

Editorial

Saturday, March 16, 2019

Parking paralysis

'An exercise in futility' would perhaps best describe the ongoing determined attempt of the state traffic police to control and maintain proper parking rules and regulations in the city. The seemingly harsh observation which is more an opinion than a qualified assessment is derived from the experiences, narrations, discussions and reactions from concerned public and bewildered motorists who have pointed out certain highlights to drive home the truth of the present situation.

The present efforts of the state authorities particularly the Imphal West Traffic Police to streamline parking methods as well as to regulate and prevent illegal parking so as to ensure minimal resistance to traffic flow in and around the city is a much needed exercise in light of the steadily increasing vehicular traffic in the city. The state has seen and experienced a rapid surge in the volume of traffic during the last decade which, while being a good indicator of increasing disposable income of the people in the state, has been proving to be a worsening problem as regulating traffic is becoming an increasingly challenging task. And the challenge is only set to get even more difficult.

The most pertinent question then is how the existing resources in terms of manpower and available spaces be utilized to ease the increasingly worsening traffic woes in the state capital. The initiative of the state government to revive the state road transport is laudable, but as of now, there are few takers which indicate an inherent flaw in the arrangement which the state think tank need to review, identify and address. Lack of dedicated parking spaces for public transporters such as autorickshaws, wingers etc around the periphery of the heart of the city, as well as the lack of a feeder transport system to ferry the public into the heart of the city has been a major stumbling block in the effort to regulate traffic in the heart of the city. The state run public transport system can be effectively used to provide the necessary service. Proper and highly visible demarcation of parking spaces with strict enforcement to comply with the authorities will definitely yield the desired result.

However, the biggest and most overlooked factor contributing to the congestions which has been baffling the public is the deliberate ignorance of the authorities- read police personnel doing the rounds in the heart of the city enforcing traffic rules and parking regulations- are the scores of women vendors displaying their wares within the parking spaces along the Thangal Bazar stretch on both sides of the road depriving the public of the much needed parking spaces. Their number is rapidly increasing by the day and is at present occupying almost half the designated parking spaces. Roadside vendors are also now spilling over onto the Paona Bazar side as well. Another prominent situation which the authorities have so far failed to notice is the encroachment of pavements/footpaths by shops for displaying their wares forcing the public to walk on the road.

Unless all the factors contributing to traffic congestion are taken into consideration and an inclusive plan to tackle the issue is drawn up and put into action, no amount of patchy albeit spirited efforts will bring the desired result.

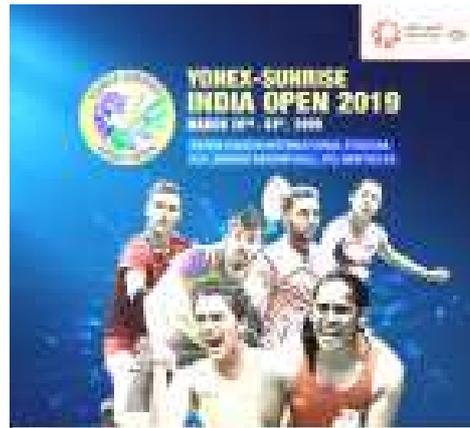
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Chen Yufei and Shi Yuqi top seeded as Chinese stars headline 9th edition of the Yonex Sunrise India Open

New Delhi, March 16

Newly-crowned All England Open champion Chen Yufei and defending men's singles champion Shi Yuqi will lead the draw as the 9th edition of the Yonex Sunrise India Open begins at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall of Indira Gandhi International Stadium, on March 26. After eight successful years at the Siri Fort Sports Complex, this time the USD 350, 000 tournament will not only have a brand-new address but is also set to welcome the biggest ever Chinese Contingent. Having upset the World No. 1 Tai Tzu Ying in the final of the All England Open last year, World No. 2 Yufei will command a lot of attention as she battles it out with India's very best at this premier World Tour Super 500 event.

The main draw of women's singles has as many as six Chinese shuttlers, with World No. 7 He Bingjiao and World No. 14 Han Yue receiving the third and seventh seeding respectively. Former champion and 2012 Olympic gold medalist Li Xuerni makes her return while Chen Xiaoxin and Cai Yanyan are the other Chinese in the draw. The Indian challenge will be spearheaded by second seed and 2017 winner PV Sindhu and two-time champion Saina Nehwal, seeded



fifth this time.

Shi Yuqi, whose All England title defence ended in the semi-finals to Viktor Axelsen, will hope to rebound at the Yonex Sunrise India Open. The World No. 2 Chinese, who begins his challenge against compatriot Huang Yuxiang, could meet his countryman Zhou Zeqi in the quarter-finals. World No. 19 Lu

Guangzu and the 37th ranked Zhao Junpeng will clash in yet another thrilling all-Chinese face-off.

The highly popular Viktor Axelsen, second seed this time and winner in 2017, will look to continue the fireworks after reaching the final of the All England Open earlier this month.

India has handsome representation

in the men's singles section with six shuttlers from home vying for the title. While 2015 champion Kidambi Srikanth has been seeded third, BWF World Tour Finals semi-finalist Sameer Verma is the fifth seed.

Sai Praneeth, HS Prannoy, Parupalli Kashyap, Subhankar Dey will carry the home hopes as well. The third-seeded men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will begin their 2019 season at the India Open amid a lot of expectations. Former National Champions Manu Attri and Sumeeth Reddy are the only other Indian pair to have been seeded at sixth.

2018 World Championships quarter-finalists Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa are the eighth seeds in the mixed doubles draw which is led by the Chinese pair of Wang Yiliu and Huang Dongping, the 2018 BWF World Tour Finals champions.

Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Sikki Reddy are unseeded and could face the fourth seeds Hafiz Faizal and Gloria Emanuelle Widjaja in the second round.

Commonwealth Games bronze medalist combine of Reddy and Ponnappa will look to pull off an upset over the sixth seeds Li Wenmei and Zheng Yu in women's doubles.

IGAR (South) Celebrates 16th Raising Day

IT News
Imphal, March 16

Inspector General of Assam Rifles (South) celebrated its 16th Raising Day on 15 March 2019. HQ IGAR (South) was raised in 2004 at the historic Kangla Fort and moved subsequently to its present location at Mantripukhri.

In line with tradition, Major General KP Singh, YSM, IGAR (S), officers and troops paid homage to martyrs by laying wreaths at the War Memorial. A special Sainik Sammelan by Maj Gen KP Singh, YSM was held at Haflong Hall. Major General KP Singh conveyed his greetings and best wishes to all ranks of HQ IGAR (South) and applauded their contribution towards creating a conducive and

secure environment in the state.

He exhorted the force to strive for the well being and safety of the people of Manipur at all times. Fondly called "Friends of Manipur", IGAR (South) has contributed not only to the security and peace in the state, but has also aided development activities especially in the border areas. Driven by the urge to usher in the well being of Manipur and its people, the efforts of the last sixteen years are today visible on the peaceful streets of Imphal and other districts of Manipur.

The raising day celebrations mark yet another successful year to the annals of the history of HQ IGAR (South) and the oldest paramilitary force - Assam Rifles. In a short span of time since its raising in 2004,



IGAR (South) has been able to achieve a lot and continues to strive for excellence in every field. On its raising day, IGAR (South) takes the

opportunity to reassure the people of Manipur that it is committed to the well being, safety and security of Manipuri people.

Assam Rifles Organises Awareness Lecture On World Consumer Rights Day

IT News
Imphal, March 16

Tulihal Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) observed World Consumer Rights Day at Leimapokpam Public High School, Leimapokpam on 15 March.

Students are the building blocks of any society and hence they need to be educated on the social issues. One of the important issues is, the consumer rights which normally remains unheeded, hence with the aim of raising awareness about the consumer rights and needs, an

Interactive lecture on the occasion was organised for the students. The lecture witnessed attendance over 150 students of Leimapokpam Public High School.

The students were informed about the theme of the World Consumer Rights Day 2019 which is "Trusted Smart Products". The students were also made aware about the various ways in which consumers are exploited such as adulteration, sub-standard items, under weighing and under measurement.

In the end students were also educated about the "Consumer Protection Act" and various means

to prevent exploitation such as purchasing ISI/Agmark products, obtaining bill of the purchased items and to approach consumer forum for redressal of consumer grievances.

The program was concluded with word of thanks by the School Staff. They also appreciated the kind gesture of the Assam Rifles in reaching out to them and hoped that this effort would go a long way in further cementing the bond between the people of Manipur and the forces and reaffirming the faith of the people in Assam Rifles as "Friends of Manipur".

Modi urges supporters to take 'main bhi chowkidar' pledge

Agency
New Delhi, Mar 16

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday urged his supporters to take the 'main bhi chowkidar' (I too am watchman) pledge, saying he is not alone in the fight against graft and social evils.

"Your Chowkidar is standing firm & serving the nation. But, I am not alone. Everyone who is fighting corruption, dirt, social evils is a Chowkidar. Everyone working hard for the progress of India is a Chowkidar. Today, every Indian is saying- #MainBhiChowkidar," he wrote on Twitter.

He also posted a little over three minute video to drive home his message. Modi has often described himself as a "chowkidar" who would neither allow corruption nor get corrupted himself. Congress president Rahul Gandhi has been repeatedly hurling the "chowkidar chorhai" (watchman is the thief) jibe at Modi to claim irregularities and favouritism in the Rafale fighter jet deal, a charge the BJP-led government has rejected.

Congress MLA resigns from party in Odisha

Agency
Bhubaneswar, March 16

In a setback for the opposition Congress ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha and Odisha Assembly elections, its Salipur MLA Prakash Behera Saturday resigned from the primary membership of the party.

Earlier, three MLAs - Nabakishore Das, Jogesh Singh and Krushna Chandra Sagari, had resigned from the Congress.

While Das and Singh joined the BJD, Sagaria went to the BSP.

In a letter to Congress president Rahul Gandhi, Behera said that he has decided to quit the party after being "ignored" by the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) leadership.

Behera, who was for the first time elected from Salipur segment of Cuttack district in 2014, said he has also sent his resignation letter to OPCC chief Niranjan Patnaik. "I worked in the party for last 20 years, but did not get importance in the Congress," Behera told reporters.

The Congress legislator claimed that he had raised certain issues with the OPCC president, but they were "ignored".

The Salipur MLA had earlier given indication about his move when he stopped using party flag and banners during a recent padyatra in his constituency.

Asked whether he will join the BJD, Behera said: "I will take a decision after consulting my supporters and seniors in Salipur." He said that he will take a decision in this regard within a day or two.