

ANALYSIS 7  
OVER TO THE  
JUSTICESMONEY 8  
PVT TRADERS PLACE  
ONION IMPORT ORDERSSPORTS 12  
WRIST SPINNERS DIFFICULT TO  
PICK WITH PINK BALL: HARBHAJAN

HYDERABAD, WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2019; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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MEGASTAR AND  
MANI SHARMA  
AGAIN

Page 11

## Road accident deaths cross 1.51 lakh in 2018

NEW DELHI: Nov 19 (PTI) The number of people killed on Indian roads recorded a rise of 2.37 per cent to 1.51 lakh in 2018 and 70 per cent of the victims fell in the age bracket of 18-45 years, according to a report released by the highways ministry on Tuesday.

A total of 1.47 lakh people were killed in road crashes in 2017, according to the annual report 'Road Accidents in India, 2018' brought out by the ministry's transport research wing.

"Road accidents in the country have increased marginally by 0.46 per cent during 2018 with the year seeing 4.67 lakh road accidents as against 4.64 lakh in 2017," the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said.

## RS chairman orders review of new uniform of marshals

NEW DELHI: Nov 19 (PTI) Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Tuesday ordered review of the new military-style uniform of marshals in the House, a move which comes following criticism by some ex-Army officers and remarks of opposition leaders. Uniforms of Rajya Sabha marshals were restyled from traditional Indian attire comprising turbans to dark navy blue and olive green military-style outfits with caps. Naidu mentioned in the House that the Secretariat of Rajya Sabha had come out with a new dress code for marshals.

## Cong-NCP meet on alliance with Sena called off

NEW DELHI: Nov 19 (PTI) A meeting with the Congress scheduled on Tuesday to further discuss the possibility of government formation in Maharashtra was called off due to pre-occupation of Congress leaders with Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary events, NCP leader Nawab Malik said. He said Congress leaders requested that the meeting be postponed to Wednesday. The two sides have deputed leaders for holding talks on a possible alliance. NCP President Sharad Pawar had a meeting with Congress President Sonia Gandhi on Monday. Pawar said if the NCP-Congress have to take a view on government formation, they have to first discuss it between themselves.

### TODAY

#### ALMANAC

##### Month & Paksham:

Kartika &amp; Krishna Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Ashtami: 01.41 pm

Nakshatram: Magha 08.05 pm

Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)

Rahukalam: 12.01 pm - 01.25 pm

Yamagandam: 07.50 am - 09.14 am

Varjyam: 08.44 am - 10.15 am

07.00 pm - 05.03 am

Gulika: 10.37 am - 12.01 pm

Good Time: (to start any important work)

Amritkalam: 05.49 pm - 07.19 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham: NIL

#### HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 29/19

Humidity: 79%

Sunrise: 06.23

Sunset: 05.39

Current Weather Conditions

Updated November 19, 2019 5:00 PM

## Farmer attacks revenue office with petrol

RAMAKRISHNA PERALA  
■ KARIMNAGAR

In yet another incident that has sent shivers down the spine of already scared revenue staff, on Tuesday a farmer sprinkled petrol at a tahsil office here and allegedly tried to immolate a staffer, but was overpowered by other staffers in the nick of the moment.

The incident occurred in Chigurumamidi mandal of Karimnagar district, triggering bitter memories of the murder of Abdullapurmet MRO Vijaya Reddy, who was burnt alive by a disgruntled farmer early this month.

The farmer concerned in Chigurumamidi, identified as Kanakaiah of Lambadipalli village, resorted to this act as he was unable to secure his Pattadar passbook. The farmer alleged that revenue officials were intentionally harassing him by delaying the issuance of the passbook.



The farmer (right) holding a matchbox and the Tahsildar office into which he entered with petrol for torching on Tuesday

Kanakaiah had made several rounds to the office over a long period of time, but his issue remained unsolved, sources said.

According to reports, he came to the office on Tuesday and sprinkled petrol initially on computers and furniture and later even on senior assistant Ramachandram. When he allegedly tried to torch the senior assistant, alarmed colleagues came to his rescue and caught hold of the farmer.

Police later went to the spot and initiated an inquiry.

Responding to the grouse of the farmer, revenue officials told the police that since a dispute among the family members of Kanakaiah was pending, the passbook was not issued to him.

The Joint Collector Shyam Prasad Lal took the issue to the notice of Collector Sarfaraz Ahmed. Revenue officials were instructed to lodge a complaint against the culprit.

Circle Inspector T Mahesh Goud took Kanakaiah into custody. The police are questioning him now.

## Mamata accuses Owaisi of divisive extremism

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has accused the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimen (AIMIM) party of dividing communities, and warned minorities against what she describes as "extremism". The AIMIM's leader, Asaduddin Owaisi, shot back on Tuesday, saying it wasn't religious extremism "to say that Bengal's Muslims have one of the worst human development indicators of any minority".

Mamata Banerjee, the leader of the Trinamool Congress, was speaking on Monday at a rally in Cooch Behar, a border district in West Bengal where illegal immigration from Bangladesh is a hot-button issue.

Although Banerjee didn't



explicitly name the AIMIM or Asaduddin Owaisi, she made a clear allusion to them when she said they were based out of Hyderabad.

Owaisi is the Lok Sabha member from Hyderabad.

Mamata Banerjee said the AIMIM was creating differences, and asked minorities not to make the mistake of "trusting these forces".

She also warned voters against "Hindu extremist forces".

Continued on Page 4

## 'Allowed by law to intercept, monitor data'

BLOOMBERG ■ NEW DELHI

The centre said on Tuesday it's "empowered" to intercept, monitor and decrypt digital information in the public interest as long as its agencies follow the law.

Laws allowed federal and state governments to intercept "any information generated, transmitted, received or stored in any computer resource," G Kishan Reddy, junior minister for the Ministry of Home Affairs told parliament in a written reply when asked by an opposition lawmaker whether the government had snooped on WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Viber, and Google calls and messages.



## Couple alleges daughters held at Nithyananda's ashram

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A couple has petitioned the Gujarat High Court on Monday for help to get back two daughters who they allege have been illegally confined at an ashram run by controversial self-styled godman Swami Nithyananda.

Petitioners Janardana Sharma and his wife told the court on Monday that they had admitted their four daughters, from 7 to 15 years of age, to an educational institution run by Swami Nithyananda in Bengaluru in 2013.



When they learnt that their daughters were this year shifted to another branch of Nithyananda Dhyaneetham, named Yogini

Sarvagyaapeetham, situated on the premises of Delhi Public School in Ahmedabad, they tried to meet them.

However, officials of the institute refused to let them meet their daughters, the petitioners alleged.

With help from the police, the Sharmas visited the institute and managed to bring back their two minor daughters, but their elder daughters, Lopamudra Janardhana Sharma (21) and Nandhita (18), refused to accompany them, according to the petition.

## TS develops alternative Aadhaar authentication using AI-ML

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

The ITE&C Department of Telangana has developed an alternative solution for Aadhaar using Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Deep Learning. Termed 'Real-time Digital Authentication of Identity (RTDAI)', it uses a person's selfie for authentication.

RTDAI facilitates some of the key processes of government departments such as name verification, photograph verification, ID verification, etc. for service delivery that is highly accurate and independent of human judgment, along with proper audit trail for



accountability and transparency. GT Venkateshwar Rao, IRS, Commissioner Electronic Service Delivery,

said, "If we think of anything where we can remotely authenticate, where citizens need to prove your identity, this solu-

## Writ against privatisation of RTC routes premature: High Court

Says TS cabinet decision to privatise 5,100 RTC routes cannot be faulted

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A two-judge bench of the Telangana High Court, hearing the cases pertaining to the TSRTC issue, on Tuesday suggested that the writ petition challenging the move by the State government to privatise certain RTC routes was premature. The bench, comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice A Abhisekh Reddy, pointedly asked the petitioner's counsel, Chikkudu Prabhakar, as to how the challenge was maintainable at this stage.

The bench was dealing with a public interest litigation plea, moved by retired professor P L Vishweswar Rao, challenging the intended action of the State government to privatise certain routes presently being run by the State-owned Corporation.

After prolonged arguments by the counsel on issues relating to effects and far-reaching consequences of privatisation, the bench pointed out that the decision of the State Cabinet was restricted to initiating the

## TSRTC strike to continue, say JAC leaders

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The RTC Employees Unions' JAC has said that on Wednesday it will take a call on whether to continue the ongoing strike, considering that it is yet receive a copy of the High Court judgment on the issue. JAC convenor

Aswathama Reddy said that they would take a decision only after receiving the High Court's verdict copy. "We will take a final decision after receiving the verdict copy and discussing it with the legal experts. We are expecting copy from High Court tomorrow," he observed. He assured

that JAC would stand by the families of RTC workers took their lives during the strike.

Meanwhile, RTC unions held meetings separately at various places on Tuesday. The TMU held a meeting at a private function hall in LB Nagar.

Continued on Page 4



process to permit private operators on 5,100 routes. Referring to the challenge on the ground of procedural irregularities, the bench said the Cabinet nod was only to initiate the process.

At this stage, therefore, the bench wondered if the allegations of procedural irregularities can be gone into. The petitioner's counsel referred to Section 102 of Motor Vehicles

Act, which states the "State Government shall publish any modification proposed under Sub-section (1) in the Official Gazette and in one of the newspapers in the regional languages circulating in the area in which it is proposed to be covered by such modification, together with the date, not being less than thirty days from such publication in the Official Gazette, and the time and place at which any representation received in this behalf will be heard by the State Government."

Continued on Page 4

## Prashant went after his girlfriend, claims father

NAVEEN KUMAR  
■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad techie Prashant Vaindam, among the two Indian nationals arrested in Pakistan's Cholistan for illegally entering that country, was reported missing back in 2017. Speaking about his prolonged absence, after coming to know of his current whereabouts via news, Prashant's father, Babu claimed that his son had slipped into depression due to failure in a love affair and that he had crossed the border solely because he went in search of his lady love against odds.

Prashant was working for Shore Technologies, a software company in Hyderabad. He was reported missing in April, 2017 when his family lodged a complaint with the Madhapur Police. The news of his surfacing in Pakistan has left friends and family residing in Hyderabad deeply worried. They have urged the Telangana and Union governments to help them get their son back.



M Babu Rao



Prashant

Prashant's father Babu Rao told The Pioneer on Tuesday that since their complaint in April 2017 his son had not contacted the family. Nor could the police trace him.

Babu Rao hails from Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. His family settled in Hyderabad six years ago.

Continued on Page 4

## Distressed father approaches police

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cyberabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar, after being approached by Prashant's father Babu Rao on Tuesday, assured the latter that his son would be back home soon and requested the public not to believe in "false news" surrounding the case. "We have the missing case reported back in 2017 and are working on it. There are reports surfacing online with angles of love jihad and that the techie is a spy and many more. I would request the public not to believe in all that and wait for things to get cleared up to know the full story," he said observed.

Continued on Page 4

## MAN BOOKED FOR GIVING TRIPLE TALAQ

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A trader who had given triple talaq to his wife, after he and his family members allegedly harassed her for giving birth to a girl child, was booked by the police on Tuesday, invoking provisions of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act. According

to the police, the woman, identified as Mehraj Begum from old Safilguda, was married to Mohammed Dastagiri, a trader from Dabeerpura, in 2011. They were married in the presence of elders from both sides and Dastagiri had also taken dowry at the time of the wedding.

Continued on Page 4

## India vulnerable to capital inflow shocks: YV Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former governor of Reserve Bank YV Reddy has said that recent developments around China, Iran and the Middle East have the potential to generate two types of shocks: oil and capital flows. And, India is vulnerable to both.

He was speaking at a programme organised by the Institute for Advanced Studies in Complex Choices (IASCC) on Tuesday.

Reddy said, "There is a new bi-polar world with USA and China leading each block. The difference between old and new bi-polar world is that China and America have close economic integration. This complicates the fight for supremacy underway. The Belt Road initiative goes well beyond economic infrastructure."

He said that there were three economic challenges, which were global in the sense that they could be resolved only through cooperation and



concerted action on the part of all or most of the countries. He said, "Climate change is an area where collective action is inevitable, but it is becoming increasingly difficult. As the problem is getting acute, the solution is becoming more difficult. Demographic divergences are seriously affecting the macro-economic balances and, more importantly, the compulsions to migrate. Technology is the third most important element that will disturb the global balances in future."

Continued on Page 4



**S**chool education in Andhra Pradesh government has become a 'burning' topic, especially for those whose passions have been inflamed by the recent replacement of the medium of instruction. The decision of the state government to replace Telugu with English as the medium of instruction from Class I to Class VIII with effect from academic year 2020-21 has generated political heat. For the opposition parties, including Telugu Desam Party, the primary goal is to "protect Telugu pride", which has been linked to the medium of instruction for more than three decades.

The objective of the Government of AP is to begin a new era in school education by introducing English medium in all government schools across the state. The idea is to enable students with poor financial background to compete with

# Can English do justice to Telugu on its own soil?

**The AP government has decided to go ahead with its agenda of transforming school. The YS Jaganmohan Reddy government is trying hard to make parents understand that their children would eventually be in a position to compete globally in exploring job opportunities**

their affluent counterparts in private schools, in which the medium of instruction is English from Class I to Class X.

Why are opposition parties averse to the change in the sensitive sector of school education? Are they wholeheartedly opposing the introduction of English in school? Why are they not heeding the request of the government in this regard? Are they really against uplift of students belonging to poor families, irrespective of their caste, creed and religion?

Students from disadvantaged sections can certainly benefit from the government move. They can hope for maximum support from the government, including financial assistance in the form of scholarships.

Hence, the AP government has decided to go ahead with its agenda of transforming school. The YS Jaganmohan Reddy government is trying

hard to make parents understand that their children would eventually be in a position to compete globally in exploring job opportunities.

The opposition parties, however, are mobilising people to take on the government. This has led to concerns among a section of the parents. The opposition leaders need to clarify whether children in their respective families are studying in English medium. Emotional bond with Telugu as mother tongue is one thing and opposition to English as the

medium of instruction is quite another.

The unified state of Andhra Pradesh was formed for Telugu people on 1 November, 1956. It was dream come true after nearly 150 years. People's agitation for separate Telugu state got fulfilled and Telugu-speaking districts were separated from the composite Madras state. As a result, the new state of Andhra was carved out on 1 October 1953 with Kurnool as capital.

Against odds, then Chief Minister of Hyderabad state



**M D RATNA KUMAR**  
Senior Journalist

Dr. Burgula Ramakrishna Rao took initiative and convinced Nehru for the formation of the unified state of Andhra Pradesh. Subsequently Nehru announced the formation of AP in March 1956.

In this backdrop, due to opposition parties' stance, the YSRCP government may have to bulldoze its way to silence them. Chief Minister YS

Jaganmohan Reddy hit the nail on the head when he sarcastically questioned Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu whether his grand children studied in Telugu medium!

It is surprising to note that those persons who had pitched for the introduction of Telugu medium at school level are now supporting the government's stand. Official Language Commission chairman Y. Lakshmi Prasad is one example. It is ridiculous on his part to say now that he has to 'support whatever decision the Chief Minister takes'. Where is the need for his silence when he is working as chairman of a linguistic body that is supposed to propagate the language? The same person lambasted the erstwhile Chandrababu government for not bringing Telugu Research Institute from Karnataka to AP. N. Lakshmi Parvathi, widow of TDP founder NT Ramarao,

too has become tight-lipped on this issue after being given stewardship of the Telugu Academy.

The AP government's decision might prompt other states to remove Telugu, which is taught as a subject in government schools there.

The agony of Telugu language echoed in Parliament too with members from Andhra raising the issue on the first day of the current session. They demanded three-language set up, with Telugu being continued as the medium of instruction.

Is it enough to meet the needs of the rich Telugu language? Can English medium cater to the real needs of students and address the original problem in embracing the English medium? All teachers may not have capabilities to deal with English medium. Will orientation classes for teachers make them perfect in acquiring language skills?

What about the age-old practice of having Telugu medium at the primary education level? What should the government do to achieve such goal of having English as the medium of instruction? Can the government give guarantee on one key issue: that there will not be a single drop out case in the entire academic year due to implementation of English medium? These are some of the questions that have remained unaddressed.

All told, it would be pathetic for lovers of Telugu language to see the possible disappearance of Telugu medium in a state formed on linguistic basis. For that matter, Andhra Pradesh was the first state to be formed on linguistic lines in independent India. So, replacing Telugu medium with English medium could result in Telugu losing prominence on its own soil at the behest of the government. At the end of the day, the Jaganmohan Reddy government will be answerable to people on the repercussions of the dicey move in school education.

## Etela urges Center to sanction 7 medical colleges for Telangana

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Health Minister Etela Rajender on Tuesday said that he lead a delegation to Union Health Minister Harshvardhan and sought establishment of medical colleges, among other things, in at least seven district. If not feasible, the delegation urged the Union Minister to sanction medical colleges in two or three districts at least.

The delegation pressed for Central assistance especially on five issues, he explained. The Center went on record expressing its intention to set up not less than 75 medical colleges across the nation. The delegation advised the Center to set up medical colleges one each in Khammam, Karimnagar, Sangareddy, Mancherial, Bhadrachalam, Bhupalapalli, and Tandur or Vikarabad.

A detailed project report would be dispatched to the Center soon, he said. However, the Center agreed to sanction two or three medical colleges to the state. Besides the medical colleges, the Government



Health Minister Etela Rajender with Union Health Minister Harsha Vardhan in New Delhi

of Telangana delegation sought establishment of regional cancer treatment centres at Adilabad and Warangal and also urged it to sanction two super specialty blocks to the state for Gandhi, Niloufer and Osmania Hospitals.

Besides these, the Center

was urged to sanction trauma care centers at 11 places on national highways. The government told the Center that it spends at least Rs 1,200 crore annually for medicare of the poor and told that the state has been implementing Arogyasri scheme better than the Center's

Ayushman Bharat. However, the Center wants state to implement Ayushman Bharat scheme.

Etala said that the delegation urged the Union Minister to sanction incentives to the states, who set an example for the Center to emulate on med-

**A detailed project report would be dispatched to the Center soon, the Minister said. However, Center agreed to sanction two or three medical colleges to the state**

ical and health issues. Further, the delegation impressed on the minister stating that health for all would be feasibly only when modern diagnostic laboratories and scanning centers are set up.

He said that the Government of Telangana won many awards for its accomplishments in medical and health sector and rated the state as number three in the country in implementation of novel medical and health schemes.

## Harish inaugurates new PS building of Koheda

**PNS ■ SIDDIPET**

Finance Minister T Harish Rao has inaugurated the new police station building at Koheda mandal headquarters in Siddipet district on Tuesday. He has also inaugurated the 22 CCTV Cameras installed at various important locations in Koheda. Addressing the people after inaugurating the Police station, Rao has said Telangana government was providing all infrastructure facilities, best technology and vehicles to the Police department to help them discharge their duties properly.

He has called upon the staff of the Police station to create the best environment on the premises of the Police station to make the people visit the Station without any fear. After planting a sapling, Rao has asked the staff to improve the greenery on the premises of the Station. The Police station was built with an estimated cost of Rs 1 crore in 3,753 square feet area. The new Station was having SI Room, waiting room, reception, women restroom and others.

Commissioner of Police D Joel Davis has instructed the



**The Finance Minister has called upon the staff of the Police station to create the best environment on the premises of the Police station to make the people visit the Station without any fear**

staff to create a friendly environment in the Police station. He further said that the two more police station buildings in- Akkannapet and Komuravelly-were under-construction in Siddipet district. Zilla Parishad Chairperson, Roja Sharma, MLA, Husnabad,

Vodeithala Sathish Kumar, MLC, Ragotham Reddy, ADCP, G Narsimha Reddy, ACP, Husnabad, Mahendar and others were present. The Finance Minister took part in a host of other programmes under Husnabad Assembly Constituency on Tuesday.

## NIT-W registrar talks tough on use of drugs

**PNS ■ WARANGAL**

The registrar of NIT-Warangal, Prof S Goverdhan Rao on Tuesday asserted that the management of the institute won't tolerate the students consuming narcotic drugs within the campus limits. In a statement released to the media, the registrar said a news item about the consumption of marijuana by some students and seizure of large quantity of the banned substance from the hostel premises of NIT Warangal, was carried out in the media and it alerted the management to



take necessary steps.

The registrar clarified that on late on 26 October night, during the routine checking of the hostel rooms by the security personnel, traces of consumption of ganja by some students was noticed in one of the rooms of 1.8K hostel.

He detailed that, on comprehensive probe, it was found that around 12 students were in the state of intoxication. The Committee has taken note of the incident and on enquiry, students have confessed to have consumed small quantities of ganja for the first time.

## Singapore team all praise for TS policies

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

A delegation headed by the Consul General of Singapore - Chennai Pong Kok Tian called on IT and Industries Minister KT Rama Rao in Hyderabad on Tuesday. During the meeting, both parties discussed opportunities for Singapore companies to invest in various sectors such as information technology, urban infrastructure, pharma, and tourism.

In the meeting, Minister KTR informed the Consul General that Major global companies have already set up their offices in Hyderabad.

Minister stated that Singapore's Surbana Jurong is preparing the master plan for Hyderabad Pharma City.



The Minister highlighted the Telangana government's industrial policy, TS-iPASS, which is a single-window clearance initiative for investors. He also stated that Telangana is consistently ranked top in Ease of Doing Business in the country.

In the meeting, KTR said that Telangana State has transformed into a favorite destination for global companies in the past five years. He stated that the Telangana government will provide complete assistance to the companies who are interested in setting

up their facilities in the state. During Tuesday's interaction, KTR proposed for a meeting with the heads of Singapore companies who are looking for opportunities to invest in Telangana. Minister requested the Consul General to visit Telangana's industrial parks and incubators such as T-Hub to understand the ecosystem in the state. He also mentioned about the BioAsia 2020 event and requested the Consul General office to assist in inviting major pharma companies to the event.

Consul General appreciated the policies of the Telangana government and said that the investor-friendly policies of the state will encourage the Singapore companies to invest.

## Beechupally mill land to be registered in name of Oilfed MD

**PNS ■ GADWAL**

District Collector K Shashanka has said that the land of Beechupally oil mill, which is in the name of Markfed, would soon be registered in the name of the Managing Director of Telangana State Oil Federation.

On Tuesday, the Collector along with Oilfed Managing Director K Nirmala, went through the land records pertaining to 97.30 acres of land which was allotted in the past while setting-up of Beechupally oil mill. In the past, 5.38 acres of that land was illegally registered

under the name of wrongful owners, which was contested in the Court of law, which had ruled in favour of Markfed.

Sasanka said that survey would be done to ascertain the boundaries for the entire land and only after that the land would be registered under the name of the managing director of Oilfed. He also said that an integrated agricultural market yard with all facilities just like the one constructed in Siddipet would also be constructed in that land, which the district administration was considering.

## One dead, 3 injured in car crash on NH 44

**RANGAREDDY:** One person died and three others were injured when the car they were travelling in, hit the road divider and crashed on the other side of NH44 on Tuesday morning.

The passengers, all residents of Hyderabad, were heading towards Jadcharla when all of a sudden, the driver hit the median and the car fell on the Shadnagar-side of the national highway near Burgula stage.

**BAJAJ ALLIANZ LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED**

Regd office: Bajaj Allianz House, Airport Road, Yerwada, Pune 411006. Tel.: 020 66026777, Fax: 020 66026789

**Public Notice**

Notice is hereby given that the office of Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company Limited located at 508, 5th floor, Navkethan complex, Near Clock Tower, Telangana, Secunderabad - 500013 will be shifted at Eden Amsri Square, Municipal No. 9-1-87 and 9-1-119/1, Unit no 309, 3rd Floor, St. John's Road, Telangana, Secunderabad - 500003 from 31st January 2020.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**

**IRRIGATION AND CAD DEPARTMENT**

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, IRRIGATION CIRCLE, WARANGAL**

**e-Procurement Tender Notice**

e Procurement Tender Notice No. 29/2019-20, Dt. 13.11.2019

Sammakka Saralamma Jathara-2020-Bids are invited for Sammakka Saralamma Jathara work in Mulugu District for Rs. 349.05 Lakhs will be published in the web site from 20.11.2019 to 27.11.2019.

For further details log on to https://tender.telangana.gov.in website

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, I & CADD, Irrigation Circle, Warangal

R.O. No. : 261-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2019-20 Date: 19-11-2019

## Soups can help fight malaria, says study

**PNS ■ LONDON**

To fight against malaria, home made soups might help as researchers have found that some of the soup recipes have anti-malarial properties. "Malaria kills more than 400,000 people per year and infects more than 200 million, yet resistance to our frontline drugs continues to emerge," said study lead researcher Jake Baum, Professor at Imperial College London, in UK.

"We may have to look beyond the chemistry shelf for new drugs, and natural remedies shouldn't be off our watch list," Baum added. For the study, published in the journal Archives of Disease in Childhood, researchers from Imperial College London with school children test their fam-



ily soup broths for activity against the malaria parasite.

Several of the soup broths, collected from traditional family recipes that originated around the world, showed activity against the malaria parasite Plasmodium falciparum, either by curbing its

growth or preventing it from maturing. The soup recipes had been passed down through the generations for the treatment of fever. Five of the broths were able to curb growth of the parasite in its disease-causing stage by more than 50 percent.

**For the study, published in the journal Archives of Disease in Childhood, researchers from Imperial College London with school children test their family soup broths for activity against the malaria parasite**

In two of these, the inhibitory activity was comparable with that of a leading anti-malarial drug, dihydroartemisinin. Four other broths were more than 50 percent effective at blocking the ability of the parasites to mature to a form that infects mosquitoes, potentially blocking the process of transmission.

Dihydroartemisinin contains artemisinin, which was

isolated from a traditional Chinese herbal medicine.

The pupils brought in samples of homemade clear soup broths from family recipes from across Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. Filtered extracts of the broths were then tested against two stages of the parasite: when it can infect mosquitoes, and when it can cause the disease in humans. The recipes for each of the broths varied.



## CRIME CORNER

### Man gets 10-year RI for raping daughter

A local court at LB Nagar here on Tuesday sentenced a 40-year-old man with 10 years Rigorous Imprisonment after he was convicted of raping his minor daughter. The accused was identified as Md. Anees, a native of Uttarakhand. Police said that Anees, an alcohol addict, used to come home in an inebriated condition regularly and rape his daughter. He even threatened her and made sure she didn't disclose the incident to anyone. Later the victim narrated the ordeal to her mother after which a case was registered and Anees was remanded to judicial custody and PD Act was invoked against him. During his judicial custody under PD Act speedy trial was conducted and ended up with 10 years Rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs 5,000.

## Rash driving lands truck driver behind bars

A local court in Albrahimpattam sentenced a truck driver to undergo two years imprisonment for rash and negligent driving leading to the death of a motorcyclist on Monday. The truck driver has been identified as 38-year-old Mohd Tabrez from NTR Nagar in Tandur village of Ranga Reddy district. According to the police, in February 2018, P Chandraiah and P Praveen Kumar were on a motorcycle and heading to Hyderabad to Nampally village in Nalgonda. When they reached the outskirts of Agapally village, Tabrez who was driving the truck rashly, hit the motorcycle. Due to the impact of the crash, Praveen fell down on the road and died on the spot while Chandraiah, who was riding pillion, escaped with fractures on his hands and legs. The Manchal police booked a case of negligence causing death and subsequently arrested Tabrez. After a charge sheet was filed in the court, the judge sentenced him to undergo a 2 year imprisonment and also imposed a fine of Rs 1,500 on him on Monday.

# GHMC begins repair works on damaged roads

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Following enormous complaints and social media posts requesting to repair bad roads, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation have finally began fixing damaged roads in phase wise. In few places, roads have been laid, but most of the works being done by the workers are patch works.

In the past few days, the citizens vented their ire against the GHMC for ignoring road repair works, which were damaged due to the rains. Some citizens planted saplings in the potholes to bring the issue to the notice of the concerned officials, while others organised photo shoots and uploaded it on the social media sites to highlight the crisis.

Speaking on the issue, an official said, "We have started repairing roads in phase wise. There are a lot of places where we have redone the entire stretch and in lot of places we are filling patches." Many workers across the city are lay-

# 'ZERO BUSINESS' TAKES A TOLL ON STATE'S GST REVENUE

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

'Zero business' going on in the city unhindered causing a dent in the revenue of the state government in spite of implementation of the GST. Business establishments have been allegedly avoiding payment of various taxes by recording sales transactions only on white papers and by not giving bills to consumers for the goods purchased.

Publicity by the Commercial Taxes Department advising the consumers to demand bill for the goods purchased, asking traders to pay taxes on time and take part in country's development appears to have no impact on the business community having very little or no impact on the target group.

The 'zero business' is being witnessed in all markets - Begum Bazaar, Koti, Sultan Bazaar, Abids, Mozamzahi Market, Troop Bazar, Secunderabad market, Malakpet Gunj market, Charminar market and Pather Ghatti market. Even some shopping malls are not giving bills for the goods sold, it is learnt.



Some traders are giving bills on demand by consumers otherwise, they are happy with doing 'zero business'. Even though the concerned Tax Department officials are well aware of the fact, they appear to be silent for obvious reasons. Several allege that the 'zero-business' is going on unhindered as the enforcement officials look other way upon greasing of their palms by traders.

Though the GST Act is in force, the 'zero business' is going on unchecked. The records of Commercial Taxes Department reflect only a portion of the sales. Bills are being given on white paper, which does not reflect the name of the shop, goods purchased and register number of the shop and so on.

The traders avoid giving bills because giving bills would

**Some traders are giving bills on demand by consumers; otherwise, they are happy with doing 'zero business'. Even though the concerned Tax Department officials are well aware of the fact, they appear to be for obvious reasons**

increase the price of goods because of the tax component. Therefore, the consumers are not demanding bills. The Commercial Taxes Department officials also know about it, but fail to take remedial measures. They apparently take no measures to increase the tax revenue to the government. This is helping the zero-business thrive like anything.

The Begum Bazaar, whose existence dates back to 1770, transacts business in lakhs of rupees across the shops in the bazaar. All shops are generally full with customers. The market is famous for all kinds of goods right from dry fruits and masala to gold. The market is the main supplier of all varieties of goods to districts.

The Muktiyar Gunj, Kishan Gunj, Osman Gunj, Maharaj Gunj and other adjacent markets are known for sale of millets, atta, rice, oil and so on. Here the traders give bill on white paper, but goods are supplied from godowns.

According to statistics, the sales tax receipts of the government were put at Rs 60,000 crore in 2018-19 with Hyderabad markets along contributing to 60-65 per cent of the revenue to it. According to officials, there are over 2000 registered dealers of various goods and services who include retail as well as wholesale dealers. Some of them are not furnishing full data of sales records. The situation is more or less the same in all other markets.

## 7 held for stealing cash from wine shop

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Crime team of the Narayanguda Police have arrested five people for stealing Rs 18 Lakh cash in a wine shop at Himayat Nagar on Tuesday. The arrested were identified as Manraj Damai, Krishna Pariyar, Ramprasad Bhandari, Lokesh Gopi Sharma, Deepak Khatri, Parame Damai and Gauri Ajay Ahuja.

The Narayanguda police received a complaint on 11 November from the owner of Kuldeep wines, about cash from his wine shop being stolen. The thieves stole Rs 18.3 lakh cash from his safe by making a hole in the wall.

During investigation, the Narayanguda crime team apprehended one of the accused, Manraj Damai, who was involved in the offence and recorded his confession. Manraj said that his father



used to work as a watchman in a room beside Kuldeep wines and that's how he learnt of the money that could be stolen. Manraj then learned the details of the shop, location of the cash safe locker, doors and safety system through one of the employees of the shop and his relative Krishna Pariyar.

The Narayanguda police then apprehended the other accused persons and recovered Rs 7.9 lakh from their possession. They were arrested and remanded to judicial custody.

## VRO arrested for taking bribe

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The officials of Anti Corruption Bureau arrested the Village Revenue Officer (VRO) of Kojia Vanampally, in Nawabpet Mandal, Vikarabad District for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 4,000 on Tuesday. The accused Talari Ramulu, was caught red handed when he demanded and accepted the bribe amount on Tuesday at 5 pm at his agricultural field situated in the outskirts of Chittigidda village.

"He was caught accepting Rs 4,000 from the complainant,



Begari Sai Kumar, 36, to do an official favour, which was to process an online entry of acres 03.29 guntas agricultural land on the name complainant's

father. The bribe amount was recovered from Ramulu's possession and was tested positive in a chemical test. The accused officer performed his duty improperly and dishonestly to obtain undue advantage" said the officials.

The accused officer is being arrested and produced before the Special Judge for SPE and ACB cases, Hyderabad. The case is under investigation. In case of demand of bribe by any employee of the Revenue, the public are requested to contact the Toll Free Number of ACB, 1064 for taking action as per law.

## Metro services disrupted due to snag

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Metro services on the Nagole-Hitec City route have been disrupted due to a technical snag. Passengers were seen walking on the tracks at Ameerpet Metro station and services were halted for over 40 minutes.

L&T Metro Rail Hyderabad Limited tweeted: "We have a disruption in our blue line due to a technical failure. We will start our services in 15 minutes. We regret the inconvenience caused."

Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited Managing Director NVS Reddy said the pantograph of a train, which draws power from the overhead electrical traction system got entangled with an overhead electrical line between Begumpet and Ameerpet stations on the up line. Trains are being run on the other line in single line method carefully in restricted mode and rectification work of the affected line was underway, he added.



## CLEANING SPREE



The GHMC EVD teams have started removing of unauthorised flexis/banners across the city. This drive will last till Friday, after which strict penalties will be levied

## SBI CAPS to raise Rs 2,500 cr rupee term loan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation's (GHMC) efforts to raise Rs 2,500 crore through rupee term loan have gained momentum with the State government on Tuesday according permission to appoint SBI CAPS as the arranger for raising the loans.

The funds raised through rupee term loan will be exclusively utilised for Strategic Road Development Programme (SRDP) and others in the city. In 2017, the State government had accorded permission to the municipal cor-



**The funds raised through rupee term loan will be exclusively utilised for Strategic Road Development Programme (SRDP) and others in the city**

poration to borrow Rs 1,000 crore through municipal bonds and Rs 2,500 crore through rupee term loans. There will be no Government Guarantee for the loans raised by the municipal corporation.

GHMC has already issued three tranches of municipal bonds till date and raised Rs 495 crore. It has now become the largest municipal bond route utilizer for generating funds in the country. Tenders

## HMDA to take up massive land pooling scheme

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The HMDA will be taking up massive Land Pooling Schemes in Hyderabad Metropolitan Region. As part of it, in phase-I, a total of 1,575 acres at villages of Pratapsingaram and Korremula in Ghatkesarmandal and 456 acres of land at Mokila and Shankerpally will be pooled.

HMDA issued a notification for declaration of intention to undertake Land Pooling Scheme and called for consent applications from willing landowners expressing consent to participate in the land pooling scheme. HMDA will be conducting Grama Shaba / stakeholder consultations on 23 November.

were floated for the purpose of identifying arrangers for issuing municipal bonds and rupee term loan and SBI CAPS, which quoted a fee of 0.10 per cent of the amount raised, was selected by the municipal corporation.

Since GHMC lacks sufficient manpower and expertise to take up the task of raising term loans, it had taken up the issue of utilising the services of SBI CAPS with the Standing Committee, which approved the same in October. Following the GHMC Commissioner's proposal, the State government too on Tuesday approved the move.

## Public sector lags behind in use of AI

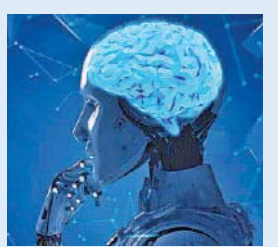
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite the talk around emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Blockchain, 92 per cent of the solutions in public sector are in POC stage in India. Only 8 per cent of solutions have been implemented in real time. In Telangana, of the 6 Blockchain use cases, only 2 have been rolled out and rest are in POC stage. Experts opine that the lack of regulatory reforms is the reason for slow adoption.

Vishwesh Padmanabhan, Partner - Digital, KPMG in India said, "India's public sector is fast emerging as a large consumer of Blockchain technology. The government is playing an important role not only as a regulator but also as a consumer of Blockchain solutions in India. Currently, 40+ Blockchain initiatives are being executed by the public sector in India, with 92% in pilot/POC phase and 8% projects in the production phase".

He was speaking on the sidelines of the the Ananta - Seminar on Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain for Efficient Public Service Delivery held in Hyderabad on Tuesday. He said, "One is making sure the compliance and assurance framework is mature is trust worthy. Secondly, there has to be enough funding and consumption, the uptake has to increase and unit cost has to come down. This trend is similar in other economy, there is long gestation. The big thing is liability, accountability and responsibility for frameworks".

India is well positioned because of IT base, but need to have legal and regulatory framework to give the community and investors surety.



**In TS, of the 6 Blockchain use cases, only 2 have been rolled out and rest are in POC stage. Experts opine that the lack of regulatory reforms is the reason for slow adoption**

Experts emphasise the need for clear policy guidelines like clear approach for resolution is needed. The Central government has come out only with a paper on AI, draft rules for drones and still figuring out Block chain standards.

Sriram Mahalingam, Partner - BSR & Co "All these emerging technologies have to converge, to give right effect for use case. AI and Blockchain have to transform how public service is being rendered. When it is cutting across sectors, all these have to converge. Based on that the policy frameworks have to be made as massive data is to be used. Whether it is drones or AI, creating right awareness to enhance acceptability is key. These are going to be long term projects and social impact of public service will take longer. Longevity of framework needs to be studied".

## GHMC delegation inspects double-decker flyover in Nagpur

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

City Mayor Bonthu Rammohan, principal secretary to municipal administration department Arvind Kumar, accompanied by chief engineers Sridhar and Ziauddin, of the GHMC, visited Nagpur and inspected the double-decker flyover executed as part of 38.215-km-long Metro Rail project, construction of under passes in the city, maintenance of parks and

the sewerage-treatment plant. The Metro Rail authorities of Nagpur made a power-point presentation on the construction of the project, maintenance and other technical aspects. The double-decker flyovers helped reduce the project cost by at least 40 per cent and led to the minimal acquisition of land and public properties. It helped accelerated execution of the project, which was executed at a total cost of Rs 8,680 crore.

The authorities explained the visiting dignitaries that shuttle bus services, development of foot-paths, pressing into service battery-operated vehicles, provision of bicycles were all part of the project. The delegation inspected the sewerage-treatment plan executed under the public-private participation mode.

The mayor said that there is a plan to set up the treatment plants in Hyderabad too to use the water from the plants to

water plants in public parks and to use it for construction sector.

The delegation went round the underpasses in Nagpur where the officials took precautions to prevent rain water finding its way into the under passes. The team inspected vertical gardens set up at many places across Nagpur. Mayor Rammohan invited Metro Rail authorities to visit Hyderabad. The delegation is going to visit Pune on Wednesday.



HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD			O/o. Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M Circle-III, Goshamahal, Hyderabad - 500012.
e-TENDER NOTICE			
e-tender Notice No. and Date	Name of Work	Estimate Contract Value	
229 (Reserved for SC), 231 & 234/CGM(E)/O&M.C.III/ /D4/ 2019-20.	Laying of 200 mm dia SWG line under Ghode - Ki - Khaber Section, Sub Division - I of O&M Division No. IV (1 <sup>st</sup> Call)	Ranging from Rs. 10.59 to 11.05 Lakhs	
(1) Tender documents will be available online from dt. 18.11.2019 (7.00 P.M. onwards) to dt. 25.11.2019 for e Tn. Nos. 229, 231 & dt. 19.11.2019 (7.00 P.M. onwards) to dt. 26.11.2019 for e Tn. Nos. 234. (2) Name and address of Chief General Manager (Engg), concerned - Chief General Manager (Engg), O & M Circle-III, HMWSSB, Goshamahal, Hyderabad - 12. (3) The contractors / firms are requested to upload the information in the "ZIP" format preferably. (4) Further details can be seen @ <a href="http://www.eprocurement.gov.in">http://www.eprocurement.gov.in</a>			
Sd/- Chief General Manager (Engg), O&M-III, Goshamahal, Hyd - 12.			Customer Care Centre - Dial: 155313



# GOVT MULLS HIKE IN LIQUOR PRICES

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State Government is likely to revise the prices of liquor being sold in the state and has plans to constitute a three-member Cabinet sub-committee to fix the revised prices, according to propaganda gained currency among excise circles.

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao is likely to take a decision on the basis of the recommendations of the sub-committee. In the light of new excise policy, the Excise Department did some homework and prepared proposals to hike the liquor prices by 5-10 per cent to net additional annual revenue to the state between Rs 1,200-1,700 crore.

Excise Minister Srinivas Goud and higher officials in the department deliberated on taking the proposals to the notice of the Chief Minister. The moment the proposals referred to KCR, a Cabinet sub-committee will be constituted and the Chief Minister will take a final call depending on the recommendations of the com-



mittee. However, the forthcoming municipal elections will affect the government's decision on hiking the liquor prices. Depending on the election schedule, the CM would take a decision, according to sources. If there is delay in issuing the election notification, the government wants to take a decision on the issue as early as possible. If the elections are notified immediately, the government would adopt a wait-and-watch attitude till the elections are over and then take a decision.

A notification inviting applications to set up bars in all the 73 municipalities will be issued soon. The government will take a decision soon. Further, the government is toying with the idea of revise fees for staging various events in the state capital and on its outskirts. The government wants to generate additional revenue through hiking liquor prices, by issuing notification to set up bars in all 73 municipalities and by revising the fees for organising various events in the city and its outskirts.

## POST HC VERDICT

### People lost faith in judiciary, says VH

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress senior leader V Hanumantha Rao has found fault with the High Court for suggesting the RTC workers and state government to go to Labour Court for further trial on ongoing RTC strike. He said that people have lost faith even on judicial system with the High Court's verdict on RTC strike after 45 days trial. "Court would have stated the same much before," he said.

Speaking to the media on Tuesday at Gandhi Bhavan, VH questioned the High Court to tell as to why it failed to file a suo Motu case against Chief Minister, when a driver Naresh mentioned in his death declaration that the reason for his death was KCR and state government. He alleged that several employees died due to KCR's 'self dismiss' statement. "There might not be these many deaths of RTC employees if the court reacted in the same manner immediately after filing case. Certainly people would lose faith in Courts with such verdicts," he opined.



VH said that the former Prime Minister late Indira Gandhi's reforms were not being implemented in Telangana. He alleged that irregularities increased in Revenue Department. VH said that there is a need for the Congress to wage movement with the slogan 'KCR Hatao-Telangana Ko Bachao' agitation for the sake of poor people, who are facing all these atrocities.

Earlier, VH and other senior Congress leaders Bhatti Vikramarka, Ponnala Lakshmaiah, Marri Shashidhar Reddy, T Jagga Reddy, Damodara Raja Narsimha, Jetty Kusuma Kumaram and others paid floral tributes to the portrait of the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the occasion of her 102nd birth anniversary at Gandhi Bhavan.

## RTC STRIKE

### CLP to lodge plaint with Guv, President against govt

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress Legislature Party (CLP) has alleged that no Chief Minister in the history behaved like Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao. "The Chief Minister is not caring the Constitutional systems. KCR is not listening to judicial system. KCR is not worried about the systems and employees. Arrogance has reached to KCR's head with the power and he is behaving like a dictator. There is no place to democracy in Telangana. The democracy has been crushed in the hands of KCR," CLP said. Demanding the Chief Minister to conduct talks with the RTC workers, CLP warned KCR that constitutional crisis will arise in case the state government failed to conduct talks. Governor and President have powers to take action under their limits, CLP said. It also made it clear that taking up strikes is the right of workers.

CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka along with former Minister D Sridhar Babu spoke to the media at Assembly Media

**Condemning the state government's affidavit, which stated that the opposition parties and RTC JAC leaders were hatching conspiracy to destabilise the state government, Bhatti demanded Chief Minister to make the evidences public**

Hall here on Tuesday. Bhatti said that the Congress will submit a memorandum to the Governor and President of India if Chief Minister failed to change his attitude.

He reminded the High Court statement that the Telangana government will not consider if appointed a committee with the Supreme Court retired judges to look into the RTC strike. Condemning the state government's affidavit, which stated that the opposition parties and RTC JAC leaders were hatching conspiracy to destabilise the state, Bhatti demanded the state government to make the evidences if they have public. Or else take serious action against the officials, he said.

Stating that TRS party's affiliated Union TMU was also

participating in the strike; Bhatti said that TRS party affiliated unions and TRS leaders may be trying to destabilise the state government joining hands with opposition parties. Bhatti demanded the Chief Minister to order CBI inquiry into it if he had such doubts.

"Many RTC workers have died with heart attacks and committing suicides after KCR's statement 'Self Dismiss'. RTC workers died due to KCR. RTC workers were also Telangana sons. They participated in Telangana movement", he lamented. Sridhar Babu alleged that Chief Minister is throwing the pretense on opposition parties questioning the Chief Minister to tell as to why he was not giving salaries of the RTC workers for the last two months.

## 20 in fray for TPCC SC Cell Chairman position

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Around 20 leaders, including senior leaders like former Minister A Chandrasekhar, TPCC general secretaries Bakka Judson, Manavatha Roy, TPCC official spokespersons Rachamalla Sidheshwar, Satheesh Madiga, Medipally Sathyam are competing for the TPCC SC Cell Chairman position.

On Tuesday, the AICC committee comprising Brijlal Khabri (Committee chairman), Rajakumar Chandrawala (Member) and Noushad Solanki (Member) took the opinions of aspirants and senior leaders of the party from the state.

The Committee, which came on Monday to Hyderabad, took the opinions on Tuesday at Gandhi Bhavan.

According to sources, the Committee also took the opinion of senior leaders like Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Damodara Raja Narsimha. The Committee left for Delhi on Tuesday night. The Committee will discuss with the party high command and will announce the name later.

## India vulnerable to capital inflow shocks: YV Reddy

Continued from Page 1

Reddy observed that technological progress was so fast and the disruptive nature of technological developments so deep that institutions were finding it difficult to cope with these changes. Further, technologies had tendency to cut across national boundaries sooner than later. The Institute for Advanced Studies in Complex Choices (IASCC), in association with XLRI, Jamshedpur, had organised a two-day Leadership Conclave - The Growth Paradox: Resolution through Changes in "Frames for Choice".

The Leadership Conclave witnessed the presence of Dr Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India, Mohan Guruswamy, Head Centre for Policy Alternatives, Harish R Dave, former Deputy Managing Director, NABARD, P Sainath, Founder PARI and Ramon Magsaysay Award winner, Biten Kathrani, Head APAC R&D - Visioncare, Johnson & Johnson Vision, Singapore, SV Nathan, Partner & CTO, Deloitte India, among other industry experts and academic leaders.

## COURTESY CALL



MLC and chairman of Telangana Farmers' Coordination Committee Palla Rajeshwar Reddy with Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy on Tuesday

## Errabelli receives TS Swachh Survekshan Award

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Panchayat Raj Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao received Swachh Survekshan Green-2019 award from Union Minister for Commerce Sadanand Gowda at a programme held here on Tuesday. Union Sanitation Secretary Parameshwar Iyer, Telangana Panchayat Raj Commissioner M Raghunandan Rao and others took part in the function.

Sanitation in Telangana improved because of the intervention of the Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and contribution of village sarpanches, officials and elected people's representatives, Dayakar Rao said. He made a special mention of the 30-day action plan



Panchayat Raj Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao receiving the award from Union Minister for Commerce Sadanand Gowda in New Delhi on Tuesday

implemented in village panchayats and Palle Pragati programmes. Sanitation improved in weekly shandies, anganwadis,

schools and other public places, he said adding that the government helped panchayats identify dumping yards in villages.

## Writ against privatisation of RTC routes premature: High Court

Continued from Page 1

The notice must also be given to any other person who, in the opinion of the State government, is likely to be affected by the proposed modification, he contended.

The court said that the decision taken by the state government for privatization of 5,100 permits of TSRTC cannot be faulted since it has only initiated the process under Section 102 of the Motor Vehicles Act. The court said that as the process of privatisation has not commenced so far, there is no evidence to prove the ulterior motive of the state government as alleged by the petitioner Dr. PL Visweswar Rao.

Citing that the state government has complete powers over the regulation of state road transport as per section 67 of the MV Act, it asked the counsel for the petitioner what was the basis for faulting the decision of the state cabinet.

The counsel for the petitioner told the court the state government should inform about its decision to modify any changes as per section 102 of the MV Act. He said that the said section

## TSRTC strike to continue, say JAC leaders

Continued from Page 1

Later, speaking to the media, Ashwathama Reddy said that the unions held meetings separately on the ongoing strike and future course of action. The workers had differing opinions on the strike. Still, the unions had made it clear that they would abide by the decision of JAC whatever it may be, he claimed. According to sources, JAC leaders gleaned the opinions of RTC workers depot-wise across the state. Employees' Union leaders met at KK Garden, STF leaders at CITU office and TJMU leaders at their own office. Workers from districts participated in the meetings in large numbers. According to sources, workers confronted the leaders and asked them to give them a clear picture. They were sore that they had not received salaries for the past three months. They were worried that the Labour Court would take a long time to resolve the issue. Some workers expressed their doubts over the government taking back employees, should the strike be called off. Most of them wanted the strike to continue till the issue is resolved by the Labour Court. Some wanted a clear assurance from the government that it would take back the employees. Others said it would be good to wait and see as the High Court has given 15 days' time to Labour Court.



talks about the cancellation or modification of the existing scheme of transport. He also said that the decision was taken in bad faith and with ulterior motive at a time when the TSRTC employees were on strike.

## Man booked for giving triple talaq

Continued from Page 1

Mehraj alleged that Dastagiri and his family members began harassing her a few months after the marriage. Her first child died during delivery due to the negligence of her in-laws. She was admitted to a hospital where there was no proper treatment, resulting in the child's death, said Mehraj in her complaint. She then got pregnant again and gave birth to a girl child. The delivery expenses were borne by her parents, said Mehraj.

After the birth of the girl child, they harassed Mehraj more and demanded additional dowry. Dastagir even physically abused Mehraj, saying he wanted a son and told her that he was no longer interested in her and wanted to marry again. The couple were earlier counseled at the Women Police Station in Charminar and at Bharosa Centre. However, last Saturday, as they came out of the counseling session, Dastagiri allegedly pronounced talaq thrice in the presence of her family members. A case has been registered. No arrests have been made yet.

## Prashant went after his girlfriend, claims father

Continued from Page 1

His son's first job posting was in Bengaluru, where he had fallen in love with a girl working in the same company. After the girl, hailing from Madhya Pradesh, moved to Switzerland, Prashant slipped into depression. "Last we saw him was when he was leaving home in April, 2017 as usual and did not return back," said the distraught father.

Prashant's brother told media that Prashant was in love with a girl from Madhya Pradesh, later identified as Swapnika Pandey. He inadvertently crossed over to Pakistan while trying to go after her on foot. However, it is not clear how Prashant and Dari Lal (the other Indian who has been detained) met or whether they had crossed the border together.

Meanwhile, Pakistani authorities have released a one-minute video of Prashant talking to his parents. After taking permission to speak in Telugu, Prashant assures his parents that he is fine and that he has been brought to the court from the police station. The man is reportedly heard

## Distressed father approaches police

Continued from Page 1

Reports suggest that the two Indian nationals were apprehended at separate times. Sources alleged that Pakistani Foreign Ministry had been officially informed by their Indian counterparts about the possibility of the two Indian nationals having inadvertently crossed over to Pakistan side several months back. According to sources, in the case of Prashant

Vaindan, "it was conveyed as early as May 2019 that he is reported to have inadvertently crossed over in 2017 and possibly apprehended by Pakistan Rangers." His personal details, along with photograph, were shared. The case of Bari (Wari) Lal, sources say, "was taken in December 2018 when reports were received that he may have crossed into Pakistan inadvertently and arrested by Rangers in 2017."

saying, "Mummy and Daddy, are you fine? Here (Pakistan), everything is okay. They (referring to Pakistan police) have brought me to the local court from the police station. They have declared that there is no problem (given me a clearance). I am being sent to the jail from here, and after which, they (Pakistan police) will be contacting the Indian embassy and further contact you. I may get released in a month."

Pakistan media reported on Monday that Prashant, along

with Dari Lal, a resident of Madhya Pradesh, were arrested on November 14 in a desert close to Bahawalpur district. Babu Rao said they had no idea why Prashant went to Rajasthan and how he came into contact with Dharilal. "All I know is that my son is not the one to indulge in any illegal activity. We appeal to Pakistan authorities to release him," said Babu Rao, who plans to leave for New Delhi to make a formal request to Pakistan Embassy.

## Experts bat for curriculum change in Forestry Education

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dr Janaki Ram Reddy Alavalapati, Professor and Dean, School of Forestry and Wildlife Science, Auburn University, Alabama, USA visited Forest College and Research Institute, at Mulugu on Tuesday and interacted with faculty members and Dean, Forest College and Research Institute (FCRI) on exploring the prospects for students and faculty development and collaborative activities.

R Sobha IFS, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests



R Sobha IFS, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) Telangana, and others at a meeting in Hyderabad on Tuesday

(HoFF) Telangana and Munindra IFS, PCCF (IT & Admin) were present in the discussion. Various issues per-

taining to collaboration were discussed in detailed, especially with regard to experiences on Forestry Education,

**With evolving technologies and innovations in science, the curriculum needs to be designed suiting industrial and societal needs, said R Sobha IFS, Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) Telangana**

Research and Extension programmes implemented in Auburn University. He shared his inputs on various aspects related to Forest based Entrepreneurship, Economics and Marketing.

With evolving technologies

and innovations in science, the curriculum needs to be designed suiting to the industrial and societal needs. He explained certain subjects like Wood Science and Technology to be renamed as Biomaterial Engineering.

Packaging industries has immense potential from bio-materials, wildlife entrepreneurship management as business and hospitality models. Cross Laminated Timber buildings will be the future in the construction sector.

He also suggested to have a nature camping activities for a one month duration. Plastic based materials to be replaced with biomaterials. Interaction with graduate students in curriculum revision. He suggested to have coordination with forest-based corporations and have collaboration with different agencies.



SHORT READS

Creating excellence more important than marks, says Bhagwat

**NAGPUR:** RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Tuesday asked educationists to create excellence among students rather than having a classroom system geared towards scoring marks in exams. He was addressing the 'International Principals' Education Conference 2019' here. "Classroom education is not everything, though it has its importance. But the classroom is for real-time experience and how it can be taken forward to a conclusion," Bhagwat said. "Nowadays, marksheets and marks have become more important due to competition. Doing this (giving predominance to marks) is not education. We need to create people through excellence," he said.

Maoists getting help from Islamic militant organisations: CPI(M)

**KOZHIKODE(KER):** Days after the arrest of two CPI(M) student activists under UAPA for their alleged maoist links, a Senior party leader has stirred up a controversy by stating that the ultras were receiving help from Islamic militant organisations based here. Maoists are being 'nurtured' by Islamic militant organisations based in Kozhikode, CPI(M) district secretary, P Mohanan, said addressing a function here. "Some are encouraging these maoists to take up arms against the government," he alleged and asked the government to look into it. The Islamic militant organisations here are the 'strength' of the Maoists, he claimed. Two students-- Alain Shuhaib and Taha Fasal were arrested on November 1 after pro maoists pamphlets were seized from them. Meanwhile, police has said C P Usman (40), hailing from Malappuram, has been identified as the third suspect who had absconded after Shuhaib and Taha had been arrested. Describing UAPA as a 'draconian' law, senior CPI-M leader Prakash Karat had said the two arrested Left student activists have been 'wrongly' booked under it and had urged the party-led LDF government to intervene and 'undo this mistake'. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had informed the state assembly that the government would not allow the 'misuse' of UAPA and would look into the issue seriously.



Issue of withdrawal of SPG cover for Gandhis raised in LS

**NEW DELHI:** Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Tuesday raised the issue of withdrawal of SPG security cover to the Gandhi family, but the government said he cannot raise the matter in Zero Hour as he had not given a notice for the same. After the notice of adjournment motion given by the party on the withdrawal of Special Protection Group (SPG) cover to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and former party president Rahul Gandhi was rejected by Speaker Om Birla, Chowdhury raised the issue in the Zero Hour. Supporting the demand of the Congress, DMK member T R Baalu said removing the SPG cover from the Gandhis has put their lives under threat. The government should provide SPG protection to them, Baalu said. Chowdhury said the family faces threat to life and the cover by the elite security organisation should not have been withdrawn. The Congress leader said the previous NDA government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee also did not remove the SPG cover of the Gandhis. He wondered what is the conspiracy of the government in removing the SPG cover. Both Congress and DMK members walked out of the House on the issue of removing SPG cover from Gandhis. Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal said Chowdhury cannot raise the issue in Zero Hour as he had not given notice in this regard.

AIR POLLUTION

Confident that IITs, NITs will find solutions: Prez

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday exuded confidence that the IITs and NITs, with their specialisations, will be able to find solutions to address the problem of air pollution as well as create sensitivity among students and researchers.

Kovind made the comments at the annual 'visitor's conference' at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, attended by directors of 23 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), 31 National Institutes of Technology (NITs) and Indian Institute of Engineering Science And Technology (IIEST), Shibpur. "This is that time of the year when the air quality of the national capital as well as of many other cities worsens beyond all norms. Many scientists and futurologists have painted doomsday scenarios. On days of smog and poor visibility in our cities, we fear the future might already be here," Kovind said.



"I am sure that your institutes, with your various specialisations, will find a solution and take care to create a sensitivity and awareness among students and researchers towards our common future," he added.

With the air quality levels touching the "emergency" mark, various IITs have come forward to work on solutions to address the issue including identification of upwind districts in Punjab and Haryana from where crop burning contributes maximum to pollution in Delhi-NCR and a study on identification of brick kiln

clusters which contribute most to pollution levels in Delhi-NCR.

"We are facing a kind of challenge here that we have never faced before. Hydrocarbon energy changed the face of the world in the last couple of centuries, but now it is threatening our very existence. The challenge is compounded for nations battling to bring substantial sections of populations out of poverty. Yet, we will have to find alternatives," Kovind said.

The president said that after the government's efforts to improve India's ranking on



President Ram Nath Kovind

the Ease of Doing Business Index, the aim is now to improve the Ease of Living for all citizens.

"How can we move forward in that direction, and make life easier for all, especially those on the margins of society? Later this week, Governors of states will be here in Rashtrapati Bhawan and this will be one of the major points of deliberation in their conference. I am sure there are solutions in the area of governance," he said.

Water quality: BJYM stages stir with Kejriwal's 'missing' posters

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stepping up pressure on the AAP government over the water quality issue in the national capital, Delhi BJP's Yuva Morcha activists staged protests across the city on Tuesday. The protesters were seen carrying 'missing' posters of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who is also the chairman of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

"Have you seen the DJB chairman, Arvind Kejriwal?," read the posters.

Similar posters were put up in some parts of east Delhi. Former Delhi BJP president Satish Upadhyay took part in the protest near the Moolchand flyover.

Other senior leaders of the saffron party, including its national vice-president Shyam Jaju and Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta, also participated in the protests.

Kejriwal's 'missing' posters



were put up after similar "missing" posters were seen in the city of East Delhi BJP MP Gautam Gambhir, who faced flak from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over skipping a key parliamentary panel meeting on air pollution due to his cricket commentary assignment.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been trying to corner the Kejriwal government

over a Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) study that found water samples from Delhi failing on 10 of the 11 quality parameters.

Protests were held across the city on Monday also by the BJP and the Congress.

Kejriwal said according to the DJB tests carried out in the last nine months, 98.5 per cent water samples were found to be safe.

LS Speaker takes note of Rahul's absence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking note of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's absence from the House, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday said he had wanted to give a chance to the former Congress president during Question Hour.

"His (Rahul Gandhi's) question was listed for the Question Hour and I wanted to give him a chance had he been present," Birla remarked when K Suresh got up to speak during Zero Hour from Gandhi's seat.

The speaker asked Suresh to move to his designated seat and continue.

As per the Lok Sabha schedule, question number 28 was listed against the name of Gandhi. The question pertained to Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana for Kerala.

Question numbers 21 to 25 were taken up during the Question Hour.

Raj, Manipur only states to have passed bills to check lynching

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Only Rajasthan and Manipur have passed bills on action to be taken against those involved in lynching but the legislations are yet to get the President's consent, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

Union minister of state for home Nityananda Rai said the Centre, following a Supreme Court directive, has issued two advisories to state governments to check incidents of lynching.

"In pursuance to the Hon'ble Supreme Court's judgment on July 17, 2018, two advisories - on July 23, 2018, and September 25, 2018, were issued to the state governments and union territories administrations for taking measures to curb incidents of mob lynching in the country," he said replying to a written question.

On whether a number of states have enacted laws, making lynching a non-bailable offence and recommending life imprisonment for those involved in such violence, the minister said as per information available, two bills on the subject passed by state legisla-



Union minister of state for home Nityananda Rai said the Centre, following a Supreme Court directive, has issued two advisories to state governments to check incidents of lynching

tures of Manipur and Rajasthan are reserved by the governor for consideration of the President have been received.

"The bills so received are examined in consultation with the concerned central ministries," he said.

Rai said the government through audio-visual media has also generated public awareness to curb the menace of lynching.

The government has also sensitised service providers to take steps to check the propagation of false news and rumours having potential to incite mob violence and lynching.

In its order, the Supreme Court had said the state governments shall designate a senior police officer, not below the rank of Superintendent of Police, as nodal officer in each district.



States, UTs briefed on Gandhis new security protocols

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CRPF has written to states and UTs about the new protocols for Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her family members security and will soon seek sanctions to raise at least one more battalion for the task, officials said on Tuesday. The central government earlier this month replaced the Special Protection Group (SPG) security cover given to Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul Gandhi and daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra by the 'Z-plus' security of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

The paramilitary force will also seek sanctions to procure specialised armoured vehicles in the light of these high-profile persons, along with former prime minister Manmohan Singh, being sent under its security cover, the officials said.

The CRPF, through the Union home ministry, has written to state and union territory governments about the new protocols that came into force after the Centre's decision, they said.

It has also informed states

and UTs that the Gandhi family has been accorded an advance security liaison (ASL) protocol and this will require the "support" of their intelligence, police and administrative machinery prior to any of the five new protectees -- Sonia Gandhi, Rahul, Priyanka, Manmohan Singh and his wife Gursharan Kaur -- reaching their jurisdictions on official or personal tours.

The Singhs SPG cover was withdrawn by the government in August.

The officials said a special CRPF team will travel at least 24 hours in advance to these locations and liaise with local authorities to sanitise the venue and isolate the areas that the VVIPs will visit.

"They will need to be given all administrative and police support along with route plans and travel maps. The CRPF will now do what the SPG did," a senior official said.

The states and UTs have been informed about the 'yellow book' procedure in this context and all the 28 VVIP security bases of the CRPF in the country will be used to execute this job, the officials said.

Massage facilities for pilgrims

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Massage facilities will be introduced for pilgrims along the 16-km trek route from Gaurikund to Kedarnath in Uttarakhand from next year, an official said.

"We have decided to set up seven massage centres along the uphill trek to the shrine from the next season to help pilgrims overcome fatigue during the journey," Rudraprayag District Magistrate Mangesh Ghildiyal told PTI.

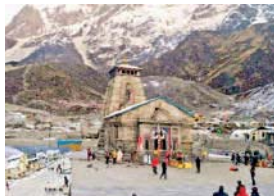
These centres, equipped with massage chairs, will be set up at the main halts -- Bhimbali, Lincholi, Rudra point and Junglechatti -- along the uphill trek to the famed shrine, he said.

The decision is part of the state government's efforts to introduce additional facilities for pilgrims en route to Kedarnath and enrich their experience of visiting the shrine, Ghildiyal said.

It will also help to generate employment opportunities for local youths, he added.

Over 10 lakh pilgrims visited Kedarnath this year before it closed for the winter season on October 29, breaking all past records and the credit goes to the improved facilities on the route, the District Magistrate said.

He said the number of pilgrims is expected to go up further in the years to come.



Fire guts attendance logs of home guards

PNS ■ NOIDA (UP)

A fire broke out at the Home Guards district commandant's office in Greater Noida, gutting attendance logs of all personnel since 2014, police said on Tuesday. The fire, which took place late Monday night and was reported on Tuesday morning, comes at a time when an investigation is going on into the fraudulent withdrawal of salaries of scores of home guards in the district, officials said. The fire was reported in the District Commandant Home Guard Office in Surajpur, Senior Superintendent of Police,



Gautam Buddh Nagar, Vaibhav Krishna said.

"Station House Officer (SHO) Surajpur and Fire Safety Officer in Surajpur found that a big box having salary muster rolls (attendance logs) of home guards was in a burnt state with

all the muster rolls inside it completely burnt down," Krishna said.

He said an FIR was being registered in the case and thorough investigation has been ordered.

A special investigation team

at district level, under Superintendent of Police, Noida, Vineet Jaiswal, has been constituted to investigate the matter, he added.

"Prima facie it has come to light that this box had salary muster rolls of home guards deputed in different police stations and government offices in the district since 2014," Krishna said.

Earlier in July, it came to light that salaries of scores of home guards deployed here were withdrawn despite them showing up for work only half of the time during May and June, prompting officials to launch a probe into the matter.

Draft guidelines for vehicle scrapping centres prepared, NGT told

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways told the National Green Tribunal on Tuesday that draft guidelines for setting up and operating vehicle scrapping centres has been prepared and uploaded on its website seeking public comments.

The Ministry told a bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel that it has also circulated a policy paper on creation of an eco system for scrapping of old vehicles for transition to environment-friendly new vehicles.

The tribunal was also informed by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee that a special task force, constituted by the NGT, is keeping an active and regular watch in Mayapuri area to take action against those who are dismantling vehicles on roads and



confiscate tools and vehicles on a weekly basis.

As per the draft authorised vehicle scrapping facility (AVSF) guidelines, individuals, firms, societies or trusts will be allowed to set up scrapping facilities subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and receiving authorisation from the licensing authority.

The authorisation will be valid for 10 years and can be renewed for another 10 years.

Prospective scrappers must have usable treatment facilities with a minimum area of 4,000 sq metre for small vehicles and 8,000 sq metres for all bigger vehicles, as per the guidelines.

Vehicles which have not renewed original registration, not been granted fitness certificate and those auctioned, impounded and abandoned by any enforcement agency, among others will be allowed to be offered for

As per the draft authorised vehicle scrapping facility (AVSF) guidelines, individuals, firms, societies or trusts will be allowed to set up scrapping facilities subject to meeting the eligibility criteria and receiving authorisation from the licensing authority

scrapping, it said.

"DPCC has constituted 16 teams to carry out night patrolling of industrial areas of Delhi to identify dumping and burning of any type of waste apart from identifying the industries emitting black smoke emissions," DPCC said.

The tribunal was informed that DPCC has already sanctioned Rs 61.5 lakhs to the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) Ltd. for installation of CCTV cameras at vulnerable points outside the Mayapuri Industrial

Area where illegal dismantling of vehicles was taking place.

"On the directions of the chief secretary, DSIIDC has floated tenders for upgradation of 20 kms of roads and 12 kms of drains in both phases of Mayapuri industrial area with an estimated cost of Rs 66.59 crore."

Additional Commissioner of police has informed that motorcycles have been engaged specifically to take rounds and to keep check all over the area so that no illegal vehicle dismantling activity takes place," DPCC said.



## Student uprising

The JNU fee hike could be reasonably negotiated but using force on students means undoing what we teach them to do



Student movements have had transformative and revolutionary power in world history, from 13th century Paris to the climate activism of Greta Thunberg. That's how our societal and education systems have raised our young to be, question the status quo if it is unjust, create a liberal order, chase passions and ideals that are yet uncorrupted by politics and do so with a "can do" spirit that has not yet been bartered away to compromise. That's why students have overturned

regimes across the world, because all they need is a generational contiguity to override everything else and generate a populist swell. At home, the Nirbhaya and Jessica Lal vigils, Dalit or gay rights would not have changed outcomes had the students not taken the lead. And they have all begun as non-violent, peaceful sit-ins and marches till retaliation was forced by State repression. However, one must cite the college students versus Government protests in Iran of 1999 during which Ayatollah Khamenei had to instruct the police to restrain itself even if it meant that students burnt his posters or tore them apart. This was remarkable in a regime intolerant of any kind of alternative discourse or dissent but Khamenei was aware that student activism had freed itself from State fear and politics and in the long-term could be a challenge if not accommodated. Suppression would only beget harsher rejection and counter-reaction. Therefore, such pragmatism should have also dawned on authorities in New Delhi before they used the police to literally beat up protesting JNU students wanting to march to Parliament and be heard on a surprise fee hike. Cracking down on them mercilessly has not only emboldened them further but shown up the Modi Government as a bulldozer of what JNU stands for, an institution of excellence and learning that attempts classlessness in thought and action, encourages free and radical thinking and a convergence of ideas fearlessly. The ostensible row over a fee hike has taken a back seat due to such mishandling. The Modi Government has clearly overlooked the practicality of raising fees and used it as a ruse to suppress what it really wants, take over and crush a seat of Left-leaning liberalism, one that its proponents dismiss as a despicable clan called "JNU type." Particularly, malign a university that bears the name of India's first Prime Minister. The Government is making a classic mistake of resorting to symbolism. Negotiations could have taken care of much of the problem. But the suddenness of the fee hike was clearly meant to provoke students and make them look like perennial trouble-makers who needed to be taught a lesson. The students' angst over the almost 300 per cent hike is understandable as it's astronomical and insensitive, instead of being graded and phased out as all transitions to a new protocol should be. For long, JNU has been offering succour to the poorest of families, who could not afford a respectable education for their children due to the hefty fees charged by other eminent institutions. It is also a fact that JNU had been operating under a differential fee regime compared to its counterparts. A room rent of just ₹20 per month for a single-seater or ₹10 per month for a double seater, that, too without any utility or service charge, is a dream in the heart of Delhi. This is the reason why students prolonged their stay at the hostels, enrolling in course after course while working part-time. Old students overstaying led to a chronic hostel shortage for newcomers. In this sense, it is welcome that the varsity has finally woken up to the dangers of big subsidies. Yet it must be accepted that a steep hike, coming after 19 years, is an injustice when not reasonably executed. No consultations were made with the stakeholders or the management council to arrive at a common ground. The partial rollback, again swiftly ordered, was cosmetic, according to students. And clamping them down with police action frankly gives more credence to their story of persecution than issues that matter.

Going by the recent past, students have won — those at Jadavpur University forced their Vice-Chancellor to resign, FTII students challenged the appointment of chairman Gajendra Chauhan and women students across the country began the Pinjra Tod movement when Jamia Millia Islamia cancelled late nights for its girl hostellers. The Government may want to compartmentalise every part of our public life, saffronising education being a big part of it. Even if we were to follow the spirit of Vedanta truly as it wants, then we would realise that "each man is the power. There is no king. I see everybody equally the same." That's why Professor Firoz Khan of Banaras Hindu University may be a celebrated Sanskritist, who received awards in his subject, but is now considered untouchable.

## Hong Kong crisis

Protests here have intensified and most citizens are in support of the young activists. Beijing is in a quandary



When the People's Republic of China (PRC) took over the administration of Hong Kong in 1997, it laid to rest a painful chapter of colonialism on the Chinese mainland. The UK had sought and won certain rights for the citizens of Hong Kong. The Chinese Government had promised "One country, two systems" for the city-state, which still maintained its judicial, economic and cultural identity. It even competes at global sporting meets independent of the PRC. Initially, the system worked well. Officials in Beijing had

a tough time grasping the concepts of free speech and expression in Hong Kong. They realised that the city and its vibrant stock markets and access to the Western capital allowed huge fund inflows into the PRC. Indeed, the PRC's massive growth in the decade following Hong Kong's return was fuelled by money that was routed through the city. However, things have taken a dark turn here under China's new strongman Xi Jinping, who wants the "Sinification" of the city to progress much faster than the promised 50 years. Instead of Hong Kong hoping that some of its free and open culture will be imbibed by China, Xi wants it to be under his thumb. He wanted to achieve this by essentially subverting Hong Kong's unique judicial system to that of China. Easy, peasy he must have thought, but he had not accounted for the citizens, particularly the students. They were loathe to give up the freedoms they have become accustomed to. Even under the heavy hand of the Hong Kong police, who used some of the latest facial recognition technology, the students have continued to resist. Xi's predicament has worsened because of Hong Kong's vibrant and free media, making the city's crisis a public relations nightmare for Xi and his minions.

Letting the students have their way would be akin to admitting defeat by Xi. However, he should learn that compromise is sometimes the best policy as is keeping one's promises, no matter how much one may not like them. Hong Kongers are proud to be citizens of the PRC as well but they were promised two systems and they want that much and no further. The sight of teargas shells being lobbed at students will not serve Xi well in the long run and might even make his economic diplomacy goals such as the rehabilitation of Huawei and selling the Belt and Road Initiative much more difficult.

# opinion06

## Power shift in Colombo

Sri Lanka's new President Gotabaya has vowed to maintain neutral but friendly relations with foreign powers. He must be judged by his deeds, not words



ASHOK K MEHTA

Gotabaya (Gota) Rajapaksa's decisive victory in the presidential election was not entirely surprising though it has shocked the liberals in Colombo, becoming the most ethnically polarised verdict. Gota has shown that presidential elections can be won without the ethnic minority vote. Ever since the Mahinda Rajapaksa regime was voted out of power in 2015 and following the passage of the 19th Amendment, Gota's choice was natural as 19A had ruled out a third term for the President and raised the bar for age to 35 years, thus rendering Mahinda and his son Namal Rajapaksa ineligible for contesting the presidential election.

For an Army Colonel, Gota's decade as the Defence Secretary to elder brother and former President Mahinda Rajapaksa facilitated the straightening of many wrinkles in defence and national security, though many of his Army colleagues and friends had turned adversaries. By the time Gota became a presidential hopeful, he was accused of corruption, human rights violations during the war, "white van" disappearances, murder of the editor of a newspaper and linkages to a Buddhist extremist group targeting Muslims. But his image as a war hero endured.

Gota won exclusively on the plank of national security. The catastrophic Easter Sunday bombings by radical Islamists linked to Islamic State (IS) were the result of infinite bungling by an incumbent Government already charged with lackadaisical performance. The clamour for return of the Rajapaksas, who had ushered in a decade of peace, began to pick up. Gota sensed his moment. He blamed the Government for dismantling the intelligence apparatus he had established across the country for surveillance and early warning. The bombings were a clear systemic failure.

As President, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, Defence Minister or whichever portfolio he assigns to himself, Gota's first task will be to ginger up the intelligence network and reinstate the intelligence grid and to eliminate the residual sleeper cells of the IS linked to radicalised Muslims in Sri Lanka. The reorganisation of higher defence management, which had become esoteric under his predecessor, is bound to be revamped. The post-Easter Sunday appointments of the chief of national intelligence, Inspector General of Police and Defence Secretary, who report directly to the President, will be reviewed.

Gen Shantha Kottagoda, whose term as Army Commander was prematurely terminated in mid-2000 to accommodate Gen Sarath Fonseka, is current Defence Secretary. The extended term of Chief of Defence Staff, Admiral Ravi Wijegunaratne, a war hero who had to go to jail, ends next month and he may get an extension. Army Chief, Lt Gen Shavendra Silva, another war hero whose



appointment in August attracted Western criticism on account of alleged human rights violations, will certainly get an extension beyond December.

As pledged, Gota will likely arrange the release from jail of military intelligence officials under trial. Similarly, he will end speculation over any domestic or international investigation about alleged war excesses and also close the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution dated January 30, 2015, co-sponsored with the US — which has already quit the council — on post-war transitional justice and reconciliation. Most of the military is jubilant about Gota's return. So excited was the Army that it reportedly endorsed Gota's presidential candidature in a newspaper advertisement.

Simultaneous with alterations in defence and security architecture, Gota will use his executive and persuasive powers to change the Government and make Mahinda the Prime Minister. This can happen in two ways: First by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and his Cabinet resigning in the aftermath of his party's electoral defeat. Ministers aligned with the presidential loser Sajith Premadasa have already resigned and have urged

Wickremesinghe to quit, who said he will consider. A snap election could follow.

Second, according to the 19th Amendment, the President can dismiss the Government four-and-a-half years into its term, which is sometime in February 2020 to pave the way for a new Parliament by August 2020.

Either way, Mahinda will now certainly be the next Prime Minister. And as he recently told a Tamil newspaper: "PM is the real power." The last and only time two brothers have been President and Prime Minister together was a decade ago in Poland with twins — the Kaczynskis. By abolishing the 19th Amendment with a two-thirds majority, the Rajapaksas and the Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) may rule, preferably by taking minorities along, till kingdom come.

Gota must also attend to the declining economy crippled by the IS-linked terrorist attacks. Soon after the war, the economy was zipping at eight per cent growth. The central bank bonds scam under the Wickremesinghe Government was the proverbial last straw that broke the people's confidence in the Government.

Multi-lateral financial agencies are uniformly predicting GDP slipping below the

International Monetary Fund's (IMF) growth forecast of 3.5 per cent for 2019.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka has warned of a Greece-like crisis unless deep structural reforms are implemented. Colombo's total indebtedness to Beijing is unknown but is estimated at 60 per cent of all foreign borrowings. Mahinda had given very generous concessions to China, resulting in both Hambantota and the Colombo Port City projects being leased to Chinese companies for 99 years. China and Sri Lanka decided last month to establish an international financial centre — to rival India's planned international financial centre in Gandhinagar — halfway between Dubai and Singapore. Notwithstanding its viability, the financial centre will give China another foothold in Sri Lanka.

Where does the landmark regime change in Sri Lanka leave India given that it was instrumental in dislodging Mahinda in 2015? This time around, India's non-interference is impeccable. With the Rajapaksa redux, it is easy to paint doomsday scenarios. The Rajapaksa's indebtedness to Beijing started during the war when New Delhi rejected several requests from Colombo for

military hardware to fight the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). It was China and Pakistan, who bailed them out. Upon which India had mocked Lanka for approaching these countries when it was willing to supply only non-lethal stores in deference to domestic political compulsions in Tamil Nadu. The strategic cost of India's hedging lingers though that constraint is gone. Gota famously described New Delhi's non-interference in the war as "management" of India. China's ingress in Sri Lanka pre-dates Rajapaksas. Hambantota was offered twice to India. The rest is history.

It will be unwise to go by the track record of a feisty wartime defence secretary, who as part of the famed *troika* with brother Basil and Secretary to President Lalith Weeraratunga, dealt with an intransigent India. Now President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who has said he will be "neutral but friendly" in foreign relations, must be judged by his deeds not words. Like Nepal, geography and history militate against Sri Lanka being hostile to India.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander IPKF South, Sri Lanka and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff; currently the Integrated Defence Staff.)

## SOUNDBITE

I am sure that IITs and NITs, with their specialisations will be able to find solutions to address the air pollution problem.



**President**  
—Ram Nath Kovind

I want to strike a balance between films and web. I haven't given much thought about working more on streaming platforms.



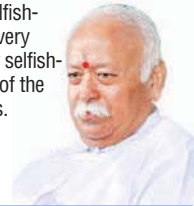
**Actor**  
—Emraan Hashmi

The US is gravely concerned about deepening unrest and violence in Hong Kong. The Government must take clear steps to address public concern.



**US Secretary of State**  
—Mike Pompeo

Everyone knows that selfishness is a bad thing but very few people give up their selfishness. Take the example of the country or of individuals.



**RSS chief**  
—Mohan Bhagwat

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### What a U-turn?

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Dealing with a new Lanka" (November 19). In 2015, voters seemingly *en masse* voted to defeat a supposedly corrupt Rajapaksa regime, which was blamed for many negatives, including nepotism of the highest degree. This, with utter disregard to the fact that it was the very same leader, who along with the defence guidance of his own brother, had been responsible for the defeat of the most feared terrorist organisation.

Five years on, people apparently sought the very people to salvage the country from the abyss it is said to find itself in. Sri Lankans feel that Gotabaya Rajapaksa is their saviour and they pinned new hopes from the new President.

Jayatheertha SA  
Hyderabad

### Tread with care

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Dealing with a new Lanka" (November 19). India's relations with neighbouring countries have

### A whiff of Assam movement

The Asom Songrami Mancha, a platform of civil society leaders and activists, has threatened the BJP that it will launch a massive stir if it goes ahead with the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Parliament. It has strictly warned the Centre of a great movement bigger than the 1980s' Assam students' agitation. The Bill proposes to grant citizenship to refugees from minority communities like Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians. Muslims have been excluded from the scheme of things. This goes against the basic principles of "secularism" as enshrined in the Constitution, particularly Articles 14 and 15, which guarantee equality before the law and forbid discrimination on grounds of religion.

Indigenous people in the State are apprehensive and vociferous about granting citizenship to such a huge number of migrant refugees because this may alter the State's demography. It is also a fact that India has always welcomed and given asylum to all those who have been persecuted. But considering the number of refugees and migrants will be huge, it will send the already slowing economy into a tailspin. If the BJP is still adamant, the Union Government must rehabilitate the migrants in other States, too. The All Assam Students Union (AASU)-led



agitation was a mass movement against the influx of foreigners, especially from neighbouring Bangladesh. It started in 1979 and ended with signing of the 1985 Assam Accord. The Union Government must take stock of the situation and discern the consequences of their zeal to legislate the Citizenship Bill instead of acting hastily. It must refrain from introducing the Citizenship Amendment Bill as it is bound to heap untold miseries on the people.

TK Nandan  
Chennai

always remained wanting. One can understand the thorny historical issues with those in the landlocked arc of the Northwest to the Northeast, the gateway of our invaders. There was no reason for the recurrent indifferent ties with Sri Lanka.

We were naive to be over involved in the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) operation. This peace-keeping exercise not only alienated our own Tamil sentiment but also earned the displeasure of the Sinhalese. Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi

paid the ultimate price.

Things may look better today. But in the election of Gotabaya Rajapaksa as the Sri Lankan President, we have a proponent of majoritarianism, much like our own present dispensation and, thus, they could vibrate well.

That said, the dormant Tamilian schism, both at home and in Sri Lanka, may well find cause for resurgence. This is where we need to tread with care lest we repeat history.

R Narayanan  
Navi Mumbai

### Troubling times ahead

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Dealing with a new Lanka" (November 19). The election of Gotabaya Rajapaksa as the Sri Lankan President will have serious repercussions back home. It is the political shift that is a cause of worry. If Mahinda Rajapaksa becomes the Prime Minister, the Tamil and Muslim populations over there will suffer the most.

But it will be better for the Rajapaksa brothers to focus on issues plaguing the country, most importantly the economy. India, too, needs to pay close attention to the developments in the island nation and protect the interests of the Tamil population there.

Shivansh  
Via email

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

## Being systematic has its benefits

Putting in money regularly through SIPs rather than trying to time a lump sum investment can help one become a more disciplined investor



HIMA BINDU KOTA

A Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) is an investment option offered by mutual funds to people where they can put in small amounts periodically instead of lump sums. They can do this by directly debiting a fixed amount of money from their bank accounts and investing in a specific mutual fund and allocating several units according to the current Net Asset Value (NAV). The frequency of investment could be anywhere from weekly, to monthly or quarterly.

There is no fixed period of investment in a SIP and it could range from as small as six months to forever. However, the shorter the investment period in equity mutual fund SIPs, the higher the potential gain. However, this is not without a higher risk. Research shows that there is a 16 per cent chance of losing more than 20 per cent in an equity mutual fund over a six-month horizon, whereas, there is a 90 per cent chance of positive returns in an average equity fund SIP of three years or more, making long-term investments more desirable.

Although most investors associate SIPs with equity mutual funds, investments into debt SIPs can be as effective. One of the fundamental principles of investing is to make money work as soon as possible. An investment needs time to grow, so the longer the money is in the market, the more chance one has of achieving one's goals. An SIP is an option for small investors who want to take advantage of investing for a longer-term but cannot put in a large amount or a lump sum. Surprisingly, sometimes making regular and small investments in the form of SIP can work in the favour of small investors, because of a concept known as "Rupee Cost Averaging."

Rupee Cost Averaging is an approach in which a person invests a fixed amount of money at regular intervals. This, in turn, ensures that they buy more shares when the prices are low and less when they are high. Let's take an example. Suppose Ram has a lump sum of ₹10,000 that he wants to invest in a particular stock or fund, valued at ₹100. He has two options: First, he can invest the full ₹10,000 in one go, buying 100 shares, at ₹100 each. But by doing this Ram is fully exposed to the movements of the market and the value of his investment will rise and fall in line with any share price changes. His second option is to invest his money gradually and Ram may choose to invest ₹1,000 a month over 10 months. If the stock price stays the same, he will be able to buy 10 scrips each month at ₹100.

However, since share prices fluctuate frequently, regular investments by Ram will increase his buying power when the share price falls and he ends up buying more stocks and vice versa. With a drop in the share price to ₹90, he can buy 11 shares, whereas if it rises to ₹110, Ram will end up with nine.

Hence, by regular, small and pre-determined value of investments, Ram would be in a position to buy more shares when the price falls, thereby bringing down the average cost of purchase. When the stock price recovers to ₹100 in the last month, Ram's original investment would be worth ₹10,300. This means Ram would be ₹300 richer by investing regularly, compared to a lump sum investment in the first month by buying 100 shares.

However, there is a flip side to it as well. Ram could also lose money if the share price moves up and he ends up purchasing at a higher price for most of the months. However, we all know that stock markets rarely move in a straight line and price fluctuations are the norm rather than an exception.

By systematic investments over some time, one can invest across a range of prices and effectively end up paying the average price over a fixed period, which can help smooth out market volatility. Trying to buy an asset when it is considered cheap, which is known as market timing, is tricky even for the most experienced investors. Just because a share has already fallen steeply in value, doesn't mean it won't drop further. Because of many market forces at play, nobody can predict perfectly how and when the price would change.

The decision to invest should be based upon market conditions and putting in money regularly through SIPs rather than trying to time a lump sum investment, can help one become a more disciplined investor and earn better returns in the long run. SIPs help in hedging the risk of getting the market timing wrong. They are also a good option for people with a regular income who want to allocate a fixed amount for mutual funds every month. Further, the choice of mutual funds should be based on one's risk appetite and investment objective.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, Amity University)

ARVIND KEJRIWAL MUST NOMINATE A REPRESENTATIVE TO TEST DELHI WATER SAMPLES AGAIN. WE CHOOSE PRAMOD TIWARI AND J ROYCHOWDHURY FROM BIS.

— CONSUMER AFFAIRS MINISTER

RAM VILAS PASWAN

POINT COUNTERPOINT



WE CAN GET WATER TESTED BY ANY INDEPENDENT AGENCY. STRANGELY, THE CONSUMER AFFAIRS REPORT BELIES THAT OF JAL SHAKTI MINISTRY.

— AAP MP

SANJAY SINGH

# A man-made crisis

Authorities were aware of the impending environmental hazard but instead of a well thought out long-term strategy to tackle air pollution, our approach appears to be a classic case of ad-hocism



KK PAUL

The London smog of November 1952 is considered to be the worst-ever such case of environmental hazard which led to the death of a few thousand people. Winston Churchill, who was the Prime Minister at that time, himself suffered a bronchial attack due to the toxic air. Even though the Clean Air Act came up only in 1956, stringent action had been initiated by the local authorities well before that, bringing in a dramatic improvement in the state of the environment in the city.

Back home, even though the National Green Tribunal (NGT), in the case of Ganga Lalwani vs Union of India (2015), had made burning of crop stubble a penal offence and additionally, formulated a National Policy for Management of Crop Residue, the result of the enforcement effort has been rather half-hearted and its dismal and disastrous results are being experienced by all of us in the form of a health emergency being declared in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR). According to medical experts, air pollution in Delhi-NCR is no longer just a health risk, it has become a hazard. Everyone in Delhi, particularly asthma patients, infants, children and the elderly are affected by this pollution. It doesn't matter whether a person is a smoker or not, the toxic air people are breathing in is equivalent to smoking 15 to 20 cigarettes a day.

Except for the States of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, where some seriousness has been shown in combatting air pollution, the enforcement of the NGT's orders and follow-up on the policy in some of the other States, particularly in Punjab and to some extent in Haryana, has been very poor.

However, according to an affidavit filed by the Central Government in the Supreme Court (SC), stubble burning has gone up by seven per cent in Punjab and gone down by 17 per cent in Haryana. In order to address this problem, a new Central scheme, "Promotion of Agricultural Mechanisation for In-Situ Management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi," was approved in 2018.

This provided for subsidising machinery required for in-situ management of the biomass, for which a sum of ₹1,151.80 crore has been allocated for the period of 2018-2023. Out of this provision, Punjab has got the largest share. The objective of the scheme was to procure agricultural machinery and equipment for in-situ management of crop residue, create farm machinery banks and conduct multi-media awareness campaigns.

Delhi, leading the NCR with a combination of adverse factors, has already broken the world record for Air Quality Index (AQI), making the headlines bold and telling. But perhaps waking up will take some time. There is no dearth of authorities who are, and were aware of the impending environmental hazard, but instead of a well thought out long-term strategy or some short-term relief our approach appears to be a classic case of ad-hocism. For instance, it is now known that the burning of stubble is respon-



sible for about 37 per cent of the pollution, which is more or less of a seasonal nature. For the remaining, it is understood that two-wheelers, whose number in Delhi alone is 88 lakh, happen to be the source of about 33 per cent of the pollutants, while four-wheelers, whose number is about 35 lakh are responsible for just about 15 per cent of it.

In these circumstances, forcing some four-wheelers to be off the roads is bound to have just a marginal impact.

On the other hand, as is well known, the two-stroke two-wheelers and three-wheelers emit a far more hazardous mixture of hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides, some of which like benzene are known to be carcinogenic, but their numbers continue to increase.

In respect of automobile emissions, complete combustion within the engine is essential to reduce the extent of pollutants. The four-stroke engine is cleaner because it burns pure petrol; the two-stroke engine, on the other hand, burns a combination of lubricating oil and petrol and a fair amount of the oil is emitted as unburnt vapour.

Some 94 per cent of the two-and three-wheelers in India are powered by two-stroke engines that are simple and compact in design, cheap and easy to maintain. But the conventionally-designed two-stroke engines produce high levels of hydrocarbons in exhaust emissions — 5,500 parts per million (ppm), compared to 850 ppm from four-stroke engines. According to a research at the Indian Institute of Petroleum at Dehradun, four-stroke engine-powered motor cycles have been observed to emit just one-sixth to one-tenth of the hydrocarbons emitted by two-stroke engines. In addition, their fuel economy is better by 20 to 50 per cent. However, manufacturers prefer two-stroke engines because they are more powerful and

EXCEPT FOR THE STATES OF ODISHA, ANDHRA PRADESH AND TAMIL NADU, WHERE SOME SERIOUSNESS HAS BEEN SHOWN IN COMBATTING AIR POLLUTION, THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE NGT'S ORDERS AND FOLLOW-UP ON THE POLICY IN SOME OF THE OTHER STATES, PARTICULARLY IN PUNJAB AND TO SOME EXTENT IN HARYANA, HAS BEEN VERY POOR

have greater pick-up. In the long run, electricity-powered two-wheelers could be a suitable alternative. The latest figures available for usage of public transport in Delhi indicate that the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and Delhi Metro carry just 12 and 10 per cent respectively of the entire commuter traffic.

This is an extremely low proportion and obviously leading to a much greater usage of highly polluting two-wheelers. Obviously, we have to create conditions for encouraging greater ridership on public transport. At the same time we must ensure a larger number of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel stations so as to reduce the waiting time, since mostly these cater to public transport vehicles or taxis.

Last year a group of industries had conducted a pilot project in two districts of Punjab covering an area of 16,000 acres of farm land, where 25,000 tonnes of rice straw were processed and converted into fibre-based cellulosic products. The details of the project need to be analysed to enlarge its scope.

The apex court has pulled up the Government of India as well as the Delhi Government for "passing the buck" even as Delhi and nearby areas face a public health emergency due to the severe air pollution.

Further, the Centre has been asked to call environmental experts including those from the Indian Institutes of Technology so that their views on the current situation could be taken into account for suitable directives. It can thus be easily observed that a rational public policy based on scientific inputs needs to be operationalised while ensuring its stringent implementation and monitoring.

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

# What lies ahead for Sri Lankan Tamils?

The new President, known as 'terminator' for his role in wiping out the LTTE a decade ago, has faced lawsuits in Lanka and in the US over allegations of staged killings of Tamil separatists, critics and journalists during the civil war



KALYANI SHANKAR

Sri Lankan People's Front candidate Gotabaya Rajapaksa, younger brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, has now taken over as the country's President. A retired Lieutenant-Colonel, who presided over the country's Defence Ministry for a decade during his brother's tenure (2005-2014), Gotabaya swept the polls in the Sinhala-majority districts, while his main opponent Ranasinghe Premadasa, garnered most of the votes from the Tamil-dominated north and east of the country.

Gotabaya's victory would mean the return of the powerful Rajapaksa family as he is expected to appoint his brother Mahinda as the Prime

Minister, sooner than later.

The new Sri Lankan President, known as "terminator" for his role in wiping out the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) a decade ago, has faced lawsuits in Sri Lanka and in the United States (US) over allegations of staged killings of Tamil separatists, critics and journalists during the civil war.

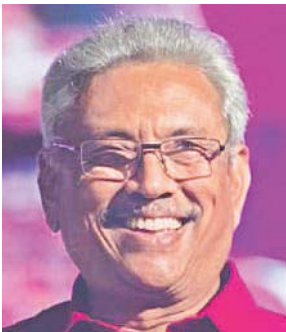
In a fascinating interview with this journalist in 2014, Gotabaya revealed many things, including how he then government finished off the LTTE. Giving a graphic description of what happened in the last days of the LTTE War IV, (the name given to the fourth phase of the armed conflict between the Sri Lankan military and the separatists), he pointed out that the biggest advantage was that his brother had full trust in him and the then Army chief Sarath Fonseka. Mahinda had the political will to neutralise the LTTE.

Second, the leadership agreed with the defence assessment that a large-scale expansion was needed within a very short period. "We briefed the President. It was not an easy thing to achieve. You need to recruit people, train them and also

equip them. But, we did it," he said. Giving more details, Gotabaya said that the President also created a core group to cut down red tape.

"From our side it was Basil Rajapaksa, Lalith Chandrakumar Weeraratunga, who was the President's Permanent Secretary and me. From the Indian side it was their National Security Advisor MK Narayanan, Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon and Defence Secretary VJ Singh, who were in the loop. We coordinated everything. We went to India and they came to Sri Lanka. And we discussed everything, even the operational plan and intelligence inputs."

Gotabaya also exposed the double face of the then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M Karunanidhi, who put tremendous pressure on the Manmohan Singh Government to stop the war on the LTTE, while the ruling DMK adopted a strategy of run-



ning with the hare and hunting with the hound.

Shivshankar Menon in his book, titled *Choices: Inside the making of India's Foreign Policy*, confirms that New Delhi was in "intense" and "constant" touch with Colombo.

"I vividly remember the atmosphere of the crisis

that built up during that period and repeated visits from and to Colombo in the first five months of 2009," Menon notes in his book, adding that by mid-January 2009, the Sri Lankan Army and leadership were convinced that they had the measure of the LTTE and the victory would be theirs. As a strategy, the Sri Lankan Army strongly occupied the north and the south so that the Tigers were kept away and were stopped from procuring military supplies.

As for the last phase of the Eelam War IV, Gotabaya noted, that even at the last minute

Thiruvankadam Velupillai Prabhakaran, the founder and leader of the LTTE, broke from the line and went into the small island with his bodyguards.

"Kandasamy Pathmanabha, a Sri Lankan Tamil rebel, founder of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front and the LTTE's financier, spoke to Prabhakaran in January 2009 over the phone asking him to escape. We intercepted the conversation. Prabhakaran refused to hide at that time. Two weeks before the war ended KP spoke to him again and asked him to escape. The LTTE Tiger again refused," he said.

Gotabaya pointed out that, "Do you think that such a person will come out holding his hands up and surrender?"

The then Army chief Sarath Fonseka, in an interview to this journalist also observed that the strategy was to take on the LTTE in the jungles. "By May 17, 2009 the troops cornered the LTTE within an area of 400X400 metres. That night when they tried to escape they were prevented from doing so, by all three lines of defence put up by the Army.

"On the night of May 18, the top LTTE leadership divided itself into three groups. They attacked the Army's forward defence line along the Nandikadal lagoon and did manage to break through. Jeyam, Pottu Amman and Soosai led these three groups. Prabhakaran and his closest guards thought they would manage to escape but in reality all these LTTE fighters (around 250) had got trapped between the Army's first and second line of defence. "After fierce fighting that night, almost the entire leadership of the LTTE was eliminated in that area. "We discovered Prabhakaran's body on the morning of May 19. I got the news of his death around 11 AM. I got a phone call from the Commander who gave me the information. Looking back, I was confident. I said I would finish the LTTE in three years and I did it in two years and nine months," Fonseka said.

Those were different times but today it is a time for peace and as President how will Gotabaya deal with the Tamil minorities in Lanka now? The fact that the Tamils did not vote for him reveals their apprehensions.

(The writer is a senior journalist)



FOREIGN EYE



## THE WORLD IS WATCHING CHINA

Since 1989, when it crushed the pro-reform protests that began in Tiananmen Square and witnessed the beginning of the end for the Soviet Union, Beijing has calculated that bloody suppression should be avoided if possible — but not by offering concessions. It will angrily dismiss any criticism, as it has that from Britain. Ignored or not, foreign leaders have a duty to remind China that they are watching the action in Hong Kong.

(The Guardian editorial)



CAPSULE



Passenger vehicle retail sales jump 11 pc in Oct on festive demand: FADA

**NEW DELHI:** Automobile dealers' body FADA on Tuesday said retail sales of passenger vehicles in October increased 11 per cent to 2,48,036 units against the same period last year, driven by festive demand during the month. According to Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), passenger vehicles (PV) sales stood at 2,23,498 units in October 2018. Two-wheeler sales increased 5 per cent to 13,34,941 units last month as compared with 12,70,261 units in the year-ago period. Commercial vehicle sales, however, declined 23 per cent to 67,060 units as compared to 87,618 units in October last year. Three-wheeler sales saw an increase of 4 per cent to 59,573 units last month. Total sales across categories rose 4 per cent to 17,09,610 units in October, as against 16,38,832 units in the same month last year.



Govt extends date till Nov 20 to register with SIMS to import

**NEW DELHI:** The government has extended the date for traders till November 20 to register themselves with Steel Import Monitoring System (SIMS) to import 215 iron and steel products. "One time relaxation till November 20, 2019, for obtaining SIMS registration is notified," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification. Earlier, the date was November 1. In September, the government had made it mandatory for traders to register themselves with SIMS to import 215 iron and steel products. These items include certain flat-rolled products, some stranded wire, ropes, cables; certain items of springs and leaves for springs of iron and steel, tubes, pipes and hollow profiles, diesel-electric locomotives, and some parts of railways.



Traders to protest against Amazon, Flipkart on Wednesday

**NEW DELHI:** Traders in more than 700 cities will on Wednesday protest against the "unethical and unfair business practices" of e-commerce firms Amazon and Flipkart, CAIT said. The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has on multiple occasions alleged that these companies were circumventing the law and abusing Press Note No 2 of the government's foreign direct investment (FDI) policy. During the nationwide agitation, traders will observe November 20 as 'National Protest Day' and hold 'dharna' in more than 700 cities in different states, said the body, which claims to represent 7 crore traders.

1,000 TONNES EXPECTED BY MONTH-END: GOVT OFFICIAL

Pvt traders place onion import orders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Private traders have placed orders for importing onions and at least 1,000 tonnes are expected by month end, which will help ease retail prices that is still ruling high at over Rs 60/kg, a senior government official said on Tuesday.

The retail prices of onion had soared to Rs 100/kg a week back in the national capital, but the government's various intervention helped it to cool down a bit, but the rates are still ruling high at over Rs 60/kg in Delhi as well as other consuming areas of the country.

"Private traders have informed the government that they have imported a small quantity of onion. Traders are expected to order further 1,000 tonnes for delivery by month-end and another lot for next month," a senior Consumer Affairs Ministry official told PTI.

The shipments will come smoothly as the government has liberalised phytosanitary and fumigation norms for import of onion till December-end, the official added.



**The shipments will come smoothly as the government has liberalised phytosanitary and fumigation norms for import of onion till December-end, the official added**

To improve domestic availability and contain price rise, the government is facilitating onion imports through private as well as public trading agencies. The government has decided to import 1 lakh tonnes of onion through state-

run MMTC, which has already invited bids for import of 4,000 tonnes.

Onion prices came under pressure due to 30-40 per cent estimated fall in the kharif (summer) output this year on account of floods and drought.

TCS launches Microsoft Business Unit for enterprises leveraging AI, ML

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT services major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Tuesday said it is setting up a new Microsoft Business Unit (MBU) that will help enterprises to better leverage technologies like artificial intelligence, automation and cloud.

"The new unit will leverage TCS' deep domain knowledge across industries and global talent pool of nearly 50,000 engineers trained on Microsoft technologies, to help customers leverage the power of AI, automation and cloud to enhance customer experience, re-imagine employee empowerment, optimize operations and spur innovation," a statement said.

The MBU will be led by Siva Ganesan, who has been with TCS for over 29 years and held various global leadership roles, it added.

"Entire industries are transforming, and today every company is becoming a software company. Through this expanded partnership with TCS, we are significantly increasing our ability to enable our customers to take advantage of the opportunities to transform and accelerate into the digital era," Jean-Philippe Courtois, Executive Vice President and President, Global Sales, Marketing & Operations at Microsoft Corp, said.



Housing sales of 9 listed players up 2 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Housing sales of nine major real estate companies, which are listed on stock exchanges, increased marginally 2 per cent to Rs 5,520 crore during the second quarter of 2019-20, according to a research report.

The sales booking data for July-September of nine companies -- DLF, Godrej Properties, Mahindra Lifespace, Oberoi Realty, Prestige, Sobha, Puravankara, Brigade and Kolte-Patil -- has been compiled by property consultant Anarock.

The organised housing brokerage business, Noida-based Investors Clinic, Anarock, New Corp-backed PropTiger, Anil Ambani led Reliance group-backed Square Yards, Quirk Realty and Gurugram-based 360 Realtors are the leading players.

"While housing sales in overall residential market

While housing sales in overall residential market recorded a decline in Q2 FY20, the housing sales value of India's top 9 listed developers remained steady during the quarter

**ANUJ PURI**  
Chairman, Anarock

recorded a decline in Q2 FY20, the housing sales value of India's top 9 listed developers remained steady during the quarter," said Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock.

On quarterly basis, their housing sales value increased 5 per cent from Rs 5,250 crore in the first quarter of 2019-20 to nearly Rs 5,520 crore in the second quarter.

"On yearly basis, these listed developers collectively saw their housing sales value rise by a meagre 2 per cent from Rs 5,390 crore in Q2 FY19," Puri said.



istration as an investment adviser with the regulator, has declared that he was not engaged in

Sebi bans Capital Heed proprietor from taking fresh clients

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi has barred Capital Heed Financial Research's proprietor Shailendra Sen from taking any fresh clients for investment advisory services as he provided false information to the regulator in his application for registration as investment adviser. Besides, the markets regulator prima facie,

found that Sen, as one of the partner of Cash Cow Broking & Advisory Solution, was carrying out investment advisory services from August 2014 till October 2017 without obtaining the necessary registration as mandated under the Investment Adviser (IA) Regulations.

A Sebi probe also found that Sen, at the time of seeking reg-

Tata Steel confirms job cuts of up to 3,000 across European ops

PTI ■ LONDON

Tata Steel has confirmed cuts of up to 3,000 jobs across its European operations as part of a wider restructuring and cost-cutting strategy to counter stagnant steel demand in Europe and global overcapacity.

The Indian steel giant said it plans to lower employment costs with the "estimated reduction" in employee numbers, about two-thirds of which are expected to be office-based white-collar roles -- a majority expected at its Netherlands unit.

"The information shared with the European Works Council select committee lays out the case for change, explains our transformation programme and gives a first overview of the organisational impact," a company statement said.

"A transformation is needed to mitigate the current structural and cyclical headwinds and create the foundation for the company's future success. Stagnant EU steel demand and global overcapacity have been compounded by trade conflicts which have turned the European market into a dumping ground for the world's excess steel capacity," it noted.

Through its proposed transformation programme, Tata Steel Europe said it is initially targeting a positive cash flow by the end of its financial year ending March 2021. It is



The information shared with the European Works Council select committee lays out the case for change, explains our transformation programme and gives a first overview of the organisational impact

—TATA STEEL

also aiming for an EBITDA margin of around 10 per cent throughout the market cycle.

"We intend to align on our approach and the process going forward and engage with various stakeholders to develop the proposed decisions and ensure compliance with all European and national obligations. Further details will be provided from this point forward and detailed proposals will be developed from here," the company statement added.

The steel major, one of Europe's leading steel produc-

ers, said the changes were needed to ensure the business can thrive despite severe market headwinds and also accelerate innovation towards carbon-neutral steelmaking.

"Today we are highlighting important proposals towards building a financially strong and sustainable European business," said Henrik Adam, CEO of Tata Steel in Europe, in a statement on Monday.

"We plan to change how we work together to enable better cooperation and faster decision-making. This will help us become self-sustaining and cash positive in the face of unprecedented severe market conditions, enabling us to lead the way towards a carbon-

neutral future," he said.

The programme is focused on four areas to improve financial performance -- increasing sales of higher-value steels by improving product mix and customer focus; efficiency gains by optimising production processes, supported by the application of big data and advanced analytics; lowering employment costs; and reduction of procurement costs through smarter sourcing and strengthening cooperation with companies within the Tata Steel group.

The latest move comes a few months after Tata Steel Europe announced plans to close two UK operations with the loss of 400 jobs, after it failed to sell off its loss-making Orb Electrical Steels business in Newport, South Wales.

Tata Steel's struggles with its European operations follow a European Union (EU) ruling to deny its joint venture plans with German giant ThyssenKrupp on anti-competitive grounds.

The company said its quest for improved earnings and cash flows would help make it a financially self-sustaining business able to invest in asset reliability and improvements while also servicing its financial obligations to its lenders and shareholders.

According to the latest figures, in the first six months of its current financial year starting April 2019, Tata Steel Europe reported a drop of 90 per cent in EBITDA to 31 million pounds and revenue stood at 3.25 billion pounds.

Google acquires CloudSimple

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Google has acquired US-based CloudSimple for an undisclosed amount, a move that will help the tech giant further strengthen its cloud business.

CloudSimple, which allows companies to run computing workloads that are based on VMware's server virtualisation technology, is headquartered in Santa Clara, US. Founded in 2016, it has offices in Ukraine and India (Bengaluru, Gurugram and Pune), and its investors include Mayfield, Redpoint and M12 (Microsoft's venture fund).

"This acquisition builds on our existing partnership with CloudSimple that we announced earlier this year, allowing us to accelerate a fully integrated VMware migration solution with improved support for our customers," Google Vice-President (Engineering) Rich Sanzi said in a blogpost.

He added that many enterprises are using VMware in their on-premises environments to run a variety of workloads: business applications such as ERP and CRM; databases such as Oracle and SQL Server; development and test environments; virtual desktops; and reporting and analytics systems.



**CloudSimple, which allows companies to run computing workloads that are based on VMware's server virtualisation technology, is headquartered in Santa Clara, US**

Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"As part of their IT modernisation initiatives, we hear frequently from enterprise customers that they need a simple way to migrate those workloads to the cloud. To put it simply: they want to be able to run what they want, where they want, and how they

want - so they can leverage existing investments with as little toil as possible," he said.

CloudSimple co-founder and CEO Guru Pangal said the company is "incredibly excited to be part of Google Cloud and look forward to accelerating our ability to help customers easily move their enterprise workloads to the cloud".



help customers easily move their enterprise workloads to the cloud".

Sundaram BNP Paribas HF is now Sundaram Home Finance

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The subsidiary of non-banking finance company Sundaram Finance Ltd - Sundaram BNP Paribas Home Finance - has been changed to Sundaram Home Finance with immediate effect. The move to change the name follows the receipt of regulatory approvals relating to the acquisition by Sundaram Finance of BNP Paribas Personal Finance's stake in Sundaram BNP Paribas Home Finance Ltd.

In June, Sundaram Finance and BNP Paribas Personal Finance had reached an agreement whereby BNP Paribas Personal Finance agreed to sell its 49.9 per cent equity stake in Sundaram BNP Paribas Home Finance Ltd to Sundaram Finance Ltd subject to the regulatory approvals. "The transaction was completed on September 30 after receiving all regulatory approvals. The name change is consequent to this," a company statement said on Tuesday.



Comm min asks cashew industry to file application for probe into dumping

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The commerce ministry has asked Cashew Export Promotion Council to file an application with Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) to probe dumping of the commodity into India, which is impacting domestic players, an official has said.

In a meeting last month on export performance of the country, the council had raised the matter of dumping of broken cashew into India.

Cashew Export Promotion Council of India was asked to file an anti-dumping investigation request with the DGTR, the official said.

The directorate is an arm of the ministry which conducts probe related to dumping and significant increase in import of a product.

If it establishes in its probe that dumping and increase in imports are impacting domestic players, DGTR recommends anti-dumping and safeguard duties, respectively. The finance ministry takes the



final call to impose these duties.

The council's chairman R K Bhooles said large volumes of semi-finished kernels are being dumped in India from African countries including Guyana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Ivory Coast.

The African nations have formed 'African Cashew Alliance' to boost the industry in that continent.

The government in June increased sharply the minimum import price for whole and broken cashew, making inbound shipments of the commodity costlier.

India's first technical textile hackathon from Nov 22

PNS ■ MUMBAI

India's first technical textile hackathon will be held here on Friday, with an aim to identify solutions to the critical challenges of sustainable urban living.

The hackathon aims to potentially build business models that can be funded, scaled, and taken at a global level. It is expected to bring the country's top 10 technical textile start-ups under one roof, a statement issued by the organisers Messe Frankfurt India said.

While the manufacturing side will be represented by companies of speciality fibres, yarns, textiles, fabrics, products along with brands and traders,



the entrepreneur side will cover SMEs, start-up ecosystems and accelerators.

The hackathon will take up topics centred around India's challenges of sustainability such

as ocean littering, plastic recycling and waste disposal and drive concepts for start-ups to

**While the manufacturing side will be represented by companies of speciality fibres, yarns, textiles, fabrics, products along with brands and traders, the entrepreneur side will cover SMEs, start-up ecosystems and accelerators**

collaborate with industry stakeholders to develop focused solutions using technical textiles, the statement said.

"While Techtextil India exhibition highlights innovations in the sector, the Techtextil NEXT Hackathon is a concerted effort to tackle today's urban living challenges with next-generation solutions. The platform

has the potential to present transformative ideas," Raj Manek, executive director and board member, Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings said.

Technical textile is increasingly penetrating every aspect of our daily lives such as medical masks, car seats, trekking gears, specialised sport-wear etc.



Actress Prachi Tehlan, who is all set to test her luck in Telugu film industry with her latest flick *Mamangam*, shares her journey from being the captain of the Indian netball team to becoming an actor with V SATEESH REDDY

## STAR IN SPORTS SHINES ON SCREEN

Prachi Tehlan, the Delhi-based sportsperson-turned-actress is all set to test her luck with the Telugu audience with her latest film in Malayalam, *Mamangam*, which has been dubbed into Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. Prachi is also a successful sportswoman who represented India in netball and basketball competitions, nationally and internationally. "I was working for Accenture as a consultant when Shashi Summet Productions approached me with an acting offer. I took it as an opportunity to try something new and I am glad it worked for me. I started enjoying it and I can see myself doing more in the future. *Arjan* was my first movie and it was directed by Mandip Singh in which I loved giving a powerful performance as Nimmi (Nimrat Kaur)," says Prachi who made her acting debut with the TV series *Diya Aur Baati Hum* in 2016. Speaking about her role in the Mammootty-starrer *Mamangam*, she shares, "*Mamangam* is a period drama. I play Unnimaya who is an entertainer and a warrior. I also feature in fight scenes. I

have considerable screen space with all major characters in the film since the major part of the film was shot at Unnimaya's palace. To play the role to my best I learnt Mohiniyattam and Malayalam." She said that working with legendary actor Mammootty is an honour for her and he was helpful and kind in every way. Her love for movies equals her love and dedication for sports where she has excelled before becoming an actress. Prachi was the former captain of the Indian netball team which represented India at the 2010 Commonwealth Games and in other major Asian championships in 2010-11. "Sports will always be my first love and it was a wonderful experience. I played both basketball and netball for 10 years for Delhi and India and I learnt a lot and developed a personality that has helped me in almost every profession I have worked in," she tells *The Pioneer*. Prachi, who has been into sports professionally for a decade now feels team sports in India still have a long way to go for people to make it into a profession with lucrative jobs and salaries. "I have enjoyed playing sports and I was very passionate about it. Now I am in a different phase of my life and I have been blessed to experiment with careers. I enjoy being an actor today," she says. According to her, the status of netball in India is not up to the mark. She says, "Netball should have been picked after performing on an international platform such as the Commonwealth games (CWG) 2010 for the first time. But, we couldn't make use of it. Players were not provided any grounds to play and I remember, during the last tournament I played for India, we used to practise outdoors

Netball should have been picked after performing on an international platform such as the Commonwealth games 2010 for the first time. But, we couldn't make use of it. Players were not provided any grounds to play and I remember, during the last tournament I played for India, we used to practise outdoors on the grass and played the tournament on a wooden court. It doesn't work like that. Players should be respected and given facilities they deserve."

Prachi says that even the sports dramas that have become so common in mainstream movies can't really inspire the youth to play unless followed up with proper infrastructure. "It (the movies) definitely bring awareness in people about sports and the journey of sportspersons. But, I am not too sure how they can motivate people to play sports. For that there should be good infrastructure, motivation to join sports and good job opportunities. There should be a structure in place to give children options from a younger age to choose whichever sports they would want to choose professionally," says Prachi expressing her interest in starring in sports biopics along with romantic and action movies. About her Hyderabad connection, she recalls, "I remember playing a sports tournament in Hyderabad when I was in Class 9 and I also remember seeing *Kal Ho Naa Ho* here. And my childhood memories of this place definitely includes Biryani." Prachi has also acted in her first Telugu film *Trishanku* which will be released soon. Reacting to whether she is thinking of moving to another career, she says, "God knows. I am just going with the flow. I don't know where life takes me. I am just utilising the opportunities that come my way to the best of my capabilities."



## Everybody must watch George Reddy: Chiru

George Reddy has gained considerable attention from all sections of society even before its release. It even attracted the attention of Megastar Chiranjeevi who recollected the time from his college days, when he first heard about the student leader, George Reddy. "The first time I heard about George Reddy I was studying Intermediate in Ongole. After that it is only now I am hearing his name because of this movie. It is

surprising that no movies have been made on this revolutionary student leader who questioned injustice and wrong doings. I wish to watch more such movies," Megastar said while releasing the song *Adugu Adugu...* of the film. "Everybody must watch this film," Chiru said enthusiastically and congratulated the movies team including the lead actor Sandeep Madhav and writer-director B. Jeevan Reddy. The movie will hit screens on November 22.

## CITY ENJOYS MUMBAI FLAVOURS



Chef Irfan

Ambience is often the most important aspect of a restaurant that is overlooked by many. But, when it comes to Soda Bottle Opener Wala, a Parsi café near Jubilee check-post, you are left in awe, as soon as you enter the restaurant, at the amount of care taken in creating a pleasant atmosphere. The restaurant chain,

which is renowned throughout the country, recently launched a new menu at its Hyderabad branch that aims to cater to the local palette without compromising on taste. Everyone knows about the affinity Hyderabadis have for their food. But, there are certain items like the taste and aroma of a hot cuppa Irani Chai that turn us finicky and write lengthy blogs. The restaurant, in

tune with this requirement, offers a plethora of items catering to the local taste, which goes beyond the classic Bombay and Parsi flavours, encompassing dishes that are inspired from other communities living in Mumbai. For instance, the Mutton Pepper Fry and the Egg Wrapped Kheema Pulao that Soda Bottle Opener Wala caters to city residents are from the local bars of Mumbai. There are also a

few innovative additions like Kundapuri Prawn, Meatless Baida Roti and Chicken ghee roast, which will leave you wanting for more. If you're on the lookout for a cafe to visit this weekend, do remember to check out Soda Bottle Opener Wala and enjoy a satisfying experience that will linger on for days.



## Bengali movies to enthrall city

Bengali cinema, in the 1950s, has brought in a wave of parallel cinema that not only put Indian cinema on the world map but also influenced the next generation of filmmakers across the country. To celebrate this rich culture of Bengali cinema, the Hyderabad Bangalee Samithi, in association with the Tourism and Culture Government of Telangana, Moving Images and Utsab Cultural Association is all set to present the 3rd edition of Telangana Bengali Film Festival in the city. Spanning three days, the festival, that will be held from December 6 to 8, at the Prasad Preview Theatre at Banjara Hills, will feature 10 feature films, eight short films and three foreign films. Apart from movie screenings, the film festival will unfold a variety of striking activities like acting workshop by Mohammad Ali Baig, prominent theatre personality, Debasish Sen Sharma, an

independent filmmaker, a photo exhibition by Ritwik Ghatak and a cooking competition by Goutam Ghose. "Eight lakh Bengalis reside in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, who are parched for cultural shows or movie screenings in Bengali. TBFF — Aayna, 2019 will again look to unite the huge Bengali diaspora living in Hyderabad and beyond and help them connect with the artistic, social, cultural and political ethos of their roots,"

said Ranjan Kumar Roy Choudhury, Chairman, Hyderabad Bangalee Samithi.

**THE THREE-DAY FESTIVAL STARTING FROM DECEMBER 8 WILL FEATURE 10 FEATURE FILMS, EIGHT SHORT FILMS AND THREE FOREIGN FILMS**



PARTY



Prabhas



Vijay Deverakonda



Srinivas Reddy, Praveen, Ajay



T Harish Rao



Namrata Shirodkar



Sunil, BVSN Prasad



Revanth Reddy



Ujwal and Manisha

A STAR-STUDED AFFAIR

The engagement of producer Sirish's son Ujwal to Manisha in Hyderabad over the weekend was a grand affair with celebs from all walks of life gracing it. Sirish being leading producer Dil Raju's partner, the star power was evident at the event, with Prabhas, Vijay Deverakonda, Sunil and Namrata Shirodkar among others adding glamour. Telangana finance minister T Harish Rao and MP Revanth Reddy too were spotted at the do, so were VV Vinayak, Srinivas Reddy and Ajay among others.

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 tomorrow at Alliance Francaise.



MOVIES, PLAYS AND CONCERTS

JOD TOD

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



VIVA CUBA MOVIE SCREENING

In a tale akin to Romeo and Juliet, the friendship between two children is threatened by their parents' differences. Malu is from an upper-class family and her single mother does not want her to play with Jorgito, as she thinks his background coarse and commonplace. The movie shall be screened at Lamakaan on November 27, at 7 pm.



LEGENDS LIVE IN CONCERT

One of the most-awaited events is finally happening, a three-hour musical concert with the voices of legends — SP Balasubrahmanyan, KJ Yesudas, and KS Chitra. The power-trio shall perform live at Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium on November 30 at 7 pm. Organised by Eleven Point Two, the concert will showcase soulful melodies by the trio, who have come together for the first time.



INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL

Half a dozen bands from Germany, France, Switzerland, Meghalaya, Mumbai and Hyderabad shall be seen performing at the event. Goethe-Zentrum Hyderabad, Alliance Française and U.S. Consulate General Hyderabad are pleased to present the 3rd International Hyderabad Jazz Festival from November 22 to November 24 at Phoenix Arena 6:30 pm onwards.



ARIJIT - LIVE PERFORMANCE



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

QADIR ALI BAIG THEATER FESTIVAL

One of the most prestigious theatre festivals in the subcontinent today Qadir Ali Baig Theater Festival brings together an eminent assembly of theatre practitioners from across the country and over seas. It is curated by Padma Shri recipient Mohammed Ali Baig as a tribute to his father, Hindustani theatre legend Qadir Ali Baig. The event shall be held till November 24 across the city.



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



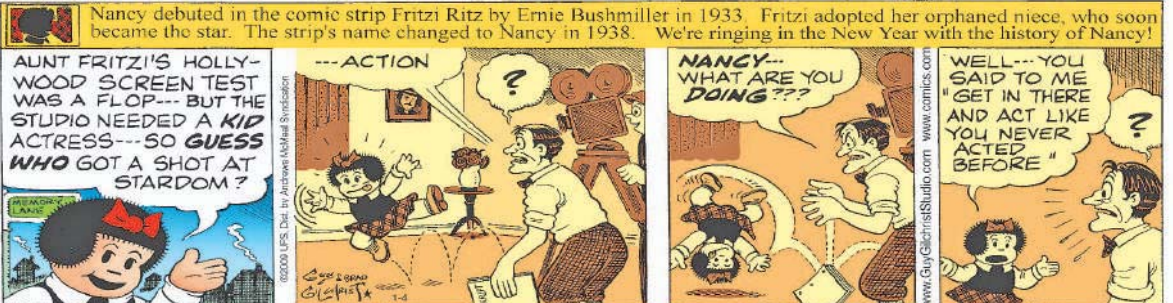
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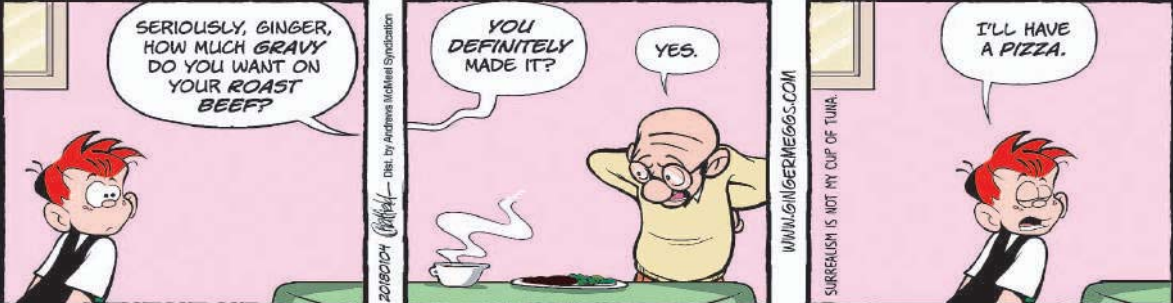
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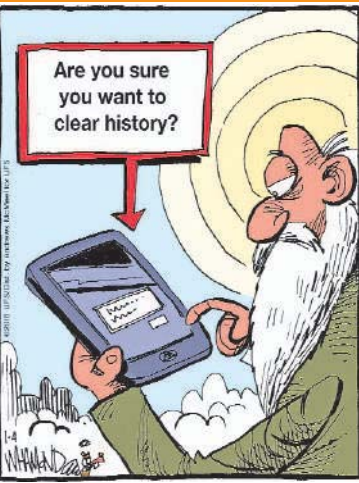
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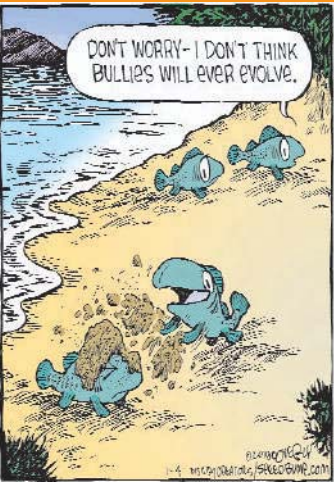
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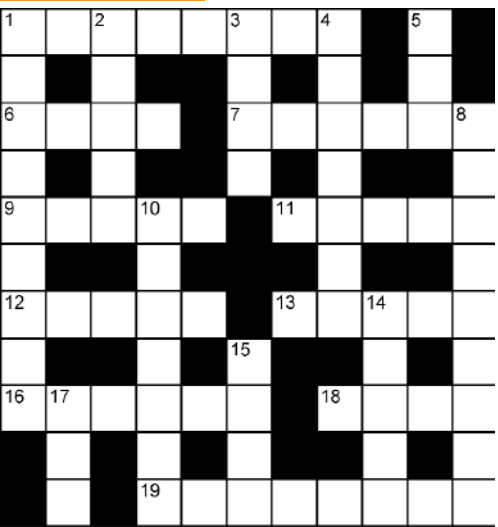
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Nice, enjoyable
- 6 Decays
- 7 An animal with a shell
- 9 Causes pain to
- 11 A witch's power
- 12 Footwear
- 13 A hot drink
- 16 A medical professional
- 18 Lengthy
- 19 Inspected closely
- 4 A violent storm with twisting winds
- 5 Unwell
- 8 Swapped
- 10 Go to see shows here
- 14 A king or queen wears this
- 15 Length x width =
- 17 Not at home

DOWN

- 1 Bought
- 2 Go in
- 3 Takes part in a play

SOLUTION





# CONNECTING TO ROOTS

Director Ravi Kiran speaks to NAGARAJ GOUD about his bumpy ride from receiving no support for choosing a career in films to the praises he has been receiving for his maiden film *Raja Vaaru Rani Gaaru*

**F**ilmmaker Ravi Kiran Kola wasn't prepared for the response the teaser of his maiden feature film, *Raja Vaaru Rani Gaaru*, has received after it was released online last month. From Sukumar, Sreekanth Addala to Adivi Sesh and Bunni Vaas, everybody rang him up and showered praises. "It was a great welcome gesture for sure. Impressed by the teaser, producer Suresh Babu told me that he would love to support the film in every way possible. He watched it in a special screening and decided to give it a release under the Suresh Productions banner. What more can a team of youngsters ask for?" he tells us in an exclusive conversation.

Ravi, a native of Bhadravaram village, East Godavari was drawn to films in school, courtesy Megastar Chiranjeevi. So eager to get into the industry that he landed in Hyderabad after completing his intermediate. His father was staunchly opposed to the idea, while his mother supported his dream. "My father was the one who challenged me that I will not become a director. He was of the belief that since I knew no one in the industry and that I had no monetary support, it would be impossible for me to become a director," Ravi recalls.

After receiving some good counsel, days after he reached Hyderabad, he decided to go back to his hometown, get a graduation degree before trying his luck in the film world again. While pursuing engineering, he made a short film which was picked for a festival in Hyderabad. It helped him grab the attention of a prominent filmmaker, who asked him to pen a screenplay for his film. "After completing my last exam in engineering, I straightaway took a bus and reached Hyderabad. I was with the director for a year but as the film couldn't move to floors, I later directed a short film on Swachh Bharat with anchor Ravi in 2016. It was a period of boom for short films back then and I thought things would change for me, but that wasn't meant to be," he reminisces.

Later, he started penning the script of *Raja Vaaru Rani Gaaru* and things started falling into place. "With the film I wanted to connect to my roots and tell a tale honestly. I've seen a lot of Telugu films where some characters spoke in an East Godavari accent which is different from how it actually is. Maybe that was needed to generate comedy but *Rangasthalam* managed to break that. All the characters in my film speak in a slang that is

native to East Godavari. The film deals with fear of rejection. I've seen many late adolescents speaking to other girls from their class with relative ease but when it comes to speaking to their first love, they get nervous. The film follows Raja who fight to muster courage to tell how much he likes Rani. However, the story is not confined to them. There is a whole world around them and I focused on it as well," he informs.

While casting his male lead, Kiran Abbavaram, was uncomplicated, finding Rani proved to be easier said than done. Ravi was keen on a Telugu girl doing the part. "I went through almost 2,000 profiles for nearly four months, before zeroing in on Hyderabad-based Rahasya Ghorak. For the supporting parts of Raja's friends, Chowdary and Naidu, I've chosen my childhood buddies Rajkumar and Yajurved. We later conducted a workshop with almost all the cast members for 25 days. The film was shot in 40 villages around Ravulapalem for over 60 days," he says.

One of the challenges he faced on sets was to draw natural performances from his actors. "I understood that they were used to a certain kind of style, acting-wise, because of the films they grew up watching. Once they got a wind of what I expected from them, it became easier.

Also, I like Malayalam films a lot and I wanted a similar colour tone for my film as well. However, weather in East Godavari is different to that of Kerala, so we waited for specific time periods in a day to shoot some portions to get the desired output. As we were not bound by time to complete the shoot, we could get what we want without any pressure. In fact, we waited three months for the monsoon to film some portions. Director Tharun Bhascker recently told me that I transported him to a *Premam* kind of world with the film," he informs, adding that he is writing on a political drama for his next. "It will have a mix of local and state politics," he says.



## Nikhil to marry post film's release?

**A**ctor Nikhil Siddhartha, who admitted to being in a relationship with a doctor, said he will be announcing his marriage details after the release of his next *Arjun Suravaram*. Interacting with his fans as a part of promoting his November 29 release, he spilled the beans about his marriage. "Hari bro, I will answer your question post the film's release," was the actor's reply when a fan asked about his marriage.

He also said that he would love to team up with Pawan Kalyan — even if it means sidelining his present venture. "I will bear the losses of my current film and will do a film with Pawan Kalyan if an opportunity presents itself," he insisted.

On *Arjun Suravaram*'s release woes, he clarified that the delay has nothing to do with financial problems. "Hmmm can't explain in a Tweet.. but it was not because of Financials as everyone thought.. it was of a small dispute which is resolved and everything smooth now. all happies now (sic)," he wrote when a fan quizzed about the film's multiple postponements.

He further said that he will be teaming up with *Ekkadiki Pothavu Chinnavada* director Vi Anand for a new film next year.

## Megastar and Mani Sharma again

**T**he suspense surrounding who would compose music for Megastar Chiranjeevi's next with Koratala Siva seems to have reached a conclusion, at last! While famed Bollywood musicians' duo Ajay-Atul who were composing music for anticipated period flicks like *Taanaji*, *Panipat*, *Shamsher* and *Sardar Udham Singh* were frontrunners to bag the project, allegedly their jam-packed schedule has caused Koratala to look for other options. It is understood that Ajay-Atul told Siva that they will be available from January but with the latter keen on beginning the shoot with a song shortly, he has initiated discussions with other composers. Also, the fact that most Bollywood composers refrain from composing background score, Koratala is



favouring Mani Sharma for the job. There's also buzz about S.S. Thaman's name in the talks but sources confirm that Mani Sharma, who is back in the spotlight after *iSmart Shankar*, is likely to walk away with the job. The composer also has multiple projects in his kitty but it's likely he might overlook some of them to work with Megastar, with whom he has done films like *Choodalani Vundhi*, *Bavagaru Bagunnara*, *Annaya* and *Indra* among others.



## Kavuladaari turns KAPATADHAARI

**A**ctor Sumanth's next with Tamil film-maker Pradeep Krishna Moorthy has been titled *Kapatadhaari*. The actor's superstar uncle Nagarjuna unveiled the title on his Twitter page on Monday evening.

*Kapatadhaari* is an official remake of this year's Kannada hit *Kavuladaari*, a political crime thriller. It has gone to floors on November 1 in Chennai and the makers are planning to wrap it up by January-end. The makers are keen on releasing it in March. The likes of Nasser, Nandita, Pooja Kumar, Jayaprakash and Sampath are playing supporting roles, while national award winning producer Dr G. Dhananjayan is producing it under his Creative Entertainers & Distributors banner.

Rajasekhar was initially supposed to headline *Kapatadhaari* but due to reasons guarded, he left the project. After wrapping up this film, Sumanth will shift attention to Telugu remake of Malayalam hit *Padayottam*.



## MAY DAY RELEASE FOR SAI TEJ'S NEXT

**L**aunched last month, the filming of Sai Dharam Tej-starrer *Solo Brathuke So Better* kicked off in Hyderabad on Tuesday. A popcorn entertainer, the film will mark the directorial debut of Subbu and sees Nabha Natesh alongside Tej. With the summer of 2020 ready to witness the release of many anticipated films, producer B.V.S.N. Prasad has decided to lock May 1 as the release date for *Solo Brathuke So Better*. Technicians like S.S. Thaman (for music) and Venkat C. Dilip (cinematography) are associating with the film.



# Wrist spinners difficult to pick with Pink ball: Harbhajan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

At the floodlit Eden Gardens, wrist spinners landing the pink ball with scrambled seam will be far more difficult to pick than finger spinners, feels senior off-spinner Harbhajan Singh.

India will be playing its much-awaited first Day/Night Test against Bangladesh at the Eden Gardens from Saturday and there is a lot of curiosity regarding how the pink ball would behave.

"Wrist spinners will have one advantage if you see because it's going to be very difficult to pick the seam (with black stitches) of pink ball," Harbhajan told PTI during an interaction.

India has a wrist spinner in Kuldeep Yadav but Harbhajan didn't want to talk on selection matters.

"Well, that's the team management's call and I can't comment. But then Bangladesh need to play the Indian pacers on the seamer friendly track before spinners are fully operational," he said, referring to their performance against Mohd Shami and Co. In the first Test.

"And also between 3.30 and 4.30 pm, the time of sunset in Kolkata where seamers are known to do maximum damage. But yes we need to figure out more about spinners if we want to play more D/N Tests in future."

He reminded how Kuldeep turned out to be lethal during the 2016 Duleep Trophy, played with the pink ball.

"If you remember Duleep Trophy, no one could effectively read Kuldeep from his wrists. Leg spinners got lot of wickets during that edition," Harbhajan said.

He explained why wrist spinners are more effective.

"When a finger spinner bowls, the ball is released with seam so that there is turn and bounce. When you are bowling the googly, the seam will be scrambled and very difficult to pick," he explained.

However, someone like a Muttiah Muralitharan might just be very effective.

"But there are exceptions like Muttiah Muralitharan, who could have been a killer with the pink ball despite being a finger spinner



Ravichandran Ashwin, center without cap, celebrates with teammates the dismissal of Bangladesh's Liton Das during the third day of first Test between India and Bangladesh in Indore

AP

because unlike other finger spinners, both his off break and doosra were released with scrambled seam," said one of India's greatest spinners.

However, the pink SG in general will be a challenge for the spinners with the extra lacquer that will be applied to keep its colour intact under lights.

"More lacquer means that you will not have a good grip on the ball, especially finger spinners. And the ball starts skidding from the hand."

He then went on to explain the fundamental difference between bowling with white ball and pink ball when the dew sets in.

"A lot of people think that the ball will be like a slippery soap bar as it happens with white ball in D/N games. It's not the same. The white ball becomes slippery because the white lacquer goes off the skin of the ball gets wet.

"With extra lacquer, pink ball's skin won't get wet but the stitches will be very soggy. And therein lies problem with finger spinners.

**When a finger spinner bowls, the ball is released with seam so that there is turn and bounce. When you are bowling the googly, the seam will be scrambled and very difficult to pick**

Also the format of the game makes it difficult.

"In 50 overs or 20 over cricket, whenever the ball gets wet, you can just alter the length a bit and let the batsmen play on backfoot getting those singles.

"But in a Test match, you will not have a field setting like that. You have to pitch it up. Now landing six deliveries on one spot while trying to grip a wet seam can be a challenge because trying the ODI length will be easy meat for batsmen."

For spinners to be more effective, they have to play more games at the domestic level.

"If BCCI creates a window so that all top national players are available for a couple of specific rounds in Ranji Trophy, then you can learn more.

"Even Duleep can go back to pink ball but only if stars play. With no disrespect to any player, if top players don't play here, the purpose is lost and no advantage gained while playing next pink Test," he concluded.

## Shami alters length to keep batsmen guessing

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India speedster Mohammed Shami said altering length to keep the batsmen guessing would be key when India take on Bangladesh in their maiden Pink-ball Test.

Shami, who has been in terrific form, returned with the figures of 3/27 and 4/31 in the first Test at Indore to achieve his career-best ranking, said he intends on keeping things simple for the historic Test.

"What one thing bowlers should do is keep an eye on the wicket and how is it behaving, so what I do is as the pitch gets slower I keep pushing myself and when I notice that the batsman is uncomfortable I go over the top... So the length has to keep changing," Shami said on *Nerolac Cricket Live on Star Sports*.

Meanwhile, former India cap-



tain Sunil Gavaskar cautioned Mayank Agarwal, who scored a double century in the Indore Test, saying opposition would be better-prepared to counter him in future matches.

"He is enjoying Test cricket, this is his first year and hopefully he keeps scoring on the second year also because in the second sea-

son there is a lot more data available of you to the opposition.

"But he has been batting beautifully, the way he balances himself without falling on the offside as he plays so straight and his movement of the front and back foot has been fantastic making him the man in form who is full of confidence," Gavaskar said.

Former India opener Gautam Gambhir said the Men in Blue have a complete bowling unit with quality spinners and pacers in their ranks.

"If you see other oppositions, some teams have got quality fast bowling attacks, some have quality spinners but if you look at this Indian side, they've got two quality spinners, three quality seamers plus Jasprit Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar Kumar who are not in the playing 11.

"So they've got proper 5 seamers plus Kuldeep Yadav."

## Coach Langer throws weight behind Warner



IANIS ■ BRISBANE

Australia coach Justin Langer has reckoned opener David Warner will put his bad form in the Ashes this year behind him in the upcoming Test series against Pakistan. Warner had a horrible outing during the Ashes campaign this year as he managed just 95 runs at an average of 9.5 from five games.

"I cannot wait to see him play well.

When he simplifies the game, stays still and watches the ball, keeps his mind clear, we know there's no more destructive player in the world, probably," Langer was quoted as saying by *cricket.com.au*.

"He loves batting in Australia, he loves batting, basically. We are looking forward to him having a great summer. I know how important he is to our team, that's why I had no doubt after the Ashes that he'd be in the first Test of the summer," he added.

When Pakistan last toured Australia, Warner averaged 71.20 across three Test matches.

Earlier, Aussie spinner Nathan Lyon felt that Warner would come out all guns blazing in the two-Test series against Pakistan.

"Dave is a world-class player. I'm expecting him to come out here and play exceptionally well," Lyon had told reporters on Saturday.

"No doubt, he would have been down and disappointed about the Ashes that he had. But he was still part of the side to go over there and retain the Ashes, which is pretty bloody special, if you ask me," he added.

## Babar's best yet to come: Ponting

IANIS ■ BRISBANE

With Pakistan set to challenge Australia in a two-Tests series starting Thursday, former Australia skipper Ricky Ponting believes that Babar Azam could be a threat for the home team as the World Cup-winning skipper feels that Babar is yet to play to potential.

"We haven't seen the best of him yet," Ponting told *cricket.com.au*. "Twenty-odd Tests for an average of 35 — he's better than that. He averages 54 in one-day cricket at a strike-rate of about 90. He's a very, very classy player.

"He's a really exciting talent and probably the guy I'm looking forward to seeing the most this summer. I've seen the Aussies a lot and I've seen a lot of the Kiwis, but I'm really excited to see him. He could be anything," he added.



Babar Azam in a file picture

PCB

## Kiwis & Eng put rivalry to Test

AFF ■ MOUNT MAUNGANUI

New Zealand and England will take their cricketing rivalry into the Test arena on Thursday after finding themselves evenly matched in recent limited-overs thrillers.

England have bragging rights after winning a rollercoaster World Cup final in July, then edging the Black Caps 3-2 in a desperately close Twenty20 series completed earlier this month.

Both the one-day decider and T20 series needed tie-breakers to find a winner and there will be no shortage of mutual respect when the rivals face off again on Thursday in the First Test at Mount Maunganui.

On paper, there again appears to be little to separate the teams, with New Zealand second in the Test rankings and England third.

But England skipper Joe Root is painfully aware that his team underperformed when it lost a two-Test series in New Zealand last year after underestimating the Black Caps' bowlers on their home turf.

Pacemen Trent Boult and Tim Southee bundled the tourists out for 58 in the first innings of the opening Test as England tried to play what Root described as "fast forward" cricket.

England's skipper said his team would be taking a more measured



New Zealand and England players watch as local maori perform a haka during an official welcome

AP

approach this time, with batsmen placing an emphasis on protecting their wickets.

"We have to be prepared to play some attritional cricket at times," he said.

"We have to try to bat longer... it would be nice to get used to batting for 120 overs more regularly, especially in the first innings."

The series will not count towards the World Test Championship, giving new England coach Chris Silverwood room to experiment in his first Test series in

charge.

He is expected to hand opening batsman Dom Sibley his debut, partnering Rory Burns, with Root moving down to fourth in the order.

New Zealand will take the opportunity to blood speedster Lockie Ferguson, who has already excelled in limited overs internationals and was described as "an extreme talent" by short-ball specialist Neil Wagner.

"I know he's raring to go. If he gets the opportunity he'll make the most of

it," Wagner said.

New Zealand will also be bolstered by the return of captain Kane Williamson, who sat out the T20 series with a nagging hip injury.

It will be the first Test match ever staged at Mount Maunganui's Bay Oval, which has been hosting limited-overs internationals since 2014.

The beachside venue is Wagner's home ground and he said the wicket could take time to get used to.

"It's been a pretty good wicket that's tended to be on the flatter side but there's always pace and bounce that you can work with," he said.

"It's also got its own unique challenges with wind that swirls around a bit."

### SQUADS

**New Zealand:** Kane Williamson (capt), Todd Astle, Tom Blundell, Trent Boult, Colin de Grandhomme, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Henry Nicholls, Jeet Raval, Mitchell Santner, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, Neil Wagner, BJ Watling  
**England:** Joe Root (capt), Jofra Archer, Jonny Bairstow, Stuart Broad, Rory Burns, Jos Buttler, Zak Crawley, Sam Curran, Joe Denly, Jack Leach, Saqib Mahmood, Matthew Parkinson, Ollie Pope, Dominic Sibley, Ben Stokes, Chris Woakes.

## Misbah working on plans to shut Smith

IANIS ■ BRISBANE

Pakistan coach Misbah-ul-Haq said that pitching the ball consistently on the blind spot or near the top of the off stump would be key to dismissing Australian stalwart Steve Smith.

Smith returned to Test cricket by taking the Ashes by storm earlier in the year. In the five-match series that was held across August and September in England, Smith scored a whopping 774 runs at an average of 110.57. He carried the good form into the recently concluded T20I series against Pakistan at home.

"As far as Steve Smith goes, there's a blind spot for every top batsman in the world; as a bowler you're always interested in pitching the ball there," Misbah is quoted as saying by *ESPNcricinfo*.

"It's important that we bowl with consistency there. Our bowlers are

executing the plans very well right now, and hopefully we'll be able to build that kind of a pressure, and stay disciplined especially early in the innings. No matter how good a batsman is batting, it's about consistency and bowling the maximum balls in those areas that build pressure and the batsman respects you, and you force him to make a

mistake."

Pakistan are going into the series with a pace attack that consists of Mohammad Abbas, Shaheen Afridi, Muhammad Musa and the 16-year-old Naseem Shah.

"All the batsmen you talk to, any batsman in the world, that's the area where you have to defend a ball, and that is a six to eight metre spot where you have to play the top of off stump," he said. "That's the area from where if it's happening then that creates a great chance. Even if it's not happening, you have less chances to do anything with the ball.

"So it's about consistency, and top players in the world, if you miss those areas, that special length and line, then they are good enough to just cash in on that. So you have to be very, very disciplined, just keep the ball there, and if it's happening you are already in the game."

