



the pioneer



GOT MORE THAN
 WHAT I ASKED
 FOR: HANSIKA
 ON HER CAREER
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CJI is public authority, falls under RTI: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
 The Supreme Court on Wednesday held that the office of the Chief Justice of India is a public authority and falls within the ambit of the Right to Information Act. A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi upheld the 2010 Delhi High Court verdict and dismissed three appeals filed by Secretary General of the Supreme Court and the Central Public Information officer of the apex court. Cautioning that RTI cannot be used as a tool of surveillance, the top court in its judgement held that judicial independence has to be kept in mind while dealing with transparency.

JNU rolls back proposed hostel fee hike

NEW DELHI: The Jawaharlal Nehru University's executive committee on Wednesday rolled back the proposed hostel fee hike and also has now proposed a scheme for economic assistance to students from Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). The move comes as a huge success for the agitating students who have been on strike for over 15 days now. "Executive Committee announces major rollback in the hostel fee and other stipulations. Also proposes a scheme for economic assistance to the EWS students. Time to get back to classes," R. Subrahmanyam, Union Education Secretary, tweeted on Wednesday.

The move comes after the executive committee of the university meet to discuss the hostel draft manual which has been at the heart of the controversy that brought the varsity to boil.

PM will take decision on Ayodhya trust

NEW DELHI: Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahald Patel on Wednesday said the decision on the formation of the Ayodhya Trust will be taken at the level of the prime minister. "The decision on the trust — how will it be formed, who all will be its members - will be taken at the level of the prime minister. I cannot comment more on this," Singh told a television channel. Settling the fractious issue that goes back more than a century, the Supreme Court backed the construction of a Ram temple by a government trust at the disputed site in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya on Saturday and ruled that an alternative five-acre plot must be found for a mosque in the Hindu holy town.

SC paves way for disqualified MLAs to contest Dec 5 bypolls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the disqualification of 17 Congress-JD(S) MLAs in Karnataka by the then Assembly Speaker but paved the way for them to contest the December 5 by-polls on 15 seats in the state. While upholding their disqualification, the apex court set aside the portion of the orders by the then speaker K R Ramesh Kumar by which the legislators were disqualified till the end of the 15th Karnataka Legislative Assembly's term in 2023.

A bench of justices N V Ramana, Sanjiv Khanna and Krishna Murari said it is clear that the Speaker, in exercise of his powers under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, "does not have the power to either indicate the period for which a person is disqualified, or to bar someone contesting elections". "We must be careful to remember that the desirability of a particular rule or law, should not in any event be confused with the question of existence of the same, and constitutional morality should never be replaced by political morality, in deciding what the Constitution mandates," the bench said in its 109-page judgement. The court said there is a growing trend of Speakers acting against the "constitutional



DISQUALIFIED MLAS JOINING BJP

BENGALURU: Elated by the Supreme Court's ruling partially in their favour, all the 17 disqualified legislators are joining the ruling BJP on Thursday ahead of the December 5 by-elections, a party official said on Wednesday. "All the 17 MLAs, including 14 from the Congress and 3 from the Janata Dal-Secular (JD-S) will join our party on Thursday here and 15 of them will contest in the by-elections on our party symbol," BJP state unit spokesman G Madhusudana said. The apex court earlier in the day upheld their disqualification by former state assembly speaker K.R. Ramesh Kumar. However, the 3-judge bench allowed them to contest the by-elections from the assembly segments they resigned in mid-July before they were disqualified and expelled by their parties by July-end for defying their party whip. They had stayed away from the assembly on July 23 when the former coalition government led by CM HD Kumaraswamy lost the trust-vote in the assembly, leading to the fall of the 14-month-old coalition government the same night (July 23).

duty of being neutral" in addition to political parties indulging in horse trading and corrupt practices due to which citizens

SC decision has exposed 'Op Kamal: Congress

NEW DELHI: Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala on Wednesday said the Supreme Court's decision on the disqualification of 17 MLAs in Karnataka has burst the bubble of BJP's 'Operation Kamal.' Taking to Twitter, Surjewala demanded the Yediyurappa-led BJP government in Karnataka should now be dismissed for "brazenly and illegally" bringing down the Congress-Janata Dal(S) alliance government in the state. "The SC's decision upholding the disqualification of 'defector MLAs' has burst the bubble of BJP's 'Operation Kamal'. It's now proved that BJP brazenly and illegally brought down an elected JD(S)-Congress govt in Karnataka.

the proceedings of the House or adjudication petitions, it said. The constitutional responsibility endowed upon the Speaker has to be scrupulously followed and his political affiliations cannot come in the way of adjudication, the apex court said, adding, there is a need to consider strengthening certain aspects so that such "undemocratic practices" are discouraged and checked.

CASH SEIZURES DURING TS ASSEMBLY POLLS 2018

Big politicians have the last laugh in poll cases

L VENKAT RAM REDDY ■ HYDERABAD

It is an open secret that the flow of money and liquor during elections cannot be prevented altogether. The reasons are obvious. The only consolation is that the Telugu maxim "Dorikithe donga" (if you are caught, you are damned) applies. Still, reports of cash seizures during election campaigning make headlines because of people's fond hopes that at least such cases would be taken to their logical conclusion. What if the police book small fry and wink at the big fish?

As many as 640 cases pertaining to seizure of cash valued at Rs 84.36 crore were reported during the Telangana Legislative Assembly polls held in December 2018. Yet, the Telangana police filed FIRs in respect of only 159 cases involving seizure of cash totaling Rs 28.27 crore. As for the remaining cases - 481, involving cash totaling Rs 56.09 crore, the culprits were released without any cases being booked against them. This includes cases involving hawala transactions!

This indicates that cases were booked in respect of a mere 24 per cent of the total cash seizure cases reported



As many as 640 cases pertaining to seizure of cash valued at Rs 84.36 crore were reported during the Telangana Legislative Assembly polls held in December 2018. Yet, the Telangana police filed FIRs in respect of only 159 cases involving seizure of cash totaling Rs 28.27 crore

during the TS Assembly polls. What is more illuminating in respect of the cases booked is that police filed FIR pertaining to cash seizures involving petty amounts, including as low as Rs 500, while leaving out those involving huge cash piles totaling lakhs. These are some of the shocking findings that emerged following RTI queries raised by the Forum for Good Governance with various police units across the state. The Forum released details of

an analysis of the data obtained through RTI queries. It was observed that in most of the cases, the names of those behind the movement of cash was known to officials but no cases were filed against them, indicating that that sharks were allowed to go scot-free, while cases were booked against minnows unabashedly. For instance, in Gadwal rural, a case was registered after a paltry sum of Rs 500 was seized from an individual. **Continued on Page 4**

Dump of Rs 12 cr demonetised notes unearthed in Khammam

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

The Khammam police unearthed a huge dump of demonetised currency notes at Marlapadu village of Vemsoor mandal in Khammam district late on Tuesday night. The police seized the stash of nullified notes of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 denominations with face value of Rs 12 crore. According to Kallur ACP Venkatesh, the police stumbled upon the dump during investigations following the recent arrest of the king-pin of a racket involved in circulation of fake notes. The accused, identified as Shaik Madar, belongs to Gowrigudem village of Sathupalli mandal in the district. Explaining the modus



operandi of the racket, the ACP said the gang, led by Madhar, had been conning people into exchanging their original notes with the counterfeiters by placing them in between the bundles of nullified Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes. G Venkatesh Narayana and K Hanumantha Rao were taken into custody in connection with the stash.

SC strikes down Finance Act amendments

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday struck down rules in the amended Finance Act 2017 on tribunals and directed the government to reformulate fresh norms with respect to appointment of tribunal members. A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi directed the Ministry of law to conduct impact study and submit report to the apex court. The top court directed that appointment in tribunals should be in accordance with respective statutes.

TS Govt 'no' to HC proposal on SC panel for resolving RTC strike

● Files affidavit in HC ● HC adjourns case to November 18

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government on Wednesday expressed its inability to accept the proposal of the High Court for constitution of a high-powered committee comprising three former judges of Supreme Court of India to resolve the ongoing dispute of TSRTC employees, who have been on an indefinite strike for the last 40 days. It urged the court to refer the matter to State Labour Commissioner, while noting that he is the appropriate adjudication authority for taking further steps in the matter as per Section 10 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. It also told a division bench of the HC that there was no such provision for the constitution of a high-powered committee comprising former Supreme Court judges.

The state government made these remarks while arguing before the HC in a batch of Public Interest Litigation petitions filed on the ongoing indefinite strike and issuance of 5,100 private route permits of TSRTC. **Continued on Page 3**



A Nareesh, who committed suicide, and (right) family members waiting over his body being taken in a procession by RTC employees



Another worker commits 'suicide'

HYDERABAD: Another Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) driver allegedly committed suicide on Wednesday in Mahabubabad district as the indefinite stir by the employees' unions entered the 40th day. A Nareesh, 45, consumed some poisonous substance at his house in the early hours and was rushed to a hospital by his family where he died, police said. Already, four RTC employees had ended their lives and some others attempted suicide in different parts of Telangana since the strike began on October 5. A senior police official said Nareesh resorted to the extreme step apparently "upset" whether the ongoing RTC issue would be resolved. A purported suicide note in the name of Nareesh allegedly mentioned that the state government was not responding properly to the stir, the official said and added that its authenticity has to be verified. Scores of TSRTC workers and employees along with members of some political parties took his body in a procession from the hospital towards the RTC depot raising slogans against the government. **Continued on Page 4**

Loss to RTC due to strike put at Rs 400 Cr

HYDERABAD: The 40-day-long indefinite strike launched by RTC employees, longest ever in the annals of the state transport undertaking, has caused the corporation losses totaling Rs 400 crore till date, at the rate of Rs 11 crore per day. Compounding the woes of RTC, say officials, the running of RTC buses with the help of temporary drivers and conductors is not generating enough revenues for the unviable transport undertaking. The worst part is that people of the state have been encountering untold difficulties because of the protracted strike. The strike entered the 40th day on Wednesday as both sides - the government panel and RTC workers' unions - have stuck to their stated positions. **Continued on Page 4**

Businessman robbed of Rs 30 lakh

● Miscreants use pepper spray

● Incident at Mahankali area

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Some as-yet unidentified persons allegedly robbed a businessman of Rs. 30 lakh after spraying pepper into his eyes at Mahankali area of Secunderabad on Tuesday night.

According to the police, the businessman, Roopa Ram, who works with Rohit Jewellers, had gone to Navkar Jewellers at Pot Market in Secunderabad to bring cash from there. After taking Rs 30 lakh from the shop located on the first floor of a building, Ram descended to the cellar, where the robbers reportedly attacked him with pepper spray, snatched the money, and fled the place.

Police suspected that Ram was being followed before he entered Navkar Jewellers. On receipt of information, police reached the spot and took up investigation. A case has been registered. Hunt is on to nab the miscreants.

Give priority to senior citizens' complaints: HM

● Mounting cases of abandonment, ill-treatment by kin

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad has been witnessing mounting cases of elder abuse. Many senior citizens in the city, upon being ill-treated, dispossessed or abandoned by their kin, run from pillar to post as their complaints to police remain unheard. Tired of the lack of response to their complaints, some of such aggrieved senior citizens residing in various parts of the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad gave a representation to Home Minister Mohammed Mahmood Ali on Wednesday. The Minister then directed the Director General of Police to issue suitable instructions to police authorities and SHOs in the State to consider the com-



The Minister directed the DGP to issue suitable instructions to police authorities and SHOs in the State to consider the complaints lodged by senior citizens on priority basis and to initiate prompt action as per law

plaints lodged by senior citizens on priority basis and to initiate prompt action as per law. Abandonment of senior citizens has become a regular issue in the city, with at least 10 senior citizens being left at Osmania General Hospital every month.

It may be mentioned here that during the year 2018-19, Hyderabad registered over 70 complaints at the tribunals from senior citizens over harassment by kin. That apart, the number of suicides among senior citizens in the capital has been rising.

Yet, as per NCRB report, only 14 cases were reported under 'crime against senior citizens' in 2017. The number of such cases reported in 2016 and 2015 were 40 and 48 respectively. Most of the cases registered in 2017 pertained to attempt-to-murder

case as if there were no major crimes. The surprising 'dip' in such cases suggests negligence towards the requests of senior citizens, going by the ground reality. Citing this, senior citizens urged the government to be considerate towards them and rescue them from ill-treatment and harassment at the hands of their adult children and legal heirs irregularly claiming shares in their property. They pointed out that even well-to-do children often neglected old and hapless parents.

The senior citizens claimed that they were being deprived of the rights to live decently and respectfully as guaranteed and protected under the Maintenance & Welfare of Parents & Senior Citizens Act, 2007.

CC cameras, fire-fighting equipment at revenue offices

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Principal Commissioner (Land Administration) has issued orders to District Collectors asking them to provide police security at revenue offices in light of the recent murder of Vijaya Reddy, MRO of Abdullahpurmet, in her office. The Collectors have been asked to also ensure fire-fighting equipment and provide CC cameras at all the revenue offices. According to the special orders issued on Wednesday, collectors have been asked to provide CCTV cameras using available funds. Special time should be identified to receive grievances from public and all revenue employees should be



According to the special orders issued on Wednesday, collectors have been asked to provide CCTV cameras using available funds

available at the office at that time. Collectors have been asked to sensitise the revenue staff on important pieces of legislation.

TODAY
ALMANAC
 Month & Paksham: Kartik & Krishna Paksha
 Panchangam
 Tithi : Dwititya: 07:54 pm
 Nakshatram: Rohini: 10:48 pm
 Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam: 01:24 pm - 02:48 pm
Yamagandam: 06:23 am - 07:48 am
Variyam: 02:32 pm - 04:11 pm
 07:00 pm - 06:07 am
Gulika: 09:12 am - 10:36 am
Good Time: (to start any important work)
Amritkalam: 07:30 pm - 09:09 pm
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:37 am - 12:22 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER
 Forecast: Clear with periodic clouds
 Temp: 29/19
 Humidity: 72%
 Sunrise: 06:20
 Sunset: 05:40
 Current Weather Conditions
 Updated November 13, 2019 5:00 PM

PRIORITY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT: ERRABELLI

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Panchayath Raj Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao on Wednesday asserted that the government was firm on uplift of rural areas and gram panchayaths in the entire state.

Speaking at a function organised in connection with the tractors distribution to the gram panchayaths on Wednesday, the Minister said that there was no dearth for funds in Gram Panchayaths and all these funds would be utilised for the development of the villages in the coming days. The Minister ridiculed the allegations leveled by the Congress leader Bhatti Vikramarka about the corruption of Rs 50,000 crore in Mission Bhagiratha and termed them as baseless.

When the government has not even spent Rs 29,000 crore for the scheme so far, how come the corruption can reach Rs 50,000 crore? he asked.

The minister said the government was keen on spending drinking water expenses on its own in the rural parts and this service-oriented nature was thoroughly supported by central Ministers too, he said.

He suggested the Congress leader to rectify himself from this false propaganda. Meanwhile, the Minister distributed 50 tractors to the gram panchayaths in the JNS



Panchayat Raj Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao driving a tractor in Warangal on Wednesday

The Panchayat Raj Minister ridiculed the allegations leveled by the Congress leader Bhatti Vikramarka about Rs 50,000 crore swindle in the Mission Bhagiratha and termed them as baseless

grounds and asserted that the process would be extended to all the regions in the state. Errabelli said the 30-day

comprehensive action plan adopted by the state government was getting prominent response in the rural parts and

it is also becoming a front runner in the entire country.

On the Sarpanch post, the Minister said that his father had also served as the village Sarpanch for thirty years and the development he attained has given him the scope to see his son as the MLA and Minister today. The Minister suggested the district Collector of Warangal urban district to felicitate five best Sarpanches and five failure Sarpanches on every 26th January.

MRO MURDER CASE

Kin of attender allege apathy by government

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The condition of office attender, Chandraiah, who sustained severe burns while trying to save MRO Vijaya Reddy in Abdullahpur, was stated to be very critical.

It may be recalled that a farmer Suresh armed with petrol went to the MRO office on Monday last and poured petrol on the MRO Vijaya Reddy and set her ablaze. Later, he also immolated himself and succumbed to burns while undergoing treatment in Gandhi hospital recently. However, the MRO's driver who sustained burns in the incident, while trying to save her also sustained burns and later succumbed while undergoing treatment.

In the similar fashion, MRO office attender Chandraiah sustained severe burns while trying to save the MRO. His family members allege that the government officials and MRO office personnel are paying no attention to his recovery.

"The cost of treatment exceeded Rs 5 lakh so far and the Apollo Hospital management is not willing to continue the treatment unless the bill has been cleared," the family members alleged. The family members feel that it was high-time the government paid the medical expenses.

Trainee Civil Servants turn bizmen for a day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The trainee Civil Servants, representing 23 states and 15 services, organised "FETE-The Mela", a day-long fun-filled food-cum-recreation extravaganza, on Wednesday, as a part of their rigorous 94th Foundation Course (FC) at Dr. MCR HRD Institute.

The trainee Civil Servants not only showcased their culinary skills and dishing out mouth-watering delicacies, which reflected the true diversity of India, but also proactively sold them as hard-core businessmen. The dishes at various stalls included fish curry, jal mudhi, etc. from eastern zone, gajrela, matakulcha, etc. from western zone, Punjabi lassi, dal kabab with parantha, etc. from northern zone, and masala osa, onion utappam, etc. from southern zone. The event had much more to offer to those who wanted to gorge on delicious hot food from over 20 States.

Apart from the food items, the stalls offered an array of exciting games and activities, including JalliKattu, Smash the Rat, Fly the Plane, Drop & Catch, House of Cards, Sand Ki Aankh, Spoon Feeding, etc. in order to keep the guests engaged and entertained. The feet tapping music in the background, electrifying dancing by the trainee Civil Servants to the tunes of hit Bollywood numbers, and lively commentary



Trainee Civil Servants with B P Acharya, IAS, Spl. Chief Secretary and DG, Dr MCR HRD Institute and others at 'FETE-The Mela', on Wednesday

The trainee Civil Servants not only showcased their culinary skills but also proactively sold them as hard-core businessmen

brought out the true essence of this grand food and games festival.

The trainee Civil Servants implemented, with a professional touch, the theory of business plan into actual practice, which involved discovering the unique needs of customers, offering innovative products and services, and

putting in place a perfect marketing plan. Finally, they succeeded in generating profits, which were donated to an NGO.

B P Acharya, IAS, Spl. Chief Secretary & DG, Dr. MCR HRD Institute congratulated the trainee Civil Servants for proving, beyond an iota of doubt, that they not only have the ability to crack the world's toughest examination but also are endowed with multiple talents to conceptualize and execute business projects.

"Overall, the 'FETE-The Mela' was not only a fun-filled event but also provided a platform for the trainee Civil Servants to learn important concepts of good governance. 'This is something that no textbook can teach us', opined all the trainee civil servants unanimously.

Local bodies asked to pay library cess promptly

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Chairman of Telangana State Legislative Council Gutha Sukender Reddy on Wednesday exhorted the local bodies to pay library cess collected from people to the authorities of libraries, which would help in strengthening them.

Laying the foundation stone for a Rs 24 lakh reading hall exclusively for those preparing for competitive exams on the premises of the district library here, Sukender Reddy said he had extended Rs 24 lakhs for the reading hall construction from his MPLADs funds when he was Member of Parliament. The gram panchayats were not paying library cess due to poor collection of the taxes.

"Though the municipalities were collecting the taxes, they have not shown any interest to transfer the library cess collected by them from the people to the authorities of the libraries," he said, adding that it was impacting the functioning of libraries, which were knowledge centres. The local bodies should cooperate for strengthening of libraries by paying the library cess to them from time to time, he added.

Stating that the people visit libraries to gain knowledge on different subjects, he underlined the need to make available all categories of informative books and magazines in libraries.



Police officials with those arrested in Jadcherla on Wednesday

Gang busted for robbing motorists

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Jadcherla police have arrested seven persons who had formed a gang, robbing motorists of their valuables, after requesting for a ride and then ambushing the victims after getting off the vehicle at secluded locations.

On November 10, around 10.30 pm, one Kummari Ramulu was stopped by a person on the road, requesting him for a ride. An auto kept following Ramulu's bike and when the bike stopped to drop the pillion-rider off at Burugupally stage in Jadcherla mandal, a group of persons emerged from the auto, attacking Ramulu and snatching away his cell phone and cash worth Rs 3,000. Ramulu filed a complaint with Jadcherla police, who started investigation.

On November 12, the police

apprehended seven persons namely Akhil Krishna Vamshi (23), Rapalle Chandrudu (22), Vadthavath Shiva (19), Shivagalla Raj Kumar (19) and Naidu Durga Raj Kumar (19) and two juveniles, (whose names are withheld), from Nimmabavi Gadda area in Badhepally and recovered Ramulu's cell phone and cash from the accused.

Upon interrogation, it was found that the arrested persons were involved in motorbike thefts also under Thimmajipet police station's limits. Thimmajipet police seized three motor bikes from the two juveniles involved in the thefts and an autorickshaw from the possession of a juvenile involved, which was used to commit the crime of robbery. It was interesting to see that five of the gang members were teenagers and the other two were in their early twenties.

Summary revision of electoral rolls

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Electoral Officer Dr Rajat Kumar has notified that the special summary revision of the photo electoral rolls and said that voter's verification programme and other pre-revision activities, including rationalization of polling booths, will be entertained up to November 30.

In a release, he said that publication of integrated draft electoral rolls will take place on December 16. The claims and objections, if any, will be entertained from Dec 16 to Jan 15. All claims and objections will be disposed of on January 27.

ACTION PLAN



Ministers Sabitha Indra Reddy, V Srinivas Goud and others at the Anantagiri Hills in Vikarabad district on Wednesday. The Ministers directed the concerned officials to make Anantagiri as the tourist hub of Telangana.

Ten arrested for gambling

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

The Task Force police raided a house in Krishnanagar, NTPC and arrested 10 persons engaged in gambling. The police seized Rs 1.57 lakh in cash and 13 mobile phones from them.

Based on reliable information that political leaders and business community people were involved in the illegal activity, the police conducted raids on the residence of Venu

The Task Force officials seized Rs 1.57 lakh in cash and 13 mobile phones

Malani, a businessman, late on Tuesday night and caught ten persons red-handed while playing cards.

The arrested were Venu Malani, the organizer of gambling, Nadipalli Abhishek Rao,

Attal Mangilal, Md Asif, Boinipalli Amarendra, Md Abbas, Mamidi Venkatesh, Adepu Bhaskar Reddy, Vasanthi Gurusu Reddy, Roti Natraj.

While Guruvu Reddy stays at Annapuram Colony of NTPC, the other nine belong to Krishnanagar. Both Malani and Mangilal turned their houses into gambling centres for some time now, police said. All of them were handed over to NTPC police for further investigation.

Doctors demand police security

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Doctors of Government Hospital, Sangareddy and other staff have demanded that government set up a police outpost at the entrance of the Government Hospital to provide security to the staff of the hospital and help the discharge duties without any issues.

The doctors and other staff have staged a protest on the hospital premises condemning the attack on a duty doctor and a nurse by the family of a patient, who died on Tuesday while undergoing treatment.

Supported by AITUC leaders, the hospital staff took out a rally protesting the attack. Dasarath (45), a resident of Zaheerabad Mandal, was brought to the hospital at 4 am on Tuesday. Dasarath, who was suffering from jaundice, died in the hospital at 10 am. Holding the hospital staff



responsible, the kin of the Dasarath attacked a duty doctor and a nurse.

They have staged a protest on the premises of the Hospital. Local CPI (M) leaders have joined them and demanded Rs 10 lakh ex gratia for the victim's family. However, the doctors have clarified that Dasarath was suffering from kidney and liver issues by the time he was brought to the hospital. Though they have provided necessary treatment, he died within hours.

'TAARE ZAMEEN PAR'

A special treat for differently abled

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Round Table India, an Indian arm of international organisation spread all over the world organised 'Taare Zameen Par', a unique painting competition for differently abled and physically challenged children here in Begumpet Palace Function Hall at Secunderabad on Wednesday. It was organised on the eve of the Children's Day on Thursday. The event is an annual affair being conducted for the past 13 years.

The children reveled in colours and were royally treated with their choicest dishes such as noodles, manchuria, biryani, etc. and will be given away gift hampers besides prizes. The painting competition saw a participation of 800 from different schools such as Helen Keller School for Deaf n Dumb; Another Helen Keller School from Ramakrishnapuram, Oral



School for Deaf n Dumb, National Institute of Mental Health, NIEPID (NIMH), Green school, Sri Vidhyas Centre For The Special Children.

The painting competition saw the differently abled children portray colourful interpretations of the world they perceive. A differently abled student Archana Jain with 'down syndrome' beautifully

depicted a portrait of a half-human face and half tree expressing the communion between humans and nature. Students Deepika and Bhagya from the Oral school for the deaf presented their paintings, which voiced their universal message for spreading smiles and peace.

The differently abled children often express their unspoken feelings through

The painting competition saw the differently abled children portray colourful interpretations of the world they perceive. In all, around 800 children participated in the event

bright colours and splendid drawings reckoned Vandana Goud, principal of Pamencap, a school for the mentally retarded. She added that differently abled children are on par with technology utilization and show a great prowess with software's such as Microsoft Word and Excel.

Umesh Padia of The Round Table India, the organisers of the competition said Taare Zameen Par is a National Initiative of

Round Table India where painting and sketch competition are organised for the differently abled children to help children unravel their hidden skills. It was organised across the country.



HYDERABAD BULLION RATES	
GOLD	₹ 38,100 (10 gm)
	₹ 30
SILVER	₹ 44,300 (1kg)
	₹ 600
CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹167
Without Skin	₹190
Broiler at Farm	₹115
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	402
VIJAYAWADA	413
VISAKHAPATNAM	405
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.02

CRIME CORNER

Man stabbed to death by father

In a bizarre incident, a man stabbed to death his 21-year-old son in Dornakunta of Pegadapalli mandal on Wednesday. His father attacked the deceased, Nakka Jalender with a knife indiscriminately. As a result, the victim died on the spot with severe bleeding. Though exact facts are yet to be known, family disputes are said to be the reason for the murder. After coming to know about the incident, police rushed the spot and begun investigation by registering the case. Ramesh was absconding. Body was shifted to Jagtial hospital for postmortem.

Lookout notice for woman who stole Rs 8 lakh

The Rachakonda Police issued a lookout against a woman who allegedly stole Rs 8.5 lakh from another woman passenger in a moving bus at Nacharam on Monday. According to the police, the victim had left the cash bag on a vacant seat in front of her from where it was stolen. The Rachakonda police shared a picture of the suspect and announced a cash reward of Rs 50,000 to those who give genuine information on her whereabouts. When asked about why the victim had such a huge amount of cash, the complainant said that she sold a property in Cherlapally and had gone to collect the cash from the buyer after registration at the Sub-Registrar Office in Uppal. The complainant kept Rs 8.5 lakh cash in a bag and was returning home when the incident occurred.

GHMC TO CONNECT 'MISSING LINKS'

100-km parallel stretches to ease traffic in the city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a relief to citizens commuting on heavy traffic flow roads, the GHMC has identified parallel stretches of about 100 km in six zones in the city. GHMC commissioner DS Lokesh Kumar said that there are small missing links connecting parallel roads, which will be addressed and parallel roads will be made available to civilians in February or March.

Further signage will be established once the missing connectivity is provided to the road. There are properties, which need to be acquired to connect the missing links. The DPR has been approved and the civic body is currently analyzing properties. The cost of the project is expected to be Rs 200 crore with major share of more than 100 crore going for land acquisition. Additionally, the tender process for handing over 709km of roads to the private agencies has commenced and the estimated cost of the project is Rs 900 crore. The amount for this privatising of roads will be given by the government.

The civic body has sent a proposal to raise 2,500 crore through term loans phase wise for mega projects in the city. Even though the civic body has raised Rs 1000 crore through municipal bonds, due to the high interest rates, now GHMC is looking at term loan. GHMC gave approval for Rs 9,000 crore worth of works, of which Rs 300 crore are yet to be grounded.



DPR has been approved and the GHMC is currently analysing properties. Cost of the project is expected to be Rs 200 cr with major share of more than 100 crore going for land acquisition

Civic body to collect debris also from your homes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation will be collecting debris from the households. After the civic body managed to collect 235MT of discarded materials in the 10-day recycling programme, now it will be collecting construction related debris from homes.

Commissioner GHMC Lokesh Kumar said that due to home modifications and small constructions, construction debris is generated at homes, which is making its

way on to roads. So a ten-day programme to collect debris will be initiated.

He also noted that the scrap collection drive will be conducted at regular intervals after every 3-4 months for ten days, to ensure that the discarded materials won't end up in nalas. Followed by that, GHMC will initiate ward level cleaning programme.

Meanwhile, speaking about sanitation at tourist spots commissioner said the 24-hour sanitation programme will be carried out in the 27

most important tourist and historic areas in the city. He said, "We are running a pilot project in all the spots with entrusted to private agencies".

The commissioner said that garbage that has been generated in the wake of the recent annual festivals has reached 8,200 tonnes. Nearly 14 of the 18 transfer stations in the city have been taking garbage to the Jawaharnagar dumping yard on time. Commissioner said that the transfer stations are being kept clean and will facilitate playing of volleyball. However, the transfer station will act as volleyball ground only for GHMC staff.



Drunk driving led to mishap?

The actor allegedly had alcohol bottles in the car

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tollywood actor Dr Rajasekhar escaped a car mishap with minor injuries late on Tuesday night at Outer Ring Road (ORR) near Pedda Golconda. The Shamshabad Police booked a case and started a probe. The actor allegedly had alcohol bottles in the car and it is yet to be ascertained whether he was drunk or not during the time of mishap.

According to sources, the actor was reportedly coming in a chauffeur driven car from Vijayawada to the city when the vehicle overturned on the Pedda Amberpet stretch on ORR in Shamshabad. Rajasekhar and the driver sustained injuries and were rescued by the local police. They were shifted to a hospital.

It is learnt that the car was driven at high speed when it lost control after one of the tyre burst. The airbags in the car opened providing a cushion to the occupants and ensured their safety. He managed to escape without injuries and by the time police reached the spot, he left the place, said the Sub Inspector of Shamshabad Police, N Sridhar, adding that the actor was undergoing treatment at his own residence.

It is unclear whether he was behind the wheels at the time of the accident. Rajasekhar was reportedly travelling back from Vijayawada with a group of people. "We are also collecting CCTV footage and other evidence from the area, to assess



The car was reportedly driven at high speed when it lost control after one of the tyre burst. The airbags in the car opened providing a cushion to the occupants and ensured their safety

the reason for the accident. We are seeking a legal opinion and a case may be filed soon," the SI added. As soon as the accident took place, police said that the black Mercedes, bearing number plate TS07FZ1234, deployed its airbags, thereby avoiding any serious injuries to its occupants.

Incidentally, a quick look at the e-challan on the website of the city's police shows that the owner of the car is Rajasekhar Varadharajan and it already had three pending challans on it, all of them for over-speeding and dangerous driving.

While one challan was issued near the ORR at Ghatkesar on July 31, two other challans were issued on

the ORR near Chennamma hotel in Rajendranagar on October 2 and October 18 respectively.

Roadside speed trap cameras are set up at every few km on ORR. The challan issued on October 2, with a photograph of the car, estimated that it was travelling at 161 km/hr, against the speed limit of 100 km/hr on ORR. Rajasekhar had met with an accident previously in 2017 as well, but had denied driving under the influence of alcohol at the time. Rajasekhar and his wife Jeevitha are popular actors, who also are the Vice-President and General Secretary of Tollywood's Movie Artistes Association (MAA) respectively.

Elevated BRTS faces speed bumps

Religious structures, graveyards likely to hinder the works

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Religious structures and graveyards could hold up the proposed Elevated Bus Rapid Transit system (EBRTS) corridor from KPFB Metro station to Nanakramguda Junction. According to sources, the alignment of 17km long EBRTS is primarily at the medians similar to that of metro, but at turns, there are structures like temples, graveyards and others.

While the alignment of EBRTS is yet to be frozen, even if the temples, houses and graveyards are skipped, land acquisition could become a problem at such points.

The proposed EBRTS takes off from KPFB Metro station, passes through JNTU-Forum Mall road, Malaysian township, Hitex-NAC, CII-Tech Mahindra road, Raidurg, ISB

Road, Wipro junction, and connects Nanakramguda Junction on the ORR.

Hyderabad Airport Metro Limited MD NVS Reddy, who had the unpleasant task of overseeing the shifting of temples and mosques for metro, will likely be in similar situation again. Sources point that the alignment is being designed in a way to put behind the religious obstacles by looking for alternate recourse.

Sources alleged that the land acquisition needs to be done in such places but it could be a problem. In the meantime, NVS Reddy has already requested representatives of the IT companies to give land parcels from their campuses for the EBRTS.

To make the project financially viable, HAML appealed to the stakeholders to become partners in this project in a



unique Public-Private and Stakeholder Partnership (PPSP) model and give some land from their respective campuses for creation of world class EBRT stations with mechanized parking facilities and circulation areas.

It may be mentioned here that EBRTS is almost similar to

the Metro Rail system, with an elevated viaduct providing dedicated Right of Way for running train like electric buses, but will be less costly than Metro.

Nonetheless, the alignment will be made available after freezing the DPR and approval from the government.

Hyd to host global seminar on Buddhist Archaeology

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An international seminar on Buddhist Archaeology named 'Telangana Bouddha Sangiti 2019' will be organised in Hyderabad on November 16 and 17 at the Marri Chenna Reddy Human Resource Development Institute (MCR HRDI) in Hyderabad jointly by Buddhavanam Project of TSTDC and The Department of Heritage.

Thirty eminent Buddhist Archaeologists and scholars from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Australia and Indian states will be presenting papers in this international seminar on significant Buddhist excavations and researches on history, art and architecture.



Chandraker Bharti, IAS, Joint Secretary (Aero), Ministry of Defence lighting the lamp on the eve of road show held in the city in connection with Defexpo - 2020, on Wednesday

DEFEXPO-2020

Road show to raise vendor awareness

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A road show in connection with Defexpo - 2020 was jointly organised by HAL, Avionics Division, BDL and MIDHANI in the city on Wednesday. The main objective of the road show was to enhance awareness among Hyderabad-based vendors of the three organisations about the business opportunities, which DEFEXPO - 2020, has to offer and to encourage their participation at the exhibition.

Defexpo - 2020, the 11th edition of the biennial mega defence exhibition, being organised by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, will be held from 5-8 February in 2020 at Lucknow.

This edition of Defexpo - 2020 provides a very good business opportunity for vendors to showcase their products and exchange of ideas.

defence sector under one roof and provide myriad of opportunities for government, private manufacturer and start-ups.

The roadshow began with a welcome address by Rajeev Kumar, GM (Avionics Division), HAL, Hyderabad. A presentation on Defexpo-2020 was made by HAL. Joint Secretary (Aero), Ministry of Defence, Chandraker Bharti, IAS was the chief guest on the occasion.

Vendors from over 180 firms based in Hyderabad and Secunderabad attended the road show. Speaking on the occasion, Chandraker Bharti, JS (Aero) invited participation of vendors at the Defexpo and stated that Defexpo - 2020 provides a very good business opportunity for vendors to showcase their products and exchange of ideas.

Vice Principal held for sexual harassment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The vice-principal of Narayana Junior College (IIT campus) at Madinaguda was arrested for sexually harassing girl students on Tuesday. The VP, who was tasked with the job of counselling students, misused his position to target girls and sexually harass them, said the police.

The arrested was identified as Gundu Mukesh Reddy. Police said that Mukesh had joined the junior college in 2017. Apart from his academic and managerial responsibilities of the vice principal's post, Mukesh was also involved in counselling students.

The harassment came to light after a girl student, who was subjected to the VP's harassment, complained to her parents about Mukesh's behaviour. According to the Miyapur Police, Mukesh would frequently call girl students to his chamber on the pretext of counselling. He would then touch them inappropriately and pass obscene remarks about their bodies and dressing. Police said that victims have even complained about him collecting their personal information on several instances.

Police said that they had received complaints from 5 girls of the college against the VP. "The Vice Principal has been sexually harassing female students since the past two years according to the complaints we have received. We will record all the statements of all the victims involved and investigate the case accordingly" said Venkatesh Shamala, Inspector of Police, Miyapur.



ICE sets up facility in Hyderabad

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Intercontinental Exchange, a US-based operator of global exchanges and clearing houses and provider of listings services, on Wednesday announced the launch of its facility here.

The state-of-the-art facility will initially focus on providing ICE Data Services' reference data, the company said in a press release. ICE Data Services is a part of Intercontinental Exchange and offers award-winning pricing and analytics, indices and exchange data via secure, flexible connections. These services help customers address their investing, trading, compliance and risk management requirements across a

broad range of asset classes, it said. "India is an important part of ICE's global growth strategy and a vital resource as we partner with and serve customers around the world," Benjamin Jackson, President of Intercontinental Exchange said. "With its deep pool of talent and diverse culture, our investment in India will help grow ICE Data Services and other elements of our business which form the core of our comprehensive trading and risk management offerings for our customers," he added.

The facility, the Indian headquarters, spans 85,000 square feet and the facility can accommodate up to 750 employees.

Restaurant booked for charging more than MRP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The officials of Legal Metrology Department in Medchal District have booked a case against Big Spice Restaurant & Bar on Wednesday after receiving a complaint from a city resident that the place is charging customers more than the MRP. Manthoju Praveen Kumar, has lodged a complaint on October 10, to the Legal Metrology Department, stating that, the restaurant has charged Rs 35 for a water bottle worth Rs 20.

Based on the complaint, the Medchal Legal Metrology officer inspected the trading premises of Big Spice Restaurant and Bar in Habsiguda area on October 15 and during the inspections, 60 ML and 30 ML peg measures were verified and found to be short by 5 ML and the management did not exhibit the verification certificate in the premises. Due to which the officer registered a case for contravention of Sec 30 & Sec 8/25 of the Legal Metrology Act.

KTR to launch Rs 100 cr works in Kukatpally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

MA&UD Minister KT Rama Rao will inaugurate Rs 100 crore worth works in Kukatpally on Thursday. This includes 108 2BHK houses at Chittamma nagar basti at cost of Rs 9.34 crore. In addition, an indoor stadium built at Kukatpally 6th phase at a

cost of Rs 5.65 crore will be officially opened.

The Minister in Kukatpally Phase3 will officially launch modern fish market at cost of Rs 2.78 crore. Also, the minister will lay the foundation stone for railway over bridge at a Kaitalapur, which will be built at cost of Rs 83.06 crore.

TAKING CUE

'Water bells' to ring in TS schools thrice a day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Schools in Telangana will soon resound with water bells to ensure students drink water and stay hydrated. This move comes after the initiative was taken up in schools in Kerala.

To avoid health issues among students from not drinking enough water, water bell has been made mandatory in all schools. On Wednesday, terming the initiative as "nice thought", Education Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy said that orders will be given to DEOs to follow it.

She was responding to a request made on twitter to implement the initiative in

According to this initiative, a special interval called 'Water Bell' will be given to students every day. The Water Bell will ring thrice a day alerting the children to drink water and keep themselves hydrated

Telangana following the footsteps of Kerala.

According to this initiative, a special interval called 'Water Bell' will be given to students every day. The Water Bell will ring thrice a day alerting the children to drink water and keep themselves hydrated. The initiative was intro-

duced in schools of Kerala as students were frequently falling sick and some even reported kidney stones. It was soon followed in Karnataka as well. Several citizens welcomed the initiative and most of the citizens have been requesting to implement this change across all the schools in the country.



RTC STRIKE

'Govt insulting HC'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka has demanded the state government not to hand-over the RTC assets to private persons. He also demanded the state government to make the RTC employees to withdraw their ongoing strike by fulfilling their demands. He alleged that the state government is insulting the Legislative Assembly and Court by furnishing different information to them.

Bhatti addressed a letter to the Chief Minister in this regard on Wednesday. In his letter, Bhatti said that the previous governments set up RTC with huge assets. The Telangana state was also created to protect such assets ensuring that private persons would not loot them. However, the present government is trying to hand over the assets of RTC, he said.

He said "handing over RTC assets to private persons is a dangerous one. This attitude is totally against the objectives of creation of separate Telangana state". Bhatti further said that the Congress was opposing the decision of the state government that it will privatise 5,100



Handing over RTC assets to private operators is a dangerous act. This attitude is totally against the objectives of creation of separate Telangana state
— MALLU BHATTI VIKRAMARKA, CLP leader

bus routes.

He demanded the state government to withdraw the decision of privatisation of 5,100 bus routes and continue the RTC as it was. He said that the present RTC was set up in 1932 by then Nizam government for the sake of public transport in the name of Nizam State Rail and Road Transport

Department.

"The then kingship created RTC for the sake of people. It was turned as APSRTC in 1958 after the merger of Hyderabad and Andhra. The then Congress government nationalised the routes in 1963 for the sake of people and transformed the RTC as a big corporation", he reminded.

Democratic values eroded in state, says Chada

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Communist Party of India general secretary Chada Venkat Reddy has alleged that the good sense did not prevail on the state government in spite of the RTC strike entered the 40th day on Wednesday. He felt that democratic values have eroded in the state.

"It has become very easy for the RTC leaders to get Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan's appointment but not that of Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao," he said questioning why the Chief Minister has been denying appointment to RTC JAC leaders.

The state government did not appear to be feel pinched at the RTC workers' strike, which entered the 40th day on Wednesday. Addressing media here on Wednesday, Chada Venkat Reddy said on one hand Andhra Pradesh

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy stood by the RTC and assured to merge it with the government, but KCR begs to differ.

Adamant attitude of K Chandrashekhar Rao was responsible for the RTC workers going on strike. He did not seem to have drawn lessons in spite of Telangana High Court admonishing him. He demanded K Chandrashekhar Rao to invite the RTC workers for talks and threatened that the danger of striking work by all trade unions is lurking around the corner.

The CM on one hand spoke about cleansing of land records and on the other the Dharani website is not recording. Cleansing of land records has become a bogus exercise, he alleged. The state was pushed into Rs 3,12,000-crore debt. Thanks to Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao, he said.



Good Samaritans come to the rescue of RTC workers

■ Distribute 25kg of rice and other essential commodities to around 60 striking employees

PNS ■ NALGONDA

In a humanitarian gesture, a software engineer, Telangana Vidyavantula Vedika leader, DTF leader, some retired teachers on Tuesday distributed 25 kg of rice and other essential commodities to at least 60 RTC workers, who have been going without wages for the past two months because of the RTC strike, at Telangana Vidyavantula Vedika Office here on Tuesday.

The eyes of the beneficiaries became wet with the gesture as they recalled that the succor came to them at a time they have been finding it very difficult to run the families and meet expenses of children's education and house rent and so on. They feel that the support gave them the much-needed strength.

Speaking on the occasion, several leaders said that Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao is blowing the RTC strike out of proportions. It was sad to note that there was no change in his attitude in spite

It is sad to note that there is no change in Chief Minister's attitude in spite of High Court advising the government to resolve the problem. It reflects the adamant attitude of the Chief Minister, said a TVV leader

of high court advising the government to resolve the problem. It reflects the adamant attitude of the Chief Minister.

Instead of filling jobs in Telangana, which is the result of sacrifices by many, 48,000 RTC workers were driven onto the streets, they said adding that the people were introspective themselves whether they have committed any offence by giving their vote to the TRS.

DTF state vice president Somaiah, Telangana Vidyavantula Vedika state president Ambati Nagaiah, district president P Saidulu, retired teachers' association leaders R Vijayakumar, Narsireddy,

Venkulu, Yedukondaluy, Munasa Venkanna, Hari Krishna, Bakaram Srinivas, Kondeti Murali, Dayakar, ES Reddy, Ramalingam, Raju and Venkanna were present on the occasion.

Earlier, the RTC workers along with Left party leaders and people's organisations leaders protested against the government's attitude at the Ambedkar Bhavan here and raised slogans against the government. Later, they organised Vanta-Varpu programme. Two RTC workers joined duty in Miryalaguda depot. The RTC workers hit the flexis containing the images of the two workers with sands and took out a rally.

NGO leaders indulging in sycophancy with govt: Jagga

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MLA from Sangareddy T Jagga Reddy alleged that the NGO leaders have confined to support the words of Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao. Finding fault with the NGO leaders K Ravinder Reddy, Mamatha, former leaders Swamy Goud, Devi Prasad and Srinivas

Goud, Jagga Reddy alleged that these leaders are indulging in sycophants to the state government instead of speaking on RTC employees' issue.

He alleged that he Telangana has turned as a 'suicides' and 'heart attacks' Telangana. Describing state government's attitude towards RTC strike as a fight between 'strong' and 'weak' persons, Jagga Reddy

stated that one has to wait and see as to whose victory will ensure by the 'god'.

Jagga Reddy said that there is no value to the movements in the state. TRS government has become blind even having eyes, he said. He demanded the officials to try to extend help to the families of

bereaved RTC families.

Referring to one RTC worker Avula Naresh's suicide on Wednesday, Jagga Reddy questioned the Chief Minister to tell whether the latter was not feeling shy as several RTC workers were committing suicides in the

state. He said that Chief Minister stated several times during Telangana movement that there won't be suicides if Telangana state was created. "But farmers suicides on one side and RTC workers suicides on other side", he said. He exhorted that it is first time in the history of RTC that the RTC strike reached to 40 days. He said that the RTC workers were continuing their strike with the demand of merger of RTC into government, however, the government is not solving the issue though the High Court expressed anger at state government.

There is no value to the movements in the state. the officials try to extend help to the families of bereaved RTC families

— T JAGGA REDDY, Sangareddy MLA



Raise traditional crops, Minister tells ryots

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy has directed the Agriculture Department officials to encourage farmers to raise traditional crops such as sunflower and rapeseed oil crops and advised them to rotate the crops with gingelly crop. Also, he asked the officials to sensitise them on the extent of subsidy the farmers get to raise gingelly crop.

In a meeting to review the activities of the Agriculture Department held at HACA Bhavan here on Wednesday, he asked the officials to keep ready groundnut seeds as needed by farmers and felt that the area



Niranjan asked the officials to keep ready groundnut seeds as needed by farmers and felt that the area under rabi crops would increase with abundant availability of irrigation facility

under rabi crops would increase with abundant availability of irrigation facility. He wanted the officials to supply paddy seeds ascertaining specific requirement of farmers.

He told them to make available seeds of sunflower and rapeseed crops and give wide publicity to the crops. Further, the officials should advise farms to apply fertilizers judi-

ciously. Moreover, adequate quantities of fertilizers for rabi should be kept ready. As on December 15, 2 lakh tonnes of urea stocks should be maintained with the Markfed towards buffer stocks, he directed.

Further, he asked the officials to speak to LIC and ensure that the farmers get LIC claims within 10 days. Agriculture principal secretary C Parthasarathi, agriculture commissioner Rahul Bojja, Telangana Seeds Development Corporation Director Kesavulu, Markfed MD Bhaskarachary and others were present at the meeting.

REMEMBERING KALOJI



Finance Minister T Harish Rao, IT Minister KT Rama Rao paying tributes to Kaloji Narayana Rao on his 'Vardhanthi' at BRKR Bhavan in Hyderabad on Wednesday

Loss to RTC due to strike put at Rs 400 cr

Continued from Page 1

Amid several suicides by distraught RTC workers, the RTC JAC has put forward its 26 demands for redressal, with the principal one being merger of the corporation with the government.

Although the Telangana High Court asked the government to resolve the crisis, the government appears to be in no mood to find a solution to the RTC strike.

The APSRTC, from which TSRTC was segregated, took shape on Jan 11, 1958. However, TSRTC was created post bifurcation of the state from the undivided AP.

The previous longest strike by RTC workers in 2001 lasted 24 days. Seeking enhancement of their wages, the RTC workers struck work for three days in July 2005 and against for two days in October the same year.

At the height of the movement for Telangana, spear-headed by the Telangana Rashtra Samiti, RTC workers participated in Sakala Janula Samme and struck work for 27 days. After the formation of TRS government, RTC workers struck work for eight days seeking enhancement of salaries.

Big politicians have the...

Continued from Page 1

Although there are standard instructions for the police to not insist on records when the cash involved in seizure amounts to less than Rs 50,000, the procedure was not followed. If the amount in question exceeds Rs 10 lakh, rules mandate that the IT Department should be alerted. Still, cases were booked in respective districts by police officials who chose to take unilateral decisions, irrespective of the amount involved. In some cases, the seized money has since been kept in fixed deposits without any action being initiated against those found guilty. For instance, Khammam's Bonakal police seized Rs 49 lakh. The money, which belonged to a TDP leader, was deposited in FDs, but no action was initiated against the culprit.

"It is simple. The money that was seized when the Model Code of Conduct was in force was being transported for the specific purpose of bribing the voters, although Section 171 IPC clearly defined those offences. In many cases, the seized money was handed over to the IT Department even as the police did not book a case. The IT Department looks into the genuineness of money and not the criminal aspect.

TS Govt 'no' to HC proposal on SC...

Continued from Page 1

Arguing the case, the Advocate General of the state government told the HC that it didn't approach the Labour court on the issue as it was hearing the petitions. He also told the HC that the strike was illegal as per ESMA.

In response to the submissions of the state government, the senior counsel for trade unions told the HC that the court had powers to constitute the committee. He also told the HC that he would place case laws on the issue as to whether government's consent was required for constituting the said committee and the powers vested in the High Courts on their constitution.

Following this, the High Court posted the matter to November 18 for further hearing of the batch of pleas.

Meanwhile, dealing with another PIL plea filed concerning the issuance of the private route permits, the division bench of the High Court extended its earlier interim order till Thursday. It directed the state government and RTC authorities concerned not to take any steps in the issue till it issues further orders. The case will come up for hearing on Thursday.

Another worker commits...

Continued from Page 1

The protesters also forcibly removed the barricades put up police on the main road, and later held a protest with the body in front of the depot.

Following intervention by police and assurances by district officials regarding to look into his family demands for ex-gratia, among others, the protest was withdrawn.

Nearly 48,000 employees had boycotted work and commenced an indefinite stir across Telangana on a call by the JAC of TSRTC employees' unions, demanding merger of RTC with the government, pay revision, recruitment to various posts, among others, resulting in state-run buses staying off the roads causing inconvenience to commuters.

Chief Minister had earlier said under o circumstances would the RTC be merged with the government and said the employees' stir was illegal as they caused immense inconvenience to the public.

BJP will win big in municipal polls: Laxman

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP state president Dr K Laxman has announced that the ensuing municipal elections would certainly be a referendum to their party. He demanded the Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao to conduct municipal elections immediately after the completion of duration if the latter had guts.

Opining that the Huzurnagar by-election impact will not show on the party, Laxman said that they will prove their party strength in

the ensuing GHMC elections certainly. Laxman announced that their party will contest in all wards across the state.

He said that he will meet the Union Minister D h a r m e n d r a Pradhan on giving permissions to the petrol bunks to be set up in RTC lands.

He questioned the Telangana government to tell as to why it was hiding lakhs of crores of worth GOs. Laxman said that the Union

Ministers praised the state as part of the relations between state and Central government.

Reacting on state BJP new chief appointment, Laxman said that the party high command will decide the new chief in the month of December. He made it clear that the national party's decision would be for the development of the party only. Laxman opined that the TRS

graph is speedily falling down after coming to power for second time. The BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's graph has grown in the state, he said. Spitting fire on Chief Minister, Laxman said that allegations on corruption against TRS government increased.

The workers and employees, who extended their support to KCR, were now distanced from KCR, he observed. He slammed that KCR is not implementing the assurances given in elections.



First child-friendly PS to be inaugurated today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Children from broken homes are more likely to commit crimes than those from stable families. Though, they committed crimes, police wanted to provide them conducive atmosphere at police stations. Hence, they decided to set up a Child-friendly Police Station.

Rachakonda police will inaugurate the first Child-friendly Police Station on the Children's Day for Juvenile delinquents at Medipally on the outskirts of the city.

The Medipally Police Station, which falls under Rachakonda Commissionerate, will be the first ever Child-friendly Police Station with colourful paintings, curtains



and a bed to rest. The place will have a separate board comprising names, phone numbers and other details of officials working at the station.

Rachakonda Commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat said that the room is aimed at providing a cheerful environment for chil-

dren coming to the police station. "The project is the brainchild of 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan' (India's largest movement for the protection of children). The room will welcome children on November 14.

The child-friendly room has

very friendly décor, and houses books, toys, indoor-games and more. The objective is to provide a friendly environment for visiting children. Police will be present to help them have a positive behavioural change, and counsellors will be employed as well," said Bhagwat.

Apart from this, the Commissioner of Police has started work site schools for rescued children in collaboration with District Collector of Bhongir Yadadri and Nalgonda district, Brick Kiln Workers Association and NGO Aid at Action from Odisha.

"One 'Brick Kiln School' was started with 180 students at Pedakonduru village in Choutuppal division, another

one was started with 800 students at Ravirala village in Ibrahimpatnam division and also at Chikitimamidi village of Bhongir division. These Oriya language schools helped children of migrant Odisha labourers to continue the education in mother tongue. The project received international award of IACP USA for Civil & Human Rights in 2018. So far 2100 children underwent training" explained the official.

In this connection, trafficking in persons report, Hero-2017 award is presented to Mahesh M Bhagwat, IPS, by the US Department of State for Meritorious Services, in anti-trafficking work of 13 years to end organised human trafficking.

SHORT READS



Civil Services probationers learn archery for focus

DEHRADUN: Probationary IAS officers are trying their hand at archery during a three-day course, aimed not just at teaching them to score a bullseye. At the first workshop of its kind at Mussoorie's Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, trainee Civil Services officers are being taught by three-time national archery champion Dinesh Bhil. The programme for IAS, IPS and IFS probationers began on Wednesday. The trainees are being taught the high-concentration sport to help them learn patience and how to focus on a target for better results. Bhil, who is the archery coach at the Sports Authority of Gujarat, said, "At least six months are needed even to learn the basics of archery, Bhil told."

HC notice to Centre on passport rules on sex reassignment surgery

CHENNAI: A Chennai resident has moved the Madras High Court, seeking to declare passport rules which require submission of Sex Reassignment Surgery certificate for gender determination as "unconstitutional", saying they violate Article 21 of the Constitution that deals with personal liberty. A division bench of Justices M Sathyanarayanan and N Seshasayee issued notice to Union Ministries of Law and Justice and External Affairs, returnable by December 12, on the petition of Sivakumar TD. The petitioner, who has been actively involved in furthering the interests of the LGBTQ community, referred to a Supreme Court judgment relating to the rights of transgenders in the plea.

8 killed, 11 injured in two separate road accidents in Bihar

BIHAR: Eight persons were killed and 11 others injured in two separate road accidents in Bihar's Nalanda and Rohtas districts on Wednesday, police said. Six persons were killed and three were injured seriously when a speeding truck collided head-on with an autorickshaw in which the deceased and injured persons were travelling near Durga Nagar village in Nalanda district, the police said. Deputy Superintendent of Police Somnath confirmed the death of six persons including a newborn baby in the mishap. The three injured persons have been admitted to Bihar Sharif Sadar hospital and their condition was serious, the police said. In another incident, two persons were killed and eight others injured five of them seriously when an SUV in which they were travelling rammed into a stationary gas tanker on Grand Trunk road (NH 2) near Suara mor under Dehri-on-Sone police station area in Rohtas district in the early hours of Wednesday, police said.

Rural women to audit govt's welfare schemes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to empower women in the rural areas, the Centre has decided to carry out a social audit of its flagship welfare schemes by them and they will also work as the nodal persons to resolve the complaints of the beneficiaries of these programmes, a top government official said on Wednesday.

In a social audit, the beneficiaries themselves assess the impact of government schemes and programmes by comparing official records with the actual ground situation, Amarjeet Sinha, Secretary, Rural Development, told PTI on the sidelines of the National Seminar on Social Audit of Rural Development Programmes.

Educated women in the rural areas associated with the self-help groups (SHGs) working under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) will check whether the welfare works were being carried out properly or not, he added.

The social audit started with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), but later the Rural Development Ministry extended it to all of its welfare schemes, including the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin)



Educated women in the rural areas associated with the self-help groups working under the National Rural Livelihood Mission will check whether the welfare works are being carried out properly

and the Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojana (Rural).

"The idea is that these women, whom we usually call didi (elder sister), will check whether the work under the welfare schemes has properly been done or not, whether pensions have been received by elderly persons, whether beneficiaries got their houses built or not," Sinha said, suggesting that these women were better placed to check leakages in the schemes. The women will be paid for conducting the social audit of the

welfare schemes, he added.

Besides, to empower these women and make them stakeholders in a better implementation of the schemes in the rural areas, it was decided that they will also work as the nodal persons of these schemes for grievance redressal, Sinha said.

"They have been given the responsibility of working as the grievance redressal nodal persons, so that the complaints and problems of the beneficiaries of these schemes in rural areas can easily be resolved," he added.

Currently, such a social audit is done for the MGNREGA, the rural housing programmes and also for funds allocated through the 14th Finance Commission, Sinha said, adding that it will now be extended to various welfare schemes of other ministries as well.

The ministry has finalised the auditing standards for the social audit with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), he informed.

The government, along with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad, has also developed a short-term certificate course on social audits for district and block resource persons and SHGs, Sinha said.

May extend odd-even scheme if required: Kejri

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As pollution levels in the national capital hovered close to emergency levels, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said the odd-even scheme could be extended, if the need arises. The road rationing scheme started on November 4 and is expected to end on November 15.

"If the need arises, we will extend it (odd-even scheme)," Kejriwal said in response to media queries on whether the road rationing initiative, aimed at curbing vehicular pollution, will be further extended.

Delhi-NCR gasped for breath today as the noxious smog resulting from raging farm fires and unfavourable weather pushed pollution levels in the region towards the "emergency" zone for the third time in the last 15 days.

Kejriwal blamed stubble burning in neighbouring states for repeated episodes of smog in Delhi and said it has hit Delhi's image worldwide.

"I remember German Chancellor Angela Merkel was in Delhi a few days ago... when a public health emergency was declared. What kind of image of Delhi she must have carried to her country," he said.

The chief minister said Delhi's neighbouring states, especially



Haryana and Punjab, are burning crop residue disregarding strict directions from the Supreme Court.

"The air quality oscillated between the good and moderate categories in the early part of this season because of our continuous efforts to check pollution. But it deteriorated due to the intrusion of stubble plume from Punjab and Haryana," he said.

"The number of farm fires reduced in between due to rains in Punjab and Haryana. It led to a decline in Delhi's pollution. The incidents of stubble burning have shot up again. These states are not even following the Supreme Court's directions. Delhi people are suffering because of it," he said.

Kejriwal reiterated that paddy straw can be used to produce compressed natural gas and coal which will also increase the income of farmers. "I have met

many experts. I am myself an engineer. Stubble can be converted into CNG. The foundation stone of an industry that can convert paddy straw into CNG has been laid. I have talked to Indraprastha Gas Limited and they are ready to procure all CNG produced from stubble," he said.

Many factories, which can convert stubble into coal, have come up in Punjab. National Thermal Power Corporation Limited is ready to purchase all the coal produced through this method, he said, adding these measures will also help generate employment and increase the income of farmers.

According to the government's air quality monitor, SAFAR, the share of stubble burning in Delhi's pollution is predicted to be 22 per cent on Wednesday. It was 25 per cent on Tuesday.

WHO for toning up primary health care, educating families to tackle diabetes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Strengthening primary health care, creating green spaces and outdoor gyms and empowering families are some of the measures listed out by the World Health Organisation to its member countries in South East Asia to tackle rising cases of diabetes.

Though these measures go beyond the health sector, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh stressed that health authorities should act as nodal agencies, working across sectors to find high-impact solutions that also reduce health care costs.

An estimated 91 million people in the South East Asia

region have diabetes and around 49 million, more than half, are unaware of their condition, Singh said.

As part of the region's primary health care approach in tackling diabetes, families must be empowered to act as they have an important role in creating awareness of the risks of diabetes, Singh suggested.

"They are also the first to identify diabetes' signs, symptoms, risks and complications. When complemented by access to quality primary health care, families are an important asset in the battle against diabetes," she said.

Families can be made aware via social and behavioral change campaigns that highlight their role as a first line of



They are also the first to identify diabetes' signs, symptoms, risks and complications. When complemented by access to quality primary health care, families are an important asset in the battle against diabetes

defense. Campaigns should also outline how families can work together to develop healthy habits.

This is particularly important, given that most diabetes cases are type 2, meaning they can be avoided by healthy eat-

ing and adequate physical activity, Singh said.

The creation of green spaces and outdoor gyms will facilitate

weight management.

"Third, all families should have access to quality primary health care. Primary-level services must be equipped to detect diabetes, including the high and rising incidence of pre-diabetes. A reliable supply of quality medicines and medical products that can help manage cases should be on hand," she said.

Each of the interventions outlined in the Colombo Declaration on accelerating the delivery of noncommunicable diseases (NCD) services at primary level, which the region adopted in 2016, must be fully implemented, Singh stressed.

Undiagnosed or poorly-controlled type 1 or type 2 diabetes

can lead to heart, kidney, nerve or eye damage. It can also lead to premature death, which in the region accounts for just under 50 per cent of all deaths caused by NCDs. Preventing and controlling NCDs is one of the region's eight flagship priorities.

The region's member states are taking decisive action. All countries have developed national multi-sectoral NCD action plans and each plan contains specific interventions to tackle diabetes.

Their roll-out has occurred alongside member state efforts to strengthen primary-level NCD services, which will also help the region achieve its flagship priority on universal health coverage.

Mamata pegs loss due to cyclone 'Bulbul' at Rs 50,000 crore

PNS ■ BASIRHAT (WB)

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, after conducting an aerial survey of cyclone 'Bulbul'-hit areas in North 24 Parganas, said on Wednesday that the loss incurred by the state due to the natural calamity might go up to Rs 50,000 crore. Banerjee handed over a cheque of Rs 2.4 lakh each to the family members of five people from the district who lost their lives in the calamity.

Taking note of the fact that at least 15 lakh hectares of agricultural land was damaged due to the storm, she said the affected farmers would get all help from her government.

"Going by what I have seen, I think the cyclone has led to massive destruction. By massive, I mean really massive... People sitting in Kolkata and other parts of the state will be not able to realise the degree of devastation."



"If I'm not wrong, I think there has been a loss of Rs 50,000 crore," the chief minister said at an administrative review meeting here following the reconnaissance.

Those who have enrolled their names for the state government's crop insurance scheme would get 100 per cent coverage for their loss, she asserted. "A total of 15 lakh hectares of agricultural land

has been damaged. The entire paddy cultivation has been ruined. I assure the farmers of all form of support from our government. The farmers under the state's crop insurance policy will get hundred per cent coverage," Banerjee said.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo further said that the state government would soon announce a special package for the affected farmers.

At least nine people have lost their lives in the calamity - five from North 24 Parganas, three from South 24 Parganas and one from Purba Midnapore - while seven fishermen were still missing, Banerjee said during the meeting.

According to the chief minister, six lakh people have been affected and over five lakh houses damaged due to the cyclone, which made landfall late on Saturday between Sagar Islands in West Bengal and Khepupara in Bangladesh.

The CM gave assurances to rebuild damaged houses under her government's 'Banglar Bari' scheme. She also announced one hurricane lamp and five litres of kerosene for each affected family in the state. Banerjee directed the education department to provide books to schoolchildren appearing for board examinations in the storm-hit areas.

BSY govt is 'illegal', dismiss it, says Karnataka Cong

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Welcoming the Supreme Court decision on the disqualified MLAs, the Congress in Karnataka on Wednesday said the verdict proves that the BJP-led government in the state was "illegal" and sought its dismissal. While KPCC President Dinesh Gundu Rao asked BJP not to give tickets to the disqualified legislators to contest polls if it has "any morality left," CLP leader Siddaramaiah said the verdict was a lesson to defectors to whom people would teach a lesson in the December 5 bypolls. "Supreme Court has partially upheld the then Speaker Ramesh Kumar's decision. I welcome the verdict," Siddaramaiah said. Speaking to reporters here, he said, the court's stand was that defecting was "immoral" and "violation of trust of the voter".

Centre tells depts to allow transparency audit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked its departments to allow government-run training institutes to conduct transparency audits on proactive disclosure of information on their websites, according to a personnel ministry order.

The suo motu disclosure of information to the public is mandated under Section 4 (2) of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005, so that people have to use the transparency law less to get information. Each ministry or public authority should get its proactive disclosure package audited by a third party every year, as per norms. The audit should cover compliance with proactive disclosure guidelines as well as adequacy of items included in the package.

It must also examine whether there are any other type of information which can be proactively disclosed. The audits will



be done annually and communicated to the Central Information Commission every year through publication on websites.

"Further, the task of undertaking transparency audits may be given to the respective training institutes under each ministry/department/public authority and across the states and union territories," the ministry said in the order. However, in cases where no training institute exists under ministries or departments, the tasks of undertaking transparency audits may be given to any government training institutes, it said.

BJP takes out rally in city to protest spike in dengue cases

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The BJP on Wednesday took out a rally here to protest against the spurt in dengue cases in the city and its fringe areas and accused the Trinamool Congress government of trying to "hush up" the figures.

The protest march, convened by BJP Yuva Morcha, has been taken out from Central Avenue in the city and is scheduled to culminate at Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) headquarters, with the gherao of the civic office.

"The state government has been deliberately trying to

hush up the figures (of those killed and affected). The government and the KMC are more keen on hiding the actual numbers rather than taking steps to tackle the menace," state BJP president Dilip Ghosh, who led the rally, told reporters. Police sources, however, said that barricades have been set up near Chandni Chowk Metro station to stop the rally beyond that point.

The saffron party said it wanted to submit a deputation to Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim regarding the dengue menace and, if stopped, the party would resort to a sit-in demonstration.

Govt extends moratorium on soft loan to sugar mills

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the Rs 15,000 crore soft loan scheme for sugar mills is moving at a snail's pace, the government has extended the moratorium period for repayments by six more months, according to sources. Now, the moratorium period is one-and-a-half years. A moratorium period is a time during the loan term when the borrower is not required to make any repayment.

The Centre had announced the loan package in two tranches -- first in June 2018 amounting to Rs 4,440 crore and the other in March 2019 of Rs 10,540 crore. The objective was to help millers in clearing cane arrears and divert surplus sugar for ethanol manufacturing. A soft loan is a loan that is given at a subsidised interest rate.

"When the soft loan scheme



was launched to augment ethanol production in the country, one year moratorium was provided. This has now been extended to 1.5 years in the interest of sugar mills and farmers," a highly placed source said.

A notification in this regard will be issued soon, the source added. Of 418 applications for

the loan, the food ministry has found 282 eligible. Of this, 114 applications have been cleared for loans amounting to Rs 6,139.08 crore, as per official data.

However, banks have sanctioned the loan to 45 applicants and disbursed Rs 900 crore to 33 applicants till September-

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end, the data showed.

The soft loan package is being implemented by the food ministry, which provides a list of eligible loan applicants to banks for further process.

According to industry experts, only 5-6 per cent of the total soft loan amount of Rs 15,000 crore announced under

the scheme has been disbursed so far by banks.

The sugar industry is of the view that much of the time is being wasted in the first screening at the ministry level. Ideally, banks should check the eligibility criteria and sanction the loan amount accordingly.

"In this process, the scheme has not been able to take off properly. The scheme was launched in June 2018 and still the ministry is screening the applications. At this pace, mills may not benefit from the scheme. It takes at least 18 months to establish an ethanol unit," another industry official said.

At present, 3-4 lakh tonne of sugar gets diverted for ethanol making. With creation of additional capacity under the scheme, 9-10 lakh tonne of sugar is expected to be diverted for ethanol production. Sugar mills have supplied

175 crore litres of ethanol to oil marketing companies (OMCs) till October 22 of the 2018-19 season (October-September) and helped them achieve 5.2 per cent blending with petrol, as per industry data.

The soft loan was announced to improve liquidity of mills, reduce sugar inventory and facilitate timely clearance of cane dues of farmers.

However, cane arrear still remains high at Rs 9,000 crore so far this year based on the sugarcane price fixed by both the Centre and states, as per the ministry data.

There is a sugar glut in India, the world's second largest sugar producer after Brazil. The country had produced 32.5 million tonne and 33.1 million tonne in 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons (October-September), respectively, much higher than the domestic consumption of 25 million tonne.

Let Rajpath be

Repairing and rejigging heritage structures is one thing, changing skylines quite the other



When the glass Pyramid came up in the courtyard of the Louvre Museum, ostensibly to serve as a central conduit for a more functional visitor movement, the then French President François Mitterrand was lambasted for creating “an architectural joke, an eyesore, an anachronistic intrusion of Egyptian death symbolism in the middle of Paris, and a megalomaniacal folly.” Parisians still have mixed feelings about the new-age intrusion, which has allowed more utilitarian and pedestrianised access to art besides increasing foot-

falls. But the oddity of its existence was such that critics and conservationists compelled the architects to tone down on drama, keep much of the rejig of the Louvre’s internal map underground and stay away from the surrounding classical architecture. Mitterrand, an avid art lover, was thinking about keeping the Louvre relevant for generations than sealing a political legacy. However, the real intent of the argument that Lutyens’ Delhi needs a makeover, particularly the central vista of the Rajpath, to create more spaces for Ministry offices and freeing up more citizen-friendly spaces, is entirely political and in no way cultural or futuristic. Tradition’s co-existence with modernity is encoded in our DNA and Delhi is the best testimony, where each successive ruler has sedimented through relics and monuments. And Delhiites have never denied heritage its place — Rajput, Islamic, European or colonial — making it a part of their living history, one where Lutyens’ Delhi is a key chapter. Talking of the central vista and the domed buildings around it, do we really need to tamper with the elegance and classicism of design here? The green pavilions, perches, cupolas and the islands are the only democratic spaces where citizens can move and roam free, catching the afternoon sun in the middle of winter and the gentle breeze of a summer evening. No kiosk or retail space is needed for it is precisely to escape these that Delhi families assemble here.

Besides, being the first stretches to be locked down for security around Republic and Independence Days, they are anyway sanitised and cannot ever be a porous event space like Washington’s National Mall. Redevelopment wouldn’t necessarily mean more freedom to the masses. Considering the India Gate and now the war memorial are a tribute to martyred soldiers no less, do we need to scream our triumphalism and identity any louder with an Eiffel tower-like structure? Shouldn’t the Government be wiser to leave a legacy of policy and governance instead? Repurposing administrative offices within the shell of an existing facade and rejigging interiors are the done thing. But to change the skyline is quite the other. Agreed, there may be an increasing demand for land in the cities and the size of the Government means that its bureaucracy needs to be accommodated. Does that mean Lutyens’ bungalows should be torn down indiscriminately without attempting a solution within the original plan? Cannot some Government accommodation be relocated to areas where vertical structures are the norm than the exception? The Rajpath has been our ceremonial pivot, providing a monumental, dignified and symbolic setting for governmental structures, museums and national memorials. Attempting to change it for no pressing reason, therefore, is like marginalising and eroding its place-based identity. Simply because of its historicity as a power statement. One that the current regime wants to overlay with its own imposition of a Bharat Parv, as if we never had one through millennia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi doesn’t quite like the “Lutyens’ world” and the power structures embedded in it. “For me, everything is about the people of India,” he had said. But in the name of breaking elitism and freeing up space for people, one cannot justify political point-scoring. Or even the political economy it will generate — the project is expected to run into multi-crore tenders. There are fruits of preservation; they serve as reminders of what was and where we need to go. There are only ruins of demolition, forcibly reconstructing the past on wobbly stubs to suit our ends. Given the secrecy around the makeover project, the least the Government can do is to put a proposed plan to a public vote, keep it transparent, consultative and reasonable and synchronise its character with the aspiration of Delhiites to be citizens of a world heritage city. The city’s application, submitted to the Unesco in 2013, lists Lutyens’ Bungalow Zone (LBZ) along with Shahjahanabad (old Delhi) as the rationale for seeking the tag. That sure will have a longer legacy than proving a point for BJP’s manifesto of 2024, the deadline of the project.

Trouble in Jharkhand

After Maharashtra, allies AJSU and LJP turn adamant on seats, show BJP why it needs them



From the west to the east, BJP’s allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) are seeking to assert themselves and give the “big brother” a tough time in both pre and post-poll scenarios. That’s because the results in Maharashtra have proven that the BJP, regardless of the brute force of the Lok Sabha verdict, cannot make it on its own. It has hardly recovered from the jolt in Maharashtra, where its three-decade-old ally, the Shiv Sena, snapped ties with it for its failure to honour a rotational chief ministerial formula, but is staring at another one in Jharkhand. Here its long-time ally, the All Jharkhand Students’ Union (AJSU), has upped the ante by staking claim to 17 seats for itself. But the BJP is not willing to concede. The AJSU has since gone ahead by fielding its candidate even against the BJP’s State unit chief. As if this wasn’t enough, another BJP ally, the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), has announced it will go alone and field its candidates in 50 of the 81 Assembly seats.

The timing is all wrong for the BJP, which is actually looking to consolidate its gains in the State. The Raghubar Das-led regime has the distinction of completing a full five-year-term, which is a first in the 20-year history of the State that has always had fractured mandates leading to half-a-dozen Chief Ministers helming the affairs from time to time. For the BJP, however, the LJP is not a cause of worry given its minuscule presence in the State. The LJP contested only one Assembly seat in 2014 and lost. By contesting 50 seats this time round, its new president Chirag Paswan wishes to gain some foothold in Jharkhand. But as far as AJSU is concerned, the party, which is a product of the Jharkhand movement, has a strong presence, especially in areas around Ranchi. AJSU has been a part of almost all Governments formed in Jharkhand ever since the State’s creation when Babulal Marandi became the first Chief Minister. Its chief Sudesh Mahto has handled plum portfolios throughout, including that of the funds-rich Road Construction department. He played a key role in hijacking MLAs to prop up the Arjun Munda regime. The AJSU is also gaining strength from the fact that Opposition parties are courting it. AJSU fighting alone, nevertheless, will be advantage BJP as the former shares a support base with the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and could cut into its votebank. Despite its dominance, the BJP cannot alienate time-tested allies who have stood by it through thick and thin. As Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Naresh Gujral said, the BJP should not treat its allies as lesser partners as they, too, have self-respect.

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opinion

Guarantors vs enforcers

The brawl between police officers and lawyers over a parking lot was the manifestation of a misplaced sense of entitlement at work. The episode should lead to corrective introspection



BHOPINDER SINGH

Submission to an inviolable sense of justice, order and probity ought to be at the heart of professionals rendering policing and legal services to society. The nobility of purpose in both these professions mandates a certain code of conduct and ethics that posits the responsibility to the citizenry at large and, thereby, the nation. Many such mandates have been legislated, ingrained and templated in the form of standard procedures, processes and even uniforms that they bear with aplomb and responsibility. The allegorical personification of Lady Justice (originally *Lustitia*, the goddess of justice in the Greek mythology) with a blindfold, a balance and a sword is deeply symbolic of those who uphold its tenets as protectors of justice.

Similarly, the khaki uniform of the police personnel is freighted with the citizen’s charter that explicitly seeks, among other things, the “maintenance of law and order in civil society” as a common bond between the two services. Many illustrious lawyers and policemen (and policewomen) have conducted themselves with the highest dignity, civility, service and personal sacrifices that have been the pride of the society and the nation.

Yet, the unfortunate spectacle of the violent clash between policemen and the lawyers at the Tis Hazari court in the national capital shamed the edifice of justice, which is the shared responsibility of these two callings. In an age of reckless social media, the free flow of visuals of the fights, accusations and the public protests was a reflection of institutional breakdown at various levels.

The immediate impact of this wholly avoidable fracas goes way beyond the perceptions about these two professions. It speaks volumes about the institutional one-upmanship, prevailing societal anger and above all, a misplaced sense of entitlement that some individuals may carry — all of which could taint the entirety of their services. For the sake of national security and order, institutional blame-game must be contained with immediate effect. The High Court-appointed judicial inquiry must ascertain individual acts of misdemeanour and those involved must be punished, irrespective of their professional callings.

However, the lazy and wanton lust to sully the reputation of either of the institutions can have unfathomable repercussions that the nation can ill-afford, given that both are unique and irreplaceable services, often the only source of ensuring justice to the citizenry. To that extent, the act should be treated as a matter of individual (at best a group of individuals) culpability or complicity as opposed to a situation where the top-brass of either institutions lock horns on behalf of their colleagues. The fact that the violence was triggered by



a seemingly innocuous dispute over a parking space reeks of ego, vanity and a sense of fiefdom that was involved. The proverbial “turf-war” further eroded the citizen’s waning trust, faith and decorum about governmental and judicial arms, who are in dire need for reforms and reassurances.

In the melee of excesses was the regrettable irony of the Delhi Police’s motto of “*Shanti, Sewa, Nyaya*” (Peace, Service and Justice) or indeed, the fact that the lawyers are the ultimate restorers of the law of the land. The hapless citizenry could only mull and reminisce their own experiences at the hands of either of these two.

Such incidents also give a parallel vent to latent concerns that have remained unaddressed for far too long but contextualising the same to this incident is to distract from the immediacy and specificity of action. The unwarranted politicisation of the incident, with political parties assuming positions that suit their immediate narrative, can only fan the fire. Sane voices, who are either in positions of seniority in the respective hierarchies or those who have retired from official service, would do yeoman service by insisting on isolating the individuals concerned in the violence, as opposed to taking institutional positions.

“SUCH INCIDENTS ALSO GIVE PARALLEL VENT TO LATENT CONCERNS THAT HAVE REMAINED UNADDRESSED FOR TOO LONG BUT CONTEXTUALISING THE SAME TO THIS INCIDENT IS TO DISTRACT FROM THE IMMEDIACY AND SPECIFICITY OF ACTION. THE UNWARRANTED POLITICISATION OF THE INCIDENT CAN ONLY FAN THE FIRE”

Other collateral concerns like work conditions and officer-soldier relationship in the police among others, however true and important in their own right, are a matter of separate enquiry and resolution. In fact, there has been a plethora of committees and commissions that have identified various reforms pertaining to the efficacy of the judicial and policing services. Unfortunately, political will has been lacking and even institutional lethargy to undertake the recommendations made by experts in the field.

A more reassuring arm of the Government has been the armed forces. The principal factor for this has been the relative isolation from the politicisation of its environment, functioning and ethos. In cases of individual culpability pertaining to the rare wrongdoings of a soldier of the armed forces, care is taken to isolate them from institutional framework as discipline cannot be compromised.

Discipline, leadership and soldiering ethos are made to walk the talk in the armed forces. The finest example of this is the “officer-to-soldier” fatality ratio, which is the highest for any military in the world. It is the professional culture and standard that are at stake when murmurs abound

of creeping politicisation even in the armed forces.

The onus is on the Government to contain this incident with speedy intervention, resolution and then usher in the much-delayed institutional reforms. No society can thrive where a revenue officer is burnt alive during the conduct of his/her duty, where police-lawyers vandalise public property, where policemen in uniform protest raising slogans, where suicide attempts for justice by lawyers are made. Indeed, forgotten from the recent limelight is the unprecedented tragedy of the war heroes of the armed forces sitting on roadside, asking for what was rightfully promised in OROP.

There is certainly a power play of institutional relevance, elbow-room and assertion at play. The fight over the parking lot was symbolic of the misplaced sense of entitlement that is at work with a few that shame their own institutions. This incident should lead to corrective introspection and cooling of tempers as opposed to a field day for those who have vested interest in TRPs, partisan concerns or perpetuating the existing systemic rot.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry)

SOUNDBITE

RCEP is in our interest. If it is signed by other 15 nations and we are sitting outside, no multinational will want to come here.

NITI Aayog vice chairman
—Arvind Panagariya



Today, whether it’s pageantry, surviving in the modelling business or entering Bollywood, I don’t think you’ll survive if you’re not strong as a person.

Actor
—Lara Dutta



India, China and Russia are doing absolutely nothing to clean up their smokestacks. The garbage that they drop in the sea floats into Los Angeles.

US President
—Donald Trump



Women need to get out of their comfort zone. It’s time for them to lead the transformation in emerging technologies like AI and IOT.

Union Minister
—Smriti Irani



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

JNU hullabaloo

Sir — This refers to the editorial, “Fee hike unjust” (November 13). There is no doubt that there has been a significant hike in both the hostel room fee and one-time mess fee at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) but we also need to ponder as to how long will the State exchequer keep funding its students’ subsidised education. The monthly fee of ₹20 for a hostel room is something that really needed to be changed but at the same time, the authorities should have held discussions with the stakeholders on the amount that needed to be increased. There should have been a hike that would not pinch too much as students from all sections of the society come to study in this varsity. While it’s good that the authorities have partially rolled the proposed fee hike, students need to introspect why there should not be a basic hike in their fees when they are being part of one of the most sought after universities in the country. There has to be some rationality in this entire issue.

Bal Govind
Noida

Seshan was a poll crusader

Before TN Seshan occupied the office of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), not much was known about the game-changing ability of the Election Commission of India (ECI). Seshan proved what the electoral body could do to instill decorum in the way elections were conducted in the country. Until he took over, booth captures, corruption, impersonation, vandalism and violence were part of the election process. The introduction of electors’ photo identity cards was one of the measures taken by him which put the ECI’s integrity on the rising graph. The Model Code of Conduct got a fresh meaning as the “maverick” Seshan cracked the whip on politicians.

Ironically, Seshan paved the way for a three-member ECI. His aggressive style and frequent tiffs with leaders prompted former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao to re-introduce the three-member ECI. Again, Seshan met his match in the Supreme Court after he contested the powers of two newly-appointed Election Commissioners — MS Gill and GVG Krishnamurthy.



He had to eat the humble pie everytime he tried to assert his supremacy. Despite his frequent squabbles with the Government, colleagues and the courts, Seshan was the architect of the “new Election Commission” in India.

Ganapathi Bhat
Akola

Expand bases

Sir — It is given to understand that an applicant can apply for a normal passport at all Post Office Passport Sewa Kendras (POPSKs) and Passport Sewa Kendras (PSKs) spread across various States. It is further given to understand that for *tatkal* pass-

port applications, an applicant can approach only a few PSKs located within the States. Thus, for an applicant there is no possibility to apply for a *tatkal* passport at any POPSKs located across various districts headquartered.

The current non-availability of *tatkal* appointments at POPSKs is causing much inconvenience to the applicants. All are compelled

to approach the nearest PSK located within the State. The move, thus, causes inconvenience to the applicants owing to logistical factors to reach the venue.

The Ministry of External Affairs must accept *tatkal*-based passport applications and allot appointments under *tatkal* quota at POPSKs, too. The suggested move will entail quick processing

of such applications and subsequently may even reduce the burden of PSKs.

Varun Dambal
Bengaluru

The great reformer

Sir — As the Chief Election Commissioner, TN Seshan brought many reforms in the country’s electoral process, which includes the enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct, introduction of voter ID cards for eligible candidates and curbing malpractices like the exchange of liquor and money during elections.

The real tribute to Seshan would be to enforce one of his orders where he directed that the ballot papers be mixed without fail before they were counted so that polling agents would not know in which booth they voted and how. This will partially curb the behaviour of our elected representatives who tend to tilt development funds towards the area that voted for them.

Harvinder Singh Chugh
Jalandhar

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Governor's decision unconstitutional

President's Rule in Maharashtra must be shot down by the SC. Elections are a costly affair and a poor country like India can ill-afford frequent polls



MARKANDEY KATJU

In my opinion, the recent imposition of President's Rule in Maharashtra under Article 356 is unconstitutional and needs to be declared as such by the Supreme Court (SC). In the recent elections to the 288-member Maharashtra Legislative Assembly, the BJP got 105 seats, the Shiv Sena got 56, the NCP 54 and the Congress 44. Although the BJP and the Shiv Sena had fought the election in alliance, after the poll it fell apart on the issue of power-sharing. No single party got a majority in the House and no alliance could be formed claiming a majority. Hence the Governor of the State recommended President's Rule, which was imposed. Now, a similar situation had arisen in Uttar Pradesh (UP) in 1996 where also President's Rule was imposed soon after the Legislative Assembly elections for the same reason, viz no party, nor combination of parties, had a majority in the House. The imposition of President's Rule was challenged in the Allahabad High Court (HC) and a full Bench of the HC, of which I was a member, held the imposition unconstitutional, vide HS Jain vs Union of India case.

The reasoning which the full Bench gave in that case squarely applies to the imposition of President's Rule in Maharashtra too and it was this: "It has been held in the authoritative judgment of the Supreme Court in Bommai's case, (1994) 3 SCC 1 (in paragraphs 109, 120, 383 and 391) that imposition of President's Rule should not be resorted to unless all other recourses have failed."

In paragraph 112 of my decision, I observed: "The Governor should have sent a message to the House under Article 175(2) of the Constitution, after summoning it under Article 174(1) stating that despite his best efforts he was unable to find out who can command the confidence of the House and hence the House itself should inform him about such person. The Governor in this message should have asked the House to assemble and decide the matter within a reasonable period of time and then inform him. In this message the Governor could have also warned the House that if it did not make up its mind within a reasonable period of time, the House may have to be dissolved." In paragraph 128 of my decision, I observed that in case of a fractured electoral verdict, where no party or combination of parties appeared to have a majority in the House, "the only legal alternative left for the Governor is to ask the Assembly to inform him about the person in whom it has confidence. Who can be in a better position than the House itself to inform the Governor in whom it has confidence?" And in paragraph 131 of my verdict I stated, "Although this course of action has not been expressly mentioned in the Constitution, it logically flows out of Article 164(2) and is the only democratic alternative short of dissolution. In today's era of fractured verdicts, it is the only logical method."

I referred to Article 6 of the Japanese Constitution which states, "The Emperor shall appoint a Prime Minister as designated by the Diet" (the Japanese Parliament is called the Diet) and observed "Although we do not have a similar provision in our Constitution, while judicially interpreting it we can borrow from the democratic spirit of the Japanese Constitution."

Thus, when the Governor of Maharashtra could not find any party or combination of parties, which appeared to have a majority in the Assembly, before recommending imposition of President's Rule he should have sent a message to the House under Article 175(2), after summoning it under Article 174(1), asking the House to assemble, deliberate and then inform him within a reasonable period of time in whom it has confidence, so that he could be appointed Chief Minister.

In Bommai's case it was held that imposition of President's Rule was a very serious step and was a last option, to be resorted to only when all other recourses failed. In Maharashtra, as in UP in 1996, there was an option left, as referred to above. Hence without resorting to it, recommending imposition of President's Rule straightaway was clearly unconstitutional.

Some people may ask what use such a step would have been when the political leaders were unable to come to a compromise?

The answer was given in paragraph 134 of my judgment. "In my opinion, if the elected members are permitted to come together and meet in the House, then a Socratic debate may take place and it is possible that a solution may emerge. When two or more persons are sitting separately they may not be able to resolve their differences but when they come together it is possible that by discussions and negotiations some compromise may come about. This is the democratic method also. The elected representatives may put pressure on their leaders to give up their intransigent and uncompromising attitude and adopt a more flexible approach."

It must be remembered that elections are a costly affair and frequent polls are a recourse which a poor country like India can ill-afford. Also, frequent elections were one of the causes of the collapse of the Weimar Republic and Hitler coming to power in 1933. Hence every effort should be made to avoid them.

If elected representatives are not allowed to meet in the House, should they meet in a tennis court, as happened in France during the French Revolution of 1789?

(The writer is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India.)

EVERYTHING IS GOING FINE. TALKS ARE ON IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND A DECISION WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME.

— SHIV SENA PRESIDENT
 UDDHAV THACKERAY

POINT COUNTERPOINT



OUR MEETING WITH UDDHAV THACKERAY WAS A COURTESY CALL. THE FACT THAT WE ARE MEETING IS ITSELF A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT.

— MAHARASHTRA CONGRESS CHIEF
 BALASAHEB THORAT

Shed the protectionist mindset

Keeping in mind the criticality of being an integral part of the global supply chain to achieve a \$5 trillion economy, India needs to reconsider its decision on RCEP



UTTAM GUPTA

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a conglomeration of 10 members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) viz. Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, The Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei, Laos and Cambodia plus six others viz. Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, China and India. If it really sees the light of day with all 16 members intact, the group will cover 3.6 billion people or almost 50 per cent of the world's population and account for nearly 40 per cent of the global GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

India is aiming to double its GDP to \$5 trillion by 2024-25. To achieve this, it is looking inter alia to doubling its exports from the current over \$500 billion to \$1 trillion and increasing agricultural exports 2.5 times from \$40 billion to \$100 billion. In this backdrop, the RCEP with a combined GDP of \$30 trillion presents, at least on paper, a huge opportunity that the country can't afford to miss.

Since 2012 (when the RCEP was mooted), 29 rounds of negotiations have already been held. During the ASEAN Summit (November 11-15, 2018), Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called for early conclusion of the process. In the recent ministerial gathering held in Bangkok (October 10-12), even as discussions reached a deadlock over a dozen contentious issues, ministers were given 10 days to iron out the differences. If, they didn't succeed, Modi, with his famed "Midas touch" was expected to make it happen in the third RCEP leaders' summit.

However, on November 4, Modi announced India's decision not to join the group citing that "the present form of the RCEP Agreement does not fully reflect the basic spirit and the agreed guiding principles of RCEP. It also does not address satisfactorily India's outstanding issues and concerns". So, what are India's major concerns? And, are these valid?

First, India wants the reference date for undertaking tariff reduction to be extended to 2019 instead of 2014 planned initially. Since 2014, the Government has raised import duty on 3,500 items. In this backdrop, if for the purpose of phasing out duties, it were to use 2014 as a reference point, this benefit will be lost. The Indian stance is perfectly logical as the quotation date for commencement of tariff cuts has to be in sync with the date the agreement takes effect.

Second, under the Most Favored Nation (MFN) clause, the investment or service related concessions given to a trading partner under a bilateral treaty have to be automatically extended to all other members of the group without any time gap. India was not inclined to accept this. This stance is illogical. MFN is a cardinal principle governing World Trade Organisation (WTO) — the international body dealing with global rules of trade. India should not be seen as taking a stance which is inconsistent with WTO rules.

Third, India wanted an "automatic trigger safeguard mechanism." What it really means is that in the event of import of a particular commodity exceeding a certain number (also known as threshold), this clause will automatically kick in, giving the right to the importing country (read: India) to apply higher tariff to prevent a surge. This stance is untenable as it militates against the principle of free international trade based on comparative advantage.

INDIA'S APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS ON RCEP IS OVERLY PROTECTIONIST. BARRING SHIFTING THE REFERENCE DATE FOR UNDERTAKING TARIFF PHASE OUT TO 2019, IN ALL OTHER AREAS, THE GOVERNMENT'S STAND IS NOT TENABLE. IT IS BORNE OUT OF THE FEAR THAT JOINING THE GROUP WILL DEVASTATE OUR FARMERS AND SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES AT THE CURRENT JUNCTURE WHEN THE ECONOMY IS IN THE GRIP OF A SLOWDOWN. ITS WORRY IS MORE ON ACCOUNT OF A FLOOD OF IMPORTS FROM CHINA. THIS FEAR IS UNFOUNDED



The rationale behind eliminating tariffs on goods moving across international borders is to enable participating countries to maximise their respective gains from trade. This overarching objective will be defeated if a member gets the right to automatically increase the duty, which will prevent the exporting country from realising the full potential of its low cost. Moreover, if India insists on this clause, others too will want it. In that scenario, all members will end up compressing the market for each other.

Additionally, there will be practical problems in determining the threshold level (each member would like to keep it at the lowest level possible for extracting maximum mileage) and the number of commodities to be covered by this dispensation (each member will insist on having a large number). They will end up denying access to the market for each other instead of expansion, which is the overriding consideration behind forging a free market area.

India should shun the idea of automatic trigger safeguard mechanism. Instead, it needs to focus more on requiring member countries to refrain from giving subsidies, including "hidden" (as China does by making fuel, power and other inputs subsidised for enterprises) so that a situation of selling commodities at below cost (or dumping in plain words) in other members' markets is avoided. Further, it should insist on stricter and transparent rules of origin to ensure that China does not use other members' territories to flood the Indian market (it is learnt that our negotiators have not done enough home work in this area).

Fourth, India is opposing the demand of other members to seek trade concessions in its domestic space. Termed as "ratchet" in trade terminology, the concept implies that any policy changes will be automatically com-

mitted under RCEP agreement to all members after a fixed period. While, India is willing to give concessions in the services and investment segment, developed countries are pushing for similar concessions in goods trade as well.

Fifth, India is also not comfortable with the "standstill" clause, which binds a member to the current level of domestic liberalisation in services; hence can't be reversed in future. For instance, if the Modi Government wishes to withdraw the 51 per cent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in multi-brand retail, which was allowed earlier in 2012 by the UPA dispensation, it won't be able to do so.

Having taken a policy decision in the overall interest of our economy, there is nothing wrong in staying with it to ensure stability of the policy environment.

Finally, India has offered to phase out Customs Duty on imports from China on nearly 74 per cent of the tariff lines (jargon for a product as defined in lists of tariff rates; products can be sub-divided, the level of detail reflected in the number of digits in the Harmonised System code used to identify the product) as against 90 per cent of tariff lines on imports from all other members. China refused to join negotiations on this offer which it considers highly restrictive.

To sum up, India's approach to negotiations on RCEP is overly protectionist. Barring shifting the reference date for undertaking tariff phase out to 2019, in all other areas, the Government's stand is not tenable. It is borne out of the fear that joining the group will devastate our farmers and small-scale industries at the current juncture when the economy is in the grip of a slowdown. Its worry is more on account of a flood of imports from China. This fear is unfounded.

First, under the agreement, tariff elimination is mooted over a reasonably long period of up to 20 years and it should be possible to backload most of it, especially on sensitive items. Any apprehension of an adverse effect in the near-term is misplaced. The Government should not allow its decision to be obliterated by the present state of the economy.

Second, the handicap of domestic industry is more due to local factors such as the high cost of power, fuel (currently, neither is under the Goods and Services Tax, which means suppliers are not eligible for Input Tax Credit resulting in a cascading effect on cost. Besides, the excise duty and Value Added Tax are also high), logistics, capital and so on. If only these costs are lowered, "Made in India" products can compete with the lowest priced goods from anywhere in the world.

Third, we also need to look at the potential that China offers for boosting India's exports. The Chinese economy is undergoing a metaphorical transformation from export-driven (until hitherto) to domestic consumption and from industry to services. According to an estimate, China has plans to import goods and services worth \$12 trillion over five years. India should tap this potential market.

Keeping in mind the criticality of being an integral part of the global supply chain to achieve a \$5 trillion economy, India needs to reconsider its decision. The Government should shed its present tough stance on MFN, safeguard mechanism, "standstill" and "ratchet." On the offer to China, this may be improved to 80-85 per cent (from the 74 per cent already on the table). With a flexible mindset, it should consider joining RCEP which is expected to be sealed in March 2020.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

Answer to power woes blowing in the wind?

The speed at which India is progressing on its wind energy agenda is not encouraging, whereas the targets the country has set itself are very ambitious. Why is there such a major disconnect between plan and action?



KOTA SRIRAJ

Many environmental sceptics will write off wind energy as a resource that has literally gone with the wind and rightly so, as India still has a long way to go before it can say that wind power has come to play a pivotal role in becoming the alternate source to fossil fuels.

Having said this, wind energy obviously cannot be written off as it has tremendous potential that is just waiting to be tapped. The specific circumstances in India are not able to create an enabling environment for the full-fledged harnessing of this amazing pollution-free sustainable and renewable power resource.

The speed at which India is progressing on its wind energy agenda is not encouraging whereas the targets the country has set itself are very ambitious.

Why is there such a major disconnect between plan and action? Is it due to the lack of a cohesive vision?

For instance, India has set an ambitious target of achieving 175 gigawatt (GW) renewable energy capacity by 2022. As per the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy's figures, at the end of 2018, India had an installed capacity of 35 GW. Hence, the jump from 35 GW to 175 GW by 2022 sure looks ambitious and maybe a tad unachievable, not because the target is high but because there is an absence of aggressive policy-backed implementation efforts and initiatives to achieve the same.

The world is witnessing a major shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy, mainly due to the rising awareness regarding their ill-effects.

Thanks to this awakening, the cost of renewable energy infrastructure is coming down rapidly elsewhere in the world, but in India this fall in installation rates is not translating into renewed enthusiasm for wind energy and this is concerning. The full potential of wind energy, if and when harnessed, has the ability to mitigate climate change and pollution together. In our renewable energy sector, the emphasis on grand plans and commitments is given primary importance, whereas time-bound execution of projects is sorely missing. Yet another pressing factor is going to make reliance on renewable energy compulsory sooner than later. According to a



study by the Indian Statistical Institute, the projected domestic social cost of coal-based power generation will be too high by 2024-25. This will necessitate reduction in building of new coal-based power plants and render the operations of the existing ones unviable. At a time such as this, a fully-developed portfolio of renewable energy options will be able to shoulder the burden of India's energy demand. However, this portfolio, with a robust GW capacity cannot happen overnight and needs a sufficient run up, which is not happening in the country today.

Senior environmentalists and policymakers must understand that

though time is short, it is also ripe for harnessing wind energy. This is because the technology is available and energy storage is improving exponentially as a lot of innovation is taking place. Hence, it will be much more easy to adopt wind energy today than ever before.

Wind energy cannot be seen as a back-up resource or a plan B. Renewable power sources, especially the trio of solar, wind and hydro power are going to be the mainstay of the future energy sector of the country. To make this happen India must invest appropriately also.

According to the estimates of the US-based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), the country will require \$500 to \$700 billion in renewable energy and supporting grid investment over the coming decade in order to meet its renewable energy targets. Some immediate steps can go a long way to counter the wind ener-

gy generation slowdown.

India must first, bring policy consensus and ensure that implementation and execution remain the strong points of its policy. Also, a monthly monitoring of the hurdles being faced by the renewable energy sector will help in smooth scaling up of the wind energy portfolio.

In addition to this, the authorities may want to prepare a compelling mix of wind and solar energy generation options for small and medium investors as this will raise awareness and present a major business opportunity too. The proper and viable storage of energy is an ongoing issue, which needs to be taken care of as well.

Wind energy has a potential that is still waiting to be tapped and India can easily sail through any future energy crisis only if it has got the wind in its sails.

(The writer is an environmental journalist.)



FOREIGN EYE



BEIJING NEEDS TO STEP BACK A LITTLE

John Tsang, Hong Kong's former financial secretary, defeated by Carrie Lam for the chief executive's post, has said that given the imbalance of power between protesters and the Chinese Government, the latter must take the initiative to de-escalate the force it is using. Coming from a pro-establishment figure it is a striking statement. Yet it will almost certainly go unheard by Beijing.

(The Guardian editorial)

CAPSULE



Britannia Ind shares gain 5 pc after robust Q2 earnings

NEW DELHI: Shares of Britannia Industries on Wednesday jumped almost 5 per cent after the company posted 32.90 per cent rise in consolidated net profit for the quarter ended September. At close of trade, the scrip moved up 4.94 per cent to close at Rs 3,270.25 on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 5.86 per cent to Rs 3,299. At the NSE, it gained 4.84 per cent to close at Rs 3,270.75. The food company on Monday posted 32.90 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 402.73 crore for the quarter ended September 30, 2019. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 303.03 crore for the July-September period a year ago, Britannia Industries said in a BSE filing. Net sales were up 5.88 per cent to Rs 3,022.91 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 2,854.81 crore of the corresponding quarter previous fiscal.



TVS Srichakra posts July-Sep quarter net at Rs 20.26 cr

NEW DELHI: TVS Srichakra Ltd on Wednesday reported a 31.4 per cent decline on its standalone net profits at Rs 20.26 crore for the July-September quarter. The Tamil Nadu-based tyre manufacturer had recorded net profits at Rs 29.57 crore during corresponding quarter of previous year. TVS Srichakra Ltd said in a BSE filing. For the half year ending September 30, 2019 standalone net profits was at Rs 46.51 crore, as compared to Rs 63.53 crore recorded same period last fiscal. The standalone total income for the quarter under review was at Rs 546.72 crore as against Rs 636.49 crore registered a year ago.



Adani Green Energy Q2 profit at Rs 102 cr

NEW DELHI: Adani Green Energy on Wednesday posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 102 crore profit for the September quarter of 2019-20. The company reported a loss of Rs 188 crore in the year-ago period, a BSE filing said. Total income rose to Rs 711.96 crore in the second quarter from Rs 458.89 crore a year ago. "Adani Green Energy continues to expand and invest in the renewables spectrum following the government's mission to be the world's largest renewable energy expansion programme of 175GW till 2022. The company will continue to provide reliable, sustainable, round the clock green power for India's growing power demands and needs," Chairman Gautam Adani said in a statement.

Nita on the board of Metropolitan Museum of Art

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Philanthropist and Chairperson of the Reliance Foundation Nita Ambani has been elected to the board of the prestigious Metropolitan Museum of Art here for her "truly exceptional" commitment to preserve and promote India's art and culture.

Chairman Daniel Brodsky of the museum, considered as the largest and most visited art museums in

the world, announced that Nita has been named its Honorary Trustee. Her election took place at the meeting of the board on Tuesday.

Welcoming Nita, 56, to the board, Brodsky, in a statement, said that her "commitment to The Met and to preserving and promoting India's art and culture is truly exceptional. Her support has an enormous impact on the museum's ability to study and display art from every corner of the world."

Chairman Daniel Brodsky of the museum, considered as the largest and most visited art museums in the world, announced that Nita has been named its Honorary Trustee

Nita, wife of Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani, is also the Founder the Reliance Foundation, which has supported The Met since 2016, beginning with the exhibition 'Nasreen Mohamedi', which was the first museum retrospective of the artist's work in the United States and was also one of The

Met Breuer's inaugural exhibitions.

She is also a member of The Met's International Council. The museum had announced in October 2017 that the Reliance Foundation promised a "generous gift" to support exhibitions that explore and celebrate the arts of India. It had not stated the amount of the gift.

The museum had then described Nita and Mukesh as "great champions of The Met."

In a statement made at the time of the announcement of the gift in 2017, Nita had said that India has a rich heritage of art and culture that can be traced back to the fourth century B.C.

She had said that the Foundation aims to recognize and promote the "valuable tradition" by offering opportunities and platforms for Indian art not only within the country but at various institutions around the globe as well.

"This partnership with The Met enables Indian art to be shown at an iconic institution and further encourages us to

continue our work in the art world," she had said then.

The first exhibition to benefit from the Foundation's gift was 'Modernism on the Ganges: Raghbir Singh Photographs' that ran from October 2017 till January 2018, followed by 'Phenomenal Nature: Mrinalini Mukherjee' (June-September 2019). This exhibition marked the first comprehensive display of the renowned Indian sculptor's work in the United States.



BUDGET 2020

FM wants suggestions to rationalise income tax, duties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In perhaps the first instance, the finance ministry has kicked off the exercise to formulate the next budget by seeking suggestions on changes in direct and indirect taxes from industry and trade associations.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who had to announce additional measures to stimulate a slowing economy within a month of her maiden budget being approved by Parliament, is due to present the annual budget for the financial year 2020-21 on February 1.

While the ministry holds pre-budget consultations with representatives of different sectors and stakeholders, the Department of Revenue in the finance ministry perhaps for the first time put out circular seeking suggestions for changes in income tax rates for both individuals and corporates as well as in indirect taxes such as excise and customs duty.

The November 11 circular asked industry and trade associations to give "suggestions for changes in the duty structure, rates and broadening of tax base on both direct and indirect taxes giving economic



After her maiden budget on July 5, Sitharaman on September 20 announced a cut in corporate income taxes for domestic companies to 22 per cent from 30 per cent previously

justification for the same." "Your suggestions and views may be supplemented and justified by relevant statistical information about the production, prices, revenue implication of the changes suggested and any other information to support your proposal," it said.

After her maiden budget on July 5, Sitharaman on September 20 announced a cut in corporate income taxes for domestic companies to 22 per cent from 30 per cent previously. This would bring effective corporate tax rate, including all additional levies, to

about 25.2 per cent, for companies which are not receiving any incentives or exemptions.

New manufacturing companies formed after October 1 will enjoy a 15 per cent (effective rate of 17 per cent) corporate income tax rate, against 25 per cent previously.

The move is estimated to result in Rs 1.45 lakh crore in revenue loss for the government during 2019-20.

Subsequent to this, there have been demands for a reduction in income tax rates for individuals as well so as to put more money in the hands of the common man for a consumption-led revival of the economy. India's economic growth had slipped to a six-year low of 5 per cent in the April-June quarter and the revival may take a few quarters despite announcements to boost real estate and financial sectors.

"As regards direct taxes, while forwarding your proposals, please take into consideration the recent initiatives of the government to reduce corporate tax rates applicable to domestic companies" provided they do not avail of any other tax rebate or concession, the orders said.



ClearTax aims for Rs 100 cr biz from online GST course

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Financial Technology firm ClearTax has rolled out an online GST course with plans to generate Rs 100 crore business by March 2020.

The company has set a target of training 75,000 tax professionals, and more than 2 lakh businesses through new e-learning course in partnership with online education platform Udemy.

"We expect to train 75,000 tax professionals, and more than 2 lakh businesses by our new e-learning course by the end of March 2020, before the launch of the new GST return filing system. This course comes at a cost of Rs 4,800. However the company is currently giving a discount of 25 per cent till December 31," ClearTax founder and CEO Archit Gupta told PTI.

At discounted rate and full enrolment rate, back of the envelope calculation shows that the company will be able to generate business of Rs 100 crore.

Sensex tumbles 229 pts amid weak macro data

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Benchmark BSE Sensex on Wednesday dived 229 points as concerns over poor macro data and confusion over US-China trade deal persisted.

Further, continued unrest in Hong Kong led to fall in regional markets, also impacting sentiment on Indian bourses.

A sharp depreciation in the Indian rupee too added to investors' woes, traders said. The rupee dropped below the 72-level against the US dollar in intra-day trade.

After gyrating 386 points during the day, the 30-share Sensex ended 229.02 points, or 0.57 per cent, lower at 40,116.06.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty fell 73 points, or 0.61 per cent, to end at 11,840.45.

Yes Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack cracking 6.51 per cent, followed by SBI, Axis Bank, Vedanta, Sun Pharma, ICICI Bank, IndusInd Bank, ITC, Infosys and Tech Mahindra, shedding up to 3.69 per cent.

On the other hand, TCS, RIL, HUL, Maruti and NTPC rose up to 3.76 per cent.

Posing questions over the much-anticipated truce deal,



After gyrating 386 points during the day, the 30-share Sensex ended 229.02 points, or 0.57 per cent, lower at 40,116.06

US President Donald Trump dubbed China a cheater on trade even as he seeks an initial settlement to calm an 18-month trade war, adding to the uncertainty over the deal between the two countries.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul settled up to 1.82 per cent lower violent protests in Hong Kong.

Exchanges in Europe were also trading in the red in their respective early deals.

'Govt to push OSH Code for passage in Budget session'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government will push Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code in the Budget session of Parliament for approval, said Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar on Wednesday.

The Code was introduced in the Lok Sabha on July 23, 2019. It is expected to enhance the coverage of workers manifold and also merge 13 central labour laws into a single code which would apply to all establishments employing 10 or more workers.

It will subsume 13 labour laws relating to safety, health and working conditions. These include the Factories Act, 1948, the Mines Act, 1952, and the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.

"We will definitely bring the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2019, in the Budget Session.



Santosh Gangwar

We will definitely bring the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2019, in the Budget Session

SANTOSH GANGWAR

Labour Minister

Parliamentary standing committee has sought public comments on the Code," the minister told reporter on the sidelines of an event of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC).

Indian Hotels shares climb 6% on Q2 profit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Indian Hotels Company on Wednesday climbed over 6 per cent after it reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 69.30 cr for the second quarter ended September.

The company's stock rallied 6.08 per cent to close at Rs 155.40 on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 7.84 per cent to Rs 158.

At the NSE, it gained 6.17 per cent to close at Rs 155.60.

In traded volume terms, 2.35 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 48 lakh shares on the NSE during the day.

The Tata Group firm on Monday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 69.30 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2019.

It had posted a loss of Rs 5.57 crore in July-September period a year ago, Indian Hotels Company Ltd (IHCL) said in a filing to the BSE.

Total income rose 4.83 per cent to Rs 1,028.57 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 981.15 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal.

'Engineering exports decline 6 pc in Sep'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Falling for the fourth straight month, India's engineering exports declined over 6 per cent to USD 6.36 billion in September as against USD 6.77 billion in the same month last fiscal, EEPC India said on Wednesday.

The country's engineering shipments contribute 25 per cent to the overall merchandise exports.

A clearly visible global slow-



down is biting engineering exports, suffering setbacks in almost all major destinations

The country's engineering shipments contribute 25 per cent to the overall merchandise exports

including the US, European Union, Middle East, South Asia or even CIS countries, with September shipments conceding fourth straight

monthly decline and fifth in fiscal 2019-20, the engineering exporters body said.

Engineering exports from the country witnessed over 6 per cent decline in September, dropping in all months of fiscal 2019-20 barring May, it added.

In September 2019, shipment of Indian engineering products stood at USD 6.36 billion as against USD 6.77 billion.

ABB India Jul-Sep net profit soars to Rs 79 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

ABB India's standalone net profit more than doubled to Rs 79 crore in the quarter ended September 30, 2019, mainly due to higher revenues.

The company follows January to December financial year.

ABB India had posted a net profit of Rs 36 crore in the quarter ended September 30, 2018, a BSE filing said.

Total revenue of the company rose to Rs 1,746 crore in July-September from Rs 1,492 crore in the year-ago quarter. The company's total orders



rose 5 per cent year-on-year (YoY) to Rs 1,606 crore.

Service orders were up 16 per cent YoY led by process improvement and production optimisation initiatives when private capex continues to

lag, the company said in a statement.

While electrification and motion businesses continued the solid growth pattern, robotics and discrete automation and industrial automation are facing challenges in navigating sectoral headwinds, it added.

The quarter was also marked by orders for smart cities in Ranchi and the ancient city of Ujjain for smart power distribution equipment like compact substations and ring main units. A steel major also placed a significant order on electrification ArTuK panels.



Javadekar takes charge as Heavy Industries Minister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prakash Javadekar on Wednesday took charge as the Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, two days after Shiv Sena leader Arvind Sawant resigned from the Union Cabinet.

Javadekar also holds information & broadcasting, and environment, forest and climate change portfolios.

Speaking to reporters here, Javadekar said he hoped the additional charge was for a temporary period and there will be a regular arrangement in place thereafter.

"I have assumed charge of heavy industries and the related ministries. I hope it's for temporary period because there will be a regular arrangement thereafter. But, as I was asked I have assumed the charge and will start functioning right from today (Wednesday)," Javadekar told reporters.

Global stocks sink after Trump threatens more China tariffs

PNS ■ BEIJING

Global stocks sank Wednesday after President Donald Trump threatened more tariff hikes on Chinese imports if talks aimed at ending a trade war fail to produce an interim agreement.

Market benchmarks in London, Frankfurt, Shanghai and Tokyo declined.

Trump said Tuesday that an agreement on the "Phase 1" deal announced last month "could happen soon." But he warned he was ready to raise tariffs "very substantially" if that fails.

The two sides disagree publicly about whether

Washington agreed to roll back some punitive tariffs imposed in the fight over Beijing's trade surplus and technology ambitions. The Chinese government said last week that was settled, but Trump denied that.

Trump's comments "served as a reminder of the challenge that the two sides face," said Jingyi Pan of IG in a report. However, she said, investors saw them as "positioning statements," reducing their impact.

Wall Street closed Tuesday with modest gains. In early trading, London's FTSE 100 declined 0.4 per cent to 7,338.51 and Frankfurt's DAX lost 0.5 per cent to



13,222.13. France's CAC 40 shed 0.5 per cent to 5,888.55. Wall Street, futures for the benchmark Standard & Poor's 500 index and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were down 0.3 per cent. In Asia, the Shanghai

Trump's comments "served as a reminder of the challenge that the two sides face," said Jingyi Pan of IG in a report. However, she said, investors saw them as "positioning statements," reducing their impact

Composite Index lost 0.3 per cent to 2,905.24 and Tokyo's Nikkei 225 sank 0.9 per cent to 23,319.87. Hong Kong's Hang Seng tumbled 1.8 per cent to 26,571.46.

South Korea's Kospi retreated 0.9 per cent to 2,122.45 and Australia's S&P-ASX 200 sank

0.8 per cent at 6,698.40. India's Sensex lost 0.3 per cent to 40,215.20. Taiwan, New Zealand and Singapore declined.

Hong Kong shares, already under pressure from the US-China tariff war and slowing global demand, have been jolt-

ed by growing violence in anti-government protests.

The protests began in June over a proposed extradition law and expanded to include demands for greater democracy and other grievances. Hong Kong tumbled into its first recession in a decade in the latest quarter.

On Tuesday, the S&P 500 ended up 0.2 per cent while the Dow was unchanged. The Nasdaq gained 0.3 per cent to a record.

Momentum for the market has been mostly upward for more than five weeks as worries about the US-China trade war have eased.

While Nehru is remembered on November 14, people often skip looking into the prevalence of another important issue in society, that is, the rise in the number of diabetes cases involving children, writes ANUSHKA PRADEEP

'BURN FAT AWAY TO KEEP DIABETES AT BAY'



A RAPID CHANGE IN THE INCIDENCE, WITHIN A GENETICALLY STABLE POPULATION, IMPLIES THAT NON-GENETIC FACTORS ARE ACTIVE AND THAT THE INFLUENCE OF GENES IS RELATIVE TO POPULATION, TIME, AND PLACE. IT SUGGESTS THAT SOMETHING HAS CHANGED IN THE ENVIRONMENT OUR CHILDREN ENCOUNTER OR IN THE WAY THEY ARE REARED

Many people know that Children's Day is celebrated on November 14 in memory of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. But a lesser-known fact is that November 14 is also commemorated as World Diabetes Day. The co-occurrence of both days is symbolic as there has been a rise in the number of children having diabetes.

In the early 20th-century, childhood diabetes was incredibly rare. This was followed by a steep rise in the number of recorded cases during the mid-20th century and the trend has been rising since.

"People with Type-1 diabetes need to take insulin every day to stay alive while Type-2 diabetes is when the body doesn't make or use insulin well. A recent study has found that the rate of diabetes in children and teens rose between the years 2002 to 2012. The researchers reported an increase in the rates of both Type-1 and Type-2 diabetes," states *NIH (News In Health)* a monthly newsletter.

But what may be the cause behind children being affected by diabetes at such early stages of their life? In answer to this question, Dr Lakshman, Professor,

Department of Community Medicine, Osmania Medical College, said, "As time passes, each generation is less likely to avail fresh, natural food. The food given to children since their childhood is more often than not lined with saturated fats, artificial sugars etc. Certain toxic chemicals are branded as edible as well. Such foods may lead to several diseases. Diabetes may be a more prevalent disease but it's just one of the several diseases this generation faces, most of which are food-borne."

The changing demography of childhood diabetes has major implications for our understanding of the disease. A rapid change in the incidence, within a genetically stable population, implies that non-genetic factors are active and that the influence of genes is relative to population, time, and place. It suggests that something has changed in the environment our children encounter or in the way they are reared.

"Being overweight is closely tied to the development of Type-2 diabetes. Overweight children have an increased likelihood of insulin resistance. As the body struggles to regulate insulin, high blood sugar leads to a number of potentially serious health problems," says Dr Deepa

Agarwal, Chief Nutritionist at Tanvir Hospital.

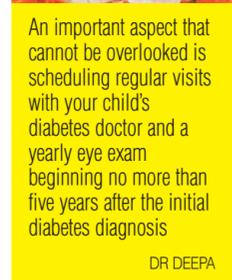
Responding to the future complications that children could face due to the onset of diabetes at a young age she said, "Heart and blood vessel diseases such as coronary artery disease with chest pain (angina), heart attack, stroke, narrowing of the arteries (atherosclerosis) and high blood pressure later in life for one. Nerve damage is yet another problem. Excess sugar can injure the walls of the tiny blood vessels that nourish your child's nerves, especially in the legs. This causes tingling, numbness, burning sensation and even pain. Nerve damage usually happens over a long period of time. Kidney damage, eye damage, skin conditions, osteoporosis are other possible problems that may accompany diabetes in the future."

She adds, "Helping your child maintain good blood sugar is very important. Also, teaching your child the importance of eating healthy and participating in regular physical activity goes a long way. Another important aspect that cannot be overlooked is scheduling regular visits with your child's diabetes doctor and a yearly eye exam beginning no more than five years after the initial diabetes diagnosis."



The food given to children since their childhood is more often than not lined with saturated fats, artificial sugars etc. Certain toxic chemicals are branded as edible as well. Such foods may lead to several diseases

DR LAKSHMAN



An important aspect that cannot be overlooked is scheduling regular visits with your child's diabetes doctor and a yearly eye exam beginning no more than five years after the initial diabetes diagnosis

DR DEEPA

than five years after the initial diabetes diagnosis. "Public health/community medicine is an important subject that is provided in several medical fields but in most cases, it is taken very

lightly. Public health-incharges are meant to be incorporated into policymaking. This is a major issue that I wish policymakers look into," concludes Dr Lakshman.

Theatre at your DOORSTEP

Bhoomika Theatre Group has come up with an innovative concept called 'Theatre at your doorstep' to stage socially relevant plays that reach a wider audience, finds V SATEESH REDDY

Theatre, as an art form has undergone various changes over the years with changes in cultures and advancements in technology. Gone are the days when theatre groups used to travel various places to stage socially relevant plays. In the early 1900s, street plays played a key role in spreading awareness among people.

Later came cultural centres where one could watch socially relevant plays. But, with technology making everything simpler and right at our fingertips, people stopped going out to watch these plays. This has resulted in a reduction in the audience members at theatres.

Bhoomika Theatre Group has found an innovative solution to this issue by coming up with a new concept called Mungitlo Naatakam (Theatre at your doorstep), where the group visits various colonies in the city and stages plays.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Udaya Bhanu Garikapati, director of the group, said, "Theatre today is diminishing and people have forgotten the charm of seeing stories come to life in front of them as a live performance. Even if people are interested to go watch plays, the sheer time and energy it takes to travel in traffic discourages many. So to bring back that magic we came up with *Mungitlo Naatakam*."

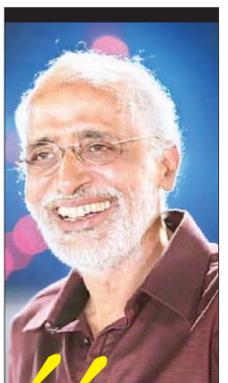
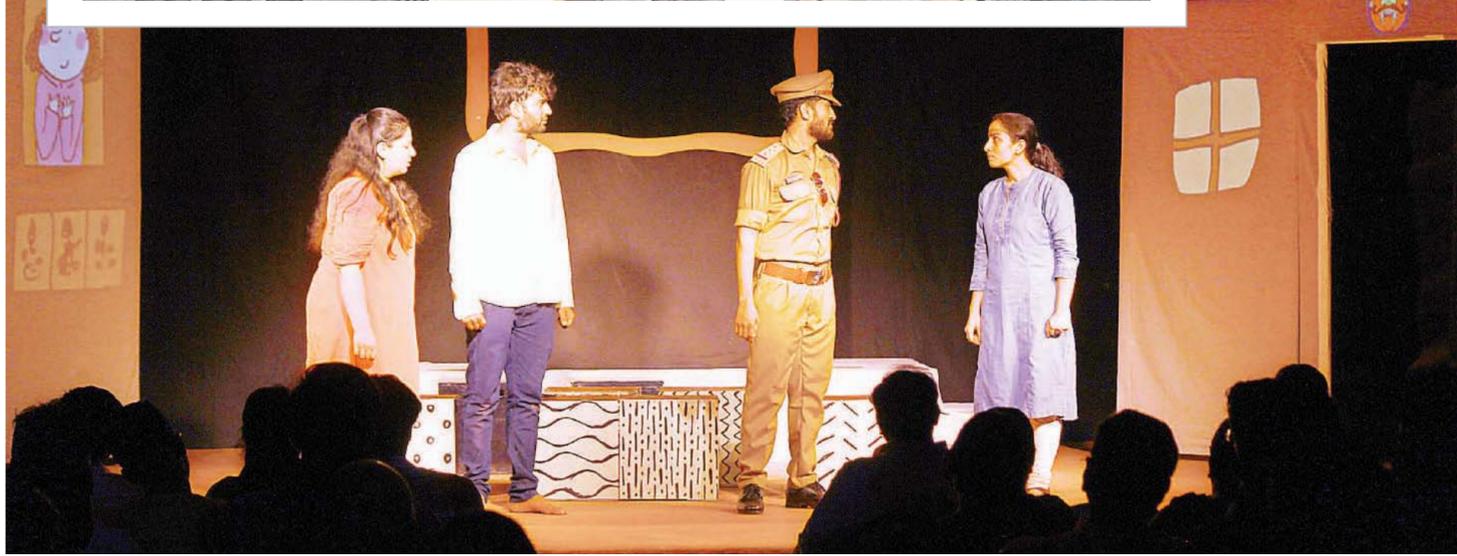
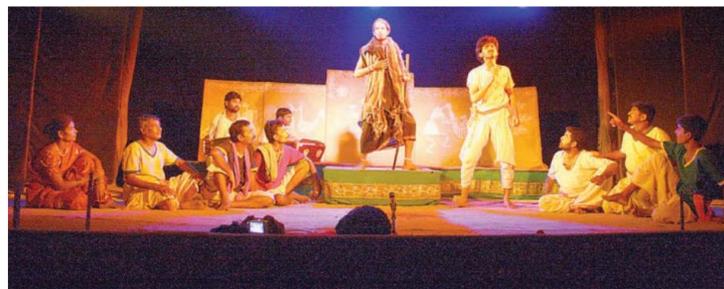
However, this is not the first time the group has tried to introduce this concept. He shares, "This concept was introduced by us in the early 2000's, where we travelled to different colonies and societies in Hyderabad and performed plays in community centres and halls. This year, we are bringing it back to help you experience the joy and magic of theatre without hassles like travelling or purchasing costly tickets."

When they started staging plays at colonies, they used to distribute pamphlets about what they were going to perform a day before and invite people for the show. Usually they stage plays on Sundays and disseminate the information on Saturdays.

Udaya Bhanu said that the idea is to get the theatre audience back to the people. All they need is power supply and an area to perform. The rest is taken care of by them. Bhoomika Theatre Group specialises in theatre for children and has staged many plays for them.

Udaya Bhanu shares, "This attempt is to get more audience as the audience has been decreasing every year due to traffic and distance. I believe that many will have the chance to watch plays thanks to this initiative."

People who want to witness live theatre at their colonies can contact at bhoomikatheatre@gmail.com



Theatre today is diminishing and people have forgotten the charm of seeing stories come to life in front of them as a live performance. Even if people are interested to go watch plays, the sheer time and energy it takes to travel in traffic discourages many. So to bring back that magic we came up with Mungitlo Naatakam

UDAYA BHANU GARIKAPATI

what's brewing?

PARTY

STARRY AFFAIR

Celebrities had a gala time at the 3rd anniversary celebrations of the Myron Homes recently. Music composer RP Patnaik and singer Simha enthralled the guests with their songs followed by a lunch with wide-spread menu of food and drinks.



● Rakesh Varre



● Manjusha



● Anuradha



● Maruthi



● RP Patnaik



● Keerthi



JOYOUS RITUAL

Take-mixing ritual is known as a harbinger of good tidings and happiness. Mercure Hyderabad KCP recently celebrated its annual fruit 'Soak & Mix' ceremony with great pride to usher in the festive season. Guests at the event were entertained with lovely music and delicious food.

Photos by SV Chary

CITY GUIDE

ART AND SPORTS

BRAVE 30 - AN MMA EVENT

India's biggest MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) event is back in Hyderabad. Mercury presents to you the *Brave 30*, at GMC Balayogi Sports Complex. Popular MMA athletes from across the globe will fight it out on the arena on November 23.



WORKSHOP ON PUPPET THEATRE

Leather puppetry workshop is the shadow theatre tradition of AP, Telangana and parts of Karnataka. Stories from epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata will be enacted. The workshop by B. Raju of Nimmalakunta leather puppetry, will be held on November 20 at Alliance Francaise.



THEATRE

JOD TOD

Jod Tod, a Hindi play presented by Kalayan Theatre group from Bengaluru, is a fulfilled crackling comedy about quintessential relationships and its complications. This light hearted fulfilled play will be held at Lamakaan on November 30 at 7.30 pm.



INDRAJAL

The play *INDRAJAL* is one of the masterpieces of Hindi writer Jai Shankar Prasad. It is a love story between Bela and Goli, members of a travelling community who dream of devoting their entire life to each other and how different reflections of our society play a role. It will be held at Pheonix Arena on November 16 at 7.30 pm.



MY FATHER - HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS

A play based on the life of the last Nizam of Hyderabad, once the richest man on the planet. It delves into his relationship with his daughter Shehzadi Pasha with the turmoil of accession looming in the background. It was written by Noor Baig and directed by Mohammad Ali Baig. It will be held on November 15 at Ravindra Bharathi.



MELANGE

STEPPIN OUT NIGHT MARKET

The Steppin Out Night Market, Christmas Edition in association with CRED Experiences, will be held at Hotel Taj Krishna. It's a one-step gateway to the world of fashion with clothing, jewellery, home decor, and lots more which will be held on December 14.



ARIJIT - LIVE PERFORMANCE



My music, my country is bringing in Arijit Singh for a live performance. It was initiated by Hyderabad Talks as a platform for gifted Indian artists and to re-introduce the ethnicity of Indian music. The event will take place on November 23 at Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium.

FLUTE RECITAL



Surmandal and ICCR in association with Rithwik Foundation, Economic Committee is presenting a flute recital by Shashank and vocal recital by Jayateertha Mevundi accompanied by Sateesh (Mridangam), Ojas Adhla (Tabla) and Vyasmurthy Katti (Harmonium) on November 17 at Gandhi Centenary Hall, Exhibition Grounds from 6 pm onwards.

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

FUN TIME

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



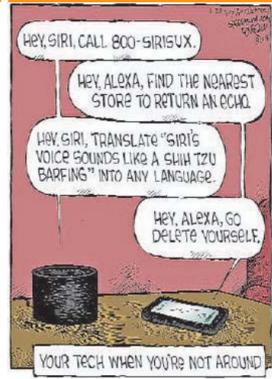
GARFIELD



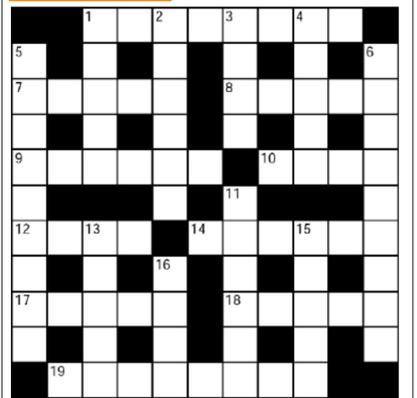
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

- Long pants
- Correct
- Untrue
- Someone who lives alone, keeping away from others
- Costing nothing
- Shortly
- Thief
- Lift up
- Think the same way
- Huge

DOWN

- A large wild cat
- Get
- Out of danger

4 Draw a straight line with this

- A large group of musicians who play together
- Practised
- A root vegetable
- A smelly vegetable
- Destroys by fire
- Expensive

SOLUTION



GINGER MEGGS





Rajasekhar escapes unhurt in road mishap on ORR

Actor Rajasekhar had a narrow escape after his black Mercedes met with an accident late on Tuesday night at Hyderabad's Outer Ring Road (ORR) near Pedda Golconda. He sustained a minor cut on his forehead. He was on his way back to home from Ramoji Film City and was travelling alone when the mishap took place.

As rumours spread thick and fast that he sustained multiple injuries, the actor issued a statement on Wednesday morning, saying he was safe and that he informed the police about the incident before reaching home.

Recalling the incident, he said, "On Tuesday night, while I was returning to home from Ramoji Film City via Outer Ring Road, I met with an accident at the Golconda Appa Junction. Seeing the condition of my vehicle, commuters on the road came to my rescue and brought me out of the vehicle. They recognised me as an actor. I borrowed their phone and immediately informed the police and my family members."

Blaming flat tyre as the cause of accident, Rajasekhar's wife Jeevitha said, as soon he returned home, his doctor friend examined him and said the condition of Rajasekhar was okay. "He was given first aid to the cut on his

forehead and advised some pain killers. The police asked me to give a statement after Rajasekhar recovers and we would be doing it soon," Jeevitha said.

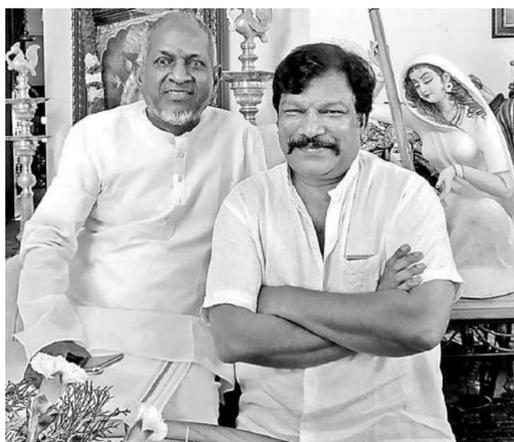
Rajasekhar is not new to road accidents. More than two years ago when his career was not going great guns, he met with an accident, hitting another car in the process. When reports emerged that he was driving under the influence of alcohol, he said he was on anti-depression pills as he was recovering from the death of his mother.

Incidentally, three challans are pending on his car (TS 07 FZ 1234) for over speeding and dangerous driving.



Ilaiyaraaja, Krishna Vamsi RE-TEAM AFTER 21 YEARS

After announcing that a remake is being made on Marathi super hit *Natsamrat* in Telugu as *Ranga Marthaanda* with Prakash Raj and Ramya Krishna last month, filmmaker Krishna Vamsi has now signed on maestro Ilaiyaraaja to compose music. This would be the second time the famed tunesmith will be rendering music for a film of Krishna Vamsi. They've earlier created magic with *Anthapuram* in 1998. One of the film's songs, *Asalem gurthuku raadu...* is still a favourite for many.



Going by his latest tweets, the filmmaker has already started music sessions with the maestro in Chennai. His friend and actor Prakash Raj too accompanied him. "Fortunate n blessed to b associated with the god again for RANGA-MAARTHANDA..... ThQ sir (sic)," wrote Krishna Vamsi on Twitter on Tuesday evening. A source says Ranga Marthaanda required composer of Ilaiyaraaja's stature and both Vamsi and Prakash Raj are glad that the Padma Vibhushan

recipient is on board. The film is a joint production venture between Abhishek Jawkar and Madhu Kalipu, with Vamsi's another best friend Uttej tasked to adapt the script to Telugu tastes.

Natsamrat (2016) told the story of a veteran Shakespearean actor (played by Nana Patekar) who retires from

the stage and into painful tragedy of old age, facing ungrateful family and his fleeting legacy. The film was the screen adaptation of noted Marathi playwright Kusumagraj's iconic Marathi play *Natsamrat* which was first staged in 1970. Prakash Raj will be stepping into the shoes of Patekar.

GOT MORE THAN WHAT I ASKED FOR: Hansika on her career

Actress Hansika talks to NAGARAJ GOUD about her role in *Tenali Ramakrishna BA BL*, her packed schedule with many Tamil movies in the kitty, the choice of stories she's looking, etc.,

Hansika Motwani is an easy-going person who enjoys comedies and popcorn entertainers in real life, so when an opportunity to be a part of a full-length entertainer like *Tenali Ramakrishna BA BL* came her way, there was no way that she could've overlooked it. In the courtroom crime comedy slated to hit theatres tomorrow, she plays a lawyer. "She's a flop with her profession. She thinks of herself as a big lawyer but isn't. All the sections that she reels out in the film turn out to be factually incorrect. She chooses the profession because of her father who is renowned lawyer. She is innocent. How *Tenali* helps her and how she supports him later in a case is what the film deals with," Hansika shares.

Smiling wide, she adds, "If not an actor, I would've been a lawyer in real life. When I was pursuing my 11th standard, a thought that I should pursue law crossed my mind as I was good at arguing. But I'm glad that I've become an actor and I'm extremely happy with my profession."

Talking about profession, how does she look back at her 12-year journey till now? "I got better than what I asked for. I'm happy with the choices I have made till now but there's a lot more to achieve. This is just the beginning. Work is everything to me and I want to keep entertaining further. I'm not an insecure actress. I come with my own confidence and I know wherever I go, I will

make my mark. I want everyone to do well, so that there is no negativity around me," she asserts.

Of late, she has limited her work in Telugu, making her presence felt in every two years. Her last Telugu film was Gopichand-starrer *Gowtam Nanda* (2017). Is it a conscious decision or is that offers from Telugu have dried up? "I've been extremely busy in Tamil. I have four-five films out there to release. When I have dates and if the content pleases me, language is never a barrier to me. In fact for *Tenali Ramakrishna BA BL*, Nageswara Reddy garu had to wait for my dates but it worked out very well in the end," she clarifies.

The actress was in the news recently for signing *Bhagamathie* director G Ashok's next endeavour, a web series for streaming giant Amazon Prime. She admits she watches a lot of shows on Amazon and Netflix and is glad that she is a part of a web series, as they are the thing now. "It's a thriller which has been mostly shot during nights. My part has different shades to it and it's about how she overcomes big hurdles in her life. I couldn't get a breather at all on sets as I'm spearheading it. Its being shot in Telugu and will be dubbed into other languages.

In another three days, I will complete my portions. It will start streaming early next year," she signs off.



SHOBA RANI to produce original content

Producer Shoba Rani, who has distributed Tamil films like *Thuppakki*, *Billa 2* and *Puli* in Telugu, under her SVR Media, has now shifted focus to producing original content. She is planning to produce five Telugu films next year and has already started groundwork for the

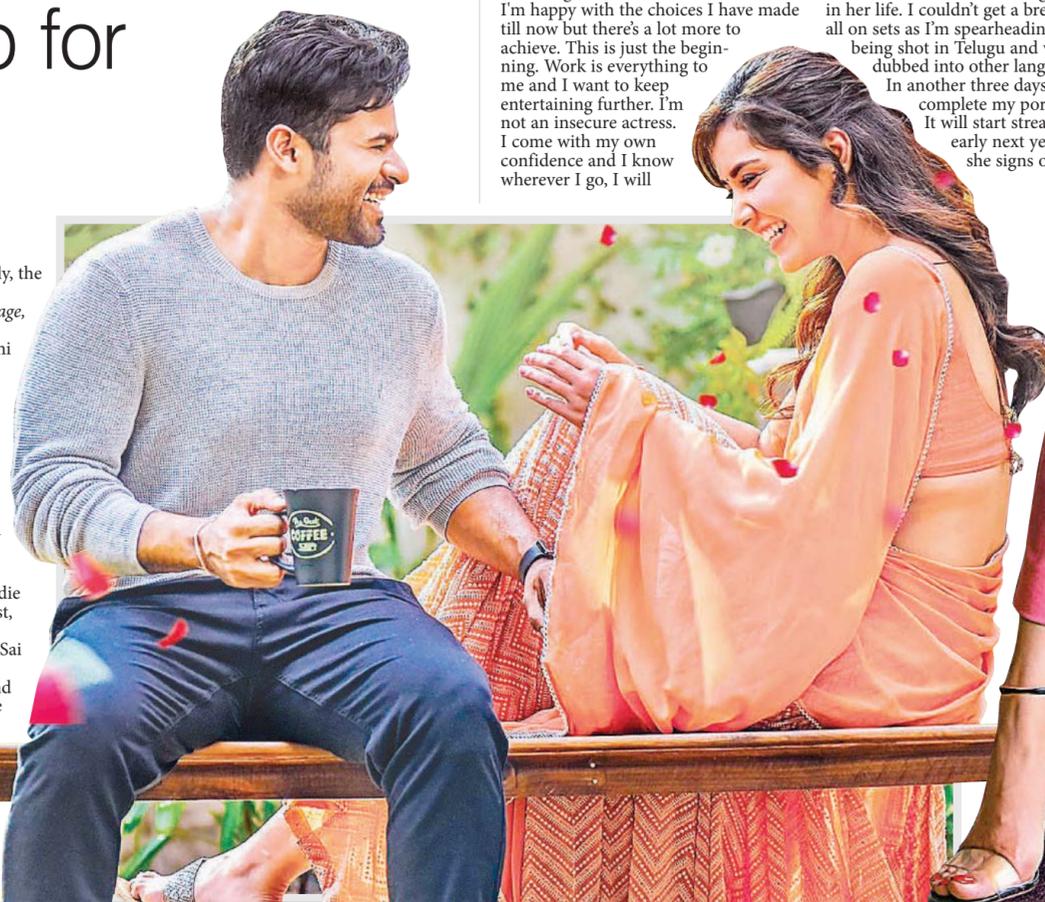
same. The scripts for the five films have been locked, while Shoba is on the hunt for suitable actors and technicians to take them forward. The idea is to encourage fresh talent, she says. Aspiring actors and technicians can reach out to starmaking2020@gmail.com with their profiles to bag a chance in her production ventures.

It's a wrap for Prathiroju Pandage

Having gone to sets earlier this July, the filming of Sai Tej and Raashi Khanna-starrer *Prathiroju Pandage*, except for a song, has been wrapped up. Directed by Maruthi and produced by Bunny Vass, the film is an emotional comedy entertainer, with Satyaraj playing a key supporting role. Recently, the film's unit has been to US to shoot a small schedule. The pending song will be shot soon in picturesque locations.

Speaking about the film, Maruthi had earlier told us, "In my earlier films I mirrored the day-to-day happenings of society in an entertaining way. *Prathiroju Pandage* follows the same template. It's a film which celebrates death. Satyaraj's part is about to die but he believes in living his life to the fullest, celebrating every day and so, the title. It's a story which every household will connect. Sai will be playing his NRI grandson."

The film's promotions have kicked off and from the end of this month; the makers are keen to amp up marketing activity further. With Sai Tej's last *Chitralahari* doing decent business, expectations surrounding this new film, which will open on December 20, are high.



RED ALERT

India aim to build on early World Test Championship lead against Bangladesh

PTI ■ INDORE

The action begins with the red cherry but the focus is firmly on the pink ball as a formidable India looks to overpower a depleted-but-gritty Bangladesh in the first Test of a two-match series starting here at Holkar stadium today.

The rubber opens here but the buzz and the talk has been consistently centered on the second game in Kolkata, which will be played under lights — a historic first for both the teams.

This is also that one series in the World Test Championship calendar, in which Virat Kohli's men, currently in the "pink of form", can steamroll the rag-tag opposition well inside four days.

In fact, on paper, it is difficult to imagine how Bangladesh, without Tamim Iqbal and the suspended Shakib Al Hasan, will even be able to compete in a format, which has been their weakest till date.

Having crushed South Africa in their last series, this Indian team, with inarguably their greatest-ever pace unit till date, will definitely be too hot to handle for a side whose best batsman — skipper Mominul Haque — has less than 10 Test hundreds (eight).

Although Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad are committed cricketers but in the longest format, they aren't exactly formidable names.

Compare that to India's premier willow wielders — Kohli (26 hundreds), Ajinkya Rahane (11), Cheteshwar Pujara (18). They have 50 plus ton collectively and it will be one hell of a task for Mustafizur Rahaman, Taijul Islam and Mehidy Hasan Miraj to stop this line-up.



Indian pacer Ishant Sharma bowls at nets during India's practice session ahead of 1st Test against Bangladesh

India vs Bangladesh
Live from 9:30am IST
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

And before these three even come into play, Bangladesh will have to deal with openers Mayank Agarwal and the indomitable Rohit Sharma, who can make mincemeat of their bowling attack.

Add to it, India's bowling unit with 800-plus scalps, this is one contest where the 'David' looks incapable of slaying the proverbial 'Goliath'.

Not to forget that Bangladesh, in their last Test match under the

mercurial Shakib's leadership, lost to Afghanistan in a one-off game. The Indians, however, do not want to take anything for granted.

"Bangladesh is a very good team. We played very well against South Africa but that's past now. With (World) Test Championship, every match is equally important. We like to take one game at a time which is Indore now," vice-captain Rahane said. "We completely respect the

Bangladesh team and we are going to play to our strength rather than thinking about theirs," he added.

The track at the Holkar stadium has always been a batting paradise with ridiculously short side boundaries but there is bounce on offer.

Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav are certainities in the pace line-up while Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin are expected to make the squad.



Virat Kohli, Wriddhiman Saha, Ravindra Jadeja, Shubman Gill and Umesh Yadav

INDIA-BANGLADESH IN TESTS				
Venue	Played	Ind won	Ban won	Drawn
In B'desh	8	6	-	2
In India	1	1	-	-
Total	9	7	-	2

HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS			
India:	687- 6 dec at Hyderabad		2016-17
B'desh:	400 at Bangabandhu Stadium, Dhaka		2000

HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES			
India:	248* Sachin Tendulkar at Dhaka		2004
B'desh:	158* Mohammed Ashraf at Chittagong		2004

BEST BOWLING IN AN INNINGS			
India:	7-87 Zaheer Khan at Mirpur, Dhaka		2004
B'desh:	6-132 Naim-ur-Rehman at Dhaka		2000

BEST BOWLING IN A MATCH			
India:	11-96 Irfan Pathan at Mirpur, Dhaka		2004
B'desh:	7-174 Shakib Al Hasan at Chittagong		2010

FAISEL FEATURES

Kohli indicated that Ishant Sharma will be playing as the third seamer instead of an additional spinner.

"Yeah that seems pretty likely looking at the pitch. Also because of the way Umesh has bowled, Shami obviously has been brilliant. Bumrah isn't fit yet. Ishant's probably been our most consistent bowler in the last two years and a big reason for our success in Test cricket is his ability to just keep bowling in the same area and the others come and pick up wickets," he said.

"But also he has picked up 4-5 wickets on many occasions when he's gone through a great spell. So I think his experience will always be handy for the team."

For Bangladesh's young guns, the 'biggest test' in the Test will be to stretch this Indian team to

the fifth day which looks unlikely at the moment.

SQUADS

India (12): Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli (captain), Ajinkya Rahane, Ravindra Jadeja, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Kuldeep Yadav. **Reserves:** Shubman Gill, Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant.

Bangladesh: Mominul Haque (captain), Imrul Kayes, Mushfiqur Rahim (wk), Mahmudullah Riyad, Mohammed Mithun, Liton Kumar Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraj, Mustafizur Rahaman, Naeem Hasan, Saif Hasan, Shadman Islam, Taijul Islam, Abu Jayed, Ebadot Hossain, Al Amin Hossain.



Virat Kohli checks out the new pink ball as he interacts with umpires after batting in the nets

Kohli interested to see how old pink ball behaves

PTI ■ INDORE

The pink ball swings more than the red one but how it would behave after getting old, especially when dew will be a factor, is keeping India skipper Virat Kohli intrigued ahead of team's historic day-night Test.

The pink ball Test is still a few days away but Kohli, on the eve of the series-opener, was busy answering questions related to the second Test starting November 22.

"I think it's a new way to bring excitement to Test cricket. The pink ball I played yesterday (on Tuesday), I felt it swings a lot more as compared to the red ball because there's extra lacquer (quote of paint) on the ball which doesn't go away too fast. And the seam holds upright quite a bit," the skipper's initial observation seemed in sync with what his deputy Ajinkya Rahane had assessed.

Kohli said they are yet to figure out how the old ball will behave during November evenings in Kolkata.

"If the pitch has extra help for the bowlers, then they will be in the game, especially fast bowlers throughout the course of the Test match. I don't know how the old ball behaves because with the dew and the lacquer going off, it will be interesting to see how much the old ball does," the skipper said.

However he made it clear that for a pink ball to be effective, it is important to have lively tracks.

"With the pink ball having enough life in the pitch will be very important factor."

The Indian team did not practice with the pink ball under lights but did take a few throw-downs on Tuesday to adjust to the colour of the new ball.

Captaincy will not affect my batting: Mominul

INDORE: He is new to captaincy but Bangladesh skipper Mominul Haque is confident that the added responsibility will not affect his batting, which will be crucial to his team's chances of upstaging an accomplished India in the Test series.

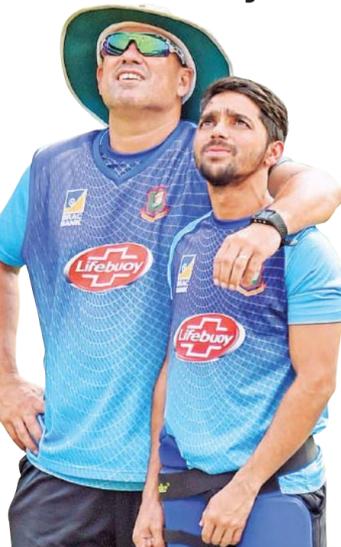
The 28-year-old Mominul has replaced Shakib Al Hasan as five-day format skipper. "I am not feeling pressure just because I have been appointed captain. The way I batted before captaincy, I will bat in the same way now," said the left-hander, who is also the team's premier batsman with eight hundreds.

"I always try to think about the positive aspects. There are a few positives in being captain as well. Your knowledge about the game increases. You tend to become more responsible as a player. So I think, it will help me improve my performance," he added.

Mominul feels that since expectations from his side are not particularly high, the pressure is also a bit less.

Asked about India's pace bowling might, Mominul said: "India is such a team that they can challenge different opponents in different ways."

"May be they will challenge us with spin



attack. We are ready to face both spin and pace attack challenge from India. Definitely, it will be tough for us. But we are preparing to face it."

Asked what has changed in Bangladesh cricket in nearly two decades from the time they first played a Test in 2000, Mominul pointed at the attitudinal shift.

"I think the mentality of players has changed. Players have become more disciplined. Also they are more eager to play five-day games as well," he said.

While Virat Kohli termed Mustafizur Rahaman as a threat, Mominul didn't disclose whether the pacer will be a part of playing XI.

"We have not planned about the team and the playing eleven has not been selected yet. You will know tomorrow (today) if he plays," he said.

Asked about missing Shakib and Tamim Iqbal, Mominul said others are more aware in the absence of the two stalwarts.

"I think three players are missing because Shakib *bhai* is equal to two players. Yes, it will be challenging. But there is no scope of thinking about it too much now," he said. **PTI**

Important to play attacking game as opener in T20s: Dhawan

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

The first six overs in a T20 game is considered the most crucial as both the batting and bowling team look to grab early advantage and with the World T20 in Australia less than a year away, India opener Shikhar Dhawan is very clear that for him it will be all about attacking from the word go Down Under.

Dhawan said that even as every team and every individual is playing with an eye on the showpiece event, he doesn't really have any special plan. All he wants to do is keep it simple and start on the attack before settling down and providing the middle order the perfect platform to finish with a flourish.

"The plan is to play a nice attacking game as an opener in the first six overs and build a good total. I like to play aggressive and if some wicket is slow or if the ball is stopping on it, then obviously the plan changes accordingly. If we can manage to get say



Shikhar Dhawan in a file picture

"Play as per the situation. If some day Rohit is attacking and I am not being able to connect well, then that is different. But otherwise, I don't believe that only one batsman can attack. If your game is to attack, then you must stay natural. Also, when you attack from both sides then the pressure is on the opposition," he explained.

While Indian teams over the years have been all about its batsmen, the current team has some of the best bowlers and Dhawan feels that is the reason why this team has won consistently both at home and on foreign soil.

"It is matter of tremendous pride that we have a team of bowlers who actually put the opposition batsmen on the backfoot. I feel the bowling line-up is one of the major reasons that we are winning consistently and also along with the pace bowling attack, we also have the experience to adapt. They train as professionals and know their job very well," he

explained. While he is one of the first names when the playing XI for the limited-overs team is announced, lack of form has seen him miss the bus in the longer format. But Dhawan isn't ready to give up and wants to return with a bang.

"Absolutely looking to get back. I am always on for Test cricket and when I get the opportunity (in domestic cricket) I will be playing. I will play Ranji Trophy when I am free. I will not sit at home. When I am not playing all the three formats, I will definitely play domestic cricket," he said.

Dhawan also said that Team India will be one of the favourites to win the trophy come the World T20 next year.

"We are strong contenders. From now onwards we will play so many T20s that we will get refined and be ready for the World T20. I am sure that we will do really well there," he said.

Harbhajan nemesis for me throughout career: Gilchrist

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian legend Adam Gilchrist has described Harbhajan Singh as his 'nemesis', saying the Indian off-spinner and Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralitharan were the two toughest bowlers that he faced during his international career.

Talking about his illustrious career's milestones and memorable moments, the wicketkeeper recalled the 2001 away Test series against India where Harbhajan starred with the ball.

"He (Harbhajan) was a bit of a nemesis for me right throughout my career. I found him and Murali probably the two hardest bowlers to face," Gilchrist told *cricket.Com.Au* in their "The Unplayable Podcast".

The 2001 series, considered one of India's finest, saw the hosts break Australia's 16-match win streak in Tests.

While the visitors won the first Test by 10 wickets,

Harbhajan wreaked havoc on Australia helping India win the remaining two Tests.

"(We were) five for 99, I went in there, got a hundred off 80 balls, we won in three days and I just thought, 'What have these blokes been doing for 30 years. How easy's this?'" Gilchrist said.

Harbhajan, who was adjudged Man of the series, picked 32 wickets in three matches, including India's first Test hat-trick at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata during the second Test.

"And how wrong I was. We've only got to fast forward to the next Test match and I came back to reality," Gilchrist said.

"As it would turn out, by the end of that series we probably needed to learn how to put a holding pattern, rather than 'attack, attack, attack' because it doesn't always work — Harbhajan bamboozled us," he added.

SINGLES

PBL 5 TO BEGIN ON JAN 20

NEW DELHI: Some of the top shuttlers including World Champion P V Sindhu will be in action when the fifth edition of the Premier Badminton League (PBL), featuring eight teams, gets underway on January 20. The upcoming season which concludes on February 9 will be staged this time in Chennai, Delhi, Lucknow, and Bangalore. The league owned by Badminton Association of India (BAI) and organized by Sportzlive, offers a total purse of ₹6 crore with the winner taking home a cheque of ₹3 crore.

POORAN SUSPENDED FOR BALL-TAMPERING

DUBAI: West Indies wicketkeeper-batsman Nicolas Pooran was on Wednesday handed a four-match suspension after admitting to ball-tampering in the third ODI against Afghanistan, an offence for which he also issued a public apology. He will now miss the next four T20 International games for the West Indies and will have five demerit points added to his record. The game in question took place in Lucknow on Monday.

PERRY PLANS RECORD-BREAKING SHOW

SYDNEY: American popstar Katy Perry announced on Wednesday she will be performing at the final of the Women's Twenty20 World Cup in Melbourne next March before an expected record crowd on International Women's Day. "Aussie Aussie Aussie Oi Oi Oi!" Perry said in an *Instagram* post using the Australian sporting chant. "Let's break some records — join me in Melbourne on March 8, 2020 for the ICC @T20WorldCup Women's Final. We'll Roar in support of these awesome women on International Women's Day!" The International Cricket Council said Perry would perform both before and after the final in "what is anticipated to be the biggest women's cricket match of all time."

BOULT TO PLAY FOR MI, RAJPOOT FOR RR

NEW DELHI: New Zealand fast bowler Trent Boult will play for Mumbai Indians in next year's Indian Premier League while domestic pacer Ankit Rajpoot will represent Rajasthan Royals after they were successfully traded by their respective franchises. According to an IPL statement, Boult will play for Mumbai Indians after being traded by his current team Delhi Capitals, while Rajpoot has been traded successfully by Kings XI Punjab. Boult made his IPL debut in 2014 and played for Delhi Capitals in the 2018 and 2019 season. He has 38 IPL wickets from 33 games. Rajpoot, a right-arm fast bowler who joined KXIP in 2018, has played 23 IPL matches and has 22 wickets in his kitty.

2019 WORLD KABADDI CUP FROM DEC 1 TO 9

CHANDIGARH: The 2019 World Kabaddi Cup, to be organised by the Punjab government, will be held from December 1 to 9, state's Sports Minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi said on Wednesday. He also said that this year's tournament would be dedicated to the 550th birth anniversary of Sikh guru, Guru Nanak Dev ji. Sodhi said nine teams — India, USA, Australia, England, Sri Lanka, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan and Canada — are expected to take part in the tournament. He, however, informed that Pakistan and Canada are yet to get clearance from the Indian government. The inauguration of the event would be held on December 1 at Guru Nanak Stadium, Sultanpur Lodhi and four matches would be held that day. The closing ceremony would be held at the Shaheed Bhagat Singh Sports Stadium in Dera Baba Nanak.

JUVENILE HOMES LEAGUE LAUNCH TODAY

NEW DELHI: Football Delhi is all set to launch a Juvenile Homes Football League at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium from November 14 to December 15. This league is part of the Juvenile Homes Football Programme, launched by Football Delhi in collaboration with the Department of Child and Women's Development, Government of Delhi. Eight Juvenile Homes are part of this football programme and 6 teams will be participating in the tournament.

6 MEDALS ASSURED IN ASIAN YOUTH BOXING

ULAANBAATAR: India were assured of a bagful of medals at the Asian Youth Boxing C'ships after six of the country's pugilists advanced to the semis with dominating victories on Wednesday. Soy Selay (49kg), Aman (+91kg), Ankit Narwal (60kg), Naorem Chanu (51kg), Jasmine (57kg) and Vinka (64kg) made the last four stage. Selay defeated Philippines' Flint Jara 5-0, while Aman (+91kg) out-punched Taiwan's Kai-Hsung Wang in a bout that didn't go the full distance. Narwal was also up against a Taiwanese in Yu Lin and the Indian prevailed 5-0. In the women's draw, Chanu claimed a 5-0 triumph over Korea's Eunsu Sun. Jasmine and Vinka were both rewarded for domination with early closure. While Jasmine got the better of Japan's Kimura Mona, Vinka sailed past Taiwan's Hsueh-Tzu Tsui. **AGENCIES**