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HYDERABAD, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3



the pioneer



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SET FOR A
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14 DEAD IN GODAVARI BOAT TRAGEDY

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a major tragedy, around 14 holiday revelers died when a tourism boat they were aboard capsized in River Godavari en route to Papikondalu (bordering East and West Godavari) from Gandipochamma temple in Devipatnam Mandal in East Godavari. Though the incident occurred around 10 am on Sunday, it was reported three hours later. According to sources, of the 36 persons found missing, three are from Andhra Pradesh while of the remaining, 10 are from Hyderabad and 17 from Warangal and Hanamakonda.

According to reports, the boat Royal Vasita Punnami was on its way to Papikondalu with 63 tourists and a six-member crew. On reaching Kachhuuluru en route while negotiating a curve in swelling Godavari River the boat over-turned and capsize.

Officials said the river was in spate due to release of five lakh cusecs of excess water from Dowalawiswaram barrage in sea on Sunday. The state port authorities permitted tourism from Sunday and only one boat was permitted after a break of two weeks. Chief Secretary L V Subrahmanyam spoke to East Godavari District Collector Muralidhar Reddy and enquired about the incident.

The Chief Secretary directed that a helicopter be pressed into service to trace the boat mishap victims.

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy announced

Rs 10 lakh ex-gratia for bereaved families. According to an official statement, Jagan directed National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Navy and ONGC helicopters to carry out rescue operations on a war-footing. He has also ordered the ministers in the district to supervise the rescue works.

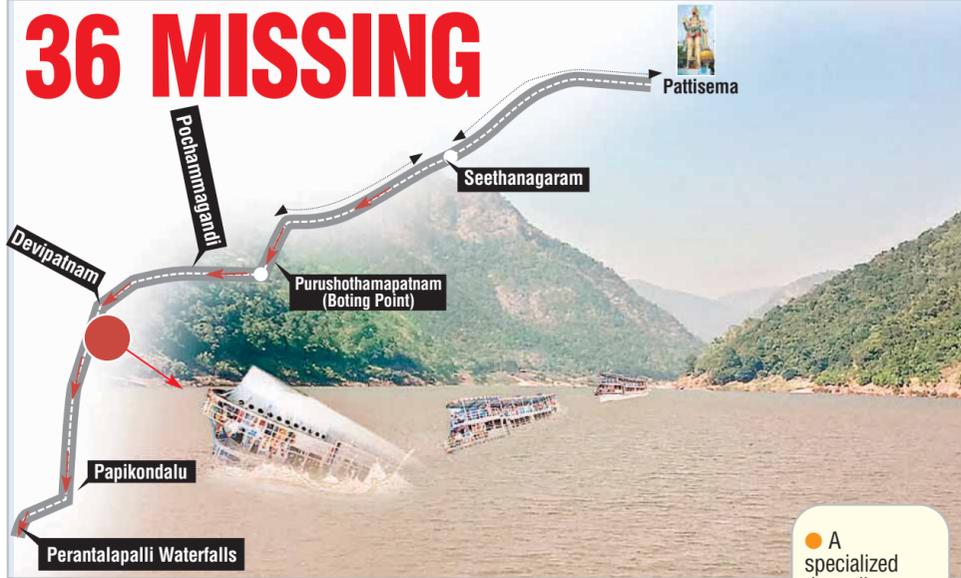
District officials have been directed to suspend all the boating services in the region immediately and check for the license of the boats. He asked officials to form an expert committee to suggest guidelines to permit boats on rivers. According to East Godavari SP, Adanan Nayem Asmi, three bodies were recovered and 16 more, who wore life jackets, were rescued.

It is suspected that though wearing of life-jackets is mandatory, a majority of tourists did not wear them resulting in the tragedy. East Godavari Agency Rampachodavaram OSD Arif Hafez said the police, revenue, NDRF, besides Navy and ONGC choppers have been on search. However, owner of the boat Vankata Ramana made it clear that they operated the only service cleared for Sundays from Papikondalu after getting clearance from port department.

Meanwhile, Indian Navy has dispatched a Dornier plan with a diving team to assist in the search operation to locate missing persons, following a request from the Andhra Pradesh government.

Related reports on Page 4

36 MISSING



● AP CM YS Jagan announces Rs 10 lakh exgratia
● TS CM KCR announces Rs 5 lakh

No of persons on board around 72		
No of persons rescued	No of bodies retrieved	No of persons missing
28	8	36

● Most victims from Hyderabad, Warangal and Vizag
● 2 NDRF, 2 SDRF teams deployed
● 1 deep divers teams of Indian Navy deployed

● 1 ONGC chopper pressed into service for search operations
● Rescue operations in full swing
● 5 members of family missing from Uppal

● A specialized deep divers team with 'side scan sonar' equipment from Uttarakhand to land today to retrieve remaining dead bodies from river



The Royal Vasita Punnami just before commencement of the ill-fated journey

Official inaction in reining in boat trips blamed

PNS ■ KAKINADA/DEVIPATNAM

Despite of flood fury in River Godavari, the owners of private boats have been playing havoc with lives of tourists by operating the boat services in the swirling waters of the river.

For the past two months, the river is in spate and flowing menacingly inundating several low-lying villages on the river's bank. Yet the private boat operators have been operating services to various tourist destinations. The boats are being operated under hazardous conditions from Papikondalu from Posammagandi.

When a boat set sailed in the river with 50 passengers on

board, the officials remained as mute spectators let alone preventing the boats from undertaking the trip.

Because of the flood fury, at least 36 villages still remained marooned. Operating a boat under such prevailing conditions to Papikondalu is a misadventure. Earlier, a launch capsized between Manturu-Vadapalli in the river putting 19 on board to death. Since then, only West Godavari district officials are looking into permission for boat tours. The East Godavari district has nothing to do with the boat trips in the river. However, the district strongly feels that the boat trips from Posamma Gandhi should be reined in.

No uranium mining in Nallamala forest, says KCR

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has asserted that his government would not permit uranium mining in the Nallamala forests of Telangana at any cost as the project was bound to harm environment in a big way.

He declared that the State Legislative Assembly would pass a single-sentence resolution on Monday denying permission for uranium mining and send a copy of it to the Centre. His government was ready to fight against the Centre, along with all political parties in the state, in case it ignores the House resolution and goes ahead with uranium mining.

While giving reply to a discussion in House on budget on Sunday, the Chief Minister assured members that his government would protect the Nallamala forests. There was no need for people to feel concerned over uranium mining as the state government would never give permission to the Centre to take up uranium mining in the Nallamala



● CM makes a statement in Legislative Assembly
● Assembly to pass a resolution against Uranium mining today and send to Centre

● Congress itself gave permissions in the past and UCIL mining Uranium in Kadapa
● KTR makes similar statement in Legislative Council

forests. The previous Congress government had given permission for uranium mining, though political parties and people had objected. Already the Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) was mining uranium in Kadapa. KCR expressed his concern,

saying that the Krishna water would be polluted if the Centre mined uranium in Nallamala forests. People in Hyderabad would also be affected as they were drinking Krishna water, he pointed out.

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No lessons learnt from the past

SEELAM AROZIE ■ VIJAYAWADA

The boat capsized in the swollen River Godavari near Devipatnam of East Godavari district on Sunday, which left 14 drowned and 26 missing, is a grim reminder of officials not sticking to the rules.

Lobbying by boat owners and the officials ready to please them for a few bucks has cost precious lives. This is the third such incident starting from the one in River Krishna at Pavitra Sangamam at Ibrahimpatnam near Vijayawada.

River Godavari has been in spate on and off in the past few days due to heavy rains in the catchments in Maharashtra. Even Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy wondered how the officials had given permission for the boat ride to Papikondalu in the swirling waters. Throwing rules and regulations to the winds, the officials allowed the boat to set sail to the tourist spot, much to the chagrin of the YSRC government which has been time and again declaring its zero-tolerance to corruption. In the incident that preceded the cur-

rent one during the TDP government, inefficiency of the boat driver was blamed for the tragedy. In yet another incident that took place at Pavitra Sangamam, 19 people had died as the boat, on that occasion, hit a dune and overturned. Failure of the officials to monitor the situation and the absence of a mechanism to ensure that procedures are followed are seen as the main reasons for the tragedy. As per the rules, the condition of the boat is to be verified thoroughly by all the departments concerned. Even at the time renewals, the officials are said to be doing favours to boat owners by accepting bribes. Lobbying in boat business has been going on no matter what strictures are being passed by the governments from time to time.

New MV Act not to be implemented in TS: CM

● TS joins MP, WB in refusing to implement new MV Act

L VENKAT RAM REDDY ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao said on Sunday that the State government would not implement the new Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act 2019 in Telangana, considering that the hefty penalties prescribed would burden common people. KCR made this announcement in the Legislative Assembly while replying to a general discussion on the Budget. With this, Telangana has joined the list of two states (West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh), which have refused to implement the new MV Act opposing steep penalties for traffic violations.

KCR said that the state government would soon come out with a new policy on how to check traffic violations without burdening the people.

With states choosing not to implement the amended Act or offering to steeply reduce the prescribed fines, the Centre's professed plan to improve road safety and ensure discipline through hefty penal-



KCR said that the state government would soon come out with a new policy on how to check traffic violations without burdening the people

ties is in jeopardy. After the BJP government in Gujarat first announced a reduction in fines on "humanitarian grounds", on Tuesday last other BJP-ruled states such as Karnataka and Uttarakhand

followed suit. Meanwhile, Maharashtra, another BJP-ruled state, has urged the Centre to reconsider and reduce the stiff penalties proposed under the law.

Continued on Page 3

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Bhadrpada & Krishna Paksha
Panchangam
Tithi : Dwitaya : 2:35 pm
Nakshatram: Revati: 04:22 am (Next Day)
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam: 07:38 am - 09:09 am
Yamagandam: 10:40 am - 12:10 pm
Varjyam: 03:04 pm - 04:50 pm
Gulika: 01:41 pm - 03:12 pm
Good Time: (to start any important work)
Amritakalam: 01:43 pm - 03:29 am
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:46 am - 12:35 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Isolated Thunderstorms
Temp: 31/23
Humidity: 87%
Sunrise: 06:04
Sunset: 06:17
Current Weather Conditions
Updated September 15, 2019 5:00 PM

82 ex-MPs still to vacate official bungalows

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Over 80 former MPs are yet to vacate their official bungalows in Lutyens' Delhi despite a stern warning by a Lok Sabha panel, sources said.

They said the government is contemplating to take action against these ex-MPs under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act for their speedy eviction.



within three days. "Since the committee's order, most of the ex-MPs have vacated their official bungalows. But, 82 former MPs are, however, yet to vacate their bungalows as per a recent list," the sources said.

Sources in the Lok Sabha Housing Committee said this is not acceptable and that strict action will be taken against such former MPs.

'Will not make KTR CM'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Putting an end to speculations in some quarters that he would make his son and IT Minister KT Rama Rao the next Chief Minister of the State, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao on Sunday declared that he had no such plans and that he would remain the Chief Minister for the next 10 years.

KCR made these remarks to this effect while giving reply to the general discussion on Budget in the Legislative Assembly on Sunday.

"I am 66 years old now. I have no health issues. Why would I make my son KTR as CM? TRS will win Assembly polls for the next three terms and I will be able to work as CM at least for the next 10 years"

—KCR, Telangana Chief Minister



is not well, he will make his son KTR as CM and take rest.

But I have not died in these 20 years. My health condition is absolutely good. Why would I make my son KTR as CM? I will be able to work as CM at least for the next 10 years," KCR remarked, amid thunderous applause from the treasury benches.

KCR took a dig at rumour mongers on his health condition. "Let them curse me as they like. Nothing will happen to me. I am healthy and I will continue as CM for the next ten years," he said.

Satya Nadella performs father's last rites

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The last rites of BN Yugandhar, a former bureaucrat were performed here on Sunday. Microsoft Chief Executive Officer Satya Nadella who reached Hyderabad late Saturday night lit the funeral pyre at Mahaprastanam in Jubilee Hills. Yugandhar, who was 80-years passed away on Friday after brief illness.

Satya Nadella, the only child of Yugandhar, other relatives and friends bid a tearful adieu to the former bureaucrat, who served in the Prime Minister's Office and the Planning Commission. Telangana Chief Secretary SK Joshi, Special Chief Secretary Suresh Kumar and DGP Mahendar Reddy and several in-service and



Satya Nadella arrives in Hyderabad for his father's last rites on Sunday

retired civil servants were present at the crematorium. An IAS officer of the 1962 batch, Yugandhar held many key positions both in undivided Andhra Pradesh and at the Centre. Known for his clean record, he was instrumental in implementation of many schemes designed for the poor and marginalized sections of the society.

Continued on Page 3

Panchayat Raj minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao was left blushing after finding himself in a slightly awkward situation in Telangana Assembly on Sunday. Without warning, CM KCR came up with an episode of some years ago when Errabelli was in TDP. KCR, known for his sharp memory, recalled the incident of protest against Babli project when Errabelli toed the TDP line and happened to oppose the TRS party. Rubbing in salt, but all in jest, KCR reminded the House how TDP MLAs, including party chief N Chandrababu Naidu, got roundly beaten by counter-protestors. He said, "Our Dayakar Rao too received Marata lathi blows." The anecdote came as a welcome relief of Legislators perhaps, but Errabelli wanted the moment to pass ASAP.

ERRABELLI LEFT RED-FACED

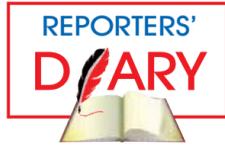
Lazy Sundays for cops too

Cops generally like being on Assembly duty, basking in the afterglow of being in close proximity while escorting powerful people who matter. Some though find it a punishment. Often, police personnel talk among themselves about issues in debate, which all Legislators' words in the House carry weight, etc. A few also share their feelings with scribes. Gleaning from such interaction, one realises that cops, like everybody else in jobs, they too like lighter work - such as early adjournment of the House and or how tough it is to

work on Sundays when the Assembly is in session. "Sir, how much more before the House is adjourned? Arre... what is the need to run the Assembly even on Sundays," is how one policeman's conversation with a scribe went.

Padmarao Goud rescues Bhatti

A little help to a rival during a debate lifts the bonhomie in the Assembly, should be welcome and is very much on. The other day, Deputy Speaker T Padmarao Goud happened to chip in with a little help when CLP leader Malu Bhatti Vikramarka was struggling to get the name of a hospital right. Bhatti



was in the midst of a tirade against the TRS government on the condition of government hospitals in the state. He somehow couldn't recall a certain hospital name, fumbled with all sorts of other names and couldn't get on with his argument. "Mulugu hospital", prompted Padmarao Goud to put an end to Bhatti's discomfiture and setting him free to continue with

his criticism of the government. However, Padmarao Goud's gesture amused the Treasury benches and Opposition members in equal measure. Why, you can only appreciate an effort to help out a colleague, even if from another camp.

News flow interruptions

The reported restrictions imposed on two vernacular TV news channels have led to some speculations in political corridors. There was no official ban on the channels, but it is learnt that MSOs (Master Cable Operators) were asked not to telecast their news feed in the Amravati Capital region. The matter, as it turned out, was only about

the two channels not having paid the annual fee to MSOs. While the ruling YSRCP had nothing to do with it, the episode brought back memories of the time when TDP regime reportedly instructed news channels not to air Jagannathan Reddy's padyatra last year, as also interruptions in the telecast of PM Narendra Modi's speech during his visit to Guntur after the TDP fell out with BJP two years ago.

'Hindi' unites opposition

On Hindi Divas, Union Home Minister Amit Shah expressed his view that Hindi would unite India, pitching for 'One nation-One language' idea. Contrary to uniting

India, Shah's comments sparked protests across the country, especially the southern part of the nation. Senior communist leader and Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan, Puducherry CM V Narayanasamy, DMK president MK Stalin, former CMs of Karnataka Siddaramaiah and HD Kumaraswamy, AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, all have raised objections against Amit Shah.

The issue turned into a political storm with 'Hindi imposition' hash tag getting viral. Shah's idea of 'uniting' everyone backfired spectacularly; instead it only succeeded in uniting Opposition leaders from different backgrounds and ideologies.

(Contributed by Kolihetty Venkateshwarlu, Patri Vasudevan, Deepthi Nandan)

Gold closes at \$1,490, silver at \$17.52 amid trade tensions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Amidst increased tensions between the US on the one hand and Iran and N.Korea on the other, coupled with looming uncertainty over the outcome of trade talks with China, the yellow metal hovered around US \$ 1,500 (per Oz) during the week ended Saturday. Gold closed at \$ 1,490.85, while Silver stood at \$ 17.52 on the closing day. Platinum and palladium were firm, and closed at \$ 950.60 and 1,610.75 respectively.

Other economic parameters, except Brent oil, moved northward. Brent closed at US \$ 59.73 (per barrel), while Crude oil was quoted at Rs.3,915 (per barrel). Gold MCX stood at Rs.37,731 (per 10 gms). Sensex and Nifty 50 closed at 37,384.99 and 11,075.90 points respectively. Leading foreign currencies' exchange rates were: US \$: Rs.71.03, British Pound: Rs. 88.83, Euro: Rs. 79.25, Canadian \$: Rs.53.43, Swiss Franc: Rs.71.75, Australian \$: Rs.48.85, Saudi Rial: Rs. 19.08, Kuwaiti Dinar: Rs.233.73, Omani Rial: Rs. 184.51 and UAE Dinar: Rs.19.34

At home, due to higher prices, despite fast approaching festival season, trading was dull. However, both the precious metals surged ahead and closed at the higher levels. Standard gold (24 carats) appreciated by Rs.1,040 and closed at

Gold closed at \$ 1,490.85, while Silver stood at \$ 17.52 on the closing day. Platinum and palladium were firm, and closed at \$ 950.60 and 1,610.75 respectively

Rs.38,920 (per 10 gms) . Ornamental gold too, moved up in tandem and was quoted in the range of Rs.36,040 - 36,140 on the closing day. Silver (0.999), too, appreciated by Rs.2,100 and closed at Rs.47,900 (per kg). The sentiment in gold and silver is likely to remain strong, considering the geo-political situation of the day.

COMMODITIES

The sentiment in principal wholesale commodity markets in the twin cities was from moderate to strong. Rythu Bazars and the various commodity markets located in Begum Bazar, Kishangunj, Mukhtiyargunj, Risala Abdullah, Mir Alam Mandi, Dilskhannagar, Kukatpally, Bowenpally and General Bazar did brisk business.

According to unofficial reports, sugar production in the current sugar year is likely to be around 282 lakh tons, slightly lower than estimated earlier. However, in view of the

comfortable stock position, there is no likelihood of price rise.

During the week, common pulses such as tuar dal, moong dal, urad dal and masoor dal recorded a marginal appreciation, while staple food grains and common edible oils remained unchanged at the previous week's closing levels.

The prices of common vegetables continued to be on the higher side considerably during this week also despite good arrivals. Common vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, ribbed gourd, snake gourd, lady's fingers, cucumber, potatoes, onions, tomatoes and French beans, along with leafy vegetables, recorded an increase in the range of 12 per cent and 25 per cent.

In Hyderabad, the NECC wholesale egg price appreciated by Rs.21 and closed at Rs.340 (per 100).

WEEKLY MARKET REVIEW

TSTEA resents having PRC once in 10 years

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Employees' Association (TSTEA), at its meeting held here on Sunday with its president C Sampat Kumar Swamy in chair, demanded the TRS government to withdraw its proposal on constitution of the Pay Revision Commission once in 10 years.

Vehemently opposing the proposal, the meeting adopted a resolution in this regard. It demanded the government to announce 43 per cent of the salary as interim relief immediately and announce the PRC with 69 per cent of the fitment allowance.

The meeting demanded the government to withdraw the contributory pension scheme, and restore the old pension scheme and increase the upper age limit for retirement to 61 years. The meeting also resolved to regularize services of the contract workers unconditionally. Other demands of the association include extending health insurance scheme without collecting premium from employees, issue housesites to the teachers and government employees. The meeting resolved against merger of the revenue department with other departments, reduce the experience required for promotions from three years to two years.

KCR SLAMS BJP OVER SEPT 17 HUNGAMA

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Reddy indirectly targeted BJP in the Legislative Assembly without naming it. He said that some political parties are doing 'hungama' in the name of 'September 17'. He made it clear that his government will not compromise in regard to law and order. He said that there is no single law and order problem in the state after the creation of Telangana state and made it clear that his government gives top priority to the law and order at any cost.

While giving reply to budget discussion in the Legislative Assembly on Sunday, the Chief Minister found fault with some political parties alleging that they are trying for political gains in the name of 'September 17'. KCR said that the same parties were forgetting the fact that the then Union Home Minister Sardar Vallabhai Patel himself honored Nizam King with 'Raj Pramukh' appellation after the merger of Hyderabad Samsthan into Indian Union. "How your Vallabhai Patel gave Raj Pramukh appellation to Nizam if Patel opposes Nizam if Nizam was not good", he asked.



There was no single law and order issue in the state after the formation of Telangana. Government will not compromise in regard to security issues, says Chief Minister KCR in Assembly

KCR said that the Telangana region's condition fell in danger after the transformation of power from Nizam's autocratic rule to democracy rule similar to one fell from pan to the oven. The Telangana fell in 60 years danger after merging with Andhra state, he lamented. KCR admitted that he too demanded then united

Andhra Pradesh leaders to celebrate Hyderabad Liberation Day celebrations. He said that the Telangana region people have faced severe atrocities for two years after the merger of Hyderabad Samsthan into Indian Union. General JN Chowdhary led army resorted to massacre against Communists, who waged Telangana armed struggle.

gle, atrociously in Telangana for two years after September 17, 1948 after the merger of Hyderabad Samsthan into Indian Union.

KCR said that the people were afraid of Chowdhary army when they went to rural areas. "In those days there were 'dandu batas' for army. People feared severely when army came to their villages. Army constable shot dead former Home Minister Naini Narsimha Reddy's father reaching to their residence", he said.

KCR made it clear that his government is not giving much priority to the September 17 as many historians suggested him to forget the issue. He said "the Historians suggested me not to give much priority to the September 17. Giving priority to that day is nothing but raking up communal disturbances only. The state is enjoying the communal harmony and what is the need to disturb our self by giving priority to September 17".

KCR also made it clear that his government will give all permissions to the political parties to organise processions, programmes and flag hoisting and all. The government will not object anyone if they organised their programmes as they wished.

TETE-A-TETE



Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan with Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy at Raj Bhavan in Hyderabad

Election mood sets in Sec'bad Cantonment

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the term of existing elected board members ending in January 2020, election mood is setting in Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB). Already, the ruling TRS has started focusing on polls and is even making efforts to hold polls on party symbols. The BJP and Congress party leaders on the other hand have also started preparations. Local leaders who were maintaining low profile have started actively taking part in protests and programmes with an eye on SCB polls.



"The term of present board members is ending but they have done nothing in the past five years. Even basic issues such as drinking water, drainage facilities, failure to control mosquitoes and others

have not been addressed. In fact, neither SCB vice president nor board members have been in touch with people. If present board members are committed to people, first they should ensure that voters list is prepared without errors and all the eligible are added as voters," said T Satish Kumar Gupta, president of Vasavinagar Welfare Association.

While there are total 8 wards, according to the data, there are about 1.6 lakh voters in SCB limits. Though elections were held on a non-partisan basis (without party sym-

bols) seven wards were won by leaders belonging to the ruling TRS. Though P Bhagyashree from Congress won in Seventh ward, even she joined the TRS later. "There is clear edge for TRS in Secunderabad Cantonment. Chief Minister has even written to Defence Ministry to hold elections on party symbols. We feel that by electing TRS in Cantonment, there will be good coordination between SCB and government," said TRS leader S Keshava Reddy, who is an elected ward member and former vice-president of SCB.

TJS: Anti-Telanganaites are KCR's friends now

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) Chief Prof M Kodanda Reddy has alleged that the leaders, who opposed Telangana protagonists during Telangana movement have become friends of Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Reddy.

He said that former Minister Patnam Mahender Reddy had not allowed Telangana protagonists to conduct a meeting at Tandur during Telangana movement. More over, Mahender Reddy said during Telangana movement that he will become a Minister while bribing Chief Minister with Rs 5 crore after the creation of Telangana.

Making it clear that he don't need Minister posts, Kodandaram lashed out at TRS government's attitude on Sunday in a programme held in Hyderabad. He said "people have thought that their lives will be changed after the creation of Telangana state. But nothing changed except KCR's residence shifted to Pragathi Bhavan".

Reminding late Prof Jayashankar's comments that the movements must for the development of Telangana after the creation of separate state, Kodandaram alleged that Andhra contractor Mega Krishna Reddy only got the entry into Pragathi Bhavan at the cost of Telanganans.

Alleging that KCR had not only fought for the sake of Telangana, Kodandaram said that the Telangana belongs to the people. He slammed that KCR is behaving like he has only sole powers on Telangana.

In a show of strength, India stands up like a colossus!

HC UPADHYAY ■ HYDERABAD

By declaring unconditional, unstinted and spontaneous support to the latest acts of abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A of the Constitution of India, the Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind, a premier Muslim body, has not only served a solid punch on the Muslim fanatics, but also sent a message, loud and clear, to the war-mongering Pakistan as well as its supporters within India who have been playing the sinister game of inciting the Muslim community in the name of religion that India is one and shall remain united in all circumstances.

The most influential Muslim organisation following the Deoband School of Islamic thought is a widely respected religious congregation having over ten million members in the country. Its general secretary, former Rajya Sabha member, Moulana Mehmood Madani, has condemned Pakistan-sponsored terrorism

in very strong words and exhorted the people, including the Muslims, not to fall prey to the vicious propaganda by the enemy country, Pakistan and its 'paid' henchmen within the country.

Unity in diversity is the beauty of this great country, called Bharat or India. Whenever nation faces the external threat, be it from Pakistan or China, all people, irrespective of their different religions, creeds, castes or languages, unite and stand up like a rock. Such a show of strength, indeed, is equal to winning half the battle as the enemy certainly feels threatened and demoralised.

SC gives its mind to uniform civil code

The candid observation made by the Apex Court in the recently delivered judgement that despite the hope and expectation expressed in Article 44 of the Constitution of India, no concrete steps have been taken by the success-

The most influential Muslim organisation following the Deoband School of Islamic thought is a widely respected religious congregation having over ten million members in the country

sive governments to introduce a Uniform Civil Code in the country.

Citing the example of Goa, where no person, including Muslim, can practice polygamy or give oral divorce (Triple Talaq), the court exhorted the government that necessary steps towards introduction of Uniform civil code throughout the country should be taken in right earnest.

UP in arms against SC: Coincidence or conspiracy?

Once again the top judiciary has been in the news. And, this time it has been targeted for exercising its power of transferring some high court judges. While the Telangana High Court's lawyers, sup-

ported by the subordinate courts advocates associations and the State Bar Council, have not yet totally given up the threat of abstaining from the court work on the issue of transfer of a senior judge, Sanjay Kumar, to another high court in lower seniority, Madras High Court too is facing a similar conundrum. Its Chief Justice Vijaya K. Tahilramani has defied her transfer orders to the Meghalaya High Court and tendered resignation, which is yet to be accepted.

Meanwhile the lawyers of Madras High Court boycotted the courts and now there are

reports that the lawyers in Maharashtra too would do so. In Madhya Pradesh, the Bar Association of High Court is on a different wicket. It has demanded transfer of Justice Sanjay Kumar Yadav alleging that the said judge has been 'misbehaving' with advocates and there have been several complaints against him.

Added to this, former judge of the apex court, Markandey Katju has also taken a plunge into the troubled waters in favour of the Collegium of the Supreme Court. In a web-article, the former chief justice of Madras High Court came down heavily on the present incumbent and said that she hardly devoted time for the judicial work which also demoralised other judges of the high court.

Indeed, this is a very unpleasant situation. It does not behave well that a wheel of the

judicial machine, called the Bar Association, in its anxiety to streamline or overhaul the justice delivery system, comes out openly in public and, forgetting its limitations, and indulges in abstaining from judicial work thereby causing hardship to the litigant public.

Having sex knowing uncertainty about marriage, no rape: SC

If a woman continues to maintain physical relationship with a man for a long time despite knowing it won't fructify in marriage, she cannot accuse him of rape on the ground that he made a false promise of marriage.

The verdict of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Indira Banerjee came as it quashed the rape case lodged by an assistant against a deputy commandant of CRPF. They were in a relationship for six years and lived in each other's houses on multiple occasions, which showed they were in a consensual relationship, the

court said. The complainant, who knew the CRPF man since 1998, alleged he had forcibly established a sexual relationship with her in 2008 on the promise of marriage. The relationship continued till 2016 during which they used to visit each other's house and stayed together for days. In 2014, he raised concerns about marriage on the ground of her caste, but they continued to remain in a relationship. She filed FIR against him in 2016 when he told her about his engagement with another woman. The bench said any false promise of marriage must be of immediate relevance or bear a direct nexus to the woman's decision to engage in the sexual act. It said there is a distinction between a false promise given on the understanding by the maker that it will be broken, and the breach of a promise which is made in good faith but subsequently not fulfilled.



LEGAL ROUNDUP

CRIME CORNER

Realtor murdered; biz rivalry suspected

A 42-year-old man, who went missing a day ago, was found murdered on Sunday morning at Balapur in Pahadi Shareef area. The deceased, Mohd Idris, was a real estate agent, said police. Rivalry with his colleagues is suspected to be the reason behind the murder. Police said Idris went missing after parking his vehicle at the real estate office he was working in on Saturday night. The family members tried to reach him but in vain. Meanwhile, there was a report about a dead body recovered in Pahadi Shareef, which was later turned out to be of that man. The victim had cut marks on the neck, police said. Following a complaint, a case was booked under section 302 (murder) of IPC and a probe was launched. The body was shifted for postmortem to OGH.

Drunk drivers booked in Cyberabad

As many as 204 offenders, including 145 bikers, were booked by the Cyberabad traffic police over the weekend for drunk driving. The checking was done at various locations in Cyberabad limits on Friday and Saturday nights, in which a majority of the offenders were booked for driving vehicles under the influence of alcohol on ORR, National Highways and residential areas, said the traffic police. The most number of violations were recorded in Kukatpally area (38), followed by Madhapur (31), Miyapur (26), Gachibowli (22), Shamshabad (17), Rajendra Nagar (15), Alwal (16), Balanagar (14), Jeedimetla (13) and Shadnagar (12). Police said it is youngsters on two-wheelers who mostly resort to this dangerous activity. All those booked will be prosecuted in the court as per law after they attend the mandatory road safety counselling at our Traffic Training Institute in Madhapur.

Man hangs himself; reason unknown

A 40-year-old man committed suicide by hanging at his residence in Saidabad on Saturday. The deceased was identified as K Balaiah, 40, a labourer from Balaji Nagar in Saidabad. According to the police, Balaiah went home in an inebriated condition on Friday night and later locked himself in a room. He was found hanging by his family members on Saturday morning. Upon receiving information, a patrol team reached the spot. The body was shifted for postmortem and a case was registered.



Minister Talasani Srinivas sprays insecticide in the garden of his house on Sunday

Police stations checked on 'No Dengue Sunday'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Operation 'No Dengue Sunday' initiated by the GHMC by was conducted at police stations in the city. Police Commissioner of Anjani Kumar visited several police stations to enquire about the sanitation in and around their premises in wake of the viral fever epidemic in the city. On Sunday, Anjani Kumar visited Saifabad PS, which like most other police stations houses abandoned vehicles that have piled up over months, where accumulated rainwater has become a breeding site for mosquitoes. Animal husbandry minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, with the help of GHMC entomologists, got his house fumigated to rid it of mosquitoes.

Students push back, reject college's dress code diktat

■ Girl students of St Francis College plan not to enter institute gates; parents, alumni up in arms over 'long kurti' rule

DAVE BENNETT SILVERY ■ HYDERABAD

Parents of students of St Francis College expressed have displeasure over the management imposing a dress code on girls. Now, the students have planned a protest against the college's action on Monday. According to a post circulating on social media, students have decided not to enter the college gates.

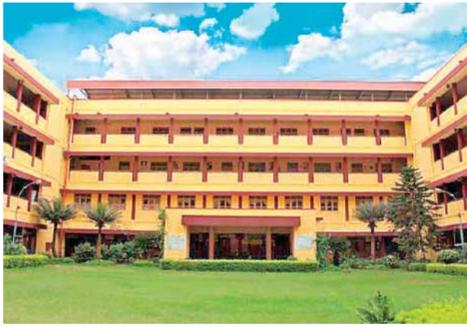
The college's alumni have also raised serious objections to the diktat.

"I am completely against the dress code introduced by the management and what they said in order to reinforce it," said a parent who wished not to be named.

The college management issued a notification over a new dress code in which students were asked to wear only below knee-length kurtis with elbow-length sleeves, else they would not be allowed to enter the college.

Students of the women's college were allegedly stopped on Friday and harassed by the staff who scrutinised their attire at the gate. Most of the girl students were not allowed to enter even if the kurti's length was just a little above the knee.

Students' posts and rants of outrage over the incident have been making the rounds on social media and also caught the attention of some celebrities who condemned the management's "highhanded behaviour". Videos of the 'rule' implementation were shared widely, showing the principal allowing students to enter one



Students of the women's college were allegedly stopped and harassed by the staff who scrutinised their attire at the gate. Most of the girl students were not allowed to enter even if the kurti's length was just a little above the knee

at a time after she determined that their dress adhered to the college's new rule.

"Rather than telling our daughters what to wear, we should tell our sons how to behave with and respect a woman. The college's attitude is not acceptable," said another parent.

In a Facebook post, Zanobia Tumbi, a student of St Francis College for Women said, "This went against the very grain of our values as millennials of the 21st century. Things have got worse, every day we are humiliated for wearing a kurti that is just an inch or less above the knee, we are made to stand outside the college, losing out on classes and tests. Things did

not stop there, the college went ahead and hired female security guards on the pretext of security, these female guards were checking the length of our kurtis. They went ahead and pulled girls by their I-card ribbons and even pulled their kurtis. Now it's time we do something about this."

The dress code notification was issued in August, but was not strictly enforced at first. However, on Friday the college management hired women security guards, who were asked to stop girls who did not follow the dress code from entering the college. Students said that were harassed by the guards. In one video, a student is seen telling the principal that

not all of them come from good financial background to afford to stick to the dress code. The principal replies saying "you have to make a choice".

A student, who was asked to stand out because her dress did not meet the college's rules, said, "If out college, which is supposed to be the best for women in Hyderabad, treats us like this, how are we supposed to be prepared for how the outside world will treat us."

A student representative added, "A college that prides itself on women empowerment, seems to be steeped in patriarchal thinking."

"This way the girls missed their classes and tests as well. Is this what education is... to humiliate them for wearing kurtis a little above their knee? In this particular scenario, a woman is demeaning another woman, which is what girls/women do not need. The college needs to stop humiliating its students," said another parent.

The issue was earlier brought to the management's notice where the students wrote it a letter explaining their plight.

Only five student representatives were allowed to talk to the management (the principal and HoDs). However, even before the students got a chance to talk, the management started off with a speech of Francis's culture and tradition and how tight clothes reveals the body shape which provokes men.

The management went on to add that the male staff are feeling uncomfortable because of the girls' attire.

No uranium mining in Nallamala...

Continued from Page 1

At this point, CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka suggested that the government should to pass a single-sentence resolution in the Assembly stating that the state government would not give permission for uranium mining and send a copy to the Centre.

The Chief Minister accepted the CLP leader's suggestion. Municipal Minister KT Ramarao made it clear in the Legislative Council that the TRS government would not give any permission for uranium mining not only now, but also in future.

During question hour, KTR

said that prospecting for uranium was completed in Lambapur of Nalgonda district, but it could not take place in Nagar Kurnool-Amrabad forests. He cited a statement of the Wild Life Protection Department that it would not give permission for uranium mining though there were uranium deposits in Nallamala forests. KTR then asked: "The Chief Minister has taken up Haritha Haram programme in a big way aiming to protect the environment. How one can expect that he will give permission for uranium mining in the state?"

It may be recalled that protests against uranium min-

ing have gained momentum in the state. The Telangana Congress appointed a committee under the leadership of senior leader V Hanumantha Rao to fight against uranium mining. Cine actor Pawan Kalyan-led Jana Sena, TJS and Left parties too joined hands with the Congress to take up agitations against uranium mining. These parties are conducting an all-party meeting on September 16 in Hyderabad to chalk out an action plan to wage a movement against uranium mining. Celebrities like cine directors and actors as well as netizens were extending their solidarity through social media platforms.

No implementation of new MV...

Continued from Page 1

Some non-BJP ruled states have also refused to toe the line. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has said she would not implement the higher penalties, calling them "harsh".

Many States' unwillingness to implement the new MV Act in letter and spirit comes amid furore over hefty penalties being imposed for violating traffic rules. Among several cases reported last week, a man driving a two-wheeler in Delhi was fined a whopping ₹23,000

for not wearing a helmet and not carrying vehicle-related documents. Similarly, a truck driver in Odisha was fined ₹86,500, but after a five-hour negotiation, reportedly, the driver paid ₹70,000 as fine.

Penalty provisions under the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 came into effect on September 1. States can revise fines for more than two dozen provisions that are compoundable, but penalties for non-compoundable offences—where the nature of the offence is grave—cannot be revised.

Hyd couple, child killed in road accident in Oman

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An Indian couple and their eight-month-old baby were killed while another child was injured when their car crashed into another vehicle in Oman, officials said on Sunday.

The family suffered severe head injuries in the road accident that took place while they were on way back to Dubai from Salalah, the Indian Consulate in Dubai said.

Ghousulla Azmathulla Khan, 30, his 29-year-old wife, Ayesha Siddiqua, and their eight-month-old son Hamza Khan died on the spot in the accident while their three-year-old baby Haniya Siddiqua is fighting for her life in the hospital.

The bodies of the deceased Indians were sent to their hometown in Hyderabad from Muscat this morning, the Indian Consulate in Dubai said.

We have been in touch with the company where Ghousulla was employed as well as the relatives of the family and our mission, the Indian Embassy in Muscat, Consul General of India in Dubai Vipul told Gulf News.

FESTIVITY FOLDS UP



The metal frame of the massive Khairatabad Ganesh being safely dismantled at Tank Bund on Sunday

As Chancellor, new Guv brings hope to TS varsities

MAYANK TIWARI ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana universities were for long waiting for the consideration of the state Governor and Chancellor of universities to conduct review meetings that have been pending for long.

"The last review meeting with vice-chancellors of all the state universities was held eight months ago," said Osmania University Teachers Association (OUTA) president Battu Satyanarayana.

"Former Governor ESL Narasimhan didn't show much interest in the education sector as Chancellor. Nevertheless, now we are hopeful that Tamilisai Soundararajan will make the necessary reforms soon after her appointment. She has called for a long-due meeting."

Without immediate improvements in staff strength, infrastructure and amenities for students in state universities, things are likely to deteriorate further. "OU might as well lose its accreditation of 'A+' to 'B' or even worse," said a professor in Osmania University, who wished not to be named. "It is because the National Assessment and Accreditation Council's (NAAC) ranking is based on teaching quality," the prof



Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan

The last review meeting with vice-chancellors of all the state universities was held eight months ago, said OUTA president

introduced new interactive courses, but a majority of departments do not have educators. "The number of student intake is on the incline, while teaching staff is on constant decline. Students, after joining the university, get disappointed because there are no educators in some of the departments," added Satyanarayana. "Student satisfaction is lost, and with it, the trust of the university too, owing to the negligence of the government. The gross amount allocated in the Budget for education sector came down from 10.88 percent in 2014-15 to 6.75 percent in the current fiscal," said chairman of Centre for Educational Students and Services (CESS), Ngati Narayana. "The Budget shows the government's attitude towards the education sector," he said.

Rescued sloth bear brought to city zoo

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana forest department officials rescued a sloth bear which had strayed into residential areas in Koilkonda mandal of Mahbubnagar district in the early hours of Sunday.

The sight of the bear in the area left residents of Koilkonda panic-stricken. Forest officials later tranquilised and rescued the bear after receiving a complaint from locals.

The animal received a few minor injuries but is safe. It is now in Hyderabad zoo and undergoing treatment, forest officials said.

Veterinarians from the zoo said the bear is recovering and is being fed. Soon after it recovers, it will be released



back into the forest. It is believed to have ventured out from the Koilsagar forest area.

Satya Nadella performs father's last rites

Continued from Page 1

He was the top bureaucrat in the rural development ministry when PV Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister.

In an email statement, Nadella thanked all the well-wishers for their condolences.

"I wish to personally thank all well-wishers for condoling with the passing of my father.

My father cared deeply about all the people and institutions he had the good fortune to work with and serve. And I shall be ever grateful for the love and affection shown to him in return," Satya Nadella said.

Students of RGUKT develop solar-powered bike

■ Propose to also build electric car for speed and acceleration in their next project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The scope of the project involves designing and constructing a prototype of the EV that would be economical, reliable and environment friendly, said students

Undergraduate students of Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies (RGUKT) at Basar in Nirmal district made a solar power regenerative battery-operated electric bike and a cart as part of their college project.

The undergraduate mechanical engineering team designed and designed the all-electric bike aimed at being high-performance and cost-efficient solar vehicle. All kinds of energy used in electric vehicles (EVs) are expensive, so students of RGUKT decided to use sunlight which is ample and available all the time as a renewable energy source.

"With this technology, we

aim to make a solar energy-powered car in our next project," said Raghu, one of the students involved in the project.

The scope of the project involves designing and constructing a prototype of the EV that would be economical, reliable and environment friendly.

The specifications of the motor that drives the pro-

posed EV car have been calculated based on the intended speed and acceleration. "The chassis of the car will be constructed with components such as suspension system, a rack-and-pinion steering and drum brakes. The outer body will be aerodynamic," said another student.

Both, the cart and the motorcycle can run for 60 km on a single charge.



RGUKT students display the solar-powered bike they developed

TRAGEDY STRIKES TOURISTS

OF THE 72 MEMBERS ON BOAT, AT LEAST 36 PERSONS BELONG TO TELANGANA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In the ill-fated boat, there were at least 36 persons belonging to Telangana, including Hyderabad. Of them, 22 hail from erstwhile Warangal district and 14 from Hyderabad. According to reports, they hail from Kadipikonda of Warangal district. They left their place for a tour of Papikondalu on Sep 13. They were identified as Baske Dasaradham, Baske Venkata swamy, Baske Prasad, Baske Avinash, Darsanam Suresh, Sunil, Baske Rajender, Sivvi Venkataiah, Aarepalli Yadagiri, Sunil, Gorre Rajender, Prabhakar, Konduri Raj Kumar, Kommala Ravi and Baske Dharmaraju.

Residents of Hyderabad who were feared dead in the boat tragedy were: Gandhi, Vishal, Lakshman, Janakairam, Rajesh, Raghu Ram, Abdul Salim, Saikumar, Vishnu Kumar,



Maheswar Reddy's family, While Murali and five others survived the boat tragedy, nine others have gone missing. One of the survivors, Murali gave an account of how the tragedy occurred. He said that

the boat tilted to one side at Kachaluru, near Devi patnam, and soon it went completely under the water.

To save his skin, he along with some others climbed onto the top of the boat. Many of his

fellow passengers fell into the river as the water speed increased. He and some others managed to stay on the top of the boat. Around the same time, another boat came their way helping them survive the

accident. Earlier also, two boat tragedies with high casualties were reported from Kachchaluru, where the Royal Punnami went down under water with 62 on board. The water depth is will be about 80 feet in Kachchaluru.

In 1964, at least 60 persons died when a boat 'Udaya Bhaskar' drowned at Kachchaluru. Subsequently, a boat 'Jhansi Rani' drowned at the place leading to death of eight. The Sunday's tragedy occurred soon after the boat set sailed for Papikondalu from Gandi Pochamma temple.

Bitting a boulder is stated to be the cause for the drowning of the launch. The deceased include boat drivers Sangadi Nookaraju and Tamaraju. According to launch owner Venkata Ramana, the drivers did not negotiate a large whirlpool near Kachaluru leading to the tragedy.

'Drivers did not heed warnings, ventured into river'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The owner of the ill-fated Royal Vasistha launch, K Venkata Ramana, claimed on Sunday that the launch had capacity to have at least 90 people on board and that it was equipped with life jackets for 150 people.

However, official sources pointed out that, though the Devipatnam police had warned the drivers against venturing into the river, which had been flowing menacingly, the drivers were adamant. They claimed to have obtained licence from the Kakinada Port authorities and operated the boat, leading to the tragedy. Incidentally, the drivers -- Sangadi Nookaraju and Tamaraju -- figured among the dead. Venkata Ramana said that the course of the swollen river was very rough, especially at Kachchaluru. The drivers



perhaps could not control the vessel at that spot. Moreover, there was a huge whirlpool in the area.

Cell phone signals do not reach the area where the boat went down. The boat owner claimed that the tourists were wearing life jackets at the time of the mishap. According to him, those seated in AC rooms of the launch were missing

The boat owner claimed that the tourists were wearing life jackets at the time of the mishap. According to him, those seated in AC rooms of the launch were missing

Tweets

Extremely pained by the capsizing of a boat in Andhra Pradesh's East Godavari. My thoughts are with the bereaved families
- NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister

The loss of lives due to capsizing of a boat in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh is very unfortunate. I am deeply pained. My thoughts are with families of those who have lost their loved ones. May god give the bereaved families strength to withstand this tragic loss.
- AMIT SHAH, Union Home Minister

Deeply Saddened to learn about the loss of lives in tourist boat capsizing in the Godavari River near Kacchuluru village in Devipatnam Mandal of the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh today.
- VENKAIAH NAIDU, Vice President of India

Deeply anguished at the loss of precious lives due to capsizing of a boat in East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh. My heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased.
- RAJNATH SINGH, Former Union Minister

I'm sorry to hear about the boat accident in the Godavari river, in #AndhraPradesh. My deepest condolences to the families of those who have perished in this tragedy. I pray that all those reported missing will soon be accounted for and that they are safe.
- RAHUL GANDHI, Congress

Saddened at the loss of lives in the Godavari boat tragedy in Andhra Pradesh. My condolences to the families of the deceased. My prayers that the missing passengers are rescued.
- MAMATA BANERJEE, West Bengal Chief Minister

Shocked with the terrible boat accident in AP. Praying for the victims & the bereaved families Will speak to colleague ministers in AP to assist with whatever we can
- KT RAMA RAO, Telangan IT Minister

Boat tragedy near Devipatnam in Andhra Pradesh is unfortunate and I convey my sympathies to bereaved family members. The state government should take necessary measures since the people of Telangana also figured among the dead and lend every support to the bereaved family members.
- T HARISH RAO, TS Finance Minister

Shocked to know about the boat tragedy near Devipatnam. It's painful to note that many tourists from Telangana also figured among the victims. I urge the Andhra Pradesh Government to order a full probe into the boat tragedy. I had spoken to Union Minister of State for Home G Kisan Reddy on the incident.
- K LAXMAN, TS BJP president

SURVIVORS OF THE MISHAP

PNS ■ DEVIPATNAM

Of the 72 people travelling by the ill-fated Royal Vasistha boat that went down the water near here on Sunday, only 27 people survived the tragedy. When the boat capsized, there were nine crew members on the vessel.

1. Bopala Lakshmi (45) - Visakhapatnam
2. Darasanala Suresh (29) - Warangal
3. Baske Venkataswamy (60) -Warangal
4. Baske Dasaradham (52) - Warangal
5. Durgam Madhulata (35) - Tirupati
6. Gorre Prabhakar (47) - Warangal
7. Janaki Rama Rao (65) - Uppal, Hyderabad
8. Arepalli Yadagiri (42) - Warangal
9. Kattapu Gandhi (29) - Vijayawada
10. Galla Sivasankar (25) - Kodada
11. Soteti Rajesh (24) - Sanathnagar
12. Narnapuram Suresh (31)- Jagadgirigutta
13. Mazeeruddin (28) - Hyderabad
14. Kirankumar (29) - Hyderabad
15. Janani Kumar (21) - Hyderabad
16. Kodada Arjun (23) - Hyderabad
17. Gangadhara Kumar - Narsapuram
18. G Subrahmanyam - Hanuman Junction
19. Ungaral Srinu - Hanuman Junction
20. Maddila Jojibabu - Hanuman Junction
21. K Jagannadhareddi - Kadapa



BEFORE MISHAP: The group of tourists from Warangal before boarding the boat

Corpse pose helps man survive tragedy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 65-year-old Janaki Rama Rao from Uppal area of the city survived the boat tragedy by practicing corpse pose of yoga, while many of his fellow tourists were washed away with bleak hopes of their survival given the furious course of the river.

Rama Rao lives in Srinivasa Colony under Medipally police station limits. He along with spouse Jyoti, brother-in-law, brother-in-law's spouse and their son went for pleasure trip two days ago. Barring Janaki Rama Rao, the rest of his family members are missing. On learning about the tragedy, a pall of gloom descended on Srinivasa Colony. Apart from them, Vishal, Dharani Kumar, Arjun and Laddu of Hayath Nagar in the city remained untraced so far. The flood level in the river



Janaki Rama

was put at 5 lakh cusesn when the boat mishap occurred. Besides Janaki Rama Rao, 20 others could reach the shore safely. Janaki Rama Rao is undergoing treatment in a hospital. Narrating how the tragedy took place, he said that the incident had taken place after everybody had finished their breakfast and about to reach Papikondalu in a few moments

and when the launch was passing through 'danger zone', as said by the crew, in the river. The crew asked the tourists not to be afraid as the boat rocks violently because of the flood level in the river. Even as the crew finished cautioning the passengers on board the vessel, the launch started rocking and went to one-side but could not regain its original position, he said.



Navy dispatches diving team, plane

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Indian Navy has dispatched a Dornier plane with a diving team to assist in the search operation to locate missing persons in Godavari river boat capsizing tragedy based on a request from the Andhra Pradesh government. A Naval Dornier along with naval diving team, inflatable Gemini boat and associated equipment was deployed

from Naval Air Station, INS Dega to Rajahmundry on Sunday evening. The naval diving team will join the search operation for missing personnel from the capsized tourist boat in Devipatnam on Sunday. Two naval helicopters will also be deployed from INS Dega with first light on Monday morning to join the search operation along with NDRF, SDRF and civil authorities.

Boat didn't have permission, says AP Tourism Minister

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Much to the chagrin of everyone, the boat which capsized in Godavari River, killing 12 tourists did not have permission. The boat, 'Royal Vasistha' was carrying tourists on Papikondalu tour, without any permission from Andhra Pradesh Tourism Department. It is said to be owned by a person called Kodigudla Venkataramana.

"The boat which was overturned did not have any permission from AP Tourism Department. It was being run by a private operator. As Godavari was in full spate, government boats which were taking tourists on Papikondalu tour were stopped. As soon as we received information about accident, we



Avanthi Srinivas

have pushed into service NDRF teams and even sought Indian Navy's support. Tourism department boats were also immediately pushed into service rescue tourists. We are also using helicopters to rescue travellers on boat," said AP Tourism Minister Avanthi Srinivas.

It is said that the Kakinada Port authorities give permis-

Picnic turns tragedy

PV KONDALU RAO ■ WARANGAL

Seven of the missing tourists in the Papikondalu boat accident are assistant engineers in the Police Housing Corporation who went on a picnic from Telangana state. While four of them are safe, three have not been traced yet. The safe engineers include S.Rajesh(Hyderabad), N.Kiran Kumar(Chithkala, Nalgonda), Sivashankar(Kodada) and Suresh of Hyderabad. The whereabouts of three more -- Surabhi Ravinder(Haliya Nalgonda), Tarun Reddy(Nalgonda) and Hemanth of Warangal are not known.

The engineers are now getting treatment in the Rampachodavaram hospital as per official information from the AP State Government.

Meanwhile the former Deputy Chief minister Kadiyavari Srihari expressed shock over the incident and consoled the bereaved families.

sions to boats operating in the area and depending upon the situation even Tourism Department issues directions on whether to carry or not tourists on Papikondalu tour from time to time. The Royal Vasistha boat is said to have been operating without any information to Tourism Department.

'Carelessness costs lives'

Besides transporting tourists dangerously while Godavari was in full spate, the boat operator is also said to have taken no measures regarding passengers' safety. Even life jackets were not worn by all passengers on board the boat. While about 14 persons wore life jackets, they were saved by local people after the accident.



AP announces Rs 10L ex gratia

CHIEF MINISTER JAGANMOHAN ASKS OFFICIALS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has announced Rs 10 lakh ex gratia to the families of the victims who died in the boat tragedy that took place near Devipatnam in East Godavari district on Sunday. In the wake of the incident, the CM called for an emergency meeting with officials and ordered that all boat services on rivers in the State be cancelled with immediate effect.

He also spoke to Home Minister M Sucharitha, Ministers Kurasala Kannababu and Tourism Minister Avanthi Srinivas who were monitoring the

rescue operations and asked them to deploy NDRF and SDRF personnel to help in rescue operations.

He also requested the Navy to help State government officials in rescue operations. He directed the officials to inspect the licences and check whether necessary safety gear and equipment in the boats are present in the tourist boats. An expert committee should be constituted to suggest guidelines to permit the boats, he added.

The CM wondered how the boat was given permission when the river is in spate and directed the officials to conduct an inquiry to examine how the tragedy occurred.

Stop all boat services: Jagan tells officials

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy ordered to stop all the boat services on rivers in the state with immediate effect, on the wake of boat capsized incident on

Godavari river in East Godavari district. He further ordered officials to check the licences of the boat crew. He asked officials to form an expert committee to suggest guidelines to permit the boats on rivers.

KCR announces Rs 5 L ex gratia

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao announced an ex-gratia payment of Rs five lakh each to the families of the victims from Telangana State who died in the boat tragedy on Godavari in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. Over 20 tourists from the State, including 14 from Warangal, two from Mancherial, one from Nalgonda and some from Hyderabad, were on the ill-fated boat that capsized near Papikondalu in East Godavari District in the neighbouring State. The exact number of tourists from the capital is yet to be established.

Expressing deep shock at the tragedy, Chandrashekar Rao has asked Panchayat Raj Minister Erabelli Dayakar Rao and MLA Aruri Ramesh to rush to the spot and help the families of the

victims there. He also asked Transport Minister P Ajay Kumar to coordinate the relief measures.

The Chief Minister conveyed his deep sympathies to the members of the bereaved families. Since there were people from Telangana among those dead, he instructed officials concerned to take necessary action. Municipal Administration Minister K. T Rama Rao also expressed shock over the boat tragedy near Papikondalu. Describing the incident as a "terrible accident", the minister said he would coordinate with the Andhra Pradesh ministers on help to be extended to them.

Finance Minister T. Harish Rao described the tragedy as most unfortunate and expressed his condolences. He said the Telangana government would extend all possible help to the kin of victims from Telangana State.

SHORT READS



Around 45,000 cases disposed of in MP national Lok Adalat

JABALPUR: Around 45,000 cases, including those pending and in the pre-litigation stage, were disposed of in the national Lok Adalat held in Madhya Pradesh whose proceedings were affected in many districts due to rains and inundation, a senior state government official said on Sunday. The cases pertained to power and water dues, acquisition of land, matrimonial disputes and others. "Proceedings of the National Lok Adalat were affected due to heavy rains and flooding on Saturday in Mandasaur, Dhar, Badwani, Ujjain and Vidisha districts," D K Singh, deputy secretary, MP State Legal Services Authority, told PTI. While proceedings could not be held in Mandasaur due to water-logging of the areas around the district court campus, he said, adding that the work was partially affected in Dhar, Ujjain, Vidisha and Badwani due to heavy rains and flooding. More than 44,970 cases, including those pending and in the pre-litigation stage, were disposed of, he added.

61 held in Mumbai bar raid, four women rescued

MUMBAI: As many as 61 people were arrested and four women dancers rescued after a major raid by police at a bar in suburban Borivali, a senior police official said on Sunday. Acting on a tip-off that some obscene activities were going on at Charvak Bar, the police raided the premises around 11.30 pm on Saturday and found several people there involved in such acts, he said. Following the raid, 32 bar staff members and 29 customers were arrested, the official said. Four bar dancers were rescued from the bar, he added. "The 61 arrested accused were booked under Indian Penal Code Sections 294 (indulging in obscene acts and songs), 114 (abetter present when offence is committed) and 34 (common intention)," Kasturba Marg police station's senior inspector Namdeo Shinde said. All the accused were on Sunday produced before a local court which granted them bail, he said.

Australian man found dead at Jaisalmer guest house

JAIPUR: A 45-year-old Australian citizen was found dead at a guest house in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district, police said on Sunday. The guest house staff found Nocolas's body on Saturday and informed police. The body was then taken to a hospital, said Kiran Kang, Jaisalmer's Superintendent of Police. He had checked into the guest house on Thursday, police said. The Australian high commission in New Delhi has been informed about the incident. Officials said the cause of the death will be known only after postmortem.

'One nation-one language will never be a reality'

PNS ■ BENGALURU

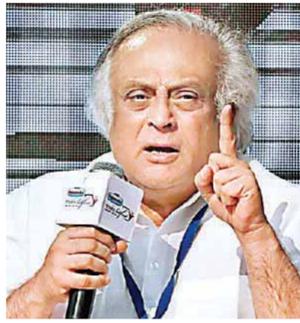
Amid a raging debate over Hindi as a common language for the country, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday said it would never be a reality. The Rajya Sabha member also noted that former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was under daily attack by forces out to "denigrate and obliterate" his legacy and the very idea of India would "die" if his ideas were abandoned.

"...we may have one nation-one tax, but one nation-one language will never be a reality...we are one nation- we are many languages, we are one nation-many countries," he said.

Ramesh, who began his speech by addressing the dignitaries, including the Governor and Chief Minister and the audience in English, Kannada, Hindi, said "I have spoken in three languages in one minute, just to give you a message..."

"We may have one nation-one tax, one nation-one election, but under no circumstances can we have one nation-one culture, one nation-one language," he added.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday had pitched for Hindi as a common language for the country, reigniting the debate on the issue as parties in the South said they would oppose any attempt to 'impose' the lan-



Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday had pitched for Hindi as a common language for the country, reigniting the debate on the issue as parties in the South said they would oppose any attempt to "impose" the language

guage. Congress too had cautioned against stirring up "emotive" issues "settled" by those who framed the Constitution, after Shah said that while diversity in languages is India's strength, a national language is needed so that foreign languages and cultures do not overpower the country's own.

Ramesh was delivering the Sir M Visvesvaraya memorial lecture- "A Prime Minister and an Engineer" at an event organized by the Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry to commemorate the birth anniversary of its founder Visvesvaraya, who was also the Diwan of Mysore state.

A "war cry" against non-Hindi speaking people

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Slamming Union Home Minister



Amit Shah for his Hindi language pitch, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Sunday said it was a "planned attempt" to stir up a controversy and divert attention from pressing problems in the country. He termed it as a "war cry"

against the mother tongue of non-Hindi speaking people.

The Chief Minister, in a Facebook post, said that despite protests erupting in many places on the issue, Shah was not prepared to withdraw from the "hindi agenda", which are signs to show that the sangh parivar was getting ready to open a new "agitational platform". However, Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan welcomed the move, saying language inspires and unites the people and the country's unity can be strengthened through Hindi.

CPI(M) slams Shah's statement

NEW DELHI: Any attempt to impose one language will lead to disruption of the country's unity, the CPI(M) said on Sunday criticising Union Home Minister Amit Shah's comments on Hindi. Shah's statement that "Hindi should be treated as the national language runs contrary to the spirit of the Indian Constitution and our country's linguistic diversity," the Left party said.



"All languages listed in the Eight

Schedule of the Constitution are national languages and must be treated equally. Any attempt to impose any one language will lead to the disruption of our country's unity and integrity," it said in a statement.

Speaking on Hindi Divas, Shah on Saturday pitched for Hindi as a common language, asserting it can unite the nation as it is spoken the most in the country.

Stalin decries "autocratic imposition" of Hindi

CHENNAI: The DMK president M K Stalin on Sunday accused the Centre of "autocratic imposition of Hindi" and underscored the need for unity in opposition ranks to take forward protest against the government on such issues. Addressing an MDMK party event chaired by its leader Vaiko here, Stalin said Tamil was sidelined in the competitive examination conducted by the railways and postal department. After Home Minister Amit Shah's pitch for Hindi as a common link language,

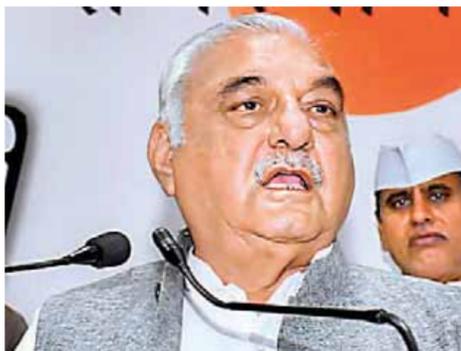
the DMK chief had Saturday said that such a view was against national integrity and demanded that it be taken back. "We have been compelled to go the protest mode everyday to get our rights," he said and sarcastically added "even if we snooze they (the Centre) will thrust Hindi and ease out Tamil if we tired."

Pondy CM registers protest

PUDUCHERRY: Puducherry Chief Minister V



Narayanasamy on Sunday registered strong protest against Union Minister Amit Shah's pitch for Hindi as common language and claimed it was a "clear exposure of the hidden agenda" of the Centre to impose the language on non-Hindi speaking states. The CM's comments come a day after Shah batted for a common language for the country and said it is Hindi which was spoken the most and can unite the whole country. "India is a multi lingual, multi cultural and secular nation and any move to impose Hindi would only strike at the pluralistic features of the nation and its cultural identity," Narayanasamy said.



BJP's Ladakh MP puts conditions before mega solar power project

PNS ■ LEH

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, the BJP MP representing Ladakh Lok Sabha constituency, has welcomed the Rs 50,000-crore mega solar power project in the region, but made it clear that it can go ahead if jobs are reserved for the locals and can work on a land lease model.

Protecting the fragile ecology of Ladakh is of paramount importance, Namgyal said, adding the investor should also devote a part of the earnings as royalty for the locals.

Following the Centre's moves to abrogate Article 370 and create a separate Union Territory of Ladakh, there has been media report of a Rs 50,000-crore solar power project coming up in the region.

"Investments are essential to come from outside, I welcome those. But there are a few conditions - we can't give the land in



"The developmental model should keep in mind the fragile ecology of the region. We are not going to allow you otherwise, he made it clear"

your name, you will have to take it on lease and a portion of the jobs will have to be reserved for the local youth.

"And whatever you earn from here, a part of it will have to be given to the council fund as roy-

alty for ground development," he said.

The developmental model should be keeping in mind the fragile ecology of the region. We are not going to allow you otherwise, he made it clear.

The need is to tread on a "middle path" between the development and the local interests, such that both the Ladakhis as well as rest of India benefit, he said.

"It's not that we are closing ourselves, nor do we want anybody to exploit Ladakh," he stressed. Namgyal said Ladakh always possessed huge potential to develop solar energy and credited the Narendra Modi government for trying to tap the potential.

The young lawmaker said Ladakh should not be looked at as an infertile piece of land alone, pointing to the region being an important tourist destination, rich in rare medicinal plants and also a repository of glaciers.

The Rs 50,000-crore project is touted as the single biggest investment in the space. A recent media report said sites have been identified for the grid-connected project.

4 lions rescued from 100-foot deep dry well in Gir forest

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

Three lions and a lioness were rescued from an open well in Sarasiya range of Gir East forest division in the early hours of Sunday, an official said. The unused well was about 100 feet deep and was situated on a farm in Manavav, and the four big cats, in the 2-3 year age group, fell into it on Saturday evening, Sarasiya Range Forest Officer M R Odedra said. "The farm owner alerted us. A forest department team managed to rescue the lions and lioness after working through the night. The well was dry and the four had to be dragged out with the help of residents and equipment we had carried for the purpose," he said. The incident comes within a month of the state government telling the Gujarat HC that it had, so far, constructed 37,201 parapets on open wells in forests to prevent lions from falling into them.

At party workers' meet, Hooda gives call to oust Khattar govt

PNS ■ LEH

Senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Sunday said the days of the "anti-people" BJP government in Haryana are numbered and people have made up their mind to throw them out of power in the upcoming Assembly polls.

The Haryana Congress Legislature Party leader said the "false promises" made by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have been exposed before the people. Addressing a party workers' meeting in Faridabad, Hooda called on all Congress workers to work hard to oust the BJP regime.

He also targeted the BJP governments at the Centre and in Haryana over the amended Motor Vehicles Act.

Giving an example where a hefty challan was imposed on a motorcyclist in Gurgaon for violations, Hooda said under the amended act hefty challans were being issued, which were burdening the common people. "A bike is worth Rs 15,000, but a challan is issued for Rs 15,000," he said.

Targeting the Khattar government, Hooda said, "This government showed hurry to implement the amended Act because it is an anti-people government...when we come to power,

we will reduce the fines". The Leader of Opposition in the presence of state Congress chief Kumari Selja further said "all sections of the society were fed up with the BJP government".

"All sections of the society, including farmers, workers, traders and government employees, have been hit by the anti-people policies of the BJP," the former Haryana chief minister said. On law and order front, Hooda claimed that no person in the state is happy or safe as the state has become a hideout of criminals. "The days of the anti-people BJP-led government in Haryana are numbered and people of the state have made up their minds to vote it out," he said.

Appealing to the people to strengthen the hands of the Congress, he said only his party can get rid of "this anti-people government". He said the BJP made tall promises to the people before coming to power but failed to fulfill them. "Whereas, whatever the Congress promised in its manifesto in 2005, 2009, we fulfilled that," he said. Hooda said if the Congress comes to power, it will increase the old age pension, give pay scales to its employees at par with those enjoyed by Punjab government employees and develop Faridabad at par with Gurgaon.

'Zindagi' edu prog in Odisha wins praise from Hrithik

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A noble initiative in Odisha to mentor aspiring medics from financially downtrodden families has drawn effusive praise from Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan among others.

Modelled along the lines of Super 30, helmed by ace mathematician Anand Kumar, non-governmental organisation Zindagi Foundation runs a free-of-cost coaching programme for poor students aspiring to crack the NEET exam, and also bears their food and lodging expenses.

Roshan, who earned accolades for playing Kumar in the recently released 'Super 30', took to Twitter to laud the efforts of Ajay Bahadur Singh, the man behind the success stories of Odisha boys and girls hailing from remote areas of Koraput, Behrampur, Angul, Malkangiri, among other areas.



"What a fantastic initiative. Kudos to you, Ajay Bahadur Singh," the actor tweeted.

"Zindagi", as the project has been named by Singh, also drew appreciation from Kumar, who had pioneered the initiative in Bihar way back in 2002 by providing free food and lodging along with regular tuitions to 30 meritorious students willing to crack JEE exams.

"It's heartening to see that the concept is inspiring people like Ajay Bahadur Singh, who

'Zindagi', as the project has been named by Singh, also drew appreciation from Kumar, who had pioneered the initiative in Bihar way back in 2002 by providing free food and lodging along with regular tuitions to 30 meritorious students willing to crack JEE exams

has launched a similar effort," Kumar told PTI.

Others who have extolled the "Zindagi" programme include writer and director Ratan K Gupta, filmmaker Harshan Shankar and Punjab's ex-education minister Amarjeet Singh.

Singh, who had to give up his dream of becoming a doctor early in life and sell tea and sherbet to sustain his family, said "kind words" from different sections of the society

have boosted his confidence.

"It will inspire me to serve the society with greater dedication," he told PTI on Sunday.

Currently, the 'Zindagi' programme is mentoring and providing for 19 students, selected through a statewide screening test, in the state capital.

Last year, 14 of its students had cracked NEET, 12 of whom secured admission in government medical colleges. Chief minister Naveen

Patnaik had in July invited the meritorious students here and felicitated them.

Senior coordinator of the Zindagi Foundation, Shiven Kumar Choudhry, said the accolades received from a large cross-section of people have helped the students firm up their resolve to do well in life, some of whom hail from families of vegetable sellers, fishermen and marginal farmers.

As "guru dakshina" (fees), Singh said, the students are told to take a pledge that they would never turn away "hapless patients with empty pockets".

Asked why he chose to name his educational programme "Zindagi", he said, "It is inspired by the thought 'zindagi jeetna sabhi chahte hain, par kisi aur ki zindagi jeetna sab ki bas ki baat nahin hain' (everybody wants to triumph in life, but it's rare to win over others).

'Safarnama' New app to let people engage with heritage on the go

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking to engage the people with architectural legacy and the forgotten stories of the past, a new heritage app is all set to be launched on Tuesday that will allow them to "digitally interact" with Delhi's cultural landmarks.

The app -- 'Safarnama' -- is endowed with an "enormous range of material" drawn from archives in India and abroad, said Deborah Sutton, the principal investigator of the project.

"From conception to execution, the project has taken us nearly two years, and the app uses the GPS location of the phone to pinpoint the heritage buildings nearby with a small notification that pops up once in the vicinity," Sutton told PTI.

She said the idea of such an app is to make people engage with history and heritage on a daily basis and on the go.

The Android-based app,

available on Google Play, has two components -- Delhi Partition City and Ghadar se Azadi Tak -- spanning the period from 1857-1947.

"After downloading the app, a user will need to scan QR codes available on customised postcards which we have designed for the project. After scanning, the user would be able to access the archival material pre-loaded in the app," said Sutton, who is from Lancaster University in the UK.

The material has been drawn from the Delhi State Archives, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, British Library, University of Michigan repository, Library of Congress in the US, Times of India archives, among other sources, she said.

"The idea is to enhance the digital heritage experience with audio-visual aid and pictures embedded in the app. So, if a user is walking through



Chandni Chowk and happens to be nearby Begum Samru's Palace, he or she will get a pop-up notification," Sutton said. "Quite often we walk past a place but don't know the layers of history that lie behind it.

Also, in many cases old buildings have either been renamed, re-purposed or rebuilt after demolition. So this app essentially creates a sense of curiosity among people about the city's heritage," she said.

So, many people walking on the Rajpath or Janpath almost regularly wouldn't know they were originally called Kingsway and Queensway respectively, or the story behind those names. The app with its archival bank

"After downloading the app, a user will need to scan QR codes available on customised postcards which we have designed for the project. After scanning, the user would be able to access the archival material pre-loaded in the app"

past" too, with the help of archives, she said.

The project was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the UK and Lancaster University, she said.

The partners in the project included, INTACH Delhi Chapter, 1947 Archives, and Centre for Community Knowledge at Ambedkar University in Delhi, said Sutton, who has a PhD in History from the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

The Ghadar se Azadi Tak segment deals with the 1857 Mutiny, creation of new imperial capital of New Delhi (from 1911-1931) and its growth till 1947 when India earned Independence.

Sutton said, people are busy with their daily lives and so the app seeks to engage them with their surrounding landmarks. "So, people going to office, or transiting from one place to another in a cab, or travelling

to airport, these are the moments when the app will alert them if they are travelling past an old monument or take them to the stories associated with these landmarks," the researcher said.

If a user has chosen 1947 Partition City segment on the app, and travelling past Purana Quila, then a notification will come up to inform that refugees from Pakistan had sought shelter here right after the bloody Partition, she said.

"We are launching the app on Tuesday in Delhi and soon we will decide where all these QR-code postcards will be available. Also, this is a first version of the app and we invite suggestions from people to improve it or point mistakes if any," Sutton said. "The primary idea is that a person can be made aware of heritage not just during a heritage walk but can also be engaged during day-to-day lives as well," she said.

'Nearly two dozen terrorists in and around Srinagar'

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Nearly two dozen terrorists are present in the city and its periphery and even openly threatening shopkeepers in some areas, raising serious concern in the security establishment, according to officials.

However, security forces are taking all precautions to ensure that the terrorists do not use the situation to cause any flare-up as in the past incidents of stone pelting by youths have occurred during anti-militancy operations, they said.

There have been only stray protests since the government imposed severe restrictions on communication channels and movement of people after it announced its decisions to abrogate the special status accorded to Jammu and Kashmir and split the state into two Union territories on August 5.

Restrictions have subsequently been eased, but the situation in Kashmir Valley seems "far from normal", particularly with a high presence of terrorists, they said.

At many places in Downtown Srinagar, the terrorists have been seen roaming freely and even warning shopkeepers to keep their shops



Jammu and Kashmir Police chief Dilbag Singh did not rule out the possibility of presence of terrorists but said to claim that they are roaming freely "is an exaggeration"

shut and adhere to their diktats, the officials said.

Jammu and Kashmir Police chief Dilbag Singh did not rule out the possibility of presence of terrorists but said to claim that they are roaming freely "is an exaggeration".

From interactions with several officials of the state as well as the Centre, it is estimated that around two dozen terrorists are well-entrenched within the city limits, while their movement and visibility in

rural areas have become a routine.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said counter-militancy operations have taken a severe hit ever since August 5 when the government announced its decisions on Jammu and Kashmir.

Only two operations have taken place since August 5 -- one in Baramulla on August 20 and another chance encounter in Sopore on September 9.

The terrorists have erected

blockades in certain parts of the city, including in areas adjoining Anchar Lake and Soura.

The officials said that the administration has ensured that there is no civilian death till now and apprehends that any strong action may provide a trigger for violent protests.

Search-and-cordon operations and imposition of night restrictions in the city area had ended in early 2000s and it had been declared as militancy free in 2012, they said.

The officials believe the terrorists have "a deeper game plan" as the violence level has come down despite their "heavy presence".

At many places in the city, including the highly secured Civil Lines areas of Raj Bagh, Jawhar Nagar and Lal Chowk, shopkeepers were threatened at gunpoint to keep their shops shut and ensure a complete hartal.

The shopkeepers and some media outlets have also been asked to keep their peripheral CCTV cameras off, the officials said.

In the militancy-hit areas of Shopian, terrorists burnt down an automobile workshop as it was repairing vehicles on Saturday, they said.



High humidity in northern plains to prevail: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the monsoon showing no signs of withdrawal, north Indian plains are unlikely to get any respite from high levels of humidity this week, MeT officials said on Sunday. The country has so far received four per cent more rains than normal, India Meteorological Department (IMD) data shows.

Normally, the withdrawal of monsoon from parts of west Rajasthan begins from September 1. By September 15, the monsoon withdraws from some more parts of Rajasthan, the areas of Kutch in Gujarat and parts of Punjab. However, monsoon is still active over west Rajasthan this year. Currently,

there is a low pressure area of northwest Madhya Pradesh which is causing good rainfall, said K Sathi Devi, Head of the National Weather Forecasting Centre. This also attracts moisture from the easterlies. Several parts of the north Indian plains have been recording high levels of humidity, which is not a usual phenomenon in September.

High amount of moisture due to the low pressure area, coupled with temperatures, leads to rise in the humidity. Mritunjay Mohapatra, Director General of the India Meteorological Department, said the intensity of the low pressure will be ebbing from Monday but the effect in likely to remain for the next five days.

Major UP rivers in spate, water level at danger mark

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Major rivers in Uttar Pradesh were in spate and some of them were flowing above the danger mark due to release of water from various dams, official sources said on Sunday.

According to a Central Water Commission (CWC) report, the Ganga is flowing above the danger mark in Ballia and Ghazipur. In Varanasi, Allahabad and Badaun, the water level in the river is nearing the danger mark.

Similarly, the Yamuna is flowing above the danger mark in Hamirpur and Chhittigarh (Banda), the Betwa river is above the red mark in Hamirpur. The Sharda and Ghagra rivers are above the red mark in Palliakalan (Lakhimpur) and Elgin Bridge in Barabanki respectively, it said.

The rise in water level in rivers are due to release of water from various dams in the state.



SHORT READS



4 Naxals arrested in Chhattisgarh's poll-bound Dantewada

RAIPUR: Four Naxals were arrested on Sunday from separate places in poll-bound Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh, police said. Two of them were held from within Farspal police station limits while the others were caught in Geedam and Katakalyan, an official said. Dantewada Assembly bypoll is scheduled for September 23 and the arrests came while the District Reserve Guard and Danteshwari Fighters, an all-woman anti-Naxal police unit, were carrying out a joint patrol, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava told PTI. He identified the arrested cadre as Bhime Kowasi (20), a woman member of Mirtur LOS (local organisation squad) with Rs 1 lakh reward on her head, and janmilitia member Ursa Mithu (20), from Kachhe valley, adding that 11 Maoist posters and a set of combat uniforms were seized.

NCMC reviews flood situation in MP, Rajasthan; directs immediate help

NEW DELHI: The National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, on Sunday reviewed the prevailing flood situation in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and directed that immediate assistance be provided to meet the crisis. The NCMC has been informed that action to evacuate and rescue people and livestock has been taken by the states and no loss of life has been reported, a Home Ministry statement said. Adequate teams of the National Disaster Response Force and the Army have also been deployed in rescue work, it said. The Cabinet Secretary took stock of the situation, preparedness, rescue and relief operations and directed that immediate assistance, as sought by the states, be provided to meet the crisis, the statement said.

'Don't post wildlife photos on social media'

JALPAIGURI (WB): Safari jeep drivers and guides working at the Gorumara National Park in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district were on Sunday asked by the authorities to refrain from posting photographs of wild animals on the social media. The national park authorities said the photographs provide vital information about the location of the wild animals to poachers, making their work easy. The instruction was issued on Sunday by Gorumara south division ranger Ayan Chakraborty to the jeep drivers and guides working at the national park. He, along with Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Janmejay Pal, briefed them at the Lataguri Environmental Observatory here, a day before the reopening of all the protected forest areas in the region on Monday. The protected forests remain closed from June 15 to September 15 every year during the breeding period of the animals. The decision to prevent posting of photographs of the wild animals on the social media was taken by the Forest Department during a recent meeting held here, an official of the department said.

RSS is a movement that can change the country, world: Poonia

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Termining the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) a movement that can change the country and the world, newly-appointed Rajasthan BJP chief Satish Poonia on Sunday reiterated there would have been no Hindustan without the Sangh.

Poonia, who comes with an RSS background and was appointed as the state BJP president on Saturday, was speaking to reporters on Sunday after a programme here.



In an apparent attack on the Congress without naming it, he said, "Historical facts are no more hidden...who was behind Partition? Who got in collusion with the Mughals and the Britishers? I feel that without

the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, there would have been no Hindustan."

He continued, "Democracy was saved...along with intact democracy, the country's respect increased across the world. The RSS is not a word but a movement that can change the country and the world." The 55-year-old Poonia was appointed as the state president of BJP Rajasthan on Saturday.

In his first remarks after being appointed, he had praised the RSS on Saturday when he was asked about his Sangh background.

Mumbai's Aarey area is govt land, not forest: Fadnavis

PNS ■ PUNE

Amid protests against the proposed felling of trees in Mumbai's Aarey Colony to make way for a Metro car shed, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday said it is the government's land which does not fall under a forest area. On Yuva Sena chief Aaditya Thackeray's opposition to the proposed felling of over 2,600 trees in the leafy colony, Fadnavis said objections were invited when the decision to set up the car depot for Metro III project in Aarey was taken.



"Around 13,000 objections came...out of those 13,000, 10,000 objections were from one Bengaluru-based website. I can understand the view of Thackeray on this tree felling issue," he said.

'Association with IIM will help UP become USD 1 trillion economy'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said by joining hands with IIM-Lucknow, the state government will deliver good governance and achieve the goal of becoming a USD 1 trillion economy. Adityanath was speaking at the second edition of 'Manthan' -- a leadership development programme conducted by senior faculty of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) here for the chief minister and his ministerial colleagues.

As part of the programme, Adityanath and his colleagues will attend one more session.

"I am confident that when institutions like the IIM join hands with the government and take forward the programmes, we will be able to deliver good results," Adityanath said at the programme which was attended by



his ministerial colleagues and state government officials.

"Through this programme, we will be able to deliver development and good governance to people of Uttar Pradesh and also reach the figure of USD 1 trillion economy," he added.

"This is team work and (teaches us) how we can work as a team for the development of the state, give results and achieve targets. I feel Manthan-2 will help in achieving the targets of development and good governance for the state," he said further.



Def Min condoles death of Army's canine soldier 'Dutch'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday condoled the death of Army's "canine soldier" Dutch, credited with successfully sniffing out explosives during several military operations.

The Raksha Mantri has expressed his condolences at the death of 'Dutch' a 'Canine Soldier' who recently died after serving the Army and the nation for years," tweeted the Office of Defence Minister.

"Dutch was a decorated dog of #EasternCommand who was instrumental in identifying IEDs in various

CI/CT Ops (sic), it added. Nine-year-old Dutch, a Labrador, died due to natural causes on September 11 and the memorial service was held at the Tezpur-based 19 Army Dog Unit in Assam.

#ArmyCdrEC condoles the death of 'Dutch' a 9 yr old ED dog who died on 11 Sept. He was a decorated dog of #EasternCommand who was instrumental in identifying IEDs in various CI/CT Ops. A real hero in service to nation. #Salute @adgpi @SpokespersonMOD, (sic) the Eastern Command of the Army had tweeted on Saturday.

Gangwar 'insulting' north Indians: Priyanka

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday accused Union Minister of State Santosh Kumar Gangwar of insulting north Indians by saying that recruiters complain of paucity of "quality people" in this

part of the country for the posts they wish to fill.

Minister of State for Labour and Employment (Independent Charge) Gangwar had on Saturday told reporters in Bareilly that there was no dearth of employment in the country, but the recruiters visiting

North India complain of dearth of "quality people" here to fill vacancies in their firms.

"The issue of employment keep figuring in newspapers these days. I am handling the same ministry for labour and employment and examine the issue daily. I have understood the problem," he said.

Nobel Media CEO says humanity can change the world

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Nobel Prize shows that humanity can change the world for the better, Nobel Media CEO Laura Sprechmann said as she praised Nobel peace prize winner Kailash Satyarthi for motivating children to realise their dreams.

Sprechmann, who is in India for the 'Nobel Prize Series 2019', the third such series in the country, said that investing in education is investing in the future.

An exhibition, as part of the world premiere of the third edition of 'Nobel Prize Series India 2019' highlighting how Nobel laureates made the world a better place, was inaugurated

Serge Haroche, the winner of Nobel Prize for Physics in 2012; Kailash Satyarthi, recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize; Sprechmann; Rahul Mehta, founder of the philanthropic organisation Mehta Family Foundation which is focused on education, children, and healthcare, interacted with students as part of the programme

LAUDS KAILASH SATYARTHII



in Mohali on Wednesday. Serge Haroche, the winner of Nobel Prize for Physics in 2012; Kailash Satyarthi, recipient

of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize; Sprechmann; Rahul Mehta, founder of the philanthropic organisation Mehta

Family Foundation which is focused on education, children, and healthcare, interacted with students as part of

the programme.

"Education enables us to become active citizens and reach new insights in our quest. The Nobel Prize shows that humanity can change the world for the better and it starts with education," she said.

"Education enables us to become active citizens and reach new insights in our quest to understanding ourselves and our universe. By making education accessible to everyone, we can make sure that human potential does not get wasted," she added.

The Nobel Prize Series inspires people to seek knowledge, ask questions and contribute to improving the world, Sprechmann said.

Doordarshan turns 60, people become nostalgic

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Doordarshan turned 60 on Sunday bringing back memories of a golden period when entertainment in the country revolved around serials such as Mahabharata, Fauji and Malgudi Days.

People turned nostalgic on Twitter to mark the public service broadcaster of India's 60 years with several of them asking on social media "which is your favourite DD shows".

Some posted its iconic logo that used to appear before the start of programmes with its characteristic tune.

There were many who shared their fond memories associated with Doordarshan and remembered iconic shows that made their childhood days memorable.

Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati said, "It's a moment to recognise that it's not that Doordarshan has gotten older, but it is getting newer for digital audiences"

Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati said, "It's a moment to recognise that it's not that Doordarshan has gotten older, but it is getting newer for digital audiences."

"It is not only that Doordarshan has turned 60 but the history of television broadcasting in India now spans 6 decades - a milestone for all of TV industry in India," he said.

Doordarshan Director General Supriya Sahu said, "Doordarshan is in the DNA of India. Happy Birthday

Doordarshan. 60 Glorious Years of DD. May you continue to enthral generations of Indians."

"Starting off as an experiment in 1959, Doordarshan can take pride in the fact that it has emerged as one of the leading broadcasters in the world," Sahu said in a video message.

From the days of Ramayana, Hum Log, Buniyaad, Surabhi, till today Doordarshan gives high-tech coverage of national and international events, she



said, adding that Doordarshan has been a "trailblazer".

Doordarshan, which began as an experiment on September 15, 1959, became a service in 1965, when it began beaming signals to reach television sets in living rooms in and around the

national capital. By 1972, services were extended to Mumbai and Amritsar and then to seven other cities by 1975.

All this time, it was part of the national broadcaster, All India Radio. On April 1, 1976, it transitioned to become a sepa-

rate department in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Over the years, Doordarshan has grown into a network operating 34 satellite channels, besides providing free-to-air DTH service having 104 in its bookings.

Many a career were launched on this platform, including that of Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan who became a household name after his serial Fauji, and many shows went on to become classics.

Entertainment shows like Chitrahaar, Mahabharat, Dekh Bhai Dekh, Fauji, Malgudi Days, among others, captured the imagination of the Indian public in the late 80s and early 90s, and still remains etched in people's minds as pure entertainment that brought people together.

Delhi railway police helpline flooded with requests to get pizzas, burgers delivered

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

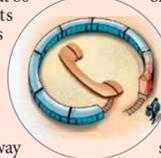
The railway police in Delhi is having a tough time as a bulk of phone calls about 80 per cent on its helpline per day is related to requests for pizza delivery, mobile recharges or other such trivial matters.

The Delhi Railway Police Control Room receives 200 phone calls on an average on its 1512 helpline daily, and during 80 per cent of such calls, passengers either

request the staff to get eatables such as pizzas and burgers delivered to them or enquire about railway jobs, police said on Sunday.

"Get my phone recharged, get pizza delivered, I want two burgers, tea, juices, cold water are some of the demands the passengers make," a senior police officer said.

There are also passengers who seek police assistance in getting their electricity bill paid or train tickets booked.



Iran refutes US claim it's behind Saudi oil attacks

AFP ■ TEHRAN

Iran on Sunday dismissed US accusations it was behind drone attacks on Saudi oil installations, suggesting the United States was seeking a pretext to retaliate against the Islamic republic.

"Such fruitless and blind accusations and remarks are incomprehensible and meaningless," foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi was quoted as saying in a statement.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo condemned Iran after Saturday's attacks, which knocked out half of Saudi Arabia's oil production.

Yemen's Iran-aligned Shiite Huthi rebels claimed responsibility for the drone strikes, but Pompeo said "there is no evidence the attacks came from Yemen".

"The United States will

work with our partners and allies to ensure that energy markets remain well supplied and Iran is held accountable for its aggression," the top US diplomat tweeted.

Mousavi said the US allegations over the pre-dawn strikes on Abqaiq and Khurais in Eastern Province were meant to justify actions against Iran.

"Such remarks... Are more like plotting by intelligence and secret organisations to damage the reputation of a country and create a framework for future actions," he said.

Tehran and Washington have been at loggerheads since May last year when President Donald Trump pulled out of a 2015 deal that promised Iran relief from sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

Since the withdrawal, the

United States has slapped crippling sanctions on Iran as part of a campaign of "maximum pressure" and the Islamic republic has responded by reducing its commitments to the nuclear accord.

"The Americans have taken the policy of 'maximum pressure' which has apparently turned into 'maximum lying' due to their failures," said Mousavi.

The arch-foes were on the cusp of confrontation in June when Iran downed a US drone and Trump ordered retaliatory strikes before cancelling them at the last minute.

In remarks published Sunday, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' aerospace arm said Iran's missiles could hit US bases and ships within a range of 2,000 kilometres (about 1,240 miles).

Saudi halts production at attacked oil plants: Minister

AFP ■ RIYADH

Saudi Arabia has temporarily halted production at two Aramco oil facilities that were attacked by Yemeni rebels, interrupting about half of the company's total output, the energy minister said Saturday.

The attacks "resulted in a temporary suspension of production at Abqaiq and Khurais plants," Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, the energy minister said in a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency.

It led to the interruption of about 50 per cent of total production, he added.

"These attacks resulted in production suspension of 5.7 million barrels of crude oil per day," the state-owned Aramco said in a separate statement.

Underfire PM calls up Hulk, claims 'huge' Brexit progress

AFP ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson insisted Sunday that "huge" progress was being made in Brexit talks and declared Britain would break out of the European Union just like the comicbook hero Hulk.

The Conservative leader made the comments ahead of meetings with European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker and EU negotiator Michel Barnier in Luxembourg on Monday.

In an interview with the Mail on Sunday newspaper, Johnson said he was "very confident" of getting a divorce deal at an EU summit on October 17, in time for Brexit on October 31.

In an odd analogy, he compared Britain to the comic book character Hulk. "The madder Hulk gets, the stronger Hulk gets and he always escaped, no matter how tightly bound in he seemed to be -- and that is the case for this country," he said.

But Johnson is facing opposition in parliament to his threat to leave the EU without a deal next month if his negotiations fail.

On Saturday night, one of his Conservative MPs defected to the pro-European Liberal Democrats.

Former universities minister Sam Gyimah, who has called for a re-run of the 2016 Brexit referendum, condemned Johnson for "veering towards populism".

Meanwhile former prime minister David Cameron, who led the failed campaign to stay in the EU in 2016, accused Johnson in his memoirs of only pursuing Brexit out of political ambition.

The turmoil comes ahead of another crucial week, as the Supreme Court considers the legality of Johnson's decision to suspend parliament earlier this month until October 14.

Johnson was a leading "Leave" campaigner in the referendum, and took office in July promising to deliver Brexit no matter what.

He wants to renegotiate the terms struck by his predecessor Theresa May, which MPs have rejected, but EU leaders have so far refused.

He told the Mail there was a "very good conversation" going on about the key sticking point, the issue of the Irish border.

"A huge amount of progress is being made," he said.

Much of the opposition in London to the current Brexit deal is focused on the so-called backstop plan to keep open the Irish border.

It could keep Britain indefinitely tied to EU trade rules to avoid frontier checks between British Northern and EU member Ireland.

Brexit minister Steve Barclay insisted "the backstop needs to go", but fuelled speculation that an alternative might be taking shape.

"We can see a landing zone in terms of a future deal but there is significant work still to do," he told Sky News television on Sunday.

"The talks tomorrow will be an important step forward as part of that and they build on significant discussions that have been happening at a technical level."

Johnson repeated that "under no circumstances" would he delay Brexit. However, he may have no choice after MPs last week passed a law to postpone until January if he does not get a divorce deal by the EU summit.

Twenty-one Conservatives rebelled to back the law and were expelled from the party, leaving Johnson without a majority in the House of Commons. One of the rebels was Gyimah, who becomes the Lib Dems' 18th MP in the 650-seat chamber.

The 43-year-old was once viewed as a rising star in the Conservatives and briefly ran against Johnson for the party leadership. But he said Johnson had left moderates like him with a "stark choice... To accept a no deal Brexit or walk away from public life".

HK returns to violence with tear gas, Molotovs

AFP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong riot police fired tear gas and water cannons at hardcore pro-democracy protesters hurling rocks and petrol bombs on Sunday, tipping the violence-plagued city back into chaos after a brief lull in clashes.

Tens of thousands of people defied authorities to march through the streets of the city in an unsanctioned rally on Sunday, the latest expression of a popular revolt that has raged for the last 99 days.

But the rally descended into violence when small groups of hardcore activists -- known within the movement as "braves" -- tried to attack the city's main government complex.

Police fired repeated volleys of tear gas and deployed water cannon trucks after Molotov cocktails and rocks were thrown over security barriers surrounding the complex, which has become a frequent flashpoint in the ongoing protests.

Local television networks



An anti-government protester throws a Molotov cocktail during a demonstration near Central Government Complex in Hong Kong on Sunday. AP

broadcast footage of protesters tearing down and burning a banner celebrating the upcoming 70th anniversary of the founding of communist China -- as well as burning a Chinese flag. As evening set in, protesters retreated, chased by riot officers and water cannon firing blue-dyed water.

Some demonstrators built barricades, set fires and vandalised subway stations but the crowds avoided further

direct clashes and largely ran away when ranks of police officers got close.

The clashes ended a relative lull in recent days in the intensity of skirmishes between police and protesters.

The once-stable international hub has been convulsed by weeks of huge, sometimes violent rallies calling for greater democratic freedoms and police accountability.

Hard Brexit threat looms over French fishing fleet

AFP ■ GRANVILLE (FRANCE)

The waters for French fishermen are being stirred up by uncertainty of what will happen if Britain leaves the EU without a deal on October 31 and their boats barred from British waters.

A no-deal Brexit would likely end access for French boats to British waters and, in France, fishing industry players fear this will not just increase tensions with rivals across the Channel but between themselves.

Sophie Leroy, whose Armement Cherbourgeois company operates three fishing vessels off the northwest coast of France, says there have been almost daily checks of their boats by the British authorities.

Earlier this month, her boats were stopped for what she described as an interminable set of checks 21 miles off the English coast.

Her boats were also surrounded by 15 British fishing vessels, she said. "And they were saying, 'We are going to do

the same as what the French did to us last year'."

The "Scallop Wars" in 2018, when French and British fishing vessels clashed over access to scallops off France's Normandy coastline, was finally settled by the two sides in a deal last September.

While a Brexit deal would help put a framework in place, Britain anticipates the possibility of more clashes between rival fishing vessels if the country pulls out of the EU with no agreement in place. The government last week released a study of that scenario, code-named "Operation Yellow Hammer", after a copy of the document was leaked to the press.

One issue it addressed was the possibility that EU vessels could illegally enter British waters, leading to "clashes between vessels", "violent disputes" or even the "blockading of ports". So far this time around the two sides have not actually come to blows.

But Leroy referred to what she called a "war of nerves" online.

Jeddah-bound PIA flight makes emergency landing

PTI ■ LAHORE

A major tragedy was averted on Sunday when an agile pilot successfully landed a Pakistan International Airlines flight carrying about 200 passengers onboard after one of its engines caught fire minutes after take off.

The Jeddah-bound flight PK-759 was forced to make an emergency landing back to Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore after one of its engines caught fire during take off. "One of the engines of the aircraft caught fire during the take off Sunday morning and the pilot alerted the control room about it and sought for emergency landing," an official of the airlines told PTI.

He said the pilot successfully landed the plane and no passenger was injured.

The passengers were sent to Jeddah on another aircraft in the afternoon while the plane has been grounded for repair work.

PIA spokesperson Mashhood Tajwar, however, claimed that the plane had not caught fire.

Decks collapse during firefighter event; 22 injured

AP ■ WILDWOOD, (NEW JERSEY, US)

A home's multilevel deck collapsed Saturday evening at the Jersey Shore during an event weekend, trapping people and injuring at least 22, including some children, officials said.

No deaths were reported. The collapse happened around 6 p.m. Saturday in Wildwood during the annual New Jersey Firemen's Convention.

It was unclear how many people were on or under the decks at the time, or how many were firefighters, but authorities said those who were trapped were quickly removed.

The annual convention attracts thousands of current and former firefighters to the resort town. Firefighters were likely among those hurt or trapped.

Cape May Regional Health System said 21 people were taken there, at least three of them children. Eleven patients had been released by 10 p.m., including all the children who

were admitted, hospital spokeswoman Susan Staeger said.

AtlanticCare Regional Medical Center in Atlantic City said at least one additional person was taken there.

The conditions of the remaining hospitalized people wasn't known.

Photos and video on social media showed firefighters trying to lift a piece of decking. Images showed multiple levels of decking ripped away from the building and reduced to beams and splintered wood.

The decks appeared to have been attached to a three-story building and topped by a fourth-floor overhang.

The second and third levels appeared to have pancaked onto a first-floor deck. The overhang looked intact.

Nearby resident Joann Devito saw the collapse from a deck across the street.

"I was sitting on the deck up there, and I heard this noise, so I turned and looked and saw the whole thing caving in," she said.

"I saw two women running and screaming. It was horrible."

Over 2,000 fetal remains found at ex-abortion doctor's home

AP ■ JOLIET (ILLINOIS, US)

More than 2,000 medically preserved fetal remains have been found at the Illinois home of a former Indiana abortion clinic doctor who died last week, authorities said.

The Will County Sheriff's Office said in a news release late Friday that an attorney for Dr Ulrich Klopfer's family contacted the coroner's office Thursday about possible fetal remains being found at the home in an unincorporated part of Will County in north-eastern Illinois.

The sheriff's office said authorities found 2,246 preserved fetal remains but there's no evidence medical procedures were performed at

the home.

The coroner's office took possession of the remains. An investigation is underway.

A message left Saturday seeking additional comment on the discovery was not returned by the Will County Sheriff's Office investigations department.

Klopfer, who died September 3, was a longtime doctor at an abortion clinic in South Bend, Indiana. It closed after the state revoked the clinic's license in 2015.

The Indiana State Department of Health had previously issued complaints against the clinic, accusing it of lacking a registry of patients, policies regarding medical abortion, and a governing body to determine policies.



Israeli soldiers chat as they stand guard for a weekly cabinet meeting, in the Jordan Valley, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Sunday. AP

Cleanup resumes in Bahamas as Humberto swirls away

AP ■ MCLEAN'S TOWN (BAHAMAS)

Jeffrey Roberts lifted a mustard-yellow curtain from the ground as he looked for passports and other documents at the site where his family's home once stood in Grand Bahama.

He then moved the cloth aside, picked up a pair of old, rusty pliers, and continued his search.

"We got to take what God gives us," Roberts said in reference to Tropical Storm Humberto, which narrowly missed the island over the weekend as it continued on its northward trajectory well offshore of Florida's east coast.

By early Sunday morning, the US National Hurricane Center said the storm was located about 137 miles (220 kilometers) north of Great Abaco Island and was moving at 7 mph

(11 kph) north-northwest with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (97 kph).

Weather forecasters said it would likely become a hurricane by The storm briefly shuttered a couple of small airports, sent people in damaged homes to seek shelter and threatened to interrupt the distribution of sorely needed supplies including food and water.

As the storm barely passed the northern Bahamas, however, Roberts and others were already returning to the task at hand: resuming their cleanup and recovery efforts in communities devastated by Hurricane Dorian two weeks ago.

On Saturday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited the island of Great Abaco to support humanitarian efforts in the wake of the storm, which left thousands in need of food,

water and shelter.

"Hurricane Dorian has been classified as Category 5. I think it's Category Hell," said the secretary-general, adding he was horrified by the "level of systematic devastation."

The death toll from the hurricane stands at 50 and the number of missing at an alarming 1,300 people, although officials caution the list is preliminary and many people could just be unable to connect with loved ones. Meanwhile, detritus was piled high as Bahamians attempted to continue salvaging what was left behind.

On Saturday, Patrice Higgs stood barefoot in her backyard with grey mud caked on her feet. She stared listlessly at the horizon as she occasionally pointed at some of her belongings that remained tangled in the debris and out of reach, including a cream-colored loveseat?

Italy: Rescue boat with 82 migrants can sail to Italian isle

AP ■ ABOARD THE OCEAN VIKING (ITALY)

Italy allowed a charity rescue ship to sail Saturday to a tiny southern island so that 82 migrants aboard could be transferred to shore, but the country's foreign minister cautioned against interpreting the move as a sign the new government is easing a crackdown on humanitarian vessels.

Shortly before midnight, all the migrants had been transferred off the Ocean Viking after several days stranded at sea prior to being given permission to sail to Lampedusa island.

Women, children and unaccompanied minors were put on an Italian coast guard vessel, while men were taken aboard a customs police boat, so all could be brought to Lampedusa's dock.

The Norwegian-flagged ship, which had appealed for days for a port of safety, is operated by two humanitarian groups, Doctors Without Borders and SOS Mediterranee.

Ocean Viking carried out its first rescue, of 50 migrants who were struggling in an unseaworthy rubber dinghy launched by Libyan-based migrant smugglers, on September 8.

The others were rescued the next day. Among the migrants is a 1-year-old boy from Somalia.

"We just heard that we have been assigned a place of safety, we are now on our way" to Lampedusa, Erkinalp Kesikli of Doctors Without Borders said earlier in the day after the ship received a call from Italian authorities about the permission.

Migrants clapped with joy

and excitement.

"We are very happy about the news this morning. It amazes us. This news amazes us," said Myriam Annie Malang, one of the migrants.

"We are arriving at a place where people understand and listen to us. We are very happy to learn that we are disembarking in Lampedusa."

Malang said she had been beaten while detained in Libya, a common account of suffering among migrants waiting to depart the northern African country on smugglers' boats.

She said she had fled conflict between English- and French-speaking communities in Cameroon.

The previous government, under a rigid anti-migrant policy led by right-wing leader Matteo Salvini, banned charity rescue boats from entering Italy's waters and disembarking

migrants on Italy's shores.

Premier Giuseppe Conte's week-old coalition now contains the center-left Democrats, whose leaders have called for a more humane policy on the rescue boats. Italy's current and previous governments have insisted on more solidarity from fellow European Union nations, saying the migrants set out on their journeys seeking asylum or better economic conditions in Europe as a whole, not necessarily in Italy.

Italy's new foreign minister, Luigi Di Maio, leader of the coalition's senior partner, the populist 5-Star Movement, cautioned against concluding his government was softening its stance on private rescue boats.

"I believe there's a big misunderstanding about a safe port given to Ocean Viking," Di Maio told reporters.

"It was assigned a port

because the EU adhered to our request to take the great share of the migrants."

Germany's interior minister said in a report published on Saturday his country is prepared to take in a quarter of migrants rescued off the Italian coast as the European Union tries to find a solution to repeated standoffs involving humanitarian groups' ships.

The Italian news agency ANSA said Germany, France, and Italy were expected to take about 24 migrants each, while the other 10 would go to Portugal or Luxembourg.

While Di Maio insisted that Italy wasn't lifting the ban, championed by former Interior Minister Salvini, on docking by charity rescue boats, lawmakers from the left praised the resolution of Ocean Viking's situation as a break with the previous government's hard line.k

Afghan Taliban rescind ban on Red Cross

AFP ■ KABUL

The Afghan Taliban rescinded a months-long ban on the International Committee for Red Cross (ICRC) working in areas under their control Sunday and restored security guarantees for those working for the organisation.

The militants and the ICRC "consented to following the old agreement on top of new promises in humanitarian aid leading to the Islamic Emirate granting ICRC permission of resuming their activities," said Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in a statement.

S Africa dispatches emissaries to calm xenophobia fears

AFP ■ JOHANNESBURG

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has sent high-ranking emissaries on a mission to reassure African countries after a wave of xenophobic attacks, the presidency said on Sunday.

At least 12 people have been killed in the surge of mob violence targeting foreign-owned businesses and homes, mainly in and around Johannesburg since the start of the month.

Hundreds of economic migrants from neighbouring Zimbabwe and Mozambique

have fled to shelters and Nigeria has flown 600 of its citizens back home after they were targeted in the violence.

The mission, led by former minister Jeff Radebe, left South Africa on Saturday and will visit Nigeria, Niger, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, DR Congo and Zambia, the presidency said.

Ramaphosa was jeered at on Saturday during his speech at Zimbabwe ex-leader Robert Mugabe's funeral in Harare before he apologised for the attacks, which have been prompted by unemployment and poverty.

PAPER WITH PASSION

Odd-even blues

As Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal proposes the controversial vehicular restriction, we must question its feasibility



Before we start a debate on vehicular curbs in the city, we need to recognise a few things. First, vehicular congestion is a problem and is impacting economic prospects with millions of man-hours lost in fruitless traffic jams in the city. The second is that while vehicular pollution is not the worst sort of pollution, it does create a whole host of noxious gases, particularly nitrous oxides, which are unique to the burning of petroleum products.

In that light is the proposal by the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to reintroduce the "odd-even" vehicle rationing scheme after the Diwali festivities to control the November smog practical or not? There is after all, little evidence to show that previous "odd-even" schemes have worked significantly and one must remember that the last time it was planned, the scheme was shot down by the courts. Besides, pollutants have been going down this year. But Kejriwal has cited an issue that he has no control over, namely stubble burning in neighbouring States.

While a vehicular restriction scheme is not a bad idea per se, something like "odd-even", which is heavy-handed, needs to be fine-tuned. In this context, Delhi-NCT should take inspiration from other cities where such practices are followed, notably London and Beijing. In Beijing for example, on weekdays numberplate based restrictions affect just 20 per cent of vehicles. In London, a heavy congestion charge on bringing vehicles into the city has resulted in a dramatic decline in inner-city pollution. However, in both cities, both local and regional public transport services, are far superior to that in the Delhi-NCT. The capital of India still suffers from a dramatic shortage of buses for example, something that has not been solved. And while the city has one of the most extensive mass-transit systems in the world today in the form of the Delhi Metro, it barely scratches the surface and one wonders where Delhi would have been minus it. Possibly once the Regional Railway Transit System (RRTS), that will connect Delhi to nearby cities alongside Phase-IV of the Delhi Metro, takes off, there could be potentially a more planned offloading of vehicles from the city's roads. One other problem with "odd-even" plan before was the huge number of exemptions, particularly for two-wheelers and for women. If a scheme is to be successful, not only should all private vehicles be covered, no exemptions must be made. But Delhi-NCT should look at long-term and permanent solutions to vehicular congestion and pollution. A congestion charge in Central Delhi, alongside a steep increase in parking charges for example, could be considered. This could be followed up with building parking towers outside and not just rely on inefficient surface parking. Also the government can look at a "pollution charge." New BS6 capable vehicles, particularly BS6 diesels, are cleaner than their BS3 and BS4 brethren, and since registration data includes such details, these vehicles should be charged extra to enter the congestion zone or at parking bays. Most importantly, just like the Delhi Traffic Police has installed hundreds of cameras across the city to monitor traffic, the State transport department should use the funds raised from the new fines under the Motor Vehicles Act to install more cameras and automated systems for traffic management. As for Diwali, it would be better to crack down on firecrackers as well as increasing awareness drives for the public about the dangers of the toxic gases that these produce.

Myth versus reality

ASCI ticks off misleading ads featuring celebrities as claims are grossly exaggerated



Ad guru Leo Burnett once said how advertising does not just circulate information, it penetrates the public mind with desires and belief. And at a time when lifestyle choices are aplenty and we seek to govern our lives with the right one, advertisements, especially those helmed by celebrities and their

gone-in-60-seconds wisdom, have a profound impact. Artful lying it is, but when it is outright falsehood, there's a problem. That's why the Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI) has decided to verify tall claims made by companies in mass media campaigns and banned 106 of 334 ads for violating consumer rights and interests. Most of these campaigns were by topline brands and found to be selling mistruths concerning crucial sectors like healthcare, home appliances, personal care, housing, food and beverages and education, in short our everyday life and well-being. The ASCI said the commonest reason for pulling out ads was their unsubstantiated and exaggerated claims that exploited the consumers' lack of knowledge. Besides, some of the products made unverifiable leadership claims, improper use of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) logo in contravention of the FSSAI advisory and labelled products organic without fact-checks. One ad claimed an endorsement by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) which had supported the technology but never the product. It also came down heavily on celebrity campaigns, considering their mass popularity and impact, suggesting that each brand ambassador should, while endorsing products, at least ensure that all description, claims and comparisons made in the advertisement are genuine. The misleading advertisements include those of Asian Paints, featuring actors Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone; Fena Superwash Powder peddled by Preity Zinta, cricketers KL Rahul and Ravichandran Ashwin; Eureka Forbes RO hawked by Madhuri Dixit; CricPlay online game by cricketer-turned politician Gautam Gambhir and housing firms ads by actress Vidya Balan.

Earlier, too, products that falsely claim doctoral research or clinically proven results had been pulled out, be it enriching clay shampoos, chemical-free hair colours or pure *atta* noodles, all of which have a certain ratio of concentrates and ingredients that they claim to have done away with. For example, *atta* noodles have *maida* or refined flour, too, and 100 per cent dandruff-free shampoo is never a possibility. Consumer awareness and rights are anyway not scaled up in this country and without questioning, such products are not only misleading and overrated but cheating the consumer of his expectation and right to a good and healthy life. Going by the list, most of the products prey on the consumers' health insecurities instead of addressing them through scientific corroboration. Of course, there are consumer laws and various codes about advertisement in general to curb malpractices. And though food safety norms have made labelling with details mandatory, the same does not extend to other product categories with equal seriousness. However, the absence of a single statutory, regulatory body further aggravates the problem. But hopefully this will be taken care of by the Consumer Protection Bill 2019, which seeks to penalise deceptive advertisements. Disclaimers should run as tickers on both audio, print and video campaigns. Of course, the core of the advertising industry is based on tempting the consumer, capturing their mindspace and then driving up sales. True, it is hard to expect the creators to be "conscience-oriented," but given the social cascade of information flow, they have to be self-regulatory, considering their rule cultural sensibilities.

Betraying the Uighurs

The deafening silence of nations towards the oppressed Muslims in China exposes a potent combination of greed, fear and insincerity that has been guiding them



BHOPINDER SINGH

There is a deafening silence that surrounds the ongoing fate of the beleaguered Uighurs, incarcerated in Chinese detention centres. This indifference is especially ironical from the affluent Gulf sheikhdoms, who themselves cry hoarse on issues like Palestine, Rohingya, Bosnia or even Kashmir, albeit, unsuccessfully. Countries like Saudi Arabia, who have used religion to legitimise their own regime, political standing and global efforts pertaining to the matters of Ummah, are conspicuous by their feeble and pusillanimous stand against the Chinese for their treatment of the Uighur Muslims. Even the theoretically-powerful multilateral forum (world's second-largest organisation with 57 member countries representing 1.8 billion people) like the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which positions itself as "the collective voice of the Muslim world", has been equally fearful of slamming Beijing.

On the contrary, the OIC had incredulously passed a resolution at the Abu Dhabi declaration to "commend the efforts of the People's Republic of China in providing care to its Muslim citizens." Whereas voluble and belligerent nations like Pakistan, who are virtually surviving (economically and diplomatically) on the Chinese doles and bail-out packages, are expectedly mum on the Uighur affairs and are only selectively pitching Kashmir. Matters like the fate of the besieged and oppressed co-religionists like the Uighurs are not allowed to vitiate the "all-weather friendship" with China. On the contrary, it was left to the 22-odd countries, including Australia, Canada, Japan, the UK, France, Germany and the US among others, to jointly write to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) stating: "We also call on China to refrain from the arbitrary detention and restrictions on freedom of movement of Uighurs, and other Muslim and minority communities in Xinjiang."

The undeniable reality is that a lot of public posturing, cause-espousal and haranguing that is routinely done by Islamic countries is only on account of convenience, selfish considerations and not on account of morality or conscience. As Pakistan wraps itself up as the self-appointed custodian of the Kashmiris, its embarrassing silence on the Uighurs and the state-sponsored complicity against its own Baluch populace or other minority denominations like Hindus, Christians and even the sectarian "others", like the Shias and the Ahmediyas among others, makes a mockery of its self-righteousness. Pakistan's patent two-facedness has earned it the ire of its own Islamic neighbours like Iran and Afghanistan.

Even though Pakistanis play up the rote "brother-Islamic-nation" card with both Iran and Afghanistan, the former fumes at the sectarian intolerance that is "allowed" within Pakistan, whereas the Afghans bristle at the active support that Islamabad bestows on Afghan-facing terror organisations. Whereas "Kashmir" unites the polity of Pakistan like



nothing else can, it is the singular societal unifier that legitimises the unwarrantedly generous budgets of the Pakistani military. The poison of the Pakistani clergy emerges as the pivotal rallying cry for Pakistani civil politicians. "Kashmir" is the ultimate weapon of distraction that can sway mood, deflect attention and cobble together the semblance of a unified nation. No such tears are even pretended on the hapless Uighurs even though the situation, treatment and Constitutional status of the Kashmiris and Uighurs cannot even be compared. Kashmiris are entitled to all Constitutional rights, guarantees and opportunities as is applicable to others. Clearly, realpolitik and commerce overrides all other considerations in the Middle East. China is the high-temple of transactional relationships and is flexing its "scale" muscle to extract its own pound of flesh. Beyond beholden or vassal nations like Pakistan (owing to the \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor investment) or pathologically anti-US countries like Iran for whom China has a natural traction, others like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Qatar are engaged in very high-stakes trade and commerce with Beijing. That is perennially at the risk of earning China's ire, should these countries speak out against the Uighurs. Reciprocally, China never

“ AS PAKISTAN WRAPS ITSELF UP AS THE SELF-APPOINTED CUSTODIAN OF THE KASHMIRIS, ITS EMBARRASSING SILENCE ON THE UIGHURS AND THE STATE-SPONSORED COMPLICITY AGAINST ITS OWN BALUCH POPULACE OR OTHER MINORITY DENOMINATIONS MAKES A MOCKERY OF ITS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS ”

expresses any concern with state actions like the Jamal Khashoggi episode, Baluch insurgency or other human right issues in the region. It is a mutually-beneficial silence maintained by both China and these nations that selectively bury some issues like the blatant Uighur exploitation, while allowing for some others.

Even when the United Nation forums were taking up the Uighur issue against China (often by Western powers on account of their own realpolitik considerations against China), the visiting Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman endorsed the Chinese "counter-terrorism" strategy against the Uighurs in Xinjiang by stating, "We respect and support China's rights to take counter-terrorism and de-extremism measures to safeguard national security. We stand ready to strengthen cooperation with China". He added for good measure that the Saudis oppose "interference by external forces in China's internal affairs."

Shortly thereafter, a multi-billion Saudi-Chinese oil deal and agreement to partake in the gargantuan "One Belt, One Road" initiative was promptly confirmed. Independent bodies have consistently called the bluff on Chinese camps that forcibly host up to one million Uighurs in what the Chinese regime calls "boarding schools", "vocational centres" and even "re-education centres". Independent researchers

have described the same as "wartime concentration camps" that are part of a "systematic campaign of social re-engineering and cultural genocide."

Reports of torture, forced sterilisation and political re-education are commonplace, yet there is not a twitch of condemnation from major Islamic nations. Already, the Chinese have brazenly forbidden people from practising Islam in certain areas and banned elements of religiosity like keeping fasts, wearing hijab, growing a beard or even retaining "Muslim" sounding names. The Chinese Government has openly announced its five-year to "Sinicize" Islam via a virtual denouncement of religion. The ingenuous attempt to "guide Islam to be compatible with socialism and implement measures to Sinicize the religion" is a barely concealed socio-cultural genocide that has escaped any tangible condemnation from Islamic nations. The sheer hypocrisy of silence surrounding Uighur suppression exposes a potent combination of greed, fear and insincerity that guides some of these nations, who often shroud themselves with fake emotions about issues that do not earn them either petrodollars or the wrath of countries like China.

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

SOUNDBITE

We reiterate our commitment to the welfare of (Singur) farmers, alongside promoting industry. My humble pronam to Maa, Mati, Manush.

West Bengal CM — Mamata Banerjee



FM's measures will help make exports competitive & especially benefit MSME exporters with a new scheme for reimbursing taxes & ease of doing business.

Commerce Minister — Piyush Goyal



I want to appeal to people to promote their native languages but also use Hindi to make the dream of Bapu and Sardar Patel of one language come true.

Home Minister — Amit Shah



As an actress, I am okay with constructive criticism from film critics because it is a part of my job to take it all in my stride.

Actor — Kangana Ranaut



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fix driving culture

Sir — Looks like Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will not relent easily. Undaunted by opposition from BJP-ruled States to the hefty road penalties, he has boldly asserted that he is not afraid of street protests, explaining, "My responsibility is to save the lives of 1.20 lakh people who die on road in accidents."

He further reasoned that it is everyone's responsibility to save people's lives besides underscoring "the duty of the State as well." We can blame successive Governments for failing to stem the rot at the "rogue" transport office but what about the way we have chosen to drive?

Frankly, in India, one can procure a vehicle, learn to drive and get licence from a tout. It could be a truck, a light commercial vehicle or a motorbike. Which means that just about anyone can start driving on the road in real traffic.

The dangers are immense, for what one is driving has the ability to kill. The working presumption is not a scientific one: That everyone's life is dear to

The need for an anti-lynching law

Attempts being made to help those who committed the murder of Tabrez Ansari in cold blood amount to subversion of justice. Ansari was attacked by a mob on June 17 after he was accused of being a thief. Like the Pehlu Khan case, the Ansari case now does not credit to India's criminal justice system. Something must be terribly wrong if even open-and-shut cases go the way they do without a glimmer of hope for justice to the victims of hate crime. By dropping the murder charges and choosing to slap culpable homicide not amounting to murder, the Jharkhand police has shown utter lack of professionalism and naked partisanship.

The footage of the mob lynching a person clearly establishes the identity of the killers; yet the ruling dispensation has been far too lenient with them. In both the cases of lynching, heart attack was cited as the cause of death. The logic is that the lynching (captured on camera) does not matter because the alleged victims would have been dead anyway due to cardiac arrest.

The attribution of heart attacks to stress, drug and injuries is a vain attempt at impartiality. Obfuscation, by mixing up head injuries with heart attack and vice versa,

them so they will by default drive carefully, learn to swim quickly than sink. Along with fear, Indians need to learn how to make the process of driving a pleasurable one.

KS Jayatheertha
Bengaluru



convincing nobody. The adjectives "light" and "minimal" introduced by the police to describe the brain haemorrhage sustained by Ansari in the mob attack says it all. By the prosecution's logic, death must occur on the spot for a crime to be treated as murder. The way the lynching cases are going, there's a dire need to formulate a special anti-lynching law.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

and unrest in the Valley. International opinion has always been counted in our diplomatic stances and initiatives and it tends to be in our favour. But there always exists the probability of a tilt towards an abrupt change. Besides, we must also factor in the reality that ensuing socio-economic imbalances post the abrogation of Article 370 would be onerous to tackle. The sooner we move on to the next phase, the quicker we can put the Kashmir episode behind us.

R Narayanan
Navi Mumbai

Suppressing voices

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Grudge wars in Andhra" (September 14). The house arrest of N Chandrababu Naidu and his son was unwarranted. Leaders have the right to take out rallies to express their dissatisfaction with the Government. Resorting to such tactics amounts to curtailment of Constitutional rights.

Shambhavi
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

The gains of sustainability

It's time to prepare for the future before the nature of raw materials and inputs changes so drastically that a new civilisational order is required



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

There comes a time in management of knowledge when phrases become clichés and are repeated ad nauseam, without many pausing to think about their meaning or significance. One such phrase is "The world is changing."

What is often not clear is what is changing, by how much and in which direction? Unfortunately though, this does not even bother people sufficiently for them to pause. This is also true about the watershed times that we live in. Fossil fuel is now nearly passé. Hydrocarbon-based energy, to move vehicles and generate heat, is given a lease by the most optimistic of forecasters of not more than 30 to 40 years. The rest of the debate is known too well to bear recount.

Yet, there are obvious aspects which never figure in the debate. The overall consumption would indeed go down if the population was to remain a constant. The reduction in the quantum of the demand of the existing population is more than made up by the rise in demand from the population which is subsequently added. To bridge the gap between past consumption of the horizon year and current year of reckoning, therefore, becomes a methodological requirement. New consumers keep the level of consumption constant.

Similarly, developments of one sector are very often serenaded without factoring a composite picture. Consider the way a particular Minister has been propagating electrical vehicles. These, in their present state of research and development (R&D), are at best a showpiece purchase by those who can afford a third or fourth car. The battery of an electrical vehicle is not only exorbitant and with a short life but cumbersome to maintain and tricky to deal with. Yet, coming as it does from the exalted office of the Minister-concerned, it has had a dampening influence on the enthusiasm for petrol or diesel vehicles. Inter se parity rarely passes the mind of those whose careers depend on attention-grabbing statements or positioning themselves as 'innovative'!

No less dramatic is the threatening effect of climate change: the melting glaciers, sometimes the change in nature of the rivers. Not unknown is the level of the sea water rising in certain parts of the world, at certain times.

Not only is there a fight for the forest cover but there are lifestyle issues related to forest produce. Typical of the products would be Gum Karaya. This product is used in food industries as a thickener and emulsifier of food. It can be used in concentration as stabiliser for aerated dairy products and frozen dessert. It can also be used for controlling the formation of ice crystals. Clearly it is an input to lifestyle issues of many urbanised folks. The examples can be multiplied.

The snag is people are not talking of this enough and not enough R&D is going into it. These are big issues. Perhaps so big, that they get trivialised. Whereas all the structures are there to pay attention to these concerns, the outcomes are difficult to locate or for that matter even draw significant attention. The non-descript of the urban elite is likely to yawn over all this, shrug his shoulder and say "well... these are complicated issues." In one breath the line of thought has been both mystified and de-constructed and the bandwagon rolls on.

For the sake of argument one can be tolerant about this attitude and one can talk of lesser rarified things like forest cover. There are silent workers, say in Manipur, who are working to not only save the forest cover but to extend them. One such person is Moirangthem Loiya. He works silently to clear the roots of the trees and plant fresh saplings to keep the acreage of the forest cover growing. He has not been recognised by any award. Apparently he does not even care. Even comparatively more experienced people in forestry have testified to his having saved flora and fauna by replanting 300 acres of forests. Indeed, he quit his job to plant different types of plants in Punshilok forest in Langol hill range of Manipur. It took him nearly two decades and, of course, Punshilok has become a plastic-free zone. He claims that he does not want to buy land and own it. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Manipur, Kereihouvi Angami claims that anyone else is equally welcome to replicate Loiyo's feat. There are reserved forests, there are protected forests and there is a whole typology of forests entirely lost to the learning of avant garde curriculum of so-branded elite schools. The proposition is simple: What is the kind of generation we are preparing for the future? In the meanwhile, the water table keeps receding and water conservation is more talked of than acted upon. It's time to think of the future and prepare for it before the nature of the raw materials and the inputs changes so drastically that a new civilisational order is required.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

INFLATION HAS BEEN KEPT VERY MUCH BELOW THE FOUR PER CENT MARK AND THERE ARE CLEAR SIGNS OF REVIVAL IN THE ECONOMY.

—FINANCE MINISTER
NIRMALA SITHARAMAN



THE STEPS ANNOUNCED TODAY WILL NOT REVIVE THE INDIAN ECONOMY, THEY ARE PURELY COSMETIC AND PIECEMEAL.

— CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON
ANAND SHARMA

Powerless, cosmetic moves

Given the extant tariff policy and Power Purchase Agreements, the Centre's plans to reform PPAs to provide power at competitive prices and make discoms viable fall far short



UTTAM GUPTA

The Union Government has set up a committee to reform Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to ensure power availability at competitive prices and make distribution companies (discoms) viable. A PPA is a contract between a generation company (genco) and discom which lays down the terms of electricity purchase by the latter from the former, including the tariff, which is subject to approval by the State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC).

The Cabinet is also considering a new tariff policy which will inter alia require discoms to pay a surcharge to the genco for delayed payment, which would be equal to the commercial rate of interest. The Government has already made it mandatory for discoms to open Letters of Credit (LoC) for getting supply from gencos from August 1, 2019. However, State-owned gencos are not covered by this dispensation.

The discoms would be allowed to recover only up to 15 per cent of under-recovered power supply cost from other consumers implying they need to absorb the remaining 85 per cent. Also, they won't get any grant or loan if they don't reduce losses.

When seen in juxtaposition with the extant tariff policy environment as also the architecture of PPAs, the intended reforms and proposed measures are laughable.

On tariff policy, under directions from the State governments, discoms sell electricity to poor households and farmers at heavily subsidised rates, even free in some States. To make up for the under-recovery, they charge exorbitant rates from industries and businesses; yet they continue to incur losses forcing the Centre to come out with packages to bail them out. Three packages have already been given since 2000, with the latest being Ujjwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) launched in 2015 and the fourth is in the offing as alluded to by Power Minister RK Singh.

In this backdrop, if discoms' recovery of under-recovered power supply cost from others (industries) is restricted only to 15 per cent, their losses will multiply.

Instead of allowing proper pricing of supplies to households and farmers and curb theft (the only logical way to cut under-recovery), the Government wants discoms to absorb losses. Do they have Alladin's lamp? Penalising them by charging commercial rates of interest, insisting on LoC or denying them loans, for not reducing losses, amount to adding insult to injury.

Yet another factor adding to the woes of discoms is the unusually high price they are forced to pay to gencos under long-term PPAs which account for nearly 86 per cent of the power sold (of the balance, ten per cent is covered under short-term agreements and four per cent sold on trading platform). Herein, two extreme scenarios are discussed to show how discoms and eventually the consumer and the taxpayers are taken for a ride.

First, in consonance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan of giving a big push to renewable energy, in Andhra Pradesh, promoters of 139 power plants based on solar and wind energy had signed agreements with the discoms during the last five years under the erstwhile dispensation led by N Chandrababu Naidu. Under



PPAs SHOULD HAVE A CLAUSE TO PROVIDE FOR CANCELLATION OF THE CONTRACT IF ANY IRREGULARITY INVOLVING CORRUPTION IS NOTICED. ON THE CONSUMPTION SIDE, THEY SHOULD DO AWAY WITH SUBSIDISED OR FREE SUPPLY AND BRING DOWN POWER THEFT TO ZERO. SANS THESE REFORMS, THERE IS NO WAY OF SALVAGING DISCOMS AND PROTECTING INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESSES FROM HIGH TARIFF



the PPAs, the discoms had agreed to pay to the gencos ₹4 to 6 per unit which is almost double the cost of supply, about ₹2.4 per unit. At such high tariff, discoms are incurring huge losses. Of the total loss of close to ₹7,000 crore in the last five years, an overwhelming ₹5,500 crore was on account of excess payments to the generators of renewable energy.

This prompted the new Government led by YS Jaganmohan Reddy to set up a high-level committee in July, to review those agreements with a view to bring down the tariff. But the decision has been stayed by the Andhra Pradesh High Court (APHC). The issue is heading for a protracted legal battle and it will be some time before the proceedings get concluded and final pronouncement from the Supreme Court comes.

Meanwhile, investors in these projects (mostly foreign investors) have raised the pitch, arguing that any review will dent the sanctity of contracts, thereby eroding their confidence in India as an attractive investment destination. The countries from where these companies come have taken up the matter with the Centre, which in turn, has asked the AP Government to honour the PPAs. The way events are unfolding, it is unlikely that the issue will get settled in favor of discoms.

At another extreme, gencos had agreed to charge from discoms low tariff — using the Tariff-Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) method. Under the long-term PPAs signed by

Tata Power Ltd (TPL) and Adani Power Ltd (APL) with regard to their Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPP) in Gujarat, these companies had committed to sell at ₹2.26 per unit and ₹2.35 per unit respectively for supplies to discoms in the State. Both projects are based on coal; TPL is entirely on imported coal, APL uses 70 per cent domestic and 30 per cent imported coal. Unlike all other PPAs wherein increase in the cost of fuel is pass-through, for supplies from these UMPPs, the consumers were fully shielded. In fact, TPL/APL had arrangements in place to ensure that they got coal supplies at a fixed price all through the project life.

These included TPL acquiring 25-30 per cent equity in three Indonesian mines. Likewise, Adani acquired a coal mine in Queensland, Australia in 2010. But, this turned out to be an illusion.

In 2012, TPL/APL petitioned the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) seeking compensatory tariff — a sophisticated nomenclature for hike in tariff. They argued that following an order of the Indonesian Government in September 2011, fixing a Minimum Export Price (MEP) of coal, they were forced to pay more which should be compensated. This was instantly allowed by the CERC and confirmed by the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL) in December 2016.

The Supreme Court (SC) after initially rejecting the claim (order of

April 2017), finally directed CERC "to amend the PPAs to enable pass-through of fuel price escalation subject to a cap" (order dated October 29, 2018).

We see a typical syndrome of "head I win and tail you lose." While, on one hand, there are PPAs which allow gencos to charge more from day one, even where the agreements were crafted to charge low tariff, those were subsequently altered to provide for escalation (TPL and APL).

For the discoms being squeezed at both the ends by having to pay more to gencos and compelled to charge less from preferred users (farmers and poor households), any talk of making them financially viable or reduce tariff burden on industries — as contemplated in the new tariff policy — is meaningless.

The Government should look at as to why cost of supplying power is high; especially aspects such as 'gold plating' (a euphemism for claiming higher investment than actual), over-invoicing of fuel bills need to be seriously examined and remedial steps taken. For instance, PPAs should have a clause to provide for cancellation of the contract if any irregularity involving corruption is noticed. On the consumption side, they should do away with subsidised or free supply and bring down power theft to zero. Sans these reforms, there is no way of salvaging discoms and protecting industries and businesses from high tariff.

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

Pakistan and the Muslim Ummah

With the Saudi monarchy and Gulf Arabs making unprecedented and self-interested political moves, Islamabad should also refigure its nationhood in the context of its South Asian heritage



NADEEM PARACHA

On August 31 this year, former chairman of the Senate and long-time member of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Raza Rabbani was quoted in the media as saying it is high time for Pakistan to pull out of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). He then added that the "bubble of an Islamic ummah (global Muslim community) had burst."

Rabbani was echoing the thoughts aired by many Pakistanis — especially on social media sites — who are incensed by the manner in which Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) reacted to India's move to controversial-

ly remove Article 370 from India's Constitution and thus nullify the 'special status' that the article provided to India-Occupied Kashmir.

The Saudi monarchy went ahead with a \$15 billion investment deal with an Indian business giant, whereas the UAE Government bestowed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the UAE's highest civilian award.

The English weekly *The Friday Times* had reported on August 9 that Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan was not happy with Saudi Arabia and the UAE's passive stance on Kashmir. But when, in mid-August, news of Saudi investment in India became common knowledge, and later, when Modi was bestowed with an award by the UAE, Imran Khan didn't say much. In fact, his Foreign Minister went to the extent of suggesting that "international relations are above religious sentiment."

Of course, Pakistan was never given this privilege by the same Arab monarchies. In the 1970s when Saudi/UAE jobs, money and

oil began to arrive in Pakistan it was with the condition to gradually roll back the manner in which the state and governments of Pakistan had advocated Islam — sometimes by merging it with Islamic modernism and sometimes fusing it with socialism.

After the Shia clerics came to power in Iran in 1979, Pakistan could still not claim that foreign relations are above religious sentiment as the state of Pakistan gladly embraced militant Saudi proxies in Pakistan against the country's Shia minority, segments of which eventually became Iranian proxies.

Nevertheless, there is nothing incorrect about what the Foreign Minister says. Indeed, foreign relations are almost entirely based on geopolitical and economic interests of states. Yet, for over 40 years or so, the Pakistani state and governments have been passionately lecturing their citizens about the notion of a "Muslim ummah" and that Pakistan was at the core of it.

The more immediate roots of this claim can be found in the mid-

1970s when oil-rich Arab countries began enjoying windfall profits due to an unprecedented rise in oil prices, and when Saudi Arabia successfully replaced Egypt as the most influential Muslim country.

The Pakistani state's thinking also began to transform after the country lost its eastern wing in 1971. Pan-Islamist ideas and the word "ummah" became a lot more common in the post-1971 state narrative, mainly to offset the creeping paranoia that Islam alone could not keep an ethnically diverse Pakistan together.

The perception that there was an ummah and Pakistan was an important part of it was bolstered when Pakistan was made the launching pad for an armed jihad against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.

Saudi Arabia (along with the US) became the largest donor of financial and military aid to Pakistan during this period. Their reasons were geopolitical in nature but, of course, Saudi Arabia and Pakistani dictator General Zia

explained the endeavour as a jihad by the ummah against the godless Soviet Union. What's more, it also gave Zia the excuse to start defining himself as 'Mard-i-Momin'.

Former senator Rabbani is right in saying that this bubble has burst — especially when the Saudi monarchy is making some unprecedented political and social moves to change the geopolitical and ideological complexion of the Kingdom.

Pakistan, on the other hand, is left lamenting that it was made a proxy of the Arabs when they needed to enhance their political clout in the Muslim world through the ummah narrative.

Fact is, the roots of the idea of an ummah run even deeper than when the populist ZA Bhutto regime first floated the idea in 1974 to get close to oil-rich Arab monarchies. According to historian Mubarak Ali and celebrated sociologist Hamza Alvi, in the 19th Century, when the already depleted Muslim rule in India completely collapsed, many Muslims became

aware of their minority status vis a vis the Hindus.

In his 2011 book *Pakistan In Search of Identity*, Ali writes that this is when some members of the fading Muslim elite began to claim that the Muslims of India were a part of the larger Muslim universe, the ummah. In a 1997 essay "Ironies of History", Alvi explains that the idea of the ummah was proliferated among India's Muslims by 19th Century pan-Islamists, many of whom had the backing of the last remaining caliphs of the Ottoman Empire.

Interestingly, according to Christopher Jaffrelot's *The Pakistan Paradox*, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, actually discouraged the whole idea of the ummah because he believed it diluted his idea of forming a concrete Indian Muslim identity.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, too, aired similar concerns when he refused to join the Khilafat Movement (1919-24) led by pan-Islamists and the ulema.

Yet, some 25 years after

Pakistan's birth, the state reinstated the idea of the ummah. Just as this idea had emerged in the 19th Century to appease Indian Muslims who had suddenly become conscious of their minority status, in the 1970s, the shock of losing East Pakistan because of ethnic divisions, reinvigorated the same idea to (albeit artificially) lift Pakistan from its South Asian roots and place it at the core of the larger Muslim world.

This diluted Pakistan's identity and the manner in which it described itself as a Muslim majority state. It began looking for validation from Arab monarchs to the extent of sometimes changing the way its South Asian Muslim ancestors had practised their faith for centuries, and adopting the behaviours of rich Arabs.

It is time to refigure Pakistani nationhood in the context of its rich South Asian heritage, especially now that India is digging exactly the kind of hole that we once dug and then fell into.

(Courtesy: *The Dawn*)

CAPSULE



Govt to come up with agri-mall for farmers in Jammu

JAMMU: A multi-facility agricultural mall will be constructed in Jammu at Bishnah at a cost of Rs 70 crore to provide various facilities to farmers under one roof, officials said on Sunday. The proposed mall is a part of infrastructure development project and a similar project has also been sanctioned for Kashmir division, the officials said. They said the agri-mall is visualised to provide facilities like controlled atmosphere or cold storage, tractors, tillers, spray equipments, fertilizers, pesticides, and organic fertilizers or manure. The other facilities at the mall will include vermicompost, soil testing laboratory, harvesting machinery like combines, threshers, husking facility and other agriculture related machinery for farmers under one roof on sale or hire basis, the officials said.



Linen Club aims Rs 1,500 cr business by 2024 ; to add 200 stores

NEW DELHI: Jaya Shree Textiles' fabric brand Linen Club expects to double its business to Rs 1,500 crore and add 200 stores in its sales network by 2024, said a company official. As part of expansion, the Aditya Birla Group company is focusing to expand in tier II and III markets along with its cluster based approach, where people are spending more on tailored clothes. Besides domestic expansion, Linen Club, which has couple of stores in the Middle East, is also exploring opportunities to open stores in southeast Asian regions. "We want to double our business and be around Rs 1,500 crore by 2024 along with a network of 400 brand outlets," Aditya Birla Group CEO - Domestic Textiles & Thai Acrylic Fibre - Satyaki Ghosh said.



Aeroflot to resume flights on Mumbai-Moscow route

MUMBAI: Russian flag carrier Aeroflot plans to revive its services to Mumbai from the second quarter of the next fiscal year, even as its New Delhi-Moscow route continues to see high demand, the airline has said. The airline said India remains a priority market and sees "immense" growth potential with traffic surging dramatically since the doubling of its services to New Delhi in 2016, clocking around 3 lakh passengers annually. Connecting India for more than six decades now, Aeroflot currently flies twice daily between the two capitals, the airline told PTI in an e-mail response from its Moscow headquarters and confirmed Mumbai-Moscow flight plans from mid-2020.

NHA, IRDAI moot steps to check frauds, standardise data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Health Authority, responsible for implementing the Ayushman Bharat scheme, and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) have launched a report recommending best practices, common standards, collaborative measures and IT framework for data standardisation and to check frauds.

A joint working group of IRDAI and NHA was formed to work on key areas of mutual interest and co-operation which focussed their work on four key areas Hospital Network Management, Data Standardization and exchange, Common IT infrastructure for health insurance claims management and Fraud and abuse control.

In the report on Hospital Network Management, the experts recommended building a national repository of empanelled hospitals under insurance/government schemes with defined standards for quality and package rates and codes.

The report on Data Standardization and Exchange stresses on creating standard data formats across health insurance payers for analysis and policy-making by developing standardised data tables to capture and report the data, identifying data elements common with IRDAI and PMJAY.

It also includes setting up a framework for capturing and exchanging data.



It also recommends creating a repository of fraudulent transactions, modus operandi and entities and develop standards for field verification and investigation and developing the "name and shame" guidelines

The report on Fraud Control focuses to help detect and deter frauds through common repository and capacity building by developing a standard reporting format for fraud and abuse to be used across the industry and government schemes.

It also recommends creating a repository of fraudulent transactions, modus operandi and entities and develop standards for field verification and investigation and developing the

"name and shame" guidelines.

The report on the Common IT Infrastructure for Health Insurance Claims Management focuses on increasing service efficiency and transparency amongst stakeholders in the delivery of Health insurance services by defining the roadmap for electronic, paperless, codified data exchange between payer and provider, collation and analysis.

Sixty per cent of the Indian population today is covered

under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and privately paid health insurance making it a great opportunity for IRDAI and NHA to jointly work on key areas for the strengthening of health insurance eco-system in the country, making it more efficient and effective, an NHA official said.

"The recommendations in the report are a step forward in enabling quality healthcare and access to the patients. These reports would help further strengthen the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of AB-PM-JAY, benefiting millions in India directly," Indu Bhushan, CEO of NHA.

The completion of these report in record time is a huge achievement, and I thank the members of the Joint Working Group who have toiled to put them together. We are confident that implementation of these recommendations shall create a positive impact and lead to further growth of health insurance in the country, Subhash Khuntia, chairman IRDAI said.

The recommendations will benefit all stakeholders beneficiaries, policyholders, insurers, state health agencies, healthcare providers, implementing agencies and intermediaries etc, officials said.

The Reports of Joint Working Group shall be available on IRDAI and NHA website for comments by industry and public at large.

AIMS OPERATING PROFIT THIS FISCAL

Air India posts Rs 4,600 cr operating loss in 2018-19;

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Air India posted an operating loss of around Rs 4,600 crore in the last financial year mainly due to higher oil prices and foreign exchange losses but the debt-laden carrier expects to turn operationally profitable in 2019-20, according to senior officials.

Reflecting tough business conditions, the airline's net loss stood at about Rs 8,400 crore while total revenues touched around Rs 26,400 crore in 2018-19, one of the senior officials told PTI.

Another senior official said the airline is projected to post an operating profit of Rs 700 to 800 crore in 2019-20, provided oil prices do not shoot up significantly and there is no steep fluctuation in foreign exchange rates.

However, the airline incurred an operating loss of Rs 175 to 200 crore in the three months ended June as closure of Pakistan airspace for Indian carriers resulted in higher costs and caused a daily loss of Rs 3 to 4 crore when the restrictions were in place, the official said.

Air India had a loss of Rs 430 crore in the four-month period when Pakistan closed its airspace after the Balakot air strikes.

The official noted that load factor and yields are improving for Air India, which currently flies to 41 international and 72 domestic destinations. Load



Air India had a loss of Rs 430 crore in the four-month period when Pakistan closed its airspace after the Balakot air strikes

factor is a measure of seat occupancy and yield refers to average fare paid per passenger.

The situation is anticipated to improve further as more wide-body planes would be available for operations in the coming months, the official added. Air India had grounded several of its wide-body aircraft for maintenance and most of them are in the process of being re-inducted into the fleet.

Air India is to start flying to Toronto from September 27 and to Nairobi in November.

The airline has a debt burden of more than Rs 58,000 crore

and servicing the loans is a major challenge as the annual outgo is more than Rs 4,000 crore.

The official who was quoted first said the carrier is facing a financial crisis and disinvestment is the option.

Aviation consultancy CAPA South Asia CEO and Director Kapil Kaul said Air India's financial position is likely to "significantly improve" in the current financial year.

"CAPA expects a closer to break-even in FY 20 excluding increased costs incurred due to closure of Pakistan airspace. With oil prices expected to stay below USD 60, expect a closer to break-even for Air India in FY 20, he told PTI.

Noting that improved financial performance would be a positive for divestment, Kaul said a fully divested Air India that is well capitalised and with improved governance and management would ensure that the airline has a relevant future.

India needs a stronger Air India which is viable without taxpayers' support, he added.

Vistara to revamp its frequent-flyer programme

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Vistara is planning a complete revamp of its frequent-flyer programme "Club Vistara" by increasing the number of partner companies across different segments and moving to a dynamic award-pricing system, a top airline official has said.

Under the proposed dynamic system, a seat will always be available for member-passengers in exchange for points and it will also allow members to earn and use points to book seats across all partner companies, the official said.

However, Club Vistara currently has just two airline partners Singapore Airlines and Silk Air, but it has seven other partners across other segments.

Moreover, member-passengers can earn points by using services of any of the partners, the points earned can only be spent to purchase tickets on Vistara or other airline-partners.

Also, Club Vistara uses the traditional award chart system, wherein the seats available for members and the points required to get each such seat are fixed beforehand.

Frequent-flyer programmes across the world are junking the traditional award chart system as passengers complain that they are unable to get a seat on a flight when they need it.

"The new way that some airlines have moved is that they don't publish the award chart... There, the number of points that are required for booking a seat are dynamically prepared," Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer Sanjiv



“The new way that some airlines have moved is that they don't publish the award chart... There, the number of points that are required for booking a seat are dynamically prepared

—SANJIV KAPOOR
Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer

Kapoor told PTI.

"For example, a ticket on Saturday afternoon may be available for 7,000 points but the same ticket for Monday morning would be for 30,000 points. The benefit of this dynamic system is that a seat is always available in exchange for points," Kapoor explained.

There is another variant of this dynamic system.

If a person wants to book a ticket, he or she can estimate how much money and points should be spent in combination to book a ticket.

For example, when a seat is available for 20,000 points or for Rs 8,000, the dynamic system shows the seat can also be bought by expending 10,000 points and Rs 4,000 in combination.

SBI may offer fixed-floating rate home-loans

PTI ■ LEH

The largest lender State Bank of India will be seeking clarifications from the Reserve Bank whether it can offer long-term home loans with fixed rates in the beginning and convert the same into floating rates later, chairman Rajnish Kumar has said.

The move comes after the Reserve Bank has mandated banks to shift all retail lending to floating rates that will be determined by external benchmarks like the repo rate.

Kumar said there is a lack of clarity on how it can go ahead with the fixed rate products, after the RBI's new regulations on floating rates.

Rahul Bajaj visits memorial of RSS founder

PTI ■ NAGPUR

Veteran industrialist Rahul Bajaj paid a "courtesy" visit to the memorial of RSS founder Dr K B Hedgewar in Reshimbaug area of Nagpur in Maharashtra, a Sangh functionary said on Sunday.

He did not visit the Sangh headquarters located in nearby Mahal area.

Bajaj, who was accompanied by Nagpur Mahanagar Sanghchalak Rajesh Loya and other Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) functionaries, offered flowers at the memorial on Saturday, he said.

Hedgewar founded the RSS in 1925 on the day of 'Vijaydashmi' (Dussehra)

with an aim to organise Hindu community for its cultural and spiritual regeneration.

Meanwhile, a senior RSS functionary told PTI that Bajaj visited the memorial on his personal invitation.

"It was a courtesy visit. I had invited Bajaj to visit the memorial whenever he comes to Nagpur. Since he was in neighbouring Wardha district, he came here. It was an informal invitation," he said.

It can be recalled that Bajaj, known for speaking out his mind, had turned down an invite from the RSS headquarters to visit the Sangh leadership earlier this year.



Rahul Bajaj paid a "courtesy" visit to the memorial of RSS founder Dr K B Hedgewar in Nagpur on Sunday

CAIT: Issue guidelines to remove confusion on single-use plastic

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Traders' body CAIT has written to Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar to remove confusion on use of single-use plastic and urged him to come out with clear guidelines which asks big players to stop using single-use plastic.

The body is of the view that traders are forced to sell the goods packed in single-use plastic by big manufacturers.

In a letter to Javadekar, the Confederation of All India Traders drew the minister's attention to the confusion prevailing among trade and industry about stoppage of single-use plastic, the traders' body said in a statement.

Such confusions, if not taken cognisance of, may prove to be



a roadblock in success of eradication of single-use plastic, CAIT said. CAIT has urged that suitable guidelines should be issued immediately to bring an end to single-use plastic in the country, it added.

The traders body further

said that traders are the last mile connect with 130 crore people of the country and as such can play a major role in extending the call down the line across country through more than 7 crore shopping outlets.

Ericsson acquires Niche AI workforce for India centre

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Swedish telecom gear maker Ericsson has acquired workforce of Niche AI for its Bengaluru-based artificial intelligence centre, and looking for more buyouts to build a team of 150 high-tech engineers for India operations this year, a senior company official said.

The company started India wing of Global Artificial Intelligence Accelerator (GAIA) last year to develop open source solution to modernise telecom network, using AI and machine learning.

"We are looking at both organic hiring, one by one through recruitment off the market, as well as what you might call as inorganic, which is more through acquisitions and acquires (acquiring only talents)

—SANJEEV TYAGI
Head of Ericsson R&D Bengaluru



"We are looking at both organic hiring, one by one through recruitment off the market, as well as what you might call as inorganic, which is more through acquisitions and acquires (acquiring only talents)

—SANJEEV TYAGI
Head of Ericsson R&D Bengaluru

of internet of things devices and large number of different elements in the network, which can be efficiently managed only through AI and ML like technologies and for which GAIA is developing solutions.

"The exponential growth in IoT devices will mean that the traditional methods of managing networks are no longer going to scale and that is an area where we are going to need self-organizing, self-healing, self-governing networks using AI and ML. We're also looking at leveraging machine learning techniques to optimize the volume of signalling needed between a 5G handset and the radio base station so as to conserve battery life," Tyagi said.

He did not disclose financial details of Niche AI acquisition.

Air India's low-fat meals for healthier flight crew

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Air India has revised its menu for flight crew and is now providing them 'special low-fat diet meals', which include dishes like Sauté Spinach, Beetroot Ki Tikki, Palak Matar Bhurji, Tinda Masala and Dal Malka Masoor, so as to improve their health.

The changes in the menu as of yet were made only on the flights operating from Delhi and Mumbai, and officials said the move was cost effective as well for the airline that was grappling with a debt of over Rs 58,300 crore.

"As per GM (General Manager) Catering, initially the changed menu will be introduced only on ex-Delhi/Mumbai flights with



effect from September 15, 2019, midnight on all domestic and international flights," said an

order issued by the Air India. "The same is applicable to all flying crew i.e. Cockpit and

The changes in the menu as of yet were made only on the flights operating from Delhi and Mumbai, and officials said the move was cost effective as well for the airline that was grappling with a debt of over Rs 58,300 crore

Cabin Crew. A copy of the menu is attached herewith for reference," stated the order dated September 11, a copy of which is with PTI.

Low-fat diet meals like Nutri Peas Bhurji, Dal Arhar, Pudina Raita, Dry Chapattis, Murg Dhaniya, Fresh Green Salad, Chaunk ki Subz, Dal Kabila, Boondi Raita and Palak Corn Tikki will be

prepared for the crew on the flights.

Some of the other dishes that the flight crew would be getting during operations are: Vermicelli Upma, Beetroot ki Tikki, Sauté Spinach, Bhanu Kebab, Tinda Masala, Dal Malka Masoor, Cucumber Raita, Murg Methi, Dal Hara Moong and Khus Veg Kebab.

The Air India told its flight staff that "taking into consideration the health factor of crew, an initiative has been taken by Director Operations to revise the in-flight food menu".

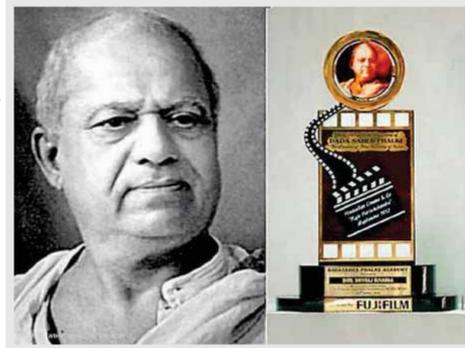
"In view of the above, special low fat diet meal for crew has been worked out on day wise basis in order to provide light and healthy meal with a home (Indian) touch," the order explained.

An Air India spokesperson told PTI, "We are introducing healthy special meals for all crew. The new menu is also cost effective."

In 2018-19, Air India incurred losses of around Rs 7,600 crore. By the end of 2018-19, it had a debt burden of around Rs 58,300 crore.

HONOURING SOUTH FILMS

To encourage filmmakers from South India, Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival is all set to begin its first ever Dadasaheb Phalke Awards in the South in Hyderabad on September 20, reports V SATEESH REDDY



“Six Telugu people won bagged this highest honour till date towards Indian cinema. I'm very happy that this has been introduced to the south films. This award helps many aspiring filmmakers to give quality output.”

KAUSHAL, ACTOR AND MODEL



Sampurnesh Babu said that this is a great initiative and that it will inspire many filmmakers from South India. Many from the cine fraternity attended the event and shared their views about the award.

The organisers informed that the award ceremony will take place at N-Convention, Madhapur, on September 20, in the presence of Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan and the grandson of Dadasaheb Phalke.

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival (DPIFF) is all set to launch its first-ever Dadasaheb Phalke Awards South on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Dadasaheb Phalke, the father of Indian cinema. The awards will honour and appreciate the creativity and talent of Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam film industries.

It is a unique initiative intended to honour the entertainment industry and appreciate the creativity, and the DPIFF team will set up a platform in the South where the talent and creativity can be honoured.

Abhishek Mishra, CEO of DPIFF says, “The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival is to honour the lifetime effort of the father of Indian cinema, Dadasaheb Phalkeji. The award function will celebrate the brilliance of Indian cinema, which is making an effort to acknowledge as well as aid nascent projects by bringing them to mainstream audiences.”

He adds, “These days the South is making bigger movies than Bollywood. Many South movies are also being remade in Bollywood. To inspire many talented people, these awards were introduced time. We are excited for the first ceremony scheduled on September 20.”

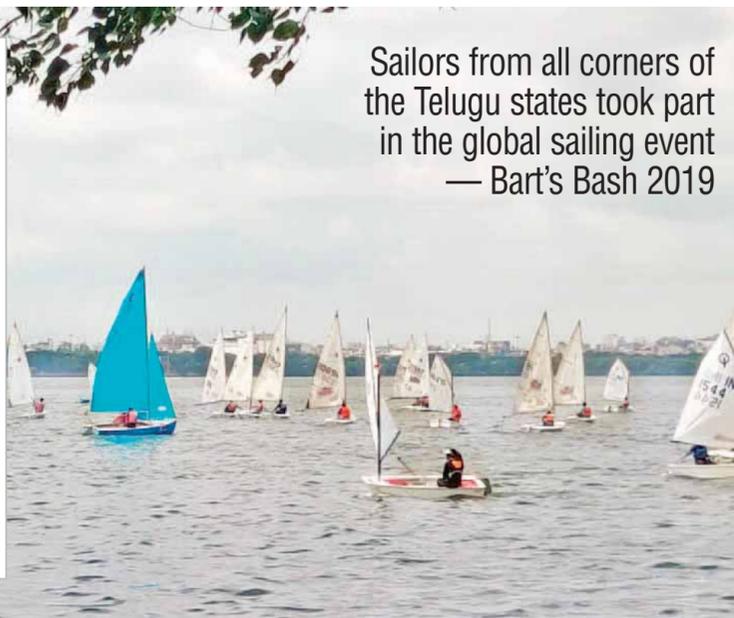
Kaushal, Telugu Bigg Boss season 2 winner said, “Six Telugu people have won the Dadasaheb Phalke Award till date. It is the highest honour for a filmmaker in India to get this award. I'm very happy that the award is being introduced in the South for the first time. This award helps many aspiring filmmakers to give their best.”

Tollywood actor



Sailing at their best

Sailors from all corners of the Telugu states took part in the global sailing event — Bart's Bash 2019



SALMAN to rock the town

As part of *Dabangg 3* promotions, the team of the film will tour Hyderabad. The team is all set to rock the town with power packed performances by Salman Khan, Sonakshi Sinha, Jacqueline Fernandez, Prabhu Deva, Daisy Shah, Guru Randhawa, Maniesh Paul, Ayush Sharma and Kamaal Khan, at LB Stadium, on November 2.

The Live-in concert brought to us by Farhad Hussain, scripted and directed by Sohil Khan Entertainment and JA Events, is the most anticipated Bollywood fest of the year.

After fascinating the audience in New Zealand, Australia, UK, USA, Canada and Hong Kong, the crew is all set to take to Hyderabad the star-studded evening of entertainment, fun, music and dance performances. Around 35,000 to 40,000 audiences are expected to attend the concert.



new heights in sailing through the Secunderabad Sailing Club,” said Arjun Pradiapak, Commodore of the Secunderabad Sailing Club.

Tarun, one of the participants, says, “Since childhood, I was interested in sailing. What started as a hobby has become my career. My father and brother are national-level sailors and they helped me learn the sport.” He added that sailing is an eco-friendly sport and teaches discipline.

Another participant Virendra says, “Such events help sailing reach more people. It is a worldwide competition and an ideal platform for people who want to learn sailing. For me, sailing is all about utmost concentration and discipline.”

It was a day to remember for sailors in Hyderabad who participated in the third edition of Bart's Bash — a worldwide sailing race held in the city on Sunday. Around 90 sailors took part in different categories and gave their best to bag the winner's

title. The event has been organised by the Secunderabad Sailing Club along with EME Sailing Association. Verified by Guinness World Records as the 'Largest Sailing Race in the World', Bart's Bash, an annual global sailing race is being held in many venues with thousands of sailors from

around the world taking part in it. This year, the race was held on September 14 and 15 all over the world. Pranoy Chauhan, secretary of the Secunderabad Sailing Club, said, “The objective is to create awareness about sailing and encourage more people to take up the sport.” “It was a great opportunity for the sailors to showcase

their skills at the competition. It seems like the good days for sailing are finally here as more youngsters take to this sport every year.” “For this year's Bart's Bash, over 5,000 sailors participated from all over the world. Sailors from over 80 countries participated in this year's race. We are helping many youngsters achieve





● Archana

● Savitha

● Ritu

● Vanitha

Photos by SV Chary



● Lakshmi

● Swathi Kashyap

● Honey

PARTY

IT'S FASHION TIME

The curtain raiser of Khwaish fashion and lifestyle exhibition was held over the weekend. Fashion aficionados and socialites had a gala time while interacting with designers during the launch.



● Krishna Sri

CITY GUIDE

COMEDY FUNNY BUZZNESS

Funny Buzzness is a well known comedy gig series by Buzz Kya Entertainment and has been instrumental in bringing down artists like — Amit Tandon, Sorabh Pant, Sumukhi Suresh and Naveen Richards. October 20 at 6pm HICC.



THEATRE

GOOD ANSWER BY MARK
● Good Answer depicts one very unpleasant morning in the life of Michael Kaminski, a mathematics professor at a small Iowa college who is currently serving as its acting president. He would like to get the word 'Acting' removed from his job title. September 21 at 7:30 pm, Phoenix Arena



COMEDY CRACKERS

● Funny Side Up - in association with Comedy Central India presents a New Material night show - 'Comedy Crackers' with Hyderabad's very own Rohit Swain & Saikiran.. Don't miss 75 minutes of hilarity on Sep 17th 2019 8M at Phoenix Arena - An Art & Cultural Centre (Art Gallery). September 17 at 8pm, Phoenix Arena



EK DURACHARI RAJA

● All of us believe that our present may be bad but our future will be good. The Hindi play Ek Durachari Raja (the story of a despot) adapted from Albert Camus' 'Caligula' remains universally relevant. It represents the face of despotism, not only in terms of the whimsical madness and dedication of rulers but also in terms of how people react to such rule with glimmer of hope for the future. September 22, 7.30 pm, Lamakaan



VENTRILOQUISM

● Ventriloquism is an art of voice manipulation using a puppet or doll. Sathosh is an international Ventriloquism artiste, with more than 20 years experience in performing Ventriloquism shows. He is the only ventriloquist who is attending international Ventriloquism convention at USA, since 2012. He regularly works with schoolchildren & teachers in helping them to improving their skills. September 21, 11 am, Lamakaan



BAAGH

● Baagh, a play written by Badal Sircar and directed by Malayaban Lahiri has friendship and relationships at its core. The play revolves around repressed pain, relationships, and structures that we adhere to. October 2 at 8pm Phoenix Arena



EXHIBITION

EMERGING PALETTES

● A group art exhibition, a platform for emerging artists to display their work. This is the 11th edition of the exhibition organised in collaboration with Goethe-Zentrum. Till October 6 at Shrishti Art Gallery, Jubilee Hills.



MAHABHARATA - THE EPIC TALE

● All history and mythology is based on cause and effect. Mahabharata - The Epic Tale... in-depth deals with the primary emotional and psychological causes that were the genesis of this destructive war. The planet has witnessed destruction based on the whims of a few people. September 14 to October 6, multiple venues



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

FUN TIME

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



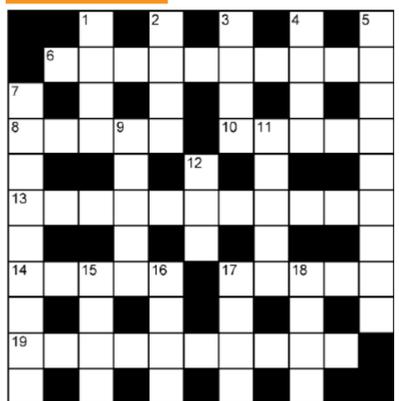
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- 6 Job
- 8 A sung musical drama
- 10 A short part of a play
- 13 Refusing to obey orders
- 14 To cook vegetables or meat in an oven using fat
- 17 Listen to music and news on this
- 19 Somewhere students go

- 11 Porcelain
- 12 Fast aeroplane
- 15 This chemical liquid burns
- 16 Held by ropes
- 17 Take a break
- 18 A fruit from a palm tree

DOWN

- 1 Painful throb
- 2 Hawaiian dance
- 3 Overtake
- 4 Pleasant
- 5 A jab with a syringe
- 7 Marvellous
- 9 A plant's anchors in the soil

SOLUTION



GINGER MEGGS



SURIYA ON A MISSION

After the debacle of *NGK*, the superstar is right now looking forward to the release of *Bandobast*, which marks him reteaming with KV Anand after *Veedokkade* and *Brothers*, finds NAGARAJ GOUD

After the debacle of his last, *NGK*, Suriya's Telugu market has shrunk drastically. He hides his disappointment with a smile when asked about *NGK*. "Selva Raghavan sir invested two-and-a-half years on the film's script and he has written three drafts. We picked the best one. So was the climax among three different versions. At that given point of time, with a release date around... with the producers associated at the creative level and the director too giving his creative best, it was a collective decision to leave the film the way it was and see how the audience responds," he maintains.

The superstar is right now looking forward to the release of *Bandobast*, which marks him reteaming with KV Anand after *Veedokkade* and *Brothers*. For the actor, the lensman-turned-director is a big brother of sorts in real life. "He was the cameraman for my first film. He took my first picture in a Russian angle and it was splashed across newspapers the next day in Tamil Nadu back then. Before he made



Mohanlal and KV Anand on the sets of *Bandobast*

the switch to feature film cinematography, he was a photo journalist with a media house. Which is why, all his films have been inspired by real-life incidents and he makes it a point to collect interesting articles about what's happening in the country and across the globe. His films have an entertainment value but the stories he

picks will always be unique," Suriya points out.

He is lucky to have been offered a film like *Bandobast* whose story span is wide, requiring the unit to travel to Delhi, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Pollachi, London and Cambodia and shoot for 115 days in total. The fast-paced action thriller follows

the actor's SPG (Special Protection Group) part to thwart attempts by a high-ranking member of the group who has gone rogue and is plotting to assassinate the Prime Minister (played by Mohanlal) of the country. The actor that he is, he prepped for the part by visiting SPG facility at Manesar near New Delhi and interact-

ing with the commandoes. "They don't lead a normal life for sure. I got a lot of insights about how they go about their job, which I applied to the part. They act as human shields for the VIP. Despite most of them coming from different corners of the country, I saw a lot of brotherhood among them. An SPG commando spends more time with a VIP that he is assigned to, than with his family. The film covers the conversations between them and the relationship they share. The VIP knows his protection detail members in and out, so it gets emotional at times. I was happy to have played a role like this," Suriya says, quick to mention that he will not be seen as a typical hero as his role has his own share of conflicts in the film, which he believes also has a "nice blend between politics and agriculture as one layer."

It's for the first time the actor has rubbed shoulders with Malayalam superstar Mohanlal and the actor can't contain his excitement to speak about the legend. "He is an actor who makes the camera disappear. Most of the times, you see actors

standing next to a camera and performing but even if one places a moving camera in front of him, his eyes will never catch the lens. He was so effortless with his small nuances. To see him prepare for a scene was a learning curve for me," he rhapsodises.

The actor is grateful for Arya to have stepped in at the last minute in place of original choice Allu Sirish for a key supporting role. "Due to last-minute issues, Sirish couldn't be a part of the film. Arya listened to the story for four hours and said he will do the film. In fact, we spoke to him in the morning and he reported to the sets in the noon. It was magnanimous of him and I believe his role will be spoken at length after the film opens," Suriya, who is five days away from completing *Sudha Kongara's* next based on the life of captain Gopinath, founder of the budget airline Air Deccan, signs off.



Suriya



Miriyala Ravinder, Balakrishna and Boyapati Sreenu

Balayya, Boyapati set for a hat-trick

Nandamuri Balakrishna's project with Boyapati Sreenu is on. After the latter's efforts to find a top-league producer failed, seems he has finally settled with his *Jaya Janaki Nayaka* producer Miriyala Ravinder Reddy to pool in resources for the film.

The film was officially announced on Sunday. It will mark the third time that Balayya and Sreenu will be coming together after *Simha* and *Legend* that made big at the

THE UNTITLED FILM WILL TREAD A BURNING SOCIAL ISSUE AS THE CORE THEME AND WILL SEE BALAYYA IN A BRAND NEW AVATAR

box office. Like their earlier collaborations, the untitled film will tread a burning social issue as the core theme and will see Balayya in a brand new avatar.

His looks in Sreenu's films have been raved. According to the official statement, the film will roll in December-probably

after the actor completes KS Ravikumar's on-sets film - with an intention to arrive in May next year. To rewind a bit, Balayya was supposed to work with Boyapati after NTR biopic but due to reasons best guarded, he picked Ravikumar.

SUNDEEP CONSIDERS HIMSELF TO BE 'LUCKY'

The teaser of *Tenali Ramakrishna BA BL*, starring Sundeep Kishan and Hansika Motwani, was unveiled in Hyderabad on Sunday. A directorial venture of G Nageswara Reddy, the film, which is a courtroom crime comedy, has been produced by Sanjay, Nagi Reddy and Sreenu under Sri Neelakanteshwara Swamy Creations.

Speaking after the teaser launch, Nageswara Reddy, who is in desperate need of a hit after his last set of ventures - *Aatadukundam Raa*, *Intlo Deyyam Nakem Bhayam* and *Achari America Yatra* fared poorly at the box-office, said the producers are his friends who've helped him many a time in the past. "Making a film for them is a small thing compared to what they did to me," he said.

Sundeep, who is on a high post the success of *Ninu Veedani Needanu Nene*, said that shooting for the film has been the most fun ever he had till now in his career. "I consider myself lucky to have gotten an opportunity to be directed by Nageswara Reddy. I learnt a lot from him, especially some minute details. I was ashamed I didn't know about them until now."

Praising Hansika, he added, "I've shot with her for 30 days and never did I saw her stressed out one single day. She is always smiling and full of positive energy. When I asked her why she didn't associate with different kind of cinema despite being in the industry for this long, she told me that she is a typical filmi girl who loves to whistle upon hero's introduction. It is the reason why she prefers commercial cinema," he noted.

SUNDEEP, WHO IS ON A HIGH POST THE SUCCESS OF NINU VEEDANI NEEDANU NENE, SAID THAT SHOOTING FOR THE FILM HAS BEEN HIS MOST FUN EVER



Sundeep Kishan and Hansika Motwani

Avika Gor is 'scared' of horror movies

Avika Gor, who is making a comeback to Telugu cinema after two-and-a-half years with Ohmkar's *Raju Gari Gadhi 3*, says she feels good and proud to be back. "There was no way I could've said no to the project because of the talent it had. The first meeting with Ohmkar was fun because he kept narrating me the story and I kept getting scared. Horror is new to me; in fact, I'm scared of watching horror films. Chota sir (cinematographer) made sure that I was scared during the shoot (smiles) as well. He kept pulling my leg often. The experience of working for the project was joyous. The shoot went on smoothly and I had a lot of fun on sets, a reason why the project is close to my heart," the actress said. She was speaking at the film's trailer launch in Hyderabad on Sunday. Victory Venkatesh unveiled the trailer.

Director Ohmkar, on his part, said that he could complete the film in a little more than two months because of the speed of Chota K Naidu and dialogue writer Sai Madhav Burra, who despite being busy with other projects, penned the film's dialogues and handed over it to him in no time. The horror-comedy, featuring Ashwin Babu, Urvashi, Ali, Brahmaji, Prabhass Sreenu, Hari Teja and Ajay Ghosh in key roles, will open in cinemas for Dasara.

— NG



Avika Gor



Vijayendra Prasad

VIJAYENDRA VARMA director stages a comeback

After his first directorial venture *Vijayendra Varma*, featuring Nandamuri Balakrishna, tanked at the box-office, opportunities dried up for director

Swarna Subbarao. Fifteen years after his maiden film released, Subbarao has got another shot at direction to redeem himself. Interestingly, his first film's story writer Vijayendra Prasad has

penned his comeback film's story as well. The untitled film will be headlined by Saptagiri. In fact, this was a story that Prasad wanted Sunil to do long back but it couldn't transpire. To roll out next month, the film,

to be presented by Prasad, will be a comedy entertainer and will see newbie Priyanka Agarwal alongside Saptagiri. She was earlier seen in Malayalam film *1971: Beyond Borders*, featuring Mohanlal.



Saptagiri

GANGS OF WASSEYPUR ONLY INDIAN FILM IN 'THE GUARDIAN' BEST 100 LIST

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap's cult film *Gangs Of Wasseypur* has become the only Indian film to feature in *The Guardian* list of 100 Best Films of the 21st century. Kashyap on Saturday took to Instagram to announce that his action drama has bagged the 59th position. He wrote, "Proud to be here but this wouldn't be my list. So many films which are my favourites can't be below my film... and *The Dark Knight* deserves to be way up. The number 1 film in the list I totally agree with. That's my absolute favourite of the 21st century. "P.S. this is also that film of mine that totally destroyed my filmmaking life by the expectations it sets from me as a filmmaker and has been continuously so, and I have forever been trying to break away from it. Hopefully someday that will happen (sic)." Critically acclaimed films as *Persepolis*, *Waltz With Bashir* and

Capernaum are also on the list. The two-film *Gangs Of Wasseypur* series was released in 2012, and narrated the saga of a coal mafia family in the town of Wasseypur in Dhanbad district of Jharkhand. Both films were loved by the masses for their drama and rawness, and acclaimed by the classes for cinematic aesthetics. The two films were box-office hits. The gang-war drama featured Manoj Bajpayee, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Piyush Mishra and Richa Chadha as part of an ensemble cast.



Singer Adele is feeling free after filing for divorce from her estranged husband Simon Konecki. Adele and Konecki, who share six-year-old son Angelo, announced their separation in April this year after three years of marriage. She has now filed for divorce. "Adele feels free and is moving on with her life. It looks like the divorce will be straightforward at this stage. They both want what is best for their son," *mirror.co.uk* quoted a source as saying. She is also working on new music. "She is definitely getting ready both mentally and physically to promote new music. It seems it will happen later this year. She talks about last year as a very difficult year and she's said in the past that creating new music is almost like therapy," said the source.

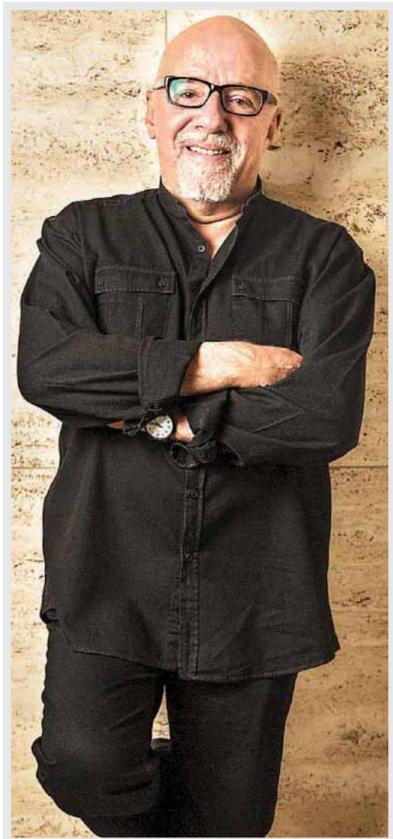
ADELE FEELS FREE AFTER FILING DIVORCE



AUTHOR PAULO COELHO ALL PRAISE FOR NAWAZUDDIN, ACTOR FEELS HONOURED



Bestselling author Paulo Coelho has praised Nawazuddin Siddiqui's work in *Sacred Games*. In turn, the Bollywood actor says it's an honour for him to be noticed and mentioned by someone like the noted author. Coelho had shared the link of Netflix's *Sacred Games* and wrote: "One of the best series on Netflix, with the great actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui." To which, Nawazuddin replied: "Sir Paulo Coelho. I have read your books *The Alchemist* and also watched the film *Veronika decides to Die* based on your novel. I have always been an ardent fan of your writing and it's an honour to be noticed and mentioned by someone like you. I don't have words to describe the feeling." Nawazuddin will next be seen in *Bole Chudiyaa*, which marks the directorial debut of his brother Shamas Nawab Siddiqui and is produced by Rajesh Bhatia and Kiran Bhatia under their banner Woodpecker Movies.



PAMELA ANDERSON GETS FOIEGRAS REMOVED FROM CLUB MENU



Actress and animal rights activist Pamela Anderson has won her battle to ban foiegras from the Playboy Club here. Foiegras is a luxury food product made of the liver of a duck or goose that has been especially fattened. By French law, foiegras is defined as the liver of a duck or goose fattened by force-feeding corn with a feeding tube, a process known as gavage. The actress urged the heads at the venue to stop selling foiegras, pointing out it was produced by force feeding the birds, reports *aceshowbiz.com*. "I'm part of Playboy's family and... was confused - and disappointed - to learn that the Playboy Club London is serving foiegras. There's nothing sexy about foiegras, which means 'fatty liver'. In fact, it's downright vile," she wrote. "Selling this abhorrent pate is not in keeping with the Playboy brand I know and love, and I hope you'll remove it from the menu right away." The heads at the entertainment club in Mayfair have now assured the former *Baywatch* star that they have cut the liver pate from the menu.

Singer Billie Eilish has decided to donate part of her Music Midtown festival fee to charity. The *Bad Guy* hitmaker took to her Instagram account and shared that she will give away a part of her guarantee to Planned Parenthood Southeast, after the state of Georgia imposed new laws that restrict the circumstances in which women are legally able to have an abortion, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*. "ATLANTA. one of my favorite places in the world, to be in, and play shows. But I do not love the state's lawmaker's decision to take away women's rights. I still cannot believe we are even having this conversation in 2019. I'm dedicating my performance and donating a portion of my guarantee to @plannedparenthood. We need this organisation more than ever. Swipe up to learn more and join me to sign the petition, and if you have any spare change, donate," Billie wrote. Last month, Billie was among 136 artists who joined Planned Parenthood — an NGO that provides reproductive health care — to protest laws in states across the US that restrict abortion.

BILLIE EILISH TO DONATE HER MUSIC FEST'S FEE



SOURABH WINS VIETNAM OPEN

PTI ■ HO CHI MINH CITY

India's Sourabh Verma registered a thrilling three-game win over China's Sun Fei Xiang to claim the men's singles title at the USD 75,000 Vietnam Open BWF Tour Super 100 badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Second seed Sourabh, who has won the Hyderabad Open and Slovenian International earlier this year, recovered from a mid-game slump to beat Sun 21-12 17-21 21-14 in the summit clash which lasted an hour and 12 minutes.

"I am very happy with the way, I played this week. I played three Japanese and these players have similar kind of style. Most like to attack and the little differences in their style is something you have to figure out on the court. So it was nice to beat them," Sourabh told PTI.

He beat three Japanese shuttlers -- Kodai Naraoka, Yu Igarashi and Minoru Koga -- on way to his title win.

"The final was a tough match but I am happy I could play my game and come out victorious. This title will give a boost to my confidence," the Indian said.

It was a third career meeting between Sourabh and Sun. The duo has faced off twice this year at Canada and Hyderabad with the Indian coming up trumps on both the occasions.

Talking about the final



match, the world no 38 Indian said: "In the first game, I waited for his weak returns. I realised his defence was a little weak, so I looked to exploit that. He committed too many unforced errors and it helped me.

"In the second game, I was

troubled by the drift from one side and he jumped into a huge lead. But after the change of side in the decider, I went back to the strategy that worked for me and I am happy I could win," added the National champion.

Asked if he will play the

The final was a tough match but I am happy I could play my game and come out victorious. This title will give a boost to my confidence

USD 400,000 Korea Open World Tour Super 500 event to be held from September 24 to 29, Sourabh said: "I will head back home now and depending on the condition of my body and the time required to recover, I will take a call if I want to go to Korea or not."

In the finals, Sourabh dominated the proceedings in the opening game as he jumped to a 4-0 lead early on and kept moving ahead. He enjoyed a 11-4 cushion at the break and surged to a 15-4 advantage after the breather. Sun tried to recover but the gap was too wide to be bridged as Sourabh pocketed the first game comfortably.

The Chinese came out all guns blazing in the second game, zooming to a 8-0 lead. He led 11-5 at the interval and even though the Indian tried to make a comeback, it proved an uphill task as Sun roared back into the contest.

In the decider, Sun had a slender 4-2 lead initially but Sourabh ensured he enjoyed 11-7 advantage at the breather. The Indian then maintained his lead, despite the Chinese snapping at his heels.

Leading 17-14, Sourabh blasted off the next four points to shut the door on his opponent and win his third title of the year.

The 26-year-old from Madhya Pradesh had won the Dutch Open and Korea Open last year



Fati lights up Barca

AFP ■ MADRID

Ansu Fati, the 16-year-old starlet from Guinea Bissau, scored his second goal of the season as Barcelona breezed to a 5-2 win against Valencia on Saturday.

Karim Benzema netted twice for Real Madrid as they fought off a late comeback to beat Levante 3-2 as Eden Hazard made his La Liga debut.

Atletico Madrid retained their place at the top of the table, but only by one point from Real Madrid after their first defeat of the season when they lost 2-0 at Real Sociedad at the Basque club's newly refurbished stadium.

With Lionel Messi still out and watching from the stands at the Camp Nou it was left to Fati take the plaudits.

Fati, who became the third youngest scorer in La Liga history when he came off the bench to net in a 2-2 draw at Osasuna this month, scored in the second minute, before providing the assist for Frenkie de Jong's seventh minute goal.

Barca coach Ernesto Valverde marvelled at Fati's

composure.

"It's not usual that on his first touch he scores, and on his second he sets up a goal," he said.

The defeat left Valencia with just four points from four matches, leaving new coach Albert Celades -- a former Real Madrid assistant coach -- with a huge amount of work to do before the club play their first Champions League group game against Chelsea on Tuesday.

- Real show frailties - At a rain-drenched Santiago Bernabeu, Benzema's goals came just six minutes apart in the first half before Casemiro put Real 3-0 up.

However Levante, who had won their previous two outings, made a fight of it in the second half as they pulled goals back through Borja Mayoral and Gonzalo Melero.

Hazard also came off the bench for the final half-hour to make his first La Liga appearance after a thigh injury had interrupted the start of his Real career following his 100 million-euro (\$110 million) move from Chelsea.

SINGLES

KAUSHAL WINS MYANMAR IN T L



SERIES

YANGON: Indian shuttler Kaushal Dharmar clinched the Myanmar International Series with a come-from-behind win over Indonesia's Karono Karono in a thrilling men's singles final here on Sunday. The 23-year-old from Mumbai, who had won the Hatorz International in October last year, recovered after dropping the opening game to outwit Karono 18-21 21-14 21-11 in a match that lasted an hour here. A trainee of Uday Pawar Badminton Academy, Kaushal, who has been troubled by injuries for almost two years, is currently ranked 187th.

KAVINDER BISHT MOVES AHEAD

EKATERINBURG (RUSSIA): Asian silver-medallist Kavinder Singh Bisht (57kg) advanced to the pre-quarterfinals with a hard-fought win over China's Chena Zhihao in the World Men's Boxing Championships here on Sunday. The fifth seeded Indian left his rival with a bloodied face before the judges ruled 3-2 in his favour after an exhausting bout during which both the boxers managed to connect very few impactful punches. The 26-year-old Indian Air Force man, who was a quarterfinalist in the 2017 Hamburg edition and is among the strongest contenders for a medal this time around, stood out for his pace and endurance during Sunday's bout.

GR WRESTLERS CONTINUE STRUGGLE

MUR-SULTAN (KAZAKHSTAN): Ravi won India's first bout at the World Championships before suffering a defeat by fall as the country's Greco-Roman wrestlers continued their disappointing show on Sunday here. The Olympic qualification was at stake in three categories but all three Indians cut a sorry figure as Manish (67kg), Sunil Kumar (87kg) and Ravi (97kg) exited without a fight.

ANJUM 3RD IN NATIONAL TRIALS

NEW DELHI: World championship Silver medalist Anjum Moudgil swept the women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions (3P) national trials, winning the T7 trial at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range here on Sunday. Anjum, thus, added to the T6 title she won in the same event on Saturday. With this, the Punjab girl has won four trials in all in this outing, claiming both the T6 and T7 Rifle Prone events before landing both the women's 3P titles.

GILL MAKES MARK IN TURKEY

NEW DELHI: India's top rally driver Gaurav Gill won praise of his co-competitors by overcoming mechanical failures and a series of punctures before it ended in a heartbreak for him in the gruelling Rally of Turkey, the first event of the FIA World Rally Championship 2 on Sunday. Going into the final day with a top-five finish firmly in sight, the JK Racing ace underlined his mettle by finishing second in the first stage of the day. He continued in the same vein, taking the third place in the next stage too, demonstrating phenomenal speed and control to post spectacular timings to inch up the leader-board.

Inter Milan top Serie A as Juventus held in Fiorentina

AFP ■ MILAN,

Inter Milan reclaimed top spot in Serie A after a 1-0 win over 10-man Udinese on Saturday as Juventus lost three players to injury in a painful goalless draw at Fiorentina to complicate preparations for next week's Champions League opener.

Stefano Sensi's diving header was enough to seal a maximum nine points for Antonio Conte's Inter ahead of their European opener against Slavia Prague in the San Siro next Tuesday.

But as Maurizio Sarri made his debut on the Juventus bench after recovering from pneumonia, the Italian champions showed signs of weakness four days before their trip to Atletico Madrid.

Juventus are trailing two points behind Inter Milan after three games and could be overtaken by city rivals Torino who host promoted Lecce on Monday.

Napoli meanwhile warmed up for European holders Liverpool on Tuesday with a Dries Mertens double sealing a 2-0 win over crisis club Sampdoria, to move up to fourth in the table.

The reigning eight-time Serie A champions are already missing injured captain Giorgio Chiellini, Mattia De Sciglio and Marko Pjaca.

And Brazilian Douglas Costa pulled up with a hamstring problem minutes into



the game in Florence, followed by Miralem Pjanic with a muscular injury with Danilo later suffering cramps in the heat.

- 'Better than Ronaldo' - Ribery, 36, went off to a standing ovation from the crowd at the Artemio Franchi Stadium after an hour as his team earned their first point this season.

Ribery "played better than Ronaldo," insisted Fiorentina's new owner Rocco Commisso, as the former Bayern Munich midfielder did well to neutralise Ronaldo, who had scored four goals for Portugal in European qualifiers this week.

Ronaldo failed to add to his tally with an acrobatic bicycle kick in the 85th minute flying over the bar.

TIME TO TURN THE PAGE: NEYMAR

AFP ■ PARIS

Neymar shrugged off a hostile reception as he marked his return to action for Paris Saint-Germain with a stunning injury-time winner, and then insisted it was time to move on from the saga of his aborted return to Barcelona.

The world's most expensive player was booed and insulted by sections of the PSG support in the Ligue 1 match against Strasbourg at the Parc des Princes.

That seemed set to be the only story of the afternoon until the second minute of added time when, with the game still goalless, the Brazilian met Abdou Diallo's cross with an acrobatic effort that sent the ball arcing back over his own head and in off the post, sealing a 1-0 win.

It was a remarkable goal and a reminder of why PSG paid a world record 222 million euros (\$264 million at the time) to sign Neymar in 2017. It also leaves them two points clear of Rennes at the



top of Ligue 1.

"I made it clear that I have nothing against the fans, nothing against Paris Saint-Germain as a club. Everyone knows I wanted to leave. I am not going to get into the details of what happened," he said after the game.

"It is time to turn the page. Today I am a Paris Saint-Germain player and I am going to give everything on the field."

He had not played for his club since May and had been left on the sidelines in their first four league games of the campaign because of the uncertainty surrounding his future.

However, having been resigned to a third season in France, he was handed a start by coach Thomas Tuchel here, and loud jeers greeted his name as the teams were read out. He was also regularly whistled by

fans when he touched the ball.

"It is not the first time I have been booed by everyone," Neymar admitted.

"I played in Brazil away from home, I was widely booed. I have played in finals and been booed, I have played here in France, away from home, and also been booed.

"It is sad but I know that, from now on, every game I play will be an away game." One banner unfurled in Portuguese, aimed at Neymar's father, who is also his agent, read: "Neymar Senior, sell your son in the Vila Mimosa".

Vila Mimosa is a district of Rio de Janeiro notorious for prostitution. Another banner mockingly called Neymar "Calimero", a reference to the always unlucky Italian cartoon character.

Certainly not much was going right on the field for the 27-year-old or for his team, who had been held by Strasbourg twice in the league last season.

Barua's sensational charges divide Indian chess

NAVIN UPADHYAY ■ NEW DELHI

Indian chess bosses have swung into action to contain the damaging fallout of the sensational corruption charges leveled by Grandmaster Dibyendu Barua, a chess legend in his own right, against the Bengal Chess Association (BCA) secretary, Atanau Lahiri.

The latest reaction of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) in dealing with Lahiri, who has been caught with his hands literally in the till, shows the Federation has done a rethink on tacking an alleged offender, who is also one of their own officials. Lahiri is a member of the AICF trainer's committee and perceived to be close to the Federation bosses.

Barua had accused Lahiri of routing huge amount of fund received from the state government to his own chess promotion company in a clear case of conflict of interest. Barua produced documents to show that Rs 23 lakh in cash was withdrawn from Lahiri's company - Global Chess - in around 53 weeks.

Barua also accused Lahiri of not allowing him to hold a youth tournament and banning two of India top players, Grandmaster Surya Sekhar Ganguly and Deep Sen Gupta, from taking part in Bengal Chess events. Lahiri also barred under-9 national girls' champion Sneha Halder from playing in a tournament on disciplinary grounds.

Barua has reportedly also

met with State Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and brought to her notice serious financial irregularities in conduct of state chess association.

Barua's charges of corruption are in sync with an allegation leveled by an office bearer of the BCA that signature of a chartered account was forged to manipulate the accounts.

There are also serious allegation that Lahiri conducts all profitable tournaments under Global Chess and all non-profitable ones under BCA. Lahiri is a partner and main signatory in Global Chess.

In its first reaction AICF secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan on August 30 issued a statement taking cognizance of Barua's complaint and promised to set up a three-member committee to probe the charges.

"The AICF will initiate a thorough enquiry into the affairs of Bengal Chess Association and its secretary Atanau Lahiri on the charges leveled by Dibyendu Barua. We will set up a committee soon to look into the matter."

Stopping chess activity is perceived as a serious offence by us in AICF," the statement added. Chauhan's letter also slammed BCA's decision to stop nine-year-old Sneha Halder - the state and national U-9 champion - from taking part in state-level tournaments.

The tone of Chauhan's statement was highly critical of Lahiri's conduct and gave the impression that the AICF was determined to do justice in this



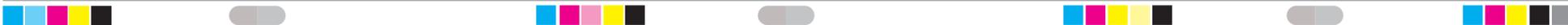
case.

Chauhan statement created a flutter in the chess circle, because Lahiri is seen as a blue-eyed boy of the AICF bosses, who allowed him to control the destiny of Bengal chess despite presiding over an association which didn't even have a fulltime president in the last three years.

It didn't take long before differences cropped up in the AICF over this issue. On September 6, AICF president P.R. Venkatarama Raja issued a state-

ment in which he virtually criticized Bharat Singh Chauhan accusing him for taking side in the matter and arguing for impartial probe.

Rebuffing Chauhan for backing a serious issue tossed by India's foremost chess player, the AICF president Venkatarama Raja said, the Federation should act impartially in this matter and Chauhan "went beyond the brief" while issuing the press statement regarding the allegations leveled by Barua.



Dream didn't come true for Aussies

England close in on Ashes-levelling win after Broad double on day four



Australia having a 'mare' with Ashes DRS calls

AFP ■ LONDON

Australia captain Tim Paine admitted he was having "a mare" after twice failing to review umpiring decisions in the fifth Ashes Test even though the challenges would have brought wickets.

England, seeking to level the series at 2-2, are firmly in control of the final Test with two days to go, 382 runs ahead with two second-innings wickets left.

Australia toiled in the field at the Oval on the third day of the match on Saturday and were not helped by Paine's misjudgements.

Joe Denly, who went on to score 94, should have been out lbw to Mitchell Marsh when he was on 54 but Australia opted not to review the not-out decision.

Later on the skipper, who is the team's wicketkeeper, failed to review a not-out decision against Jos Buttler after an appeal for lbw, with replays showing Nathan Lyon's delivery would have hit the stumps.

Buttler, then on 19, went on to score 47.

"I'm getting it wrong," said a tetchy Paine.

"I don't know what else to say. We're having a mare (nightmare). We've got it wrong."

"It's fast," he added.

"It's a tough job as I've said throughout the whole Test series. I've got a new respect for umpiring, particularly in Test cricket because it's a hard job."

When asked what he could do about it, he said sarcastically that he would enrol in "umpiring school" when he returned home to Australia.

Paine said after his side's defeat in the third Test at Headingley that he would be putting someone else in charge of the team's reviews.

During the closing stages of that match, Lyon had a huge appeal for lbw against Ben Stokes but the England vice-captain was given not out and Australia could not challenge that verdict as they had used up all their reviews.

His misery was compounded when replays revealed that Stokes would have been given out.

Paine said it was sometimes difficult to judge from behind the stumps,



saying he was not sure where the ball hit Denly, for example.

The skipper said his team, guaranteed to retain the Ashes urn, still had a chance to win the series outright.

"The only thing that's been a bit upsetting this Test match is our catching and our referrals but that's not anything new," he added.

He described his top-scorer Steve Smith as a "freak" after he took a stunning diving slip catch late on to see the back of Chris Woakes.

"Cricketers like him, I think Stokes is the same, they're just in the contest and in the game all the time," he said.

"That's what makes great cricketers great because they're always in the contest, they're always aware of what's happening. It was a pretty special catch."

AFP ■ LONDON

England closed in on a series-levelling victory in the fifth Test at the Oval on Sunday as Australia slipped to 68-3 at lunch on the fourth day.

Joe Root's side set the tourists an unlikely 399 to win in London after adding just 16 runs to their overnight total.

Paceman Broad pounded in, roared on by a packed crowd, who raised the roof when he demolished Marcus Harris's off-stump in the fifth over, removing the batsman for nine.

In his following over, Broad ended David Warner's miserable

series, with the opener edging him to Rory Burns in the slips and departing for 11.

Warner, who returned to international cricket in June after a 12-month ban for ball-tampering, had a good World Cup but has endured a torrid time in the Ashes.

The attacking batsman has scored just 95 runs in 10 innings and has been dismissed by Broad seven times.

Warner's dismissal brought Steve Smith to the wicket and he opened his account

with a sweet drive through the covers for four off Jofra Archer.

Smith and Marcus Labuschagne (14) took the score to 56 before off-spinner Jack Leach beat the outside edge of Labuschagne's bat and Johnny Bairstow whipped off the bails to complete a sharp stumping.

Seamer Sam Curran and Leach continued to apply pressure

on Smith and new man Matthew Wade but Australia reached the lunch break without losing a further wicket.

Smith was unbeaten on 18, with Wade 10 not out.

England, who became world champions in the one-day game for the first time in July, are desperate to end a long summer by levelling the five-match series at 2-2.

If they manage to win, it would be the first drawn Ashes series since 1972.

The tourists' hopes rest almost entirely on the shoulders of Smith, who has dominated the series with his bat despite miss-

ing one-and-a-half Tests after being hit by an Archer bouncer.

His 769 runs so far put him fifth on the list of highest tallies in an Ashes series behind Don Bradman's two entries, England's Wally Hammond and former Australia skipper Mark Taylor.

Australia are seeking their first Test series win in England since 2001 but only once before have they scored 399-plus runs in the fourth innings to win a Test match, against England at Headingley in 1948.

Earlier, England took their second-innings total to 329, with Archer and Leach the last men out.

'Youngsters need to prove themselves'

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

India captain Virat Kohli has made it amply clear that the youngsters drafted into the squad ahead of the T20 World Cup next year will have to prove themselves in the "four or five" opportunities they get.

Giving his own example, Kohli, who made his India debut in 2008, said he never expected to get a bagful of opportunities in his early days as an international cricketer.

"We have 30 odd games (before T20 World Cup). From team's point of view, it is very clear. Even when I got into the team it is not like I was expecting 15 opportunities. You get four to five opportunities and you have to make the most of it. That is the level we are playing at," Kohli told Star Sports.

"I think individuals coming in need to have the mindset (of limited opportunities) because team definitely has that mindset.



The first T20 International match between India and South Africa at Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium on Sunday was called off without a ball bowled due to rain. The consistent showers throughout the day didn't even allow the toss to take place and both the team had to walk away without any action on the field. Source: Twitter

Pant has unquestionable talent: Shastri

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

India head coach Ravi Shastri has made it clear that Rishabh Pant will be "rapped on the knuckles" if he keeps on playing rash shots like the one he did against the West Indies recently.

Shastri did not mince words as he pointed out that the young wicketkeeper-batsman has let the team down during India's recent tour of the West Indies where he was dismissed first ball in an ODI game.

"We'll let him be but at times when you see a shot, like the first ball dismissal in Trinidad, if he repeats that, then he will be told. There will be a rap on the knuckles, talent or no talent," the head coach said.

"As simple as that. Because you are letting the team down, forget letting yourselves down. In a situation where you have the captain at the other end, a target to chase, the need of the hour is sensible cricket," Shastri was quoted as saying in an interview with Star Sports.

Shastri said Pant has unquestionable talent but if he



can sort out his shot-selection and decision-making, he will be unstoppable.

"No one will even think of changing his style. Like Virat said, reading the situation, match-awareness and shot-selection becomes crucial. If he can fathom that, he could be unstoppable.

"It could take one game, it could take four games. He has played so much IPL cricket, he will learn. It's time now for him

to step up and show how devastating he can be," Shastri said with captain Virat Kohli by his side. Kohli, on his part, said he wants Pant to play according to situations.

"The only expectation from Rishabh is that he read situations well," Kohli said.

"We don't expect him to play the way you might be thinking. It is about analysing a situation and dealing with it in your own way."



Guys who grab the opportunity quickly, they grab the opportunity. It is a delicate balance to strike but it is important because you only have 30 games (to figure it out)."

Besides the T20 World Cup in Australia next year, the team is also focussing on the World Test Championship.

For the last two T20 International series, including against the West Indies and the ongoing one against South Africa, India have left out spinners Kuldeep Chahal and Yuzvendra Chahal who have made way for Rahul Chahar and Washington Sundar. The selectors have also brought in batsmen Shreyas Iyer and Manish Pandey.

"Before we reach the World Cup, focus is on T20s and Tests. Youngsters are being pushed in from time to time. It is very important to settle the team combination and you will have to figure out the players who will take the team forward," added Kohli.

PKL: Dabang Delhi beat Gujarat Fortunegiants

PTI ■ PUNE

Naveen Kumar was once again the hero for Dabang Delhi KC as they beat Gujarat Fortunegiants 34-30 in a Pro Kabaddi League match here on Sunday.

Naveen Kumar picked up another Super 10 (13th consecutive) as Delhi produced a composed performance, despite being closely challenged in the second half by Fortunegiants, to pick up five points and consolidate their stay at the top of the points table.

The initial minutes of the match suggested it would be a closely-fought encounter with both defences looking sharp.

Ravinder Pahal pulled off two successful tackles for the Delhi side while, at the other end, Rituraj Koravi was looking in form.

But Naveen had other plans, as

The initial minutes of the match suggested it would be a closely-fought encounter with both defences looking sharp

he unlocked the Gujarat defence with a five-point raid in the ninth minute to clinch an All-Out for Delhi.

The restart didn't bring good fortunes for Fortunegiants, with their raiders looking rather one-dimensional against a Delhi defence that was slowly growing in stature.

The first half ended with Naveen claiming another two-point raid that reduced Gujarat to



a single player and gave Delhi an 11-point lead (20-9).

Sadly for Delhi, both Meraj Sheykh and Anil Kumar had to be substituted due to injuries.

Delhi secured their second All-Out in the first move of the second half but the restart marked the revival for last season's runners-up Fortunegiants.

Pankaj, playing in the left corner for Gujarat, ensured Naveen Kumar had no influence in the game, while Rohit Gulia produced a quick-fire Super 10 to inflict an All-Out on Delhi (sixth minute of the second half) and reduced the margin.

Sachin also got into the act for Gujarat as the team kept pace with the Delhi side.

But Naveen's clinical Super 10 and a dash by Vishal Mane on Gujarat's Sachin was enough for Delhi to pick up a victory