NEW DELHI: India and the US here discussed ways to deepen their defense ties along with key issues such as Afghanistan, where New Delhi has ruled out any troop contribution, and terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her US counterpart James Mattis held comprehensive talks covering the entire gamut of the bilateral defense partnership.

“The situation in our neighborhood and the growing menace of cross-border terrorism were discussed in depth. There is growing convergence in the approaches of both our countries on this issue,” Sitharaman said at a joint press conference.

She said both sides recognize the importance of holding those who use terrorism as an instrument of state policy to account and to dismantle the infrastructure that supports terrorism.

Details on page 5

REFRESHED PARTNERSHIP: US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis calling on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on September 26
FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS CELEBRATES 1ST TIME IN CHICAGO GRAND DIWALI MELA
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Publisher’s Diary

It’s admirable how on the sidelines of the ongoing UN general assembly session, the Indian delegation engaged with their counterparts of nearly 50 different countries in bilateral and multi-lateral meetings towards a common pursuit of mutually beneficial futures for their peoples.

Sadly though, the main session of the UNGA itself has become a platform for unilateral declarations, if not outright threats, much to the detriment of the very people the world leaders come to represent.

Historically, this annual jamboree has never exactly been a lovefest; but over the decades, member countries at least made an attempt to find unifying causes and to address common issues.

This time around, the US, in its self-appointed capacity as leader of the free world, let loose a bluster fest of sorts.

So after the US, North Korea and Iran unleashed the cannon of highly provocative nuclear daster and counter daster, quintessential foes India and Pakistan too went ballistic in a runaway war of words. “India is the mother of terrorism in South Asia” that professes a “racist and fascist ideology”, Pakistan said, while waving a fake picture of a Kashmiri pellet gun victim. It is also reportedly lobbying to get India declared a “state sponsor of terrorism”. On its part, India called Pakistan “Terroristan”, a “pre-eminent exporter of terror”, and a “land of pure terror”.

Well, as unfortunate witnesses to real violence in the world and redoubtable diplomatic leadership on all sides, it doesn’t matter to us who yelled the loudest, much less whether the rallying platform itself was relevant or not.

But listening to these speeches, it does seem laughable that the theme of the UNGA general debate this year was: ‘Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet’. Few really care to talk about that.

Romes K Japra
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Mission Statement
To empower the Indian Diaspora and make their voice strong and effective in countries of their adoption. RJ Media conglomerate offers a credible, professional and complete package of news, opinion, entertainment, networking and information.

HIGHLIGHTS

Bollywood:
Once a watchman
Nawazuddin Siddiqui has turned writer with a memoir about his “less than ordinary” life of struggle, of hope

Life style:
Indian VIPS’s favorite hotel
Vienna’s Hotel Imperial has been the fave snooze-place of the presidents, princes, kings and VIPs

Immigration:
India rejects Rohingyas
Home Minister Rajnath Singh has said Rohingyas are not refugees but illegal immigrants who “will be deported”

Techbiz:
Demonetization was courageous
Sushma Swaraj said at UN that demonetization was a “courageous” decision to challenge black money

Travel:
Mahabalipuram
Mahabalipuram is brimming with rock-cut caves and numerous temples, some even carved out of one enormous rock

Cover Story:
India, US flay Pak
Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her US counterpart James Mattis held comprehensive talks in New Delhi

Community:
GOPIO Convention
GOPIO hosted its 3rd Annual Business Convention in Chicago to create binding relationship among business community.

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“The situation in our neighborhood and the growing menace of cross-border terrorism were discussed in depth. There is growing convergence in the approaches of both our countries on this issue,” Sitharaman said at a joint press conference.

She said both sides recognized the threat that global terrorism poses to people throughout the world. “We value India’s invaluable contribution in war-torn Afghanistan. India, one of the largest contributors in Afghanistan where it is involved in several development projects, however, has ruled out troops contribution amidst the US emphasis for a greater participation by the country in the conflict-ridden Islamic nation.

“We have made it clear that there shall not be boots from India on the ground (Afghan),” Sitharaman said while responding to a query on whether India will contribute her meeting with the US Defense Secretary.

The US Defense Secretary also commented on terrorism. “Our two countries recognize the threat that global terrorism poses to people throughout the world,” said Mattis. “India and US have suffered grievous losses to terrorism. We intend to work closely with India as we work to eradicate terrorism,” he added.

Mattis’s India visit comes a little over two months after US President Donald Trump said that India must play a bigger role in Afghanistan’s path to peace. Mattis acknowledged that India has already contributed significantly.

“We value India’s invaluable contribution to Afghanistan and welcome further efforts to promote Afghanistan’s democracy, safety and security,” said the US Defense Secretary.

Sitharaman said she told Mattis that India will be continuing developmental and other assistance to Afghanistan.

‘Our two countries recognize the threat that global terrorism poses to people throughout the world,’ said Mattis. ‘India and US have suffered grievous losses to terrorism.

We intend to work closely with India’

There is growing convergence in the approaches of both our countries on this issue,” Sitharaman said at a joint press conference.

She said both sides recognize the importance of holding those who use terrorism as an instrument of state policy to account and to dismantle the infrastructure that supports terrorism.

On his part, Mattis said there can be ‘no tolerance to terrorism safe havens’. He also welcomed India’s contribution in war-torn Afghanistan.

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‘Pakistan was a pet state of generals in the Pentagon, more so of the arms lobby and more so of the octopus, hence was the equal treatment to India and Pakistan’

MUMBAI: Former senator of the United States Larry Pressler has said India is getting “more weight” as compared to Pakistan under the Trump administration, although the two countries were treated equally by the US in the past.

“Under the new regime of US President Donald Trump, India is getting more weight than Pakistan. Earlier, both the countries were treated equally, but now the situation has changed,” he said.

Pressler was speaking here at the launch of his new book - “Neighbours in Arms: An American Senator's Quest for Disarmament in a Nuclear Sub-Continent”.

During his speech, he dwelt on a wide range of issues, including Indo-Pak relations, China, growing tension among countries holding nuclear weapons and lobbying that is influencing the foreign policy of countries, including the US.

“An octopus-like nexus of lobbyists, arms dealers, law firms, PR and consultancy firms has been active internationally and influencing the foreign policies,” Pressler said.

On Indo-Pak relations, he said, “Pakistan was a pet state of generals in the Pentagon, more so of the arms lobby and more so of the octopus, hence was the equal treatment to India and Pakistan, despite India’s reservations. We do need generals, but they needed to be controlled by the Congress.”
China calls Swaraj's UN speech as 'arrogant'

BEIJING: Terming as “arrogant” External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj’s scathing attack on Islamabad at the UN for being the ‘pre- eminent factory for terror’, a state-run Chinese daily, in a grudging admission, said “there is indeed terrorism in Pakistan.”

“India and Pakistan became free within hours of each other. Why is it that today India is a recognized IT superpower in the world, and Pakistan is recognized only as the pre-eminent export factory for terror?”, Ms Swaraj said in her speech at the UN General Assembly.

“We established scientific and technical institutions which are the pride of the world. But what has Pakistan offered to the world and indeed to its own people apart from terrorism? We produced scholars, doctors, engineers. What have you produced? You have produced terrorists”, she said referring to terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad.

In signs that her speech had ruffled feathers in Pakistan’s “all weather friend”, state-run Chinese media termed it as “bigotry”.

There is indeed terrorism in Pakistan. But is supporting terror the country’s national policy? What can Pakistan gain from exporting terrorism? Money or honor,” said an editorial in the state-run daily Global Times.

“What has India accomplished? How much have you accomplished? What is India’s contribution? How much has the world gained from India? What do we mean when we say we are a democracy? We mean we are a democracy,” the paper said.

“India also seems to assess China’s strategic hostility with its own logic: China’s sound relationship with Pakistan are to counter India. India’s road construction in Doklam is to threaten the security of its Siliguri Corridor and China’s Belt and Road initiative operates programs with Pakistan and other South Asian countries to encircle India. In any case, India’s interests always reside at the epicenter of this logic,” it said.-PTI

Army chief warns of another surgical strike

NEW DELHI: Army chief Gen Bipin Rawat has said that surgical strikes on terror launch pads across the LoC could be repeated, if necessary, seeking to send a stern message to Pakistan.

He said cross-border infiltration will continue because camps across the Line of Control, from where terrorists are launched, are still operational, and warned that the Indian Army is ready to “receive” them and keep dispatching them to their graves.

“There is a strike was a message we wanted to communicate to them and they have understood what we mean...that things could follow up, if required,” Rawat said.

He was speaking at the launch of a book ‘India’s Most Fearless’ authored by two defense journalists, Shiv Aroor and Rahul Singh.

The book chronicles personal accounts of soldiers and their valour in extreme and hostile conditions, including of officers who participated in the surgical strikes.

Later, responding to a question by reporters on infiltration attempts, Rawat said, “Terrorists will keep coming because the (terror) camps are operational there (across the LoC). Even we are ready.

Cont’d on page 9
Ind-Am couple pledges $200mn to Nova varsity

HOUSTON: An Indian-American doctor couple has donated a whopping USD 200 million to create a regional campus for a private university to potentially transform healthcare in the US that will also train doctors from India.

Kiran Patel, born to Indian parents in Zambia and his pediatrician wife Pallavi Patel’s gift to the Nova Southeastern University (NSU) located near Miami will allow it to open a new campus in Tampa.

Kiran is a former cardiologist who currently runs the Tampa-based managed health care company Freedom Health.

The donation from the Patel Family Foundation includes a USD 50 million gift and an additional USD 150 million real estate and facility investment in a 325,000 square-foot medical education complex that will be part of NSU’s new campus.

Their transformational commitment will advance health care in Florida and internationally, with a particular focus on multicultural and underserved communities. The goal is to put patients first and integrate medical and health care expertise, the university said in a statement.

The campus will house a new site for NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, as well as its existing programs in the Tampa area. The school is the largest provider of medical graduates in the state of Florida, it said.

"The university will produce 250 doctors annually in the short run and the roughly 400 physicians in a few years," Kiran said.

He said medical doctors from India will be brought to the US for a year-long residency in the country. "It will be like training the trainers," he said.

"This partnership will benefit thousands of patients, students and doctors," Pallavi said.

"Over the next 20 years, NSU will train thousands of new doctors and other health care professionals who will directly touch millions of lives, making a real difference," she added.

"This gift and additional investment will enrich NSU’s ability to educate highly-qualified physicians and healthcare professionals who understand how the medical disciplines can and must work together," said NSU President George Hanbury.

"This USD 200-million-commitment will make NSU the premiere leader in healthcare education on both the east and west coasts of Florida," said Hanbury.

India getting more 'weight' under Trump

Cont'd from page 5

On Pakistan’s role to support the US war against terrorism and how the latter got disappointed with it, he said, “We never got any help in Afghanistan from Pakistan”.

"In fact, they harbored terrorists including (Osama) Bin Laden...I have asked (the US government) to declare Pakistan as a terrorist state, equal to North Korea, a rogue state. And Trump may declare it," he said.

He also said that China’s continued support to Pakistan would worsen its already tense relationship with India. "I think China is not getting anything from Pakistan. It (China) is a smart country," the former Senator from South Dakota said.

Commenting on US foreign policy, he said, “We had almost lost control over our foreign policy. The law firms had at least a law of not having clients from both the sides, but the newly-emerged consultancy firms...they do not have such a binding.”

"India-China are not going to have war. China might build few roads, but it is not relying too much on Pakistan. I am not worried about China and Pakistan doing (anything serious) together. They can make loud noise," he said in response to a query.

India, US flay Pak terror safe havens

Cont’d from page 5

“We appreciate India’s important contributions to stability in Afghanistan, but India makes billions of dollars in trade with the United States, and we want them to help us more with Afghanistan, especially in the area of economic assistance and development,” said Trump in August when he outlined his administration’s Afghan policy.

MEETING WITH ENVOY
WASHINGTON: Ahead of his India visit, Mattis met Indian Ambassador to the US Navtej Sarna at the Pentagon. In a rarest of the rare gesture, Mattis came down to the Riverside entrance of the Pentagon to receive Sarna.

The Indian envoy said the meeting was “very positive and cordial.”

After the meeting, the Defense Secretary came down to see him off.
Nadella has high praise for India's Aadhaar

ORLANDO, FL: India's Aadhaar identity system rivals the growth of other platform innovations like Windows, Android or Facebook, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella has said.

Nadella, in his book 'Hit Refresh', which was released during the ongoing Microsoft Ignite 2017 conference, has praised India's leap forward in the digital and technological arena.

"Aadhaar now has scaled to over one billion people, rivaling the growth of other platform innovations such as Windows, Android or Facebook, the 50-year-old wrote in his book that has hit the book stores.

He praised the creation of the new digital ecosystem IndiaStack.

IndiaStack is a set of APIs (application programming interface) that allows governments, businesses, startups and developers to utilize a unique digital infrastructure to solve India's hard problems towards presence-less, paperless, and cashless service delivery.

"China strategically used the global supply chain and their own domestic market to amplify their comparative advantage and bootstrap their economic growth," the Indian-born CEO noted.

The combination of industrial policy, public sector investment and entrepreneurial energy is what many other countries will also look to replicate from China's success. I see the beginnings of this in India with the creation of the new digital ecosystem known as IndiaStack, Nadella said.

"India is leapfrogging from once being an infrastructure-poor country to now leading in digital technology. IndiaStack ushers in a presence-less, cashless, paperless economy for all its citizens," said the Indian American CEO from Microsoft.

In his book, Nadella wrote that on a trip to Bengaluru he engaged in a conversation with Nandan Nilekani about IndiaStack and its future road map.

"Nandan is the legendary founder of Infosys, who went on to create a new startup with the Indian Government - Aadhaar - the identity system that is at the center of IndiaStack," he said.

Nadella has also mentioned about Enlightiks, a startup that was acquired by Practo, a leading e-health company in India.

"I met the founder of Enlightiks on the same trip to Bengaluru. They are using the latest cloud technology and AI from Microsoft to create a state-of-the-art health care diagnostics service that can, for example, detect an atrial fibrillation event before it happens because of the rich data going from the personal device of the patient directly to the cloud," he said.

"In turn, this cloud service can be made available to hospitals in smaller towns or rural areas in India. Enlightiks also has plans to take advantage of IndiaStack to authenticate the user, accept payment, create portal medical records, and much more. This Indian innovation is now looking to expand in the US, Africa and everywhere else, he wrote.

According to Nadella, this dynamic is not unique to China or India. "I saw this across Chile, Indonesia, and Poland, and also in France, Germany, and Japan." Reflected on my earlier visit to Egypt, it is clear they are investing in human capital," he said.

TECHNOLOGY SHOULD EMPOWER PEOPLE

In his keynote address at the Ignite conference in Orlando, Nadella said that every piece of technology should help embellish the capability of human beings. It should not "degrade" humanity but provide new levels of inclusiveness.

"As we talk about technology, one of the things we need in particular as technologists and decision-makers is to keep in mind the timeless values that drive what we do. How are we going to use technology to empower people? Every piece of technology should help embellish the capability of human beings.

"We definitely want more productivity and efficiency, but we do not want to degrade humanity," he said. "We want technology to provide new levels of inclusiveness. In fact, I'm most excited about accessibility."

"How can we bring more people into as full participants in our society, in our economy, using technology? How can we make sure that there's no bias built into technology?" Nadella said as he stressed on empowering every person.

Rahul attacks PM in poll-bound Gujarat

JAMNAGAR/DWARKA: Attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi over note ban, GST, farm policies and ‘Gujarat model’ of development, Rahul Gandhi here voiced confidence of being “anti-farmer”, Rahul Gandhi came down heavily on theBJP government, be it education or health services,” he said.

"Privatization is happening in every sector under this government, even education and health sector. Due to this policy of the BJP government, people are not getting education or health services,” Gandhi said.

He promised free medicines and medical treatment if the Congress is voted to power in Gujarat.

From Dwarka, Gandhi headed to Hanjarpar, where he was accorded a traditional welcome by villagers. He even rode a bullock cart and interacted with villagers.

"As we talk about technology, one of the things we need in particular as technologists and decision-makers is to keep in mind the timeless values that drive what we do. How are we going to use technology to empower people? Every piece of technology should help embellish the capability of human beings.

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Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi meeting with supporters during his visit to Jamnagar in Gujarat on September 29.
Blind devotion to godmen threat to nation: Agnivesh

JAIPUR: Social activist Swami Agnivesh has said that “rising blind devotion” towards religion and godmen was a grave threat to the country.

Talking to reporters here, the Arya Samaj leader said the “hypocrite godmen” were holding democracy to ransom in the name of religion. Any association of godmen with political leaders should be probed.

“Rising blind devotion towards religion and godmen pose a grave threat to the country. Hypocrite godmen are working to build vote bank for the political parties, which is crippling democracy,” he said.

Blaming self-styled godmen, Agnivesh said they were establishing empire of immense property for themselves by playing with people’s faith and sentiments.

Agnivesh also criticized the Centre for its attitude towards Rohingya Muslims, and announced that he will hold a fast, on October 2, to protest the government’s decision.

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Of 87 emails sent, 18 were responded to. Only two of the authors said they were aware that the journal they published in was potentially predatory.

Manipal University, which had 15 papers published in predatory journals, detailed an intervention launched earlier this year, and provided data that the effort reduced the number of articles published in presumed predatory journals, according to the researchers.

-Courtesy South Asian Post

India's low quality research under scrutiny

India is the top country globally to get low-quality research published in ‘predatory’ journals, according to a Canadian study which found that it contributed 27 per cent of the scientific studies in bogus publications.

The investigation, published in the journal Nature, also showed that majority of papers in suspected biomedical predatory journals (57 per cent) are from high or upper middle income countries, with many coming from prestigious institutions including the Harvard University in the US.

Largely unknown a decade ago, there are now an estimated 8,000 predatory journals collectively publishing more than 400,000 research studies each year, the Press Trust of India reported.

These journals offer to quickly publish research findings, typically at a lower cost than legitimate journals, but do not provide quality controls such as peer-review.

Predatory journals are also difficult to search, meaning that health-care providers and researchers can rarely learn from the data in these journals.

Researchers from The Ottawa Hospital and the University of Ottawa in Canada analyzed 1,907 research papers published in 220 suspected biomedical predatory journals.

The journals were randomly selected from well-known but controversial lists compiled by University of Colorado librarian Jeffrey Beall.

Researchers found that the top countries publishing in these journals were India (27 per cent), the US (15 per cent), Nigeria (five per cent), Iran (four per cent) and Japan (four per cent).

The US National Institutes of Health was the most frequent funder mentioned among the very few articles that credited one.

“Our research debunks the common belief that predatory journals are only a problem in low income countries,” said David Moher, a senior scientist at The Ottawa Hospital and associate professor at the University of Ottawa.

“Predatory journals publish research from scientists around the world, including those based at prestigious high income institutions,” said Moher.

The researchers also attempted to judge the quality of the suspected predatory journal papers using adapted versions of widely accepted reporting guideline checklists.

“While quality can be patchy even in legitimate journals, we found that it was far worse in suspected predatory journals,” said Larissa Shamseer, a PhD student at The Ottawa Hospital and the University of Ottawa.

“For example, clinical trials published in predatory journals are much less likely to provide information on research ethics approval, trial registration and randomization into treatment groups. These details are essential for other researchers to be able to gauge the validity of the results,” said Shamseer.

“We estimate that data from millions of patients and animals may be tuck away in predatory journals,” said Manoj Lalu, associate scientist at The Ottawa Hospital.

“Most of this work is undetectable by readers, including by health-care providers looking for research to inform patient care,” he said.

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-Army chief warns of another surgical strike

The strikes were carried out by the Special Forces of the Army who had crossed the LoC. An unspecified number of terrorists waiting to sneak into India were killed in action by the Indian Army.

When asked what impact did the surgical strikes had, Rawat said, “(It sent a message that) We are a stronger nation capable of taking decisions when time comes.”

We will keep receiving them (infiltrators) to dispatch them two-and-a-half feet below the ground.”

The surgical strikes on terror launch pads across the LoC were conducted on the intervening night of September 28-29 last year, following a militant attack on an Army camp that killed 19 soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir.

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When asked what impact did the surgical strikes had, Rawat said, “(It sent a message that) We are a stronger nation capable of taking decisions when time comes.”

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Urban drone deliveries will finally fly

Drone startup Matternet says it will use a network of robotic quadcopters to ferry packages between hospitals in cities across Switzerland this year. The Verge reports that the scheme, said to be the first to fly over densely populated areas, makes use of an automated landing station to accept packages and release them to approved recipients. Initially, Matternet will deliver blood and pathology samples, not unlike the rural service of Zipline.

Google buying HTC to make money out of AI

Google is buying the HTC team that it uses to design its Pixel phones, including 2,000 staff and a stack of intellectual property. The deal is a clear sign that Google is dead serious about its drive to build hardware. But as argued before, this isn’t hardware for hardware’s sake: it’s Google’s push to monetize its ferocious IP portfolio.

Amazon is working on Alexa smart glasses

The Financial Times says (S) the e-tailer is building a wearable version of its AI assistant. Developed by ex-Google Glass lead Babak Parviz, it’s thought to ditch cameras and screens and instead provide an ever-present Alexa, by syncing with a smartphone and using bone-conduction audio so users don’t need ear buds. The FT says a device could launch this year. Its arrival would further cement voice assistants as a primary way to interact with machines—a future we’ve postulated.

Demotization a courageous decision to end corruption: Swaraj

UNITED NATIONS: External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj has said demonetization was a “courageous” decision taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to challenge black money—one of the by-products of corruption.

"Demonetization was a courageous decision to challenge one of the by-products of corruption, the 'black money' that disappeared from circulation," Swaraj said in her address to the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly here.

She also said India has passed the Goods and Services Tax (GST) legislation, through which there is one-tax across the country, without the untidy and punishing system of multiple taxes under differing categories in different parts of India.

"Our 'Save the girl, Educate the girl' campaign is reducing gender inequality. The Clean India program is generating what can only be described as a revolutionary change in societal attitudes and habits," she said.

"The Jan Dhan plan must act as a revolutionary change in societal attitudes and habits. There are two ways of addressing the curse of poverty. The traditional method is through incremental levels of aid and hand-holding," she noted.

"But our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chosen the more radical route, through economic empowerment. The poor are not helpless; we have merely denied them opportunity. We are eliminating poverty by investing in the poor. We are turning them from job-seekers into job-providers," Swaraj said.

She said that all of the economic programs—Jan Dhan, Mudra, Ujwala, Skill India, Digital India, Clean India, Start-Up India and Stand-Up India—have a principal purpose, the empowerment of the poor.

"The Jan Dhan plan must surely count as the world’s largest financial inclusion scheme," she said, adding that at least 300 million Indians who had never crossed the doors of a bank today have bank accounts: this is equivalent to the population of the United States of America.

"This was, understandably, not easy to complete in three years, but our banks, achieved this visionary goal set by our Prime Minister.

Cont’d on page 14

Demonetization was not required: Manmohan

MOHALI, Punjab: Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said the economy is on a “downhill path” because of the “adventure” of demonetization undertaken last year which was not required at all, either technically or economically.

Singh, a renowned economist considered to be the architect of the reforms of early 1990s, said demonetization has not been successful in any civilized country, except some of the Latin American nations.

“I don’t think demonetization was at all required... I don’t think it was technically, economically necessary to launch this adventure,” he said at the Indian School of Business (ISB) Leadership Summit here when asked if the note ban decision was the right one.

He said the process involved withdrawing almost 86 per cent of the currency from circulation and “there was bound to be fall-out which we are all seeing.”

S ing h made a speech before answering a few questions at the event. “ T he economy has slowed down as I had projected a few months ago as a result of demonetization and also the fact that demonetization has been accompanied by the GST, which is a good thing that we have done in the long term. But in the short term, there are glitches that need to be resolved. Therefore, the economy has experienced a downhill path,” he said.

He said the GDP growth was much higher in the last quarter of 2016-17 than the first quarter of this financial year.
Note ban achieved its main objectives: Jaitley

MUMBAI: Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has said demonetization was a shake-up which achieved its “principal objectives” of decreasing cash transactions, expanding the tax base and increasing digitization.

“Confiscating” the money was not the aim, he pointed out. Demonetization was certainly a shake-up,” Jaitley said at the Bloomberg India Economic Forum here.

“I think the demonetization debate in India actually is being held at two different levels. The first level was ‘there’s an inconvenience caused, there are queues which have come up’.

(The second argument being) ‘Oh the money has come back into the system’. But that was the whole idea. The idea is not to confiscate money,” the finance minister said.

“The idea is to make sure that this anonymous cash operating in the system itself becomes a part of the system,” he said.

“There were three principal objectives besides the big picture that we wanted to shake and break the Indian normal. We wanted to create a new Indian normal,” he said.

While announcing the decision to ban Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes on November 8 last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said the move was aimed at reducing black money, checking counterfeiting and curbing extremism.

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(The second argument being) ‘Oh the money has come back into the system’,” Jaitley said.

Referring to the “principal objectives”, Jaitley said note ban helped reduce the reliance on cash, particularly high denomination currency. "In the first round itself we have managed to squeeze a significant part of it (currency),” Jaitley said.

It also helped increase the tax base as the anonymity associated with the cash was no longer available, he said. “A lot of people had to (come into tax net) because once you put money into the banking system, the anonymity of cash was lost. Cash got identified with its owner,” he said.

On digitization, the third “principal objective”, Jaitley said digital transactions have "multiplied" and digitization has now become "centre stage agenda of economic governance in India".-PTI

Arvind Subramanian gets extension as CEA

NEW DELHI: The government will extend the term of Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian by one year till October 2018, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has said.

Subramanian, a Senior Fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, was appointed India’s Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) in October 2014. His term was for three years, which was to end on October 16.

Interacting with reporters, Jaitley said "he (Subramanian) gets extension for one year". The BJP-led NDA government’s 5-year term ends in May 2019.

The CEA is usually the main go-to person for advice for the finance minister on macro-economic matters, and primary responsibilities, among others, include authoring the mid-year analysis and the Economic Survey.

Subramanian’s predecessor was Raghuram Rajan, who quitted the position in September 2013 after his appointment as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Speaking after the government’s decision, Subramanian said the economy is facing multiple headwinds and there is a need to attack them on various fronts.

“We have lots of challenges ahead… we have seen growth slowing down and investment not picking up. So, we have to attack this problem on many fronts - exchange rate, public investments while maintaining macroeconomic stability,” he said.

On the appreciation of the rupee, he said all emerging economies face this problem, with a surge in capital inflow putting pressure on the exchange rate.

Subramanian graduated from St Stephen’s College, Delhi, and got an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He obtained M.Phil and D.Phil from the University of Oxford in the UK.-PTI

Telecom sector under stress: SBI chief

KOLKATA: The country’s largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) has reiterated that the telecom sector was under stress and the bank was doing extra provisioning for this.

SBI chairman Arundhati Bhattacharya said, “The telecom sector is undergoing a lot of stress and the bank is extra provisioning due to this.”

She said this when asked whether TRAI’s decision to reduce the IUC charges would affect incumbent operators like Vodafone, Airtel and Idea which were already feeling the heat of Reliance Jio’s disruptive move.

On the bank’s NPA outlook for rest of the fiscal, Bhattacharya said, “We have probably reached the bottom. Slippages are under control although new sectors like telecom were showing stress”.

Bhattacharya, who inaugurated the State Bank Institute of Management at New Town area here said, said the merger of the associate banks with itself was a deep structural reform.

“Results will come over a period of time. We will deliver them in the next three to four quarters as promised.”

Regarding outlook of the economy post demonetization and GST, Bhattacharya said the government would have to do some ‘heavylifting’ like infrastructure development.

On the institute, she said, it would impart training in banking and finance of high-est standards. The institute would not restrict entry for non-SBI people and was open to all banking finance professionals, she said.-PTI
UK restaurant jobs unfilled as EU workers leave

LONDON: As EU nationals leave Britain in ever greater numbers ahead of Brexit, restaurants like pizzeria chain Franco Manca are reporting shortages that could spell trouble for a sector that relies on immigrant labor.

The number of EU nationals leaving Britain, most of them from central Europe, rose by 33,000 to 122,000 people during the 12 months to March, according to the latest data following last year’s Brexit referendum.

Franco Manca’s parent company, Fulham Shore, said the prospect of new controls on immigration when Britain leaves the bloc was “already affecting the availability of skilled European restaurant staff”.

The company, where only 20 per cent of the staff are British, said it was implementing “a number of incentive schemes” to persuade Europeans to stay.

Owners worry that British workers may not be able or willing to fill the gap left by departing Europeans.

The hospitality industry currently has the highest proportion of unfilled jobs in Britain, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). And the situation is worsening, with 4.3 per cent of hospitality jobs vacant in June to August 2017, compared with 3.5 per cent a year earlier.

Alex Wrethman, the head of Charlotte’s group of Bistros in west London, said EU nationals were being put off by the sharp fall in the value of the pound against the euro since the Brexit vote.

The currency devaluation was “effectively a pay cut for them” as it decreased the value of remittances. Wrethman said he struggled to find Britons who were as committed to the job as their European colleagues.

“It’s difficult to find a British person to get out of bed to wash dishes,” said Wrethman, who started working in the restaurants he now owns as a teenager.

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Fuel prices will come down soon: Pradhan

AHMEDABAD: Attributing the recent rise in fuel prices to a hurricane in the US, Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan has said the rates will come down in the next few days.

“Fuel prices have gone up recently due to the hurricane in the US. As the prices reduce in the international market, they will come down here also,” the Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister told reporters here.

The rates have already started to come down in the last three days,” he said, adding that the petrol and diesel prices had been linked to the market since the last 20 years.

When asked over the possibility of reduction in taxes on petroleum products to curb the fuel prices, Pradhan said taxes can’t be slashed as funds are necessary for infrastructure development and welfare schemes.

“In democracy, it is from the taxes of the people that welfare schemes are funded. This is not any hidden system. Everybody knows that most part of the revenue earned through taxes is spent on the welfare schemes,” he added.

Pradhan also expressed hope that petroleum products will soon be brought under the ambit of GST.

“We have brought GST with consensus of all states. I am hopeful that petroleum products will also come under GST soon,” he said.-PTI

Centre hands over 3 ITDC hotels to States

NEW DELHI: As part of the disinvestment exercise, the Centre has decided to exit three ITDC hotels including Jaipur Ashok and handover them to the state governments concerned.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the transfer of India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd (ITDC) hotels Jaipur Ashok and Lalitha Mahal Palace Mysore to the governments of Rajasthan and Karnataka.

It also cleared disinvestment of ITDC’s 51 per cent equity in Donyi Polo Ashok, Itanagar, in favor of Arunachal Pradesh.

Briefing the media after the Cabinet meeting, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said that as per valuations, the Jaipur property would fetch the Centre Rs 14 crore, Mysore Rs 7.45 crore and Itanagar Rs 3.89 crore.

This is as per disinvestment policy of the Government of India wherein ITDC Hotels and properties are to be leased or sub-leased jointly with states, he said.

The policy has been formulated in line with the view that running and managing hotels is not the job of the government or its entities.

The Ministry of Tourism has to date transferred the properties or units of Hotel Lake View Ashok, Bhopal; Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok, Guwahati and Hotel Bharatpur Ashok, Bharatpur to the state governments concerned.-PTI
NEW DELHI: India is engaging with various countries, including Uzbekistan, to procure nuclear fuel as part of its plan to create a strategic uranium reserve to ensure long-term security.

The plan is to have a stockpile of nuclear fuel for its strategic uranium reserve that can sustain the country’s reactors for the next five years so that they do not stop functioning because of the lack of uranium.

In the past, the Indian power reactors were underperforming due to shortage of uranium, owing to sanctions imposed by the West post 1974 Pokhran nuclear tests.

Talks are currently being held with Uzbekistan, a senior government official said, and a delegation from the Central Asian country had visited India last month to discuss the issue in detail.

The delegation came just two months after Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral talks with Uzbek president Shavkat Mirziyoyev on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Astana in June this year, said a senior Ministry of External Affairs official, on condition of anonymity.

“We have been looking to import uranium from Uzbekistan in the past. Back then, they had refused to transport uranium to an Indian port. But now they have agreed to do so and negotiations are on,” said a senior government official requesting anonymity.

According to the World Nuclear Association, an international organization that represents the global nuclear industry, the landlocked Central Asian country is the seventh largest exporter of uranium in the world.

Attempts are also being made to procure uranium from Australia. A nuclear cooperation pact between the two nations was signed in 2014 and came into force in 2015. Uranium mining in Australia is mostly done by private players. However, a senior government official pointed out that Australian uranium is “impure” in nature.

The US and other nations had imposed sanctions on India following the Pokhran nuclear tests in 1974. Post Indo-US nuclear cooperation agreement, New Delhi’s quest to have a uranium reserve got traction as importing fuel became much easier.

“Just 1.5 °C of warming may be realistic

A study published in Nature Geoscience claims we’ve overestimated the planet’s warming to date. Updated models suggest humanity could emit three times more carbon than the UN currently suggests and still meet the 1.5 °C warming target of the Paris climate pact.

America may stay in the Paris climate pact

Security adviser HR McMaster and secretary of state Rex Tillerson both say the U.S. could yet remain in the global climate deal, reports the Guardian. The Wall Street Journal also says White House economist Gary Cohn will clarify Trump’s commitment with foreign officials as world leaders arrive in NYC for a UN meeting. Much could be gained from a U-turn: Trump’s withdrawal, announced June, could cede economic opportunities to other nations.

Facebook too big to fight its ad problem?

The social network says that it’s sharing 3,000 Russia-linked ads from its site with Congress to aid an investigation into election meddling. Mark Zuckerberg has also outlined plans to increase transparency and vetting of ads, to stop future spread of damaging propaganda. But the New York Times makes a fascinating argument ($) it says Zuck has built something so big and powerful he’s no longer able to control it. As argued in the past, we need to break Facebook’s monopoly.

Wireless charging just got a range boost

The startup Pi, founded by two MIT graduates, has developed a wireless charger that it says will juice your phone from a foot away. It uses the same physics of induction as other wireless charging systems, but with the addition of fancy math to shape magnetic fields and target power devices more effectively. According to TechCrunch the device will cost under $200 and go on sale in 2018. Let’s hope it works: as we’ve reported before, other long-range wireless chargers have flopped.
THE MINISTER SAID THAT AT LEAST 14 FOREIGN COMPANIES HAVE EVIDENCED KEEN INTEREST TO SET UP INDUSTRIES IN THE PROPOSED AEROSPACE PARK IN 270 ACRES OF LAND NEAR SIRPERUMPUDUR NEAR CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government is planning to organize the second Global Investors Meet (GIM) next year, with a target to attract Rs 3 lakh crore investments, state Industries Minister M C Sampath has said.

Addressing stakeholders' meeting here on "Business Facilitation Act and Rules 2017" proposed by the state government, Sampath said the last GIM had received investments worth Rs 72,000 crore, generating 60,000 jobs.

Stating that 2018 GIM has targeted investment commitments of Rs 3 lakh crore, he said, "As per the Vision Tamil Nadu-2023 of late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa, the state has to attract an investment of Rs 15 lakh crore."

The minister said that at least 14 foreign companies have evinced keen interest to set up industries in the proposed Aerospace Park in 270 acres of land near Sirperumpudur near Chennai.

The companies will invest Rs 50 crore each for the units, he said, adding that the government will also establish a Rs 150 crore R&D facility there.

Stating that Tamil Nadu is one of the front runners in promoting industrialization in India much before the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Haryana, Sampath said the state is considered best suited for investments due to its favorable conditions including ‘Conducive Business Environment, Skilled Manpower, surplus power.’

On the Business Facilitation Act, he said it facilitates industry members to integrate the clearances required from about 15 individual departments completely online, with time limits for clearances and a system of deemed approval for delayed clearances.

The Act will certainly be a boon to Tamil Nadu to effectively compete with other states in the country including Telangana, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh in garnering investments, Sampath said.

Highlighting major projects being implemented in the region, Municipal Administration Minister S P Velumani urged Sampath to promote investments in the western part of Tamil Nadu and consider it as the focus region in the forthcoming Global Investors Meet.

He further expressed that a supporting bureau like the Guidance Bureau was institutionalized for the first time in the state of Tamil Nadu much before other states in the country, primarily for promoting industrialization.

He stated that projects like Integrated Bus Stand, Land Acquisition for Airport Expansion, company officials for a ceremony celebrating the production milestone at the Princeton assembly plant.

The factory about 25 miles north of Evansville has about 5,000 workers building Highlander and Sequoia SUVs and Sienna minivans. The Evansville Courier & Press reports Toyota estimates its presence has led to about 27,000 jobs among supplier companies.

Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana director Greg Wathen says Toyota has changed the region's economic feel by creating opportunities for suppliers nearby in Indiana and Illinois.

Toyota announced in January a $600 million investment at the factory to boost Highlander production, possibly adding 400 jobs by late 2019. - AP


demonetization a courageous decision to end corruption: Swaraj

She said that over 70 per cent of these loans have gone to women.

While some remain to be included, the target has been set every Indian family will have a bank account," she said, adding that these accounts were opened with zero balance.

Mudra yojana, she said, has enabled government to fund the unfunded. "Those who had never dreamed that bank credit was within their options, today, through Mudra, are getting soft loans without collateral to begin micro businesses," she said.

Swaraj said India has started, this year, the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, asserting that the country is completely engaged in fighting poverty.-PTI

India Post September 29, 2017

Tamil Nadu plans 2nd Global Investors Meet

Mercedes-Benz to invest $1 billion in Alabama

FRANKFURT, Germany: Carmaker Mercedes-Benz has announced that it will invest $1 billion to set up electric vehicle production at its Tuscaloosa, Alabama plant and to build a battery factory nearby; moves it said would create 600 new jobs.

The luxury division of Germany's Daimler AG said it plans to manufacture electric SUVs under Mercedes' EQ sub-brand at the Alabama plant by the start of the next decade.

Mercedes executive Markus Schäfer said in a statement that "with the addition of electric SUVs to our future fleet, we will provide discerning drivers with a new, high-quality automotive option.”

Daimler, based in Stuttgart, Germany, is among the global automakers investing in what they hope will be the automotive technology of the future, combining low-emissions electric propulsion with autonomous driving technology and new forms of getting around such as sharing cars ordered through a smartphone app.

At the Mercedes-Benz U.S. International plant in Tuscaloosa, workers assemble the GLS, GLE and GLE Coupe SUVs for the global market as well as the C-Class sedan for North America. The company says it employs 3,700 people and supports another 7,000 jobs at the 1,000-acre (400 hectare) site.

The first EQ production model, the EQC, is expected to go into production in Bremen, Germany in 2019. The Alabama battery plant will join facilities in Germany and China; construction is to begin next year on the 1 million square-foot (92,900 square-meter) facility, which is planned to start operating at the beginning of the next decade. -AP

Toyota marks 5 millionth vehicle

PRINCETON, Ind.: Toyota has marked the production of its 5 millionth vehicle from its southwestern Indiana factory that opened 19 years ago.

Gov. Eric Holcomb joined state and Toyota officials to celebrate the occasion.

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Cont’d from page 10

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GOPIO Convention lauded for promoting Indian businesses

CHICAGO: Chicago Chapter of Global Organization for People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) hosted its 3rd Annual Business Convention & Gala on Sunday September 17 at Rosemont Hyatt Hotel with attendance from many corporate executives, State and local Government officials, Asian-American and small and minority business leaders and nonprofit organization activists.

The objective of the event was to promote common cultural heritage and create binding relationship among business community. Chairman and Founder of GOPIO Chicago Gladson Varghese welcomed all the business leaders, political leaders and other esteemed guests. He also stated GOPIO is one of the largest Indian organizations outside India with Chapters in over 20 countries.

President and Founder Hina Trivedi in her Presidential address stated GOPIO Chicago is on the path of rapid growth and invited all the business leaders to be part of the organization.

In his inaugural address D.B. Bhati, Consul of India, Chicago, the keynote speakers, congratulated GOPIO Chicago leadership for hosting a Business Conference like this and promised support to the Indian community and GOPIO Chicago to create a business environment that will help to grow Indian businesses, especially the startup companies.

Cont’d on page 24

GOPIO Business Convention inauguration. -Pics Asian Media USA

Ind-Am couple donates $250,000 for hurricane relief

HOUSTON, Texas: Hurricane Harvey hit the Gulf Coast of USA on August 25 leaving South Texas with massive damage worth over $180 billion. The damage to public and private properties includes the destruction of 200,000 homes (50,000 in Houston only), which may take five years to be rebuilt, according to the Governor of Texas.

However, every dark cloud has a silver lining. An Indian American couple donated USD 250,000 to Houston Mayor’s Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund at a private event here.

Details on page 21

St. Louis temple celebrates Vaibhavotsavam

ASHWIN PATEL

ST LOUIS: For peace, harmony and general well-being, The Hindu Temple of St. Louis conducted Vaibhavotsavam from September 1to 3 in the form of Homams to all Deities in temple and Srinivasa Kalyanam. Many youth volunteers collected donations for Hurricane Harvey.

Utsavam in reference to worship is conducting of a ritual worship on a grand scale. The Hindu Temple of St. Louis has undertaken elaborate efforts to conduct this event.

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Welcome address by Gladson Varghese

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Award being presented to Congressman Raja Krishnamurthy

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Award being presented to Congressman Raja Krishnamurthy
Bathukamma celebrated with great enthusiasm

India Post News Service

MILPITAS, CA: Telangana American Telugu Association (T.A.T.A.), Bay Area, celebrated Bathukamma and Dussehra Jatara, a festival of flowers, in Bay Area, at Indian community Center Milpitas on September 23. More than 1600 members and families from various parts of Bay Area, including LA, attended the festivities.

Bathukamma is a colorful and vibrant annual floral festival celebrated by women. Though originating and celebrated mostly in Telangana region, families across all the regional and cultural boundaries join in this auspicious festival in Bay Area reflecting the unity among Telugu speaking people.

Families brought Bathukammas, a floral arrangement of many varieties of beautiful flowers stacked in layers in the shape of a pyramid. The venue was specially decorated for the celebrations. Entrance with Ravana and Lalitha Kala Toranam, inside with Pochamma temples. Women clad in colorful traditional dresses and choice of beautiful gold ornaments and men and children in the traditional attire added more color to the event.

The festivities started with Lalitha Parayanam, the women members chanting mantras in praise of Goddess Durga who is a symbol of womanhood and the universal Shakti, with utmost devotion.

Later with all the Bathukammas in center, womenfolk danced circling around these floral arrangements singing devotional Bathukamma songs.

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Chicago Batukamma with traditional flavor

SURESH BODIWALA

Renowned folk singer Shalini [pink sari] at Batukamma Telangana’s Floral Festival

CHICAGO, IL: Telugu Association of Greater Chicago (T.A.G.C ) celebrated Batukamma/Dusshera with the support of Telangana State Government Tourism department and the American Telangana Association on a grand scale here last week. Batukamma festival is an integral part of Telangana life and culture and is a symbol of family relationships. TAGC celebrated Batukamma/Dusshera with more than 1000 plus guests at Gazebo hall, SVS Balaji Temple Aurora. Last year Telangana State Tourism department officially announced supporting TAGC as their first international Association to be a part of the state government festivals as well as all the events conducted by TAGC. Under the TAGC President Elect Jyothi Chintalapani’s leadership and women board of directors, close to 125 women wore matching sarees and brought color and uniqueness. This initiative was done to support impoverished weavers in Telangana and help them financially.

Gazebo Hall and central area were decorated with colorful fall flowers under the leadership of TAGC decoration committee chair Swetha Janamanchi and volunteers. TAGC President and Board offered sarees, flowers, pasupu & kumkum, vodibiyam and nose ornament to goddess Parvathi at temple, prior to the event. Sannai and Dolu musical performers and were immersed in a pond close by. Gifts were presented to Batukamma competition winners.

Cont’d on page 23
Concord Murugan Festival evokes Indian Utsav

CONCORD, CA: The very first “Concord Murugan Festival with Navaratri Natyanjali 2017” took place exactly like an Indian temple Utsav with great joy and enthusiasm at the Shiva Murugan Temple, Concord, CA in the temple grounds located at 1803, Second Street, Concord, CA.

Volunteers toiled night and day for weeks to make it happen and the festival shone with their passion and happiness. The auspicious sights and sounds of the Natyanjali dances filled the entire temple arena. Festival visitors strolled around the grounds enjoying the attractions of many booths filled with colorful Indian clothing, accessories, mehendi, health food groceries and aromatic food stalls. They also met several service vendors for educational classes, insurance, real estate and mortgage, etc.

The décor, completely done by temple volunteers, transported people back to a village style carnival in India. An arch decorated with traditional banana trees, colorful silks and pictures of 3 Devis welcomed the guests to the festival. A beautiful tableau set up at the entrance was hugely popular for photo ops - a young Bala Murugan with a kavadi, lamps, and ‘I support CSMT placards’.

Visitors posed in front of him, pretending to be traditional Karagam dancers or even dancing horses! The site of the future Murugan Garbagruha was decorated charmingly with a Vel and rangolis and many took pictures with the “Kaikari Ganesha” or “Shakambhari Ganesha” made of pumpkins, gourds and assorted veggies.

The brand new Pushpa Pallakkku was painstakingly decorated with flowers by volunteers for six+ hours. There were tears in many happy eyes when the 3 Devis ceremoniously paraded through the temple grounds. On Sunday, the Lord Murugan mounted his silver Mayura Vaahana manned by dozens of volunteers and majestically flew around the grounds of the temple accompanied by joyous dancing and the chanting of “Arohara!” by the assembled crowds.

Folk dances in traditional Village style were performed during the above processions and drew enthusiastic crowds. The audience also appreciated the Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Garba & Bhangra dances. 47 Bay Area schools vied with each other to display their talents to the assembled crowds. Children had a fun time getting tattoos and face painting, playing games and enjoying the giveaways.

The temple started the first Utsavam auspiciously with a Ganesha Puja and Sarva Devata Homa for Loka Shema, for the peace and wellbeing of all. They are seeking funds to help raise the new buildings, the design of which has been approved by the City of Concord. Volunteers are throwing their heart and soul into the project.

If you would like to help, please visit the temple website www.temple.org.
Indian Diaspora hurt by Rahul Gandhi lies

NEW YORK: Congress Party’s Vice President Rahul Gandhi’s derogatory statements against India, its democratic traditions, independence movement, deceptive statements on terrorism, and supporting of political dynasty during his recent tour of USA were hugely resented by a large number of Indian Americans across the country.

His entire tour of USA was a façade to mask his utterly failed leadership and churlish ideas, many felt. An outreach to Indian Diaspora to seek their support, he has failed miserably in this objective because the Indian Diaspora is amused and not convinced by his calling Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and others as NRIs, and terming the freedom movement as the NRI movement.

While speaking at Berkeley University, Rahul Gandhi justified his political heirship by announcing that India runs on dynasty. People were laughing at such deplorable defense of his very existence in politics. India does not run by dynasty but Congress Party does and yes, some of the regional parties too are run by dynasties. India has best democratic traditions and is run by its Constitution in which there is no place for dynastic rule.

His comparison to business house. You cannot put 1.3 billion people under a failed dynasty’.

Rahul excels in perpetuating lies as a true follower of Goebbels that if you tell a lie a thousand times, it would become a fact. He falsely claimed that the Congress party destroyed terrorism’s backbone in Kashmir during previous UPA government but during the last two year tenure of BJP and PDF government in Jammu and Kashmir saw increased violence and terrorism in Kashmir.

First, Rahul Gandhi needs to understand that the entire issue of violence and terrorism in Kashmir is a product of Congress party’s failed policies in Kashmir. His great grandfather Nehru was the creator of the Kashmir problem, and each successive Congress government only made it worse by making anti-India deals with the Abdullah family.

Second, for the first time after Modi government assumed office just three years ago, militancy has been in steep decline. Number of Pakistan sponsored terrorists including top commanders of the terrorist organizations are being eliminated daily in Kashmir. Those people supporting separatists in cash and kind have been identified, arrested and prosecuted. Pakistan’s evil organizations and film industry with dynastic traditions is another dismal example to justify his party perpetuating dynastic politics. OFBJP President, Krishna Reddy Anugula said, “The real question is why the nation has to suffer for the sake of one family. A nation cannot be equated with a business of terrorism lead to Pakistan, the epicenter of terrorism.

Third, it is this NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that has shown the courage to carry out a successful surgical strike to destroy terrorist launch pads across the line of control causing heavy casualties to Pak trained terrorists. This showed to the world that India would not compromise on its integrity and sovereignty and would take whatever steps are needed.

Rahul Gandhi made a self-contradictory statement by saying Modi is a better communicator and knows how to send messages to 3-4 different groups of people at once, but he does not converse with the people whom he works. How can one be a better communicator without conversing with your own people?

“Modi was the most successful chief minister of India before he won a landslide historical victory in 2014 parliamentary elections and subsequent assembly elections held in the last three years including the largest state of Uttar Pradesh” said Prof. Dinesh Agrawal, OFBJP Past President. “People have rejected corrupt Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that looted India and caused misery to the population, and now this dynastic rule cannot be revived”, he added.

Rahul Gandhi said GST and demonetization have destroyed jobs and will have adverse impact on economy. Contrary to his doomsday predictions, the bold steps of GST and demonetization have cleansed the system; it has added 56 lakh new tax payers. Cash deposits worth 2.89 lakh crores are under investigation, 2.1 lakh shell companies de-registered and 3 lakh suspected companies are under radar. These are long time measures and their impact will be very positive for India. Mr. Gandhi is literally telling lies about these measures, whereas, facts and figures cry something else. Congress party’s dynasty has always thrived on fear mongering, outright lies, unprecendented corruption, and dictatorship.

He has been inactive during parliament sessions and failed miserably to serve his constituents. Most of the time his party does not allow parliament to run smoothly by resorting to obstructionist methods but he shamelessly speaks about non-functional parliament. Whom is he trying to hoodwink in this digital age? In his final speaking engagement in New York, he again talked about divisive politics. “He should look at the history of the Congress party and how it has been dividing the country for vote bank politics”, said Dr. Vasudev Patel, OFBJP Organizing Secretary.

Rahul Gandhi, during this trip, repeatedly said that India’s major challenge is concentration of power. We agree with that observation. In fact, people of India agree and that is the reason people have thrown out the Congress party from power because Rahul’s Gandhi-Nehru-Manu dynasty kept political power within themselves for the last 70 years.

OFBJP Vice President Dr. Adapa Prasad said, “If his tour was designed to impress the Indian Diaspora or a dry run before assuming the office of President of his Congress party, then he failed miserably in this test as well”.

OFBJP is fully aware of how Congress Party’s rule debased India at the world stage and harmed every interest of the country starting from his Great Grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru through the leadership of his Mother Sonia Maino Gandhi”, he added.
IND-AM couple donates $250,000 for hurricane relief

HOUSTON, Texas: Hurricane Harvey hit the Gulf Coast of USA on August 25 leaving South Texas with massive damage worth over $180 billion. The damage to public and private properties includes the destruction of 200,000 homes (50,000 in Houston only), which may take five years to be rebuilt, according to the Governor of Texas.

However, every dark cloud has a silver lining. An Indian American couple donated USD 250,000 to Houston Mayor’s Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund at a private event here.

Amit Bhandari, a Houston-based entrepreneur, is CEO and Chairman of BioUrja Group which trades in energy and agricultural commodities across the globe. His wife, Arpita Bhandari is the Vice President of Human Resources in the company.

Amit Bhandari said that volunteers of the Greater Houston Community Foundation helped rescue 700 victims of Hurricane Harvey in Houston. The community has also donated $1.5 million to several charitable organizations involved in Hurricane Harvey relief and rehabilitation.

The Consul General of India in Houston, Dr. Anupam Ray lauded the Indian American community for their humanitarian efforts.

ROLE OF SEWA INTERNATIONAL

Sewa International is another non-profit organization that deserves a special mention for its pivotal role in evacuating and rescuing people, including 247 Indian students at the University of Houston, from the floods caused by Hurricane Harvey, which is described as the costliest natural calamity in US history.

Sewa International raised $250,000 in ten days to provide relief to the victims of Hurricane Harvey. The volunteers tirelessly organized health camps, arranged temporary shelters, provided medical supplies and served hot meals.

Several local organizations and Houston restaurants including Dinesh Purohit’s Cafe India contributed to the relief work by providing and distributing 30,000 meals a day across Greater Houston.

Houston Indian American Amit Bhandari and his wife Arpita Brahmbhatt Bhandari have donated $250,000 to Houston Mayor’s Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund.

The Consul General of India in Houston, Dr. Anupam Ray lauded the Indian American community for their humanitarian efforts.
St. Louis temple celebrates Vaibhavotsavam

ASHWIN PATEL

ST LOUIS: For peace, harmony and general well-being, the Hindu Temple of St. Louis conducted Vaibhavotsavam from September 1 to 3 in the form of Homams to all Deities in temple and Srinivasa Kalyanam. Many youth volunteers collected donations for Hurricane Harvey.

Utisavam in reference to worship is conducting of a ritual worship on a grand scale. The Hindu Temple of St. Louis has undertaken elaborate efforts to conduct this event as per Hindu scriptures involving the use of sacred fire. Fire (Sanskrit: Agni) is one of the five elements and is a sacred medium to offer sacrifice to the deity of worship. The procedure for worship of deities is codified in the ancient texts known as the Vedas.

The event started with ceremonial entering of the Yagashala. Devotees who participated in all events were given Deeksha with clothes to be worn for the next three days.

Agnimathanam, the start of fire by friction for the homam, was conducted. Wooden piece from Arani tree was used to generate the initial fire. Ganesh Homam was performed followed by Mantrapushpam and Prasadam to conclude the Day 1 events.

Day 2 events commenced with the Yagashala Pravesham and Ganesha Pooja. Later Kalasa sthapana and Chatusthhana Archana were conducted. The Deities were invoked into the central Kalasa and the four corners of the Yagashala. Sudarshana Homa in the morning session and Chandi Homa in the evening session were conducted as Pradhana Homas. These Homas were followed by Homas to other deities. Moola Mantra chanting by Priests resonated the Yagashala as devotees offered Havis (in the form of Navadhanya) with uttering of Swaha.

The Homas continued on Day 3 with Rudra Homa. Prior to homa, the priests chanted Mahanyasam. The Homas were offered with precious elements, Ratnas and herbs in a silk cloth. Priests explained the significance of the rituals and elevated the experience of the devotees. After the Purnahuti of each session, the devotees followed the priests in circumbulating the yagashala.

Srinivasa Kalyanam was performed in the evening at the Dhwaja Stambham in pleasant weather. A large number of devotees witnessed the divine wedding ritual

Srinivasa Kalyanam was performed in the evening at the Dhwaja Stambham in pleasant weather. A large number of devotees witnessed the divine wedding ritual

President Sharath Rao thanked Mrs. Padmasai Dammalapati, Chair of Pooja Committee for taking a lead along with Dr. Venkat Dharmavarapu, Prasad Bokka, Prasanna Ayer, Hari Kavuri and Phani Raju Nachu spending hours to organize the event. President also thanked chairs of the committees, Raja Shankar Kasinaduni, Mrs. Rajyalakshmi Naidu, Hema Bagavondoss, Kanta Rao Minneganti and Prasad Swarna for their continued support.

The event was helped by many volunteers including children from temple youth group. Sharath Rao appreciated the support from board for giving an opportunity to conduct such an event on a grand scale for the first time in temple history.
What drives docs to pen your prescription?

NEW YORK: Consider this scenario: There are over 4800 brands of medications available only for managing high blood pressure in India! Arguably, doctors face tremendous choice overload while writing a drug prescription.

So it’s not surprising that the pharma industry works overtime to register a top of mind recall for brands belonging to their stables. Pharmaceutical industry has been time and again criticized for offering financial incentives to lure medical professionals into prescribing for them.

Stringent guidelines issued by Medical Council of India (MCI) continue to discourage pharmaceutical marketing initiatives that directly offer financial benefits to healthcare professionals. Amidst such a cluttered market, what determines physician’s final choice of a drug is still mostly unknown.

A recent study involving over 600 physicians conducted over a three-year period reveals that doctors are mostly influenced by factors such as patient context, pharmacological profile of the drug, influence of professional peers’ opinion, besides ongoing familiarity with medical representatives.

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Financial incentives to lure medical professionals into prescribing for them.

What drives docs to pen your prescription?

PM SWAMY

Full practice authority for advanced nurses

SURENDRA ULLAL

Chicago Batukamma with traditional flavor

Cont’d from page 18

TAGC raised funds to support hurricane Harvey & Irma relief by selling Telangana traditional snacks. Vani Yetirintala played a key role in raising 1000 dollars by selling snacks with help of youth volunteers. After Batukamma immersion, all the families participated in Shammi/Jammi puja conducted by Balaji temple priest Sri Hanuman Prasad Garu on the occasion of Dusshera. All the families took the blessing from the elder guests by sharing the Garu on the occasion of Dusshera. All the families took the blessing from the elder guests by sharing the

The President thanked Telangana state tourism department ministry team, American Telangana Association team, SVS Balaji temple management, sponsors for the event and media partners.

Turning point launches education academy

MADHU PATEL

SKOKIE: Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center has announced the launch of Turning Point Academy.

Beginning this fall, Turning Point Academy will offer a series of professional development seminars which will present engaging and practical learning experiences as well provide valuable opportunities to fulfill in-person Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirements for social workers, counselors, clinical psychologists, and marriage and family therapists.

“Through Turning Point Academy, we look forward to hosting thoughtful, inspiring speakers, known for their clinical work, compassion, and attention to important issues,” said Ann Fisher Raney, Turning Point CEO. “We know these individuals, have heard them present, and are very excited to share their expertise.”

“Throughout the year, Turning Point Academy will add to its presentation roster,” said Tina Cortez, Turning Point Compliance Officer. “Our mission is to provide valuable and enriching continuing education to clinicians in our community to assist them in providing quality, compassionate care to people during some of the most difficult times of their lives.”

Fall 2017 seminars are:
Friday, October 13 - Presenter: Susan Zoline, PhD. “Traditional Dilemmas and Evolving Trends in Mental Health Practice: Clinical, Ethical and Legal Considerations”
Friday, November 3 - Presenter: Aaren Drehobl, LCSW, CADC. “Engendering Inclusion: Providing Affirming Services to Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults”

Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center is a licensed State of Illinois provider of Continuing Education for social workers (LSW/LCSW), clinical psychologists, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors (LPC/CLP). It was established in 1969 as a non-profit outpatient mental health center, serving children and adults, with a mission to provide “Solid support. When you need it most.”

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The later part of the evening was filled with entertainment and enthralled the audience with many cultural programs.

At the end, the floor was opened to the guests for a non-stop music and dance by Roll Rida Dasara festivals in praise of Goddess Durga. Men and women of all ages paired up dancing to the upbeat music.

Smt. Jhansi Reddy, President of TATA, oversaw all the arrangements with the help of Ramesh Thangellapalli Board of Director and Appi Reddy Regional Vice President. The entire event was supported and encouraged by T.A.T.A. Advisory Council Chair, Dr Pailla Mall Reddy.

Complete Cultural program was organized by Srinivas Manapragada, Cultural Chair person. A major role was played by YUVA for the entrance decoration and in all other activities. Also presented Mother’s Rights Award to Lovely Varughese. Community leader of the year award was given to Dr. Bharat Barai, Student of the year award was given to Ms Payal Patel.

The event was attended by Board members Savi Singh, Vikrant Singh, Syed Hussaini, Heman Trivedi, Sharan Walia, Nambi Vaithilingam, Vinoz Chanamolu, Chandrasekar Reddy, Manoj Kumar Singamsetti, Hitesh Gandhi and Laddi Singh. The event was attended by U.S. Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Consul of India D.B. Bhati, Mayor Mickey Straub, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Consul of India O.P. Meena. Humanitarian Award was given to Zahid Hameed, Sponsorship recogni- tion to Lisa Victoria Waller, Syed Hussaini, Avani Trivedi, Abdul Gafoor, Manoj Kumar Singamsetti, Nick Gakhal and Namibajam Vaithilingam. The event was attended by Board members Savi Singh, Vikrant Singh, Syed Hussaini, Heman Trivedi, Sharan Walia, Nambi Vaithilingam, Vinoz Chanamolu, Chandrasekar Reddy, Manoj Kumar Singamsetti, Hitesh Gandhi and Laddi Singh.

The Emcee for the evening was Dr. Ajit Pant. President Hina Trivedi thanked all the dignitaries, GOPIO Board members, CEOs of various companies, media, sponsors and all the audience for their support for GOPIO Chicago. The Business Conference ended with Bollywood style entertainment programs including dances, music and DJ. At the end of the program, Indian style dinner and cocktails were served to the guests.
Hari Om Mandir hosts yoga & meditation

CHICAGO: One of the leading Hindu temple organizations, Hari Om Mandir Medinah in Medina, organized free musical Yoga & Meditation for Better living Camp from September 14 to 17. It was led by Yogiraj Dr Omprakash Ji Maharaj of Om Yog Sansthan Trust Pali, Faridabad, India.

The Camp began at 6 pm. President of the Temple Vipin Wadhera introduced Yogiraj Dr. Omprakash Ji Maharaj, Vandna Jhingan, Bimal Parikh and Ajay Chandokh. He gave to Maharaj Ji a hearty welcome by presenting the flowers.

In the 4-day camp Dr. Om Prakash Ji instructed participants how to control and remove stress, regain flexibility and self esteem. He also taught and spoke on Yoga, Naturopathy, Reiki, Acupressure and Ayurveda. His mastery was also in evidence when he taught Music Yoga Meditation. Through this yoga one can get huge benefits like greater concentration, fun, better energy, healthy body, combat obesity, control stress, flexibility and self esteem. Yoga Camp was very successful and as a result next year he will be arranging more yoga camps in Chicago area.

Visiting Islamic scholar denounces terrorism

CHICAGO: A visiting Islamic scholar Javed Ahmad Ghamidi speaking on Sunday, September 23 at Wentz Concert Hall, North Central College in Naperville said that Jihad can only be waged by a state and only against those perpetrating oppression and injustice. It cannot be waged by individuals or private groups on behalf of Muslims.

Ghamidi also observed that establishing an Islamic State/Caliphate is not a directive of the Islamic Law. Suicide bombings are completely un-Islamic. Killing innocent human beings is a heinous crime.

On tolerance, he opined that respect for other human beings is essential. The Qur’an states that if God had desired all people to come to the same religion and the same path, it was easy enough for Him to do so. But this is not what He wanted. He wanted human beings to have freedom of choice.

Ghamidi is a strong advocate of democracy in Muslim countries and he believes it to be a directive of Islam. Monarchy, according to him, is a major cause that weakened the Muslim institutions. Freedom of speech and expression is fundamental to democracy in his view.

He explained that Islam teaches that human beings have not evolved separately to belong either to the east or the west. They are all descendants of a single couple, Adam and Eve. All races are connected to each other in a relationship of brotherhood, a relationship that is based on humanity.

According to Ghamidi, Muslims must be law abiding citizens of the countries they reside in and work for promoting peace in the society. If they are persecuted in these countries, they must fight for their rights but peacefully.

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi is a well known Muslim theologian, Quran scholar and exegete, and educationist. A former member of the Jamaat-e-Islami, who extended the work of his tutor, Amin Ahsan Islahi, Ghamidi is the founder of Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamic Sciences and its sister organization Danish Sara.
Mr. Kawaljit Singh started KS Agro exports almost four decades ago, with a vision to be a premier supplier of Indian Basmati rice. Today his business is exporting more than 550,000 MT of Basmati rice across the globe every year. His dream is to provide the best quality products to the consumers all over the world.

K.S Aura LLC is a complete import export house formed out of collaboration of Mr. Kawaljit Singh and Mr. Rajiv Wadhera who is a resident of United States and a keen person seeking opportunity for innovation. Their common goals and interests brought them together to form K.S Aura LLC and today they are launching their first and finest premium quality South Asian grocery brand 'Khandaan'.

'Khandaan' brand covers products such as pulses, rice, spices, flours and many more that guarantees both taste and health.

'Khandaan' will be their one stop destination, as a brand that will be most trusted in the food categories available. With the goal to achieve market leadership in all key geographies of the world and to serve the world with the highest possible quality products, we are launching our new brand 'Khandaan' marking another step in our journey to progress.

RENASCENT Media President Tanvi Prenta Chandra said, "We are very honored and grateful to be associated with one of the world's largest company, now launching Khandaan brand - premium quality food products in this part of the world. Whereas advertising and marketing is concerned, we are all set to leave no stone unturned to make Khandaan a number one brand in America." organized.

PG&E connects underserved with electric vehicles

PG&E Corporation Foundation will provide $75,000 in shareholder funds to cover the cost of upgrading home service panels—a commonly cited obstacle to EV adoption. IBEW Local 684 and 100 members will perform the site surveys, planning and panel installation for customers who qualify for the program. Valley CAN, a nonprofit organization committed to improving air quality in California’s San Joaquin Valley, already provides up to $9,500 for local low-income homeowners to trade in their older vehicles for a used plug-in EV. Doing so is part of their ongoing participatory Plus-Up program, an initiative funded with revenue from California’s Cap-and-Trade program.

"Electric vehicles—and the home electrical panel upgrades that may be needed to charge them—are often beyond the reach of individuals and families living in disadvantaged communities. PG&E is partnering to overcome these financial barriers so that all of our customers can afford clean energy options. This pilot with Valley CAN and the IBEW Local 684 and 100 will help us better understand how we can assist Central Valley residents," said Melissa Lavinson, PG&E’s chief sustainability officer and vice president of federal affairs and policy.

"PG&E is reducing barriers to zero-emission transportation in disadvantaged communities by giving low-income customers free home infrastructure improvements they need to install electric vehicle chargers. PG&E is making a real difference with this pilot," said Tom Knox, executive director, Valley CAN.

Prince group provides hurricane complimentary rooms

FULLERTON, CA: Prince Organization is the first hotel group to have signed up for Hurricane Harvey Complimentary Room Night Coalition compiled by the federal and state officials. It includes 80 to 100 daily rooms for up to five nights in our various properties throughout TX and LA.

Said to be the CEO of America’s most honored business, Orange County Resident and Social Entrepreneur Sunil Tolani enjoys a global status as a Second chance giving. Women’s equal right to pay, prevention of Women’s sexual and domestic violence crusader, Human rights activist, philanthropist, super car racer who seeks spiritual guidance from Dalai Lama and is by any standards a role model for his sons Krish, 10 and Aryan 9. His network of Lodging association’s advocacy groups has exerted surprising sway in the Trump administration, scoring some early victories and pushing its priorities to the top of the white house agenda. Tolani said "We are more optimistic now about what we can accomplish than we’ve ever been."
India is a ‘Land of Everlasting Festivals.’ It has several cultures that welcome the spring or the rain or the harvesting of crops, or the seeing of full moon that cause joyous celebrations splashed with colors, music, folk dances, and songs. ‘Vijayadashami,’ or ‘Dasara’ or ‘Dashain’ or ‘Durgotsav’ or Tenth day of holy Navratri, ‘or Dussehra’ is amongst the most significant Hindu festivals celebrated across India and other countries like, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh in September / October of every year.

The name Dussehra is derived from Sanskrit word “Dasha-hara”, which literally means ‘Dasha’ - the ten-headed demon king Ravana and ‘hara’ - defeat and actually referred to Lord Rama's victory over Dashanan Ravan. This holy day also marks the victory of Goddess Durga over the demon Mahishasur. She fought with him for 9 days and on 10th day she killed him. Therefore the name Vijayadashami is derived from the Sanskrit words “Vijaya-dashami” literally meaning the Vijay-victory on dashami - tenth lunar day of the Hindu calendar month. Dussehra/Vijayadashami is celebrated in different ways in different part of India. This festival is relevant to many ancient Hindu epics and stories like, Ramayana, Mahabharata, brother Kumbhakarna and son Meghanad are burnt to conclude the celebrations.

In the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, the Dasara festival starts with unique performance of Ramila based on the musical rendering of the katha (or story) of Lord Rama. This style of the Almora or Kumaon, Raghunath idol of Lord Rama is killing Ravan

In the state of Himachal Pradesh, the Kullu Dussehra is a famous International Mega Dussehra festival, which allures tourists from across the globe. Kullu Dussehra is celebrated in the Dhalpur maidan of Kullu valley. It commences on the ‘Vijay Dashami’ day and continues for seven days. The history related to 17th century, when local King Jagat Singh installed an idol of Raghunath on his throne as a mark of penance. After this practice, Lord Raghunath was declared as the ruling deity of the valley.

This international festival of Kullu Dussehra displays traditional folk music and dance during the fair. In Manali, Hidimba, the demon is also worshipped as their kul Devi in this region because she was the wife of Bheema and the mother of Ghatodkuchh who were the powerful characters of Mahabharata and taken out in the Palaki during this festival as a deity for her good deeds.

In the state of Karnataka, Dussehra is celebrated in various ways in different regions of South India. This day is observed to express gratitude to everything which brings success in life. Celebrations include worshipping the goddess Chamundeshwari (Durga) and exhibiting colorful toys, celebrated as Golu or Gombe Gudda in Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The concluding and striking event in Andhra Pradesh on Vijaya Dashami is the Theppotsavam (boat festival) at Krishna - Thungabhadra temple and Ramakrishna missionary in the country's capital, Dhaka. On the day of Vijayadashmi (Dussehra), clay statues of the Goddess Durga are submerged in rivers.

All the devotees of Lake County are invited to participate and obtain the blessings of Maa Durga as her nine manifestations will be worshiped on each day of Navratri along with Children’s Ramaleela performance and Ravan Dahan on Vijayadashami at the Hindu Mandir of Lake County, Grayslake, IL.

“We always have a choice,” the actor writes in the book. Siddiqui, who hails from small-town Budhana in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, moved to Delhi to try his luck at theatre, to eventually become the actor he is today.

However, the journey to fame and fortune was far from easy for the actor who went from being a manager at a petrochemical factory in Haridwar to a watchman to a watchman in Delhi.

Sushant Singh Rajput is likely to play legendary wrestler The Great Khali.

An insider told DNA, “The biopic is on the life of wrestler Dalip Singh Rana, better known as Khali or The Great Khali in WWE circle. People only know about the sporty side of this Indian-born American semi-retired professional wrestler, promoter and actor. But there’s an untold story behind his super success. He was an officer for the Punjab state police and struggled for years before making it big in wrestling. The story will be about his journey.”

Khali has a huge frame as a wrestler, seven feet one inch and weighing 157 kilos.

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, who was last seen in Karan Johar’s ‘Ae Dil Hai Mushkil’ which also starred Ranbir Kapoor, Anushka Sharma and Pakistani actor Fawad Khan in a small role, has again grabbed the limelight with her decision to do an uncanny film like ‘Fanney Khan’. ‘Fanney Khan’ which is being directed by Atul Manjrekar also features Anil Kapoor and Rajkummar Rao in pivotal roles and the unlikely fresh pairing of Rajkummar and Aishwarya has become the talk of the town.

There are rumors that the quintessential Bollywood actress has said no to intimacy, according to a leading daily. The daily has even reportedly quoted a source saying that Aishwarya is very particular about each and every scene of her films and has expressed her wish to avoid intimate scenes. The film which is an official remake of the Oscar-nominated Dutch film ‘Everybody’s Famous’ is scheduled to release on April 13 next year.

Aishwarya is very particular about each and every scene of her films and has expressed her wish to avoid intimate scenes.
Ayushmann Khurrana, who is basking in the success of his films, Bareilly Ki Barfi (BKB), and Shubh Mangal Saavdhan (SMS), says it’s no surprise that small-budget, ensemble cast films sometimes do far better (business) than the much-anticipated and big-budget movies starring industry biggies. Case in point: Shah Rukh Khan’s Jab Harry Met Sejal and Salman Khan’s Tubelight tanked at the box-office.

Ayushmann feels that this is how the film business works; there’s always that uncertainty. “The film industry has always been volatile, especially now, since we have so many means of entertainment - web, television, theatre - we can consume content easily. It has, therefore, become challenging for directors and actors to offer something that will make people pay the price of a ticket and come to the movie hall.

The 33-year-old, who made his debut with the 2012 film, Vicky Donor, admits that back-to-back releases (BKB and SMS) can leave an actor exhausted.

Talking about the time when the actress was yet to deliver her first hit, Shraddha Kapoor says, “Between my first film and ‘Aashiqui 2’, I have lost count of the screen tests and auditions that I appeared for. I have also lost count of the number of rejections that I faced.”

Ask her if she feels more confident about her abilities today as an actress and Shraddha says, “I think I will always be a little doubtful about my performances because that is who I am.”

Talking of the number of films being driven by female protagonists Shraddha adds, “It doesn’t matter whether films are male or female-centric; people want to watch content-driven movies. ‘Queen’, ‘Mary Kom’ and ‘Neerja’ received the appreciation they did because of their stories. Also, these films were inspiring.”

Sensational ‘Julie 2’ actress Raai Laxmi dated ace cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni at one point of time but their relationship did not last long and both parted ways.

Raai Laxmi, who is busy promoting her upcoming film was asked about her alleged affair with the Indian cricketer and her reply was, ‘Who’s he?’, she added, “This needs to have a full stop. It was a long time ago, he is happily married now, he has a kid. Everybody knows everybody in today’s world and you may end up with a person tomorrow whom you don’t know today. It is the process of life and certain things don’t work out, and then you have to move on.”

‘Julie 2’ faced the wrath of ex-censor board chief Pahlaj Nihalani, who said that the film is a ‘clean adult film.’ Raai Laxmi said: “Though it’s a film on an adult subject - the exploitation of strugglers and newcomers in Bollywood - the film has no nudity, no skin show, and no double-meaning dialogues.”
PREETI VERMA LAL

“We have enjoyed every moment of our stay in the Hotel Imperial. The services, courtesy and comfort of the hotel is wonderful and we cannot wait to come back again to experience again the joy of living at the Hotel Imperial.”

In the ornate Kaiser suite of Vienna’s Hotel Imperial, I was poring over the guestbook when Michael Moser, the hotel’s archivist and former Chef Concierge, flipped a page and read the message written in blue ink in slanting handwriting and signed by Gayatri Devi, the Maharani of Jaipur on September 12, 1967. She is not the only royal to have made Hotel Imperial her home on a Vienna sojourn. The hotel’s guest list reads like a Who’s Who of the rich and the mighty.

Built in 1863 as the Viennese residence of the Prince of Württemberg and transformed into a hotel in 1873, Hotel Imperial redefines magnificence. Tasteful furnishings, marble bathrooms, and walls cocooned in silk. Precious antiques conjure up the atmosphere of nineteenth-century Vienna. The Royal Staircase leads up to the breath-taking Royal Suites. Magnificent chandeliers sparkle and shimmer from high stucco-adorned ceilings radiating aristocratic flair.

Hotel Imperial has been the fave snooze-place of the presidents, princes, kings and everyone who is someone in the world of art, literature and music. Queen Elizabeth stayed here in 1969 and the Emperor of Japan turned in with 400 suitcases. Michael Jackson stayed incognito until he walked across the street to shop and fans gathered around the hotel in the frosty night.

Cont’d on Page 33
Diaspora story of loss and recovery

Gurjinder Basran’s second novel, Someone You Love Is Gone, features a supernatural supporting cast including a ghost, a reincarnated poet, a boy who channels the departed and hundreds of invisible levitating haikus. There is even a Mason jar of dead poems interred in the back garden. Yet, at the heart of this book is a very this-worldly question: How do you work through loss?

In this multigenerational story set across three time periods, members of the current-day Sandhu family have migrated from Pakistan to India to Canada. At each fork in the road over this 50-year span, they have left behind homeland and loved ones. Sometimes the losses are tragic and cruel: a lover who takes his life, an autistic son sent away from his home. At others, they are gradual and occur in plain sight: a father fading away into a bottle, a daughter escaping into a Bible.

As in Gurjinder Basran’s first book, Everything Was Goodbye, Someone You Love Is Gone is a story of a fractured South Asian family that reconciles with loss by forgetting about it. There is a sort of migratory approach to dealing with grief as moving on is conflated with moving forward.

Like many second-generation children of Punjabi immigrant parents, she has grown up in a household where decisions go unexplained and she is expected to do as she is told. Never one to blindly follow, she grows from a moody child into a conflicted adult - equal parts mischievous and perspicacious; the two traits feed off each other. And now her mother, her last surviving parent, has died, but she cannot find solace in her mother’s adage that “forgetting is the only thing that gets you through life.” Even if she could forget and move on, she doesn’t know in which direction she should turn.

Counseling fails to rescue her from her doldrums. So does retail therapy - a trip to Wal-Mart leads to her leafleting the cars of fellow shoppers with her mother’s funeral flowers. She remembers the last time she truly felt free: during an extramarital affair. But that lover is also long gone and those memories only further estrange her from her husband and daughter. If only Simran could unravel the taxing mystery of how exactly she ended up here, perhaps she could again find a way forward.

To untangle herself from this web of confusion, Simran subconsciously summons a spirit guide, her dead mother. The triarch shows little wear and tear, persisting on the visit, but also teaches her that the troubles of uprooted life, an autistic son sent away from his home. At others, they are gradual and occur in plain sight: a father fading away into a bottle, a daughter escaping into a Bible.

As in Gurjinder Basran’s first book, Everything Was Goodbye, Someone You Love Is Gone is a story of a fractured South Asian family that reconciles with loss by forgetting about it. There is a sort of migratory approach to dealing with grief as moving on is conflated with moving forward.

This severing with the past, however, never seems to lead to full closure. It’s as if clocks stop moving as old unresolved feelings linger, memories persist. They become a vague pain that gnaws at the family like a phantom limb, or like an actual phantom in this story.

That is why Simran, the narrator and protagonist of the novel, is stuck. Like many second-generation children of Punjabi immigrant parents, she has grown up in a household where decisions go unexplained and she is expected to do as she is told. Never only they had access to a time machine and a return-ticket home. Although it is debatable whether Someone You Love Is Gone falls squarely under this genre, Basran still contends with these issues because she is writing about immigrant characters. And to her credit, she doesn’t let them off that easy. Although her characters may romanticize aspects about their homelands, she never suggests they would be better people if they lived in a more familiar setting.

This allows her to write with an uncompromising honesty about her characters for who they are and avoid flattening them under the weight of ethnic stereotypes. If her characters are lost in their current world, it is because they, like the vast majority of humanity, are not at home in their own skin.

As a second-generation immigrant herself, Basran was raised in the same spaces occupied by her characters. Her inside knowledge shines in the best passages in this book, such as when Simran sees her brother after a lengthy absence: “He stares at me with his surprising grey eyes that are as round as riverbed stones.”

Writing about psychological states demands considerable skill from a writer in order to avoid the inner voices of characters from sounding self-absorbed or just boring. Someone You Love Is Gone avoids this on the most part, while serving up characters with whom we can empathize, even when we recognize unappealing glimpses of our own neurosis staring back at us. The ability alone to weave this moral complexity into her stories makes Gurjinder Basran a novelist worth reading.

Jagdeesh Mann is a journalist based in Vancouver. This review was first published in The Globe & Mail.
NEW DELHI: Maqbool Fida Husain may have spoken volumes with his strokes, but the celebrated artist was left speechless during a meeting with the legendary Hindi film actress Meena Kumari, the author of a new book recalls.

Husain, born 102 years ago, was taken to meet the actress in a hospital in 1967, when he was visiting the infant son of student and fellow artist Ila Pal.

Meena Kumari, who was also in the hospital recovering from an ailment, looked “absolutely bewitching”, Pal writes in her book on the barefoot artist.

“Her husky mellifluous voice could really hold people in thrall, and that day she was determined to leave Husain devastated,” she writes.

And Husain, visibly smitten, was tongue-tied. The Pakkeezah actress held a silver betel-leaf box in her lap, her eyes subtly shaded with kohl, her long hair loose, fragrant and lustrous. When she offered Husain a paan, he “could barely speak”, Pal writes.

“He ate whatever she offered and nodded to whatever she said,” the book ‘Husain: Portrait of an artist’ reveals.

“What could I do? The moment I parted my lips to speak, kambakht ne is andaaz se meri taraf dekha, meri to zaaba hi kat gai! (she looked at me in such a way that I lost my voice),” Husain told Pal when she remonstrated with him later on his uncharacteristic silence.

The biography is full of little nuggets about a man whose life many thought was an open book. What is known is that he was born in Pandharpur in Madhya Pradesh to a Sulaymani Bohra family, on September 17, and his initial years were a veritable struggle.

“He had brothers and sisters to play with, but all he wanted to do was to paint,” Pal writes.

He won a gold medal at a state annual art exhibition while in school, ranked second in his second year examination conducted by the J J School of Art, but came closest to art when he started working as a billboard painter in 1936 - sleeping on footpaths, barely managing two square meals a day.

“Husain was nineteen or twenty, and six annas was a pit-ance ... Yet, with that amount, Husain could still buy two cheap meals,” Pal, now 78 and based in Mumbai, writes.

During his first stint as a billboard painter, Husain learnt carpentry, the techniques of priming, stretching jute cloth and mixing colors. His greatest takeaway from the job, however, was that it helped him learn how to paint large hoardings and posters, paving the way to eventual stardom.

But his mastery over his art did not prevent him from putting his “sprightly mischief” to use. Pal, who first met him when she was studying art in what was then Bombay, writes about the time she walked into a tabla performance in an old haveli in Udaipur with Husain.

The host mistook the artist for a tabla maestro, thanks to his “flowing beard, burning eyes and his fingers keeping time on his knees”. And Husain made no effort to dispel the impression.

“No, please ... please continue,” he said with a benevolent smile on his face when the musicians urged him to take over.

“This went on and on. Unnerved by the presence of a ‘great tabla wizard’ amongst them, they finally wound up quite abruptly,” she wrote, recalling how he didn’t say a word even when they began to touch his feet.

When Pal asked why he fooled them, Husain replied nonchalantly, “I was wearing my beard, my very own beard, and I was tapping my fingers on my knees the way I always do when I am impatient to leave. What wrong did I do?”

The book also talks about the women in Husain’s life, including his wife Fazila, whom he married when he was a young billboard painter.

The film federation of India has announced that the film is releasing doubles on March 4, 2018, in Chile’s “A Fantastic Woman”.

‘Newton’ is India’s official entry to Oscars

MUMBAI: Hindi film “Newton”, a black comedy on the foibles of democracy, has been chosen to represent India in the Best Foreign Language category at the 90th Academy Awards next year, the Film Federation of India has announced.

The movie, which has released commercially, is Amit Mesurkar’s second directorial venture and features Rajkummar Rao, Pankaj Tripathi, Raghubir Yadav, Anjali Patil and Sanjay Mishra.

It was the unanimous choice of FFI’s selection committee, headed by Telugu producer CV Reddy.

“Newton” has been selected as India’s official entry to the Oscars. It was unanimously chosen from 26 entries this year, FFI secretary general Supran Sen told PTI.

The announcement came as a double celebration for the film, director Mesurkar said.

“We are really happy. The fact that the film is releasing doubles the happiness. We hope that people will now really head to the cinema halls to watch the film,” he said.

For Rao, who has been enjoying a great run in the movies this year, the news was the proverbial “cherry on the cake”. “It is a really honest film and we are already getting an overwhelming response. We will put all our energies to take the film forward,” the actor told PTI.

His co-actor Tripathi, who plays a cynical Army officer to Rao’s earnest election officer determined to hold elections in a Chhattisgarh village despite the threat of Naxalite violence, was equally thrilled.

“Good work always finds a way to shine. I am happy that our talent is finally being recognised. It is truly a win for independent cinema in our country,” said.

Produced by Drishyam Films and distributed by Eros Entertainment, the movie arrived in theatres to great reviews. PTI

Producers Manish Mundra said there was no greater honour than the Oscars.

“And for the news to be announced on the day of Newton’s theatrical release across India — the stars are truly aligning for us,” he said in a statement.

No Indian film has ever won an Oscar. The last Indian film that made it to the final five in the Best Foreign Film category list was Ashutosh Gowariker’s “Lagaan” in 2001.

“Mother India” (1958) and “Saalam Bombay!” (1989) are the other two Indian movies to have made it to the top five.

Tamil film “Visaranai” by director Vetrimaaran was India’s official submission to the Oscars last year.

Mesurkar’s film faces competition from already announced movies such as Angelina Jolie’s Cambodian war drama “First They Killed My Father”, Pakistan’s “Saawan”, Sweden’s “The Square”, Germany’s “In the Fade” by Fatih Akin and Chile’s “A Fantastic Woman”.

The 90th Academy Awards will be held on March 4, 2018, in Los Angeles. -PTI
In 'Bhoomi,' a father fights for his daughter

There is a spate of movies in Bollywood that are addressing the issue of violence against women and actor Aditi Rao Hydari believes it is better to make such films than just another run-of-the-mill love story. Raveena Tandon’s ‘Maatr’ and Sridevi’s ‘Mom’ saw the mothers turning into avenging angels and now ‘Bhoomi’ sees a father, played by Sanjay Dutt, fight for his daughter (Aditi).

The 30-year-old actor who features in the titular role of Bhoomi in the Omung Kumar-directed film says these movies are a reflection of what is happening in society. In an interview, the actor says, “So many cases of violence against women continue to take place, why aren’t we asking this question to the system? There are certain things that are constantly seen in our society. It is being done so many times. Every kind of violence is different, every parent-child relationship is different. I’m sure ‘Mom’ was different. But these stories were not able to reach out to audiences. I really hope ‘Bhoomi’ does.”

Aditi said her film is about a lower middle class family and how the father stands up for his daughter. “Here you see a father believing in his daughter and that comes out of love. It is often shown that a daughter always stands up for her family. But I don’t know how many times the parents stand up for the daughter.

Calling Bhoomi a woman of internal strength, the actor said she is glad the film is based in Agra as there is a tendency to get their daughters married as soon as possible in smaller towns. “With us city girls, there is an assumption that we have the space to raise our voice. Most of the parents in India, especially in smaller towns, fear for daughters due to the inhuman treatment meted out to them. They want her to go away, saying, ‘you’re not my responsibility anymore’. I don’t understand why don’t we nurture our girls?”

‘Bhoomi’ is Sanjay’s comeback vehicle, so will the audiences get to see enough of Aditi’s performance? The actor says, “It’s Sanju Sir’s comeback film, yes. He’s an experienced, loved and established actor. For example, the first shot in any traditional movie set-up would have been his.”

“But here, I don’t know whether they thought about it or just happened that the first shot in the film is a scene where Bhoomi is dyeing her father’s hair. That’s a rare thing to happen.”

Kumar of South, I used to do four films a year. He does good films, but some films of mine were good, some weren’t. I was just signing films, there wasn’t this thing of ‘wanting to do good work’, Ileana said. The ‘Mubarakan’ actor said she eventually decided to get her feet “back on ground” and focus on taking her career forward.

“I told myself, this is never really going to last for a long time, about time I start doing good work. Then I put my head into it completely... I had no idea about the South film industry and how it worked. "When I was offered a film there, I thought how would I do it, I don’t even speak the language. When I started doing it, I was like anyway people won’t watch my film even if I do bad in it. It was a very stupid, careless and careless attitude that I had." Ileana said she was approached for Bollywood films long before ‘Barfi!’ hit theatres but she wasn’t prepared at the time.

"I did get Bollywood offers even before my first South film and I am thankful that I didn’t make a mess of it. If I had done a Bollywood film, which has far more exposure than the South ones even though they get released worldwide, I would have made a fool of myself." The actor said she was in two minds about ‘Barfi!’ as well, which was both a critical and commercial success.

"I was actually going to back out of ‘Barfi!’ as well, because I wasn’t sure. I took three months to sign it. There was something about the story. I don’t know if I will ever get to do a story like this. I decided on a whim to do it.” Ileana was also offered Salman Khan’s ‘Wanted’ a film whose Telugu original ‘Pokiri’ featured her in the female lead but the actor chose to appear for her exams over the movie.

"I was offered a film of my own which was ‘Wanted’ with Salman Khan. I was actually going to do it. I was happy that my first film would be with Salman.”

Indian VIPs’ favorite hotel in Vienna

Cont’d from Page 30

Jackson dropped a duvet from his balcony and all night there was music on the streets. For Madonna, it became a base camp as she flew into Vienna on a private jet and returned to Imperial every evening for the famous square almond Imperial torte and Weiner schnitzel. Rolling Stones, JF Kennedy, Bismarck, George Bush, the Clintons, Vladimir Putin, Leopold II, to name a few. Add to that that one night Hitler stayed in to March 1938 to announce the annexation of Austria.

In its sepia pages, Hotel Imperial’s guestbook still holds the signature of several Indians. Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore checked-in in 1926, Mrs Indira Gandhi chose this hotel as the base during her two official visits to Austria. The Maharajas of Baroda and Sawantwadi were special guests. So were President KR Narayanan and Pratibha Patil. History elegantly lives in Vienna’s Hotel Imperial. And Moser can share enough Indian tales over a cup of coffee and a bite of the scrumptious almandier torte.

The signature of Mahanani Gayatri Devi dated September 12, 1967

Rajamouli receives ANR award

HYDERABAD, Telangana: Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu felicitated film-maker S.S Rajamouli with the prestigious ANR National Award for his contribution to the Telugu film industry here.

“You deserved the award because you are ‘Baahubali’, Naidu said, revoking the title of Rajamouli’s blockbuster fantasy drama.

“This felicitation is to provide inspiration and to inspire people. It is a memorable moment for me to present evergreen ANR award today,” the vice president said.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, also present at the function, recalled the contribution of A Nageswara Rao, popularly known as ANR, to the Telugu film industry.

ANR’s son Nagarjuna Akkineni, other members of the Akkineni family and prominent members of the film industry were present at the award function.
Although there might remain some kind at work however the continuous support of your spouse shall certainly make the things easier now. The first half of the week would prove to be good for devising plans for the expansion of work and improvement of health. You started working for the restoration of your immunity from the mid of last month and now you are fully confident and happy with the results that you are getting.

The first half of the week would prove to be the best for active social life. This whole week would prove to be the best for attaining the favor of destiny and brightness at work and because of that the family and finance related tensions shall go unnoticed. Although there might remain some kind of uncertainty in family matters.

Try to keep yourself cool on 6th and 7th of this week because these two can really go bad for your happiness.

Try to put a check on expenses. There shall be some ups and downs in family atmosphere with abrupt eruption of arguments however your balanced approach in handling the issues won't let you get affected at all. Your confidence, energy, recognition, reputation and the ability to set a right goal for you would keep you at the top.

You are likely to lose your confidence and patience. You state of mind shall remain disturbed badly. You are advised to take care of the health of your mother. This week would not be a good time to take some decision about property.

You shall be friendly with lot of new people. Your shyness won’t come in your way. You would be able to do well on all fronts and your bond with family members shall also get strengthened. The inflow of money is likely to increase. You are advised to look after your health as your this approach shall keep you tension free for sure. The mid of the week is especially good for your marital bliss.

The initial three days of the week are excellent for marital bliss and for developing chances of gains from outer connections. The 4th and 5th of October are negative for health and happiness. Try to remain cool & composed otherwise the domestic atmosphere might get affected badly. You are advised to take care of the health of your mother. This week would not be a good time to take some decision about property.

You shall be getting return within few days. The beginning of the week gives an indication of your becoming focused for the fulfillment of your aspirations. You would try to create a good bond with your family members but there are indications of getting into arguments with family members and in laws because of the lack of resistance. The beginning of the week is best time to do short time expansion or for making those investments for which you are likely to get return within few days.

Kindly read the predictions from your ascendancy sign. If you do not know your ascendancy sign then read it from the Zodiac sign. The ascendancy sign which is calculated from the birth details viz. date, month, year, time & place of birth gives 85% accurate predictions. The accuracy of predictions from Moon sign get limited to only 50%. The predictions from Zodiac sign are only 25% accurate. In nutshell the predictions from ascendancy sign are most accurate. In getting personality analysis the traits given by ascendancy sign are 100% accurate and that is the essence of Vedic Astrology.

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PHOENIX: Arizona health officials are launching a project to screen drinking water in child care facilities for lead.

The Department of Health Services project starting this month will have licensing personnel collect water samples for lead testing at the Arizona State Public Health Laboratory. The department says the testing results then will be reviewed to see whether the sampled water meets safe drinking water standards.

Confirming samples will be collected from facilities and tested if initial screening levels are found above standards.

The department says drinking water has not historically been found to be a cause of lead poisoning in Arizona and that common sources include lead-based paint, imported glazed pottery, imported Spices, Mexican candy and traditional and folk remedies.

The state also has a lead screening program for school buildings. -AP

118 held in China for health products fraud

BEIJING: Over 100 people have been arrested in China for allegedly cheating senior citizens of about USD three million by selling healthcare products.

The 118 suspects were members of a fraud ring - masterminded by Changsha Yunyi Technology, a company based in Hunan Province - that organized health lectures and promised free prizes and vacations to earn the trust of the elderly, Wenzhou city police in eastern China’s Zhejiang Province said. The victims were persuaded, with false advertising, to purchase costly healthcare products. The frauds also promised to return the cash.

When the victims paid the money, the suspects vanished, state run Xinhua news agency reported.

Police said that seniors usually have money and property, and were interested in products promising to improve their health, making them targets for fraud, it said. -PTI

Health Ministry tells AIIMS to prioritize health projects

NEW DELHI: Citing lack of funds, the Union Health Ministry has asked the AIIMS here to review its projects, both sanctioned and proposed, estimated to cost over Rs 12,000 crore, and prioritize those based on its current needs.

According to a senior government official, during the tenure of the previous director of the institute, several projects were conceptualized and sanctioned in a piecemeal manner without assessing if those are financially viable.

The issue came up in a meeting held earlier this month between officials of the health ministry and the AIIMS.

“It is not only just about building the infrastructure. Funds are required for equipment, staff and recurring costs. Thus, AIIMS has been asked to prioritize the projects based on its current need and sustainability,” the official said.

“The issue of prioritizing projects would be taken up for discussion in the Governing Body meeting scheduled on October 10. The Standing Finance Committee will review the development work on October 9,” he said.

Nine projects at AIIMS, including building a surgical block, Mother and Child Block, OPD block, doctor’s hostel and Geriatric ward are at various stages of completion.

“Due to lack of funds, a lot of work in these projects is incomplete,” the official said.

Besides, five projects, including the Trauma Centre Expansion and Emergency-cum-diagnostic Block to cost Rs 8,885 crore, are at advanced stages of being sanctioned. A few more projects are in the pipeline.

Another official said the AIIMS had asked for more than Rs 2,000 crore from the government in this financial year for various development works, but received Rs 576 crore till now.

Following the meeting with the health ministry, the AIIMS on September 12, constituted an 18-member committee to review the projects to be executed at institute’s Masjid Moth campus and Trauma centre.

“Keeping in mind the needs of the AIIMS, a relook committee has been formed to prioritize various projects on the basis of the needs of the departments and the institute,” AIIMS Director, Dr Randeep Guleria said.

“For example, AIIMS is witnessing a huge influx of patients in the Emergency Block with many of them having to wait in the corridors. Therefore, development of the Emergency Block will be one of our priorities,” he said. -PTI

Indian-Am doc stabbed to death by patient

WASHINGTON: A 57-year-old Indian-American doctor has been stabbed to death allegedly by an Indian-origin patient near his clinic in the Wichita city of Kansas.

Psychiatrist Achutha Reddy, who hailed from Telangana, was found dead with multiple knife wounds in an alley behind his clinic in East Wichita, police said.

One of his patients, 21-year-old Umar Rashid Dutt, also an Indian-American, has been arrested and charged with first degree murder.

Reddy was pronounced dead on the scene by the police, Lt Todd Ojile, section commander of the homicide division at the Wichita Police Department, told reporters.

The accused man was found at the country club after a security guard reported a suspicious person sitting in a car in the parking lot with blood on his clothes.

“During the investigation, we learned that the 21-year-old suspect was a client of Dr Reddy and had been at the office. The suspect was in the business for a short time. He left and then later came back with Dr Reddy and they went into an office there, Ojile said.

“After going to an office, a disturbance was heard. An office manager entered into the office and observed the suspect assaulting Dr Reddy. She attempted to stop the assault which allowed the doctor to flee the office, he said. Umar chased the doctor out of his office, and stabbed him multiple times, Ojile said, adding that the reason for the murder has not been ascertained yet.

Cont’d on page 39
WHO grant for healthcare of Rohingya refugees

NEW DELHI: The WHO has released its first tranche of emergency funding of USD 175,000 to provide essential medicines and life-saving healthcare to the “vulnerable population” in Bangladesh’s Cox’s Bazar that has witnessed an influx of thousands of Rohingyas from Myanmar.

The mobile medical teams of Bangladesh’s health ministry will help deliver those services amid a highly challenging situation, Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia, said.

“Vulnerable populations require access to health services, including emergency and basic healthcare. Access for women to reproductive health services is especially important,” she said.

“Poor nutrition, communicable diseases (including vaccine-preventable and water-borne diseases), injuries and other concerns such as mental health provide immense public health challenges that the Ministry of Health, Bangladesh, WHO and other health partners are working to address,” the World Health Organization (WHO) statement said.

The statement made no mention of Rohingya Muslims specifically but the UN has stated that since August 25, over 410,000 Rohingyas have poured into Bangladesh.

More than 380,000 people have gathered in makeshift or spontaneous settle-

ments, the WHO statement said.

The WHO South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund (SEARHF) grant of USD 175,000 will support 20 mobile medical teams to provide essential services for at least two months.

This was decided at a meeting along with principal secretary of Health department R K Mahajan.

There are 10 government medical colleges and hospitals in Bihar at present and three in private sector. Rajendra Nagar Super Speciality hospital would have an eye bank by end of this December.

Pandey announced that a nodal officer would be appointed at state level for facilitating donation of body organs by citizens. An advisory committee would be constituted at state level under Health minister on subjects linked with donation of body organs after death. The state Health minister said that a committee of experts would be notified for declaration of a patient as brain dead.

With the consent of kin, organs of a brain dead person would be taken out for utilising them for needy,” a statement issued by Sushil Kumar Modi said.

The grant is also being used to procure essential medicines and medical supplies to be distrubuted to pre-existing health facilities in Cox’s Bazar area.

“Mass immunization is one of the most powerful ways to keep vulnerable communities safe from communicable diseases, especially when overcrowding and inadequate access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene are present,” Dr Singh said.

WHO is working closely with International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and other health partners in ensuring that adequate health services are provided to the vulnerable population. -PTI

35 medical tests free of cost in Haryana

CHANDIGARH: Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij has said that 35 medical tests would be conducted free of cost under the first-of-its-kind medical scheme to be soon launched in the state.

Vij, who was presiding over a review meeting of the Health department, said the scheme would generate detailed reports of various diseases afflicting the people living in different parts of the state, an official release quoting him said.

The entire state would be divided into four to five zones and different agencies would be directed to conduct tests and put the record online. A hard copy of the test report would also be given to the person concerned so that he can use it for getting proper treatment, it said.

The facility should be regulated. Reputable tattoo parlors and piercing salons should provide a long list of dos and don’ts on how to care for the area that was worked on, and what signs might indicate a problem,” said Cora C Breuner, Chair of the AAP Committee on Adolescence in the US. Researchers also suggest that someone considering a tattoo should make sure that their immunizations are up to date and that they are not taking any medication that compromises their immunity.-PTI

Tattoos, body piercings can be harmful

NEW YORK: Tattoos and body piercings - an increasingly popular form of self-expression - may cause medical complications and people should carefully weigh the potential risks before getting such body modifications done, US experts say.

A report by researchers at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) provides an overview of the types and methods used to perform body modifications.

The report, published in the journal Pediatrics, details possible medical complications, which, while uncommon, should be discussed with a pediatrician.

It stated that while societal acceptance of tattoos and piercings has increased, there may still be repercussions.

In a 2014 survey, 76 per cent of 2,700 people interviewed said they believed that a tattoo or piercing had hurt their chances of getting a job, researchers said.

They suggest that before getting a tattoo or piercing, one should make sure the salon is sterile, clean and reputable.

The facility should be regulated by the state and provide clients with information on how to care for the area that has been tattooed or pierced afterwards. The facility should practice infection control just like at the doctor’s office.

“Reputable tattoo parlors and piercing salons should provide a long list of dos and don’ts on how to care for the area that was worked on, and what signs might indicate a problem,” said Cora C Breuner, Chair of the AAP Committee on Adolescence in the US. Researchers also suggest that someone considering a tattoo should make sure that their immunizations are up to date and that they are not taking any medication that compromises their immunity.-PTI

Bihar hospitals to have eye bank

PATNA: All medical colleges and hospitals in Bihar would have eye bank by end of March next year, Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi has said.

This was decided at a meeting of Health Minister Mangal Pandey with a society concerned with donating body organs after death.

Sushil Modi was present at the meeting along with principal secretary of Health department R K Mahajan.

There are 10 government medical colleges and hospitals in Bihar at present and three in private sector. Rajendra Nagar Super Speciality hospital would have an eye bank by end of this December.

Pandey announced that a nodal officer would be appointed at state level for facilitating donation of body organs by citizens. An advisory committee would be constituted at state level under Health minister on subjects linked with donation of body organs after death. The state Health minister said that a committee of experts would be notified for declaration of a patient as brain dead.

With the consent of kin, organs of a brain dead person would be taken out for utilising them for needy,” a statement issued by Sushil Kumar Modi said.

The state government would also appoint a motivator in every medical college and hospital to inspire people to donate body organs for needy. -PTI
Immunotherapy - hottest thing in cancer care

SAN DIEGO: Dennis Lyon was a genetic train wreck. Cancer was ravaging his liver, lungs, bones and brain, and tests showed so many tumor mutations that drugs targeting one or two wouldn’t do much good. It seemed like very bad news, yet his doctors were encouraged.

The reason: People with the most messed-up genes often are the ones who do best on treatments that enlist the immune system.

“Those are the patients we used to be very depressed about,” thinking they couldn’t be helped, said Dr. Razelle Kurzrock at the University of California, San Diego. “Now when we see those types of patients, we’re really excited,” because there are so many ways for the immune system to recognize the cancer cells as abnormal.

Immunotherapy is the hottest thing in cancer care. Drugs called checkpoint inhibitors can vanquish some advanced cancers by removing a chemical cloak that hides them from the immune system. Former President Jimmy Carter got one at age 91 for skin cancer that spread to his brain, and now is in remission.

“Quite honestly, I didn’t know if I’d ever see her again,” he said.

Now, Tippett’s lung tumors are gone. Her liver tumor shrank 50 percent and is stable. She got married in July and says she feels great.

“Don’t feel any different than you do. I’m not tired, I’ve got all my hair,” she said. “I want more people to know about it and to ask their doctors about it,” she said of immunotherapy and the woman with endometrial cancer, and a 44-year-old breast cancer patient whose tumors “just exploded” in size within two months of immunotherapy.

In a report on 155 patients, she tied several gene mutations to this risk. Kurzrock has consulted for some gene-medicine makers and co-founded a company using a software program to determine best treatments for patients depending on their tumor genes.

Max Krummel is working on a roadmap to do that. The University of California, San Francisco scientist heads a project with $10 million from three companies that make checkpoint drugs. He is analyzing hundreds of tumor samples to see what immune system features spell success or failure.

“We’re not looking at how the immune system changes,” but for what starting point works best with the drugs, he said. “What we’re seeing is that the kinds of cells you have in a tumor predict who’s going to respond.”

Krummel, who was involved in work that led to Yervoy, the first checkpoint drug, has started a company to try to tune up one part of the immune system he thinks is key to maintaining a healthy balance.

Cancer exists because the immune system isn’t working as it should, he said, so successful immunotherapy may require “treating the immune system, not treating the tumor.” - AP
6 NGOs get Spirit of Humanity Awards

Mumbai: Americares India’s 8th Annual Spirit of Humanity Awards recognized six outstanding non-governmental organizations during its grand finale on September 14, at the JW Marriott, Juhu, Mumbai.

More than 300 organizations entered this year’s competition, which celebrates excellence among NGOs working for the underprivileged. Participants underwent three rigorous rounds of short listing and the winners were announced in a grand award ceremony in the evening.

The winners in each award category are:

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<th>Award Category</th>
<th>Winning NGO</th>
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<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>Arpan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Association of Parents of Mentally Retarded Children</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Women Empowerment</td>
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The Spirit of Humanity is a national-level platform for collaboration, capacity building and recognition within the social sector in India. The finale of the 8th Spirit of Humanity brought together not-for-profit organizations, academia, government authorities, thought leaders and corporations for sustained engagement and cross learning.

Apart from celebrating the NGOs’ successes, the event featured a keynote address by Mr. Annaswamy Vaideesh, vice president, South Asia and managing director of GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Ltd. He emphasized the importance of good health, health infrastructure and budgets in India.

The 8th Annual Spirit of Humanity was organized with the support of Abbott, Bharat Serums and Vaccines, Hexacraft, JW Marriott, KPMG, SPJIMR and The Hans Foundation.

The winners each received a prize amount, trophy and certificate of excellence from thought leaders and industry experts. They also received opportunities to share their work and meet corporate social responsibility professionals.

Indian-American doc stabbed to death by patient

Cont’d from page 36

Umar has been held on USD one million bond. According to Wichita State University, he was a former student and was last enrolled in the spring of 2015.

"His tragic loss will be felt by many. In today’s world mental health resources are stretched thin. Many looked toward Dr Reddy for help in their times of crisis. As many providers in the mental health profession, he offered hope to many suffering from mental illness, Wichita Police Department said in a statement.

Reddy graduated from a medical school at Osmania University in India in 1986 and did his residency at the University of Kansas Medical Center in 1998.

He specialized in psychiatry. Holistic Psychiatric Services psychotherapist Brenda Trammel described it as a great loss.

"Dr Reddy was an amazing, compassionate man that was kind and loving to anyone he met. He had a gift of knowing what each and every one of us needed and gave it freely," she said.

"He would often tell me you have to have freedom to live life to the fullest and this is how he lived his life. He thought of himself as our father and his job was to guide us to do well in our lives. He expected the best from all of us and we gave it to him with the same abandon he gave to us," Trammel said.

The Indian American community in Wichita has expressed shock over incident.

"With a heavy heart, we regret to inform our community, that a member of our Wichita Indian Community has lost his life," Cultural Association of India-Wichita said. -PTI
Mahabalipuram, in the state of Tamil Nadu, is located right on the Coromandel Coast next to the Bay of Bengal. It was a well-established sea port during the 7th and 10th centuries of the Pallava dynasty and has flourished accordingly.

This city was actually the second capital of the Pallavas. It was originally named after the rude, cruel, and arrogant King Mahabali who was killed during a fierce battle by Lord Vishnu at that location. It was named by the people more out of gratitude that the heartless king was killed there than out of respect upon his death for his leadership.

During the rule of the Pallavas, new styles of art and architecture were pioneered. Mahabalipuram is where they tried and then exhibited their new artistic and architectural creations. As a result, the area is brimming with rock-cut caves and numerous temples. In fact, this region is often referred to as an open museum.

Some of the temples were even carved out of one enormous rock rather than simply be constructed out of rock. Not much pillaging has occurred here over the centuries, since the wealth of the Pallavas was never flaunted. So the temples are well preserved.

The architecture is not the only draw for tourists in this city. The area is also nestled in an especially impressive setting. Beautiful white sandy beaches are plentiful, as are the casuarinas trees that are found in abundance there. Mahabalipuram is also known for providing a fantastic shopping experience. Exquisite local handmade crafts are readily available in the local shops.

Some of the temples were even carved out of one enormous rock rather than simply be constructed out of rock. Not much pillaging has occurred here over the centuries, since the wealth of the Pallavas was never flaunted.
Tourist Attractions

**Arjuna's Penance:** It is a famous rock sculpture that portrays a story out of India lore. It is carved onto the back side of a whale shaped rock. The sculpture measures 9 meters high and 27 meters long. Arjuna is the great hero of the great epic Mahabharata, and the name of the sculpture comes from his story. There is some controversy however as to whether the story portrayed is actually the story of Arjuna or if it is the story of Bhagiratha who is an ancestor to Lord Rama. Numerous gods and demigods as well as animals and people are all carved on the sculpture. The talent that it took to create such a sculpture is obvious and deserves respect. The characters amazingly look both realistic as well as humorous.

**Tiger's Caves:** The Tiger’s Caves are a popular picnic spot, so you may want to plan your day so that you are there at lunch time. Such a picnic would allow you to take in the sights at the caves as well as enjoy the beauty of the landscape itself.

**Crocodile Bank:** The Crocodile Bank is located 14 kilometers from Mahabalipuram. It was established by herpetologist Romulus Whitaker in 1976. It houses several different species of Indian and African alligators and crocodiles. They are kept in open pools that are made to resemble their natural habitat. This Crocodile Conservation Center is the most popular site to visit at Crocodile Bank. A snake farm is also located at this site. Anti-venom is produced here. The process of extracting the snake venom is a popular tourist attraction, and it allows the Irulas, the snake catcher’s tribe, to make a living.

**Five Rathas:** The Five Rathas, also known as Panch Rathas, is a set of rock temples. They are excellent examples of the evolution of Dravidian style architecture. These temples are built in the same shape as pagodas, and greatly resemble Buddhist shrines and monasteries. The rathas are associated with the great epic Mahabharata.

The first ratha that is located right by the entrance gate is Draupadi’s Ratha. It is shaped like a hut and is dedicated to the goddess Durga. Next comes Arjuna’s Ratha. This one has a small portico and carved pillar stones and is dedicated to Lord Shiva. There are no carvings inside this temple, but many are on the outside.

Directly in front of Arjuna’s Ratha is the Nakula - Sahadev Rath. This ratha has some huge elephant sculptures included that are a huge draw for the Five Rathas. It is dedicated to the God of Rain, Lord Indra. The Bhima Rath is huge. It measures 42 ft in length, 24ft in width, and 25ft in height. The pillars there contain lion carvings even though the ratha as a whole is incomplete. The largest of the Five Rathas is the Dharmraja Yudhistar’s Rath. This rath is also dedicated to Lord Shiva and is a great example of later built South Indian temples.

**Shore Temple:** Tradition has it that there once stood seven temples along the shore line in this area. Today, the only one that remains is the Shore Temple. It was built during the 7th century by the artisan Rajasimha under the rule of Narasimha Varman II. It is one of the oldest temples in South India that is built in the Dravidian style. It has lately increased in popularity because it is now listed as one of the world heritage sites of the UNESCO. Numerous carvings can be found throughout the temple. Three separate buildings make up the temple. Two are Shiva temples that face east and west. The third is a Vishnu temple.
Winter travel bookings see 22% growth

MUMBAI: The approaching winter season has witnessed 22 per cent growth in overseas bookings as compared to last year, according to a report.

The winter is traditionally considered the peak season for Indian travellers.

"More and more Indians are planning and investing in holidays. There is a significant rise in bookings for the winter season. The demand for international holidays has surged by 22 per cent (this year) compared to last year," Cox & Kings Head (Relationships) Karan Anand said.

He said there has been growth in bookings for domestic destinations as well. "Bookings for domestic holidays have gone up around 18 per cent."

The winter season begins from Diwali in October/November and continues through Christmas and the New Year, presenting opportunities for travellers to explore the places of their interest as they get consecutive holidays during this time, said the report by the leading travel company.

"Usually, people combine these holidays with weekends and also take a day or two off from work to plan long trip of 7-8 days," Anand added.

Europe is the most sought after destination this winter followed by Dubai, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, according to the report.

"Countries with visa-on-arrival facility or where the lead time to obtain the visa is less are in demand for short weekend trips," Anand said, quoting from the report.

Dubai, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia (Bali) are the top picks among these, he added.

"For international vacations, we see increased number of nights and higher transaction values. We have also observed that multigenerational families from different locations congregate on a destination to enjoy festive celebration for the extended family," he said.

On the domestic front, Kerala, Andaman, Rajasthan, Goa and Himachal Pradesh are the flavours of this season, said Anand.

Meanwhile, the report revealed that evolved travellers are looking at upcoming places like Tanzania, China and Uzbekistan. "They also look for off-beat international destinations such as Cambodia, Egypt, Kenya, Israel and Japan."

Bookings for honeymoon are also in full swing in this period and beach and island destinations like Bali, Vietnam, Seychelles, Mauritius and the Maldives are among the preferred choices for the newly married couples, it said.

Tourism continues to grow in Roanoke Valley

ROANOKE, Va.: New figures show an increase in tourism spending in the Roanoke Valley for the seventh year in a row.

The Roanoke Times reports numbers from the Virginia Tourism Corp. and the U.S. Travel Association show direct travel expenditures by regional visitors grew to about $813 million in 2016. That’s $13 million more than the year before.

Related jobs also grew last year. According to the tourism bureau that represents Roanoke and Salem cities and Roanoke, Franklin and Botetourt counties, tourism-supported jobs increased to 7,878 -8 jobs more than in 2015.

According to Gov. Terry McAuliffe’s office, tourism statewide brought in nearly $24 billion in revenue last year, and Virginia welcomed more than 45 million visitors from across the United States, a record high for domestic travel to the Commonwealth. -AP

'S Africa team wins adventure race in Kashmir

SRINAGAR: South African team Nevarest Jabberwock has won the 450-kilometer multi-discipline international adventure race, the first-of-its-kind event in Kashmir where 13 foreign teams participated.

The team, from South Africa, completed the ‘Expedition India 2017’ at 2:00 pm in Leh, Ladakh region by covering the distance in 55 hours, an official of the Tourism Department said here.

He said the adventure race included 75 kilometers of rafting, 43 kilometers of mountain biking, 53 kilometers of trekking and uphill running, 120 kilometers of mountain cycling, and 59 kilometers of camel safari in Nubra Valley.

As many as 14 teams - 13 from abroad and one local team - took part in the 10-day competition.

"Four teams pulled out of the grueling race in Leh and one team was rescued and the rest of the eight teams are expected to finish the race," the official said.

The teams were from South Africa, Australia, the UK, Sweden, New Zealand, Ireland, France, Argentina and Czech Republic, among others.

The expedition was flagged off by Secretary Tourism M H Malik on September 13 at the Shankaracharya hill here.

The first-ever international adventure event in Kashmir saw athletes passing through land of high mountain passes at an average altitude of over 3,500 meters, breathtaking valleys and beautiful rivers, making it one of the most fascinating and highest adventure races in the world, the official said.

 Rail food must list quantity, supplier

NEW DELHI: Railway Minister Piyush Goyal has asked officials to ensure that meals served on board trains carry information about quantity and the contractor supplying it, as the national carrier continues efforts to improve catering services. In a letter addressed to all zonal general managers, the railway board has said that Goyal has asked that food served to passengers has the name of the supplier or contractor, weight, date of packing and a distinct symbol indicating if it is vegetarian or non-vegetarian.

As of now, the packets only mention if the food is veg or non-veg.

The letter from Sanjiv Garg, Additional Member (Tourism and Catering), Railway Board, comes days after another letter was sent to the IRCTC and all general managers of Zonal Railways on the instructions of Goyal, asking them to crackdown on overcharging by catering contractors and staff.

The September 5 letter also said that special emphasis should be laid on ensuring hygiene and quality of food served to passengers.

These measures come in the backdrop of a CAG report earlier this year which was severely critical of meals served by the railways.

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More travellers keen to try local cuisines

MUMBAI: Travellers are getting more adventurous with 71 per cent of people surveyed in Asia Pacific emphasising on the importance of trying local cuisines while on vacation, a recent survey has revealed.

“Six out of 10 travellers were keen to try new experiences or activities and local cuisines,” according to Airbnb’s Asia Pacific (APAC) Travel survey.

“Our survey has shown that people across the region, irrespective of age or gender, have a desire to really experience the places that they travel to, not just visit. Food is such an influence on destination decision-making, and is also one of the easiest ways that you can immerse yourself into a local culture or community whether travelling with your family and friends, or alone,” Airbnb Regional Director, Asia Pacific, Siew Kum-Hong said.

The Airbnb APAC Travel survey was conducted among 6,979 travellers across seven countries in APAC, including Australia, China, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand.

It found that Indian women travellers are more adventurous when it comes to trying new cuisines. About 71 per cent Indians are most likely to want to try local food, in comparison to 58 per cent of travellers from South Korea.

Indian women are more adventurous in trying local food and drink (74 per cent) compared to 68 per cent of men. Women in China (73 per cent), Japan (80 per cent), Singapore (84 per cent), South Korea (59 per cent) and Thailand (69 per cent), are more inclined to sample local cuisine than their male counterparts, it said.

The only exception is Australia where 76 per cent of men are more keen to try local dishes against to 71 per cent of women. Millennials are more open to trying new cuisines compared to their aged counterparts, the survey said.

In Australia (77 per cent respondents), China (65 per cent), India (72 per cent), Japan (83 per cent), Singapore (79 per cent) and South Korea (59 per cent) are more open to new ideas and the importance of trying local foods. Women in 18-24 years old age group in APAC are more likely to try local food (77 per cent) than 35-44 years olds (69 per cent).

However, their male counterparts become more experimental with food in 35-44 age group, with 73 per cent, compared to only 64 per cent of males aged 25-34, it added.

Further, the survey, said one fifth of solo tourists cook on vacation, from 46 per cent of family travellers.

When vacationing with families, travellers do not always have the opportunity to explore the local food scene, it added.

In fact, the survey said, 46 per cent of family travellers across APAC are likely to cook, compared to one-fifth (21 per cent) of solo travellers.

There are regional variations as family groups travelling from Japan (23 per cent) are least likely to cook.

On the other hand, 46 per cent, 47 per cent, 64 per cent and 66 per cent of Indian, Chinese, Thai and South Korean travellers would be more likely to cook in their accommodation when they are travelling with their families.

Meanwhile, the survey also found that 59 per cent of all APAC travellers interviewed want to try new activities or experiences on holiday.

This rises to 70 per cent for Singaporeans, 68 per cent for Indians and 65 per cent for Australian travellers who are keen to try something different and new while on holiday.

Japanese travellers are the least likely to embrace new activities and adventures at 31 per cent, it added.-PTI

50% of train tickets purchased in cash

NEW DELHI: Fifty per cent of train tickets in the country are still purchased in cash, thanks to the dependence on neighborhood ticketing agents, said a study.

RailYatri, a web-based firm that provides various rail and bus based solutions, conducted the study among 5,979 trav­ellers across 25 cities and consulted around 800 travel agents.

The study has found that even though 65 per cent of rail passen­gers prefer digital payments while buying a ticket, 50 per cent of the train tickets are still bought in cash, notwithstanding the cen­tral governments digital push.

“A significant consumer section of India depends on man­aged services, especially when the complexity of their need is high. And because of the supply-demand mismatch and other uncertainties around train travel, ticket booking falls in this bucket,” said Manish Rathi, Co-Founder and CEO, RailYatri.

“This has in turn led to the popularity of train ticket booking through these mom-and-pop travel agents,” he said.

The study has shown that most travelers prefer going to a local agent because it “reduces complexity” and “helps in decision making”.

It also found that the Payment Gateway (PG) charges at 0.7 per cent (for train tickets priced less than Rs 2,000) was acting as a hurdle for travel agents.

The typical PG charges vary between 1.5 to 2 per cent depend­ing on the provider, with most providers falling on the higher side.

“Agents, understandably, are unwilling to pay for the difference,”he said.

The study also called for making the digital payment modes sturdy by removing the chinks.-PTI

Mahabalipuram

Open museum of rock-cut caves & temples

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Shopping: Shopping opportuni­ties are excellent in Mahabalipuram. Handmade crafts made by people in the region are the specialty. There are stone statues carved to look like the enor­mous originals that are in the area. The statues are carved out of granite which enhances their beauty. Many people are more than glad to travel to this region to acquire such fine artistic pieces made by quality artisans. Soapstone images, wood carvings, jewellery, and items made from local seashells are also popular items that are sold in the local shops.

Kovalam: The village of Kovalam was originally just a small fishing village that was located 15 kilometres from Mahabalipuram. Today, that fishing village is still there, but it has also expanded to become one of the most famous beach resorts in India. You can still explore the old sea port that used to exist there. Numerous quality beach resorts can be found at Kovalam. It is also to these beaches that the well-known Olive Ridley Turtles travel every year to hatch their eggs.

How to reach

By Train: The nearest rail head is Chengalpattu, 29 km from Mahabalipuram city. Chennai is the major railway station nearby which is connected to all major cities in India by rail.

By Air: The nearest airport is Chennai International airport, which is located 54 km from Mahabalipuram. Chennai is well connected to all major cities in India and many cities abroad, in­cluding Colombo, Middle East countries, Singapore and Gulf countries.

By Bus: Mahabalipuram is well connected with many cities in and around including Chennai by Tamil Nadu public transport bus services. Many private tourist buses also operate between Mahabalipuram and Chennai Central.
**In Brief**

**Apple CEO defends ‘dreamers’ program**

NEW YORK: Apple CEO Tim Cook has defended the government program that protects young immigrants in the U.S. illegally and called immigration the “biggest issue of our time.” Cook, speaking at the Bloomberg Global Business Forum, said Apple Inc. plans to work with Congress on behalf of its employees that benefit from the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program.

**Big American detention center sued**

SEATTLE: Washington State has sued the operator of one of the largest private immigration detention centers in the United States, claiming thousands of detainees were paid $1 per day for the work they performed but should have received the state’s much higher minimum wage.

State Attorney General Bob Ferguson filed the lawsuit claiming the GEO Group made millions of dollars and profits by illegally exploiting the workers. The Florida-based company owns and operates the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma under a contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Detainees since 2005 did laundry, cooked, cleaned and performed other work but were only paid $1 per day and in some cases did not receive that much because they were paid in food or snacks, the lawsuit said. -AP

**US to deport Indian, 2 Pakis for fraud**

WASHINGTON: The US has filed denaturalization complaints in a federal court against an Indian man and two Pakistani citizens who allegedly obtained their naturalized American citizenship by fraud.

The three allegedly concealed their prior orders of exclusion and deportation under different identities than the identity under which they naturalized, the US Department of Justice and US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) said.

If convicted all the three, Parvez Manzoor Khan and Rashid Mahmood from Pakistan and Baljinder Singh from India would be deported to their respective home countries. "The Justice Department is committed to preserving the integrity of our nation’s immigration system, and in particular, the asylum and naturalization processes, said Acting Assistant Attorney General Chad A Readler of the Justice Department's Civil Division. "The civil complaints charge that defendants in these cases exploited our immigration system and unlawfully secured the ultimate immigration benefit of naturalization. The filing of these cases sends a clear message to immigration fraudsters if you break our immigration laws, we will prosecute you and denaturalize you, Readler said. "The three cases were referred to the Department of Justice by USCIS and identified as part of Operation Janus. -AP

**India says Rohingyas illegal immigrants, not refugees**

NEW DELHI: Home Minister Rajnath Singh has said Rohingyas are not refugees who have applied for asylum in India but illegal immigrants who “will be deported”.

Addressing a seminar organized by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), a tough-talking Singh asked why some people were objecting to the deportation of Rohingyas when Myanmar was ready to accept them.

“The Home Ministry has clarified its position through its affidavit (in Supreme Court) that these are illegal immigrants and they will be deported. The Rohingyas are not refugees. There is a procedure to get refugee status and none of them followed this procedure. "No Rohingya has got asylum in India nor has anyone applied for it. They are illegal immigrants," he said.

Rohingyas are minority Muslims in western Myanmar and have been fleeing their homes following an army crackdown on their villages that has left hundreds dead. The home minister said India would not be violating any international law if it deportes Rohingyas as it is not a signatory to the UN Refugees Convention 1951. The NHRC recently issued a notice to the Centre over its plan to deport Rohingyas, who live in various parts of India. The government told Parliament on August 9 that more than 14,000 Rohingyas, registered with the UNHCR, stay in India.

However, aid agencies estimate there are about 40,000 Rohingyas in the country. According to NHRC, it’s “inter-vention is appropriate” from the human rights angle. The home minister said some people had again raked up the issue of human rights of Rohingyas who came to India illegally.

“We have to think about the human rights of our own people before talking about the human rights of people from other countries,” he said.

Any sovereign country, the minister said, was free to take a decision on what kind of action it should take against illegal immigrants. “The issue of national security is involved with regard to illegal immigration which our country can’t undermine,” he said.

He also referred to Myanmar state counselor Aung San Suu Kyi’s statement two days ago that her country would resettle some of the refugees. “I am sure Myanmar will take positive steps to take back the Rohingyas.” Singh said some people had termed the deportation process of Rohingyas wrong by referring to the ‘non-refoulement principle’, which forbids a country receiving asylum seekers from returning them to a country in which they would be in likely danger of persecution.

“But I want to tell them that the non-refoulement principle is applicable to those who take asylum.” -AP

**Myanmar tries to reassure the world**

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Immigrant hurricane victims turn to churches

HOUSTON: Immigrants came from across Houston to a Baptist church gymnasium and stacked dollys with boxes of cereal, orange juice and household necessities like cleaning bleach.

For many of them, the church was the safest place to seek relief after Harvey devastated Houston and left thousands of immigrants fearful of turning to the government for help amid fears they would get deported. A similar response was seen in immigrant-heavy sections of Florida after Irma swamped the state.

“We have to come together as churches to help the undocumented,” Emmanuel Baptist Church pastor Raul Hidalgo said while mingling with victims and volunteers on the church gymnasium’s parquet floor.

Places of worship and private charities in Texas and Florida are playing a pivotal role in the recovery effort from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma because so many storm victims are immigrants in the country illegally and therefore ineligible for federal disaster aid. They are doing charity giveaways like the one at Hidalgo’s church. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston is hosting workshops for immigrants to explain FEMA eligibility and answer other questions.

Federal Emergency Management Agency rules allow people in the country illegally to apply for disaster aid on behalf of children born in the U.S.

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WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump is considering a further reduction in the number of refugees allowed into the United States as the administration works to re-shape American immigration policy, officials say.

Trump has already slashed refugee admissions once since taking office. Now he faces a decision on how many to admit in the next budget year.

As is often the case with the Trump administration, Cabinet officials are divided as to whether they weigh the costs and potential security risks associated with the program.

The Department of Homeland Security has been pushing for a reduction beyond the 50,000 maximum-entry mark set by Trump earlier this year as part of his travel ban executive order—a number that is already the lowest in modern American history.

In a proposal submitted late last week, the department called for a reduction to 40,000 refugees in the next budget year starting Oct. 1, citing concerns about its workload and ability to adequately vet those seeking entry.

The State Department, which oversees the program, has formally recommended that the number be kept at 50,000, according to Trump administration officials who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss internal deliberations.

State Department officials would have been inclined to set the issue over the weekend, after he finishes up at the U.N. General Assembly in New York, one White House official said.

The U.S. welcomed 84,995 refugees in fiscal year 2016, and the maximum-entry mark set by former President Barack Obama had wanted to raise that number to 110,000 in 2017.

In a speech to the United Nations, Trump thanked Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon for taking in hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Syrian conflict, and described the United States as a “compassionate nation” that has spent “billions and billions of dollars in helping to support this effort.”

“We seek an approach to refugee resettlement that is designed to help these horribly treated people, and which enables their eventual return to their home countries to be part of the rebuilding process,” he said, arguing that for the cost of resettling one refugee in the United States, the U.S. can assist more than 10 migrants in their home regions.

Advocates say that misses the point.

“I think these comments show a basic misunderstanding of the refugee crisis,” said Jen Smyers, who helps run the immigration and refugee program at Church World Service, one of nine organizations that work to resettle refugees in the U.S. She said the safe re-integration of refugees into their home countries is always the preferred outcome, followed by integration in a nearby country that shares a refugee’s language and culture.

Resettlement is a last resort when those options are impossible.

Refugees already face an extensive backlog and waiting periods that can take years. Smyers said that after Trump’s executive order, she had to tell refugees in their recommendation higher, several of the people said, but were taking their cues from the president’s executive order and felt that 50,000 was the highest number that would be palatable to him.

Trump has until Oct. 1, the start of the new fiscal year, to determine how many refugees to admit under the Refugee Act of 1980. He is expected to consider their recommendation higher, several of the people said, but were taking their cues from the president’s executive order and felt that 50,000 was the highest number that would be palatable to him.

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Pelosi priority to save 'Dreamers now'

WASHINGTON: House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi has said that she respects young immigrants who shouted her down at an event in San Francisco, but said their call for a comprehensive immigration overhaul was premature.

Instead, lawmakers must focus on protecting young immigrants brought to the United States illegally as children, Pelosi said.

“We are not in a position where we can say all or none. We have to have the Dreamers now,” Pelosi said at a news conference at the Capitol.

“‘Dreamers’ is a term used for young immigrants who were brought to the country illegally as children or by parents who over-stayed visas.

Dozens of protesters disrupted an event in Pelosi’s hometown of San Francisco showing their displeasure over her recent meetings with President Donald Trump over ways to continue the program that protects young immigrants from deportation. The protesters called for reform that gives legal status to all immigrants in the country, not just young people.

While she said she respects their concerns, Pelosi said she disagreed with the protesters. “There are some who say all or none. We don’t have that opportunity in a Republican-led Congress, Pelosi said.

Laith Ocean, a 20-year-old Northern California junior college student who was among the protesters who shut down Pelosi’s event said that the student had acted to make their voices heard. “She turned her back to us, she called a conference in our name without consulting us,” said Ocean, a transgender immigrant from Nicaragua who attended a town hall on immigration featuring Democratic California Reps. Jared Huffman and Mike Thompson.

Ocean and other students from protest denied they were seeking immediate overall immigration reform.

The issue, Ocean said, “was we don’t want her making any deals with Trump” in the name of Dreamers.

“My friends, my family, my community are not bargaining chips” for Democratic deal-making with the Trump administration, said Alexander Gonzalez Jimenez, 23, another of the protesters.

Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer had met with Trump twice and discussed a deal to provide legal status to young immigrants. Trump said earlier this month he will halt the program instituted by former President Barack Obama if Congress does not act to continue it. Trump gave Congress six months to fix it.

Schumer and Pelosi said they reached a deal with the White House on legislation that would offer eventual citizenship to the immigrants in question. Republicans say talks focused on making permanent the protections offered under Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, commonly referred to as DACA.

Sen. Diane Feinstein, D-Calif., was booed last month in San Francisco after she called for patience in dealing with Trump. saying she hoped he would change for the better. - AP
Myanmar tries to reassure the world

UNITED NATIONS: Myanmar has tried to reassure the world about its handling of the mass exodus of Rohingya Muslims to Bangladesh and said it is committed to resolving sectarian tensions in the strife-hit region.

The Southeast Asian nation is facing accusations of ethnic cleansing and “savagery” by its security forces. More than 420,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since Aug. 25 when Rohingya insurgent attacks on security forces prompted a military crackdown and reprimals by majority Buddhists.

Vice President Henry Van Thio spoke to the U.N. General Assembly in the absence of Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of Myanmar’s civilian government who has been criticized for failing to protect the minority group.

Van Thio echoed Suu Kyi’s speech to diplomats in Myanmar that “the great majority” of the Muslim population decided to remain in their villages and that the situation has improved. But he also voiced concern over reports that the numbers of Muslims crossing into Bangladesh “remain unabated.”

He said the government is committed to ensuring aid without discrimination and implementing recommendations of a commission on resolving the tensions in Rakhine State led by former U.N. chief Kofi Annan.

“Deep mistrust developed over decades has to be slowly chiselled away,” Van Thio said.

The conflict is overshadowing Myanmar’s historic shift from five decades of direct military rule after Suu Kyi’s elected government took office last year. She does not, however, control the military, which retains much of its power under the country’s constitution.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence lamented the “terrible savagery” of Myanmar’s security forces. He warned the violence against the Rohingya will “sow seeds of hatred” that could consume the region and threaten global peace.

“We welcome Suu Kyi’s comments that returning refugees have nothing to fear, the U.S. renewed our call on Burma’s security forces to end their violence immediately and support diplomatic efforts for a long-term solution,” Pence said.

He urged the Security Council, the U.N.’s most powerful body, to take “strong and swift action” and “to give hope and help to the Rohingya people in their hour of need.” He did not specify what kind of action he was seeking.

Britain announced it had suspended aid to Myanmar’s military until the current situation was resolved. Some 24 U.S. lawmakers are urging the Trump administration to follow suit and suspend all U.S. training, which is already heavily restricted.

However, the U.S. announced nearly $32 million in humanitarian aid to help Rohingya refugees. It was the Trump administration’s first major response to the mass exodus that has left Bangladesh struggling to cope.

-AP

Palestinian activist deported from Chicago

CHICAGO: Dozens of demonstrators gathered at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport to show their support for a 111/2-hour flight to Amman.

Danish aircraft for the 111/2-hour flight to Amman.

Rasmea Odeh pleaded guilty in April to confessions by the Israeli military.

She was sentenced to life in prison but was released in 1979 as part of a prisoner swap with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

With family in Michigan, she applied for a U.S. visa in 1994, but didn’t disclose her criminal record. She also didn’t disclose it when she applied for citizenship in 2004. Odeh was convicted of lying in 2014, but the verdict was overturned. She chose to make a deal with the government rather than face a second trial.

Odeh didn’t serve any time in prison after pleading guilty to misleading U.S. immigration officials, but she lost her citizenship and was deported.

“Her grace and her resilience under this relentless, stupid, idiotic attack has been so inspiring,” said Lynn Pollack of Jewish Voice for Peace.

In Chicago, Odeh was associate director of the Arab American Action Network, which provides social services and education. She is widely respected for her work with immigrants, especially Arab women.

“Technically she was a terrorist,” U.S. District Judge Gershwin Drain said in 2015. “But looking at Ms. Odeh’s recent history, I’m convinced she’s really been involved in a lot of good works.”

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US to deport Indian, 2 Pakis for fraud

A Department of Homeland Security initiative, Operation Janus identified about 315,000 cases where some fingerprint data was missing from the centralized digital fingerprint repository.

Among those cases, some may have sought to circumvent criminal records and other background checks in the naturalization process, a statement said.

These cases are the result of an ongoing collaboration between the two departments to investigate and seek denaturalization proceedings against those who obtained citizenship unlawfully, it said.

According to the complaint, Baljinder aka Davinder Singh, 43, of India, arrived at San Francisco International Airport on September 25, 1991, without any travel documents or proof of identity.

He claimed his name was Davinder Singh. He was placed in exclusion proceedings, but failed to appear for his immigration court hearing and was ordered excluded and deported on January 7, 1992.

Four weeks later, on February 6, 1992, he filed an asylum application under the name Baljinder Singh. He claimed to be an Indian who entered the US without inspection.

Singh abandoned that application after he married a US citizen, who filed a visa petition on his behalf.

Singh naturalized under the name Baljinder Singh on July 28, 2006.

The civil complaints contain charges against defendants that include illegal procurement of naturalization by not being lawfully admitted for permanent residence, illegal procurement of naturalization due to lack of good moral character and procurement of US citizenship (concealment of a material fact or willful misrepresentation; false testimony). -PTI

Young Rohingya Muslims stand on a slope and stretch their arms out to receive food being distributed near Balukhali refugee camp in Cox’s Bazar Bangladesh

Rasmea Odeh
PE flows into realty may scale new high to top $4 b this year

MUMBAI: Private equity inflows into the realty space may set a new milestone and exceed USD 4 billion this year, says a report.

Most of these investments are into pre-leased office and retail assets, a major shift from residential sector, showing the low risk appetite of investors, says a Knight Frank report, adding that over 80 per cent of PE capital so far this year is from long-term sovereign and pension funds.

The share of PE investments into residential projects nearly halved from 50 per cent in 2011 to 28 per cent in 2016 and further dropped to a meagre 4 per cent in 2017.

Against this, the share of office market accounted for 29 per cent in 2011 now it stands at 66 per cent of the investments into the real estate while that of retail climbed to 19 per cent in 2016 from almost nil in 2011 and is at 14 per cent till September this year.

Share of warehousing in total investments nearly doubled from 9 per cent in 2011 to 16 per cent in 2017.

*Private equity investment is estimated to exceed USD 4 billion this year, well past the 2015 mark which was the highest since 2010,* says the report and noted that this is a welcome change as PE investments into the realty was stagnant between 2011 and 2014.

From an average investment of USD 2.1 billion in 2011-14, capital flows rose by 57 per cent in 2017 as compared to last year.

Anmol Ambani, executive director of Reliance Capital said, “The listing results in Reliance Capital Shareholders directly owning a major portion of the equity capital in Reliance Capital, safeguarded by treating them as secured creditors like banks and financial institutions.

The home buyers, who have neither got possession of flats, nor refund of their hard-earned invested money had booked homes in the Amrapali Centurion Park-Low Rise project, Amrapali Centurion Park-Terrace Homes and Amrapali Centurion Park-Tropical Garden at Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh.

More than 5000 flats were to be built in approximately 40 towers in a phased manner by the embattled group.

The fresh plea, filed by Bikram Chatterjee and 106 others, has sought quashing of a National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) order passed on the plea of Bank of Baroda seeking initiation of insolvency proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, which give priority to lending institutions, be held ultra vires.

**Detest the terms and conditions contained in the agreement, the buyers alleged they were” oppressive and unreasonable”**

### 100 home buyers of Amrapali move SC

NEW DELHI: Over 100 hassled home buyers, who had booked dream homes with Amrapali Group firms, have moved the Supreme Court seeking that their interests be safeguarded by treating them as secured creditors like banks and financial institutions.

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### 2016 against Amrapali Silicon City Pvt Ltd.

Consumer and recovery cases and decrees passed by civil courts and consumer fora in favor of home buyers against real estate firms cannot be executed to the Constitution as being violative of fundamental rights like right to equality and right to life.

The petition, filed through lawyer M L Lahoty, alleged that the 107 home buyers had neither got possession of the property, nor any compensation from the firm.

It also alleged that the insolvency proceedings against Amrapali Silicon City Ltd had affected the home buyers of Amrapali Centurian Park Pvt Ltd.

It claimed that thousands of buyers had booked apartments during 2010-14 by paying booking amounts running into several crores after which they were made to sign a “one-sided” allotment agreements.

Detesting the terms and conditions contained in the agreement, the buyers alleged they were “oppressive and unreasonable” as there was a clause for timely payment by the buyer, but no timely completion of the project.

Contd’ on page 49
Embassy JV with Taurus for Kerala project

BENGALURU: Realty firm Embassy group has said it will form a joint venture with US-based Taurus Investment Holdings to develop commercial projects, including an SEZ, in Kerala at an investment of about Rs 900 crore.

Taurus and Bengaluru-based Embassy will develop a 10-acre SEZ project at Trivandrum comprising 1.4 million sq ft of office space through a joint venture firm Winterfell Realty.

Taurus will have 51 per cent stake in the JV while Embassy will hold 49 per cent, although the economic interest will be equal between the two partners.

In another 10-acre of non-SEZ land, Embassy and Taurus will form separate JV to develop 0.9 million sq ft of office space in the second phase. Taurus will independently develop 1.2 million sq ft of retail space and a hotel on this land.

“We are entering into a JV with Taurus Investment to develop 2.3 million sq ft of office space in two phases. This will be our first project in Kerala,” Embassy group CMD Jitu Virwani told PTI.

When asked about investment, he said the total project cost will be about Rs 850-900 crore, which will be infused in form of equity and debt by the partners.

The JV expects to sign a lease agreement with Kerala government by November for the SEZ project and start construction work early next year.

Embassy through its entity Embassy Property Development has entered into an agreement with Taurus Investment Holdings, a real estate private equity investment and development firm, to form the JV Winterfell Realty to develop Embassy Taurus World Technology Centre SEZ project.

This partnership strengthens Embassy’s commercial office space portfolio and development of SEZs in key strategic locations, Virwani said.

The total size of the project is 20 acre comprising 3.5 million sq ft of developable area. The land will be on lease from the state government for a period of 90 years, with an additional renewal option of another 90 years.

Virwani said the SEZ development has been envisaged as an important strategic tool to expedite the growth of global trade and services and the company is committed to be a part of this significant growth through exclusive SEZ project developments across locations.

Taurus Investment Holdings LLC Country Managing Director, India Ajay Prasad said: “Taurus has a legacy of more than four decades of successful investments across countries. Real estate is a focused play and we have been on the constant lookout for a suitable strategic partner for this venture.”

Embassy group is a leading commercial real estate developer in the country. The company’s joint venture with global investment firm Blackstone has a portfolio of 20 million sq ft of completed office space and another 10-12 million sq ft in the pipeline.

Embassy and Blackstone are planning to launch Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) to monetize its office assets.

The group is also into residential and hotel business.

The JV expects to sign a lease agreement with Kerala government by November for the SEZ project and start construction work early next year.

Fadnavis for slum scheme in PM Yojana

MUMBAI: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has urged the Centre to bring the state’s Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) so that it can get subsidy to create more affordable housing stock.

He said the government’s intention was to create more housing stock and that it was taking various initiatives and making policy changes for it.

“Our SRA scheme has not progressed as it should have. We are in the process of making amendments in the scheme,” Fadnavis said at a summit organized by the National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) here.

The chief minister said he has urged Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri to include the SRA in the PMAY, which would ensure creation of excess housing stock.

“If SRA is brought under the PMAY then those projects can also get subsidy under the scheme, so then we can convert the saleable stock to affordable stock. The minister has given an in-principle approval for the proposal but it is a process and we hope our demand is considered,” he said.

The state government is making some amendments in the SRA scheme and also taking certain policy decisions for the re-development schemes so as to make housing more affordable, Fadnavis said.

“In the next two-three months we will see a number of amendments made and policy decisions taken to enable creation of more affordable housing stock. Also, we will be soon coming out with a development plan (DP) for the megapolis which will ensure creation of more housing stock,” he said. -PTI

100 home buyers of Amrapali move SC

Besides two Amrapali firms, the plea has made Union Ministries of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Uttar Pradesh government, Bank of Baroda and the RBI as parties.

The plea has sought a direction restraining the Interim Resolution Professional (IRP) from creating any third party interest in the projects in question and safeguarding of financial interests of home buyers.

Earlier, the apex court had taken note of a similar plea of hassled home buyers of real estate major Jaypee Infratech Ltd and revived the insolvency proceedings against the firm.

It had given the management control of the firm to the IRP, appointed by the NCLT, besides asking the firm to deposit Rs 2000 crore with the apex court registry to safeguard the interest of the home buyers. -PTI

Unitech told to compensate 39 home buyers

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has directed embattled real estate firm Unitech Residential Resorts Ltd to pay Rs 80,000 each as compensation to 39 home buyers towards litigation cost and causing harassment to them.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices Amitava Roy and A M Khanwilkar disposed of the appeal filed by the real estate company against the order of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) and asked it to pay the cost within eight weeks to the home buyers.

The 39 home buyers had booked flats in Unitech’s Vista housing project in Gurugram and had sought a refund of their principal amount, totaling Rs 16.55 crore with interest, after the developer, which had promised to give them possession by 2012, delayed it.

The court modified the NCDRC’s order on the issue of compensation and awarded the compensation of Rs 80,000, besides the refund of the money invested by the home buyers who had said that they did not want the flats.

Earlier, the firm had told the court that it has complied with the direction on refund of principal and interest to the home buyers of its Gurugram’s project.

Prior to this, the court had directed the firm to deposit 14 per cent interest on Rs 16.55 crore invested by the 39 buyers and warned it that failure to pay could invite attaching the realtor’s property. -PTI

Cont’d from page 48

It claimed that the contract was one-sided as it allowed the builder to raise loan from any bank by way of mortgage of the flats being sold and buyers cannot object.

“Giving serious jolt to home buyers who have paid their hard earned money and life savings into funding the purchase of their dream homes, the Respondents 3 and 4 (Amrapali) were found in serious breach of their obligation to deliver the flats within 36 months, i.e. By 2013 and in some cases it is 2016,” the petition said.

No compensation for this failure to deliver the flats had been paid to the buyers, it alleged.

The NCLT had on September 4 this year ordered liquidation of the builder on the plea of Bank of Baroda seeking initiation of the scheme.

MUMBAI: Maharashra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has urged the Centre to bring the state’s Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) so that it can get subsidy to create more affordable housing stock.

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AMRITANANDAMAYI DEVI

The ultimate truth is Pure Consciousness. It under goes no change when the universe manifests from It. We refer to the power behind it as Devi. God and divine power are not two; they are one and the same, just as sun and its light, honey and its sweetness, a word and its meaning.

We have the freedom to worship God in any form we like. We can worship Him as Mother, Father, Guru, Friend, the Lord or as our own child. The only thing is, our worship should be based on spiritual principles. Among human relationships, the one between mother and child is highest. The child has total freedom with his mother. He gets what he wants by crying or through willfulness.

Even if the mother spars her child, he will hold on to her tightly. “I have no other refuge than the mother”-this is his attitude. No matter what the cause of his distress, he finds consolation in his mother’s lap. This is the attitude we should have towards God. The mother is the embodiment of patience.

No matter how many times the child errs, the mother forgives him repeatedly and showers her affection on him. However, most mothers have such love only for their own children, whereas the Divine Mother’s attitude combines both love towards all beings in the universe and spiritual discipline. Some ask why we refer to Devi as Maya. Doesn’t Maya lead us to delusion, sorrow and bondage? Why then do we worship Devi? The universe is the visible manifestation of Devi. She pervades all than our own mind. It is not some outer force. Maya is the root form of the mind. The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation.

Once, a band of thieves robbed a person of his valuables, bound him with rope, and pushed him inside a well. The victim shouted for help. Hearing his calls, a few people went to the well. Seeing them, they threw a rope inside the well and saved him. A rope bound liberation. Most of our sorrows are caused by misconceptions. At dusk, the sun sets into the sea. A child cries, imagining the sun is drowning. Such is the case with most of our sorrows. God has assigned everything its own place in the universe. There is no great or small. See and revere everyone as God. This is also the message behind the bommakkolu (multi-tiered ar-

Devi is knowledge, ignorance, & Supreme Truth too

We worship even the most insignificant idol as a part of Devi. Supreme devotion is seeing, loving, serving and worshipping everything as the Universal Mother.

Focus on changing yourself, and the whole world will appear differently: Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.

Always follow your heart; it will take you where you need to go: Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of love.

Love is everything: Only from the heart can you touch the sky. This is love: to fly toward a secret sky, to cause a hundred veils to fall each moment. First to let go of life. Finally, to take a step without feet.

Rise up to meet your potential: You were born with potential. You were born with goodness and mercy. Be like the night to cover others’ faults. Be like running water for generosity. Be like death for rage and anger. Be like the Earth for modesty. Appear as you are. Be as you appear.

Find people who will shine light on your path: Ignore those that make you fearful and sad, that degrade you back towards disease and death. Set your life on fire. Seek those who fan your flames.

Forget safety; Live where you fear to live

Ignore those that make you fearful and sad, that degrade you back towards disease and death. Set your life on fire. Seek those who fan your flames.

JALAL AD-DIN MUHAMMAD RUMI

Don’t avoid tough experiences; they are wonderful teachers: The wound is the place where the Light enters you. These pains you feel are messengers. Listen to them. You have to keep breaking your heart until it opens. The moon stays bright when it doesn’t avoid the night. What hurts you, blesses you. Darkness is your mother is the embodiment of patience.

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Don’t allow things outside yourself to control your emotions: If you are irritated by every rub, how will you be polished? Don’t grieve. Anything you lose reveals something you were afraid of losing.


Don’t act so small when you have the whole universe inside of you: Stop acting so small. You are the universe in ecstatic motion. Become the sky. Take an axe to the prison wall. Escape.

what you really love. When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy.

You have a purpose here beyond what you’ve been told: There is a candle in your heart, ready to be kindled. There is a void in your soul, ready to be filled. You feel it, don’t you?
Abe-Modi meet strengthens n-energy cooperation

SHIVANI SINGH

EXISTING BOTTLENECKS
Most of the concerns were put to rest by India during the nuclear deal negotiations. However, a major bone of contention in realizing the full potential of this deal on both ends - which was not addressed during this visit - is the termination clause envisaged in article 14 of the agreement. Currently, the clause grants the party seeking termination of the agreement the right of return of all “nuclear material, non-nuclear material or equipment transferred pursuant to this Agreement and any special fissionable material recovered or produced as a by-product.”

This is fashioned around the same template as the Indo-US nuclear deal where the parties have a ‘right to recall’, and is also mentioned in a separate document recording the views of both parties. Japan’s commitment to this clause arises from the pressures of domestic forces.

However, there is some ambiguity over whether this clause is binding on India. The details of the termination process have not been specified either.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES
Shinzo Abe’s visit was an opportunity for both countries to tie up loose ends and facilitate a smooth implementation of the clauses under the agreement. Both countries expressed gratitude at the entry into force of the civil nuclear agreement and decided on setting up a working group “to strengthen bilateral cooperation in this field and reiterated their shared view that the Agreement reflects a new level of mutual confidence and strategic partnership in the cause of clean energy, economic development and a peaceful and secure world.”

The details of this working group and its functions have not been chalked out yet.

India and Japan also reiterated their commitment to an early conclusion of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and effectively verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). This will help in setting the right tone to ensure nuclear safety and security in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Seen in retrospect, the meeting between Abe and Modi was successful in further strengthening nuclear energy cooperation between the two countries, and has laid the foundation for further bilateral collaboration on clean energy. However, the visit could have gone a step further in addressing concerns regarding the termination clause in the agreement to overcome the last hurdle towards optimizing the benefits of such cooperation.

The writer is Research Intern, NSR IPS

Slinging match

A country usually boasts of its good points in international arena and exposes and blows up the flaws of its enemies. This was witnessed at the recent India-Pak slanging match at the UN. Pakistan loves to provoke India, if not with bullets in Kashmir than with barbs at international fora. It feels uncomfortable if India doesn’t react.

India fell into the trap this time and our Sushma Swaraj went hammer and tongs at Pakistan for the terrorism it spawns and gives shelter to such elements. The Pak media celebrated saying India had been rattled by their Prime Minister’s speech accusing India of killing Kashmiris and injuring them with pellets.

In fact there is nothing like criticism by others for self-improvement. If Pakistan doesn’t take note of what everyone is accusing it of, it is Pakistan’s business. But official India too doesn’t like being reminded of its treatment of Kashmiris; an issue which has become its Achilles heel. Indeed it was due to repeated reference to Kashmir at UN that India reacted with ferocity. It means there is need to amend our policies if only to protect our image as a democracy.

There has been a single-minded muscular approach in Kashmir which has certainly yielded some benefits. With terrorist leaders being eliminated the militant groups are becoming rudderless. With the Army having an upper hand, people get the message they cannot trifle with it like throwing stones.

NIA investigations have exposed the Hurriyat leaders’ financial links with Pakistan and its secret agencies. The stone throwing has also come down with the capture of the purse strings with these leaders. Demonetization has also played a major part in killing off remuneration for stone throwing. The impact has been so much that a Hurriyat leader like Maulvi Farooq is calling for talks with the Government.

However, the strong arm approach needs now to be tempered with improving human relations with the Kashmiris. They have been shown how their leaders are dancing to the tunes of Pakistani money. That this muscular policy has succeeded has also led to the Pakistani diatribe at UN. They are worried at its success. Now there is time for a healing touch.

Indian American Center being run in despotic way

The Indian American Center on Devon Avenue was founded by Indian Americans with the express purpose of being of service to the Indian American community.

Over the past several decades thousands of Indians have come to the center for much needed advice and help on matters pertaining to public aid, immigration, literacy and computer literacy. It is a place where first generation Indian immigrants can find a safe refuge with volunteers who understand their culture, speak their language and respect their religious beliefs.

Until the time of the much respected former executive director of the center, Mr R S Rajan, visitors to the center were assured of being treated with respect and dignity. His cabin was always open and he listened to their grievances and problems patiently and took prompt action to redress them.

Under the present executive director, there seems to be a witch hunt against members of a particular community. Three senior staffs of the center, all with more than two decades of dedicated service, have been terminated without a shred of dignity and recognition. The sentiment and beliefs of Hindus who form three quarters of the clients of the Center are systematically ignored.

One of the staffers dismissed was the senior services coordinator whose untiring dedication and service resulted in the center becoming a safe haven for senior citizens seeking assistance, companionship and entertainment.

Many of the benefactors and patrons of the center have stopped all financial assistance. Many senior members of the board have quit in disgust. Will the community wake up now at least or will they wait for the Center to be turned into a den of members of a certain community not known for respect for other communities?

Anil Pillay, B Kumar, Nand Kapur, Madhu Patel and others
Chicagoland, Illinois
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW JERSEY</td>
<td>Upcoming</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat, Sep 30</td>
<td>Patel Brothers and India House Navratri 2017</td>
<td>Venue: South Field center, 50 Cragwood Road, South Plainfield, NJ 07080  Time: 09:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat, Oct 07</td>
<td>Navratri Dandiya and Accessories Sales 2017</td>
<td>Venue: Online and by Phone Only, 709 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Bayonne, NJ 07002  Time: 04:00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEW YORK</td>
<td>Upcoming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Sep 30</td>
<td>Dipawali Mela 2017 with Kavi-Samelan and Sangeet program</td>
<td>Venue: Vedic Heritage Inc, 111 Jerusalem Ave, Hempstead, NY 11550  Time: 08:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun, Oct 01</td>
<td>BAGA Presents Durga Puja</td>
<td>Venue: Mountain View High School, 2301 Sunny Hill Road, Lawrenceville, Ga 30043  Time: 10:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat, Oct 14</td>
<td>Diwali Motorcade &amp; Cultural Show 2017</td>
<td>Venue: Arya Spiritual Center Ground, 104-20 133rd Street, NY 11419  Time: 03:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Oct 14</td>
<td>Navaratri and Diwali Mela - Chinmaya Mission Alpharetta</td>
<td>Venue: Lambert High School, 805 Nichols Road, Suwanee, GA 30024  Time: 06:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun, Oct 14</td>
<td>Diwali Festival of Lights</td>
<td>Venue: Waukonse Valley High School, 2590 Ogden Avenue, Aurora, IL 60504  Time: 12:30 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASHINGTON DC</td>
<td>Upcoming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Oct 07</td>
<td>Heritage India Festival - Diwali extravaganza</td>
<td>Venue: Dulles Expo Center (South), 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly, VA 20151  Time: 12:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat, Oct 21</td>
<td>Diwali - The festival of Light 2017</td>
<td>Venue: Science of Spirituality Meditation Center, 2950 Arizona Avenue Northwest, Washington, DC 20016  Time: 05:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORTHERN CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>Upcoming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Sep 30</td>
<td>Diwali Festival of Lights in Bay Area</td>
<td>Venue: Memorial Park, Cupertino, CA 95014, 21251 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino, CA 95014  Time: 11:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun, Oct 01</td>
<td>ICC Diwali Dhamaka - A Fundraiser for ICC Seniors</td>
<td>Venue: India Community Center, 525 Los Cocos Street, Milpitas, CA 95035  Time: 09:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri, Oct 06</td>
<td>Falguni Pathak Dandiya &amp; Raas Garba Live In Bay Area</td>
<td>Venue: Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA 95054  Time: 11:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat, Oct 07</td>
<td>DUSSHERA DIWALI/DHAMAuka 2017</td>
<td>Venue: Santa Clara Fair Grounds, 344 Tully Road, San Jose, CA 95111  Time: 11:00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat Oct 14</td>
<td>Abul Purohit Navratri Dandiya &amp; Raas Garba</td>
<td>Venue: Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, 344 Tully Rd, San Jose, CA 95111  Time: 06:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILLINOIS</td>
<td>Upcoming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat, Sep 30</td>
<td>Chicago Children's Bal Mukund Character Building Program and Hindi Literacy Classes</td>
<td>Venue: Yogali Center, 601 W. Higgins Road, Hoffman Estates, IL 60192 (Next to Nissan Dealership)  Contact: Ajay &amp; Arti Chandhok @ 630-561-4807  Time: 11:00 am</td>
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OF NAVRATHRI 2017

JAGRAN TIMINGS
07:30 to 08:30 p.m.
Bhandara
08:30 p.m.
Pooja followed by
Jagra
11:45 to 12:30 a.m.
Tea Break
12:30 a.m.
Resume Jagran
followed by
Tararani Katha &
Mata Arati

SATURDAY SEP 30TH 2017

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