

**ANALYSIS 7**  
NOT A RECIPE  
FOR DISASTER

**MONEY 8**  
TRADERS' BODY DEMANDS  
'BAN' ON AMAZON, FLIPKART

**SPORTS 12**  
SHAMI DEADLY ON ANY  
SURFACE: SAHA

HYDERABAD, THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2019; PAGES 12 & 3



# the pioneer



CINEMA WILL  
CO-EXIST WITH  
OTT SERVICES:  
ALLU ARAVIND

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## Rajat to head petrochemical investment panel

**AMARAVATI:** The Centre has appointed senior Andhra Pradesh bureaucrat Rajat Bhargava as head of a high-level committee to suggest necessary policy initiatives for attracting more investments into the Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemical Investment Regions (PCPIR) in the country.

Bhargava, the AP Industry and Infrastructure Principal Secretary, was appointed by the Union Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

Full report on Page 4

## Businessman kills self after failing to pay GST

**AURANGABAD:** An entrepreneur, owning a small metal polishing unit in Waluj Industrial area, committed suicide, after failing to pay Goods and Services Tax (GST), police said on Wednesday.

Vishnu Rambhau Kalavane (53) hanged himself from the ceiling with a saree at his home in Pandharpur area on Tuesday, an official said. In a suicide note found at the scene, the deceased has stated that his failure to pay GST has forced him to take the extreme step, he added.

## Passport systems in 42 Indian missions linked

**NEW DELHI:** The External Affairs Ministry on Wednesday said it has integrated the passport issuance systems in 42 Indian missions and posts into the Passport Seva Project (PSP) so that people can directly apply from abroad.

In response to a Lok Sabha query, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said the countries where the integration has been done include Australia, Canada, China, France, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia, New Zealand, United Arab Emirates, UK and the US.

He further said the Ministry is in the process of linking and integrating all the Missions and Posts abroad with the PSP.

# NRC will be implemented nationwide: Amit Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) will be implemented nationwide, said Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, asserting that no person from any religion need to be afraid of it.

"The NRC exercise is monitored by the Supreme Court. No religion has been targeted or isolated during the NRC exercise," said Shah responding to a query of Congress leader Syed Nasir Hussain. The MP asked whether the NRC provides citizenship to immigrants of six non-Muslim faiths.

Shah said NRC and The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016, which lapsed on June 3,



2019, are two different issues and both should not be seen through one prism.

Shah said people whose names are missing from the NRC can approach tribunals formed at the tehsil level. The

Assam government will provide financial help to those who don't have the money to file pleas, he said. Shah said the government would bear the cost of hiring a lawyer.

The updated final NRC,

"The NRC exercise is monitored by the Supreme Court. No religion has been targeted or isolated during the NRC exercise"

— AMIT SHAH  
Union Home Minister

which validates genuine Indian citizens, has left out over 19 lakh applicants in Assam. Most of these are people who have not produced required documents to prove their claims and have the option of appealing to Foreigners' Tribunals and subsequently approach the courts.

In Assam, the NRC aims to identify illegal immigrants who entered the state and settled after March 25, 1971.

# RTC JAC offers to withdraw strike, but with a rider

- Govt should take back staff into jobs unconditionally: Aswathama Reddy
- Will continue strike till govt responds on our offer

K VENKATESHWARLU  
■ HYDERABAD

TSRTC Employees Unions' Joint Action Committee (JAC) has said that RTC employees would call off their strike and resume duties if the state government takes them back unconditionally and provides favorable conditions for them to perform their duties. The JAC hoped that the state government and RTC management would initiate steps in this direction. JAC leaders made it clear that the employees would continue the strike till the State government responded to the issue.

Earlier, the JAC leaders examined the directions issued by the High Court, after receiving a copy of the verdict at the Employees Union office located at Vidyanagar. Sixteen JAC leaders, including convener E Ashwathama Reddy as well as



RTC JAC convener E Ashwathama Reddy and other leaders addressing the media in Hyderabad on Wednesday

co-conveners K Raji Reddy, Linga Murthy, Thomas Reddy and O Sudha, participated in the meeting.

Continued on Page 4

# I-T raids at Ramanaidu Studios

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Officials of the Income-Tax (I-T) Department on Wednesday conducted simultaneous raids on Ramanaidu Studios in Hyderabad and at several other premises owned by popular Tollywood producer Daggubati Suresh Babu. Searches are underway also against another biggie S. Radha Krishna, who owns production houses, Haarika and Hassine Creations and Sitara Entertainments.

The raids began early in the morning on Wednesday. The officials are reportedly going through I-T returns filed by the production house over the last few years to examine alleged tax evasion," sources



said. Some documents were reportedly examined and seized.

An official statement is yet to be issued by the department. According to available information, searches are on in 25

locations across Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Visakhapatnam. A majority of the locations are properties owned by the Telangana-based film production house owners.

Continued on Page 4

# Government may empower Tahsildars

- Resolving problems relating to lands listed under Part-B

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Alarmed at the trend of physical attacks on Tahsildars by frustrated farmers forced to go round in circles for their so-called updated Pattadar passbooks, the state government has decided to authorise Tahsildars to resolve problems relating to lands identified as controversial and included under Part-B during the recent land records 'purification' programme. A decision in this regard is likely within a week.

The Revenue Department has included not less than 5 lakh acres under Part-B because of court litigation, discrepancies in land area, discrepancies in sharing of lands among brothers, discrepancies in the lands

assigned and the actual land available at the field level, lands locked in disputes between forest and revenue departments, discrepancies in forest, endowments, wakf and Bhoodan lands, disputes between private persons and forest department over land tracts and so on.

The machinery of the revenue department has caused abnormal delay in resolving these problems on account of software issues, the condition that no officer other than the joint collector is authorised to resolve the problems, while the issue of pattadar passbooks in respect of problematic lands has been suspended.

Continued on Page 4

# SC says make exclusive law for Sabarimala

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Kerala government to formulate an exclusive legislation in connection with the administration of the Sabarimala temple. A bench headed by Justice N V Ramana asked the state government to place before the court a legislation, before the third week of January, incorporating various aspects associated with the welfare of pilgrims visiting the temple.

The apex court took exception to the state government's attempts to make joint law for administration of Sabarimala temple and other temples, and insisted there should be separate law. The counsel for the state government contended before the court that a draft has been prepared which reflects amendments to the law.

# JOLT TO TRS...

# MLA Ramesh no longer an Indian citizen: MHA inquiry panel

L VENKAT RAM REDDY  
■ HYDERABAD

In a jolt to the ruling TRS, an inquiry panel, constituted by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs at the behest of the High Court, on Wednesday ruled that TRS MLA from the Vemulawada constituency, Ramesh Chennamaneni, "is not an Indian citizen".

The MHA panel ruled, "The Competent Authority is satisfied that it is not conducive to public good that Dr. Ramesh Chennamaneni continues to be a citizen of India. The Competent Authority, in exercise of power vested in him under section 10 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 decides that Dr. Ramesh Chennamaneni ceases to be a citizen of India."

In view of this ruling, the election of Ramesh as MLA is likely to be declared 'null and void', necessitating a by-election within six months.

The Representation of



- Will approach HC again, says the legislator
- Panel says the legislator obtained Indian citizenship by fraudulent means, concealing German citizenship
- Ramesh's election likely to be declared 'null and void'

People's Act states that any person who is not an Indian citizen is not eligible to contest or vote in any election.

Ramesh has been elected four times to the Legislative Assembly, including a bypoll, since 2009.

In fact, it was in 2017 that MHA first decided to cancel Ramesh's citizenship after BJP candidate Adi Srinivas, who had unsuccessfully contested

against Ramesh in 2014, complained to MHA that the legislator was a German citizen.

Adi Srinivas complained that Ramesh held citizenship of Germany; yet, he had submitted fake documents stating that he was in India for a continuous period of one year to circumvent rules and contest in the polls.

Continued on Page 4

# Kavitha likely to be fielded in Vemulawada bypoll

**HYDERABAD:** With by-election looking imminent for the Vemulawada Assembly seat in the wake of the Union MHA inquiry panel ruling definitively on Wednesday that TRS MLA Chennamaneni Ramesh is no longer an Indian; the focus has now shifted to who will be the TRS candidate in the eventuality of a bypoll. The sudden development has triggered speculations in TRS party circles that TRS supreme and Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu would field his daughter K Kavitha from the seat. Kavitha has been largely inactive on the political front, after her shocking defeat at the hands of BJP in the Nizamabad Lok Sabha seat in May this year. Vemulawada has been the bastion of TRS since 2009.

# No proposal to link social media accounts to Aadhaar: Prasad

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has no proposal for linking Aadhaar with social media accounts of individuals, Prasad said that as a matter of policy and by design, UIDAI precludes itself from aggregating information arising from the use of Aadhaar, tracking and profiling individuals.

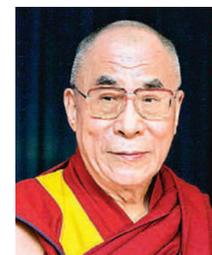
"...the system by intent is blind to the purpose for which Aadhaar may be used at the front end by the resident. Also, the core biometrics is encrypted at the time of enrolment/ update. It

never kept unencrypted and is never shared," he added. Prasad said Aadhaar is based on three core principles of "minimal information, optimal ignorance and federated database". "In its whole lifecycle, an Aadhaar database contains only the information that the resident provides at the time of enrolment or update..."

"The database may also have mobile and e-mail, if provided by the resident, during enrolment or update," he said.

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"The database may also have mobile and e-mail, if provided by the resident, during enrolment or update," he said.



# Dalai Lama to address Global Buddhist meet

PNS ■ AURANGABAD

Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, will deliver two lectures at the three-day Global Buddhist Congregation to be held in Aurangabad from Friday.

The event will take place between November 22 and 24. "The Dalai Lama will be in Aurangabad for two days and will deliver two sessions at the Buddhist Congregation," monk Sadanand Mahasthivir Mahathero, president of All India Bhikkhu Sangh, told reporters here on Wednesday.

"The Dalai Lama will give a special talk at Chauka in the city on Saturday for monks residing in Lokuttara Mahavihar. On Sunday, he will deliver a lecture at the People's Education Society (PES) ground, which is open for all," he added.

The inaugural ceremony will take place in the presence of Mahanayaka Thero from Sri Lanka.

# Highest video consumption in India is by Telugu people

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

The highest video consumption in India is by Telugu people. This was disclosed by KPMG to filmmaker Allu Aravind who had engaged the firm to understand OTT. He said, "I took the help of KPMG and in the very first phone call, KPMG told me that the highest video consumption in India was by Telugu people. Telugus are so receptive regarding all these things (OTT). I engaged KPMG to do some work for me about Telugu OTT. I was interested in niche Telugu OTT and asked my sons about it".

In his remarks at India Joy event, Aravind observed: "People are ready to receive different content with bold, honest, candid, naive expressions, but due to censor and conventional making, we haven't touched them. There is huge reception from youngsters which is predominantly personal viewing and 85% of viewing is by mobiles".



IT Minister KT Rama Rao and film producer Allu Aravind at the 'India Joy 2019' in Hyderabad on Wednesday

Even Amazon prime acknowledged that Telugu-speaking people have embraced OTT content. Vijay Subramaniam, Director and Head Content, Amazon Prime Video, said, "OTT is truly a transformative medium to

bring alive story-telling culture by immersing yourself in it. I am particularly grateful to the good citizens of Telangana in the way they have embraced the entire content presentation we have made so far in Telugu, for the wonderful customers here and diaspora all over the world. This encouragement gives us commitment to go even further and bring your vision alive. We are actively working to bring the vision alive with creators and many more. At Prime video, we are blessed with the opportunity to

bring compelling stories and creators to the forefront through the medium and opportunity that we have in front of us." Experts admit that success of OTT would be impossible without the support of the entire industry and collaboration with every single creator in every single field.

Aravind said, "Cinema will co-exist with OTT, TV and everything will co-exist. Hyderabad is going to become host of all the technological progress. I strongly believe Hyderabad is going to be the

**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**  
Month & Paksham: Kartiki & Krishna Paksha Panchangam  
Tithi : Ashtami: 11:28 am  
Nakshatram: Purva Phalguni: 06:30 pm  
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)  
Rahukalam: 01:25 pm - 02:48 pm  
Yamagandam: 06:27 am - 07:51 am  
Varjyam: 01:09 am - 02:38 am  
Gulika: 09:14 am - 10:36 am  
Good Time: (to start any important work)  
Amritakalam: 12:31 pm - 02:01 pm  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:39 am - 12:24 pm

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**  
Forecast: Clear with periodic clouds  
Temp: 29/19  
Humidity: 81%  
Sunrise: 06:23  
Sunset: 05:39  
Current Weather Conditions  
Updated November 20, 2019 5:00 PM



Minister Indrakaran Reddy and other dignitaries at the launch of 'Forest-PLUS 2.0: Forest for Water and Prosperity' on Wednesday

# 'Forest protection govt's top priority'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Succeeding the national launch on September 25, 2019, the USAID for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) of India launched the bilateral programme "Forest-PLUS 2.0: Forest for Water and Prosperity" at an event in Hyderabad.

Under the joint programme, the USAID will provide technical assistance to Telangana Forest Department to improve the management of Medak Forest Division. Through Tetra Tech ARD, the programme implementation organisation, the USAID will build activities based on the tools, techniques, and practices developed through its successful predecessor program, the Forest-PLUS: Partnership for Land Use Science, which was implemented from 2012 to 2017.

Speaking on the occasion, USAID/India Deputy Mission Director, Ramona El Hamzaoui remarked that the Forest-PLUS 2.0 will contribute to achieving the goals

**Telangana Haritha Haram is one of the best programmes in India. It helped increase the green cover from 24 per cent to 33 per cent, said Minister for Forest & Environment Indrakaran**

of "Telangana ku Haritha Haram" ("Green Garland for Telangana" in English), a programme of massive afforestation, rejuvenation of degraded forests, and soil and moisture conservation launched by the Telangana State Government.

Highlighting the importance of programme, A Indrakaran Reddy, Minister for Forest & Environment, Science & Technology, Endowments and Laws, Government of Telangana said, "The protection of forest and preservation of ecosystem services are the top priority of the Telangana State. Telangana Haritha Haram is one of the best programmes in India to increase the Green Cover from 24 per cent to 33 per cent. Forest-PLUS 2.0 will contribute technical support for the management of the forest and landscape in the Telangana state."

The technical sessions in the launch event focused on the importance of forest ecosystem services and the need for incorporating them in forest landscape planning by local forest department, such as the working plans prepared by the Telangana Forest Department and the landscape management plan by the Medak Forest Division.

The sessions also delved into the role of gender in forestry and the economic opportunities for the forest dependent communities to significantly enhance their well-being beyond subsistence level. Specifically, Forest-PLUS 2.0 will pay more attention to address the barriers to women's participation in forest management and access to more viable economic opportunities.

# Ryots told to sell cotton at CCI centres

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Huzurnagar MLA Shanampudi Saiji Reddy on Wednesday asked farmers to sell their cotton produce at CCI (Cotton Corporation of India) cotton purchasing centres that would guarantee minimum support price (MSP) fixed by the government.

Launching a CCI cotton purchasing centre set up in Doctor and Friends Ginning Mill at Chinthalapalem in the district, Saiji Reddy said farmers should not approach middlemen and brokers who would cheat them by offering price less than MSP for the crop.

The Government has set up CCI cotton purchasing centres with the objective of ensuring MSP for the crop produced by farmers and the farmers can utilise the CCI purchasing centres to get the best price for their produce.

He said that the farmers should dry up cotton crop and maintain the moisture percentage below eight per cent while bringing it to the CCI cotton purchasing centres to get the MSP. The payment amount will be credited into the bank accounts of the farmers by the government within three days after the purchase, he added. The MLA said that elected representatives and members of Rythu Samanvaya Samithis should create an awareness among the farmers on the matter.



MLA Saiji Reddy interacts with farmers at a purchase centre on Wednesday

Saiji Reddy asked farmers not to approach middlemen, who would cheat them by offering price less than MSP for the crop

The Government has set up CCI cotton purchasing centres with the objective of ensuring MSP for the crop produced, he said

# 'Foreign seed firms exploiting farm sector'

PNS ■ WARANGAL

The national vice-president of Kisan Congress, Kodanda Reddy on Tuesday alleged that foreign seed companies are exploiting the farm sector. He said the State and Central governments were before the Multi National Companies. He was addressing a convention-cum-farmers meet in Warangal on Wednesday.

The Congress leader was vehement towards the TRS regime for its anti-farmers role and said it was specifically indulging in anti-farmer attitudes. Former president of the PCC and former Minister Ponnala Lakshmaiah said the Congress party was the flag bearer of the Agriculture revolution.

He claimed that it was because of Congress party, the country has secured a position to provide basic food grains to 128 different nations spread across the globe. The Congress leader criticised the TRS regime and said the government's 'Rythu Bandhu' scheme was just a gimmick and was taken for publicity means. The Congress leader alleged that the Chief Minister, K Chandrashekar Rao has restricted himself to farmhouse and Pragathi Bhavan.

# Cotton ryots switching to maize

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Farmers in Kesamudram mandal of Asifabad district have been destroying their cotton crops as the crop yield was not as expected by the farmer. The poor yield is attributed to heavy rains in October, pest attack on the crop, cotton balls turning black and farmers not recovering investments.

More and more farmers are uprooting the crop in their field to facilitate maize cultivation as they find cotton crop as unremunerative. In villages like Tallapusapalli, Inugurti and Kalvala, the farmers have started removing cotton crop and more will follow suit in the days to come.

Earlier, the farmers used to wait till Jan or Feb

and used to remove cotton plants after third harvesting. Now, the farmers have no patience to wait till Jan or Feb. They are uprooting the plants with the help of rotovator after the first harvesting.

As the government increased the MSP for maize, the cotton farmers are now turning to raise maize. The MSP for the maize last year was Rs 1,700 a quintal. But the government increased the MSP to Rs 1,760 this year. The recent heavy rains improved ground water table in the state. Because of this factor, farmers have been preparing themselves to raise maize in rabi hoping to harvest at least 25 quintals an acre. "We are asking the farmers not to wait till December and remove the cotton crop residue from their fields," agriculture official said.



# Drugs: Cops raid NIT-W hostels

PNS ■ WARANGAL

A special drive to check on the use of ganja, drugs or other prohibited substances, was carried out by the Police Commissionerate Task Force and Excise personnel of the Kazipet station along with the local police and security personnel of the NIT-Warangal, on the intervening night of November 19 and 20 in some hostels of the campus here. However, no suspicious material was found.

It may be noted that during the routine check of 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 on the intervening night of October 26 and 27. Subsequently, a detailed inquiry was conducted and it was found that 12 students were under the influence of drugs.

Fearing action, one of the students, who was the main accused, had himself opted to get out of the institute by TC. It is said that the students, who consumed ganja, got admissions into the institute under Direct Admission of Students Abroad (DASA) scheme.

# NATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

# 'Promote films based on rural issues'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) at Rajendranagar hosted the 4th National Film Festival on Rural Development on Wednesday. As a part of NIRDPR 61st Foundation Day, the event was organised as a platform to inspire young filmmakers to showcase their talent and promote films based on rural issues and document films on rural development.

In her opening remarks, Radhika Rastogi, IAS, Deputy Director General, NIRDPR said, that movies have a strong impact on the viewers and can impart the knowledge among the people. "Films as a medium have massive outreach across the country. In India, movies are made in large numbers and even the Hollywood movies like Avatar and Matrix draw their ideas from Indian philosophy. From the days of Dadasaheb Phalke's Raja Harishchandra to the Bahubali era, the Indian movies have a universal appeal. They strike an emotional note with audiences across the globe," she observed.

Recalling the instance of a lady sarpanch who had carried out mosquito eradication in her



From the days of Dadasaheb Phalke's Raja Harishchandra to the Bahubali era, the Indian movies have a universal appeal. They strike an emotional note with audiences  
— RADHIKA RASTOGI, IAS, Deputy Director General, NIRDPR

village and challenged to pay Rs 1000 to anyone who could find a mosquito in the village, Radhika Rastogi said movies should be made based on such interesting happenings. Joining the meeting via videoconferencing, Dr WR Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRDPR said, that despite sarpanches in India doing phenomenal work, seldom the stories of such works reach media and others across the country. "Such practices should be chosen to make movies, because films act as right medium to motivate the audience and they can inculcate positive attributes to the youths. For instance, Ralegan- Sidhi is a drought-prone area in Maharashtra and two people took up an initiative to ensure water harvesting is done. Now, there is enough water in the region; there are many such initiatives which should be showcased by the filmmakers," he said.

"While going to field for research, resource persons take many pictures and videos but do not publish them anywhere else. If they were to knit them together and make a story out of it, it would be really beneficial to all," Dr WR Reddy added. The chief guest of the event Dr. Rajkumar Upadhyay, ITS, Additional Director General, Doodarshan & All India Radio, South Zone noted that films have lasting imprints on the minds of the viewers.



# TCS, Qualcomm launch innovation hub in Hyderabad

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Tata Consultancy Services on Wednesday announced the launch in Hyderabad of an innovation hub which will be used -- with support from Qualcomm Technologies -- to build domain-specific solutions that utilise the combinatorial power of AI, IoT and 5G technologies. The hub will utilise TCS' expertise in digital technologies, along with Qualcomm Technologies' depth in 5G, edge AI and edge devices to build solutions to entirely new use-cases, TCS said in a statement.

# Show-cause notice served on sarpanches

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rangareddy District Panchayat Officer Padmaja Rani has served show-cause notices on seven sarpanches and two upa-sarpanches for showing dereliction of duty and for their failure to rein in illegal real estate layouts in Chilukuru village of Moinabad mandal.

While Chilukuru sarpanch Gunugurti Swarupa failed to check the unauthorised layouts coming up in Chilukuru, while Tolukatta sarpanch Kanakamamidi Srinivas gave permissions for such layouts in his village. In Kanakamamidi village, sarpanch Patilola Janardhan Reddy did not pay attention to violation of GO No.111. Similarly, Surangal village Sarpanch Gaddam Lavanya

failed in the same fashion. Pulimamidi sarpanch Vattula Anita made payments for works executed during the recent 30-day action plan without any documentary evidence like - resolutions, MB records, vouchers and bills. The payments were made keeping panchayat secretary in the dark. In Sirigiripuram of Maheswaram mandal, sarpanch Kasula Suresh gave wrong information to the media stating that there were no funds in the panchayat bank account in spite of the panchayat having funds to the tune of Rs 20.22 lakh.

Bandameedi Krishna, Sarpanch of Mondigourelli in Yacharam mandal, subjected the government officials to threats by posting objectionable messages in social media.

# US scientist claims evidence of life on Mars

PNS ■ NEW YORK

As scientists scramble to determine whether there is life on Mars, a researcher from Ohio University in US believes that there is evidence of insect-like creatures on the red planet.

Courtesy photographs from various Mars rovers, Professor Emeritus William Romoser's research found numerous examples of insect-like forms, structured similarly to bees, as well as reptile-like forms, both as fossils and living creatures. "There has been and still is life on Mars," Romoser said, noting that the images appear to show both fossilised and living creatures.

"There is apparent diversity among the Martian insect-like fauna which display many features similar to Terran insects that are interpreted as advanced groups - for example, the presence of wings, wing flexion, agile gliding/flight, and variously structured leg elements," Romoser added. Romoser said that while the Martian rovers, particularly



the Curiosity Rover, have been looking for indicators of organic activity, there are a number of photos which clearly depict the insect- and reptile-like forms. Numerous photos show images where arthropod body segments, along with legs, antennae and wings, can be picked out from the surrounding area, and one even appears

to show one of the insects in a steep dive before pulling up just before hitting the ground. Individual images were carefully studied while varying photographic parameters such as brightness, contrast, saturation, inversion, and so on. No content was added, or removed. Criteria used in Romoser's research included: Dramatic

departure from the surroundings, clarity of form, body symmetry, segmentation of body parts, repeating form, skeletal remains, and observation of forms in close proximity to one another. Particular postures, evidence of motion, flight, apparent interaction as suggested by relative positions, and shiny eyes were taken to be consistent with the presence of living forms. "Once a clear image of a given form was identified and described, it was useful in facilitating recognition of other less clear, but none-the-less valid, images of the same basic form," Romoser said.

**Individual images were carefully studied while varying photographic parameters such as brightness, contrast, saturation, inversion, and so on. No content was added, or removed**

An exoskeleton and jointed appendages are sufficient to establish identification as an arthropod.

# Dutch panel help in horticulture development

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The four-member Netherlands delegation, headed by Director Economic Affairs and Internationalization Karim Adatghal, on Wednesday called on Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy and the delegation agreed to seed exports from Telangana and cooperate with the Government of Telangana in the spheres of horticulture and development of municipalities.

The Agriculture Minister assured full support to the delegation on behalf of the state government and welcomed investments from European countries into the state on the basis of ease of doing business. Principal secretary C Parthasarathi and Director of Telangana state Seed and Organic Certification Dr Kesavulu were also present.



**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**  
O/o THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, TRIBAL WELFARE, HYDERABAD  
TRIBAL WELFARE, 5th FLOOR, D.S.S. BHAVAN, MASAB TANK, HYDERABAD  
NIT No. SE/TW/HYD/238 & 239/2019-20, Dt: 19-11-2019. Name of the works (2) : Supply and Fixing of 2 No's 13 passengers capacity Lifts to Banjara Bhavan & Kumararam Bheem Bhavan at Road No.10, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. Estimated Cost: Rs. 82,00,00,000 (Approximately). Bid Submission Starting Date: 25-11-2019 By 05:00 PM. Bid Submission Closing Date: 03-12-2019 by 03:00 PM. Commercial Bid Opening Date: 03-12-2019 by 04:00 PM. Further Details can be seen at procurement.marketplace @ https://tender.telangana.gov.in, Ph.No.: 040-23315950. Mail ID: setwhyd13@gmail.com. Sd/- Superintending Engineer  
DIPR No.964D/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/11/2019-20, Dt: 20-11-2019

CRIME CORNER

Two arrested for theft

The Gachibowli Police have arrested two persons for cheating and stealing from furnished flats in Gachibowli on Wednesday. The arrested persons were identified as Dhulipudi Srivastava (30) and Samba Raj Kumar (49). Srivastava, a resident of Kukatpally is an aeronautical engineer by profession, whereas, Raj, a resident of Saroornagar is in the electronics business. According to police, the duo look for advertisements online about fully furnished apartments that are given out for rent. They then approach the apartment owners and show interest in renting out the flats and later steal the valuables from the house. Officials recovered five Samsung TVs, eight mobile phones, a projector and a screen, a refrigerator, a home theater and a laptop from their possession. A Ford Endeavour SUV that was used in the crime was also seized from them. The Police have arrested the duo and the investigation is on.

Woman arrested for online harassment

The Cyber Crime Police of Rachakonda arrested a 41-year-old woman who had posted objectionable and abusive photos of another woman on Facebook on Wednesday. The arrested was identified as Peddi Reddy Raja Chandrika, a Child line Mandal Coordinator at Markapur. Based on a complaint from a victim from Neredmet, the police registered a case under sections 417, 419 and 509 of the IPC and 66 C and D of the IT Act and began an investigation. The victim stated that Chandrika was harassing and stalking her online. She shared objectionable and abusive photos of the victim on Facebook and sent derogatory messages to her friends and relatives. Officials apprehended the accused, a resident of Chinaganukapalem in Addanki of Prakasham. She admitted that in 2016, after mutual disturbances between them she bore a grudge against the victim and started posting her photos by creating 3 fake profiles on Facebook. She also sent abusive messages to the victim, her friends and family, cause mental agony to her.

'IMAGE Tower to be ready by 2022'

It will be the technology powerhouse for creative Industry, says IT Minister KT Rama Rao

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

IT Minister KT Rama Rao said that the IMAGE Tower is being established at a cost of Rs 1,000 crores and will be operational by end of 2021 or early 2022. He said that through IMAGE Tower, government is seeking collaborations and seeking to beat MediaCity UK and Digital City soul.

Speaking at the inaugural of 'IndiaJoy 2019' event on Wednesday, he said, "IMAGE Tower will have a total built up space of 16 lakhs sqft (1.6 million sqft) with all supporting infrastructure such as MOCAP studios, Green Mat Studios, sounds and aquatic studios, Colour coding and DI Studios, Render farms, Data Center, High Definition Bandwidth, Shared software services etc. This will be the Technology Powerhouse for creative Industry. I would say, it will be a one stop shop for animation, gaming & VFX units."

Telangana has already set up an Image Incubation Centre for Gaming and Animation companies in 27,000 sq.ft with 10 companies being incubated in gaming sector employing 150 Animation and gaming professionals. He added that "We recognise that if Telangana has to become a leader in this industry, a major responsibility on the government will be to ensure the availability of skilled manpower. As a part of policy measures, many new initiatives are being taken up by



IT Minister KT Rama Rao, filmmaker Allu Aravind and others at the 'India Joy 2019' event in Hyderabad on Wednesday

POSITIVE GROWTH

The number of gaming startups in the country has gone up from 25 in 2010 to more than 250 in 2019



Hyderabad has over 150 companies including VFX Studios, 2D, 3D animation and gaming companies employing about 30,000 professional in this segment

Close to Rs 2,000 crore worth of content is developed out of Hyderabad

As per the research published by a Dublin-based news agency PRWire, the Animation Industry is projected to reach US \$ 270 Billion by 2020

the government like Introducing AVGC as a subject in all fine arts courses in degree colleges and University programmes. Training and place-

ment through TASK and promote local content creation through reservation of air time in national channels" Pointing that Telangana

Government has announced a host of cash incentives and subsidies to support the gaming and animation industry, KTR said, "I can confidently state

that ours can easily be considered the best package in totality. For marquee names and mega investors, we are prepared to even design a tailor-made package. With a Policy driven growth agenda, competent and abundant talent pool and world class infrastructure, I am confident that Telangana is poised to become the prominent destination for the Animation, Gaming and VFX Industry globally."

Speaking about OTT services, KTR said, "Super Man was cool, Spidey man was cool and thanks to people like Raj (maker of series), even, The Family Man (series) is equally cool. I am looking forward for the next season of Family man. Offlate when I was down for a bit, I was binge watching. I was very thrilled about what I got to watch on Netflix, Amazon Prime, Voot and soon to be launched OTT by Allu Aravind".

Over 30,000 visitors, will converge during the 4-day event, held at HICC from 20-23rd. IndiaJoy aims to serve as a catalyst for Indian media, gaming and digital entertainment companies on the world stage. The spotlight will be on the Indian Media and Entertainment (M&E) industry which is poised to touch INR1,631 billion according to a recent market report on the back of rapid growth in digital user base and consumption combined with growing regional demand and monetisation.



SCR extends free Wi-Fi facility to all 574 stations

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major thrust to Digital India Mission, the South Central Railway (SCR) has extended free high-speed Wi-Fi facility to 574 stations. With this, SCR has become the 2nd zone on Indian Railways to accomplish the target set by Railway Board.

To use the free Wi-Fi at railway station premises, the user has to switch on the Wi-Fi mode in the smart phone and select the Rail Wire Wi-Fi network. Rail Wire homepage network automatically appears on the smart phone and prompts to enter mobile number. The user will get one-time password (OTP) in form of SMS in the message box which has to be entered in the home page of Rail Wire. After entering OTP, users will be able to access high speed internet & can start internet browsing.

SCR implemented the provision of free high-speed Wi-Fi facility at all railway stations with help of Rail Tel Corporation of India Ltd (RCIL), a subsidiary of Indian Railways, and successfully completed the mission of extending free High speed Wi-Fi facility at all 'A1', 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' category railway stations & also all 'E' category stations having necessary infrastructure i.e., presence of Optical Fiber Cable.

Free Wi-Fi services to rail users are being provided under 'Rail Wire' brand- the retail Broadband initiative of Rail Tel. According to the press communique, "Designed to offer the best Internet experience to users, Rail Wire Wi-Fi is accessible by any user who has a smart phone with working mobile connection for

SCR implemented the provision of free high-speed Wi-Fi facility at all railway stations with help of Rail Tel Corporation of India Ltd (RCIL), a subsidiary of Indian Railways

KYC considerations".

It may be mentioned that the provision of free Wi-Fi was started at Secunderabad station in 2015. Wi-Fi access at railway stations is increasing day by day due to easy and low-cost availability of Smart phones in the market. On an average, more than 50,000 users are using this free Wi-Fi over the Zone on each day with an average upload of 5,000 GB and download of 28,000 GB data. Provision of free High-speed Wi-Fi at small stations located in rural areas is to encourage the rural population in adopting digital technology and make them part of Digital India. Free High-speed Wi-Fi facility provided at rural railway station Gollapalli is being used by teachers of government school located near to the station to educate the students in improving skills and knowledge. Gajanan Mallaya, General Manager, SCR expressed his happiness on completion of the project within reasonable time and appreciated all the officers & staff who have put their efforts in completion of the mission.

20K illegal flexis removed in 3 days

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The process of removing illegal flexis, banners and posters was carried out as part of the Nagara city beautification on Wednesday as well. Enforcement Director Vishwajit Kampati said that about 20,234 illegal posters, banners and flexis were removed as part of this special drive that began on the 18th of this month.

On Monday, about 4,980 posters, flexis and banners, on Tuesday about 9,768 and on Wednesday (until 2pm) 5,486 were removed. Under the guidance of the GHMC Enforcement and Disaster Management Department, 24



teams were deployed throughout the city to remove the illegal flexis, banners and posters. On Wednesday a special drive was held on Raj Bhavan Road, at GVK Mall, assembly, Attapur, Malakpet, Uppal, Gandhi hospital, Shilparamam, OU Campus, Gachibowli care hospital, LB-Nagar, Panjagutta, Habsiguda parts of the main roads.

Nayeem's sister arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda Police have arrested Saleema Begum, sister of the slain gangster Nayeem, on Wednesday for allegedly grabbing agricultural lands, plots and shops in Bhongir town. The police of Bhongir town, on credible information arrested Md Saleema Begum, 53, who along with other gang members illegally grabbed agriculture lands, house plots, shops in the limits of Bhongir by threatening the victims and got them registered on her name.

"Saleema Begum, who currently resides in Khaji Mohalla, is the sister of gangster Nayeemuddin. Nayeem, his sister Begum and his gang members occupied the open



lands by threatening the land owners," said the DCP Bhongir, K. Narayana Reddy. Speaking about the case, the DCP said that one Kurapati Abhinandan sold some plots to the complainant Velishala Shankara Chari and others in his land prior to 2006. "However, in 2007, the land owner Kurapati Abhinandan

and Saleema Begum, Nayeem gang colluded with each other and conspired to grab the plots and the land, including plots registered on the name of accused Saleema Begum and other family members.

Later, the accused transferred the land on the name of realtor Adla Venkat Reddy who subsequently converts the land into plots and sells out on the name of 'London Township'.

They also threatened other land owners, Kurapati Sridevi and Kurapati Srinivas, and occupied the land to an extent of Ac. 09-06 guntas on the name of Saleema Begum and her family members, subsequently the land was also transferred to realtor Adla Venkat Reddy" said the official.



Five held for duping woman of Rs 5 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyber Crime Police of Cyberabad have arrested a five-member gang of fraudsters from Jharkhand for cheating a woman of Rs 5 lakh by sending her a phishing link online.

The arrested were identified as Ram Kumar Mandal, Jamrudin Ansari, Jitendra Mandal, Birendar Kumar Mandal and Rohit Raj. The gang's mastermind Sanjay Kumar Mandal is absconding, the police said.

The police received a complaint from a doctor in October about the money being withdrawn from her bank account. "The victim received a message on her mobile that her debit card is going to be blocked and asked her to visit the link sent on her mobile. The link asked her to enter the KYC details of her bank account. She then entered all her bank account credentials including the internet banking credentials in the link of Google view form received on her mobile. Soon after, multiple transactions took place on her account and an amount of Rs 5,29,000 was

Sanjay, the mastermind of the crime, has been committing cyber frauds since 2016 and changes his modus operandi regularly

transferred to different e-wallets," said the Police.

"Sanjay Kumar Mandal, the mastermind of the crime, has been committing cyber frauds since 2016 and changes his modus operandi from time to time. Ram Kumar Mandal and Jamrudin Ansari are most wanted cyber fraudsters by the Jharkhand State police and are even wanted in cases throughout India. Birendar Kumar Mandal was working as a driver in Mumbai. He is Ram Kumar Mandal's friend and assists him in his frauds. Rohit Raj met Ram Kumar Mandal through facebook and also assists him in frauds. The arrested persons help Sanjay in his fraud scheme by redeeming the vouchers he purchased fraudulently," said V C Sajjanar, Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad.

Woman techie commits suicide

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A software employee committed suicide by hanging herself in her hostel at Raidurgam here on Wednesday. Police suspect that she was depressed over her job security and resorted to the extreme step.

The incident that occurred in the city, is among the latest of techie's suicides despite the claims of a financial boom in the IT industry. Many employees are reportedly unhappy with their work environment and the insecurity of their jobs.

The deceased was identified as 24-year-old Pogaku Harini. A native of Mahabub Nagar, she was working for Golden Hills Capital India Pvt Ltd in Gachibowli and was residing at a women's hostel in Gachibowli since two years.

According to the police, Harini had joined the software firm on a two-year contract



that expires in December. The company had issued notices to Harini and several other employees about their employment with the company being terminated in December. Police suspect that she was depressed over losing it and was going through the process of looking for a new one. On Tuesday night, when

she was alone in her room, Harini hung herself to the ceiling fan and committed suicide. Police found a suicide note in the room purportedly written by Harini that said "Please donate my organs". The Raidurgam police registered a case and are investigating the incident. The body was sent for a post mortem examination.

Harini had joined a software firm on a two-year contract. The company had issued notices to Harini and several other employees about their employment with the company being terminated in December

Youngster arrested for raping 5-year-old

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Maheshwaram police arrested a youngster for raping a five-year-old girl at Poranda village of Maheshwaram on the city outskirts on Tuesday. The arrested was identified as 21-year-old Chandu, an intermediate dropout, who was working as a helper in a provisional store.

The police said that the incident occurred on November 17, after the victim's parents had gone to work and her grandmother went to attend a function in Rajendranagar. While her siblings were playing in front of the house, the victim was alone inside watching television. According to police, Chandu took advantage of the situation and entered the house and took the child to the bed-

room where he raped her. The victim, who knows Chandu, did not suspect anything when he entered the house. He overpowered the girl and sexually exploited her, said the police.

The incident came to light after the victim's mother, who was returning from work found Chandu rushing out of the house. "She found the other children playing outside and saw Chandu," the police said, adding that she grew suspicious and enquired with the child who revealed what had happened. Based on a complaint lodged on Sunday evening, the Maheshwaram police booked a rape case under POC SO Act and arrested him. The child was sent for a medical examination. Chandu was produced before court and remanded in judicial custody.

Metro Feeder services from Virtusa Campus in Gachibowli

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

L&T Metro in collaboration with AllMiles launched Metro feeder services from Virtusa campuses in Hyderabad. The frequency of these shuttles is 20 minutes and they operate from

Virtusa's Nanakramguda Campus as well as Capital Facility near Wipro Circle. Speaking on the occasion, Krishna Yedula, Centre Head of Virtusa, who is also Gen Secretary for SCSC said such feeder services shall encourage employees to adopt public transport and help in reducing single user vehicles on roads. The launch was attended by L&T Metro Marketing Head Manoj Daniel, Sachin from AllMiles and Senior leadership team of Virtusa.

RGIA celebrates 'Swachh Bharat Pakhwada'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's flagship campaign of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, GMR-led Hyderabad International Airport is celebrating "Swachh Bharat Pakhwada" - a 15-day cleanliness and sanitation drive from 15 to 30 November. As part of this initiative, the airport on Wednesday organised a 'Swachhta March' in the airport premises followed by a Clean Up Drive of the environs in which the Management, staff and all other stakeholders of the airport including airlines officials, CISF, customs officials, concessionaires, ground handlers and the entire airport community participated. Addressing the gathering

As part of the 15-day campaign, the airport has started an awareness campaign across the terminal and on its social media platforms to creatively engage and promote the importance of cleanliness

after the clean-up drive, Dy CEO - GHIAL, Pradeep Panicker highlighted the importance of cleanliness, sanitation and hygiene for an airport. He thanked all the stakeholders for their support and cooperation in lending a helping hand in maintaining clean surroundings on par with global standards at the Hyderabad International Airport. He stated that we

must recognize the efforts of each individual who is responsible for taking care to see that we live in clean surroundings and that their toil must be appreciated.

As part of the 15-day long campaign, the airport has started an awareness campaign across the terminal and on its social media platforms to creatively engage and promote the importance of clean-

liness and sanitation among the public at large. As one of the cleanest airports, Hyderabad International Airport has been proactively participating in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for several years.

The airport has a dedicated team, which has been running this campaign on the ground ensuring high quality standards of cleanliness are maintained.

Hyderabad International Airport has India's first airport-based captive compost plant to process food waste into generating organic compost, which not only ensures cleanliness and sanitation of the airport but also nurtures the vast greenery across the airport approach road.



### 108 check dams to come up in Kothagudem

PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM

The district administration has planned to construct as many as 108 check dams across the district with the objective of improving irrigation facility and to boost ground water levels.

District Collector Rajat Kumar Saini said a proposal in connection with the construction of check dams had been sent to the State government. Giving the Assembly constituency-wise breakdown of the proposed check dams, he said 18 check dams each in Yellandu and Kothagudem Assembly were planned to be constructed.

Similarly, 25 each in Pinapaka and Aswaroepet constituencies and 22 check dams in Bhadrachalam were planned to be constructed. Yellandu MLA B Haripriya made a request for the construction of check dams across the Masivagu stream which was the main water source for Yellandu.

Priority would be given to the tribal areas in the construction of the dams, the Collector Saini said while adding that under Mission Kakatiya, 83,353 acres of ayacut had been stabilised by developing as many as 2,396 tanks in the district during four phases.

# Cong plans to raise funds for striking RTC employees

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy proposed that funds should be raised for the RTC employees who are on strike for the last 48 days. Gudur Narayana Reddy, in a media statement on Wednesday, said that the RTC employees and their families were in deep financial trouble due to non-payment of salaries since September.

"Nearly 50,000 families are suffering due to in-human attitude of TRS Government. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao cannot wash off his hands by calling RTC a loss making organisation. The employees have not only served the people for several decades, but also gave several sacrifices for the creation of Telangana.

We cannot simply leave them to their fate. They are not victims of circumstances, but fell prey to the arrogant attitude of KCR. Therefore, it is the duty of all citizens of Telangana to help the RTC employees," he said.

While announcing that he would initiate the fund raising by making first contribution,



Gudur Narayana Reddy said RTC employees were fighting for their justified rights and they deserved full support from every individuals who believes in democracy. He said he would chalk out the fund raising drive in a few days and the amount collected could be handed over to the unions for distribution among employees.

"Many RTC employees have not paid their rents, school/college fee or EMIs of various loans since September. They are also unable to take care of basic expenses on healthcare and many families might not be having money to bear the expenses for food. KCR's in-human attitude has pushed thousands of employees into huge debts and ruined their personal lives. This will turn

into a big human tragedy if immediate measures are not taken," he said.

The Congress leader expressed confidence that the RTC employees would win the legal battle and get justice. Till that happens, he said everyone should support them in whatever way they could to ensure that they get basic minimum support.

He said KCR was planning to force RTC employees surrender to his will by engineering financial crisis. The Chief Minister was apparently trying to set an example out of RTC staff to intimidate employees of other departments so as to establish his dictatorial rule.

However, he said that justice would prevail and KCR would fail in his attempt to turn over

### Suicides: NHRC demands explanation from TS Government

HYDERABAD: The National Human Rights Commission on Wednesday served notices on Government of Telangana asking it to explain the death of RTC workers and strike observed by the RTC workers before November 28. The notice is sequel to a complaint lodged by CPI leader Narayana with the NHRC on suicides by RTC workers. The complaint mentioned that the suicides come under violation of human rights. On the basis of the complaint, the NHRC sought an explanation from the Government of Telangana.

50,000 employees and their families into his slaves. Stating that nearly 27 RTC employees died due to heart attack, suicide or other diseases related to mental trauma caused by the Chief Minister. He said the families of those employees should be paid appropriate ex-gratia and one member of their family should be given a government job.

# Azharuddin's 'absence' irks Congress leaders

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Congress leaders are allegedly upset with the TPCC working president Mohammed Azharuddin's 'absence'. According to sources, the leaders opined that after winning the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) elections, the former cricketer has not visited Gandhi Bhavan even once.

The leaders, irrespective of their position, were not happy with the attitude of Azharuddin as he met the TRS working president and IT Minister KT Rama Rao and Education Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy but he didn't look towards Gandhi Bhavan at least once. Soon after Azhar's meeting with KTR, rumors spread that the former cricketer may join the ruling TRS. However, he didn't. More so, Azharuddin then said 'rumors remain as rumors'.

"Azharuddin is in a responsible position (TPCC working president), but he is not coming to the party office. He came to Gandhi Bhavan a couple of times after becoming the TPCC working president. The other three working presidents - Ponnamp Prabhakar, Jetti Kusuma Kumar and A Revanth Reddy visit Gandhi Bhavan frequently and participate in party activities. Forget about active

Senior leaders of the party opined that the former cricketer and the TPCC working president has not visited the party office, Gandhi Bhavan even once after getting elected as HCA president



Azharuddin is he didn't come to his own party office. Azharuddin would have come to Gandhi Bhavan. Congress party leaders would have felicitated Azharuddin in a grand manner if he had come to Gandhi Bhavan after winning HCA elections. But he didn't, he said.

participation, Azharuddin doesn't even visits the party office being in a responsible position," said one of the party leader on condition of anonymity.

Another senior leader on condition of anonymity lamented that he was very much hurt with Azharuddin's attitude. "Most hurting point is Azharuddin met Minister KTR but he didn't come to Gandhi Bhavan after winning HCA elections. There is nothing wrong in meeting KTR, but wrong thing on the part of

One of the TPCC Core Committee member said that it's true he didn't come to Gandhi Bhavan after winning HCA elections. But Azharuddin attended Core Committee held at Golconda Hotel held before Huzurnagar by-elections. "No TPCC leader considers his presence as an important issue in the party," he opined.

It may be recalled that former Congress MP and former India Cricket team captain Mohd Azharuddin was elected as HCA president in the elections held in September. Azharuddin won the elections by defeating his nearest rival Prajash Chand Jain with a margin of 74 votes. Azharuddin secured 147 votes, while Jain secured 73 votes.

# MRO issues patta on tenant farmer's name

Victim approaches VH for help • Leader demands immediate action

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The recent attack on a MRO, Vijaya Reddy, who was burnt alive in her office chambers in Abdullapurmet, is still fresh in the minds of people. After the gruesome murder, a couple of attacks on Tahsildars were reported in some districts in the state.

The farmers, who resorted to the extreme steps, allegedly blamed the officials inaction in issuing pattadar passbooks. After these incidents, another case has been reported in Mahabubnagar, where Koilkonda Mandal tahasildar allegedly issued a 16-acre 27 guntas patta in the name of a tenant farmer of Suraram village by accepting bribe from a tenant farmer, as the land owner Yedla Kondamma failed to give Rs 75,000 bribe to the tahasildar.

The farmer, Yedla Kondamma approached Congress senior leader V Hanumantha Rao requesting him to do justice. Speaking to the media along with the victim, Kondamma and her daughter Suvarna in Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday, Hanumantha Rao said that the corrupt practices were not decreasing even after Vijaya Reddy's murder.

"There were no land disputes



Congress leader V Hanumantha Rao along with Yedla Kondamma at the Gandhi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Wednesday

in Karnataka state. But due to government attitude, the irregularities are taking place in Revenue Department in Telangana," VH alleged. The revenue officials are not doing the works of farmers if not offered bribe in Telangana. The revenue officials are issuing pattas in the name of tenant farmers even after Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao made it clear that the tenant farmers have no rights on land.

Demanding the Chief Minister to set right the Revenue Department, VH described the situation in Telangana as 'Ganga Jal' film in which people roam while carrying acid to face atrocities. "Now the farmers are visiting

Tahasildar offices with petrol bottles with the troubles created by revenue officials," he said. He demanded KCR to react on the issue and do justice to farmer Kondamma immediately.

"Do justice to RTC workers' VH urged China Jeeyar Swamy, who is going to participate in a programme in Amberpet to deliver pravachanams, to do justice to the RTC workers. He requested China Jeeyar Swamy to give advice to Chief Minister to do justice to the RTC workers as Chief Minister will follow the words of Swamiji. He lamented that China Jeeyar Swami didn't respond even after the deaths of 24 RTC workers.

# RTC JAC offers to withdraw strike, but with a rider

Continued from Page 1

They considered whether to continue the strike in the wake of the judgment and issued a statement later.

In the statement, JAC urged the state government to take the strike issue to the Labour Court immediately as the High Court has given two weeks' time to the government to furnish the issues mentioned in the JAC notice to the Labour Court.

The statement drew attention to the High Court's particular reference to the Supreme Court's observation in a previous verdict that the aim of strike of workers is for solution of their problems, but not to abandon their jobs. Hence, JAC asked the state government to provide work conditions that prevailed as on October 4th (a day before the launch of the strike) for the benefit of workers. The JAC also cited the High Court's comment that the state government should look after RTC workers in such a manner that it is looked upon as a model management.

Ashwathama Reddy told media persons: "We welcome the High Court's directions to

the Labour Court. We also welcome the High Court's verdict. We hope that the state government respects it." The JAC convener exuded confidence that they would get justice in the Labour Court.

Reddy said that the state government as well as the RTC management had the responsibility of protecting the self-respect of the workers as their role in building the image of RTC across the world was unquestionable. The government should take back the employees unconditionally. "We are ready to call off the strike if the government invites us for unconditionally joining duties. We will not give any written assurance to the management. Our main demand is unconditionally joining duties. We hope that the Labour Court would solve our problems. We will raise the issue of salary for strike period in the Labour Court. Till now, we have not got any response from the government. We are hoping that the government will respond to our statement. We will sign only on duty chart and attendance register," he said.

### MLA Ramesh no longer an Indian...

Continued from Page 1

After an inquiry, MHA initially ruled on August 31, 2017: "Ramesh Chennamaneni was deprived of his Indian citizenship under section 10 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 on grounds that he had obtained the certificate of Indian citizenship by playing fraud upon the Government of India and concealing crucial material facts of his visits abroad during the last twelve months immediately preceding his application for Indian citizenship..."

However, Ramesh challenged the orders in the High Court of Hyderabad. The High Court, in July 2018, granted relief to Ramesh by setting aside the MHA order. Following this, MHA constituted a committee of inquiry to probe the issue afresh. Based on the arguments and evidence submitted before the committee, MHA on Wednesday finally ruled that Ramesh is not an Indian. Reacting to MHA orders, Ramesh said, "the home ministry has given same directions earlier. Then I approached the High Court against it; the court had set aside home ministry's orders in July 2019. The HC asked home ministry to look into other issues such as my social conduct, service to people etc, but nothing was considered. I will move the HC again," he said.

# Rajat to head petrochemical investment panel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Centre has appointed senior Andhra Pradesh bureaucrat Rajat Bhargava as head of a high-level committee to suggest necessary policy initiatives for attracting more investments into the Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemical Investment Regions (PCPIR) in the country. Bhargava, the AP Industry and Infrastructure Principal Secretary has been appointed by the Union Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

On Tuesday, a high-level meeting under Union Chemicals and Petrochemicals Secretary P Raghavendra Rao in Delhi discussed the proposed amendments to the

PCPIR Policy that was put in place in 2007 and constituted the committee headed by Bhargava, a senior official here said. "The Committee will submit its report in a fortnight after consultations with Principal Secretaries of Tamil Nadu, Odisha and Gujarat. Besides, industry associations and other stakeholders will also be consulted," he said.

This is the first time the Centre is seeking to amend the PCPIR Policy after it was introduced. For over a year now, the central government had been mulling new policy interventions to attract investments into the PCPIRs by addressing various issues.

At a recent summit on global chemicals and petrochemi-

For over a year now, the Central government had been mulling new policy interventions to attract investments into the PCPIRs by addressing various issues

icals manufacturing hubs, the issue was discussed and accordingly, the Centre has now set up the high-level committee to come up with necessary suggestions for rejuvenating the PCPIRs, the official added. The Centre, as per the PCPIR Policy, approved four PCPIRs at Dahanu (Gujarat) on the west coast and Visakhapatnam-Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh), Paradeep

The VK-PCPIR is the largest in the country spread over an area of 640 sq km along the Bay of Bengal coast. Two big-ticket projects have now been lined up as anchor tenants for the PCPIR in Kakinada with an aggregate investment of over \$15.72 billion. Haldia Petro Chemicals would set up a refinery in the Kakinada Special Economic Zone with an investment of 11.43 billion USD to serve as the anchor unit with supply of required feedstock. HPCL, in a joint venture with GAIL, would set up a greenfield refinery, a 1.5 million metric tonne per annum petrochemical complex, in Kakinada with an investment of \$4.29 billion.

# Government may empower Tahsildars

Continued from Page 1

All of this has created a sense of fear among most farmers that revenue officers are deliberately not resolving their problems, though Tahsildars have been at pains to explain to farmers that they have no power to resolve the disputes. This pervasive fear among farmers has induced some of them to physically attack Tahsildars and their offices. The tragic torching of Vijaya Reddy, Tahsildar of Abdullapurmet, is a case in point.

Therefore, the state government has decided to resolve technical problems pertaining to lands as well as those listed under Part-B as early as possible.

As a step in this direction, the state government is considering a proposal to authorise Tahsildars, instead of the Joint Collectors, to peruse land records and resolve the problems.

Following the attack on Tahsildar Vijaya Reddy, recently the Chief Minister issued orders for en masse

transfer of Tahsildars to repatriate them to their place of posting prior to elections. Once these Tahsildars settle down, the government will issue guidelines on dealing with problematic lands listed under Part-B.

Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao assured revenue employees' associations that they would be allowed to meet Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for getting their problems resolved, including the one relating to increased risk to their lives from attacks by irate farmers.

Telangana state revenue employees' association leaders, led by association president Ravinder Reddy, called on Ministers KT Rama Rao and Srinivas Goud and discussed issues like amenities and shortage of hands. The association also highlighted certain recent developments. It sought a meeting with the Chief Minister. The association thanked the government for repatriating Tahsildars to their previous place of posting.

### WEDDING BELLS



AP Special Chief Secretary to higher education Satish Chandra and his wife at their son's wedding on Wednesday

# I-T raids at Ramanaidu Studios

Continued from Page 1

Both the production houses are readying to release their new films. Haarika and Hassine is all set to release its next movie 'Ala vaikunthapuramulo' starring Allu Arjun, while 'Sitara Entertainment's last production was Premam, remake of

2015 Malayalam film. The romantic drama features Naga Chaitanya and Shruti Hasan.

According to sources, sleuths are suspecting massive tax evasions in production, distribution and exhibition earnings. Ramanaidu Studio is set for a December release of 'Venky Mama' that

stars the uncle-nephew duo Venkatesh and Naga Chaitanya.

Over the last 10 years, given the drop in earnings from movie productions, Ramanaidu Studio has ventured into film distribution and exhibits. The other source of revenue is the theatre chain they own.

### RACE FOR TPCC CHIEF POSITION

# Duo 'walk' from Adilabad-Hyd in support of Komatireddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two Congress local leaders from Adilabad district have proved the proverb 'each one wallows on one's own fad' by walking from Adilabad to Gandhi Bhavan in Hyderabad urging the party high command to consider Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy for the TPCC chief position.

Adilabad District SC Cell convener Suddala Rajeshwar and district party senior leader Kandi Ganga Reddy

walked around 320 kms for 8 days and reached Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday. Both Rajeshwar and Ganga Reddy started their walk from Boath in Adilabad district and reached Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday.

Speaking to the media, the duo said that Congress will come to power if Komatireddy Venkat Reddy is given TPCC Chief position. They asked the party high command to give TPCC Chief position to Komatireddy for the sake of party welfare.

They said that Komatireddy has the charisma like former Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy. The party cadre is wishing to make Komatireddy as TPCC Chief, they said. Komatireddy will take up Padayatra or Rathayatra to bring the party back to power if given state party chief position. Komatireddy will wage fight on public issues continuously, they said requesting the party high command to give TPCC Chief position to Komatireddy.



Adilabad District SC Cell convener Suddala Rajeshwar and district party senior leader Kandi Ganga Reddy speaking to the media after reaching Gandhi Bhavan from Adilabad on Wednesday

# Pawar meets PM Modi over farmers' distress in Maha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Wednesday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Parliament here and apprised him about farmers' distress in Maharashtra and sought his urgent intervention in the wake of the crop damage and rising agrarian crisis in the state. The meeting at the prime minister's chamber in Parliament comes amid uncertainty over the government formation in the Maharashtra where talks are on between the NCP, the Congress and the Shiv Sena for an alliance.

In a three-page memorandum, Pawar said in Nashik district crops like soybean, paddy, finger millet, corns, bajra and vegetables like tomato and onion were at the harvesting stage but incessant and unseasonable rains completely ruined them. He said 44 farmers from Nashik have committed suicide in the face of the crisis in the last 10 months. In Nagpur, cotton crops over 35,000 hectares have been damaged due to unseasonable rains, Pawar said.

"Due to President's rule in the state, your urgent intervention is highly necessitated. I shall be grateful if you could take immediate steps to initiate massive relief measures to ameliorate distressed farmers," the memorandum said.

The duo is meeting two days after the prime minister



**The duo is meeting two days after the prime minister praised the NCP lawmakers in Parliament over their decision against entering the Well during the proceedings**

## CONGRESS UNHAPPY WITH MEET

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress seems to be unhappy with NCP chief Sharad Pawar meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the issue of farmers' distress in Maharashtra. Home Minister Amit Shah was also present in the meeting. The Congress sources say the meeting is sending wrong signals when negotiation for an alliance with the Sena is going on. The Congress has already expressed apprehension on a tie up with the Sena. The NCP-Congress high level committee is to meet to finalise the common minimum program (CMP). Sena MP Sanjay Raut has also claimed that there will be Sena-led government in the state soon. The Shiv Sena has also raised the issue of changing of seats in the upper house, Sanjay Raut has shot off a letter to the Rajya Sabha Chairman saying, "when they have not parted ways from NDA officially, why their seats have been changed arbitrarily". The two developments of Pawar-PM meet and Sena writing letter to Venkaiah Naidu are giving mixed signals, said a senior congress leader. However, a top source said on Tuesday that at this point too, there is no commitment, and matters will move according to the talks, and Congress is "not in a hurry". On Monday, NCP leader Sharad Pawar had met Sonia Gandhi and discussed the possibility of a tie-up. After the meeting, Pawar said, "I have briefed Sonia Gandhi about the political situation in the state and leaders of NCP. Congress will meet to discuss the issues and then will report to Sonia Gandhi." The Congress has also kept the window open, party chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said. Pawar has however ruled out any tie-up with the BJP, but said that during the meeting, supporting the Shiv Sena was not discussed.

praised the NCP lawmakers in Parliament over their decision against entering the Well during the proceedings. NCP and Congress leaders

will meet in the evening to discuss how to partner with the Shiv Sena, a long-term BJP ally that recently ended its alliance with the ruling party over a

power tussle in Maharashtra. When asked about the government formation in Maharashtra, the NCP chief refused to comment.

# Navy is inducting large number of state-of-the-art assets

PNS ■ KANNUR

Indian Navy is inducting a large number of highly capable and state-of-the-art assets and equipment, President Ram Nath Kovind said on Wednesday as he highlighted the strategic importance of the seas in the well being of people of the country.

Addressing the Naval cadets after awarding the President's Colour to the Indian Naval Academy, the President said that India is a maritime nation and highlighted the strategic values of its long coastline and several islands which are acting as the country's "national outposts".

"A significant proportion of India's trade and energy needs are met through the medium of the oceans. Safety of the seas and maritime commons, therefore, remains a critical requirement to ensure the economic and infrastructure development on land, as also to ensure well-being of its people," he said at the function organised at the Ezhimala Naval Academy in the district. Underscoring the security challenges — both in the con-



ventional and asymmetric domains — facing the country today, Kovind said, "The country looks upon you to deliver, each and everytime, whether it is a full fledged conflict, natural calamity, law and order challenge or our diplomatic mission."

Hailing the Indian Navy as the country's prime instrument to ensure maritime security, Kovind said, "you will be pleased to know that our Navy is inducting a large number of highly capable and state-of-the-art assets and equipment". "We live in a digital age and the battles of tomorrow will

also be fought in the domain of information and technology. You, as technical graduates, would be expected to stay ahead of the technology curve to be better prepared to respond when required," the President said.

The President complimented the commandants, all instructors and officers involved in training at the academy for producing multifaceted officers for Indian Navy.

"I am sure that you will never let your country down," he said.

## LS member seeks relook at national security definition

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

"I am unable to repair my house" due to restrictions on building construction in the vicinity of defence establishments, a Shiv Sena member said in Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

During the Question Hour, Rahul Shewale also demanded that the definition of national security should be relooked at.

"I am an MP and my father was a Naval officer... but I am unable to repair my own house," Shewale said.

The House was discussing a question about defence establishments and restrictions on buildings in their vicinity. Shiv Sena, a long time ally, parted ways with the NDA recently in the wake of differences with the ruling BJP over formation of government in Maharashtra.

About the issue, Finance Minister and former Defence Minister Nirmla Sitharaman said the situation is not that no permissions have been given for projects.

## Internet in Kashmir after green light from local admn

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said in Rajya Sabha that the government will restore Internet connection in Kashmir as soon as the local administration feels it is fit to do so.

Responding to a series of questions on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir during Question Hour, Shah also asserted that not a single person has died in police firing after August 5 when the special status accorded to Jammu and Kashmir was scrapped.

He also said all newspapers and TV channels are functioning in Kashmir and there is no decline in circulation of newspapers. "The situation there was always normal. There were many notions spread all over the world."

There is total normalcy prevailing. After August 5, not a single person has died in police firing although many feared there would be bloodshed and more number of killings," the Home Minister said.

# Trouble for Medha Patkar as passport office issues notice

■ 'Failure to disclose info regarding pending cases'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Regional Passport Office, Mumbai, has issued a show cause notice to Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) activist Medha Patkar as to why her passport should not be impounded for failing to disclose information regarding pendency of cases against her.

The RPO Mumbai has noted that nine criminal cases have been registered against her — three are in Barwani, one in Alirajpur and five in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh — and are still pending adjudication. "While obtaining passport bearing no...dated March 30, 2017 you have not disclosed the fact regarding pendency of above cases and obtained passport by suppression of material information."

"In view of the same it is proposed to impound your passport bearing and any other passport if issued subsequently under section 10(3)(e) of the Passports Act 1967. You are requested to state why action should not be



**The RPO Mumbai has noted that nine criminal cases have been registered against her — three are in Barwani, one in Alirajpur and five in Khandwa district of MP — and are still pending adjudication**

taken under section 12(1) of the Passports Act 1967," the notice issued by the passport office on October 18 said. The passport officials have sought her explanation within 10 days from the date of this communication failing which action would be taken.

A complaint was filed against the activist in June this year by a journalist stating that Patkar had obtained her passport by concealing and suppressing material facts from the RPO Mumbai.

According to the sources, Patkar has till date not sub-

mitted any reply despite the lapse of more than 30 days.

Patkar had earlier contested Mumbai North-East Parliament seat in 2014 on the AAP ticket but lost the election. Section 10(3) of the passport act states that "the passport authority may impound or cause to be impounded or revoke a passport or travel document Section(e) if proceedings in respect of an offence alleged to have been committed by the holder of the passport or travel document are pending before a criminal court in India".

# BHU students continue protest, Muslim prof feels 'insulted'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The students' protest against the appointment of a Muslim professor in the Sanskrit Vidya Dharma Vigyan in the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) entered its 14th day on Wednesday with the students refusing to give up on their demand. The BHU administration continues to maintain that the appointment of professor Feroz Khan is in accordance with the prescribed norms and there is no question of his removal.

The BHU administration has issued a statement, saying, "The idea behind the establishment of the university was to contribute in nation-building by providing equal opportunity of study and teaching to all deserving people without any discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, gender and sect."

The statement also said that Khan's appointment was a unanimous decision made by a selection committee under a transparent process.

The Muslim professor Feroz Khan, meanwhile, said that he felt "insulted" by the incident and added that he would have never applied for the job if the university had mentioned in the advertisement that they did not want a Muslim.

Students sitting on dharna, on the other hand, have started reciting Hanuman Chalisa to underline their opposition to a Muslim faculty member.



## Pareesh Rawal: Stunned by the protests against professor

NEW DELHI:

Actor and former BJP MP Pareesh Rawal has condemned the ongoing lockout by students at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) over the appointment of a Muslim professor in the Sanskrit faculty, saying he is "stunned by the protest" against Feroz Khan. "Stunned by the protest against professor Feroz Khan. What has language to do with religion? Irony is professor Feroze has done his masters and PhD in Sanskrit (sic)," Pareesh Rawal tweeted. A group of 30-odd students of Sanskrit literature have been sitting outside the office of BHU vice-chancellor Rakesh Bhatnagar for 12 days, protesting the appointment of Feroz Khan as an assistant professor. Outside his office, students have been reciting hymns and even carried out a yagna, saying they would not budge till their demands are met. The university administration has rallied behind Professor Khan, saying he is the most suitable candidate for the job and that all procedures were followed during the appointment. The university has issued statements twice in the last week, saying it is "committed to achieving the objectives of the BHU in providing equal educational and teaching opportunities to everyone irrespective of religion".



Chakrapani Ojha, a student leader leading the protest since November 7, said: "The appointment of a Muslim faculty member has hurt the sentiments of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya who established the BHU. This appointment has been made as part of a conspiracy."

Scindia criticises attempts to glorify Nathuram Godse

## Capsules



### Scindia criticises attempts to glorify Nathuram Godse

**GWALIOR:** Senior Madhya Pradesh Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia on Wednesday condemned the attempts aimed at "glorifying" Mahatma Gandhi's assassin Nathuram Godse by certain sections including the Hindu Mahasabha. He demanded strict action in such cases. The Mahasabha on November 15 had performed 'aarti' of Godse and Narayan Apte, a co-conspirator who too was hanged in the Mahatma Gandhi assassination case, at their office in Gwalior. "Glorifying the person who had killed Mahatma Gandhi is condemnable and a strict action should be taken in such cases. The entire world is paying homage to Gandhiji. It is wrong to glorify his killer," Scindia told reporters. An FIR was registered by the local police on November 16 against Mahasabha activists for allegedly distributing pamphlets describing Mahatma Gandhi in an objectionable manner in Daulatganj area.

### Guj: Lioness found dead at Gir sanctuary

**VADODARA:** A lioness was found dead in the sanctuary area of Gujarat's Gir Somnath district, a forest official said on Wednesday. Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary is home to more than 500 Asiatic lions. A nine to 12-year-old lioness was found dead during a joint patrol of Hadala and Jasadhar border rounds staff on Tuesday night, chief conservator forests (wildlife) D T Vasavada said. A team comprising a forest official, two range forest officers and veterinarians, who examined the carcass, didn't find anything suspicious, he added. The lioness may have been responsible for attacking a 'maldhari' or tribal herdman in Dodi Ness area four days ago, Vasavada said. Doctors have collected required samples during post-mortem to ascertain the exact cause of death, the senior official added.

### Man, two children run over by speeding bus

**SURAT:** Three members of a family, including two children, were killed after getting hit by a city bus on Dindoli bridge here in the early hours of Wednesday, police said. Yashwant Ponikar, his son Bhavesh (7) and nephew Bhupendra (11) were killed when the motorcycle they were travelling in was hit by a speeding city bus on Dindoli bridge in Gujarat's Surat city, an official said. Another man, who was injured in the mishap, was rushed to a government hospital, where he is currently undergoing treatment, he said.

## UP HOME GUARD SALARY FRAUD

# Divisional commandant among five arrested

PNS ■ NOIDA

Five Home Guard officials, including a divisional commandant, have been arrested for their alleged role in the fraudulent withdrawal of salaries of the force personnel, police said on Wednesday.

Their arrest comes a day after muster rolls (attendance logs) of all home guard personnel were found burnt in a box inside the office of the Gautam Buddha Nagar district commandant of the Home Guard in Greater Noida.

Attendance logs of all the personnel since 2014 in the district



Home Guards' present Divisional Commandant Ram Narayan Chaurasia, who has earlier served as district commandant in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Assistant Company Commander Satish, and Platoon commanders Montu, Satveer and Shailendra have been arrested in the salary scam case

— VAIBHAV KRISHNA, Senior Superintendent of Police

were found destroyed in the fire amid an ongoing investigation into the salary fraud, prompting Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to intervene.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Vaibhav Krishna said five accused have been arrested for their suspected role in the salary

scam. "Home Guards' present Divisional Commandant Ram Narayan Chaurasia, who has earlier served as district commandant in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Assistant Company Commander Satish, and Platoon commanders Montu,

Satveer and Shailendra have been arrested in the salary scam case," he said.

Krishna said the five suspects have detailed the modus operandi of the fraud to police and further details will be made public later on Wednesday.

# Vulnerability detected in WhatsApp; CERT-In issues advisory



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

An Indian cyber security agency has warned WhatsApp users against a "vulnerability" that can attack this popular social media messaging app and compromise individual system without seeking permissions.

The Computer Emergency Response Team-India (CERT-In) has issued an advisory in this context calling the severity of the threat, being spread by an MP4 file, as "high."

The advisory comes in the backdrop of recent develop-

**The Computer Emergency Response Team-India (CERT-In) has issued an advisory in this context calling the severity of the threat, being spread by an MP4 file, as 'high.'**

ments where WhatsApp had informed the Indian government in September that over hundred Indian users were targeted by the Israeli spyware Pegasus.

"A vulnerability has been reported in WhatsApp which could be exploited by a remote

attacker to execute arbitrary code on the target system," the latest advisory said.

The CERT-In is the nodal agency to combat hacking, phishing and to fortify security-related defences of the Indian internet domain.

The agency's advisory suggested "upgrading" to the latest version of WhatsApp to combat or tide over the problem.

Describing the malicious action of the vulnerability in the popular social messaging app (application), it said, "A stack-based buffer overflow vulnerability exists in WhatsApp due to improper parsing of elementary stream metadata of an MP4 file. A remote attacker could exploit this vulnerability by sending a specially crafted MP4 file to the target system."

It added that this could trigger a buffer overflow condition leading to execution of arbitrary code by the attacker.

"The exploitation does not require any form of authentication from the victim end and executes on downloading of malicious crafted mp4 file on victim's system," it said.

Successful exploitation of this vulnerability, it said, could allow the remote attacker to cause remote code execution (RCE) or denial of service (DoS) condition, which could lead to further compromise of the system.

## Myths about Kashmir

Facts and figures on J&K tabled in the House may paint a rosy picture but won't change ground realities



Kashmir's smokescreen becomes so dense by the day that in the end, it solidifies as the only truth, or a picture of it, so relentlessly it is pushed down our throats. And with stories of the non-cooperative Kashmiri and the Western media bias drowning out the validity of the ugly truth that does make it to the surface, the myth takes hold of the mindspace as it is easier to digest narratives that operate within simplistic binaries than raise complex questions. Like the response the Government has tabled in the Rajya Sabha, that

stone-pelting has subsided ever since the abolition of Article 370 in Kashmir and that tourist footfalls have increased, apparently generating an additional ₹25 crore as revenue since August. The first claim gets negated by the government's own admission that 700 plus people have been detained during the same period. And the bubble of a thriving tourist economy has been burst by a Kashmiri traders' association claim that the former State has suffered a ₹12,000 crore loss since the lockdown. Home Minister Amit Shah, too, painted a picture of normalcy, telling the Rajya Sabha how schools and colleges were open, the apple industry was recovering, any preventive curfew was only intended to disable Pakistan-sponsored militancy and that there has been no bloodshed since Kashmir became a Union Territory. As if alienation has been the sole byproduct of exported terrorism. He also defended the blockade of internet corridors, saying the fight against terror propaganda meant that security is prioritised over everything else. Yet, even going by the sanitised reportage from the Valley, communication remains a challenge with landlines operating in fits and starts and patchy internet even at media centres. Yes, the Centre through its agencies is picking up apples but truckers from the plains are being attacked randomly and crates are full of some bad apples, literally, with separatist messages imprinted on them. The entire economy is gasping with the lockdown affecting logistics and supply chain management. Existing small and medium-scale businesses are floundering, delivery service start-ups are on the verge of a meltdown with suspended services, the flight of labour and the absence of internet. No tourist, foreign or domestic, is knowingly planning a visit to Kashmir. Violence, either by militant groups, hitbacks of angry citizens or punitive strikes by security forces, makes for a bigger picture when one joins the dots. And the silence is deceptive in the absence of middle ground between polarities. With citizens also resorting to civil disobedience, refusing to open businesses or keeping their children away from school, it could be the proverbial lull before the storm, a fear psychosis or a siege mentality.

Facts and figures can be tweaked but the truth lies elsewhere as a figment, and that is costing us our credibility. While the world and even much of the domestic opinion, in principle, accepted the withdrawal of Article 370 as operable, the never-ending lockdown is raising more questions about our militaristic ambitions than democratic propriety. The Government's continued detention of politically elected representatives, who it says had done nothing to control militancy and played the Indo-Pakistan dynamic for their continued relevance, has stifled the only voice of the locals. Nothing explains why the most pro-India voice among them and somebody who has been the BJP's blue-eyed boy, Omar Abdullah, or even Sajjad Lone continue to be detained. Or why they are being psychologically worn out in dehumanised conditions. If the Government wants to peddle normalcy, then it has to prioritise civil and political engagement, no matter how chaotic or negative the result may be. Restoring civil rights is a must if it wants its governance agenda to not sound like a fable but intended action. A big move always generates big reactions but muzzling them won't help in a political economy called Kashmir. Egoism must make way for reasoned pragmatism and a majoritarian Government should have the strength to stomach the pitfalls than fogging out reality. The world could soon turn intolerant of us.

## Turmoil in telecom

How long can companies overlook unsustainable charges? The Government must intervene on taxes



British telecom giant Vodafone's threat to quit India seems to have jolted a few officials in the Government. After all, if such a famous corporate name could be jolted by policies and unfair tax demands, how would smaller, less famous foreign investors fare in the country? There has been a degree of damage control exercise by both Vodafone and the Government after the first stories emerged in London newspapers but the single best thing that seems to have happened since then is that Indian telecom companies across the board

have realised that their current charges are unsustainable. They are now speaking of increasing tariffs next month onwards. This is on expected lines for, in real-money terms, telecom charges have been declining year after year even if data is excluded. Data charges per megabyte transmitted today are barely a per cent of what they were a decade ago. Low charges have helped put data in the hands of virtually every Indian but good times were never going to last forever.

While the quantum of the increase remains to be seen, after years of unsustainably low charges, coupled with the constant need to invest in new infrastructure, most telecom operators in India are bleeding. The desperation to be seen as the largest player in a huge market led to unsustainable rates, first for voice communications and later for data after the entry of Reliance Industries' Jio, which benefitted from several aspects of a late entry. It was able to invest in better and cheaper infrastructure, not needing to carry the can for low revenue consumers. Surely, the Supreme Court's ruling on taxes being applicable to "annual gross revenues" for telecom operators rather than for "revenues" must be seen as a harsh one. The Government should do something to mitigate the extent of the payment but an increase in call and data rates is much needed now. Complaints about call quality and lack of network connectivity have become far too common and networks need investment to improve services. For that, India needs a sustainable telecom industry. It is almost certain that with the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) being taken up in droves by Government-owned telecom operators BSNL and MTNL, the State might be exiting the telecom space once and for all, keeping just a secure communications backbone for intelligence and military purposes. If that indeed is the case, the Government must ensure that all telecom operators are in good financial health. At the same time, the coming years will see next-generation 5G networks, with the Government expecting to make thousands of crores in the spectrum auctions, something that appears to be more of a pipedream than anything else right now. The Government runs the risk of killing the golden goose and finding a hollowed out shell inside. That means allowing operators to raise prices and most importantly, refute allegations of favouritism that tend to stick when it comes to Mukesh Ambani.

# Neighbour's border envy

While China has undertaken multiple development projects near the Indian border, Delhi has been very slow and remains hesitant to see tourists in restricted areas



CLAUDE ARPI

Recently, the Indian media was agog with news about the latest deployment of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) close to the Indian borders. One website, the *Indian Defence News*, affirmed: "China strengthening military base near Uttarakhand's Lipulekh Pass, which is located near the tri-junction between Nepal, Tibet and India. It explained: "The new base has 20 parking hangars and also maintenance hangars. Medium-lift helicopters for the local Army aviation brigade have also been spotted... There are signs of a military build-up opposite Lipulekh Pass on the northeastern tip of Uttarakhand." It cited some intelligence sources saying that the PLA had built a helipad close to the pass and also "installed two surveillance cameras, a Long Range Reconnaissance and Observation System (LORROS) and a solar panel."

Some other reports mentioned model villages being built by Beijing near the Indian border. This is not new, though the scale should worry New Delhi. The information about Lipulekh Pass is probably linked to the new airport coming up near Purang (Taklakot); it will serve the Kailash/Manasarovar area.

On June 9, 2018, the Civil Aviation Administration of China and the Tibetan Autonomous Region's (TAR) provincial government announced that Tibet would soon have three new airports. An official communiqué stated: "Construction of the three airports, all above the altitude of 3,900 metres, should begin in 2019." The new airports are to be located in Lhunse county in Lhoka (called Shannan by the Chinese) area, north of the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh; the second will be between Tingri and Lhatse counties of Shigatse City, north of Zangmu, the border post with Nepal, and the last in Purang, near Lipulekh.

It was then announced: "The airports should be completed in 2021; by then, there will be eight airports in TAR." The news agency added: "At present, the preparatory work for the three airports is under way. The preferred sites have been determined; the idea is "to consolidate the border and to promote the deep integration of the military and the people." While tourism and "cultural" industries remain the pillars of the so-called stabilisation, defence is also vital for the Chinese authorities — one of Chinese President Xi Jinping's pet projects is the Military Civilian Integration (or "fusion").

Another of Xi's favourite schemes is to make "patriotic" Tibetans "the protectors of their sacred homeland." The last two years have seen the mushrooming of model villages near the Indian border; they are known as "Xiaogang" or "moderately well-off villages." The pretext for building more than 100 such border villages is "poverty alleviation." Tibetans need to be pulled out of poverty (incidentally, is it not strange that 70 years after the arrival of the communists on the plateau



and the so-called liberation of Tibet, the populations still live in such pitiable conditions?).

But "poverty" is not the only motivation. Xi once famously declared: "Govern the nation by governing the borders; govern the borders by first stabilising Tibet; ensure social harmony and stability in Tibet and strengthen the development of border regions." These villages are following the "double-support model city", which translates into full military and civilian integration.

The authorities have started implementing the theory of their boss by providing decent housing to the villagers and enticing the local recalcitrant Tibetan population to their side. Local satraps have a new leitmotif, the inhabitants of China's borders (with India) should be "the protectors of the sacred homeland and the builders of happy homes." The construction of "model" villages on the Tibetan side of the Indian border, mainly north of Arunachal Pradesh and also in Himachal and Ladakh, is the outcome of this. Several senior communist leaders have visited these new villages, either north of Kibithu in the Lohit valley; in Metok, north of Upper Siang district; in Yume (also written Yumai), north of Takshing in Upper Subansiri or in Lepo, Marmang and Tsona, north of Khenzimane and Tawang.

Take Metok County, for example. *China Tibet News* reported that there are 46 administrative villages (including one

multi-ethnic inhabitation area consisting of Monpa, Lhopa, Tibetan or Han) with a total population of 13,725. "In 2018, the county's GDP has reached 606 million yuan (\$99 million); farmers and herdsman's per capita disposable income and cash income have reached 10,380 yuan (\$1,687) and 8,833 yuan (\$1,486) respectively."

In October, 133 villagers belonging to 29 households moved into their new houses. Reports said how "all the township's residents are living in free houses provided by the Government," in Puma Changthang township, north of the Bhutan border. "Sharing a 25-km border with Bhutan, where the average altitude tops 5,300 metres above sea level, the Puma Changthang township is in Nagartse county; it is renowned as the world's highest township."

The report explained: "Resettlement in new housing provided by the Government is part of its efforts to ensure the entire population lives comfortably in border areas... Project construction includes villagers' houses, party's committee offices, village clinics, water supply and roads" and, of course, these "multi-ethnic" villages will welcome Han Chinese.

Take another example. It was reported that Tibetans in Bayi village of Nyingchi City, north of Arunachal Pradesh, have come together and jointly "built a beautiful hometown as well as a better life." Incidentally,

places called Bayi (or 8-1 for August 1, the PLA anniversary) are usually under the Army's management.

The article said that by the end of 2016, 16 impoverished villagers were lifted out of poverty through pairing assistance (ie, with the support of a mainland province), through participation in the collective economy and self-employment: "Bayi Village improved farmers and herdsman's cultural living standards, supported the construction of a "cultural" square, a village library and also organised various cultural and sports activities such as Tibetan circle dance, tug of war, lifting stones or archery."

But at the same time, a review committee in Tsona county warned: "All townships and villages must come together to improve the village rules and regulations [of the party], standardise the daily behaviour of the villagers and strengthen the rural revitalisation strategy goals."

"Standardise the daily behavior" is ominous. On the Indian side, everything moves slowly as usual. A welcome exception is the Sisseri River bridge in the Lower Dibang Valley of Arunachal Pradesh, recently inaugurated by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. It will cut down travel time from Pasighat to Roing by about five hours. But the Government remains hesitant to see tourists in "restricted" areas. China does not have this problem.

(The writer is an expert on India-China relations)

“ WHILE TOURISM AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES REMAIN THE PILLARS OF THE SO-CALLED STABILISATION, DEFENCE IS ALSO VITAL FOR THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES — ONE OF CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING'S PET PROJECTS IS THE MILITARY CIVILIAN INTEGRATION (OR FUSION) ”

## SOUNDBITE

The BJP had promised to build the country but it is working to make India's best organisations hollow and sell them. Sad.



Congress leader —Priyanka Gandhi

We should use cinema to implant the thought of normalcy in people's mind, especially those who are not well-versed with the topic of homosexuality.



Actor —Zareen Khan

The terror-crime nexus is an existential global threat. In order to combat this menace, the international community must keep ahead of new trends and technologies



Indian envoy —Syed Akbaruddin

It was astonishing that my seating position in the Rajya Sabha was changed. This was done intentionally to humiliate me and my party's status in the House.



Shiv Sena leader —Sanjay Raut

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Welcoming change

Sir — This refers to the article, "What lies ahead for Sri Lankan Tamils?" (November 20) by Kalyani Shankar. It is an intriguing story as to how the newly-elected Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaska, former Defence Minister and brother of former President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaska, led a brutal crackdown on Tamil Tiger separatists, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and cornered it during the Eelam War IV. This culminated in the elimination of LTTE leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran.

This is why Gotabaya came to be known as the "terminator" despite the fact that he carried the infamy of alleged staged killings of Tamil separatists as well as journalists in the civil war during his regime as the Defence Minister. The Lankan President's administrative strategy fructified at the end of the day and ended Sri Lanka's nearly 30-year civil war with the LTTE. His present election as the President is again a manifestation of his political sagacity. The writer's plea about apprehensions being harboured by the Tamil minorities in Lanka, who did not cast votes in Gotabaya's favour, carries weight. But now, as President, Gotabaya must think differently, keeping in mind the holistic

### Make JNU a success model

This refers to the editorial, "Student uprising" (November 20). It is a truth that in today's polarised times, we have to pay through the nose for subsidising comforts and facilities enjoyed by our politicians. Even poor people have to share this burden in the form of indirect taxes that constitute a major part of our tax regime. But in return, can't we expect subsidy in education for our own children? It was unfortunate that the Delhi Police used brutal force against a number of students from the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), who participated in the protest march to Parliament, demanding a total rollback of the hostel fee hike. Students are of the view that two in five boarders cannot afford the hiked fees and as a result, this would hamper the aspirations of the young. This will further make education a commodity only for the rich and higher middle class people.

JNU's fee structure was designed in a way to provide low-cost, high quality education to all — cutting across caste, class and economic divisions — and, thus, make the country's education system a model of plurality. While it must be accepted that a reasonable fee hike is needed, it must also be ensured that the once highly-reputed university is not divested of its original pur-



pose. A country cannot prosper if the right of a large section of its population to education gets hijacked. Education is indeed the only way to break the vicious cycle of poverty. Now that a committee has been formed by the Centre to look into the impasse over fee hike, a noble way should be found to address the concerns of those students who are financially not able to pay their fees. Sujit De Kolkata

### Television day

Sir — Though digital platforms have increased their presence in today's times, television is still the most important and the greatest

tool for entertainment.

It was in December 1996 that the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed November 21 as World Television Day. This day recognises the role and importance of television in our day-to-day lives. It has been at the core of the information revolution, driving reliable visuals, news and entertainment from across the globe at people's doorstep.

Falguni Aswani Ujjain

### Come to the rescue

Sir — It is unfortunate that a number of telecom giants have been registering eye-popping losses in the last quarter. This, coupled with intense competition and bitter disputes over policy compliance, has compelled them to raise tariffs. With no clarity over how they will pay their accumulated dues, the Government, which is examining this issue, must waive off penalties and interest against telcos.

Suchitra Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**

**No bad soldiers, only bad bosses**

If thousands of policemen take to the streets to express their displeasure, it simply amounts to complete failure of command



ABHIJIT BHATTACHARYYA

Today, I am on cause of action, or lack of it, if any, pertaining to national interest. Not on prescribed judicial process or procedure, except to recall the universally accepted dictum: Justice is blind. Blind, because it cannot see and must never try to see colour, creed, caste, class, community, character, or distinguish/discriminate between either an erring cop or a roving counsel. Law punishes, after following due process thereof, the culprit. I am concerned over the nasty clash of November 2019 between policemen and counsels on the streets of Delhi, Capital of India's 1.3 billion people.

To start with, I don't belong to the Indian Police Service. Yet, I have had the rare privilege as junior "subaltern", to work directly with two legends of the Indian police, K Sankaran Nair in IX Asian Games 1982 and with RN Kao, for short stint, thereafter. Both of them were amazing and extraordinary professionals of superior, rare quality. Both were workaholics, who knew how to command and also demand in a stentorian manner, mission success. Both told a junior non-IPS officer like me at first sight: "There are no bad soldiers; there are only bad commanders." Their crisp advice: "Carry out the assigned task. I am with you always. In success or failure, don't worry." It was an unprecedented reassurance from two superiors in a span of two years. In retrospect, I see the success of my two commanders owing to their inherent ability to command, control, communicate with conviction, objectivity and fairness, and, yet with guts, to demand the impossible to turn defeat into victory; à la Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, General JN Chaudhuri and Lieutenant-General Zorawar Chand Bakshi. Not everyone, therefore, can command simply by wearing a commander's uniform. That's a harsh reality. Hence, recalling my 38-year-old experience, I froze seeing at least 7,000 police personnel taking to the streets, to express their grievances, defying their top brass, on live TV.

If thousands of subordinates of uniformed service take to the streets to express their displeasure and fury, it simply amounts to complete failure of command and the posting and deployment of the entire top brass of the force need a close re-look. It's time to transfer, re-train and reform. It reflects a complete disconnect between command and the corps. It's an abominable state of affairs for an aspiring superpower status-seeking State.

That the police rank and file is treated like doormats by all political hues is a reality too stark not to be noticed. One instance will suffice. On December 3, 2004, I was driving back to my office after attending the All India Revenue Sports Meet Zonal inauguration by Viren Shah, Governor West Bengal. At a traffic signal, there was a commotion owing to a brazen red light violation in the busy Dalhousie Square of Kolkata, adjacent to Writer's Building, the seat of the State Government. The traffic sergeant on duty showed exemplary promptness to flag down the errant cab driver and impose a fine. But the dutiful cop was pounced upon by the law-violating driver and five more cabbies. I, as Commissioner Customs, went back and promptly wrote a demi-official letter to Kolkata Police Commissioner suggesting that the officer assaulted should be recognised at once and law violators be booked. A fortnight later in my office came three unknown visitors and one of them virtually fell at my feet to say thanks and broke down. I was dazed. It transpired that my letter to the Police Commissioner not only lifted the traffic sergeant's instant suspension "for gross dereliction of duty and rioting" but also brought him a reward and recognition. I felt happy that my letter gave justice to an honest professional in uniform.

I can go on. My four-decade-long diary has some real-life stories for the future. Nevertheless, the narrative would remain incomplete without one of the most macabre cases of murder of a 1971-batch West Bengal-cadre IPS officer Vinod Mehta that was masterminded, instigated, executed by the political class of this country. It was Sunday, March 18, 1984, a Holi holiday. Deputy Commissioner Port, Mehta was "on-call", along with two more Deputy Commissioners, with armed forces, in the vicinity to thwart anticipated trouble. Despite advance inputs, preparation and deployment, Mehta was lynched by a fanatic mob and none of his IPS colleagues came to his rescue. The Communist Chief Minister of West Bengal and his cohorts were busy scheming and manoeuvring the next move. Nothing happened in that murder case. No politician lost his chair. No criminal was punished. Only the words of my two legendary police bosses of yesteryears ricocheted and haunted me: "There are no bad soldiers; there are only bad commanders." The political bosses are commanders of India. They haunt me even today. Every day.

(The writer, alumnus of National Defence College, is the author of China in India)

FIVE YEARS AGO THE CHIEF MINISTER OF DELHI USED TO BE THE ONLY ONE COUGHING, BUT NOW THE WHOLE CITY AND HOUSE IS COUGHING.  
 —BJP LOK SABHA MP  
 PARVESH VERMA

**POINTCOUNTERPOINT**



THIS SHOWS BJP'S INTELLECTUAL BANKRUPTCY. IF THEY THINK PERSONAL ATTACKS ON CM'S HEALTH WILL END POLLUTION, THEN DO SO DAY AND NIGHT.  
 —AAP SPOKESPERSON  
 RAGHAV CHADHA

**Not a RECiPe for disaster**

India's perennial inward focus emerges across trade discussions. This is counter-intuitive, since the country has benefitted greatly from globalisation and liberalised market access



MOHIT KALAWATIA RAGHAV PRIYADARSHI

At the recently-concluded Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that despite seven years of negotiations, his Government had decided not to join this plurilateral regional trade bloc that was launched by the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders and six other countries during the 21st ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2012.

The objective of launching RCEP negotiations was to achieve a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement among the ASEAN member States and its Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partners.

Announcing the country's decision to stay out, Modi said, "India stands for greater regional integration, as well as for freer trade and adherence to a rule-based international order. India has been pro-actively, constructively and meaningfully engaged in the RCEP negotiations since inception. India has worked for the cherished objective of striking a balance, in the spirit of give and take. Today, when we look around we see during seven years of RCEP negotiations, many things, including the global economic and trade scenarios, have changed. We cannot overlook these changes."

Modi's decision came in the backdrop of intense domestic pressure from various stakeholders, including political parties, State Governments and various industry lobbies. Indian decision-makers were persuaded to shun the free trade partnership due to shrill concerns that India would become a dumping ground for Chinese products, adversely impacting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and also cripple its dairy industry due to the presence of majors such as Australia and New Zealand in this trade grouping.

Interestingly, India's decision to withdraw from the RCEP came despite the Ministry of Commerce's High-Level Advisory Group (HLAG) recommending that the country adopt an optimistic outlook towards RCEP. The HLAG, constituted under the chairmanship of Surjit Bhalla — Executive Director for India at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and former member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council — comprised other high-ranking members such as Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and former Commerce Secretary Rajeev Kher. The HLAG was tasked with recommending steps to boost the country's share in global merchandise and services trade, and formally came out with its recommendations only days before the Prime Minister announced India's withdrawal from RCEP. Since then, the Commerce Minister has clarified that India may still join the partnership if its concerns are addressed, though such an eventuality seems unlikely in the near future.

To an extent, India's decision to withdraw was also influenced by the perceived negative outcomes of earlier trade pacts it had entered into with Japan, Korea and the ASEAN. A central theme which emerges across trade discussions, of which India is a part, is the country's perennial inward focus. This stance is counter-intu-

TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS COHERENCE IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXPLORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NODAL BODY, ON THE LINES OF THE ERSTWHILE TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE CABINET. SUCH A BODY CAN ENABLE CONSULTATIVE DECISION-MAKING, EFFICIENT INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATION AND BETTER DEFINITION OF THE COUNTRY'S TRADE PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES



itive since India has benefitted greatly from globalisation and liberalised market access, evidenced not only in its services exports but also through import of primary and intermediate goods for domestic value-addition and re-export.

Further, the impending stalemate at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), precipitated by the US's efforts to render the WTO appellate body comatose, necessitates an exploration of other routes for trade enhancement. Bilateral and plurilateral trade arrangements such as the RCEP have thus emerged as a preferred alternative. Since the beginning of the Doha Round of trade negotiations at the WTO in 2001, the number of such arrangements in force globally has grown more than three-fold. During the same period, India inked trade agreements with the ASEAN, Japan, South Korea and Singapore. However, since 2011, India has not signed any further bilateral or plurilateral trade agreements, primarily due to a growing perception that opening up of trade borders has not served the country well.

Contrary to this perception, such agreements have contributed immensely towards trade creation. For instance, India currently has a trade surplus of \$2.5 billion with Singapore. Similarly, India's trade deficit with ASEAN vis-à-vis its total trade deficit witnessed a continuous decrease from 9.9 per cent in 2007 to 6.6 per cent in 2017; despite the fact that ASEAN's share in India's total trade has remained more or less constant. Meanwhile, India's deficit with China, a non-FTA partner country, increased from 18 per cent of the total trade deficit in 2007, to 40 per cent in 2017. Even within the aegis of the WTO, the concept of flexible multilat-

eralism has found several supporters. Flexible multilateralism allows WTO members to advance and conclude plurilateral agreements where full consensus is not yet possible. Examples of such plurilateral arrangements include the Information Technology Agreements (ITA-I and II) — while India is a signatory to ITA-I, it has refrained from adopting the second iteration. More recently, taking forward the approach of flexible multilateralism, 76 countries decided to initiate discussions on trade related aspects of electronic commerce. India has so far not joined the discussion, citing the erosion of policy space and the digital gap between member countries among other reasons, for not doing so.

Looking ahead, if India wants to achieve its target of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2024, then considerable efforts and resources are required to push its exports. More importantly, the country will have to review its frozen approach towards bilateral and plurilateral arrangements. Indeed, along with other like-minded countries, the country should continue to ensure that the relevance of a multilateral trading system is maintained. However, it is also important that in light of changing global trade dynamics characterised by forward and backward linkages, it cannot afford to ignore preferential agreements, or even limited trade deals like the one it is currently exploring with the US.

Given India's political-economy compulsions, it is understandable that the country remains wary of entering into far-reaching trade agreements proposed by advanced jurisdictions. But India must nevertheless adopt an alternative strategy to advance its self-

interest. It is better to sit in the negotiating room and disagree than to leave the room altogether.

Going forward, the Indian leadership must resist the temptation of abstaining from decisions due to perceived costs in the short-run. To begin with, there is an urgent need to fix internal decision-making mechanisms. A more concerted and coordinated effort across Government departments in evaluating trade partnerships should be the way forward, instead of convening inter-ministerial discussions as a reactionary measure. Government departments should engage with the industry on a more frequent basis on issues of market access and to determine sub-sectoral competitiveness.

Further, the country's relative strengths and domestic industry participation in specific value chains should inform prioritisation of trade partner negotiations. At present, the Commerce Ministry reaches out to the industry for inputs only after the country has initiated trade discussions — this mechanism largely remains ineffective as it fails to solicit detailed and usable submissions within predefined timelines.

To ensure that there is coherence in the decision-making process, the Government should explore the establishment of a nodal body, on the lines of the erstwhile Trade and Economic Relations Committee (TERC) of the Cabinet. Such a body can enable consultative decision-making, efficient inter-ministerial coordination and better definition of the country's trade priorities and strategies.

(Kalawatia and Priyadarshi work at Koan Advisory Group, New Delhi. The views expressed here are personal.)

**The creeping death that we must fight**

All sources of NOx and NO<sub>2</sub>, be it transport, industries and power generation, should be tackled keeping in view the health emergency that the country faces today



KOTA SRIRAJ

At a time when air pollution levels are becoming a constant threat in India and across the world, we need to deal with two most damaging gases, nitrogen oxides (NOx) and nitrogen dioxides (NO<sub>2</sub>).

NOx and NO<sub>2</sub> are produced from the reaction of nitrogen and oxygen gases in the air during combustion, especially at high temperatures. Hence, in areas with high vehicular traffic, especially large cities, the amount of NOx and NO<sub>2</sub> emitted into the atmosphere as air pollution can be significant.

NOx and NO<sub>2</sub> gases react to form smog and acid rain as well as being central to the formation of fine

particles (PM) and ground level ozone, both of which are associated with adverse health effects. Exposure to PM pollution and deadly ozone, even for a short duration, can worsen respiratory conditions and asthma and lead to emergency hospital admission, especially for those with pre-existing heart or lung disease and in the elderly and children.

India, too, is in the crosshairs of spiralling NOx and NO<sub>2</sub> levels. The *Air Pollution Global Cities Ranking Report* released by Greenpeace found that 15 of the 20 most polluted cities in the world are located in India, highlighting the country's air pollution crisis.

The organisation analysed the satellite data generated using the methodology of Tropospheric Monitoring Instrument (TROPOMI), which monitors vertically integrated amount of several atmospheric trace gases, including NOx and NO<sub>2</sub>. Based on the analysis of this satellite data, Greenpeace India put the culpability of rising NOx and NO<sub>2</sub> levels on transport and indus-



trial clusters which are creating India's worst nitrogen dioxide hotspots such as Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Hyderabad, given the fact that these cities have high vehicular population and petrol/diesel consumption.

According to the satellite data collected between February 2018 and May 2019, coal consumption and industrial clusters like Sonbhadra-Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh, Korba

in Chhattisgarh, Talcher in Odisha, Chandrapur in Maharashtra, Mundra in Gujarat and Durgapur in West Bengal were also found to be equally polluting when it comes to NOx and NO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

In January 2019, *Airpocalypse III*, another report by Greenpeace India, identified 139 cities where air pollution levels exceed national standards but were not included in the National Clean Air Programme

(NCAAP) that was recently released by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

The report states that even if we are optimistic and assume that air pollution across India can be reduced by 30 per cent by 2024, 153 cities will be left with pollution levels exceeding the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and only 12 cities will comply with World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines.

To highlight the severity of the crisis, even after a 30 per cent reduction, PM10 levels in Delhi will still be about 168 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, almost three times the national standard of 60µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

India is already paying a price for the current nitrogen dioxide levels with increasing cases of asthma, lung damage, heart attacks and lung cancer. NO<sub>2</sub> also contributes to the formation of PM2.5, a dangerous air pollutant.

It is estimated that air pollution, ambient PM2.5, household and ozone air pollution collectively caused 3.4 million deaths worldwide

in 2017 and over 1.2 million in India. PM2.5 alone resulted in more than 6.7 lakh deaths in India in 2017.

The proliferation of NO<sub>2</sub> levels and the consequent increase in PM2.5 levels require urgent intervention and action from the Government. All sources of NO<sub>2</sub>, be it transport, industries and power generation, should be tackled keeping in view the health emergency India faces today.

Additionally, the emission standard deadlines for coal-based power plants and industries must be strictly adhered to, even as the industrial and electricity sectors' transition to cleaner alternatives for power generation must be speeded up.

In fact, according to a 2015 report by IIT-Kanpur, a 90 per cent reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> from power plants in a radius of 300km from Delhi can reduce nitrates by 45 per cent, which will effectively reduce PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations in Delhi and help us breathe better.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)



**FOREIGN EYE**



**BRING OUR KIDS BACK FROM SYRIA**

Those who joined IS should be punished. Their children should not. It shames the UK that IS' downfall, the closure of a vicious chapter which should have heralded progress, appears instead to have hardened attitudes in such a way as to place civilised values in doubt. It is one of the UK Government's first duties to protect blameless British children from harm. Those trapped in Syria must be repatriated without delay.

(The Guardian editorial)

CAPSULE



Hyundai's new sedan Aura has BS VI compliant engines

**NEW DELHI:** Hyundai Motor India on Wednesday said its upcoming sedan Aura will be powered by BS VI compliant petrol and diesel engines. The new powertrains offer low vibrations, superior performance and high fuel efficiency offering cleaner emissions and efficient performance, the company said in a statement. The model would come with a BS VI turbo charged petrol engine, it added. Aura would come with both manual as well as automatic transmissions, Hyundai said. "Keeping in mind the need of new age customers and future emission norms in India, various amalgamations of petrol and diesel engines with manual and AMT transmission powertrains have been devised for customers to choose from," Hyundai said.



Kalpataru sells its entire stake in Satpura Transco

**NEW DELHI:** Kalpataru Power Transmission Ltd (KPTL) on Wednesday said it has completed sale of its entire stake in Kalpataru Satpura Transco Pvt Ltd to CLP India. As a result of this stake sale, Kalpataru Satpura Transco is no longer a subsidiary of KPTL from Wednesday. "The company has completed the sale of its entire stake in one of the subsidiaries viz. Kalpataru Satpura Transco Private Limited today on November 20, 2019, (Wednesday) after obtaining the requisite regulatory and other approvals and compliance with condition precedents," according to a BSE filing.

'CIL to develop 55 new coal mines in next 5 yrs'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned CIL will develop 55 new coal mines and expand 193 existing ones in the next five years, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. The company is also undertaking portal-based monitoring of ongoing projects to ensure their timely completion.

"Coal India has taken... steps to boost its coal production, (including) opening of 55 greenfield projects having capacity of 92 MTPA (million tonne per annum) and expansion of 193 brownfield projects having capacity of about 310 MTPA in next five years," Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said in a reply to the Lok Sabha.



A new project on an unused land is called a greenfield project while the existing one that is modified or upgraded is called a brownfield project.



Coal India has taken... steps to boost its coal production, (including) opening of 55 greenfield projects having capacity of 92 MTPA (million tonne per annum) and expansion of 193 brownfield projects having capacity of about 310 MTPA in next five years

—PRALHAD JOSHI, Coal Minister

Besides, CIL has introduced technology "to improve its work efficiency with high capacity Heavy Earth Moving Machinery, like 42 cum Shovel and 240 T Rear Dumpers in Gevra Expansion, Dipka & Ksumunda open cast mines (and) introduction of surface miners in opencast mines to improve operational efficiency and to cater to environmental needs."

During 2018-19, around 50 per cent of the opencast coal production in CIL was through surface miners. Further, in order to reduce import of coal, CIL is taking up source rationalisation with part supply from higher grade coal sources. More coal from various sources was offered through e-auction schemes, particularly special forward e-auction, for power consumers, not having fuel supply agreement with CIL sources.



'No move to waive penalty, int on telcos' licence fee dues'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There is no proposal before the government at present on waiver of penalties and interest on outstanding licence fee payments based on adjusted gross revenue (AGR), or on extending the timelines for telcos to pay their statutory dues, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

"No such proposal is under consideration of the government as on date," Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

He was responding to specific questions on whether the government proposes to provide a waiver for penalties and interest on the non-payment of license fee on adjusted gross revenue (AGRs) by telecom operators and also on whether it is considering extending the time limit for the payment of license fee, penalty, interest and other dues.

The minister said the Committee of Secretaries under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary had held meetings to discuss the issues relating to the stress in the telecom sector. The total debt of the telecom industry, service providers and tower companies combined, stood at Rs 7.87 lakh crore as on August 2017, he noted.

The provisional outstanding of the 16 telecom service providers on account of license fee stood at a cumulative Rs 92,642 crore, Prasad said, adding that the amounts are provisional and subject to revision in light of the Supreme



3.26 lakh complaints of unsolicited telemarketing calls during Jul-Sep

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Over 3.26 lakh complaints relating to unsolicited telemarketing calls have been lodged by consumers with their telecom service providers during July-September, the Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

The Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference Regulations, 2018 have prescribed default timeline from 10.00 am to 9.00 pm for marketing calls to mobile users.

Consumers also have an option to choose any time band for receiving communications as per their preference for any category/categories of communications. "As per the details of complaints lodged by consumers with the service providers and uploaded by the service providers on TRAI portal www.ncptra.gov.in, 3,26,264 numbers of complaints relating to voice UCC have been lodged by consumers with their service providers during the period 1.07.2019 to 30.09.2019," Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.

Group (along with Idea Cellular) stood at Rs 28,309 crore, while that of Bharti Airtel Group of companies was at Rs 21,682 crore (and that of

Court ruling on AGR matter on October 24, 2019.

As per the information provided by the minister, the licence fee dues of Vodafone

Task force for converting IPPB into small finance bank

**NEW DELHI:** The possibility of converting India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) into a small finance bank is being explored to further the goal of financial inclusion, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. A task force has been set up for studying the logistics and feasibility of converting IPPB into a small finance bank.

Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. "Yes sir, expansion of IPPB and possibilities of converting it into Small Finance Bank is being explored. In this regard, a task force has been set up for studying the logistics and feasibility of conversion of IPPB into a small finance bank," Prasad said.

This step will further the goal of financial inclusion by allowing all citizens greater access to enhanced savings and credit, he added.

Telenor and Tata Group of companies at Rs 1,950 crore and Rs 9,987 crore respectively). "The Government has directed the TSPs (telecom service providers) to make the payment in accordance with the order of the Supreme Court dated October 24, 2019 and submit the requisite documents to ensure the compliance within the stipulated timeframe," the minister said.

'Revise mode for setting up industries in polluted areas'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to revise its mechanism for setting up of new industrial units as also expansion activities in critically polluted areas.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel also warned that it will "coerce action" against the heads of State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) for failing to take concrete action against violators.

It said the CPCB data shows increasing air, water and soil pollution and violators of law cannot be allowed to have a free run at the cost of environment and public health.

The tribunal reiterated that "meaningful action" has to be taken by the SPCBs and a report on that should show the number of identified polluters, extent of closure of polluting activities, environmental compensation recovered, cost of restoration of the damage to the environment otherwise



It said the CPCB data shows increasing air, water and soil pollution and violators of law cannot be allowed to have a free run at the cost of environment and public health

there will be no meaningful environmental governance.

"This may be failure of rule of law and breach of trust reposed in statutory authorities rendering their existence useless and burden on the society. "On default, the tribunal will

have no option except to proceed against the Chairman and the member secretaries of the SPCBs by way of coercive action under Section 25 of the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 read with Section 51 CPC, the bench said in a recent order.

Yellow metal rises Rs 296 on weaker rupee

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold on Wednesday rose by Rs 296 to Rs 39,194 per 10 gram in the national capital on weaker rupee and rally in international prices, as per HDFC Securities.

The yellow metal had closed at Rs 38,898 per 10 gram on Tuesday. "Spot gold prices for 24 Karat in Delhi rallied by Rs 296 on weaker rupee and rally in international gold prices," HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said.

The spot rupee was trading around 20 paise weaker against the dollar during the day, he added.

The rupee opened on a weak note and fell 9 paise to 71.80 against the US dollar in opening trade as US-China trade deal concerns weighed on investors.



Silver prices also jumped Rs 331 to Rs 46,103 per kg from Rs 45,772 per kg in the previous trade.

"Gold prices traded higher on Wednesday, gaining for the third consecutive day on US-China political spat and worries over trade deal," he said.

In the global market, gold prices were trading higher at USD 1,478 per ounce, while silver was quoting at USD 17.17 an ounce.

BS VI norms to create headwinds for CV sector

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rating agency India Ratings and Research on Wednesday said the implementation of the BS VI emission norms from April 1, 2020 could create short-term headwinds for the commercial vehicle (CV) segment.

Considering the sharp year-on-year fall in the sales volumes of CVs, especially since May 2019, the underwhelming pace of industrial activity and the higher cost of ownership of a BS-VI compliant commercial vehicle (CV), the implementation of BS-VI could add to the sector's woes, India Ratings and Research said in a statement.

Pramit, who brought scale to Citi, quits

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Pramit Jhaveri, the former country head of Citi India, has quit for unspecified reasons, sources said on Wednesday.

The 56-year-old Jhaveri had joined the Wall Street major as a management associate in 1987, and had a steady rise to become vice-chairman of banking, capital markets and advisory for Asia Pacific earlier this year, after heading the India operations for almost a decade between 2010 and 2019.

His resignation was announced by the Citi Asia Pacific chief executive Peter Babej over email to the employees, the sources said. Babej's mail lists out the key milestones in Jhaveri's 32-year-long association with Citi, including his leadership of India operations.

"Jhaveri's leadership, partnership and friendship will be missed across our firm," the memo, which was reviewed by PTI, said. A Citi spokesperson confirmed the development but without offering details.



A Citi spokesperson confirmed the development but without offering details

"Jhaveri has decided to retire from Citi. During his tenure, he built a strong team and established Citi as a market leader," the spokesperson said.

Under his helm, Citi India's total assets almost doubled (95.48 percent to be precise) between FY10 and FY19, to Rs 1.86 lakh crore, while gross non-performing assets improved to 1.37 percent in March 2019 from 3.43 percent in March 2010.

Traders' body demands 'ban' on Amazon, Flipkart

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Trade associations observed "National Protest Day" on Wednesday and held protest dharnas against "unethical trade practices" of leading e-commerce firms like Amazon and Flipkart in over 700 cities across the country, CAIT said.

The traders' body, which has been alleging that these e-commerce firms were adopt-



ing unethical trade practices and are openly violating the government's FDI policy, claimed the protests were attended by lakhs of traders.

"The demonstrating traders said India's e-commerce market has been made highly toxic by Amazon and Flipkart with their unethical trade practices and open violation of the government's FDI policy," the CAIT said.

According to the traders' body, the protestors demanded that the government impose an immediate ban on e-commerce portals of both Amazon and Flipkart.

IBM platform to speed response to cyber threats

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Technology giant IBM on Wednesday launched 'Cloud Pak for Security', featuring innovations to connect with any security tool, cloud or on-premise system, without moving data from its original source.

The platform includes open-source technology for hunting threats, automation capabilities to help speed response to cyberattacks, and the ability to run in any environment, the company said in a statement.

It is the first platform to leverage new open-source technology pioneered by IBM, which can search and translate security data from a variety of sources, bringing together critical security insights from across a company's multi-cloud IT environment, the company claimed.

The platform is extensible, so that additional tools and applications can be added over time, the statement said. As businesses move further into cloud maturity, applica-



tions and data are frequently spread across multiple private and public clouds and on-

premise resources, IBM noted. Attempts to protect this fragmented IT environment often require security teams to undertake complex integrations and continuously switch between different screens and point products.

General Manager, IBM Security, Mary O'Brien was quoted as saying, "With Cloud Pak for Security, we're helping to lay the foundation for a more connected security ecosystem designed for the hybrid, multicloud world."

Swiggy cloud kitchens in 12 more cities by Mar 2020

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Food ordering platform Swiggy on Wednesday said it has set up over 1,000 cloud kitchens for its restaurant partners and plans to have more such facilities in 12 new cities by March next year.

In a span of just two years, the company has invested in over a million square feet of real estate space across 14 cities to help large, medium and small restaurant partners expand to more locations both within their city and across new cities through cloud kitchens, Swiggy said in a statement.

"Swiggy has always maintained that cloud kitchens will be the future of food delivery. Very soon, India will have the second-highest number of cloud kitchens in the world, only next to China," Swiggy New Supply CEO Vishal Bhatia said.

The milestone of Swiggy successfully creating over 1,000 partner kitchens shows the faith the restaurant partners have in the concept and bolsters company's pioneering efforts in enabling more success stories in the restaurant ecosystem, he added.



In a cloud kitchen concept, operators prepare, package and deliver food without providing any dine-in facility to end-consumers

In a cloud kitchen concept, operators prepare, package and deliver food without providing any dine-in facility to end-consumers.

"Over the last two years, Swiggy has invested over Rs 175 crore towards setting up and running these kitchens. This success has encouraged us to invest an additional Rs 75 crore to bring more partner cloud kitchens in 12 new cities by March 2020," Bhatia said

Starting flights to Ras Al Khaimah, airline next: Ajay

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

SpiceJet will first start flight operations between India and Ras Al Khaimah by early next year and after that establish a new airline in the UAE city, said its Chairman and Managing Director Ajay Singh on Wednesday.

"Just like we operate flights to Dubai, we can operate flight to Ras Al Khaimah," he said, adding that while bilateral rights between Indian cities and Ras Al Khaimah are thin, "let us start the flight operations first, let us explore the market, because we believe there are good possibilities".

"From Ras Al Khaimah, there are onward (flight) pos-



sibilities to Eastern Europe," he added.

When asked how many air-

craft there will be in the new airline, he replied, "We have no idea yet. We are first applying.

We have no idea yet. We are first applying. We are studying the market. At this time, the focus is really on first (starting) the flight into Ras Al Khaimah from India. So that flight we are hoping we can start soon, hopefully by the beginning of next year

— AJAY SINGH, Chairman and Managing Director SpiceJet

We are studying the market. At this time, the focus is really on first (starting) the flight into Ras Al Khaimah from India. So that flight we are hoping we can start soon, hopefully by the beginning of next year.

On the question if starting a new airline will stretch SpiceJet's balance sheet

too thin, he said, "Not at all. There are no huge investments.

What are the investments in an airline? It's aircraft. That we have here. We are going to put some aircraft over there."

"These guys (foreign airlines) are coming



To mark the World Television Day today, *The Pioneer* has reached out to a few small screen actors to gauge the condition of the industry in the era of OTT platforms and how they cope with the competition, writes K RAMYA SREE

## STREAMING OR CABLE, CONTENT TRUMPS ALL

**T**he times are a changing and so is the content. Gone are the days when soap operas were considered family dramas with lots of emotional sequences where mother-in-laws play the vamp and other unrealistic characters. With the arrival of new channels and the OTT platforms booming, the receptivity of the audience to TV has changed through time.

Speaking of the same, Nirupam Paritala of *Karthikadeepam* fame says, "In those days there was only one channel, with limited programmes and very less entertainment. Currently, we have so many channels and programmes and the source of entertainment has increased with it. In today's households, we rarely see everyone watching the same show."

Seconding Nirupam, Meghna Raami of *Zee Telugu*, says, "We did not have these soap operas, but had a finite series for entertainment. Those shows focused on education and spread social messages which people followed in their lives. Around 30 years ago, we used to wait enthusiastically for a whole week to know what will happen in the next episode. Now, people's engagement with television has increased greatly and people watch it every day. This is the reason why the approach towards TV has changed."



MEGHNA RAAMI

From weekly entertainment it has become daily entertainment."

Speaking about the needs of mainstream audiences today in terms of entertainment, Sheela Singh, a senior actor says, "Audience like to see the modern society in serials. If any show comes up with a new concept, the audience welcomes it with open arms. Content is more important these days to retain audiences."

Television has always



VJ SUNNY

been a medium to address social issues on a public platform. Nirupam, who feels that a new transformation can take place if digital platforms and television come together said, "TV has a lot of scope to bring about social awareness among large groups. If booming OTT platforms and TV join hands, it would be no less than any hardcore film in spreading a social message." Nirupam says TV is the most powerful

medium to bring social issues to light.

*Satyameva Jayathe* is one such exemplary show, where many issues were solved.

But, Raami has a different view about the same. She says, "TV has the efficiency and capability to talk about social issues, but we are not using it for the right purposes. Programmes coming up to speak about social problems is a very recent phenomenon. We



SHEELA SINGH

need more such programmes to create awareness."

"People have lots of expectations from us, which is why, we need to send out a positive message through our roles. Maybe because of this reason, I cannot connect to negative roles in the serials. I feel by playing positive roles, if I'm changing into a better person, then when people who watch our shows, they will change to some extent,"



NIRUPAM PARITALA

Raami adds.

On the other hand, the youngster VJ Sunny who claims not to relate to the black and white content on TV feels that there are a set of dedicated audience who enjoy the folklore fantasy. He says, "No matter how quickly the technology advances, a set of audience will always be loyal to the technology they are used to. Adoption of online media is primarily among the urban youth, which is not com-

parable to the television audience, but will surely catch up some day. Changes in television happen at their own pace. The format of television is likely to stay the same, however, the quality of television production will improve. I think online content will see more changes than television medium to draw more people."

In a concluding note, Sunny said, "Acting has never been a financially

lucrative field, but it is the passion of actors that drives the competition. One doesn't seek to become a part of the industry. One can be motivated by other people, but they have to be naturally excited to be in front of the camera and perform for a good output. Planning to become an actor for fame and money never works out. Only hard work and dedication pays off in the end. I would like to advice people coming into this field in the future to be prepared for failures, but not let the passion die out. In the Telugu industry, there is a need for male and female talent. There are a lot of opportunities available and it is up to us to find the right door and decide why we want to enter it."

Telugu serials and the channels are evolving to catch up to Bollywood. In recent times there has been an increase in the number of get-togethers and award functions that TV stars and crew celebrate to showcase the immense amount of talent that has been limited to TV sets so far.

**MANY ACTORS FEEL MORE TV SHOWS, LIKE SATYAMEVA JAYATHE, SHOULD BE MADE TO SPREAD IMPORTANT SOCIAL MESSAGES**

## Vegans stranded in the land of meat?

Vegan food is one of the most misunderstood new age cuisine. ANUSHKA PRADEEP tries to find out how hard it is to run a vegan restaurant in the city of Nawabs



**H**yderebad was recently declared as 'India's most vegan-friendly city'. Although this came as a surprise to many as the cuisine, the city is famous for, is miles away from being vegan, the question that comes next is: how hard it is to run a vegan outlet in a city that is known for its multi-flavoured biryani and Mughlai delicacies? "In Hyderabad particularly, we found that there are two types of barriers when reaching out to non-vegans about vegan food. Firstly, many, despite predominantly eating vegetarian at home, prefer to eat non-vegetarian food when they go out to dine. Secondly, many vegetarians, whose diet preferences stem from their culture or community, don't know about veganism or have a slightly pejorative view of the same. So there is definitely some level of ignorance or a lack of

open-mindedness to experiment with new food," says Mansi Virmani, co-founder and partner of Smart Alec Alternative Deli.

"Procurement and sourcing of ingredients is also difficult since hospitality-related logistics and resources don't necessarily cater to minimalist vegan outlets like ours. So finding distributors for speciality goods like tofu, plant milk, mock meat, certain types of flours and vegetables is a challenge which also reflects on the price of these dishes. We still, to this day, buy a lot of things from specific stores elsewhere in the country or online as they are not available in the city," she added.

A 2018 Oxford University study found that the single biggest way to reduce your environmental impact is to avoid animal products. This is mainly because more than 80 per cent of farmland is dedicated to livestock raised

for meat and dairy, yet these food products only account for about 18 per cent of calories and 37 per cent of protein consumption.

But how can the good folk of Hyderabad who have got used to the Nawabi delicacies — heavily endowed with ghee, butter, curd, and so forth — forget their age-old rich culture of non-vegetarian food and choose vegan food?

"There is a notion associated with being vegan that is almost like a turn off for people. Even today, the moment when one talks about vegan food, the first image that comes to mind for them is some bland food with tasteless raw veggies. Vegan outlets are often not the first resort for people to visit when the plan to eat outside," says Sandhya Dittakavi, partner of the Smart Alec Alternative Deli.

"One of the reasons for coming up with a vegan

restaurant is to change the prevailing notion of its food among people," she added.

Despite growth in the number of vegan outlets, the entire city may only have about a maximum of six to seven prominent vegan restaurants and the rest are yet to gain familiarity. Ideally, apart from contributing to a healthier environment, these food restaurants intend to cater to people who want to eat healthy while being tasty at the same time.

This raises another question about the accessibility of these purely vegan restaurants to the general population.

"In order to focus more on my fitness, I turned towards a vegan diet and so I came to know how hard it is to find exclusive vegan restaurants in the city. The only ones I can think of are Plantarium, Smart Alec, Frozera and a few others," says Harshith Vedumala a student aspiring



DHANESH SHARMA  
OWNER OF  
TERRASSEN CAFE

There's actually a good scope for vegan restaurants in Hyderabad but it is definitely a challenge to run a vegan restaurant in a city that is well known for its non-vegetarian menu across the world

to pursue Masters in Cybersecurity. Hyderabadis have begun to warm up to the vegan scenario says Dhanesh Sharma, owner of Terrassen Cafe. "We started our cafe in 2015 and there has definitely been a rise in the number of customers. We have about 50 to 60 people visiting our cafe on weekdays, which increases to more than 100 customers on weekends," he says.

**The entire city may only have about a maximum of six to seven prominent vegan restaurants**



MANSI VIRMANI  
CO-FOUNDER OF  
SMART ALEC ALTERNATIVE DELI

Many vegetarians don't know about veganism or have a slightly pejorative view of the same. So, there is definitely some level of ignorance or lack of open-mindedness to experiment with new food

"There's actually a good scope for vegan restaurants in the city but it is definitely a challenge to run a vegan restaurant in a city that is well known for its non-vegetarian menu across the world. The high prices of the ingredients involved to prepare vegan food also pose a hurdle. But, restaurants have a certain responsibility towards their customers. They have to cater to people's demands while ensuring that they serve a delicious yet healthy meal. Both taste and health must go hand in hand. This was my idea behind starting Terrassen Cafe. To offer the customers a unique experience by making vegan food delicious and healthy," says Dhanesh.



## A TRENDY WAY TO STAY FIT

**T**he latest technological development and nature of jobs in India have forced a sedentary lifestyle on the people. According to a research, India topped in the world with highest number of diabetes patients (31.7 million) which is expected to rise to 79.4 million people by 2030. Lack of physical activity also causes anxiety and depression.

Exercise is one of the primary ways to avoid catastrophes from of sedentary lifestyle. Heavy workout, strength training and other fitness activities which were concentrated to elite class earlier are becoming popular within the people of all hues. Running, as a trendy way

to stay fit, is gradually emerging as one of the most popular fitness activities.

The 10K Run concept is gaining spotlight because of the numerous benefits and discipline that it inculcates.

The 10K foundation in Hyderabad is an prominent NGO and it will be organising its 17th edition of the Hyderabad 10K run at the Necklace road on November 24.

"Have proper gear such as running shoes and bands. Running on a proper surface is also advised. Training plans should be strictly followed and people should focus on gradually increasing the distance covered. The last week before the race is critical," the organisation advised in a release.

# what's brewing?

## PARTY



● Pallavi



● Shalini



● DJ Murthovic



● Sanna



● Soniya



● Chitra

## ELECTRONIC NIGHT

Farzi Cafe Hyderabad celebrated its second anniversary by organising 'Friday Night' with DJ Murthovic. The evening was full of music and fun and the guests enjoyed delicious and mind-blowing food and drinks.

## 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.



#### SPACE TIME

Gallery Space, Banjara Hills is presenting a group art show *Space Time Continuum* by Sachin Jaitare, Ramesh Gorjala, Anjaneyulu G and Bratin Khan from November 23 to December 20 between 10 am and 6 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 Balasubrahmanyam, 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.



### 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 fulfilled 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.

### ARIJIT - LIVE PERFORMANCE



My music, my country is bringing in Arijit Singh for a live performance. It was initiated by Hyderabad Talks as a platform for gifted Indian 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](mailto:pioneer.features@gmail.com)

## FUN TIME

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### NANCY



### SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

**Rules**

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

### CROSSWORD

	1	2	3	4					
5									6
7				8					
9								10	
								11	
12	13			14				15	
								16	
17								18	
19									

**ACROSS**

- Fish tank
- Fewest
- Narrow shelf
- Ottawa is the capital of this country
- Journey
- Slightly hot
- Thief
- Sweeten a drink with this
- A feeling of rage
- Obstinate
- Beneath
- A watch's hands move in this direction
- Not permanent
- A red fruit used in salads
- Correct
- Start
- A creature with nippers

**DOWN**

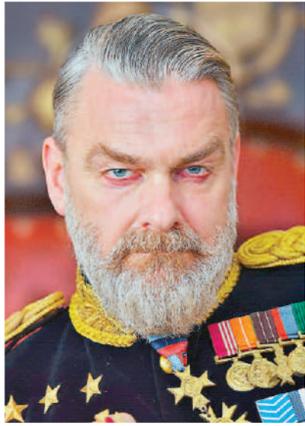
- Once more
- Messy, disorganised
- Tumble over and over

**SOLUTION**

P	L	E	A	S	A	N	T	I	
U	N	G	O	L					
R	O	T	S	T	U	R	T	L	E
C	E	S	N						X
H	R	T	S	M	A	G	I	C	
A	H		D						H
S	H	O	E	S	C	O	C	O	A
E	A	A							R
D	O	C	T	O	R				L
U	R	E							W
T	E	X	A	M	I	N	E	D	

The standards that Rajamouli has set with his films have gone beyond state and national lines, evident from the international acclaim his movies have garnered. The director took his time with the international cast of *RRR* and the ideas are finally taking shape, reports NAGARAJ GOUD

# RRR GETS INTERNATIONAL ADDITIONS



Music and Drama, Cardiff, UK. She will join the sets shortly and we hear that her role of Jennifer falls more in the supporting actress category rather than of the leading lady. Already, Alia Bhatt is on board to play opposite Charan in the film.

The film's team has also announced that 53-year-old Irish actress Alison Doody, who is known for her role as Nazi-sympathising archaeologist Elsa Schneider, in Steven Spielberg's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989), will be playing one of the film's antagonists, Lady Scott, with the other being played by Ray Stevenson, another Irish actor. Ray Stevenson is best remembered for playing Titus Pullo in the BBC/HBO television series *Rome* (2005-2007) and as Dagonet in the film *King Arthur* (2004). He also played Volstagg in Marvel's *Thor* and its sequels *Thor: The*

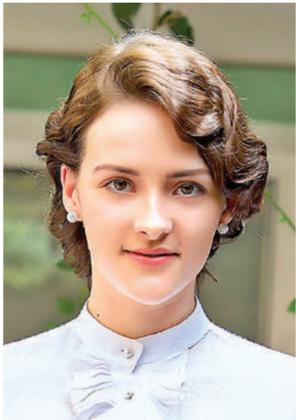


*Dark World* and *Thor: Ragnarok*. He will be seen as Scott in *RRR*.

Being made on a budget of Rs 400 crore, *RRR*, set in early 1920s, is a fictional story based on two real-life heroes and freedom fighters — Alluri Seetharama Raju and Komaram Bheem.

Tarak is playing the younger Bheem, while Charan will be seen as younger Ramaraju.

The likes of Ajay Devgn, Alia Bhatt and P. Samuthirankani are essaying significant roles in the film. The film, one of the hotly anticipated ventures, has a July 30, 2020 release date but with the shooting set to continue till May, the date might just be postponed, although the makers continue to maintain silence around it. Besides Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Hindi, the makers are planning to release it in six other languages simultaneously.



It has been more than a year since S.S. Rajamouli's *RRR*, starring Jr NTR and Ram Charan, went to floors in Hyderabad. The latest piece of information trickling in indicates that despite witnessing multiple delays on the shooting front, a good 70 per cent of the movie's shooting has been wrapped up. The casting issue, about finding a foreign actress alongside NTR has been attended to, as Rajamouli has picked a little known English actress Olivia Morris. She has recently graduated from the Royal Welsh College of



## Cinema will co-exist with OTT services: Allu Aravind

Producer Allu Aravind, who will make entry into the Over-the-top (OTT) media services with a soon-to-be launched channel, said the giants are gradually getting to know about the OTT platform as it hasn't fully evolved yet. "I've been in the film line for 35 years and I'm scared of taking my baby steps onto the OTT service. I usually finish my business activities and retire to my home by 8 pm. I get time to play with my grandchildren for a while before hitting the bed. But, over the past two to three years, I've been tuning into Netflix, HBO, Hotstar regularly. Consequently, my reading habit has disappeared. As I started consuming content on such services, doubts about whether they will eat away my cinema have crept in. I remember binge watching *Game of Thrones* one night, only for my wife to wake up and shut the TV at 5 am. At this age, my binge watching habit has surprised me. Suddenly, the OTT platform has made me go mad," he said. He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of India Joy Event in the city.

He spoke about what he discussed with a Bengali friend, who runs a regional OTT platform, to determine whether the platform is a giant in technology or content. "He said technology plays a key role but the content is the heart. This warmed my heart. Later, I got to know that Telugu people consume these videos the highest. Soon, I decided to start an OTT platform. My investor friends were enthusiastic about it and my family also said that it is the future. There's a demand for honest and bold content and some platforms have already received great reception. I've engaged a bunch of youngsters for our shows," he said.

"After the advent of streaming, many have asked whether cinema will survive. Cinema withstood competition from colour TV in the '80s and cable onslaught in the '90s. I believe it will co-exist with this lovely giant called OTT," he added.

# tollywood

## SREE VISHNU shifts focus to Hasith Goli

Sree Vishnu, who was supposed to start his yet-to-be-titled cop story with new director Pradeep Varma later this month, has decided against it. Instead, he will first begin working on Hasith Goli's film, complete it and then move on to Pradeep's action-drama. Sources say that the dull reception to his recent release, *Thippameesam*, made Vishnu change his mind. "The actor wants to do a light-hearted film first — which is what Hasith's film is about — and then move to Pradeep's gritty drama. Pre-production for Hasith's film is in full-swing and the team will take the film to floors in January. The casting will be

finalised by the mid of next month. Vivek Sagar is on board to render tunes," said a source close to the unit.

Hasith, an engineering graduate from BITS Pilani, has associated with Vivek Athreya for his two films, *Mental Madhilo* and *Brochevarevaruara*. His film with Vishnu will be a satirical comedy, where the actor will be playing his age. It will be completely shot in Hyderabad. T.G. Vishwa Prasad and Abhishek Agarwal are jointly producing the film. — NG



## PRABHU DEVA AS Krishnamanohar IPS

Prabhu Deva who made his mark in Bollywood with the remake of *Pokiri* is busy shooting for big projects. The dancing sensation is currently shooting for a Tamil movie that will be released in Telugu as well as *Krishnamanohar IPS*.

The action entertainer, being produced by R. Sitaramaraju under the Pavanaputra banner, is scheduled to hit theatres in the first week of December.

While Niveda Pethurath of *Ala Vaikuntapuramlo* will be cast alongside Prabhu Deva, the likes of *Baahubali* Prabhakar, Suresh Menen will be seen

playing key roles.

Prabhu Deva, who has been entertaining audience with romantic comedies as a lover boy, will now be seen as a rebel fighting various societal issues in the film, directed by Mukhil Chellappan, said producer Sitaramaraju.

— K Ramya Sree



## Rajini's DARBAR to arrive a day early

The release of superstar Rajinikanth-starrer *Darbar*, directed by A.R. Murugadoss, has been advanced by a day. Instead of the earlier date of January 10, the film will now hit theatres on January 9.

We hear that the rescheduling has a Tollywood connect. With news that films like *Sarileru Neekevvaru* and *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo* are likely to be released on January 12, Telugu producers of *Darbar* have asked Lyca Productions if the film can arrive early to get a

two-day head start. With the film wrapped up more than a month ago and currently in post-production, Lyca obliged the request of Telugu producers. Also, we hear that *Sarileru Neekevvaru* and *Ala Vaikunthapuramlo* will not be clashing on the same date — January 12. Trade sources pointed out that Mahesh Babu-starrer will most likely be released on January 11, while the Allu Arjun-starrer will open on January 12.

An action-drama with an underlying social message,

*Darbar* sees Rajini donning the cop uniform after more than 25 years. His last cop act was in the 1992 release *Pandian*.

Nayanthara, Nivetha Thomas, Dalip Tahil, Soori and Harish Uthaman are playing important roles. It also features Suniel Shetty and Prateik

Babbar as antagonists and it is believed that the latter will play the former's brother.



## DIL RAJU, DEVERAKONDA combo in the offing

Leading producer Dil Raju is attached to produce Vijay Deverakonda's next with *Nimnu Kori* director Shiva Nirvana. The film was announced by Deverakonda when he was promoting his production venture, *Meeku Maathrame Cheptha*. Shiva will first complete his next with a reputed hero for Sahu Garapati and Harish Peddi and then move on to Deverakonda's project. "Dil Raju has been waiting to do a film with Deverakonda for past one year and he is glad that film with Nirvana is taking shape. It remains to be seen whether the actor will move to this film after he wraps up *Fighter* with Puri Jagannadh, as he also in line to finish *Hero* with Anand Annamalai," said a source.



# Shami deadly on any surface: Saha



Indian pace trio of Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav pose with the pink ball during team's first practice session at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Wednesday. BCCI/Twitter

PTI ■ KOLKATA

India wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha on Wednesday brushed aside concerns about pink ball being a challenge for bowlers like Mohammed Shami who, according to him, can be trusted to come good irrespective of the ball's colour or the nature of the surface.

Shami had a match-haul of seven wickets among the Indian pace attack's collective haul of 14 scalps in the home team's innings and 130-run victory over Bangladesh in the first Test in Indore.

"With the form they (Shami, Ishant Sharma and Umesh Yadav) are in, the pink ball is not a factor. Especially (Mohammed) Shami, he can be deadly on any wicket. He has pace and is able to extract reverse swing," Saha said when asked whether colour of the ball will make more difference.

Saha said that they haven't yet checked how much movement is on offer as far as pink ball is concerned. "We are yet to see the movement of the pink ball. But the colour of the ball won't matter with the current form of our pacers," Saha added.

A handful of Indian players,

## Star will telecast India's training today

IANS ■ KOLKATA

The excitement in the City of Joy is clearly visible and while the first four days of pink ball Test is already sold out, fans have also been coming to the Eden Gardens to watch the Indian and Bangladeshi players train for the Test which starts tomorrow. And for those who cannot make it to watch Virat Kohli and boys train on the eve of the game today can witness

including Bengal's Shami and Saha, have pink ball experience in domestic cricket but the wicketkeeper pointed out that it was a Kookaburra.

"The only change is the colour of the ball. It's made differently. There's also a change in the timing and picking the ball a bit difficult in twilight. It may help the pacers but will be challenging for the batsmen," Saha said.

NEW BEGINNING

Senior Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin feels Day/Night

the practice live.

A Star official confirmed that this will be the first time that the training session on the eve of the game will be telecast by the host broadcasters.

"Yes, we will be telecasting Kohli and boys' training on Thursday (today) as we wish to give the fans a feel of what goes on hours before the two teams actually walk out to play their maiden Day-Night Test," the official said.

Tests will mark a new beginning for the traditional format in the country as the spectator count will improve drastically owing to the match timings.

The daily proceedings in the match will start at 1pm and wind up by 8pm.

"I just hope this marks the beginning of where we get huge crowds coming into the stadium and Test cricket gets its credit and obviously with the change in timings people can afford to finish their work and come into the game, watch it and enjoy it," Ashwin

"The pitch looks good. I am very excited. When have you last seen a Test match where first four days' tickets have been sold out."

—SOURAV GANGULY

said on Star Sports. His teammate Mohammed Shami is focussed on the challenges that await him in the game.

"The middle session should be the main focus for batsman while using the pink ball unlike the morning session that is usually considered the most important in a test match as it will have more of a swing in Eden Gardens," he said.

Shami said the bowlers will have to work very hard to extract any assistance from the pink ball. "...The pink ball is only useful when there is a hard and grassy wicket because the ball goes straight."

"Pink ball is a very different ball and doesn't work like the white or red ball at all so there is a very low possibility that in the last session we get a swing or reverse so we will have to work very hard," he said.

## Finest cricketers to grace pink ball Test



Sourav Ganguly inspects the ground with other officials. AP

**KOLKATA:** India's finest cricketers including Sachin Tendulkar, Sunil Gavaskar and Kapil Dev will assemble during the country's first-ever day-night Test against Bangladesh, starting in Eden Gardens tomorrow.

The iconic Eden Gardens is all set to witness a musical extravaganza in the presence of former cricketers, celebrities and politicians during India and Bangladesh's first-ever pink ball Test.

According to BCCI President Sourav Ganguly, the second Test of the two-match series will be one to remember.

"Sachin (Tendulkar), (Sunil) Gavaskar, Kapil (Dev), Rahul (Dravid), Anil (Kumble) everyone will be there. In tea time, there will be carts going around the stadium with former captains in them," Ganguly said on Wednesday.

"There is a musical performance at tea time and at the end of the day there is a felicitation. Both the teams, former captains, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Chief Minister will be there.

"Runa Laila will be performing, Jeet Ganguly will be performing. I am very excited. Just see the excitement, four days are already sold out in a Test match," he added.

The Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) and BCCI have put in place several plans to mark India's maiden pink ball Test.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to ring the 'Eden Bell' along with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the first day of the match.

Besides, a host of sporting starts, including star shuttler P V Sindhu, chess ace Viswanathan Anand and tennis sensation Sania Mirza are expected to grace the occasion.

As per plans, paratroopers are expected to fly into Eden to hand a pink ball each to captains Virat Kohli and Mominul Haque just before the toss.

The CAB has also organised a talk show featuring the 'Fabulous Five' of Indian cricket — Sourav Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Anil Kumble and V V S Laxman during the 40-minute dinner break. They will talk about the historic 2001 Test win against Australia at the Eden.

The CAB also plans to felicitate sporting stars, including Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra, Sania Mirza, Sindhu and six-time boxing world champion MC Mary Kom. PTI



Daniel Vettori speaks during press conference on Wednesday. PTI

## Tigers wary of early sunset

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Bangladesh's spin bowler Saif Hassan

is done dwelling on the "negatives" and wants his team to feel excited about competing in its maiden Day/Night Test even though it happens to be against a formidable-at-home India.

"We are excited to play rather than think about the negatives," Vettori told reporters ahead of the Test.

"Visibility is fine, but the only anecdotal conversation I have heard is around being a little bit hard to pick up from point and square-leg. It will be interesting to find out if slips, gully and umpire is picking it up well. They say there's a small halo effect," he pointed out.

While a handful of players from India have played a pink-ball game in domestic cricket, Bangladesh's only experience with that was a one-off Day/Night four-day match in 2013 but none of the current team players were a part of that fixture.

Vettori conceded that early sunset in Kolkata could pose a massive challenge for his team's batsmen during the twilight hours.

"Pink ball plays normal at this time of the day, and in this light. I think the challenge will be when the Test is under lights. Sunset is quite early here — I think 4:30 pm. I think that'll be the time when we see the pink ball come into play," the former New Zealand captain said.

Vettori has not been a part of any Day/Night Test but he feels batting during the twilight period will be challenging.

"The twilight hour, dusk is when it seems to do a little bit more. My experience is only from watching on TV. It will be the period of the Test match when tactically things might do a few different things," he said.

"The wicket will be pretty good and that last session will be very interesting with the pink ball."

With the pink ball expected to help seamers more, Vettori said Bangladesh pacers are equally excited.

"The four fast bowlers are very excited. It is a nice thing. Bangladeshi fast bowlers don't get to be excited a lot. I think they are coming to grips with a slightly different ball. It is the SG pink ball."

"I think most guys have limited experience with the Kookaburra one. But I think there's real optimism," he said.

The former New Zealand spinner is also hopeful that tweekers would come into play, especially in the first two sessions each day.

## Saif out of Eden Test

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Bangladesh's reserve opener Saif Hassan was on Wednesday ruled out of the Day/Night Test against India owing to a finger injury.

The 21-year-old Hassan split the webbing of his finger while coming in as a substitute fielder during the first Test in Indore.

"The injury has not yet healed and the medical team is of the opinion that he will benefit from being rested to full recovery. Taking the state of injury into consideration, Saif has been ruled out of the second Test," the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said in a release.

The batsman was in line to make his debut in the historic pink-ball Test at the Eden Gardens, with regular openers Shadman Islam and Imrul Kayes failing to impress in the opener.

Hassan's injury means the embattled visitors will have to continue with the duo of Islam and Kayes, who managed all of 24 runs across two innings at Indore.

## Team for WI series to be announced today



PTI ■ KOLKATA

Vice-captain Rohit Sharma's workload management and opener Shikhar Dhawan's poor form are expected to dominate the deliberations when the national selection committee meets here today to decide on India's limited-overs squads for the home series against the West Indies.

If all goes well, Rohit may get some well-deserved rest during the three-match ODI series against the Caribbean team so that he is fresh and rejuvenated for the tough tour of New Zealand next year where India will play five T20 Internationals, three ODIs and two Test matches.

Rohit's workload will be the prominent point of discussion as he has played close to 60 competitive matches (including IPL) this year.

While the onus will also be on Rohit to give his viewpoint, the possibility of him being given a break in at least one of the two formats looks strong.

The other person, who might feel the heat is senior opener Shikhar Dhawan. Dhawan hasn't been in the best of forms since he returned to cricket after sustaining an injury during the World Cup.

Mayank Agarwal's stupendous form in Test cricket and a very good List A career average of

50-plus and an above 100 strike-rate makes him a good choice to partner KL Rahul in case the selectors think of looking at the third opener's option.

The soon-to-be 34 Dhawan is also not expected to be around for a long time.

Ditto for Rishabh Pant, who will don the big gloves with Sanju Samson close on his heels.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni has already started training and if Pant can't seal it during the upcoming series, he might face stiff competition from the 38-year-old legend once IPL comes calling.

With Hardik Pandya (stress fracture), Jasprit Bumrah (back surgery), Navdeep Saini and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (side strain) still recovering from their respective injuries, Shivam Dube and Shardul Thakur are expected to continue in the squad.

Spin bowling all-rounders Washington Sundar and Krunal Pandya — are also under the scanner due to their underwhelming performances.

With Yuzvendra Chahal doing well and if Ravindra Jadeja is not given another break, one among the two could get the axe.

India's new T20 sensation Deepak Chahar is expected lead the pace attack but Khaleel Ahmed's economy rate has been a problem.

## 'Ashwin deserves limited overs comeback'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Spin great Harbhajan Singh feels Ravichandran Ashwin deserves a comeback in India's limited overs set-up as a reward for his recent exploits with the red ball.

With the management and selectors exploring options ahead of the T20 World Cup next year, opportunities have been given to the likes of Washington Sundar and Rahul Chahal.

As the selectors meet to pick the ODI and T20 squads for the West Indies series next month, Harbhajan said Ashwin should get another chance in the shorter versions of the game.

"This is what I feel, if you are looking to bowl a spinner upfront (which Sundar has been doing in T20s), you rather have a wicket-taker which Ashwin is. Why not (give him a chance)? He has also done a good job with the red ball



R Ashwin bowls at nets in Kolkata. PTI

recently," Harbhajan said on Tuesday. "Ashwin spins the ball, he has got more variations. Someone like a Sundar needs to learn. I want him to do well. I am all for bleeding in youngsters but they must learn else they will be replaced, considering the stiff competition," said the 39-year-old.

Ashwin last played a limited overs game for India in July 2017, following which he and Ravindra Jadeja were overlooked for the shorter formats with wrist-spinners Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Chahal replacing the finger-spinners. Jadeja was able to make a comeback but Ashwin hasn't.

Harbhajan, though, also believed that both Chahal and Kuldeep remain India's best bet for providing breakthroughs.

"They are your wicket-takers. People who are wicket-takers will always be in the game, be it Kuldeep or Chahal or whoever."

"You need to ask the management (if they should be playing every game). They (management) probably want to see what combination works well for them but good to see Chahal back and hopefully Kuldeep will be back too. In my opinion, they are your two best options," he said.

## Malinga does u-turn on retirement

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka captain and veteran pacer Lasith Malinga has had a rethink on his decision to retire after next year's Twenty20 World Cup, saying he can carry on for another two years.

Malinga, in March, had stated that he wanted to retire after the Twenty20 World Cup scheduled in October-November in Australia next year. But the 36-year-old, who captains Sri Lanka in the shortest format, now says he can play on beyond that.

"T20 is four overs and I feel with my skill, I can manage T20 as a bowler. As a captain, because I've played so many T20s around the world that I feel I can manage that period for maybe another two years," Malinga told 'ESPNCricinfo'.

## Naseem to make Test debut

BRISBANE:

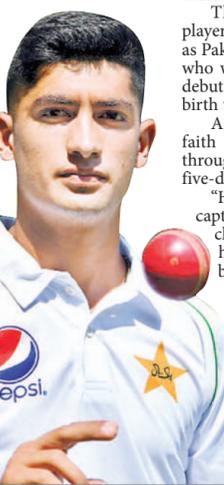
Teenage bowling sensation Naseem Shah will become one of the youngest cricketers to play a Test after Pakistan captain Azhar Ali confirmed on Wednesday the 16-year-old will make his debut at the Gabba.

Shah, who opted to remain on tour after his mother died, made the grade for today's first Test after impressing with an eight-over spell against Australia A in Perth.

"We are definitely looking to play him — he is bowling really well," Azhar said.

Only handful of players have made their

Australia vs Pakistan  
Live from 5:30am IST  
SONY SIX NETWORK



debut aged 16, including Sachin Tendulkar who went on to become an Indian batting legend.

The youngest Test player is listed by 'Cricinfo' as Pakistan's Hasan Raza, who was 14 on his 1996 debut, though his date of birth was later disputed. Azhar said he had faith in Shah's abilities through a high-pressure five-day game.

"He's very fit, I have captained him in first-class matches and he has overs under his belt," he said.

"I'm sure that he can do that in Tests as well, I have no doubts in his fitness and his bowling skills." AFP

## Focus on Dhawan, Shaw in Super League stage

PTI ■ SURAT

The spotlight would firmly be on the likes of Shikhar Dhawan and young Prithvi Shaw when the Super League stage of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament begins here today.

The focus will be on Dhawan, who has not had a great run in recent times as well as Shaw, who recently returned to competitive cricket after serving an eight-month retrospective ban.

Dhawan is currently going through a rough patch. The Delhi batsman had scores of 0(9) against Jammu & Kashmir, 9(6) against Jharkhand, 19(18) against Sikkim and 35(33) against Odisha in the league stage of the national T20 championship and he would be more than keen to turn things around.

Syed Mushtaq Ali T20  
Live from 2:20pm IST  
STAR SPORTS 2 NETWORK



Mumbai opener Prithvi Shaw in action against Assam. PTI

Another promising opener who would want to make most of the opportunity is Shaw, who returned with a bang from a doping ban, slamming a half-century against Assam in the last game of the league stage for Mumbai.

Twenty-year-old Shaw will have to make optimum use of the Super League stage if he has to impress the national selectors and make a comeback to the national team.

In all probability, Shaw will open for Mumbai, replacing an in-form Jay Bista, with senior pro Aditya Tare.

His teammates and three India players — Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube and Shardul Thakur — also have an opportunity to cement their places in the Indian T20 squad with good outings.