



the pioneer



I WILL CONTINUE
TO EXPERIMENT:
VARUN TEJ

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MindSpace Metro launch by October end

HYDERABAD: If all goes well, employees working in IT companies can use Metro to commute to MindSpace Metro station starting this Diwali. Works relating to the Raidurgam Metro Station is nearing completion and Metro officials say the rest of the works would be completed by October 15. Due to the construction of an underpass and a flyover of SRDP, work at this station was delayed. Central Chief Electrical Inspector inspections for overhead traction lines have already been completed.

HMRL MD N V S Reddy said that the residual works would be completed by mid-October. The inaugural run could happen between October 15-30, upon approval by the Commission of Railway Safety (CMRS).

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Govt bans production, import of e-cigarettes

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an ordinance to ban production, import, distribution and sale of electronic cigarettes, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

Sitharaman, who had headed a Group of Ministers (GoM) on the issue, said the Cabinet decided to ban e-cigarettes and similar products as they pose health risk to people, especially the youth.

It is believed that there are more than 400 brands, none of which is manufactured yet in India and they come in over 150 flavours.

It is Electronic Nicotine Delivery System or ENDS, the formal technical name of e-cigarettes. There was 77.8% growth among school students taking to e-cigarettes

NIA Hyd registers first human trafficking case

HYDERABAD: The city unit of National Investigation Agency (NIA) booked its first human trafficking case, under provisions of the recently amended NIA Act, against three persons including a woman.

The case was booked following the arrest of Mohammed Yousuf Khan, Bithi Begum and Sojib, all natives of West Bengal, who were living in Hyderabad and were arrested by Chatrinaka police in April for their alleged involvement in illegal trafficking of Bangladeshi women to Hyderabad and their sexual exploitation.

Continued on Page 4

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Bhadrapada & Shukla Paksha
Tithi: Panchami: 07:26 pm
Nakshatram: Bharani: 08:46 am
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam: 01:40 pm - 03:10 pm
Temp: 29/22
Varjyam: 09:33 pm - 11:15 pm
Gulika: 09:08 am - 10:39 am
Good Time: (to start any important work)
Amritakalam: Nil
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:45 am - 12:34 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

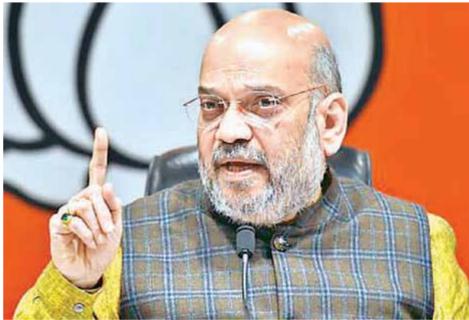
Forecast: Thunderstorm
Temp: 29/22
Humidity: 90%
Sunrise: 06:04
Sunset: 06:15
Current Weather Conditions Updated September 18, 2019 5:00 PM

Not for imposing Hindi over regional languages: Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a huge backlash over his comments on Hindi as a "unifying language", Home Minister Amit Shah said today that he had never asked for the imposition of Hindi over regional languages and added, "If some people want to do politics, it is their choice." Amit Shah's comment earlier this week on Hindi becoming a unifying language for all Indians was read by many as a precursor to the government's bid to impose Hindi on non-Hindi speaking states, reviving a decades-old debate.

"I never asked for imposing Hindi over other regional languages and had only requested for learning Hindi as the second language after one's mother tongue. I myself come from a non-Hindi state of Gujarat. If some people want to do politics, it's their choice," Amit Shah said. On Saturday, the Home Minister had tweeted: "India is a country of many different lan-



guages and each language has its own significance, but it is necessary to have a common language that becomes the mark of India's identity globally... Today, if there is one language that has the ability to string the nation together in unity, it is the Hindi language which is the most widely-spoken and understood language in India."

The tweet provoked a storm,

especially in southern states that have always been opposed to any suggestion that may seem like wider use of Hindi in the states and the language taking precedence over their regional tongue.

Among those who were at odds with Mr Shah's comment was the BJP's BS Yediyurappa, the Chief Minister of Karnataka. Mr Yediyurappa tweeted that his

government would not compromise on the importance of Kannada in the state. "As far as Karnataka is concerned, Kannada is the principal language. We will never compromise its importance," he had posted. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had said the claim that "Hindi unifies our country is absurd".

Amid similar protests from Tamil Nadu politicians, superstar Rajinikanth today said "no southern state would accept" any such move. "A common language not just for India but any country is good for its unity and progress. Unfortunately, (one cannot) bring a common language in our country. So you cannot impose any language," Rajinikanth told reporters in Tamil at the Chennai airport.

"Especially, if you impose Hindi, not just Tamil Nadu, no southern state will accept that. Many states in northern parts will also not accept that," he added.

Uttam, Revanth cross swords over Huzurnagar bypoll candidate

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Infighting in the State unit of the Congress party was out in the open on Wednesday, as TPCC working president and MP A Revanth Reddy expressed his displeasure at TPCC chief Uttam Kumar Reddy unilaterally announcing Padmavathi Reddy as the candidate for the Huzurnagar constituency bypolls. While speaking to media persons in the Assembly lobbies, Revanth Reddy faulted Uttam for naming the candidate without informing the High Command and without consulting anyone in TPCC.

In the next breath, expressing his own preference, Revanth Reddy said that he would support the candidature of Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy. The force with which he said that sounded like a revolt against TPCC president.

By-elections will be held for the Huzurnagar Assembly constituency, as Uttam vacated the seat after winning the Lok Sabha polls as Nalgonda MP.



Infighting in Congress out in the open, as Revanth Reddy raises revolt against TPCC president Uttam Kumar Reddy

Although notification for the Huzurnagar bye-elections is yet to be announced, infighting in the grand old party has already spilled on to the streets. Revanth is said to have met

Telangana Congress in-charge RC Khuntia and complained about Uttam. Khuntia is understood to have pacified Revanth, saying he would inform party High Command about the issue. Revanth is known to be jockeying for TPCC president post and his overt defiance of Uttam in the case of Huzurnagar candidate has become a topic of hot discussion in party circles. Revanth, along with his family members, met even Congress matriarch Sonia Gandhi recently, setting off speculations.

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Cabinet clears Rs 2,024 cr bonus for Railway staff

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a festive season bonanza, the Union Cabinet has approved bonus worth 78 days' wages for over 11 lakh Indian Railways employees.

"It will motivate employees. This is a reward for their productivity," Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said while briefing the media on Cabinet decisions. The bonus to railway employees would cost Rs 2,024 crore to the national transporter. Javadekar said that the Cabinet decision on bonus equivalent to 78 days' wages has been the sixth in the row thus setting a record. The bonus for financial year 2018-19 is linked to employee productivity and covers 11.52 lakh eligible non-gazetted railway employees.

"Productivity-linked bonus (PLB) to all non-gazetted railway employees is an acknowledgement of their contribution to the efficient running of the Railways," an official statement said.

Was World Telugu Conference a one-off extravaganza?

● No word for over 2 years about 'annual' conference

L VENKAT RAM REDDY
■ HYDERABAD

Was the much-highlighted World Telugu Conference (WTC), conceived and executed by Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Naidu ostensibly to promote Telugu language, literature and culture across the globe, a one-off affair? What about the promise to make it an annual feature so that Telugu, a classical language, gets its due at the global level? On hindsight, WTC seems to have been a hyped show with no enduring elements for promoting Telugu at the international level. For, just one of the promises made in the heat of the moment has seen the light of the day today!

KCR held the maiden WTC amid much fanfare in December 2017 for five days. The entire Hyderabad city was decked up in bridal finery with themes reflecting Telugu language, literature and culture. It was the first conference of its kind to be held in Telangana to celebrate Telugu language, literature and culture after it was accorded classical language status in 2016. Celebrities, including film stars and litterateurs, took part and paid glowing tributes for the broad canvas given by the government to project Telugu. On the whole, about Rs 80 crore was spent on WTC.

During the valedictory ceremony, which was attended by



World Telugu Conference inauguration ceremony in 2017 (file photo)

Celebrities, including film stars and litterateurs, took part and paid glowing tributes for the broad canvas given by the government to project Telugu

● First WTC held amid much fanfare in December 2017
● Nearly Rs 80 crore spent with a litany of promises

President Ram Nath Kovind, KCR announced, to the joy of everyone present, that the event would be organized every year. However, the event was not held in the subsequent year -2018. There has been no initiative from the government till date to

organize the event in the current year. No doubt, the Chief Minister took personal initiative to make WTF a grand success. He invited President, Vice President, Governors and other important delegates to attend the event. The main venue of the event was Lal Bahadur Stadium, where the inaugural and valedictory ceremonies were held with pomp and gusto. While the inaugural event was attended by Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, the valedictory event was attended by President Ram Nath Kovind.

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Kamala Harris very much qualified to run for US Prez: NJ Gov

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Indian-origin US Senator, Kamala Harris is an outstanding leader and very much qualified to run for the post of American President in 2020 elections, said Governor of New Jersey, Phil Murphy here on Wednesday.

Noting that there were probably 12 to 15 candidates in the Democratic Party running for the US President, he said, "many of them are very qualified and she (Kamala Harris) certainly is one of them."

"I am with my state, my favourite senator Cory Booker who I think is terrific. But Kamala Harris is an outstanding leader as well,"



Phil Murphy

The NJ Governor said when asked for his opinion on the Harris' candidature. He was here to take part in Sustainable Innovation Summit 2019 organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce.

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Prakash Reddy

Head constable shoots himself, succumbs

T AMARENDER REDDY
■ NIZAMABAD

Prakash Reddy, a head constable attached to the Indlawai Police Station in Nizamabad district, allegedly shot himself on the forehead with the service revolver of the station sub-inspector on Tuesday morning. He succumbed instantaneously to the injuries.

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RGIA world's 3rd fastest-growing airport

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The latest World Airport Traffic Report released on Tuesday features GMR Hyderabad International Airport as the 3rd fastest-growing airport in the world in terms of passenger growth. Hyderabad, along with Bengaluru, figures in the list of top five fastest-growing airports in the world last year in the more than 15 million passengers per annum category, according to Airports Council International, a trade associa-

tion. ACI revealed the findings. Hyderabad International Airport registered passenger growth of 21.9% in 2018 over the corresponding year.

ACI World Director General Ms. Angela Gittens said, "India's move towards a more liberalized aviation market and the nation's strengthening economic fundamentals have helped it become one of the fastest-growing markets with its traffic growing rapidly in a relatively short time."

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Shamshabad airport

Telangana and New Jersey 'Sister States'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana and New Jersey signed a 'Sister State Partnership Agreement' in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The agreement was signed by Chief Secretary Dr SK Joshi and New Jersey State Governor Phil Murphy in the presence of IT and Industries Minister K T Rama Rao.

The agreement facilitates cooperation in specific areas of economic development such as IT, Pharma and Life Sciences, Biotech, Fintech, Media, Data Centres, Clean Energy, Higher Education, Tourism, Culture and Healthcare sectors, among others. The agreement was signed to strengthen the part-



Chief Secretary SK Joshi and New Jersey State Governor Phil Murphy signing the 'Sister State Partnership Agreement' in the presence of IT and Industries Minister KT Rama Rao

nership and good relationship between the people of the states of New Jersey and Telangana. The pact will encourage continued discus-

sions; develop programmes and activities of mutual interest amongst the people of New Jersey and Telangana.

Continued on Page 4

T-HUB INKS MOU WITH 'VENTURELINK' AND 'CHOOSE NEW JERSEY'

The Telangana government's startup initiative T-Hub on Friday signed a tripartite MoU with 'Choose New Jersey', an economic development organization, and 'VentureLink', a community hub for technology companies at the New Jersey Institute of Technology for Northern New Jersey. The MoU will promote technology and investment exchange between New Jersey and India through collaboration between T-Hub, VentureLink, and Choose New Jersey. T-Hub will provide Indian growth-stage startups with business opportunities, market understanding, and access to clients in New Jersey. The three entities will collaborate in the areas of startup innovation, funding and entrepreneurship. Under the agreement, two individuals per startup will get complimentary space for two months. The agreement will also enhance the global competitiveness of New Jersey and Indian startups and it will support joint research and development in the areas of common interest between the parties.

13 more still missing, 34 dead bodies recovered

● Boat capsized in river Godavari

PNS ■ KAKINADA

The search operations for the still missing in tourist boat capsize continued on the fourth day on Wednesday.

A total of 727 personal and staff from Indian Navy, NDRF, SDRF, police, AP fire and disaster management are engaged in the search operations that entered its fourth day on Wednesday.

Of the total 73 in the capsize boat, 26 were rescued on Sunday, and of the remaining 34 missing, bodies were recovered in the last four



days from Sunday. According to East Godavari joint collector and additional district magistrate Dr G Lakshminsha the search operations will be resumed by 4 am on Thursday, for the remaining 13 missing, the JC said.

9.93 lakh acre new ayacut by next Kharif

FM Harish Rao says irrigation department has been allocated Rs 8,356 crore in the Budget for this

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Finance Minister T Harish Rao on Tuesday said that 9.93 lakh acre of new ayacut will be created by next kharif season in the state and fund allocations have been made in the 2019-20 Budget to achieve this.

The irrigation department has drawn up big plans to increase ayacut in the state, and Rs 8,356 crore had been allocated in the Budget. This apart, Rs 12,302 crore will be raised through loans from different funding agencies, the Minister said in the State Assembly, adding that these funds will be utilised for Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme, Sitarama project, Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme and other irrigation projects.

"All together, about Rs 20,668 crore will be spent by the Irrigation department during the financial year. This will help in creating a new ayacut of 9.93 lakh acres by next kharif," Harish Rao said.

Stating that the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme had begun yielding fruit, he said that water will be supplied up to Nalgonda, Suryapet and Kodad during Yasangi season this year. Through SRSP Stage II, water will be supplied to four lakh acres, while SRSP Stage I will irrigate 9.60 lakh acres.

Irrespective of water inflows from upstream in river Godavari, water will be supplied to 14 lakh acre through Saraswathi, Lakshmi and other canals, besides Ali Sagar, the



Minister said amid thumping of benches by the TRS MLAs.

Irrespective of inflows from upstream in river Godavari, water will be supplied to 14 lakh acre through Saraswathi, Lakshmi and other canals

with minimum expenditure and least time spent, the flood flow canal was transformed into a reservoir to store huge volumes of water. "This is a victory achieved by the TRS government. Would this have been

possible if Congress was in power?", Harish Rao asked pointing to Congress MLA Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy in the House.

The Minister said that MLAs, cutting across party lines, had appreciated Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao for ensuring water through river Godavari. "Sangareddy MLA Jagga Reddy and CPI leader Chada Venkat Reddy complimented the Chief Minister, while Karnataka MLA Revanna felicitated Chandrashekhar Rao. Navjot Singh Sidhu came all the way from Punjab and appreciated the efforts of the Chief Minister but Congress leaders here are oblivious to all these appreciations and developments, he pointed out.

The Minister said after formation of Telangana State, over 12 lakh acres of new ayacut came under cultivation. Over 1.27 lakh acre was stabilized under major and medium irrigation projects and similarly over 14 lakh acres was stabilized through Mission Kakatiya. Referring to reverse migration in erstwhile Mahabubnagar district, he said the State government's initiatives helped in transforming the drought-prone district into a vast expanse of lush green fields.

Nearly Rs.2,652 crore was spent on completing pending projects in Mahabubnagar district. This facilitated in supplying water to over 7 lakh acres in the district, the Minister said.



A lamp being lit to inaugurate the R&D facility in the city on Wednesday

Cloud data firm invests Rs 1,400 cr in Hyd unit

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cloud data management company Informatica, has launched its R&D facility in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The expansion is an integral part of Informatica's global R&D investment, which exceeds \$200 million a year and enables the company to support its continued growth in India.

Informatica has invested over \$2 million in Hyderabad to build a new 23,000+ sq ft engineering hub which will spearhead innovation for the company. The Hyderabad facility is focussed on the evolution of Informatica Intelligent Data Platform. Currently, there are currently over 150 employees at the Hyderabad engineering hub and this is expected to double in a few years. Informatica employs around 1,600 people across the country with its three major development centres in Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad.

Leveraging AI and machine learning across the company's entire product architecture via its CLAIRE engine, the Hyderabad office will further develop Informatica Enterprise Data Catalog (EDC), and its strategic cloud offerings.

Amit Walia, president of products and marketing said,

SOARING HIGH

- 1700+ employees in India
- Started operations in India 16 years ago and opened its Hyderabad office 10 years ago
- 150 employees in Hyderabad. Headcount to double in two years
- Has seen 20 per cent growth in employees each year
- Data Security Products and Enterprise Data Catalogue are key. Many Informatica products are developed out of its Hyderabad office and it has expanded in cloud, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML)

"India, specifically Hyderabad, with its highly skilled talent pool is vital to Informatica's growth. With almost half of our global employees located in the three facilities in India, expansion is inevitable. Hyderabad is driving some of the most significant innovations that have allowed Informatica make a global impact."



HC notice to govt over PIL on GOs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday issued notices to the state government to respond to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed that it had been keeping several GOs secret.

The petition was filed by one Perala Shekar Rao, a resident of LB Nagar in the city, who told the court that out of a total of 1.07 lakh GOs issued by Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao led state government ever since it came to power, about 42,500 GOs were not put up in the public domain. The petitioner urged the HC to issue directions to the government to publish all the Government Orders (GO) notifications, rules and circulars on Internet and update those passed by the government put in the public domain, especially on the official website of the state government. Perala Rao also urged the court to appoint a senior officer who is responsible for prompt updating of the government website and proper flow of content to the government's official site, besides uploading all future GOs. A division bench comprising Chief Justice RS Chauhan and Justice A Abhishek Reddy adjourned the matter for four weeks after the issuance of the notices.

The PIL claims that of a total of 1.07 lakh GOs issued, about 42,500 were not put in public domain

HYDERABAD BULLION RATES

GOLD
₹ 37,847 (10 gm)
₹ 33
SILVER
₹ 46,751 (1kg)
₹ 51

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG

Dressed/With Skin ₹161
Without Skin ₹183
Broiler at Farm ₹111

EGG RATES ₹/100

HYDERABAD 363
VIJAYAWADA 388
VISAKHAPATNAM 405
RETAIL PRICE ₹3.63 (IN HYDERABAD)

CM peddling lies on recession: BJP

Party spokesperson says KCR is blaming Centre to hide his failures on TS' financial front

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP alleged that Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao was peddling blatant lies in case of state's financial position and pointing fingers towards recession and Centre to hide his failures. BJP's spokesperson Anugula Rakesh Reddy demanded an apology from CM KCR for misquoting industrialists Ratan Tata and Anand Mahindra on recession and misleading Telangana people.

"Telangana state's financial position is in such a pathetic situation that the government is not even able to pay salaries and pending bills. KCR has increased state's debt from Rs 60,000 crore to Rs 3 lakh crore, but failed to build any new assets or increase income. If the Centre stops funds, the state government cannot run even for a day. Every month, at least Rs 5,000 crore new loans have to be availed to run the government. Telangana has come to this situation due to the utter negligence and inability of CM KCR. But to hide his failure and inability, KCR is pointing towards Centre and citing recession as the reason for Telangana's poor financial position," criticised Anugula Rakesh Reddy, speaking in Hyderabad on Wednesday.



Anugula Rakesh Reddy

"KCR said that due to recession, the state's budget has been decreased. He even said industrialists Ratan Tata and Anand Mahindra have said that India is going through a recession. This is absolutely false. Ratan Tata and Anand Mahindra have never commented on recession. KCR should apologise for telling lies on recession," he demanded.

Rakesh Reddy also said that KCR has been misleading Telangana people on several economic indicators. "KCR, time and again, says that Telangana is the number one state in GSDP, which is glaring a lie. According to RBI data, Telangana is at 8th place in GSDP. KCR is also cheating people saying Telangana is number one state in welfare, while it is at 8th place. Even in case of IT sector, Telangana is at 5th position. IT Minister KTR's English is good but performance is bad," alleged Rakesh Reddy.

South Africa pitches for trade ties with India

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

"India is very important market for us. We are open to do business," said Joel Sibusiso Ndebele, South African High Commissioner to India while addressing a business seminar on Trade and Investment Opportunities in South Africa held in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The meet was organised by the Federation of Telangana Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) in partnership with South African High Commissioner.

"We have set ourselves a target to attract an investment of US\$ 100 billion in the next five years and we are here to attract investments from our priority market India," Sibusiso Ndebele added. "South Africa

'South Africa offers immense business opportunities and potential for Indian corporate in General and Telangana in particular'

offers immense business opportunities and potential for Indian corporate in General and Telangana in particular. We have robust independent legal and judiciary system with high level of Industrial innovation. We are looking for investments in pharma, IT, infra and renewable energy sectors," he said. Speaking at the gathering attended representatives of big

corporate, government officials and entrepreneurs, FTCCI Sr Vice President Ramakanth Inani said, "This seminar is aimed at creating awareness about business opportunities and promoting trade and investment partnerships between India and South Africa. We are working closely with SA officials and facilitating trade and business opportunities for our region."

The seminar was attended by Khyati Naravane, CEO, FTCCI; E Vishnu Vardhan Reddy, Regional Passport Officer, Ministry of External Affairs; Lerato Mashile, Acting Consul General, South African Consulate General, Mumbai; Recado Andrews, Counselor of Economic, South African High Commission in New Delhi, among others.

Singareni workers to be given share in profits, says KCR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao on Wednesday said the government is ready to solve problems of the Singareni workers. The CM has instructed Singareni CMD Sridhar to convene a special meeting with MPs, MLAs and MLCs from Singareni area, discuss all matters threadbare and suggest solutions.

CM KCR held a meeting in his chamber in the Legislative Assembly here with Singareni region MLAs Balka Suman, Gandra Venkatramana Reddy, Divakar Rao,

He met MLAs from Singareni area who brought to his notice problems faced by workers

Vanama Venkateswarlu, Durgam Chinnaiyah, Sandra Venkata Veeranna, Rega Kantha Rao, Hari Priya and Korukanti Chander. Singareni CMD Sridhar, CM Principal Secretary S Narsing Rao also participated in the meeting.

Singareni area MLAs brought to the notice of the CM the problems faced by workers. They urged him that as was done every year, workers should be given a share in the profits of the company for the financial year 2018-19 too. The CM responded positively to this. KCR assured that he would make a statement in the Assembly on Thursday on the share from profits to be paid to Singareni workers.



ITC, edu dept, GHMC join hands for Swachh Bharat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

City Mayor Bonthu Rammohan and education secretary Dr B Janardhan Reddy inaugurated the Swachh Vidyalaya programme, which aims to raise awareness about the sanitation and cleanliness among students on Wednesday. This is a joint initiative between ITC's Wellbeing Out of Waste (WOW) programme, the department of education, Telangana and Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

As part of the initiative, the three have joined hands to implement a major awareness campaign across 5,000 selected schools in Hyderabad and Telangana by creating "Swachh Vidyalaya" aimed at developing appropriate knowledge, attitude and behaviour about waste management among children.

The programme is created to encourage school students practise and spread awareness about waste segregation and sustainable management of waste. School students, teachers and principals of over 400 schools and stakeholders from government and non-governmental agencies participated in the event.

This programme would help reduce dumping of waste in and around the school campus and address the challenge of environmental degradation. It will also help



City Mayor Bonthu Rammohan and state officials take a sanitation and cleanliness pledge at the event on Wednesday

promote segregation of waste at the source so that the recyclable materials and wet waste is converted into organic compost to be used as manure for kitchen gardens and farmers.

The Mayor called upon every student to be a Swachh ambassador and conduct Swachh programmes at home and in and around their school. Janardhan Reddy said that there are about 29,000 public schools in the state and over 10,000 private schools where Swachh Vidyalaya program is being implemented. He also said that 39 action items were sent to each school to receive a Swacchta rating. The rating period begins from October 1 and will run for one full year.

GHMC and ITC WOW will also jointly conduct "Clean Communities Championship" in Hyderabad to create awareness on

the importance of segregation in households. Over 300 gated communities in Hyderabad will be covered under the programme.

The 2019 inter-schools recycling championships was awarded to Kanduri Adit, a Class II student of Ochrud's International School, Gachibowli, who worked on environmental protection by collecting 2,145 kg of dry, recyclable waste.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sanjay Singh, member, corporate management committee, and chief executive, Paperboards and Specialty Papers Division, ITC Ltd., said, "We have also started the 'Clean Communities Championship' and 'Inter-School Recycling Championship Awards Ceremony' to motivate children and contribute to the government's goal of achieving a Swachh and Swasth Bharat."

YADADRI SHRINE ROW

Land allotment to Jeeyar Swamy challenged

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A PIL was filed in Telangana High Court on Wednesday challenging the state government's decision to transfer 2.3 acre land to Jeeyar Swamy Vedic Trust in the pilgrim city of Yadadri.

The petition was filed by one Ch Veera Chari, a social activist from Lalapeta area of Secunderabad. In his petition, Chari urged the high court to declare the action of secretary of Yadadri Temple Development Authority (YTDA) in registering the 2.30 acres of land in Survey Number 172 of Gundlapally village of Yadadri district in favour of Jeeyar Integrated Vedic Academy (JIVA) run by Sri Sri Sri Chinna Srimannarayana Ramanuja Jeeyar swamy on September

5, 2019 as arbitrary and illegal and set aside the registration.

The petitioner also urged the court to direct the state government to compensate the Jeeyar Swamy for acquiring his Kuteer built in 2004 without conducting any alternate allotment of land.

A division bench comprising of Chief Justice RS Chauhan and Justice A Abhishek Reddy adjourned the matter till next week, following a request by the counsel for the petitioner. The Jeeyar Swamy was made the sixth respondent in the case. The principal secretaries of Revenue and Endowments Department, the secretary of the YTDA, district collector of Yadadri Bhongir district are the other respondents in the case.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT
(e) Procurement Notice
1. Online tenders are invited under e-procurement platform for Two (2) works in Karimnagar District under Special Development Funds, vide E-n-C(R&B) SR&CRN, serial No.07/Coronet works (SDF)/ENC/DC/EE/R/DEE-10/AEE-6/2019-20.16.09.2019. 2. Tenderers can download the tender schedule and further details can be seen from e-market place i.e., Procurement market place at www.procurement.gov.in. The last date of receipt of tenders is on or before 27.09.2019.
For Engineer-In-charge (R&B) State Roads & CRN.
DIPR R.O. No. 665/PP/CL/AGENCY/ADVT/11/2019-20

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA Department of Revenue (Land Acquisition) Office of the District Collector, Siddipet
FORM-VII
PRIMARY DECLARATION
Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation And Resettlement Act, 2013 (central Act 30/2013) under section 19(1) and Rule 25, Sub-Rule (1)
Collector File No.G2/3043/2019 Date: 16/09/2019
Siddipet File No.B/142/2018 Date: 31/08/2019
Gazette No.552/19 Date: 16/09/2019
As per the orders of Government of Telangana/Siddipet District Collector the land listed in the table below measuring acres 4.23 guntas in Chepala village of Mirdoddy Mandal of Siddipet district hereby acquired for the purpose of the public benefit i.e. to construct a distributary canal D-13 to Komuravelli Mallannasagar Reservoir as part of the Kaleswaram Project.
As the government felt that the above said land is required, following a request by farmers of Chepala farmers the patta land measuring Acres 4.23 guntas is confirmed to be acquired as per the Central land acquisition act 30.2013 as listed in the below table

Schedule-1										
Village:Chepala					Mandal:Mirdoddy			District:Siddipet		
Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Nature of land	Type of land	Area under acquisition	Name of the Patta/Owner/ Husband Names	East	West	North	South	Structure/ Father/ Husband Trees and other including names and Variety
1	810	Patta	Dry	0.34	Punapalli Balaiah S/o. Narasaiah	811	812	809	810	1-Pipeline 1-Dip 2-Neem 1-Aurang 1-Tamra
2	810	Patta	Dry	0.10	Punapalli Kanunakar S/o. Pochiah	811	812	808	810	1-Pipeline 2-Dip 2-Gores
3	810	Patta	Dry	0.27	Punapalli Ramulu S/o. Narasaiah	811	812	808	810	1-Pipeline 2-Dip 1-Custodapple
4	836	Patta	Dry	0.12	Arikula Narasaiah S/o. Balaiah	834	838	835	836	1-Bore, 1-Teak, 1-Neem, 1-Kanuga, 1-Pipeline
5	836	Patta	Dry	0.19	Arikula Ramulu S/o. Malliah	834	838	835	836	3-Neem, 1-Kanuga, 1-Kakani
6	836	Patta	Dry	0.10	Arikula Balaiah S/o. Bal Narasaiah	834	838	835	836	1-Bore, 1-Teak, 1-Neem
7	838	Patta	Dry	0.10	Arikula Galaiah S/o. Ramaiah	839	842	836	837	1-Bore 7-Neem, 2-Chanang, 1-Thurms, 1-Mango
8	879	Patta	Dry	0.06	Dasari Balaiah S/o. Sallu	880	884	876	878	1-Animals Hut, 3-Neem, 6-Kanuga, 1-Tamra, 1-Dip, 6-Custodapple
9	1081	Patta	Dry	0.08	Dasari Lakshminarayana S/o. Sallu	Road	Pond	887	1082	1-Pipeline 1-Dip
10	1081	Patta	Dry	0.07	Lachola Lalitha	Road	Pond	887	1082	
TOTAL 4.23										

As mentioned under the Section 15 of the Central Act 30 of 2013, people who expressed interest to part with their land have been consulted and an inquiry was undertaken and upon verification of objections raised the above confirmatory declaration has been made. The land to be acquired is meant for construction of a canal and no villager is going to be displaced by the canal the question of rehabilitation does not arise.
Since the land is being acquired for irrigation project, during the phase of construction of the canal if mines are located in any part of the land or other minerals and excavated coal, iron ore, granite stone, granite slab and other minerals are not at all needed for construction purpose.
The maps of the above said land to be acquired can be inspected at the office of the District Collector, Siddipet and special deputy collector (Land Acquisition), Siddipet during working hours.
Sd/- Tahsilddar, Siddipet, Sd/- Spl. Dy. Collector (LA), Joint District Collector, Siddipet District, Sd/- Sd/- Mirdoddy Unit-1 Kaleswaram Project Collector, Siddipet District, Sd/- Siddipet District, Sd/- Siddipet District, Sd/- Siddipet District
DIPR No.809/LA/PP/Agency/2019-20

CRIME CORNER

Six held for harassing traffic cop

HYDERABAD: The Gandhinagar police arrested six persons on Wednesday for allegedly abusing a traffic police sub-inspector at Tank Bund during Ganesh immersion procession last week. According to the police, the six persons were identified as Shiva Shankar, Vinay Kumar, Ajay Kumar, Shiva, Srinath and Anand abused the Chikkadpally Traffic SI Balraj while he was on Ganesh immersion duty on September 9. A video of the six persons abusing the SI and abusing him went viral on social media. The six persons were allegedly drunk and were questioning the police official why he had abused them. On a complaint made by the SI, the police registered a case against the six persons under sections 351, 353, 504 of the IPC and placed them under arrest on Tuesday.

Fraud booked for extorting donations

HYDERABAD: The Apollo Hospital management has lodged a complaint with the Banjara Hills police stating that a fraudster was extorting donations from doctors and NRIs to be transferred into the bank accounts of the hospital by claiming that the hospital is in collaboration with the State government would be treating dengue patients with the funds collected. According to sources, the fraudster, G Kranthi Kumar from Boduppal, opened a bank account with Axis Bank in the name of Apollo Hospitals using a fraudulent letterhead of the hospital. He was soliciting donations from people to be transferred into the bank account. The fraud came to light when the bank officials approached the hospital to check the veracity of the details. Efforts are on to nab the accused, police said.

Student mowed down by lorry at Medchal

HYDERABAD: A 20-year-old student was killed on the spot when a speeding lorry ran over him at Medchal on Tuesday. The deceased student was identified as Arigela Dhiraj, studying his B.Tech in MREM college. He was pursuing his 3rd year and was staying with his brother in a hostel at Medchal. According to the police, Dhiraj was heading towards Medchal check post when the mishap occurred. Dhiraj was on his two wheeler when a lorry being driven rashly crashed into the bike. The impact of the crash was such that Dhiraj immediately came under the wheels of the lorry and was crushed.

AIMIM holds free health camps in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
In light of rise in cases of malaria, typhoid and dengue in Hyderabad, AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has decided to hold free medical health camp at the various locations in the city in collaboration with Owaisi Group of Hospitals. One such camp was inaugurated by Mayor Bonthu Rammohan along with Asaduddin Owaisi at Owaisi Health Centre at Talabkatta on Wednesday. Diagnosis, consultations and medicines will be conducted and provided free of cost at the camps. Speaking to the media, the Mayor urge people to avail the opportunity to ensure their welfare. The next few health camps will be held at MF Garden in Tolichowki on Friday, at KHK Function Hall in Asifnagar on Monday, Khilwat Grounds at Charminar on September 25.

Flexi-staffing keeps IT jobs going amid economic slump

Fixed-term contracts enable IT firms control costs, techies keep jobs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Although the country is facing an economic slowdown, one sector that has no dearth of jobs is the IT industry, which is not just expanding, but also focussing on flexible hiring, which is a short, fixed-term contract between six months to a year.

"When market uncertainty sets in, flexi-staffing comes to the rescue for both applicants and employers. While applicants keep themselves engaged, employers try to manage their current state of affairs without hiring someone full-time," said Rituparna Chakraborty, president of the Indian Staffing



Jobs in sectors like IT and accounting witnessed a hike of 6 per cent in Hyderabad, which is the highest in India

Federation.

Jobs in industries like IT and accounting witnessed a hike of 6 per cent in Hyderabad, which is the highest in India, according to Naukri JobSpeak. Not just Hyderabad, despite glob-

al slowdown India as a whole has witnessed big growth over the past few years and the IT sector is set to lead the way, suggests a report published by Indian Staffing Federation. According to the report, "It

is anticipated that flex workforce in the Indian IT sector would increase to 7 lakh by 2021."

"Flexi staffing in the coming years will be on a fast-paced growth trajectory, as there is a huge opportunity for organisations to use it to meet their objectives with appropriately-skilled workforce. As flexi staffing moves up the value chain in an organisation and the future workplace becomes agile, mobile and flexible, the opportunity for us as staffing organisations to grow and create an impact is immense," says Paul Dupuis, chairperson of the research committee of Indian Staffing Federation.

2020 to be 'Year of AI' in Telangana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has decided to declare 2020 as Artificial Intelligence year by organising various activities related to the emerging technology, Jayesh Ranjan, principal secretary, IT and Industries said here on Wednesday.

"The year 2020 is going to be celebrated in Telangana as AI year. And throughout the year, we will be running multiple programs and activities.

A lot of hackathons and meetings will happen and the government agencies will give challenges and make available data sets on which you (companies) can run algorithms," he said speaking at a programme. Ranjan said the state government has signed up with NITI Aayog, which has come out with the 'National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence' to run pilot projects in Telangana.

He said IT industry body NASSCOM is setting up a Centre of Excellence in Data Sciences and AI here, which is expected to start its activities in 2020.



Pulitzer prize winner Carol Guzy interacts with photojournalists at Press Club in the city on Wednesday

ROLLS ARE OUT, IT'S DIGITAL AGE!

Can't confine journalists to just one role: Pulitzer winner

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The only news photographer to be honored with four Pulitzer prizes, Carol Guzy, who formerly worked with The Washington Post, was in Hyderabad on Wednesday and was heard saying, "A good news picture is one

which is understood by people across the globe without having to read the caption."

Carol was interacting with the city's photojournalists at Press Club in Somajiguda. She said, "The role of journalists is fast changing. Journalists are multi-tasking to remain competitive in the

media market. No more can we limit journalists to one particular role."

Carol is one of the few distinguished photographers who will participate in the India Photo Festival (IPF) festival to begin at the State Art Gallery in the city on Thursday.

ISB ranks 7th globally in Forbes' best biz school list

City-based ISB is top-ranked B-school in Asia in one-year MBA category

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Indian School of Business (ISB) has secured the seventh position globally in the Forbes Best Business Schools 2019 rankings announced today. ISB is the top-ranked B-School from Asia among those surveyed. The School has participated in Forbes rankings for the first time this year.

The Forbes Best Business School rankings are announced every two years and rank the schools solely on their "5-year MBA gain." It represents the net cumulative amount the typical alumni would have earned after five years by getting their MBA versus staying in their pre-MBA career.

This year Forbes looked at more than 100 schools and surveyed 17,500 alumni regarding their pre- and post-MBA compensation, career choice, and location. They did not consider the schools where alumni had a negative ROI after five years.



'These rankings speak of the value that ISB's MBA brings to the table for both our students and the corporate world'

Sharing his views on this Professor Rajendra Srivastava, Dean, ISB said, "We are delighted to be a part of the Forbes Best Business School 2019 rankings, and it is a pleasure to see ISB's PGP gaining more and more recognition globally. These rankings speak of the value that ISB's MBA brings to

the table for both our students and the corporate world. It bears testimony to our students' competencies, teachings of our world-class faculty, the satisfaction of our alumni as well as the confidence of our recruiters. I want to thank each of them for this success. I would also like to mention about our updated curriculum that helps the students to hone their skills as per the fast-changing world today. We look forward to working hard and keep moving up the ladder in the right direction with the ISB family together."

Forbes compared the alumni earnings in their first five years out of business school to their opportunity cost of doing an MBA. Their survey measured total compensation, including salary, bonuses, and exercised stock options. Based on their analysis, they concluded that a typical student's salary would have risen half as fast as their post-MBA salary increase.

Y-Junction to re-open after eight years

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Kukatpally Y-junction, which was closed about eight years ago to facilitate Metro station works, will be opened for commuters in a week.

The Y-junction at Balanagar in Kukatpally is crucial link not only for local commuters but also outstation buses. With state and national highway touching it, this junction is part of the crucial Mumbai highway. According to Cyberabad traffic police, "This junction is being reopened in view of the chaotic situation at U-turns on the stretch and road safety issues."

This was one of the crucial and busiest junctions previously, with traffic personnel being deployed round the clock. The proximity of the U-turn to the signal also creates confusion among commuters.

Commuters, especially on two-wheelers and four wheelers, end up fighting as they jostle for space. Clients of the bars and restaurants park their vehicles on the road, which only adds to the congestion.



MAUD Minister KTR at the review meeting at GHMC headquarters on Wednesday

Review meetings for GHMC areas start

MAUD minister assesses infra, sanitation, water, etc in Amberpet

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao officially began a review meeting of constituencies under the GHMC. As part of this constituency review meetings, works in Amberpet were reviewed along with Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav.

The meeting, held at GHMC HQ, was attended by officials from the water board and national highways and revenue department. The meet discussed the progress of development activities in the constituency. Officials provided details on sanitation, water supply, Amberpet flyover and the possibility of construction of double-bedroom houses.

Town planning officials informed the ministers that land acquisition required to start the Amberpet flyover is almost complete and the site will be handed over to the National Highway Authority of India in the next three weeks. The water board officials said that the supply of drinking water was sufficient to cover

the constituency. The board is supplying every household about 11 gallons of water every day. The ministers also instructed water board officials to take immediate action if there are any problems.

Officials discussed the functioning of Amberpet water treatment plant and cleanup of the sewage in river Musi. Amberpet MLA K Venkatesh brought several issues to the notice of the authorities. He said a sanitation drive is currently well underway and asked for more staff to be allocated. In addition, the MLA mentioned several areas where the double-bedroom houses can be built.

Officials have been asked to submit a report on the situation facilities in these areas for 2BHK houses. Minister KTR said that if the government identifies land lying vacant, permits will be granted for construction of houses.

The meeting was attended by Mayor Bonthu Rammohan, Deputy Mayor Baba Fasiuddin, GHMC Commissioner Lokesh Kumar, HMWSSB MD Dana Kishore and other officials.

KTR urges Rajnath to ask SCB to reopen roads

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TRS Working president K T Rama Rao on Wednesday requested Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to intervene and issue instructions to the Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB) officials to reopen roads in the vicinity to avoid inconvenience to people.

"Extremely strange behaviour despite repeated requests from Govt of Telangana and the local residents. I request Hon'ble Defence Minister Sri Rajnath Singh Ji to intervene and issue instructions to the local Cantonment officials to avoid inconvenience to public," he tweeted. Rao's comment came after a Twitter user, Greensainikpuri, complained that roads in Secunderabad's Cantonment area were being closed without any prior information.

Greensainikpuri tweeted, "Breaking news Secunderabad Cantonment roads are again closed for civilians at Valerian Grammer School from today onwards. Jawans at the post say they have received orders from AHQ ADGPI to close for civilians. Very shocking situation. Civilians are Orphans again."

"Shri KTR Garu, they have been harassing civilians with these public roads closures inspite of clear orders from their boss COAS & Defence Minister India. Now its duty of our Vp RKs_RamaKrishna MLA Garu & MP to enforce that a special board meeting be called to table those orders," he said in another tweet.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LAND ACQUISITION) DEPARTMENT Office of the Collector, Medchal - Malkajgiri District									
FORM - C (Under Section - II of the Act where IDA Exemption is given) (See rule 6/2)									
Collector, MMD File No.:	Date:	File No. D/12/27/2019	Date:	Gazette MMD No. 40	Date:				
G2/1546/2019	26/08/2019	20/08/2019	27/08/2019						
Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/Collector that a total of Acs. 12-14 gts land is required in Kolthur Village, Muduchintapally Mandal, Medchal - Malkajgiri District for public purpose namely Kondapochamma Sagar of Kaleshwaram Project of Thurkapally canal on Jagadevapur canal.									
Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in Kolthur Village, Muduchintapally Mandal, Medchal - Malkajgiri District land measuring, Acs. 12-14 gts of standard measurement, whose detail description is as following, is proposed for acquisition.									
SCHEDULE - I									
Village: Medchal-Malkajgiri District Mandal: Muduchintapally District: Kolthur									
PATA									
Serial No.	Survey No.	Title	Type of Land	Area in Gts	Name and address of persons interested	North	South	West	East
1	48	Patta	Dry	0.04	Vandhana Educational Society (P.Chakravarthi S/o Chandraiah)	504	485	508	482
2	482	Patta	Dry	0.12	Chinthakindi Rama Goud S/o Raja Goud	504	483	48	499
3	492	Patta	Dry	0.24	Chinthakindi Lacha Goud S/o Raja Goud	498	497	491	493
4	498	Patta	Dry	0.12	Chinthakindi Lacha Goud S/o Raja Goud	550	491	499	496
5	498	Patta	Dry	0.09	Bala Kistaiah Kummari S/o Rajaiah	501	498	482	498
6	504	Patta	Dry	0.02	Chinthakindi Rama Goud S/o Raja Goud	505	481	508	501
7	506	Patta	Dry	0.01	Mezen Medic Health care Pvt. Ltd Rep by Amarnath Reddy S/o Y Narsimha Reddy	532	507	531	505
8	507	Patta	Dry	0.07	Mezen Medic Health care Pvt. Ltd Rep by Amarnath Reddy S/o Y Narsimha Reddy	506	508	511	504
9	508	Patta	Dry	0.11	Mezen Medic Health care Pvt. Ltd Rep by Amarnath Reddy S/o Y Narsimha Reddy	507	480	509	504
10	51	Patta	Dry	0.13	Mezen Medic Health care Pvt. Ltd Rep by Amarnath Reddy S/o Y Narsimha Reddy	531	506	513	507
11	531	Patta	Dry	0.15	Mamadi Rajeshkar Reddy S/o Bagi Reddy	529	511	512	506
12	532	Patta	Dry	0-10	Yanga Srinivas Reddy S/o Rayakoti Reddy Mamidi Jagannathan Reddy S/o Bagi Reddy Mamidi Rajeshkar Reddy S/o Bagi Reddy	533	506	531	533
13	533	Patta	Dry	0.09	Ms Biological E Limited Rep by Eshwar Reddy	534	539	532	535
14	534	Patta	Dry	0.10	A Sudhakar Reddy S/o Ranga Reddy B J Ravinder Reddy S/o Gopal Reddy	536	533	529	535
15	535	Patta	Dry	0.07	Ms. Biological E Limited (N. Eshwar Reddy) Guda Jeyvan Reddy S/o Satyanarayan Reddy	536	533	534	538
Total						12-14			

London Mayor in Hyd, bats for UK-India ties

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cyber security Center of Excellence, Telangana in collaboration with City of London Corporation hosted the UK-India Fintech & Cyber security Forum at T-Hub, Hyderabad on Wednesday. Mayor of London Alderman Peter Estlin, along with a UK delegation of fintech and cyber security companies, were in the city to boost India-UK ties in cyber security and fintech.

This collaboration will catalyze Indian and UK organi-

zations to expand their engagement and horizon of business to both countries. As per the press statement, Lord Mayor of the City of London Peter Estlin said "I am delighted to be the first Lord Mayor in many years to visit India's innovation city Hyderabad and look forward to exploring how we boost ties between the UK and India in areas including insurance, fintech and cyber. As a businessman with long ties to India, I've seen with my own eyes the explosion of innovation in this amazing country, which now

boasts over 20,000 start-ups, 3,000 alone in fintech. Hyderabad is one of the most exciting places in India to do business right now, and I can't wait to see what more our two cities can do together."

Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Government of Telangana, said, "In the era of digitalisation, innovation and rapid change, global collaborations such as the India-UK partnership with Hyderabad plays a vital role in exchanging knowledge and expertise to

address global challenges and explore potential business opportunities. Cybersecurity and Fintech are two such areas rich with possibilities for global partnerships."

Speaking at the event, Dr Sriram Birudavolu, CEO, Cyber security CoE said, "The Cyber security CoE at Hyderabad is a nerve centre for international and domestic collaborations. We are happy to foster engagement among the UK and Indian government bodies, companies and academia."



London Mayor Alderman Peter Estlin

Suspension of 400 Twitter handles irks Pawan Kalyan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD
Suspension of as many as 400 Twitter accounts of the Jana Sena Party (JSP) supporters has evoked protest from party chief and popular actor Pawan Kalyan, here on Wednesday.

The actor-politician wondered if the accounts were suspended for standing by helpless people and their issues. "I don't understand the reason for suspending 400 Twitter accounts of JSP supporters," tweeted Pawan Kalyan with hashtag #BringBackJSPSocialMedia.

Party leaders suspect the support for the save Nallamalla forests campaign could have led to suspension of accounts. The JSP has opposed the reported move to mine uranium in the forests, spread over Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Attending the all-party meeting to oppose uranium mining, he had said if necessary he would be ready to do a 'padyatra' over the issue.

Nalgonda gets 20 cm rain in 24 hrs; downpour in rural TS

MANDAL-LEVEL OFFICIALS ACROSS STATE ASKED TO RECORD DETAILS OF CROP LOSS

PNS ■ WARANGAL/NALGONDA

Heavy rains lashed Warangal and the nearby region for the second consecutive day on Wednesday.

Torrential rains started in late afternoon and continued for more than one hour, inundating low-lying areas in the city. Met officials said the city received about 8 cm rain, which left the roads flooded causing inconvenience to vehicle riders.

Areas like Hanamkonda, Deenaday Colony and Hunter Road were submerged in water.

Erstwhile Warangal district witnessed a heavy downpour while certain pockets in western Warangal received good inflows into tanks and ponds on Tuesday night.

Irrigation officials said rains were uniform in all regions, including Jangaon, Warangal rural, Warangal urban, Mulugu and Bhupalpalli and Mahabubabad districts.



including Jangaon, Warangal rural, Warangal urban, Mulugu and Bhupalpalli and Mahabubabad districts. Heavy rain was also witnessed in adjacent Nalgonda and Khammam districts.

in fact recorded the highest rainfall in a century of 20 cm on Tuesday. Flood water caused heavy losses in slums dwellers as thatched huts and old houses fell in the incessant rain.

District officials of the agriculture department in all rural Telangana districts have asked mandal-level agriculture extension officers to stay alert and record details pertaining to crop loss in the regions where heavy rains played havoc with the standing crop.

According to information reaching Warangal, rains caused loss to crop in Mulugu, Parakal, Hasanparthi, Wardhannapet and Dharmasagar regions. Apart from the flood flow canal waters, almost all the Devadula connected reservoirs received heavy inflows under the influence of rain over the past two days.

MLA Raja Singh sets up his own of 'vigilante army'

BJP leader puts out videos from camp being held at unknown location

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP MLA from Hyderabad, Raja Singh, has announced the creation of a vigilante army to 'deal with' traitors and 'send them to hell'.



But there should also be an army to take care of the terrorists inside the house, right? So that army is now being readied. "This army will be created in every corner of India. In the coming days, any traitor hidden inside India will be dragged out and worn down, and sent outside India - or even directly to Jahannum (hell)," Raja Singh threatened.

"This programme will go on for seven more days, and we will continue to have great discussions," he said, hinting that this diabolical vigilante army was only the beginning of his anti-national activities.

In another video released on the same day, he said, "We have a determination/commitment towards Hindu rashtira, for this Hindu rashtira, we need an army. How can this army be formed? All over India, we are forming an army for Hindu rashtira, the protection of dharma and the nation. For this, there's a 10-day camp for which we have come to Bengaluru."

While one of the videos was uploaded on his Facebook page, the other was shared on WhatsApp. The exact location of this camp in Bengaluru is unclear.



RDO humiliates woman MRO, video spreads

PNS ■ WANAPARTHY

A woman MRO was allegedly humiliated by an RDO who reportedly told the public that the former "lacked basic knowledge" of revenue-related works.

The picture of the MRO standing with folded hands went viral on social media and made many to wonder what made the RDO take special interest in revenue cases of Amarchinta mandal, while similar issues of farmers from across the district were still unresolved after the Land Records Update.

and therefore he had to personally attend the grievance redressal. Kalyani, who was seen standing with her hands folded, told mediapersons that her posture was intended to bring to the notice of the RDO the issues related to lands, so that they could be solved by him.

The picture of the MRO standing with folded hands went viral on social media and made many to wonder what made the RDO take special interest in revenue cases of Amarchinta mandal, while similar issues of farmers from across the district were still unresolved after the Land Records Update.

Police analysing ex-Andhra Speaker's phone calls data

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad police probing the suicide of former Andhra Pradesh Assembly Speaker Kodela Sivaprasada Rao is analysing the data on the phone calls he made before ending his life on Monday.

Assistant Commissioner of Police K. Srinivas Rao on Wednesday said they were analysing the call details.

Talking to reporters, he dismissed as rumours reports doing the rounds on the social media about the last call made by Kodela, as Rao was popularly known.

The conversation Kodela had during his last phone calls could throw light on the reasons for him taking the extreme step. Kodela hanged himself at his residence in the posh Banjara Hills neighbourhood on Monday.

The ACP said so far they have questioned 12 people as part of the investigations into the suicide case. The statements of Kodela's wife and daughter were also recorded.

Police officials said the statement of Kodela's son Sivarama Krishna will be recorded soon.

Krishna, who was abroad, returned home on Tuesday



and is currently in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh to perform his father's last rites. The ACP said the police were yet to receive the final autopsy report.

Kodela's daughter P. Vijayalakshmi told police in her complaint that she found him hanging from the ceiling around 11.10 a.m. when she went to his room on the first floor to inform him that she was going to a hospital with her mother.

Vijayalakshmi told police that with the help of the driver and gunman, she lowered his body to the floor and then shifted him to Basvatarakam Indo-American Cancer Hospital where doctors failed in their efforts to revive him.

hanged himself. The investigators, who gathered clues from the scene, were also examining the medicines the deceased leader was using.

Vijayalakshmi, in her police complaint, alleged that the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government in Andhra Pradesh was harassing her father politically to take revenge. She said false cases were filed against him and other family members. She alleged that the government was continuously harassing him mentally due to which he got depressed and took the extreme step.

Kodela, who had also served as minister in undivided Andhra Pradesh, is suspected to have used a cable to hang himself after he reportedly failed in using a cloth for the purpose. As Kodela was staying at his residence in Hyderabad for 20 days, police sources also believe that he had planned the suicide.

Terming Kodela's suicide as a murder by the YSRCP government, TDP President N. Chandrababu Naidu has demanded a probe by CBI. The former Chief Minister alleged that the harassment by the government and the insults he was subjected to pushed him to end his life.

Kamala Harris very much qualified to run for US Prez: NJ Gov

Continued from Page 1

Harris (54), officially launched her campaign for the US presidential election in 2020 to take on President Donald Trump.

To another query on the chances of an Indian origin senator becoming the US president, the Governor said anything is possible in USA.

"The Indian community is one of the most important in America, in our democracy. So I think anything is still possible in United States," he said.

Meanwhile, New Jersey signed a sister state agreement with the Telangana government which included a wide range of sectors in which both the states hope to bolster public and private sector collaboration including clean tech cooperation, an official release said.

The governor said the two states would cooperate in education and business opportunities.

"The two states will further advance their relations in the fields of IT, Pharma, Life Sciences, Biotech, FinTech, Data Centers, Clean Energy, Higher Education and Tourism," it said.

Shamshabad 3rd fastest-growing airport

Continued from Page 1

As the fastest-growing airport, Hyderabad International Airport is becoming an important centre for destination-cum-transit location for travel between the Eastern and the Western parts of the world. Currently, the airport is served by 29 passenger airlines, connecting 69 destinations both domestic and International.

Telangana and NJ are 'Sister States'

Continued from Page 1

As per the press communiqué, Minister KTR said, "Telangana would benefit in several sectors with this sister-state agreement. He stated that a lot of Telugu people reside in New Jersey and he too was a resident of New Jersey for a

brief period". Appreciating the investor-friendly policies of the State, New Jersey State Governor Phil Murphy said that Telangana was suitable for global businesses. US Consular Chief Eric Alexander and Principal Secretary Jayesh Ranjan were present in the program.

Uttam, Revanth cross swords over Huzurnagar bypoll candidate

Continued from Page 1

Indicating his desire to take control of the party, Revanth Reddy recently expressed his dismay at Congress MLAs skipping the Assembly session during a discussion on power scenario in Telangana. The issue was all the more important for him as he had recent-

ly made serious allegations against the government and power utilities' CMD on 'irregularities' in power deals. He felt isolated in the House due to the absence of his party MLAs. Curiously, the Malkajgiri MP said that he had no information about Congress leaders meeting Governor Tamilisai Soundarajan.

NIA Hyd registers first human trafficking case

Continued from Page 1

The police rescued five women after a raid. On August 9, the case was transferred from the Chatrinaka police station to the Central Crime Station (CCS).

According to the police, Khan and Bithi Begum alias Khadija Shaik were running a prostitution racket involving illegally trafficked Bangladeshi women on a premises near Kandikal Gate at Baji Nagar in Uppuguda.

Based on credible information, Chatrinaka police searched the premises on April 21 and arrested Khan, Bithi Begum and Sojib and rescued five women. Owing to the gravity of the offence and its inter-state and cross-border connections, the case was taken over by the NIA for a detailed investigation.

Was World Telugu Conference a one-off extravaganza?

Continued from Page 1

About 7,000 delegates had registered to attend the conference. There were representatives from 30 countries and 12 States. Apart from the prime shows at LB Stadium, extended events were held at Ravindra Bharathi, Telugu Lalitha Kala Thoranam and other places.

Overall, WTC sounded like a resounding success, with 20,000 to 25,000 people turning up at various venues in the city. Plenums, evening cultural programmes, literary discussions, poetry recitations, avadhanams (ancient method that measures man's ability to multi-task) etc. were held daily from morning till evening.

Overwhelmed at the grand success of conference, KCR, in his valedictory speech had announced that the event would thenceforth be held every year without fail. He announced various other decisions as well to promote Telugu on the occasion.

This includes making Telugu compulsory in all schools from Class I to X. This promise alone has been kept. The others remain on paper. For instance, KCR instructed that all private and public institutions in Telangana must display their organisation's name in Telugu on their signboards.

The Telangana government, he said, would pass a resolution in the state Cabinet meet for protection and perseverance of Telugu language and literature.

Official sources in the Culture Department cited Assembly elections in December 2018 for not holding the event last year. But they see no reason for not holding the event this year.

"If the CM were serious to conduct WTC this year, the government would have issued directions to the Culture Department to make arrangements by August itself. But there has been no word from the CM or the government, though it is nearing October. It takes considerable time to invite dignitaries, start registrations and plan programmes for the event. Since only two months are left for the year to end, it is impossible to conduct the 'annual' event at this juncture," sources commented.

Walmart opens 4th store in Telangana

'BEST PRICE' MEGA STORE IN WARANGAL TO HELP CREATE JOBS, IMPROVE TRADE

PNS ■ WARANGAL



'Best Price' store, a modern wholesale store from Walmart India, was inaugurated in Warangal on Wednesday. It is the company's fourth store in Telangana and the 27th in the country.

and the farmers, especially vegetable farmers, in order to avoid middlemen. Krish Iyer, president and CEO of Walmart India said, "We are very excited today as we open our 'Best Price Modern Wholesale Store' in the city of Warangal. This is the fourth store

businesses such as kiranas/resellers, offices and institutions (O&I) and hotels, restaurants and caterers (HORECA) in Warangal city and neighboring areas.

"Walmart India will offer them unique propositions of a wide range of quality merchandise & local assortment at 'Every Day Low Prices', unique & multiple shopping options, door-step delivery and convenient payment solutions," he said and added that they source fresh vegetables from clusters in and around our stores and are proud to share that red whole chilli from Warangal is supplied to all our stores in the States of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

MindSpace Metro launch by October end

Continued from Page 1

Corridor-3 is the most important component of the Metro Rail first phase project from Nagole to Raidurgam as it has potential to further increase footfalls. There are lakhs of people working in the IT corridor, though it does not have proper public transportation system. If the Metro becomes operational there, it would be helpful for them. The Metro is currently running up to HI-TEC City and the Raidurgam Metro Station is being constructed at MindSpace, just a kilometer away. People can avoid congestion from Cyber Towers to MindSpace of about 30minutes with the Metro extension.

Head constable shoots himself, succumbs

Continued from Page 1

The constable has been working in the Indalwai Police Station for the past two years. He reported for duty at 7.30 am, relieving the section in-charge Damodar.

According to preliminary enquiries, around 8.30 am, a sweeper heard some tyre-burst like sound from the police station. When he inside, he noticed the body of Prakash in a pool of blood and immediately called others. The body has been sent to the Nizamabad GGH hospital for postmortem.

Nizamabad ACP Srinivas said a departmental enquiry would be conducted. He said Prakash Reddy was very sensitive in nature. The Sub Inspector had left the weapon with the shift in-charge, he said. Colleagues said the constable, a native of Nizamabad, had complained of health problems and work pressure.

Government of Telangana Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department. Notice regarding land acquisition for industrial park in Shabad Mandal, Chandaivaly Village.

Government of Telangana Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department. Schedule of land acquisition for village Wadajhari, Mandal: Tanour, District: Nirmal.

SHORT READS



Sena urges ECI to hike Assembly poll expenditure limit

MUMBAI: With the assembly elections in Maharashtra drawing closer, the Shiv Sena on Wednesday urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) to raise the poll expenditure limit per candidate from the existing Rs 28 lakh to Rs 70 lakh. The demand raised by the Sena was supported by its partner the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), and also by Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). Sena leader and Rajya Sabha MP Anil Desai made the representation to the ECI during the meeting of public representatives here with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora, Election Commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra. The poll panel is in Mumbai to review the preparedness for the elections, due in October. The resolution stated that the election expenditure limit for each candidate should be increased to Rs 70 lakh from the existing Rs 28 lakh.

NCW seeks stern action against Assam cops for torturing three sisters

NEW DELHI: The National Commission for Women (NCW) on Wednesday sought stern action from Assam Police against officials who allegedly stripped and beat three sisters at a police outpost. According to a media report, the three sisters have accused the Assam Police of custodial torture, including being stripped, kicked and beaten with lathis, at a police outpost in Darrang district. Reportedly, one of the women was pregnant and suffered a miscarriage due to the alleged torture. The women were picked up by police on September 9 in connection with a case registered against their brother for allegedly abducting a Hindu woman, the media report said. The NCW, which took suo moto cognisance of the issue, condemned the treatment meted out to the women. The commission has asked Assam director general of police to take up the matter urgently and ensure that the accused officials are given stern punishment, the NCW said in a statement. It said it is "angushed" by such alleged misconduct on part of the police officials. The police officials, the NCW said, ill-treated the women not involved in any crime but suspected to know the whereabouts of an alleged criminal. The role of police officials is to help uphold law and order impartially, and protect people, especially women, it said. The commission is of the view that these officials should be dealt with very strongly so that they do not repeat such an act in future, it said.

NCP releases first list of candidates for Maha Assembly polls

BEED: NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Wednesday released the party's first list of five candidates, including senior leader Dhananjay Munde, for the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections. Pawar made the announcement at a meeting of NCP workers in Beed district, the party said on Twitter. The NCP has fielded Dhananjay Munde, who is at present leader of opposition in the state Legislative Council, from Beed's Parli Assembly seat, setting up his possible clash with cousin and state minister Pankaja Munde yet again. Pankaja Munde defeated her cousin in the 2014 Assembly polls from Parli by 25,895 votes. Besides, the NCP patriarch also declared the candidature of four other party leaders - Sandip Kshirsagar (from Beed seat), Vijaysinh Pandit (Gevrai), Prakash Solanke (Majalgaon) and Namita Munda (Kaij). The Beed Assembly seat is currently represented by Sandip Kshirsagar's uncle and state minister Jaydutt Kshirsagar, who quit the NCP and joined the Shiv Sena earlier this year. The NCP suffered a setback recently after some of its senior leaders joined the ruling BJP and Sena.

Modi showed Pak its place by nixing Art 370, 35A: Shah

PNS ■ JAMTARA (JHARKHAND)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi showed Pakistan its place by abrogating Article 370 and 35A and established that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.

Shah also said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should tell people of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Haryana, when he goes there, whether he was with the decision to abrogate Article 370. Assembly elections are due in Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Haryana this year.

Addressing a public meeting after launching the BJP's 'Johar Jan Ashirwad Yatra', the BJP president said his party stood in favour of removing Article 370 ever since it had been there, and asked why the Congress felt a 'stomach ache' following its annulment.

Located in santhal paraganas near Dumka, Jamtara is more than 250 km from the capital Ranchi. Johar is a tribal salutation. Chief Minister Raghubar Das, Union Tribal Affairs minister Arjun Munda



and Bihar minister Nand Kishore Yadav, who is BJP's in-charge of Jharkhand, were present on the occasion.

"Removing Article 370, Modi ji showed Pakistan its place, and established that Kashmir is an integral part of India," Shah said.

"Our stand has been to remove Article 370 ever since

it had been there," Shah said and asked "why the Congress felt a 'stomach ache' following its abrogation?"

Making a scathing attack at the Congress, he said the party had also opposed and sought evidence after surgical strike.

"They (Congress) should tell the people which direction they want to go," he added.

Shah said even while being in the opposition, his party leaders had supported the government on important issues.

"Atal Bihari Vajpayee had supported former prime minister Indira Gandhi after winning the Bangladesh Liberation war.

"Atal ji also put Indias side at the United Nations on

"Our stand has been to remove Article 370 ever since it had been there," Shah said and asked "why the Congress felt a 'stomach ache' following its abrogation?"

Minister Narendra Modi ji nursed it towards development during the last five years," Shah said.

Jharkhand was carved out of Bihar and made a separate state in 2000 by the then NDA government of A B Vajpayee.

Referring to how the prevailed Arjun Munda-led governments in the state had been overthrown due to lack of majority, Shah said the people had given a stable government in 2014 under the leadership of Chief Minister Raghubar Das and the state government worked for their development.

"There is Modi government above and Raghubar Das government below. The double engine governments have changed Jharkhand, and the evidence is that the people of Jharkhand gave 12 of the 14 Lok Sabha seats to Modi government in the Lok Sabha elections," Shah said.

"Naxalism was there, but now Jharkhand is headed towards almost naxal-free state and moving forward with developmental initiatives," he said.

Shah gave an account to the people of how the central and

state governments developed the sectors like electricity, housing, health care, toilet construction, free of cost gas connection and drinking water, two battalions comprising Paharia tribes and setting up nearly 70 Eklavya schools the current regime, and demanded that the Congress should also give an account what it had done during its ten years rule.

"I would like to ask what has the UPA given in its ten years rule to Jharkhand? While the 13th Finance Commission had given only 55 thousand and 200 crore to Jharkhand, the 14th Finance commission under Narendra Modi gave 2.5 times more funds, giving one lakh and forty-five thousand crore," Shah said.

He said after the 'Johar Jan Ashirwad Yatra' of Chief Minister Raghubar Das, which he kicked off Wednesday from Jamatra, will criss-cross all the 81 assembly constituencies and when it reaches Ranchi, the BJP would once again form a majority government.

"The double engine governments will make Jharkhand the number one state in the country," Shah promised.

UP CM asks Allahabad, Varanasi to remain vigilant

RIVERS SWELL DUE TO RAINS

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday directed officials in Allahabad and Varanasi districts to remain vigilant as the water levels in Ganga and Yamuna rivers neared the danger mark. Heavy rains over the past few days have caused the rivers to swell.

A senior official said authorities in Allahabad and Varanasi have been asked to make all necessary arrangements to deal with the situation and flood 'chowkis', to monitor the water levels in the rivers, have been activated.



A report from Banda district said continued rainfall in the Bundelkhand region and release of water in Yamuna had led to flooding in many areas in Hamirpur, Banda and Chitrakoot districts.

Yamuna, Ken and Betwa rivers are in spate and several acres of agricultural land has been submerged, it said.

Now, prisoners to run fuel stations in Kerala

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

After their success in dishing out delicious and cost-effective food items, prisoners in Kerala are now gearing up to manage fuel stations, thanks to an innovative government initiative.

Drawing inspiration from their counterparts in Tamil Nadu and Punjab, the Prison Department is all set to open petrol pumps in the outer campuses of three central jails in the state, envisaged to be run by selected inmates.

The Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is setting up the pumps in the land, identified by the prison department.

At least 15 convicted prisoners would be identified and given training to run each fuel station on a shift basis and they will be given wages for their work as per jail rules, authorities said.

A top prison official said the



plan is to open the fuel stations by November-December this year. "All necessary government clearances have been received for the initiative. The pumps will come up on the campuses of the central prisons in Poojappura here, Viyyur in Thrissur district and in Kannur," Prison DGP, Rishiraj Singh told PTI.

"The IOC will begin the construction works soon and the work is expected to be completed in the next one month. We hope that the pumps can be opened by November-December," he said.

Singh said many states like Tamil Nadu already have petrol pumps under the Prisons department. "They are making

The IOC will begin the construction works soon and the work is expected to be completed in the next one month. We hope that the pumps can be opened by November-December

initiatives like online food or in the running of prison cafeteria. Those who have knowledge in manning petrol pumps will be given preference. All those selected will be given training," he said.

Based on the nature of the work, the inmates are given wages of up to Rs 160-180a day in the state prisons and those deployed at the fuel stations would also be given remuneration as per the standards, he said.

Seeking to tap the hugely popular online food market, the Kerala Prison Department had recently begun offering biriyani prepared by inmates. For this, they have tied up with Swiggy, the online food delivery player.

The Freedom Food Factory, an enterprise selling food, mainly chappathi and chicken curry combo, prepared by inmates at Kerala prisons, has been engaged in the business since 2011.

SIT launches probe into missing computer hardware from aircraft carrier

PNS ■ KOCHI

In a suspected case of theft, some computer hardware has gone missing from the country's first indigenous aircraft carrier being built in the Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL) here, police said.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) has launched a probe into the matter following a complaint regarding the missing hardware even as the City Police Commissioner was monitoring the investigation.

"Although reported missing from the carrier, the hardware does not form part of the equipment of the vessel," they said. The incident was reported



from the high security zone of the CSL, where the prestigious warship was being built.

"However, considering the seriousness of the incident which occurred in the high security zone, we have formed a special investigation team headed by ACP crime branch. The probe is being monitored by Kochi Police Commissioner Vijay Sakhare," a top official told PTI.

DGCA grounds three pilots, two engineers NOT REPORTING PW ENGINE VIBRATIONS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation regulator DGCA has grounded three pilots and two aircraft maintenance engineers of IndiGo for not reporting vibrations in the Pratt and Whitney (PW) engines of the A320neo planes in separate incidents that have occurred since March, senior officials said on Wednesday.

"Three pilots -- Captain Krishna Arjun Reddy, Captain Sanjay Gupta and Captain Pankul Nag -- have been suspended for not reporting the vibrations observed in the PW engines of their A320neo planes," a Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official said.

While Nag was suspended for three months, Reddy and Gupta were suspended for a period of six months from the date of their respective incidents, another



official said. The PW engine-powered A320neo planes of GoAir and IndiGo have been facing flicking mid-air as well as on-ground since their induction in 2016. This has led to grounding of some of these planes.

Two aircraft maintenance engineers of IndiGo have also been suspended by the DGCA in connection with separate incidents, one of the officials said.

As on August 30 this year, IndiGo and GoAir had 92 and 35 A320neo aircraft powered by PW engines respectively in India. A total of 436 such aircraft are operating globally.

On August 30, the aviation regulator had said it was keeping a tab on the issues related to the PW engines in the Airbus A320neo planes and that it would act when warranted.

MANUAL SCAVENGING Nowhere in the world people sent to gas chambers to die: SC



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing serious concern over people dying during manual scavenging and sewage cleaning in India, the Supreme Court Wednesday said nowhere in the world people are sent to "gas chambers to die".

Although over 70 years have passed since the Independence, caste discrimination still persists in the country, the apex court said while making scathing observations on the practice.

A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra questioned Attorney General K K Venugopal, appearing for the Centre, as to why proper protective gear like mask and oxygen cylinders were not being provided to people engaged in manual scavenging and cleaning of sewage or manholes.

"Why are you not providing them masks and oxygen cylinders? In no country in the world, people are sent to gas chambers to die. Four to five people are dying due to this every month," said the bench also comprising justices M R Shah and B R Gavai.

The Constitution has provided that all human beings are equal but they are not being given equal facilities by the authorities, it said.

The bench termed as "inhuman" the situation where the people are not provided with

any protective gear and they are dying during the process of cleaning of sewage and manholes across the country.

The apex court made these hard-hitting observations while it was hearing the Centre's plea seeking review of its last year's verdict which had virtually diluted the provisions of arrest under the SC/ST Act.

Venugopal told the bench that no law of tort, which deals with civil wrong and its liabilities thereof, is developed in the country and the magistrates are not empowered to take cognisance on their own of such incidents.

A case can't be filed against the person who is sweeping the street or cleaning the manholes but the supervisory officers or the authorities, on whose instruction the work is carried out, should be held liable for this, he said.

"This is most inhuman to treat the human beings like this," the bench observed. The bench also made observations on the aspect of untouchability in the country.

"Despite the constitution abolishing untouchability in the country, I am asking you people, do you shake hands with them? The answer is no. That is the way we are going on. The condition must improve. We have moved 70 years since Independence but these things are still happening," Justice Mishra said.

'Don't impose Hindi; common language not possible in India'

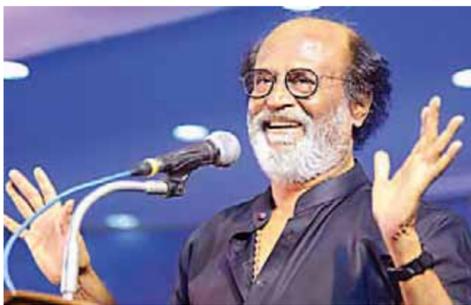
PNS ■ CHENNAI

Veteran actor Rajinikanth on Wednesday said the concept of a common language in India was "unfortunately" not possible and asserted any attempts of Hindi imposition would be not only resisted by southern states, but even many in the north.

The actor's remarks came in response to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent pitch for Hindi as a common language, which drew sharp reactions from various south Indian leaders including DMK President MK Stalin and Congress leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

The superstar said Hindi should not be imposed, as the concept of a common language was "unfortunately" not possible in the country.

"A common language not just for India but any country is good for its unity and progress. Unfortunately, (one cannot) bring a common language in our country. So you cannot impose any language," he told reporters at the airport



here.

"Especially, if you impose Hindi, not just Tamil Nadu, no southern state will accept that. Many states in northern parts will also not accept that," Rajinikanth, who has announced that he will enter politics ahead of the next Assembly polls (2021), said.

On Saturday, Shah had pitched for a common language for the country and said it is Hindi which is spoken the most and that it can unite the whole nation.

The home minister had also said efforts would be made to

expand Hindi to different parts of the country and asked everyone to use their native languages as much as possible. "India has many languages and every language has its importance. But it is absolutely necessary that the entire country should have one language that becomes India's identity globally," he had said.

The remarks had drawn widespread criticism, especially in Tamil Nadu, with the BJP's ally, the ruling AIADMK saying there will be only "adverse reaction" if Hindi is imposed in the state.

A common language not just for India but any country is good for its unity and progress. Unfortunately, (one cannot) bring a common language in our country. So you cannot impose any language

with its importance, he had said. Rajinikanth's contemporary and Makkal Needhi Maiam founder-president Kamal Haasan, had warned of a bigger protest in Tamil Nadu than the pro-jallikattu agitation in 2017 against any attempts of Hindi imposition.

Tamil Nadu was witness to the famous anti-hindi agitation successfully taken forward by the DMK in the 1960s, against the alleged imposition of the language.

To a query on erection of banners, an issue which had hogged limelight following the death of a techie here last week after one such hoarding fell on her, Rajinikanth said he had always advised his fans against such a practice.

A 23-year old woman techie riding a two-wheeler had lost balance and fell down after an illegal hoarding put up by an AIADMK functionary crashed on her and she was run over by a water tanker that came behind her.

The incident led to a public outrage, with even the Madras High Court frowning on illegal banners.

SC sets Oct 18 deadline for Ayodhya hearing

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday set an October 18 deadline for conclusion of hearings in the protracted Ram-Janmabhoomi Babri Masjid land title dispute, a move that has raised the possibility of a verdict in the politically sensitive case in the middle of November.

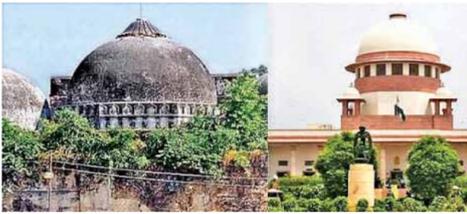
The target date for completion of arguments by both the Hindu and Muslim sides assumes significance as Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, who is heading the five-judge Constitution bench hearing the case, is due to demit office on November 17.

The apex court also said the parties to the dispute can amicably resolve the matter through mediation if they want to but told lawyers from both the sides that it wanted to conclude the day-to-day hearings by October 18 so that the judges get almost four weeks' time to write the judgment.

The Court on Tuesday asked the counsels for the Hindu and Muslim parties to inform it about a tentative "time schedule" for concluding their arguments.

The Constitution bench,

JUDGEMENT LIKELY IN MID-NOVEMBER



The apex court also said the parties to the dispute can amicably resolve the matter through mediation if they want to but told lawyers from both the sides that it wanted to conclude the day-to-day hearings by October 18 so that the judges get almost four weeks' time to write the judgment

which also comprised Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S A Nazeer, also said it has received a letter from former apex court judge F M I Kalifulla, who was heading the three-member mediation panel, in which it was stated that some parties have written to him for resumption of the mediation process.

"There is an ancillary issue.

We have received a letter that some parties want to settle the matter by way of mediation," the bench said, adding they may do so and the proceedings before the mediation panel can remain confidential.

The bench said the day-to-day proceedings in the land dispute case have reached "an advanced stage" and will continue.

The apex court on August 6

commenced day-to-day proceedings in the sensitive land dispute case as mediation proceedings initiated to find the amicable resolution had failed.

The court had taken note of the report of the three-member panel, also comprising spiritual guru and founder of the Art of Living foundation Sri Sri Ravishankar and senior advocate and renowned mediator Sriram Panchu, that mediation proceedings, which went on for about four months, did not result in any final settlement and it had to decide the matter pending before it.

The court, which on March 8 referred the matter for mediation, had asked for in-camera proceedings to be completed within eight weeks, but later granted time till August 15 after the panel's earlier report said the mediators were "optimistic" about an amicable solution.

The top court fixed the seat for mediation process in Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh, around 7 km from Ayodhya, and said adequate arrangements, including the venue of the mediation, place of stay of the mediators, their security, travel should be forthwith arranged by the state government.

Maha CM hints at reviving Nanar project in Konkan

PNS ■ RAJAPUR

With a mutually agreeable seat-sharing formula for upcoming Maharashtra assembly polls still eluding the ruling BJP and Shiv Sena, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis has hinted at reviving the Nanar refinery project in the Konkan region which was put on the hold in view of strident opposition by the Uddhav Thackeray-led party.

Addressing a rally on Tuesday in Rajapur in Ratnagiri district, where the project was initially proposed, the chief minister said if locals wanted the project to come into existence he will talk with them. When Fadnis was addressing a gathering as a part of his "Maha Janadesh yatra", some locals raised the slogans that the project be brought back to the coastal Konkan.

The proposed Asia's biggest first green oil refinery, was shelved due to environmental concerns at the behest of the Sena, as a condition of its pre-Lok Sabha election alliance earlier this year. The chief minister had then announced relocation of the project from the ecologically-sensitive Konkan, a stronghold of the Sena.

"If locals wanted this project I am willing to talk to them



The proposed Asia's biggest first green oil refinery was shelved due to environmental concerns at the behest of the Sena, as a condition of its pre-Lok Sabha election alliance earlier this year

about Nanar," he told the gathering. Fadnis' remarks came days after Thackeray asserted that the proposed metro car shed project in Mumbai's Aarey Colony, being opposed by environmentalists and civil society groups, will go the Nanar way.

The chief minister had also backed the Aarey car shed project for Metro 3 line, saying it was coming up on the government land which does not fall under forest area.

Thackeray and his son Aaditya, who is tipped to be contesting his maiden assembly elections due next month,

have raised their pitch against the Nanar project amidst intense hassling with the BJP for evolving a seat-sharing formula for the joint contest.

State-run oil majors have tied up with Saudi Aramco and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company for the refinery project in Ratnagiri district, which entails an investment of Rs 3 lakh crore.

The 60-million tonne per annum refinery-cum- petrochemical complex has been conceived as the largest such facility in the world, which was supposed to be set up on over 15,000 acres.

SHORT READS



Lightning kills 18 people in Bihar

PATNA: At least 18 people were killed in Bihar in lightning strikes during heavy rainfall since Tuesday, officials said here on Wednesday. According to the Bihar Disaster Management Department, lightning claimed altogether 18 lives with Gaya and Kaimur accounting for three casualties each, followed by Patna, Bhojpur, East Champaran, Siwan and Arwal (two each) and Katihar and Jehanabad districts (one each). Heavy rain lashed several parts of the state since Tuesday afternoon, which continued till the early hours of Wednesday. According to the weather department, Patna recorded 95.5 mm of rainfall followed by Darbhanga (75.2 mm), Dehri (59.6 mm), Forbesganj (51.4 mm) Chhapra (44.6 mm), Supaul (39.1 mm) and Muzaffarpur (21.4 mm). Bihar has recorded deficient rainfall this year, and the state cabinet had last week marked 102 blocks of 18 districts for special assistance in the wake of a drought-like situation.

Good samaritan pays off almost entire dues of couple

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Moved by the plight of a couple and their minor daughter sitting outside their home after it was sealed on court orders for defaulting on a bank loan, a good samaritan has repaid almost the entire dues. Of the total dues of 2.94 lakh, Rs two lakh was remitted by the person on Wednesday, following which the keys of the house was handed over to the couple, an official of the state bank of India told PTI. The balance amount was waived by the bank, he said, adding that the documents of the house would be handed over to the family after consultations with higher authorities. As the plight of the family came to light on Wednesday morning after television channels aired visuals, showing Balu and Beena and their daughter Veni in her school uniform sitting in front of their sealed home with a lighted candle, offers of help poured in. The man had availed a loan in 2014 and had remitted around Rs 93,000.

Gangster chasing rival shot at by bank security staff in TN

SIVAGANGA (TN): One man was injured when the security staff of a nationalised bank opened fire on a gang which barged into the premises to attack a murder accused at nearby Manamadurai on Wednesday, police said. Thangamani, wanted in connection with the murder of an AMMK functionary, ran inside the bank as he tried to escape from the by the four-member armed gang which inflicted cut injuries on him, they said. The security staff on duty, an ex-serviceman, shot at and injured one of the gang members below the knee using his gun, while the three others escaped. The injured gangster and Thangamani had been hospitalised, police said adding further investigation was on.

Idea that Hindi can alone unite India dangerous: Chidambaram

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram, who is lodged in Tihar Jail, on Wednesday said the idea that Hindi alone can unite the people of the country is a dangerous trend.

Chidambaram said while he supported the idea that all languages should be developed, he will never accept that Hindi can alone unite the country.

"I have asked my family to tweet on my behalf the following: A dangerous idea that Hindi alone can unite the people of this country has been floated," a tweet from Chidambaram's official Twitter handle said.

"The Tamil people, as well as all others who speak other languages, will never allow the imposition of Hindi," he tweeted.

JNU CASE Court asks Delhi govt to decide within a month

Sanction to prosecute Kanhaiya, others

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A court here has asked the Delhi government to decide within one month on the sanction to prosecute former JNU Students' Union president Kanhaiya Kumar and others in a sedition case. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Manish Khurana said the delay in taking a decision on the matter has caused wastage of judicial time as the case had been listed and adjourned repeatedly since the filing of the charge sheet.

The court passed the directions after the Delhi Police informed the court that the file regarding sanction is pending with the Home Department.

"The time which is being taken to finalise the issue of sanction or otherwise has caused

wasted of judicial time as the case had been listed and adjourned repeatedly since the filing of the charge sheet. "It is expected of the Delhi government that the decision regarding the sanction or otherwise would be taken within one month so that further processing in the present case may be done," the court said.

The court then posted the matter for October 25, by which the reports have to be filed.

On January 14, the police had filed a charge sheet in the court against Kumar and others, including former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) students Umar Khalid and Anirban Bhattacharya, saying they were leading a procession and supported seditious slogans raised on the campus during an event on February 9, 2016.

HC raps UP Information Commission

SAYS SUMMONING GOVT OFFICIALS "UNNECESSARILY" AFFECTS PUBLIC WORK

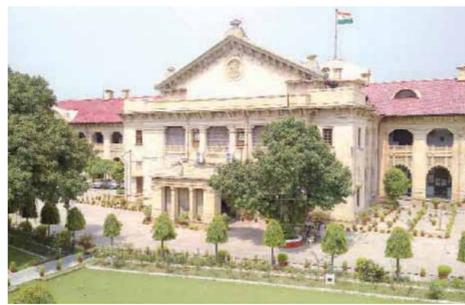
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court has rapped the Uttar Pradesh Information Commission for "unnecessarily" summoning government officials, saying that it affects public work.

A bench of Justices Munishwar Nath Bhandari and Alok Mathur said the commission is under obligation to issue a proper notice at the initial stage as to whether the personal appearances of the officer is required or not.

The Lucknow bench of the high court was hearing a plea filed by Superintendent of Police Sanjay Singh challenging order passed by the commission imposing a penalty of Rs 25,000 on him despite furnishing of information.

According to the plea, filed by advocates Shubham Gupta



and Vineet Jaiswal, the penalty was imposed merely on the ground that the Public Information Officer (SP) did not appear before the Commissioner Information.

Advocate Amul Mani Tripathi said that the UP Information Commission did

not take into consideration that another officer appeared before it to inform that the required information has already been supplied, and the document taken on record.

"We deprecate the practice of the commission to call the officers unnecessarily, as it affect

the public work. They are under obligation to issue a proper notice at the initial stage as to whether the personal appearances of the officer is required or not. Invariably it is seen that while issuing notice, the columns are not marked or deleted," the high court said.

Further, it said, the Commission should take care of Section 20 of the RTI Act of 2005 before imposition of penalty. The high court said that it would have imposed a cost on the respondents, but as the officer has retired, "we are refraining to impose cost, but commanding the Information Commission to comply the direction and observation made in this order, so that in future such an order is not passed. It is otherwise giving rise to avoidable litigation".

Woman held for bid to extort Rs 20 lakh from lawyer's kin

PNS ■ JABALPUR

A 27-year-old woman has been arrested in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district for allegedly trying to extort Rs 20 lakh from an advocate and his family by sending them threatening SMSes, police said on Wednesday.

Yashoda Dhurve, a native of Mandla district who was residing in Gorabazar area here, apparently took clues from a popular crime show on television as she wanted to make a quick buck, Superintendent of Police Amit Singh said.

Dhurve targeted advocate Sanjaylal Kataria, his father



"The accused asked them to deposit Rs 20 lakh in an account, which was in the name of one Nagesh Prabhakar Patil, in a local bank within two days, or else face dire consequences," he said.

Following Kataria's complaint, the police traced the number and arrested the woman on Tuesday, he said, adding that the mobile phone used in the crime was also seized.

The accused was booked under Indian Penal Code Section 386 (extortion by putting a person in fear of death or grievous hurt), he said.

and niece by making blank calls and sending them threatening SMSes, while claiming to be a member of the Bablu Panda gang.

To make her threats look genuine, she tracked the family's movements and informed them that she knew when they left or arrived at home.

Govt doctor held while taking bribe to operate on patient

PNS ■ JABALPUR

A doctor, posted in a government hospital in Madhya Pradesh's Mandla district, was allegedly caught on Wednesday while accepting bribe to perform a surgery, the Lokayukta police said on Wednesday.

Dr Sunil Kumar Yadav was caught red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 6,000 at his private clinic, said J P Verma, deputy superintendent, Lokayukta Police.

Pramod Kumar Nareti had filed a complaint with the anti-corruption agency Lokayukta that Yadav had demanded a bribe of Rs 6,000 to operate on his father Sonul Nareti for hernia.

3 factory guards killed in attack by over dozen men in Gujarat

PNS ■ BHARUCH

Three security guards at a glass making factory were killed and as many others injured after a group of 25 to 30 people attacked them in Gujarat's Bharuch district, a police official said on Wednesday. The exact reason behind the attack was not yet known, though police suspect it to be a robbery bid.

The incident took place late Tuesday night when the assailants jumped the boundary wall of the P G Glass Company, located at Utiyadara village in Ankleshwar taluka, to enter the premises and attacked the guards, he said.

The assailants, wielding wooden stick and iron pipes,

The incident took place late Tuesday night when the assailants jumped the boundary wall of the P G Glass Company, located at Utiyadara village in Ankleshwar taluka, to enter the premises and attacked the guards

attacked six guards deployed at the factory, which was shut since last four years, Ankleshwar (rural) police inspector (in-charge) Jayrajsinh Chavda said.

"Two guards, who received

head injuries, died on the spot. The four others were rushed by villagers to a private hospital in Ankleshwar where one of them succumbed to his injuries. The two others were undergoing treatment," he said.

The factory was closed since last four years but its owners had employed six guards to look after the property, he said. "We are yet to ascertain the reason behind the attack. Prima facie, it appears the attack was a result of a loot attempt, but an investigation is on to ascertain if the assailants managed to get away with anything," he said.

The deceased were identified as Pirabhai Rabari (40), Govabhai Rabari (47) and Devabhai Rabari (65), he added.

Terror groups often seal shops, paste threatening posters in Kashmir

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Armed militants are trying to spread fear among residents and defy the administration by forcibly shutting shops, sometimes by walking into the premises and intimidating owners, through threats made in posters that appear on walls overnight or by sealing shutters with tape, officials here say.

Jammu and Kashmir Police has officially kept mute with no one willing to come on record, but officials said on condition of anonymity that the situation could be slipping out of their hands.

The incidents of terrorists sealing shops and posters, both handwritten and typed, being pasted in markets, mosques and other areas with do and don't dikats from different terror groups, have become a



regular feature in Kashmir Valley, they said. There have also been

instances of armed militants walking into shops to warn owners to keep shutters down

and barging into Jammu and Kashmir Bank branches in south Kashmir to ask employ-

Two shops in Modrigam village in south Kashmir's Kulgam district were recently sealed by adhesive tapes with a seal of the banned terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen, sending shock waves in the area. And it is not just about a far-flung village or one terror group

ees to stay away from work, they said.

Two shops in Modrigam village in south Kashmir's Kulgam district were recently sealed by adhesive tapes with a seal of the banned terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen, sending shock waves in the area. And it is not just about a far-flung village or one terror group, officials said.

In Karan Nagar market in Srinagar's Civil Lines area, the words 'LW' were emblazoned on two shops followed by an insignia of the Hizbul Mujahideen.

Police deciphered 'LW' to mean 'last warning' as the two shops had defied the militants, officials said.

"We want to open markets

but who will guarantee our security when we return home.

We have held talks with senior police officials privately but no solution to our problems is forthcoming," said a shopkeeper who did not want to be identified.

It's a common refrain in the Valley, which has been under virtual lockdown since August 5, when the Centre announced the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status and the bifurcation of the state into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Normal life remains hit with a communications clampdown, markets and other business establishments closed, and public transport largely off the roads.

"We do not understand why police is ineffective and not acting against those creating

mischief," said another shopkeeper.

In Ganderbal in central Kashmir and in Srinagar's downtown Fathekadal area, posters came up on behalf of the terror outfit Al Badar asking them to socially boycott the families of the policemen.

Several police officials said the posters were pasted at night when security deployment was low.

In another instance, a poster in English from the Musa Baba group was pasted on the wall of a shop at Srinagar's Bemina Bazar asking shopkeepers to sell essential commodities till 8.30 am.

Officials admitted that such posters were dictating the defiance against the administration. Many people were taking them seriously and preferring to remain indoors, they said.

US official says Iran behind Saudi attack, Pence warns of strikes

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

The United States has concluded that an attack on Saudi oil facilities was launched from Iran, a US official said Tuesday as Vice President Mike Pence again warned that the US military is "locked and loaded" for a possible response.

The official, speaking to AFP on condition of anonymity, said the strike involved cruise missiles and that evidence would be presented at the UN General Assembly next week.

Pence announced that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was on his way to Saudi Arabia to "discuss our response."

"As the president said, we don't want war with anybody but the United States is prepared," Pence said in a speech to the Heritage Foundation think tank in Washington.

"We're locked and loaded and we're ready to defend our interests and allies in the region, make no mistake about it," he said, echoing President Donald Trump's words on Monday.

The apparent hardening of the US position came as Iran's supreme leader ruled out negotiations with Washington "at any level."

However, continuing days of mixed messaging from the White House, spokesman Hogan Gidley refused to rule out a possible -- albeit now highly unlikely -- encounter between Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at the United Nations next week.

Trump is "obligated to try and find peace," he said. Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for Saturday's oil installation attacks, which halved output from the petro-state, the world's biggest crude producer and a close ally of Washington.

The Houthis are at war with Saudi-backed forces in Yemen, turning the impoverished nation into a proxy battlefield for bitter regional rivals Tehran and Riyadh.

The increasingly complex conflict dovetails with the Trump administration's attempt to curb Iranian power through a "maximum pressure" campaign of crippling economic sanctions.

Trump began that campaign after unilaterally pulling out of a 2015 international deal meant to reward Iran for allowing restrictions on its nuclear industry. He says that Tehran is secretly cheating and

Rouhani says Yemenis attacked Saudi oil sites as 'warning'

Tehran: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Wednesday Yemenis targeted Saudi oil facilities as a "warning" about a possible wider war in response to the kingdom's US-backed intervention in their conflict-ravaged country.

"The Yemenis... Haven't hit a hospital, they haven't hit a school, they haven't hit Sanaa bazaar. They just hit an industrial centre... To warn you," Rouhani said after a cabinet meeting.

"Learn lessons from this warning and consider that there could be a war in the region," he said, in a likely address to the rulers of Saudi Arabia which has spent billions of dollars on US weapons. Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for the strikes but a US official said Tuesday that the administration of President Donald Trump concluded the attacks involved cruise missiles from Iran.

Saudi Arabia, which has been bogged down in a five-year war in Yemen, has said the weapons used in the attacks were Iranian-made but has not directly blamed its regional arch-rival.

Tehran has repeatedly denied accusations from Washington and Riyadh that it arms the Houthis.

trying to build nuclear weapons and must be stopped.

Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Washington's real goal was to bring his country to its knees.

"The policy of 'maximum pressure' against the Iranian nation is worthless and all Islamic Republic of Iran officials unanimously believe there will be no negotiations with the US at any level," he said in a televised address.

Khamenei also said that as long as sanctions are in place, direct talks are impossible, including a meeting at the UN.

"Without this, no negotiations will happen at any level between the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials and the Americans, not during the visit to New York or any other visit," he said.

Whether the new stage of the long-running US-Iranian standoff leads to a shooting war

US 'IN DENIAL' OVER SAUDI ATTACKS: ZARIF

Tehran: The US is "in denial" over attacks on oil installations in Saudi Arabia, Iran's top diplomat said Tuesday, after Washington blamed weekend strikes on Tehran despite Yemeni rebels claiming responsibility.

"US is in denial if it thinks that Yemeni victims of 4.5 yrs of the worst war crimes wouldn't do all to strike back," Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote on Twitter.

American ally Saudi Arabia leads a military coalition that has been battling the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels since 2015.

as the big unknown.

Saudi Arabia, which has bought huge quantities of US weaponry, is considered a strategic ally in the region, second to Israel, another bitter foe of Iran.

Trump called off a retaliatory US missile attack on Iran in June after the Iranians shot down a spy drone. He said he did not want to kill what generals told him could be up to 150 people. He has indicated that he

Substantially increase Iran sanctions, orders Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump on Wednesday announced what he said would be substantial new sanctions against Iran in the first response to what US officials say was likely Iranian involvement in an attack on Saudi oil facilities.

"I have just instructed the Secretary of the Treasury to substantially increase Sanctions on the country of Iran!" Trump said in a tweet. The United States already enforces widespread sanctions that have crippled Iran's economy, including attempting to shut down its major oil export industry.

There were no immediate details on what the new measures might be. Trump has yet to put categorical blame on Iran for last weekend's bombardment by drones or missiles of Saudi oil facilities. However, a US official has confirmed to AFP that the administration believes Iran is responsible.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is due shortly in Saudi Arabia to meet with the petro-state's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, to discuss a response.

may no longer feel that restraint. "I'm not looking to get into new conflict, but sometimes you have to," he said Monday.

"That was a very large attack, and it could be met by an attack many, many times larger."

US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper labelled Iran a destabilizing force in the region, but stopped short of directly accusing Tehran over the strikes. The US military, he said, was working with its part-

ners to "address this unprecedented attack."

In Congress, Republican Senator Mitt Romney told reporters that the United States should not be drawn into war.

"Saudi Arabia is fully capable, with the weapons we've sold them, to respond in a way they think is appropriate," he said.

Another Republican, Senator John Thune, said that if Iran were proven to be behind the Saudi attack, that "crosses a

line that hasn't been crossed before and, yeah, I think it'd be certainly appropriate for the US and allies to respond."

The contested strikes hit Abqaiq, the world's largest oil processing facility, and the Khurais oil field in eastern Saudi Arabia. Oil markets continued to eye the situation carefully. Prices receded five per cent on Tuesday, reversing some of the previous day's gains as analysts said they were expecting Saudi output to recover sooner than expected after the weekend's attacks.

As aftershocks continued to ripple across financial markets on Tuesday, energy specialists S&P Platt said around three million barrels per day of Saudi crude would remain offline for at least a month.

Britain and Germany on Tuesday urged the international community to forge a "collective response" to the attacks.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, visiting Cairo, said it was "imperative to put all our efforts together to achieve this de-escalation."

China condemned the attacks and appealed to all sides to "refrain from taking actions that lead to an escalation of tensions in the region."

NYT ENDS SEPARATE SPANISH-LANGUAGE OP

New York: The New York Times is shutting down its Spanish-language service called NYT en Espanol, saying it was not "financially successful." The service launched in 2016 had included around 10 "high-quality original and translated" New York Times stories a day in Spanish. "We launched NYT en Espanol as part of an experiment to reach and engage more international readers by extending our coverage to different languages," the newspaper said in a statement.

Trump names US hostage negotiator as new NSA

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday named his chief hostage negotiator Robert O'Brien as the new National Security Adviser to replace John Bolton, who was fired last week.

O'Brien, who has been serving as the special envoy for hostage affairs at the Department of State, has been chosen for the role, Trump tweeted.

"I am pleased to announce that I will name Robert C. O'Brien, currently serving as the very successful Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs at the State Department, as our new National Security Advisor."

"I have worked long & hard with Robert. He will do a great job!" he said.

In his role as special presidential envoy for hostage affairs, O'Brien works with families of American hostages and advises on related issues, including recovery policies.

In choosing O'Brien to replace Bolton, the president tapped a longtime lawyer who has impressed him with his work to extricate Americans detained by countries like North Korea and Turkey, The New York Times reported.

O'Brien would be Trump's fourth national security adviser of his presidency.

On Tuesday, the White House said President Trump has shortlisted five people for the NSA's position.

Pak authorities order probe into Hindu girl student's death after family claims murder

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistani authorities on Wednesday ordered a judicial probe within 30 days into the death of a Hindu dental college student in Sindh province after her family claimed that the girl was murdered, according to a media report.

Namrita Chandni, a final-year student of Bibi Asifa Dental College in Larkana district and a social activist, was found lying on a cot by her friends on Monday with a rope tied to her neck. Her room was locked from inside.

Police is yet to ascertain whether the girl committed suicide or was murdered.

The Sindh government on Wednesday asked the sessions court of Larkana to hold a judicial probe into the death of Chandni, the Dawn News reported.

"Section Officer Aijaz Ali Bhatti wrote a letter to the district and sessions judge of Larkana, requesting that a judicial inquiry be held in the matter and submit a report to the home department within 30 days so that further action can be taken," it said.

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER
CONSTRUCTION UNIT UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM,
Collectorate Compound, Rudrapur, Dist.- Udhm Singh Nagar, E-Mail- constructionunitnigam@gmail.com
Letter No. 1468/ NVIDA / 304 **E-Tender Notice** Date: 18.09.2019

1. Name of the Work- CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSIT HOSTEL FOR 12 MEDICAL OFFICERS AT CIVIL HOSPITAL KHATIMA (UDHAM SINGH NAGAR)
2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 199.08 Lakh
3. Period of Completion - 06 Month
4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 19.09.2019 (17.00 hrs)
5. Last date/Time of receipt of bids in the portal - 04.10.2019 (17.00 hrs)
6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 09.10.2019 (12.00 hrs)
7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid - Er. Om Prakash, Collectorate Compound, Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar).
8. Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place :- 21.09.2019 (13.00 hrs) Rudrapur.
9. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment/correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER
CONSTRUCTION UNIT UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM,
Collectorate Compound, Rudrapur, Dist.- Udhm Singh Nagar, E-Mail- constructionunitnigam@gmail.com
Letter No. 1468/ NVIDA / 305 **E-Tender Notice** Date: 18.09.2019

1. Name of the Work- CONSTRUCTION OF TYPE-II BUILDING FOR AASHRAM PADHATI SCHOOL, KHATIMA (UDHAM SINGH NAGAR)
2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 92.15 Lakh
3. Period of Completion - 09 Month
4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 19.09.2019 (17.00 hrs)
5. Last date/Time of receipt of bids in the portal - 04.10.2019 (17.00 hrs)
6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 09.10.2019 (12.00 hrs)
7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid - Er. Om Prakash, Collectorate Compound, Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar).
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OFFICE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER
CONSTRUCTION UNIT UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM,
Collectorate Compound, Rudrapur, Dist.- Udhm Singh Nagar, E-Mail- constructionunitnigam@gmail.com
Letter No. 1467/ NVIDA / 303 **E-Tender Notice** Date: 18.09.2019

1. Name of the Work- CONSTRUCTION OF REMAINING WORKS AT ISBT SITARGANJ (UDHAM SINGH NAGAR)
2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 114.16 Lakh
3. Period of Completion - 04 Month
4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 19.09.2019 (17.00 hrs)
5. Last date/Time of receipt of bids in the portal - 04.10.2019 (17.00 hrs)
6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 09.10.2019 (12.00 hrs)
7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid - Er. Om Prakash, Collectorate Compound, Rudrapur (Udhm Singh Nagar).
8. Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place :- 21.09.2019 (13.00 hrs) Rudrapur.
9. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment/correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in

Sale Notice
Shree Balaji Printpack Private Limited
(In Liquidation)
Reg. Off.: 191, Nangli Sakrawati, PP No-NJF B-379, Najafgarh, New Delhi-110043, India
Place where Books of Account & papers are Maintained: A-33/21, Vishwakarma Compound, Site-4, Sahibabad Industrial Area, Ghaziabad-201010, Uttar Pradesh, India
Liquidator: Mohd Nazim Khan
Liquidator Address: G-41, Ground Floor West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008
Email: nazim@mnkassociates.com, Contact No.-9818156340

E-Auction
Sale of Assets under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016
Date and Time of Auction:
25th September, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m.
(With unlimited extension of 5 minutes each)

Sale of Plant and Machinery owned by Shree Balaji Printpack Private Limited (In Liquidation) forming part of Liquidation Estate of Shree Balaji Printpack Private Limited in possession of the Liquidator, appointed by the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal New Delhi Bench III at New Delhi vide order dated 03.04.2019. The sale of properties will be done by the undersigned through the e-auction platform <https://mcauction.auctiontiger.net>.

ASSET	ITEMS	RESERVE PRICE (Rs. In)	Earnest Money Amount (Rs. In)
Core Cutting Machinery	1		
Design & Cylinder	Lot		
Heat Converter	1		
Hot Air System	2		
Hydraulic Stackers	2		
Printing Mach ne (Masko)	1		
Solvent Less Lamination Machine (Masko)	1	3,500,000	350,000
Air Compressor	2		
Sitting Machine	2		
Inspection Machine	1		
Pouch Making Machine	1		
Weighing Machine	3		
Sealing Machine	1		
Pressure Roller	Lot		
Rubber Roller	Lot		

Terms and Condition of the E-auction are as under

1. E-Auction will be conducted on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" through approved service provider M/S e-procurement Technologies Limited (Auction Tiger)
2. The Complete E-Auction process document containing details of the Assets, online e-auction Bid Form, Declaration and Undertaking Form, General Terms and Conditions of online auction sale are available on website <https://mcauction.auctiontiger.net>. Contact Mr. Tiaik Marath & Mr. Pushpit Maru at +91-6351996834 / 079 61230 580/ 554/594/598 E-mail : Tiaik@auctiontiger.net/ Pushpit@auctiontiger.net/ Support@auctiontiger.net.

Date : 17.09.2019
Place : New Delhi
Sd/-
Mohd Nazim Khan
Liquidator
IBBI/PA-002/IP-ND0076/2017-18/10207

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
No. 128-W/260/Tender Notice/62/19-20/W-IV Dated: 18.09.2019
The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work:

Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

1. Name of work with its location	Provision of "Dryang Friendly Toilets" along with septic tank and soakpit at 113 nos. (NSG-5 & NSG-8) railway stations in De hi division (Sr. DEN I-30 Nos., Sr. DEN II-26 Nos., Sr. DEN III-8 Nos., Sr. DEN IV-36 Nos., Sr. DEN V-13 Nos.) (57-W-IV-19-20)
2. Approx. cost of work	Rs. 2,08,04,940.25
3. Earnest Money	Rs. 2,54,000.00
4. Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender	Bidding Start date Up to 15:00 hrs. on 27.09.2019 opening of e-tender at 15:00 hrs. on 11.10.2019
5. Website particulars published e-tender, complete location etc. notice details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

3001/19

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one boy namely Hare Krishna S/o Avtar Prashad R/o B-41 gali No. 2, Inder Enclave Ph-1, Prem Nagar, Delhi has been missing from the area of P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi since 07.06.2019. In this regard, a case DD No. 49A dated 09.07.2019 has been registered at P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi. The description of the missing/kidnapped boy is as under.



HARE KRISHNA

Age: 34 Years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5' 3", Face: Round, Wearing: Brown colour shirt and blue colour pant and choklate colour shoes. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing boy then please inform P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi at following Tel No. / e-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
Sd/- S.H.O.
P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi
Ph. 011-25489080

SEARCH OF MISSING/KIDNAPED

General public is hereby informed that one person (depicted in the photo), Namely: Sarik, S/o: Fasiyudeen, R/o: H. No. C-74, J.J. Colony, Sector-25, Rohini, Delhi, Aged: 27 years, has been missing/kidnapped from the area of P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Outer North District, Delhi since 21.01.2018 vide DD No. 11-A, Dated 24.01.2018, has been lodged at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi.



Sarik

His physical description is as under:
Complexion: Fair, Height: 5 Feet, Face: Round, Physique/Build: Medium, Clothing: White Colour Shirt, Blue Colour Jeans and White Colour Shoes in Feet.

Any person is having any information/clue about this missing person, may inform SHO, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi at E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> in Tele No. : 11-24368638 or 24368641

S.H.O.
P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi
Ph.: 011-27821047, 27822207
DP/576/ON/19.

INDIAN ROADS CONGRESS
80th Annual Session, Patna
12th - 15th December, 2019
Local Organising Committee

Doc. No.-BRPNL/80th IRC/PAT/770
(Through e-procurement mode only- www.eproc.bihar.gov.in)

SHORT-TERM RE-TENDER INVITATION OF PROPOSALS FOR PROCUREMENT OF ALL SERVICES OF EVENT CONSULTANTS

Local Organizing Committee, Indian Road Congress 80th IRC Annual Session Patna (Bihar) invites following proposals for procurement of services of qualified Event Consultants for "80th IRC Annual Session -2019 at Patna (Bihar)" to be held between 12th - 15th December 2019.

The Bid would be followed by submission of Technical Bid with Bid Security money cost of EoI -cum-RFP document fee, Earnest money and Financial Bid as per Bid Document, and then followed by short listing of Technically Qualified Bidders.

Sl. No.	State	Name of Project	Bid Security (In Rs.)	Cost of EoI-cum-RFP Document (In Rs.)	Bid Processing Fee (Online Payment) (In Rs.)	Time of Completion
1	Bihar	Appointment of Event Consultants for Conceptualization, Planning, Co-ordination, Management, Monitoring and supervision of entire Event of 80 th IRC Annual Session-2019 at Patna, Bihar.	1,00,000/-	10,000/-	5,900/-	05 (Five Months) (4+1)

The Eligibility Criteria and detailed Scope of Work etc. can be seen and downloaded from website: www.eproc.bihar.gov.in / www.brpn.bih.nic.in

1. A firm may apply individually or in Joint Venture/Consortium/Association. In case of Joint Venture/ Association/Consortium, a maximum of 2(two) are permitted.
2. The two parts of the Proposal (Part 1: Technical Proposal; Part 2: Financial Proposal must be uploaded with all pages numbered serially, along with an index of submission. In the event, any of the instructions mentioned herein have not been adhered to Local Organizing Secretary will reject the proposal.
3. Local Organizing Secretary will not be responsible for any delay, loss or non-downloading of RFP document. Further Local Organizing Secretary shall not be responsible for any delay in downloading the Proposal and reserves the right to accept/reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

SCHEDULE:

Sl. No.	Activity	Duration
1.	Download Date of EoI Documents	From 24.09.2019 (10:00 Hrs.) To 27.09.2019 (15:00 Hrs.) [www.eproc.bihar.gov.in]
2.	Pre-bid Meeting	25.09.2019 at 11.00 Hrs. (HQ, LOS office, BRPNL 7, Sardar Patel Marg, Patna-15)
3.	Date/Time for submission/ uploading of offer/Bid	28.09.2019 upto 15:00 Hrs. (www.eproc.bihar.gov.in)
4.	Last Date of Submission of Bank Draft, Bid Security and Hard Copies of Document in original in sealed envelope.	30.09.2019 at 15: 00 Hrs.
5.	Date & time for opening of Technical Bid	30.09.2019 at 15: 30 Hrs. (www.eproc.bihar.gov.in)
6.	Date, time and place of opening of Financial Bid	To be informed later to technically qualified bidder. (www.eproc.bihar.gov.in)

- Bid Validity - 120 days
- The Cost of RFP Document is Rs.10,000/- payable in the form of Demand Draft, Bid Security / Earnest Money of Rs.1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh) only in the favour of "LOS, 80th IRC Annual Session, Patna Payable at Patna and Bid Security in original will have to be deposited in the office of the Local Organizing Secretary, Bihar Rajya Pul Nirman Nigam Ltd., 7, Sardar Patel Marg, Patna-15 upto 15:00 hrs. (IST) on 16.09.2019
- The selection of Consultants shall be on QCBS=80:20
- The applicants may download the EoI-cum-RFP document from e-procurement website: www.eproc.bihar.gov.in
- For participating in e-tendering process, the consultant shall have to get themselves registered to get user ID, Password and digital signature. This will enable them to access the website www.eproc.bihar.gov.in and download/participate in e-tender. Those who are not registered in e-tendering systems, they may contact "e-Procurement HELP DESK, First Floor, Plot No. - M/22, Road No. - 25, Sri Krishna Nagar, Bank of India Compound, Patna - 800 001, Contact no. - 0612 - 2523006, 9939035696" for registration for support related to e-tendering process, bidders may contact at following address "e Procurement HELP DESK, First Floor, Plot No.-M/22, Road No.-25, Sri Krishna Nagar, Bank of India Compound, Patna-800001, Contact No: 0612-2523006; 9939035696". Vendor may visit the link "Vendor Info" at www.eproc.bihar.gov.in
- Detailed EoI-cum-RFP can be seen on website: www.brpn.bih.nic.in or www.eproc.bihar.gov.in

Address for Communication

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80th IRC Annual Session Patna,
Bihar Rajya Pul Nirman Nigam Limited,
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Local Organizing Secretary, -cum- Managing Director

PR No. 008018(Ni.Ni.) 2019-20
Bihar Rajya Pul Nirman Nigam Ltd., Patna

अवेश शरब एवं मदक द्रव्य के संबंध में शिकायत टॉल फ्री नं. 18003456268 या 15545 पर करें

No need for Opposition

As federalism gives way to legitimacy of national parties, regional ones look at extinction

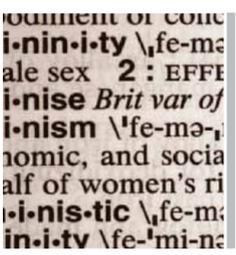


If the Lok Sabha verdict is considered a benchmark in resetting the grammar of politics as swatting the Opposition, then its impact on regional politics has been such as to eliminate the relevance of federal parties. Once the backbone of powerful coalition governments at the Centre, State parties are now much like tribal chieftains, good enough for lording over their flocks but too tiny to stall the juggernaut of national parties gobbling them up. In such a scenario, they have just two options, either withdraw to their pocketboroughs or sign up with the big players if they want to stay in the game. So it is that in Maharashtra, there has been a mass migration from the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) to the BJP-Shiv Sena combine, almost wiping off the Opposition space. And in Rajasthan, the ruling Congress government has followed the same pattern of accretion to its ranks by coopting six Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) MLAs, grinding the theory of Dalit consolidation to the dust.

Given the current scenario, Maharashtra really doesn't need an election, considering that the only tussle will be between coalition partners, the BJP and the Sena, over seat percentage and power-sharing, much like a fraternal war of carving out the spoils. Twenty-six MLAs from the Opposition camp, including its leader in the Assembly, joined the ruling party, creating a political vacuum. The worst hit has been NCP founder Sharad Pawar, no longer appearing to be the Maratha strongman. Such is his condition that except his core team, every other party member is looking to jump ship. And though NCP is tying up with the Congress to avoid total dissipation, fact is the rump that both parties have become may just get them 30 plus seats in a House of 288. The Congress is at its worst level of preparedness given the dissension within its ranks and the Young Turks, led by Milind Deora, stepping aside and themselves not averse to charting out an independent course. Yes it has a new State chief but the will to fight back is simply missing at the unit level. The party would be just about happy with whatever it gets courtesy the standing of some of its individual leaders. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray, who at least injected some drama into proceedings by questioning the establishment, is nowhere to be seen what with the BJP taming him with a slew of Enforcement Directorate (ED) cases. The fringe players, who could be vote cutters, like Prakash Ambedkar and Asaduddin Owaisi, have been torn asunder and chasing their own kitties. As for the BJP-Sena duel, the former is now claiming its pound of flesh, considering it can go alone and has for years stepped back to accommodate the sensitivities of the Sena. The latter may want a 50-50 distribution of seats, and maybe even a shot at deputy chief minister for Aaditya Thackeray, son of Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray, but it has no negotiating edge. And while its conscience calls in the form of criticising the Modi government and functioning like an Opposition worked in 2014, it certainly isn't attractive anymore. Besides, the Sena must understand that though the Modi charisma works, BJP Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis has quietly developed his own stock. If the Sena has so far peddled the local versus outsider logic, the BJP has several Maratha leaders now, courtesy the migration of senior leaders from the Congress, and has even roped in Shivaji's descendant Udayanraje Bhosale. So the Sena may engage in posturing, yet has no option but to acquiesce to the BJP's grand design. The ruling Congress in Rajasthan, too, has just gone by the old formula of buying support with promised doles, something which has become part of the BJP's playbook. In fact, it was to counter the BJP's poaching attempts in Rajasthan and create a Karnataka-like scenario that prompted the Ashok Gehlot-led government to scoop up allies. Sadly, such rampant horse-trading is just eroding the idea of a federal union and overlaying a new text of unionised federalism. A throwback to the chaos that we had hoped to clean up.

Who is a woman?

An online campaign on sexist interpretations in the Oxford dictionary is resetting conversations



The Oxford Dictionary is considered no less a Bible when it comes to semantics. Such is its credibility that seldom does one question whether its makers need to question internal wisdom rather than deciding what a word should mean to the world. Clearly it's time for some soul-searching as its editors have managed to offend, enrage and alienate women around the world through their insensitivity and failure to keep up with the times. An online petition is gathering steam to redefine the word "woman" which the dictionary still considers synonymous with "bitch, besom, piece, bit, mare, filly" and so on. As if this was not enough, the sentences that explain the usage of the word or their application add insult to injury as they objectify and portray women as subordinate to men. "Ms September will embody the professional, intelligent yet sexy career woman" and "I told you to be home when I get home, little woman," are some of the offensive examples given, clearly out of sync with not just gender sensitivities but also the fluidities of modern contexts. This stands out all the more because the Oxford Dictionary is very quick to absorb contemporary idioms and even legitimise a lot of fusion words as part of the mainstream English lexicon.

Signatories of the petition, that was started by UK-based women's rights activist Maria Beatrice Giovanardi in July, are calling on editors to "eliminate all phrases and definitions that discriminate against and patronise women and/or connote men's ownership of women." This is not the first time that the compilers of the dictionary have given a misogynistic explanation to a word. Check out "rabiid" and up pops "feminist" next to it, search for "nagging" and it is followed by "wife." This should encourage a larger conversation on whether the English language is sexist and needs to modify itself, considering it is a common thread of communication across the world and, therefore, needs to be politically correct. Have we ever wondered why words like "mistress" and "madam", that actually meant women of authority, have over the decades, undergone degeneration? Pejoration of words related to women is a sad reflection on the way society views their place in it. In a rather weak response, Oxford has said that the content referred to in the petition by Giovanardi is not from the scholarly Oxford English Dictionary, but from the Oxford Thesaurus of English and the Oxford Dictionary of English, which are drawn from "real-life use" of language. However, other popular online dictionaries like Cambridge and Merriam-Webster, which also give examples of "real-life" use of the word, are more respectful and gender sensitive. While Cambridge describes "woman" simply as an "adult female human being," Merriam-Webster adds the words "female" and "lady" to the same description given by Cambridge. Given that Merriam-Webster even released an additional dictionary definition of the word "they" to refer "to a single person whose gender identity is non-binary," isn't it time that the world's most trusted lexicon changes the way it refers to women?

A Himalayan threat

Fires that engulfed the Amazon rainforests should awaken us to the threat closer home. Shivaliks and lower Himalayas, too, witness the same risk almost every year



KK PAUL

Recent fires that have ravaged the Amazon rainforest in Brazil have not only generated sufficient heat to light up the scene for a fresh debate on development and environment but are also responsible, to some extent, for overheating the world of diplomacy, which was much evidenced at the G7 summit held in France last month. It is obvious that major forest fires like the ones around the Amazon rainforest and the Indonesian blaze can no longer remain a localised affair. They tend to assume international dimensions in view of the overall impact on the environment and in the long run, on climate change. The temperature spikes in carbon sinks across the world end up melting our glaciers.

The allegation that the fires had been lit intentionally to make way for developmental projects being undertaken by the Brazilian Government in collaboration with private entrepreneurs may or may not be true but the damage to the environment has already been done. Imagine, Brazil was host to the earth summit in 1992, where the concept of sustainable development was initiated and a long term strategy to deal with climate change was formulated for the first time.

Back home, we have similar problems in our forested areas, except for those where rainfall is heavy and trees are able to retain sufficient moisture. The coastal areas and forests of the North-East as well as the Andamans are a case in point. Fires in the forests of Shivaliks and lower Himalayas are well-known. In fact, they have become a regular feature, except that they keep varying in intensity. Experience shows that forest fires in hill areas are more difficult to tackle due to the problem of accessibility as is noticed in several districts of Uttarakhand.

The year 2016 almost created history, both in the number of fires as well as their spread with at least seven casualties being reported. On account of a virtual absence of winter rain, signs of a difficult impending summer were quite visible even in mid-February during that time. During my journey from Dehradun to Nainital, while my helicopter was overflying the forests of Tehri and Pauri, a few isolated cases of smoke rising from deep inside the forests were visible. The absence of any rainfall through the months of March and April, along with an unusual rise in temperatures, compounded the situation.

Despite sufficient warning time being available, necessary steps were not taken. Mobilisation of volunteers and other personnel on the ground remained inadequate. By the end of March, almost a crisis situation had developed when the fires appeared to threaten settlements and peripheral areas of some of the towns. By then, the State had come under President's Rule and as the then Governor, containing the damage done to forest wealth besides saving life and property became one of my top priorities. It was strange to see that the forest department was neither



adequately prepared nor committed to fighting the fires. It was considering them to be a normal and an annual feature.

Given the gravity of the situation, the State disaster response force along with personnel from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in large numbers were inducted into the operation. Simultaneously, the police personnel, who were accompanied by the district revenue authorities, were also mobilised. As the fires became more menacing and life-threatening, the Indian Air Force (IAF) was approached, who with the personal intervention of the then Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha, responded almost instantaneously.

Choppers with Bambi buckets were available at the Sarsawa airbase, not far from Dehradun, which flew to Pauri and Nainital without any loss of time. They were immediately operationalised with the lake at Nainital and the reservoir at the Tehri Dam providing adequate supply of water. The only problem faced was the supply of fuel for the choppers as the tankers mowed at a very slow pace on the winding hilly roads. The ordeal was finally over after a few showers towards the end of April, breaking one of the longest dry spells of more than 50 days at a stretch.

While only a certain amount of damage by fires can be quantified, the adverse impact on biodiversity and ecosystem remains immense and unquantifiable. Suffice to

“ WHILE ONLY A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF DAMAGE BY FIRES CAN BE QUANTIFIED, THE ADVERSE IMPACT ON BIO-DIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM REMAINS IMMENSE AND UNQUANTIFIABLE. SUFFICE TO SAY THAT HUGE VOLUMES OF CARBON DIOXIDE SO RELEASED LEAD TO SERIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ”

SOUNDBITE

I too come from a non-Hindi speaking State. One has to listen to my speech carefully, if someone wants to do politics, it is their choice.



Union Minister —Amit Shah

I always heard stories about how the film industry ran on connections and *jugaad* but they never worked in my favour when I was starting out.



Actor —Rajkumar Rao

It was Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, America, certain European countries and the Zionist regime (Israel) which started the war in this region.



Iran's President —Hassan Rouhani

By showing glitter, saying 5 trillion, 5 trillion, everyday, the economy cannot improve. Investors don't come by sponsoring events abroad.



Congress leader —Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shocking development

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Farooq, now a threat" (September 18). That former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah was booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) exposes the true intention of the ruling Government. Ever since it abrogated the Valley's special status, there has been a complete lockdown there. More than 40 days have passed but things have remained the same. Instead of engaging with the people or taking steps to restore normalcy, the Government is imposing laws that go against the spirit of the Constitution.

Farooq's detention comes close on the heels of MDMK leader Vaiko moving a *habeas corpus* petition in the Supreme Court, seeking the J&K Government to set him free. It must also be remembered that Farooq was already under house arrest for more than 40 days, as have two other former Chief Ministers Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah. If Abdullah's arrest was inevitable, the Government must give appropriate reasons for the same. It's

Come to terms with air pollution

This refers to the editorial, "Odd-even blues" (September 16). Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal believes that the odd-even scheme will reduce pollution levels though past experiments have proved to the contrary. But it is also true that the Government was able to decongest the roads to a large extent when the rule was first introduced. With the onset of winter, especially when the farmers start preparing for harvest, air quality becomes twice as polluted than during the spring and summer. As the Supreme Court had said, Delhi resembles a "gas chamber." The capital city's image took a massive beating when a 2016 report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) described it as the "world's most polluted." The odd-even scheme may not achieve what is needed. Instead, the Kejriwal Government should take parallel and reasonable measures like ensuring vehicles are run on clean fuel. It may as well order the closure of thermal emission plants.

The second time when the "odd-even" rule was implemented, people turned on the heat by buying additional cars so that they could use it on a daily basis, thus negating the cardinal principle of the rule. Most importantly, Kejriwal was right when he declared that his Government would be in close touch with the



Governments in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to reduce crop residue burning. Planting of trees, identification of pollution hot spots in Delhi, too, have been steps in the right direction. But the rampant bursting of crackers during Diwali needs a solution. Despite a Supreme Court ban on the sale and use of conventional firecrackers, Delhi records worst air quality every year a day after Diwali. Kejriwal has claimed that air pollution in Delhi dropped 25 per cent in four years. Only a post-November study will vindicate his stand.

Ganapathi Bhat Akola

beyond imagination that a very senior politician and one of the most prominent faces in the country is being considered as a threat to security.

Tharcus S Fernando Chennai

Gandhian philosophy

Sir — Responding to the call of Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish climate activist, various Indian cities, including Delhi,

Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Kochi, Allahabad and Calicut will be hosting "climate strikes" between September 20 and September 27. Thousands of students from across the nation will skip schools to be part of the

"climate strike."

Thunberg's movement has had its impact in India and the country became a witness to some of its first school strikes with students demanding more action from authorities regarding global warming and climate change. The May 24 climate strike saw a great turnout in cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru and Delhi. Though skipping schools and colleges won't make a difference, certainly it can help create awareness.

However, the best way to combat pollution, which has been one of the most pressing environmental threats to human health, is to listen to Mahatma Gandhi's message. The issues that the world community is faced with today were envisioned by him decades ago. His idea of *swaraj* in terms of clean air and water is more relevant in our times than it was when India was under foreign rule. Most importantly, his suggestion was that school and college students must be educated about the value of clean air.

Srishti Mathur Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

The mystery of drone strikes

Though Pompeo blamed Iran for the attacks on Saudi oil, Trump doesn't want a full-scale war with it and neither does the kingdom



GWYNNE DYER

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo dismissed the Houthi claim that the Yemeni rebel group had carried out Saturday's strike on two huge Saudi Arabian oil processing facilities. There was "no evidence" that the drones belonged to the Houthis, he said. Instead, he blamed Iran. No surprise there. The way things are at the moment, if an incoming asteroid were about to strike the Earth, the US would blame Iran. But there's "no evidence" that the drones came from Iran either. Pompeo is simply trading on the assumption that Yemenis are too ignorant to manage that sort of technology, so it must be Iran. Saudi Arabia and the alliance of other autocratic Arab States that have been bombing Yemen since 2015 push the same line all the time. It goes down fairly well in the kingdom, where most people look down on Yemenis for being poor and less well educated, but it isn't actually true.

Within a year of the war's start, the Yemenis began launching a few small ballistic missiles (with conventional warheads) back at Saudi Arabia, but the Saudis refused to believe they were doing it themselves. The Houthis, they implied, were too backward to upgrade the Yemeni air force's old Soviet-made Scud missiles themselves. Iran must have helped them. In fact, the Yemeni air force had Scud missiles for decades before the Government collapsed in 2015, and technicians to service them. Some, maybe most of those technicians threw in their lot with the Houthis and upgraded those Scuds by cutting them in half and inserting a larger fuel tank. It changed their flight characteristic and made them very inaccurate but it did extend their range enough to hit targets all over southern and eastern Saudi Arabia. And by mid-2017 the Houthis, who controlled most of Yemen, were making their own improved copies known as Burkan missiles. The "Super-Scuds" were more a morale booster than a war-winner for the Houthis, who live under a merciless daily bombardment from the air (7,290 documented civilian deaths so far). The current attacks, if the Houthis' claim is true, would just be another morale-booster, even though it has temporarily cut world oil production by around five per cent.

But was it really the Houthis? At this point there is no clear evidence, but it could have been. They certainly have the motive and they may have the technology. They have used small drones in previous air strikes and there are bigger drones available commercially that could do the damage seen at the Saudi facilities. The biggest currently available is the Guardian, a monster that can carry a payload of 200 kilos. It's made by Griff Aviation, a Norwegian company whose Lakeland factory in Florida is producing one Guardian a day and selling them to industrial, agricultural and military clients.

It would be quite a trick for the Houthis to acquire ten of them but stranger things have happened. Or maybe they did get their hands on some military drones, which would certainly be up to the job. Or maybe it was Iran but nobody really knows yet.

One apparent flaw in the Houthi theory is that there are no civilian drones capable of flying the almost 800 km from Yemen to the Saudi targets but that's not really necessary. Most of the land around the Abqaiq and Khurais oil facilities is open desert and launching the drones for 25-50 km away would escape detection unless the Saudis were actively anticipating such an attack.

Who would launch them? There are a million Yemenis resident in Saudi Arabia, plus two to three million Saudi citizens, who suffer severe discrimination because they follow the Shia version of Islam. There are even Sunni Saudi citizens (mostly Islamists) who are sufficiently disaffected to attack the regime directly. That's a pretty large pool to fish in if you're looking for local collaborators to smuggle the drones in and launch them - which is what the Houthis themselves say happened. In their statement claiming credit for the attacks, they express thanks for "co-operation with the honourable people inside the kingdom." None of this proves that it was the Houthis or that it wasn't the Iranians. It does leave the identity of the attackers up in the air, where it will remain until conclusive proof emerges one way or another (if it ever does). Mike Pompeo's confident attribution of blame to Iran, later echoed by Energy Secretary Rick Perry, is just politics, not proof. As Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif tweeted on Sunday, "having failed at max pressure (anti-Iran trade sanctions), Sec Pompeo's turning to max deceit." Fair comment, really. And we should be grateful that Donald Trump, for all his faults, is the grown-up in the house this time. On Sunday Trump tweeted: "There is reason to believe that we know the culprit, are locked and loaded depending on verification but are waiting to hear from the Kingdom as to who they believe was the cause of attack, and under what terms we would proceed!" Trump doesn't want a full-scale war with Iran, and neither does Saudi Arabia. It probably won't happen.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is *Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work*)

INSTEAD OF WEAKENING COMMUNAL FORCES, THE CONGRESS IS ENGAGED MOSTLY IN WEAKENING THE FORCES THAT RAISE VOICES AGAINST IT.

—BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY CHIEF MAYAWATI

POINT COUNTERPOINT



NO ONE CAN SAY THAT CONGRESS FAILED TO PLAY THE ROLE OF OPPOSITION. OUR LEADERS FOUGHT IN LEGISLATURES, PARLIAMENT AND ON STREETS.

— CONGRESS LEADER AJAY MAKEN

Free the land to save Earth

Degraded tracts can be used for orchards and agro-forestry to help store more carbon in the soil. This will help mitigate the effects of climate change



INDRA SHEKHAR SINGH

The fire of humanity's end has started to burn the Amazon rainforests. Our hunger for destruction of forests is older than the Roman Empire's greed for wood or Amazonian farmers' need for more land. In India, we are victims of rampant logging and deforestation, too. The mighty Himalayas in Himachal Pradesh are stripped for lumber and in the plains trees are chopped to make way for real estate or farmland. Badland use means degraded land of 26 million hectares (ha) while excessive use of chemicals in industrial agriculture is resulting in more fertile tracts being destroyed each day. But time is up and, "any wrong step towards Earth's degradation by anyone, any government around the world affects each one of us." This was made clear at the recently-concluded United Nations' Convention to Combat Desertification Conference of Parties (UNCCD COP14) held in India.

India tops the charts as "the most climate-affected country of the world." This means that we may see temperatures hitting 55 °C, agriculture production failing and water wars in the next decade. We need to swerve towards healing the Earth and adopt realistic policies to address environmental degradation with a mass mitigation movement, otherwise climate change will destroy India. And city dwellers can't do it alone. India needs its farmers to save not just the country but perhaps, the world. And this time cultivators need help from our policy-makers too.

India is well stocked in cereals and is in fact heading towards over-production in rice and wheat, which is destabilising market prices and not allowing for farming of other crops. The culprit is the state policy of the limited scope of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme. The Government needs to extend MSP beyond wheat and rice, and given the newer challenges of water scarcity and climate chaos, we need to innovate to expand the scope of farmers' support system. A direct way is to include more crops under MSP, but the other can be to introduce relaxations to land ceilings as advised by the Economic Survey of India. This can be strictly done for growers who are willing to devote over 80 per cent of their land to orchards, agro-forestry using ecological practices like inter-cropping, natural composting and so on. The Government needs to come out in support of cultivators who can become the vanguard of India's climate mitigation campaign. We need a policy, which incentivises carbon sequestration by growers and Farmer Producers' Organisations (FPOs) using carbon credits matched by water efficiency scores. Carbon sequestration is the process by which carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere is absorbed by trees, plants and crops through photosynthesis and stored as carbon in biomass such as tree trunks, branches, foliage, roots and soils.

We don't need all of the Indian farmland for cereal production and should promote orchards and agro-forestry, which are good for the cultivators and the Earth. As per a study conducted by the Environmental Defence Fund (EDF) in India, methane and nitrous oxide emissions from rice farms could have the same long-term warming impact as about 600 coal plants. Compare this to a research on mango orchards by ICAR-NICRA (Indian Council of Agricultural Research- National Initiative on Climate Resilient

“ IF LAND CEILINGS ARE RELAXED FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS, WHY NOT FOR CLIMATE MITIGATION THROUGH BIO-DIVERSITY? INDIAN FARMERS, MUCH LIKE THE SOLAR INDUSTRIALISTS, ARE FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE. THEY ONLY DIFFER IN THEIR APPROACH. ONE USES SHINY SOLAR PANELS WHILE THE CULTIVATORS ARE ARMED WITH THEIR SAPLINGS AND SEEDS. THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO INDIA'S CLIMATE MITIGATION BECAUSE THE THREAT IS VERY REAL AND AFFECTS THE FARMERS AND RURAL INDIA MORE



Agriculture) published in 2019. The study stated that the "country as a whole has sequestered 285.005 million tonnes of carbon in its mango orchards. Andhra Pradesh (AP) and Telangana put together, having a maximum area under mango cultivation, sequestered 69.98 million tonnes of carbon. This is followed by Uttar Pradesh (35.58 million tonnes) Karnataka (29.57315 million tonnes), Odisha (21.07 million tonnes) and Bihar (20.09 million tonnes)."

This figure can grow if agro-ecological practices such as inter-cropping with pulses, other fruit trees, organic composting and fertilisers are used. Most degraded land can also be used for orchards, hence adding incomes for the farmers/FPOs and helping store more carbon in the soil.

In Ladakh, Nubra Valley produced about 4,650 metric tonnes (MT) of apricot, apple, walnut, mulberry, grape and plum and sequestered 22,300 MT of carbon. The cultivation of such temperate fruits can be used for carbon sequestration and rejuvenating degraded land, cold-arid regions by improving Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) contents and bringing more prosperity to farmers.

After achieving food sovereignty, we should diversify and not only meet climate targets, by planting trees and agro-forestry, we save water, clean the air and bring higher economic returns for farmers. To free the land to heal and repair the Earth, we have to address the issue of degraded areas. The burden of cereal production has been rapacious for bio-diversity. We need to rejuvenate bio-diversity of the hinterland, especially along the Gangetic plains and river plains of the south with trees. Let the bigger farmers grow forests, so the small and medium cultivators can grow cereals, lentils and oilseeds. Once the bigger

farmers shift out of cereal production, small growers can get better prices for their produce through the Government and grain traders. FPOs can play a very big role in this.

Take for example Lucknow or Kanpur, both of which are high on the air pollution index. The State Government can identify clusters of degraded or wastelands and convert them exclusively into agro-forests or mixed orchards. If a cluster decides to use agro-ecological methods of farming, it should be incentivised by allowing each individual farmer to own more than the prescribed limit in the Land Ceiling Act of UP.

Instead of the Government bearing all burden of degraded land restoration, through policy decisions facilitate farmers/FPOs to buy it. The Government can assist by providing region-wise bio-diversity-based plans. Inter-cropping, natural composting, organic farming should be encouraged within the orchards and agro-forests.

Farmers/FPOs should be exempted from the Land Ceiling Act if they purchase degraded land and bring 90 per cent of it under tree cover/orchards based on local biodiversity in the next two or three years. This should be over and above the land ceiling limits within State laws. This would ensure that the project is economically viable and reduces the pressure on the land and the Government. State laws can be amended to include this new category of farmlands and a limit should be imposed to ensure that they stay under tree cover for the next 60 years.

The next step would be to create a national kisan carbon credit programme, linking it to the global carbon credit system. Then FPOs/clusters can earn carbon credits for the country. This will also

encourage developed nations and progressive states like California to make an investment into rural communities directly. Global companies too could buy carbon credits to reduce their emissions. The farmers will earn more and we clean the air of surrounding cities while earning investments straight into rural and semi-rural India.

If land ceilings are relaxed for renewable energy projects, why not for climate mitigation through bio-diversity? Indian farmers, much like the solar industrialists, are fighting climate change; they only differ in their approach. One uses shiny solar panels while the cultivators are armed with their saplings and seeds. They should be given every opportunity to contribute to India's climate mitigation because the threat is very real and affects the farmers and rural India more. We need integration of old wisdom and new farming technologies.

The size of the land-holding is too small and is ever-shrinking, while the degradation and depletion of land fertility are at an all-time high. We have to free the land and free the farmers to help restore the ecosystem. Days of bullock carts are long gone, we need to embrace technology and steer it for the protection of the Earth and our nation.

We need to embrace new science and the forest together, to save our civilisation from the negative effects of climate change. Reconnect with the Earth and act now unitedly for the benefit of our *Vasudeva kutumbakam* (global family) or else as best articulated by James Baldwin, "Instead of ending the world with water, God will end it with fire next time."

(The writer is Programme Director for Policy and Outreach at the National Seed Association of India)

Ship-breaking poisoning the environment

The pipes and steel body of a vessel hold an average of 1,40,000 PPM mercury, that is released into the air during the dismantling process. This puts labourers and technical staff at risk



KOTA SRIRAJ

The ship-breaking business in India is booming as many nations across the world have completely banned dismantling of vessels on their soil, owing to public pressure over environmental concerns. However, the ship-breaking business in India is gaining notoriety thanks largely to the anti-environmental policies followed at the yards and the tremendous health risks involved.

A recent Dutch documentary has highlighted how environmental and safety norms are being flouted in Gujarat's Alang ship-breaking yard. The documentary titled, "Het gisfchip van SBM" was aired on Zembila, a Dutch television documentary pro-

gramme on September 12, 2019. The documentary shows how the Dutch company, SBM Offshore, concealed that a gas tanker it owned, which was to be scrapped in Alang, was contaminated with mercury. SBM Offshore provides floating production solutions to the offshore energy industry.

Many ships are contaminated with mercury, especially the ones converted to Floating Storage and Offloading (FSO) vessels. Stationed at gas fields, these vessels accumulate high levels of mercury, which gets attached to the steel walls of the tanker. In addition, mercury also contaminates ballast water. Some studies show that its presence is as high as 300 points per million (PPM) of mercury in 4,500 tonnes of ballast water. Furthermore the pipes and steel body hold an average of 1,40,000 PPM mercury, that is released into the air during the dismantling process. This puts labourers and technical staff at risk as mercury exposure can damage the central nervous system, kidney and cause liver impairment, reproductive and devel-



opment disorders, defects in foetuses and learning deficits. Yet in spite of these conditions, the ships keep arriving at these yards and breaking continues round-the-clock. How these workers protect themselves against the health threats and what the Indian Government will do to take care of its people and the environment is anybody's guess.

The work at the yards is largely still being done by hand. As such the risks and exposures attached to the business by way of accidents and chemical reactions are very high. This raises a pertinent question as to how the Government has not fully automated the breaking process as the heavy industry technology has made major progress over the last

few decades. Big industrial corporations like Hitachi, Siemens and Hyundai specialise in heavy industry machinery. So why is the ship-breaking industry still hand driven? The Government must step in and increase automation at these yards. Not only will this benefit the workers, it will also be easy to adhere to international ship-breaking guidelines.

Further, public awareness about this business and its impact on people's health and the environment is low. This needs to change because with awareness comes safety.

The Government, which is always on the back foot on this subject as it's a business fraught with risks, can use technology as a way out of this conundrum.

It can begin an online portal, which deals with scrapping of any harmful object, be it as small as white goods and e-waste to as large as ships. The portal, under different heads, can give information and live feed of the various dismantling and waste processing facilities. This information will bring transparency on

adherence to norms concerning health and environment safeguards. This will also earn the Government the respect of the common man.

While the ship-breaking business has been the focus of many researches and studies, the lot of the people on the ground and the immediate environment, whether it is the sea or the ambient air quality, has more or less remained unchanged. With such glaring examples of pollution in front of us, it seems that the authorities in India, both executive and judicial, seem to have trained their guns elsewhere and on smaller sources of pollution. This seems particularly true when one examines the fact that ship-breaking possibly is the only activity that has the dubious capability of polluting the air, sea water and harming human health all in one go and under one activity.

Surely this cannot be ignored and allowed to continue as it has thrived long enough and consumed enough human lives and environmental assets.

(The writer is an environmental journalist)

FOREIGN EYE



TACKLING DISPARITIES

Tackling disparities in power and capital has become the leitmotif of the Left globally. France's President Emmanuel Macron has just pushed through a law for mandatory profit-sharing schemes for employees. In the US, Democratic presidential hopefuls Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren propose to tackle soaring wealth inequality by giving employees a stake in their companies. This would be welcome indeed.

(The Guardian editorial)

UK Parliament panel slams 'flawed' reaction to visa row affecting many Indians

PNS ■ LONDON

An influential UK Parliament committee on Wednesday issued a harsh rebuke of the UK government's "flawed" reaction to a visa row involving compulsory English tests that affected hundreds of overseas students, many of them Indian.

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC) had opened an inquiry into a scandal dating back five years over allegations of cheating in the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), a compulsory requirement in some student visa cases.

Many of the students caught up in the row have maintained their innocence and have been lobbying the government for a chance to prove their inno-

cence. They have been backed by many cross-party British MPs and have now also received the backing of the PAC, which has called on the UK Home Office to create and promote a "fair and trustworthy" means of helping all individuals who may have been wrongly accused to be able to clear their names.

"The Home Office's flawed reaction to a systemic failure by a private company has led to real injustice for many thousands of overseas students taking English Language tests," said Labour Party MP Meg Hillier, Chair of the PAC - the committee which oversees government expenditure and effective use of resources.

"It beggars belief that despite known flaws in the Tier 4 student visa system, the Home Office designed an English



language testing system that failed to recognise the potential incentive for cheating... However, despite the scale of the abuse, many hundreds of people continue to protest their innocence at great personal cost. It is staggering that the

Home Office thinks it is acceptable to have so little regard for the impact its actions might have on innocent people," she said.

The issue dates back to February 2014, when BBC's 'Panorama' investigation

uncovered evidence of organised cheating in two English language test centres run on behalf of the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

This included providing English-speakers to take speaking tests instead of the real can-

Many of the students caught up in the row have maintained their innocence and have been lobbying the government for a chance to prove their innocence

didates and staff reading out multiple choice answers for other tests. The UK Home Office responded vigorously, investigating colleges, test centres and students and cancelled many visas.

"The Home Office's pace of response to the issue of cheating has either been 'full throttle or too slow', with no middle ground. It has been quick to act on imperfect evidence, but slow in responding to indications that innocent people may have been caught up in its actions," notes the PAC report titled 'English Language Tests:

A Systemic Failure Affecting Thousands'.

It adds: "The Home Office's decision to revoke the visas of thousands of individuals before properly verifying evidence provided by ETS has led to injustice and hardship for many people."

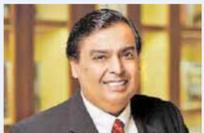
"The Department recognises that hundreds of students maintain their innocence but continues to suggest that there is only a small risk that people have been wrongly caught up in their actions. We are staggered that the Department thinks it is acceptable to have

so little regard for the impact its actions might have on innocent people."

The report, which gives the Home Office a strict timeframe to respond on each of its findings, was welcomed by groups campaigning for justice on behalf of the affected students.

"We particularly welcome the recommendation for the Home Office to urgently design and implement a genuine means for innocent students to clear their names, and we urge the Home Secretary to make that happen. Working alongside many of the students affected, we have seen first hand the extreme hardship they face every single day as a direct result of the Home Office's deeply flawed reaction," said Nazek Ramadan, Director of Migrant Voice.

CAPSULE



Ambani raises stake in Reliance Industries to 48.87%

NEW DELHI: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani has raised promoter stake in flagship Reliance Industries by 2.71 per cent to 48.87 per cent, according to regulatory filing by the company. Reliance Services and Holdings Ltd, controlled by promoter group firm Petroleum Trust, acquired 17.18 crore shares or 2.71 per cent stake in Reliance on September 13, it said. The acquisition was pursuant to a scheme of arrangement not directly involving Reliance, the filing said without giving details. Ambani and his private firms held 47.29 per cent stake as on June 30, 2019 in India's second-most valuable company.



India Post starts speed post service to 6 new nations

NEW DELHI: India Post on Wednesday expanded speed post service to six new foreign destinations in Asia, Europe and South America. "The Department of Posts has announced commencement of International Speed Post (EMS) Service to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Lithuania and North Macedonia," the postal department said in a statement. EMS or Express Mail Service is a premium service that enables its users to send documents and merchandise faster and with the added facility of being able to track the movement of the item on the internet. "This facility is expected to augment people to people contact with these countries and foster trade as EMS is popular channel for small and medium enterprises. The EMS service to these countries will henceforth be available at major post offices across India," the statement said.



Greenlam Industries expands Nalagarh unit

NEW DELHI: Greenlam Industries on Wednesday said it has expanded the production capacity at its Nalagarh plant in Himachal Pradesh by 1.6 million laminate sheets per annum. The company, which is a leading producer of laminates in Asia, can now produce up to 15.62 million sheets in the facility annually, thus further strengthening its position in the market. "With this expansion, we are delighted to announce that our manufacturing unit in Nalagarh is now entirely operational to produce an additional 11.4 per cent - 1.6 million laminate sheets per annum," MD and CEO Saurabh Mittal said in a statement.

Essar to double CBM gas production to 1 mmscmd

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai's Ruia family-owned Essar plans to double production of coal-seam gas from its Raniganj east block in West Bengal as a vital Urja-Ganga gas pipeline connecting users in eastern India gets commissioned by year-end, a company official said on Wednesday.

Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production (EOGEP) currently produces about 0.45 million standard cubic metres per day due to constraints of pipelines that could take the gas to consumers. The company plans to ramp up the production to more than 1 mmscmd, the official, who did not wish to be named, said.

This would be the highest production of coal-seam gas or coal-bed methane (CBM) from any block in the country.

The firm has already invested Rs 4,000 crore in the project, which encompassed drilling of 348 wells, setting up the supply infrastructure, and laying pipelines to Durgapur and nearby industrial areas.

The current production from the Raniganj east CBM



The company plans to ramp up the production to more than 1 mmscmd, the official, who did not wish to be named, said

block is significantly lower than its capacity with the company having to throttle the output at about 0.45 mmscmd because of lack of a pipeline to take the gas to consumers.

"We have already produced 1 mmscmd gas from this block, which is the highest by any player in the sector. However, sustaining production at that level is unfeasible without the GAIL pipeline being commissioned. This is why we are producing far lower quantities of gas than we are capable of," the official said.

The Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga natural gas pipeline transverse from Jagdishpur

in Uttar Pradesh to Haldia in West Bengal and Bokaro in Jharkhand and Dhamra in Odisha. The pipeline is being commissioned in phases and the last leg is scheduled for completion by December 2019.

This will help gas supplies to reach four fertiliser plants in Gorakhpur, Sindri, Barauni and Panagarh, besides more than two dozen towns where city gas distribution rights have been awarded recently. The total demand in the region is envisaged at about 20 mmscmd.

CBM is natural gas stored or absorbed in coal seams and contains 90-95 per cent

methane. According to the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons, India has the fifth-largest proven coal reserves in the world and, therefore, holds significant prospects for exploration and exploitation of CBM.

Raniganj east block is India's most prolific CBM block, holding 1 trillion cubic feet of recoverable reserves.

The official said EOGEP is also planning to drill additional wells in accordance with the approved field development plan for the block.

The additional wells will enable the company to ramp up production to a peak of 2.3 mmscmd in the next few years, he said.

Sensex rises 83 pts; energy, metal stocks climb

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmark BSE Sensex rose 83 points on Wednesday, led by gains in energy, metal and power stocks as global crude oil prices eased and rupee recovered against the dollar.

After a rangebound session, the 30-share index ended 82.79 points, or 0.23 per cent, higher at 36,563.88. The index hit an intra-day high of 36,712.99 and a low of 36,465.92.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty settled 31.05 points, or 0.29 per cent, up at 10,848.65.

Top gainers in the Sensex pack included Tata Steel, Vedanta, SBI, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints, M&M, NTPC and PowerGrid, rising up to 3.95 per cent.

On the other hand, ONGC, Yes Bank, Bharti Airtel, HDFC Bank, Sun Pharma and Maruti fell up to 2.08 per cent.

After plunging over 2 per cent in the past two sessions, equities took a breather as oil



BSE Fastest Exchange in the world with a...

prices cooled after Saudi Arabia's energy minister said that more than half of the country's daily crude oil production, that was knocked out by the drone attack, has been recovered.

He also assured that production capacity at its targeted plants would be fully restored by the end of the month.

Consequently, Brent crude futures fell 0.95 per cent to 63.94 per barrel (intra-day).

Tracking the movement in oil prices, the rupee appreci-

ated 52 paise (intra-day) to trade at 71.26 per US dollar.

Further boosting global market mood, US President Donald Trump said a trade agreement between the US and China was likely to happen either before or immediately after the American elections.

Market participants were also awaiting cues from the policy meeting of the Federal Reserve, traders said.

Elsewhere in Asia, Shanghai Composite Index, Hang Seng, Nikkei and Kospi ended on a mixed note.

Odisha registers 7% increase in revenue collection till August

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha has registered a 7 per cent increase in revenue collection till August during the 2019-20 fiscal, officials said.

This was revealed by state Finance secretary A K Meena during a review meeting presided by Chief Secretary A K Tripathy.

Meena said total revenue generation increased to around Rs 12,315 crore against collection of Rs 11,758 crore in the corresponding period of last year.

While the non-tax revenue collection increased by 12 per cent over the previous year, the own tax collection amount was more by 5 per cent during the same period, Meena said. Replying a question, Meena said expenditure slowed down because of the general elections during initial 2-3 months of the current financial year. The programme expenditure up to August declined by 4 per cent in comparison to the same period of last fiscal year, he said.

The programme expenditure till August 2018 was around 32 per cent of the budget provision against which the expenditure till August this year was 28 per cent of the budgeted allocation.

The chief secretary has directed the secretaries of different departments to expedite



The programme expenditure till August 2018 was around 32 per cent of the budget provision against which the expenditure till August this year was 28 per cent of the budgeted allocation

implementation of the projects and utilization of the budgeted amount in coming months.

Tripathy also asked the secretaries to implement the reforms in the field of budget preparation, strengthen macro-fiscal forecasting, annual and medium-term budgeting and introducing commitment control system for uninterrupted financing to various projects and programmes.

Making an appraisal of the progress of the projects under District Mineral Foundation

(DMF), Development Commissioner S C Mohapatra said total collection under DMF up to August this fiscal was Rs 8,252 crore.

Around 71 per cent of the funds (Rs 5,722 crore) was allocated to 9,241 projects under priority activities of DMF like drinking water, education, environmental preservation, pollution control, health care, sanitation, skill development, welfare of women and Children, housing, livelihood creation programs, and connectivity.

Gold drops by Rs 215 on strong rupee

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold dropped Rs 215 to Rs 38,676 per 10 gram in the national capital on Wednesday on strong rupee, according to HDFC Securities.

In line with gold, silver prices also declined by Rs 770 to Rs 47,690 per kilogram. On Tuesday, silver had closed at Rs 48,460 per kilogram.

Gold prices had closed at Rs 38,891 per 10 gram in the bullion market here on Tuesday.

"Gold price for 24 Karat in Delhi was trading down by Rs 215 as stronger rupee reduced investment demand for gold.

The spot rupee was trading 51 paise stronger against the dollar with fall in crude oil prices during the day," Tapan Patel, senior analyst - commodities, HDFC securities said.

In the international market,



gold prices were trading marginally lower at USD 1,500 an ounce in New York, while silver was also trading down at USD 17.81 an ounce. "Gold prices traded marginally lower on Wednesday with international spot gold prices trading near USD 1,500 an ounce ahead of US FOMC decision and eased crude oil supply worries," Patel said. International gold prices were trading steady, holding the narrow trading range as market is awaiting outcome of US Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting and stance over Fed rate, he added.

Petrol, diesel prices see steepest hike since July 5

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel prices were on Wednesday hiked by 24-25 paise per litre, the steepest increase since July 5 Union Budget, as a fallout of turmoil in global oil markets following drone attacks on Saudi Arabian crude oil facilities.

Petrol price was increased by 25 paise per litre to Rs 72.42 and diesel by 24 paise to Rs 65.82 in the Delhi market, which is sort of a national benchmark, according to price information available from state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the biggest single-day hike since the July 5 Budget of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that raised rates by almost Rs 2.50 a litre due to an increase in excise duty on the fuels.

The hike on Wednesday followed a 14 paise a litre increase in price of petrol on Tuesday and 15 paise per litre rise in diesel rate.

Following the drone strikes on Saturday, international oil prices rallied nearly 20 per cent on Monday in intraday trading -- the biggest jump in almost 30 years -- as the attacks halved Saudi Arabia's output.

Rates have in subsequent two days retreated, conceding about half of the gains. Brent crude future on Wednesday dipped 0.26 per cent to USD 64.38 per barrel after jumping to near USD 72 in reaction to the disruption. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude lost 0.5 per cent to USD 59.06 per barrel.

This came after signs that Saudi Arabia was quickly restoring production at Abqaiq facility.

Users can now interact with Alexa in Hindi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Users in India can now speak to Amazon's voice assistant, Alexa in Hindi to carry out tasks like checking cricket scores, requesting for songs and even asking how she's doing.

Launched in India in 2017, Alexa was able to understand and pronounce names of popular places, names and songs in regional languages like Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Punjabi but supported commands only in English.

With the latest update, Alexa can now understand customers speaking to her completely in Hindi and Hinglish.

Alexa, which competes with digital assistants like Apple's Siri and Google Assistant, is available across Amazon's Echo range of devices as well as



products from brands like Bose, MyBox, iBall and Syska. "India has uniquely challenged our AI teams with its cultural and linguistic diversity. We have worked to ensure that customers can interact

with Alexa in different regional variants of colloquial Hindi," Amazon Vice President and Head Scientist, Alexa AI, Rohit Prasad told reporters here.

He added that along with Amazon's own team, many

"India has uniquely challenged our AI teams with its cultural and linguistic diversity. We have worked to ensure that customers can interact with Alexa in different regional variants of colloquial Hindi," Amazon Vice President and Head Scientist, Alexa AI, Rohit Prasad told reporters here

Indian users contributed to Hindi development through the Cleo skill on Alexa.

Prasad said Alexa already has 500 "skills" for Hindi language and the firm will continue to work with developers in India to introduce more such skills. Skills are capabilities like providing weather forecasts, ordering cabs or tell stories by simply asking Alexa

to do so. Over 90,000 skills are available for Alexa worldwide with a significant number catering to Indian users.

Prasad said Alexa has been equipped with a rich Hindi vocabulary and speaks in fluent Hindi while responding to customer requests.

He indicated that other languages could also be introduced in the future.



Hyderabad

The next generation is always expected to blame them if the growth is not what it is expected to be? The country is now at a dilemma as to who should be blamed for the dip in the economy. Does the onus fall on the collective economic policies of the world governments or on millennials who claim to have inherited more bone than boon from their predecessors?

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman caused ripples on social media last week when she suggested that the choice of transport by millennials be it cabs or other means of public transportation is a major factor that brought down the sales in automobile industry and has consequently hurt the profits.

But several problems Millennials cannot be expected to face the brunt of the cause as it's not just the millennials who are inclined towards cabs and other public transports but members of all age groups alike. Some of them might want to save themselves from the stress of driving while others would prefer sitting in the back and get their work done on the move

“The reason for several members of the common population choosing cabs and metros over owning their own vehicle stems from reasons such as high costs of fuel and spare parts, dangerous conditions of roads etc,” says A.Y. Prasad, Partner, Business Development at Tooni Arks. “It is not that the next generation would not like to avail the commodity but it is just that they don't have the luxury of investing in a commodity which would eventually only end up burning a hole in their pockets due to high maintenance costs.”

Deepthi Ravula, CEO of WeClub, offered different insight into the issue. “Millennials cannot be expected to face the brunt of the cause as it's not just the them who are inclined towards cabs and other public transports but members of all age groups alike,” she said. “There is definitely a change but the change depends on the choice of lifestyle of the people. Some of them might want to save themselves from the stress of driving while others prefer sit-

ting in the back and get their work done on the move. People today make a conscious decision to put convenience over anything else,” says Deepthi.

There are many other economic factors that need to be considered while measuring the spending patterns of the public. Even though the finance minister claims that the industrial sector has clearly indicated growth, the expectations of the public, with regard to issues such as employment are yet to be resolved as 13 per cent of graduates and 16 per cent of post graduates remain unemployed.

“The sudden dip in the automobile industry is in fact influenced by the already fluctuating economy,” says Ramu Srinivasan, Managing Director of Wide Reach Advertising Private Limited.

“Given the rise in the GST a lot of consumers now are thinking twice before purchasing an automobile. Most of them tend to wait for the economy to stabilise and the taxes to come down before buying so that they do not face

losses after investing in the said commodity. The consumers are only being vary of their choices,” he says.

The US, too, is grappling with a similar quandary. In 2018, the Federal Reserve Board in Washington DC released a paper titled ‘Are Millennials Different?’ which concluded that millennials, though are more educated, racially diverse and indifferent to marriage, ‘do not appear to have’ consumption patterns different from their earlier generations. In short: the economy dictates millennial choices, not the other way around. But the debate on who exactly is responsible for the recent setback in the automobile sector and economy in general

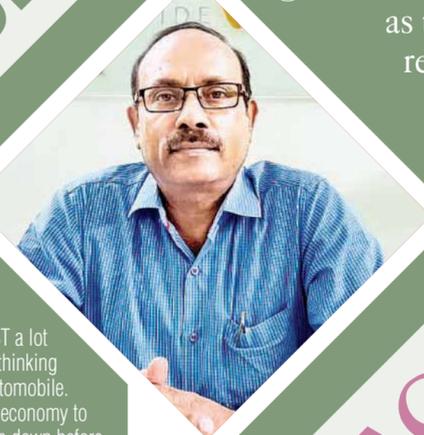
“The automobile industry is now affected by BS6 and the mindsets of millennial, who now prefer to have Ola or Uber rather than committing to buying an automobile

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN, FINANCE MINISTER ON THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY EARLIER IN THE MONTH



A spark lit by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on the dip in the automobile sector has ignited a debate nationwide as to who is actually responsible for the losses, reports ANUSHKA PRADEEP

is still ongoing. Only time will tell.



RAMU SRINIVASAN MD OF WIDE REACH ADVERTISING PVT LTD.

Given the rise in the GST a lot of the consumers now are thinking twice before purchasing an automobile. Most of them tend to wait for the economy to stabilise and the taxes to come down before buying so that they do not face losses after investing in the said commodity. The consumers are only being vary of their choices

BLAME GAME IN A CHANGING ECONOMY

DEEPTHI RAVULA CEO, WECLUB



The fifth edition of the annual Indian Photography Festival has been scheduled to begin from today at various locations across the city. IPF provides a platform for professional and aspiring photographers and photography lovers to showcase their skills. While promoting the art of photography, the event also addresses various social issues through photographs.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Acquin Matthew's, IPF director says, “After IPF earned international recognition to Hyderabad, the city of pearls, has now occupied a prominent position in the global art calendar. The festival has exhibited the work of more than 2,000 photographers and artists from all over the world and hosted more than a million visitors. The last edition has been a landmark in itself, from every point of view: in terms of audience participation, artistic representation, scale and intent. As many as 550 photographers from 52 countries and hundred-plus events and exhibitions made the 4th edition of the festival a massive hit.”

Acquin informed that Lens Culture, the leading European photography magazine listed IPF 2018 festival as one of the few festivals to visit in 2018 worldwide.

He adds, “It is a month long festival and brings some of the world's renowned names in the photography industry. It will be held at State

Gallery of Art and multiple venues in the city.

Photographers from over 50+ Countries including the US, UK, Australia, Finland, New Zealand, Sweden, Hong Kong, Japan, Spain, Greece, Italy and Japan are expected to take part in the festival. The festival has already placed Hyderabad on the map of the international photography scene in line with other major cities such as New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Auckland and Sydney.”

This year, the festival will give more exposure to Telangana, feels Acquin. The festival features exhibitions, artist talks, portfolio reviews, photography workshops, book launches, screenings and more. IPF widely uses public spaces for photography exhibitions to bring art to common audience, who might not normally attend art exhibitions and events. Public exhibitions are done at Ameerpet and Hitec City Metro station, KBR Park, GMR Hyderabad Airport and Inorbit Mall.

With a mission to make photography accessible to everyone who do not generally attend art exhibitions, IPF will extend its expo till October 20.

IPF will create awareness about photography and bring a plethora of topical social issues to the public through its medium, while also promoting culture and heritage. The Indian Photo

It is not that the next generation would not like to avail the commodity but it is just that they don't have the luxury of investing in a commodity which would eventually only end up burning a hole in their pockets due to high maintenance costs. High cost of fuel and spare parts discourages people from buying vehicles

A.Y. PRASAD PARTNER, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT TOONI ARKS



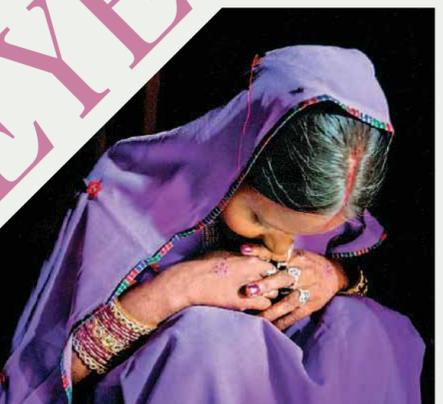
Festival will also conduct free photography workshops to underprivileged students from government schools in collaboration with Teach For India at the State Gallery of Art in Madhapur.

Acquin adds, “The workshop will be useful to identify the untapped talent of government school students, who hardly get a chance to dabble in photography. The whole purpose of this workshop is to give the students, a general idea about photography and create an exhibition of the images shot by the students during this workshop.”

Speaking about the IPF Portrait Prize, Acquin said, “The Portrait Prize 2019 is a portrait competition open to the photographers from the Indian subcontinent. Photographers have been making portraits for centuries and what's so interesting about portraiture is its ability to capture the essence of a person, a time-period, or a culture. This award aims at discovering the compelling portraits and extraordinary talents.”



Thousands of photographers from across the world are set to showcase their skills at the annual Indian Photography Festival, which will start in Hyderabad today, reports V SATEESH REDDY





● Suman Rao



● Srikanth



● Sija



● Rahul and Viswanath

Photos by SV Chary



● Veda

PARTY

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

South India's largest footwear destination Centro, celebrated its 10th Anniversary, by pampering its customers with great offers and freebies. By introducing a new line of wedding and festive footwear collection, the event showcased a mesmerising and comfortable footwear line for men and women.

CITY GUIDE

» **COMEDY**

FUNNY BUZZNESS

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



INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL

The fifth edition of the Indian Photography Festival will be held from September 19 to October 20 at various locations in Hyderabad. IPF is an international photography festival which showcases various events, including talks, discussions and more.



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 deification 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



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

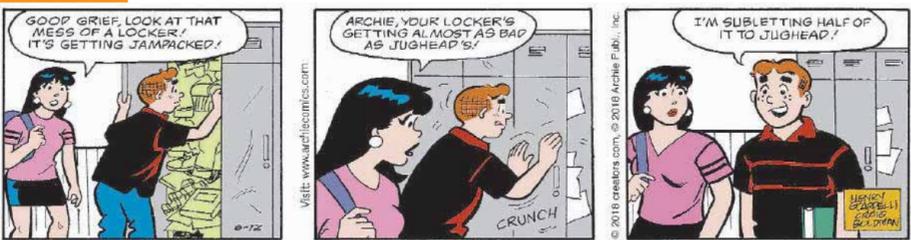
CITY DAIRY



GITAM bagged 'Inter College Recycling Championship Award-2018' for its Wellbeing out of Waste (WOW) programme from ITC Limited Paper Boards in an award ceremony held at JNTU Auditorium, Kukatpally, on Wednesday. Bonthu Rammohan, GHMC Mayor and B. Janardhan Reddy, Secretary to Government, Department of Education presented the award on the occasion.

FUN TIME

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



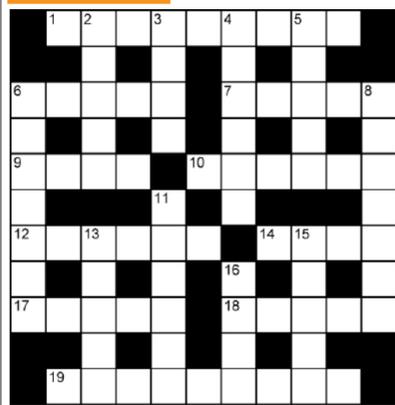
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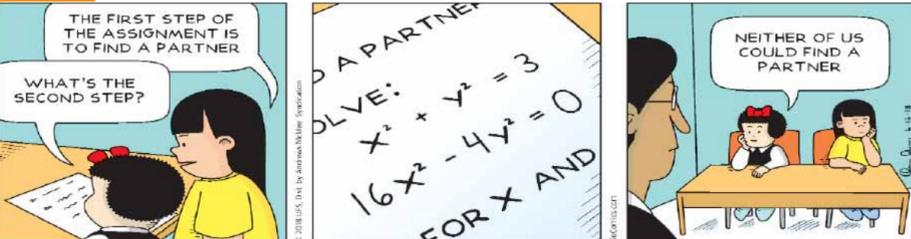
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

- A four-sided shape
- A month
- A number of people or things together
- Change direction
- A road in a town
- To tremble or shake a little
- Female horse
- Choose by votes
- A grown-up
- Put together from parts
- Baggy
- An old object
- Someone sick in hospital
- Middle
- Thoughts
- Make laugh
- A baby sheep

DOWN

- Mistake
- Chatter
- These are longer in winter

SOLUTION



GINGER MEGGS





I will continue to experiment: VARUN TEJ

In a chat with NAGARAJ GOUD, the rising star speaks about his process for becoming Gaddalakonda Ganesh

The enormous success of his love stories like *Fidaa* and *Tholi Prema* came with negatives as well for Varun Tej as many directors started to approach him with romance as the central theme. But he was sure not to get pigeon-holed. In fact, Harish Shankar, the director of the actor's Friday release *Valmiki*, too knocked his doors with *Daagudu Moothalu*, a love story. Although the actor liked it, he wanted to move away from his comfort zone.

"After eight hours of discussions, he spoke about *Jigarthanda*. He asked me whether I watched it. I said yes and he told me to watch it again. The next day he told me the vision he had for it. After some time, we've decided to make it," Varun notes in a conversation.

The original tells the tale of an aspiring director (played by Siddharth) who targets a ruthless gangster (Bobby Simha) because he wants to make a violent gangster film.

His discreet attempts to research the gangster fail miserably. Finally, when he gets caught snooping, things take a worst turn. While Varun has stepped into the shoes of Bobby Simha for the remake, Tamil actor Atharvaa Murali has reprised Siddharth.

"People around me expressed their apprehensions about me doing the gangster role at this stage of my career. Since they were many in number, I decided to meet Chiranjeevi garu to seek his feedback. Harish shared the entire script to him, post which he told me, 'The script is superb and your character is amazing. You should do it'. He gave some suggestions to Harish on the creative front, which the latter incorporated into the film," Varun recalls, adding for his get-up of Gaddalakonda Ganesh, he took his uncle's look in *Punadhiralu* as reference. "Since Bobby was relatively new to the Tamil industry, no one asked why he was violent in the original, whereas as I've played a hero many times in the past, Harish felt the need

to have a back-story of 25 minutes to explain why my part behaves in a way he does in the film."

He goes on to mention that since Bobby has raised the bar with his performance in the original; he felt the need to approach the role in a new way. "I believe the film helped me discover the other side of me. I always had it but I didn't get the opportunity to exhibit that wild and violent side. The Telangana dialect and constant conversations with Harish too helped my role further," he points out.

Varun has grooved to the remix version of evergreen hit number *Yelluvachi Godaramma Yellakila Paddadammo* (from 1982 film *Devatha*) along with Pooja Hedge in the film. The number is known for its foot-tapping music and the way director Raghavendra Rao filmed it on the shores of river Godavari. Was he nervous? He says, "Except for the fact that I get nervous to shoot any song in general, there was no added pressure as such to shoot the remix number. It was last bit we filmed for.

Harish was extremely confident about the song and he knew its history more than me. We released a portion of the video song on Tuesday and the response it got shocked me. As a matter of fact, at the pre-release event as well, it got more thunderous response than any other song from the soundtrack."

He admits getting a tad disappointed with the poor show of *Antariksham* at the box-office.

"On sets itself, we couldn't match up to the scale we've set out for ourselves to achieve. We predicted that we could finish it in a certain budget, which we couldn't do, leaving us no option but to compromise on the computer graphics. Yet, we still had the belief that it will do well post release and with that same belief we completed it. However, after we saw the final product, we realized there were glitches. We had to edit some portions, which didn't help the continuity cause," he reasons.

He, however, asserts that space drama's failure will not deter him

from associating with experimental films.

"If I get a sensitive subject like it tomorrow, I will do it. When my market grows, I'm happy man not because I can pocket more money but because it gives me a chance to experiment," Varun states, adding that he will be more cautious attempting such content hereafter. "I have my space suit from *Antariksham* at the entrance of my office. It reminds me of the mistakes I did, which I don't want to repeat again."

Quiz him if he is interested in starring in the biopic of Chiranjeevi, whose journey in the industry has been nothing short of inspirational, he is prompt to answer that he is. "Harish Shankar said he direct the biopic of Chiranjeevi because he believes nobody loves him the way he does. As much as I feel Charan anna should do it, I'd be second in line if he doesn't do it. I will lower my height in CG to be more apt to play Chiranjeevi garu," he signs off, smiling.



Left to right: Actress Pooja Hegde, directors K. Raghavendra Rao and Harish Shankar and actor Varun Tej

Raghavendra Rao recollects Sridevi's hit

Remixing old songs has now become a new trend in Tollywood.

Especially, mega heroes are known for remixing old classics. Director Harish Shankar in his *Valmiki*, is remixing Sridevi's hit song *Velluvachi Godaramma* of *Devatha* movie. The *Valmiki* team released making of the song during a pre-release event on Wednesday. Varun Tej, Pooja Hedge and Minalini Ravi are playing lead roles in *Valmiki* that is set to hit the screens on September 20 worldwide. Director K.

Raghavendra Rao said that he recollected 25 years old memories after seeing the song on screen. He added that the *Valmiki* team did their best to make it beautiful once again. Varun Tej said that he used to listen the *Velluvachi Godaramma* song since his childhood and never thought that he would act in its remake. Varun thanked his team for making the song beautiful. Varun added that he was lucky to do a song of great actor Shoban Babu. Director Harish Shankar says, "Remixing of *Velluvachi Godaramma* song is my dream. We strived hard to create the 80's atmosphere for the song. Varun and Pooja did their best and no one can do better than them in the song."



Song poster from the movie Valmiki



JAYASUDHA felicitated with the Abhinaya Mayuri award

Industrialist and politician T. Subbarami Reddy celebrated his birthday in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. Celebrities from the south film fraternity attended the event that felicitated natural actress Jayasudha with the Abhinaya Mayuri award. Speaking at the event,

Subbarami Reddy said, "In order to encourage films of all categories I host this event every year. I feel very happy to felicitate Jayasudha garu with the Abhinaya Mayuri award."

Actors including Murali Mohan, Dr Rajasekhar and others praised the politician for hosting such an event.

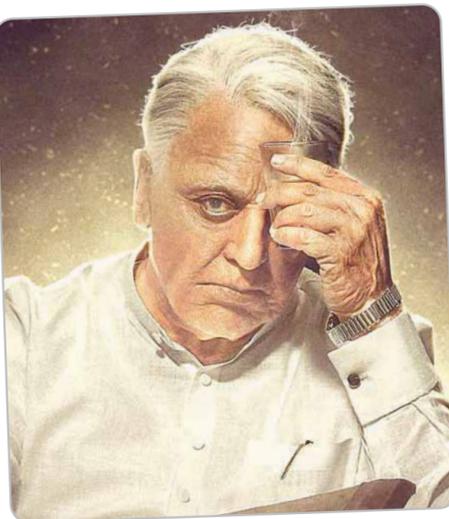
Expressing his happiness, actor/comedian Bramhanandam said, "Subbarami Reddy holds great events to complement senior actors. This is a positive trait of his for which I love him." Senior actors such as Roja, Jayapradha, Radhika, among others graced the event.

Indian 2 moves to AP

Following more than seven months of deadlock over budgetary issues, Shankar's *Indian 2*, starring Kamal Haasan, has resumed work recently. The latest about the film is that the ace director is shooting it in Rajahmundry. The schedule will go on for another 10-12 days. Shankar has been asked to complete the film by year-end. The next leg of filming will take place in Chennai and Taiwan. Buzz is Kamal wants to wrap up the shoot by November as he wants to allot more time to his

political outfit Makkal Needhi Maiam.

In the sequel, Kamal will be seen as a morally upright freedom fighter Senapathy, while Siddharth, Kajal Aggarwal and Rakul Preet Singh will be seen in significant roles. The supporting cast is stacked up with the likes of Vivekh, Nedumudi Venu, Samuthirakani, Delhi Ganesh and Vidut Jamwal. Noted Hollywood stuntmen Jack Gill and Tadd Griffith are choreographing action, while some parts will be supervised by Peter Heins. Lyca Productions is bankrolling the film, an Anirudh Ravichander musical.



Everybody on sets would be bowled over by Dulquer's charm: RITU

Pellichoopulu girl Ritu Varma, who has shared screen space with Malayalam heartthrob Dulquer Salmaan in *Kanulu Dochayante*, is in awe of him. "I've always admired and respected him as an actor, especially the choices he made in his career. When the offer to feature in this film came by, I was sure it would be a good film. He is a very down to earth person, chilled out, friendly, competitive and someone who doesn't have any starry airs whatsoever. He was extremely cooperative as well. I've had a very lovely time working with him. Everybody on sets would be bowled over by his charm," she tells us, flashing a smile. Speaking about her role and the film, the Hyderabad, who has recently signed Sharwanand's Telugu-Tamil bilingual with Shree Karthick, adds, "It's something which I haven't done till now. She is a very sweet and independent girl who lives by principles. The film is a sweet romantic comedy interspersed with some thriller elements. It will move at a fast clip. There's a lot of travelling involved as well. It's going to be a fun watch."

- NG



DEVERAKONDA to pen 4 novels in his next?

Youth star Vijay Deverakonda is capitalising on his off-screen persona to add dazzle to his on-screen character. Deverakonda, who has won many admirers by banking on his introspective side during interviews, will be playing the role of a writer in his upcoming film, *World Famous Lover*.

In the movie, Deverakonda seeks inspiration from real life to write intense romantic novels. He writes four novels based on his relationship with each of his girlfriends, played by Raashi Khanna, Aishwarya Rajesh, Catherine Tresa and Izabelle Leite.

Director Kranthi Madhav is said to be bringing his vision of an interesting storyline where the story of the protagonist is told through his novels. The film is said to boast aesthetically designed romantic scenes curated with heart touching dialogues.

This role would definitely be a change from Deverakonda's usual roles of an angry young man in love. People are eager to see how he has molded himself into the role of an writer.

DID J LAW SECRETLY MARRY HER ART DEALER FIANCEE?

Hollywood actress Jennifer Lawrence and fiancé Cooke Maroney were spotted at the New York City marriage bureau, and fans promptly took to social media to discuss if the couple had tied the knot.

JLaw and her art dealer beau went into the courthouse followed by a photographer and a friend, besides a couple of guards, according to a report in *hollywoodlife.com*. The report quoted *Page Six* as stating that the lensperson was Mark Seliger, a top celebrity photographer who has worked with Lawrence in the past.

Stoking fuel to wedding speculation was a *New York Post* picture that hinted at the fact that Maroney seemed to cover the ring finger on his left hand, and also the fact that Lawrence and Maroney, walking hand in hand, car-

ried some official paper. Beyond the NY paps, fans noticed, too.

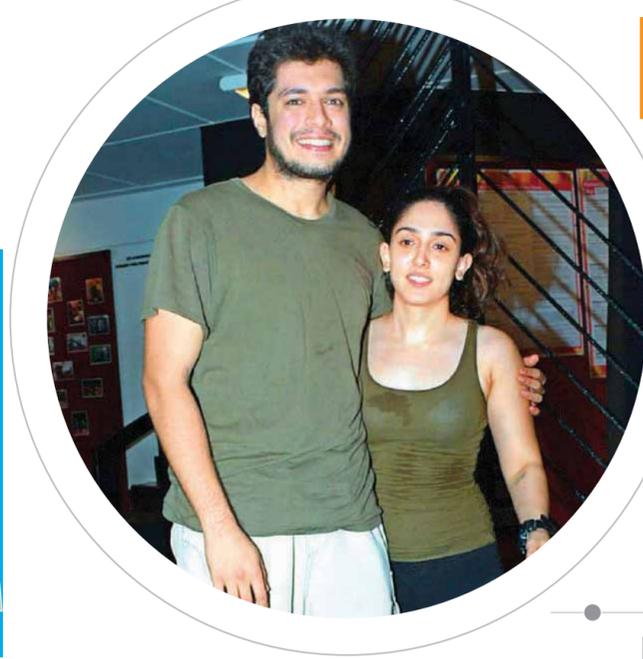
"When you go get your marriage license, and Jennifer Lawrence walks by to tie the knot before your eyes. Yeah, kids, City Hall is COOL," an onlooker tweeted and then deleted the post, according to *Page Six*.

JLaw and Maroney got engaged in February and the buzz doing the rounds of H-Town is they plan to throw a big party next month. Wedding gala? That's anybody's guess.

"Jennifer is madly in love with Cooke and so happy to be engaged. Jen and Cooke have amazing chemistry together, and she can't possibly imagine a life without him. She feels really lucky to be marrying the man of her dreams," a source close to the actress had informed *hollywoodlife.com* after the engagement.



AAMIR'S SON JUNAID JOINS SISTER IRA'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT PLAY



Superstar Aamir Khan's son Junaid Khan will star in his sister Ira Khan's English play *Euripides Medea*, which marks her directorial debut.

After announcing that actress Hazel Keech will be featuring in Ira's directorial debut, the official Instagram page of the play shared a video introducing the cast to the world.

The caption of the post reads: "You met Medea, now meet the rest of our cast!" The video, though, doesn't reveal the character Junaid Khan is going to play. The play is an adaptation of Euripides' Greek tragedy *Medea*.

The cast also includes actors such as Varun Patel, Sabreen Baker, Nolan Lewis and Divyesh Vijayakar, among others. Ira on Wednesday also shared a photograph of herself spending some 'father-daughter' time with Aamir, whom she lovingly called 'couch-buddy'.

FILM BODY ASKS UDIT, 2 OTHERS TO CANCEL US SHOW

After the Diljit Dosanjh controversy, the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) has requested singers Alka Yagnik, Kumar Sanu and Udit Narayan to cancel their upcoming *Throwback 90's* concert, scheduled to take place in the US in November, over the alleged organiser, a Pakistani man, reports *ANI*. The FWICE stated in its letter that they've asked Indian artists to refrain from associating with Pakistani organisers many times. The film body requested the singers to 'not throw open any ground for disharmony and displeasures.' "FWICE holds the dignity of our country of paramount importance and it has time and again informed the members of the film fraternity to abstain from associating with a Pakistani National in any platform of cultural or professional activities in Pakistan or in any part of the world," the letter stated. "Needless to add here that you all are acclaimed singers of India and have garnered enormous people from this country. Guess you would reciprocate the same sentiments with your countrymen and not throw open any ground for disharmony and displeasures arising out of any adverse eventuality in the future," the letter added.



CHRISSY TEIGEN SAVOURS 'BIG B VADA PAV' IN LA

Model Chrissy Teigen savoured a *vada pav* themed on none other than Indian megastar Amitabh Bachchan when she visited an Indian restaurant here.

Teigen took to her Instagram stories on Tuesday to share her Indian moment. She was seen in a beige embellished tube dress, holding a plate of vada pav. There was a pinned flag featuring a photograph of Amitabh on the popular Mumbai street food.

The restaurant too shared Teigen's video on their Instagram Stories. The 33-year-old model, whose Instagram bio reads "making America great again," is married to musician John Legend. The couple has two children Luna and Miles. Teigen has recently been in the news after being trolled by none other than US President Donald Trump, and she too took a jibe back at him.



KYLIE'S LATEST INSTA POST SPARKS BREAK-UP RUMOURS

Reality TV personality Kylie Jenner's latest post has fans wondering if she and rapper Travis Scott (II) are headed for splitsville.

On Tuesday, the makeup mogul posted on a new photo on Instagram, showing off her fashion inside a walk-in closet, reports *aceshowbiz.com*. In the photo, Kylie looked stunning in a short bob, sunglasses and a curve-hugging dress with a deep cut at the top.

But what caught the attention was the fact that a framed photo — of her and the rapper that was always visible in that spot — had gone missing. The rumours received further boost thanks to the cryptic caption she put alongside the photo.

"Ain't a game, boy," she wrote as caption with the pic.

Her close friend, Yris Palmer, also fuelled the rumours by replying in the comment: "Made for one player," with a fire emoji. Users were quick to take

not. "She removed the picture she had of her and Travis and the caption seems sus," one user wrote.

Another claimed to be shocked over the post, while was optimistic things are fine, and that Kylie had merely moved the photograph elsewhere. The couple has yet to respond to this speculation.

Kylie and Travis started dating in 2017 and welcomed their first child, Stormi Webster, in February 2018.



KANGANA JETS OFF TO U.S. FOR LOOK TEST OF THALAIVI

Actress Kangana Ranaut has taken off to Los Angeles, US, with the *Thalaivi* team for a look test. She returned from Thailand on Tuesday evening after attending an event, and is now on her way to the US where she will be undergoing various look tests with Hollywood expert Jason Collins, who has worked on films like *Captain Marvel* and *Blade Runner 2049*. "I am very curious about this process. I don't know how it will impact my expressions and approach to my character but this is going to be one-of-a-kind experience for me," said Kangana, who will be playing late politician Jayalalitha in the film. A multi-lingual, *Thalaivi* is scheduled to go on floors after Diwali and its shooting will happen near Mysuru, Karnataka. The film is being directed by AL Vijay, and produced by Vishnu Vardhan Induri and Shaalish R.



Penalty of drama

Mertens scores from spot to surprise holders; Ter Stegen wins point against Dortmund

AFP ■ NAPLES/LONDON

Holdes Liverpool began their defence of the Champions League trophy with a defeat against Napoli on Tuesday, while one missed spot-kick condemned Chelsea to defeat against Valencia and another came to Barcelona's rescue.

Liverpool survived a 1-0 defeat in Naples in the group stage last season to go on and win their sixth European Cup, and this time a 2-0 reverse at the San Paolo made them the first reigning champions to lose their opening game in the competition since 1994.

Both sides had chances in the Group E clash before the hosts won a late penalty with barely 10 minutes remaining when Jose Callejon went down under an Andy Robertson challenge.

Dries Mertens beat Adrian from 12 yards and substitute Fernando Llorente — who played for Tottenham Hotspur against Liverpool in last season's final — then took advantage of a rare defensive lapse by Virgil van Dijk to make it 2-0 in stoppage time.

HAT-TRICK HERO HAALAND

Liverpool must now bounce back in two weeks when they host Austrian champions Salzburg, who made a stunning return to the group stage as teenage forward Erling Braut Haaland netted a hat-trick in a 6-2 demolition of Genk.

Salzburg had fallen in the qualifying rounds in the last seven campaigns but finally progressed this season to the group stage for the first time since 1994-95.

Haaland, the teenage English-born Norwegian striker whose father Alf-Inge played for Manchester City, gave Salzburg a second-minute lead and netted twice more before half-time.

Aged just 19 years and 58 days, Haaland is the third-youngest player to score a Champions League hat-trick behind Wayne Rooney and Raul.

The South Korean Hwang Hee-Chan and Dominik Szoboszlai also struck before the break for Salzburg, while captain Andreas Ulmer completed the rout in the second half.

Jhon Lucumi and Tanzanian striker Mbwana Samatta scored for the Belgian champions.



Barcelona's goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen saves a shot by Marco Reus during the Group F match in Dortmund



Fernando Llorente holds Dries Mertens after he scores from spot against Liverpool

Last season's Europa League winners Chelsea ensured it was two defeats out of two on the night for English sides as they lost 1-0 at home to Valencia.

The Spaniards scored in the 74th minute when a Dani Parejo

free-kick was converted by Rodrigo Moreno. Chelsea were given a chance to rescue a draw when Daniel Wass was penalised for handball in the box, but Ross Barkley's 87th-minute penalty hit the bar and went over.

FIGURATI

1 Napoli are the first Italian side to win against the European reigning champions in the CL group stages since Juventus, against Chelsea in 2012 (3-0).

19 Erling Haaland, aged 19 years and 58 days, is the third youngest player to score a Champions League hat-trick, behind Rauli (18y 113d in 1995) and Wayne Rooney (18y 340d in 2004).

1 Frank Lampard is the first Chelsea manager to lose his first Champions League match in charge, 10 of the previous 11 had won, while Gianluca Vialli drew with Milan in 1999.

12 Lille remain on 12 matches without success in European competition (6 draws, 6 defeats — preliminary rounds included), the worst series of its history.

4 Marc-André ter Stegen has stopped four of the six penalties he has received in the Champions League and is the goalkeeper who has stopped the most in the competition since at least 03/04 alongside Andriy Pyatov

1 Ansu Fati (16 years and 321 days) becomes the youngest player in CL history to play for Barcelona, breaking the record of Bojan (17 years and 22 days).

"You want to have at least a point and we didn't get that because of the penalty. When the player jumps before there is contact it cannot be a penalty. We cannot change that any more, so now we carry on. That's it."

—Jurgen Klopp (Liverpool manager)

"It was just one victory, but yes it has given us confidence, being able to match Liverpool is impressive as for me they are the best team in Europe at the moment."

—Carlo Ancelotti (Napoli manager)

"Given the performances last season, the bar was set high, and people were asking if we could do it again this season. I think a 3-0 victory shows that we can."

—Quincy Promes (Ajax forward)

"It was a difficult game today and I think the result is fair considering what happened."

—Marc Andre Ter Stegen (Barcelona goalkeeper)

"Without a doubt (we deserved more). Probably a win, but at least a draw. We conceded with one shot on target. It's a harsh lesson of Champions League football, a game we've played pretty well in and we lose it."

—Frank Lampard (Chelsea manager)

"We had four or five chances, and if we had taken one of them, we would have won. We said after the draw that we wanted to qualify for the knockout stages. If we continue to play like we did today then there shouldn't be a problem."

—Marco Reus (Borussia Dortmund captain)

"Slavia Prague attacked us with intensity and showed a ruthless streak. We didn't do well in terms of finding the right solutions and struggled too much."

—Antonio Conte (Inter Milan coach)

"Everything is possible. We all saw Ajax last year, it would be nice to be the new Ajax. But we know there are a lot of good teams. It's hard, but everything is possible."

—Erling Braut Haaland (Salzburg striker)

AJAX IMPRESS

Also in Group H, last season's semi-finalists Ajax claimed an impressive 3-0 home win over Lille with two of their newest signings among the goals.

Quincy Promes headed the Dutch champions in front and the Mexican Edson Alvarez doubled their lead early in the second half before Nicolas Tagliafico sealed the win.

After a patchy start to the season, Barcelona will be relieved to escape from their trip to Borussia Dortmund with a 0-0 draw as Lionel Messi returned from injury as a second-half substitute.

The home side will feel they should have won, but Marco Reus had a second-half penalty saved before Julian Brandt hit the bar late on.

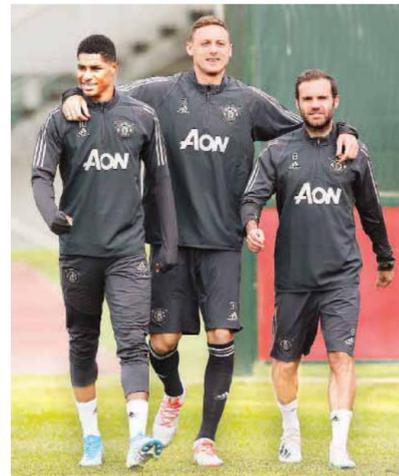
"We played brilliantly in the second half, and it feels a bit like we have lost two points," Mats Hummels told Sky.

Those two appear well placed already to progress from Group F after Inter Milan needed a stoppage-time Nicolò Barella goal to rescue a 1-1 draw against rank outsiders Slavia Prague.

Nigerian forward Peter Olayinka put Slavia ahead in the 63rd minute, only for Barella to level in the second minute of stoppage time after a Stefano Sensi free-kick hit the bar.

In Group G, RB Leipzig won 2-1 at Benfica with Timo Werner bagging a brace before Haris Seferovic pulled one back.

Earlier, Memphis Depay's penalty gave Lyon a 1-1 draw at home to Zenit Saint-Petersburg after Iranian striker Sardar Azmoun opened the scoring.



Marcus Rashford, Matic & Juan Mata during training

Man Utd, Arsenal carry English hopes

AFP ■ PARIS

Manchester United and Arsenal headline an English trio that also features Europa League newcomers Wolves while record five-time champions Sevilla figure to be among the primary contenders as the group stage begins today.

Scottish rivals Celtic and Rangers face testing paths to the knockout rounds as bitter foes Roma and Lazio bid to end Italy's two-decade wait for the title.

Porto, PSV Eindhoven and Feyenoord are the other former European Cup winners in a competition that will welcome the eight third-place finishers from the Champions League groups for the knockout phase.

United, Europa League winners in 2017, will host Astana in Group L as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side face opponents from Kazakhstan for the first time in club history.

They will be expected to progress with relative ease from a group that also includes Partizan Belgrade and former finalists AZ Alkmaar of the Netherlands.

Unai Emery's Arsenal return to the competition after last season's 4-1 defeat by Chelsea in the final in Bakou. The Gunners visit Eintracht Frankfurt to kick off their campaign, with 10-time Belgian champions Standard Liege and Portugal's Vitoria Guimaraes also in Group F. Wolves, in their first European campaign since 1980, will meet Portuguese club Braga in their opening game at Molineux. Scottish champions Celtic travel to French Cup holders Rennes in Group E, with Italian Cup holders Lazio and CFR Cluj, the Romanian side to whom they lost in Champions League qualifying, completing a tricky section. Steven Gerrard's Rangers are at home to Jaap Stam's Feyenoord and will do well to navigate a group with Porto and Young Boys. Roma will take on Istanbul Basaksehir in their first game while Moenchengladbach host Austria's Wolfsberg. Austria boast two representatives with LASK Linz among the six debutants — alongside Espanyol, Wolves, Wolfsberg, Olexandria and Ferencvaros — in the tournament.



Amit Panghal celebrates after winning his last 8 bout against Filipino Carlo Paalam

Panghal, Kaushik assure 2 medals

PTI ■ EKATERINBURG

India were assured of an unprecedented two medals at the World Men's Boxing Championships after Amit Panghal (52kg) and Manish Kaushik (63kg) entered the semi-finals of the marquee event with impressive victories here on Wednesday.

While Asian Games and championship Gold-medallist Panghal defeated Filipino Carlo Paalam 4-1, Commonwealth Games Silver-medallist Kaushik got the better of Brazil's Wanderson de Oliveira 5-0.

Both the boxers sealed their maiden world medals.

Before this year, India had never won more than one Bronze medal in a single edition of the world championship.

The overall medal count for the country stood at four Bronze medals claimed by Vijender Singh (2009), Vikas Krishan (2011), Shiva Thapa (2015) and Gaurav Bidhuri (2017).

However, Sanjeet (91kg), a former India Open Gold-medallist, and fifth seed and Asian Silver-winner Kavinder Singh Bisht (57kg) bowed out after losing their respective quarterfinals.

While Sanjeet went down 1-4 to Ecuador's seventh-seeded Julio Castillo Torres, a Pan-American Games Silver-medallist, Bisht was beaten by the reigning Commonwealth Games champion Peter McGrail of England 0-5.

The second-seeded Panghal, who had earlier defeated Paalam in the Asian Games semifinals last year, wasn't off to the best of starts and was trailing Paalam at the end of the opening round.

But the Army man from Rohtak didn't take long to get his act together and become the more aggressive one in the next two rounds.

In the last-four stage, the Haryana-pugilist will be up against Kazakhstan's Saken Bibossinov, who stunned Armenia's European Gold-medallist and sixth seed Artur Hovhannysyan in his quarterfinal showdown.

"He is a southpaw and has a long reach, I will work out a strategy for him," the 23-year-old Panghal said.

While next up for Kaushik is Cuban top seed Andy Gomez Cruz, who out-punched Russia's eighth-seeded Iliia Popov.

Cruz was the light welterweight (64kg) category Gold-medallist in the 2017 edition.

Vinesh locks Olympic quota with Bronze

PTI ■ NUR-SULTAN

Indian wrestling had a lot to celebrate on Wednesday as Vinesh Phogat secured Tokyo Olympics qualification and won a Bronze, while Pooja Dhanda put herself one win away from her second medal at the World Championships.

Having endured a medal-less run in three World Championships before, Vinesh finally ended the drought by pinning wrestler Maria Pevolaraki by fall in the Bronze-medal bout.

"It is my first World Championship medal and it is a big thing to win a medal at the Worlds," Vinesh told reporters.

"I had changed my weight category and in just 10 months, I got this medal. It is a thing of great happiness for me. It is the biggest medal of my career till now."

She is only the fifth Indian woman wrestler to win a Worlds medal after Alka Tomar (2006), Geeta Phogat

(2012), Babita Phogat (2012) and Pooja Dhanda (2018).

Earlier in the day, she had held off world number one Sarah Ann Hildebrandt with some superlative defense in her second repechage round to qualify for the 2020 Olympics.

Vinesh is now one of



Vinesh Phogat in action against Yulia Khavaladzy Blahinya

(2012), Babita Phogat (2012) and Pooja Dhanda (2018).

India's most successful wrestlers with Gold medals at the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games, already in her cupboard.

Adding to the elation of the Indian camp was a gritty show by Pooja in the 59kg, a non-Olympic category. Pooja reached the semi-

finals with a remarkable come-from-behind 11-8 win over Japan's Yuzuka Inagaki before losing the semifinal by technical superiority to Russia's Liubov Ovcharova, the 2017 European champion.

She will now fight for her second Bronze medal at the Worlds, having won one in 57kg at the 2018 Budapest edition.

Pooja can now become the first female wrestler and only second Indian to win two World medals. Only Bajrang Punia has achieved the feat. He won a Bronze in 2013 and a Silver in 2018.

Seema Bisla though missed Olympic qualification in the 50kg after losing her second repechage round 3-11 to Russia's Ekaterina Poleshchuk.

Much was expected from Sarita Mor after her shock victory over Pooja Dhanda in the trials but she was far from her usual aggressive self.

In the 76kg, Kiran had rattled her German opponent

Aline Rotter Focken to lead 4-0 but lost five points in a row in the second period to lose the opening bout 4-5.

She paid the price for being over-defensive. Since the

German lost her semifinal, Kiran's campaign is over.

Navjot Kaur was also ousted from 65kg after losing her opening bout to Alis Manolova, who later lost her semifinal.

SINGLES

HIMA DAS RULED OUT OF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

NEW DELHI: World junior champion Hima Das has been ruled out of the upcoming World Championship due to a nagging back problem. "Unfortunately Hima will not be able to compete at the World Championships in Doha due to her back injury," Athletics Federation of India (AFI) president Adile Sumariwalla said. The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) had on September 9 named seven women, including Hima, for the 4x400m relay and 4x400m mixed relay races at the World Championships to be held from September 27 to October 6 in Doha. Hima has been suffering from a lower back pain after competing at the Asian Games last year. She pulled out of the individual 400m heats during the Asian Championships in Doha in April midway through the race.

PANT, SAINI NAMED IN DELHI SQUAD

NEW DELHI: Wicket-keeper batsman Rishabh Pant and pacer Navdeep Saini were on Wednesday named in the 16-member strong Delhi squad, led by top-order batsman Dhruv Shorey, for the first four games of the Vijay Hazare Trophy, starting September 24. Delhi start their campaign on the opening day against Vidarbha and it is expected that both the players will be available for the initial matches. Saini, who is not in the squad for the Test matches, is expected to be available for the better part of the National one-day championship, while opening batsman Shikhar Dhawan has opted out of the current squad.

FEDEX, POTRO TO PLAY IN BUENOS AIRES

PARIS: Roger Federer and Juan Martin del Potro, who is set to return next month from a knee injury, announced Tuesday they will play an exhibition match in Buenos Aires on November 20. "I just wanted to tell you I'm so excited to come back to Argentina to play my good friend Juan Martin del Potro at Parque Roca," Federer said in a video on Del Potro's Twitter account. The Parque Roca stadium has a capacity of around 15,500 and is primarily used for Davis Cup ties. Del Potro has not played since fracturing his right knee in the Wimbledon tune-up at Queen's in June. He is expected to make his comeback at the ATP tournament in Stockholm, which runs from October 14 to 20, and is also scheduled to compete in Vienna the following week.

MOODY NAMED AS COACH OF OVAL TEAM

LONDON: Former Australia all-rounder Tom Moody and England World Cup winner Lydia Greenway have been appointed as head coaches of the Oval-based men's and women's teams for the new Hundred competition, the England and Wales Cricket Board announced on Wednesday. The 53-year-old's appointment is the final one among the eight men's outfits in The Hundred following the announcements of Stephen Fleming (Nottingham), Mahela Jayawardena (Southampton), Simon Katich (Manchester), Gary Kirsten (Cardiff), Darren Lehmann (Leeds), Andrew McDonald (Birmingham) and Shane Warne (Lord's).

AGENCIES



Naomi Osaka celebrates after beating Viktoriya Tomova in straight sets on Wednesday to reach Pan Pacific Open quarters



Aiden Markram of South Africa plays a shot during India Vs South Africa A 2nd Test match in Mysore on Wednesday

India restrict South Africa to 149/5

Deepak Chahar picks two wickets for 22 runs in his four overs



India's captain Virat Kohli, right, congratulates teammate Deepak Chahar after he dismissed South Africa's Reeza Hendricks here on Wednesday.

HIGHEST SCORES ON DEBUT FOR SOUTH AFRICA IN T-20I				
Score	Batsman	Opponent	Venue	Date
78	Rilee Rossouw	Australia	Adelaide	05-11-2014
61	Greame Smith	New Zealand	Johannesburg	21-10-2005
56	Rassie van der Dussen	Zimbabwe	East London	09-10-2018
49	Christiaan Jonker	India	Cape Town	24-02-2018
49	Temba Bavuma	India	Mohali	18-09-2019

FAISEL FEATURES

PTI ■ MOHALI

Skipper Quinton de Kock and debutant Temba Bavuma played impressive knocks but India were able to contain South Africa to 149 for five in the second T20 International here on Wednesday.

Newly appointed captain de Kock (52 off 37) led from the front, while Bavuma (49 off 43) too impressed in his first limited-overs appearance for South Africa in almost two years.

But South Africa did not get the final flourish they were looking for and ended up with a below-par total. India bowled well in the death overs, conceding only 24 runs in the final four. Pacer Deepak Chahar was pick of the bowler with two wickets for 22 runs from his four overs.

India captain Virat Kohli sent a new-look South Africa into bat with the visitors picking three debutants in Anrich Nortje, Bjorn Fortuin and Bavuma.

While Reeza Hendricks departed cheaply, de Kock looked in sublime touch from the word go.

De Kock cover drove spinner Washington Sundar on the first ball he faced before collecting three straight boundaries off pacer Navdeep Saini who was taken out of the attack after conceding 13 runs in his first over.

Bavuma, South Africa's Test specialist, joined de Kock after the fall of Hendricks in the fourth over and he too looked in fine touch. He made his intentions clear by pulling Hardik Pandya over deep square leg for a six.

South Africa made only 39 for one in six overs but their innings

INDIA CAPTAIN VIRAT KOHLI SENT A NEW-LOOK SOUTH AFRICA INTO BAT WITH THE VISITORS PICKING THREE DEBUTANTS IN ANRICH NORTJE, BJORN FORTUIN AND BAVUMA

picked up momentum after that, taking them to 78 for one in 10 overs.

It took a brilliant catch from skipper Kohli to dismiss de Kock and shift the momentum in India's favour.

De Kock mistimed a hit off Saini and Kohli came running from mid-off to pounce on it, brining the crowd back to life. The stand between de Kock and Bavuma yielded 57 runs.

Vice-captain Rassie van der Dussen, South Africa's best batsman in the World Cup, followed de Kock in the dressing room quickly by offering a simple return catch to Ravindra Jadeja in the 13th over, leaving his team at 90 for three.

Runs dried up in the death overs but South Africa got a much-needed couple of sixes in the 20th over off Saini, which went for 16 runs.



Shreyas Iyer bats during practice session

BCCI/Twitter

Ganguly demands consistent run for youngsters

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly said that India need to look beyond the upcoming World T20 when it comes to finding young talent and give them consistent runs in the senior squad.

"The most important thing for India is to not look at the World T20 next year. Before the last World Cup there was too much noise about it and that sometimes is not good. What they need to do is pick the best possible players and give them consistent opportunities, as there is some serious talent in the domestic circuit," Ganguly wrote in a column for the Times of India.

Ganguly said that the bowling department in particular will be interesting to watch with the likes of Deepak Chahar, Khaleel Ahmed and

Navdeep Saini knocking at the doors. "These guys, with time and maturity, will see (Jasprit) Bumrah, Bhuvu (Bhuvneshwar Kumar), (Mohammed) Shami as their role models and this will be a healthy sign for Indian fast bowling. Spinners like Rahul Chahar, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep (Yadav), (Yuzvendra) Chahal will also keep everyone on their toes," said Ganguly.

He said that K L Rahul will now be under pressure to keep his number four spot in limited overs after losing the Test opening slot. "With Rohit (Sharma) and Shikhar (Dhawan) at the top as the best possible opening pair, K L Rahul will be pushed. He has lost his place in Test cricket due to indifferent form and the likes of Shreyas and Manish Pandey will keep him on his toes if he wants to hold on to the No. 4 slot," he said.



Indian paddler Sharath Kamal in a file picture

Paddlers win Gold in 1st Div at Asian C'ship

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian men's team logged their best ever result at ITTF Asian Table Tennis Championships, finishing fifth after beating Hong Kong 3-1 in the classification match here on Wednesday.

The Indian team also defeated Iran 3-0 to clinch the Gold medal in the champions division.

In the classification match, India tried out a new opening with Sharath Kamal, who after the initial struggle, managed to put it across Lam Siu Hang 9-11, 11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 11-7 to provide the lead.

In the second tie, Anthony Amalraj beat NG Pak Nam 9-11, 11-4, 11-6, 11-7, while in the third singles, G Sathiyam defeated Kwan Man Ho 11-5, 11-13, 11-7, 14-12.

In the second and fourth games, Sathiyam won the last on his second match-point. He was the lone Indian who did not lose a single match in team event, having played all matches from 1st Division to finishing fifth in the Champions Division.

In the final of the 1st Division, Sharath opened again for India and downed Amin Ahmadi 11-5, 9-11, 11-6, 11-6, while both Sathiyam and Amalraj were stretched fully. Sathiyam beat Air Hossein Hodaie 6-11, 11-4, 10-12, 11-7, 12-10 while Amalraj accounted for Noshad Alamiyan 18-16, 5-11, 11-9, 6-11, 11-9 as India won the yellow metal.

Sindhu, Praneeth, Kashyap win in China

PTI ■ CHANGZHOU (CHINA)

Reigning world champion and title favourite P V Sindhu sailed into the pre-quarterfinals with a convincing straight-game win over former Olympic Gold-medallist Li Xuerui at the China Open Super 1000 tournament here on Wednesday.

India's top shuttler Sindhu beat China's Li Xuerui 21-18 21-12 in just 34 minutes to set up a clash with Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong.

Replicating her world championship form, the Olympic Silver-medallist produced another strong performance to get the better of the currently 20th-ranked Chinese, who entered the match with a 3-3 record against the Indian.

Men's singles players, Sai Praneeth and Parupalli Kashyap also progressed to the second round after notching up contrasting opening-round wins.

Commonwealth Games bronze medallists Ashwini



PV Sindhu attempts a return shot

BAI/Twitter File Picture

Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy too found a place in the pre-quarterfinals after crossing the opening hurdle.

However, Saina made an early exit after losing to Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrunphan in the women's singles.

The London Olympics bronze-medallist lost 10-21

17-21 at the hands of the World No.19 Ongbamrunphan in a match that lasted for 44 minutes at the Olympic Sports Center Xincheng Gymnasium.

It was the former world number one's second successive loss to the Thai player.

The 29-year-old Saina has struggled for form following

her recovery from injuries.

The Indian started her season with a win at the Indonesia Masters but has failed to reach another final on the BWF circuit so far.

In men's singles, world championships bronze medallist Praneeth had to battle for an hour and 12 minutes to get past Thailand's Suppanyu Avihingsanon 21-19 21-23 21-14.

while former top 10 player Kashyap beat France's Brice Leverdez 21-12 21-15 in 38 minutes.

Next world no 15 Praneeth will face China's Lu Guang Zu, while Kashyap lock horns with seventh seeded Indonesian Anthony Sinisuka Ginting.

In women's doubles, Commonwealth Games bronze medallists Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy too crossed the opening hurdle after their opponents Chinese Taipei's Cheng Chi Ya and Lee Chih Chen retired mid way in the second game after lagging 13-21 8-11.

Bumrah equipped for Test success

NEW ■ (IANS)

Ever since making his Test debut in Cape Town in January 2018, Jasprit Bumrah has improved by leaps and bounds and has become an integral part of the Indian team across all formats, especially Test cricket. Bumrah has featured in 12 Test matches so far, in which he has scalped 62 wickets at an average of 19.24, thus becoming the linchpin of Indian bowling unit.

All these 12 Tests have been played on foreign soil (3 in South Africa, 3 in England, 4 in Australia and 2 in West Indies) where wickets naturally assist pacers. In all these places, the right-arm pacer from Mumbai has made a mark and performed brilliantly. However, the real test for him will come up when India take on South Africa in the three-match series at home.

Former Indian pacer Ajit Agarkar feels Bumrah will have an exceptional debut home Test series against the Proteas.

"With experience, every-



Jasprit Bumrah in a file picture

IANS.

(IPL) and has been instrumental in their success in the league.

"A lot of people tend to forget that Bumrah played quite a lot of first-class cricket before he played for India. He has bowled in these conditions with the SG ball. He knows what to do," said Agarkar.

Agarkar, 41, who played 26 Tests and 191 ODIs for India, also said that Bumrah will be fresh and raring to have the ball in his hand as he has not played much cricket ever since the World Cup. "Since the World Cup, he hasn't played a lot of cricket. He missed (retired) the T20Is and the ODIs and featured in the two Test matches. So, he must be relatively fresh and will be very keen to perform in India as well," he said.

Bumrah played two matches in the Caribbean Islands, in which he picked 17 wickets, including a hat-trick.

"I would not be surprised if he has an exceptional series," Agarkar signed off.

Belgian title will give me confidence: Lakshya

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rising Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen is hoping to continue the consistency that fetched him the Belgian Open as he looks to break into top 50 in the world ranking, which will help him qualify for bigger tournaments next season.

The 18-year-old from Almora shocked second seed Victor Svendsen of Denmark in straight games to clinch the men's singles title at the Belgian International Challenge last Saturday.

"I think I played consistently well throughout the week and I'm happy with my performance," Lakshya, who didn't drop a single game throughout the tournament, told PTI.

"This win will give me lots of confidence to do well in the coming tournaments," he said.

"This year I can play more tournaments than last year in the senior circuit and I hope to prepare well for all the tournaments."

Playing his first full-fledged season in the senior circuit, Lakshya had broken into the top-100 in March this year. The Belgian Open win saw him jump 12 places to grab the World No 67th spot in the latest BWF ranking.

His father DK Sen, a SAI coach, who gave him the early lessons in badminton,



Lakshya Sen in a file picture

qBWF

THIS YEAR I CAN PLAY MORE TOURNAMENTS THAN LAST YEAR IN THE SENIOR CIRCUIT AND I HOPE TO PREPARE WELL FOR ALL THE TOURNAMENTS

said Lakshya will have to quickly get into the top 50 by the year end.

"The target now for him will be to break into the top 50 by end of the year so that he can qualify for bigger tournaments," he said.

Asked about his upcoming tournaments, Lakshya, the reigning Asian Junior Championship winner, said: "I'll be playing the Dutch and SaarLorLux Open next month and then in November, I have Irish and Scottish Open."

Lakshya, who also claimed a bronze at the World Junior Championship and silver at Youth Olympic Games last year,

is currently in Europe playing in the Danish League for Aarhus club.

"It's nice to be in Denmark and the league matches are exiting. It's a new experience for me," he said.

"We are going to be in Europe for 3 months, play the European circuit and the league matches."

"In the first team match, I won against Jan Jorgensen and got 1 point for the team. It was a big match for me," added the Indian, whose next outing in the country will be the Syed Modi World Tour Super 300.

Lakshya, who has been a trainee at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) since 2010, had decided to play in the season circuit after the high in juniors last year.

He began the year well with a semi-final finish at the China Masters Super 100 tournament before reaching the finals at Polish Open. After a few early exits, he suffered an ankle injury in July but recovered well to claim the Belgian Open.

"This year, I twisted my ankle in July. It was not very major but I took two weeks to get back on court. I'm just taking good care and rehab," Lakshya said.

"Mental strength is very important as in senior circuit every match is tough," he signed off.



Mahmudullah plays a shot during his 62 run innings

ICC/Twitter

Mahmudullah guides B'desh to 175-7

AFF ■ CHITTAGONG

Mahmudullah Riyad smashed 62 off 41 balls, with five sixes, as Bangladesh posted 175-7 in their tri-nation Twenty20 international match against Zimbabwe in Chittagong on Wednesday.

Liton Das gave Bangladesh a positive start with 38 off 22 balls before a mini collapse saw the home side reduced to 65-3 after

they were asked to bat first by Zimbabwe captain Hamilton Masakadza.

Mahmudullah put on 78 runs with Mushfiqur Rahim (32) for the fourth wicket before Zimbabwe snatched the momentum back with few quick strikes.

Kayle Jarvis claimed 3-32 while Chris Mpofu finished with 3-42 for Zimbabwe. Afghanistan are the third team in the tournament.