

OPINION 6 GLOBAL WARNING

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HYDERABAD, WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 18, 2019; PAGES 12 ₹3



# the pioneer



RAJINIKANTH: I WANT TO PLAY THE ROLE OF A TRANSGENDER

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## 3 capitals for Andhra, hints AP CM

■ Visakhapatnam may be executive capital, Legal capital in Kurnool and Legislative capital in Vijayawada ■ From TDP's Singapore model to YSRCP's South Africa style, decisions help ruling party gain political capital

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Ending the uncertainty over future of Amaravati as Andhra Pradesh capital, Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Tuesday said the state may have three capitals with executive and judicial capitals coming up in Visakhapatnam and Kurnool respectively.

He said while the legislative capital may continue to function from Amaravati, the coastal city of Visakhapatnam may be made the executive capital and Kurnool may be developed as the judicial capital. He told State Legislative Assembly that the state needs to have innovative thinking to ensure decentralization.

"Decentralization is the real concept. We should also



change. Countries like South Africa have three capitals. We may also have three capitals."

"Legislative capital may remain here. Assembly may function from here. We may

have executive capital in Visakhapatnam. Administration may work from there. Kurnool may have judicial capital.

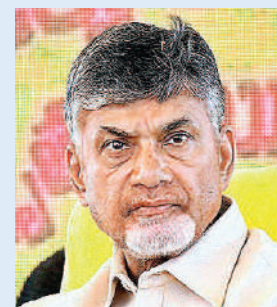
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## Why this much hatred against Amaravati, asks Chandrababu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu flew out of handle on Tuesday out of rage as Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy stated on the floor of the state legislative Assembly hinting at the state could be having three capitals.

Talking to media outside the Assembly after being suspended from the House, he came crashing down like a



ton of bricks on the YSRCP government predicting that it

will destroy the state further and compared the rule of the present regime with that of Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq. He questioned why Jagan has this much hatred on Amaravati and wondered why he is bent upon killing the new city.

If the state is to have three capitals, from where will Jagan will rule -- from Amaravati? or Visakhapatnam? or Kurnool?

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## NIRBHAYA CASE CJI recuses from hearing convict's plea

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice S A Bobde recused himself on Tuesday from hearing the plea of convict Akshay Kumar Singh seeking review of the 2017 apex court judgment upholding his death penalty in the Nirbhaya gang rape-and-murder case. At the outset a special bench comprising the CJI and Justices R Banumathi and Ashok Bhushan made it clear that the review plea has to be heard by another appropriate bench.

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## Urdu writer to return Padma award

HYDERABAD: Acclaimed Urdu writer from Hyderabad, Mujtaba Hussain has announced that he would be returning his Padma Sri award to the Union government. He decided to return the Padma award to register his protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the plan to update the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

## Pregnant woman raped in Karimnagar

KARIMNAGAR: In yet another heinous incident, a pregnant woman was raped by a cable TV unit worker in Karimnagar town on Monday. According to a complaint lodged by the family of the victim, the worker, Ramakrishna, came to their house in Bommakal village of Karimnagar rural mandal to repair the cable connection on Monday.

The woman's husband, a security guard, was away from home. The worker sexually assaulted her, filmed the entire act, and blackmailed her that he would make the clip public if she revealed the incident. However, the woman and her husband complained to the police. The accused was booked under SC/ST Act for molestation.

## Bihar woman, set on fire after rape bid, dies

PATNA: The 23-year old woman, who was set on fire after a failed rape bid in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district on December 7, died here on Monday night. She was undergoing treatment in Patna's Appolo hospital after receiving 80 per cent burns.

The victim's kin said the woman died around 11.40 p.m. on Monday night. The Muzaffarpur district administration had assured to bear the entire cost of treatment of the woman.

According to the family members of the victim, her last words were, "I want justice. The person who has committed this crime should be hanged."

## Follow Agama shastra rules strictly, CM KCR tells Yadadri officials

■ Asks officials not to complete works in a hurry ■ CM conducts over 6-hr inspection of Yadadri temple renovation works

L VENKAT RAM REDDY ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao has asked the officials concerned not to rush through Yadadri Temple renovation works, considering the need to ensure high quality and strict adherence to Agama Shastra rules. KCR went round Yadadri temple premises for six and half hours on Tuesday, along with officials from various departments. He initially performed a special pooja to Sri Laxmi Narasimha Swamy and sought blessings from Vedic scholars.

Later, he keenly inspected works being executed at Gopuram, Dwaja Sthambham, Sivalayam, sanctum sanctorum, Mada streets, queue lines, kitchen where prasadam is being made, Towers, Pushkarini, Yagashala, among others. He expressed his satisfaction that all the works were



Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao during his inspection of works being executed at Gopuram, Dwaja Sthambham, Sivalayam, sanctum sanctorum, Mada streets, queue lines of Yadadri Temple on Tuesday

being done reflecting sublime spirituality and traditions.

"Works on temple cannot be

done as per deadlines. Since they are going to be permanent constructions, each and every

precaution should be taken on all aspects.

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## TRS push for irrigation led to boom in food processing industry

To attract investments that promote large scale employment

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

IT and Industries Department Minister K T Rama Rao has said that the ripple effects of giving priority to the irrigation sector through the Kaleshwaram project and the revival of tanks are reflecting in the rising demand for food processing units in the state so much so that TS is now looking at options to export and find ways to use paddy by promoting agro-based industries. With substantial additional land being irrigated now, the need for agro-based and food processing industries had increased tremendously, he pointed out at a review with officials of IT and Industries Department here on Tuesday.

KTR said: "The Telangana government has been giving top priority to the agricultural and irrigation sectors. This has led to an increase in crop production, giving a large scope for the food processing industry. Food processing units will create employment



TSBP vice chairman Vinod Kumar, TRRS chairman Palla Rajeshwar Reddy congratulate KTR on completion of one year as TRS working president on Tuesday

opportunities in rural areas."

A Cabinet sub-committee is reportedly working towards turning certain agri products into value-added products by encouraging industrialists and incentivizing them in a way that it benefits both farmer and industrialists.

KTR stated that the government would bring in more textile, electronics, and food processing units to the state as

these sectors had abundant scope for job creation. He instructed officials of the IT and Industries Departments to set targets for attracting investments that boost employment opportunities in the state.

The Minister said that the Telangana government's Industrial Policy had succeeded in attracting investors from across the world.

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## Protest over citizenship law turns violent in East Delhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Angry protesters demanding scrapping of the amended citizenship law torched several motor bikes, pelted stones at police and damaged public buses in Northeast Delhi's Seelampur area on Tuesday, in fresh violence in the national capital.

Police resorted to baton charges and fired tear gas shells to disperse the protesters. Plumes of smoke billowed from at least two localities.

Police said two bikes of traffic cops were burnt by the demonstrators, adding a police booth in the area was damaged.

A large number of policemen were deployed following the violence.

Police said the protesters were marching from Seelampur towards Jafrabad.

**Police said two bikes of traffic cops were burnt by the demonstrators, adding a police booth in the area was damaged**

Clashes erupted between police and protesters at Seelampur Chowk when the security personnel tried to stop them from moving ahead.

According to a senior police officer, the protest began at around 12 pm. The protesters raised slogans against the new law as well as the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The clashes erupted two days after violence broke out during a protest in the New Friends area in South Delhi near Jamia Millia Islamia.

## Opposition delegation meets President, seeks CAA rollback

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the protests across the country against the Citizenship Amendment Act, a delegation of 19 opposition leaders on Tuesday met President Ram Nath Kovind and urged him to ask the Narendra Modi government roll back the legislation.

Addressing the media after the meeting, Congress' interim President Sonia Gandhi said that the whole country is agitating on the CAA, and the opposition was anguished with the police action against the protesters in the northeast and in Delhi. "Delhi is an example



where the police has trespassed into the Jamia women's hostel and dragged them out.... they have beaten up students mercilessly, you have seen that the

Modi government seems to have no compassion when it comes to shutting down people's voices," she said.

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## No going back on Citizenship Act: Shah

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Amid raging protests over the amended Citizenship Act, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted there was no question of going back on its implementation and accused the opposition of engaging in a "false" campaign over the legislation.

Speaking at India Economic Conclave, Shah said there was nothing against minorities in the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), which was passed by Parliament last week and has received Presidential assent.

"There is no going back on



Amit Shah

Citizenship Act, government is firm like rock on its implementation," said Shah amid demand by opposition parties for withdrawal of what they called an "unconstitutional and divisive" law.

## Cabs cancelling, refusing rides will be booked

NAVEEN KUMAR ■ HYDERABAD

Contract carriages operated by aggregators like Ola and Uber as well as auto-rickshaws operating in the city are henceforth liable to be booked under the Moror Vehicles Act by the Cyberabad police for refusing/cancelling rides of passengers. Aggrieved people can lodge complaints through the dedicated WhatsApp number, according to traffic authorities. It is illegal on the part of contract carriages to cancel or refuse rides; so, instead of ignoring the issue, people can



always alert the police to book a case, said DCP of Cyberabad Traffic Police, S.M. Vijay Kumar.

Two such cases were booked

on Tuesday via WhatsApp.

Section 178 of the MV Act, under which offenders will be booked, says action will be taken if the service provider

fails or refuses to accept the fare when tendered and refusal to ply contract carriage.

People are not aware of this. This (refusal/cancellation of ride) is totally illegal and, after we start booking cases, in due time they will learn a lesson not to cancel rides. A fine of Rs 500 will be charged per cancella-

tion. We have a WhatsApp group with volunteers who have been vocal about facing problems from cab service providers. We booked two cases on Tuesday, one of them in Secunderabad, which was referred to the Hyderabad traffic police," the DCP said.

Appreciating the move, Vinod Kumar Kanumula, Chief Functionary of Indian Road Transport, opined that the other Commissionerates in the city should also start this. "It is a good move from the police. I have faced this issue myself several times.

Continued on Page 4

TODAY ALMANAC Month & Paksam: Margashirsha & Krishna Paksha Panchangam Tithi : Sapthami: 11:30 pm Nakshatra: Purna Pralgn 12:01 am Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work) Rahukalam: 12:12 pm - 01:34 pm Yamagandam: 08:05 am - 09:28 am Varjyam: 08:58 am - 10:28 am Gulika: 10:50 am - 12:12 pm Good Time: (to start any important work) Amritakalam: 06:00 pm - 07:30 pm Abhijit Muhurtham: NIL

HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Clear with periodic clouds Temp: 28/16 Humidity: 73% Sunrise: 06:39 Sunset: 05:45 Current Weather Conditions Updated December 17, 2019 5:00 PM



# Opposition bracing up for polls to local bodies in AP

**PIN POINT**  
Opposition parties in Andhra Pradesh are rejuvenating and gearing up for the upcoming polls to local bodies. The elections to local bodies, likely to be held in the first half of 2020, are going to be the litmus test for all, including the ruling party. Telugu Desam Party, Janasena and the Left parties are busy involving their respective cadre in protests against the policies of the YSR Congress government. TDP is formulating strategies for surviving effectively in the political arena of the state. The party's stir, therefore, is intended to take on the YSRC government on the one hand and keeping its flock together on the other. For, the ruling party is believed to be making

attempts to poach from TDP so as to strip it of the rank of principal opposition in the AP Assembly. Just six TDP members are enough for the ruling party to disturb its bête noire politically. The ruling party, by establishing ward-level secretariats and the system of volunteers in villages, has paved the way for reaching out to people. So, TDP faces a formidable challenge in regaining its strength and sustaining its position. Trying to align with BJP could prove to be a very big task for TDP in the backdrop of YSRC's relentless efforts to strike a friendly deal with the saffron party. The issue will be decided, basing on their pros and cons, at the behest of Modi-Shah combination. Which political combination in AP will be useful for BJP to retain power at Centre in 2024?

**The issue will be decided, basing on their pros and cons, at the behest of Modi-Shah combination. Which political combination in AP will be useful for BJP to retain power at Centre in 2024?**

What kind of plan of action is needed for that? Who will be the electoral partner for BJP in Andhra? Which party is capable of going the 'extra mile' to get maximum benefits that could also turn the tide in BJP's favour? These are some of the issues that BJP would consider while taking a call on possible political tie-ups. In any case, BJP is eagerly waiting for a political partner in AP to buttress its strength in Parliament. That future partner in AP should be like AIADMK of Tamil Nadu, which has been acting as staunch supporter of

BJP on all key issues. It is only because of the unqualified support extended by parties like AIADMK that the Modi government could have the last laugh in the case of Citizenship Amendment Act. As things stand, YSRC may be BJP's natural choice in AP, considering it has 22 Lok Sabha members. But BJP is wary that a party's present strength in legislature may get altered following change of mood in voters. Still, BJP needs support of regional parties before the 2024 polls. Janasena Party headed by



**M D RATNA KUMAR**  
Senior Journalist

alliance against YSRC in AP. Pawan is concentrating on mass contact programmes related to farmers and working classes and is trying to project himself in national media as a fighter solving people's problems. He seems to have prepared himself even to lose his lone MLA in AP Assembly who is slowly getting nearer to CM Jagannathan Reddy by praising his policies on the floor of the House. Pawan is enjoying the patronage of BJP without having single seat in Parliament. The left parties should also be included in this proposed alliance as per the opinion of many. But the left parties won't align themselves with a front in which BJP is a partner. So, it may not be possible even for Chandrababu and Pawan to get left parties included in their possible combination.

Jaganmohan Reddy is keen on having proper ties with BJP at Centre as the sword of criminal cases is hanging above his head. Hence, YSRC supported CAB recently. One incident that took place in Delhi in 1997 needs a close look. A ninth class girl student, daughter of a Sub-Inspector in Delhi police, got very much disturbed to see police atrocities on a hapless woman in a Bollywood film 'Hamare Dil Apke Pass Hai' in which heroine Aishwarya Rai is subjected to high degree of harassment at the hands of a sub-inspector. That girl, in that very particular moment, had a hallucination of seeing her real father in the role of the sub-inspector in that movie. The adverse comments made by her classmates after watching that movie over police harassment in general adds fuel to

fire in 'hurting' feelings of that girl. Soon after returning home, that girl fumes at her father, stating how he could be so cruel towards a hapless woman. Her father is stunned on receiving such response from his teenage daughter. This suggests that people have strong positive opinion on police; yet, they easily get disturbed if things go wrong even if it is a fictitious one. The latest happening in the national capital makes people draw a parallel with the foregoing incident. A woman journalist Bushra Sheik, working for BBC, got a raw deal at the hands the Delhi police while she was covering midnight protests of the students of Jamia Millia Islamia University in Delhi over CAA. This real incident seems to have 'enough stuff' to defame the Delhi Police.

## HYDERABAD 'ENCOUNTER'

# Hospital seeks HC advice on preserving bodies of accused

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state-run Gandhi Hospital here on Tuesday sought a directive from the Telangana High Court over preserving the bodies of the four accused in the rape-murder of a woman veterinarian, who were later killed in an alleged encounter with the police.

The directive was sought following concerns expressed by the hospital's forensic experts over keeping the bodies.

The forensic professor, who preserved the bodies, has expressed concern as to how long we can preserve the bodies. We cannot keep them any longer, a senior medical official at the Gandhi hospital said.

The forensic professor's views have been forwarded to the High Court for guidance and orders from the court were awaited.

Whatever the forensic professor has said is his concern over maintaining the bodies for a longer period.

With his reference, we have approached High Court," the official said.

"So, we asked for the high court to kindly give us the direction as what should be done next, he said.

Whatever the High Court



**The forensic professor's views have been forwarded to the High Court for guidance and orders from the court were awaited**

says they will follow, he said. As per the forensic experts views, the bodies have been in good condition, but he needs further guidelines as to what is to be done as no cut-off time has been given, he said.

The bodies have been preserved in minus degrees temperature, he said.

The bodies were to be preserved till December 13 as per the high courts directives earlier, the official said, adding that no further directives have been received from the High Court.

The four men, accused in the rape and murder of the

woman veterinarian, were killed in an alleged encounter with police on December 6.

The four accused were arrested on November 29 for allegedly raping and killing the woman veterinarian and later smothering her and later burning her body.

They were allegedly gunned down by the police after the accused snatched the firearm of the law enforcers at Chattanpalli when they were taken to the scene of crime near the culvert, under which the charred remains of the 25-year-old veterinarian were found on November 28, to

recover her phone, wrist-watch and others pertaining to the case. The Supreme Court had appointed a three-member inquiry commission headed by former apex court judge V S Sirpurkar to probe into the

## Korutla TRS MLA backs 'encounter'

**JAGITAL:** While the Supreme Court has ordered an inquiry into the killing of four accused in Disha case, Korutla TRS MLA Ch Vidhyasagar Rao asked all Telangana legislators to back the police. Justifying the encounter, he took out a rally in Metpalli town on Tuesday. The MLA is planning to take out another rally in Korutla on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Vidhyasagar Rao appealed to all MLAs of Telangana to extend their support to police by organising rallies in their respective constituencies. Stating that it was not against any government, the MLA wanted all sections of society to come forward to instill

self-confidence among the police personnel. "On the day of encounter, people showered flowers on policemen. However, nobody was talking about the injustice being meted out to policemen. Nobody would save the people if the police lose self-confidence," Vidhyasagar Rao said.

"Time has come to make changes in existing laws," he added. However, political analysts felt that Vidhyasagar Rao had organised rallies to counter Health Minister Etela Rajender who opposed the encounter. The Minister said that encounters and imprisonments would not solve problems. There should be change in the behaviour and attitude of people.

circumstances that led to the alleged encounter of the four accused in the gang-rape and murder of the veterinarian.

The apex court had said the preservation of the bodies shall continue until further orders.



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## ISO 14001 certification for nine railway stations of SCR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Nine railway stations of South Central Railway (SCR) including Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Kacheguda, Vijayawada, Nizamabad, Kurnool city, Basar, Vikarabad and Parli Vajinath have been awarded with the Environmental Standard ISO 14001:2015 certification for implementing Environment Management System successfully in railway stations.

The standards are mainly aimed at minimising consumable resources and developing environment friendly atmosphere. ISO 14001 certification is issued to the stations which fulfil the laid down standards in provision of services and amenities for transportation of passengers and maintenance of cleanliness in railway station premises and timely disposal of garbage to municipal authority.

This includes maintaining cleanliness, disposal of solid waste, pet bottle shredders, anti-littering, water conservation, energy conservation, installation of solar energy, developing green belt and implementing zero-waste management among others.



**GM of SCR complimented the officials and advised them to further improve the standards of EMS**

Gajanan Mallya, General Manager of SCR complimented the officials and advised them to further improve the standards of Environment Management System for getting certification for some more stations.

It may be mentioned here that National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed Indian Railways to identify 36 stations to be developed as eco-smart stations by achieving green environment standards. SCR identified three stations from its zone namely Secunderabad, Kacheguda and Vijayawada.

One of the norms laid down by NGT is getting ISO 14001 certification from BIS. Accordingly, all the three identified railway stations to be developed as eco-smart stations - Secunderabad, Kacheguda and Vijayawada are now in receipt of ISO 14001: 2015 certification complying the NGT norms.

## Minister reviews step for Vaikunta Ekadasi fete

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for animal husbandry Talasani Srinivas Yadav on Tuesday asked officials to make all arrangements for the Vaikunta Ekadasi Dhanur-masa celebrations to be held at Ranganatha Swamy temple in Jaguda on January 6 to rule out any inconvenience to devotees. He asked the officials to beef up security arrangements and implement all measures before January 1.

## KTR completes 1 year as working president



**HYDERABAD** On completion of a year on assuming charge as TRS working President, party leaders made a beeline to congratulate Minister for Industries KT Rama Rao. Ministers Koppula Eshwar, Satyavathi Rathod, Gangula Kamalakar MPs, MLAs, MLCs and party leaders extended greetings on the occasion. Labour Minister Malla Reddy on the occasion of the completion of a year held special prayers in Yadadri temple. Mohammed Baba Fasiuddin Deputy Mayor GHMC presented chادر before the saint Hzt. Yousufain Shareefain RH Dargah, Namapally on Tuesday, seeking blessings for KTR. B Vinod, Ranjith Reddy, Maloth Kavitha and others greeted the Minister.

## Chicken prices drop as demand slumps

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chicken prices have dropped over a week. The price of chicken was Rs 220 per kg till a few days back. Recently it dropped to Rs 150-180 per kg, while the live chicken is being sold between Rs 82 to 92 per kg.

The demand for chicken has come down because of winter season and Ayyappa deeksha. The traders attribute it the mismatch in demand and supply chain. The chicken sales during normal days are 4 to 5 lakh kgs. The traders say that there is at least 30 per cent cut in the sales.

## Axe may fall on 238 engineering colleges

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Axe may fall on 238 engineering colleges across the state during the academic year 2020-21 as the deadline set by the AICTE to the engineering colleges, at the behest of the state government, to secure building permissions for the college structures has expired last month.

The colleges apparently built structures without necessary permissions. Following receipt of complaints in this regard, the AICTE served notices to the college managements and asked them to produce necessary permissions to get a nod for admissions. At the intervention of the government, it gave deadline for two years. But the colleges, seems to have not received the building permissions even now. The Chief Secretary had written to the AICTE, asking it to extend the deadline by two years, it com-



plied with the request. As the deadline expired last month, the AICTE served notices to the college managements again.

Out of these colleges, many colleges are located under the HMDA limits. There are 42 colleges which come in regions prohibited by the GO 111. Some of the colleges raised multi-stored structures with the permission from gram panchayat. The AICTE asked the government in April this year to complete verification of the permissions and submit a report by October.

## MANUU staff, faculty join anti-CAA stir

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Students of Maulana Azad National Urdu University continued their protest for the second consecutive day on Tuesday while teachers and non-teaching staff also took out a rally to show solidarity with the students of Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University.

Boycotting the exams, students of MANUU continued their protest on the campus, raising anti-government slogans and condemning police brutalities on students of JMI and AMU. MANUU Students' Union, which has organised the protest, is demanding action against the policemen who allegedly entered JMI and



AMU campuses and attacked the students on Sunday.

The protestors were also demanding rollback of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and withdrawal of the

proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC).

The students locked the university gates to prevent the police from entering the campus. The police also erected

**Boycotting the exams, students of MANUU continued their protest on the campus, raising anti-government slogans and condemning police brutalities on students of JMI and AMU**

barricades on the road leading towards the university and stopped media persons from entering the campus.

The students of India's first and only Urdu university boycotted the exams for a second consecutive day. The students union is expected to decide later in the day whether to end the boycott of exams from Wednesday or continue it.

The union had stated that the students may attend the

exams from Wednesday but the democratic and peaceful protests will continue.

Meanwhile, faculty and non-teaching employees of MANUU took out a rally on the campus to condemn the police highhandedness at JMI and AMU.

Teachers' Association, Administrative Officers' Association and Employees' Welfare Association organised the rally in support of the

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**CRIME CORNER**

**5-year jail to man for assaulting Inter student**

A local court at LB Nagar convicted a 22-year-old man for five years of imprisonment and slapped a fine of Rs 1,000 for assaulting and threatening to kill an Intermediate student. The accused, identified as Ramnath alias Sai, was booked by the Jagadgirigutta Police in 2015 for confronting the student and threatening to splash acid on her. Ramnath also threatened that he will kill her family members. Ramnath's mother Eshwaramma, 65, also abused the mother of the victim. The accused was arrested and sent to judicial custody said the police. Under supervision of PV Padmaja, DCP Balanagar and Court Monitoring Cell of Women and Children Safety Wing of Cyberabad, the court trial was conducted on Monday. The judge convicted Ramnath to undergo with imprisonment for 5 years fined him with Rs 1,000. Eshwaramma was also given 1 year of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1,000 fine.

**2 held, 250 gms of opium seized**

Commissioner's Task Force sleuths apprehended two persons from Rajasthan who were trying to sell opium in the city on Tuesday. Police officials seized 250 grams of opium from them. The accused were identified as Naga Ram, 27 and Banna Ram Chowdhary, 26, both natives of Rajasthan. "The duo procured 500 grams of opium from one person in Rajasthan and sold half of it to some persons known to them. On a tip off, they were caught at Afzalguni on Tuesday when they came to sell the remaining quantity of the drug," said S Raghavendra, Inspector Task Force (south) team.

**Price gap between RTM, UC homes shrink to 3-7 per cent**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Under-construction homes will no longer come with attractive price tags. Be it ready-to-move-in (RTM) or under-construction (UC) home, the price difference has come down vastly. The average price gap between a ready-to-move-in and under-construction home across seven cities has reduced to a mere 3-7 per cent in 2019, a recent report by ANAROCK reveals. The same in 2018 and 2017 was 5-9 per cent and around 8-12 per cent, respectively.

In Hyderabad, the price difference is 6 per cent. The average price of an under-construction home in 2019 was Rs 4,015 per sq ft while that of ready-to-move-in property was Rs 4,250 per sq ft.

Irrespective of the price difference, in Hyderabad majority property seekers prefer ready-to-move-in homes. Without lower prices,



**In Hyderabad, the price difference is 6 per cent. The average price of an under-construction home in 2019 was Rs 4,015 per sq ft while that of ready-to-move-in property was Rs 4,250 per sq ft**

rental treadmill. Investors previously chose under-construction homes for their lower prices and the compounding capital appreciation as projects neared completion. Anuj Puri, chairman of Anarock Property Consultants said, "Previously, the ultimate selling proposition of under-construction homes was the significantly lower over ready-to-move-in options. The ready-to-move-in premium was primarily on the 'instant gratification' quotient, immediate freedom from rent and zero construction risk. In the last two years, the price gap between these two categories has eroded year-over-year. In 2017, the price gap in the top seven cities was 8-12 percent. This reduced to 5-9 percent in 2018 and sank further to 3-7 per cent in 2019. Along with the other benefits that ready homes provide, they attract no GST," he explained.

**GHMC gears up for Prez's visit**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In view of President Ramnath Kovind's visit to Hyderabad for his annual southern sojourn on December 20, GHMC entomology wing is deploying workers for spraying, fogging and anti larva operations in Hyderabad.

GHMC Commissioner D S Lokesh Kumar held a review meeting with higher officials and directed them to coordinate with the

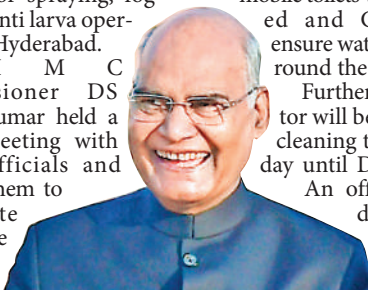
Cantonment Board officials as it falls under its jurisdiction and ensure all arrangements are properly done.

Apart from providing 20 mobile toilets from Cantonment, additional 30 mobile toilets will be provided and GHMC will ensure water availability round the clock.

Further one contractor will be attached for cleaning toilets twice a day until December 28. An official will be deputed to oversee the activities.

GHMC will provide mobile toilets at Hakeempet Airport. Regarding sanitation the GHMC Commissioner instructed officials concerned to take up sanitation and ensure the surroundings of Rastrapathi Nilayam are clean. He also directed the officials to limit use of plastic material. Lokesh asked the veterinary wing to deploy dog catching squad, monkey catching squad.

Additional Commissioners Adwait Kumar Singh, Shruthi Ojha, Vijaya Laxmi, Director EVDMS Sri, Vishwajit Kampati, Chief Entomologist Rambabu participated in the meeting.



**CCMB to train 25 students on scientific methodology**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad is going to conduct a two-week Young Innovators Programme (YIP) for the seventh consecutive year. Around 20 to 25 school students from Classes VIII to X are trained during the programme on scientific methodology. The participants will get a chance to interact with active scientists at CCMB, and will be given a hands-on experience on research. The YIP 2020 will be conducted from 31 December 2019 to 13 January 2020.

The participants will be selected on the basis of a test which will be conducted on 26 December at the CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology auditorium. The screening test participants will also get to attend a science lecture by Dr VM Tiwari, director of CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute. The topic of the lecture will be based on water management strategies. The last date of registration is 21 December.



**Air Force Academy to hold graduation parade on Dec 21**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A combined graduation parade with full military splendour will be organised at Air Force Academy in Dundergul on December 21 to mark the successful completion of pre-commissioning training of flight cadets of various branches of Indian Air Force.

Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria will be the chief guest and reviewing officer of the passing out parade. During the function, he will confer the 'President's Commission' to 136 graduating trainees. The ceremony also includes the presentation of 'wings and 'brevets' to the flight cadets who would be successfully completing flying and navigation training. The chief guest will also be awarding 'wings' to officers of Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard on successful completion of their flying training at Air Force Academy.

The flight cadet from flying branch standing first in the order of merit will be awarded the prestigious 'Nawanagar Sword of Honour' studded with five centuries old diamonds and other precious gems, for excelling in overall training. The awardee will have the privilege of commanding the parade besides receiving the President's plaque for being the best trainee. On the eve of graduation parade, the reviewing officer would attend the ceremonial dinner and interact with graduating flight cadets and their parents. The event will also have a display by 'Akash Ganga' Sky Diving team and synchronised drill movements by the Air Warrior Drill Team. Aerobic display by Pilatus PC-7 trainer, fly pasts by formations of PC-7, Kiran and Hawk aircraft a display by Sarang helicopter team and display of formation aerobatics by Surya Kiran team will live up the event.



would attend the ceremonial dinner and interact with graduating flight cadets and their parents. The event will also have a display by 'Akash Ganga' Sky Diving team and synchronised drill movements by the Air Warrior Drill Team. Aerobic display by Pilatus PC-7 trainer, fly pasts by formations of PC-7, Kiran and Hawk aircraft a display by Sarang helicopter team and display of formation aerobatics by Surya Kiran team will live up the event.

**Secretaries of TPF, CMS arrested**

**ACCUSED OF HAVING LINKS WITH THE BANNED CPI MAOIST PARTY**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Jogulamba Gadwal police arrested Telangana Praja Front secretary Menchu Ramesh and Chaitanya Mahila Sangham committee secretary Chukka Shilpa on December 17.

They were arrested following the searches conducted at their residences. Police had earlier arrested TPF Vice President Nalamasa Krishna, along with Telangana Vidyarthi Vedika State president Maddileti Bandari in October 2019.

On Tuesday, police conducted searches at Ramesh and Shilpa's residences located at Nacharam in Hyderabad and Keesara.

Jogulamba Gadwal SP Apoorva Rao stated that they seized outlawed Maoist ideology literature and electronic data containing revolutionary ideology from their possession. They are affiliated with the banned CPI Maoist party, and they are covertly working as sympathisers-cum-couriers of the Maoist party.

The SP added that according to the directions of the higher cadre, the duo attracts innocent youth to the banned organisation by injecting their revolutionary ideology into their minds. "They do so through secret activities across Telangana, recruiting youths to strengthen the party and to carry out their destructive activities to destabilise democratically elected governments. They want to establish their own rule through an armed struggle as per their strategy

and ideology," Apoorva Rao said.

The officers will produce them before a court, and they will be sent to judicial remand. Meanwhile, Maoist frontal organisations condemned the arrests, terming them as government's autocratic move to crush public opinions and voices of dissent.

Rani, wife of TPF state general secretary Menchu Ramesh, alleged that the police arrested her husband after foisting false cases against him.

**Six arrested for abducting bizman**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Six people, who allegedly abducted a 50-year-old businessman from the city to recover their chitinvested amount and took him to Bengaluru, have been arrested and the man rescued within 24 hours of the crime, police said on Tuesday.

The businessman, who earlier resided in Bengaluru, used to run chit fund business and

did not repay the amount of Rs 5 lakh invested by two friends of the arrested men even after completion of the chit period, police said. Then he shifted to Hyderabad and was evading to return the amount.

The six men then hatched a plan and abducted him on December 15, it said. Based on a complaint from the businessman's wife, a police team identified the six men and nabbed all of them from Bengaluru on December 16.

**Hyderabad gets rentless scooter rental services**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bounce, a dockless scooter sharing service, has launched 2,000 scooters in Hyderabad for first and last mile connectivity and regular commute.

The company plans to deploy 10,000 scooters by June 2020.

Varun Agni, co-founder of Bounce said, "We are excited to introduce dockless scooter service as an intra city mobility solution. We have chosen Hyderabad as our first city to expand into as it is one of the most mature and ready cities to transition into shared mobility."



**Osman Sagar to get facelift**

**Landscape park to be beautified in 9 months with outlay of Rs 35.6 cr**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osman Sagar is all set to get a facelift within 9 months.

HMDA is planning to construct a landscape park near Osman Sagar lake to transform it into a tourist destination. The park will have facilities including art pavilions, kids play area, public arena with water front line development, amphitheatres, viewing decks, pavilion with watch and ward rooms, food courts, skating zone, cycle tracks, walk ways and outdoor gym.

In the initial phase, estimates were prepared for the park in an area of 18 acres at a cost of Rs 35.60 crores. As per the press release, "Tenders are received for the work and entrusted to Srico projects with a period of completion of 9 months. The work will commence shortly. The

**HMDA is planning to construct a park near Osman Sagar lake to transform it into a tourist destination**

park will be a tourist destination."

It may be mentioned here that Telangana Government has accorded a sanction for Rs 100 crores for beautification of Osman Sagar viz. Chain link fencing, Landscape pathways. The task force constituted for the project decided to develop the park in 18 acres. Accordingly the proposals were modified and requested the government to accord the approval of Rs 36.50 crores.

**'Cultivate emotional intelligence'**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A two-day training programme on 'Emotional Intelligence (EI) for effective workplace excellence' for IFS officers was inaugurated by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests R Sobha at the Telangana State Forest Academy.

As many as 16 senior officers from 13 states are attending the training programme.

Sobha said every officer should be aware of themselves and their employees to be able to work together as excellent teams. While intelligence is generally inborn, EI is learnt. Research also showed that people with high EI are more successful in life while people with high intelligence quotient may encounter problems.

**TITA to enrol enthusiastic techies**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Information Technology Association (TITA) has initiated a fresh membership drive. It has called for active participation in its Global Committee 2020. The association has announced in its Governing Council notification that the term of TITA GWC 2019 will end on 31 December and the new members can join the committee for the next term.

Speaking on the occasion, TITA president Sundeep Kumar Makthala said that the association which has played a key role in the formation of Telangana has also taken several initiatives after the formation of state.

"The association also supported many State government initiatives that were aimed to improve the IT sector such as encouraging village adoption to achieve dig-



ital literacy, encouraging cashless transactions through digitisation, roll out of ambitious Digithon, connecting government school students with IT industry through Digital Yatra and industry tours, supporting innovation by creation of innovation cells in academia and others," Sundeep said.

Employees at the IT Industry, Corporates, NRIs, students, IT faculties, IT affiliated industry professionals, government staff working in

**HMWSSB MD: Use VDS to avoid penalty, cases**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply & Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) as part of its Voluntary Disclosure Scheme has received 2,300 applications to regularise illegal tap connections. HMWSSB MD Dana Kishore said that these applicants will soon be assigned CAN numbers.

Kishore held a review meeting on Tuesday where he urged city dwellers to take advantage of the scheme and avoid the risk of large-scale penalties and criminal cases.

A total of 73,841 connections were surveyed in the six divisions, of which 3,727 were commercial connections, 1,288 were MSB connections and 1410 were illegal connec-

tions. He said that, through this survey one-time connection fee of around Rs 9.3 crores and monthly Rs. 22 lakhs will be added to the coffers of the board.

MD said that the authorities should take steps to ensure 100% billing and 100% collection. Special teams have been formed to address the issue of dues and bills for unpaid connections. Also, MD advised DGMS to set up camps within their jurisdiction to regulate illegal network connections.

MD advised officials to take measures to ensure that there is no overflow and leakage of water in tourist areas. If ignored, stern action will be taken. He also ordered that any manholes be repaired on a war footing if necessary.

**Increase in demand for divorce, family lawyers: Study**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A study undertaken by Sulekha, a digital platform for expert services shows that online searches for divorce and family lawyers have increased, with Hyderabad among the top cities five cities in India.

Data provided by Sulekha shows that in 2019, around 38,344 searches were made for family and divorce lawyers in Hyderabad, a drastic increase of 97 per cent when compared to 2018.

Satya Prabhakar, Founder



& CEO of Sulekha has said that consumers are moving from traditional to digital medium in their searches for lawyers.

"Our recent study shows that there is a sharp increase in the online searches for divorce, criminal and cyber

**Data provided by Sulekha shows that in 2019, around 38,344 searches were made for family and divorce lawyers in Hyderabad, a drastic increase of 97 per cent when compared to 2018**

lawyers in Indian metros in the past one year. This indicates that consumers are moving from traditional to digital medium in their searches for lawyers. The demand for Armed forces tribunal and consumer protection and dispute lawyers have also increased significantly." Categories such as armed force tribunal lawyers and consumer protection and dispute lawyers have slowly

gained traction amongst the people as there has been an increase by 12 and 20 per cent respectively.

Chennai, Mumbai and Bengaluru top the chart when it comes to online searches for divorce and family lawyers. A total of 1,08,478 people from Chennai searched online for divorce and family lawyers; Mumbai had 60,629 searches while Bengaluru has 50,508 searches. Kolkata (42,009), Hyderabad (38,344) and Ahmedabad (29,725) also had high searches under this tab.



**SC serves notices to TS, AP bar councils**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Supreme Court issued notices to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State Bar Councils for filing counter affidavits in a petition filed before it challenging the conduct of the elections held in November 2018 last year. The petitioners alleged that the elections to the Bar Councils were without making amendment to Section 3 of the Advocates Act - 1961 and in violation of section 34 of AP Reorganisation Act - 2014. Arguing the case before the court, the counsel for the petitioners Balaji told the court that as per Section 34 of the AP Reorganization Act 2014, it was mandatory to amend the Section 3 of the Advocates Act by the Legislature to constitute the TS Bar Council. He told the court that the Bar Council, in its affidavit had also confirmed the fact that the Act was not amended so far.

**Opposition delegation meets...**

Continued from Page 1

Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad said that "the government knew that what is going to happen but did nothing on it, and in Assam five people have died and many have bullet wounds". The opposition leaders assembled at the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Parliament House before proceeding to the Rashtrapati Bhavan with Sonia Gandhi leading them. The opposition delegation also included Samajwadi Party's Ram Gopal Yadav, DMK's T.R. Bopal, Trinamool Congress' Derek O'Brien, and the Communist Party of India-Marxist's Sitaram Yechuri.

**'KST scam' behind liquor price hike: Revanth Reddy**

● Malkajgiri MP demands CBI probe into liquor production, distribution

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Malkajgiri MP Revanth Reddy has charged the ruling TRS with collecting 6 per cent of cost for development works as 'Kalwakuntla Sales Tax' (KST) unofficially and alleged the KST scam behind the recent liquor price hike and demanded CBI probe into liquor production, distribution, sales and also in the hike of liquor prices. Revanth Reddy wanted the Center to order CBI probe into 'KST'.

Prior to this, he wanted the state government to roll back the hiked prices of liquor.

In an open letter to the people of the state on Tuesday, the Congress MP, who described the excise and prohibition department as excise and promotion department, accused the Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu of becoming brand ambassador for promoting alcohol in the state.

Coming down heavily on government, Revanth Reddy said that the state government encouraged setting up of a belt shop for every 10 houses with an eye on excise revenue to fill state's coffers in spite of the fact that the poor people are committing crimes under the influence of alcohol.

He said, liquor is found to be the chief reason for committing crimes against women, but the government permitted belt shops. These shops have been set up close to schools and temples. Telangana which should be home to intelligentsia and academicians became hunting ground of alcoholics.

Revanth Reddy accused the government of killing the



**KCR in 2004** introduced an application fee of Rs 10,000 for ticket aspirants who have applied for the TRS party tickets. He did not return the money to the unsuccessful ticket aspirants

— REVANTH REDDY  
Malkajgiri MP

instinct of questioning the government by making people getting addicted to alcohol. The projected revenue of Telangana with a population of over 4 crore would be around Rs 26,000 crore per annum, as against the Rs 23,000 crore of the UP which has a population of over 22 crore. This makes the Telangana as top state in liquor sales, he said.

Prior to the Center introducing the GST, 'KCR introduced KST' and the revenue realised benefits KCR family directly, he said accusing KCR of implementing his sentiment - lucky number 6 - to get works done. He added, to get works done in the state, KCR and Co should be paid 6 per cent of the cost, he said blaming the government for not even sparing tipplers in imposing the KST. KCR and the government under his leadership is looting the hard earned money of the poor.

He alleged that a liquor bottle that costs Rs 10 is being sold at Rs 50 or Rs 100, collecting 500-1000 per cent profit from

the people and felt that it amounts to exploitation.

Why the consumers' forum is not taking up the case suo moto as exploitation takes place so brazenly, he wondered.

The state government which prohibited lottery as it comes under gambling has adopted the lottery system for allotment of wine shops. Collecting a fee of Rs 2 lakh for each application, the government mopped up Rs 900 crore, he said.

Revanth Reddy said that the government on one hand prohibited the people of the state from indulging in lottery, but on the other, the state government mobilised Rs 900 crore revenue through lottery. Is it not a crime? If the government did not allow the shops, it should return the money immediately. Otherwise, it amounts to crime.

Quoting an example, he said KCR in 2004 introduced an application fee of Rs 10,000 for ticket aspirants who have applied for the TRS party tick-

ets. He did not return the money to the unsuccessful ticket aspirants. However, with the court's involvement, he had to return the money.

Similarly, in allotment of wine shops too, if the unsuccessful wine shop allottees approach court, he or she is bound to get back their application money, he felt.

The government issued licenses to new wine shops from Nov 1. The shop owners are supposed to pay Rs 5 lakh quarterly. Though there is time till Jan 30 for the shop owners to pay the license fee, the excise department has served notices on wine shops asking them to pay the fee. This explains the pathetic condition of the state's finances.

The state government is not counting on the ill-effects of promoting liquor shops since it eyes only on excise revenue, he criticised.

Liquor production and distribution passed into hands of mafia in the state, he alleged that a ruling party MP has been camping in Chennai and Delhi to take care of hiking prices of liquor and collecting kickbacks, Revanth alleges.

**WEDDING BELLS**



Former MP Kalvakuntla Kavitha with Telangana Jagruthi Germany unit President Swarnakar and his fiancée Dr Julia. The couple invited Kavitha to their wedding to be held on December 22 at Begumpet

**Agri Minister urges Center to build more warehouses in TS**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy has sought cooperation of the Warehousing Corporation Board in building of warehouses in Telangana for the benefit of farmers storing their produce in them.

Niranjan Reddy was participating as chief guest in the board meeting held here on Tuesday. He said that Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu with the help of the Nabard could build 336 warehouses at a cost of Rs 1000 crore.

Niranjan Reddy wanted the farmers would be able to sell their produce when remunerative prices are there in the market. Niranjan Reddy pointed out that many warehouses are being put to good use by the farmers as crop yield increased with the improvement in irrigation facility.

He exhorted the Center to build the highest number of



Niranjan Reddy

sector, Rytu Bandhu scheme, Rytu Beema and execution of irrigation projects. The crop yield is going to increase more, he said. Currently, there is no problem as the CM got many godowns built out of foresight, he said adding that more and more godowns needed to be built to meet future needs.

The representatives of the warehousing corporation told the minister that they are ready to build godowns provided the state government allows land in the districts and mandals identified by them at the price suggested by them.

The minister asked the officials to prepare the necessary proposals in this regard.

Agriculture principal secretary C Parthasarathi, Warehousing Corporation MD Bhaskarachary, CWC General Manager RR Agarwal, regional manager Pravin Kumar and director Dr Muthuraman and others took part in the meeting.

godowns in Telangana with the help of the Central Warehousing Corporation and the representatives of the corporation responded favourably to the proposal.

He said that the states have 50 per cent share in the warehousing corporation. The area under various crops has increased with the amenities like round the clock power to farm

**Cabs cancelling, refusing rides will be booked**

Continued from Page 1

However, the Greater Hyderabad officials should start a similar service for the public as well. Services like Ola have an option to cancel up to three-four rides per day, post which they will be fined, Kumar said. "Cab services are an important means of transportation in a growing city and a large number of commuters are now using taxis through app-based aggregators. There is an urgent need to frame rules to regulate the operation of these cab services," said an official of the Transport Department.

**TRS priority to irrigation led to rise in demand for food...**

Continued from Page 1

TS-iPASS had already granted approvals to 11,569 companies, out of which 80% of the units had started functioning, generating 6 lakh jobs.

The Minister said that many foreign investors from textile and electronics sectors were keen on investing in Telangana. The TS Government had created favorable conditions for the textile industry in the state.

Telangana housed the country's largest textile park - Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal and had recently signed an agreement with Korean company Youngone Corporation, the Minister mentioned.

As part of efforts to boost the electronics manufacturing sector in the state, KTR recently held a series of

meetings in Bengaluru, along with Principal Secretary Jayesh Ranjan. Major firms such as One Plus, Sky Worth had already set up their facilities in Hyderabad. Attempts were being made to rope in electric vehicle and battery manufacturing industries, he said.

As part of steps to attract investments, KTR will soon hold sector-wise meetings with industry leaders.

He instructed IT and Industries Department officials to provide complete information related to land banks and industrial parks to investors evincing interest in setting up their firms in the state. KTR instructed officials to work aggressively towards bringing in more investments to the state for boosting employment opportunities.



Ministers Koppula Eshwar, Satyavathi Rathod participate in the Cultural Carnival for intellectually challenged at Lalitha Kala Thoranam, Nampally on Tuesday

**Minister: Will take measures to nurse intellectually challenged**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Welfare Koppula Eshwar has appreciated parents and civil society organisations for taking intellectually challenged persons under their wings and serving them facing an undaunted challenge.

He was participating as the chief guest in the inaugural of the two-day maiden cultural carnival of the intellectually challenged at Lalitkala Thoranam on Tuesday.

For reasons not known, lives of intellectually challenged persons are pitiable yet they have been progressing without giving room for any fear, he

remarked. All through their lives the intellectually challenged should be nursed like babies, he said adding that services being rendered to them are invaluable.

The Minister for Welfare Koppula Eshwar has appreciated parents and civil society organisations for taking intellectually challenged persons under their wings and serving them. He said that the government will take measures for nursing them, he hinted at establishing an organization for every 3 or 4 districts with the help of the

NGOs. Minister for Woman and Child Welfare Satyavathi Rathod said that the government is kind enough to increase pension payable to them from Rs 500 a month to Rs 3,016 besides reserving seats for them in educational institutions and government jobs. The cultural programmes presented by them enthralled audiences.

Certificates have been presented to representatives of the NGOs working for the mentally challenged by ministers.

Principal secretary woman and child welfare department Jagadishwar, senior citizens welfare department director Sailaja and others took part.

**Follow Agama shastra rules strictly CM KCR tells Yadadri officials**

Continued from Page 1

The construction work should not disturb the sanctum sanctorum and its prominence. There is no need to hurry the works. Follow caution and quality. Constructions should be strong and everything should be done in tune with the Agama Shastra rules. This is an ancient temple. Performing poojas here is a tradition handed down over generations. Laxmi Narasimha Swamy has devotes in the country and in other countries too. In the days to come, lakhs of devotees will visit Yadadri. Hence, the aim should be to ensure that devotees will have no problem in having darshan or during their stay, holy bath at Pushkarini and while tansuring their heads," the Chief Minister said.

KCR complimented the sculptors who had created wonderful sculptures. He appreciated the design of the temple and the positioning of the idols. The CM said hard work put in by 560 sculptors had borne fruit after four years 4 years in the form of great walls. The Chief Minister suggested that gardens and green cover should be created for ensuring a pleasant atmos-



phere on the temple premises. He directed the officials concerned to ensure that wall paintings depicted the greatness of the temple, the story of Laxmi Narasimha Swamy, and Sthala Purana.

Later, KCR examined the Ring Road works at Yadadri. He visited 15 VVIP cottages being constructed as part of the Presidential suite and suggested some changes there.

The Chief Minister instructed that, like in the case of the Baswapuram reservoir, the Mylargudem Tank near the Presidential suite should be developed as a tourist spot. Works between the main temple and the Ring Road should be developed as planned. He wanted works on tank (Koneru) to begin. Ministers G Jagadish Reddy, Vemula Prashanth Reddy, Malla Reddy. Government whip G Sunitha, Rajya Sabha Member J Santosh Kumar, MLAs Sekhar Reddy, Gyadari Kishore, Vivekananda, MLCs Seri Subhash Reddy, A Krishna Reddy, Sambipur Raju, ZP chairman A Sandeep Reddy, YTD special officer Anita Ramachandran, Temple EO Gita, Temple sculptor Ananda Sai, R&B E-in-Cs Ganapathi Reddy, Ravindra Rao, CM special secretary Bhoopal Reddy accompanied the Chief Minister.

**Three capitals for Andhra: AP Chief Minister**

Continued from Page 1

High Court may be located there," he said.

Legislators of ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) hailed the chief minister's announcement with the thumping of desks and slogans of 'Jai Jagan'. Reddy said a final decision in this regard would be taken by expert's committee constituted by the state government. The panel is seeking opinion of people from all the regions.

The chief minister made the announcement at the end of the heated debate over Amaravati, which saw Speaker suspending nine members of the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) for stalling the proceedings.

Ever since YSRCP came to power in May, the fate of Amaravati was hanging in bal-



ance as the new government had put all the works on hold, citing irregularities in development of the capital during TDP rule. The government had formed a five-member committee, comprising urban planning experts, to look into the issue of state capital and make recommendations.

The panel had also sought people's opinion from all 13 districts of the state.

The foundation stone for Amaravati as the capital of Andhra Pradesh was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015.

A brainchild of then chief minister N. Chandrababu

**Why this much hatred against Amaravati, asks Chandrababu**

Continued from Page 1

The decision will be counterproductive for the state. Will people make rounds to three capitals to get their works done? Will they build one home at each of the capital cities? What the government is going to achieve by having a secretariat at Visakhapatnam? Moreover, the government should be slush with funds to have three capitals, and quipped that it would be better for the government to have one office in each mandal. He demanded the CM to make public in which capital people can find the ministers. Chandrababu, giving vent to his angst, said that the government is taking decision on the state capitals having suspended the Opposition members. Only time will teach a lesson to people like Jagannathan Reddy, he said. It has become a catchword for the CM to use the word benami holders. He dared the government to take action against the culprits if assets are acquired in Amaravati in the name of benami-holders.

Naidu, Amaravati's design was prepared by Singapore government. He had planned to

develop the city on the banks of Krishna river as a world-class city.





SHORT READS

**'Police crackdown on campus dangerous for democracy'**

**NEW DELHI:** Criticising the police crackdown in Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi Commission for Women chief Swati Maliwal on Tuesday urged women to approach the panel in case they had any complaint. "The protest should always be peaceful. The police brutality with students after barging inside the library is saddening. It is very dangerous for democracy. I hope an atmosphere of peace will be established soon. If a girl has a complaint, please contact us!" she tweeted.

**Nigerian nabbed with drugs worth lakhs**

**MUMBAI:** A 27-year-old Nigerian national has been arrested for possession of mephedrone worth Rs 4.20 lakh in the eastern suburb of Mankhurd here, police said on Tuesday. The Anti Narcotics Cell's Ghatkopar unit on Monday arrested Anayo Okolie Sanday, a resident of Nallasopara in neighbouring Thane district, an official said. Sanday had come to sell the drugs on Sion-Panvel Expressway and was nabbed after being identified by an informant, he said. The police seized 210 gm of mephedrone worth Rs 4.20 lakh from the accused, he added. The police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and are investigating the source of the drug and to whom it was being supplied to, the official said.

**Modi to students: Bring issues in democratic manner**

**BHOGNADIH:** Accusing the Congress of peddling lies over the amended Citizenship Act and creating an atmosphere of fear among Muslims, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday iterated that no citizen in the country would be affected by the law. Addressing a rally here, Modi appealed to college and university students, who had been protesting over the amended Act, to bring forth issues for discussion with the government in a "democratic manner". He alleged that "urban naxals" were trying to instigate youth in the country to foment trouble. "The Congress is spreading lies, creating an atmosphere of fear for Muslims over the Citizenship Act. I give my assurances no citizen in the country will be affected by the law," he stated.

**Murder convict escapes from open prison in Maharashtra**

**Aurangabad:** A murder case convict has escaped from a prison in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district, police said on Tuesday. Akalan Rishu Bhosale, lodged at the Paithan open jail here, was working in a field when he managed to give police the slip on Monday, police inspector Bhagirath Deshmukh told PTI. Bhosale was pronounced guilty in a murder case in 2011. He was shifted to the Paithan open jail from a prison in Nashik on June 22 this year, the official said. "He was working in an onion field in the prison area when he ran away. A case has been registered and search for the prisoner is on," he said. This year, four prisoners escaped from the jail and the police managed to nab one of them, the official said.

MINORITIES NEED NOT FEAR CAA

**Some parties indulging in vote bank politics: Gadkari**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that minorities in India have nothing to fear from the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday said some parties who want to play vote bank politics are creating fear and insecurity.

Road Transport, Highways and MSME Minister Gadkari speaking at 'Agenda Aaj Tak 2019' said "deliberate" attempts are being made by such forces to create "misunderstanding" of the law.

"This Act is against foreigners and not against Indian citizens... People are being provoked by deliberately creating misunderstanding about the law... Whoever are Indian citizens, whichever religion they belong to, caste creed or sex - we have neither supported any such discrimination nor will do that. CAA is not against minorities," Gadkari said.

He said ever since BJP has risen to power in the Centre, there are political parties who are creating fear among minorities saying that "BJP is



**Gadkari said ever since BJP has risen to power in the Centre, there are political parties who are creating fear among minorities saying that "BJP is against minorities or will drive them out which is not true".**

against minorities or will drive them out which is not true". The Minister said that creating fear is a part of politics by some opposition parties who play "vote bank politics" which is not good in a democracy or in national interest or for the unity and integrity of the country.

were given right to franchise later due to vote bank politics. Some of them reached Parliament and Assemblies," he said.

Gadkari said in Bangladesh and Pakistan, the number of Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists have decreased drastically in the last 40-50 years because of injustice meted out to them.

"They don't have any other country to take refuge in. If they want to come to us, we will give them citizenship. This is quite natural. There are thousands of people in Kashmir and in other parts and there is no harm in providing citizenship to them," he said.

He also added that a section of political parties or media are misquoting "Hindutva" and stressed that all those living in India are "Hindus or Hindustanis" and Hindu is a lifestyle much above the narrow confines of religion.

The Minister said: "It is not proper to politicise a national issue (CAA). We are trying to convince them... we will convince them, peace will be restored."

**CAA does not take away citizenship of Indians: V-P Naidu**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The amended citizenship law is meant to give citizenship to religiously persecuted refugees and not to take away the citizenship of Indians of any religion, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu told trainee diplomats from Bangladesh on Tuesday.

He also said that India is aware of the heavy burden on Bangladesh as a result of the influx of lakhs of displaced persons from the Rakhine State of Myanmar and that it appreciates Dhaka for its humanitarian gesture towards these displaced persons.

He said that Bangladesh could count on India's full support towards their bilateral efforts with Myanmar in the repatriation of displaced Rohingyas back to Myanmar, a statement from the Vice President's Secretariat said.

The vice president's remarks on the Citizenship



M Venkaiah Naidu

**Naidu emphasised that India wants peace and stability in the neighbourhood and friendly relations with all its neighbours.**

country to aid, abet, fund and train terror outfits to promote cross border terrorism.

The vice president sought Bangladesh's support in restructuring and reforming multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, so that policies that affect the entire world were not decided by a few.

He told the trainees diplomats that the world was multipolar now and it was time to restructure multilateral organisations to reflect this new global reality.

**5 Metro stations closed in Delhi**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Entry and exit gates at five metro stations in northeast Delhi were closed on Tuesday in view of protest in the Seelampur area.

"Entry and exit gates of Seelampur and Gokulpuri are closed. Trains will not be halting at these stations," Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) tweeted.

Earlier DMRC closed Welcome, Jaffrabad and Maujpur-Babarpur metro stations.

Angry protesters demanding scrapping of citizenship amendment law clashed with police, pelted stones at them and damaged several buses in Northeast Delhi's Seelampur area.

Police resorted to baton charges and fired teargas shells on the protesters who were marching from Seelampur towards Jaffrabad.

**Kamal hits out at CAA; says MNM opposed to NRC**

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Actor-politician Kamal Haasan on Tuesday opposed the proposed nation-wide NRC and hit out at the AIADMK for supporting the BJP-led NDA government's latest amendment to the Citizenship Act, saying the ruling party in Tamil Nadu was being "obedient to their masters".

AIADMK's support to the amendment bill in the Parliament was a betrayal of the Tamils and the nation, the Makkal Needhi Maiam chief charged.

"They are obedient to their masters, you know who their masters are," he told reporters apparently alleging that the AIADMK was dancing to the tunes of the BJP-led Centre.

A day after the MNM said it has moved the Supreme Court against the Citizenship Amended Act, he said the party would take up the cudgels against the National Register of Citizens (NRC) as well.

"There is this NRC, when it is implemented (at the national level) we will get into the field (against it) and go as far



as we should go," he said when asked about the follow up action by the MNM on the CAA.

MNM would pursue legal solution against the CAA, he added. To a query on the students' protest, he said the youngsters will have to be politically aware.

On Home Minister Amit Shah saying that the CAA was not against Muslims, he quoted a Tamil proverb to indicate the Minister was allegedly obstinate and does not see reason.

The actor-politician sought to know why the right bestowed on "Pakistani Hindu" was not given to Sri Lankan Hindu.

Expressing concern over the plight of Tamil refugees from the island nation, he asked what answer the country had for them who had all along trusted Tamil Nadu.

"What is the urgency for this amendment when everyone is concerned about the slide of economy and soaring inflation and this question is the starting point of the nation-wide protests," he said.

Rather than answering questions, "throttling" the voices of those raising such questions in Delhi, Aligarh and Assam was "state terrorism," he alleged, in an apparent reference to charges of police excesses while handling the student protesters.



**Repeal Citizenship (Amendment) Act: HRW**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Human Rights Watch has urged the Centre to immediately repeal the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in view of nationwide protests against it, and said there should be an independent probe into police "brutality and excesses" against students and other protesters.

In a statement on Tuesday, the international human rights body's South Asia Director Meenakshi Ganguly said the "government failed to grasp the extent of public opposition over erosion of basic rights evident in these protests".

Its "strongest response to the protests would be to repeal" the Act and "withdraw its plan for citizenship verifica-

tion that threatens marginalised communities", the organisation said.

On the police action against students of Jamia Millia Islamia, Aligarh Muslim University and others in northeastern states protesting against the law, she said the authorities should immediately order all police personnel to abide by international standards on policing assemblies.

"The police may have used excessive force against demonstrators across the country" and the government "should establish a credible independent investigation into allegations of excessive force, brutality, and vandalism" by policemen, Ganguly said.

**Privilege notice against Irani**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress MP Manickam Tagore has submitted a privilege notice against Union minister Smriti Irani for "misleading" the House on Rahul Gandhi's 'rape remark' on December 13. Sources said Tagore met Lok Sabha Secretary General Snehlata Shrivastava and moved the privilege notice against the Union minister.

Tagore said the notice has been received by the secretary general and will be taken up further. "Under Rule 222 of the rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I hereby give a notice of a privilege motion against Minister of Textiles, Women and Child Development Smriti Irani on the statement made by her during the intervention in the in Lok Sabha on 13th December, 2019," he said in his petition. Tagore said the minister's assertions on the floor of the house are "absolutely false".

"The honourable member has willfully misled not only members of the house, but also the entire nation. The minister had claimed that Rahul Gandhi has given a clarion call to rape women in India in his speech during an election rally on December 12. The minister has knowingly and intentionally misled Parliament by falsely attributing a statement to Rahul Gandhi," he said.



**CAA: AASU leaders, actor court arrest**

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

AASU leaders Samujjal Kumar Bhattacharya and Lurinjyoti Gogoi along with actor Barsha Rani Bishaya and hundreds of other agitators courted arrest for the second consecutive day on Tuesday as part of their 'Mass Satyagraha' against the amended citizenship law, police said.

Guwahati Police Commissioner Munna Prasad Gupta told PTI that the AASU activists had courted arrest and were "not detained".

"They are doing this as part of their Satyagraha programme. We released them later and now they are on their way to their homes," he said.

The agitators courted arrest in front of the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup Metropolitan district



and were taken to a temporary jail inside the Dighalipukhuri tank complex.

All Assam Students' Union (AASU) chief adviser Samujjal Kumar Bhattacharya said the Centre has to either repeal the amended Citizenship Act or keep arresting them every day.

AASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi said the government is on one side doing nothing to repeal the Act and on the other doing a "drama" by arresting them.

"The government is playing the Hindutva card. However, Assam will not fall prey to their communal agenda," he said.

**'Rapist' Gujarat teacher hiding in Odisha: CBI**

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha School and Mass Education minister Samir Ranjan Dash on Tuesday said all district education officers have been asked to look out for a teacher of Gujarat, an accused in several cases of rape, who might be working in an educational institute in the state.

The state government recently received a letter from the CBI which informed that 49-year-old Dhavalkumar Hareshchandra Trivedi, a Gujarat-based teacher, might be hiding somewhere in Odisha.

The premier investigating



Samir Ranjan Dash

agency suspect that Trivedi might be working in any coaching centre or education-

**The premier investigating agency suspect that Trivedi might be working in any coaching centre or educational institution in a remote part of Odisha as he is a good English teacher**

al institution in a remote part of Odisha as he is a good English teacher.

"We have received the letter from the CBI regarding the fugitive teacher who has been involved in a number of heinous crime like rape. The state government has already written letters to all the District Education Officers and Block Education Officers to trace

the fugitive teacher if working in their areas," Dash told reporters here Tuesday.

The minister said the department has also attached the identification of the accused teacher in the letter. All the educational institutions, both government and private ones, have also been informed about Trivedi, the minister said.

**'Delhi Crime' harnessed strength of being able to catch culprits, not pain: Shefali Shah**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Netflix series "Delhi Crime", based on the 2012 Delhi gangrape-murder, which saw nation-wide protests leading to a change in India's rape laws, found acceptance with the audience as it depicted the procedural investigation of the case without exploiting the pain behind it, says actor Shefali Shah.

Shah plays Vartika Chaturvedi, whose character in the show was based on former Delhi Police DCP Chaya Sharma who cracked the case of the brutal gangrape of the physiotherapy intern within 72 hours.

The 23-year-old, who came to be known as 'Nirbhaya', the fearless one, was assaulted on the night of December 16, 2012 in a moving bus by six men and died of her grievous

**Revisiting the heinousness of the crime is not something many wanted to do when the series, directed by Indian-Canadian filmmaker Richie Mehta, premiered on the streamer early this year**

injuries 13 days later in a Singapore hospital.

Revisiting the heinousness of the crime is not something many wanted to do when the series, directed by Indian-Canadian filmmaker Richie Mehta, premiered on the streamer early this year.

"I got a lot of reactions say-



ing 'we are too afraid and too scared to open up old wounds. So we don't want to watch it'. A lot of people were very terrified about it saying it might be a graphic depiction of what happened, but it is not.

Then they watched the show and they appreciated the sensitivity with which it was handled. We weren't harnessing the pain, we were harness-

ing the strength of being able to catch the culprits," Shah told PTI in a telephonic interview.

The actor said the series followed the investigation of the case in the five-day aftermath, not the incident.

"I completely respect and understand the sentiment. It's not an easy one to take," she added.

Shah, 47, said becoming

Vartika was a challenge but she eventually managed to find the soul of the character.

"I think I've managed to fill her shoes, which were very large shoes to fill. When you watch it, you don't think Shefali did a good job, you just respect and admire Vartika as a person. You understand her strength, the intricacies of who she is. I can safely say that there can't be any other Vartika.

"There might be someone else who is powerful than her as a character or even another actor playing it much more strongly than I could. But this version of Vartika which has been loved and appreciated, and respected so much, there can't be another one."

The actor, who recently won the best actress iReel Award for 2019, said creating a character is the "highest kick" she gets out of a project.

**Scuffle between BJP, Sena MLAs in Maha Assembly**

PNS ■ NAGPUR

In unprecedented scenes, two MLAs of the ruling Shiv Sena and opposition BJP held each other by the collar over the issue of assistance to farmers.

Soon after proceedings began, BJP MLA Abhimanyu Pawar tried to display a banner in front of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

The banner carried a report published in the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana', about Thackeray demanding Rs 25,000 per hectare for farmers hit by untimely rains.



The BJP MLAs sought to remind Thackeray of this demand made by him before he became the CM of providing assistance to affected farmers.

The BJP members rushed to the well of the House and shouted slogans, seeking

implementation of Thackeray's previous demand.

Sena MLA Sanjay Gaikwad tried to snatch the banner from Pawar and the two briefly held each other by the collar before senior ministers and former ministers pulled them apart.

Speaker Nana Patole appealed to BJP members to return to their seats and allow the House proceedings to continue.

However, some Sena MLAs also tried to snatch the flex boards from BJP members, leading to ruckus.



## Defanging RTI

The SC may argue that pleas are frivolous but the fact is a filter kills the very purpose of ensuring transparency



Ever since it became a reality, the Right to Information Act (RTI Act), which guarantees transparency in governance and ensures its accountability to citizens, has been defanged by successive regimes. It all began with the Manmohan Singh government when establishment hawks claimed that the law was being misused by "frivolous and vexatious" requests for information. Another canard was also spread about RTI being used as blackmail, a ruse to stifle it as more and more cases of corruption tumbled out of the cupboard following even simple requests for information. This thread was picked up by Home Minister Amit Shah who asserted that citizens do not have the need to file RTI applications because the Modi government is anyway transparent. Obviously, the RTI petitions had led to embarrassing revelations on demonetisation, Aadhaar and even bank NPAs. The judiciary, too, has not been proactive on this as questions have begun to be raised about the lack of transparency in its functioning. Agreed every law has advantages and pitfalls and the RTI could probably do with some caveats but when the Supreme Court, too, plays up the establishment's anxieties, then the implication becomes serious for the common man. On Monday, the court ruled that the misuse and "criminal intimidation" of RTI should be stopped and that only petitioners, who are connected or involved with the issues raised, would be entertained. Describing the huge flow of applications under RTI as a "serious problem", the Bench said though it was not opposed to the transparency law, there was a need to evolve some mechanism to ensure that only the affected or concerned person has the recourse to power. The problem with such filtering mechanism is that you first isolate the information seeker, making it that much easier for the powers that be to hound or silence him/her than when it is a class action plea. Far too many reports have emerged of RTI activists being killed. According to the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, 84 RTI activists have been killed in India since October 2005. Second, information on a policy matter of far-reaching consequence can never be a matter of personal but general interest. For example, no political party or politician will seek or be a party to a scrutiny of the electoral bond scheme, the working of which impacts voter preferences. Also, if a bidder in a government contract loses out over suspected foul play, will the individual/organisation pursue a petition, the effort for which may disqualify them from future contracts as a trouble-maker? The top court, however, directed the Centre and various State Governments to fill up vacancies of information commissioners, which have further held up crucial files. Independent studies have shown that at one time there were four vacancies in the 11-member Central Information Commission (CIC) while pendency had been rising every month to touch 33,000. The studies also found out that an appeal in the Andhra Pradesh State Information Commission could take 18 years for scrutiny. That time taken in Bengal and Odisha would be five and four years.

The RTI is slowly becoming another casualty of democracy, the government having whittled down its efficacy and the institutions formed by it with an amended version. The new RTI anyway strips the Information Commissioners from the immunity that is given to Supreme Court judges and Chief Election Commissioners, subjecting their service records, tenure and salaries to the discretion of the government or the Executive. Effectively, it means defanging them as the Government can remove them when it considers them unsuitable to its design. A fixed tenure and autonomy regardless of the government of the day would enable them to pursue fair probes. Otherwise, they would be afraid to be independent. Even our first Chief Information Commissioner, Wajahat Habibullah, and several other bureaucrats had written to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to not bring the amendments and dilute what actually empowers the common man. Modi, who made running a corruption-free government his professed mantra since 2015, lost credibility by pushing something antithetical to that spirit. But now that he has the heft of the Lok Sabha verdict, he is beyond any criticism of the citizenry that voted him. Information Commissions are crucial links in allowing access to the workings of the Government. The system was anyway dependent on retired bureaucrats and now has loyalists. As it appears, RTI is now a robotic ritual than democratic intervention.

## Trust in Max

Ten months after the Boeing 737 Max was grounded, it seems it's not getting back into the air soon

The American plane-maker Boeing's tremendous confidence in the ability of its latest jet, the 737 Max, even after two dramatic fatal accidents in Ethiopia and Indonesia killed close to 400 people, was worth watching. The Max was grounded worldwide in March but Boeing kept churning them out at a rate touching 42 a month. This has led to over 400 aircraft sitting around Boeing's factories at Seattle, unable to fly anywhere. Boeing's confidence in its jet and almost bombastic optimism that it would be soon cleared to fly is not matched by the US aviation regulator, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which has been embarrassed by a rash of stories of how it had been infiltrated by Boeing employees, who led their inspectors up the garden path and essentially gave certification to a plane that had some fundamental issues. The issues are so fundamental that it now appears the Boeing 737 Max may not actually be recertified to fly, that, too, only in the US initially before February 2020, and possibly even March. It is no surprise, therefore, that Boeing has finally decided to wind down production of the aircraft.

In many other industries, a product failure like this would have been fatal to the company. Thankfully Boeing operates in a comfortable duopoly with European manufacturer Airbus, which despite opportunities, has not stuck the dagger into it. The relationship between Airbus and Boeing then is akin to that between Coca-Cola and Pepsi, not really a rivalry, no matter what the advertising says. Ergo, Boeing will survive the worst of this crisis in all likelihood, even though it might take a year or so to get back to its feet. Thankfully, for the global aviation industry, a few fortuitous airline collapses, including the demise of Jet Airways in India, have meant that at least for the time being there are enough aircraft available to pick up the slack of demand. That said, airlines will be wanting aircraft soon enough and Boeing will have to get its act together to resolve the problems on the Max. Crucially, the manufacturer will also need to fix the trust deficit that it suffers regarding the Max with ordinary airline passengers. The crisis also highlights severe flaws in the aircraft certification process. All in all, aviation is safer today than it has ever been. That does not mean that we take things for granted. Boeing did in case of the 737 Max and will pay a massive price but hopefully, 2020 will be a better year than 2019 was for global aviation.



Universities must play a leading role in addressing national challenges. Higher educational institutes must emerge as spaces that nurture free expression and ideas.

**President**  
—Ram Nath Kovind

#MeToo movement came and went. It is disappointing. A lot of things that should've changed have not changed. A lot of things have not come out, have not changed.

**Actor**  
—Radhika Apte

I look very much forward to debating whoever the lucky person is who stumbles across the finish line in the little watched *Do Nothing Democrat Debates*.

**US President**  
—Donald Trump

I want to say (to the Opposition) oppose politically as much as you want but Modi Government is firm on implementing the citizenship law.

**Union Minister**  
—Amit Shah

# opinion

## Global warning

Irrespective of the disappointing outcome of the Madrid summit, as a responsible nation, India cannot be making a half-hearted approach to address the issue of climate change



KK PAUL

Even as the thunderous reverberations of the 16-year-old environmental activist, Greta Thunberg, at the UN, just three months ago, are yet to die down, to our utter surprise, the Madrid climate talks under the aegis of COP25 ended in a failure. This is not the first time that such discordance among member nations has been witnessed. The present talks failed despite the fact that while inaugurating this conference, UN Secretary General António Guterres had issued a very stern warning. "I call on anyone who is still lobbying their Governments for a slow transition or even no transition, to end those activities now. The world is watching," he emphasised. Today, the world community appears to be focussed more on the protection of their own domestic agenda rather than paying heed to the impending disaster.

The first decade after the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 1992 saw a rare building up of consensus on almost all issues. Perhaps it was the decade after the Cold War and the first Gulf War when the world community saw immense merit in consensus-building. The same was also manifest during the signing of the WTO Agreement at Marrakesh, Morocco, in 1994. But in the very next decade, one saw the appearance of discordant notes, particularly as former US President George W Bush virtually refused to follow the Kyoto Protocol even as America was the largest polluter in the world. This trend was further aggravated when President Donald Trump followed the same route as charted earlier by Bush.

Unfortunately, despite the bleak scenario, the voice of a number of smaller and less polluting nations, prominently Tuvalu, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan among others, who are already facing the brunt of the climate change, seems to have been lost. On the other hand, high polluting nations such as China, India and the European Union could not account for their efforts at reducing global warming. They were unable to quantify in specific terms the targets achieved as was laid down under the Paris Agreement. But the prime reason for the failure of the Madrid Summit, which was participated by 197 countries across the world, was a lack of consensus on development of a market mechanism to limit carbon emissions.

The concept of trading in carbon markets as a response to climate change was an important outcome of the Kyoto Protocol. The primary purpose of the Protocol was to make the developed countries pay for their emissions while at the same time, monetarily reward those nations with good record in this regard. The underlying philosophy was that since the developing countries could start with cleaner technologies, they would be rewarded by those who were stuck with old and polluting technologies. In a way, this translated into wealthier countries purchasing the extent of reduction in carbon levels achieved by the developing countries.



In this manner, the developed and wealthier nations would not only be able to sell their technology to the developing countries but could also gather carbon credits to meet the requirements of Kyoto Protocol without any reduction in their emission levels. The failure of the Madrid summit, to achieve any results in this direction, may have also disappointed those who encouraged carbon trading mechanism like the oil major Royal Dutch Shell Plc and the Spanish utility Iberdrola SA.

Such a market mechanism was also considered important by heavy industrialised countries, who are economically dependent on oil and gas production. In the normal course, large-scale decarbonisation would take much longer than as prescribed under the Paris targets. Besides, it would also ensure that the rich and already developed countries could continue to pollute on the strength of carbon credit purchased by them, while the options of developing and relatively poor countries would be curtailed. It can, thus, be inferred that the summit spent more time in ensuring that the interests of the developed countries are well protected through the carbon trading mechanism.

In fact, the scheme of carbon credits is some kind of a smokescreen which enables the devel-

oped and richer countries to exploit those still developing. Those already developed, thus, escape the limits while the less industrialised and less polluting are loaded with the burden of further reductions. This may ultimately impact and retard their progress in the long-run.

In this context, let us take the example of the GFL gas project in Gujarat. GFL is one of the largest producers of carbon offset credits in the world, selling them to many of the biggest polluters in the EU. Europe's polluters have had a cheap way to offset their climate responsibilities without actually greening even a small patch of the land. EU Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard admitted that such projects have a "total lack of environmental integrity."

At the summit, not much time was spent on determining the targets to be achieved by each country so as to keep the emissions of greenhouse gases within the overall objective of the global warming being limited to the extent of 1.5 degrees between 2018 and 2100. For this to become a reality by 2050, we should be a net-zero emitter. So far only about 20 countries, including the UK, France, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden, figure in the list of those who are expected to meet

this target. India, China and the US still have a long way to go.

In India, with a perceived difficulty in cutting emissions in order to meet the targets, an ambitious plan for harnessing solar energy has been formulated. We are lucky that sunlight is available in abundance but the challenge lies in the procurement of solar Photo Voltaic (PV) cells, which is one of the major constraining factors in our efforts to realise the full potential. According to a report submitted by the parliamentary standing committee, in order to achieve the target of 100 GW of solar electricity capacity by 2022, India should have had an installed capacity of 32,000 MW by 2017-18. But as of January 31, 2018, the country only had a capacity of 18,455 MW in just four years — this is over 20,000 MW a year and appears difficult to achieve.

Irrespective of the disappointing outcome of the Madrid summit, as a responsible nation with high prestige in the international arena, India does not have the luxury of a half-hearted approach towards this vital area. The phenomenon of global warming has to be seen as a global warning.

(The author is a former Governor and a Senior Adviser at the Pranab Mukherjee Foundation)

## SOUNDBITE

**President** —Ram Nath Kovind

**Actor** —Radhika Apte

**US President** —Donald Trump

**Union Minister** —Amit Shah

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Bad day for democracy

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Take the lead" (December 16). It's incomprehensible as to how the police could forcibly enter an educational institution without any permission. According to Jamia Millia Islamia Chief Proctor, Waseem Ahmed Khan, Delhi Police personnel entered the university by force without any permission and beat up staff members and students who were forced to leave the campus. Photos of injured students speak for police brutality inside the campus. Now the question is: Who issued the order, asking the police to forcibly enter the university and resort to violence? This shameful act must be condemned by everyone who believes in democratic values.

The BJP has alleged that some political parties are spreading rumours and inciting violence to promote their political interests and the students are falling into the trap. Even if this was the case, there can be no justification to brutal police action. The police cannot trample their right to protest.

**Sujit De**  
Kolkata

### An attack on the idea of India

This refers to the editorial, "Jackboots vs Ahimsa" (December 17). The police brutality unleashed on the students of Jamia Millia Islamia university and Aligarh Muslim University, who were protesting the amended citizenship law based on religion, must be condemned. The right to protest is intrinsic to a democracy. A democratic Government cannot stymie protests or use force to quell them just because they are antithetical to a decision taken or a law passed to implement the ruling party's agenda. The visuals of students walking with their arms raised were disturbing. The police cannot equate protesting students with criminals, barge into hostels and libraries, switch the lights off and thrash them. Students do not exist for the police to give vent to their aggressive instincts and please their political masters.

Widespread protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), decreed as an affront to the Constitution as it links citizenship with religion, should awaken the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah duo to the realisation that Indian democracy is bigger than them and they cannot polarise people and pit one community against the other along religious lines *ad infinitum*. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remark that "they can be identified by the clothes they are wearing" is unbecom-



coming of the holder of India's most exalted office. There are no prizes for guessing for which "noun" the pronoun "they" is used. Reneging on his call for a 10-year moratorium on "communal politics" to create the necessary conditions for the pursuit of economic progress, his Government is taking steps and engendering social strife. Sadly, it does not occur to the Modi Government that a country divided against itself cannot aspire to become a superpower and an economic power house.

**G David Milton**  
Maruthancode

ed more hardships for the locals. The basic premise of the lifting of Article 370 was to usher in development. The Government needs to accelerate its development pitch and allay the fears and anxieties of the Kashmiris.

**M Shadab**  
Bengaluru

### Lacking political will

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Climate breakdown" (December 17). It is disappointing that the UN climate talks ended without making any significant progress. It could not even frame rules for a new global carbon trading and postponed them until next year. This will only make the target set by the Paris accord harder to realise. Clearly, it's not the lack of technology but political will that will make it difficult for us to tackle global warming. None can deny that regulated carbon markets can make technologies accessible and affordable without hurting the economy.

**Sweta Sankrityan**  
Via email

### A healing touch

Sir — BJP general secretary Ram Madhav said recently that his Government would soon allow detained political leaders in Jammu & Kashmir to come out

in the open and resume political activity. The State has been under a lockdown since August, when the Government withdrew the limited autonomy granted to it under Article 370 and fully integrated it with India. As against the Government's claim that nor-

malcy has returned to the State, the fact is that extreme restrictions are still in place. Top local political leaders are still in detention, internet services are yet to be restored and not all communication lines are functional. Such moves have only creat-

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FIRST COLUMN

Get off the couch

The time for the citizens to speak against the high-handedness of the Government is now. We must do so before there is no one left to speak for us



MD FAIZ YUSUF

In the past year, the country has seen numerous developments in key sectors such as aviation, railways, oil and gas, roads and bridges, ports and shipping, telecom, power and urban infrastructure, just to name a few. Despite all the rhetoric, actual "development", as promised by the Modi Government when it was elected to power, is yet to materialise. Nonetheless, this isn't a statement where I mean to say that the current Government is "unsecular." I believe this was automatically implied when the Citizen Amendment Act (CAA), 2019, was passed in Parliament. For, it entails that every "illegal migrant", Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan and who entered India on or before December 31, 2014, other than the Muslims, are eligible for Indian citizenship.

Neither is there any need to elucidate on the state of the economy, which is at its worst phase with the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) seeing a marked fall every quarter. The economic slowdown is in everybody's mind. Just a few days ago, former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian termed the economic crisis in the country as a "great slowdown" and said that it is in the "intensive care due to structural and cyclical factors." Beyond the economy, amid a steep rise in oil prices, agrarian distress, retail inflation and unemployment have posed another set of problems. Daimler AG and Audi announced almost 20,000 job cuts in the past three weeks.

My intention is not to take pot-shots at the Government. But it dragged its name through the mud when the Delhi Police forced its way into the Jamia Millia Islamia, one of the most reputed educational institutions in the country, and brutally assaulted the students over there. Neither do I need to emphasise the fact that the Government has been lying to its citizens every since it came to power. From trumpeting a dream project of a high-speed rail, what has been delivered is that crucial sectors like education, defence and healthcare are facing its gravest crisis ever.

Today, we are living in a country where States like Jammu & Kashmir and Assam are boiling. People's voices are being suppressed. Being apolitical is a risk one should not be taking. Because being "apolitical" or in turn "silent" is a weapon that only backfires. For silence only means being "complicit" to the happenings. When a Government maintains silence, it is considered to be an accomplice of the wrong because the reality says otherwise. When it is silent, it is used as an excuse to continue with the actions that are detestable. Had the Government actually been concerned about the problems surrounding the citizens, it would have acted maturely. I am not here to take criticism on my take of "consequences of being silent." I am here to tell you that this is the real world.

This does not mean that one will not be labelled as an "anti-nationalist" when he/she speaks against the establishment. One also needs to understand that raising voices against the Government does not in any sense mean that one is speaking against the nation. Instead, when one tends to take a view, he/she is trying to protect the interests of the fellow citizens when actually it is the duty of the Government to do so.

If this situation persists, eventually a time will come when we will be able to call ourselves the "largest democracy" with as much credibility as modern-day China. Leaders there state that they run a "socialist democracy" alongside an authoritarian rule that strips people off their democratic rights, which is the very basis of a democratic State.

As a Muslim who has had mostly Hindu friends, I have been confiding in them, laughing with them and sharing this idea of One India, which I believed, stood as a strong evidence that we can embrace diversity and be united even as we boast of more than a billion people with different religions, dissimilar languages, individual beliefs and varied cultures. To my dismay, the Government has been trying to bring out a strange undercurrent of differences among the citizens, which in my opinion, did not exist before. One only wishes all of this ends here. It is not just the Muslims who are being isolated but even the Assamese, the Kashmiri Hindus and the students as well.

If we don't speak even now, when the Government came after the students in Jamia, it may act against all of us. At least one can draw the line and make it realise that such barbaric ways will not be tolerated. The time to act is now.

(The writer is an author and is currently pursuing Economics Graduation from Ashoka University)

THE BJP GOVERNMENT HAS DECLARED A WAR ON ITS OWN PEOPLE. IT HAS BECOME THE CREATOR OF VIOLENCE AND DIVISIVENESS.

—CONGRESS CHIEF SONIA GANDHI

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



WHAT HAS THE CONGRESS DONE TO PUNISH THE PERPETRATORS OF MOB VIOLENCE DURING THE 1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS?

—DEFENCE MINISTER NIRMALA SITHARAMAN

Are SDGs on track?

Since meeting goals by 2030 requires substantial changes in all aspects, the limited effectiveness of governments may not be sufficient unless businesses and civil society play their part



HIMA BINDU KOTA

The world cannot survive unless drastic steps are taken. The member states of the United Nations (UN) in 2015 adopted the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 Goals at its heart. This is a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people live a productive, vibrant life and enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Since 2020 is round the corner and we are just a decade away from 2030, we must analyse the sufficiency of the actions taken by governments, businesses, developmental organisations, scientific community and civil society to make achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) a reality. Since these require substantial changes in all aspects, the limited effectiveness of governments may not be sufficient, unless businesses and civil society play their part.

The UN's SDG Report, 2019, is helpful in measuring headways made in several critical areas and indicates some positive developments like substantial decline in extreme poverty, 49 per cent fall in the under-five mortality rate since 2000 and access to electricity to a large chunk of the world's population. Marine life has also been safeguarded and protected areas have multiplied since 2010. Issues regarding illegal fishing are also being smoothened. The Paris Agreement on climate change has been signed by 186 parties. Rapid urbanisation has also been addressed worldwide with 150 countries framing policies at the national-level aiming to solve the problems arising from it. Over 300 policies and instruments have been developed by several countries, including the EU, to encourage sustainability in production and consumption. These improvements could not have been possible without the widespread support of all stakeholders and this all-pervasive participation creates considerable optimism and promise for a secure future.

However, unified and concentrated action is still required in many areas. Environment protection and action to reduce climate change are the top priority as it is predicted that global warming will rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels in years to come if greenhouse emissions are not checked. This, coupled with increasing sea levels because of it, will have cumulative effects that will be irreversible and disastrous. Add to this an increasing ocean acidification, coastal erosion, extreme weather conditions, the frequency and severity of natural disasters, continuing land degradation, risk of loss of one million plant and animal species and we have a perfect recipe for the ecosystem's collapse.

Human suffering is closely linked to this environmental degradation as it has the capability to make many parts of the planet derelict. Given the loss of vital plant and animal species and global warming — with the last four years being the warmest on record — food production will be at risk, leading to large-scale food shortage and increasing global hunger. This can potentially displace up to 140 million people by 2050, unless strong and decisive action on climate change is taken by the entire world.

The goal to end extreme poverty by 2030 also looks unattainable as violent disturbances, conflicts and displacements are adding to the exposure to natural disasters, leading to deep-rooted deprivation. At least half of the world's population lacks essential health services, more than half of the world's children do not meet educational standards and women in all parts of the world continue to face dis-



THE UN'S SDG REPORT, 2019, IS HELPFUL IN MEASURING HEADWAYS MADE IN SEVERAL CRITICAL AREAS AND INDICATES SOME POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS LIKE SUBSTANTIAL DECLINE IN EXTREME POVERTY, 49 PER CENT FALL IN THE UNDER-FIVE MORTALITY RATE SINCE 2000 AND ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY TO A LARGE CHUNK OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION



advantages and discrimination.

Since achieving SDGs is not easy or possible alone, all stakeholders should partner for the cause. As resources are limited, be it financial, natural or human, society must make optimum use of the same. By way of partnership, we have the ability to bring together diverse and scarce resources to deliver a higher impact, greater sustainability and increased value to all. According to the UN, "Partnerships for sustainable development are multi-stakeholder initiatives voluntarily undertaken by Governments, inter-governmental organisations, major groups and other stakeholders, whose efforts are contributing to the implementation of inter-governmentally agreed development goals and commitments."

Through this the UN has recognised the importance of partnerships by businesses and all leading institutions as imperative in international relations and global development. This fundamental shift in its thinking and approach is expressed in its clear acceptance of the interrelations and interdependence of thriving business, prosperous society and a healthy environment as a whole. All societal sectors without exception have been named as key development actors and an unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration is the need of the hour for achievement of SDGs.

Since the launch of SDGs, several wide-ranging development partnerships have seen the light of the day, both at global and local levels; from international networks to bilateral arrangements; from multi-sector, multi-issue platforms, to single-sector, single-issue interest groups. To bring some standardisation into the multitude of collaborative arrangements with quite different qualities, three basic types of partnerships can be identified, which can be distinguished in terms of the main objectives of the partnership and the nature of the relationship between the

partners.

The first category, "Leverage/Exchange" involves partnerships that are complementary to each other and are a one-way transfer or reciprocal exchange of resources like knowledge, services, skills and funding, that the organisations need to employ towards their own strategic goals. It is applicable when each partner has something that is more valuable to the other than to themselves, resulting in net gain on exchange. For example, the relationship between an aid agency and a university research institute can constitute a partnership of mutual benefit where the agency accesses research outputs and expertise from the institute while providing research funding or sources of data and case studies to the institute. An example of this type of partnership is Coca-Cola and the Global Fund Project Last Mile, which leverages Coca-Cola's logistic, supply chain, distribution and marketing expertise to build African Governments' capabilities to ensure communities have better access to life-sustaining and life-enhancing medicines. Coca-Cola gains by demonstrating its commitment to a better planet as well as providing employee engagement opportunities.

The second category, "Combine/Integrate", identifies a cross-sector partnership, which is essentially a partnership between two or more organisations where complementary resources are pooled to identify solutions to a common problem and in the process accomplish a shared strategic goal. Innovative approaches, which are developed by all the partners involved through brainstorming and consistent dialogue and mutual accountability, are the hallmarks of this type of partnership. The core belief here is that one can achieve more by working together and combining the resources than individually. An example in this category can be seen in Bangladesh between

a social enterprise and a major supplier of renewable energy, SOLshare, and Grameen Shakti, which is being supported and enabled by UN DESA. Grameen Shakti brings access to its massive existing customer base and network of solar homes, as well as its knowledge of the communities, and SOLshare brings cutting-edge, innovative technology with the potential to transform the supply of affordable energy to low-income households in Bangladesh.

The final partnership type "Transform", is more ambitious and focusses on the final goal of tackling a development challenge in an innovative and multi-faceted way where the problem definition may be unclear, and partners bring differing world views and perspectives to the issue. For example, Scaling up Nutrition is a global, country-led and multi-sectoral movement to combat undernutrition and catalyse support for countries with a focus on a set of evidence-based direct nutrition interventions. Here a partnership is developed to facilitate a system change with the involvement of various actors like countries, various Government ministries (e.g. ministries of education, health and agriculture) as well as other change agents like businesses, civil society and the UN.

We are at a time where interventions to save the planet have to be colossal and no country or individual can contribute in isolation. The challenges are global and require global solutions. The SDGs have brought countries and communities together to work for a better life and a sustainable planet. It is the duty of all stakeholders to develop and to further strengthen international cooperation on climate change, migration, technology, trade and partnerships. Let us take the advantage of many synergies that we have and work together to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

(The writer is an Associate Professor, Amity University)

What lies ahead in 2020?

Politically, the country will be stable, given the massive mandate won by Prime Minister Narendra Modi just six months ago but the BJP has a lot of work still left to do to fulfil its core agenda



KALYANI SHANKAR

Nostradamus, the world's most famous seer, had predicted that the year 2020 would mark the beginning of a new era, accompanied by bloodshed and suffering, but that it would also bring new hopes. So, as we stand at the cusp of the new year, one wonders what 2020 will bring for India?

Politically, the country will be stable, given the massive mandate won by Prime Minister Narendra Modi just six months ago. The BJP is sure to begin the year with a sense of triumph as the Modi Government has achieved most of the party's core agenda during its second term, including the abrogation of Article 370, a favourable judgment in the

Ayodhya issue, dealing with the issue of illegal immigrants through the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and so on. However, there is a need to arrest the widespread unrest created due to the CAA and the NRC as it is not doing the Government any good.

Going forward, in 2020, the Government is likely to form a trust and begin the Ram temple's construction in a grand manner in Ayodhya. The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is the only remaining part of the core BJP-RSS agenda and a Bill to regulate the population is also on the anvil.

Though the BJP will not achieve majority in the Rajya Sabha, Modi and his deputy Amit Shah have shown how Bills could be pushed through with the support of some neutral parties like the Biju Janata Dal (BJD).

However, the economy is going to be the biggest challenge for the Modi Government. A plunge in domestic consumption, manufac-

turing, construction, real estate, weakening of industrial production, slump in exports and imports and a mess in the banking and financial sectors need urgent attention.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently marginally cut its growth forecast for 2019 to 5.8 per cent but said it will pick up to 6.2 per cent in 2020 and further to 6.4 per cent in 2021. The global broking firm Goldman Sachs has forecast a mild recovery of the Indian economy by March 2020.

Politically there could be some realignments. The Opposition may continue to be scattered and weak. The Congress' prospects are looking up a bit. However, it is yet to emerge as an alternative. Both the Congress and the BJP might have new presidents. While Rahul Gandhi is expected to return as the party chief, the BJP might choose the present working president JP Nadda to lead it from now on.

The BJP ended the year by emerging as the single-largest party in Haryana and Maharashtra. While

the party formed the Government in Haryana, the Shiv Sena-Congress-Nationalist Congress Party combine formed the Government in Maharashtra, upstaging the BJP there.

With the parting of ways with the Shiv Sena, the BJP might have to look for new friends in the coming year. As it is, the NDA has shrunk with the Telugu Desam Party leaving in March 2019 and the Sena in December 2019. The JD(U) and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) are the only two big allies left with the saffron party.

Bihar and Delhi will go for Assembly polls in 2020. Both are important for the BJP as it is part of the ruling coalition in Bihar and has been trying to get Delhi back as it was strong in the Capital in the past. The "Modi magic" did not work in both the States in 2015 as the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) won with a massive majority in Delhi and the mahagathbandhan, comprising the Congress, JD(U), the RJD and smaller parties, won in Bihar. The mahagathbandhan has broken up

since then and Nitish Kumar is back as an NDA Chief Minister. Bihar has 243 seats and Nitish will lead the BJP-JD(U) combine in the Bihar polls.

As for Delhi, the ruling AAP is going strong despite all odds. The fight there will be three-cornered with the AAP, the Congress and the BJP fighting for the 70 seats. The Congress and the BJP have no local leaders to match the stature of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. However, the BJP's star campaigner Modi is planning to kick off the poll campaign on December 22 with a huge rally at the Ramlila Maidan.

Modi has struck up a friendship with US President Donald Trump. It is to be seen who wins the crucial 2020 US presidential elections. In any case, India has the support of both Democrats and Republicans in the US and the victory of Boris Johnson in the United Kingdom (UK) might cement the Indo-UK relationship further, too, making things right for the country as far as the West is concerned. However,

India has to sort out its differences in the neighbourhood, particularly with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

The Tokyo Olympics in 2020 is an important event as in the 100th year of India's participation, the Indian Olympic Association, with the JSW Group, will showcase the nation's heritage and economic might through an India House. It seems strange that a country of more than 1.3 billion people can only collect an average of less than one medal per games. Maybe the new year will see the nation shore up its winnings as more and more people take to sports and training takes centre stage.

India will be hosting the next 'No Money for Terror' Ministerial Conference in 2020. Restricting funding is the key to stopping terror in its tracks, as money is the backbone for training, attacks and other terror infrastructure.

Though the year 2020 is not packed with events, nevertheless, it is only the beginning and events might overtake any prediction. (The writer is a senior journalist)



CLIMATE CHANGE DIPLOMACY

Understandably distracted, Chile's lack of leadership saw a coalition of States with strong links to fossil fuel industry — the US, Brazil, Australia and Saudi Arabia — seize the opportunity to undermine the talks. Their success was to render meaningless the summit's final declaration. This is a snub to science and strikers in a year of unprecedented climate activism. If this climate denialism persists, we will pay a heavy price. (The Guardian editorial)



# Sensex, Nifty hit lifetime peaks

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmarks Sensex and Nifty soared to new peaks on Tuesday, driven by gains mainly in metal, financial and IT stocks amid firm global cues and sustained foreign fund inflows.

After surging to its record intra-day peak of 41,401.65, the 30-share BSE barometer settled 413.45 points, or 1.01 per cent, higher at its all-time high of 41,352.17.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rallied 111.05 points, or 0.92 per cent, to its record closing high of 12,165.

Tata Steel was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging 4.38 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel 4.37 per cent, Vedanta 3.50 per cent, Tata Motors 3.03 per cent, HDFC 2.46 per cent and Bajaj Finance 2.39 per cent.

On the other hand, Sun Pharma fell 1.37 per cent, M&M 0.63 per cent, Bajaj Auto 0.56 per cent and HUL 0.48 per cent.

According to experts, domestic market scaled record peaks following positive cues from global equities that rallied



The positive mood of the markets was also aided by the RBI Gov's statement about central bank's further accommodative stance in terms of policy rate provided if there is a need

—NARENDRA SOLANKI  
Head Fundamental Research (Investment Services)

on optimism over US-China trade truce.

"The positive mood of the markets was also aided by the

RBI Governor's statement about central bank's further accommodative stance in terms of policy rate provided

if there is a need," said Narendra Solanki, Head Fundamental Research (Investment Services) - AVP Equity Research, Anand Rathi Shares & Stock Brokers.

The traders were also seen optimistic ahead of Wednesday's GST Council meet and expects some positive outcome from the same, he added.

Sustained foreign fund inflows too boosted market mood here, experts said.

On a net basis, foreign institutional investors bought equities worth Rs 728.13 crore,

while domestic institutional investors sold shares worth Rs 796.38 crore, data available with stock exchange showed on Monday.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul and Tokyo ended significantly higher, while those in Europe were trading on a mixed note.

On the currency front, the rupee appreciated 3 paise against the US dollar to 70.96 (intra-day).

Brent futures, the global oil benchmark, was slipped 0.17 per cent to USD 65.23 per barrel.

**SENSEX**  
41352.17  
413.45 (+1.01%)

**NIFTY**  
12145.30  
91.35 (+0.76%)

■ Tata Steel was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging 4.38 per cent

■ Sun Pharma fell 1.37 per cent, M&M 0.63 per cent

■ Sustained foreign fund inflows too boosted market

## CAPSULE



### Gold prices rise marginally; silver gains Rs 75

**NEW DELHI:** Gold prices rose marginally by Rs 11 to Rs 38,771 per 10 gram in the national capital on Tuesday, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had settled at Rs 38,760 per 10 gram in the previous trade. Spot gold for 24 Karat in Delhi was trading marginally higher by Rs 11 on rupee appreciation which limited the upside, HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said. The spot rupee was trading around 9 paise stronger against the dollar during the day, he added. Silver prices also gained Rs 75 to Rs 45,610 per kg from Rs 45,535 per kg in the previous trade. In the global market, gold was quoting higher at USD 1,478.20 per ounce, while silver was trading at USD 17.02 per ounce.

### Lupin's arm completes stake divestment in Kyowa

**NEW DELHI:** Drug maker Lupin on Tuesday said its subsidiary Nanomi BV has completed divestment of its entire stake in Kyowa Pharmaceutical Industry to Japan-based equity fund Unison Capital Partners. Nanomi BV held 99.82 per cent stake in Japan-based Kyowa, Lupin said in a statement. Last month, Lupin's board had approved the stake sale in Kyowa for an enterprise value of JPY 57,361 million (around Rs 3,702 crore). The Mumbai-based drug firm said the transaction generates post tax net cash inflow of around JPY 33,429 million (Rs 2,157.6 crore) and significantly strengthens its consolidated balance sheet. The deal helps the company pare its net debt from Rs 4,361.8 crore (as on September 30, 2019) to Rs 1,075.3 crore. The company's net debt to equity ratio now stands at 0.08 as compared to 0.32 earlier.



Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman holding pre-budget consultation with stakeholder groups of "Industry, Service and Trade", in New Delhi on Tuesday. Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Anuraj Singh Thakur and other dignitaries are seen

## FM sets Rs 1.1L cr monthly GST collection target

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid concerns that the government may fall short of tax collection target in a slowing economy, the Centre has set an ambitious Rs 1.1 lakh crore monthly GST target for the remaining four months of the current fiscal and asked taxmen to step up efforts to achieve the goal.

Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey held a video conference meeting with top tax officials of departments looking after both income tax and indirect taxes such as GST and asked them to step up efforts to achieve tax targets, finance ministry sources said.

While taxmen have been asked to plug evasions, Pandey impressed upon them to achieve targets without harassing honest taxpayers.

Taxmen were told in no uncertain terms that both the GST as well as the Rs 13.35 lakh crore target for direct taxes for 2019-20 will have to be achieved.

In the meeting, the GST target was set at Rs 1.10 lakh crore every month between December 2019 and March 2020. Of these four months, Rs

**Also, it was clarified to the officers that the corporate tax relief worth Rs 1.45 lakh crore by way of a cut in rates, should not be taken as an excuse for lesser direct tax collection**

1.25 lakh collections has to be achieved in at least one month, the sources said.

Gross GST collections, which include the share of both Centre and the states, crossed Rs 1 lakh crore mark in four out of the eight months of the current fiscal and only once was above Rs 1.1 lakh crore. At the current trend, the GST tax collection target is likely to be missed by at least Rs 1 lakh crore.

Out of the Rs 13.35 lakh crore direct tax collection target, about Rs 6 lakh crore or 45 per cent of the annual target, has been collected till October (first seven months).

For 2019-20, the Union government is targeting Rs 6.63 lakh crore from its share of GST revenues. GST subsumed 17 centre and state levies and the

two equally split the revenues. The sources said the revenue department in the finance ministry is taking concerted measures to augment collections in the next four collection months and has exhorted its senior officers, including Members of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), as well as other top officials to achieve tax targets both for direct and indirect taxes.

Officers have been particularly urged to ensure that during such field enforcement drive and visits, no taxpayer is overreached or troubled, they said.



## Govt decides to go slow on FTAs to avoid RCEP-like impasse

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India will not sign any free trade agreement in a hurry or to the disadvantage of industry and exporters, Union minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday, more than a month after the country walked out of the China-backed mega trade deal RCEP.

On November 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in Bangkok that India will not join RCEP as negotiations failed to address New Delhi's "outstanding issues and concerns". Speaking at an event organ-



I can assure all of you that going forward, none of the FTAs will be settled in a hurry or will be settled to the disadvantage of Indian industry and exporters

—PIYUSH GOYAL, Union minister

ised by CII, Goyal said the government took the bold decision in the national interest because clearly, the pact had become nothing but an India-China FTA which "nobody wants".

This, according to Goyal, was a bold decision "as for the first time it reflected the resolve of the government that diplomacy will not prevail over trade.

## UK PM to outlaw Brexit extension beyond 2020

AFF ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson plans to pass a law guaranteeing Britain's Brexit transition period cannot run beyond the end of 2020, a source in his office said on Tuesday.

Johnson won a big majority in last week's election on a promise to take Britain out of the European Union by the end of January, followed by a transition period when London and Brussels negotiate a trade agreement.

## Bankers: Kotak Mahindra best suited to buy Yes Bank

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Two of India's top bankers on Tuesday opined that Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMB) is best suited to acquire smaller and capital-starved rival Yes Bank.

Yes Bank's capital buffers have dipped on accelerated non-performing assets recognition under new chief executive Ravneet Gill earlier this year. The private sector lender's capital raising plan is also passing through uncertainties and there are speculations on whether Yes Bank is an acquisition target, which has been denied by its management.

"I think Uday (Kotak) is the best candidate to acquire Yes Bank. You need deep pockets, Uday has that," SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar said at Times Network's India Economic Conclave here.

When the same question was posed to third-largest lender Axis Bank's Managing Director and CEO Amitabh Chaudhry, it was answered with the same suggestion.

"We (Axis Bank) are a smaller bank. We are trying to ensure that we grow big so that at some stage we can acquire others. So, yes Mr Kotak, they are best suited rather than us," he said.

When contacted, Kotak Mahindra Group Chief Communication Officer Rohit Rao said, "these are comments made by other bankers and reflect their views, and not ours".

## FRAUD-HIT CG POWER

# Shareholders vote for raising Rs 5K cr loan, appoint Sudhir

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fraud-hit CG Power and Industrial Solutions has got shareholders' nod to borrow up to Rs 5,000 crore to meet working capital and other business needs as it looks to spring back from the worst crisis in its history.

As many as 99.99 per cent of shareholders, at the company's annual general meeting in Mumbai on December 14, voted in favour of a resolution moved for raising borrowing limit, CG Power said in a regulatory filing on Tuesday.

They also approved appointment of Sudhir Mathur as whole time executive director of the company with an overwhelming 99.99 per cent voting in favour of the resolution.

Mathur, who along with non-executive chairman Ashish Kumar Guha has been overseeing the clean up of the company after the alleged fraud of over Rs 3,000 crore came to light, was first appointed as independent director on CG Power board on October 1, 2018 and moved into an executive role from May 10, 2019.

Shareholders approved both his appointments, the filing showed.

They also approved appointment of Narayan K Seshadri as independent director on the board of the company.



**They also approved appointment of Sudhir Mathur as whole time executive director of the company with an overwhelming 99.99% voting in favour of the resolution**

In the shareholder notice, the firm had stated that its current borrowing as of March 31, 2019 was Rs 2,455.39 crore (fund based including short term loans) and Rs 1,380.00 crore (non fund based).

"Keeping in view the existing borrowing and additional fund requirements and given the current financial condition of the company, the company is in urgent need of both long-term capital and working capital and towards this, the management of the company is in the process of identifying potential sources of capital," it had said.

## Hetero unveils 'Taffic' combo drug for HIV

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Drug firm Hetero on Tuesday launched an antiretroviral combination drug, used to treat human immunodeficiency virus type (HIV-1), in the country.

The Hyderabad-based company has introduced the 3-in-1 drug under the brand name 'Taffic' in India.

The company's product is a generic version of Gilead's Biktarvy and has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).

The product will be marketed and distributed by Hetero Healthcare Ltd in the

country, the drug firm said in a statement.

"The launch of this product emphasises company's ongoing commitment to provide advanced and effective treatments to HIV patients worldwide," it added.

To further this mission, Hetero will be making the latest combination drug available in 116 low and middle-income countries upon approvals from the regulatory authorities there, the drug firm said.

Taffic, a once-a-day single pill, is a combination of three medicines -- Bictegravir (50mg), Emtricitabine (200mg) and Tenofovir Alafenamide (25mg).



**'India will emerge from difficult economic situation soon'**

PNS ■ NEW YORK

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said that India is impacted to some extent by the global economic slowdown but expressed confidence that the country will come out of the difficult situation within a short time.

Singh, who arrived in the US on Monday for the 2019 US-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in Washington DC on September 18, addressed members of the Indian community at educational organisation Asia Society here at an event organised by the Consulate General of India.

He said currently the world over, there is a talk of a global economic slowdown. "I also accept that there is global economic slowdown and India is also impacted by it to some extent. But I can say with full confidence that India will come out of this difficult situation in only few months' time," Singh said.

Singh said this was not a matter of big concern for India because the government has taken several major steps and announced economic packages to boost economic growth.

"We can face and tackle the global economic slowdown only by increasing consumer demand," he said.

# India slips to 112th place on gender gap; in bottom-5 on health

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has slipped four places to rank 112th globally in terms of gender gap amid widening disparity in terms of women's health and survival and economic participation -- the two areas where the country is now ranked in the bottom-five, an annual survey showed on Tuesday.

While Iceland remains the world's most gender-neutral country, India has moved down the ladder from its 108th position last year on the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report to rank below countries like China (106th), Sri Lanka (102nd), Nepal (101st), Brazil (92nd), Indonesia (85th) and Bangladesh (50th).

Yemen is ranked the worst (153rd), while Iraq is 152nd

and Pakistan 151st.

"The time it will take to close the gender gap (globally) narrowed to 99.5 years in 2019. While an improvement on 2018 -- when the gap was calculated to take 108 years to close -- it still means parity between men and women across health, education, work and politics will take more than a lifetime to achieve," the World Economic Forum (WEF) said.

Geneva-based WEF, an international organisation for public-private cooperation, said this year's improvement can largely be ascribed to a significant increase in the number of women in politics.

The political gender gap will take 95 years to close, compared to 107 years last year. Worldwide, women now hold 25.2 per cent of parliamentary



lower-house seats and 21.2 per cent of ministerial positions, compared to 24.1 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively last year.

However, the economic opportunity gap has worsened, widening to 257 years, com-

pared to 202 years last year. The report said one of the greatest challenges to closing this gap is women's under-representation in emerging roles, such as cloud computing, engineering and data and AI.

The WEF had published its

**Geneva-based WEF, an international organisation for public-private cooperation, said this year's improvement can largely be ascribed to a significant increase in the number of women in politics**

first gender gap report in 2006, when India was ranked relatively higher at 98th place.

Since then, India's rank has worsened on three of four metrics used for the overall ranking. While India has improved to 18th place on political empowerment, it has slipped to 150th on health and survival, to 149th in terms of economic participation and opportunity and to 112th place for educational attainment.

The WEF said economic opportunities for women are extremely limited in India (35.4 per cent), Pakistan (32.7 per cent), Yemen (27.3 per cent), Syria (24.9 per cent) and Iraq (22.7 per cent).

It also named India among countries with very low women representation on company boards (13.8 per cent), while it was even worse in China (9.7 per cent).

On health and survival, four large countries -- Pakistan, India, Viet Nam and China --

fare badly with millions of women there not getting the same access to health as men, the WEF said.

It also flagged abnormally low sex ratios at birth in India (91 girls for every 100 boys) and Pakistan (92/100).

The WEF said India has closed two-thirds of its overall gender gap, but the condition of women in large fringes of India's society is precarious and the economic gender gap runs particularly deep.

Since 2006, the gap has significantly widened and India is the only country among the 153 countries studied where the economic gender gap is larger than the political one.

Only one-quarter of women, compared with 82 per cent of men, engage actively in the labour market -- one of the lowest rates globally (145th).



## THE DOMINANT SHIFT

Here's how streaming and #MeToo shaped TV decade of change

**G**ame of Thrones was both an unprecedented achievement and old-school role model in the TV decade that's rolling its final credits. Instalments of the elaborately produced hit were doled out one at a time by an established outlet, premium cable channel HBO. That was standard TV operating procedure until, suddenly, it wasn't. The new era arrived in 2013 when a full season's worth of *House of Cards* popped up amid Netflix's on-demand movies and old TV shows.

The drama's unexpected home appeared simply to be an option to the 500-channel universe born in the 1990s. But *House of Cards* foreshadowed a streaming gold rush and volume of programming dubbed Peak TV in 2015 — and with no drop in altitude in sight.

The result — nothing is the same, whether it's how much television we consume; how and where we do it; who gets to make it, and the level of respect given the creatively emboldened small screen. We don't just watch TV, we binge it until we're bleary-eyed if not sated. We still change channels with a remote control, but more often we're logging in to watch shows on our phones or other devices and on our schedules, not network-dictated appointment TV.

A comic strip, *Zits*, recently summed up the current reality in three panels. "What's on?" a father asks his teenage son, who's sitting cross-legged in front of a TV set and is bracketed by a smart phone on one side and a laptop on the other. "Everything ever videotaped, filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise documented whenever I want to watch it," the teen answers, nonchalantly tossing popcorn into his mouth. "I miss television," the downcast dad tells his wife.

### ALL HAIL STREAMING

Generational nostalgia aside, consumers have embraced the change in their media world, said Robert Thompson, director of Syracuse University's Bleier Center for Television & Popular Culture. "This was the decade that streaming became for many, many people the dominant way in which they watch television," said Thompson. It's a rapid shift that bears little relation to the previous entertainment industry revolution, cable TV.

Only about a quarter of the US



homes had cable in 1980 despite its availability since the mid-20th century. While growth finally exploded in the 80s, it wasn't until the tail end of the 1990s and the arrival of HBO's *The Sopranos* and *Sex and the City* that premium cable received critical praise and honours, Thompson said.

In contrast, it took less than a decade for leader Netflix to skyrocket from about 12 million US subscribers at the decade's start to 60 million this year and 158 million worldwide. The streamer reportedly lavished \$15 billion on programming for 2019 alone, and earned buzz with series including *The Crown*, *Stranger Things*, and *Orange is the New Black*. Even major films, among them Martin Scorsese's *The Irishman*, are making themselves at home on Netflix while still in theatres.

Others in the fray include Amazon Prime Video, although "streaming wars" became the aggressive phrase applied to the increasingly competitive marketplace. With newly emboldened (and sometimes mega-expanded) media companies intent on getting a piece of the streaming action, there was a growth surge that won't abate in the new decade.

Apple TV Plus launched on November 1 with Oprah Winfrey and Steven Spielberg among its first wave of producers, and was quickly followed by Disney Plus. The latter has a storehouse of Disney movies and TV shows to draw on, along with acquired properties from Marvel Entertainment and Lucasfilm and its Star Wars franchise.

While cord-cutting became a quest for viewers seeking to shed hefty cable bills, there is still a price tag for the gusher of riches, as much as \$14.99 monthly for HBO Max alone. A bonus for viewers as they sort through the competing options — more programming doesn't just mean more of the same.

### VARIETY STORE

If retailers can provide every type of yogurt known to humanity, why can't TV take the same eclectic approach? It has in the past 10 years, as the increasing demand for content and the growth of niche programming created opportunities for diverse and candid voices. Ongoing efforts by advocacy groups also contributed to the gradual but unmistakable shift.

Ryan Murphy, already established as a successful producer with *Nip/Tuck* and *Glee*, exercised his clout to make FX's *Pose*, set in the LGBTQ ballroom culture scene of the 1980s and 90s. Its star, Billy Porter, became the first openly gay man to win the best actor Emmy.

Even mainstream broadcasting expanded its field of vision, with ABC the first network in 20 years to air an Asian American family sitcom, *Fresh Off the Boat*, ending this season. Nahnatchka Khan was its executive producer, one of the women who gained prominence behind the camera in a sector long dominated by men.

African American women took the spotlight in creator-star Issa Rae's *Insecure*, while Jenji Kohan's

*Orange is the New Black* featured characters notable for their ethnic, sexual and class diversity. Some established female producers further cemented their success. Shonda Rhimes added *Scandal* and *How to Get Away with Murder* to her body of work, with the latter's star, Viola Davis, becoming the first African American to win a best drama actress Emmy. Ava DuVernay, already a filmmaking force, spearheaded *When They See Us* and *Queen Sugar*.

Reese Witherspoon, adding producing to her portfolio, made good on her vow to bring strong female characters to the screen with the hit series *Big Little Lies* and *The Morning Show*.

Statistics confirm the anecdotal evidence. Across all TV platforms in 2017-18, women accounted for a historic high of 31 per cent of those working in key behind-the-scenes jobs including directors, writers and editors, according to research by San Diego State University's Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film.

While television moved toward better reflecting the world at large, it was forced to look inward as well.

### #METOO FALLOUT

Revelations of sexual misconduct hit the TV industry hard and with more lasting effect than any other sector of Hollywood, even compared to producer Harvey Weinstein's fall from filmmaking heights. Two of media's top powerbrokers were brought down in the #MeToo era — Les Moonves and Roger Ailes.

Top-tier actors also lost their jobs, including Jeffrey Tambor of *Transparent* and Kevin Spacey of *House of Cards* and *Louis CK*, whose TV projects included *Louie*, which he starred in and produced. — AP



## A FRESH WAVE OF TALENT

**T**he beauty of theatre directed for the age group of 0 to 6 years lies in the unsaid.

Youngsters were delighted by the sheer grace of Dhanendra Kawade's movements in the play 'Nal-Jal', by Swangvale, while the elderly audience experienced a universal truth, a rare connection to a delicate yet weathered state of being.

'Nal-Jal' perfectly encapsulates the elements of pure play. A joyous journey into the flow of water, the show is a one-man act, held afloat with splendid musical effects, an enchantingly simple set of faucets, pipes, mugs and other everyday objects.

With captivating ease, Dhanendra moved across the stage — creating sublime visuals with a torch and a canister of water, making music with half-full mugs, eliciting giggles with slow and rushed gargling. The audience's eyes followed everything, spellbound.

As ripples spread over the ceiling, a collective sigh rippled through the audience. The 10th year of the Hyderabad Children's Theatre Festival has introduced a fresh wave of talent to the city — with stunning performances by international and national groups, exhibitions, and workshops. The 10-day celebrations wrapped up today. — PMS

**'NAL-JAL' ENCAPSULATES THE ELEMENTS OF PURE PLAY. A JOYOUS JOURNEY INTO THE FLOW OF WATER, THE SHOW IS A ONE-MAN ACT, HELD AFLOAT WITH SPLENDID MUSICAL EFFECTS, AN ENCHANTINGLY SIMPLE SET OF FAUCETS, PIPES, MUGS AND OTHER EVERY-DAY OBJECTS.**



Be it acting or cricket, **NANDA KISHORE** has done it all

Speaking to **V SATEESH REDDY**, television actor Nanda Kishore shares his journey into theatre, progressing into television, being an all rounder for the Telugu Warriors cricket team and his interest in doing negative roles



**T**o help and inspire people, we are planning to form four cricket teams consisting of about 60 Telugu television actors. The four teams are red, green, blue and yellow. Red shows the importance of blood donation, green is for planting trees, blue is for saving water and yellow is for winning medals and making India proud, said television actor Nanda Kishore who debuted in 2001.

### Father's encouragement

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Nanda Kishore says, "My father is a railway employee who settled in Hyderabad. He is also a stage artiste and has previously acted in a movie called *Hyderabad Blues* by Nagesh Kukunoor. I also played a lawyer in it. My father introduced me to theatre and made me join Bhoomika Theatre Group when I was in college. Bhoomika's founder G Udayabhanu is my father's friend."

### Basics from theatre

Speaking of his experience as a theatre artiste, Kishore adds, "I learnt a lot from Bhoomika. Theatre is all about discipline, punctuality, acting and coordination. I learned my basics from theatre. I used to be a part of many folk dramas in Telugu and Hindi and performed across India. Folk dramas help you learn how to dance, sing and act at the same time. Theatre helps in personality development."

### Television career

In 2001, he got a chance to play a constable in *Athagaru Kotla Kodalu* serial. Later, he acted in serials like *Velugu Needalu*, *Suryavamsam*, *Chi La Sow Sravanthi* and more. He has also done dance shows like *Narhanashala*, *Star War*, *Jalsa* and proved his dancing prowess. Kishore has also been a part of over 10 Telugu films and did his PG Diploma in Management Information Systems and Computer Applications from Badruka College. When asked if he faced any challenges in acting,

Kishore shares, "I have never faced any difficulties. I have a strong theatre background and it helped me very well. Now, we have various mediums for acting like cinema, television, web series and so on and it's important that one is doing justice to a particular character. It doesn't matter which medium one is in, talent matters."

### Theatre gives satisfaction

He informed that being a part of a play gives him ultimate satisfaction. He explains, "The serials *Chi La Sow Sravanthi* has given me name and fame. For me, theatre gives utmost satisfaction as in theatre, we don't have retakes and have to excel and mesmerise the audience in one go. If a single artist makes a mistake, it impacts the whole team. Where as in television and cinema, we have retakes which gives you a second chance."

### Fitness Freak

Nanda Kishore said that being fit is important for every one. He adds, "I believe that

without fitness, there is no long run for people in any field. Every day, I do yoga and go to the gym. One hour of fitness activities is important for people on a daily basis. I'm also a trained personal wellness teacher and teach a few people. Fitness gives you great strength."

### Cricket League

Nanda Kishore is also well known in the cricket circle. He is an all rounder in Telugu Warriors team. He says, "It was a great experience playing cricket with senior actors like Venkatesh and Sreekanth. I used to play cricket very well since childhood and it made me an all rounder for our Telugu team."

He adds that till date he has portrayed positive characters and wants to portray a negative one soon.

He shares, "Positive characters have certain boundaries that restrict actors in certain ways. Negative roles have no boundaries and it also reaches people fast. I'm looking to do a negative role soon."



# what's brewing?

## PARTY



Alka Rathore



Mandakini



Priyanka



Soundarya



Srinivas



Saihithi Jaddi



Srivani

### AN EVENT OF BLING

The Miss, Mrs and Mr Urban India fashion show was held recently at the Shilpakala Vedika, Madhapur, which was organised by CMOF Global, Sarakadam Stories. Actress Rohini was among the jury members of the event. The guest and the participants enjoyed the event while being decked up in dazzling outfits.

## CITY GUIDE

### COMEDY

#### HYDERABAD COMEDY FESTIVAL

Learn the basics of Madhubani Painting, tips & tricks, in a session by Bhamini Shree. Madhubani Painting is a folk art of India, where the idea traditionally revolves around mythology and nature. The workshop will be held at Lamakaan on December 29 at 3 pm.



### BADLAV

Badlav is an original Hindi play written and directed by Amaan Ahmad. Badlav revolves around Gayatri, Kalpana, Radha, and Bindya. Gayatri wants change but her hypocrisy surfaces all the time. The play takes various twists and turns and touches the element of the Theatre of Absurdity. The play is all set to be performed on December 26 at 8 pm at Lamakaan Cultural space.



### MASALA CHAI

Kissago Theatre Group is staging a play Masala Chai on December 21 at Lamakaan from 8 pm onwards. A lot can happen over a cup of tea! Masala Chai revolves around the concept tea being a form of social network. People get together for tea and build long term friendships with tea being the binding factor in many relationships.



### KITTEN FOSTER TRAINING



Hyderabad's first ever kitten foster training is being brought to the city for all the cat-people here, on December 21 at the Pet Cafe (Road No 12, Banjara Hills). WhatsApp at 8121913573 / 9051073333 to confirm your seats.

### SPACE TIME



Gallery Space, Banjara Hills is presenting a group art show Space Time Continuum by Sachin Jaltare, Ramesh Gorjala, Anjaneyulu G and Bratin Khan until December 20 between 10 am and 6 pm.

### ANTARANG 2019



Aakruti Kathak Kendra is organising 'Antarang 2019', a two-day free music and dance festival held in memory of Guru Kathak Maestro Pt Durga Lal Ji at Ravindra Bharati, today between 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. The Kathak Kendra, one of the premier Kathak learning centres of India, has been nurturing young talent in Hyderabad since 1990.

### POTLUCK



Cinephiles Film Club will screen a movie titled Potluck on December 25. The movie is about an economics graduate student studying for a year in Barcelona, Spain, as part of the Erasmus programme, where he learns from a group of students from all over Western Europe in a student share-house. The movie shall be screened at Lamakaan

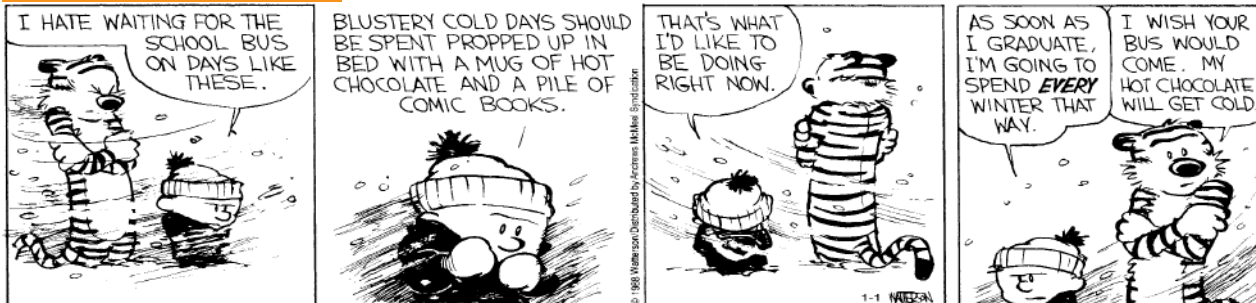
**GET YOUR EVENT LISTED:** To get your events listed, please send your details along with a poster and contact number to [pioneer.features@gmail.com](mailto:pioneer.features@gmail.com)

## FUN TIME

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



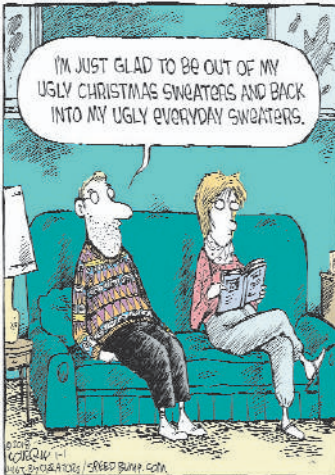
### GARFIELD



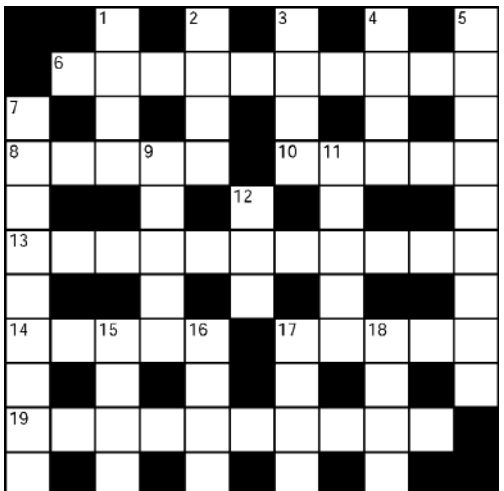
### REALITY CHECK



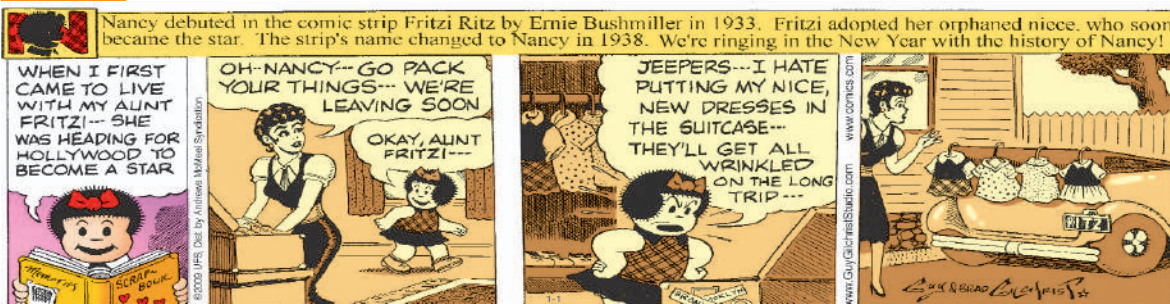
### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### NANCY



### SUDOKU

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

#### Yesterday's solution

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

- 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

- 6 Snapshot
- 8 Bees make this
- 10 Exchanges for money
- 13 Make
- 14 Hair in ring shapes
- 17 Smashed to pieces
- 19 People who work in libraries
- 9 Of exactly the same size
- 11 Go in
- 12 A month
- 15 Bones in your chest
- 16 A line of sewing where cloth is joined
- 17 The edge around the top of a container
- 18 A noise made by a pig

### DOWN

- 1 Part of your face
- 2 Don't go
- 3 Birds lay these
- 4 Many animals have one of these behind them
- 5 Spoke very quietly
- 7 A person in a laboratory mixes these together

#### SOLUTION

T	U	N	N	E	T	O	P	E
R	A	R	E	T	U	R	T	L
N	R	O	R	S	D			
V	O	L	C	A	N	O		
A	W	T	I	B	D			
N	C	O	U	N	T	E	R	
S	B	G	A	O				
W	A	T	E	R	S	T	E	E
E	N	R	E	L				
R	I	A	I	S				
U	R	A	N	I				



South Superstar opens up at the trailer launch of *Darbar* about Big B's advice to not enter politics, wish to work in a Marathi film and many more

# Rajinikanth: I WANT TO PLAY THE ROLE OF A TRANSGENDER



**S**uperstar Rajinikanth says he would love to explore the idea of playing a transgender in a film.

"I have explored almost all the genres. I have worked in 160 films and it's been 45 years in the film industry. I want to play the role of a transgender," said the Tamil screen idol, when asked if there still was any genre or role that he would like to explore after such a glorious innings in films.

Rajinikanth opened up at the trailer launch of his upcoming film *Darbar*. Asked if he has been approached by any filmmaker to play a transgender, he said: "No, not yet. I thought about it just now and expressed my wish."

The 69-year-old actor feels that he doesn't see any progress in his acting. "I don't see any progress in my acting. In the beginning of our career, we all feel a little shy and nervous but as you work more, it increases your confidence. I think acting mainly depends on the director and how he extracts acting from an actor," said the veteran actor.

The Tamil superstar enjoys global popularity. Who does he look up to in his life?

"I have said this many times. It is Amitabh Bachchan. He is my inspiration. He inspires me not only in front of the camera but off screen, too," replied Rajinikanth.

Asked what his fond memories of working with Big B are, he replied: "There are many moments. He loves me. A few years back in Chennai, he told me, 'after turning 60, you should be careful of three things: Do exercise regularly, be busy and do whatever you want without bothering about what people say. The third thing he told me is, 'don't enter politics'."

Rajinikanth added: "I have followed his first two advices but the third thing, I couldn't follow because of the circumstances. So, I have learnt so many things from him. People say I do comedy and other characters very well but I have learnt it from Amitji!"

He announced his entry into politics on December 31,

2017 and confirmed his intention to contest in the 2021 Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly elections in all 234 constituencies.

The actor also spoke of his wish to work in a Marathi film someday, since his roots belong to Maharashtra. He added that his passion for acting has been the driving factor for the last 45 years.

He said: "I do speak in Marathi in my house. Once I had an opportunity to work in a Marathi film but that didn't work out. I would like to work in a Marathi film. Let's see when it happens. We have shot this film (*Darbar*) for 90 days in Mumbai. I really love people of Mumbai."

Rajinikanth, who was born as Shivaji Rao Gaekwad in a Marathi family in Bangalore, plays the commissioner of Mumbai in *Darbar*.

Asked what drives him to work in films after having achieved everything, he said: "To be frank, it's about money (laughs). I have to justify the money I get, and that is huge. No, actually it is the passion. I feel we should

love the work that we do. I love acting and I love coming in front of the camera. I think the camera and the light give me energy."

"Actually, I don't like to act as a cop because it is related with duty and all the serious aspects. I love to play happy-go-lucky and entertaining characters. In a cop film, you have to be very serious since he goes after criminals, so I used to avoid it. But (*Darbar* director) Murugadoss came to me with a very good subject. It is not a routine cop character. He (Murugadoss) has extracted very different kind of work from me and when you see the film, you will realise it," said Rajinikanth.

*Darbar* is an action thriller written and directed by Ghajini maker A.R. Murugadoss. The film stars Rajinikanth, Nayanthara, Prateik Babbar, Jatin Sarna, Dalip Tahil, and Sunil Shetty in important roles.

The film is scheduled for a worldwide release in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindi on January 10, coinciding with Thai Pongal. — IANS



I don't see any progress in my acting. In the beginning of our career, we all feel a little shy and nervous but as you work more, it increases your confidence. I think acting mainly depends on the director and how he extracts acting from an actor.



## KAJAL to get a wax statue in MADAME TUSSAUDS

**P**opular Telugu actress Kajal Aggarwal has become the first south Indian female star to get her wax statue at Madame Tussauds in Singapore. In fact, she is the third Telugu star to be immortalised in the form of a wax statue after Mahesh Babu and Prabhas in the museum. The excited actress has revealed her replica will be unveiled on February 5, 2020. Taking to Instagram, she wrote, "Excited and honoured to

unveil my very own wax figure at Madame Tussauds Singapore! On the 5th of February 2020, I will be @mtssingapore in the Ultimate Film Star Experience to introduce my figure, stay tuned! (sic)"

Sharing some photos of the wax statue in making, Kajal recounted her visit to Madame Tussauds as a child. "I remember going to @madametussauds as a child and being so fascinated with all the figures that I've always looked up to, admired and

been in love with.. overwhelmed to be amongst them myself! (sic)," she posted further.

Addressing and thanking her fans, she added, "This feels like a fabulous culmination so far and a great way to start the new decade on a good note.. the insane hours of hard work and personal sacrifices, all feel worth it.. forever thankful to have all of you by my side.. this ones for each one of you! Me and my other half will see you in Singapore on 05/02/2020! (how could I not say that?)"

On the work front, the actress will be next seen in Shankar's *Indian 2* and Sanjay Gupta's *Mumbai Saga* alongside John Abraham.



## Drishyam was a blessing and a curse: Jeethu Joseph

**T**he original *Drishyam*, starring Mohanlal, was one of the most successful films of Malayalam in 2013, spawning remakes in other Indian languages. Its director Jeethu Joseph, who was also the film's writer, directed its Tamil remake, *Papanasam*, with superstar Kamal Haasan. But then he informs that *Drishyam* was a blessing and a curse. "Every film of mine that released after *Drishyam* was compared to it. I don't think it's fair because as a filmmaker I want to attempt different genres and I even did so in my career. I debuted as a director with an investigative drama, followed a family drama. The third one was a humorous film, which set the box-office on fire. Unfortunately, I've done two thrillers — *Memories* and *Drishyam* — in the same year, post which I earned the tag of a thriller filmmaker," he sighs.

Continuing with the explanation, he goes on, "After *Drishyam*, I did a family film *Life of Josutty* but it couldn't be a major success although the producer didn't lose his money. Fearing that it might be judged against *Drishyam*, I even ran a tagline for the title, saying 'There is no suspense or twist'. Yet after release, people told me that they expected it to have certain twists. I'm experimenting but it's not working out. However, I will continue to experiment. For any filmmaker, it'd be boring



to do thrillers back-to-back. Also, the problem is I'm a producer's director. I don't bother about how much money he makes with my directorial but I don't want him to incur losses for sure. Producers who are approaching me are keen that I make thrillers, saying that's what audiences expect of me. When I say I have humorous story ready, they seem averse to it. Which is why, I'm producing films that satiate the creativity in me."

In fact, from Bollywood as well, it's more or less the same story. "Some three-four big production houses approached me for thrillers. If I don't have a thriller subject with me, they are dispatching a thriller script," he rues. Jeethu is right now looking forward to the release of *Donga*, starring Karthi and Jyotika. He describes the film as a family entertainer with a mix of action, drama and humour. "Of course, there's a

small suspense angle as well," he smiles, adding that the film has close to three emotional sequences between Karthi and Jyotika and they nailed it. "Their bond in real life helped the scenes come alive. At times, I forgot to say cut, immersed in seeing their performances. They didn't even use glycerin for such bits."

He also wants to do a Telugu film. "After *Drishyam*, I did get a couple of offers. Lack of a good story coupled with the fact that I was busy with other films meant I couldn't accept those offers. Telugu industry is a powerful and beautiful place and I would want to do a Telugu film," Jeethu, who is reuniting with Mohanlal again for *Ram*, a big-budgeted action film with a realistic touch to it, concludes. — NG



## Chay dedicates VENKY MAMA success to grandfather Ramanaidu

**W**ith the crucial Monday too witnessing no major drops in foot-falls, *Venky Mama*, starring Venkatesh and Naga Chaitanya, is poised to become a major success.

Naturally, Chay is chuffed to bits. "I'm extremely happy with the collections and the reactions. People who have spoken to me have owned the film. I'm also getting a lot of appreciation calls from family and women audience. Both *Venky mama* and *Suresh mama* showed me how a commercial blockbuster looks like. In fact more than for the three of us, the film is grandfa-

ther Ramanaidu's success," he said. He was speaking at the film's success meet in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

Heaping high praise on the film's director Bobby, Chay added, "Some directors show me a new direction to my career and that's what Bobby did with the film in terms of my comic timing and action image. Nobody believed that I could do action until *Tadakha* happened. Stunt masters Ram-Laxman deserve credit for it. They've encouraged me a lot for the military episode in *Venky Mama* as well. I extend my thanks to them."

## Shivathmika to romance Adith Arun

*The Pioneer* has exclusively learnt she will be playing the female lead in Adith Arun's next with debutant director Naresh, who assisted Dasaradh earlier, reports NAGARAJ GOUD

**S**hivathmika Rajasekhar is on a roll. Days after boarding Krishna Vamsi's *Ranga Marthaanda* to play the role of Prakash Raj and Ramya Krishna's singer daughter, the one-film old has green-lit another film. *The Pioneer* has exclusively learnt she will be playing the female lead in Adith Arun's next with debutant director Naresh, who assisted Dasaradh earlier.

A source close to the development says, "The film, titled *Vidhi Vilasam*, is a thriller. It was the director's idea to have a Telugu girl on board. Adith proposed the name of Shivathmika and he was

instrumental in getting her mother Jeevitha hear the narration. He shares a good bond with Jeevitha, having worked with her for *PSV: Garuda Vega*. Later Shivathmika too heard the story and she was sold. The role has a lot of meat for a newcomer like her and there was no way she could've let it slip out of hands."

The source adds that the film will go to floors next year.

"Adith is busy with multiple projects and he is also required to promote *Thagithe Thadana* next month, while Shivathmika will start shooting for *Ranga Marthaanda* shortly. So mostly, *Vidhi Vilasam* will hit the road in February-end."





Bumrah bowls full tilt



**VISAKHAPATNAM:** Jasprit Bumrah showed no signs of rustiness as he went full tilt at Rishabh Pant but the resurgent Prithvi Shaw looked far from being fit for international cricket during his session with trainer Nick Webb at India's optional practice on Tuesday.

Bumrah has been out with a stress fracture of the back and is expected to be available for the New Zealand tour next year while Shaw, after serving his eight-month doping ban, has already made a successful comeback for Mumbai in domestic cricket.

The Indian team management, as part of its policy, wanted to have "a word" with both players while checking their fitness levels. A peek into the training session was an indicator that re-induction of a proven match-winner like Bumrah is just a matter of time.

He was given the Indian team's training Jersey as he bowled for close to an hour to Pant, Manish Pandey and Mayank Agarwal at the nets.

There was no Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul during the optional training session.

With coach Ravi Shastri and national selector Devang Gandhi keeping a close eye, Bumrah didn't show any visible discomfort as he worked up brisk pace to trouble Pant and Agarwal.

However, Shaw, wearing a plain T-shirt, had a chat with trainer Webb as he did the routine obstacle stuff. After that, he was asked to take some high catches given by fielding coach R Sridhar.

There were a few he didn't attempt but overall he didn't seem to have attained the peak fitness levels that captain Kohli demands from every member of the senior team.

Bumrah's reintegration may be a matter of time but for Shaw, it might just be some more way to travel and runs alone won't suffice. **PTI**

# India out to save series

Hosts fret on bowling combination on batting belter; West Indies aim to lock series

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

India will have to get their bowling combination right after failing to stop the West Indies from executing a perfect chase in Chennai when they take on the buoyant visitors in the second ODI here on today, aiming to keep the three-match series alive.

A series win here would certainly raise Kieron Pollard's profile from a T20 freer-lancer to an able leader but a blinder from Rohit Sharma or another hundred from skipper Virat Kohli on a batting bel-

ODI AT VISAKHAPATNAM		
<b>HIGHEST TOTALS</b>		
India	356-9 in 50 v Pakistan	05-04-2005
West Indies	321-7 in 50 v India	24-10-2018
<b>HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES</b>		
India	157* Virat Kohli v West Indies	24-10-2018
West Indies	123* Shai Hope v India	24-10-2018
<b>BEST BOWLING</b>		
India	5-18 Amit Mishra v New Zealand	29-10-2016
West Indies	4-60 Ravi Rampaul v India	24-11-2013
FAISEL FEATURES		

could be mullied upon considering the plight the hosts faced in the last game with Shimron Hetmyer and Shai Hope beautifully planning the chase with their respective hundreds.

The biggest reason for the setback in Chennai was spinners Ravindra Jadeja (0/58 in 10 overs) and Kuldeep Yadav (0/45 in 10 overs) being rendered ineffective.

Hope and Hetmyer didn't murder the attack but did enough during the middle overs to ensure 103 runs came without taking any adventurous route.

They chose their bowlers perfectly and as a result, debutant Shivam Dube leaked 68 runs in 7.5 overs, indicating that he is certainly a "work in progress" as far as his bowling is concerned.

However, it's a tricky path for India to tweak their playing XI considering what exactly they have in their reserves.

They have Mayank Agarwal, the reserve opener, who is unlikely to get a chance as Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul are set at the top.

Then they have Manish Pandey, the reserve middle-order batsman, who can only be replaced at No 6 in place of Jadhav.

And Jadhav did nothing wrong in Chennai, scoring 40

off 33 balls with his typical 'chip and charge' game.

The questions that people are raising is about Jadhav not being given another go after he was hit for 11 in his solitary over.

On a Chennai track, if he couldn't be risked for a second over, what will happen on a batting friendly Visakhapatnam pitch where he could be hit through the line easily.

So will Pandey, with a better range of strokes, be an option instead of Jadhav? If that's the case then they will have to go for a specialist fifth bowler — either seamer Shardul Thakur or leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal.

In case India go for either of the two, then the axe may fall on one of the two all-rounders, Dube or Ravindra Jadeja.

Dube was sent to bat at No 8 in the last game and might not get to bat here irrespective of whether India bat first or second.

In that case, Shardul could be an option as Jadeja's experience in all departments is a necessity.

However, it is a well-known fact that Jadeja struggles on good batting surfaces which creates a case for Chahal's conventional leg-breaks.

For the West Indies, Hetmyer has undoubtedly

## Shai 'Hope'ful of pipping Kohli, Rohit

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

West Indies opener Shai Hope is quite "sure" that some of his teammates will have tomorrow's IPL auction on their minds during the second ODI but for him it will be "secondary" to beating Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the 2019 top run-getters' list.

Hope, a chip of the old bloc, carried his bat through with a century in the first game but one number nugget that could interest the uninitiated is the runs he scored in ODIs this year.

Talk about whether IPL auction will be on his mind, Hope sounded dismissive.

"I am sure it would be but I am sure that's secondary. We came here to play a series against India so whatever comes secondary is secondary," Hope said on the eve of the second game.

"I am sure some of the guys will be looking forward to the auction but we have an India series to play and that's the main thing right now," he added.

Hope is currently third in the ODI run-getters' list this year with 1225 runs behind Virat Kohli (1292 runs) and Rohit Sharma (1268 runs).

Is there an added moti-



Shai Hope tosses the ball as he leaves after batting in the nets. AP

vation to surpass the Indian superstars?

"Thanks for heads up (on numbers). Obviously I have to ask the bowlers to do some damage as well," he smilingly replied.

"As a batsman, you want to contribute as much as possible and if it helps the team win even more satisfying. Hopefully, we can remove them at the top and then get some big runs and get to the top of that run-getters list," he said.

been one of their key performers and getting his wicket will be the key for the Indian team.

West Indies' pacers were also on the money as Sheldon Cotterell and a fit-again Alzarri Joseph did a good job both at the beginning and the back-end of the Indian innings.

Keemo Paul also did his bit and the West Indies pace attack could be lauded for using a lot of variations including the slower deliveries to good effect.

But on a true pitch like Visakhapatnam, it will be a different challenge for the pace troika.

## Labuschagne gets maiden ODI call-up

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

In-form batsman Marnus Labuschagne on Tuesday earned a maiden call-up to the Australian ODI squad for the three-match series against India next month following a prolific year in Test cricket.

Labuschagne has averaged 58.05 since making his Test debut last year, scoring hundreds in his last three games.

All-rounder Sean Abbott has been recalled after five years while also making a comeback as pacer Josh Hazlewood and spinner Ashton Agar.

The big names missing from the squad are Glenn Maxwell, Usman Khawaja, Shaun Marsh and Nathan Lyon.

The Indian fans will also get to see Australia's star players — David Warner and Steve Smith — in action.

The first ODI will be played in Mumbai on January 14, followed by Rajkot (January 17) and Bengaluru (January 19).

Hohns is confident that Labuschagne will come good in challenging Indian conditions.

"Marnus Labuschagne is ready for his international white



ball debut after his strong form for Queensland in this form of the game," said Hohns.

"The performance of our white-ball squads has been strong and we are hoping to build the momentum towards the T20 World Cup at home at the end of the year and ultimately build towards the 2023 World Cup in India," he added.

Head coach Justin Langer will not be travelling to India for the short tour with assistant coach Andrew McDonald taking charge.

**SQUAD:** Aaron Finch (captain), Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Alex Carey, Pat Cummins, Peter Handscomb, Josh Hazlewood, Marnus Labuschagne, Kane Richardson, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Ashton Turner, David Warner, Adam Zampa.

## Mandhana in ICC teams of the year

PTI ■ DUBAI

India opener Smriti Mandhana was on Tuesday named in both the International Cricket Council's ODI and T20 teams of the year, capping off a memorable season.

Mandhana has Hulian Goswami, Poonam Yadav and Shikha Pandey for company in the ODI team of the year and all-rounder Deepti Sharma in the T20 side.

The 23-year-old Mandhana has played 51 ODIs and 66 T20s for India, besides a couple of Test matches. She has a combined tally of 3476 runs in T20Is and ODIs.

Australia's Alyssa Healy was chosen as the T20 cricketer of the year following her record-breaking 148 against Sri Lanka earlier this year.

The ODI cricketer of the year honoree went to Australia's Ellyse Perry, who scored 441 runs at an average of 73.50 and took 21 wickets at 13.52.

Perry also pocket-

ed the Rachael Heyhoe-Flint award for being the cricketer of the year across formats.

Perry has had a stellar year across formats, with three hundreds including one in the women's Ashes Test. She also became the

first player to complete 1,000 runs and 100 wickets in T20I cricket.

"It's an amazing honour and I'm a little bit shocked, given how many amazing performances there have been across the year," said Perry, who has won the Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award for the second time in three years.

"It's amazing to be acknowledged and I do truly appreciate it. It's a really nice way to finish the year on a personal note."

Australian Meg Lanning was chosen as captain of both the ODI and T20 side.

"It's a huge honour to be named captain of the ICC ODI and T20 Teams of the Year alongside some incredible players. It's been an amazing year for the Australian team and we're looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead in 2020," said Lanning.

ing day of their Elite Group B game.

Electing to bat first at the KSCA Hubli cricket ground, 18-year-old Juyal (109 off 251 balls, 11x4) stood tall, as he played a responsible and mature knock to pull his team out of trouble.

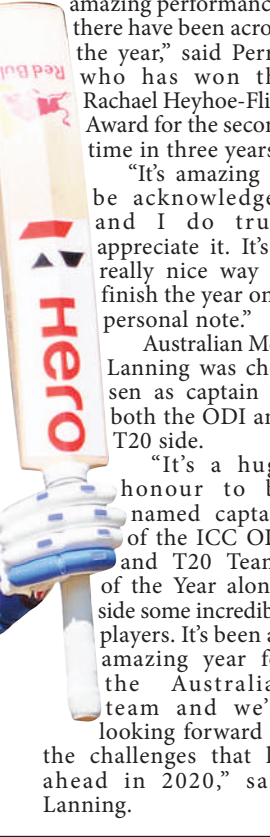
He was ably supported by Mohammed Saif (56 batting off 124 balls, 8x4) who came in at number 5.

The duo stuck a 109-run stand and resurrected the innings.

For Karnataka, Mithun (3-45) was the pick of the bowlers, while More (1-22) and Shreyas Gopal (1-45) took a wicket each.

**ASHWIN BAGS 5 WICKETS**

**DINDIGUL:** Ace off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin starred with a five-wicket haul to help Tamil Nadu bundle out Himachal Pradesh for 158 in 71.4 overs.



## AB exploring comeback before T20 WC: Faf

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

Widely-followed South African swashbuckler AB de Villiers is exploring the possibility of coming out of retirement for next year's T20 World Cup, Proteas captain Faf du Plessis has revealed.

Du Plessis said that talks have been going on for nearly three months to get the star batsman back into international cricket ahead of the marquee event in October next year.

"People want AB to play and I am no different," du Plessis said after his Paarl Rocks team — coached by Boucher with de Villiers in the line-up — won the *Mzansi Super League* final on Monday night.

"Those conversations have been happening for two or three months already: what does it look like, how does it look over the next year, and that's where it starts."

Considered one of the greatest players to have played for South Africa, former skipper De Villiers quit international cricket in March last year citing exhaustion from the workload that he had often talked about.

He has since been plying his trade in franchise-based T20 tournaments around the world.

There were reports that he had made himself available for selection on the eve of the ODI World Cup earlier this year, but South Africa's selectors felt it prudent to not entertain his request at that point as he had left it for too late.

Du Plessis added, "T20 cricket is a different beast, it's not a lot of time away from home. If you are a full campaigner, you have to really get stuck in and spend a lot of time on the road."

"Those conversations have already taken place and will continue to before the next T20 series starts."

On Sunday, newly-appointed head coach Mark Boucher had said he may try to persuade a few recent retirees, including de Villiers, to return to the South Africa squad ahead of the T20 World Cup.



## SINGLES

**SHINWARI LIKELY TO MISS 2ND TEST**

**Karachi:** Pakistan's left arm pacer Usman Shinwari is unlikely to play in the second Test against Sri Lanka after being hospitalised with high fever, head coach Misbah-ul-Haq said on Tuesday. He said that Usman is being treated and it is highly unlikely he would be available for the second Test starting from Thursday at the national stadium in Karachi. Sri Lanka have also lost pacer Kasun Rajitha for the second Test, according to head coach Mickey Arthur. "No he can't play here and he is being looked after for his left hamstring problem," he said.

**SIDDLE RECALLED TO BOXING DAY TEST**

**Sydney:** Australia's cricket selectors gave veteran paceman Peter Siddle a career lifeline on Tuesday, calling him up to the 13-man squad for the second Test against New Zealand in Melbourne beginning on Boxing Day. James Pattinson is favourite to replace Hazlewood but chief selector Trevor Hohns said Siddle had plenty to offer at his home Melbourne Cricket Ground. "Peter has been brought in as a 13th player for Melbourne," Hohns said. "He is a proven Test match performer with an exceptional knowledge of the MCG which will be a valuable part of our preparation."

**LAKSHYA REACHES CAREER-BEST 32**

**New Delhi:** Rising Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen has climbed up nine places to a career-best 32nd spot among men's singles players in the BWF rankings issued on Tuesday. Lakshya achieved the feat by winning the title at the Bangladesh Int'l Challenge. There was no further movement in the men's singles chart with B Sai Praneeth and Kidambi Srikanth remaining static at 11th and 12th spots respectively. Among the women singles players, Olympic medallists P V Sindhu and Saina Nehwal are static at the sixth and 11th positions, respectively.

**JAMIESON COMES IN FOR FERGUSON**

**WELLINGTON:** Uncapped paceman Kyle Jamieson was drafted into the New Zealand Test squad on Tuesday after injury sidelined Lockie Ferguson for the rest of the Test series against Australia. The Black Caps had high hopes that Ferguson's lightning pace would make an impression on his Test debut in Perth, but he pulled up with a calf strain on the opening day as his side slumped to a 296-run loss. Coach Gary Stead said it was a bitter blow for Ferguson, who will be out for four to six weeks.

**INDIA MEN TO FACE NZ IN OLY DOPENER**

**Tokyo:** The Indian men's and women's hockey teams will open their campaigns against New Zealand and the Netherlands respectively at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics on July 25. According to the match schedule, both the Indian teams will open their campaigns on the first day of hockey competitions. After New Zealand, eight-time champions in the men's competition, India will face world number one Australia on July 26, before taking on Spain (July 28), defending champions Argentina (July 30) and hosts Japan (July 31) in Group A. The women's team, who are also clubbed in Group A, will lock horns with Germany on July 27, before meeting Great Britain (July 29), Ireland (July 31) and South Africa (August 1). The men's and women's gold medal matches will take place on August 6 and 7 respectively. **AGENCIES**

PTI ■ ONGOLE

Delhi put up a disappointing batting performance to be bowled out for 215 on the opening day against Andhra on Tuesday.

By stumps, Andhra were also struggling at 16 for two, with both their openers back in the hut.

Playing their second match of the season, Kunwar Bidhuri (22) and Nitish Rana (51 off 51) repaired Delhi's innings with a 60-run stand for the fourth wicket before a mini collapse pushed them on the back foot. Their innings ended in 70.6 overs.

Lalit Yadav (50 off 104) also put up a much-needed fight while batting with tail-enders.

Medium pacer K V Sasikanth (5/38 in 20.1 overs) was the pick of the bowlers for Andhra, claiming his fourth five-wicket haul in first-class cricket.

**JUYAL HITS TON**

**HUBLI:** Young Uttar Pradesh opener Aryan Hubli struck a gritty 100, as he guided Uttar Pradesh to a modest 232/5 on the open-

## Delhi bundled out for 215



Faizal Fazal celebrates after completing hundred. PTI

ing day of their Elite Group B game. Electing to bat first at the KSCA Hubli cricket ground, 18-year-old Juyal (109 off 251 balls, 11x4) stood tall, as he played a responsible and mature knock to pull his team out of trouble.

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**DINDIGUL:** Ace off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin starred with a five-wicket haul to help Tamil Nadu bundle out Himachal Pradesh for 158 in 71.4 overs.

B Aparajith, leading the team in the absence of Vijay Shankar who missed out due to a niggle, elected to bowl and the bowlers justified the decision as Ashwin (5 for 67) and left-arm spinner R Sai Kishore (3 for 22) had the HP batsmen in a spin.

The visiting team looked in danger of being bowled out for a sub-100 score before Akash Vashist (35, 94 balls, 4 fours) and Mayank Dagar (33, 62 balls, 3 fours) got together at 76 for 7 to add 53 runs and lend respectability to the total.

Tamil Nadu openers-Abhinav Mukund and debutant K Mukunth made eight runs from three overs before bad light ended play for the day.

**MAHA DISMISS J&K FOR 209**

**PUNE:** Anupam Sanklecha's four-wicket haul helped Maharashtra dismiss Jammu

& Kashmir for 209 in Group C match.

The home team finished the day at 51 for 3 in 15.4 overs, trailing by 158 runs.

Sent in to bat, Jammu & Kashmir struggled against the Maharashtra attack led by veteran medium-pace Sanklecha (4/56) and slipped to 42 for 5 and 79 for 6 before left-handed Abid Mushtaq (50, 55 balls, 2 fours, 4 sixes) batting at No 9 began the rescue act.

His 54-run last wicket partnership with M Mudhasir (18 not out, 1 four, 1 six) proved valuable as it took J&K past the 200-run mark.

Opener Ahmed Bandy (76) was the only top-order to offer resistance as the Maharashtra bowlers kept pegging away and picked up wickets at regular intervals.

His 149-ball knock which included 10 fours, ended when he nicked one to the keeper off Sanklecha.

In reply, Maharashtra lost the in-form opener Raturaj Gaikwad for 10 as J&K fought back to have the host at 51 for 3 at stumps.