China by Alibaba and JD and didn't want a repeat in India. Amazon committed \$5.5 billion to its efforts, and country manager Amit Agarwal adapted the site to local conditions -- such as simplifying the app so it didn't crash cheap smartphones.

That helped propel Amazon to No. 2 behind Flipkart in just four years, and the Seattle-based company started to eye a partnership with Flipkart. Both

Bansals stepped aside for Krishnamurthy in January 2017 -- a year that many observers said would be make-or-break for both him and the startup.

Krishnamurthy started his tenure by trying to change the narrative from one of "deep-pocketed Amazon versus startup Flipkart" to one based on a home-grown operator knowing what 1.3 billion Indians want.

He set goals for online traffic and sales, streamlined operations and fired poor performers. Krishnamurthy also implemented what he called the "80-20 rule" -- focusing on the 20 percent of categories that generated 80 percent of Flipkart's revenues. Those included large appliances, fashion and mobile phones.

"He would pound on the doors of vendors to cut exclusive deals," said Kumar, who watched Krishnamurthy in action. "He would get on a flight to meet the company executives to seal the deal."

India is a medley of income levels, languages and cultures -- a place Krishnamurthy describes as "several countries within a country." Krishnamurthy said he wanted Flipkart to appeal to as wide a demographic as possible.

The company introduced round-the-clock customer service, offered demonstrations to first-time appliance buyers and sent technicians to typically small homes to mount TVs on the wall. Krishnamurthy himself answered customer-service calls.

"It is an eye-opener on how and why India buys online," he told Bloomberg News during a 2017 interview at company headquarters in suburban Bengaluru. "It's been a great investment of my time."

Krishnamurthy, who earned MBAs from the Asian Institute of Management in the Philippines and from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is a sharp dresser who doesn't look out of place among the millennial hordes at a workplace adorned with posters of Albert Einstein, Coco Chanel and John Lennon.

The CEO is an ardent yoga practitioner, constantly sips water and bounds up and down the stairs at work. He is the father of two young daughters.

He also takes his online shopping seriously.

"I'm a big customer of Flipkart," he said. "In fact, we have two of everything at home, and that really annoys my wife."

## Oil prices gain as Middle East tensions flare after Trump exits Iran deal

Oil extended its three-year high as tensions in the Middle East flared following the US decision to renege on sanctions on Iran, OPEC's third-largest producer.

Futures in New York added as much as 1.1 percent, reaching the highest level since November 2014. Israel said it struck Iran's military facilities in Syria after a barrage of missiles was fired by Iranian forces at the Golan Heights. Prices jumped 3 percent Wednesday after US President Donald Trump said he would scrap a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, and reimpose restrictions on the Islamic Republic's crude exports.

Crude's recent rally has been propelled by Trump's Iran sanctions and simmering geopolitical tensions surrounding the Middle East. While investors are still evaluating the full impact of the US withdrawal from the nuclear accord, UBS Group AG said the sanctions could cut Iran's oil exports by as much as 500,000 barrels a day in the next six

months. Saudi Arabia signaled it could make up lost supplies, while Goldman Sachs Group Inc. said there's a chance prices may exceed its forecast.

"Judging by the initial reaction of the market, the damage is potentially great" though the impact of the sanctions is still being assessed, said Tamas Varga, an analyst at PVM Oil Associates Ltd. in London.

West Texas Intermediate crude for June delivery rose as much as 75 cents to \$71.89 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange and traded at \$71.57 at 10.32 am in London. Prices climbed \$2.08 on Wednesday. Total volume traded Thursday was about 20 percent above the 100-day average. Brent for July settlement added as much as 1 percent to \$78 a barrel on the London-based ICE Futures Europe exchange, after rising 3.2 percent to \$77.21 on Wednesday. The global benchmark crude traded at a \$6.03 premium to July WTI.

Futures for September delivery on

the Shanghai International Energy Exchange rose 2.4 percent to 476.4 yuan a barrel, climbing for a fourth day. That's the longest rising streak in a month.

Iran's Quds Force, which is fighting in Syria, targeted Israeli army positions with 20 rockets, according to a Twitter post by Israel Defense Forces spokesman Jonathan Conricus. While he said several of the rockets were intercepted and there were no casualties, the Israeli media called the confrontation the biggest direct military clash between the two rivals.

Oil prices are also getting a boost as stockpiles continue to shrink. In the US, the Energy Information Administration reported nationwide crude inventories slid 2.2 million barrels last week, in contrast to a forecast for a 1 million-barrel gain in a Bloomberg survey. The crude draw was largely due to a decline in imports, which fell by the most since November 2016. Domestic gasoline and distillate stocks were also eroded.

## India deal done, a look at what Walmart will do next

The sun never sets on Walmart Inc.'s empire, thanks to its network of stores across five continents. But in the span of 10 days, chief executive Doug McMillon has begun dramatically redrawing the retailer's map, and there's likely more to come as it places bets to remain on top.

"All of a sudden, everything is in play," said Dave Marcotte, an analyst at Kantar Retail.

In less than two weeks, Walmart has agreed to cede control of its British business to a competitor and spend \$16 billion to acquire India's e-commerce leader in its biggest-ever deal, fending off Amazon.com Inc. The wheeling and dealing show how McMillon is focusing on high-potential markets like China and India, finding partners to help it battle online and cutting loose middling businesses. He's got more work to do, though, and subpar markets like Brazil and Japan might be next on his list.

Walmart's far-flung international units don't get much attention, but they're important as a source of cash, management talent and ideas that percolate into its core US operations. Sales growth outside the US once topped more than 10 percent annually, adjusted for currency moves, but it's less than half that now as sluggish economies, store closures and fierce competition have taken their toll.

Those pressures -- combined with a US e-commerce business that continues to spill red ink and higher labor expenses from this year's wage hike -- have forced McMillon into hard choices. Some, like



selling the British Asda stores, were welcomed by Wall Street, but Wednesday's deal got a rude welcome from investors, who raised concerns about Flipkart's steep losses and asked whether Walmart's cash would be better spent elsewhere. S&P Global Ratings said the heavy spending to compete with Amazon could threaten Walmart's pristine credit rating.

McMillon defended the Flipkart deal to analysts, saying it was a unique opportunity. He's certainly mindful of past missteps abroad, such as his 2011 decision to buy an unprofitable, second-tier online marketplace in China that's forced the company to play catch-up to Alibaba -- the Amazon of China -- ever since.

Walmart's international reach sprawls across 6,360 stores in about two dozen countries from Argentina to Zambia. Many were acquired during a buying spree from 1999 to 2009, but that era of aggressive flag-planting is long over. Today the international business accounts for less than one-quarter of Walmart's total revenue, down from nearly 30 percent five years ago.

That share will decline

further after Walmart's decision to merge its Asda business in the U.K. with Sainsbury Plc, retreating from a market that was once its shining star abroad. Other moves are expected to follow, as the Asda sale "was the first volley" in a broader reshuffle of Walmart's global holdings, said Mark Stoecle, portfolio manager of the Adams Diversified Equity Fund, which owns Walmart shares.

Stoecle and other investors were encouraged when Walmart's finance chief, Brett Biggs, said in October that he's "open to taking action" to simplify operations. Getting leaner should help Walmart devote more focus and firepower to its escalating battle with Amazon, which is trying to crack categories like food and apparel, long Walmart strongholds. Acquiring e-commerce startup Jet.com two years ago has helped, but the Flipkart deal suggests that future moves will likely come outside the US.

In Brazil, a nation just coming back after a two-year recession and political unrest, Walmart has already closed stores, overhauled management and wound down its e-commerce platform. It's now reportedly considering selling

a majority stake in the unit, which includes a dozen different store types that could easily get broken up by a new owner.

"Would I prefer they take capital out of Brazil and put that toward battling Amazon? Sure," Stoecle said.

Japan is another potential trouble spot. Walmart's big-box, one-stop shopping model has never caught on there, and today its Seiyu chain sits far behind leaders 8&i Holdings Co. and Aeon Co., according to data tracker Euromonitor. As with other Asian markets like China and India, success in Japanese retail is more about clicks than bricks. Walmart has taken steps to improve its digital business, teaming with local player Rakuten Inc. earlier this year to revamp its online grocery service.

"The only route they have to grow that market is online," Kantar's Marcotte said.

Walmart could go further, cutting a deal with Rakuten or another Japanese company that allows it to focus on the online business and lessen its exposure to capital-gobbling traditional stores.

"There's certainly going to be a bright-light audit on Japan," said Bill Dreher, an analyst at Susquehanna International Group. "The growth and margins of Seiyu are underwhelming and we could see something smart being done there."

With Walmart's shares down about 16 percent this year, after two straight years of increases, McMillon needs to cast a bright light across Walmart's entire map.

## Lot of interest in Air India stake sale, says civil aviation secy as deadline looms

There is a great deal of interest for the Air India disinvestment initiative, civil aviation secretary RN Choubey said on Thursday, as the deadline for submission of preliminary bids looms over the corner.

The last date for submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) for the proposed 76% stake sale in the debt-laden airline ends on May 31.

Earlier this month, the government had come out with clarifications related to the disinvestment move.

"There is a great deal of



interest for Air India," Choubey said at the US-India Aviation Summit which commenced on Thursday in Mumbai. He said no American carrier had expressed a formal interest for Air India.

The divestment includes the profit-making Air India

Express and AISATS, an equal joint venture between the national carrier and the Singapore-based SATS Ltd.

The last date for submission of EOIs for Air India disinvestment had been extended to May 31 from the earlier deadline of May 14.

The qualified bidders would now be known on June 15, whereas the earlier date was May 29.

Starting the disinvestment process of the debt-laden national carrier, a preliminary information memorandum for the proposed sale of up to 76% stake in Air India along with management control to private entities was issued on March 28.

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

## Drukpa Order, Ladakh announces the Naropa Fellowship programme for Indian Graduates

The Naropa Fellowship will empower the next generation of leaders to positively impact the Himalayan region

New Delhi, May 10, 2018: The Drukpa Order, which has shaped and contributed to the Himalayan and Central Asian culture and heritage for over a millenium, has launched the Naropa Fellowship programme to develop entrepreneurial skills that will foster a robust socio-economic environment in Ladakh and the greater Himalayas. This modern approach to serving the people of the Himalayas will help ensure that the communities and cultures cradled in the Himalayas thrive for generations to come.

The Naropa Fellowship is a one-year, fully residential, post-graduate, academic programme focused on creating and nurturing

agents of change who will work towards building a sustainable socio-economic environment in Ladakh and the greater Himalayas. It seeks to foster entrepreneurship, retain local talent while preserving the cultural heritage of the region. The fellowship is designed to address the rising challenges of unemployment, lack of training and professional skills, and gradual cultural erosion in Ladakh and the Himalayan societies. The Naropa campus is located at Hemis, a beautiful village in Leh.

The Naropa Fellowship is inspired by His Holiness the Gyalwang Drukpa and co-founded by His Eminence Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche, Spiritual Regent to His

Holiness the Gyalwang Drukpa and Dr. Pramath Raj Sinha, the founding dean of the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, and the co-founder of Ashoka University, Sonapat.

Expanding on the Drukpa Order's centuries old tradition of experiential learning, the curriculum of the fellowship will include entrepreneurship, society and culture, communication skills and personal development tied up with a live project which will engage the fellows in working on sustainable solutions for the local community in Ladakh and surrounding regions with support from faculty which includes industry experts, academicians and prac-

tioners who will guide and instruct the fellows. Speaking on the occasion Dr Pramath Raj Sinha said "The Naropa Fellowship is a wonderful initiative that fosters entrepreneurship, leadership and responsible and sustainable solutions for society. It is a great opportunity for the youth to engage and involve themselves with a programme that develops their leadership skills and prepares them to contribute to their communities".

Speaking on the occasion His Eminence Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche said "Education is the key for creating a sustainable future and finding solutions for the challenges that face us today. The Naropa Fellowship is a step in the

direction of inspiring our youth to take on these challenges, provide leadership and direction to efforts at revitalizing the land, the society and the balance of nature."

Over 40 of the world's leading academics, industry experts and practitioners will guide and instruct the Naropa Fellows as visiting faculty- facilitating professional development and growth. Some of the reputed faculty includes Kenwyn Smith- Professor, University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Policy and Practice, Kathy Dewitte- Dean, Arteveldehogeschool, Belgium, Stuart Hendry- Entrepreneurship Lead Professor, University of Cape Town, Sara J. Corse.

## Rupee slide continues, sheds 10 paise against dollar

The rupee weakened by 10 paise to trade at a fresh 15-month low of 67.37 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday, due to appreciation of the American currency overseas amid sustained foreign capital outflows and soaring global crude prices.

This is the rupee's second straight slide, which dealers say is mostly due to demand for the US currency. However, a higher opening in the domestic equity market capped the losses. The dollar held firm against a basket of currencies overseas after the 10-year US bond yield rose back to the psychologically important 3% mark and investors looked to US consumer price data due later to show an acceleration in inflation.

The rupee had closed 19 paise lower at a 15-month low of 67.27 on Wednesday against the US currency following a surging demand for the dollar as crude oil prices zoomed past \$77 per barrel level.

# IPL 2018: How Ishan Kishan pounded Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens

Kolkata: The transformation of Ishan Kishan took all of one ball on Wednesday. And, as the Mumbai Indians batsman moved from being beaten to belligerent, Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) became increasingly woebegone.

When Kishan, 19, walked in, Mumbai Indians were 62/2 after nine overs in their Indian Premier League (IPL) match at Eden Gardens. Kuldeep Yadav beat Kishan with his first ball after he played for the turn that wasn't. The next ball, in the innings' 10th over, was dispatched for a six. The Kishan charge had begun. Soon, he would have Yadav's number.

By the time he left, after a 21-ball 62 that had five fours and six sixes, Kishan had put Mumbai Indians on way to their third straight win in IPL 2018. "At that stage, he (Kishan) really changed the run rate. He batted well, played some nice shots. We bowled in areas he might have got out but he went over the fielders," said KKR skip-



per Dinesh Karthik.

Kishan said it helped that MI let him bat at the top of the order. "It's given me stability. It's always good for a youngster to bat up the order..."

The role for him here was to hit well, said Kishan.

"The coach (Mahela Jayawardene) said during the timeout 'just be yourself as we need some good hits today'.

Rohit bhai (Sharma) too said 'you know you can hit well'. They knew if I was there, I can get a lot of runs," he added.

After his first scoring shot went for the maximum, Kishan hit three boundaries off Piyush Chawla in the next over, the 11th. He also hit Sunil Narine for a six before being dismissed.

Karthik got Andre Russell back

for the 12th over and Kishan smote him for a boundary on the off-side. When Prasidh Krishna strayed on the leg-side with the fine-leg inside the circle, Kishan hit him for a boundary. This was crisp hitting with all the fearlessness of youth.

One that seems to have had inputs from Jharkhand's biggest sport icon, MS Dhoni. "I get a lot of tips from him... He tells me 'you can take time, read the situation and that in turn should help you build your innings. That is when I feel confident,'" said Kishan.

Kishan's innings was best exemplified by the four sixes he hit off Kuldeep Yadav in the 14th over. "He loves bowling the googly to me. I knew he would come from the pad to get the ball to outside off and get me stumped. My target was that if I get the ball in my arc, I would send it out of the park," said Kishan, who is three seasons old in the IPL and was with Gujarat Lions last term.

# Steve Smith, David Warner cleared to play club cricket in Australia

Banned Australia cricket team players Steve Smith and David Warner could be seen playing club cricket back home soon. However, the third member of the banned trio, Cameron Bancroft, might have to wait longer to start playing.

Steve Smith and Warner received a boost to their chances of playing competitive cricket again after The New South Wales Cricket Association (NSWCA) confirmed it would not stop them from playing grade cricket this season.

Bancroft, on other hand, would require an exemption from The Western Australia District Cricket Council (WADCC) to play for his club in Perth this year.

The Cricket Australia (CA) imposed sanctions on Smith, Warner and Bancroft for their involvement in the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa, barring them from playing international and domestic cricket. But they are eligible to take part in club cricket.

Both NSWCA and WADCC have rules in place which state that a player suspended by Cricket Australia is 'automatically disqualified from participation in WADCC Competitions for the duration of that suspension'. The New



South Wales based club governing body, though, cleared Smith and Warner's names taking into account the CA verdict that explicitly said that banned players are eligible and encouraged to play club cricket.

WADCC, on the other hand, is conducting a meeting of its premier clubs on Monday to determine if Bancroft should be given the similar clearance.

Smith's Sydney team Sutherland and Warner's club side Randwick-Petersham have already extended support to their star players. However, it is learnt that both cricketers won't be considered for leadership positions in their respective clubs this season.

# TIM PAINE DENIES REPORTS OF RIFT WITH DAVID WARNER AFTER BALL-TAMPERING SCANDAL

Mumbai: Tim Paine has rubbished reports of rift between David Warner and other Australian cricket team members following the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa. Like the newly-appointed coach Justin Langer, Paine too has made it clear that he is more than willing to welcome the 31-year-old Warner back to the team once his 12-month ban ends next year.

Australian journalist Robert Craddock, in an interview to SEN radio, had said that Langer's plan to bring Warner back following the end of his ban would only create problems considering "half the players can't stand him" and don't want him in the side.

Paine, though, was all praise for Warner and termed Craddock's comments "off the mark" and "really unfair".

"I certainly like Crash Craddock's writing and when he's on TV I'm a fan of his. But I thought he was a little bit off the mark there and really unfair on David Warner as a person and as a cricketer," Paine was quoted as saying by cricket.com.au. "David is someone who's certainly highly competitive on the field and sometimes that can rub people and oppositions up the wrong way. But within our team he's someone with that energy and competitiveness that we love playing with. They were disappointing comments and it's not the way David is held within our team. "There's a side of David that people don't know - he's very loyal and really caring and a good team man to have around," he added.

Among the banned trio of Steve Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft, Warner drew the maximum amount of flak for his role in the ball-tampering scandal that came to the fore during the Cape Town Test in South Africa in March this year. Apart from receiving severe criticism from cricket fraternity, there were reports of Warner facing alienation from his own team members. Some reports also claimed that Warner had removed himself from the WhatsApp group of the team following the incident.

Later, Cricket Australia (CA) investigation revealed Warner as the mastermind of ball-tampering plan and it was learnt that many Australian cricketers didn't want to play with him again. After returning from South Africa, Warner himself admitted that he may never play for the country again. Paine, however, said all was well between Warner and other members of the team.

"There was maybe a day or two there where guys were in and out of the investigation." But guys in that team get along well and David is a respected member of that team, he always has been. As long as I've been around the team he's been really well liked and really well received by his teammates," he concluded.

# For all its method, Indian Premier League thrives on unpredictability

Indian Premier League (IPL) is like the Indus Valley script, yet to be deciphered. Despite progress and preparation, and serious prayers, IPL cricket is difficult to call. Like the British weather and Indian elections, few get it right, most miss it by a mile. IPL teams are loaded with support staff -- technical experts, video analysts, Moneyball researchers, mental conditioning specialists, talent scouts and analytic gurus.

This bunch is led by high-end coaches and pundits who check every horoscope to ensure the stars are favourably aligned. Yet, all this comes to zero because teams go horribly wrong on players even as auctions appear more fo-

cus. If this was an exact science, there would be no gap between players' price and performance.

No bang for buck Given a chance, teams would happily revisit their auction/retention choices and the fate of those who lucked out (Ben Stokes/D'Arcy Short/Sarfraz Khan/Axar Patel) would be different.

If it was possible to precisely break down IPL, boasts of teams would have come true. Kings XI Punjab once claimed they were lions out on a kill but were embarrassed when the team performed poorly. Same with MI when they announced zamane ko dikhana hai (we will show the world).



Same with KKR's initial boast of jeetbo (we'll win), which came back to bite them. Delhi hired Gary Kirsten and Rahul Dravid but finished last. Point is nothing guarantees success, not Ponting or Warner as mentors, not AB de Villiers/Kohli at the top of the order. No clear favourite

If there was a known formula for success a team would lose and no film would sink at the box office. It's happened so often that teams strong on paper underperform miserably. Pre-tournament favourites do poorly and the wheels come off after a few games. Technical deficiencies of play-

ers are exposed, celebrated foreign batsmen struggle against spin and expensive bowlers fail to make an impact.

This unpredictability of not knowing who will win or what the next ball will do makes IPL hugely exciting. It is a thrill, like ABD hitting one ball over extra cover and the next, similar delivery, over square leg. As IPL is contested by evenly matched teams on a level-playing field (which is why a salary cap) it is impossible to name a clear favourite.

But not everything is uncertain -- there is lot of method in IPL. Teams prepare better, the processes are well defined and much thought is invested into making teams/

players match ready. Practice sessions simulate match situations where batsmen practise hitting sixes and bowlers work hard on nailing yorkers. Captains create customised plans for batsmen, which means Raina/Yuvraj/Sunil Narine will be dealt short balls and midwicket and third man will be placed just right. Similarly, bowling changes are thought through and tactically driven.

The IPL has progressed; tighter games have made the margin of error thin. Team talk is now about 'keeping momentum and executing plans' instead of 'enjoying and expressing myself'.

Still, matches are difficult to call.

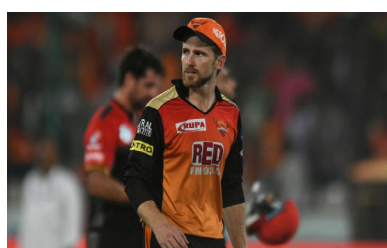
# Kane Williamson among best batsmen in the world: New Zealand coach Mike Hesson

Mumbai: Heaping praise on Kane Williamson and including him in his list of top five current batsmen in the world, New Zealand national team coach Mike Hesson described that country's captain as having the skills to adapt to any format of the game.

The stylish Williamson is leading Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the current Indian Premier League (IPL) 2018 season, and has been inspirational with the bat.

"Any quality batsman, if they have got the skills, will adapt (to) any form of the game and Kane Williamson is no different," Hesson said ahead of the high-flying SRH game against the struggling Delhi Daredevils.

"He does not go out and look to thrash



the ball, but he times the ball, gets in good positions and hits where fielders aren't. (He is) an all-round good player," said the 43-year-old Kiwis' coach, a Star Sports Select Dugout expert of the T20 League.

Williamson has amassed 410 runs from 10 games, scoring five half-centuries. His highest score has been 84.

Asked whether Williamson was the

best batsman in the world, Hesson said, "Look, I wouldn't say that."

But he was quick to add that it was good to have a New Zealand batter among the top five batsmen in the world.

"There are four-five (players) who are extremely good. (India and Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper) Virat Kohli is one, Joe Root (of England) is exceptionally good. Steve Smith (Australia), Kane Williamson, they are probably the four at the moment around the world, and AB de Villiers when he is playing," he said.

"They are good in different conditions (and) they stand out. It's nice to have a New Zealand batsman as one of those top five," said Hesson, who had also coached Kenya.

# IRELAND EXPRESS INTEREST IN TOURING PAKISTAN FOR CRICKET SERIES



Mumbai: In what could be termed a major boost to the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) efforts to regularize the conduct of international cricket matches in the country, Ireland has expressed interest in touring Pakistan for a cricket series in future.

Speaking ahead of Ireland's historic Test debut against Pakistan in Dublin on Friday, Cricket Ireland chief executive Warren Deutrom said that his country is open to the possibility of touring Pakistan.

"We've seen West Indies' recent tour which went well. We've also seen that some PSL matches were held in Lahore and Karachi and went off well. Before taking any decision we will definitely discuss the situation with ICC security and take input from Pakistan itself, but I can see that in the near future, a tour to Pakistan is possible," Deutrom was quoted as saying by Pakistan's Daily Express.

However, the prospect of organising the tour in near future is in doubt considering Pakistan have a packed schedule leading to 2019 ICC World Cup. Their home season this year features an Asia Cup in the UAE, matches against Australia and New Zealand, and the Pakistan Super League (PSL). The team will also travel to South Africa. PCB chairman Najam Sethi, who is travelling to Dublin for the one-off Test, has also made it clear that organising a tour in the next 12 months is going to be difficult. "There is no such item for discussion on my Dublin trip agenda. The fact is that Pakistan has no slot available outside our FTP for the next twelve months," he was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

This is not the first time that Ireland have shown interest in touring Pakistan. Nearly four years ago, they were very close to finalizing a tour to Pakistan but a terrorist attack on the Karachi airport brought curtains down on their plans. Since then, Pakistan have hosted a handful of big games including two PSL finals, two T20I series against a World XI and West Indies, and a solitary T20I against Sri Lanka.

# Ousmane Dembele delights Nou Camp as Barcelona roll over Villarreal

Barcelona forward Ousmane Dembele scored twice and produced a mesmerising display to fire his side to a 5-1 win over Villarreal on Wednesday which stretched the champions' unbeaten run this season to 36 games with two remaining.

Barca's record signing Philippe Coutinho fired the home side ahead in the 11th minute on the rebound after a darting run forward and shot from Frenchman Dembele while midfielder Paulinho finished off a delightful team move to double their lead five minutes later.

Barca's departing captain Andres Iniesta produced the through ball to help create the second goal and he further

delighted the crowd with a crafty first-time pass over the top which Lionel Messi tucked into the far corner on the volley for the third goal at the end of the first half.

Villarreal got a goal back nine minutes into the second period when Nicola Sansone diverted a shot beyond Barca's stand-in goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen, who later blocked a shot from Spain international Rodri on the line with his body.

Dembele grabbed a deserved goal in the 87th by knocking in from close range after a stunning individual run from substitute Ivan Rakitic.

The Croatian coasted past two defenders down the right



wing, knocking the ball past one and through the legs of the other, before laying on the pass for the Frenchman to score.

Dembele, 20, then delighted the home fans with a virtuoso individual run and

stylish dink over goalkeeper Sergio Asenjo to complete the drubbing in stoppage time.

It was the finest display in a Barca shirt from Dembele, who has taken his time to adapt to life in Spain since a 105 million-euro move from

Borussia Dortmund last August, not helped by a long layoff with a serious hamstring injury. "We've talked about him a lot, he has so much talent, technique, he's fast, he has a spark about him, he's two footed. He has it all and he can help us a lot," Barca coach Ernesto Valverde said of Dembele.

"He's young and he has a lot of time ahead of him. Every player needs time to adapt and when you are young you have a lot to learn, but today for his second goal he was incredible."

Valverde started without

Rakitic and striker Luis Suarez while leaving number one keeper Marc-Andre Stegen on the bench for the rescheduled game, which was due to take place on the weekend of the King's Cup final.

His side, however, were still far too good for Villarreal, who are sixth in the Liga standings.

The champions moved on to 90 points, stretching their gap over second-placed Atletico Madrid to 15 points after 36 games.

Barca are two matches away from becoming the first team in La Liga since 1933 to complete a season without losing and the first since the league was expanded from nine teams.