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Protests against Sterlite orchestrated: Vedanta

CHENNAI
Vedanta Limited has told the Madras High Court that the 2018 protests against its Sterlite plant were orchestrated by NGOs and activist groups "operating for profits and with ulterior motives".

TAMIL NADU ▶ PAGE 4

Announcement on DGP, Chief Secretary soon

CHENNAI
The suspense over the appointment of the new Chief Secretary and the Director-General of Police will end shortly. The announcement for the posts will be made in a day or two.

TAMIL NADU ▶ PAGE 4

METROPLUS ▶ 8 PAGES

54 nations back India for UNSC non-permanent seat

Pakistan and China also come out in support

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

India has won the unanimous support of all countries in the 55-member Asia-Pacific Group at the United Nations in support of its bid for a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council (UNSC) for a two-year term in 2021-22.

The development is particularly significant given that Pakistan and China, both countries with which India has had diplomatic challenges at the UN, supported the move.

"Humbled by the show of solidarity by the Asia-Pacific Group in endorsing India's candidature," India's Ambassador & Permanent Representative to the UN Syed

Pride of place

The earlier instances of India being elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council

- 1950-1951
- 1967-1968
- 1972-1973
- 1977-1978
- 1984-1985
- 1991-1992
- 2011-2012



Akbaruddin told *The Hindu*. "We accept the responsibility with humility and will now seek support from the broader UN membership at the elections in General Assembly next year."

The 55-member Asia-Pacific Group gets to nominate

one of its members for the June 2020 elections to a non-permanent seat on the UNSC. Estonia, Niger, Tunisia, Vietnam and St. Vincent and the Grenadines were elected earlier this month.

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India and U.S. resolve to work through their trade differences

Secretary of State Pompeo meets Jaishankar, says hurdles can be negotiated

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

India and the U.S. resolved to "work through" their differences which have led to an impasse on trade issues as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar hosted U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Delhi ahead of a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump in Osaka this week.

"If you trade with somebody, and particularly if they are your biggest trading partners, it's impossible that you don't have trade issues. But I think the sign of a mature relationship is that ability to negotiate your way through that and find com-



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in New Delhi. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

mon ground," Mr. Jaishankar said at the end of their meeting on Wednesday, although neither side announced any positive outcomes from the

discussions. Mr. Pompeo and Mr. Jaishankar are understood to have thrashed out issues, including tariffs and counter-tariffs imposed

by New Delhi and Washington on each other in the past year, as well as the U.S.'s specific concerns with India's proposed laws on e-commerce and data localisation, on price caps and market access.

"The U.S. is clear that it seeks greater market access and the removal of trade barriers in our economic relationship, and today I addressed these differences in the spirit of friendship and I think we will be able to resolve these issues in the interests of our two countries," said Mr. Pompeo.

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STAND UP FOR RELIGIOUS RIGHTS, SAYS POMPEO ▶ PAGE 11

Drowned dream



A Salvadoran migrant and his 23-month-old daughter drowned in Rio Grande river in Mexico while trying to cross into the U.S. The searing image of Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and Valeria has renewed the debate on the plight of migrants. ■ REUTERS (REPORTS ON PAGE 12)

1.02 lakh more people excluded from NRC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The office of the Coordinator for the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam on Wednesday published an "additional draft exclusion list" consisting of the names of 1,02,462 people.

This list is different from the one containing the names of 40.07 lakh people excluded last year from the 3.29 crore applicants.

This additional list also contains names included in the draft NRC published on July 30, 2018, but subse-

quently found ineligible for three reasons. "People found to be declared foreigners or doubtful (D) voters or with cases pending at Foreigners' Tribunals discovered after publication of the draft NRC are in the additional list. So are their descendants, as applicable," a government spokesperson said. The other categories in the extra list are those found ineligible while appearing as witnesses during claims and objection hearings.

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Modi says he is pained by Jharkhand lynching

'Don't insult the State by calling it a hub of such incidents'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Breaking his silence on the Jharkhand lynching, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that he was pained by the incident, and the law would take its course in the case. However, he criticised the "insults" hurled on the State over the lynching.

"Some people in the Rajya Sabha are calling Jhark-

hand a hub of lynching. Is this fair? Why are they insulting a State? None of us have the right to insult the State of Jharkhand," he said. Jharkhand will go to the polls later this year.

Whether it is Jharkhand, or West Bengal or Kerala, incidents of violence should be treated in the same manner and the perpetrators of violence should get the message that the entire country

is one on this issue, the Prime Minister said.

In the Jharkhand lynching, Tabrez Ansari, 24, was tied to an electric pole and beaten up on suspicion of being a thief. The suspects recorded his plight on a mobile phone and forced him to chant 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Jai Hanuman'.

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CALL FOR SWIFT ACTION ▶ PAGE 11

Titanic hero tweets on Chennai drought

Leonardo DiCaprio cites BBC report, highlights plight of residents

K. LAKSHMI
CHENNAI

Now, everyone seems to love a good drought. As Chennai reels under a dire water crisis, it seems to have grabbed eyeballs across the world. Twitter's big news for the city on Wednesday was actor Leonardo DiCaprio tweeting about the Chennai water crisis, citing a report on the issue. He had tweeted: "Only rain can save Chennai from this situation."

Citing BBC News, Mr. DiCaprio, a United Nations Messenger of Peace with a special focus on climate change, wrote about wells that are empty and a city that is without water. He also highlighted the plight of Chennaites who are scrambling for water and waiting in queues for long hours. "As the water levels depleted, hotels and restaurants started to shut down temporarily; and the air con was turned off in the city's metro. Officials in the city continue to try and find alternate sources of water-but the community continues to pray for rain," read his post.

Interestingly, Mr. DiCaprio, probably known best for his role in the Oscar-winning *Titanic*, and himself an Academy award winner, has taken on the



Several people thanked Leonardo DiCaprio for his concern. ■ AFP

avatar of a climate change campaigner. His recently released documentary *Ice on Fire*, which he produced and narrates, received rave reviews. He said the documentary focussed on never-before-seen solutions to the environmental crisis.

But that was not all. Earlier last week, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, too, highlighted a BBC report on Chennai running out of water, in a social media post.

Several people took to social media to thank Mr. DiCaprio for his concern and called the crisis an example of political tension within the country.

Back home, former Chennai Mayor Ma. Subramanian charged that "the State government was yet to realise the gravity of the situation."



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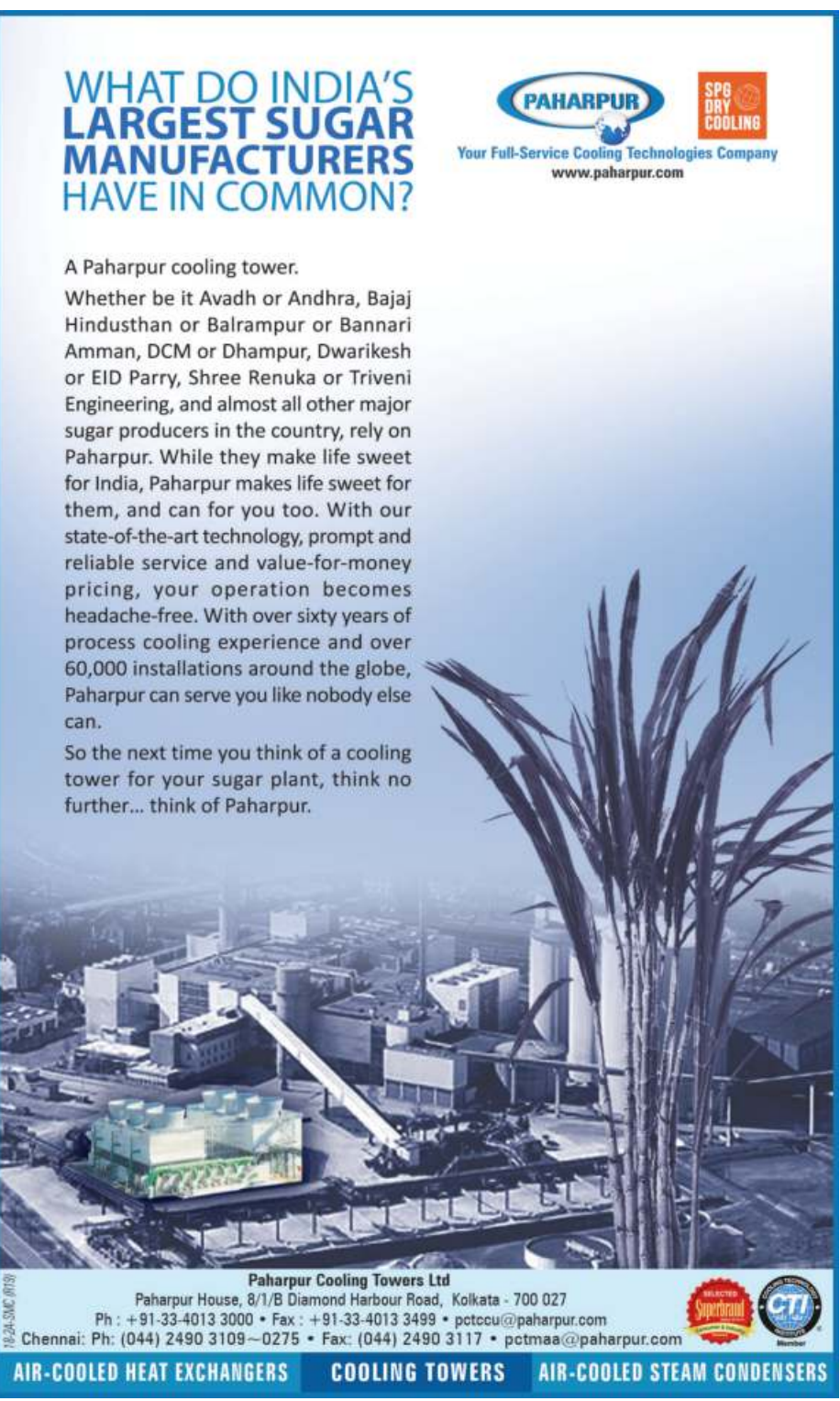
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