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HYDERABAD, FRIDAY AUGUST 23, 2019; PAGES 16 & 3



the pioneer



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Chidambaram sent to five-day CBI custody

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader P Chidambaram was Thursday sent to five-day CBI custody by a Delhi court which said his custodial interrogation was justified in the INX Media corruption case. The court said Chidambaram will be in the CBI custody till August 26, during which the agency will get him medically examined regularly as per the rules, and allowed his family members and lawyers to meet him for half an hour every day. "Considering the facts and circumstances, I am of the view that police custody is justified," Special Judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar said and remanded him to the CBI custody till August 26. After the pronouncement of the order, 73-year-old Chidambaram was immediately taken out of the court room by the CBI team. The court heard the arguments of the CBI and his counsel for over one and a half hours during which the agency said there was a need to unearth a larger conspiracy and to go to the root of the case. Chidambaram's counsel opposed the CBI plea saying that all the other accused, including his son Karti, have already been granted bail in the case. Chidambaram, who was Union home minister as also finance minister during the UPA rule from 2004 to 2014, was arrested Wednesday night after he



Congress leader and former finance minister P Chidambaram after he was produced in a CBI court in the INX media case, in New Delhi, on Thursday

The court heard the arguments of the CBI and his counsel for over one and a half hours during which the agency said there was a need to unearth a larger conspiracy and to go to the root of the case

failed to get protection from the Supreme Court, which did not list for an urgent hearing his appeal against the Delhi High Court verdict dismissing his anticipatory bail plea on Tuesday. The CBI had registered an FIR on May 15, 2017, alleging irregularities in the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) clearance granted to the INX Media group for receiving overseas funds of Rs 305 crore in 2007 during Chidambaram's tenure as the finance minister.

Thereafter, the ED lodged a money laundering case in this regard in 2018. Chidambaram was produced in the court amidst tight security and senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for him, argued that the first arrest in the case was of Bhaskar Raman, chartered accountant of Karti, who is presently out on bail. Besides that, Peter and Indrani Mukherjea, also accused in the case, are out on default bail as they are in jail in connection with another matter, Sibal said.



Trump proposes to end birthright citizenship

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that his administration was seriously looking at ending the right of citizenship for U.S.-born children of noncitizens and people who immigrated to the United States illegally.

"We're looking at that very seriously, birthright citizenship, where you have a baby on our land, you walk over the border, have a baby - congratulations, the baby is now a U.S. citizen. ... It's frankly ridiculous," Trump told reporters outside the White House.

Trump has made cracking down on immigration a central plank of his presidency and reelection campaign, but many of the administration's sweeping

rule changes and executive orders have been stymied by the courts. The Republican president had told Axios news website in October 2018 that he would end "birthright citizenship" through an executive order. Experts have said such a move would run afoul of the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution's 14th Amendment, passed after the Civil War to ensure that black Americans had full citizenship rights, granted citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States."

It has since routinely been interpreted to grant citizenship to most people born in the United States, whether or not their parents are American citizens or legally living in the United States.

State Govt begins geo-tagging employees now

● 'Healthy' beginning to check indiscipline, ensure regularity

L VENKAT RAM REDDY
■ HYDERABAD

Bio-metric record of attendance is passé. What an employee does during every minute of his or her presence in office counts. So, in right earnest, the Telangana State government has initiated geo-tagging of government employees, starting with those in the crucial Health Department, as a way to discipline lazy and irregular employees. Amidst much heartburn among a section of the employees, the exercise has begun in the Health Department, where there are many complaints against doctors, nurses and other staffers such as skipping duties in rural areas and not working for the stipulated hours, but taking up private practice or working in private hospitals. The government is planning to cover all the departments in a phased-manner.

A special mobile application has been launched for the purpose. All employees in Health Department have been asked to download it and login via the application during duty hours so that their movements can be tracked by the authorities.

Not unexpectedly, the move has evoked sharp protests from employees, who say the government has started snooping on them and is invading their privacy.



A special mobile application has been launched for the purpose. All employees in Health Department have been asked to download it and login via the application during duty hours so that their movements can be tracked by the authorities

Employees unions, which are worked up over the staff-unfriendly measure, want the government to hold deliberations with them and take them into confidence, instead of surreptitiously launching such initiatives. Corporate entities in the private sector resort to geo-tagging, as part of their HR policies, with the knowledge and concurrence of the employees.

However, geo-tagging is unheard-of in the government sector for the simple reason that no government can afford to

antagonize its employees. Governments stay clear of such measures to avoid confrontation with employees who are backed by unions that may be itching to call for strikes and protests at the drop of a hat.

In view of the multiplicity of complaints in the Health Department over 'rampant absenteeism' of staff in government hospitals, the government has brought geo-tagging system secretly, it was pointed out.

Continued on Page 4

Denied road to cremation, dalits dangle body off bridge

PNS ■ VELLORE

A video that shows a funeral procession lowering the dead body of a Dalit off a bridge in Vellore district of Tamil Nadu has been widely shared online, amid reports they were forced to do so because they were denied access to the cremation site. The road to the site runs through private properties controlled by the "upper castes". However, local police and revenue officials have claimed the funeral procession had not been opposed.

"A decade ago, upper caste property owners fenced the area. We did not want to ask them. There are stairs from the bridge to come down but we can't carry the body. We want a road or a cremation site for us elsewhere," Vijay, a nephew of the deceased said.

As many as 50 Dalit families live in the area. They normally bury their dead at a different site. However, in case of "unnatural deaths", as in this case, they cremate the body. The deceased, Kuppam, 65, had died in an accident a few days ago.

Hyd is 27% rain-deficit, rest of state does better

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad remains rain-deficit this monsoon, although the rest of Telangana received rain in multiple spells over the last three weeks.

On Thursday, the city received light showers of about 5 mm. The deficit continues at 27 per cent — the difference between actual and normal rainfall, IMD officials said.

Twenty-one other districts have also recorded deficit rainfall till date, with Nalgonda district registering the highest



deficit at 44 per cent, followed by Jogulamba Gadwal district, at 41 per cent. However, the shortfall across the state has reduced from 38 per cent in July to 5 per cent in August.

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Bachupally MRO in ACB net

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

At a time when a section of the employees of the Revenue Department are seething under the stigma of being branded as the "most corrupt" wing of the State government, the Mandal Revenue Officer (MRO) of Bachupally proved on Thursday that people are not throwing mud without reason.

Continued on Page 4



Unhappy over second girl child, woman kills husband

PNS ■ PALGHAR

A 33-year-old woman from Nalasopara in Palghar district allegedly stabbed her husband to death as she was unhappy over the birth of their second girl child, police said on Thursday. The incident took place at their residence in Gala Nagar early on Wednesday, police said. The accused, Pranali Sunil Kadam, was arrested late Wednesday night for killing her 36-year-old husband, Palghar police spokesperson Hemant Katkar said.

"The accused was unhappy ever since she had given birth to a girl child for the second time. She blamed her husband for it. Besides, she also doubted the character of her husband and they frequently quarreled over the issue," he said.

"Around 5 am on Wednesday, Pranali stabbed Sunil multiple times with the help of a kitchen knife. He was rushed to a private hospital by his parents, where he succumbed to his injuries hours later," Katkar added.

CHANDRAYAAN-2

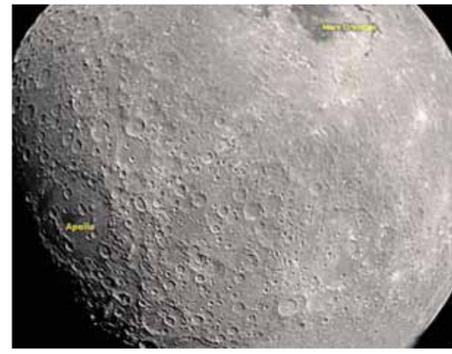
Scientists to take up crucial soft landing on Sept 7

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The crucial process of taking up soft landing of the lander 'Vikram' onboard the Chandrayaan-2 spacecraft that is currently in the lunar orbit will be taken up in the early hours of September 7, ISRO Chairman K Sivan said on Thursday. Scientists at the Indian Space Organisation in Bengaluru would be engaged in this process which is expected to be completed by 1.55 am, he told reporters at the airport here.

"It is expected to make a soft landing (on the surface of the moon) at around 1.40 am and completed by 1.55 am. At the global level this is an important mission. It is being keenly watched by everyone," he said. Elaborating about the complexity involved, he said the speed of the spacecraft needs to be brought down to 'zero'.

In a major milestone for India's second Moon mission, the Chandrayaan-2 spacecraft successfully entered the lunar orbit on Tuesday by performing Lunar Orbit Insertion (LOI) manoeuvre. The second Lunar



Moon as viewed by Chandrayaan 2's L14 camera on August 21, 2019. This image was taken at a height of about 2,650 km from Lunar surface. Photo: ISRO

bound orbit manoeuvre for the spacecraft was successfully performed on Wednesday. There will be three more orbit manoeuvres to make the spacecraft enter into its final orbit passing over the lunar poles at a distance of about 100 km from the Moon's surface. ISRO has said subsequently the lander will separate from the Orbiter (on September 2) and enter into a

100 km X30 km orbit around the Moon. Then it will perform a series of complex braking manoeuvres to soft land in the South polar region of the Moon.

Asked whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be part of the event when 'Vikram' makes the soft landing, he said an invitation has been sent seeking the Prime Minister's participation.

All 22 rifles fail to fire at Bihar ex-CM's state funeral

PNS ■ SUPAUL

While former Bihar Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra was being cremated with full state honours, 22 rifles carried by police personnel failed to fire a single shot on Wednesday. Mr Mishra's cremation took place at his ancestral village in Supaul district and it was attended by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi and Bihar Health Minister Mangal Pandey.

During the cremation, policemen failed in their attempt to give a gun salute to Mr Mishra in front of the Chief Minister and other dignitaries. Cops were seen testing if their weapons had life by pulling the trigger but all efforts failed. Nitish Kumar had reached the cremation site by a helicopter. Responding to this, Rashtriya Janata Dal MLA from Pipra Yaduwansh Kumar Yadav, who was also present at the funeral, said that the incident was the insult to the former Bihar Chief Minister and demanded an investigation into the matter.

Hyderabad in reckoning for UNESCO World Heritage City tag

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

If everything goes fine, Hyderabad, a global city in the making that also has centuries-old monuments and mirrors quaint practices, traditions and culture of a bygone era, could soon be inscribed in the coveted UNESCO List of 'World Heritage Sites'. Junhi Han, Section Chief and Program Specialist for Culture in UNESCO's office in New Delhi, said that efforts would be made to declare Hyderabad a heritage city, considering its rich historical and cultural heritage and world-renowned historic structures. She attended a meeting in which GHMC officials and officials from various departments took part at Hari Hara Kalabhavan in Secunderabad on



GHMC Commissioner Dana Kishore and Mayor Bonthu Ram Mohan felicitating UNESCO official Junhi Han in Hyderabad on Thursday

Thursday. Junhi spoke on various contingent issues such as preservation of the city's historical monuments and sites, facilities to be provided for tourists, including the bare minimum required at popular destinations. Junhi Han mentioned

that she had been touring the city over the past two days to look at the feasibility of inscribing Hyderabad in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. Suggesting that every Heritage City had its unique culture, traditions and customs, she

observed that all such attributes had been part of Hyderabad for over 400 years. Junhi said: "Citizens' participation is particularly important to the city's historical and tourist attractions. The world famous historical monuments of Hyderabad -- Charminar, Golconda and Mecca Masjid, etc., should have customary engagement of the locals". Conservation of monuments was a fundamental duty, she said. She pointed out that some visitors were writing unnecessary things on some historical buildings. Such vandalism should be avoided.

The UNESCO official indicated that sanitation programmes in Golconda and Charminar areas need to be improved.

Continued on Page 4

DLF fined Rs 50K for blocking drain

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

GHMC authorities have slapped DLF Gachibowli with a fine of Rs50,000 for choking drain by dumping plastic and construction debris.

Overflowing sewage has been a nagging problem for people near DLF. It has been causing inconvenience to lakhs of people, particularly techies who travel through this place. GHMC officials inspected drain works near DLF and noticed that the existing sewer line was choked due to plastic waste. According to officials, pipeline laying work is in progress and it will be completed in 10 days. Officials pointed that Rs. 50,000 fine has been imposed on DLF & surrounding properties for blockage.

WITH 60 LAKH MEMBERS

TRS strongest party in TS: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Rashtra Samiti working president KT Rama Rao has put the total membership at 60 lakh, including 20 lakh active members, which he says is better than that of the Bharatiya Janata Party unit in the State at 12 lakh.

After winding up the party's membership drive, KTR said that Gajwel had emerged as the front-runner in enlisting members, while Vardhannapeta figured at the other end of the spectrum. He mentioned that 63,400 members were enrolled in Sircilla -- his home constituency.

On the basis of these figures, KTR asserted there was no party as strong as the TRS in



Telangana. Active members would receive their identity cards by September 15. He asked party leaders to return surplus membership books to the party headquarters here on August 25.

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TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Shrivana & Krishna Paksha Panchangam
Tithi : Saptami: 08:08 am
Nakshatram: Kritika 03:48 am (Next Day)
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam: 10:45 am - 12:18 pm
Yamagandam: 03:25 pm - 04:58 pm
Varjyam: 03:12 pm - 04:53 pm
Gulika: 07:37 am - 09:11 am
Good Time: (to start any important work)
Amritakalam: 01:17 am - 02:57 am
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:53 am - 12:43 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Isolated Thunderstorms
Temp: 31/23
Humidity: 91%
Sunrise: 06.00
Sunset: 06.36
Current Weather Conditions
Updated August 22, 2019 5:00 PM

TRS steeped in graft, says BJP

HUGE SCAM HAD TAKEN PLACE IN POWER SECTOR: LAXMAN

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP Telangana state president Dr K Laxman has alleged that a huge scam had taken place in Telangana power sector. He said that facts would come out if ordered inquiry with sitting judge on this issue. He alleged that the TRS government entered into an agreement overnight to purchase power at Rs 5.50 paise per unit though the Centre offered power at Rs.4.30 paise per unit as part of National Solar Policy. He slammed the TRS government alleging that it left the Solar Power Generation to the wind by not providing any sort of basic infrastructure in the state.

On Thursday, Laxman explained that surplus power in 28 States was possible only with the initiatives of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister linked South and North power grids after coming to power in the year 2014 and hence the power is available at low price these days, Laxman said.

"Unfortunately, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao giving an impression that it is his credit", Laxman slammed. The credit of providing power to remote rural areas goes to Modi and he achieved this distinction because no other party did it in the last 70 years, Laxman praised.

Laxman alleged that KCR didn't launch a single new power project and produced a single Megawatt additionally in the last five years. The credit of supplying power for 24 hours in



Former MLA Nandishwar Goud with BJP state president K Laxman after he joined the party in Hyderabad on Thursday

Telangana is possible because of Prime Minister's power reforms, Laxman explained. He alleged that TRS raised curtains to new drama in power sector. Power discoms suffered heavy losses due to bad decisions of the TRS government. Corruption increased in Telangana than in Andhra Pradesh in regard to purchase of power. Laxman made it clear that the Centre is implementing clear policy on power sector.

BJP state chief alleged that KCR is trying to throw his mistakes on others. KCR admitted in Collectors meeting that corruption increased in the state. He alleged that the implementation of central schemes in Telangana is not taking place because the state government is not extending its cooperation.

Former MLA Nandishwar Goud joins BJP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Pathancheru MLA from Congress, Nandishwar Goud on Thursday joined the BJP in the presence of state unit president of the party Dr K Laxman. Presenting him with the party shawl, Dr Laxman welcomed the former MLA into the party.

Addressing a small gathering, he accused the Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao of passing the buck on others for his omissions and

commissions. The CM admitted increased corruption at the Collectors' conference. Because of the non-cooperative attitude of the TRS regime, the Centre's schemes are not being implemented in Telangana. Because of the TRS jumping to conclusions, the Discoms are sustaining losses. Compared to the Andhra Pradesh, the corruption in PPA's was more in Telangana, he said. The Centre has very clear policies on power sector, he added.

TRS has no policy, says Indrasena

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP National Executive Committee member Nallu Indrasena Reddy has alleged that the Telangana government has no clear cut policy on any issue. The TRS government has no agriculture policy and there is no assurance for farmers, he pointed out.

Even the Ministers have no freedom. The Ministers have no chance to review on their own regarding their respective departments' issues, he said. The government is doing 'hungama' in the name of new Acts but there is no use with them, he ridiculed and alleged that the CM KCR has obstructed the rural development with 'cheque power' issue. The Sarpaches have no powers now, he lamented. Indrasena questioned the CM, who revealed in a collectors meeting held two years ago that he will merge Registration Department into Revenue Department, to tell as to what happened. The CM told in that meeting that merging registration department into revenue department was a permanent solution for land disputes. The CM once again stated about new Revenue Act in the collectors meeting held on Tuesday, he said questioning KCR to tell whether he has clarity or not. There is no limit to the problems of the students in KCR's rule. KCR is speaking irresponsibly, he said.



Indrakaran Reddy addresses a meeting of Telangana State Council of Science and Technology in Hyderabad on Thursday

KCR made KLIS in 3 yrs instead of 20: Indrakaran

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

"The mighty lift irrigation project, Kaleshwaram, which was estimated to be completed in 20 years, under the aegis of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao was completed in merely 3 years," said Minister of Forest, Environment, Science and Technology, Allola Indrakaran Reddy. He was speaking at the first Telangana State Council of Science and Technology (TSCOST) meeting in Hyderabad on Thursday.

The Kaleshwaram project has set a role model for other States across the nation, he said and added that Telangana, under the aegis of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, is stepping up development path with innovative

Medigadda Barrage, which is 100 meters above the sea level, is engineered to lift water between 300 and 650 meters, says Forest Minister A Indrakaran Reddy

ideas in the fields of information and technology.

Explaining further, he said, Medigadda Barrage, which is 100 meters above the sea level is engineered to lift water between 300 and 650 meters, which can divert at least 3 TMC of water.

"State government is using technology effectively to implement welfare schemes for the development of its people and economic growth," the Forest Minister said. "The Telangana government's

actions completely shaped the current state of the country concerning research and development in the field of science and technology, which are evidence of integrity." He took another example and said, "technology is making everybody's life convenient, the government now can make time-to-online transactions for 58.33 lakh farmers of the state, which is destined to distributed Rs 10,000 annually during two cultivation seasons under Rythu Bandhu."



Shah to attend 'Dikshanth Parade'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah would participate in 70th Batch IPS Probationers Dikshanth Parade to be held in Sardar Vallabhai Patel Police Academy, Hyderabad on August 24. Amit Shah will receive the honorary salute from IPS Probationers.

On Thursday, Police Academy director Abhay told that 92 IPS officers, including 12 women officers got trained in this batch. The batch also includes 11 foreign officers including six Royal Bhutan police officers and five Nepal police officers. Three Probationers were being selected for Telangana cadre from this batch. On the other hand, Gouse Alam from Telangana cadre selected as a best all round Probationer officer. Richa Thadom from Rajasthan cadre selected as a best woman Probationer officer among women Probationers.

The best all round Probationer Gouse Alam will receive Prime Minister's baton and Home Minister's revolver, Abhay said.

Udaya Samudram Project within 10 months: Gutha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Newly elected TRS MLC Gutha Sukhender Reddy has said that Congress MP from Bhongir Komatireddy Venkat Reddy knows the fact that the delay in execution of Udaya Samudram project was due to technical problem which arose in tunnel lining. He alleged that Komatireddy is enacting dramas in the name of 'padayatra' with a political motive as the project is going to be completed within 10 months.

On Thursday, in Nalgonda, Gutha advised Congress leaders to stop telling morals to TRS government. It is said on the part of Congress leaders for leveling meaningless allegations against the state government, he said. Gutha said that the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had taken up drinking and irrigation projects in Nalgonda district as assured during the Telangana movement. TPCC Chief N Uttam Kumar Reddy

never cared about the projects of Nalgonda district in the last 20 years. Uttam confined to Huzurnagar and Kodada constituencies only, he said.

Making it clear that KCR has clear vision of completing SLBC tunnel, Gutha told that the tunnel completion agreement deadline is December 2021. He said that the then government prepared Brahmana Vellemla project depending upon SLBC tunnel project only.

The Congress government spent mere Rs 190 crore in six years and the TRS government is bearing remaining entire expenditure. The TRS government is moving ahead with special interest on irrigation projects. But the Congress leaders are making allegations only to create differences among the people, he alleged. Gutha ridiculed Uttam alleging that the latter had no idea about the places of the projects. It may be recalled that Komatireddy is all set to take up 'padayatra' on August 26.

Adopt modern technology, farmers told

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

University of Hyderabad, supported by Research and Innovation Circle of Hyderabad (RICH) organised a panel discussion on the topic 'Current scenario and path forward for GM crops in India'. The deliberations by experts and farmers brought forward the necessity for adopting and advancing modern science and technology in agriculture, like GM crops in India, for bringing the farmers out of the current distress situation.

It also emphasised that government should continuously promote plant biotech research and build capacity for adopting emerging technologies like genome editing, advances in regulatory sciences for safety evaluations and research on environmental, socio-economic and trade impact of illegal planting in India.

During the discussion, farmers have expressed their intent and willingness to accept technologies that offer promising and cost-effective solutions to their crop losses.

Prostitution racket busted, 17-year-old girl rescued

Victim was lured from Bangladesh, forced into flesh trade

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A human trafficking racket was unearthed by the Rachakonda police with the arrest of three persons on Thursday. The three included a couple involved in trafficking belonging to Bangladesh and a man from the city. Police also rescued a minor girl from the clutches of the accused.

The operation was taken up following a specific input provided by Prajwala Foundation's Dr Sunita Krishnan to Rachakonda Police Commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat on trafficking of minor girl from Bangladesh to Hyderabad. Teams were formed, comprising Special Operations Group, the Kushaiguda police and Prajwala NGO members, which conducted a 'raid and rescue' operation to arrest the accused.

According to the police, accused Mohd Sohail Hussain, 29, is a worker in Tech Mahindra Company who had illegally migrated to India from Bangladesh about 10



The accused in police custody on Thursday

years ago. He later married Visti Hossain, 25, about four years ago. The couple lived in New Hafeezpet area of Miyapur.

Police said they came in touch with one Sigdhar, who brought the 17-year-old victim from Bangladesh by pretending to lover her. He took the help of one Sujun, who used her as a dancer and later pushed her in prostitution in Bangalore. The girl was then handed over to a woman, Vijaya, in Vijayawada where she was sexually assaulted by

her son Sai. She was forced to continue prostitution by Sai and his friends. The victim was 'purchased' back by Sohail for prostitution in Hyderabad, police said.

On the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, when the couple came to a place near ECIL and called up a customer, Kounsuri Hari Chowdary, 28, the police team raided and caught the accused.

An intensive search led the police to bust the sex racket involving traffickers from Bangladesh.

BJP-TRS at loggerheads

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

The BJP and ruling the TRS are at logger heads in Karimnagar district particularly after the BJP's win in the recent Parliament elections. The party is leaving no stone unturned in cashing in on the opportunities. The granite industry and its promoters in this part of the region are either the members of Congress or of TRS and since the road network in this part is completely damaged what with the rampant quarrying activity, the BJP has started approaching the rural leaders and farmers to expose the TRS in this aspect.

The party is planning to organise a comprehensive struggle from this part and they say the action plan of struggle would be spread into the Jagtial, Siricilla and Karimnagar districts. Similarly, the BJP local leaders are keen on destabilising the TRS in Karimnagar erstwhile district with its strategic approaches.

The TRS is also not lagging behind in this aspect and that party is relying on the positive campaign methods in Karimnagar to show its supremacy.

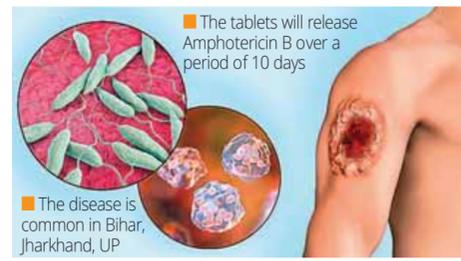
Oral tablets to treat deadly 'kala azar'

Kala azar or black fever, a form of leishmaniasis, can often be fatal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad Researchers have developed a method to produce controlled-release oral tablets for treating fungal infections and leishmaniasis (kala azar or black fever) that are prevalent in the country. The tablets were found to release the drug Amphotericin B in a sustained and controlled manner over a period of 10 days.

Amphotericin B (AmB) is the drug of choice for progressive and potentially life-threatening fungal infections of the abdomen and heart valves, fungal pneumonia, and leishmaniasis, a neglected tropical disease. It is used to treat Kala Azar or black fever, a dangerous and often fatal form of Leishmaniasis, common among the economically underprivileged sections in states such as Bihar, Jharkhand, West



The disease is common in Bihar, Jharkhand, UP

Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. The development of oral, controlled release tablets for fatal fungal infections and leishmaniasis, could help in better management of the disease burden in the country. The development of cures for dangerous fungal diseases and leishmaniasis has been challenging. Prof Brahmchari who first used an antimony compound for treating 'kala azar' in the 1920s was even nominated for

the Nobel Prize in 1929. The disadvantages associated with AmB include high cost, toxicity and poor bioavailability (<0.9%). AmB is administered through injection, which results in uncontrolled release of the drug into the blood stream. There have been attempts to make oral medication containing AmB to control the delivery of the drug and bring down costs. In order to make controlled-

release oral tablets, the drug molecules must be loaded onto a base that dissolves gradually to release the drug over a period of time. The Research was led by Prof. Saptarshi Majumdar and Dr. Chandra Shekhar Sharma, Associate Professor, Creative and Advanced Research Based On Nanomaterials (CARBON) Laboratory, Department of Chemical Engineering, IIT Hyderabad.

Speaking on the rationale of using nanofibres to produce oral tablets of AmB, Chandra Shekhar Sharma said, "Nanofibres - fibres that are a hundred thousand times thinner than the human hair - are increasingly being considered as a medium for controlled release of drug molecules because of their large surface area and porosity. There are two choices to be made in producing controlled-release tablets."

Devasena to leave for Sweden

HYDERABAD: Peddapalli Collector Devasena will participate in an international conference on water conversation in Sweden. The week-long conference will be held from Friday.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Panchayat Raj Engineering Department, (PIU), Adilabad
NIT NO.81 to 92/2019-20 Short Tender Notice Dated:14-08-2019
 Name of the Work: Construction of 2 Bed Room Houses (94) in Dhannur (K), GP Dhannur (B), Khandepally, GP Andur of Boath Mandal & Madhapur Village of Echoda Mandal in Adilabad District. (BLOCKS-A,B,C,D). Total ECV:473.76 Lakhs. Tender Documents will be available in e-procurement market place from 23-08-2019 to 01-09-2019. Further details can be obtained from e-procurement market place on www.tender.telangana.gov.in. Sd/- District Panchayat Raj Engineer (PIU) Adilabad.

DHFL DEWAN HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED
 National Office: HDIL House, 8th Floor, Anant Kanelkar Marg, Bandra East-400 051
 Changing Rules (Changing Lives) Branch Office : DHFL, Dreams Mall, First Floor, L.B.S.Marg, Bhandup (West), Mumbai - 400078

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Loan Agreement No. / Name of the Borrower/Co Borrower/ Guarantor	Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA Date	Description of secured asset (Immovable property)
(LC No.00003255 of U B Kolkata Synd Branch) Sandeep Agarwal (Borrower) Priyanka Agarwal (Co Borrower 1) Usha Agarwal (Co Borrower 2)	31-07-2019 / ₹ 6814725 / (₹ Sixty Eight lakh Fourteen Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Five) NPA (01-06-2019)	Premises No. 11 B, Bondel Road, Ward Srirampur Now Purba Ballygunge, Block No. 65 Of K M C, Kolkata, West Bengal-700019

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Place : Telangana
 Date : 23.08.2019

Sd/-
 (Authorised Officer)
 Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

CRIME CORNER

Body of newborn girl found

HYDERABAD: The body of a newborn baby girl was found abandoned in Nandanavanam area of Meerpeth on Thursday. According to the police, the body was wrapped in a plastic bag and dumped in a deserted spot in the area. Locals noticed the body and called the police, following which a patrol vehicle and a CLUES Team was sent to the spot. The body was shifted to Osmania hospital for postmortem. Police are verifying data from hospitals in the area on recent births.

17-yr-old falls into manhole; official suspended

HYDERABAD: A 17-month-old boy fell into an open manhole in Mahaveer Yadav Nagar of Gudimalkapur in Hyderabad. The boy was identified as Deekshit. The incident happened when he was playing and accidentally slipped and fell into the manhole. The infant was soon shifted to the nearby Niloufer hospital for treatment and is said to be in critical condition. An immediate compensation of Rs 25,000 is being given. Mehdiptnam Section Manager D Chandran of waterboard was suspended for negligence after an inquiry was initiated by HMWSSB MD Dana Kishore. During the investigation, it was found that delay in the completion of the manhole repair works by the contractor, as well as the lack of barricades and precautionary measures at the site resulted in the incident.

'Drunk' Octopus cops create ruckus

HYDERABAD: The Octopus police constables on Thursday have allegedly created a ruckus under the influence of alcohol and beat up a youth in Adibatla. According to sources, the constables, who came to the hotel to eat food, attacked a person identified as Ram, who was sitting on the nearby table without any reason. "When Ram questioned them about the attack, they continued to thrash him stating that he did not have the right to question their authority. Furthermore, they also roughed up those who tried to intervene," said sources. The victim lodged a complaint with the Adibatla police, who have taken up an investigation. Ram further alleged that a case was not registered against the police constables until the news of it started making the rounds.

Case against Akbaruddin: CID to file counter

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
State CID officials told the court of special sessions judge for trial of cases related to MPs and MLAs on Thursday that they would file a counter to the petition filed by city advocate, K Karunasagar, who has sought cancellation of bail granted to AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi. The bail was granted by the second additional judicial magistrate of first class of Nizamabad town. The counsel for Owaisi, on his part, also requested time for filing a counter in the case. This prompted the court to adjourn the matter till August 28. In his petition, Karunasagar told the court that Owaisi violated the bail condition and gave hate speeches at various places of the country, including Hyderabad and Karimnagar.

3 arrested for killing head of family

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda police on Thursday arrested K Kishan for killing his father Kishan Maruti Suthar six days ago. Kishan's mother and sister were also arrested in the case that involved the brutal butchering of the 70-year-old man, a retired railway employee. Police also seized the murder weapon from the prime accused.

The family had conspired to kill him and lodge a 'missing person' complaint in order to keep getting his pension money, police said.

According to the police, accused K Kishan alias Rahul, 40, his mother Ganga Bai, 58, and sister Prapulla, 29, together plotted the murder of Kishan Maruti Suthar, 70, on the night of August 16 and tried to hide the body by cutting it up in parts and stuffed them in five buckets which they



The wife, son and daughter of deceased Kishan Maruti Suthar in police custody

had bought specially for the purpose.

On Sunday morning, locals complained of foul smell in the area and saw swarms of flies coming out of a window of the small house in Doctors' Colony in

Moula Ali, and called the cops. Maruthi Suthar was allegedly killed by his son for not sharing his pension money with the family. Kishan is unemployed and addicted to vices, police said. After committing the murder,

DAD MURDERED FOR MONEY

- The reason behind the murder conspiracy was to get pension amount of Rs 30,000 from the man
- Family chopped the body and stuffed parts in buckets
- Datura fruit was procured to kill him. Accused searched internet for ways to murder

the three family members moved the buckets stuffed with human body parts from a front room to one at the back of the house, and sprayed it with air-fresheners to contain the odour, police said. Maruthi Suthar, goods train driver in the Railways, had bought the house the family lived

in 2000. His other daughter lives with her husband separately. His other son parted ways with the family and left home about 10 years ago, DCP LB Nagar Sunpreet Singh said. The family depended on Suthar's pension to get along. A few days ago they fought over money, after which the three decided to kill him. They planned to file a 'missing person' report at Malkajgiri police station, to make it appear that Suthar was missing but alive, and continue to receive his pension, DCP Singh said.

According to their plan, they mixed Datura powder in Suthar's food on August 15. He died in his sleep. The three then dragged the body into a pooja room. They used two knives to cut up the body. Locals called the police when they saw Rahul stepping out to hire an auto rickshaw to move the buckets away.

Newly-wed woman 'kidnapped' by kin

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 20-year-old newly-wed woman was allegedly kidnapped by her relatives in Amberpet on Thursday evening. According to the police, Bindu loved Raju, 23, and married him on July 15. The couple lived in a house in Amberpet. Raju told the police that Bindu's relatives took her away against her will. Police said Raju alleged that his wife's relatives took her away from their house after creating a ruckus in the afternoon. He said he too beaten up when he tried to intervene. Polices booked cases under relevant Sections and launched an investigation into the matter. The LB Nagar police had counselled the families on both sides soon after the young couple got married.



Bachupally MRO in ACB net

Continued from Page 1
He was arrested on Thursday by sleuths of the Anti Corruption Bureau for demanding and accepting a bribe amount of Rs 50,000. According to ACB officials, the MRO, identified as Yadagiri, a native of Dubbaka in Siddipet, had demanded the bribe amount from the complainant for doing an unofficial favour. "Following a tip-off from the complainant, a trap was laid by the officials and the Tahsildar was caught red-handed while accepting Rs 50,000 bribe amount. The same was verified via testing and he was placed under arrest," the officials said. Searches are on at his residence in Bachupally.

Haritha Haram Day to be observed on Fridays

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

GHMC has decided to observe every Friday as Haritha Haram Day starting this Friday.

At least 50,000 saplings are expected to be distributed and planted in each of the city's circles on Friday. The GHMC plans to plant a total of 15 lakh saplings in the city on every Haritha Haram Day.

According to the plan, every Friday all Swachh autos and vehicles available with all departments like entomology, UBD, mini tippers will be mobilised exclusively for distribution of plants from morning to evening. All government departments will participate in the day-long programme. HW Mayor Bonthu Rammoan and Commissioner Dana Kishore held a meeting with zonal commissioners and deputy commissioners on Thursday. As per instructions, area committees, ward committees and area sub-committees -- apart from MLAs and Corporators -- must be involved in plants distribution. Officials were directed to Geo-tag and update the progress on a daily basis.

The civic body will also seek participation of VIPs, sports persons and celebrities in the campaign. GHMC has decided to put up non-plastic banners at all locations where the plantation drive is being held.

LAKDI-KA-PUL WAS ONCE 'BRIDGE FOR THE GIRL'



Home Minister Mahmood Ali inaugurated a model of 'Lakdi-ka-Pul' bridge at Ayodhya Junction in the city on Thursday. The model has been built at a cost of Rs 30.5 lakh as part of the city's Junction Improvement Plan. According to historians, the original 'Lakdi-ka-Pul' was built during the rule of Ibrahim Qutub Shah in 1760s. Legend says Ibrahim's daughter needed to cross a canal on her way to visit her teacher every day at Naubat Pahad. To make it easy for her to reach there, the ruler got a wooden bridge built in May 1761. It was named 'Lakdi ka Pul' - Hindi for 'Bridge for the Girl'. Over time, the name got corrupted to 'Lakdi-ka-Pul', given that it was made of wood i.e. 'lakdi'.

Amberpet slaughter house lying unused

GHMC had spent Rs 22.15 crore to build and equip it

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Crores of rupees of public money were spent on setting up the Amberpet slaughter house, but it has apparently failed to serve its purpose.

The municipal corporation spent Rs 22.15 crore on building the slaughter house and installing advanced equipment, but the place is not being used for slaughter over the past few days. GHMC Commissioner M Dana Kishore, who did a surprise inspection of the slaughter house on Thursday, pulled up officials for the state of affairs.

The slaughtering of animals is being done on vacant land outside the slaughter house, because of which the modern facility is remaining unused. The Commissioner asked the officials why they were allowing slaughtering outside. Chief Veterinary Officer Venkateshwar Reddy told the Commissioner that the Amberpet slaughter house was leased to a private agency for a period of three years for a royalty of Rs 10 crore. The lease period ended in January 2018, but the city civil court had asked the civic body not to terminate the lease. The GHMC has filed a vacation petition in the case.

He also expressed dissatisfaction for not initiating any action against the agency, which paid royalty to the municipal corporation, when its cheques bounced repeatedly. The Commissioner sought to know why cheque-bounce cases were not filed against the agency. He said a review meeting would be convened shortly to review the performance of the city's slaughter houses.

4 arrested for gang-rape in Maheshwaram

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Maheshwaram police on Thursday arrested four persons who had raped a woman near a brick kiln last week. The accused were identified as Rahul Maaji, 25, Manoj Samrat, 23, Durga Samrat and Dhaya Making, both 20. The four belong to Bolangir in Odisha and work as labourers at JMB brick kiln in Maheshwaram.

According to police, the incident occurred when the

victim, a 30-year-old woman, had gone to attend nature's call on the night of August 16. The men, on finding her alone, waylaid her and raped her. They reportedly pulled her into the bushes and forced themselves onto her one by one.

Police registered a case after the woman filed a complaint. The accused were arrested on Thursday based on a tip-off. The men confessed to the crime during interrogation.

Youth jailed for injuring couple

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 24-year-old man was handed a three-month imprisonment by a local court in Nampally on Thursday following an incident in which he had injured a couple. The accused was identified as Shaik Imran, a resident of Red Hills in the city. Police said Imran entered a woman's house in Habeebnagar in an inebriated state on Tuesday and created a nuisance. He beat up the woman and her husband due to which they suffered internal injuries.

Use of clay Ganesh idols advocated

Pollution board has made 1.6 lakh clay idols for distribution

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Endowments Minister Indrakaran Reddy on Thursday urged people to use only clay idols of Ganesh during the upcoming festival.

Addressing a gathering after presenting eco-friendly clay Ganesh idols made by the Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB), he said that the pollution control board has made 1.60 lakh clay Ganesh idols and is distributing them among people. Earlier, he had released pamphlets and posters highlighting the use of clay for idols.

The minister said posters



Endowments Minister Indrakaran Reddy with a clay idol made by TSPCB

and banners would be put up at several public places to sensitise people on the use of clay over idols made of PoP or chemical derivatives. Clay Ganesh idols are being

installed in all temples under the Endowments department's jurisdiction, he said, adding that use of idols made of PoP or chemicals are sounding the death knell for aquatic and marine life upon their immersion.

Silt formation in tanks and other water bodies, owing to immersion of PoP idols, is leading to a decrease in their water storage capacity.

Endowments department additional commissioner Srinivasa Rao, TSPCB CEE Nagesh, joint chief environment scientist Murali Mohan and others took part in the event.

Man produces video of actor fleeing, demands money

Tollywood actor Raj Tarun is seen running away from spot after the car mishap

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a new twist to Tollywood actor Raj Tarun's car mishap case, a man claiming to have video evidence showing him drunk and fleeing from the scene has allegedly been demanding Rs 5 lakh from the cine star. However, Tarun's manager filed a complaint in the matter, after which the Madhapur police booked an extortion case and started a probe.



Karthik later showed to Tarun video clips which he had filmed with his mobile phone

car, bearing the number TS09EX1100, into a wall near Alkapur Township circle area. It now appears that he was

being filmed by a bystander named Karthik. He later claimed that the actor was drunk and fled the scene, and

that he followed him. He showed to Tarun video clips which he had filmed with his mobile phone. Tarun allegedly promised to give Karthik Rs 5 lakh and asked him to delete the videos. However, when the actor refused to pay up, Karthik approached a news channel and got the video aired.

Speaking to this newspaper, Tollywood sources said Karthik's allegations are baseless and Tarun was not drunk. "Tarun's manager, Raja Ravinder, was contacted by

Karthik to demand the cash. After he made repeated calls, we have approached the police to book a case," one source said.

Madhapur police inspector S Venkat Reddy said they received a complaint from Ravinder late on Thursday night. Karthik was booked under Section 385 (putting person in fear of injury in order to commit extortion) of IPC and an investigation was launched. Police said arrests in the case would be made after investigations.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Declaration by District Collector, Mahabubabad
[FORM - VII]
(See Sub-rule (1) or rule-25 and Section-19(1) of the Act-30/2013)
Rc. No. A/1756/2013 Date 08.2019
Collector Prods.No. G1/1482/18 Date 16.08.2019
Gazette No.48/2019 Date 16.08.2019

Whereas, it appears to the Government of Telangana/District Collector that a total of Ac.0.36 Gls. Land is required in the Mahabubabad Village and Mandal of Mahabubabad District for public purpose, namely formation of Necklace Road around Nizam Chenu.

Therefore Declaration is made that a piece of land measuring, more or less Ac.0.36 Gls. Of standard measurement under Acquisition for the above said project in the Mahabubabad Village and Mandal of Mahabubabad District, whose detail description is as following, is under acquisition:

[SCHEDULE]
Village: Mahabubabad Mandal: Mahabubabad District: Mahabubabad

Sl. No.	Sr. No.	Type of Title	Type of Land	Total Extent (In Ac.Gls.)	Name of the Interest Person					Area under Acquisition (In Ac.Gls.)	E	W	N	S	Structures/Trees/Wells (Sl. No./Sr. No./Tree Structure)
					Pattadar	Enjoyer	1	2	3						
1	651/2	Patta Dry	1.26	Ghanapuru Subashini W/o Anjash	Ghanapuru Subashini W/o Anjash	0.08	651	651	651	652	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
2	652/2	Patta Dry	1.26	Takoor Kiran Singh S/o. Ashok Singh	Takoor Kiran Singh S/o. Ashok Singh	0.08	652	652	651	655	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
3	664/2	Patta Dry	0.26	Mohammad Abdul Jaleel	Mohammad Abdul Jaleel	0.03	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664
				Abdul Azeez S/o. Madar	Abdul Azeez S/o. Madar	0.03	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664
				Abdul Maseed S/o Madar	Abdul Maseed S/o Madar	0.03	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664
				Total	Total	0.36									

The Declaration is made after hearing of objections of persons interested and due enquiry as provided U/s 15 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Act No.30/2013), as amended by the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Telangana Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No.21 of 2017) to all whom it may concern.

Mines of coal, iron-stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land, except such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the purpose of which the land is being acquired, are not needed.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the District Collector, Mahabubabad & Land Acquisition Officer/Revenue Divisional Officer, Mahabubabad on any working day during the working hours (Sd/- Land Acquisition Officer, Mahabubabad; Sd/- Joint Collector, Mahabubabad; Sd/- District Collector, Mahabubabad).
DIPR No.: 679/LA/PP/Agency/2019-20

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Revenue (LA) Department
G1/1963/2018 File No.D/651/2018 Date: 16-7-2019
FORM - C Dated: 10-7-2019

As per section -11 (1) of the right to fair compensation and Transparency in land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement act, 2013 (central act no.30/2013), as amended by the right to compensation and transparency in land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement (Telangana amendment) act, 2016 (Act. No.2016 of 2017) and where 10A exemption is Given (see rule 6/12)

NOTIFICATION

Whereas it appears to the government of telangana / district collector, Nalgonda that a total of Ac.4.17 guntas land is required in the Vanipakala Village of Chityal mandal, Nalgonda dist. for public purpose, namely for construction of dharmareddy canal water irrigation canal. Therefore it is notified that for the above said project in the vanipakala village of chityal mandal, Nalgonda dist. land measuring, more or less Ac.4.17 gts of standard measurement, whose detail description is as following, is proposed for acquisition.

SCHEDULE
Village: Vanipakala Mandal: Chityal District: Nalgonda

Sl. No.	Sr. No.	Type of Title	Type of Land	Area proposed under acquisition (Ac.guntas)	Name of the person interested (pattadar) and name of the father					Trees, structures & other details
					1	2	3	4	5	
1	488	Patta Dry	0.24	0.08	Malleboina Malesh S/o Pentaiah & Palleboina Polaraju S/o Malliah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
2	487	Patta Dry	0.03	0.05	Thangapally Vitalacharya S/o Karakalaih	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
3	487	Patta Dry	0.05	0.05	Kappala Venkanna S/o Basha	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
4	483	Patta Dry	0.07	0.07	Kappala Venkanna S/o Basha	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
5	484	Patta Dry	0.01	0.01	Kappala Venkanna S/o Basha	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
6	484	Patta Dry	0.05	0.05	Kappala Venkanna S/o Basha	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
7	486	Patta Dry	0.06	0.06	Thangapally Vitalacharya Malleboina Polaraju S/o Malliah, S/o Pentaiah, S/o Venkanna Malleboina Basavanna S/o Dhankonda (Pattadharu)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
8	469	Patta Dry	0.19	0.19	Malleboina Ilaiah S/o Lachnaah and Soudaiah S/o Yalliah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
9	467	Patta Dry	0.17	0.17	Lenkala Sathireddy and Yadagiri Reddy S/o Chandrareddy	See Note-1				
10	467	Patta Dry	0.19	0.19	Lenkala Sathireddy and Yadagiri Reddy S/o Chandrareddy	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
				0.36						
11	473	Patta Dry	0.07	0.07	Malleboina Yadaiah S/o Venkulu Sathiah S/o Venkulu and Yallappa S/o Venkulu	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
12	473	Patta Dry	0.06	0.06	Malleboina Yadaiah S/o Venkulu Sathiah S/o Venkulu and Yallappa S/o Venkulu	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
13	473	Patta Dry	0.07	0.07	Malleboina Yadaiah S/o Venkulu Sathiah S/o Venkulu and Yallappa S/o Venkulu	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
				0.20						
14	472	Patta Dry	0.06	0.06	Malleboina Ilaiah S/o Lachnaah & Soudaiah S/o Yalliah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
15	475	Patta Dry	0.02	0.02	Yellajala Pusamma W/o Yettaiah Saidu S/o Chandraiah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
16	475	Patta Dry	0.07	0.07	Yellajala Pusamma W/o Yettaiah Saidu S/o Chandraiah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
				0.09						
17	495	Patta Dry	0.16	0.16	Yellajala Pusamma W/o Yettaiah Saidu S/o Chandraiah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
18	495	Patta Dry	0.22	0.22	Yellajala Pusamma W/o Yettaiah Saidu S/o Chandraiah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
				0.38						
19	438	Patta Dry	0.04	0.04	Yellajala Pusamma W/o Yettaiah Saidu S/o Chandraiah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
20	438	Patta Dry	0.06	0.06	Yellajala Pusamma W/o Yettaiah Saidu S/o Chandraiah	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
				0.10						
				4.20						

This notification is made to pay fair compensation to the concerned land owners under the provision of section -11 (1) of the right to fair compensation and Transparency in land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement act, 2013 (central act no.30/2013), as amended by the right to compensation and transparency in land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement (Telangana amendment) act, 2016 (Act. No.21/2017) and where 10A exemption is given.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the district collector, Nalgonda land acquisition officer and revenue divisional officer, Nalgonda and Tahsildar, Chityal on any working day during the working hours. The government of Telangana / district collector, Nalgonda is pleased to authorize the revenue divisional officer, Nalgonda and his staff to enter upon and take survey of the land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work provided and specified in section -12 of the said act.

Under section 11(4) of the act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of Land i.e. sale / purchase etc., or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of such notification without prior approval of the district collector, Nalgonda.

Objections to the acquisition, if any, and claims from all the persons interested / affected for settlement by negotiations of the compensation, may be filed by the person interested in the land within (60 days) from the date of publications of this notification as provided under section (15) of the act before the district collector, Nalgonda by writing.

Sd/- Revenue divisional officer and land acquisition officer, Nalgonda
Sd/- District collector, Nalgonda
DIPR No.: 488/LA/PP/2019-20

AP's future hangs in balance

INVESTORS SPOOKED BY JAGANMOHAN'S 'ARBITRARY' DECISIONS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

When a new government takes over, it is not unusual for it to review the decisions of the previous dispensation. But the developments in Andhra Pradesh have seen recently are perhaps unprecedented.

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP)-led government, which stormed to power in the state in May with a massive mandate, is moving at rapid speed in not only reviewing all the major decisions taken by the previous government of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) but also scrapping many.

From stopping work on development of the state capital Amaravati to renegotiating Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) signed by the previous government with the producers of renewable energy and from terminating contract for one of the works of Polavaram irrigation project to closure of 'Anna Canteens', everything has happened in just two-and-a-half months.

Immediately after taking over as Chief Minister on May 27, Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy decided to review all the projects and announced that it would cancel the contracts and call for fresh tenders wherever the government found irregularities. He argued that reverse-tendering will bring transparency as it



Immediately after taking over as Chief Minister, Jaganmohan Reddy decided to review all the projects and announced that the government would cancel contracts and call for fresh tenders wherever it found irregularities

would facilitate participation of a large number of bidders and the tenders will be awarded to the lowest bidders. The decision kicked up controversy, for Andhra Pradesh is yet to overcome the post-bifurcation problems. After Telangana was carved out with Hyderabad as its capital in 2014, the residuary state of Andhra Pradesh was left without a state capital and began a new journey with huge fiscal deficit and many thorny issues arising out of the split. TDP, which formed the first government in the residuary state, embarked on building the state with several ambitious projects includ-

ing capital Amaravati, the brainchild of then Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. "Jagan Reddy is trying to take over the state with retrospective effect which is not possible as governance is a continuous process. One can go only on case-to-case basis. But he is trying a blanket reversal," political analyst Telakapalli Ravi said.

"Jaganmohan Reddy wants to de-legitimise actions and decisions of his predecessor. It is evident that the Chief Minister wants to discredit TDP supremo as a corrupt individual whose regime was filled with corruption and deceit," says another analyst P.

Raghava Reddy. TDP is shocked over the decisions. "This is something which did not happen in the past. We have seen many governments in the past but they never resorted to such actions despite enjoying huge majority. Even Jaganmohan Reddy's father Y S Rajasekhara Reddy did not do this," senior TDP leader and former Minister Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy told IANS. Chandramohan Reddy alleged that Jagan Reddy wanted to see every work started by TDP government come to a halt but in the process he is making the state suffer.

It's a government of cancellations, claims BJP

PNS ■ ELUGU

BJP leader Manikyala Rao on Thursday described the government in Andhra Pradesh as the 'government of cancellations'. Without searching for alternatives, the state government is bent on cancelling everything without a rule or rhyme, he said.

For the past two months, an atmosphere of bankruptcy prevailed in the state, he observed. The state government has been practicing the politics of compromise by hurling out threats, he said. He questioned the government on what action has been initiated to check corruption in Polavaram and other irrigation projects. He suspected that a clandestine deal is under way between the Opposition and ruling party. Further, he expressed apprehensions over a conducive atmosphere prevailing in the state. He cautioned the government that the people would revolt against it if they try to dupe the people.

Farmers irked over Botsa's remarks

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Farmers of villages, where land has been pooled for Amaravati, are incensed over Minister Botsa Satyanarayana's remarks over flood threat to the new state capital region and the government will reconsider the previous regime's decision.

When this correspondent visited the villages - Lingayapalem, Rayapalem and many villages in Tulluru mandal - to assess the situation whether there is any flood threat to the core capital region and to gather public opinion, especially of farmers, the farmers have vent their anger against the Minister. They confront the minister with the question why a lift-irrigation scheme had to be built in Tulluru if there is flood threat to the core capital region. After building the flood bank to river Krishna in 1962, the farmers said that they never came across their villages getting flooded by the river waters. The farmers said that they pooled lands for the capital city rather happily, but Chandrababu did not snatch their lands.



The farmers see conspiracy behind the Minister's flood threat statement. Such statements deal a heavy blow to the morale of the farmers, they said. The farmers suspect something fishy is going on in the government about the capital city. Wantonly, mud being slung on the capital city, they said. The ruling party promised on this prior to the elections but changed the tack after the polls, irate farmers noted and made it clear that it will not do.

The farmers observed that the current regime is undoing what Chandrababu Naidu has done to the state and dared it to merge both the two Telugu states into unified AP again and rule as one single entity.

TSCHE to consider student internships, placements

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Council of Higher Education will give a serious thought to internships and campus placements in universities. The universities were asked to send reports on the issue within a week.

"We have asked the universities to submit how many students are being placed every year, what companies have come for campus placements, how many students are getting placed. This is to understand the placement trend in universities and its affiliated colleges," said TSCHE secretary N Srinivas Rao.

After thorough verification, it will draw up guidelines to make sure universities and affiliated colleges provide internships and placements along with skills, Srinivas Rao said.

TSCHE chairman Papi Reddy said that the council will soon regulate universities and colleges with regards to internships, placements and training to students.

'Stop issuing notifications for Mee Seva Kendras'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Principal Secretary to Information Technology Department Jayesh Ranjan has written to District Collectors to cancel the notifications issued to set up Mee Seva Centers finding fault with indiscriminate permission to their starting in some districts.

He made it clear to them that adhering to rules pertaining to establishment of Mee Seva Kendras is inevitable. He hinted at releasing new guidelines to establish them. In view of widespread use of various mobile applications and other online ser-

vices, the Mee Seva Kendras attract tough competition, he said expressing doubts over the viability of the existing Mee Seva Kendras. He felt that the situation would warrant a review.

Taking all these things into consideration, he asked the District Collectors to tread cautiously on starting new kendras. The government objected to starting the E-seva kendras in Bhadradi Kothagudem district last year and Medchal district this year in leaps and bounds and felt that the mistake should not recur in future. Daily 1.5 lakh transactions take place in Mee Seva Kendras across the state.

IGNITING YOUNG MINDS



Children painting images as part of Prof Jayashankar University's training programme held at Kollapadaka village of RR district on Thursday

BJP making major inroads into Telangana?

ACCORDING TO A SURVEY, RURAL DISTRICTS IN STATE PREFER THE SAFFRON PARTY OVER TRS

PV KONDAL RAO ■ WARANGAL

Rural districts in Telangana are slowly shifting towards the BJP, at least in the urban regions if the revelations of recent surveys of a research group deployed by the saffron party are taken into consideration. The researchers from Kakatiya, Shatavahana, Gandhi, Palamuru and Telangana universities have conducted a sample survey in the urban areas after the abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir. And the youths in these areas - Warangal, Karimnagar, Adilabad,



Nizamabad, Khammam, Nalgonda, Medak, and Mahabubnagar erstwhile dis-

tricts are showing their inclination to choose BJP as the sole alternative in the coming days.

Surprisingly, the Congress Party, the current opposition in the state is lagging far behind the BJP and TRS in the survey, which covered various sections of the society. The electorate in the age group of 18 to 40 are showing an inclination towards the BJP and they believe it is the sole alternative to the ruling TRS. They say that the saffron party would emerge stronger in the coming days given the present rise of the support base. Surprisingly, mostly the electorate in the age group of 18 to 40 prefers the BJP and a total of 60 per cent voters of this age group are keen on supporting the BJP in

the coming days to secure development and comprehensive growth of the state.

The urban local bodies are preferring BJP as they believe this is an alternative force since the urban areas want to attain progress, say the survey reports. The Kakatiya University research group led by Ramesh felt that the previous stronghold of BJP like Parakal is keen on retaining that party as the formidable force in the local bodies.

Even Narsampet, Jangaon and Mulugu areas along with the Bhupalpalli is likely to fall in the lap of BJP if a poll is conducted in the next 45 days.

Govt begins geo-tagging of employees now

Continued from Page 1

Employees were unaware of this until they were told by higher-ups recently to download the mobile application to mark their attendance.

"There should be trust between government and employees. These kinds of measures will only kill trust and is not good in the long run. There are already several effective mechanisms in place to check indiscipline and absenteeism among staff. There is no need to do geo-tagging in a hurried and secret manner without dis-

cussing it with employees or unions. This will only create unnecessary apprehensions among staff," said an employee of the Health Department.

However, Telangana Employees Association leader A Padma Chary said, "We do not object to this as long as they are implemented in departments which offer emergency services like health. If the government wants to extend this to all the departments, it should first hold consultations with employees or unions, take them into confidence, and then go ahead."

Hyd in reckoning for UNESCO...

Continued from Page 1

GHMC should play a key role in keeping heritage areas clean, while providing essential facilities for tourists. Earlier, Junhi met Chief Secretary S K Joshi and Principal Secretary Arvind Kumar. They discussed Unesco's new categories and explored the possibility of Hyderabad being in one of these on Monday. Junhi said that Hyderabad, which was metamorphosing into a mega city, had many challenges to be addressed. Commissioner Dana Kishore urged Junhi to hold a special workshop for GHMC officials to help strengthen activities for conserving places and monuments of historical and tourist interest in Hyderabad.

YSRCP digging its own grave, says BJP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

BJP leaders Kanna Lakshmi Narayana and Purandareswari on Thursday stepped up their tirade against the YSRCP leaders Vijaya Sai Reddy and Jaganmohan Reddy and accused the YSRCP of trying to shift the blame on BJP for the omissions and commissions of the ruling party in the AP.

Purandareswari called cancellation of the PPAs and going in for reverse tendering of the polavaram projects are examples of YSRCP digging its own grave. She accused Jagan of playing mind game. In spite of Center advising the AP government against dishonouring PPAs in a letter, why did Jagan ignore the advice, he questioned. Referring to Vijayasai Reddy's claim that the AP government did everything with blessings from Modi and Amit Shah, she dismissed it as pure lie.

Lokmanya Tilak Express to have halts at Korutla, Metpalli

PNS ■ KORUTLA

The weekly Mumbai-Karimnagar Lokmanya Tilak express train will have halts at Korutla and Metpalli stations from September 1, according to an order issued on Thursday. Earlier, Korutla and Metpalli residents used to travel to Jagtial, which is 35 km away, or to Armoor in Nizamabad district, 50 km away, to catch the train to Mumbai.

Residents of the two towns have been elated as their dream came true at last. Efforts to stage a 'rail roko' to get the train halted at Korutla by pulling chain proved futile because of heavy police bandobust. On number of occasions, the local residents submitted memoranda to GM of SC railway seeking halt for the train at the two places.

Earlier, Kalvakuntla Kavita, former Nizamabad MP, tried to secure a halt for the train at



Local residents had submitted memorandum to GM of SCR on a number of occasions to seek a halt for the train at the two places. Earlier, ex-MP K Kavita tried to secure a halt at Korutla, but failed in the attempt

Korutla, but failed. The BJP MP, Dharmapuri Srinivas, urged Railway Minister Piyush Goyal for a halt to the train at Korutla and Metpalli and persisted in his efforts. As a result, the Minister issued orders to halt the train for a minute at these stations on an experi-

mental basis for six months. The Lokmanya Tilak Express has been extended to Karimnagar on September 26 last year. At that time, the train had halt only at Lingampalli. The BJP MP Arvind submitted a report to the department of railways on the number of

buses being operated from Korutla and Metpalli to Mumbai from these places and explained the Railway Minister the need for the train to have halts at these two places. The Union Minister issued the relevant order responding on this.

Hyd is 27% rain-deficit, rest of state does better

Continued from Page 1

The Met says this will further reduce after the state receives the forecast rain.

On the other hand, districts of Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam, Suryapet, Nalgonda, Ranga Reddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy and Jogulamba Gadwal have received excess rain and are likely to see more showers in the days to come.

For now, the low-pressure area over east Uttar Pradesh and adjoining Bihar persists and is likely to intensify in the next 24 hours, which is likely to bring heavy rain in Telangana, said a Met official.

Armoor in Nizamabad recorded heavy rainfall of 82.3 mm on Thursday, while Mahabubnagar and Vikarabad also received above 64 mm of rain.

TRS strongest party in TS: KTR

Continued from Page 1

The party's village and mandal committees should be constituted by August 30, with SC, STs and BCs being given at least 51% representation, he said.

After the ancillary committees, booth committees, ward committees and basti committees would be constituted, he added. The construction of party offices in all the 30 districts should be over by Dasara, he said.

KTR asked party leaders to refute allegations that are being leveled against TRS by leaders of various other parties. The TRS government had been extending unprecedented medical and health services to the people of the State through Arogyasri scheme, benefiting at least 75 lakh families. Hence, the TRS government need not subscribe to the Centre's Ayushman Bharat Yojana, as it could benefit only 25% of the population.

Unprecedented welfare schemes were being implemented in Telangana, he said. Therefore, the BJP should stop vilifying the State government. The TRS was against countering the saffron party's allegations on a daily basis; so, only at public meetings TRS was giving counters to BJP's charges, he pointed out.

The TRS was ready to face the municipal elections as and when they were held, he said.

The following is a breakdown of the outcome of TRS membership drive: Gajwel-90,575 (first position), Medchal-80,175 (second position), Palakurti - 74,650 (third position), Mulugu-72,262 (fourth position), Mahabubbad-70,475 (fifth position), Sattupalli-67,850 (sixth position), Palair - 69,715 (seventh position), Suryapet-66,875 (eighth position), Siddipet-64,575 (ninth position) and Vardhanapeta - 64,850 (10th position).

SHORT READS

2018 saw dip in tourists visiting HP: CM

SHIMLA: The number of foreign and domestic tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh declined by 10 per cent in the April-June 2018 tourist season as compared to the corresponding period in 2016 and 2017, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has said. As per the data provided by Thakur in the state Assembly on Wednesday, 1.25 lakh foreign tourists visited the state in the tourist season from April to June last year. The number was over ten per cent less as compared to foreigners visiting Himachal Pradesh in the three months in 2016 and 2017. In reply to a question by Congress MLA Sunder Singh Thakur, the chief minister said 1.42 lakh and 1.36 lakh foreign tourists had visited the state from April to June in 2017 and 2016 respectively.

Heavy rains: Tomato prices soar to Rs 80/kg

CHANDIGARH: Prices of tomato and onion have doubled to Rs 80 and Rs 50 per kg in Haryana and Punjab, respectively this week due to supply shortage caused by heavy rains in the region and several other parts of the country, according to traders. Prices of other key vegetables such as peas, cauliflower and beans have also surged sharply as heavy rains damaged crops in both these states and the neighbouring Himachal Pradesh. Onion is selling at around Rs 50 per kg in the two states and their joint capital Chandigarh. "Just a week ago, onion was selling at Rs 20-25 per kg and prices have now doubled."

Three elephants killed after being hit by truck in Odisha

KEONJHAR: Three elephants were killed after being hit by a truck on a national highway in Odisha's Keonjhar district early on Thursday, a forest official said. The pachyderms were crossing NH-20 near Baijodi area under Ghatagaon forest range, when the iron ore-laden truck knocked them down around 3am, he said. "A female elephant, aged around 16, and a one-year-old calf died on the spot, while another female, which had sustained critical injuries, died during treatment," Ashok Kumar Nayak, the Ghatagaon Forest Range Officer, said. Senior officials, including Keonjhar Divisional Forest Officer Santosh Joshi, had rushed to the spot following the incident to provide aid to the injured pachyderm, aged a little over 16, Nayak explained.

PC joins list of high-profile people put behind bars

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi, Aug 22 (PTI) Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram became the latest entrant in the list of high-profile people to have been put behind bars when the CBI arrested him on Wednesday in the INX media case.

The 73-year-old will be questioned in the case which was filed by the agency in 2017, alleging irregularities in the FIPB clearance granted to a media group for receiving overseas funds of Rs 305 crore in 2007 when he was the finance minister.

Chidambaram, who also served as the home minister, was arrested on Wednesday after the Supreme Court decided to hear only on Friday his petition seeking a stay on a Delhi High Court order on Tuesday that dismissed his anticipatory bail plea in the case.

Following are the names of some high-profile people who have been put behind the bars:

Lalu Prasad Yadav: The 71-year-old former Bihar chief minister and railways minister is in jail in Ranchi after being found guilty in multi-crore fodder scam cases.

In April 2019, the apex court dismissed his bail plea and rejected his arguments that he has been in jail for 24 months, saying that in comparison to the 14-year sentence awarded to him, 24 months was nothing.

The three cases in which Prasad has been convicted are related to the over Rs 900-crore fodder scam, which pertains to fraudulent withdrawal of money from treasuries in the Animal Husbandry Department in early 1990s



Chidambaram, who also served as the home minister, was arrested on Wednesday after the Supreme Court decided to hear only on Friday his petition seeking a stay on a Delhi High Court order on Tuesday that dismissed his anticipatory bail plea in the case

when Jharkhand was part of Bihar.

The RJD was in power in the state with Prasad as the chief minister when the scam allegedly took place. He is lodged in the Birsa Munda Central Jail in Ranchi.

J Jayalalithaa: She was arrested in 1996 after Subramanian Swamy, then Janata Party chief, filed a case against her alleging that during her tenure as the Tamil Nadu chief minister from 1991 to 1996, she amassed properties worth Rs 66.65 crore, disproportionate to her known sources of income.

In September 2014, Jayalalithaa and three others

including her aide Sasikala were convicted in the disproportionate assets case. She was sentenced to four years in jail and fined Rs 100 crore.

The AIADMK chief, after securing bail, returned to Chennai in October 2014 after spending 21 days in the Bangalore Central Jail. She died in December 2016 at the age of 68 after a prolonged illness in Chennai.

Bangaru Laxman: The former BJP chief was in 2012 sentenced to four years in jail by a Delhi court for taking a bribe of Rs one lakh in a fictitious arms deal case.

Laxman, born in Andhra Pradesh in 1939, was the pres-

ident of the BJP from 2000 to 2001 and served as a minister of state for railways from 1999 to 2000.

In April 2012, he was held guilty of taking a bribe from fake arms dealers to recommend the Defence Ministry to award them a contract for supplying thermal binoculars to the Army. Bangaru died in 2014 at the age of 74.

A Raja: The 55-year-old former telecom minister and DMK leader was arrested on February 2, 2011 and got bail from the trial court on May 12, 2012 after spending 15 months in Delhi's Tihar jail in the high-profile 2G spectrum scam.

Raja, who was the minister in the Congress-led UPA government when 122 telecom spectrum licences were issued to eight companies in 2008 on first-come-first-serve basis, was acquitted by a special court in 2017.

Kanimozhi: The 51-year-old daughter of DMK chief M Karunanidhi was in jail for six months from May 21, 2011 to November 28, 2011 in the politically-sensitive 2G spec-

PC PRODUCED BEFORE COURT

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader P Chidambaram, arrested by the CBI, was produced before a Delhi High Court Thursday in the INX Media corruption case.

The hearing would take place before Special Judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar.

Soon after entering the courtroom, Chidambaram was seen having discussions with his party leaders and senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Vivek Tankha.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who will represent CBI in the case, is also present in the court.

Chidambaram's family members, including his wife Nalini and son Karti, are also in the courtroom along with other senior advocates including Dayan Krishnan. Heavy security arrange-



ment has been made outside the courtroom.

He was arrested late Wednesday night from his Jor Bagh residence.

The CBI had registered an FIR on May 15, 2017, alleging irregularities in the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) clearance granted to the INX Media group for receiving overseas funds of Rs 305 crore in 2007 during Chidambaram's tenure as the finance minister.

Thereafter, the ED lodged a money laundering case in this regard in 2018.



Chidambaram's arrest depressing: Mamata

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said the arrest of P Chidambaram was "depressing" and alleged that the judiciary was not coming to the help of a "crying" democratic system.

In her first reaction after Chidambaram's arrest on Wednesday evening, Banerjee quoted Rabindranath Tagore and said the "message of justice is crying silently in isolation". "P Chidambaram is an economist, and a former home minister and finance minister.

The manner in which he has been arrested is depressing. There are four pillars of democracy: democratic institutions, Election Commission, media and judicial system. The democratic system of our country is crying, yet the judiciary is not coming to its aid," she said in a statement issued by the Trinamool Congress here. She also alleged that media outlets have become spokespersons of the ruling BJP.

Chidambaram was arrested by the CBI on Wednesday night from his residence here in connection with the INX media corruption case.

Dalit protest: Azad, 95 others arrested

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested 96 persons, including Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad on charges of rioting and unlawful assembly, officials said on Thursday.

Azad will be produced before a court on Thursday, a senior police officer said.

The Dalit leader and around 95 others were detained on Wednesday night from Tughlaqabad area after protest by Dalits against the demolition of a Ravidas temple turned violent, prompting police to resort to "mild lathicharge" and use tear gas to disperse the crowd.

"An FIR has been registered on charges of rioting, unlawful assembly, voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty, causing damage to public property, among others." Chandrashekhar has been arrested along with 95 other protesters," said Devesh Srivastava, joint commissioner of police, Southern range.

The officer said they are maintaining vigil in the area and monitoring the situation.

The protesters turned violent when police did not allow them to proceed to the site of the temple demolished by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) on August 10 on the orders of the Supreme Court.

Lalu's sons back in action after a long time, hit the streets

PNS ■ PATNA

After a prolonged sulk over the Lok Sabha poll debacle for which they indirectly blamed each other, RJD supremo Lalu Prasad's sons- Tejashwi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav- appear to have agreed to come out of their shells and bury their hatchet.

The scions gave up their squabble and hit the streets late Wednesday night here when they staged a demonstration that lasted for several hours in protest against the demolition, by municipal authorities, of a doodh mandi (milk market) in the vicinity of the Patna Junction.

Tej Pratap Yadav, the elder of the two, has for long been alleging that the younger brother surrounded by sycophants was being misled into taking political decisions that were hurting the party.

Tejashwi has refrained from reacting in public but is understood to have been upset over the frequent outbursts of his elder brother whose renegade stance during the Lok Sabha polls is said to have contributed to the party's dismal show in the general elections wherein the RJD, for the first time, failed to win a single seat.

Prasad, who had founded the party in 1997, is away in Ranchi serving sentences in fodder scam cases while his family, which controls the party in his absence, has of late left the cadres confounded with the infighting.

On Wednesday, clamour for a generational change in the



Things appeared to have changed when the brothers hit the streets in protest against about a score of shops being razed in a drive carried out to remove encroachments from the crowded and congested streets that adjoin the railway station

RJD arose with many party legislators speaking out in favour of heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav replacing his ailing and jailed father Lalu Prasad as the national president.

The demand by RJD MLAs could be seen in the backdrop of reports of family feud between Tejashwi and his two siblings active in politics- elder brother Tej Pratap Yadav and eldest sister Misa Bharti, a Rajya Sabha member.

Things appeared to have changed when the brothers hit the streets in protest against about a score of shops being razed in a drive carried out to remove encroachments from the crowded and congested streets that adjoin the railway station.

The dharna in which the brothers were joined by many leaders of their party including MLA, national general secretary and family aide Bhola Yadav, was reminiscent of the colourful politicking that was a characteristic of Lalu Prasad in his hey days, with fiery speeches and impromptu songs.

The leaders and their followers carried their dharna into the thick of the night, braving intermittent showers and mosquitoes and insects that hovered around the water-logged streets.

The stir was called off after a written assurance from the municipal authorities that all the shops will be relocated at a distance of not more than 1.5 kilometres from the railway station.

BMC officials face 50% salary cut if projects delayed

PNS ■ MUMBAI

In a bid to ensure timely completion of civic works, Brihamumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) chief Praveen Pardeshi has recently issued a circular asking the officials to get the projects done in time or else be prepared to lose 50 per cent of their salary.

Apart from the officials, the circular also warned civic contractors that if they failed to meet the deadline, they would also lose 20 per cent of the project cost.

"Pardeshi issued the circular last week, in which he asked the municipal officials engaged in supervising projects to get the works done within the deadline or else they will lose their salary by 50 per cent," a senior civic official said on Thursday.

"The contractors have also been warned that they would lose 20 per cent of the project cost if they fail to meet the deadline. The circular said the reasons cited by the officers and contractors for not meeting the project deadlines are unconvincing and very frivolous," he added.

The circular issued by the civic chief would work as a deterrent and motivate the officials, especially the engineers to complete the projects within the deadlines, he said. The move has been welcomed by activists, who said it would benefit everyone and



The contractors have also been warned that they would lose 20 per cent of the project cost if they fail to meet the deadline

help fix the responsibility. RTI activist Anil Galgali, who has exposed several cases related to alleged corruption in the cash-rich BMC, said, "The civic body spends over Rs 10,000 crore every year on public works, but it has hardly met the deadline of any project."

"On the contrary, the projects are deliberately delayed to escalate its cost. This happens due to unholy nexus between engineers and contractors. Hope this initiative to cut salary would work and break the nexus," he said.

HC seeks CBI reply on UP constable's plea in murder case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Thursday sought CBI's response on a plea by an Uttar Pradesh Police constable challenging framing of charges against him for the alleged murder of the Unnao rape survivor's father and having framed him for possession of illegal arms.

Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva issued notice to the CBI and listed the plea for further consideration on August 30.

The high court also called for digital records of the trial court in the case.

Amir Khan, who is in judicial custody, sought quashing of framing of charges, including murder and criminal conspiracy, against him alleging that the August 13 order was "illegal, improper, prejudicial and against established principles of criminal procedure code".

The trial judge in the impugned proceedings order and charges framed admitted that there is no role of the petitioner in the conspiracy of assaulting/beatings to the survivor's father. Thus, making the police officials including petitioner (Khan) liable for murder is untenable illegal," the plea said.

His counsel argued in the high court that Khan's role was confined to lodging of FIR and that he signed the memo of recovery of weapon.

The woman, allegedly raped by expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in 2017 when she was a minor, is battling for life



His counsel argued in the high court that Khan's role was confined to lodging of FIR and that he signed the memo of recovery of weapon

after a truck rammed into her car in Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly on July 28, killing two of her aunts. Her lawyer was also injured in the accident.

In the case related to her father's death, the trial court on August 13 had charged Sengar and nine others for the offences punishable under sections 302 (murder), 506 (criminal intimidation), 341 (wrongful restraint), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 193 (false evidence) of the IPC and under section 25 of the Arms Act.

The charges framed against them also included sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means), 166 (public servant disobeying law, with intent to cause injury to any person) and 167 (public servant framing an incorrect document with intent to cause injury) of IPC.

The court had also cancelled the bail of three UP police officials -- the then Makhli police station's in-charge Ashok Singh Bhadauria, Sub Inspector Kamta Prasad and Khan -- accused in the case, and sent them into custody after the charge of murder was framed against them.

Khan, in his petition, said that there was no proximity of events in the alleged murder and illegal arms cases and they cannot be clubbed and tried jointly.

The plea claimed that trial court has wrongly clubbed the two cases as one was sessions triable and other was magisterial triable case.

It added that the charge sheet of murder case was supplied to Khan only after framing of charges which was a "grave illegality".

'Cong charges baseless, they want to save face'

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Union Minister D V Sadananda Gowda on Thursday rejected the Congress charge of "witch-hunt" and abuse of investigating agencies over the arrest of P Chidambaram, saying there was no need for the BJP-led Government to resort to such things.

"Practically... what they did (misuse of investigating agencies during the Congress tenure)... now they are suffering from the same phobia D V SADANANDA GOWDA Union Minister



resort to political vengeance, we would have done earlier (in the previous term).

Now everything is over, we are in absolute power and the party has got more (bigger) mandate.

Now is there any necessity for anybody to (do it)?, Gowda

asked. The Congress is levelling charges against the government as "they want to save face", he said.

Earlier on Thursday, the Congress came down heavily on the BJP-led government over the arrest of

Chidambaram, accusing it of using the CBI and the ED as "personal revenge-seeking departments".

Senior Congress leader and former Finance Minister Chidambaram was arrested last night amid high drama by the CBI and he spent the night at a agency guest house.

"Over the last two days India witnessed the broad daylight murder of democracy as also the rule of law," said Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala.

He further said that while many accused in the INX Media case have not been arrested, a senior politician has been arrested without any legal basis.

"Government is using CBI,

ED as personal revenge-seeking departments for the party in power, as also those ruling the country", Surjewala charged.

Denying the Congress charges as "baseless", Gowda said: "This is not the time (to resort to such tactics) because we have got a beautiful mandate not only in Parliament, but in various corners (of the country), people are praising (the Modi government)".

"All party people (leaders from different parties) are joining with us (BJP). What's the fun in simply levelling some false allegations against our... (political rivals). It's a totally baseless allegation", Gowda, a former Karnataka Chief Minister, added.

Opposition parties stage stir, demand release of J&K leaders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition parties, including the Congress, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the DMK, staged a protest at Jantar Mantar here on Thursday, demanding the release of the political leaders under detention in Jammu and Kashmir.

Congress leader P Chidambaram's son Karti also joined the protest. Chidambaram, a former Union finance minister, was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday night in connection with a money-laundering case related to INX Media.

Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, CPI general secretary D Raja, Samajwadi Party leader Ramgopal Yadav, Loktantrik Janata Dal's Sharad Yadav, RJD's Manoj Jha and TMC's Dinesh Trivedi were among those who took part in the protest.

In a resolution passed during the protest, the opposition parties said as a consequence of abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution



In a resolution passed during the protest, the opposition parties said as a consequence of abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution without holding consultations with the people of the state or their representatives, an undeclared state of Emergency had come to force in the Valley

without holding consultations with the people of the state or their representatives, an undeclared state of Emergency had come to force in the Valley.

"We stand by the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their difficult hour. The decisions taken by the Union government to impose a complete commu-

nication blackout and the continued detention of former chief ministers and political leaders...members of civil society and even innocent citizens running into thousands are matters of serious concern.

"There has been a chilling crackdown on free speech and the right of assembly. Such actions go against the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India and need to be immediately reversed. We demand immediate release of all public representatives of mainstream political parties and innocent citizens," the resolution said.

The leaders raised slogans demanding restoration of normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir, resumption of telecommunication services in the Valley and immediate release of all political leaders who have been detained.

The National Conference, whose leaders Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah are among those detained in the Valley after the Centre revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status on August 5, also took part in the protest.

Shehla Rashid reasserts claims on J&K situation

OFFERS TO GIVE EVIDENCE IF ARMY INITIATES PROBE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Political activist Shehla Rashid on Thursday asserted that she stands by her comments about alleged human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, as she got into an argument with journalists over the issue. On August 18, Shehla Rashid had claimed that the Indian Army was indiscriminately picking up men, raiding houses and torturing people in Jammu and Kashmir.

Asked about evidence for her controversial claims, which drew sharp reactions from the Indian Army, Shehla Rashid said, "I will give the evidence when the Indian Army constitutes an inquiry. I have given you my statement. Has the Army initiated any inquiry?"

"All I have said is based on authentic conversations with people who have come from Kashmir and have absolutely no reason to lie. I have given a lot of statements not just one. People are running out of LPG cylinders, cooking gas in Kashmir," she said. The former Vice President of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union said if the Army initiates



The former Vice President of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union said if the Army initiates an inquiry, she will depose before them and "will give them the particulars of the incidents... where they have happened"

an inquiry, she will depose before them and "will give them the particulars of the incidents... where they have happened."

"Let them initiate an inquiry and if what I am saying is found to be true, then the Indian Army should give an assurance that the guilty will be punished," she said.

When asked by a reporter to give evidence for the claims she made on Twitter, Shehla Rashid said, "Why should I give evidence to you? Why shouldn't I tweet? Has it been banned under the Modi government?" "You should go to Kashmir and show what's happening on the ground.

Indulging in hooliganism here will not serve any purpose. You are not showing what I am saying. I have not indulged in any rumour mongering. I am absolutely confident. I stand by my statement," she said.

"There's torture... gross human rights violations happening in Kashmir. If you want to become the government's spokesperson, please be. I am not a government spokesperson. Please go and seek a post in the BJP headquarters and contest elections," she said to one of the reporters.

SHORT READS



Ajay Kumar Bhalla is new home secretary

NEW DELHI: Ajay Kumar Bhalla, currently serving as an officer on special duty in the home ministry, was appointed as the new Union home secretary on Thursday, an official order said. The Appointments Committee of the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved Bhalla's appointment as the new home secretary. He replaces Rajiv Gauba, who was appointed as the new cabinet secretary on Wednesday. Bhalla, a 1984-batch Assam-Meghalaya cadre IAS officer, served as the Union power secretary, before being appointed as an officer on special duty on July 24. He will have a fixed two-year tenure till August 2021 as the home secretary.

Puri moves Delhi court to surrender in chopper scam

NEW DELHI: Businessman Ratul Puri, who was arrested in a bank fraud case, moved an application before a Delhi court Thursday saying he wants to surrender in the money laundering case related to the AgustaWestland chopper scam. Puri, nephew of Madhya Pradesh CM Kamal Nath, filed the plea before Special Judge Arvind Kumar, who has put up the matter for Friday. The court had Wednesday refused to cancel a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against him in the money laundering case related to the chopper scam. Puri is already in the custody of Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the alleged bank fraud case related to his company Moser Baer. The application, moved advocate Vijay Aggarwal, also prayed for the production of Puri in the court so that he can surrender before the judge.

Now, Kerala women to drive govt vehicles

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Breaking yet another glass ceiling, the Kerala government has decided to appoint women drivers in government offices and public-sector establishments. A cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday took the decision, which would end the decades-long monopoly of men in this sector. Women would be appointed as drivers as part of the government's decision to ensure gender equality in all walks of society. "The cabinet has decided to induct women as drivers in government services and public-sector units. For this, the existing recruitment rules will be amended," an official release said. The government had recently formed the first women battalion with over 550 members as part of efforts to enhance representation of women in the police force.



TN Govt honours ISRO chairman with Dr A P J Abdul Kalam award

PNS ■ CHENNAI

ISRO Chairman K Sivan was on Thursday honoured with the Tamil Nadu government's Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Award by Chief Minister K Palaniswami.

The award was earlier announced in recognition of Sivan's stellar work in the promotion of science and technology.

Sivan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, was originally scheduled to receive the award here during the Independence Day celebrations on August 15, but could not do so.

The government had earlier said Sivan would receive the award from Palaniswami on a later date.

Accordingly, the ISRO chief met Palaniswami at the Secretariat here, where the chief minister presented him with the award, which carries an eight gram gold medal, Rs five lakh in cash and a citation.

The Kalam award is to honour those who work for promoting scientific growth,

humanities and students' welfare and the awardees should hail from Tamil Nadu.

Under Sivan's tutelage, ISRO had successfully launched Chandrayaan 2, the second mission to the moon on July 22 and he was the chief architect of SITARA, a 6D trajectory simulation software, according to the citation, which also hailed him as "Rocket Man".

The 62-year-old Sivan was the first graduate in his family who got a Bachelor's degree in engineering from the Madras Institute of Technology in 1980.

Completing his Master's degree in aerospace engineering from the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru, he later joined ISRO and was a recipient of several awards including the Dr Vikram Sarabhai Research Award (1999).

Following the death of former President A P J Abdul Kalam in 2015, late Chief Minister J Jayalithaa had then announced an award in his name.

'CBI scaling walls of ex-FM's home an insult to India'

PNS ■ CHENNAI

DMK President M K Stalin on Thursday lashed out at CBI officials for scaling the walls of Congress leader P Chidambaram's bungalow at Delhi on Wednesday to gain entry, saying he considered it as an "insult to India".

Stalin, whose DMK is an ally of the Congress, backed Chidambaram, reiterating his charge of "political vendetta" behind the former Union Minister's arrest.

"I saw on TV, the CBI officers scaling the walls (at Chidambaram's Delhi residence). I consider it as an insult to India. It is condemnable," he told reporters here. On Wednesday, a CBI team had first knocked at the gates of Chidambaram's Jor Bagh residence to gain entry, but finding no response, had scaled the nearly five-ft high walls to get inside.

Once three officers reached inside, they opened the gates to allow entry to other team members waiting outside.

Responding to a query on CBI's handling of the entire



Chidambaram episode, Stalin recalled that he had already dubbed it as "political vendetta" on Wednesday.

He said Chidambaram had appeared before the agencies concerned earlier when summoned by them in connection with the case.

Stalin also pointed out that the Supreme Court has decided to hear on Friday the Congress leader's petition, seeking a stay of the Delhi High Court order that had dismissed his anticipatory bail plea.

"His arrest which has happened in the meantime has an intention of political vendetta,"

Ex-HM spends night at CBI HQ which he inaugurated in 2011

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Former Home Minister P. Chidambaram, arrested by the CBI in the INX Media case.

The senior Congress leader, who himself inaugurated the present CBI headquarters in 2011, had to spend Wednesday night in the same building after the agency arrested him over alleged money laundering in the INX Media case.

Chidambaram was then the Union Home Minister during the UPA-II government led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He served as Home Minister during November 2008 to July 2012.

The senior Congress leader was the key guest along with Manmohan Singh during the June 30, 2011 inauguration of the new building of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) headquarters on south Delhi's Lodhi Road.

Chidambaram, known as a master strategist of the Congress, was arrested and taken to the CBI headquarters by the agency sleuths on Wednesday night after a day-long drama that saw agency officials scaling the walls of his Jor Bagh residence here, minutes after his press conference at the party headquarters where he said he was "not hiding from the law but seeking protection of the law."

The seven-time Lok Sabha MP and now Rajya Sabha member, Chidambaram, the CBI and the ED claimed was untraceable since the Delhi High Court on Tuesday rejected his anticipatory bail plea in the INX Media case prompting him to approach the Supreme Court challenging the order and seeking relief from arrest.

live demonstration of fate taking a twist can be seen in the case of former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, arrested by the CBI in the INX Media case.

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Prosecution seeks 5-day custody to grill Chidambaram

The prosecution on Thursday sought five-day custody of former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, who was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday night in connection with the INX media case.

The custody was sought by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta in the Rouse Avenue court where Chidambaram was brought under heavy security from the CBI headquarters. During the court hearing, the

prosecution said that the investigation has revealed that a payment of \$5 million was made by Indrani Mukherjea, an accused in the case.

The prosecution also argued that when he was shown the said document, Chidambaram remained silent and evasive. It stressed on the need to confront him further with more documents. Mehta has also cited the Delhi High Court order that denied Chidambaram anticipatory bail and called him a 'kingpin' in the INX Media case.

INX case: P Chidambaram's wife Nalini, son Karti arrive at Delhi court

Chidambaram's wife Nalini and son Karti along with senior lawyers representing the former Union minister arrived at the Rouse Avenue Court complex here on Thursday ahead of the hearing in the INX Media corruption case in which he was arrested Wednesday night. Congress party leaders and senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek M. Singhvi, Vivek Tankha and Dayan Krishnan, among others have also reached the court complex.

The CBI had arrested Chidambaram Wednesday night after high-drama with the agency officials scaling the walls to gain entry in his posh residence in tony neighbourhood of the Jor Bagh area. The arrest came after the Delhi High Court removed protection from his arrest and rejected his anticipatory bail plea. Chidambaram, 73, who spent a quiet night at the agency guest house in suite number 5 on the ground floor of the headquar-

ters, was offered a breakfast in the morning before questioning began at around 10.20 am, officials said. He will be taken to the special CBI court during the day where the agency is likely to seek his 14-day custody, they said. The CBI had registered an FIR on May 15, 2017, alleging irregularities in the FIPB clearance granted to the INX Media group for receiving overseas funds of Rs 305 crore in 2007 during Chidambaram's tenure as the finance minister.

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Man gets 25 yrs' imprisonment for raping teenage girl

PNS ■ SIMDEGA (JHARKHAND)

A Jharkhand court has sentenced a 56-year-old man to 25 years of imprisonment for raping a 16-year-old girl in Simdega district last year. Additional District Judge (1), Neeraj Kumar Srivastav, pronounced the judgment on Wednesday after convicting Stanilus Bah under sections of the POCSO Act and the IPC. A fine of Rs 60,000 was also imposed on the convict. He will have to undergo a jail term of another year if he fails to pay the fine. Additional Public Prosecutor Subhas Prasad said. On October 26, 2018, the mother of the 16-year-old girl registered a police complaint with the Jaldega Police Station, accusing Bah of raping her daughter four to five months before the complaint was lodged. In her complaint, she said the man used to threaten her daughter of dire consequences if she revealed the incident to anyone.

3 arrested, 2 detained in terror funding case

PNS ■ SATNA

Madhya Pradesh Police have arrested three persons and detained two others in connection with an alleged terror funding racket, an official said on Thursday.

The accused made several calls to foreign countries and had a number of transactions using different bank accounts, Superintendent of Police Riyaz Iqbal told PTI.

"Three persons, Balram Singh, Sunil Singh and Shubham Tiwari, were arrested and two others detained on Wednesday night in this connection," he said.

The official did not reveal names of those detained. All five have been handed over to the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) for further probe, he said.

"The accused were making calls to foreign countries. They were also using various social networking sites and applications for communication. Besides, they made several transactions using different



bank accounts," he said. They were also having links in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar, he said, adding that the ATS would further investigate the case.

Balram Singh and one of those detained were earlier also arrested by the ATS in February 2017 in connection with an espionage racket and terror funding, Iqbal said.

According to sources, Balram Singh was currently out on bail. In February 2017, 11 people, including Balram Singh and one of those detained on Wednesday, were arrested by the ATS for their alleged links to an espionage racket being run from Pakistan to collect strategic information.

Ordinary leave period of Nalini extended by three weeks

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Wednesday extended by another three weeks, the ongoing ordinary leave of Nalini Sriharan, a life convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. The leave period expires on August 25.

A division bench comprising Justices M M Sundresh and M Nirmal Kumar said the same conditions ordered by it earlier would apply during this period.

The court had on Tuesday directed the Tamil Nadu government to file its reply to Nalini's plea, seeking extension of her ongoing ordinary leave by 30 days from August 25.

Nalini had submitted that she has moved the court as the state DIG Prisons in his August 13 letter had rejected her representation for extension of the leave for another 30 days.

Earlier last month, allowing a petition by Nalini, the court had granted her 30 days ordinary leave for making arrangements



Nalini had submitted that she has moved the court as the state DIG Prisons in his August 13 letter had rejected her representation for extension of the leave for another 30 days

for her daughter's marriage. After being released from the Central Prison in Vellore on July 25, Nalini has been residing at Sathuvachari there. Lodged in prison for over 27

years, she had originally sought a six-month leave to make arrangements for her daughter's marriage.

During the hearing of Nalini's leave plea, the Public Prosecutor had submitted that the "Tamil Nadu Suspension of Sentence Rules 1982" provides for a maximum 30 day period as ordinary leave (parole) for a convict at a point of time and hence the court can consider granting leave within this limit.

The court in its order had noted that Rule 22 speaks about extension of 30 days' leave, but it can be exercised only after the initial grant.

Nalini, in her petition said that despite her sincere efforts, she was not able to complete the arrangements for the marriage of her daughter within the leave period. Nalini and six other people are serving life imprisonment in the case related to the assassination of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by a suicide bomber at an election rally in Sriperumbudur on May 21, 1991.

Vellapally held in UAE, CM writes to Jaishankar

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Thushar Vellapally, President of Bharath Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS), a coalition partner of the BJP-led NDA in Kerala, has been arrested in UAE in connection with an alleged Rs 19 crore cheque bounce case.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday wrote to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, seeking his intervention in the matter.

Vellapally is also the Vice President of the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam, a prominent organisation of the backward Ezhava community in the state. The arrest was on a complaint from N Abdulla of Thrissur in an alleged Rs 19 crore cheque bounce case of 2009 when Vellapally was running a construction business in Ajman in the UAE, according to media reports.

Thushar Vellapally had unsuccessfully contested as the NDA candidate from Wayanad in the Lok Sabha elections in April 23 this year, in which



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had emerged triumphant. In the letter, a copy of which was released to the media here, Vijayan expressed concern about the well being and health of Thushar Vellapally.

"News channels have reported the arrest of Shri Thushar Vellapally, Vice President of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) yogam at Ajman in United Arab Emirates. I express concern about his well-being and health while in custody. All possible help within the limits of law needs to be made available to him. I request your kind personal attention and intervention in this regard", Vijayan said in the letter.

Macron, Johnson set for bruising Brexit talks

AFP ■ PARIS

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson heads to Paris on Thursday for talks with French President Emmanuel Macron who is expected to rebuff his last-ditch efforts to renegotiate the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

Macron, who has said previously he is happy to be the "bad guy" on Brexit, roundly rejected Johnson's calls to scrap a key plank of a deal negotiated between the EU and former British premier Theresa May.

"Renegotiation on the terms currently proposed by the British is not an option that exists, and that has always been made clear by (EU) President Tusk," Macron told reporters on Wednesday evening.

At stake is the so-called "backstop", an arrangement guaranteeing that border checks will not return between EU member Ireland and Northern Ireland which is part of Britain.

Johnson considers the backstop to be "anti-democratic" and an affront to British sovereignty because it will require London to keep its regulations aligned with the EU



French President Emmanuel Macron talks to Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson during their meeting at the Elysee Palace on Thursday

during a transition exit period. The EU argues this is necessary to avoid the re-emergence of border checkpoints which could lead to a return of fighting on the divided island where anti-British violence has claimed thousands of lives.

More evidence of deadlock on Thursday would raise the chances of a "no deal" Brexit, which France now sees as the most likely scenario despite the expectation that it will wreak economic damage on Britain and the EU.

"The EU and member

states need to take the possibility of a 'no deal' outcome much more seriously than before," a senior EU official told reporters in Brussels on Thursday on condition of anonymity.

The Paris visit is the second leg of Johnson's first foreign trip since he became prime minister a month ago.

On Wednesday, he told German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin that the backstop has "grave defects for a sovereign, democratic country like the UK" and insisted the provision "has to go".

US raps China for 'escalation' in South China Sea

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The United States on Thursday sharpened its criticism of China's activities in disputed areas of the South China Sea, slamming an "escalation" in efforts to intimidate other claimants such as Vietnam.

China redeployed a government-owned survey vessel -- with armed escorts -- into the waters off Vietnam earlier this month, the US said.

Hanoi says those waters are part of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

The move could reignite a spat between Beijing and Vietnam over rights to the resource-rich waters in the South China Sea. Other countries in Southeast Asia also have claimed parts of the sea.

"The United States is deeply concerned that China is continuing its interference with Vietnam's long-standing oil and gas activities in its EEZ," State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortogus said.

In a statement, she called the deployment of the survey vessel "an escalation by Beijing in its efforts to intimidate other claimants out of developing resources in the South China Sea."

"This calls into serious question China's commitment... to the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes," she added. China claims its presence in the area predates that of the other claimants, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei, and hence Beijing asserts sovereignty over several disputed island chains.

The South China Sea also features key shipping lanes for global maritime trade.

The United States, which is locked in a trade dispute with Beijing, regularly criticises China's militarisation of the South China Sea, which Washington sees as a way to establish its dominance.

"In recent weeks, China has taken a series of aggressive steps to interfere with ASEAN claimants' long-standing, well-established economic activities," Ortogus said, referring to member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The US said these actions were intended to "coerce" the countries to "reject partnerships with foreign oil and gas firms, and to work only with China's state-owned enterprises."

China 'will not sit idly by' over US arms sale to Taiwan

AP ■ BEIJING

A senior Chinese officer says the country "will not sit idly by" if the US proceeds with a sale of advanced F-16V fighter jets to Taiwan, and warned of other potential countermeasures in addition to punishing foreign firms involved in the deal.

Col. Chen Rongdi, chief of the Institute of War Studies at the Academy of Military Sciences, said at a defense

forum Thursday that Beijing considered the sale a violation of previous US commitments to China regarding the island it considers its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

He did not elaborate on what additional measures China might take.

Beijing has repeatedly said it will levy sanctions against US companies linked to a planned USD 8 billion sale and demanded Washington cancel it immediately.

Iran's Prez says 'talks are useless' in dealing with US

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's President struck a muscular tone on dealings with the US, saying Thursday that "talks are useless" as Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers crumbles further. President Hassan Rouhani made the comment in a speech in Tehran during the unveiling of the Bavar-373, a long-range surface-to-air missile system that he described as an improvement to the Russian S-300.

"Now that our enemies do not accept logic, we cannot respond with logic," Rouhani said in the televised speech.

He added: "When the enemy launches a missile against us, we cannot give a speech and say: 'Mr. Rocket, please do not hit our country and our innocent people. Rocket-launching sir, if you can please hit a button and self-destruct the missile in the air.'"

On Wednesday, Iran's state TV reported that the Bavar-373 is able to recognize up to 100 targets at a same time and confront them with six different weapons.

Since 1992, Iran has developed a homegrown defense industry that has produced light and heavy weapons ranging from mortars and torpedoes to tanks and submarines.

Merkel gives Britain until Oct 31 for Brexit solution

AFP ■ THE HAGUE

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday that Britain could have until the day of its scheduled EU departure to avoid a chaotic no-deal Brexit, clarifying that she had not set London a 30-day deadline. Merkel had appeared to lay down the 30-day rule to solve the vexed issue of the Irish border "backstop" when she met British Prime Minister Boris Johnson in Berlin on Wednesday.

"I said that what you want to do in three or two years, you

can do in 30 days -- or rather, you would have to say; you can do it by October 31," Merkel said at a press conference in The Hague with Dutch premier Mark Rutte.

"So it's not about 30 days, but they were symbolic for the fact that you can do it in a short period of time."

Merkel said she was giving the new date "because Great Britain said they would like to leave the European Union on 31 October."

"And until then we have to work on it -- work on it if the will exists on both sides."

The German leader said the aim was to find a regime that both respects the two-decade old peace agreement in the British province of Northern Ireland "and at the same time we can ensure the integrity of the (EU's) internal market."

In Berlin on Wednesday night, Merkel had appeared to give London its biggest glimmer of hope in weeks when she said that "we have said we would probably find it in the next two years, but maybe we can do it in the next 30 days, why not?"

Hong Kong students plan class boycott for protest demands

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong university student leaders said on Thursday they'll call for a boycott of the start of classes to pressure the government to respond to the protest movement gripping the city since June.

Student union leaders from 10 universities said they want students to skip the first two weeks of classes in September.

They vowed to escalate their action if the city's Beijing-backed leader, Carrie Lam, fails to respond by Sept. 13.

Young people have been at the forefront of the Chinese city's protest movement, which was sparked by calls for the withdrawal of an unpopular extradition bill.

The bill, which would have allowed suspects to be extradited to mainland China where the judiciary is not independent.

Second day of Italy crisis talks after PM resigns

Rome: Italy's President began a second day of talks Thursday aimed at solving the political crisis shaking the country after the disintegration of the populist government.

President Sergio Mattarella was set to meet all the main parties, including the anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) and far-right League. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte resigned Tuesday after months of alliance sniping and a bid by League leader and Interior Minister Matteo Salvini to force a snap election, just 14 months after coming to power. AFP

Turkey to host Syria summit with Russia, Iran on Sept 16

AFP ■ ANKARA

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will host his Russian and Iranian counterparts for a summit on Syria in Ankara on September 16, the presidential spokesman said.

Despite being on opposing sides in the Syrian conflict, Syria regime backers Iran and Russia have worked closely with rebel supporter Turkey to find a political solution.

"The president will host a three-way summit with the participation of Russia and Iran in Ankara," spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said late Wednesday.

The announcement of the meeting between President Vladimir Putin, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Erdogan comes at a time when Syrian forces have made advances into the last rebel stronghold of Idlib in Syria's northwest.

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Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Ruchika Sharma/ Bhavna Sharma/ LBNOD00002050883	Flat No. 549, Second Floor "Akme Homes" Block Derby, Akme Polis, Nh 95 Ludhiana Chandigarh Road, Village Jandialia Ludhiana-141001 Punjab / Aug 16, 2019	July 31, 2015 Rs. 28,62,120/-	Del/Ncr
2.	Jasbir Singh Mann/ Rakesh/ LBNOD00002067544	Unit No. 531, SF On Second Floor, "Akme Homes" Derby Tower, Akme Township Nh 95 Ludhiana Chandigarh Road, Jandialia Ludhiana- 141001 Punjab/ Aug 16, 2019	June 29, 2015 Rs. 32,25,747/-	Del/Ncr
3.	Rajeev Kumar Jain/ Sandeep Gaur/ LBGUR00002061286	Unit No. 551, FF & SF, "Akme Homes", Akme Township Nh 95 Ludhiana Chandigarh Road, Jandialia Ludhiana-141001/ Aug 16, 2019	June 29, 2015 Rs. 51,43,357/-	Del/Ncr
4.	Raj Kumar/ Amita Devi/ LBGUR00002077645	Unit No.531, GF, "Akme Homes" At Akme Township Nh 95 Block Derby Ludhiana Chandigarh Road, Jandialia Ludhiana-141005 Punjab/ Aug 16, 2019	July 31, 2015 Rs. 32,80,734/-	Del/Ncr
5.	Shanu Gupta/ Shree Sai Jewellers/ Sonya Gupta/ LBDEL00002053679	Flat No.532-(GF & FF) On The Ground & First Floor "Akme Homes" Block Derby, Akme PO-LIS, Nh 95 Ludhiana Chandigarh Road, Village Jandialia Ludhiana-141001 Punjab/ Aug 16, 2019	December 31, 2015 Rs. 69,01,673/-	Del/Ncr
6.	Shiv Vishnoi/ Harpreet Kaur/ LBGUR00002048432	Flat No. 550, Second Floor "Akme Homes" Block Derby, Akme Polis, Nh-95 Ludhiana Chandigarh Road, Village Jandialia Ludhiana-141001 Punjab / Aug 16, 2019	December 31, 2015 Rs. 43,50,446/-	Del/Ncr
7.	Vinay Dixit/ Prabha Dixit/ LBNOD00002056380	Flat No. - 534- GF- FF- SF On The Ground, 1st And 2nd Floor Akme Homes Block Derby, Akme Polis NH-95 Ludhiana- Chandigarh Road Village Jandialia, Ludhiana Punjab, Ludhiana-141005/ August 16, 2019	July 31, 2015 Rs. 88,05,471/-	Del/Ncr
8.	Richa Rathil/ Ashish Rathil/ LBNOD00002066925	Flat No. - 525 SF On The Second Floor Akme Homes At Akme Polis NH- 95 Block Derby Ludhiana- Chandigarh Road Village Jandialia, Ludhiana Punjab, Ludhiana- 141005/ August 16, 2019	July 31, 2015 Rs. 36,33,984/-	Del/Ncr
9.	Sameer Sharma/ Ruchika/ LBGUR00002118907	Flat No. - 510 SF On The Second Floor Akme Homes Akme Polis Nh-95 Ludhiana- Chandigarh Road Village Jandialia, Ludhiana Punjab, Ludhiana-141005/ August 16, 2019	August 31, 2015 Rs. 31,26,219/-	Del/Ncr
10.	Abhishek Gupta/ Neha/ LBNOD00002062677	Flat No. - 532 SF, 2nd Floor Akme Homes Block Derby, Akme Polis NH-95 Ludhiana- Chandigarh Road Village Jandialia, Ludhiana Punjab, Ludhiana-141005/ August 16, 2019	August 31, 2015 Rs. 32,86,786/-	Del/Ncr
11.	Mahendra Kumar/ Meena Verma/ LBDEL00002048071	Flat No. - 508 SF On The Second Floor Akme Homes Akme Polis, Nh-95 Ludhiana- Chandigarh Road Village Jandialia, Ludhiana Punjab, Ludhiana-141001/ August 16, 2019	December 31, 2015 Rs. 32,60,897/-	Del/Ncr
12.	Vivek Mehrotra/ Shweta Mehrotra/ LBNOD00002073190	Flat No. - 530 (GF-FF-SF), Block- Derby Akme Township Ludhiana/ August 16, 2019	April 22, 2016 Rs. 92,27,293/-	Del/Ncr
13.	Vivek Mehrotra/ Shweta Mehrotra/ LBNO00002073188	Flat No. - 529 SF, Block- Derby Akme Township Ludhiana/ August 16, 2019	April 22, 2016 Rs. 26,69,837/-	Del/Ncr

The above-mentioned borrowers(s) guarantor(s) are hereby given a 30 days Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : 23-08-2019
 Place: Delhi/ NCR

Sd/-
 Authorized Officer
 ICICI Bank Limited

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Expression of Interest (EOI)

No.: 23AC/EOI/Non Plastic/NZM/2019 Date: .08.2019

Delhi Division, Northern Railway invites "Expression of Interest" from Entrepreneurs/Sole proprietorships/Partnerships/Limited Liability Partnerships/Companies/ Cooperative societies/NGOs for free supply of biodegradable/Oxo-biodegradable/eco-friendly Sustainable alternatives for single-use plastics and other plastic-based food packaging materials used at Catering units/stalls of Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station for a period of 1 year. The detailed information regarding EOI is available on the website of Northern Railway www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in. Last date of submission of EOI is upto 15.00 hrs. on 05.09.2019. 2705/2019

Serving Customers with a Smile

Perfect Buildwell (P) Ltd.

ZARA AAVAAS

Sector - 104, Gurugram (Haryana) Affordable Group Housing Project License No. 12 of 2014

List of defaulters who have not made payment till date in spite of reminder. The successful applicant may deposit their installment along with applicable interest on or before 2nd September, 2019, failing which their allotment shall be cancelled without any further notice and 5% of the Total Cost of the Flat shall be deducted and balance shall be refunded to the applicant without any further claims.

LIST OF DEFAULTERS	
1 BHK 301 Sq. Ft.	2 BHK 498 Sq. Ft.
Unit No.	Unit No.
8021	
9014	1061
14042	

Note:-
 1. All payments should be made in favour of M/s Zara Aavaas - Perfect Buildwell (P) Ltd.
 2. Please mention your Booking No., Name and Phone No. on the back of Pay Order/Demand Draft.
 3. All payment should be made at our Branch Off. 2nd Floor, E-597, Greater Kailash-II, New Delhi-110048.
 4. In case of any clarifications you may get in touch at 40641100-88 or you can mail us at E-mail: info@perfectbuildwell.com
 5. The above mentioned applicants can ignore the notice if already paid subject to their intimation.

The Executive Engineer, LTV Division, PWD(R&B), Manu, Dhalai Tripura invites e-tender against press NIT no.- 03/EE/LTV/PWD/M/2019-20, Date:- 07/08/2019

For "Proposed construction of 12(twelve) Nos. Staff Quarters building [Type-I quarter-04 units (one block-twin double storey), Type-II quarter-04 units (one block-twin double storey) and Type-III quarter-04 units (one block-twin double storey)] at Manu Community Health Centre (CHC), L.T. Valley Sub-division under Dhalai District, Tripura/SH: Building portion including internal water supply, Sanitary installation, Sewage and Drainage works (2nd CALL).

DNIT No: ACE/Project Unit/PWD(Buildings)/DNIT/43/2018-19

With Estimated cost: ₹ 2,25,17,830.00, Earnest Money: ₹ 2,25,17,800 Time of Completion-18 (eighteen) months. Last Date of bidding for bids -05/09/2019 upto 15.00Hrs.

For more details kindly visit: <https://tripuratenders.gov.in>

Sd/-
 (E. P. Debbarma)
 Executive Engineer
 LTV Division, PWD (R&B)
 Manu, Dhalai, Tripura

ICA/C-867/2019-20

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Coaching, Northern Railway, Delhi division, New Delhi invites e-tender for the following work: 1. Name of work with its location: Installation and operation of 44 Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) at 30 Railway Stations over Delhi Division for five years. 2. E-tender Notice Number on IREPS: Publicity ATM/118-2019 to Publicity ATM/161-2019-44 tenders. 3. Approximate cost of work: As per NIT on ireps.gov.in 4. Date of opening of Tender : 16.09.2019 at 11:00 hrs 5. Cost of Tender document & 18% GST : As per NIT on ireps.gov.in 6. Earnest Money Deposit : As per NIT on ireps.gov.in 7. Website particulars where complete details of tender document can be seen : www.ireps.gov.in No.: 3PUB/Tender/ATM/DLI-DIV/2018 Date : 16.08.2019 2708/19

Serving Customers With A Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE (E-TENDER)

For and on behalf of President of India, the Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer/ Freight, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-tender for following work from experienced and capable tenderers.

1. Tender No.	197-S/181/Hiring of Truck/CC-9T/TKD/19/MC-IV
2. Name of work	Hiring of Full body Truck (Carrying capacity -9T) at Wagon Care Centre, TKD for transportation of Railway material between depot, over Delhi Division and JUDW for two years.
3. Advertised Tender Value	Rs. 23,84,025/- (including GST & ECC)
4. Earnest Money in favour of Sr. DFM/NR, New Delhi	Rs. 47,700/- (Note: It should be in the form of net banking or gateway only. FDR not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS)
5. Date & time of submission of tender bid	Upto 20.09.2019 at 12:00 hrs.
6. Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

No. 197-S/181/Hiring of Truck/CC-9T/TKD/19/MC-IV dated : 21.08.2019 2714/19

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

UJVN LIMITED

H.O. "Ujjwal" Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephone:- 0135-2763508, 2763808, Fax: 0135-2763507, CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, website: www.uttarakhandajvnydvt.com

Time Extension Notice

The last date for submission and opening of tender specification no. 04/EE(E&M-J)/LP/2019-20 (Operation & maintenance of 33/11 KV Lakhwar substation) invited by Executive Engineer (E&M-I), Lakhwar Project, Dakpathar is hereby extended as under -

Last Date for downloading of tender document - 30/08/2019
 Last date for submitting the tender Documents - 31/08/2019 up to 6:00 Hrs.
 Due date for opening of tender Documents - 03/09/2019 at 11:00 Hrs.
 All other terms & conditions will remain unchanged.
 पत्र सं. 454 / दिनांक: 21.08.2019 Executive Engineer (E&M-I)
 "AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

WESTERN RAILWAY

VARIOUS WORKS

Sr. No.	Tender Notice No. & Date	Name of work	Tender Cost in (₹)	EMD (₹)
1	BCT/19-20/215 dt. 21/08/19	Virar- Surat Section:- Conducting "Continuous Scour Monitoring" of foundations of Bridge No. 92 Between station of VTN-SAH Section of Mumbai Central Division "using Sonar Echo-rang technology" by Airmar Echorange SS Smart sensor of similar equipment on trial basis & submitting continuous monitoring data, analysis and preparation/ submission of detailed reports of continuous scour monitoring data, generating alarms/SMS alerts and validations of reports with grounds levels.	38,38,464/-	76,800/-
2	BCT/19-20/216 dt. 21/08/19	Virar- Surat Section:- ADEN/Valsad (i) TRR(P)= 7.274km TSR(P)=7.683. (ii) Thick Web Switch Renewal (iii) Casual renewal of rails for a section of under ADEN-BL (iv) Painting of AT weld collars & rails under ADEN/Valsad Section.	3,27,38,108.47	3,13,700/-
3	BCT/19-20/217 dt. 21/08/19	Virar- Surat Section:- ADEN/Valsad (i) Complete Track Renewal of existing 60kg rails on PRC sleepers at 1660 No./km including deep screening and recoumpment of ballast to 300mm on various location i.e Total CTR(P)= 5.854km, CTR(S)= 3.110kms. (ii) Deep Screening of P&C (iii) TRR= 56.04km & TBR= 4.523km (iv) Rectification of bed layouts and TBR of P&C by use of T-28, JCB, Crane etc. under ADEN/Valsad Section.	3,16,55,349.83	3,08,300/-

Sr. No. 1, Date of opening : 19.09.2019 (15.30 hrs.), Sr. No. 2 & 3, Date of opening : 18.09.2019 (15.30 hrs.). For more details please visit www.ireps.gov.in. Manual offers will not be considered.

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly) Follow us on: twitter.com/WesternRly

GLOBE TROTTER

EXTREMISTS KILL 5 SOLDIERS IN MALI

Bamako (Mali): Mali's military says that extremists ambushed an army convoy in central Mali on Wednesday killing at least five soldiers. Army spokesman Col. Diarran Kone said Thursday that several others were wounded, and the assailants also damaged materials in the attack on the escort mission. The attack was claimed by the al-Qaida-linked group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam Muslimeen, known as JNIM, which also says it is holding two Malian soldiers hostage.

SEVERAL KILLED IN STORM IN POLAND

Warsaw: "A few" people died and 12 were injured on Thursday during a sudden thunderstorm that saw lightning strike a metal cross in the Tatra mountains in southern Poland, rescuers said.

'CHINA LAUNCHES UNMANNED WARSHIP'

Beijing: China has launched an unmanned warship, which its developer claims is combat-ready. The ship, jointly developed by No. 716 and No. 702 research institutes under China's state-owned China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC), has a length of about 15 meters and a displacement of 20 tonnes. The JARI multi-purpose unmanned combat vessel held its launch ceremony on Wednesday at an undisclosed location, state-run Global Times reported on Thursday, quoting a statement issued by the CSIC.

PAPER WITH PASSION

Trumping logic

The US President's attempt to buy Greenland and call off his Danish visit for being rebuffed is outrageous



US President Donald Trump has got away with making bewildering, puzzling and impossible statements by virtue of the high office he holds, giving his administration officials heartburn whether to treat them as an American sitcom joke or interpret them as layered diplomacy. For they simply cannot leave the words hanging there, especially when they impact relations between nations. Now that the world's most important man has escalated an international spat, by calling off his trip to Denmark

because its Prime Minister rejected his idea to buy Greenland as an absurdity, eggs are splattered all over their faces. One, Denmark is well within its rights to decide on Greenland, its semi-autonomous Arctic island with a 50,000 plus population, and air views on its territorial sovereignty whenever anybody tries to belittle it. And Trump is trying to grab it by standards of a defunct barter economy, proposing an outright land deal. But to be told off by the US President, who impetuously threatens a hitback with comments like "nasty" and "You don't talk to the United States that way, at least under me," can assume serious proportions, considering that Trump has not only upended conventions but has also followed through with his absurd statements with a fair bit of doggedness and whimsy. This has surprised Denmark all the more because it is a key partner in the North Atlantic alliance, and was among the first countries to pledge military support in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 40 Danish troops died in Helmand province, fighting alongside American and British soldiers. So it certainly doesn't deserve this blow-off.

Of course, the world's largest island comes with its strategic value in the Arctic region. Global warming and melting ice caps are making Greenland more accessible for harnessing potential oil and mineral resources. All the big powers — Russia, China, the US, Canada — are in a tussle to stake their claim on Arctic lands, hoping to own and leverage future riches. But would the US go so far with its Nordic conquest as to sink its perennial allies like the Titanic? Of course, the *Washington Post* reported that Trump had been peddling the idea for weeks and had "even discussed taking over Denmark's annual \$600 million subsidy to Greenland in perpetuity, and possibly tossing in an additional large payment to sweeten the deal." Considering that the US already has a military base in Denmark, one fails to understand the urgency of land acquisition. For by cancelling his trip, he has upset the royal household, which had formally invited Trump. He has also upset climatologists and scientists who say Greenland's massive ice sheet has seen one of its biggest melts on record this summer and economic exploitation would only worsen the scenario. Though this may not break down the cordial relations with the US yet, its Prime Minister assuring continuity despite the cancellation of Trump's visit, Danes have been put off by what they call a "farfical" and "grotesque" behaviour. Some observers have also speculated that Trump was looking for a pretext to call off his visit considering his predecessor Barack Obama was also scheduled to visit the country and enjoys more popularity and the former didn't want to appear dwarfed by comparison. But to go so far out, no matter what the strategic or personal intent, only makes the US fall from grace globally and its allies question the price of loyalty. For long, the US has been perceived as a global bully, can it afford to be more obnoxious now? Most importantly, nobody thought that Greenlanders should be asked what they want considering many wonder if Trump indeed remembered the location of Greenland from his geography lessons.

Saving the economy

Scapegoats for the economic contagion will be found, but that there is a problem remains a fact



To be fair to Indian policy-makers, it is true that the economic slowdown is impacting countries across the world, and they could potentially use that as a crutch to explain away India's current problems. That would be wrong, because while global issues do impact India, particularly Indian exports, the fact is that the Indian economy is more self-contained than most people imagine. Besides many of our problems have been created by a combination of poor policy, poor implementation

and poor management. It is also true that a lot of the current trouble with reduced credit offtake can be traced back to the profligacy of banks during the UPA era, with politically connected people getting loans at extremely favourable terms. However, the task of fixing the mess has meant that the banks are now at the other extreme and routinely turn down loan requests even to viable corporations and entrepreneurs as well as private individuals. Yes, the fiasco of demonetisation and the chaotic implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) have a role to play in the situation that India finds herself in, but it is the extreme reticence of banks to lend money that is causing the contagion to worsen. Banks are rightly scared, and they will need assurance from the Government and the bureaucracy that they will not be punished for business failures. Now the RBI Governor's statement that our service sector is sluggish and the trough is a combination of multiple factors only deepens the sense of foreboding.

A lot of reassurance will need to come from smart policy makers, and there is seemingly a lack of smartness when it comes to economic and industrial policy. Half-baked ideas, such as the talk of abolishing income tax, a wet dream of certain 'economists' are being talked about. On the other hand, half-baked ideas such as additional surcharges on income tax for high income earners became a reality in the budget but papers lack details on having sums unaccounted for. The Economic Survey in parts reads like a theological text rather than what it was meant to be. The Government really needs to bring in some proper experts, even if those people might be opposed to some of the policies followed by the Government in other areas. There is no doubt that the Indian economy is a challenge, we have a lot of poor people and they have to be taken care of. However, the best way to do that is to ensure employment and grow the economy so that incomes rise across the board and social sector spending can also improve. It is a challenge that requires the cumulative brainpower of thousands of economists, statisticians and social scientists. The alacrity with which this government is dealing with national security issues is welcome but frankly it needs to show that concern for a sputtering economy and the fallout of lower growth, or perish the thought, a recession, could be more severe than any of us can imagine.

Culling corruption

While this issue is huge, it is not insurmountable. We can at least start adopting a different approach to tackle it by bringing about behavioural change



AJOY KUMAR

India's reputation as one of the world's most corrupt bureaucracies is well-documented. On the Corruption Perceptions Index, India ranks 78th and this outlook is with merit and cause. What is surprising, however, is that the civil services examination and the post of a civil servant are still one that attracts great attention and fanfare. Any aspirant, who "cracks" the examination, is treated with great respect. This is, perhaps, why lakhs of young aspirants spend days together, working towards the goal of being part of the Indian bureaucracy.

A large number of these students are from prestigious institutes like the Indian Institute of Technology and various National Law Schools, among others. As a former civil servant, I find that this desire to join the civil services, surprisingly, has not dwindled. A few pessimists would say that these young aspirants join the bureaucracy to extract their pound of flesh. As Theodore Roosevelt said, "A man who has never gone to school may steal a freight car; but if he has a university education, he may steal the whole railroad." But levity aside, I think this is unduly harsh and frankly not true. In fact, as is true in most avenues of life, corruption in the Indian bureaucracy, too, follows the Pareto principle (also known as the 80/20 rule) that is 80 per cent of all corruption in the bureaucracy is carried out by 20 per cent of the people. The problem is to identify and punish this 20 per cent, which is bringing the entire country and the service immense shame and disrepute.

Corruption has no rigid definition, but the most common academic connotation, which defines it as "the misuse of public office for private gain", seems to be the most appropriate. While most times the media appears to cover the "headline" scandals and/or instances of corruption — ie, the kind of scams that attract most eyeballs — rarely do we realise just what the magnitude of everyday corruption is in our country. Transparency International estimates that Indians end up paying bribes of over ₹21,000 crore (approx \$3.5 billion) every year to access Government services. Therefore, there are different types of corruption, which differ from service to service. MR Venkatesh, a Chartered Accountant-turned lawyer, said it best in these lines, "IAS officers are after the rich people, IRS officers are after the middle class and IPS officers are after the poor. This is the new *varnashrama* created by the bureaucracy." While this looks like oversimplifying a complex issue, the crux of the problem does ring true.

So what are the causes of corruption? There are a number of people who have endlessly theorised on the reasons why the Indian bureaucracy suffers from corruption. One such reason is the country's complex legal and regulatory framework. India remains an extremely difficult place to do business. To set up or operate any business here, an entrepreneur or businessman has to jump through various



hoops and then hope to gain favour from the relevant bureaucrat even before starting his/her business. It is, therefore, no coincidence that India's low ranking on the Corruption Perceptions Index corresponds with its low position in the World Bank's indicators for doing business.

Just to give an idea about the ease of doing business in India, according to a World Bank survey, the act of obtaining a single construction permit in India involves 27 discrete procedures, takes 162 days and costs 46 per cent of the total outlay to a construction firm building a warehouse. The keyword here is "discretion." The minute it is brought in, the corrupt official gets an opportunity to make a quick buck.

Another reason as to why corruption persists in our country is the lack of respect towards entrepreneurs and businessmen. While we often get to hear praises about a Narayana Murthy or an Azim Premji, these examples are an exception rather than the norm. This because we, as Indians, have been encouraged to treat a business as an entity that makes money by stealing someone else's buck. This is why any new business is looked at with suspicion first and then with admiration. While the conduct of some Indian promoters does

indicate that there is some truth to this perception, our lack of openness and admiration towards entrepreneurs does the country more harm than good.

So what can be done? We need to change our attitudes towards businesses. There is no denying the fact that there should be a strict framework within which all businesses flourish. However, a strict framework does not necessarily mean that any new business ought to be treated with contempt. For example, it is important that every business operates within the realm of the law and obtains all relevant approvals. However, bureaucrats must not be given any reason to place more hurdles in helping them establish a business than those that are already present. It is evident that this Government needs cash and, therefore, is on a tax collection spree. However, in the long-run, it is impossible for any Government to collect taxes if it continues to act in a targeted and adversarial manner. It is, therefore, crucial for the Government to intimate and drive home the point to bureaucrats that their role is to facilitate the lives of honest citizens rather than acting as impediments.

Another way to mitigate the effects of corruption is to improve information dissemination

and use technology. While the former is crucial and must be encouraged with zeal, the latter must be approached with greater care in a country like India where technology is really only to the benefit of a few rather than most. The best example of how this can provide benefit is the recent change in the law which allows drivers to carry scanned copies of their driving licences and RCs. Most people, however, have not heard about this change in the rules.

I have personally heard of many stories of traffic cops taking bribes from unassuming drivers merely because they tell them that they are required to carry physical copies of their documents. In such a case if people are informed about the change in rules and technology is used meaningfully, instances of bribes will automatically be reduced.

While the problem of corruption is huge, we can at least start adopting a different approach to tackle it. Bringing about a change in mindset will be of great help. This should be coupled with other innovative solutions. With these changes, I think, we will find that the problem of corruption is not as insurmountable as we think.

(The writer is former president of Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee)

ANOTHER WAY TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION IS TO IMPROVE INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND USE TECHNOLOGY. WHILE THE FORMER IS CRUCIAL AND MUST BE ENCOURAGED, THE LATTER MUST BE APPROACHED WITH GREATER CARE

SOUNDBITE

Sometimes the process is incorrect. I am not talking about the legality. The way his (Chidambaram's) matter has been handled is depressing.



West Bengal Chief Minister —Mamata Banerjee

You get this feeling of doubt, that do you remember even to act? I was also going through that stage. Not a very good frame of mind.



Actor —Suniel Shetty

Countries like India, Iran, Russia and Turkey would have to fight against terrorists in Afghanistan at some point of time.



US President —Donald Trump

He (Modi) talks in a language that connects him with the people. If you are going to demonise him all the time, you are not going to be able to confront him.



Congress leader —Jairam Ramesh

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Save the forests

Sir — It is a matter of concern that there has been a 83 per cent increase in forest fires in the Amazon rainforest area in Brazil. Conservationists have blamed Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro for its plight, saying that he encouraged loggers and farmers to clear the land. Bolsonaro on the other hand has blamed non-governmental organisations, saying that they may have set the fires to embarrass his Government after it's decision to cut funding for them. Ironically, Bolsonaro has no evidence to support his claim.

Spread across millions of hectares in multiple countries, the Amazon basin not only hosts massive sinks of carbon that helps bring down the pace of global warming but is also home to three million species. The situation today is depressing. First and foremost, the Brazilian Government must realise the need to protect the forests. The international community must put diplomatic pressure on Brazil to convince it on the need to protect the forests and also help it seek higher funds.

Tanisha Shrivastava
Ujjain

Idea of India needs fresh outlook

This refers to the article, "Reunification of India a necessity" (August 21) by Markandey Katju. The learned writer has put forth a very noble idea, the successful implementation and sustainability of which will be a boon for the entire sub-continent. However, a look back into the history of Partition of India will reveal that ground realities are different and do not offer much hope on the lines of Vietnam or Germany or Italy where, unlike India's religious bigotry, differences were political in nature. In this connection, I would like to make two points.

First, noting the facts of history and the extent of communal discord in the country during the last 70 years, it will be incorrect to put the blame of India's Partition entirely on the British. At best, it can be said that the British took advantage of communal discord. In this connection, it would be worthwhile to recollect what Mahatma Gandhi had said during a prayer meet on the day the vital decision of Partition was taken. He said: "It is no use blaming the Viceroy for Partition. Look to yourselves and in your hearts for an explanation of what has happened." Second, it will also be worth recalling that the seeds of Two-Nation Theory were sown in the 19th Century. Ironically, after the formation of the Indian National Congress (INC), the queering pitch for Independence raised alarm bells in the minds of Muslims



at the prospect of being ruled by the Hindu majority. It is, thus, a deep-rooted problem which requires extraordinary efforts in cleansing the heart and mind. We would, therefore, do well to accept the reality and create an atmosphere of open heartedness where grievances are brought out in the open and healed forever so that the noble idea of unification of India can be achieved. Sadly, this has not happened so far and things have remained camouflaged in political language and interference.

BP Srivastava
Noida

Damage already done

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Chidambaram in a spot" (August 22). After a day-long drama, P Chidambaram did

show up for a surprise Press conference at the Congress headquarters, but by then, the damage had been done. During the Press conference, he claimed that no formal chargesheet was filed against him in the INX

Media case and that there was no question of him evading the law.

Had Chidambaram said the same thing after the Delhi High Court rejected his bail plea, he would have done much good not

only to himself but also to his party. The Congress leadership, too, had been crying hoarse, terming the action taken against Chidambaram a "political witch hunt" but the High Court has sound evidence against him. The case against him appears to be water-tight. All eyes are now on the courts. Only time will uncover the truth but certainly, the Congress has further lost credibility among the masses.

Jai Prakash Gupta
Ambala Cantt

Clarity needed

Sir — This refers to the article, "Upping deterrence ante?" (August 22) by Vivek Mishra. The Government must come clear if it is contemplating a change in its 'No First Use' policy to checkmate Pakistan or is this just another exercise to make the people believe that it can go to any extent to protect the nation's interests? This issue demands wider debate and discussion.

Karthik
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Disable the plastic bomb

An awareness campaign in regional languages, riding on social media platforms, must be undertaken by the Centre and pushed down to the panchayat level



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Mariam, an orphaned, baby dugong died somewhere in Thai waters this week. While she lived, 'Sleepyhead', so fondly nicknamed by the social media, ensured engaging moments for millions of her fans. Sadly, Mariam's life story ended tragically with her demise due to intestinal blockage caused by plastic waste. The little marine creature's suffering once again put the spotlight on the grave issue of plastic debris polluting our oceans.

A ticking bomb, that will inevitably lead to our destruction, microplastics, particles that are smaller than five millimeters, are making their way into our food and drinking water, yet, very little prevents us from asking the vegetable vendor for a plastic carry bag.

Let's take a look at some eye-popping statistics in order to understand the magnitude of the problem that we, with our callous attitude towards the environment, have created.

It is estimated that an average Indian ingests around five grams of microplastic every week, the equivalent of a credit card. A study conducted a few years ago by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) found that major Indian cities generate nearly 4,100 tons of plastic waste daily, which for the whole country translates to nearly 30,000 tons per day, out of which Delhi tops the chart at nearly 700 tons of plastic waste generated daily.

According to estimates, nearly 90 per cent of this untreated and non-recyclable plastic ends up in the soil, forests, mountains, landfills and oceans, harming humans and unsuspecting birds, marine creatures, cows and other animals.

Given the detrimental impact of plastic waste on human lives, particularly children, our oceans and the planet at large, it is commendable that a clarion call to defuse this bomb has come from Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. Modi, during his Independence Day address urged citizens to eliminate single-use plastic and use cloth and jute bags instead. He asked for the first big step in this direction to be taken from October 2, 2019, to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Thankfully, many government agencies and large private sector players have taken cognizance and have started taking steps to reduce or eliminate plastic under the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy approach. While the Parliament has banned use of non-reusable plastic items within the complex, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) a subsidiary of the Indian Railways, has also banned plastic use from October 2. It has issued a circular which prevents vendors from using plastic carry bags and will ensure the return of plastic drinking water bottles by passengers. Encouragingly, some private firms like Mahindra and Hindustan Lever have also announced plastic reduction measures.

On the policy-making front, the CPCB is slated to submit a consolidated report on the use and management of plastic waste, after it gets data from State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs). The recommendations the CPCB will make are likely to bring in more norms on top of the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018.

However, good intentions and new guidelines are not enough to tackle this menace. There are a couple of measures that need to be implemented without any compromise to ensure compliance.

A mass awareness campaign in regional languages, riding on all social media platforms, needs to be undertaken by the central government and pushed right to the municipal and village panchayat level. Only mass campaigns on the lines of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan will create awareness at the grassroots and prevent indiscriminate and irresponsible plastic use. A key issue which needs urgent attention is coordination between the CPCB and SPCBs. Most often, like other areas of Federal Vs State policy overlaps, we find SPCBs passing "Shut with Immediate Effect" kind of orders that are not in line with Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018.

A nodal ministry, looking into plastic waste management rules and their implementation, the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) should urgently set up a national-level co-ordination task force comprising state and CPCB representatives. There should be significant private sector and civil society representation as well. This body should be given targets to reduce plastic waste and co-ordinate on key matters between the Centre and states. In the absence of such a body, interpretation of key laws remains ambiguous and lands in No Man's Zone. This leads to non-compliance and missed targets. Finally, citizens need to get religious about plastic waste management. The festive season is approaching and tons of plastic will be used, that will most likely end up in the nearest water body. A conscious, collective effort has to be made by all to cut down plastic use. In fact, a zero plastic festival would be a welcome idea this season.

(The writer is a policy analyst)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

HE (CHIDAMBARAM) WAS BEING TARGETTED. SINCE TRUTH IS INCONVENIENT TO COWARDS, HE IS BEING SHAMEFULLY HUNTED DOWN.

—CONGRESS LEADER
PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA



PRIYANKA SHOULD BE TAKING CARE OF HER HUSBAND ROBERT VADRA. THERE ARE SEVERAL CASES AGAINST HIM.

—DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER OF UTTAR PRADESH
KESHAV PRASAD MAURYA

Breaking barriers

Vatsalya, an initiative to improve the health and nutritional status of women and children, was undertaken in 22 villages in Amreli's Rajula Block



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

The small boat at Gujarat's bustling Pipavav Port bobs up and down as it waits to ferry passengers to Shiyal Bet Island barely 600 metres away. It's a rainy morning and the waters of the Arabian Sea are beginning to turn choppy. Fifty-year-old Dakuben jumps onto the boat with ease, having undertaken the 12-minute journey innumerable times to visit her daughter in Shiyal Bet. However, this time, her visit is mired in sorrow as she is going to mourn the death of her newborn granddaughter.

Gujarat's Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is 30 deaths per 1,000 live births and the state ranked tenth in the country according to the NITI Aayog's 2016 IMR report. According to statistics 69 per cent of infant deaths in Gujarat were neonatal, higher than the national average of 67.60 per cent.

Anaemia is one of the major factors responsible for the rising neonatal, infant and maternal mortality in Gujarat, especially among rural women. According to the fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) conducted in 2014-15, 54.9 per cent women in the age group of 14-49 years are anaemic and 51.3 per cent of pregnant women have anaemia.

The NFHS-4 placed Gujarat among the top 15 states with the highest incidence of anaemia as the percentage of anaemic women there was higher than the national average of 53 per cent.

The survey revealed that lack of education played a major role and anaemia was particularly high among illiterate women due to lack of awareness about health-related issues.

At 31.2 per cent, Shiyal Bet's literacy rates are much lower than the state's 78.3 per cent (2011 census). With the island's female literacy rate being just 15.48 per cent, it's no surprise that awareness about anaemia and other health issues is low.

In order to change this scenario, Vatsalya, an initiative to improve the health and nutritional status of women, children, and adolescents was undertaken in Shiyal Bet and 21 villages with similar poor health and development indicators in Rajula Block in Amreli district. Launched in 2016 by the Centre for Health Education, Training, Nutrition Awareness (CHETNA), a not-for-profit organisation, the three-year programme has been able to bring down undernutrition, improve antenatal and postnatal care and ensure safe motherhood.

It has also been able to break myths related to early breastfeeding, promote healthy feeding practices, timely immunization and increase access to basic health services.

The intervention, supported by Gujarat Pipavav Port Limited (GPPL) APM Terminals under their corporate social responsibility initiative, used a multi-pronged strategy including games, Q&A sessions and street theatre to engage the community. Sustained efforts, coupled with community participation helped to bring down the number of children suffering from undernutrition from 30 per cent in 2016 to 14 per cent in 2019. The number of children who attained normal body mass index also rose.

The intervention marked up registration of pregnancies by almost 42 per cent and increased the number of women receiving antenatal care, tetanus injections and folic acid tablets. A rise in institutional deliveries by 9.42 per cent was also seen at the end of the three years.



THE MONTHLY VATSALYA SAMWAADS PROVED TO BE A GOOD MOVE AS THEY HELPED BREAK THE ICE ON MANY UNCOMFORTABLE ISSUES LIKE THE TRADITION OF EARLY MARRIAGE, MENSTRUATION AND FAMILY PLANNING IN ALL 22 VILLAGES. BESIDES EXPLAINING THE CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY MARRIAGE ON THE HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS, THE IMPORTANCE OF ANTENATAL CARE AND POSTNATAL CARE VISITS FOR PREGNANT AND LACTATING WOMEN WERE DISCUSSED. ALSO ADDRESSED WERE MYTHS RELATED TO EARLY AND EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING



"We are committed to bringing change in the lives of marginalised communities. Therefore, empowering them with factual information and linking them to government schemes and programmes was imperative. This intervention was more challenging because we had to work in difficult-to-reach villages like Shiyal Bet and with migrating populations and communities that were isolated and neglected. But we were able to make a difference in their lives thanks to our dedicated field team, and our partnership with the community, frontline health workers and panchayat leaders," said Pallavi Patel, Director, CHETNA.

A key to this success was the strategy to train women from the community as Vatsalya mitras (friends). This gave the community a sense of ownership and led to increased participation. So when Shantuben Chauhan became a trained Vatsalya mitra, she used her influence as an anganwadi worker (AWW) to reach out to pregnant and lactating women. Chauhan, an AWW for the last 15 years, is a popular face in Shiyal Bet. With both her marital and natal home being in Shiyal Bet, Chauhan was able to mobilise the community very effectively.

However, when the CHETNA team first visited Shiyal Bet, they found that although Chauhan was articulate and good at her work as an AWW, she, like most of the others, believed in many myths related to reproductive and sexual health. One of the biggest misconceptions she had was related to menstruation. Not only was it a taboo subject, but neither she nor her three daughters practiced menstrual hygiene. Considering that only 54 per cent of rural women use a hygienic method of menstrual protection (NFHS-4), this was not surprising.

The fact that women with at least 12 years of schooling were more than twice as likely to be using a hygienic method (79 per cent) as against women with no schooling (34 per cent) meant that Chauhan who is uneducated, didn't get access to information which could help her practice menstrual hygiene.

So the first step was to demystify menstruation. The team knew that once they were able to get Chauhan on board then she would get the others. "I was ashamed to discuss this issue. The training helped me understand why I should not be ashamed and why menstrual hygiene is important. I used the scientific information to convince other women and adolescents during Vatsalya samwads (dialogue)," recalled Chauhan.

For Vatsalya mitra Vandaben Goswami, the training cured her of the belief that she was 'impure' during her periods and going to the temple or kitchen was wrong. "After I became better informed, I no longer forced my daughters to follow these customs. I used my own example to convince other women and girls," contended Goswami.

The monthly Vatsalya samwads proved to be a good move as they helped break the ice on many 'uncomfortable' issues like the tradition of early marriage and family planning in all 22 villages. Besides explaining the consequences of early marriage on the health of adolescents, the importance of antenatal care and postnatal care visits for pregnant and lactating women were discussed. Also addressed were myths related to early and exclusive breastfeeding. According to NFHS-4, just 50 per cent women in Gujarat start breastfeeding in the first hour of life as recommended by the World Health Organisation, thus depriving

newborns of the highly nutritious first milk, colostrums, and the antibodies it contains. In fact, about one in five children who were ever breastfed were given something other than breast milk during the first three days.

Raziben's three children were among them. She had followed the custom of feeding her children goat's milk or hot water mixed with jaggery immediately after birth. It was only after attending the Vatsalya samwads that she understood why this was not healthy for the newborn. This helped her initiate early breastfeeding for her fourth child born last year. Inspired by this, her friend and neighbour Manjuben also breastfed her daughter within 24 hours of her birth in June this year. In fact, there was an 22 per cent increase in early breastfeeding by the end of the project.

A big factor in the improving health and nutrition indicators was the partnership with local leaders and panchayats. Leaders like Gangabhai, the sarpanch of Kundaliya Village, played an active role in mobilizing the community and promoting awareness.

"There has been a big change in my village after CHETNA began their work. The AWWs have become more informed and active. More women are attending the monthly Mamta Divas. Earlier only 7-8 women had health cards, now 60 of them have cards. I also pay visits to support and motivate them," he said.

While the success has been encouraging, challenges remain. Considering the entrenched patriarchy and caste barriers in Gujarat, sustaining behavioural change requires greater investment of time and resources. Only then, will no one be left behind.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

In denial of converging global crises

Artificial Intelligence and climate emergency are the two biggest threats facing economies today. We know a good deal about both but not enough to be confident about our choices — and besides, they may well mutate and head off in unforeseen directions



GWYNNE DYER

Maybe we can get through the climate crisis without a global catastrophe, although that door is closing fast. And maybe we can cope with the huge loss of jobs caused by the revolution in robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) without a social and political calamity. But can we do both at the same time?

We should know how to deal with the AI revolution because we have been down this road before. It's a bit different this time, of course, in the sense that the original industrial revolution in 1780-1850 created as many new jobs (in manufacturing) as it destroyed (in cottage industries and skilled trades).

The AI revolution, by contrast, is

not producing nearly enough replacement jobs but it is making us much wealthier. The value of manufactured goods doubled in the United States (US) in the past 30 years even as the number of good industrial jobs fell by a third (eight million jobs gone). Maybe we could use that extra wealth to ease the transition to a job-scarce future. The climate emergency is unlike any challenge we have faced before. Surmounting it would require an unprecedented level of global cooperation and very big changes in how people consume and behave, neither of which human beings have historically been good at.

These two crises are already interacting. The erosion of middle-class jobs and the stagnation (or worse) of real wage levels generates resentment and anger among the victims and is already creating populist, authoritarian regimes throughout the world. These regimes despise international cooperation and often deny climate change as well (Trump in the US, Bolsonaro in Brazil).

And there is a recession coming. Maybe not this year, although almost



all the storm signals are flying: Stock markets spooked, a rush into gold, nine major economies already in recession or on the verge of one, an "inverted yield curve" on bonds and trade wars spreading. Even US President Donald Trump is worried, which is why he postponed the harsher American trade tariffs against China, which were due next month.

Economists have predicted nine of the past five recessions as they say in the trade, so I'm not calling the turn on this one. But a recession is overdue and a lot of the damage done by the

Great Recession of 2008 has still not been repaired. Interest rates are still very low, so the banks have little room to cut rates and soften the next one. When it arrives, it could be a doozy. So what can we do about all this? The first thing is to recognise that we cannot plot a course that takes us from here and now, through all the changes and past all the unpleasant surprises to ultimate safety, maybe 50 years from now.

We can plan how to get through the next five years and we should be thinking hard about what will be need-

ed later on. But we can't steer a safe and steady course to the year 2070 any more than intelligent decision-makers in 1790 could have planned how to get through to 1840 without too much upheaval. They might have seen steam engines but they would have had no idea what a railroad was.

We are in the same position as those people with regard to both AI and the global environmental emergency (which extends far beyond "climate change", although that is at its heart). We know a good deal about both issues but not enough to be confident about our choices — and besides, they may well mutate and head off in unforeseen directions as the crises deepen.

But there are two big things we can do right now. We need to stop the slide into populist and increasingly authoritarian Governments (because we are not going to stop the spread of AI). And we have to win ourselves more time to get our greenhouse gas emissions under control (because we are certainly going to go through 450 parts per million of carbon dioxide equivalent, which would give us +2°C

higher average global temperature).

The best bet for getting our politics back on track is a guaranteed minimum income, high enough to keep everybody comfortable — whether they are working or not. That is well within the reach of any developed country's economy and has the added benefit of putting enough money into people's pockets to save everybody's business model.

And the best way to win more time on the climate front is to start geo-engineering (direct intervention in the atmosphere to hold the global temperature down) as soon as we get anywhere near +2°C. To be ready then, we need to be doing open-air testing on a small scale now. There will be howls of protest from the right about a guaranteed minimum income and from the greener parts of the left about geo-engineering. However, both will probably be indispensable if we want to get through these huge changes without mass casualties or even civilisational collapse.

(The writer's new book is *Growing Pains, the Future of Democracy and Work*)



ON GREENLAND

As the seriousness of the climate crisis becomes more obvious, so does the fact that it can only be solved by coordinated international action, while competing nationalisms can only exacerbate it and make the easily foreseeable end worse for all competitors. A rules-based international order is the counsel of enlightened self-interest, not idealism. But today the most powerful nation is in the hands of a man who can recognise neither his own nor anyone else's legitimate self-interest.

(The Guardian editorial)

CAPSULE



Amazon.in strengthens delivery network in TN

CHENNAI: E-commerce giant Amazon unveiled its new delivery station here on Thursday to strengthen its delivery network in Tamil Nadu. The new delivery station, claimed to be the largest in the state, is spread across 24,000 square feet and will enable Amazon ensure faster deliveries. The Delivery Stations will enable Amazon logistics supplement capacity and provide flexibility to Amazon's delivery capabilities to support customer orders. Prakash Rochlani, Last Mile Transportation Director, Amazon India, said the initiative was in line with the company's vision of making e-commerce part of everyday life. "This expansion will further create thousands of work opportunities for individuals in Tamil Nadu as we continue to remain committed to our long term investments", he told reporters here. The company also announced expansion of its delivery network in Namakkal, Tiruchengodu, Sivakasi, Krishnagiri and Tiruvallur.



Tata Sons names Pratik Pal as Tata Digital CEO

NEW DELHI: Tata Sons on Thursday said it has appointed TCS executive Pratik Pal as the chief executive officer of Tata Digital. Pal, whose appointment is effective August 21, will head the new entity which has been formed to incubate new digital businesses, a statement said. He has been with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) for over 27 years and has held several key leadership positions across multiple business units and industry verticals, it added. In his most recent role, Pal was TCS' global head of retail, travel, transportation, hospitality and consumer packaged goods industry unit. "Pratik brings strong domain knowledge of consumer-centric businesses to this role combined with a deep understanding of how new digital technologies are disrupting these industries. As the CEO of Tata Digital, Pratik will play a key role in building new platforms of growth," Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran said.

Sensex sinks 587 pts; Yes Bank nosedives 14 percent

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity index Sensex plummeted 587 points on Thursday, pressured by heavy selling in banking and energy stocks amid weak global cues.

Investor sentiment also tanked after Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian virtually ruled out a stimulus package from the government.

The 30-share Sensex sank 587.44 points, or 1.59 per cent, to 36,472.93. It hit an intra-day low of 36,391.35

and a high of 37,087.58. The broader NSE Nifty ended 177.35 points, or 1.62 per cent, down at 10,741.35. During the day, it plunged to a low of 10,718.30 and touched a high of 10,908.25.

Yes Bank was the biggest laggard in the Sensex pack, plummeting 13.91 per cent, followed by Vedanta, Bajaj Finance and Tata Motors, which declined to 7.76 per cent.

ONGC, SBI, Hero MotoCorp, ICICI Bank, Tata Steel, HDFC twins and RIL also ended in the red.

Tech Mahindra, TCS, HUL



and HCL Tech were the only gainers, spurring up to 1.57 per cent.

According to traders, Chief Economic Adviser Subramanian's comments

Yes Bank was the biggest laggard in the Sensex pack, plummeting 13.91 per cent, followed by Vedanta, Bajaj Finance and Tata Motors, which declined up to 7.76 per cent

practically ruling out a stimulus package for the economy weighed on investor sentiment.

"If we basically expect the government to use taxpayers' money to intervene every time when there are some sunsets, then I think you introduce

possible moral hazards from 'too big to fail' and as well as the possibility of a situation where profits are private and losses are socialised," Subramanian said at an event.

Globally, markets were jittery ahead of comments from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome

Powell at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, US.

Elsewhere in Asia, Shanghai Composite Index and Nikkei ended on a positive note, while Hang Seng and Kospi settled in the red.

Equities in Europe were trading lower in their respective early sessions.

Meanwhile, the Indian rupee depreciated 33 paise to 71.88 against the US dollar intra-day.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.65 per cent to USD 60.69 per barrel.

BofA-ML

Even a stimulus package can't help the economy much

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The financial conditions have deteriorated so badly despite the four repo rate cuts and there is a need for a fiscal stimulus, which though may not yield much results due to the fiscal constraints, warns an American brokerage report.

The warnings come amid the gloomy news on the growth front, with GDP expansion sliding to a 5-year-low of 5.8 per cent in March and expected to fall further in June quarter. The numbers will be announced next week.

Falling stocks, an overvalued rupee and higher volumes in the US dollar-rupee market are evident of the tightening financial conditions, Bank of America Merrill Lynch said in a report Thursday.

"We believe the economy warrants a significant fiscal stimulus at this stage which does not result in higher borrowing costs," the report said, but was quick to warn that it may yield the desired results due to the fiscal constraints of the government.

"What India needs is a fiscal boost funded by offshore borrowings. But a fiscal stimulus



Falling stocks, an overvalued rupee and higher volumes in the US dollar-rupee market are evident of the tightening financial conditions, Bank of America Merrill Lynch said in a report Thursday

package is unlikely to be a game-changer due to fiscal constraints," it said.

The stimulus package will have to be announced alongside a USD-bond sale so as to not disrupt local currency bonds, it added.

The report said "most" of the tightening of financial conditions are due to the weakness

in the equities markets, where the markets have plunged over 10 percent since June, which it attributed to "the lack of any fiscal stimulus in the budget has been one of the big reasons for this sell off."

The brokerage lamented that it was "very strange" to observe government is sticking to fiscal consolidation in FY20 in

"when the backdrop is clearly deteriorating".

Tapping into global savings which are in massive search for higher yields can be one of the ways of introducing the fiscal stimulus, it added.

The RBI has reduced its key rates by a cumulative 1.10 percentage points in four successive rate cuts since February and has also changed the direction of policy to be more accommodative.

It can be noted that the government had announced plans for a sovereign bond sale in overseas market, though many are not enthused with the plan.

Those against the move included former RBI governors, economists and other analysts, who point out that the country had not resorted to such a move even in the aftermath of the 1991 crisis. According to some media reports, the government is planning to raise up to USD 10 billion in October.

Policy makers will also have to somehow inject more liquidity into the troubled non-banking lenders and douse any concerns around them, the report added.

'WTO reforms should be wholistic, comprehensive'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday made a case for wholistic and comprehensive reforms of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) without ignoring the ground realities, especially the stark inequality among developed and developing nations.

He said instead of going for a piecemeal reform, the members should take on board issues of all countries of the WTO.

"It is the time when all members of the WTO start looking at some of those reforms that have been pending for long. When we look at reforming the WTO, (it should be done) wholistically and comprehensively. It cannot be pick and choose," Goyal said.

He was speaking at a programme of South-South and Triangular Cooperation here. "I do hope that as we look at reforming the WTO, a little bit more relevance to today and 21st century realities will come into play," he added.

The statement comes at a time when the US has called for reforming the world trade body. The US wants formulation of some guidelines regard-

ing special and differential treatment (S&DT), which is meant for developing nations. The S&DT allows developing countries to enjoy certain benefits, including taking longer time periods for implementing agreements and binding commitments, and mea-

asures to increase trading opportunities. The US also wants reforms in the dispute settlement body of the organisation and it has put roadblocks in appointment of new members in the appellate body of the WTO.

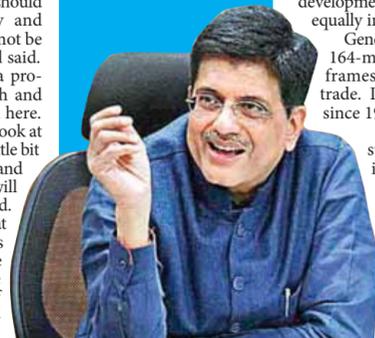
The minister said free trade cannot happen in two trading partners if their level of economic development is different.

"You really cannot have free trade between the country having per capita GDP of USD 1,000, or USD 2,000 or USD 4,000 and other of USD 60,000 and USD 80,000," he said.

He said it is a "ridiculous argument" to say that two trading partners with this level of development should compete equally in global markets.

Geneva-based WTO is a 164-member body which frames rules for global trade. India is a member since 1995. "India has always supported an open, inclusive, transparent, non-discriminatory and rule-based international multilateral trading system and engagement with countries," Goyal said.

I do hope that as we look at reforming the WTO, a little bit more relevance to today and 21st century realities will come into play
— PIYUSH GOYAL
Commerce and Industry Minister



Gold continues bull run, nears Rs 39,000 mark

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing the record-setting trend, gold price on Thursday hit a new high of Rs 38,970 per 10 gram by gaining Rs 150 in the national capital, according to the All India Sarafa Association, mainly on account of a weaker rupee and safe-haven buying from investors due to weak equity market.

Gold prices have been hitting a fresh high everyday since Tuesday.

Silver advanced by Rs 60 to Rs 45,100 per kg on increased offtake by industrial units and coin makers.

Despite sluggish overseas



Despite sluggish overseas trend, gold prices rose on account of sustained buying from local jewellers

trend, gold prices rose on account of sustained buying from local jewellers, traders said.

Besides, weakness in rupee and equity market also aided the rally in the yellow metal,

they added. In New York, spot gold was trading lower at USD 1,498.80 an ounce, while silver was down at USD 17.09 an ounce. "Gold prices in the international market are hovering

near the psychological level of USD 1,500 an ounce as traders stayed away from taking fresh position amid the key economic events scheduled this week," Hareesh V, Head Commodity Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

"Expectations are high that the US Federal Reserve chair's speech at Jackson Hole meeting on Friday would provide cues on future US interest rate cuts that may influence gold prices. Also, traders are keenly awaiting the result of G7 summit for hints of any additional steps by policy makers to push global economic growth," he said.

In the domestic market, gold prices held firm due to a feeble Indian rupee which weakened to its lowest level this year, Hareesh said.

In the national capital, gold of 99.9 per cent purity rose Rs 150 to Rs 38,970 per 10 gram, while that of 99.5 per cent gained Rs 170 to Rs 38,820 per 10 gram.

Sovereign gold stood steady at 28,800 per eight gram. Silver ready advanced by Rs 60 to 45,100 per kg, while weekly-based delivery gained Rs 133 to Rs 43,765 per kg.

Silver coins held flat at Rs 91,000 for buying and Rs 92,000 for selling of 100 coins.

NDTV interim CEO Suparna Singh resigns

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Media firm NDTV on Thursday said its interim CEO Suparna Singh has resigned, with immediate effect.

"Suparna Singh has informed the company that she will step down from her responsibilities as interim CEO with immediate effect," NDTV said in a regulatory filing.

NDTV said pursuant to a board resolution on December 4, 2017, the board resolved to appoint Suparna Singh as its CEO

subject to the receipt of requisite approval from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. "This approval was promptly applied for on December 12, 2017, but has not yet been received. Subsequently, Suparna Singh and the company entered into an appointment agreement to appoint Singh as the CEO where the appointment was conditional upon receipt of such approval," NDTV said.

Accordingly, Suparna Singh has been acting as the interim CEO during this interregnum, the company said.

NDTV said the matter will be placed before board and committee members for consideration.

The CBI has booked NDTV promoters Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy and others for allegedly violating foreign direct investment (FDI) rules in a 2007-09 investment, a charge denied by the company.

Besides the Roys, the agency registered a First Information Report (FIR) against then CEO Vikramaditya Chandra as well as unidentified government officials on charges of criminal conspiracy, cheating and corruption, officials had said on Wednesday.

Earlier this month, NDTV founders Prannoy Roy and his wife Radhika were prevented from flying abroad.

The couple is facing a case filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for the past two years.



NITI Aayog for major steps to deal with economic slowdown

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Government think tank Niti Aayog on Thursday made a case for extraordinary steps to deal with the unprecedented stress in the financial sector which has resulted in an economic slowdown in the country.

The government needs to take steps which eliminate apprehension from the minds of private sector players and encourage them to step up investments, Niti Aayog vice chairman Rajiv Kumar said.

He also said private investments will drive India out of the middle income trap.

Terming the stress in the financial sector as unprecedented, he said nobody had faced this sort of situation in the last 70 years where entire financial system was under threat.

"Nobody is trusting anybody else... within the private sector nobody is ready to lend, everyone is sitting on cash... you may have to take steps which are extraordinary," he said at an event here.

Elaborating further, Kumar said some of the steps have already been announced in the Union Budget to address stress in the financial sector and give



The government needs to take steps which eliminate apprehension from the minds of private sector players and encourage them to step up investments
—RAJIV KUMAR
Niti Aayog vice chairman

a push to economic growth which hit a 5-year low of 6.8 per cent in 2018-19.

Explaining how stress in the financial sector has led to a slowdown in the economy, the Niti Aayog vice chairman said the entire episode started with indiscriminate lending during 2009-14 leading rise in non-performing assets (NPAs) post 2014.

Rising NPAs reduced the ability of banks to do fresh lending, he said, adding the space was occupied by the shadow banks with credit growth of 25 per cent.

Changing features of currency often not proper: Bombay HC

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Changing the size and other features of currency notes often is "not proper" especially because a visually impaired person spends years to figure out the dimensions and other features of a banknote or coin, the Bombay High Court said.

A division bench of Chief Justice Pradeep Nandrajog and Justice Bharati Dange asked the Reserve Bank of India

(RBI) to state in two weeks the reason behind its decision to make such changes often.

The court was hearing a petition filed by the National Association of the Blind, claiming new currency notes and coins posed difficulty for the visually impaired people in identifying and distinguishing them. The bench had on

August 1 directed the RBI to file its affidavit in response to the petition. The RBI on Thursday sought further time to file its affidavit as it was collecting data on the issue.

"We don't want any data. We only want to know the reason behind changing the colour, size

and other features of the currency notes and coins. Don't duck this issue," the court said.

Just because the RBI has the power and authority, it does not mean it has to exercise the same without caution, it said.

"This is not proper. A visually impaired person spends years to figure out the dimensions and features of a currency note or coin but then the next day, the RBI changes it," Chief Justice Nandrajog said.



NDB looks to penetrate into Indian offshore market

PTI ■ BEIJING

The New Development Bank (NDB) of the BRICS countries, which got its first 'AAA' rating this week, plans to tap into the Indian Rupee offshore market as part of its efforts to raise capital, according to a top bank official.

The Shanghai-based NDB - floated by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) - is headed by renowned Indian banker K V Kamath.

Japan Credit Rating Agency Ltd (JCR) on Tuesday assigned 'AAA' foreign currency long-term issuer rating with a stable outlook to NDB, the first such rating acquired by the Bank since it started functioning four years ago.

"It is the safest of investment ratings. If you are a AAA issuer, essentially it means that there's



almost zero probability of you ever defaulting. That's what the rating agencies effectively telling investors out there," NDB Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Leslie Maasdorp told PTI in an interview. Maasdorp said it is significant that the NDB got higher rating than the BRICS countries.

"India, for example, is BBB-on investment grade, South Africa has one rating at investment grade, China is A+, Brazil is sub-investment grade and Russia is BBB+. So, basically, what we have now, is that the NDB is rated significantly higher than weighted average of our members," he said.

Maasdorp said the bank is looking into the Indian Rupee offshore market to raise resources after Masala bonds market slowed down

"And it is a significant achievement because there is no other bank that we are aware of in the world that is only owned by emerging markets that has a rating as high as ours. All of the others that have such a high rating, they have either the United States or in Japan or the European Union as members. We have no AAA-rated countries as members," he said.

Maasdorp said the bank is looking into the Indian Rupee offshore market to raise resources after Masala bonds market slowed down.

Kamath, who is the

President of the Bank, "knows the Indian market extremely well, we looked very closely at Masala bonds market", he said.

"We definitely intend to tap into the Indian Rupee offshore market. We looked at this already in 2017. But then, in 2018, there's been a significant drop in the market liquidity and demand for Masala bond," he said.

"For a number of reasons the Masala bond market kind of slowed down. We remain very keen to access offshore Rupee (market) as part of our capital raising, but we don't have timing yet. We are studying market conditions closely, because,

obviously, investors are very sensitive to interest rate environment," he said.

"I anticipate that in 2020 we are likely to raise Indian Rupees, but it will be based on the demand for local currency. Many of our loans in India to date have been in USD, whereas in other countries there's been more demand for local currency," he said.

"So, we are likely to also look for hard currencies for 2020, but it's all based on what happens to the interest rate environment," he said.

Maasdorp said a total of 37 projects have been approved for all the five BRICS countries. "India is number two in terms of approvals now -- I'd say about 29 per cent of our entire approved loans (totalling USD 10.2 billion), almost a third of that is in India," he said.

K RAMYA SREE
 HYDERABAD

Frequent Metro users will agree when we say that most travellers lack basic etiquette to be followed while travelling in public transport. With the Metro seeing hundreds of new riders each day, a lesson in basic etiquette is the need of the hour.

Of course, most commuters are polite, but it doesn't hurt to remind a few people about what's acceptable when you're in a packed train.

With over three lakh people using the Metro on a daily basis, there are certain things about your fellow passengers that do get to your nerves.

While some trouble passengers by clanking their luggage against the metal rails, others make things uncomfortable for others by spreading their legs.

Then you have the public DJ who thinks everyone in the coach has assembled to listen to his chartbusters. You also have the 'I'm always first' kind who does not let passengers alight at a station and swarm in like a group of bees. While this is the most common complaint by users, there are a million other etiquettes that people do wrong every day.

When one is travelling by bus, the conductor generally asks people to give up their seats for pregnant women or the elderly. But when it comes



LIFE IN A METRO

THE OTHER SIDE OF METRO TRAVEL

to the Metro, there is no one to tell these people to give up their seats. And many like to blissfully ignore boards which clearly state 'seat reserved for elderly/pregnant women'.

If this weren't enough, you have men entering the women's coach despite a sign board that says men will be fined ₹500 if they enter ladies' coach.

"People who want to board the train don't wait for those who want to alight. They just try to push you and get into the coach despite announcements

being made to let alighting passengers first. There have been instances where I have missed my stop because I have been pushed back due to the rush. Not just this, despite repeated announcements to not stand near the door, people lean on the door, leaving no room for passengers to get in or out," said K Navya, a daily commuter in Metro Rail.

"People don't respect queues even near the counter. There have been times where people tried to squeeze their hands into

the counter while I'm still taking my ticket," said another commuter P Chythanya, a software engineer.

However, N V S Reddy, MD of HMRL begs to differ and said, "When compared to other public transport, the behaviour of Metro passengers is much better. By and large people are following the rules and are keeping the premises clean. However, there is scope for improvement. This is a long drawn thing. In Western countries, metro etiquettes have

evolved over time and they respect everybody's right. In our country it will take time, but we are educating them about the etiquettes, especially when it comes to pushing co-passengers or respecting women and elders by offering seats. We are observing how people are behaving and will act accordingly."

To make life easy and the Metro rides memorable, authorities have started advertising about etiquettes to be followed by riders in train.



HERE ARE A FEW ETIQUETTES TO BE KEPT IN MIND WHILE YOU RIDE IN METRO

- Wait your turn to enter the train, don't be rude or put anyone in danger.
- No loud music on Metro:** Everybody just wants a nice quiet ride on Metro. Use your headphones.
- Don't seat hog on Metro:** Spreading your legs or using your belongings to take up more than one seat is a rude thing to do.
- Don't eat on Metro:** Eating makes a mess and causes problems, please help keep Metro clean and fresh.
- Don't block the aisles:** When you have larger items with you, move to the right place and move out of the way.
- Don't squat on floor, hold your saree close to you, be polite and listen carefully, don't carry pets, don't walk on escalator and hold your children.



I am excited but nervous for Saaho: Shraddha Kapoor

Bollywood actress Shraddha Kapoor is gearing up for the release of the multilingual *Saaho*. The actress says that she is interested in experimenting with her roles and that box-office number can never stop her from following her heart.

"Whether it worked at the box office or not, I am always offered different roles that are strong and well edged-out. As an actor, I am always looking for something different, looking for a new challenge. I know that not all my films have worked wonders at the box-office, but that has not stopped me from experimenting," Shraddha said.

The actress, who made her debut with *Teen Patti* in 2010, has left a mark with her role as a singer in *Aashiqui 2*, a Kashmiri girl in *Haider*, a dancer in *ABCD 2*, and a real-life gangster in *Haseena Parkar*, among other roles. She has the commercial biggie *Saaho* coming up, besides *Chhichhore*.

Some of her past films such as *Ok Jaanu*, *Haseena Parkar* and *Batti Gul Meter Chalu* fared below expectations, but Shraddha's confidence remains unfazed. "The fate of a film is not in my hand, so numbers should not stop me from experimenting. When an actor tried avoiding formula in order to experiment, she tends to stumble. However, every time I introspect I feel it is better to go for a script that I like but is risky, than a safe script that I may do half-heartedly," said the daughter of veteran actor Shakti Kapoor.

Shraddha, however, concedes, she is not altogether oblivious of the cold box-office response to some of her films. "Those box-office results did make me sit down and introspect. I started looking out for a better understanding of how to engage and entertain the audience, which is constantly changing," she said.

The actress admits she is stressed out about how "Saaho might fare at the box-office." "This is the first time I have worked in such a big-budget film so I am excited but nervous as well. People have huge expectations ever since the trailer was released, so I am stressed now," said the actress.

This is the first time I have worked in such a big-budget film so I am excited but nervous as well. People have huge expectations ever since the trailer was released, so I am stressed now

— SHRADDHA KAPOOR



I CONVEY A LOT WITH MY EYES: PRABHAS

The actor says that *Saaho* is not trying to compete with Hollywood movies but proving that Indian films are capable of delivering something in par with international standards

Telugu actor Prabhas became a global star after the blockbuster success of the *Baahubali* films, is back with his new film *Saaho*, which promises to be an extravagant action thriller and is rumoured to be made at a budget of ₹350 crore. Going by the trailer of his new film, Prabhas is back to playing the larger-than-life hero in *Saaho*, after the *Baahubali* series. The actor says he is comfortable portraying such an image.

"I am quite confident doing action and giving silent expressions as well as close-up shots. I go easy with the swagger and convey a lot with my eyes. I am not that confident with my dialogue delivery and am constantly working on that," Prabhas revealed how he goes about creating the alpha male image for the screen.

Considering his last release, *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion* ended up being one of the highest-grossing Indian films ever, Prabhas concedes that he was careful about what to do next. Initially, he toyed with the idea of signing a small and easy film, to have some stress-free time. "I was looking for a different script after *Baahubali* and I wanted to do something small. If we look at the magnitude of *Baahubali*, hon-

estly speaking, it is not possible for an actor to deliver every film at such a level. It is too much of a pressure and the risk was huge. We shot for the two *Baahubali* films over five years. It was exhausting, though the final product was grand. So, initially I wanted to do something easy-breezy," he said.

However, when the script of *Saaho* came up, the actor could not resist. He also mentioned that the budget of his new film eventually increased to create all the grandeur. "We started planning the film with a budget of ₹150 crore. Then slowly we developed the script and especially the action sequences, and that made us expand the budget to ₹350 crore. We cannot deliver a bad quality of VFX, since we are looking for excellence."

Saaho, directed by Sujeeth, has been simultaneously shot in Telugu and Hindi. Prabhas says he had to constantly adapt to the two versions, particularly when it came to dialogue delivery.

"There are differences I had to keep in mind as an actor. For example, in a south Indian language, say in Telugu, the emotion inherent in a sentence normally comes at the end of the line, while in Hindi you express the emotion with every word. The flow of the language is different and my expression had to be in sync with the words. It is a technical thing but I had to get it right," he pointed out.

Language, Prabhas says, was a challenge. "I was born in Tamil Nadu, so I am familiar with the Tamil language but Hindi was a first-time experience for me. This was the first time I was shooting a film in Hindi, so I consciously put extra effort. It is up to the audience to decide now, though our whole unit felt my Hindi was good," he said.

Starting his career in 2003 with the Telugu film *Eeswar*, Prabhas has done several films in Telugu but recognition came only after the *Baahubali* series. What does he look for in a script now? "For me, the story has to be engaging and the treatment of the story has to be designed to entertain the audience. It is not star power (that I look at). Rather, I look at my character in the film as secondary because the script is what we are contributing to. In *Baahubali*, too, the global appreciation happened because of the way (director) Rajamouli garu treated the story with grandeur. It was a story of our superhero, an Indian story," said Prabhas.

Saaho is one of the most technically advanced films ever pro-

duced in India. The film has been shot with IMAX cameras and has the look and feel of a Hollywood film. Does that snatch away an element of Indianness from the film?

"What we saw in (the action sequences) *Baahubali* was a combination of action and dance choreography, and that is why there was a different kind of grace in those scenes. *Saaho* is a regular film, with some stylish and slick action choreography. We are not trying to compete with Hollywood because they are more advanced than we are, but it is true that we are capable of delivering something at par with international standards. We have the talent but in Indian films, we haven't tried this level of action and VFX. Therefore, for the mass audience in India, we are giving something that is new and technologically

advanced. For the rest, it is up to them to decide. As for me, as the release date approaches, my stress level is going higher!" he smiled.

Saaho, directed by Sujeeth, also stars Shraddha Kapoor, Jackie Shroff, Neil Nitin Mukesh, M a h e s h Manjrekar, M u r a l i Sharma, and C h u n k y Pandey in key roles. The film releases o n August 30.

— IANS

I am quite confident doing action and giving silent expressions as well as close-up shots. I go easy with the swagger and convey a lot with my eyes. I am not that confident with my dialogue delivery and am constantly working on that

— PRABHAS



PARTY

CITY GUIDE



● Anuradha Kuber (left)

A MELODIOUS EVENING

Many music enthusiasts gathered at an event to listen to soulful classical music performed by Anuradha Kuber and Pt Satish Vyas. Anuradha's melodious voice accompanied by Satish's santoor notes provided an enchanting evening for the guests to get lost in



● Satish Vyas



● Hari Haran



● Mohan Hemmadi

● Tauseef Shareef



Photos by SV Chary

SPOTTED

People in large numbers attended the launch of a mobile phone in the city. Actress Hebah Patel was spotted, among others, gracing the event



● Hebah Patel

COMEDY

MANIK'S DAY OUT

Manik Manha's style of dry, almost offensive but in a funny sort of way, comedy is what he's loved for. He's ticking off the best comedy centres across the country. August 25, 7 pm, IQ Lounge Bar, Somajigudda.



BAS KAR BASSI

This is a show where Anubhav Singh Bassi will tell an honest story about his career choices and his lifestyle. His struggle is worth listening because nothing seems like a struggle. So come and witness a story full of fun, laughter and alcoholic moments. August 23, 8 pm, Oakwood Residence Kapil Gachibowli.

SAB SCAM HAI

It is a stand-up show by Gaurav Kapoor, where he talks nonsense with just one sensible joke. It's basically a one hour show with a mix of stories and observations. August 25, 7 and 9 pm, Oakwood Residence Kapil, Gachibowli.



FRIDAY COMEDY

The show is headlined by the hilarious Vivek Muralidharan popular for his YouTube videos. The event is hosted by Hyderabad's funniest mom Rupali Tyagi. It also features various artistes from the city. August 23, 7.45 pm, The Coffee Cup, Sainikpuri.

IMPROV COMEDY

While usually done in English, few city comedy artistes will perform a unique improv Telugu comedy show. August 24, 7 pm, Nriya — Forum for Performing Arts, Banjara Hills.

FOR CHILDREN

YAY FEST

This fun-filled festive event for children features tonnes of magic tricks, bowling games, fun rides, movie screening in-store, kids are in for super-duper weekend. August 24 and 25, 11 am to 7 pm, Funcity, Inorbit Mall, Madhapur.

THEATRE

KABADDI: THE GAME OF PARTITION

This play is a testament to the mass that was made to participate in one of the biggest political gambles ever. What the people went through at the time is what has carried the legacy. We have all read enough about Gandhi, Nehru, Jinnah, the commission, India, and Pakistan; it is now time to relive the madness as citizens of the country once did. August 23, 8 pm, Lamakaan, Banjara Hills.

EXHIBITION

JOURNEY OF THE CANVAS

A unique art residency programme will be organised featuring four exceptional artists — Syeda Ali, Manoj Das, Steven Gandhi, and Kotegadde Ravi — along with a live art exhibition. August 22 to 25, 6.30 pm, Mix, Westin, HITEC City.

INDIAN TRAILS

A six-day exhibition by artists Sona Kapoor and Nandini R Penna encapsulates the country's glorious culture, history, exquisite monuments, and architectural marvels that have stood the test of time. August 26 to 31, Alliance Francaise, Banjara Hills.

LIKE THE AIR I BREATHE

Artist Bakula Nayak exhibits her paintings inspired by the beautiful epic love poem *Ritusamharam* and vintage ephemeras. Ongoing, until September 2, 6.30 pm, Kalakriti Art Gallery, Banjara Hills.

BEAUTY OF WISDOM

A solo exhibition by artist Harikumar that delves deep into the introspection of beauty and how the artist wants to use his paintings to let viewers take a peek into their own beauty. Ongoing, August 16 to 23, 9.30 am, Alliance Francaise, Banjara Hills.



OTHER EVENTS

BOOK LAUNCH

The Four Sacred Texts, written by transformational leaders Krishnaji and Preethaji, offers a rare adventure into the powerful consciousness of the readers to manifest sustained happiness and prosperity. August 23, Shilpakala Vedita, Madhapur.

GET YOUR EVENT LISTED: To get your events listed, please send your details along with a poster and contact number to pioneer.features@gmail.com

FUN TIME

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



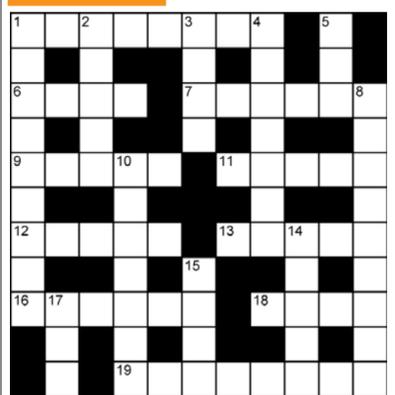
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

3	7	8	4					
	4	1					7	
1				7			6	
8								
	5	2	9		6	4	8	
								1
	2		4					5
	9			3		4		
		7		9		2	6	

Yesterday's solution

2	6	9	7	8	3	5	1	4
1	5	3	4	2	9	8	7	6
4	7	8	5	1	6	9	3	2
5	1	4	6	3	8	2	9	7
3	2	7	9	4	5	6	8	1
8	9	6	2	7	1	3	4	5
7	8	5	3	6	4	1	2	9
9	3	2	1	5	7	4	6	8
6	4	1	8	9	2	7	5	3

- Rules**
- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
 - The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- A fight using words
- Rip
- A root vegetable
- Group of eight
- Not ever
- A fruit with pips
- A hot drink
- Extreme fear
- Grow weary
- A large animal
- Glide over snow
- Not temporary
- Make bigger
- A large country in Asia
- Costing nothing
- A large bird

DOWN

- Someone in a spaceship
- A huge person
- Chews up and swallows
- An underwater missile for attacking a ship



'Annaya saved me from taking a wrong direction'

Power star and Jana Sena Chief Pawan Kalyan said *Annaya* Chiranjeevi's 64th birthday is special for him. The reason being that, as a fan of the Megastar, he has been waiting to see Chiranjeevi in a patriotic film and his wish got fulfilled with *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy*. The latter tells the epic story of Kurnool-based freedom fighter Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy who led an armed rebellion against the British in 1846, more than a decade before the sepoy mutiny took place in Meerut. "I couldn't act in the film but I consider lucky to have given voice-over for it. Our family's surname Konidela comes from a village in Kurnool and Uyyalawada is also from the same district. I believe the film came to *Annaya*, rather than going towards it. I couldn't produce a great film like it with him but I'm happy that Charan has produced it. Interestingly, it was made under Konidela Production company," he stated. He was speaking at the annual Megastar Chiranjeevi birthday celebrations at Shilpakala Vedika in

The Power Star mentions that he was contemplating suicide after failing his intermediate. Chiranjeevi encouraged him to take a path that was more suitable for him, finds NAGARAJ GOUD



Hyderabad on Wednesday evening.

Pawan expressed his joy to see two of his favourite people — Chiranjeevi and Amitabh Bachchan — in one frame in the October 2 release. "They are both my

biggest source of inspirations. The film also gave me an elusive opportunity to meet with Amitabh Bachchan *garu* when I dropped by the sets to see *Annaya*," he noted.

He said that his elder brother saved him thrice from tak-

ing a wrong turn in life. "I was depressed when I failed in intermediate. *Annaya* had a licensed pistol back then and I felt like committing suicide with it. Sensing that I was in a bad state of mind, I was taken to *Annaya* who told me,

"If you don't like academics, take another route. But don't get depressed. His words lifted my morale. I wished students who committed suicides in Telangana earlier this year had a brother like *Annaya*. Their death pained me. Politics aside, I believe that families should be able to provide counselling," he advised.

Citing another instance, Pawan recalled that as a youngster his blood would boil when someone spoke about India in a bad light. "*Annaya* would fear that I would become a revolutionary. He counselled me saying that I should first be a good human being. It stopped me from taking a radical step," he reminisced and added that at 22, he was away from home for six months doing meditation and Yoga at producer NV Prasad's ashram in Tirupati. "I told *Annaya* that I don't need anything in life and will take the spiritual route. He advised me against it, saying that I will not be useful to society if I take such a move. He felt that if I was responsible for life and family, I wouldn't think on such lines. I took his guidance which made me who I'm today."

NABHA in talks for Sai Tej's next

The actress had liked her part, which will show her in a completely new light, and it's a matter of time before she officially signs the project

After a promising turn in *iSmart Shankar*, which also lit up the box-office, Nabha Natesh is in much demand. Presently, a part of Ravi Teja-starrer *Disco Raja*, where she will be seen in a very urbane part, the actress, according to sources, is in prime contention to bag Sai Dharam Tej's next with producer BVS Prasad. "Nabha liked her part and she believes it will show her in a completely new light. It's little different from the chirpy roles that she has been associated with so far, which is why she is excited about it. Dates aren't an issue. Talks with her are in full swing and it's a matter of time before she officially signs the project," said a source close to the development.

While it remains to be seen when this project, with debutant Subbu in the director's chair, will roll as Sai Tej is also attached to star in Deva Katta's next, producer Prasad is confident of taking it to floors November-end itself. The dialogues are being written right now. — NG



VISHAL splits with ANISHA?

Did Tamil-Telugu actor Vishal call off his marriage with Anisha Alla, a Telugu actress he got engaged earlier this March in Hyderabad in a low-key ceremony? Well, that's what the buzz from Chennai circles says. Speculations about their wedding — scheduled for later this year — being called off has been doing the rounds for the past two days. What has fuelled the speculations further is the fact that Anisha has deleted all pictures of her with Vishal on her Instagram page. This came as a shocker for fans of Vishal as Anisha was spotted recently on the sets of his film in Turkey.

Before they made the news of them being an item together in January, Anisha, taking to Instagram, posted that she had "found somebody to go down the path of life with, loving him and life with true passion. I look up to this man for all that he stands for and for all of his heart. I vow to give back to him, the families and the people around with this step forward. I vow to be the best that I can be, intention towards collective learning, love and moral value (sic)."

Vishal wrote back then, "Yes. Happy. Too happy. Happiest. Her name is #AnishaAlla. And yes, she said yes. It's confirmed. My next biggest transition in life; will be announcing the date soon. God bless (sic)." Wonder what happened? Your guess is as good as ours!



NANDITA IN ANOTHER THRILLER

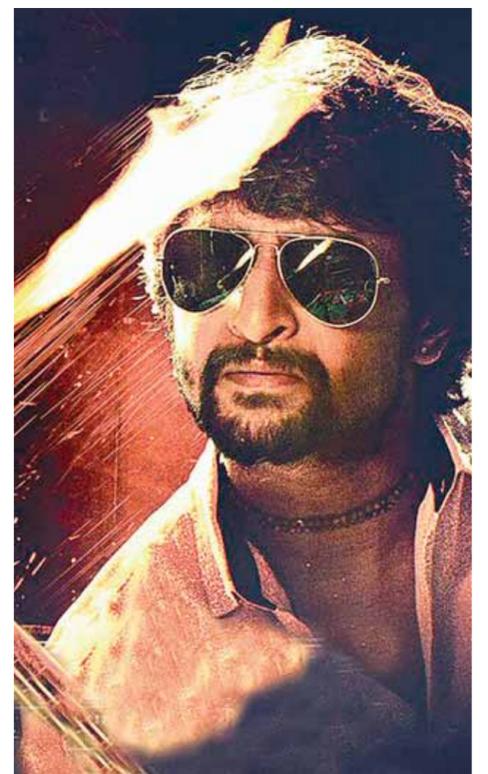
Having wrapped up the filming of *Akshara*, a social-drama peppered with comedy, actress Nandita Swetha has signed a new film, which is a family-driven suspense thriller. To mark the directorial debut of Sanjeev M, she will be seen alongside Shiva Kantamaneni of *Akkadokuntadu* fame in the film. Still untitled, the film will be launched in Ramanaidu Studios, Hyderabad on Saturday and the shoot will kick off on the same day as well. The makers are keen to wrap up the shoot in a couple of schedules. "Four of the total five songs have already been recorded. One song has been sung by Mangli (noted TV anchor)," said the makers. To be a joint production venture between G Rambabu Yadav, R Venkateshwara Rao, KS Shankar Rao and V Krishna Rao under Lighthouse Cine Magic banner, the film features Raasi, K Ashok Kumar, Posani Krishna Murali, Ajay, Praveen, Bitthiri Satti, Ajay Ghosh, Aditya Menon and Annapuramma in supporting roles.

DEVERAKONDA is Puri's FIGHTER

While the filming of Vijay Deverakonda's next with Puri Jagannadh is at least five months from now, seems there's no stopping for producer Charmme Kaur though. With *iSmart Shankar* behind her, the actress-turned-producer, it seems, is keen on keeping the project in the limelight. We hear she has approached the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce to register the title as *Fighter*. However, it seems the title has been already registered in another producer's name. She is hoping to get the consent of the said producer to part the title; else, her team might christen it as *Vijay Deverakonda's Fighter*.

The actor will be seen as a youth with a stammer in the film, joint production venture between Puri and Charmme under Puri Jagannadh Touring Talkies banner and Puri Connects, and he fights this condition every day to emerge to be a fighter, a factor that led to the title. Deverakonda's mannerisms and attitude are bound to take his fans on a euphoric ride, sources say.

Meanwhile, Deverakonda has been signed on as the brand ambassador of the food delivery app Zomato. His popularity across the South fetched him the deal and he is charging ₹1 crore as his fee, it is understood. The actor is presently shooting for Kranthi Madhav's untitled romantic drama, which will be wrapped in another month.



NANI'S TRIBUTE TO THE ORIGINAL GANG LEADER

As megastar Chiranjeevi turned 64 on Thursday, natural star Nani unveiled a new poster of his from September 13 slot-titled *Gang Leader* as a mark of tribute to the original *Gang Leader*. The interesting aspect of the poster is its similarities to that of an iconic still from Chiru's evergreen hit *Gang Leader* (1991). "This shot in our film is a tribute to the classic *Gang Leader*...On the occasion of the megastar's birthday, we decided to show you a glimpse of it as a poster — Happy birthday, sir. You are the Gang leader we will always look up to," posted Nani on Twitter.



AKSHAY KUMAR fourth highest paid actor in the world: Forbes

National Award-winning actor Akshay Kumar has made it to the fourth position on the *Forbes* magazine's World's Highest-Paid Actors Of 2019 list. According to the list on *Forbes.com* Akshay has raked in \$65 million. Hollywood star Dwayne 'Rock' Johnson tops the *Forbes* list of the 10 highest-paid actors, collecting \$89.4 million between June 1, 2018, and June 1, 2019. Australian actor Chris Hemsworth took the second spot with \$76.4 million — one of many actors from Marvel's superhero universe.

The list also covers the timeline from June 2018 to June 2019, during which the highest-grossing films of all time *Avengers: Endgame* was also released. The *Thor* star is followed by most of the *Avengers* stars — 'Iron Man' Robert Downey Jr. at No. 3, 'Rocket' Bradley Cooper at sixth, 'Captain America' Chris Evans at eighth and 'Ant-Man' Paul Rudd at the ninth spot. Others named are Jackie Chan, Adam Sandler and Will Smith.



Quentin Tarantino expecting first baby with Daniella Pick

Hollywood maverick Quentin Tarantino, 56, is expecting his first child with wife Daniella Pick. The couple, in a statement, told *people.com* that they are "very delighted to announce that they are expecting a baby".

The *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* director first met Daniella, daughter of Israeli singer and songwriter Tzvika Pick, in 2009 while promoting his film *Inglorious Basterds*. The pair didn't start dating until 2016, and then got engaged in June 2017 after having dated for around a year. The 56-year-old filmmaker married Daniella in an intimate ceremony in Los Angeles in November 2018.

The couple hosted an engagement party on September 2017 in New York City that served as a *Pulp Fiction* cast reunion, with a guest list including names like Bruce Willis, Samuel L Jackson and Uma Thurman.



LIAM HEMSWORTH files for divorce from MILEY CYRUS

Actor Liam Hemsworth has filed for a divorce from singer Miley Cyrus, citing "irreconcilable differences".

The two announced their separation on August 10, after less than a year of marriage. Just three days after their split, Hemsworth shared a message on social media wishing Cyrus "nothing but health and happiness going forward", *tmz.com* reported.

Sources connected to the couple say that Hemsworth and Cyrus had a prenup, keeping their earnings during the marriage separate, so there won't be a fight over money. Cyrus was spotted with celebrity blogger Kaitlynn Carter this past weekend in a Hollywood nightclub.

In the club, the two ladies were reportedly spotted "basically having sex" and the duo "didn't care who saw", according to a *pagesix.com* report. — IANS

Priyanka to star in Netflix superhero movie

Actress Priyanka Chopra is set to star in Netflix's upcoming project, a superhero movie titled *We Can Be Heroes*. It is still not known if the Indian beauty will play a superhero or not, but the film is for kids and is being written, directed and produced by Robert Rodriguez, director of the *Spy Kids* franchise. The film is about how a group of kids steps up to save the world when aliens abduct all of Earth's superheroes.

Meanwhile, the *Quantico* actress' Marathi production *Paani* recently won the Best Film award in the Environment Conservation category. "I'm so proud to have produced a special film like *Paani*. Congratulations to our director @adinathkothare and the entire team @PurplePebblePic @madhuchopra @lamsidchopra for our second National Award," Priyanka had tweeted. — IANS

#WHYTHEGAP Sonam Kapoor FOR CHILD RIGHTS

Ban on Mika lifted; he says won't sing in Pak again

Singer Mika Singh has apologised to the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) after the association banned him from working in India, following his recent live performance in Pakistan.

Interacting with the media on Wednesday in Mumbai, Mika said he had to do it owing to a prior commitment, but admitted it to be a mistake he would never repeat. However, the interaction soon turned into a heated exchange between the singer and the media.

"This was a commitment signed long back. The timing was wrong that I went there because the decision on Article 370 has just been taken. I called the federation and told them that this was a mistake. I apologise for the mistake and I won't repeat it. I got a visa, so I went (to Pakistan). If you get a visa, you will go, too," said Mika, while interacting with the media along with chief advisor of FWICE, Ashoke Pandit, and the body's president, BN Tiwari, on Wednesday in Mumbai.

Earlier, the All India Cine Workers Association (AICWA) and FWICE had banned Mika for performing at the wedding of a relative of former Pakistani President, General Pervez Musharraf, in Karachi. Mika's presence became known after pictures and videos of his performance appeared on social media. In his justification, the singer said that he had committed to the client "long back". — IANS



Sonam Kapoor has joined the Bollywood bandwagon spreading awareness on children's rights, as part of *#WhyTheGap* campaign promoted by Save The Children India.

The actress shared a group photo of her batch from her school days in Arya Vidya Mandir, Mumbai, and tweeted: "My school days were some of my happiest memories. I believe that education is the one path to true independence and freedom. We should all be asking *#WhyTheGap* and working towards *#TheRightStart* for every child."

The actress believes every child should have the right

start because true independence can be achieved with education, and she nominated actors Arjun Kapoor, Swara Bhasker and Dulquer Salmaan to take up the challenge on Twitter.

Save the Children India, which works for underprivileged children, started the online campaign called *#WhyTheGap* to help spread awareness about the existing gaps in our society between the privileged and the underprivileged strata.

Bollywood celebrities such as Akshay Kumar and his wife Twinkle Khanna, actresses Taapsee Pannu and Dia Mirza, musicians Shankar, Ehsaan and Loy, and Ayushmann Khurrana's wife Tahira Kashyap Khurrana have also tweeted on the same. — IANS

Man Vs Wild with Modi creates history

The special edition of *Man Vs Wild*, featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi with survivalist and adventurer, Bear Grylls, created history by garnering highest slot viewership (on active channels) with 3.69 million impressions overtaking GEC leader *Star Plus* with 3.67 million impressions.

The premiere on *Discovery Network* (across 12 *Discovery* channels) also delivered the highest ever slot reach for the infotainment genre with 6.1 million tune-in on *Discovery Channel* which is 15 times more as compared to the last 4 weeks average of the same slot. The premiere slot performance grew 50 times giving an unprecedented 93% channel share to *Discovery Channel* amongst the infotainment genre.

The premiere delivered the highest ever sampling in the infotainment genre with 15.6 million tune-ins. The premiere of the show on August 12 on *Discovery*

Channel rewrote the rules of the infotainment genre emerging as the highest-ever rated show in the history of genre in India garnering 6.9 million impressions. The cumulative reach for the show across *Discovery Network*, originals and repeat included, and *DD National* was an imposing 42.7 million. The special edition is also being showcased on *Discovery network* of channels across 179 countries.

"The historic edition of *Man Vs Wild* made a larger point about importance of wildlife conservation and sensitised people about environmental change. In that sense, it was much more than a TV show," said Megha Tata, Managing Director — South Asia, *Discovery*.

In celebration of the show's success, *Discovery India* will make a donation for the cause of tiger conservation in India in alignment with the PM's message of committing to wildlife conservation.



Actor-producer Chitrangada Singh has revealed that she is developing a web series under her production banner. The actor, who ventured into the production aspect of filmmaking with 2018 film *Soorma*, a biopic on former Indian hockey captain Sandeep Singh, said, that as a producer she wants to support content that is interesting and engaging. "I want to tell engaging stories. I am currently working on two scripts as a producer. I am also developing a web series. There is a lot of hard work we are putting in it. Hope people will have something good to say about it," Chitrangada said. She is also planning to act in one of her production ventures. "I hope I will fit in one of my projects as an actor as well."

The 42-year-old actor was speaking on the sidelines of Lakme Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2019 where she walked for Delhi-based designer Anjali Verma. Titled *Delilah*, the collection was crafted in the tone-on-tone colour palette in hues of biscuit beige, pista green, aqua green and dusty pink. Chitrangada, who wore a cherry red heavily embellished floor-length gown, said the social media scrutiny celebrities have to go through for their fashion choices is "harsh". "We all are on social media so somebody or other would put up a picture and there will be comments on it. It does make me conscious," she said. The actor, however, does not get bogged down by the negative comments she receives at times. "I have stopped taking them seriously because you do a bad look and the next day you do a good look and everything changes. One good cover and views change. I have gotten used to it but everything gets harsh sometimes," she said LFW Summer/Resort 2019 ends on Sunday. — PTI



Chitrangada to produce a web series

Griezmann could be key against Betis

Neymar future remains up in air



Antoine Griezmann celebrates after scoring his maiden goal for Barcelona during pre-season friendly game against Inter Milan

AFP ■ BARCELONA

If Lionel Messi listens to Real Betis and sits out another match, Barcelona will likely have to rely on Antoine Griezmann to finally get some points on the board.

Betis, which visits the Camp Nou on Sunday, responded to a tweet by Barcelona that Messi was back to practicing with the team for the first time since being injured in the preseason by saying: "Don't rush, Leo. No need for you to force it!" Barcelona couldn't make up for

Missi's absence last weekend when its attack was held scoreless in a 1-0 loss at Athletic Bilbao.

That was the first time the two-time defending champions had lost a Spanish league opener in a decade. And after both Real Madrid and Atlético Madrid won, the pressure is on.

Barcelona acquired Griezmann after triggering the 120 million euro (\$133 million) buyout clause in his contract with rival Atlético. The France forward was supposed to be the fourth piece to an already world class attack featuring Messi,

Luis Suárez and Ousmane Dembele. But Griezmann may be left with all the scoring responsibility in his competitive home debut.

Missi strained his right calf in the team's first practice of the season on August 5 and hasn't played since. Although it is possible he will be back to face Betis, Suárez won't be after he injured a right leg muscle in the first half at Bilbao. Dembele has also been ruled out for several weeks with a left thigh injury.

Philippe Coutinho, who could have helped out as an attacking

player, is no longer with the team after being loaned out to Bayern Munich this week. Malcom, a Brazilian forward who played sparingly for Barcelona last season, was sold to Zenit St Petersburg.

Griezmann had a lackluster match at Bilbao. His only goal scoring chance at San Mames Stadium came in the final minutes with a header.

The Frenchman, however, is used to carrying a team on his back.

Griezmann was a consistent scorer for Atlético, tallying more than 20 goals a season for five con-

Messi back in Barca training

AFP ■ BARCELONA

Lionel Messi gave Barcelona a timely boost on Wednesday by returning to training with the rest of the squad after a calf injury.

Missi trained alone in the morning before joining his teammates in the afternoon, increasing hopes that Barca's captain could play a role against Real Betis in La Liga on Sunday.

He strained his calf on August 5 in his first training session back following the Copa America and subsequently missed the club's pre-season.

It would be a surprise if Messi started at Camp Nou, but Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde will be eager to have his star available again, particularly after his team suffered a surprise 1-0 defeat by Athletic Bilbao in their opening league game last weekend.

Missi's absence has been compounded by injuries to other strikers.

Luis Suarez is expected to be out for around a month after hobbling off with a calf problem against Bilbao. Ousmane Dembele injured his hamstring and will need five weeks to recover.

Antoine Griezmann, the 120



Lionel Messi trains during Barca practice session on Wednesday

million summer signing from Atletico Madrid, is the only fully-fit forward, with Rafinha and 21-year-old Carles Perez possible options to play behind him.

The shortage up front has intensified speculation that Paris Saint-Germain's Neymar could return to Barcelona before the transfer window closes in Spain on September 2.

PSG sporting director Leonardo admitted earlier this month that the club were in "advanced negotiations" to sell Neymar but a deal is yet to be agreed with Barca, who have already spent around 250 million euros this summer.

secutive years despite the team often not having another attacking threat to draw away some of the attention of opposing defenses.

The problem at Bilbao, he said, was simply "the ball didn't go in." The other player who could make the most of the opportunity created by the injuries is 21-year-old Carles Perez, a member of Barcelona's reserve team. He impressed in the preseason, even scoring two goals in a 2-0 win over Japanese club Vissel Kobe, where former Barcelona great Andrés Iniesta now plays.

Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde included Perez in Wednesday's team practice. Betis

was the only team to beat Barcelona at its home stadium last season, outgunning the hosts 4-3.

Since then it has changed coaches, replacing the attack-minded Quique Setien with the more conservative Joan "Rubi" Ferrer, who led Espanyol to a Europa League berth.

Barcelona also poached one of its top players, left back Junior Firpo. Betis lost its Spanish league opener, falling 2-1 to Valladolid at home. The last time Betis played Barcelona was in Seville in March. Messi scored three goals and received a standing ovation from the Betis fans.

AFP ■ PARIS

Neymar remains no closer to getting his desired move away from Paris Saint-Germain amid reports on Thursday the French club had rejected an offer from Real Madrid of 100 million euros (\$111 million) plus players.

French sports daily *L'Equipe* said Real had offered cash plus Gareth Bale, James Rodriguez and goalkeeper Keylor Navas, but PSG turned it down because "the overall value of the offer did not match their expectations".

Paris paid 222 million euros to sign Neymar from Barcelona two years ago and their sporting director Leonardo is understood to be determined to only sell the forward for a deal considered to be of the same value.

Real have spent the summer trying to offload Bale, while James is unwanted after returning from a loan at Bayern Munich and Navas is no longer the club's first-choice goalkeeper.

Meanwhile, Barcelona remain hopeful of bringing Neymar back to the Camp Nou, but Catalan daily *Sport* claims an attempt to sign the player on loan with an obligation to buy for 160 million euros at the end of the season has been firmly rejected in Paris.

Sport claims Barcelona feel "it is very clear that PSG are trying to prevent the Brazilian from returning to the Camp Nou in any scenario".

PSG had previously reportedly turned down an offer from Barcelona of 40 million euros plus Philippe Coutinho and Ivan Rakitic. Coutinho has since joined Bayern on loan.

Juventus are also believed to have stated an interest in signing the 27-year-old, who has not featured in any of PSG's matches so far this season having been frozen out amid the uncertainty over his future.

The transfer window closes in France, Spain and Italy on September 2, meaning time is fast running out for a deal to be done.

The transfer window closes in France, Spain and Italy on September 2, meaning time is fast running out for a deal to be done.



Henry desires to succeed as manager



Thierry Henry reacts after Monaco suffer defeat during Ligue 1 match

AFP ■ LONDON

France football legend Thierry Henry is keen for another chance to prove he can be a successful manager despite his unhappy brief tenure at Ligue 1 side Monaco.

The 42-year-old — Arsenal's record goalscorer — told the *Daily Telegraph* that although his phone did not ring for four months following his sacking, things have picked up since then and he has received five offers.

Henry's dream return last October to manage Monaco, the club where he established his reputation as a top class striker, turned into a nightmare.

Having been part of Belgium manager Roberto Martinez's backroom team at the World Cup — where they reached the semi-finals — he lasted just over 100 days after only four league wins.

"Call me crazy if you want, but I love football and I believe I can be a successful coach," he said.

"I'm not thinking about the pain, I'm not thinking about failure. I don't like easy.

"I like to lead and it's on me to make it happen. The same when I joined Arsenal as a player, the same when I went to Belgium with Roberto. It's an

evolution."

Henry, who was a member of the France squads that won both the 1998 World Cup and the Euro 2000 title, said although he has been contacted over jobs, he has yet to find the right fit. "My phone didn't ring for four months after I left Monaco and then all of a sudden I got five calls," he said.

"Some were not what I was looking for and some were as a number two."

"I won't do a number two job because I want to be a number one."

Henry says it is frustrating having to wait around for another opportunity but he is convinced football coaching is where his future lies.

"I came out of it fully reassured that's what I want to do, zero doubt about it," he said.

All Henry asks is for transparency from his employers.

"Communication and honesty from the start is key," he said.

"What's the job? Is the job to stay up, is the job to win the League or be in the Champions League?"

"But how and what is success? Is success improving players? Ultimately, results are the most important thing, but I want to improve players as well."

Messi 'made me better player': Cristiano

AFP ■ TURIN

Cristiano Ronaldo admitted on Wednesday his long-time rivalry with Lionel Messi has made him "a better player" and that he enjoys a "healthy" rivalry with the Argentine great.

However, Portuguese star Ronaldo, whose influence at Real Madrid mirrored that of Messi at Barcelona before he left for Juventus, admitted that the pair have never socialised together.

"I really admire the career he has had and from his side, he has already talked of the disappointment when I left Spain because it was a rivalry that he appreciated," Ronaldo told *TVI* in Portugal.

"It's a good rivalry but it's not unique — Michael Jordan had rivalries in basketball, there was Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost in Formula 1. The thing they all had in common is that they were healthy rivalries."

Ronaldo and Messi have won the coveted Ballon d'Or five times each, a factor that helps each player flourish.

"I have no doubt that Messi has made me a better player and vice-versa. When I am win-



ning trophies it must sting him and it's the same for me when he wins," he said.

"I have an excellent professional relationship because we have been sharing the same moments for 15 years.

He added: "We've never had dinner together but I don't see why we can't in the future. I don't see a problem with that."

Coutinho will not start against Schalke: Kovac

AFP ■ MUNICH

Brazilian star midfielder Philippe Coutinho will not make his first Bundesliga start when Bayern Munich travel to Schalke on Saturday, said coach Niko Kovac on Thursday.

Coutinho, 27, has been the talk of Germany since joining Bayern on a one-year loan deal from Barcelona earlier this week.

Yet at a press conference on Thursday, Kovac confirmed the Brazilian would begin his first game as a Bayern player on the bench.

"He is not quite at the level of fitness he needs to play for 90 minutes," said Kovac.

"He has said that himself, and we don't want to take any risks. He has only been training for the last two weeks, so he needs to catch up," he added, but confirmed Coutinho would be in the matchday squad.



He is not quite at the level of fitness he needs to play for 90 minutes. He has said that himself, and we don't want to take any risks — NIKO KOVAC

"I know a lot of people want us to play him straight away, but everything has to be right."

Kovac said Bayern's other new attacking signing, Croatia winger Ivan Perisic, could make the starting eleven against Schalke.

"Ivan is much further along, he started training at the same time as we did, and played several games for Inter Milan in pre-season," he said.

Bayern are under pressure to pick up three points against David Wagner's Schalke side, having been held to a draw in their opening Bundesliga game against Hertha Berlin last week.

Novak, Osaka take US Open top seeds



AFP ■ NEW YORK

World number ones and defending champions Novak Djokovic and Naomi Osaka were named as top seeds for the US Open on Wednesday.

Djokovic, who will be chasing a 17th Grand Slam singles title in New York next week, heads the men's field with Spain's Rafael Nadal seeded second.

Former world number one Roger Federer, seeking a 21st Grand Slam crown, is seeded third for the tour-

nament. The draw for the men's and women's singles takes place on Thursday.

In the women's draw, Osaka is ranked number one while 2018 runner-up Serena Williams is seeded eighth.

Japanese ace Osaka won her first Grand Slam title in a controversial final victory over Williams last year and then followed it up with her second Slam at the Australian Open in January. The two other reigning Grand

Ankita out of qualifiers

PTI ■ NEW YORK

India's top women's singles player Ankita Raina crashed out of the women's singles US Open qualifying event after a hard fought three-set loss to Czech Republic's Denisa Allertova.

The world No 194 went down 7-6(5), 4-6, 2-6 to her Czech rival in a match that lasted two hours and 17 minutes, on Wednesday night.

Ankita won the first set in a tie-breaker but failed to keep her momentum as Allertova broke the Indian to take the second set comfortably.

In the decider, Ankita was broken again as she conceded the match. Sumit Nagal is the only Indian left in the qualifiers. He is scheduled to play Peter Polansky of Canada in the second round of the qualifiers.

Slam champions are seeded in the top four, with Australia's French Open champion Ashleigh Barty seeded second and Romania's Wimbledon champion Simona Halep seeded fourth.

Former world number one Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic is seeded third in the women's draw.

Praneeth enter World C'ship quarters, Prannoy loses

PTI ■ BASEL

India's B Sai Praneeth dished out a superlative performance to stun world No 8 Anthony Sinisuka Ginting and progress to the quarter-finals but H S Prannoy's fight ended with a narrow loss at the BWF World Championships here on Thursday.

World No 19 Praneeth, who had reached the finals at Swiss Open this year, took just 42 minutes to dispatch sixth seeded Anthony of Indonesia 21-19, 21-13 to set up a likely clash with another Indonesian Jonatan Christie, seeded fourth and the reigning Asian Games champion.

Earlier, Prannoy showed glimpsed of brilliance, especially in the opening game, but couldn't stop World No 1 Kento Momota from registering a 21-19, 21-12 win, his fifth victory over the Indian in as many encounters.

In the opening game, Praneeth quickly erased a 0-3 deficit to move to a 8-5 deficit. The Indian, who has had success against Anthony at the 2017 World Championship, kept his stranghold to enter the break with a 11-8 advantage.

In the second game, Praneeth zoomed to 6-2 but Anthony made his

way to manage a 11-8 lead at the breather. After the break, the Indian reeled off six straight points to make it 14-12. He kept marching ahead as Anthony crumbled.

Earlier, Momota dominated the proceedings initially against Prannoy as he moved from a 8-4 lead to grab a 11-7 advantage at the break.

Prannoy started putting pressure on his rival after the breather with an attacking game to claw back at 12-12 and kept snapping at Momota's heels.

At one stage, after the end of the 57-shot rally, an exhausted Prannoy was left prostrated on the floor following a perfect net return from the World No 1. The point gave Momota a two-point cushion at 19-17.

But the Indian stuck to his guns and a precise straight smash helped him to level at 19-19.

Momota, however, upped the pace to grab the game point with a return on the backline and then sealed it with a powerful smash.

After the change of sides, Momota once again found his way out of tricky situations to run up a lead of 11-5 at the break. Prannoy tried his best but Momota ensured he had the last laugh as he converted soon after gaining nine match points.

Roach, Gabriel jolt India early

Windies pacers exploit friendly conditions as India struggle at 68-3 in 1st session

PTI ■ NORTH SOUND

Opener KL Rahul put up a gritty fight with a circumspect Ajinkya Rahane as India partially recovered from a top-order collapse to reach 68 for 3 at lunch on the opening day of the first World Championship Test match against the West Indies.

Rahul, who had a wretched 18 months in the red-ball format, before this Test match, was composed during his unbeaten 37 after India were reduced to 25 for 3 inside the first eight overs on a track that offered bounce and lateral movement for new ball bowlers Kemar Roach (2/12 in 6 overs) and Shannon Gabriel (1/26 in 7 overs).

Mayank Agarwal (5), the ever-dependable Cheteshwar Pujara (2) and skipper Virat Kohli (9) were back in the pavilion in the first hour after Jason Holder put the visitors in on a bouncy track.

Rahul (37 batting, 73 balls) and vice-captain Rahane (10 batting, 43 balls) added 42 runs for the unbroken fourth wicket and stemmed the rot going into the lunch break after 24 overs were bowled during the opening session.

Agarwal got one from Roach, which held its line and the opener didn't fully commit forward with resultant nick being gobbled by Shai Hope behind the stumps.

The dogged Pujara didn't last long as he got a delivery from Roach that moved a shade away after pitching with India's No. 3 lunging forward. The edge was taken low down by Hope.

Skipper Kohli relishes such adverse situations and tough conditions but it wasn't his day despite a promising start that included a drive past point and another past mid-on.

However, Gabriel's ball, one



Mayank Agarwal looks down after being dismissed by Kemar Roach, right, during day 1 of the first Test in North Sound



India's captain Virat Kohli plays a shot during day one of the first Test

MAYANK AGARWAL (5), THE EVER-DEPENDABLE CHETESHWAR PUJARA (2) AND SKIPPER VIRAT KOHLI (9) WERE BACK IN THE PAVILION IN THE FIRST HOUR AFTER JASON HOLDER PUT THE VISITORS IN ON A BOUNCY TRACK

that climbed on him from short of length, saw Kohli fend awkwardly, only to be caught at gully by debutant Shamrah Brooks.

At 25 for 3, it could have been worse but a determined Rahul put his head down and left a lot of deliveries outside off-stump as Rahane also

defended dourly at the other end, waiting for Roach and Gabriel's first spell to end.

It was only when back-up pacer Miguel Cummins came into operation that Rahul collected three of his four boundaries -- a cut and a couple of off-drives.

Not for once did Rahul look comfortable during the first session and both his boundaries were freak ones. The first was a thickish outside edge that bounced short of second slip before going for four runs. The second was a pull-shot and he wasn't entirely in control. However, the best part was that he hung in there.

KEEMO PAUL RULED OUT
All-rounder Kemmo Paul has been ruled out of the first Test against India due to an ankle injury and pacer Miguel Cummins was named as his replacement by Cricket West Indies. Paul was ruled out due to an injury in his left ankle and will remain in Antigua to continue his rehabilitation.

"With Keemo ruled out for this match, it's good to have someone with Miguel's quality back in the squad, as he brings experience to the team," Windies interim head coach Floyd Reifer said in a statement.

Cummins had made his Test debut against India three years ago and took a career best 6 for 48 in the second innings of the second match of the four-Test series.

"Watching him in the last A Team series against India A and the training sessions his lengths have improved. He's a very hard worker and a wicket-taker. I'm sure, if given the opportunity to play, he will make a valuable contribution in our bid to win this series," he added.

The first Test beginning on Thursday marks the start of the ICC World Test Championship for both teams. In this series, each team can earn 60 points for a win or 20 points for a draw.



Richards sees same passion in Kohli

IAN S ■ NORTH SOUND

Virat Kohli had a fan boy moment ahead of the first Test as he got an opportunity to interview legendary cricketer Vivian Richards, whom the Indian skipper has always idol-worshipped.

Kohli quizzed Viv Richards on how he dealt with the fastest of bowlers of his time without even wearing a helmet or a guard. He introduced the Caribbean master as "the greatest inspiration to all of us batsmen".

"Whenever I have seen videos of you walking out, you're in a hat, no helmets back then. Even when there were, after a point you chose not to. Because it was something that made you feel like you had the belief and 'you are chewing gum'."

"I know the pitches were not as prepared or as covered back then. What was it like? What went through your head walking out knowing that you don't have a lot of protection. There is no restriction on bouncers and then you go out and dominate like that."

"What did you feel from the time you left the changing room till you got to the pitch. What was the mindset?" Kohli asked.

"I believed I am the man," said Richards. "It may sound arrogant but I always felt that I was involved in a game that I knew. I would back myself every time."

"You have to back yourself to get hurt, to take the knocks. But the helmet — I tried, I am not going to lie and tell you. But, it felt a little uncomfortable. So I felt my cap, my maroon cap which was given to me. I felt so proud with that."

"My mindset was that if I am good enough to be here, if I get hurt it's God's will. I will survive," the 67-year-old replied.

Kohli also shared his experience of facing fast bowlers: "I feel like it's better to get hit early on and get to know the feeling than always feeling like you might get hit."

"So, I prefer actually getting hit early on and really hard so it motivates me even further not allow that to happen again, just that pain to go through your body and be like — okay enough, it's not happening again."

Richards further said that getting hit was a part of cricket.

"Because to be fair while batting you are going to get hurt. It depends on how you come back from this knocks. In the old days, before these little guards (chest guards) around your ribs, you take it there and that's when you feel it. You take a count but then that's part and parcel of the sport," Richards opined.

Kohli also quizzed him about the challenges Richards faced that made him believe in himself. The former Windies skipper said: "I always felt I was good enough to be competing and I wanted to express myself in the best way that I can."

"I see that little similarity in you and that same passion in you," said Richards as Kohli had his moment. "There are times when folks would look at us and say, 'Wow why are they so angry?'"

Richards, who retired from the sport in 1991 had earlier hailed Kohli's batting skills and had said that the Indian skipper's batting style reminded him of his own days.



Vikram Rathour replaces Bangar as batting coach

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former opener Vikram Rathour will be replacing Sanjay Bangar as India's new batting coach while Bharath Arun and R Sridhar were expectedly retained as bowling and fielding coaches respectively.

The senior national selection committee headed by MSK Prasad has recommended three names each for all the support staff positions and the top names in each category will be appointed after the formalities with regards to Conflict of Interest declaration is complete.

The 50-year-old Rathour, has played 6 Tests and 7 ODIs in 1996 without much success but was a domestic heavyweight for Punjab. He till few years back (2016) was a senior national selector under Sandeep Patil's chairmanship.

He had earlier applied for NCA batting consultant and U-19 batting coach's position but his application was put on hold as his brother-in-law Ashish Kapoor is the chairman of U-19 selection committee.

"Vikram Rathour has got enough experience and we are convinced with his skill sets (as a coach). We will ask him to declare if he has any conflict," BCCI CEO Rahul Johri told reporters.

As per the recommendations of the selection committee, current incumbent Sanjay Bangar came second while former England batsman Mark Ramprakash was third.

"The team management had their own views but looking ahead, we felt there should be some freshness in the support staff," Johri said.

Former Mumbai Indians physio Nitin Patel, who was part of the support staff during the 2011 campaign, is back while Englishman Luke Woodhouse was appointed as the strength and conditioning (trainer) coach.

The other notable candidate to lose his job was incumbent administrative manager Sunil Subramanian, who was removed for his alleged misbehaviour with top diplomats of the Indian government during the ongoing tour of West Indies. Subramanian was replaced by Girish Dongre.

'Hesson almost beat Shastri to India coach job'

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Moments after Ravi Shastri was re-appointed as the head coach of the Indian team till 2021, Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) chief Kapil Dev had said 'as all of you were expecting' Shastri is the number one candidate for the job. But it has now come to the fore that Kiwi Mike Hesson had almost topped Shastri.

Speaking about it, a senior BCCI functionary said that it was a close call between Shastri and Hesson and New Zealand's track record under the Kiwi from 2012 till 2018 had almost sealed the deal for the former Kings XI Punjab coach.

"It was not a walk in the park for Shastri as some of you seem to believe. Hesson was really close to getting the go-ahead. It is there for all to see how the New Zealand team



improved by leaps and bounds under him across all formats.

"From being the perennial surprise package in big-ticket events, they had become a champion side under him and

that is something that really impressed the CAC.

"Under his coaching, the Kiwis reached their first-ever World Cup final in 2015. While he did resign in 2018, the Kiwis

playing their second final on the trot in 2019 also had a lot to do with what Hesson brought to the table.

His strategizing with the senior members in the team

can't be discounted," the functionary explained.

Asked what then turned the table back in Shastri's favour, considering that the CAC made it clear that skipper Virat Kohli wasn't consulted before taking the call, the functionary said it was Shastri's experience as a player on the international stage.

"The CAC felt that Shastri's proven record as a player was one area that needed to be given due recognition as one's own stature might become an area of concern when handling a team which has big names."

"Hesson hadn't played enough cricket himself and as we know started coaching in his early twenties. Shastri on the other hand played 80 Test matches and 150 ODIs. That is something that went against the for Kiwi coach," the functionary said.

Karunaratne stands tall on rain-hit day



AFP ■ COLOMBO

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne helped Sri Lanka to 85 for two at stumps on a rain-hit day one of the second Test against New Zealand in Colombo on Thursday.

Only 36.3 overs were possible after rain washed out the first session and bad light ended play for the day with Karunaratne unbeaten on 49.

Karunaratne, fresh from a match-winning century in the first Test in Galle last week last week, hit six boundaries during his 100-ball stay in overcast conditions.

Former captain Angelo Mathews was giving Karunaratne company in the middle to remain unbeaten on nought after facing 14

deliveries. New Zealand all-rounder Colin de Grandhomme, who made the XI in place of Mitchell Santner, said the match was "evenly poised".

"There's a bit of more bounce on this track than what we encountered in Galle and that's nice," he said after play ended.

"If we can get a couple of early wickets on Friday morning that will be nice."

Karunaratne batted with positive intent despite losing opening partner Lahiru Thirimanne and Kusal Mendis either side of tea.

Thirimanne never looked comfortable and his 59-minute stay at the wicket produced just two runs.

His misery ended when he pushed a William Somerville delivery and was caught at extra cover by skipper Kane Williamson. He had been earlier dropped by wicketkeeper BJ Watling off Somerville.

Mendis looked good as he reached 32 with four fours and put on 50 runs with Karunaratne to steady the batting.

De Grandhomme got Mendis caught behind on a seaming delivery outside the off stump and Watling gloved the catch.

The hosts only need a draw to clinch the two-match series.

The entire opening session and another hour was lost due to persistent rain and the toss took place at 1:10 pm (0740 GMT). The afternoon session went uninterrupted but play was again delayed by 28 minutes after tea due to rain.

After 7.3 overs in the evening session, play was called off due to bad light.

Harris, Khawaja fall amid showers

AFP ■ LEEDS

Marcus Harris and Usman Khawaja both fell cheaply before Australia reached 54-2 at tea on Thursday's rain-marred opening day of the third Ashes Test against England at Headingley.

Only 18 overs in an original day's allocation of 90 had been bowled when bad light forced an early tea, with David Warner 26 not out — his first double-figure score in five innings this series — and Marnus Labuschagne seven not out.

Rain had previously stopped play at 2.45 pm (1345 GMT) after delaying the scheduled start by more than an hour.

And there was further frustration for both England and a crowd who had waited patiently to watch cricket when, after play resumed, only 3.1 more overs were possible before the umpires suspended play for bad light even though the floodlights were on full blast.

After a grinning Warner and Labuschagne sprinted off the field, umpires Chris Gaffaney and Joel Wilson were booed as they returned to the pavilion.

Wilson was later seen having an animated conversation on the dressing room balcony with several England players and backroom staff.

England, looking to level the five-match series at 1-1, had seen captain Joe Root win the toss in the hope of making the most of overcast, bowler-friendly conditions.

Australia had dropped opener Cameron Bancroft, who had made just 44 runs in four innings, and brought in Harris to partner Warner at the top of the order after England had enjoyed the bet-



ter of a rain-affected draw in the second Test at Lord's.

Both left-handed batsmen struggled against England's new-ball attack of Stuart Broad and Jofra Archer.

The experienced Warner was repeatedly beaten by Broad juggling the ball off a length, while the express Archer, in his second Test, went past Harris's outside edge.

Archer, bowling from around the wicket, squared him up with an 87.3 mph delivery that saw Harris get a thin edge through to wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow — like Root appearing on his home ground.

Moments after Harris had fallen for eight, with Australia 12-1 off four overs, the umpires took the players off the field because of rain.

It took Warner 14 balls to get off the

mark as he continued to struggle, although Broad may have bowled a fraction too short with several deliveries beating the outside edge without really challenging the batsmen.

But he did take a wicket when Usman Khawaja, the third left-hander in Australia's top three, made thin contact with an intended leg glance and was caught behind as he too fell for eight.

England, however, had to review New Zealand official Gaffaney's original not out decision before reducing Australia to 25-2.

For Australia, fast bowler James Pattinson came in for paceman Peter Siddle.

England were unchanged after opener Jason Roy was passed fit having been hit on the head batting in the nets on Tuesday.