

Odisha asks bill waiver

Bhubaneswar (K-CN): The Odisha Government has once again requested the Union Government to waive off charges on deployment of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) Personnel in Left wing Extremist (LWE) affected areas.

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has slapped a bill of Rs.2500 Crore on the Odisha Government to clear the outstanding dues towards deployment charges of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)s.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has requested Union Minister Finance Arun Jaitley to direct MHA to waive the entire amount, which is charged for deployment of Central Forces in Odisha for tackling the LWE Menace.

Earlier Chief Minister Mr.Patnaik requested the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in this regard.

And it seems re-

peated request of the Odisha Government

pending dues in this regard.



to waive off charges on deployment of Central Forces in Maoist Zones have fallen deaf ear with the Union Government.

Though the State Government is continuously requesting the Ministry of Home Affairs to

waive off the charge, however, the Union Government has recently asked the Government of Odisha to clear the

Ministry of Finance (MoF) has said that if the State fails to do so, Union Government would have to consider recovery of the amount due on this account from various releases due to the State under Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

Union Secretary Finance has written to the State Government in this regard and the State Government has pointed out

that LWE Menace is a national issue and a grave internal security threat.

This major challenge has to be tackled by both the Union and State Government.

It has been pointed out that the State Government has been proactive in spending from its resources in creating and deploying Security Forces even amidst its tight fiscal situation.

Around 15 Battalions of State Police Forces have been raised and engaged in combat of Red Rebels.

Over 20,000 Police Force cadre has been created to tom face the LWE Menace.

As LWE combat and control is a Joint Effort of both State and Centre, the Union Government is needed to collaborate with the State Government instead of claiming reimbursement.

While the Union Government is slapping bills for outstanding dues for deployment of CAPFs, these issues are needed to be considered, pointed out a senior official.

At present 16 Battalions of CAPFs have been deployed in the State in Maoist zones, besides a CoBRA Battalion in Koraput.

State Government is repeatedly drawing attention of the Union Government that there is gross asymmetric deployment of CAPFs in Malkangiri and Koraput districts along the Border Vis-à-Vis Chattisgarh State.

This is creating serious security vacuum in these two districts. So there is influx of Chhattisgarh based Maoist Cadre into Odisha.

To give an effective security response to the Maoist activities, which is not restricted to federal boundary, there is urgent need to address this asymmetric deployment and fill up security vacuum by deploying tow more Battalions of CAPFs.

Instead of taking measures to deploy more forces the Union Government is sending bills for payment from the State Government, which needs to be considered under the perspective of grave national security threat, said an expert on Extremism.

Congress Mukht Odisha

Bhubaneswar (K-CN): With completion of the last phase of polls for the three-tier panchayat elections, the slugfest has begun among the three major political parties in Odisha.

Buoyed by its impressive performance, the BJP today claimed that Odisha is now in a way to become "Congress Mukht" while its next target has been to capture power in the state by replacing the Naveen Patnaik led BJD. BJP General Secretary in-charge of Odisha, Arun Singh, claimed that the party's performance is a big step towards realizing its goal of putting up a good show in coastal states, which include Odisha, in the next Lok Sabha polls.

"The Odisha results show that the Congress is no longer a major player in the state, which is now almost Congress-free. We will be in power in 8 to 10 district bodies out of the total 30. It is an unprecedented performance for the BJP," Mr.Singh said.

Mr. Singh attributed the party's performance to the strengthening of its organization and the performance of the central government.

"We grew our membership to 36 lakh from 3 lakh. We also divided our organization in 999 mandals from the earlier 451 and all these units held regular protests to highlight the state

government's failure in providing drinking water, power, road and other facilities," he said.

What has been particularly impressive, Mr.Singh said,

money in the rural polls. "Use of money and muscle power in the elections is against the Congress ideology," he said adding that Congress activists would not sit



is its virtual sweep in tribal regions of Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Malkangiri, which are traditional Congress strongholds.

The Congress on the other hand accused both the BJD and the BJP of using black money to win the polls in the Panchayati raj system. Both the Central government and the state government misused official machineries to further their electoral prospect, alleged OPCC President Prasad Harichandan.

Owning the moral responsibility for the party's "disappointing" performance, Mr. Harichandan said the Congress candidates could not withstand the flush of black

idle henceforth.

The OPCC President also alleged unholy nexus between the BJD and the BJP.

The BJD, on the other hand, blamed Congress's poor performance as the reason behind growth of BJP in the state.

Party Spokesperson Sashi Bhusan Behera alleged a nexus between the Congress and the BJP in the rural polls. He said that Congress people helped the BJP in the rural polls.

The SEC was yet to make announcement of results, however, the trends shows that BJD was likely to get about 450 zilla parishad seats followed by BJP with nearly 310 seats and Congress finishing in the third place with about 70 seats in Rural Polls 2017.

Trump administration lays out new approach to illegal immigration

WASHINGTON(K-CN): Donald Trump the presidential candidate made no secret of his desire to crack down on illegal immigration, but once elected, he repeatedly offered varying interpretations of just how tough he would be in the White House.

Now a pair of enforcement memos from Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly lay bare exactly what the Trump administration plans to do and how many of the estimated 11 million immigrants living in the United

States illegally will

A look at some of



be targeted for deportation. The short answer: a lot.

what the policy memos say the government will do.

A border security memo calls for the use of a long-standing but obscure U.S. law to send some immigrants who have crossed the border illegally back to Mexico even if they are from other countries. The memo and the law it cites don't include details on how or if the U.S. can force the Mexican government to allow foreigners to wait in that country while U.S. officials decide their fate. Historically, the U.S. has jailed and tried to deport (See page-7)

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Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay reception: Guests to venue, everything you need to know about this big fat event

New Delhi (KCN) Neil Nitin Mukesh, Rukmini Sahay, Neil Rukmini reception, Neil Rukmini recep-

on February 17, in Mumbai. Neil Nitin Mukesh and Rukmini Sahay are happily

who's who of B-Town celebs at their reception. Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini

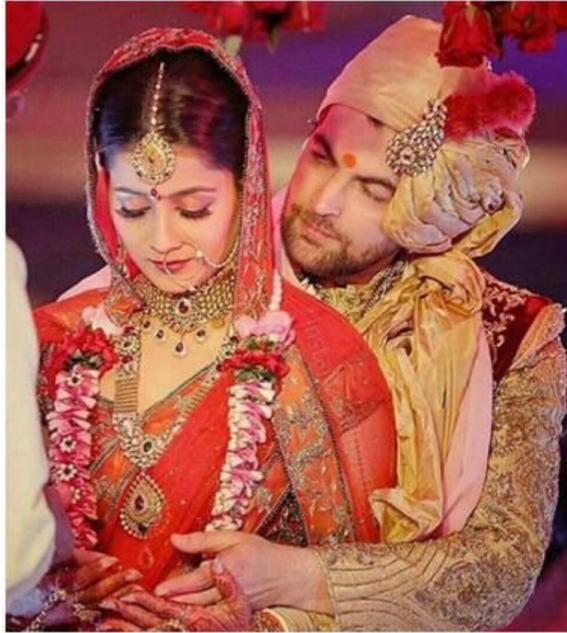
Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay reception venue: Neil and his wife Rukmini will throw a

to supervise the decoration, they ran into Amitabh Bachchan, who blessed them. So, the Bachchans are

the décor of Neil and Rukmini's reception will be European themed, highlighted by white and pink carnations. The hotel's nightclub is said to be reserved for young guests while a separate banquet has been booked for the celebs. A report in Mid-Day shares more details of the event.

Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay reception dress: Designer Manav Gangwani, who also designed the wedding trousseau of the newlyweds, has now crafted ivory and emerald green outfits for them one more time. His statement, in the daily reads as, "Neil and I share a special friendship, and he has attended quite a few of my shows. So, he always had in mind that I should design his outfits when he gets married. I am delighted to dress him and Rukmini for the reception. We chose emerald green since it is an unusual colour and suits his personality."

Watch this space for more details on Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay's reception.



tion details, Neil Rukmini reception guests, Neil Rukmini reception venue, Neil Rukmini wedding in video, Neil Rukmini wedding pics, Neil Rukmini reception news, Neil Nitin Mukesh reception, Neil Nitin Mukesh Rukmini Sahay reception, Rukmini neil Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay's reception will be held

married now. We saw pictures from the various events of their grand wedding which took place in Udaipur amid 500 guests on February 9. While the wedding was no less than the epitome of three crazy days of celebrations, song, dance and masti, a grand reception still awaits. February 17 is the day for Neil-Rukmini to dress-up one more time and host the

Sahay's wedding was a private affair with only family and close friends in attendance, but their reception will be everything about grandeur. More from the world of Entertainment: Phillauri's First Song Dum Dum, starring Anushka Sharma and Diljit Dosanjh Out Here are all the details about the event: Neil Nitin

big reception on Friday in Mumbai at a plush hotel. Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay reception guest list: From Bachchans to Khans, Bollywood's big names have been added to the guest list for the reception and thus it will be a star-studded night. A source was quoted in a daily, "When Neil and Rukmini went to the hotel on Tuesday

certain to attend. Bipasha Basu, Karan Singh Grover and Katrina Kaif are also expected." See the latest pic of Neil Nitin Mukesh and wife Rukmini Sahay: Also watch Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay's wedding video: Neil Nitin Mukesh-Rukmini Sahay reception theme: As per reports,

Gigi and Bella Hadid join anti-Trump rally

NEW YORK (KCN): Models and sisters Gigi and Bella

here", reports aceshowbiz.com When marching

neck which cropped above her pants. She

views. Earlier, she voiced her support



Hadid took to the streets here against US President Donald Trump's ban on entry of citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries.

The sisters, whose father Mohamed Hadid is Jordanian-American, Muslim and of Palestinian descent, were seen at the Battery Park shouting "No hate, no fear, immigrants are welcome

down a blocked-off roadway, they held up a sign which read: "We are all Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Atheists, Christians, Jews."

Certain key letters from each denomination written in the protest sign were highlighted to spell out: "We are all humans."

Bella flashed her tummy in a cream coloured knit turtle-

donned a pair of skin-tight jeans and sneakers.

Gigi sported a cropped pair of denim with a red stripe on the sides, completing her look with a red puffer jacket. They were joined by their mum Yolanda Hadid at the rally.

It's not the first time Gigi has expressed her political

for a Women's March in Washington.

Get engaged

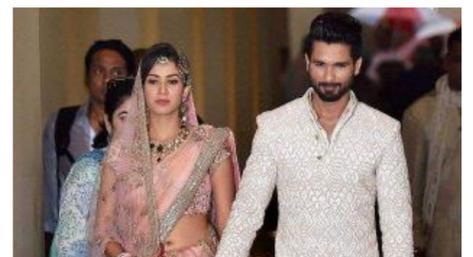
Actors Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Chaitanya Akkineni got engaged in a private ceremony in Hyderabad on Sunday. Actor Nagarjuna took to Twitter to announce the good news about his son Chaitanya saying: "#Chaisam It's official now. My mother is my daughter now.

Couldn't be happier!! more pics to come" (sic) a few hours after the event.

'Hello world', Shahid introduces daughter on social media

MUMBAI (KCN): Bollywood actor

first child with utmost joy in August last



Shahid Kapoor has finally shared a photograph of his five-month-old daughter Misha Kapoor on social media.

Shahid on Wednesday shared a black-and-white photograph of his daughter along with his wife Mira Rajput, on Instagram.

Shahid Kapoor In the image, Mira is seen hugging the baby and kissing her cheek, while Misha is looking towards the camera.

"Hello world," Shahid captioned the image. Shahid and Mira welcomed their

year. The name of the duo's daughter is an amalgam of her parents' name.

Shahid and Mira, who have a 12-year age gap, tied the knot in New Delhi in 2015. They reportedly met due to their connect with the religious group Radha Soami Satsang Beas.

On the work front, Shahid will be seen in filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali's upcoming film "Padmavati", which also stars Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone. TAGSShahid Mira Misha

GST adoption could raise India's GDP growth to over 8 per cent: IMF

WASHINGTON(KCN): The adoption of the GST could help raise India's medium-term GDP growth to over eight per cent and create a single national market for enhancing the efficiency of the movement of goods and services, the IMF said today.

At the same time, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also expressed concerns over the implementation of the Goods and Service Tax (GST).

"Although some uncertainties remain around the design and pace of implementation of the GST, its adoption is poised to help raise India's medium-term GDP growth to above 8 per cent as it will create a single national market and enhance the efficiency of intra-Indian movement of goods and services," the IMF said in its

annual country report on India.

The IMF said

than its emerging market peers, the IMF said the imple-



larger than expected gains from the GST and further structural reforms could lead to significantly stronger growth, while a sustained period of continued low global energy prices would also be beneficial to India.

Noting that India's tax revenue-to-GDP ratio (at around 17 and a half per cent) remains considerably below

mentation of a robust GST should be a key priority given its growth-enhancing effects.

"The GST should have minimal exemptions, uniform cross-state rates, and as few tax rate tiers as possible," it said.

Key production inputs, such as energy and real estate, should be kept within the tax base to enable greater output gains

and reduce the tax burden across sectors, the IMF said.

Rationalisation of the structure of direct taxes toward a lower corporate income tax rate with smaller and streamlined deductions and exemptions should continue, it said.

Efforts to improve tax administration should be stepped up as the scope for revenue gains is large. According to the IMF report, Indian authorities were confident that the outstanding issues related to GST implementation could be settled promptly.

"The GST would provide for a significant improvement over the current indirect tax system. Tax reform priorities going forward include continuing the phased reduction of the corporate income tax rate from 30 to 25

per cent over four years, coupled with a simultaneous reduction in tax deductions," it said.

The GST replaces a plethora of cascading center, state, interstate and local taxes with a single, nationwide, value-added tax on goods and services.

IMF said the destination-based GST will create, for the first time, a single Indian market, and will greatly enhance India as an investment destination.

By subsuming most of the existing indirect taxes, such as excise, sales and services levies, the indirect tax structure of the country will become less complex and the cost of doing business will decline.

The Indian government expects to roll out GST by July 1 after it could not meet the April 1, 2016, target.

Myntra to manage Mango in India; curate 25 retail stores

NEW DELHI(KCN): Fashion e-tailer Myntra today said it has bagged a master distribution and management rights for Spanish fashion brand Mango in India.

This is the first time that an e-commerce player will manage the omnichannel strategy for a global fashion brand.

No financial details of the deal were disclosed.

As part of the arrangement, Myntra will curate and facilitate setting up 25 Mango stores and list the brand exclusively on Myntra and Jabong platforms over the next five years.

Mango has been working with Myntra since 2014, when the apparel brand listed on Myntra.

"We have seen 100 per cent growth in business on Myntra platform in the last 3 years and that has given us the confidence for this partnership," Mango Vice-Chairman and Mem-

ber of the Board of Directors Daniel Lopez told PTI.

He added that India does not feature among the company's top markets as of now but this partnership will help change that.

"We will be responsible for managing Mango's omnichannel presence including Mango.com, offline stores in the country (8 of them currently) as well as adding new stores through sub-franchising. We will take the number of stores to 25 and these will be across the top cities in the country," Myntra CEO Ananth Narayanan said.

He added that the company expects to

From page-1 foreigners from countries other than Mexico, while Mexican nationals could be easily and quickly sent back over the border. The proposal is likely to come up in discussions this week in Mexico between Kelly, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and the Mexican government.

One of Kelly's memos directs the Homeland Security Department to stop providing some legal protections to child immigrants caught crossing the border alone if they are reunited with their parents or a legal guardian inside the United States. The protections generally allow for those children to have their case decided by a judge, but the new policy would likely subject them to fast-track deportation proceedings that don't require a judge's approval. The memo also calls for the government to investigate the immigration status of those parents or guardians and any possible criminal activity connected to bringing the children into the United States.

Immigration advocates decried the effort to target parents of child immigrants who they say are largely fleeing violence in Central America. Jen Smeyers, director of policy and advocacy for Church World Service's Immigration and Refugee Program, said those parents are focused on getting their children to safety.

Under the Obama administration a program allowing local police and jailers to

help grow Mango's India business 3X over the next 5 years. "Right now, Mango has about 20 per cent of its global product portfolio in India. This partnership will help Mango bring 100 per cent of its product lines -- including men's and kids wear to the Indian market," he said.

Mango has a network of 2,200 stores in 110 countries. The company, which owns the MANGO Woman, Man, Kids and Violeta (plus size) lines, closed 2015 with sales of 2.3 billion euros, up 15 per cent from the previous year. It had entered the Indian market in September 2001.

act as immigration agents was curtailed as the government narrowly focused immigration enforcement. Communities also complained that some jurisdictions were overly aggressive in enforcing federal laws.

The Secure Communities program, which uses fingerprints collected in local jails to identify immigrants in the U.S. illegally, was halted amid complaints and court rulings barring some jurisdictions from detaining immigrants for federal authorities.

Kelly's memos make clear that the government plans to restart those programs.

Kelly's directive calls for more people caught crossing the border illegally to face criminal charges. It is illegal to cross the border without permission, and the government does charge immigrants with crossing the border for the first time or coming back after being deported, a felony. But to do that on a wide scale, as was done along at least one section of the border in Texas under President George W. Bush, is costly and resource intensive.

One of the Kelly memos also calls for more jails. The government currently has the space and money to jail 34,000 people at a time. Congress will likely have to approve tens of millions of dollars for new construction and staff for the facilities or fund contracts with private prison companies.

Sensex rises 103 points; Reliance Industries Limited leads rally

MUMBAI(KCN): Markets ended higher for the fifth straight day, with the Sensex rising over 103 points

ance Jio announcing data tariff plans. The Sensex opened higher at 28,822.40 and stayed in the

higher at 28,864.71.

This is its highest closing since September 8 last year when it ended at 29,045.28.



to end at an over five-month high of 28,864.71. RIL soared to about eight-year highs following its telecom unit Reli-

positive terrain throughout the session to hit a high of 28,963.52. It finally ended 103.12 points, or 0.36 per cent

The 50-share NSE Nifty ended at 8,926.90, up 19.05 points or 0.21 per cent, after moving between 8,960.75 and 8,905.25.

Taxman to scrutinise loan deposits over Rs 20,000

NEW DELHI(KCN): The Income Tax department may initiate penal action and impose an equivalent penalty in select cases of loan amount deposits of Rs 20,000 or more as part of the 'Operation Clean Money' to check stash post demonetisation.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the policy-making body of the I-T department, yesterday issued specific instructions to the Assessing Officers (AOs) to undertake step-by-step verification of about 18 lakh people that it sent messages to, as part of

the exercise.

"In case, the transaction being loan received/repaid in cash above the permissible threshold comes to notice, the AO may consider initiation of penal proceedings under the relevant provisions separately," the instructions said quoting Sections 269SS and 269T of the I-T Act that define these instances.

A senior official, however, clarified that ascertaining if a deposit made or received, post demonetisation on November 8 last year, qualifies to be a loan transaction under

these sections will only be established after following due procedures of contacting the taxpayer and receiving details on the instance over the online medium.

"Only such cases where it is established that the amount deposited in a bank account is a case of loan received/repaid under the relevant sections will be dealt separately. Such transactions will be determined after proper due diligence so that any instance of tax evasion is checked and the taxpayer is not harassed," the official said.

India to be self-sufficient in silk production in 3-4 years: Official

HYDERABAD(KCN): With an annual growth rate of 19 per cent, India is expected to be self-sufficient in silk production by 2020, Central Silk Board (CSB) Chairman K M Hanumantharayappa has said.

"Our output is 28,000 MTs (metric tonne) to 30,000 MTs at present. Our production is growing

cent.

However, there is a 19 per cent growth in production and the aim is to produce around 34,000 MTs to make the country self-sufficient, he said. "We have come closer. If we can continue this momentum, we can do it in the next three-four years," he said.

Silk imports have come down to 3500

search and development, maintenance of silkworm production seed production network, leadership role in commercial silkworm seed production and standardising quality parameters in various production.

The CSB chairman said the Board is offering a number of services like technological support to



year to year. We are aiming to stop imports from China and produce that much in three-four years," Hanumantharayappa told PTI here.

China produces 80 per cent of global silk output, while India's share is 13 per cent, he said. The production in other countries account for the remaining 7 per

cent. China produces only mulberry, but India produces other varieties, including Tasar and Muga, he said.

The CSB, a statutory body established in 1948 by an Act of Parliament, functions under the control of Union Ministry of Textiles. Its mandated activities include, re-

farmers, subsidies on machines and free training to the farmers.

The State governments can pitch in to increase silk production by supporting farmers through monetary benefits and through other means, he said, adding that the Board would also help the cause.

Adam Zampa spins Australia to victory to avoid Sri Lankan series sweep

ADELAIDE(KCN): Leg-spinner Adam Zampa claimed three wickets to bowl Australia to victory and avoid a Twenty20 series wipeout against Sri Lanka in Adelaide

188 runs to win. But the Sri Lankans could not reproduce another of their blazing late innings comebacks where they won the first two T20 games

the vital wicket of man of the series Asela Gunaratne, leg before wicket for four in the 10th over and the tourists were unable to arouse another of their sensational

in Australia.

Skipper Finch was dropped by Munaweera before he had scored on the fifth ball of the Australian innings and went on to cash in



on Wednesday.

Man-of-the-match Zampa, who was left out of the previous match as the Sri Lankans won to clinch the three-match series, captured three for 25 at a crucial stage as Australia went on to win by 41 runs.

"It is always nice to bowl the middle overs and it is very easy when you have a start like that," Zampa said.

"Sri Lanka have very fearless players, sometimes it can be tough to bowl at them."

Openers Aaron Finch and Michael Klinger hit half-centuries as the Australians, with their leading stars in India for this week's Test series, set Sri Lanka

off the last ball.

"I thought we played some fantastic cricket tonight. A complete performance like this makes the last match even more heart-breaking," skipper Finch said.

"When you have Klinger at the other end, he lets you play your shots. We have been guilty of not converting starts. Today we had two fifties and Dunk and Head chipping in."

Sri Lanka's chase was given early impetus by Dilshan Munaweera, who smacked 37 from 25 balls, but from 41 without loss in the fourth over the tourists lost traction and slid to 76 for four in the 10th over.

Zampa claimed

finishes to beat Australia's total.

Gunaratne slammed a pulse-racing 84 to power Sri Lanka to a last-ball victory against Australia on Sunday after clubbing 52 off 37 balls in the opening win in Melbourne.

"Beating Australia in home conditions is a tough thing to do. The guys did a good job," skipper Upul Tharanga said.

"The innings Asela Gunaratne played in the second game in Geelong was amazing."

James Faulkner also took three wickets with his clever changes of pace to maintain Australia's advantage.

It was Sri Lanka's first defeat in six T20 internationals

with 53 off 32 balls with three sixes and five fours.

Klinger proved the mainstay of the innings with 62 from 43 deliveries with six fours and a six.

The opening pair put on 79 runs for the first wicket.

Ben Dunk (28 from 21 balls) and Travis Head (30 from 16) contributed useful knocks to get to 179 for two before a late flurry of wickets cost Australia a chance to top a 200 total.

Sri Lanka claimed four wickets for eight off the final 11 deliveries with Lasith Malinga taking two for 35 and Chamara Kapugedera taking three catches in the deep.

India vs Australia 2017: Five controversies between the cricketing powerhouses

NEW DELHI(KCN): Five previous flashpoints between India and Australia who begin a four-Test series in Pune on Thursday.

Sunny's almighty stop

Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar suffered a massive meltdown during the 1981 Melbourne Test when he threatened to forfeit the match after being given out lbw on 70 off Australian great Dennis Lillee. The batting legend, nicknamed "Sunny",

was adamant that the ball had hit his bat first and remonstrated with both Lillee and the umpire before reluctantly starting his walk from the crease while shaking his head vehemently. He instructed bemused fellow opener, Chetan Chauhan, to leave with him and the pair headed for the boundary. A swift intervention from

then Indian manager Shahid Durrani prevented Chauhan from

ing decision during the 1999 Adelaide Test that saw the

Some replays suggested the ball may have clipped the top



leaving the field which would have resulted in the visitors conceding the match and incurring a suspension. Gavaskar later said he regretted his "inexcusable behaviour".

See the epic meltdown moment here:

Tendulkar out 'shoulder before'

Indian fans still rage about an umpir-

great Sachin Tendulkar dismissed effectively for "shoulder before wicket". The "Little Master" -- who stands at 5ft 4in (1.65m) -- attempted to duck a Glenn McGrath bouncer, only for the ball to keep low and hit his left shoulder. Home umpire Daryl Harper had no hesitation in giving Tendulkar out lbw.

of the stumps but most were inconclusive. Tendulkar was out for a duck and the reliably-partisan Indian media went apoplectic. The ever-gracious Tendulkar played down the decision, merely saying his dismissal was a bit disappointing.

See the controversial decision here:

Ganguly keeps Waugh waiting



Team India

Buoyant India take on aggressive Australia in series opener

PUNE(KCN): On a fairytale 19-match unbeaten streak, India would seek extension of their incredible dominance on home turf when they clash against an aggressive Australia in the four-Test series, beginning here tomorrow.

The series against the Steve Smith-led side is the fourth and last home series of the 2016-17 season for India, who have conjured up emphatic victories over New Zealand (3-0), England (4-0) and Bangladesh (one-off Test).

India are going into the rubber, seeking their seventh successive series win going back to the three-Test away series against Sri Lanka in

2015.

There are several factors in India's stupendous run, chief among those being captain Virat Kohli's phenomenal run with the bat. The young captain has truly led from the front by notching up four double hundreds.

Kohli is averaging over 80 after accumulating 1457 runs in the last 13 Tests and Australia will need to find ways to curtail his brilliance to stop the Indian juggernaut.

The other major factor has been the excellent bowling by spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja, incidentally the top two bowlers in the ICC rankings.

Off-spinner

Ashwin has grabbed 78 wickets in 13 games during the same period with 8 five-fors at an average of just over 24 while left-arter Jadeja has scalped 49 wickets in 10 Tests at just under 25.

The spin twins, who combined forces to rout New Zealand and England, again pose a major threat to the Australians.

In addition to these three players' consistent performance, the support from batsmen such as opener Murali Vijay and Cheteshwar Pujara and from other bowlers has been invaluable.

The stubborn lower-order batting has often helped the team come out of

tricky situations and score big.

As coach Anil Kumble pointed out yesterday, India have not fielded the same eleven during this successful phase due to a variety of reasons including injuries. But each replacement has been bang-on and delivered the goods.

India's unbeaten 19-Test run commenced with a victory in the second Test of the series in Sri Lanka. At home, India have not tasted defeat since drawing the fourth and final Test of the 2012-13 series against England. During this period they have played 20 Tests, won 17 and drawn three, a fine record by any reckoning.

And their win-

loss record over the last 20 Tests, both home and away, is 15-1. This is the sort of challenge the Australians face as they go into the series opener at the Maharashtra Cricket Association stadium on a pitch where the ball will "fly", according to curator and former pacer P a n d u r a n g Salgaonkar.

Australia have not won a Test -- let alone a series-- in India since 2004-05 when they defeated the hosts 2-1. Since then they lost 2-0 twice in four-game series and were whitewashed 4-0 on their last visit in 2012-13.

Also Australia's series victory in India prior to the one in the 2004-05 had come

way back in 1969-70, an indication of how tough the Aussies have found it to overcome the hosts on the slow, turning pitches in this country.

India are expected to field two pacers and three spinners -- Ashwin, Jadeja and Jayant Yadav -- who was doing well in the series against England when he picked up an injury and had to sit out of the last Test against England followed by the one-off Test against Bangladesh.

The think tank also has the option of giving a Test debut to Chinaman bowler, Kuldeep Yadav who has replaced the injured wrist-spinner Amit Mishra in the squad.

Australian batting will revolve mainly around opener and vice-captain David Warner, who often gives the team flying starts back home, and captain Smith and the other batsmen will have to bat around these two biggies.

While Smith had averaged 40-plus with a highest score of 92 in the two Tests he figured in in 2012-13, 17 out of the left handed Warner's 18 Test hundreds have been scored either at home or in South Africa and he, thus, has a huge point to prove in the sub-continent.

In spite of the twin failures of young Matt Renshaw in the warm-up game in Mumbai, he is ex-

pected to partner Warner at the top of the order with Shaun Marsh and captain Smith to follow in that order. In bowling, left-arm pacer Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood could cause trouble for India if they can extract bounce out of the track with back-up seam support from Mitchell Marsh.

Off spinner Nathan Lyon, who was dealt with very severely by Mumbai batsman Shreyas Iyer and Karnataka off-break bowler K r i s h n a p p a Gowtham, in the warm-up game, will be the man the visitors would depend on to do the bulk of the bowling during the day along with left arm Stephen O'Keefe. They are also crucial to the visitors' hopes.