

**Jawan martyred
on LoC in Pak
firing**

JAMMU, JAN 21: An Army jawan attained martyrdom as Pakistan violates ceasefire along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. "Pakistan Army initiated unprovoked and indiscriminate firing of mortars, small arms and automatics from 1620 hours on Saturday in Mendhar sector along the Line of Control (LoC)," defence spokesman said here on Sunday. Indian Army retaliated strongly and effectively.
CONTD ON P-2

**Don't turn J&K into battleground, make it
'bridge of friendship', Mehbooba to India, Pak**

BARAMULLA, JAN 21: Appealing India and Pakistan not to turn the state into a battleground, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said both the neighbouring countries should make Jammu and Kashmir a 'bridge of friendship' between them. "While the whole India is heading towards development, Jammu and Kashmir is treading the opposite path. I appeal to our prime minister and our neighbour Pakistan to make J&K a bridge of friendship between the two countries and not let it become a battleground," Ms Mehbooba said while addressing a function at the passing out parade of Jammu and Kashmir constables at Subsidiary Training Centre at Sheeri in north Kashmir district of Baramulla. "She said our borders are witnessing, god forbid, a bloodbath. "It was the people of J&K who were getting killed in firing on both sides of the border," Ms Mehbooba said. "How painful it is that

when they should be demanding good schools, hospitals and roads, the people of border areas in the State are asking for bunkers to protect their lives", she said while expressing her deep anguish over the loss of lives on the borders during the heavy shelling of past few days. Asserting that Jammu and Kashmir Police have the most difficult job in the country as they face many challenges," she said, "Your challenge is not just to maintain law and order or uphold the rule of law, but you have to face your own people, small children sometimes while maintaining law and order. At that time you will have to exercise maximum restraint." "Police should adopt community policing and a humane approach while dealing with day to day situations," she said, adding efforts should be made to ensure the return back of the local youth to their families and friends
CONTD ON P-2



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti addressing newly recruits of Jammu and Kashmir Police during passing out parade at the Subsidiary Training Centre Sheeri on Sunday.

**Chill continued in Kashmir;
Kargil freezes at minus 20 degree**

SRINAGAR, JAN 21: Despite some improvement, chilly weather conditions continued as night temperature remained below freezing point in Kashmir valley though maximum temperature remained above normal due to sunshine. Meanwhile, people continued to shiver in border town of Kargil, which was the coldest place in the region at minus 20.2 degree, followed by Leh

where mercury dipped and settled at minus 14.6 degree. A Met department spokesperson told UNI that weather will remain dry during the next 48 hours in the state, which could result in further dip in the night temperature. "Skies will be mainly clear during the next 24 hours in Leh, where maximum and minimum temperatures will be around 8 degree and minus 15 degree, respectively. The mercury at world famous health resort of Gulmarg, which is about 55 km from here in north Kashmir, improvement and settled at minus 4.2 degree, against minus 5.5 degree recorded on Saturday. The night temperature at the ski resort was 3 degree above normal. The summer capital, Srinagar, also witnessed
CONTD ON P-2

**Efforts on to showcase Jammu as major
pilgrimage tourist destination: Dy CM**

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: The Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirpal Singh today said that the sustained efforts are underway to make Jammu division as one of the major pilgrimage tourist destination and in this regard necessary mechanism has already been put in place to upgrade the existing infra besides creating awareness about the same in rest of country. The Deputy Chief Minister was speaking

after inaugurating Mathwar festival at Akhnor here today. Vice Chairman Kissan welfare Board, D. S. Chib, Social Activist Mamta Singh, prominent citizens of the area and senior officers of various departments were also present on the occasion. "Akhnor area is of very great historical and cultural importance in the whole of Indian sub-continent and we have already set in process the mechanism which would not only preserve its historicity but also ensure development on the modern lines especially in the tourism and other related sectors," Dr Singh added. Deputy Chief Minister while enumerating the steps undertaken for development of tourism sector said that the Prime Ministers development package envisions for the holistic development of the tourism and the focus
CONTD ON P-2

**Govt committed to make
J&K a progressive state:**

Tassaduq Mufti
SRINAGAR, JAN 21: Asserting that the government is committed to develop Jammu and Kashmir as a progressive state of the country, Minister for Tourism Tassaduq Hussain Mufti stressed on active partaking of all stakeholders to preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of the state. "We have to maintain a balance between development and preservation of our environment and heritage," Mr Mufti said this during a marathon meeting held at S K International Conference Centre (SKICC) here on Saturday. He said that the goal should be to achieve sustainable development for meeting the needs of today, without compromising the needs of tomorrow.
CONTD ON P-2

VC JKPC works in Kathua

KATHUA, JANUARY 21: Vice Chairman Jammu & Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC), Sheikh Khalid Jehangir inspected pace of various ongoing developmental projects of the Corporation in the district. He interacted with officers of JKPC who briefed him about
CONTD ON P-2

**Former J&K DGP releases book suggesting
'Regional Councils' for progress of all 3 regions**

JAMMU, JAN 21: Asserting that establishment of regional councils in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is the only way out for an equitable development of all the three regions of the state, former Director General of Police, J&K M M Khajooria on Sunday released his book titled "Concept and Contours of Regional Autonomy". "Though we are not pitching our voice against any particular region, but the concept of regional autonomy by establishing regional councils is the only way out and lasting solution for an equitable development of all the three regions including Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh," Mr Khajooria told reporters after releasing the book authored by him. The former officer said, "we feel that integrity of the regions must be preserved and this was an idea behind introducing the road map of regional autonomy in the state of Jammu and Kashmir through this book." "The truncated Provinces (Regions) of Ladakh, Jammu and
CONTD ON P-2

**Kashmir highway through for traffic;
Mughal, Leh, Gurez roads closed**

SRINAGAR, JAN 21: Two-way light vehicular traffic continued on Srinagar-Jammu national highway, connecting Kashmir with rest of the country, though heavy vehicles will ply only from one-way. Hundreds of vehicles, including those carrying essentials besides passengers, left Jammu for Kashmir this morning as only one-way heavy vehicular traffic will continue on the highway. Meanwhile, Razdan pass, connecting border

town of Gurez with district headquarters, besides historic Mughal road remained closed due to accumulation of snow and slippery road condition. The 434-km-long Leh-Srinagar national highway, linking the Ladakh region with Kashmir, also remained closed. "We have allowed light vehicular traffic from both sides on 300-km-long Srinagar-Jammu national highway," a traffic official told UNI. However, he said movement of passenger and light motor vehicles coming from Jammu have to pass Nagrota between 0600 hrs and 1000 hrs and Udhampur upto 1100 hrs. Similarly, he said vehicles coming from Srinagar have to pass Levдора in Qazigund between 0700 hrs and 1400 hrs. "No vehicle will be allowed to cross these locations after the designated time," he said. "No Jammu-bound vehicle will be allowed from Pantha Chowk in Srinagar after 1200 hrs to
CONTD ON P-2

Three drug peddlers arrested with poppy straw in Samba

JAMMU, JAN 21: Police arrested three drug peddlers with a contraband of poppy straw in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday. "Police and sleuths of District Special Branch, Ramgarh launched an operation in Vijaypur and arrested three people with poppy straw," police here said. They said that the accused Dilip Raj, Amit Sharma and Sushil
CONTD ON P-2

**Education sector plays vital role in shaping
personality of nation builders: Priya Sethi**

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Minister for Education, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari today asked the teaching fraternity to provide quality education and inculcate moral values in students so that they become responsible citizens of the country. The Minister said this while presenting a large gathering of all heads of private schools during the 2nd State Level Conference held at Teacher Bhawan,

here today. Minister for Forests, Ecology and Environment Choudhary Lal Singh, Minister of State for Education, Tourism and Culture Priya Sethi besides Secretary School Education Farooq Ahmed Shah, Chairperson Board of School Education Veena Pandita, Director School Education Jammu Ravinder Singh and representatives of Private School Associations were present on the occasion. Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari said that Government has decided to introduce music and fine arts subject at Higher Secondary level in addition to string of reforms to improve the school education at all levels with special focus on improvement of elementary education. He said that special focus has been laid on introduction of new range of subjects to make school educa-

tion more vibrant and broad-based. Responding to the issues projected by the representatives of the private schools, the Minister said that Government is serious in solving the issues of private schools. He said that private schools have a key role in education system and Government is making all out efforts to provide full support to the schools.
CONTD ON P-2

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FROM PAGE-1

Jawan martyred...

He said that in the exchange of fire, Signalman Chandan Kumar Rai was grievously injured and succumbed to his injuries at the Military Hospital.

Signalman Chandan Kumar Rai, 25, belonged to Village Nadesar of Sakaldaha tehsil District Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh and is survived by his father Satya Prakash Rai.

Don't turn...

who, unfortunately, have gone on the path of violence. She stressed on a collective mechanism by Police, parents and the society in this regard.

Expressing concern over the rising crimes against women, the Chief Minister asked the Police to deal sternly with those found involved in cases against women. She said the killing of a young girl at Kathua was heart wrenching and the Government has already constituted a Special Investigating Team (SIT) to probe the case.

Complimenting the jawans on passing out into a new field of duty, Mehbooba Mufti asked them to perform their jobs with sincerity and dedication. She said it was a matter of pride that these boys have come through a transparent recruitment process and most of them are highly qualified. But equally, she added, they should use their good backgrounds to ensure that no injustice, however small, is done to a commoner in a routine day to day manner.

In all, 473 jawans passed out today from the Subsidiary Training Centre, Sheeri after completing the Basic Recruit Training Course for Recruit Constables.

Chill continued...

slight improvement in the night temperature though it was 2 degree below normal. Against minus 4.3 degree recorded on Saturday, the night temperature at Srinagar was minus 4.1 degree. The maximum temperature recorded on Saturday was 8 degree above normal in Srinagar.

He said skies will be mainly clear with haze during the next 24 hours in Srinagar, where maximum and minimum temperatures will be around 13 degree and minus 4 degree, respectively.

World famous health resort of Pahalgam, about 100 km from here in south Kashmir, and tourist resort of Kulkernag improved and settled at minus 6.1 degree and minus 1.7 degree, respectively.

However, the mercury at Qazigund, gateway to the valley, and Kupwara in north Kashmir dipped and settled at minus 4.2 degree and minus 4.6 degree, respectively.

Efforts on to...

is also on ensuring that the Jammu division comes up as one of the major destinations of the pilgrimage tourism in the country. He said that the efforts are also on for bringing the other unexplored areas on the tourism map.

"This would also go a long way in promotion the overall tourism in the Jammu division, which would in turn give a fillip to the economy of the areas by way of generating the necessary job opportunities to the people related with tourist activities as well as the youth", he maintained.

Deputy Chief Minister said that these occasions serve as a great opportunity for people to come together and celebrate the festivals and the spirit of India. He said that we should come together and pray for peace in our state and the whole world as well.

Govt committed...

"If we want to call ourselves a progressive society, we should start behaving like one. Our people have placed high hopes in us and we should rise to the occasion so that the future of our state as a clean and green place is preserved, which can attract tourists in large numbers," he added.

Mr Mufti sought suggestions from the officers for the preservation of Chinars. "Infrastructure development should not impact our heritage. Under Specified Trees Act, deterrents must be put in place in the form of a stronger legal framework. The Chinar Development Officer should carry out a physical census to determine the number of Chinars that exist in the State so that a policy can be evolved for their protection," he said.

Underlining the need for a better public transport sys-

tem in Kashmir Valley, particularly in Srinagar city, the Tourism Minister said over 40,000 vehicles were added to the already existing vehicular traffic in last two years in Srinagar alone. "We have to make public transport comfortable, affordable and reliable. Bus stops must be designated and there should be colour coding for vehicles," he said.

Asking the Srinagar Municipal Corporation and the Transport Department to work in tandem with each other, Mr Mufti said the route permits must be regulated to keep vehicles from moving into other areas. "There is a need for proper intersections, pavements and intelligent traffic management in the city for which the government has already hired a consultant and the results are showing up slowly. He also stressed on finding suitable place for vendors to make their lives sustainable.

The Minister was informed that 200 locations have been identified in the city where bus stands will be established which will enable better traffic management. The officers said a roadmap is also being prepared for developing water based transport while nearly seven to ten bridges are required to ease traffic bottlenecks at various places in the city.

The Minister expressed concern over the pollution caused by brick kilns and cement plants, mostly in Budgam and Pulwama districts. He was informed that there are 250 kilns in Budgam of which 51 have been closed down, especially near airport. In Pulwama, of more than 150, only 47 kilns are operational. The concerned departments informed that those kilns are being closed which do not follow norms. The Minister also directed the officers to immediately stop illegal excavation of clay and soil which will have disastrous consequences on the environment.

On the issue of disposal of bio-medical waste, Mr Mufti said the hospitals must train their staff to segregate waste products at the source so that they can be readily disposed off. He said biomedical waste disposal at hospital level should be in accordance to the set guidelines and there is need for more awareness campaigns on segregation and disposal.

The Minister, who is also in-charge of the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell, said people are approaching the cell with the hope of getting their issues resolved and stressed on interdepartmental coordination for the effective redressal mechanism. He, however, warned the officers against providing misleading and false information to nodal officers of the Grievance Cell.

"Basic information must be verified and the concerned officers must personally see to it that the issue flagged by the Grievance Cell are addressed properly," he directed.

He said now on, there will be a monthly review of grievances. "I hope people invest in us and we will try and improve the systems," the Tourism Minister said, adding that the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Baseer Ahmad Khan will hold the meetings in case he is not available.

VC JKPCCC...

progress and other related issues regarding the ongoing projects of the Corporation.

During the inspection, the VC visited approved site for construction of bridge at Jathana. He also inspected work underway on the construction of Government Engineering College Kathua and stressed on timely completion of the works so that students can be facilitated.

On the occasion, Khalid Jehangir directed the officers to ensure that required formalities and procedures for the projects awaiting clearance from various quarters are completed at the earliest so that they are taken up and completed within the stipulated timeframe for the benefit of the people.

Executive Engineer JKPCCC Kathua RK Mansotra, DCM Administration Shanawaz Ahmad and other senior officers of the Corporation accompanied the Vice Chairman.

Former J&K...

Kashmir has certain peculiarities like Ladakh occupying largest chunk of territory with minimum population while the Kashmir the largest in population controls minimum land mass," he said adding that Jammu, on the other has second large population as well as territory. If a particular community has majority in the Region, there are districts under it where the other community has the majority.

"This pattern follows down to Panchayats. This is true of Jammu region. And interestingly the minority in number of district is over 40 percent of the population. The communities are so inter-twined that separation is out of the question. Communal harmony is a necessity." "I am firmly of the opinion that the concept of autonomy in J&K must be circumscribed by three basic pre-conditions. Firstly the integrity of the composite state. Secondly, integrity of three regions and thirdly, fair, equitable and just political, administrative and developmental dispensation rooted in democratic-decentralization"

"Even Delhi is Kashmir centric but Jammu has to raise its voice against decades old discrimination. Time has come when the Jammu and its people are needed to be acknowledged," said the author. "With the creation of Regional Council in the shape and style suggested, can and will lead to better inter-regional co-operation and mutual dependence," he said.

Kashmir highway...

avoid congestion on the highway," he added. He said heavy vehicles will be allowed to ply from Jammu to Srinagar on Sunday. "No movement of load carriers and convoys of Army, and other security force agencies will be from Srinagar to Jammu," he added.

He said hundreds of vehicles, including those carrying essentials, particularly fresh vegetables, left Jammu for Kashmir this morning.

The Ladakh region remained cut off from the Kashmir valley due to closure of the national highway due to accumulation of several feet of snowfall.

The border town of Gurez, surrounded by Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) from three sides, also remained cut-off from the district headquarter Bandipora due to slippery road conditions.

The historic 86-km-long Mughal road, connecting Sholan in south Kashmir with Rajpout and Poonch in Jammu region in Jammu also remained closed due to accumulation of several feet of snow, he added.

Three drug...

Kumar, all residents of Vijaypur were nabbed with 9.5-kg of poppy straw (bhukk).

A case under NDPS Act has been registered and investigation started.

Education sector...

In his address, Choudhary Lal Singh said that the government has taken various initiatives to revive education sector across the State and is upgrading infrastructure in various schools so that students get benefited. He asked the teaching fraternity to provide quality education to the students adding that they are the main architect in shaping the personality of the students.

The Minister further said that it is firm commitment of the government to ensure that this vital sector gets a fillip in all aspects as it forms the basis of a strong nation. He urged upon the school authorities to make sure that their institution serves as a vibrant center of excellence.

Appreciating the role of private schools in spreading education, Choudhary Lal Singh said the private education institutes have done commendable job in providing quality education in the state and some of the institutes have made their name in spreading the light of education. "We appreciate the role of private schools and call upon them to adopt underprivileged children of their areas so that those living below the poverty line can also get access to good quality education," he added. Minister of State for Education, Culture and Tourism Priya Sethi said that Government is keen to provide better education for which a comprehensive plan has been formulated to improve the education standard in the state. She said that Government is making all out efforts to improve education scenario across the State with quality education and latest techniques and infrastructural facilities. She said that education sector has played vital role in shaping the personality of the nation builders.

The Minister said the Government has brought reforms to improve the education delivery system as well as opening of opportunities for perusing education, adding that the concept of remedial classes at evening is one such step taken by the Government to give education aspirants a chance to peruse education at their convenience.

HELPLINE

POLICE STATIONS	
Bagh-e-Bahu	2459777
Bakshi Nagar	2580102
Bus Stand	2575151
City	2543688
Gandhi Nagar	2430528
Gangyal	2482019
Nowbad	2571332
Pacca Danga	2548610
Railway Station	2472870
Sainik Colony	2462212
Satwari	2430364
Channi Himmat	2465164
Transport Nagar	2475444
Trikutra Nagar	2475133
Gandhi Nagar	2459660
SSP City	2561578
SP City North	2547308
SP South	2433778
Public Utility Services	
INDIAN AIR LINES	
City Office	2542735
Air Port	2430449
Jet Air Ways	2453999
City Office	2573399
RAILWAYS	
Railway Enquiry	131, 132, 2476407
Booking	2470318
Reservation	2470315
Public Health Engineering Stations	
Bakshi Nagar	2543557
Gandhi Nagar	2430786
Company Bagh	2542582
New Plot	2573429
Panjiirthi	2547537
Telecommunication Department	
Directory Enquiry	197
Fault Repair	198
Trunk Booking	180
Billing Complaint	2543896
JAMMU MUNICIPALITY	
Jn. Lines	2578503
Administration Officer	2542192
Health Officer	2547440
POSTAL SERVICES	
Head Post Office City	2543606
Gandhi Nagar	2435863
FIRE SERVICES	
Control Room	101,132, 2476407
City	2544623
Gandhi Nagar	2457705
Canal	2554064
Gangyal	2480026
COOKING GAS DEALERS	
Chenab Gas	2547633
Gulmoure Gas	2430835
JAKFED	2548297
HP Gas	2578456
Shivangi Gas	2577020
Tawi Gas	2548455
POWER HOUSES	
Gandhi Nagar	2430180
Canal Road	2554147
Janipur	2533828
Nanak Nagar	2430776
Parade	2542289
Satwari Cantt.	2452813
HOSPITALS	
GMC Hospital	2584290
S.M.G.S. Hospital	2547635
C.D. Hospital	2577064
Dental Hospital	2544670
Gandhi Nagar Hospital	2430041
Sarathi Hospital	2579402
G.B. Pant Cantt. Hospital	2433500
Ayurvedic College	2543661
C.R.P. Hospital	2591105
Acharya Shri Chander	2662536
Mental Hospital	2577444
Swami Vivekanand	2547418
Blood Bank	2547637
Ambulances	2584225, 2575364
Ambulances (Red Cross)	2543739
NURSING HOMES	
Maddan Hospital	2456727
Medicare	2435070
Triveni Nursing Home	2542664
Suvidha Nursing Home	2555965
AI. Firdous Nursing Home	2545500
Astha Nursing Home	2576707
Bee Enn Charitable Trust	2505310
Chopra Nursing Home	2573580
Harbans Singh Mem Hsp.	2541952
Jeevan Jyoti	2576985
Yudhvir Nursing Home	2547821
Mediaid Nursing Home	2466744
Sita Nursing Home	2435007
Vibhuti Nursing Home	2547969
Rameshwar Nursing Home	2580601
Bee Enn Cheritable	2555631
Maharishi Dayanand	2545225

RAILWAY TIMINGS

Train	Train No.	Arrival	Day	Train	Train No.	DEPARTURE	Day
Shalimar Express	14645	5:15 AM	Daily	Shalimar Express	14646	09:00 PM	Daily
Jammu Mail	14033	9:55 AM	Daily	Jammu Mail	14034	04:15 PM	Daily
Jhelum Express	11077	9:20 AM	Daily	Jhelum Express	11078	09:45 PM	Daily
Swaraj Express	12471	2:45 PM	(Tues, Fri, Sat, Mon)	Swaraj Express	12472	11:15 AM	(Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat.)
Sanjodhya Express	12473	2:45 PM	Sun	Sanjodhya Express	12474	11:15 AM	Thur
Happa Express	12477	2:40 PM	THUR	Happa Express	12478	11:15 AM	Mon
Lohit Express	15651	12:15 PM	(Wed)	Lohit Express	15652	10:45 PM	Wed
Himsagar Express	16317	1:45 PM	(Mon)	Himsagar Express	16318	11:45 PM	(Mon)
Gorakhpur Express	12331	12:20 PM	(Mon, Thurs, Sun)	Gorakhpur Express	12332	10:45 PM	(Mon, Thurs, Sun)
Hingiri Express	12597	12:15 PM	(Tuesday)	Hingiri Express	12598	10:45 PM	Sat
Baroni Express	15097	12:15 PM	(SAT)	Baroni Express	15098	10:45 PM	TUE
Pooja Express	12413	07:55 AM	DAILY	Pooja Express	12414	06:15 PM	DAILY
Malwa Express	12919	3:55 PM	DAILY	Malwa Express	12920	09:00 AM	DAILY
Rajdhani Express	12425	05:40 AM	DAILY	Rajdhani Express	12426	07:45 PM	DAILY
Hemkunt Exp	14609	04:30 AM	DAILY	Hemkunt Exp	14610	06:40 PM	DAILY
BTI-JA T Exp	92225	06:15 AM	DAILY	BTI-JAT Exp	92226	09:25	DAILY
AC Special	404A	11:20 AM	Daily except SAT	AC Special	404A	11:25 PM	Daily except SAT
Uttar Samparank Kranti	12445	08:35 PM	Daily	Uttar Samparank Kranti	12446	08:25 PM	Daily
DMU Passenger	2JU	08:35 AM	Mon Tue Wed Thu, Fri	DMU Passenger	3JU	05:20 PM	Daily Except Sat, Sun
DMU Passenger	1PU	07:35 AM	DAILY	DMU Passenger	2PU	05:10 PM	DAILY
Kolkata-JAT EXP	3151	08:30 AM	DAILY	Kolkata-JAT EXP	3151	9:30	DAILY
Archana Exp	12355	10:25 AM	Sun	Archana Exp	12356	08:15 PM	Sun
DMU Passenger	4JU	12:35 PM	DAILY	Madras Janta Exp	6032D	11:45 PM	Tue, Fri, Sat
Sonepur-JAT Exp	2491	11:50 AM	DAILY				
Guwahati Exp	15653	12:15 PM	Fri				
Tata Mori Exp	8101	01:10 PM	DAILY				
Nayudg Exp	16687	01:35 PM	Thu				
Chennai Janta Exp	16031	01:45 PM	Sat, Tue, Fri				
Jammagar Exp	2477	02:45 PM	Wed				
LHP-PKT DMU Passenger	2PU	05:00 PM	DAILY				
JUC-JAT-LHP-DMU	Spl DMU	17:40	Sun only				
ADI-JAT Exp	9223	07:35 PM	DAILY				
LHP-NLDS AS SPL	404A	11:05 PM	Daily Except Saturday				

RAILWAY ENQUIRY

Railway Enquiry 131, 132, 2476407
 Booking 2470318
 Reservation 2470315

AIRLINES TIMINGS

INDIAN AIRLINES FLIGHTS TIMINGS		
Departure	Arrival	
IC-821 AB 330 Daily	12:15 Delhi a.m	Jammu 1:25 p.m
IC-822 AB-320 Daily	2:00 Jammu p.m	Srinagar 2:35 p.m
IC-0450 B-737 (Monday & Friday)	3:10 Srinagar p.m	Jammu 3:45 p.m
	4:20 Jammu p.m	Delhi 5:50 p.m
	07:40 Leh a.m	Jammu 08:40 a.m
	9:20 Jammu a.m	Leh 10:20 a.m
Telephone No. City Booking Office 2542735, 2546006 Airport : 2431433, 2430449.		
JET AIRWAYS FLIGHT TIMINGS		
DAILY	S2 108	B-737-400
DELHI	DEP.	1020Hrs.
JAMMU	ARR.	1130 Hrs.
JAMMU	DEP.	1310Hrs.
SRINAGAR	ARR.	1240 Hrs.
CONTACT US: Address: Airport Director Airports Authority of India Civil Enclave Jammu (J&K) Telephone 91-191-2457943 91-191-2454138, 2452067 Fax: apd_jammu@iaai.aero E-Mail id: apd_jammu@iaai.aero		

Budget Session 2018-19 - LA Proceedings
Sunil tables Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Ordinance 2017 in LA
JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Minister of State for Transport, Sunil Kumar Sharma today laid on the Table of the House a copy of the Jammu and Kashmir Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) ordinance, 2017 (Ordinance No. V of 2017), as required under Section 91 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir in Legislative Assembly.

Placement drive concludes at Govt. Polytechnic Jammu

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Two days Placement drive under Udaan was conducted by Tata Motors at Govt. Polytechnic, Jammu on 18th and 19th January for the post of "Trainee Service Manager" and "Dealer Sales Executive" in which various passed out Diploma Engineer and Graduate Engineer in Mechanical, Electrical and Automobile branches as well as other graduates and post Graduates appeared.

Swati Jha, Senior Manager Skill Development & Training in Tata Motors, Gurugram, Haryana along with her team members conducted the placement drive. Pre-counseling placement session was also conducted for the students to give them exposure including brief introduction about Tata Motors which was followed by general Aptitude test and personal interview. The placement drive received an overwhelming response and more than 100 students from the various institutions appeared for placement and finally 34 candidates were selected. The selected candidates will undergo training on Technical & Managerial Skill Development in first six months in reputed Education school and Tata Motors training centre at Bangalore. After successful completion of training, they will be placed in the set up along with the initial salary of Rs.15000/- per month. Er. Arun Bangotra, Principal of the college thanked Tata Motors for providing the job opportunity to the Polytechnic and other students. He suggested the students to make full use of their technical skills for employability to various organizations and stressed on the importance of campus placement drives. The Placement drive was organized under the supervision of Training and Placement cell of Polytechnic Jammu, Rajesh Khajuria Training and Placement Officer, Er. Deepak Gupta, Er. P. K Angral and Er. Atul Sudan.

GDC Majalla organizes Yoga camp Cum Education training programme

UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 21: One day Yoga camp Cum Education training programme was organized by Government Degree College, Majalla in collaboration with Patanjali Yog Peeth, Udhampur under the chairmanship of principal of the college Kusum Gupta here today. While addressing the camp, Principal of the college, congratulated Patanjali Yog Peeth Udhampur for organizing the Yoga camp. She said that Yoga reduce the stress, improves health and over all personality of the person.

During the event various Yoga Asanas were demonstrated by the Yoga experts Yashpaul Khajuria and Yoga Pracharak district Udhampur. He also provided valuable information about benefits of yoga.

ADDC Ramban finalizes R-Day arrangements

RAMBAN, JANUARY 21: To finalize the arrangements for the celebration of Republic Day-2018 Additional District Development Commissioner, Ramban Ravinder Nath Sadhu held a meeting of officers here today. Assistant Deputy Commissioner Gurvinder Jit Singh, Additional Commissioner Revenue Vivek Puri, XENs, CMO, DYSSO and officers of various departments were present in the meeting. It was informed in the meeting that the venue of the function will be District Police Line Ground at Chandrod where the National Flag will be unfurled by the chief guest at 9:55 AM. The VIP will take salute followed by the parade comprising seventeen contingents including Jammu and Kashmir Police, IRP, CRPF, Forest Protection Force, NCC cadets and school children. Colorful cultural programmes will also be presented by the students. Issues regarding security, seating arrangements, transport, drinking water and electricity supply, barricading, traffic regulation, illumination of important buildings, medicare and sanitation were discussed in the meeting.

The ADDC directed the concerned officers to ensure attendance of their staff and better coordination to put in place the requisite arrangements for making national function a grand success.

SDM Mendhar finalises

Republic day arrangements

POONCH, JANUARY 21: SDM Mendhar Rahul Yadhav convened a meeting to finalize the arrangements for Republic day celebrations.

It was decided in the meeting that the main function would be held at Government boys higher secondary school Mendhar, where the National Flag would be unfurled by the Chief Guest followed by march past by contingents comprising of JK police and students.

Threadbare discussions were held on various arrangements regarding smooth celebrations of national function including seating, barricading, drinking water and power supply, sanitation, first-aid, security, transport, traffic regulation, prize distribution at the venue.

Among others Tehsiladars, Block Medical Officer Mendhar, Naib Tehsiladar, AEE PWD, Principal of GDC Mendhar, Principal HSS boys and other officers of sub-division Mendhar were present in the meeting.

Forward areas of 5 districts affected by sudden spurt in cross-border firing: Govt

'ADMINISTRATION TAKING ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO AVOID FURTHER LOSS OF LIFE, DAMAGE TO PROPERTY'

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: The Government today informed the House that there has been sudden spurt in firing from across the border along the International Border and Line of Control during the past few days in Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Rajouri and Poonch districts.

Responding to the concern expressed by the members over the loss of human lives, livestock and damage to the properties in border shelling, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Abdul Rehman Veeri informed the House that the district administrations of the affected districts including Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Rajouri and Poonch are taking all possible measures to avoid further loss of life and property. He said alternate arrangements have also been made for boarding and lodging of the affected population.

The Minister said that there has been colossal damage in the affected border areas and the concerned Deputy Commissioners have been asked to sanction ex-gratia/compensation as per the NDRF norms to the affected persons. He said the situation is being monitored closely and the State Government is taking all steps to provide the required support to the affected persons.

Veeri said as per the recent decision conveyed by the Union Ministry of

Home Affairs, the relief and compensation for house damages, crop/livestock losses, relief for stay at relief camps and displacement etc is payable at the rates equal to NDRF that are fixed from time to time.

He said further Rs 50 lakh has been provided out of the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for meeting the cost of treatment/medicines for the injured cattle/livestock. Besides, several teams have been constituted for the survey/treatment of the affected livestock/cattle.

Jammu Giving district-wise details of the losses in cross-border shelling, the Minister said that on January 17, 2018 at around 2230 hours, the Pakistani Rangers started indiscriminate firing in R S Pura Sector of district Jammu, which was retaliated by BSF 78 Bn.

During the firing, he said, one BSF personnel namely, HC Suresh Kumar of Tamil Nadu died on the spot and one constable namely, Dubraj Marmar of Orissa sustained injuries. The injured was shifted to GMC Jammu for treatment, he said.

He said Pakistani Rangers had also started indiscriminate firing again on January 17, 2018 at around 2355 hours in Arnia Sector of Jammu which was retaliated by

BSF.

During firing, he said, one civilian namely Neelam Kumari @ Sweety (19 years) died and 3 civilians namely, Romesh Lal, his wife Chanchala Devi and Darshan Lal, residents of Arnia sustained injuries and were shifted to GMC Hospital Jammu for treatment.

He said firing from both the sides again started on January 18, 2018 at around 0500 hours. During this firing, he said, two civilians namely Sahil Kumar and Bacchino Devi died on spot while 16 civilians sustained injuries. He said the injured have been shifted to GMC, Jammu for treatment.

The Minister said ex-gratia of Rs 1 lakh each has been sanctioned in favour of the deceased civilians. An ex-gratia of Rs 5000 each has been sanctioned in respect of the injured persons, as an immediate assistance.

He said DC Jammu and his officers have visited both Arnia and R S Pura. Schools in affected villages are closed. 700 people have been shifted to safer places. 129 animals have died and 93 animals have been injured.

The Minister said that on January 19, 2018 at around 0645 hours, Pakistani Rangers started indiscriminate firing in RS Pura and Arnia Sectors. Further, on the intervening night of 19 and 20 January, due to indiscriminate firing from

across the border at Khour sector one Army Jawan namely Lance Naik Shyam Abraham was killed and 2 BSF personnel namely HC Naresh Kumar and Constable Ashwani Kumar sustained injuries.

He said on 19/20-01-2018, at about 1900 hours, Pak Rangers again started indiscriminate firing in Kanachak sector, which was retaliated and firing is still going on. During firing, one SSB personnel namely Constable Lalu Ram Yadav of F-Coy attached with 1/6 Kanachak got injured and one civilian namely Billu aged about 42 years S/O Mansa Gujjar R/O Kanachak also received injuries. Both the injured persons were shifted to GMC Hospital, Jammu for treatment.

He said on 19/20-01-2018, at about 1910 hours, Pak Rangers started indiscriminate firing in Akhnoor sector, which was going on till the last reports.

The Minister said that on 19/20-01-2018, at about 1945 hours, Pak Rangers started indiscriminate firing at Makwal Forward, sector Satwari manned by BSF 127/89 Bn, which was retaliated. Firing from both the sides stopped today on 20-01-2018, at about 0900 hours. However, no loss has been reported so far.

Samba
The Minister said on

January 18, 2018 firing started in Samba sector at around 0130 hrs and two persons namely Suresh Kumar S/O Bhola Ram and Puneet Choudhary S/O Suresh Kumar, both residents of Kamour Camp got injured. On January 19, 2018 at around 0700 hours, Pakistani Rangers started indiscriminate firing in Ramgarh sector manned by BSF in which two civilians namely Nanak Raj and Ranjeet Singh sustained injuries.

He said the injured persons have been provided immediate relief @ Rs 5000 each. He said 211 persons have been shifted from Ramgarh to safer places. Schools in affected villages are closed. DC Samba and other officers have visited Ramgarh. He said Minister for Industries and Commerce has also visited Ramgarh.

Kathua
The Minister said that on January 19, 2018 firing started in Chadwal and Hiranagar sectors of Kathua district, in which 09 civilians got injured. He said the injured have been shifted to District Hospital Kathua for treatment. He said the schools in affected villages are closed and 160 persons have been shifted from Pansar Manyara to Hiranagar. He said the reports regarding cattle loss are being collected.

Rajouri
The Minister said that on 19-01-2018, at about 1840 hours, Pak rangers started

indiscriminate firing at LoC manned by Army, which was retaliated. Firing from both the sides stopped at about 1915 hours, and fortunately no loss of life has been reported, he said.

Poonch
The Minister said that on 19.01.2018 at about 1735 Hours Pak Army started indiscriminate firing in Balakote sector in which one civilian namely Mohammad Sadam aged about 26 years S/O Mohammad Iqbal Khan R/O Dabbi Triyathi, Balakote got injured and was shifted to District Hospital Rajouri for treatment. However, firing from both sides stopped at about 2130 hours, he said.

He said on 19-01-2018, at about 1805 hours, Pak Army started indiscriminate firing in Mankote sector manned by Army, which was retaliated. Firing from both the sides stopped at about 1955 hours. During the firing, he said, dry grass belonging to one Fazal Hussain S/O Jamma R/O Debraj, Mankote was killed.

He said on 19-01-2018, at about 2000 hours, Pak Army started indiscriminate firing in Bandi Chechian sector manned by Army which was retaliated. Firing from both the sides stopped today on 20-01-2018, at about 0500 hours and fortunately, no loss has been reported so far, he said.

Students of B.A Part 2 pestering for study material: Seeks Guv's intervention, NSF

DDE UNABLE TO PROVIDE, EXAM IN MID FEBRUARY, ALLEGES SINGH

JAMMUC, JAN. 21: Height of helplessness can be gauged from the fact that students of BA part 2 slated to appear in examination in mid February is still hankering, left and right frantically for getting study material from the Directorate of Distance Education thus manifesting its negligence and non-seriousness towards the basic interests of students.

This was stated by Papinder Singh, State Vice-President, National Secular Forum (NSF) in a press conference today who mocked at the ill intention of Prof Ramji Dass Sharma VC who has engaged himself in an act of wrong doings during his tenure and never

hesitated to support and shelter staff members to watch their interests.

Papinder Singh informed that although the session 2017-18 is at its fag end with students in various disciplines of the varsity studying hard to appear in their ensuing examinations, the students of DDE who have deposited huge fee for getting enrolled in BA Part 2 have not been provided the study material so far which is mandatory on the part of DDE authorities.

Papinder Singh aggrieved students rued the careless attitude of the department saying that DDE is supposed to provide study material to students even before the conduct of PCP Classes,



but surprisingly DDE conducted the PCP Classes without providing relevant study material which has seriously affected their pace of study throughout the session.

He revealed that PG in Political Science and Economics could not find places in administration

expected to resume this session, but they found no mention in the notification issued by the directorate.

Papinder Singh further informed that whole system of administrative set up under the administrative control of Prof Ramji Dass Sharma Vice Chancellor of Jammu University has landed into hatch patch with DDE. He has ultimately failed to protect the interests of students belonging to far flung areas for which DDE has been put in place and crises are being spent by the government for its survival and other expenses.

Papinder Singh were of the considered view that the next higher authority should intervene and

look into the sorry state of affairs prevailing in the Directorate of Distance Education otherwise the academic career of these students is bound to suffer badly beyond recovery.

Papinder Singh appealed the Chancellor of Jammu University to intervene and smash the nexus between these coordinators, Director DDE and VC who are hell bent to discourage and spoil the precious period of students for pursuing their studies in Directorate of Distance Education, University of Jammu.

Among those who were present in the press-conference included, Manmohan Singh, Istaq Naik and Rishikesh Rana.

DC finalises R- Day celebration arrangements at Udhampur



UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 21: To finalize the necessary arrangements for the celebration of Republic Day 2018 a meeting of District Officers was held under the Chairmanship of District Development Commissioner, Udhampur, Ravinder Kumar.

Threadbare discussions were held on various arrangements related to the smooth conduct of the function like seating, barricading, drinking water and power supply, sanitation, first-aid,

security, transport, traffic regulations and refreshment to students participating in the National function.

It was decided in the meeting that the day would start with playing of Shretnai Vadan from 6:30 am. at stipulated places by the District Information Centre, followed by flag hoisting by VIP at PG Degree College for Boys, Udhampur at 9:55 AM and march past by the contingents of District Police, SKPA, NCC, and school children of various educational institu-

tions. Cultural programmes, Skits and physical display by school students would also be presented.

DC asked the concerned officers to ensure better coordination for making effective arrangements pertaining to their departments for the function. The meeting was attended by, Senior Superintendent of Police, Rayas Bhat, Addition District Development Commissioner, Arvind Sharma, Additional Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal, PO ICDS Rimpay Chit, PO IWMP Sushil Kesar, Joint Director Planning Ashok Khajuria, Chief Education Officer JR Bhandarwaj Chief Medical Officer Dr. KC Dugga, ARIO Kulraj Singh besides Desat Heads of various departments, representative of schools and colleges were present in the meeting.

ADDC discusses action plan for integrated pulse polio immunization



REASI, JANUARY 21: Additional District Development Commissioner, Ramesh Chander held a meeting to discuss the action plan for Polio Immunization (IPI) Round-1 campaign here today.

The meeting was attended by ADC Babu Ram, PO ICDS Surinder Mohan, Chief Medical Officer Dr. L.D. Bhagat, DSWO, Kulraj Singh, ARTO Shami Sharma, DHO Dr. Amit Bajaj, BMOs, CDOs and other officers and officials of health department.

Threadbare discussion was held on man power and logistic requirements for Intensified Pulse Polio Immunization program. The ADDC asked the doctors to

ensure cent percent coverage so that no child be left out unimmunized in the district.

Earlier, it was informed by CMO that the campaign is being launched on 28 of January through which a total number of 59948 children up to 5 years would be immunized for which 364 booths shall be set up and 18 transit and 12 mobile teams have been constituted. He further informed that the services of 79 supervisors, 1645 workers and 08 district monitors would be utilized to complete the task. It was also given out that a cell has also been constituted for better coordination during the campaign.

SC sets aside Himachal HC order on strictures against judicial officer

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: The Supreme Court has set aside the order of the Himachal Pradesh High Court by which action was recommended against a judicial officer for granting bail to an accused within four days of rejection of his pre-arrest bail by a higher court.

The high court had termed the action of the magistrate as "judicial impropriety" and "gross indiscipline" and recommended the chief justice to take appropriate action on the administrative side.

It had set aside the order of magistrate and cancelled the bail plea of an accused, arrested for allegedly giving fake educational degrees to students for money. A bench of Justices A K Sikri and Ashok Bhushan said the approach of the high court was "erroneous in law" and set aside the order of single judge of the high court. "Merely, because an application for anticipatory bail preferred by the appellant was rejected, it could not be said that thereafter the magistrate was precluded from even considering the application for grant of regular bail," the bench said. The top court said, "The grounds for grant of anticipatory bail are altogether different from that of regular bail."

"No doubt, anticipatory bail was rejected on August 26, 2016 and within four days thereafter regular bail was granted. However, the high court could not have

cancelled the bail, only on the ground that the anticipatory bail was rejected," it said. It said that the high court was also wrong in observing that in the circumstances the only remedy for the accused was to approach the high court alone "as if he was precluded from filing an application for regular bail before the magistrate". Advocate D K Thakur, appearing for the Himachal Pradesh government, claimed that the accused had threatened the complainant immediately after coming out on bail.

The top court said it was an event that occurred after the accused came out on bail and could be a ground which could be raised by the complainant before a trial court for cancellation of bail.

An FIR was lodged at Dharmsalaha police station of Kangra district in Himachal Pradesh. The accused Chandar Khat was charged with the offences of forgery, criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust and other sections of IPC. After registration of the FIR and when the probe was pending, the accused had moved high court seeking anticipatory bail, which was dismissed on August 26, 2016.

Thereafter, the accused was arrested and taken into police custody. After his police remand got over, he moved a regular bail application, which the judicial

officer allowed and enlarged him on bail on August 30, 2016.

Bellandur Lake Fire Doused, Cooling Operations Underway

The complainant challenged the order of magistrate granting bail to the accused before the high court, on June 2, 2017, after seeking explanation, passed various strictures against the judicial officer.

The judicial officer in his explanation to the high court had said there were "direct or indirect directions to grant bail liberally. Taking into consideration that anticipatory bail has been rejected but now as the accused remanded to custody and opportunity was given to police for custodial interrogation and recovery, I considered it to be a changed circumstance".

However, the single judge in his order said, "To my mind, the action of the magistrate is clearly subversive to judicial discipline and amounts to gross impropriety because so long the order passed by this court was in force, the magistrate could not have entertained the application for bail much less granted the bail."

The high court said, "Judicial discipline requires decorum known to law which warrants that the appellate directions should be followed in the hierarchical system by the court which exists in this country."

Taking adequate steps to ensure fair polls: Nagaland CEO

KOHIAMA, JAN 21: The election department in Nagaland is taking adequate measures to ensure free and fair polls on February 27. Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Abhijit Sinha has said.

Addressing a press meet on Friday, Sinha expressed hope that the voters will be exercising their franchise in an ethical and informed manner without being intimidated or influenced.

The final electoral rolls, published last week, has names of 11, 89,264 voters – 6, 00,536 male and 5, 88,728 female.

"Of the 2194 polling stations in the state, 49 are in urban areas and 1735 in rural areas," he said, adding that 1,048 polling stations have been declared critical,

519 vulnerable and 617 normal. The Photo Electoral Rolls (PER) coverage in the state stands at 99.99% and Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) coverage at 96.95%.

"The identification of voters at the polling booths is mandatory. Those provided with EPIC will have to furnish the details at the booth," Sinha said, urging all standard electors to obtain their EPIC from the registration officers of their constituencies.

Elaborating on the security measures, he said, 273 companies of Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) along with 58 companies of State Armed Police Force and 5,698 personnel of District Executive Force will be deployed to

maintain the law and order situation.

Apart from that, 94 static check posts will be set up alongside 94 static surveillance teams and 180 flying squad teams, the CEO said.

Notifying that the Rs 20 lakh is the ceiling for expenditures by every candidate, Sinha expressed hope that all political parties in the state will be adhering to the norms.

The constituency with least number of voters is 27-Mokokchung Town and the one with maximum number of electorates is 4th Ghaspani-I, he said.

Bellandur Lake Fire Doused, Cooling Operations Underway

"Besides Electronic Voting Machine, the state will also have provisions for Voter-verified paper

audit trial machines in all the polling stations," the CEO told reporters.

At present, campaigns, designed under ECI's Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation programme, are being conducted across the state, Sinha said.

Asked if there is a fear of poll process disruption with tribal organizations and civil societies seeking a solution to the decades-old Naga political issue before the elections, the CEO said the term of the present assembly is coming to an end and the schedule was announced as mandated by the Constitution of India.

He appealed to all sections of the society to cooperate with the election officers for the successful completion of the poll process.

Bombay HC raps Maha govt for not effectively implementing Disaster Management Act

MUMBAI, JAN 21: The Bombay High Court pulled up the Maharashtra government for not effectively implementing provisions of the Disaster Management Act and directed it to take effective steps to set up the District Disaster Management Authority in Mumbai expeditiously.

A division bench of Justices A S Oka and M S Sonak directed the government to set up the authority in Mumbai and suburban Mumbai by January 31.

The court was hearing a PIL filed by Sanjay Lakhe Patil, president of NGO "Marathwad Anushesh Nirman Aam Vikas Manch", on the issue of drought faced by farmers in parts of the state every year

due to deficient rainfall. The petition sought direction to the government to implement the Disaster Management Act 2005 and also sought to know the measures taken by it for drought mitigation.

The DMA, a central legislation, provides for effective management for disasters, both natural and man-made.

The bench on Friday in its order noted that while the government had earlier claimed that the District Disaster Management Authorities were constituted in all districts, it later admitted that such authorities are yet to be constituted in the districts of Mumbai and suburban Mumbai.

that Mumbai and suburban Mumbai are prone to severe significant disasters both natural and man-made. Flooding during the monsoons is a perennial disaster in respect of which no effective steps appear to have been taken under the framework of the DMA," it said. There were issues of collapse of dilapidated buildings, bridges and so on which were a common occurrence in the districts of Mumbai and suburban Mumbai, the bench noted.

"The population pressure is of such high density that serious measures under the DMA are an absolute imperative, if, disasters in the happening are to be tackled with some degree of seriousness under the statu-

tory framework of DMA.

"For a period of twelve years since the DMA has entered into force, we find that there is no District Disaster Management Authority even constituted for the districts of Mumbai and suburban Mumbai," the bench said.

Bellandur Lake Fire Doused, Cooling Operations Underway

On the issue of drought, the court directed the State Disaster Management Authority and the State Executive Committee to undertake the exercise of reviewing and updating the State Disaster Management Plan particularly in the matter of tackling "drought" or "drought-like" situation in the state in three months.

Indian constitution is the greatest public policy, says Justice Chelameswar

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: Justice Chelameswar, one of the top four judges who dissented against the Justice of India over allocation of cases, on Saturday asked the youth to value the constitution, the biggest public policy document which was prepared after sacrifices of numerous freedom fighters. Chelameswar said, "The greatest public policy is the Indian constitution itself and the centre which created it is the Constituent Assembly."

Talking about the relevance of the constitution and the hard labour that went into formulating the document, Justice Chelameswar said that the wide range of knowledge of each member of the constituent assembly and the great experience which the members of the constituent assembly had, enriched the constitutional document



while creating a structure, giving clear guidelines as to how the political future of the country should be.

Addressing a gathering at the inauguration of a department in an educational institution, Justice Chelameswar said: "But so long as we are governed by the constitution, our policy-making should be subject to the broader constituents governing us." Calling Justice Chelameswar as the "Sanjay" in the court, former CJI Justice M N

Venkatachalaiah said "Justice, truth and courage are the companions of his soul. It is impossible to assess the dimensions of his personality."

Amid growing concerns over the functioning of the apex court, following a revolt by the top judges against the Chief Justice of India, CJI Dipak Misra met with the four judges and a discussion was carried around the changes suggested by the four judges of the court.

Four SDPI workers arrested in ABVP activist's murder case in Kannur

KOCHI, JAN 21: Four workers of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), the political arm of the Popular Front, have been arrested by the police for alleged involvement in the killing of ABVP activist Shyam Prasad in Kannur district of the state.

Prasad, an ABVP activist studying at the Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) in Peravoor, was riding a motorcycle on Friday when he was waylaid by some youths in a car. Though he tried to take shelter in a house nearby, the gang followed him and hacked him to death. Police say Prasad's murder was an act of retaliation following an attack on an SDPI worker allegedly by RSS workers in the area last week. A school bus driver, the SDPI activist is recuperating in a hospital.

Police say the four SDPI workers—Salim Hamza, Ameer Abdul Rahman, Muhammad Basheer and Shaheem Shamsudeen—have confessed to committing the murder. Basheer is also accused in the murder of CPM worker Naroth Dileepan. Police have been able to retrieve the weapons used in the murder. The accused were arrested from Thalappuzha in neighbouring Wayanad district based on the inputs of the eye-witnesses.

Maharashtra Minister Chandrakant Patil apologises to BJP workers for comment

MUMBAI, JAN 21: Maharashtra Minister Chandrakant Patil has issued a written apology to BJP workers for his comment that it has become difficult to find people with "high character" for important posts. Patil, a member of the BJP, said the comment was not directed at party workers and indicated it was general in nature.

Speaking at a conclave of teachers at Majalgaon in Beed district on December 25, the revenue minister had said it has become difficult to find people of "high character" for various important posts. The remark was construed as being against BJP workers aspiring for various posts in the organisation and caused



resentment in the party rank and file. "I did not mean to hurt the sentiments of party workers. If there is any misunderstanding, I tender an apology," Patil said. The Cabinet minister, in his apology letter said, the country is progressing fast and new employment opportunities are being created.

"Now, the true test is about character building. It has become difficult to find people of high character for important posts. It is the duty of teachers to create people of high character and integrity," he said. The letter is published in the latest edition of "Manogara", a fortnightly magazine of the state BJP.

Lockheed Martin proposes making fighter jets in India, says will give unique boost to Indian industry

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: Proposing to manufacture custom-built F-35 fighter jets in India, American aerospace and defence company Lockheed Martin said that it will give a unique opportunity to the Indian industry to become part of the world's largest fighter aircraft ecosystem.

"The India-specific fighter on offer and its programme's size, scope and success will enable Indian industry to take advantage of unprecedented manufacturing, upgrade and sustainment opportunities well into the future. The platform will give Indian industry a unique opportunity to become a part of the world's largest fighter aircraft ecosystem," PTI quoted Vivek Lall, vice president, strategy and business development, at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics as saying.

"We plan to introduce two new words into the lexicon of international fighter aircraft manufacturing: 'India' and 'exclusive'," he said.

Lall further said, "India-specific state-of-the-art fighter production in India will be exclusive, something that has never before been presented by any other fighter aircraft manufacturer, past or present. There will also be a significant export market available for Indian-made fighters." The fighter being offered specifically to India is uniquely the best state-of-the-art fighter," he said adding that all three variants of the F-35 are single-engine aircraft.

Claiming that no other advanced fourth generation platform has ever inched closer to matching the record of real-world combat experience and proven

operational effectiveness, Lall said, "We intend to create far more than an 'assembly line' in India."

Many of the systems used on the India-specific platform are derived from key lessons learned and technologies from Lockheed Martin's F-22 and the F-35, the world's only operational fifth generation fighters, he said.

Northrop Grumman's advanced APG-83 Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar on the F-16 Block 70 provides F-16s with fifth generation fighter radar capabilities by leveraging hardware and software commonality with F-22 and F-35 AESA radars, he added.

The APG-83 radar shares more than 95 per cent software commonality with the F-35 radar and more than 70 per cent hardware commonality, Lall said the F-16

provides the path to business relationships with Lockheed Martin, the only company in the world that has designed, developed and produced operational fifth generation fighter aircraft.

Technology improvements will also continue to flow between the F-16, F-22 and F-35 for decades, at a fraction of the cost to F-16 operators, he said.

The platform being offered provides unmatched opportunities for Indian companies of all sizes, including micro, small & medium enterprises (MSMEs) and suppliers throughout India, to establish new business relationships with Lockheed Martin and other industry leaders in the US and around the globe. Lall said giving an insight into the offer being made by his company.

AIADMK to write to Election Commission to disqualify Puducherry MLAs 'holding office of profit'

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: The AIADMK Saturday said it would seek disqualification of ruling Congress and DMK legislators in Puducherry "for holding office of profit," in view of the Election Commission's decision to disqualify 20 AAP MLAs in New Delhi on similar grounds. Addressing reporters here, the party's legislature wing leader A



Anbalagan said the "office of profit" axe has fallen on 20 AAP MLAs in New Delhi with EC sending its recommendation to the President, suggesting their disqualification.

"The development in New Delhi is directly applicable to Puducherry where the legislators belonging to the ruling Congress and its ally the DMK are holding 'office of profit' such as chair-

men of government-owned undertakings and Parliamentary Secretary," he alleged.

Anbalagan said AIADMK will give 15 days time to the MLAs "to relieve themselves of posts of chairman and Parliamentary Secretary" as to remain only as legislators as his intention is not to disturb them.

The party would send a petition to ECI after the lapse of 15 day-deadline, he added. While one Congress legislator is the parliamentary secretary to Chief Minister V Narayanasamy, two DMK members and five belonging to the Congress had been appointed chairmen of statutory bodies here.

The Election Commission had yesterday recommended to the

President the disqualification of 20 MLAs of Aam Aadmi Party for holding office of profit, setting the stage for their ouster from the New Delhi Assembly.

Questioning the move to associate Puducherry BJP President V Saminathan with the inauguration of a Passport office in Karaikal, the AIADMK leader said, "Narayanasamy had not registered protest against inclusion of the name of BJP president in both the official invitation and also the plaque erected at the venue of the function."

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had unveiled the plaque of the Post Office Passport Seva Kendra in Karaikal yesterday. Anbalagan also claimed that there were several lapses in the protocol to be adopted in a government function.

Dy CM pays homage to martyred solider



JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh paid homage to the Head Constable, Jagpal Singh of 173 Battalion BSF who attained martyrdom in cross border firing.

Speaking during wreath laying ceremony, Dr Singh said that the sacrifices rendered by valiant our soldiers would be remembered for ever inspiring the young generation to serve the cause of nation.

IG BSF Ram Awtar, IGP Jammu, S.D Singh, other senior officers of BSF and police also paid homage to the martyred soldiers.

Kohli takes stock of situation in shelling affected areas of R S Pura

REVIEWS VETERINARY SERVICES FOR INJURED LIVESTOCK



JAMMU, JANUARY 21: for Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries, Abdul Gani Kohli today took stock of situation in shelling affected areas of R S Pura.

The Minister took stock of the injuries and fatalities caused to livestock and directed the Animal Husbandry department to keep Veterinary teams stationed in the firing hit areas for instant treatment of cattle. He also directed them to keep sufficient stock of medical aid and medicines in all affected areas.

MLA RS Pura Gagan Bagat, MLC Charanjit Singh Khalsa, Director

Animal Husbandry Jammu, ADC Jammu and other senior officers of district administration accompanied the Minister during the tour.

The Minister expressed shock over loss of lives of BSF personnel, and civilians. He paid tribute to the Martyrs and expressed

sympathies with the bereaved families.

Meanwhile, the Minister convened a meeting with the officers of district administration at Sub Divisional Magistrate Office, R S Pura and directed the concerned to ensure timely evacuation and rescue of civilians.

He also directed the officers to provide ration, medicine and other essential commodities to the people displaced due to shelling.

The Minister was informed that 25 to 30 Veterinary Doctor Teams have been deployed at various places along the

International Border including R S Pura, Arnia and Ramgarh sectors to ensure early treatment to the livestock. Kohli also asked them to conduct door to door visits in the affected areas to provide medical care to injured cattle and other animals. It was informed that 233 animals were killed and 370 injured since April 2017 to January 19, 2018 due to Pakistan shelling.

Earlier, Kohli visited Chakroli Village and interacted with the local people. The people put forth problems caused due to shelling and sought early

redressal of the issues. The Minister assured them that every possible help will be provided by the Government to the affected people including ration, medicines and other facilities like tents. He said that the instructions have been issued to the Animal Husbandry Department to provide fodder for animals in the affected areas.

Later, the Minister visited R S Pura Hospital and enquired about the facilities available for the treatment of the injured persons. The Minister asked the Management to take good care of the patients.

Ansari, Haq inaugurate state of art Fitness Centre in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21: Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Imran Raza Ansari and Minister for Rural Development, Abdul Haq today inaugurated a Gym at Rajbagh here.

The Gym is first of its kind in the state with professionally designed equipments and all advanced fitness programmes. The Ministers interacted with the members of fitness centre who appraised the Ministers about various facilities available for the people in the centre.

The Ministers asked the younger generation to make exercise an important part of their daily schedule. They congratulated the Management and team of the fitness centre for spear-



heading the health and fitness initiative and providing the gift of healthy living to the people.

The Ministers urged the management to assist the youth to raise their fitness level by focusing on each individual's specific needs.

The Ministers appreciated the efforts of Gym management in investing Rs 6.50 crore on the purchase of high-end equipment.

The Ministers were informed that Gym aims to

provide best in class equipment and expertise of qualified instructors.

Speaking on the occasion, the director of the Gym thanked the Ministers for his encouragement to the management. He said the Gym aspires to be the beacon of healthy living and mascot of fitness in the state.

Director Tourism Mehmooh A Shah, Joint Commissioner SMC Abdul Majed Qayoom were also present on the occasion.

Asia Naqash reviews ongoing works at Alestang Grid Station

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21: Minister of State for Medical Education and Power Development (PDD) today visited Alestang Grid Station and reviewed the ongoing work on transmission lines there.

During her visit, the Minister instructed for completion of transmission of 220/32 KV's, and 132/33 KV's by the end of this year, which is undertaken under Prime Minister's Reconstruction Plan (PMRP).

The Minister was informed that so far 70 percent work has been completed on the project

worth Rs 78.5 crore. She impressed upon the officers to redouble their efforts for timely completion of the project.

She was also informed that tenders have been floated for completion of rest of the work, which will be carried out on a piecemeal basis.

Later the Minister also inaugurated mini-hall at the main office of PDD here, where departmental meetings, various forms of departmental training and other workshops would be held.

The Minister also issued instructions for the completion of 132/33 KV Chadoora Grid station this year. She asked for submission of DPRs

for construction of grid station at Bijbehara as per CM's instructions which she had issued during her public outreach programme.

Asia also directed officers for the formulation of DPRs to augment 220/132 KV grid station at Delina from 160 MVA to 320 MVA, besides, augmentation of 132/33 KV grid station at Ahmedpora from 50 MVA to 100 MVA.

Commissioner Secretary PDD Hirdesh Kumar, Development Commissioner Power, Chief Engineer M&RE Kashmir, Chief Engineer S&O and other senior officers of PDD were present on the occasion.

Abdul Haq inaugurates State of Art Gold's Gym Fitness Centre

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21: Minister for Rural Development Panchayati Raj, Law and Justice, Abdul Haq inaugurated Gold's Gym - a leading brand in fitness at Rajbagh Srinagar Saturday.

The Gym Centre is first of its kind in the state with professionally designed equipments and all advanced fitness programmes. The Minister interacted with the members of fitness centre who appraised the Minister about various facilities available for the people in the centre.

Abdul Haq congratulated the Management and team of the fitness centre for spearheading the health and fitness initiative and providing the gift of healthy living to the people.

Minister urged the management to assist the youth to raise their fitness level by focussing on each individual's specific needs.

Speaking on the occasion, the director of the Gold's Gym Srinagar thanked the minister for his encouragement to the management. He said Gold's Gym aspires to be the beacon of healthy living and mascot of fitness in the state.

Bali visits GMC Jammu, meets cross border firing injured



JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Minister for Health and Medical Education Bali Bhagat today visited Government Medical College (GMC) Hospital here to enquire about the condition of people injured in cross border firing. The Minister visited the hospital and interacted with the patients and their attendants and enquired about the treatment facilities being provided to them by the hospital. The Minister directed the GMC officials to provide free medical care to the injured persons. The Health Minister was appraised that adequate doctors and paramedic's staff have been deputed and also necessary life saving drugs and equipment are kept available round the clock in the hospital.

Speed up electrification of un-electrified villages: Asia

MINISTER CHAIRS REVIEW MEETING OF EM&RE WING OF PDD

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21: Minister of State for Power Development Department and Health & Medical Education, Asia Naqash today called upon the functionaries of PDD and other executing agencies to take concerted measure for implementing various schemes to avoid inconveniences faced by the people during winters.

The Minister said this while chairing a high-level meeting of officers to review the status of various works under Electric Maintenance & Rural Electrification Wing (EM&RE).

It was given out around 250 units of energy is being supplied in the valley and electricity is supplied to metered and non metered areas strictly as per the already notified schedule.

On the occasion, the Minister sought details regarding the various projects including REC scheme, Restructured Accelerated Power Development & Reforms (RAPDRP), Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS), Deen Dhayal Upadaya Grameen Jyoti Yojna

(DDUGJY) and Prime Minister Development Plan (PMDF).

It was given out in the meeting that the process of electrifying of un-electrified villages of Kupwara and Bandipora is in full swing and distribution work as well as 33 KV and 33/11 kV lines receiving stations is in progress. The Minister directed speeding up the process of electrifying un-electrified villages before 31st December 2018 as described in central sponsored 'Saubhagya' Scheme, besides completing pending works of installing Under Ground lines at tourist destinations including Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Sonamarg. She directed the concerned for submitting Detailed Project Reports (DPR) regarding the uplifting of receiving stations at Dalina Baranulla, Alastang and Budgam.

The Minister directed speeding up the execution process of all the ongoing projects undertaken under various schemes. She said strengthening and augmenting the power infra in the valley is necessary and should be completed at an earliest.

DDC Shopian conducts whirlwind tour



SHOPIAN, JANUARY 21: District Development Commissioner, Mohammad Aijaz today conducted an on-spot inspection of various developmental projects including the widening of Shopian Bijbehara road under progress at a cost of 48 crore rupees.

The DDC accompanied by Executive Engineer R&B and other officers reviewed the progress on developmental works at different locations apart from space for a park in Shopian Town.

The DDC inspected the work started on Shopian Bijbehara road from Habdipora,

which has been targeted to be completed up to a fair-weather stage, in shortest possible time. It will be followed by upgradation to blacktopping by PWD at an estimated cost of Rs 4899.20 lacs and the total length of the project is 25 km. An estimated amount of Rs 2 crore will be spent on the project which is being executed under convergence of BADP, CapEx and Constituency Development Fund.

DDC directed officers of Revenue Department to resolve any land related issues so that R&B can take up immediate steps aimed at the widening of the road and construction of an alternate road for decongestion of traffic. Directions were also issued for the removal of illegal structures along the road which are hindering the progress of widening of the road.

Officers from various departments were directed for improvement in civic amenities in town and creation of parking facilities at available locations.

DY CM flags off "Bharat Darshan" tour organized by BSF

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh flagged off the 'Bharat Darshan' tour of children from Frontier Head Quarter BSF, Paloura Camp Jammu.

While addressing the participants Dr Singh, said that it is a great opportunity for these children to know the rich heritage, culture, people and understanding unity in diversity of our great nation.

Such tours expose the children to different cultures and areas of the country and go a long way in overall personality development, he added.

He said during the tour the students would visit various historical places and get firsthand experience of their country's rich historical background.

Dr Singh said that India has a rich civilization in context of scientific and technological advances and the youth should have knowledge of these things, which will help in their career.

He further added that the interactions with the students of other insti-



tutions would acquaint them with cultural diversity of the country and make them committed to Nation's progress by inculcating sense of patriotism in them.

Total 40 children, 20 boys and 20 girls, in the age group of 12 to 17 years, are selected from remote areas of Jammu region. During the tour children will get an opportunity to visit monuments in Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Amritsar. On 26 January 2017, they will witness Republic Day Parade at the Rajpath.

The children are being fully equipped in all respect by the BSF.

IG BSF Ram Awtar, DIG BSF Harminder pal and other BSF and police officials were also present on the occasion.

Hanjura reviews progress under central, state sponsored schemes in Agri Deptt

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Minister for Agriculture Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura today convened a review meeting to have a comprehensive review of progress under the centrally and State sponsored schemes implemented by the department.

The Meeting was attended by Commissioner / Secretary, Agriculture Production Department Mohammad Afzal Bhat, Secretary Agriculture Production Department, Showkat Ahmad Beigh, Director Agriculture, Jammu H.K. Razdan, Director Agriculture, Kashmir Altaf Aijaz Andrabi, Director Area

Development, Jammu, Director Command Area Development, Kashmir, MD Agro Industries Development Corporation and other senior officer of the Department.

During the meeting the minister was informed about the achievements registered under schemes like Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna, procurement of Mushkibudji rice, progress made on digging of bore well under Saffron Mission, and ongoing projects under Command Area development.

During the meeting the officers appraised the Minister about the expenditure made on these

schemes in first three quarters of the current financial years.

Hanjura said the government is making all out efforts for sustained growth of the agriculture sector by introducing several innovative measures to enable farmers to get maximum returns from their land.

During the meeting the Minister directed the concerned officers to increase expenditure level under all the schemes and ensure targets are optimally achieved.

He said the intervention schemes and farmer welfare schemes are designed to double the farmers' income by 2022. He asked experts to lay special thrust on Apiculture,

Mushroom growing and Integrated Farming in the State. He also stressed on promoting Bee keeping on the areas having potential for seed production and orchards, which not only help in honey production but also enhance pollination, quality seed production and fruit production.

Hanjura directed that village committees should be established on co-operative patterns to give boost to Agricultural activities. He also told the Department to establish integrated farming management system across all the constituencies during the financial year 2018-18.

He also stressed that women self help groups should be constituted under ATMA.

JINDRAH IMAGES

Let us pledge to make Jammu clean in 2018

Forgetting the miserable show put by the department concerned and people to make Jammu unclean in 2017, let us all take a pledge to make Jammu clean in 2018 which has just begun. If Jammuites decide to do so and show determination, the target is not unachievable. With the citizens' support, Jammu can carve out a respectable place for it in the list of clean cities of India. Though big hoardings can be seen with ministers asking people to keep their surroundings clean to make Jammu cleaner, garbage remains littered everywhere, especially around the places where JMC has placed garbage containers. Even the leftover food is thrown into these containers which is often taken out by dogs and spread on the road outside and in the nearby lanes and bylanes. Outside banquet halls, restaurants and food malls too, a large quantity of the leftover food is dumped in JMC's garbage containers. All this continues to happen when much is being said by the state government to make Jammu clean. Even as the so-called pro-Jammu BJP is part of the government in J&K, no sincere effort is being made to make Jammu look cleaner and develop the region as a tourist destination. Soon after the formation of BJP-PDP government, then chief minister Mufti Mohammad Syed, now dead, had assured to transform Jammu into an attractive tourist destination. As part of development activities in the capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar, the government had also shown its resolve to expedite work on the otherwise abandoned development projects. Though work on some of the projects has been taken up, others still continue to be ignored. As promised, Mantalai has still not been developed as International Yoga Centre under the Centre's Swadesh Darshan scheme. Patnitop, Sanasar and Baglihar in Jammu are also yet to receive focussed attention of the government. A golf course at Sanasar with a water sports facility was also promised to be made, but it is nowhere in sight. The government had also announced that the technology used in Gulmarg Gandola Project would be used in the Jammu Ropeway Project and the process for land acquisition would be expedited so that the work on the project gets started at the earliest. The government had also emphasised the need for improving road connectivity to Basohli to develop Ranjit Sagar Dam as an independent tourist destination. All these promises are yet to be fulfilled by the government. It is also unfortunate to note that the state has so far not been able to tap the huge tourism potential of Ranjit Sagar Dam which is ideally located with Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh on one side and the great expanse of the lake on the other. Other promises, like good governance, transparency in system and providing a corruption-free government to the people, are also nowhere in sight. Apart from its failure to take up development programmes in Jammu region, the government has also utterly failed to make the city a beautiful place for tourists to visit.

Aadhaar, a security threat to nation?

SUHAS CHAKMA

A five-member constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court of India is scheduled to hear from January 17 a batch of petitions challenging the validity of the Aadhaar Act, including mandatory linkage of the biometric identity of each and every individual residing in India. The Bench has already held that the right to privacy is a fundamental right.

Aadhaar was launched by the UPA government as a voluntary initiative to prevent pilage of services and social welfare schemes offered by the government. The NDA government led by Narendra Modi turned Aadhaar into an instrument of surveillance, ostensibly to uncover black money and tax evasion. It introduced the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act of 2016 as a money bill.

The negative impact of the mandatory requirement of Aadhaar card for access to subsidies and benefits will be raised in the hearing. Whether the loose definition of service as "any provision, facility, utility or any other assistance provided in any form to an individual or a group of individuals and includes such other services as may be notified by the Central Government" meets the test of fairness, reasonableness and rationality will be seen. However, it is clear that aim of the Aadhaar Act stands violated. The Aadhaar Act defines itself as "an Act to provide for, as a good governance, efficient, transparent, and

targeted delivery of services, benefits and subsidies, the expenditure for which is incurred from the Consolidated Fund of India, to individuals residing in India". By linking Aadhaar with banking, income tax returns and mobiles connections for individuals who do not receive benefits or subsidies from the Consolidated Fund of India, the aim of the Act stands violated.

Yet, what is unlikely to figure and that cannot be argued in legal parlance is the national security threats. The Modi government has not adequately deliberated upon the issue. The NDA government has focused on how it can benefit by using the Aadhaar Act, but it has not considered as to how India itself has possibly already become the target.

About a year ago, in January 2017, then Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad announced that more than 111 crore people, including 99% of the India's adult population, are registered under the Aadhaar. As Aadhaar has been made mandatory for access to banking, mobiles and filing income tax returns, it implies that all public officials of India, including of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) or any other security agency, had to register themselves under the Aadhaar. Their data too is currently stored with the UIDAI.

This makes the Aadhaar data of extreme interest for not only profit-seeking companies but also other governments. Counter-intelligence, including of

the allies, is an integral part of the statecraft. It was none other than President Barack Obama's administration that German Chancellor Angela Merkel and then Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff were wiretapped by the CIA. The hacking of the Twitter account of India's Permanent Representative to the UN Syed Akbaruddin exposes the vulnerability of any data. There is no data which is immune from hacking or illegal access.

By illegally accessing Aadhaar data and storing the same, any government can find the identity of Indian citizens. Whether an alleged Indian spy is named Hussein Mubarak Patel or Kulbhushan Yadav can easily be identified by not extracting information through torture but simply by verifying the biometric data of the alleged spy captured. The US and the United Kingdom were the first to collect biometric data of the travelers entering their country and if they have access to the Aadhaar data, they can easily identify Indian citizens, irrespective of false passports that may be issued to the intelligence agencies. Never forget the episode of Rabinder Singh, a joint secretary in the RAW who defected to the United States in 2004. It exposes the US interest in India. Whether any country has already obtained the Aadhaar data with the UIDAI illegally is a matter of conjecture and even if illegally obtained, there is no need to declare the same from the rooftop.

It is in this regard that the measures taken by the United States to protect the data that can identify

the citizens are of significance to India. On January 3, 2018, it was revealed that the Trump administration had blocked Chinese billionaire Jack Ma-owned Alibaba Group Holding Ltd's Ant Financial's attempt to acquire a US money transfer company, MoneyGram International Inc, over national security concerns. The Committee on Foreign Investment in the US rejected the proposals to mitigate concerns over the safety of data that can be used to identify US citizens. There is no doubt that Aadhaar provides far more information, including biometric data, than MoneyGram International Inc requires to effect any financial transfer.

The NDA government has failed to examine these very concerns over the safety of data that can be used to identify Indian citizens. Following the exposure by The Tribune as to how Aadhaar data are cheaply available, the UIDAI, apart from seeking to silence reporting on its shortcoming by filing an FIR, has introduced temporary 16-digit virtual ID that can be used by Aadhaar holders for authentication purposes.

These initiatives are knee-jerk reactions and do not address national security threats. A large number of foreign banks are currently seeking permission to operate in India as fully owned subsidiaries and they shall have access to data of the customers. By linking Aadhaar with basic services, India has already exposed itself and shall continue to expose the identity of its citizens, unlike the US which has refused to share data with respect to its citizens.

Jailbreak

The security lapse in Kolkata's supposedly high-security prison strains credibility. The jail authorities of Alipore Central Correctional Home were caught with their pants down early on Sunday during the routine roll-call; but exploratory investigation suggests that the preparation for the intrepid escape by three Bangladeshis, held on charges of abduction, dacoity, illegal migration and murder, was carried out over time. The canal that skirts the prison has once again been used as an escape route to freedom... 40 years after a group of Naxalites scaled the wall and swam along the canal. A not dissimilar strategy was adopted this time around as well.

The wardens and the guards were caught napping and almost literally so. So too may have been the other inmates in the cell who are said to have been treated by the escapees with confectionery laced with sedatives. For, it is difficult to accept that the three could hack the prison bars with a hand-saw, scale the wall, and eventually jump into the canal. The three procedures, daring in itself, went totally unnoticed by the jail staff despite the powerful lights inside the complex. Several wardens have been suspended for alleged dereliction of duty and more heads are likely to roll after the probe is over. For all that, the response is fairly routine in the aftermath of a major administrative lapse; it adds up to too little, too late... indeed only to be wiser after the event.

The jaw-dropping has been collective. To attribute the security lapse to the ongoing process of shifting the correctional home to Barupur in South 24-Parganas is a specious argument. The alibi would have been laughable were it not for the profound implications in terms of jail administration. Indubitable must be the fact that there was a lowering of the guard; the jail authorities have admitted as much, going by a report in this newspaper. Has the relocation to Barupur denuded security at Alipore? The argument advanced by the jails department is thoroughly unacceptable; the shift ought to have been planned judiciously. How could the prisoners acquire a hand-saw despite the supposedly stringent security-check for visitors? The query can even be asked to unravel the possession of mobile phones in cells to facilitate underworld connection.

This is the fundamental question that needs to be asked and answered. The correctional home at Alipore direly needs what they call a course-correction. So too arguably the other jails in West Bengal. The department and its minister must be seen to be functioning. Till Wednesday morning, there was no trace of the escapes. The BSF and the police are reportedly on alert at Basirhat and Bongaon in the periphery of Bangladesh. And thereby hangs a tale.

Education inequalities must be bridged first

SUDIP CHAKRABORTY

Contemporary India's economic growth performance is remarkable. India is now the world's fastest growing economy next only to China. The turnaround happened since about the late 1980s. India adopted a neo-liberal economic policy in 1991. The average growth rate over the reform years has been 6.5 per cent per annum. It even shot up to 9 per cent during 2002 to 2009. But has this spectacular growth benefited the common man? The pathetic slip of India in the global hunger index, from 55th rank in 2014 to 100th rank in 2017 at least is clear proof that the growth has bypassed India's common man. The divide between the poor and the rich has widened.

From the low 'Hindu' rate of growth of 3.5 per cent that persisted during the period from the 1950s to the mid-80s, the Indian economy has come a long way to post almost double-digit growth. It's GDP in recent years at \$1.95 trillion has made India the world's tenth richest country, has placed her in the ranks of 'middle income' countries. So many remarkable developments in Indian economy since reform have caught the notice of the world: GDP growth, export, balance of payment, significant accumulation of foreign exchange, IT revolution, stock market, telecommunications and banking reforms.

Despite these manifest accomplishments, India is the home to the largest number of poor on this planet. About 42 per cent of India's 1.2 billion popu-



lation lives under global poverty line of \$1.25 per day. In many social indicators, some of India's leading states are lagging behind Sub-Saharan African nations. The bulk of India's growth is occurring through disproportionate rise in income of the rich. Household consumption survey does not capture the huge income of the neo-rich class in Indian society. But massive penny persists side by side with visible affluence in India's expanding urban locations. One study in 1999-2000 revealed that the gap in per capita income between the 99th and 90.5th percentile was almost four times as large as the gap between the median person and the 95th percentile. Wealth inequalities have been widening in contemporary India. Wealth holdings of Indian billionaires are estimated to have gone up from 0.8 per cent of GDP in 1996 to 23 per cent of GDP

in 2008. India is witnessing widening inequalities between classes, among regions and between rural and urban areas within the same region. India's society is historically hierarchical, embedded in the long past of social division on the basis of caste, class and gender, reinforced by 'class divide'. So, the task for inclusive growth is far more challenging for India. Poverty eradication programmes initiated after independence have focussed more on subsides and 'political spots'. Poor are led to depend on government dole. Politicians ensure solid 'vote bank'. Economic empowerment of the masses has taken a back seat. Economic growth in the beginning of the planning era was expected to remove poverty through 'trickle down mechanism' but the fruits of growth have poured on the 'possessed' sidestepping 'dis-

possessed' Indians. Persistence of mass poverty reinforced by widespread inequality poses a serious challenge for India. Inclusive growth strategy of any nation must focus on the understanding of causation of inequality. Inclusive growth can be achieved through providing opportunities for development of all citizens. India's public expenditure on health, for example, is just 1.3 per cent of GDP as compared to Nepal's 2.6 per cent as per a WHO report. India is spending 3.8 per cent of GDP on Education which is significantly lesser than countries like Brazil and South Africa. Economic growth in India coupled with increasing inequality despite some reduction of headcount poverty measured through per capita consumption is set to make this growth unsustainable.

The historically entrenched 'caste divide' in Indian society is now

supplemented by a 'linguistic divide' and 'digital divide'. Another type of divide in contemporary India is also an issue of concern and that is the 'education divide'. This divide is created by the 'dual-delivery system' of education. Well-equipped institutions, mostly in private sector, are delivering some quality education. But overcrowded government-run institutions beset with deficient infrastructure are spurning unskilled and low-skilled learners. Modern-day jobs are eluding the latter.

India's rising income inequality to a large extent is caused by the enormous difference in learning outcomes after completion of education. Enrolment and attendance in primary and secondary education has gone up significantly in recent years but those completing school are learning very little or even nothing at all. Evaluation study on learning outcome in pri-

mary education by a research group called Pratham reveals that a significant number of those completing primary school cannot read, write and do any arithmetic.

Through successive phases of education, they are not attaining skills needed for evolving job opportunities entailing specialised skills in agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors. Job opportunities in primary and manufacturing sectors have been shrinking in the wake of economic liberalisation. Service sector is growing over the years as manufacturing in the shape of service sector in India's GDP that stands at almost 59 per cent. But service sector employment is comparatively low at only 26 per cent.

One main reason of low employment participation is lack of needed skill in emerging areas of employment. NASSCOM recently reported that only 10 per cent of engineering graduates in IT education are employable in India's flourishing IT sector which is a key driver of India's service sector growth. India must try to achieve sustainable inclusive growth by incorporating four points in public policy: opportunity, capability, access and security. Public investment on universal quality education and universal quality health care hold the key to inclusive growth in India. Most important of all is strengthening the public institutions that deliver health and education. The system of accountability, checks and balances in the delivery system, must be incorporated to pave the way for equal opportunities and shared prosperity for Indians irrespective of caste, class, gender and region.

A big honour for 'PadMan' courtesy Twinkle Khanna!

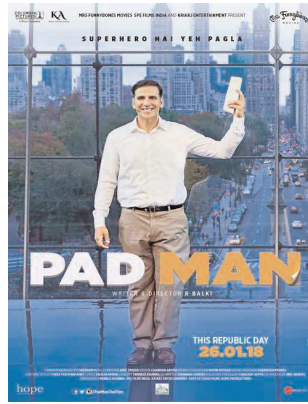
Twinkle Khanna, India's bestselling female author, film producer, woman's rights activist, interior design entrepreneur, and former actress, has been invited to speak at The Oxford Union, the world's most prestigious debating society, at 5pm on Thursday 18th January.

Approaching its 200th anniversary, The Oxford Union has an unparalleled reputation for bringing international guests and speakers to Oxford, with the aim of promoting debate and discussion not just in Oxford University,

but across the globe. Former participants include US Presidents Reagan, Nixon, and Carter, Sir Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein, Malcolm X, Mother Teresa, Sir Elton John, the Dalai Lama, Michael Jackson, Malala Yousofzai, Morgan Freeman, Shashi Tharoor, and Buzz Aldrin, to name but a few. Twinkle Khanna's participation continues The Oxford Union's fine tradition of hosting world leaders in every field.

Twinkle Khanna is popularly known as Mrs Funnybones, also the title

of her first book and her columns. Her first book Mrs Funnybones sold over 100,000 copies, making her the highest-selling female author in India and her second book, The Legend of Lakshmi Prasad, featured a collection of short stories, debuting at number two on Amazon India's bestseller list. One of the stories, Salaam, Noni Appa, has been adapted for a stage production and another story about a man who invented a machine to make low-cost sanitary pads had cinematic potential, so Twinkle Khanna turned producer to devel-



op it for the big screen. The result is her latest endeavour, Pad Man, the world's first feature film on menstrual hygiene, based on the life of social entrepreneur and activist Aruna Chalam Muruganatham, who revolutionised sanitary hygiene in rural India 20 years ago. At The Oxford Union, Twinkle Khanna is set to explain why it is important the world knows about Pad Man's story, the imperative need to spotlight issues relating to menstrual hygiene, tackling taboos and breaking down the stigma attached to periods glob-

ally as a means to empower girls and women worldwide, and how movies have the potential to become movements. Pad Man will become the first Indian film to be showcased at The Oxford Union, presenting a milestone for Indian cinema. Releasing in cinemas worldwide on 9th February, the film Pad Man traces Arunachalam Muruganatham's international journey from an outcast exiled from society for his endeavours to delve into such a taboo subject, to becoming a super-hero of India's

modern history, as he followed his dream to launch a revolution to menstrual hygiene in India. Pad Man is nothing short of an impulsive, flamboyant and driven entrepreneur extraordinaire, who refused to give up in the wake of scrutiny and ridicule, using his resilience and initiative to invent India's low cost sanitary napkin making machine. An extreme enigma in his home town, Arunachalam Muruganatham's super-heroic efforts led to a business that today employs hundreds of women across India.

R Balki all praises for Akshay Kumar Manmarziyaan to go on floors soon!

Akshay Kumar has reinvented himself and as an actor in the last few years. We have seen a different side of him. Along with action and comedy, he has been exploring a variety of genres, delivering some gritty and memorable performances. And we are not saying this it's Writer-director R Balki who is all praises for Akshay's performance in his next, Padman, "is one of the finest by an Indian actor".

Revealing how the superstar effortlessly slipped into the character of Arunachalam Muruganatham - the inventor of a low-cost sanitary pad making machine on whom the movie is based - the filmmaker says, "Arunachalam is a simple man, and Akshay, too, is an unassuming, no-fuss person. So, I thought that he was naturally right for the role. He has imbibed Arunachalam's simplicity so well



that it is wonderful to watch him on screen." Elaborating on the actor's restrained performance, Balki

says, "It's not about saying a lot; Arunachalam is the kind of man who just smiles and insists that he hasn't done much, and that

takes a lot of character. Akshay understood him perfectly and essayed the part beautifully." One of the highlights of the

film, which also stars Sonam Kapoor and Radhika Apte, is its climax. Akshay performed the 10-minute dialogue heavy scene with a three-camera setup in just one take. Balki recalls, "We thought we'd divide the shots because the scene was heavy on emotions and expressions, but Akshay got it right in the first take." Summing up, Balki says, "Akshay doesn't intellectualise acting. He does his homework quietly, understands his character and portrays it in his own way. Everyone knows him as a star, but in Padman, his performance is extremely nuanced; it's one of the finest by an Indian actor."

Padman, produced by Mrs Funnybones Movies, SPE Films India, Kriar Entertainment, Cape of Good Films and Hope Productions, and released worldwide by SPE Films India, releases on February 9th.

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap and Aanand L Rai have joined hands once again for another masterpiece. Manmarziyaan will feature Abhishek Bachchan, Taapsee Pannu and Vicky Kaushal in lead roles. It will be an Eros International presentation. The shooting of the film will start in February 2018.

Earlier it was speculated that Ayushmann Khurrana and Bhumi Pednekar will play the lead roles in the movie. But now keeping all the speculations and rumours to rest the makers have officially confirmed the cast of the film.

Trade Analyst Taran Adarsh also shared the news on Twitter and wrote, "After #Mukkabaaaz, Aanand L Rai and Anurag Kashyap join hands for #Manmarziyaan... Stars Abhishek Bachchan, Taapsee Pannu and Vicky Kaushal... Starts Feb 2018... Eros presentation."

Neeraj Pandey's Aiyary intrigues army jawans

Since Aiyary is set against army backdrop, The makers are receiving multiple requests from BSF camps across the nation for Aiyary screening.

Neeraj Pandey along with Manoj Bajpayee, Sidharth Malhotra, Rakul Preet Singh and Pooja Chopra recently visited the BSF camp in Jaisalmer and participated in a host of activities followed by Lohri celebration.

Now that republic day is around the corner, Neeraj Pandey is getting lot of messages and requests from army jawans across the nation to have the entire Aiyary Neeraj Pandey's Aiyary



trailer has garnered immense love and appreciation from across the quarters.

The trailer has not only impressed the cinegoers but also the army jawans across the nation who are high on anticipation to watch the film.

the two pitted against each other.

The helmer of celebratory films like A Wednesday, Baby, Special 26 and M.S Dhoni: An Untold Story to name a few, Neeraj Pandey is back with Aiyary, first espionage thriller of 2018.

Aiyary stars an ensemble cast of Sidharth Malhotra, Manoj Bajpayee, Pooja Chopra, Rakulpreet, Anupam Kher and Naseeruddin Shah.

Plan C, Friday Filmworks and Jayantilal Gada (Pen) present 'Aiyary' A Neeraj Pandey Film. Produced by Shital Bhatia, Dhaval Jayantilal Gada, Motion Picture Capital is slated to release on 9th February 2018.

Akshay Kumar managed to raise Rs. 12,93 crores for 'Bharat Ke Veer'

Actor Akshay Kumar's gesture to postpone the release of his film PadMan, so that Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Padmaavat can get a solo release, is drawing praise from all quarters. And now another gesture is bound to leave fans floored.

Akshay was present at the Teen Murti Bhawan in Delhi on Saturday morning for the launch of an anthem for the Bharat Ke Veer website - an initiative that allows money to transfer directly into the bank accounts of the next of kin of martyred Indian soldiers. At the launch, presided by Home Minister Rajnath Singh and attended by the National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, actor



Akshay Kumar and the singer of the anthem Kailash Kher, Rajnath Singh urged the audience

stage and surprised everyone by saying, "Let us start now". "I am willing to dance, sing, do anything that you'd like me to, but let us collect the maximum for the welfare of the families of those who sacrificed their lives for us." Soon enough, several corporate honchos raised a hand and announcing their donations. Within minutes, Rs 12.93 crores was pledged to Bharat Ke Veer.

When we contacted Akshay for a comment, he said, "It was impromptu, and I am so touched by the response. I just feel there is no greater cause than working for the welfare of the families of our brave soldiers. I am glad we could raise this amount."

Watch the epic and grandeur dialogue promos of 'Padmaavat'!

As the troubles over the release of Padmaavat are getting over with Supreme Court suspending all bans imposed by few states and Akshay Kumar postponing his upcoming film 'PadMan' to a new date, the makers of the film have released three dialogue promos from the film.

These short dialogue promos are equally grandeur and magnificent like the trailer of the film which will give you a true feeling of bravery and great valor of Rajputs which have been shown in this magnum opus.

Padmaavat is based on the legend of Rani Padmini, a 13th century Hindu Rajput queen, mentioned in Padmavat, an Avadhi poem written by Sufi poet Malik Muhammad Jayasi in 1540.

Padmaavat starring Deepika Padukone, Shahid Kapoor, and Ranveer Singh is directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali and it's slated to release on 25th January 2018.

Breathe actors Madhavan and Amit Sadh has burnt candles on both ends for their role!

Madhavan and Amit Sadh have worked really hard for Amazon Prime Video and Abundantia Entertainment's upcoming Digital series 'Breathe'.

Both the actors have taken a lot of efforts for prepping up for their roles as their characters are very intense in the series.

R Madhavan is playing the role of Danny Mascarenhas a single parent to six-year-old, Josh, who suffers from a life-threatening disease and is in dire need of an organ transplant. His character in Breathe will go to any length to save the life of his son.

On the other hand, Amit Sadh is playing the role of Kabir Sawant a brilliant but unconventional officer of the Mumbai Crime Branch, who investigates the suspect Danny Mascarenhas and will not stop till he cracks the case and delivers justice.



Both Madhavan and Amit Sadh have worked very hard for their roles and have delivered power-packed performance in 'Breathe'.

The trailer of Breathe which was unveiled recently has been loved by everyone for its sharp and intriguing storyline. Also the trailer has crossed more than 9.1 million views.

Breathe is a psychological thriller which traces the journey of a father's unbelievable quest to save the life of his son.

Breathe will be launched globally as a trilingual series in Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi.

The Amazon Prime Original, Breathe, is produced by Abundantia Entertainment and launches on January 26th, 2018, exclusively on Amazon Prime Video. In an unprecedented move, Breathe will launch as a trilingual 8 episode series simultaneously in 200+ countries.

Ruptured throat, loss of voice: Doctors warn against stifling a sneeze

NEW DELHI, JAN 20: Tempted to stifle a loud or untimely sneeze? Let it out instead, doctors in England warned Monday based on the very unusual case of a man who ruptured the back of his throat when he tried to suppress a sneeze.

In a case study published in the journal *BMJ Case Reports*, doctors described their initial confusion when the previously healthy man turned up in the emergency room of a Leicester hospital, complaining of swallowing difficulties and "a popping sensation" in his swollen neck.

The 34-year-old patient told them his problems started after he tried to stop

a forceful sneeze by pinching his nose and closing his mouth. He eventually lost his voice and spent a week in the hospital.

"When you sneeze, air comes out of you at about 150 miles per hour," said Dr. Anthony Aymat, director for ear, nose and throat services at London's University Hospital Lewisham, who was not involved in the case. "If you retain all that pressure, it could do a lot of damage and you could end up like the Michelin Man with air trapped in your body."

While examining the sneeze-averse patient, doctors in Leicester heard "crackling in the neck" down to his ribcage, a sign

that air bubbles had seeped into his chest. Worried about infection and other possible complications, they admitted him to the hospital, gave him a feeding tube and administered antibiotics, according to details published in *BMJ Case Reports*.

Dr. Zi Yang Jiang, a head and neck surgeon at University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, said he sees one or two cases arising from repressed sneezes each year, making them an "exceedingly rare" occurrence.

Jiang said it was bizarre that a single sneeze could generate enough force to cause the kind of physical

damage that usually results from trauma, such as a gunshot wound to the neck. A collapsed lung is among the problems that retaining the air from an imminent sneeze can cause, he said.

"The whole point of sneezing is to get something out of your body, like viruses and bacteria, so if you stop that, those may end up in the wrong part of the body," he said. Jiang said in most cases, the excess air is later absorbed by the body.

The English patient made a full recovery and was advised to avoid plugging his nose while sneezing in the future. Doctors recommend letting sneezes rip into a tissue instead.

E-cigarettes: Yea or nay?

NEW DELHI, JAN 20: Delhi-based businessman Rahul Sainani, 32, has been vaping for almost a year and says he is 'almost 99% off cigarettes'.

He used to smoke a pack a day. "Apart from a drag here and there, I have nearly stopped. I cut down almost as soon as I started getting my fix in another form," Sainani adds. He's not sure about getting over the vaping, though.

Sainani started smoking when he was in Class 11. He developed respiratory issues last year and his doctor calculated he had smoked close to 65,000 cigarettes in all.

"That kind of scared me. I realized I needed to do something about this habit," he says. That something is working for now,

but it's still delivering a toxic substance to his bloodstream and he's not sure he can give up his e-cigarettes at all.

"I plan to gradually reduce the nicotine content in my vaping liquid. Even if I am never able to stop, it's still better than smoking a cigarette," he says.

This is a common refrain, and it's cause for concern, doctors say. In just 14 years since the e-cigarette was invented by a Chinese pharmacist, it has already spread around the world. By 2023, its adoption rate is expected to outstrip that of cigarettes.

The reason it has caught on so rapidly is the same reason it is so hard to give up — vaping (incidentally, Oxford Dictionaries' Word of the Year in 2014) mimics the smoker's ritualistic

behaviour of holding a cigarette, puffing, and delivers a hit of the addictive nicotine too.

E-cigs are certainly less damaging to the lungs and respiratory system, but the jury is still out on how safe they inherently are.

And because of the misconception that they are relatively harmless, they are proving to be a gateway drug for nicotine addiction among the young — including teens who may not have taken up smoking at all.

Amid the concern, Bihar recently became the eighth Indian state to ban e-cigarettes, after Punjab, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, Mizoram, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh.

"The government is examining how to tackle

the consumption of electronic smoking on the basis of the reports of three panels formed by the health ministry to study different aspects of the issue," union health minister JP Nadda said in the winter session of Parliament.

Apoorv Pandit, a 37-year-old entrepreneur from Mumbai, started smoking in 2003 and smoked about a pack a day for the next decade.

E-cigarettes seemed like a lesser evil, so he switched in 2013.

"It was a step towards quitting, but still an addiction," he says.

Because the ritual of puffing persists, there's arguably a higher risk of returning to cigarettes, as Pandit did in three months. Since last July, he has gone cold turkey.

Lactalis scandal: 83 countries affected by salmonella found in baby milk powder

NEW DELHI, JAN 20: A salmonella scandal at French dairy group Lactalis has affected 83 countries, where 12 million boxes of powdered baby milk are being recalled, the company's CEO said Sunday in an interview with French media.

Emmanuel Besnier, scion of the secretive family behind one of the world's biggest dairy groups, was speaking publicly for the first time since an outcry erupted over claims the company hid the salmonella outbreak at a plant making the product.

"We must take account the scale of this operation: more than 12 million boxes

are affected," he said, adding that distributors would no longer have to sort through the produce to find the contaminated powder. "They know that everything has to be removed from the shelves," Besnier said.

Besnier, who was summoned to the French finance ministry on Friday, promised compensation for all the families affected.

He said that the consequences of this health crisis for consumers, including babies under six months, were at the forefront of his mind. "It is for us, for me, a great concern," he told the journal *Le Dimanche*.

Hundreds of lawsuits

have been filed against the group by families who say their children got salmonella poisoning after drinking powdered milk made by the company.

So far French officials have reported 35 cases of infants getting salmonella from the powder, while one case has been reported in Spain and another is being investigated in Greece.

An association representing victims says the authorities are underestimating the number of cases.

"There are complaints and there will be an investigation with which we will fully collaborate. We never thought to act otherwise," Besnier said.

HIV cases in India drop more than 50% but challenges remain

NEW DELHI, JAN 20: In 2002, US National Intelligence Council made a projection: About 20-25 million people will be living with HIV in India by 2010. They got it wrong.

"The future of the global epidemic is really at stake in India," said the then director, UNAIDS, Dr Peter Piot, who discovered the Ebola virus in Zaire in 1976. He was right, both about Ebola and HIV in India, where all the right things were done to stop the epidemic from spiralling out of control.

India being home to the world's third largest HIV population — after South Africa (7.1 million) and Nigeria (3.2 million) — has

more to do with its 1.32 billion population than high infection rates.

Adult HIV prevalence in India is 0.28%, compared to South Africa's 18.9%, shows UNAIDS data for 2017.

The number of people living with HIV in India has more than halved from 5.1 million in 2003 to 2.1 million in 2016 — partly because the World Health Organisation's revised and enhanced methodology halved HIV estimates for India to 2.5 million in 2007.

India's revised estimates, combined with the five sub-Saharan African countries of Angola, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and

Zimbabwe, led to a 70% reduction in the global HIV prevalence over the previous year, with global estimates falling to 33.2 million from 39.5 million in 2006. The epidemic, however, had started levelling off in the early 2000s as a result of a two-pronged strategy: intensive HIV prevention campaigns among the most affected; and free testing and treatment under the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) since 2004.

Lowering infections among high-risk groups such as transgenders and female sex workers (FSW) — so called as they are considered likely to engage in high-risk behaviours that

spread HIV, such as unprotected sex and sharing needles and syringes — is among the big successes of NACP. The first phase of which started in 1992.

By 2004, India had expanded targeted interventions for FSWs, injecting drug users, men who have sex with men, transgender people, single male migrants, long-distance truckers etc in the six high prevalence states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland and Manipur.

In 2003, around one in 10 FSWs in India had HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The number fell to one in 64 in 2017.

Infection fell the most

among transgender people, with HIV prevalence dropping from 29.6% in 2006 to 3.14% in 2017 (transgender was not surveyed as a distinct group before 2006), followed by homosexual men.

The hard work continues to show results. The National AIDS Control Organisation's (NACO) biennial HIV Sentinel Surveillance 2017 reports declining HIV prevalence trends in traditional high-prevalence states such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, with sharp falls in prevalence in all high-risk groups other than injecting drug users.

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IFC plans \$250m for distressed assets, to rope in partners

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: International Finance Corporation, the World Bank Group's private sector financing arm, is looking to commit around \$250 million (around Rs 1,500 crore) in distressed assets and rope in partners to help clean up non-performing assets in the Indian banking sector.

This is in addition to the agency's investment in its Distressed Asset Recovery Program (DARP) operating

in India, China, Indonesia, The Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The India numbers under this programme were not immediately available.

IFC will join hands with Clearwater Capital Partners for DARP in a special purpose vehicle dedicated to distressed and special situations assets, that will be managed by the private equity firm.

Sources said the fresh commitment of \$250 million is expected to be announced in the next few months but IFC was not immediately available for a comment. It has so far invested around \$80 million in the space.

Earlier this week, IFC South Asia director Mengistu Alemayehu told TOI that the agency was looking to investing in distressed assets in India through reconstruction

companies, either through a fund platform or a holding platform, but had refused to share further details.

"We want to provide some confidence to the system that the new bankruptcy code can actually work. So we are going to take a substantial risk and also get the right type of players who will thrive with us. I think in the next few months you will see some announcements," he

said.

Alemayehu had said Indian banks had evinced interest and indicated that IFC was interested in restructuring some of the distressed companies.

NPAs have emerged as one of the biggest challenges for the government as banks led by the public sector players are grappling with a record pile of bad debt, estimated at around Rs 8 lakh crore, on last count. This has not

only dragged down their performance but slowed down lending in the sector. The government and RBI have moved together to order a clean-up of banks' books and also enacted the new Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code to crack down on errant companies, many of which are up for auction.

Rise in NPAs has also turned into an opportunity for global investors such as KKR and Brookfield.

Mistry's allegations hit by humungous delay of decades: Tata counsel

MUMBAI, JAN 21: Tata Sons' counsel A M Singhvi concluded his arguments after six full days of being on his legs before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) in the mismanagement and oppressions complaint against the conglomerate. The complaint was filed by two minority shareholders, companies held by family of ousted Tata Sons chairperson Cyrus Mistry.

Singhvi pointed out that the allegations of a nexus between Tata and excessive favouritism for Siva group by Ratan Tata was "clearly a false and wild allegation by Cyrus Mistry" as was the allegation that Nano had been perpetuated because of the obstinacy of Ratan Tata.

Singhvi referred to minutes of board meetings presided over by Mistry from 2013 to 2016 and letters to state that "he knew all facts" since inception and "never objected or protested and actively endorsed Tata's stand on most issues." Singhvi said that "all allegations were barred by humungous delay of decades." He said, "at worst, they involved issues of commercial judgement or wisdom which could not be retrospectively assailed by Mistry or reviewed the NCLT."

SAT clarifies: Price Waterhouse can complete existing clients for financial year 2017-18

MUMBAI, JAN 21: In a partial relief of sorts to Price Waterhouse & Co, a Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Friday allowed the auditing giant to continue current auditing assignments for financial year ending 2017. It also allowed existing assignments already undertaken in financial year of April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 to be completed within reasonable time.

The Tribunal however made it clear that the firm "shall not take any new assignment with any clients and also with existing clients with obligation beyond December 31, 2018." They can also complete "various kinds of cer-

tification work with them as on date." The partnership firm registered with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and Price Waterhouse, Bangalore had moved SAT to challenge a January 10, 2018 order passed by market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) banning them for two years from doing any audit or certification, because of an alleged involvement in the Satyam scam. The Price Waterhouse counsel Janak Dwarkadas, Shyam Mehta and Somasekhar Sundaresan essentially argued that the SEBI order is actually against the brand and not against indi-

vidual chartered accountants.

The SEBI order prohibited Price Waterhouse and its network entities in India from issuing audit certificates to any listed company in India for a period of two years. The regulator also passed disgorgement orders directing Price Waterhouse, Bangalore and two of its partners to pay Rs 13 crore with a 12% annual interest from January 2009.

Dwarkadas vehemently sought a stay of the SEBI order while Shiraz Rustomjee counsel for SEBI opposed grant of a "blanket stay". The SAT order observed that Rustomjee "fairly stated

that the order itself makes it clear that assignment pertaining to financial year 2017-18 will not be affected."

The SAT clarified that "audit assignments already undertaken by Price Waterhouse pertaining to financial year ending 2017 will not be affected. Similarly assignments of existing clients already undertaken in financial April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 will not be affected and can be brought to a logical end within a reasonable time." The SAT members Jog Singh and CKG Nair directed that a list of clients existing clients and placed the matter for final arguments on February 13.

Wipro sees high value digital deals going forward

BENGALURU, JAN 21: Wipro chief executive Abidali Neemuchwala said digital deal sizes have been increasing for the company over the last two years though clients adopt a wait and watch mode when signing such deals as there is an element of uncertainty associated with it.

"We are seeing digital deals worth \$50 million to \$100 million compared to anything between \$2 million and \$5 million when I took over two years ago," he said adding that though clients are clear on what they want to do, there is also a go-slow approach when it comes to spending as they try to understand the choices they make.

"They want to do a proof of concept before going



ahead with the project. Contracting is diff in digital deals as it is more outcome based. Earlier customers were clear what they wanted, let us say for a two year period, now it is much more agile like a 90 days or a 30 days sprint. It will take

digital skills which include analytics, cloud, mobile, big data and artificial intelligence among others.

"I am more optimistic this calendar year than last year due to order booking, client mining and digital deals," the Dallas based executive told TOI.

Client spending is happening more in the banking financial service & insurance (BFSI) sector, consumer as well as in the energy & utility segment though the gains in the US is being offset by the volatile economic conditions of the Middle East. Pharmaceutical clients have just started spending again though uncertainty remains as the US government is yet to get a substitute of the Affordable Care Act.

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Rohingya refugee leaders draw up demands ahead of repatriation

New Delhi, Jan 21: Rohingya leaders in a Bangladesh refugee camp have drawn up a list of demands they want Myanmar to meet before authorities begin sending back hundreds of thousands in a repatriation process expected to begin next week and last for two years. The petition is the latest indication of the challenges ahead for Bangladesh and Myanmar as they try to engineer the return of refugees who fear continued military operations in Rakhine State and are dismayed about the prospect of a prolonged stay in "temporary camps" in Myanmar when they go back.

A half-dozen Rohingya elders, saying they represented 40 villages from Rakhine, showed the list of demands to a Reuters reporter at the Kutupalong refugee camp, where most of the 655,500 Rohingya refugees are staying. The petition, handwritten in Burmese, said none of the Muslim Rohingya would return to mainly Buddhist Myanmar unless the demands were met. The petition, which has still to be finalised, demanded the Myanmar government publicly announce it is giving Rohingya long-denied citizenship and inclusion on a list of the country's recognised ethnic groups. It asks that land once occupied by

the refugees be returned to them and their homes, mosques and schools rebuilt. It wants the military held accountable for alleged killings, looting and rape, and the release from jails of "innocent" Rohingyas picked up in counter-insurgency operations. It also wants Myanmar to stop listing people with their photographs as "terrorists" in state media and on government Facebook pages. Myanmar state newspapers this week issued a supplement listing the names and photos of alleged members of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), whose attacks on security posts on August 25

triggered a sweeping counter-insurgency operation. The United Nations has only conducted legitimate operations and denies there have been cases of sexual assault. But the military said last week soldiers had killed 10 captured Muslim "terrorists" during insurgent attacks at the beginning of September, after Buddhist villagers had forced the captured men into a grave the villagers had dug. It was a rare acknowledgment of wrongdoing by the Myanmar military during

its operations in the western state of Rakhine. ARSA said in a statement last week the 10 Rohingyas in the mass grave were "innocent civilians" and not members of their group. The Rohingyas elders Reuters spoke to said they were still finalising their list of demands before showing it to Bangladesh authorities and to aid agencies administering the camps. They said the 40 village leaders they discussed the petition with represent the interests of all Rohingya at the camp, but that could not be independently verified and aid agencies were unable to comment pending formal issuance of the petition.

Two Indian-origin women lawmakers inducted into Ontario Cabinet

Ottawa, Jan 21: Two Indian-origin women lawmakers, including a Sikh, have been inducted into the Ontario Cabinet of Premier Kathleen Wynne, in an apparent move to woo the community ahead of a major provincial election. The Indian-origin ministers inducted are — Harinder Malhi and Indra Naidoo-Harris. The reshuffle was claimed by Premier Wynne as an effort "to make sure that we have a team that's going to carry us into the election and beyond." "I think it is important to have diversity — gender and regional and background diversity — at the cabinet table and so that has been part of the consideration as we go into this cabinet shuffle," she said.

Wynne appointed 38-year-old Malhi, a Liberal Member of Provincial Parliament for Brampton-Springdale, as the Minister of the Status of Women. Malhi is the daughter of Canada's first Sikh MP Gurbaj Singh Malhi. A motion moved by Malhi in last April in the Legislative assembly of Ontario was passed by the House extending the official recognition to the 1984 riots as Sikh "genocide" in India, a move strongly rejected by New Delhi as "misguided". Harris, another Indian-origin Member of Provincial Parliament for Halton, was promoted to Education Minister. She will remain Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care. "The knowledge and skills they

bring to these roles will be crucial as we continue our work to create more fairness and opportunity for the people of Ontario," the premier was quoted as saying by The Star newspaper. With less than five months for a major provincial election, Wynne's decision is being seen as an apparent pre-emptive move to quell the rising popularity of the New Democratic Party led by a Sikh, Malhi. It is believed, can help retain Sikhs votes which may drift to the New Democratic Party (NDP) which has elected Jagmeet Singh as its national leader. By winning the NDP federal party leadership, Jagmeet Singh has positioned himself for a battle in which the role of Sikhs across Canada is crucial.

US naturalisation rates increase high among Indians: Study

Washington, Jan 21: Between 2005 and 2015, India, along with Ecuador, posted the biggest increase among origin countries for eligible immigrants opting to become American citizens, a study has found. By 2015, as many as 80 per cent of eligible immigrants from India opted to become American citizens, as against 69 per cent in 2005, thus registering an increase of 12 percentage point, the Pew Research Center has said.



immigrants from India had one of the higher naturalisation rates (80 per cent) due to a 12-percentage-point increase in its naturalisation rate since 2005. Only eligible immigrants from Ecuador (68 per cent in 2015) had as large an

increase," Pew said. "This is a bigger increase than for US immigrants overall, among whom naturalisation rates jumped from 62 per cent in 2005 to 67 per cent in 2015," the research center said, adding that eligible immigrants

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern pregnant with first child

Wellington, Jan 21: New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said on Friday she was pregnant with her first child, prompting an outpouring of support from women's rights groups and labour activists as she declared "I'll be a prime minister and a mum". Ardern said she planned to work until the end of her pregnancy in June and then take six-weeks leave, during which time Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters would run the country.

Speaking to reporters outside her Auckland home, Ardern said her partner Clarke Gayford would care for the "surprise" addition full-time and that the whole family would travel together when necessary. "I am not the first woman to know and have a baby. I know these are special circumstances but there are many women who have done it well before I have," she said.

The popular 37-year-old politician's pregnancy is one of the very few examples of an elected leader holding office while pregnant and the first in New Zealand's history. Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto gave birth while she was prime minister in 1990. Ardern, who came to power through a coalition deal after a closely fought election last year, has experienced a meteoric rise to power as New Zealand's youngest prime minister in more than a century, and its third female leader.

Ardern's rise to power has generated intense interest in her personal life and drew comparisons with other youthful leaders such as France's Emmanuel Macron and Canada's Justin Trudeau. Ardern was quick to assure the public that she would only take six weeks off, during which time she would still be contactable, so that the country would run as usual. The short period contrasts with her party's parental leave policies, such as the Labour-led coalition expanding paid parental leave from 18 to 22 weeks in one of its first legislative changes. That is set to rise again to 26 weeks in 2020. Ardern acknowledged that she was "lucky" that her partner, a well-known television fishing show presenter, could take time off

to travel with her while he worked for the baby full-time. She had no plans to stop work until June and would fly to London in April to attend a Commonwealth leader's meeting. Advocacy groups and politicians from across the political spectrum were quick to offer support. "It's really inspiring...having our prime minister lead by example is a great sign of how far we've come in women's industrial rights in New Zealand," said Council of Trade Unions President Richard Wagstaff in an emailed statement to Reuters.

New Zealand has long held a progressive reputation, having been the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893.

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Abandoned at birth, Indian elected to Swiss Parliament

New Delhi, Jan 21: His biological mother Anasuya could never have imagined that Niklaus-Samuel Gugger, whom she abandoned in a hospital 48 years ago just after his birth, would be the first Indian to be elected to the Swiss parliament. Born in CSI Lombard Memorial Hospital, run by Basel Mission, in Karnataka's Udipi town, on May 1, 1970, Niklaus was adopted by a Swiss couple within a week of his abandonment. Niklaus's new parents — Fritz and Elizabeth — took him to Kerala when he was just 15 days old and they lived there for around four years before moving to their native place in

Switzerland. There, Niklaus had to drive trucks and work as a gardener as his adoptive parents were not rich enough to finance his higher studies. Talking to IANS at the first PIO-Parliamentarian Conference here last week, Niklaus said: "My mother, Anasuya, handed me over to Dr. E.D. Pflugfelder — now deceased — just after my birth, requesting him to give me to a couple who could rear me in a better way and help me make a good career." Pflugfelder, in turn, contacted the Gugger couple and the rest, as they say, is history. Niklaus, better known as Nik, was

among 143 People of Indian Origin (PIO) parliamentarians from 24 countries who took part in the conference organised by the Ministry of External Affairs to engage the diaspora as part of its diplomatic outreach. For Niklaus, coming to India was an emotional moment. Narrating his journey from the Karnataka hospital to the Swiss parliament, Niklaus said he spent initial four years of his life in Thalassery in Kerala where his new mother Elizabeth worked as a teacher of German and English and father Fritz was a tool maker in Natur Technical Training Foundation (NTTF).

"Later, my new parents moved to Switzerland where I worked as a truck driver, gardener and mechanic to pay for my higher studies. I had to go through this because my parents were not so rich as to bear the burden of my studies. They gave me food and clothes. "They trained me in other things," Niklaus added. Having finished his studies, I indulged in social work simultaneously with my other work to earn my livelihood. In 2002, he was elected town councillor from Winterthur city northeast of Zurich near the German border.

"And subsequently, in November 2017, I was elected as a member of Switzerland parliament on the ticket of the Evangelical People's Party — a minority party. I am the first Indian to be elected as an MP in Switzerland's parliament." Niklaus added he would be the only Indian in the Swiss parliament for at least the next decade as there was no other active Indian-origin politician in the country. One of the youngest members of the Swiss parliament, Niklaus said he had also worked in an orphanage between 1992 and 1993 in the US city of Columbia.

He has also had a long association with Kerala's NITTF institute, which lends a helping hand to students pursuing their technical education in India and Switzerland. Niklaus feels that he has imbibed the culture of both India and Switzerland. He hopes to come down to India in the near future to discuss his ideas on start-ups in collaboration with the Swiss and the Indian governments. Niklaus thanked his biological mother for his success and said he named his daughter Anasuya to keep alive her memory because he has not been able to track her down.

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Donald Trump frustrated with media coverage of John Kelly's interview: WH

Washington, Jan 21: US President Donald Trump is "frustrated" with the media coverage of an interview given by his Chief of Staff John Kelly on issues like the controversial Mexican border wall, the White House has said. Trump on Thursday vented out frustration at Kelly that he told lawmakers and a news channel that his campaign promise to build a wall along the Mexican border was "not fully informed" and his view on immigration was "evolving". The Wall Street Journal reported. The White House denied such an impression and said that Trump has full confidence in Kelly. "The president is frustrated with the media coverage over the last 24 hours of that interview and

of the meeting. The President's position on border security has been very clear since day one, since the summer of 2015 when he jumped into this race," White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah said. Shah, said Trump wants to see increased personnel, technology, and infrastructure, including the wall. He always said throughout the campaign that he would be listening to the folks on the front lines. "That's what the Chief of Staff was talking about in his interview on Fox News. And that's what, actually, the president talked about in an interview with you guys at the (Wall Street) Journal pretty extensively. He talked about listening to the

Border Patrol agents. They've influenced his views," he said in response to a question. "His only frustration is with the media, and that's what that tweet was about. But what Kelly is talking about is him listening to experts and folks on the front lines, which is something he said he would do throughout the campaign," Shah said. However, The Wall Street Journal reported that in a late evening phone call with Kelly, Trump said he was upset when he learned that he had told some lawmakers that his campaign promise to build a wall along the Mexican border was "not fully informed" and his view on immigration was evolving. "He has complete confidence in Gen Kelly," White House Press

Secretary Sarah Sanders said, according to Wall Street Journal, when asked about the phone call. Trump told reporters in Pennsylvania that his views on wall has been consistent over the past three years and defended Kelly. "I think he's doing a great job. I think General Kelly has done a really great job. He is a very special guy," he said when asked about Kelly's remarks a day earlier. According to Trump, Kelly did not tell lawmakers that he was uninformed about immigration. "No, he didn't say that. I don't think you — he didn't say it the way you would like him to say it. He didn't say that. He's doing a terrific job," said the US president.

Iraq's war with Islamic State: 1.3 million children displaced, states UNICEF

Geneva, Jan 21: About half the 2.6 million people displaced in Iraq after a three-year war with Islamic State militants are children and persisting violence hampers efforts to ease their suffering, the United Nations said on Friday. While the Baghdad government last month declared victory over Islamic State after wresting back almost all the territory IS seized in 2014, persistent bombing and shooting attacks make it difficult to rebuild the lives of displaced people, according to UNICEF, the UN children's agency. "We believe that as a result of the conflict, a lack of investment over the years, and the poverty ... that there are 4 million children now in need across Iraq," said Peter



Hawkins, UNICEF chief representative in the country. He told a Geneva news briefing by telephone from Baghdad that 1.3 million of the 2.6 million displaced by the often devastating fighting with Islamic State were children. "While the fighting has come to an end in several areas, spikes of violence continue in others — just this week, three bombings went off in Baghdad," UNICEF Regional Director Geert Cappelaere said in a statement. "Violence is not only killing and maiming children; it is destroying schools, hospitals, homes and roads. It is tearing apart the diverse social fabric and the culture of tolerance that hold com-

munities together." Hawkins said UNICEF was also helping children of alleged IS militants now in detention by providing comfort and legal aid, and is trying to reunite those separated from their families, including those abroad. The issue of civilians uprooted from Sunni Muslim areas previously under control of Sunni IS jihadists has become the latest bone of sectarianizing political contention in Iraq. Sunni politicians are lobbying for postponing parliamentary elections due in May to allow the displaced to return to their hometowns to cast their ballots there. Shi'ite Muslim politicians including Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi insist on the vote taking place as planned on May 12.

Australia Open 2018: Roger Federer bests Richard Gasquet, enters fourth round in Melbourne

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: Roger Federer eased into the second week of the Australian Open for the 16th time after beating Richard Gasquet 6-2 7-5 6-4 in just under two hours on Saturday to remain on track for a 20th grand slam title. Gasquet played a fine match, studded with his trademark occasional moments of shot-making brilliance, but a tally of 27 winners against 16 unforced errors was still not enough to put sustained pressure on the Swiss master. Watched from the stands by his hero Rod Laver, Federer shifted up the gears as and when required to outwit his French opponent on the main showcourt named in honour of the Australian 11-times grand slam champion. The 36-year-old second seed was rather fortunate to clinch the match with a backhand winner after Gasquet had fired his shot off the net cord but he was undoubtedly a worthy winner, reaching the fourth round without conceding a set so far.

"The match was close, tough games, the end could have gone to a tiebreaker then you never know," Federer said on court. "I was able to be a bit more on the offensive than he was, maybe I was protecting my second serve a bit better than him."

Federer returned from a lengthy injury layoff to claim his fifth Australian Open title last year and 12 months on he was moving as freely and dominating much as he did in his heyday. DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS



"My expectations are a little different because I had a great season last year," he added. "I'm coming in this year well-equipped, fully fit. I know that five sets is not an issue this year, while last year that was a bit of a question mark."

While a break for 3-1 with a forehand winner was enough for Federer to go on and secure the opening set after a Gasquet double fault, he bided his time in the second before striking at 6-5 up to break again and double his lead.

Gasquet had some misfortune with Hawkeye in the second set, having what looked like a decent challenge turned down because the system was not working before going down 2-0 when the rebooted technology showed he had gone long on set point.

A Federer break in the second game of the third set was cancelled out in the seventh when Gasquet grabbed his first break point, but once again the Swiss pounced to take the match by the scruff of the neck at the key moment.

He served out to love for 5-4 and, although Gasquet saved his first match point with a ninth glorious backhand winner, there was no denying Federer's progress on his second.

He will next face his first career meeting with Hungarian Marton Fucsovics for a place in the quarter-finals.

"He came to train with me in Switzerland last year," said Federer. "He was great, super nice guy, hard-working, he's a great baseliner, really strong, so I'm happy I know him a little bit."

World XI hockey team wins first tour match in Pakistan

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: International hockey returned to Pakistan for the first time in a decade when a World Eleven side defeated the national junior team 5-1 in an exhibition match here. The visiting team was made up of recently retired players from Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Australia and Argentina.

"The main thing is that we have finally managed to make this World Eleven tour a reality and now we can approach sponsors and corporates to support the game," Pakistan Hockey Federation President Khalid Khokar said.

No international hockey match had been held in Pakistan since 2008 with teams refusing to tour the country due to security concerns.

Pakistan has also fallen behind in world rankings in recent times, dealing a big blow to the popularity of the sport, although it is the national sport.

Holland's legendary penalty corner strikers, Paul Lipsens and Jan Floris Bovelander were clearly the most popular players in the visiting side as people cheered them and thronged them for autographs and selfies at the heavily secured stadium.

The World Eleven left for Lahore this morning and will play their second match on Sunday.

The PHF had fielded a young side from the trials held this week and Khokar explained the purpose was not to win the match but to ensure the tour went off smoothly.

Australia Open 2018: Novak Djokovic shrugs off injury scare to advance

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: Novak Djokovic allayed fears over a muscle strain in his lower back after overpowering Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas 6-2 6-3 6-3 to reach the Australian Open fourth round on Saturday.

After holding serve to lead 2-1 in the second set, the 14th seed took a medical time-out and lay down at the Margaret Court Arena as a trainer worked feverishly on his lower back.

The injury did little to restrict the six-times Australian Open champion as the Serb returned to break the 21st seed in the next game before claiming victory in two hours and 21 minutes.

"Nothing major," Djokovic told reporters after setting up an intriguing inter-generational battle with South Korea's young gun Chung Hyeon, 21, for a place in the quarter-finals.

"I knew I wanted to use the medical timeout because I needed it, but at the same time I knew it was nothing major that can potentially raise the question mark on whether I can continue playing or not," he added. "I haven't played for six months. We have to take that into consideration. I'm kind of forced to be very cautious of what happens day-to-day. I deal with it. It's fine. I finished the match. I'm very pleased for that."

After arriving without a competitive match in six months, the 12-times grand slam champion has had three impressive wins, including a taxing four-set scrap in broiling 40 degree Celsius (104F) heat against Frenchman Gael Monfils in the last round. The 30-year-old's recovery from a serious elbow problem has meant fashioning a modified service action but the Serb has still proven very hard to break. He landed just over 60 percent of his first serves against Ramos-Vinolas, but held firm against the lefthander through six break points.

"Obviously for me, it's taking one match at a time," Djokovic said in his on-court interview.

"I have to be more humble this time with my expectations because I haven't played in six months. But I'm very pleased with where my game is at."

Djokovic gave Chung a grand slam lesson in the first round in 2016 on the way to the last of his Melbourne Park titles so the re-match may say a lot about the trajectories of both players.

Chung showed another sign of his promise by coolly closing out a five-set win over German fourth seed Alexander Zverev, a player many pundits have widely tipped as a future grand slam winner.

I didn't want to be alive: Michael Phelps opens up about battle with depression

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: The swimming great Michael Phelps on Tuesday opened up about his battle with clinical depression and said that he considered committing suicide at one point. Speaking at a mental health conference in Chicago, the 23-time Olympic gold medal winning athlete said that he used to feel into depression after every Olympic event.

"After every Olympics, I think I fell into a major state of depression," the 32-year-old was quoted as saying by news agency AFP. He further added that he locked himself up for four days after his success at 2012 London Olympics



where he won four gold medals and two silver medals. "I didn't want to be in the sport anymore. I didn't want to be alive." He further added that he contemplated suicide during his depression spell: "You do contemplate suicide."

run from," he said.

One of the most celebrated Olympians of all time, Phelps said that mental illness should not be considered as "weakness." "We're supposed to be this big, macho, physically strong human beings, but this is not a weakness. We are seeking and reaching for help," he said. He further added that the stigma around mental illness needs to be removed. "(Mental illness) has a stigma around it and that's something we still deal with every day. I think people actually finally understand it is real. People are talking about it and I think this is the only way that it can change," he said.

East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan Live streaming: When and where to watch Kolkata derby, TV channel

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: Not quite the title decider it used to be, the Kolkata derby is back with East Bengal as clear favourites against an under-fire Mohun Bagan in the I-League match at the Vivekananda Yuvabharati Kriangan on Sunday. Bagan will be without star player and skipper Sony Norde, who suffered an injury in his right knee while playing against Churchill Brothers and had to be stretchered off the field. The last time the two sides met, East Bengal went down 1-0. Post that, the Red and Golds have remained unbeaten, notching five wins and three draws, ranking third on the table with 19 points in their kitty as compared to sixth-placed Mohun Bagan with 13 points.

When is the Kolkata derby between East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan in the I-League?

The Kolkata derby between East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan in the I-League is on Sunday, January 21.

What time is the Kolkata derby between East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan in the I-League?

The live broadcast of the Kolkata derby between East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan in the I-League is at 2 PM (IST).

What channel will air the Kolkata derby between East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan in the I-League?

The Kolkata derby between East Bengal vs Mohun Bagan in the I-League will be broadcast on Star Sports 2 and Star Sports 2 HD.

Syed Mushtaq Ali: Spotlight on old warhorses in ahead of IPL auction

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: India's old warhorses like Gautam Gambhir, Yuvraj Singh and Harbhajan Singh will be seen in action as 10 teams in two groups clash each other in the Super League stage of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament beginning on Sunday.

The premier names to be seen in action for their respective sides include the World Cup winning quartet of Gambhir, Yuvraj, Suresh Raina and Harbhajan who have been out of reckoning for the national team for some time.

Gambhir was conspicuous by his absence during Delhi's training session today at the Eden Gardens and the manager informed the media that the lefthanded opener will join the team tonight.

While Raina will be returning to Chennai Super Kings in the upcoming IPL season, Gambhir, Yuvraj and Harbhajan, who will go under the hammer in the IPL auction on January 27-28, will look to make it count in the Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

Off-spinner Harbhajan, who has been released by Mumbai Indians after playing for the side since IPL's inception in 2008, will lead the challenge for Punjab in Group A which also has Karnataka, Jharkhand, Mumbai and Rajasthan.

Ten teams are divided into two groups in the Super League stage and the top two sides will play in the summit clash at Eden Gardens on October 27.

Punjab won three matches,



es, including a two-run humdinger against table toppers Delhi, to finish second in North Zone.

The Punjab skipper, Harbhajan batted and bowled in a rigorous training session for about two hours alongside another veteran Yuvraj Singh as their intent was clear.

"We have done really

well in Delhi, it's about shifting focus to the Super League stage here. It's always good to see a lot of young and exciting talents coming up. It's good to compete with them," Harbhajan said.

"Like any other cricketer, I also wish to do well and make a case for myself. Definitely I see this as a chance. It will be nice to win the Trophy," he said.

Four matches will be played everyday in two venues of Eden Gardens and Jadavpur University second campus at Salt Lake in a round robin format that will go on till January 25.

Punjab will face South Zone toppers Karnataka, while Jharkhand will take on Mumbai in the opening day's fixtures at Jadavpur University. All eyes at Eden Gardens will be on two-time IPL winning skipper Gambhir who will be released by his franchise Kolkata Knight Riders.

The Delhi player, who has a base price of Rs 2 crore alongside Harbhajan and Yuvraj Singh in the IPL auction, will look to impress alongside Rishabh Pant.

Pant, the dashing Delhi wicketkeeper batsman, smashed a 32-ball century against Himachal Pradesh and he's the leading run-getter with 278 under his belt with an astounding strike rate of 210.60.

Delhi will open their campaign against Tamil Nadu, while home side Bengal will face Baroda in the two fixtures at Eden Gardens tomorrow.

For Karnataka, Karun Nair, who is second in the run chart with 236 will be the one to watch out for.

Bengal's Shreevats Goswami too is back among the runs, aggregating 232 with the help of three half centuries and the diminutive wicketkeeper batsman will look to continue his purple patch ahead of the IPL auction.

International Olympic Committee creates pool of Russians eligible for Winter Olympics

NEW DELHI, JAN 21: The International Olympic Committee said Friday it has created a pool of 389 Russians who are eligible to compete under a neutral flag at next month's Winter Olympics amid the country's doping scandal.

An IOC panel whittled down an initial list of 500 to create what the IOC calls "a pool of clean athletes." That could potentially make it possible for Russia to meet its target of fielding around 200 athletes in Pyeongchang, slightly fewer than in Sochi in 2014, but more than in Vancouver in 2010.

It wasn't immediately clear why 111 other Russians were rejected by the IOC. The IOC didn't list the athletes who were accepted or rejected, but said it hadn't included any of the 43

the IOC previously banned for doping at the 2014 Olympics in Sochi.

The IOC's decision not to release the names of the athletes or any specific testing data did not sit well with members of the National Anti-Doping Organizations, who have called for more transparency in the IOC process.

"We all want to trust, but history has shown we must verify," said Travis Tygart, CEO of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency. "Publish the testing history of each athlete by name, type of test, and we can know for sure if what the IOC says is accurate."

Valerie Fourmeyron, the former French Sports Minister leading the invitation process, said the pool also left out any Russians who had been suspended in the past for doping



offenses.

"This means that a number of Russian athletes will not be on the list," she said. "Our work was not about numbers, but to ensure that only clean athletes would be on the list."

That would appear to rule out potential Russian medal contenders like former NHL hockey player Anton Belov and world champion speedskater Pavel Kulizhnikov, both of whom served bans in the past but have since resumed competing.

"More than 80 per cent of the athletes in this pool did not compete at the Olympic Winter Games Sochi 2014," the IOC said in a statement. "This shows that this is a new generation of Russian athletes."

The IOC will use the pool list to

issue invitations to Russian athletes to compete in Pyeongchang, after checking their record of drug testing and retesting some samples they gave previously. The IOC also said it recommended barring 51 coaches and 10 medical staff "associated with athletes who have been sanctioned" for Sochi doping.

The IOC has allowed Russian Olympic Committee to select its preferred athletes despite being suspended by the IOC last month over drug use and an elaborate cover-up at the 2014 Olympics, including swapping dirty samples for clean urine. Russian sports officials say they simply want to give the IOC recommendations to ensure that top athletes aren't accidentally left out in favor of reserves.

IIMC Jammu to start PG Diploma courses in Urdu, Hindi Journalism

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Director General, Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) K.G Suresh today said the proposal for starting Post Graduate Diploma courses in Urdu and Hindi Journalism would be taken up with the Executive Council of IIMC to run these courses at the Northern Regional Campus of the Institute in Jammu.

The DG, IIMC said this during a meeting with the Director, Information Muneer-ul-Islam here. He further said these courses would be started with 15 students each after selecting them through common entrance test at the national level. The examination centres for the same would be set up across the country including Jammu and Srinagar, he added.

The Director, Information said the matter for providing education loans at lowest interest rates to the economically backward students would be

taken up with the state government, besides facilitating them in getting the internships and ensuring other facilities for the visiting faculty.

He asked the DG, IIMC to start short term certificate courses for working journalists in the state to enhance their skills. These courses should be conducted during winters in Jammu and summers in Srinagar, he stressed.

The DG, IIMC asked the Director, Information to submit a detailed proposal for the same so that it can be taken up with the Executive Council for approval. He also offered the services of IIMC to train Information Officers/PR professionals working with the state government in Delhi to expose them to the latest techniques involved in the field of journalism and public relations.

Regional Director, Northern Regional Campus IIMC Jammu Manohar Khajuria was also present in the meeting.

Hanjura attends 15th Year celebrations of Kisan Call Centre Jammu

'Advises farmers to adopt latest technology for faster Growth of Agri-Sector'

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Minister for Agriculture, Gulam Nabi Lone Hanjura today attended the 15th Year Celebrations of Kisan Call Centre, Jammu being run by the Service Provider M/S IFFCO Kisan Sanchar Limited (IKSL).

Commissioner Secretary Agriculture Production Department, Mohammad Afzal Bhat, Union Deputy Secretary DAC & FW, P.C. Pandey, Secretary in Agriculture Production Department, Showket Ahmad Beigh, Director Agriculture Jammu, H.K. Razdan, Director Sericulture Mir Tariq Ali, Chief Manager IFFCO, Nirmal Singh and senior officers of Agriculture and SKUAST (J) were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion Minister said that Public extension system requires a paradigm shift from top-down, blanket dissemination of technological packages, towards providing producers with the knowledge and understanding with which they can solve their own location - specific problems.

He stressed that continuous two-way interaction among the farmers and agricultural scientists is the most critical component of Agricultural Extension and Kisan Call Centre can play a very vital role in the process especially for the farmers in remote and inaccessible areas.

The Minister urged upon the maintenance of call quality standards and asked the experts to ensure

a prompt response to the queries.

He added that issues of farmers are being addressed by the Extension Systems of State Departments of Agriculture, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), KVKs, NGOs, Private Extension Services through various extension approaches in transfer of technology. With the usage of an appropriate mix of technologies like telephone and Internet, the limitations in Transfer of Technology (TOT) can be overcome.

Hanjura said that Kisan Call Centre should act as a channel between the scientists, policy makers, extension workers, farmers and other stakeholders to exchange views and evolve a unique and revolutionary role in development of agriculture sector in the state.

He hoped that the farmers will enjoy benefits of the Kisan Call Centre and attain technical knowhow about modern farming.

Commissioner Secretary Agriculture, lauded the efforts of Kisan Call Centre, in providing free of cost agriculture related scientific and technical information to the farmers.

He said that majority of the farmers can use their mobile and landline phones to give feedback and also access free and easily available information and scientific advice from agriculture experts and scientists.

Speaking about the aims and objectives of scheme P.C. Pandey, Union Deputy Secretary, DAC & FW informed the participants that experts reply to the farmer's queries through countrywide common eleven digit Toll Free Telephone Number 1800-180-1551 in their own language. The Department of Agriculture, Government of India has launched Kisan Call Centre on January 21st, 2004 to deliver extension services to the farming community.

The programme was organized by IFFCO in collaboration with Department of Agriculture, Jammu during which Key note and Welcome addresses were presented by H. K. Razdan, Director Agriculture Jammu and Shakti Singh, State Marketing Manager, IFFCO respectively.

"Educated youth's anger brewing against unholy regime" Heat in Jammu region fast turning into a furnace: Harsh

JAMMU, JAN. 21: With Dogra land being taken for granted by a highly apathetic and opportunist alliance at the helm in the state, the heat in Jammu region was fast turning into a furnace, said Harsh Dev Singh JKNPP Chairman and Former Minister. He said that while the Jammu based Ministers were playing second fiddle to their valley based Ministers for keeping their jobs intact, the common Jammuites was paying the price for their cowardice. The overwhelmingly mandated BJP legislators had proved to be an Army of chocolate cream soldiers lacking the nerve and guts to ideologically confront their ally on fundamental issues, rued Harsh. He was addressing the

Panthers activists on the seventh consecutive day of chain hunger strike launched by the party to ventilate the public anger against the anti Jammu, anti youth and anti employee policies of BJP-PDP coalition.

While the tax payers' money was being brazenly looted by the mandated leaders including Ministers and MLAs, the unemployed, under employed and semi-employed was made to suffer on roadside agitating for two square meals a day. He said that while the legislators were making one demand after the other almost on day to day basis for their class with highly obliging Ministers conferring liberal doles upon their fraternity

at the cost of public exchequer, the poor and marginalized sections were silenced through lathis and police action. Even yesterday, Mr. Singh said, the MLAs had demanded govt vehicles to be provided to them during their sojourn to Delhi, Chandigarh and Mumbai with demand for vehicles for legislators in Delhi having been conceded in the Assembly. Likewise the Minister's assurance during his reply on grants of transport Dept to issue route permit on the recommendations of MLAs was defied logic maintained Mr. Singh. He regretted not a single day was devoted to deliberate upon the issues of unemployed youth or the contractual employees who were protesting in

thousands on streets for the last several days and months for their most genuine claims of job policy and regularization.

Balwant Singh Mankotia, State President expressed grave concern over the loss of innocent lives besides large scale migration of border dwellers that had taken place from LOC and IB during the last few days. He said that these hapless creatures were the victims of not only the Pak killing but also of the criminal apathy of the state and central govt which had failed to provide them proper accommodation, health care and ration. He said the border residents had overwhelmingly voted for BJP during elections under the mistaken belief that the sal-

fron party would ameliorate their lot by addressing their woes and concerns. Unfortunately their miseries increased manifold during saffron rule, lamented Mankotia. In the meanwhile, more than 20 dozen JKNPP activists from Rajouri District today joined the hunger strike seeking a fair deal for Jammu region in employment and development.

Prominent among those who sat on hunger strike today included Anita Thakur, Mustaq Ahmed, Houshr Kumar, Parshotam Lal, Mohd Latif, Sunil Singh, Gulzar Ahmed, Mohd Rafiq, Mirbal, Mohd Amin, Mohd Luckman, Capt. Narotam Singh, Sarita Sharma, Anamika Sharma besides others.

Curfew-like restrictions imposed in SeK, down town Srinagar

SRINAGAR, JAN 21: Curfew-like restrictions have been imposed in the downtown, Shehar-e-Khas (SeK) and areas falling under two police stations in the civil lines and old city since early Sunday morning following strike called by separatists.

The historic Jamia Masjid was again closed for devotees and large number of security forces and state police personnel remained deployed to prevent any demonstration.

The District Magistrate (DM), Srinagar said restrictions under Section 144 CrPc were imposed since early Sunday in the areas under the jurisdiction of police stations Khanwar, Nowhatta, Safakadal, M R Ganj and Rainawari in the downtown and SeK in Srinagar.

"Restrictions have also been imposed in Maisuma in the civil lines and Kralkhud in the old city," he added.

However, the situation on the ground was entirely different as security forces were closed majority of roads with barbed wire and people were being directed to remain indoors.

Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL), comprising of both the factions of the Hurriyat

Conference (HC) and JKLF, had called for a strike in Lal Chowk, the nerve centre of the summer capital, Srinagar, against killing of over 50 civilians in alleged security force firing in on this day in 1990 at Gawakadal.

The main gates of historic Jamia Masjid, stronghold of moderate HC Mirwaiz Moulvi Omar Farooq, have again been closed. Hundreds of security forces and state police personnel, wearing bullet proof jackets and holding automatic weapons, have been deployed outside the historic Masjid.

A large number of security forces were also deployed in the Jamia market and nobody was being allowed to enter the area.

The main Nallahmar road from Parimpora to Khanwar has also been closed with barbed wire at several places. Security forces have established 'makas' in majority areas in downtown and SeK, including at Rajwari Kadal, Nawa Kadal, Rangar Stop, Nowhatta and Zaina Kadal to prevent any traffic or pedestrian movement.

However, the road to S K Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) was through though only patients, ambulances and paramedical staff were being allowed.

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