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HYDERABAD, SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



# the pioneer

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CHIRU IN  
VEDALAM  
REMAKE?

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15 DEAD IN LANDSLIDE IN KERALA  
AFTER HEAVY RAIN, 12 RESCUED

At least 15 people have been killed after heavy rain caused a landslide in Kerala's Adukki district early Friday morning. Twelve others have been rescued so far and are undergoing treatment at Munnar's Tata General Hospital. Officials say the landslide happened in the Rajamalai area of the district, which is around 25 km from the tourist town of Munnar. Between 70 and 80 people lived in the area, officials said, adding that they do not know, at this point, how many more are trapped under the mud. Taluk officials said a connecting bridge was swept away yesterday, making access to the area difficult. Rescue teams have also been slowed by tough terrain.

PM TO INAUGURATE CHENNAI-ANDAMAN  
& NICOBAR SUBMARINE CABLE PROJECT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the Chennai-Andaman and Nicobar Island Submarine Cable System, which will provide better connectivity to the archipelago, on August 10, a senior BSNL official has said. A submarine communications cable is a cable laid on the seabed between land-based stations to transmit telecommunication signals across stretches of ocean and sea. "The most-awaited launch of the Chennai and Andaman & Nicobar Islands (CANI) Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity project is finally over. The Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the project... on the 10th of this month," BSNL Chief General Manager, Andaman and Nicobar Telecom, Murali Krishna, wrote to senior officials of the Union territory.

PROF PRADEEP KUMAR JOSHI  
APPOINTED UPSC CHAIRMAN

Educationist Pradeep Kumar Joshi was on Friday appointed the chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), which conducts the civil services examination to select the country's bureaucrats and diplomats, officials said. Joshi is currently a member in the Commission. He was administered the oath of office and secrecy by Arvind Saxena, the outgoing chairman of the UPSC, according to an official statement. Joshi joined the Commission as its member on May 12, 2015. Prior to joining the Commission, he was the chairman of the Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission and the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission, the statement issued by the UPSC said.

HC QUASHES 'DISCRIMINATORY'  
ORDERS ON SENIOR FILM, TV ARTISTES

The Bombay High Court on Friday quashed the provisions of the two circulars issued by the Maharashtra government that barred TV and film artists above 65 years of age from resuming shootings and related work during the coronavirus lockdown, terming them "discriminatory." A bench of Justices SJ Kathawalla and Ri Chagla, while setting aside the GRs (government resolutions) issued by the state, held that such restriction was "iscriminatory", and breached the fundamental rights of the artistes to practice their trade and earn a livelihood with dignity.

Karne dismisses  
Oppn claims over  
water sharing

4

## TS may present pruned Supl Budget

With revenues taking a hit, Govt has little option but to revise estimates realistically

L VENKAT RAM REDDY  
■ HYDERABAD

For the first time, the Telangana State Government is likely to table a Supplementary Budget in the Legislative Assembly for the first time with revised Budgetary allocations from that passed in the Annual Budget 2020-21 presented in March.

The State Government is likely to significantly reduce the Budget size in the supplementary budget in the wake of revenue earnings taking a severe beating due to the Corona pandemic since April. The revenue projections made in the annual budget for 2020-21 went haywire on account of the Coronavirus-induced lockdown since mid-March.

Official sources said that

**The revenue projections made in the annual budget for 2020-21 went haywire on account of the Coronavirus-induced lockdown since mid-March**



Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is considering proposals to slash the Budget size for the second year in a row. Sources indicated that KCR may slash the size of the next Budget to about Rs 1.25 lakh-crore to Rs 1.50 lakh-crore. It may be recalled that

Finance Minister T Harish Rao had presented the State annual Budget 2020-21 with a total outlay of Rs 1.82 lakh-crore in March. It was then estimated that the State would earn revenues or around Rs 12,000 crore per month.

2

Naidu asks young  
IAS to take lead in  
'new India'

5

## Paswan fires at TS and 10 other states on subsidised food grains

These states passing on Central PDS subsidies as their own: Minister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Food Minister Ram Vilas Paswan on Friday accused several states of taking subsidised PDS foodgrains and passing on to end users as their own, without giving any credit to the Centre.

He said this trend is apparent in 11 states, mostly in non-BJP ruled, that are trying to undermine the efforts of the central government in ensuring that no poor goes hungry. Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), the central government is providing foodgrains to states for distribution through Public Distribution System (PDS), also known as ration shops, at a subsidised rate of Rs 2/kg rice and Rs 3/kg wheat, costing over Rs 1 lakh crore annually to the exchequer.

"We are spending over Rs 1 lakh crore annually on subsidised PDS foodgrains distribution, but in several states there is no mention or credit given to the Union govern-



**These states spend about Rs 10,000 crore from their pocket and pass it to end users as their own. This is wrong on their part. They should give due credit to the central government**

— RAM VILAS PASWAN, Food Minister

ment," Paswan said at a virtual press conference.

There are 11 states which take subsidised foodgrains from the central government but are passing on to ration card holders free of cost or at further subsidised rates, he said.

2

## AP CS Sawhney gets extension till Dec 31, 2020

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney's tenure has been extended for another three months, and she will now continue in office till December 31, 2020.

This is the second time that the tenure of Sawhney has been extended for three months.

She was scheduled to retire on June 30 but her tenure was extended till September 30. The AP government once again sought extension of her services by another three months, and the request has been approved by the Centre.

Principal secretary to the government (political) (FAC) Praveen Prakash issued GO Rt: 1242 on Friday night issuing orders of extension of Sawhney's services beyond September 30.



## 16 killed, many injured as AIE flight skids runway

PNS ■ KOZHIKODE

Sixteen people were killed and several others injured when a Dubai-Calicut Air India Express flight with 191 passengers and crew on board overshoot the runway here and fell into a valley, breaking into two portions, on Friday evening, police sources said.

The mishap occurred at 1941 hrs. No fire was reported at the time of landing, an AIE statement said.

Police said 16 people were killed in the accident.

The Civil Aviation Ministry said the flight IX 1344 operated by B737 aircraft from Dubai overshoot runway at Kozhikode at 7.41 PM on Friday. "No fire reported at the time of landing," it noted.

There were 174 passengers, 10 infants, 2 pilots and 5 cabin



crew on board the aircraft, the ministry added.

"As per the initial reports rescue operations are on and passengers are being taken to hospital for medical care. We will soon share the update in this regard," the ministry stated. Help centres are being set

up in Sharjah and Dubai, the statement said.

A DGCA statement said after landing at Runway 10, the plane continued running till the end of the runway and fell into the valley and broke into two portions.

Kerala Chief Minister



Deepak Sathe, Pilot

Pinarayi Vijayan expressed shock over the accident.

CMO sources said Chief Minister spoke to Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and the latter assured him all help and assistance from the Centre.

Vijayan informed him that rescue operations were in full swing, the sources said.

2

## Jubilee Hills flyover is ready for inauguration

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The elevated corridor works on Road No.45 in Jubilee Hills have been completed taking advantage of the lockdown conditions in the city. As a result, people from Khairatabad, Panjagutta, Jubilee Hills and other areas can travel to destinations like Mind Space, Hi-Tech city and Gachchi Bowli and vice-versa.

The blackout and lane-marking works have been completed. The government has plans to inaugurate it along with the cable bridge across



Durgam Cheruvu once the electrification works of the bridge have been completed.

The electrification works will take two more weeks to complete, it is reliably learnt.

The elevated corridor works have been taken up to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

Jubilee hills check post to Durgam Cheruvu cable bridge.

The land acquisition for the project has delayed the elevated corridor by two years. The traffic volume on Jubilee Hills road no. 36 is very high with vehicles heading for IT corridor. In fact, lakhs of IT employees use the road to reach Hi-Tech city, Madhapur and Khazaguda and so on. At least 40,000 vehicles use the road per hour along this route.

2

## AP government sets up panel to reorganise districts

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh government on Friday kick-started the process for reorganising the districts in the state from 13 to 25 for bringing the administration at the district-level closer to the people with the objective of improving the lives of the citizens.

Turning each Parliamentary constituency into a new district by dividing the existing one is an election promise of the ruling YSR Congress as the present districts "are large in size and have become unwieldy to administer."

Last month, the state



Cabinet gave the go-ahead for the district reorganisation plan and, accordingly, a six-member committee headed by Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney was constituted on Thursday to study the various aspects

involved.

Chief Commissioner of Land Administration, General Administration Secretary (Services), Planning Secretary, a representative from the Chief Ministers Office will be members of the Committee to study the restructuring of Districts in Andhra Pradesh while the Principal Finance Secretary will act as the Convener.

The Committee has been asked to submit its report in three months as Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy is said to be keen on completing the exercise by March 31, 2021, official sources said.

2

## 265 inmates of Rajahmundry jail test positive

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As many as 265 inmates of the Rajahmundry Central Jail have tested positive for Covid-19 till Friday.

As a precautionary measure, Rajahmundry collector Muralidhar Reddy has ordered jail authorities to conduct Covid-19 tests on prisoners, following which samples of 900 prisoners were taken on August 3.

The results which were received on Friday confirmed that 247 prisoners were infected. On August 1, Covid-19 tests were conducted on 75 persons, of which 24 prison staff and nine prisoners tested positive.

A total of 64 samples were tested on August 2, where nine prisoners were found infected with Coronavirus. There are currently 1,675 prisoners in the jail, out of which 265 prisoners tested positive for Covid-19.

A total of 24 prison staff who tested positive were being treated in-home quarantine.

The jail officials arranged treatment facilities for the 18 prisoners who tested positive on August 1 and August 2, in GSL Hospital.

2

## Beer sales dip by 50%, liquor retains tippers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Beer sales in Telangana have nosedived, while there is no change in the sale of liquor, negating any adverse impact on the revenue.

In fact, the Excise revenue to the state has increased. Compared to liquor sales in July 2019, sales in July 2020 shot up by more than Rs 600 crore.

Liquor shops in districts located on the Telangana-AP border, Mahbubnagar, Khammam and Nalgonda reported additional sales and more revenue.

Across the country, there is a



**Liquor shops in districts located on the Telangana-AP border, Mahbubnagar, Khammam and Nalgonda reported additional sales and more revenue.**

lull in business and commercial activity. Moreover, business houses have been going through loss of revenue. The general feeling is that the people's purchas-

ing power has come down. In such a scenario, the tippers spent heavily on liquor and purchased liquor worth Rs 2,507 crore in July, which is Rs 600

crore more than the sales in corresponding month last year.

Excise officials noted that gathering of people on occasions like birthdays, marriages and other feasts has been hit because of the pandemic. Moreover, employees are working from home. Therefore, the beer sales have dropped considerably.

This year, 31.34 lakh cases of liquor and 22.99 lakh cases of beer were sold in July this year as against 31.48 lakh cases of liquor and 41.7 lakh cases of beer in July last year, which shows nearly 50 per cent decline in sale of beer.

2

## KCR helping AP govt take away 6.3 TMC water: Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy alleged that Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao was directly helping Andhra Pradesh complete the expansion of Pothayreddypadu Head Regulator and start new Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Scheme which would deprive Telangana of 6.3 TMC of Krishna Water.

He was addressing a press



conference through Zoom App which was also shared on social media platform Facebook on Friday.

2

## TODAY

## ALMANAC

## Month &amp; Paksham:

Shravana & Krishna Paksha  
Panchangam

Tithi : Panchami: 04:18 am (Next Day)

Nakshatram: Uttara Bhadrappada:  
04:12 pmTime to Avoid: (Bad time to start  
any important work)

Rahukalam: 09:11 am – 10:46 am

Yamagandam: 01:56 pm – 03:31 pm

Varjyam: 05:39 am – 07:26 am

Gulika: 06:01 am – 07:36 am

Good Time: (to start any important work)

Amritakalam: 10:52 am – 12:39 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:56 am – 12:46 pm

HYDERABAD  
WEATHER

Forecast: Cloudy

Temp: 29/23

Humidity: 76%

Sunrise: 05:57 am

Sunset: 06:46 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated august 7, 2020 5:00 PM





# 16 killed, many injured as AIE flight skids runway

Continued from Page 1

We rescued the children first and assisted several others also," he added.

State Health Minister K.K. Shailaja said that the condition of a mother and child was reported to be serious.

Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan, who hails from the state, said the Karipur airport as it is known is a table top airport, and that was one reason why the plane plunged into the valley causing its middle part to break open.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan about it. Table top airports have a disadvantage during rainy seasons. Generally, during heavy rains, aircraft are not allowed to land at table top airports. All these things will come out in the DGCA probe," said Muraleedharan.

Local legislator T.V. Ibrahim who was at a local hospital near the airport asked TV channels to beam the images of a young boy he was carrying in his arms as his parents were missing, so as to help the boy's relatives in locating him at the Kondotty Relief Hospital.



completely disengaged portion of the aircraft

According to information from the spot, the passengers sitting in the front rows of the plane have been seriously injured.

The condition of 13 passengers who were brought to another private hospital is reported to be serious.

Vijayan has directed Local Self Government Minister A.C. Moideen and Higher Education Minister K.T. Jaleel to rush to the spot to oversee relief operations.

## PM Modi speaks to Kerala CM

Prime Minister Modi spoke to Kerala Chief Minister to get a sense of the ground situation, soon after the accident. The PM tweeted, "Pained by the plane accident in Kozhikode. My thoughts are with those who lost their loved ones. May the injured recover at the earliest."

## Captain who died in plane crash was Ex-Air Force pilot

Wing Commander Deepak Vasant Sathe, one of the two pilots of the Air India Express plane that skidded off the runway while landing and broke into pieces at Kerala's Kozhikode on Friday, is among the 11 who died.

Both the pilots of Flight IX 1344 are among the 11 who have died, the police chief of Kerala said.

Wing Commander Sathe was a former Indian Air Force pilot who flew planes for Air India before he went on to Air India Express flights.

He was an award-winning pilot who was described as very experienced in flying Boeing 737 planes.



## RAHUL EXPRESSES SHOCK

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi expressed shock at the news of an Air India Express flight skidding off a tabletop runway and falling into a 50-foot deep valley in Kerala's Kozhikode on Friday evening. At least two people were killed in the accident. "Shocked at the devastating news of the plane mishap in Kozhikode. Deepest condolences to the friends and family of those who died in this accident. Prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured," he said on Twitter. "My thoughts are with the crew, the passengers and their families and friends at this time," he said. Congress general secretary K C Venugopal said, "The unprecedented tragedy at Calicut has shocked our collective conscience. Pray to the almighty for the well being of passengers and extend my heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased."

## Indian consulates in Dubai, Sharjah set up hotline numbers

The Indian consulates in Dubai and Sharjah have activated five helpline numbers to provide information to the family members of the Air India Express flight that skidded off the runway at Karipur airport in Kerala and fell into a 50 feet valley, killing at least 16 people on Friday evening.

The IX 1344 Dubai-Calicut flight was carrying 191 passengers and crew, including 10 infants, two pilots and four cabin crew members. After landing at Runway 10, the Boeing 737 aircraft continued running to the end of the runway and fell down in the valley and broke into two portions, an official statement said. We pray for the wellbeing of passengers and crew and will keep you updated as and when we receive further updates. Our helplines +97156 5463903, +971543090572, +971543090571, +971543090575, Dr. Aman Puri, Consul General of India,

**After landing at Runway 10, the aircraft continued running to the end of the runway and fell down in the valley**

told PTI. The helpline number to call in Sharjah for updates is +97165970303 He also said the Indian consulate will be available for any assistance it may be able to render at this time of grief. We convey our deepest condolences to the family members of those who have been injured in this tragic incident, and we are obtaining more information from the relevant authorities on the ground at Calicut International Airport, Puri said.

## Jubilee Hills flyover is ready for inauguration

Continued from Page 1

The elevated corridor eases traffic congestion along this route. The cost of the project is Rs 150 crore. The length of the flyover is 1.7 km, the width of the flyover is 16.60 meters (four lanes). Works commenced on this project in April 2018 but completed in August 2020.

## Paswan fires at TS and 10 other states...

Continued from Page 1

Paswan said, "These states spend about Rs 10,000 crore from their pocket and pass it to end users as their own. This is wrong on their part. They should give due credit to the central government."

Out of 11 states, four states (West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka) are distributing grains at free of cost, while six states (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha) are distributing rice at a further subsidised rate of Rs 1/kg and Tripura at Rs 2/kg rice via PDS, he said. "We bear over 90 per cent procurement cost of the foodgrains, but the Government of India name is not given even in advertisements. They claim as if they are bearing the entire cost. The governments should take note of this," he said.

The beneficiaries should be told that the subsidised grain is coming from the central government not only under the NFSA but also through newly launched Pradhan Mantri Garib Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), he added.

HYDERABAD BULLION RATES	
<b>GOLD</b>	
₹ 58,330 (10 gm)	
₹ 500	↑
<b>SILVER</b>	
₹ 73,500 (1kg)	
₹ 2,000	↑
CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹165
Without Skin	₹188
Broiler at Farm	₹114
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	365
VIJAYAWADA	405
VISAKHAPATNAM	405
<b>RETAIL PRICE</b>	<b>₹3.90</b>
(IN HYDERABAD)	

# Telangana may present pruned Supl Budget

Continued from Page 1

However, the Government could earn just about Rs 1,500 crore in April and Rs 3,000 crore in May.

With the easing of lockdown restrictions from June, the situation improved slightly. The government earned tax revenues of around Rs 4,000 crore per month in June and July.

The gap between revenue earnings and Budgetary estimates has been widening with each passing month making it impossible for the Government to bridge it. The chances of state revenue earnings returning to normalcy look bleak at least in the near future as all sectors are facing poor demand due to cash crunch in home budget, market disruption, loss of livelihood, jobs and

salary cuts across all sections.

It may be recalled that KCR had slashed the Budget size by 20 per cent in 2019-20 from Rs 1.82 lakh-crore to Rs 1.46 lakh-crore due to economic slowdown and decrease in the Centre's grants.

This year, the financial position of the government has gone from bad to worse due to prolonged lockdown and Coronavirus conditions.

A week after Harish's budget presentation, the state went into lockdown mode to the check spread of Coronavirus. The government extended lockdown in spells thrice till May 31.

Although the government announced relaxations mid-May, the situation has not improved much on the economic front. This is because

Hyderabad and the surrounding districts, namely Ranga Reddy, Medchal, Medak — considered growth engines of Telangana with heavy activity in industrial, commercial and service sectors — continue to remain Corona hotspots, with little scope for immediate revival of economic activity.

The government could earn only Rs 3,000 crore in May, of which the State's own revenue comprises Rs 2,000 crore and the rest Rs 1,000 crore came in the form of state's share in central taxes, grants etc. The Budget session of the Legislature was held from March 6. It was supposed to end on March 20 as per original schedule but was cut short by four days abruptly on March 16 due to corona pandemic.

## AP government sets up panel to reorganise...

Continued from Page 1

Issuing an order in this regard, the Chief Secretary said the committee would study various aspects related to the creation of new districts and the measures to be taken to optimally utilise human and financial resources at all levels.

The Committee will examine and suggest the broad principles for determining the geographical boundaries and administrative units constituting the proposed 25 districts and the steps to be taken for ensuring that the expenditure (both one-time and recurring) is kept to the minimum.

Among others, it will also study the optimal use of existing infrastructure and existing human resources and redeploy-

ment at all levels for facilitating the smooth functioning of the restructured districts, the order said. There has, however, been opposition within the YSRC to the formation of new districts with a Lok Sabha constituency as the base. Leaders from Srikakulam district, including Assembly Speaker Tammineni Seetaram, have voiced their opposition to the splitting of their district as it would lose three important Assembly segments. They wanted the government to work out an alternative plan so that the existing geography of Srikakulam district is not disturbed even after the reorganisation. There are several other Parliamentary constituencies that are spread over two districts, division of which could become a ticklish issue.

## 265 inmates of...

Continued from Page 1

One of them had escaped from the hospital. Later, GSL hospital management discharged all prisoners and the jail authorities released eight prisoners on bail and the rest 10 were being treated at Rajahmundry Government Hospital.

Superintendent S Rajarao said that if 247 prisoners who were found positive in the tests conducted on August 3 were to be shifted to an outpatient hospital.

## Beer sales dip by 50%, liquor retains tipplers

Continued from Page 1

While liquor sale remained more or less the same, the prices of alcohol was increased substantially in AP leading to smuggling of liquor from

Telangana. In spite of raids by special enforcement officials in AP, there is no let up in liquor smuggling, if the increase in sale of liquor in outlets in border districts of Telangana is any indication.

Liquor sales in Mahbubnagar district in June and July were put at Rs 190 crore and Rs 203 crore respectively. Similarly, Nalgonda district accounted for sales of Rs 274 crore and Rs 295 crore respectively in the two months.

# ICC T20 World Cup: India to host in 2021, Aus in 2022

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The International Cricket Council has decided that India will host the 2021 edition of the T20 World Cup while the postponed 2020 edition will now be held in Australia in 2022. India is also set to host the 50-over World Cup in India in 2023.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on July 20 had announced the postponement of the 2020 edition of the T20 World Cup due to the coronavirus pandemic, but did not mention the venue for the 2021 edition and the 2022 edition. They had only said that the 2023 50-over World Cup will be played in October-



November in India.

An ICC board member had said that the reason why the ICC release hadn't mentioned

the venue of the 2021 and 2022 T20 World Cup was because a decision was yet to be taken on whether India would be

**The ICC on July 20 had announced the postponement of the 2020 edition of the T20 World Cup due to the coronavirus pandemic**

requested to hand the rights of hosting the next year's showpiece event to Australia. "See, the whole idea is to reach a decision which is agree-

able to all. The only reason why the venues haven't been given and the 50-over World Cup has been delayed by a few months is to keep enough breathing space for the broadcasters," the board member had explained.

When contacted, a BCCI official had said that it will be a decision that will be taken by both the Indian board and Cricket Australia in unison. "The BCCI and CA share a very strong bond and any decision in this regard would be taken keeping each others' trust and after discussions between the two boards. With the exit of the former chairman, the era of cloak and dagger in the ICC is all but over," said the official.

## Young couple found dead in Kodaikanal

PNS ■ KODAIKANAL

A young man and his wife, hailing from Telangana, were found dead here on Friday and it is suspected that they may have killed themselves, police said. The couple, in their mid twenties, were found dead in their rentedhouse by police and the bodies have been sent for autopsy to a government hospital. Preliminary enquiries revealed that the couple, who were staying here for about a year, neither ventured out of their house nor answered calls of neighbours for at least two days arousing suspicion and the local people alerted police. The couple were said to be dejected as they were "unable to go to Australia" for work.

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
EE, CIRCLE-30, BEGUMPET, SEC'AD ZONE, GHMC

**Procurement Notice**

MT No.: 21/EE-CIR-30/SQPZ/GHMC/1-2/2020-21. Date: 07.08.2020

Name of the Work: Construction of barning platform and Balance work of 2 Barning platform in Mandradally Hindu Gave Yart 190 - Monda Market Division, Under C-30, GHMC, Begumpet. Estimate Amount: 10.00. Bid Document Downloaded Start Date & Time / Bid Submission Closing Date & Time: 07-08-2020, 5.00 PM, 12-08-2020, 12.30 PM.

Name & Address Officer Cell No.: E.E., Circle-30, GHMC, Sec'ad, Cell: 5003056718 Further details can be seen at e-Procurement @ <http://hyderabadnagar.nic.in> (2/28, Secunderabad)

R.O. No.: 3922-PP/CIL/ADVT/1/2020-21

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CIRCLE-30, BEGUMPET**

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, SERLINGAMPALLY CIRCLE-06, SLP ZONE, GHMC

**Procurement Notice**

MT No.: 20/EE-CIR-20/SLPZ/GHMC/1-2/2020-21. Date: 07.08.2020

Category of work: Other works, Estimate Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 99.40.

Start Date / Last Date / Time for Receipt of Bids: 07-08-2020, 01.30 PM, 10.08.2020, 01.30 PM, Name & Address Officer Cell No.: E.E. CIR-20, SLPZ, GHMC, 9154299724

R.O. No.: 3922-PP/CIL/ADVT/1/2020-21

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CIRCLE-20, GHMC**

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**  
O/o Dist. Welfare Officer, WCD&SC Department Hyd.

**NOTIFICATION** Dt: 05-08-2020

Lr.No.2758/ICPS/2020

The Biological parents can approach with proof to claim the children within 30 days from the date of publication to the undersigned, failing which the child will be declare as an abandoned and shall be given for adoption according to the norms, prescribed by the Government. Further details contact specialized Adoption Agency, located in H.No.8-3-222, Besides Sarathi Studios, Yousufguda, Hyderabad-38.

Adoption Agency: ADVT/1/2020-21, 07-08-2020

Dist. Welfare Officer, (FAC), WCD&SC Dept. Hyd.



# Coronavirus slows down Balanagar flyover works

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Balanagar flyover works came to a grinding halt as at least 10 of the project execution agency personnel, including the Managing Director, tested positive for the virus recently. The project has been delayed because of the delay on part of the GHMC to acquire assets on either side of the road for the proposed project.

The project agency BSCPL Infrastructure Company Managing Director, project manager and 10 others tested positive for the virus. As a result, the speed with which the project being executed has come down. The rest of the 40 employees are worried about their health too. Therefore, the company arranged for



medical tests to them. The flyover should be ready by October. During the lockdown period, the works on flyover progressed at brisk pace, but subsequently it has been slowed down.

The HMDA allocated Rs 387 crore for execution of six-lane flyover from Sobhana theatre in Balanagar to IDPL, both separated by a distance of

1.13 km. The allocations for acquiring assets is put at Rs 265 crore and Rs 122 crore for the execution of the project.

On August 21, 2017, Minister KT Rama Rao laid the foundation stone for the project. For over two years, the assets have been acquired. During the lockdown period earlier in the year, GHMC commissioner Arvind Kumar

**The project agency BSCPL Infrastructure Company Managing Director, project manager and 10 others tested positive for the virus recently**

increased the pace of execution of the project. Construction of 26 pillars has been completed. Three slabs have been laid so far. As the rest of the works are about to progress, the employees of the project execution agency tested positive for the virus, leading to soft pedalling on the execution.

## Two kids drown in septic tank

PNS ■ JAGITYAL

Two children, including a girl, drowned in a septic tank under construction in Medipalli village of the district on Friday.

The deceased were identified as Aswant, 5, son of Olpula Jalandar and daughter of his sister Dabbeti Rutika, 7.

They were rushed to a private hospital in Jagityal, but doctors declared them dead on arrival.

Rutika who lives in Aravalli village of Pegadapalli visited her grand mother's house in Medipalli on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan festival.

## ONLINE CLASSES

# High Court orders fall on deaf ears

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite the High Court's objection on the matter, many private schools across the city are still running online classes for longer hours. As many parents are upset with the schedule of online classes, the Hyderabad School Parents' Association (HSPA) has decided to file an official complaint with the Director of School Education, A Sri Devasena.

In a letter addressed to the DSE, the association wrote, "We the Hyderabad School Parents Association would like to your kind notice that various schools in the state of Telangana are conducting online classes and assessment tests which are in contravention with the guide



lines PRAGYATA issued by the MHRD which restricts the screen time for children of various ages, the schools are designing their own pattern of online classes which are causing lot of mental stress to children." "Moreover the schools are conducting assessment exams which are causing tremendous mental pressure on children and also on parents who are forced to sit with children leaving day to day

activities, few of the schools are compelling the children to upload scan copies of assessments through scanner for clear copies which are burning the pockets of the parents." They further added that the school managements are still harassing the parents to buy uniform, textbooks and other things from the school.

While much confusion regarding the online classes has prevailed since the beginning, DSE Devasena, clarifies, "The state government has asked all the schools to follow instructions from the Centre. We have also discussed the academic schedule for this year during the cabinet meeting, and will roll it out in a couple of days."

## TS Covid tally crosses 75,000, toll over 600

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana reported a further spurt in Covid-19 cases over the past 24 hours. The state reported 2,207 cases on Friday, up 195 cases in comparison to the 2,092 cases reported Thursday. The latest updates take the overall tally to 75,257 even as the death toll climbed by 12 totalling 601 deaths at 8 p.m. on Thursday. With 23,495 tests conducted on Thursday, the cumulative numbers have touched 5,66,984, state health officials said.

As per the Health Department's media bulletin, results of 1,539 samples are awaited. To the date, 39 government and private laboratories are conducting RT-PCR/CBNAAT/TRUENAT types of tests while 320 government-run centres are conducting rapid antigen tests. However, no breakup of the types of tests was made available by the health department.

The case fatality rate in the state hovered at 0.79 per cent, well below the national average of 2.07 per cent. While

46.13 per cent of deaths were attributed to Covid-19, of 601 fatalities so far, 53.87 per cent suffered comorbidities.

1,136 recoveries were documented in the past 24 hours taking the recovery rate to 70.7 compared to 71.3 per cent in the previous one day cycle. With this 53,239 people have so far recovered from Covid-19. As of Thursday evening, the number of active cases stood at 21,417. This includes 14,837 persons in home/institutional isolation. Roughly 84 per cent of those under home isolation were reported to be asymptomatic.

The Greater Hyderabad area reported the day's maximum of 532 new cases. However adjoining districts also reported high Covid numbers. Medchal-Malkajigiri, and Rangareddy districts reported 136 and 196 cases respectively, while Sangareddy district had 37 new cases. Meanwhile, the districts continue to witness high numbers. Warangal Urban saw 142 new infections, Kamareddy 96, Karimnagar 93, Nizamabad 89, and Jogulamba Gadwal 87 cases.

## 3 lakh followers for DGP on Twitter

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Director General of Police Mahender Reddy has earned a rate distinction of having three-lakh followers in his Twitter account. In a message tweeted to his account, the DGP confirmed this. He said that the respon-

sibility of his office increased manifold upon reaching the 3 lakh followers milestone. The DGP's twitter account grew close to the people in a short span of time. He used to respond with speed in any complaint is posted to his handle in Twitter handle.



## Set back for Virinchi Hospitals in HC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Friday refused to hear a petition filed by city-based Virinchi Hospitals, whose permission to treat Covid-19 patients was revoked by the Medical and Health Department of the state, seeking an urgent hearing on the issue of the revocation of the permission by the state government.

The counsel for the hospital told the HC that the lives of the patients who required ICU facility were in danger. Responding to the plea, the HC said that if the hospital was so concerned about the lives of

the patients lives, it would have implemented the GO issued by the state government on collection of fee from the Covid-19 patients. It made it clear it would hear the case in a normal course.

**HC directs govt to file full-fledged report**

The Telangana High Court on Friday expressed its dissatisfaction over the report filed by Bhongir RDO in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by the Telangana Vanarasena Society. A division bench of the HC comprising the Chief Justice of the state Justice RS Chauhan and Justice B Vijaysen Reddy directed the



state government to file a full-fledged report along with the maps of proposed six lane Outer Ring Road (ORR) around Yadadri temple, original letter of executive engineer, plans and designs before the next date of the hearing of the case.

During the course of the

hearing of the case, the court pulled up the officials for hiding the documents and for not submitting full details to the court. The PIL was filed by the president of the Telangana Vanarasena society Naam Rami Reddy.

In his petition, he urged the HC to issue directions to the authorities concerned not to demolish or remove the Hanuman temple and 200-year-old Banyan tree situated in Yadagirigutta vicinity in Bhongir Yadadri district of the state.

The division bench later adjourned the matter to August 29 of this month for further hearing.

## Urdu daily editor-in-chief Khan Lateef Khan no more

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Editor-in-Chief of Urdu daily Munsif, Khan Lateef Mohammed Khan, passed away in the US following a heart attack. He was 80. Khan, known for bringing in revolutionary changes in Urdu publications, flew to Chicago about a fortnight ago to meet his brother.

He suffered a heart attack around 11.30 AM (US time) on Thursday and breathed his last, Munsif sources said on Friday. He will be laid to rest at a cemetery in Chicago, they



said. Khan, who ran a successful business in the US before returning to India, took over Munsif daily and brought drastic changes in its publication. The staff was given good

salaries when wages in Urdu media in the city were low, they said. The standard of Urdu newspapers in the city improved after he ventured into journalism, they added. He was chairman of Sultan-ul-Uloom Education Society which runs several educational institutions.

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, TDP Chief N Chandrababu Naidu, TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy and several other leaders condoled the death of Khan. Rao conveyed his condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

## Techie from Kamareddy ends life in Bengaluru

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

A 25-year-old software engineer from Kamareddy allegedly committed suicide at her residence in Bengaluru on Friday. On learning about the incident, her parents immediately rushed to the garden city. The victim was identified as Saranya, a resident of Kamareddy. Saranya had fallen in love with Rohith and the two got married last year. Police sources said Rohith was an alcoholic and had been harassing Saranya for the past few months.

## IN BRIEF

### SCR gets high flow nasal cannula oxygen devices

Extending a helping hand during the pandemic, Major cement companies and Railway PSU, Rail Vikas Nigam Limited have decided to strengthen the efforts of South Central Railway (SCR) in providing Covid-related treatment at the Railway Hospital. As part of their CSR, these companies have donated 12 High Flow Nasal Cannula Oxygen Devices to Railway Hospital. These HFNC devices are very useful in treating Corona patients with respiratory infection. While the hospital already has ventilators for the patients, HFNC will further strengthen the facilities at the hospital. The Rail Vikas Nigam Limited donated 10 HFNCs, where as the cement companies donated the other two. Gajanan Mallia, General Manager, SCR, has appreciated the initiative take by these companies in donating these critical units under their CSR programme. While accepting the machine, he thanked the companies for their gesture.



### Meet on Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations today

A high-level meeting will be held in MCR HRD Institute in the city on Saturday on how the Ganesh Chaturthi should be celebrated in the city in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting will be chaired by Minister for Animal Husbandry Talasani Srinivas Yadav. MPs, MLAs, MLCs, officials and Ganesh Utsav Celebrations Committee members will take part in the meeting to discuss precautions to be taken among other things. Deputy Speaker Padmarao Goud, Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy, state ministers Mahmood Ali, Sabita Indra Reddy, Mallia Reddy, police commissioners of Hyderabad and Cyberabad, Bhagya Nagar Ganesh Utsav Samiti members, Khairatabad and Balapur Ganesh celebrations committees members would take part in the event. The meeting would discuss among others whether to hold the celebrations or not in the context of the Coronavirus.



### BDL observes 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Week'

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), a Government of India Enterprise under the Ministry of Defence, is observing 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Week' from 7 August to 14 August. As a part of this, several events have been planned by BDL during the week to take forward the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', initiated by the Government of India. Keeping pace with the latest technology and the requirement of high quality and reliability in the manufacture of Defence equipment, BDL has set up Surface-Mount Technology (SMT) facility. BDL has also established 'High Performance Computing facility' of 43 Teraflop capacity in pursuit of realization of Atmanirbhar Bharat in Defence industry. The facilities were inaugurated by BHVS Narayanamurthy, Distinguished Scientist & Director, RCI, DRDO at BDL, Kanchanbagh Unit, Hyderabad on Friday in the presence of Commodore Siddharth Mishra (Retd), CMD, BDL, Directors and senior officials of the Company at BDL, Kanchanbagh Unit, Hyderabad. Surface-Mount Technology (SMT) is a method for producing electronic circuits in which the components are populated directly onto the surface of printed circuit boards (PCBs). An electronic device so made is called a surface-mount device (SMD).



## Pay heed to our issues, say Transport workers

NAMRATA SRIVASTAVA  
■ HYDERABAD

Various Transport Associations in the state reached out to the authorities concerned on August 5, to discuss their plights. However, despite the Commissioner's assurance the matter was not raised during the recently held Cabinet meeting.

Shaik Salauddin, chairman of Telangana State Taxi and Driver JAC, said, "We have been patient. All we are asking for is to give us financial support during these tough times. Two days back, the Transport Department also passed a GO, in which they extended the grace period for Motor Vehicle Advance Tax to August 31. But, the tax, insurance and other document pertaining to vehicles are valid till September 30, as per the Central Government order. Which means the GO issued by Telangana's Transport Department holds no value. We are, however, demanding for a waiver of taxes this year. Also, looking at this year's circumstances we want that no interest be levied for vehicles that have been purchased on loan." "Although we were promised that our issues be discussed at the Cabinet meeting, nothing of the sorts happened. We haven't discussed our next plan of action yet, but we will keep fighting for our rights," he added. Members of various transport authorities, including Telangana Lorry Owners' Association, All India

### Demands of the associations

- Withdraw enhanced excise duty on Diesel/Petrol and roll back the revised prices by the Oil Companies since June 7, 2020.
- Provide Social Security coverage and instruct companies to provide health insurance for the App-based Transport and Delivery Workers
- Implement the National City Tax Scheme in all states
- Instruct companies like Ola and Uber to bring down their commission rates to 5%
- Provide minimum wages (starting at Rs 7,500 per month) for delivery riders/workers working for Swiggy, Zomato, Dunzo, etc. as per the state Labour Laws
- Waiver of Road Tax, Vehicle Tax, Border Tax, Toll, Permits etc. for the year 2020
- Waiver of additional interest on loan moratorium and extension on the loan repayment for next 12 months

Trade Union Congress and Telangana State Taxi and Driver JAC had met the RTA authorities, Khairatabad recently to discuss their issues.

## DEATH PENALTY

# Unending wait for justice for kin of Hajipur victims

PNS ■ BOMMALARAMARAM

Family members of rape-murder victims of Hajipur are still waiting for justice delivered to them even though a special court trying POCSO cases awarded capital punishment to the accused Srinivas Reddy. The special court set up in Nalgonda on February 6 awarded death penalty to Srinivas Reddy. The verdict brought relief to the victim's families, but the families are eagerly awaiting implementation of the death penalty.

They say that the Rs 75,000 given to victims' families is too meagre, they say. The promise to build a road bridge on a

stream near Hajipur is yet to be fulfilled. It would enable the RTC to run buses to the village. In the absence of bus service, the culprit Srinivas Reddy on the pretext of offering lift to girls and women out raged their modesty and killed them and disposed their bodies in old and disused well near the village.

The government announced compensation of Rs 50 lakh, a government job to one family member and a 2BHK house to each victim's family. They did not receive any assistance so far from the legal cell.

Of the three victims of Srinivasa Reddy, two belong to Hajipur while the other belongs



to Mysireddypalli. The only brother the victim from Mysireddypalli is physically

**Govt announced compensation of Rs 50 lakh, a government job to one family member and a 2BHK house to each victim's family. They did not receive any assistance so far from the legal cell**

challenged. Officials promised pension to him and also good treatment in hospital. He

applied for pension three months ago, but could not be sanctioned. The family lives in a ramshackle house.

Family members of one victim urged the authorities concerned to show mercy on them. It was one year since the government assured all assistance to them. Srinivas Reddy should be hanged to death immediately, Tipraboynia Mallesh, father of the victim felt.

T Meena, sister of the victim belonging to Mysireddypalli, said that the family has been eagerly awaiting succour for the past 16 months. She said their house is in a dilapidated condition. She urged the government to sanction 2BHK house

and pay ex-gratia to the family.

Pamula Narsimha, father of another victim from Hajipur, urged the district Collector to show initiative in rendering justice to them. He said that the souls of the victims would rest in peace only when the culprit was hanged to death. District Collector Anita Ramachandran said that reports have been sent to legal cell authority. As and when 2BHK works commenced in Bommalaramaram, the houses for the victims would be allotted. One of the family members on the basis of their educational qualifications would be given job in government.



# Positivity, only medicine to conquer Coronavirus

K VENKATESHWARLU  
■ HYDERABAD

As the numbers of positive cases are on the rise across the world, some people, who have recovered from the infection, are sharing their stories of survival with the world on social media platforms, including Twitter and Facebook. From sharing tips on how not to lose hope to utilising their time in the hospital, a lot of people have recovered from Covid-19 are sharing their experiences on dealing with the pandemic.

Many people, including politicians, actors, journalists, police personnel and others, who have successfully recovered from Coronaviurs, are taking to social media platforms to share their experiences. While some patients, who tested positive for the virus, got admitted in the hospital, many opted for home isolation. All the Covid warriors have one thing to say in common - 'Don't lose hope. Be Brave'.



Srinivas, a journalist, who tested positive for the virus, along with his seven of a family, shared his experience on Facebook. "For the first three days, I was so scared. However, gathering courage I instilled confidence among my family members. Now, we have successfully recovered from Coronavirus," he said on his FB post. In Telangana, with each passing day, the numbers of

Corona cases are on the rise. However, the state is showing some positive recovery rate. According to state government health bulletin issued on Friday, 53,239 patients successfully recovered from Corona.

A Covid warrior, Shankar from Nagole, in a video message said that he recovered from the virus within one week. He said that he underwent treatment at his home with full support of his

**Some people, who have recovered from the infection, are sharing their stories of survival with the world on social media platforms**

wife. He suggested the Corona positives to be brave and consume food rich in nutrients besides taking medicine suggested by the doctors.

Till date, the number of active cases is 21,417. Former MLA from Kothagudem Kunamneni Sambasivarao, who underwent treatment successfully at NIMS, also suggested the people not to panic. He also criticised the government to provide facilities to common people affected with Corona.

## Karne dismisses Oppn claims over water sharing

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Government Whip Karne Prabhakar said that the TRS is against Andhra Pradesh drawing water from Potireddypadu reservoir right from the beginning. Addressing the media on the issue at the Assembly media point here on Friday, he said, referring to the Congress, those who had supported diversion of water then are now blaming others as water thief.

The Congress leaders who did not resist drawing of water by Rayalaseema leaders till 2014 from the reservoir are now pinning the blame on others, he observed. In undivided Andhra Pradesh, leaders of AP region always exercised authority over others, he lamented.

The Brijesh Kumar Award on river water sharing noted that injustice was done to Telangana region, he said. All representations made to the Centre on Krishna River water issue have been kept pending, he said. He said the Government of Telangana filed



**The Congress leaders, who did not resist drawing of water by Rayalaseema leaders till 2014 from the reservoir are now pinning the blame on others, he said**

a special leave petition in the Supreme Court to get the efforts of increasing capacity of Potireddypadu project stalled.

He said that the Government of Telangana would appeal to the court to restrain the Government of AP in implementing the GOs 203 and 388 pertaining to expansion of Potireddypady head regulator and the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Scheme. However, he said that some Congress leaders are indulging in misinformation campaign that the Government of Telangana locked horns with the Government of Karnataka instead of Government of



## Jagga slams CS over Covid crisis

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MLA from Sangareddy T Jagga Reddy took potshots at Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar over Coronavirus situation in state. The Congress MLA asked the Chief Secretary to reveal as to what the latter has been doing when the people are dying with Corona. "The Chief Minister is busy with the construction of new secretariat but what CS is doing?" he asked. On Friday, Jagga Reddy alleged that the Gandhi Hospital is collecting Rs 30,000 to dispose the body of Corona patient.

## Cong seeks nod to visit Secretariat site

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court refused to hear a petition filed by Telangana Congress leaders urging it to issue orders to the state government to permit them to consider their representation and allow them visit the demolished premises of the old state secretariat.

The High Court questioned the petitioners about the need to visit the site even after completion of demolition works. Responding to this, the counsel for the petitioners submitted that there were reports about presence of underground a vault consisting of a hidden treasure under the old secretariat buildings especially beneath the G block, which was also famous as Safabad Palace and was constructed about 132 years back. Following this, the court

asked the counsel about the proof of such treasure. The court said that it will hear the plea in a normal course of work and adjourned the matter till Monday next week. The petition was filed by former Minister and veteran Congress leader Mohammed Ali Shabbir, Party MP A

Revanth Reddy, former MPs M Anjan Kumar Yadav and Konda Visweswar Reddy. In their petition they told the HC that the state government had not considered their representation submitted on July 27, 2020 and July 30, 2020 to allow them to visit the demolished site of the state secretariat and added that the government didn't take any decision on their representation. They told the HC that the action of the state government to not consider their representation was illegal.



## VH urges Uttam to set up Control room

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress senior leader V Hanumantha Rao on Friday addressed a letter to TPCC chief N Uttam Kumar Reddy requesting the latter to set up a control room in Gandhi Bhavan to extend help to the needy Corona patients. In the letter, the Congress senior leader said that the TPCC had set up control room during lockdown period and extended help to the migrant labor to reach their native places by arranging buses collecting funds from party men. He asked the TPCC chief to set up control room in the same manner to help the poor Corona patients.

## Shabbir expresses shock over demise of Khan Lateef Khan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir has expressed deep shock over the demise of eminent NRI, Sultan-ul-Uloom Educational Society Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of Munsif Urdu Daily Khan Lateef Khan. "The sudden demise of Khan Lateef Khan has come as a major shock for everyone. We've lost a good human being who had spent his whole life serving the people in various capacities as philanthropist, academician and journalist," he said in his condolence message on Friday.

Shabbir Ali recalled that he was associated with Khan Lateef Khan since 1987 when he was a Youth Congress worker. "I enjoyed his blessings and guidance when I began my career in electoral politics in the year 1989. He was among the first few people who met and congratulated me when I was made a minister in the cabinet of Marri Chenna Reddy in 1989. He used to call



me 'Mantri Ji' and addressed me with the same pet name till the last time he interacted with me about two months ago," he recalled.

He praised the role played by Khan Lateef Khan in providing education for poor students, especially in the old city of Hyderabad. "He was very concerned about the closure of government schools in the Old City which provided free education to poor children. He took several initiatives to impart education to poor students free of cost. He believed that everyone must have access to free and quality education irrespective of their socio-economic status. He has played a commendable job as the Chairman of Sultan-ul-Uloom Education Society which has re-defined the modern education, especially among minorities," he said. He also recalled that it was Mr. Khan Lateef Khan who agreed to bear huge legal expenses in the fight to defend 5 per cent and then 4 per cent Muslim reservation in the High Court. "It was because of Khan Lateef Khan that we were able to hire senior counsels like Rajiv Dhawan to contest the case in favour of Muslim reservation which so far benefited over two million poor Muslims in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh," he said.

"Khan Lateef Khan has done a great service to Urdu journalism by taking over Munsif Urdu Daily in the year 1999. By incorporating modern technology, he took the Urdu journalism to a different level. Later, he also launched Munsif TV, a satellite channel in Urdu language which was never dreamt of," he said.

## Pvt hospitals looting Corona patients: Bandi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Friday alleged that the private hospitals are charging exorbitant rates for Corona treatment. He blamed the state government for not keeping a tab on the private hospitals.

"Because of the negligent attitude of the state government, even the poor people are approaching private hospitals," he alleged. "The poor are spending lakhs of rupees with the hope to save their lives by selling their assets and mortgaging their belongings. Taking it as an advantage, the private hospitals are looting the poor indiscriminately. Bandi alleged and called upon the Yuva Morcha leaders to stand by the people at hospitals to mount pressure on the government to initiate adequate steps.

On Friday, Sanjay held a meeting with state party general secretaries and chiefs of various Morchas at the party



office. Leaders--G Premender Reddy, D Pradeep Kumar, Bangaru Sruthi, Bhanu Prakash, Koppu Bhasha, Hussain Naik and others participated in the meeting. On the occasion, the party chief said that it is painful that some private hospitals are charging exorbitant rates from patients in name of Corona treatment. One can see the negligent attitude of the government in private hospitals inhuman behavior, he alleged. He urged the private hospitals managements not to 'loot' the patients and demanded them to provide free treatment.

## JC Prabhakar, son arrested within hours of release

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Controversial TDP leader JC Prabhakar Reddy and his son Asmith Reddy were arrested within 24 hours after being released from the Kadapa Central Jail, over case filed with the Tadipatri police under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

The case was filed against them for their inappropriate behaviour towards Tadipatri police station Circle Inspector Devendra Kumar. The TDP leaders along with 31 others also face a case under the Disaster Management Act registered at the Tadipatri police station for violation of Covid-19 curbs. Prabhakar Reddy and



Asmith Reddy were released from the central jail on Thursday after their arrest in forging documents and wrongful registration of buses. The two, besides a few others, are accused of fabricating documents to facilitate registration of buses besides illegally converting BS-III vehicles into

BS-IV vehicles in Kohima of Nagaland using forged documents.

At the time of their release from jail, their followers gathered outside the prison in large numbers created ruckus there, in complete violation of Covid-19 guidelines. In a show of open defiance of rules, the duo went to their home town Tadipatri leading a rally of his supporters.

During the rally, Prabhakar Reddy allegedly abused police inspector Devendra when the latter objected to their travelling in a procession involving many people. The temperamental leader not only behaved rudely with the Dalit inspector but even issued threats to him openly.

## Drive against misuse of sanitisers conducted

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Officials of Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) have been conducting surprise checks as part of their special drive against misuse of sanitisers in the absence of liquor for the last three days.

As many as 345 vulnerable places where there is possibility of consumption of sanitisers in the absence of liquor shops were identified and 144 vulnerable people were identified and counselled.

During the special drive, sanitiser manufacturing units were inspected, including their licences, quality control and sales.

About 303 awareness cam-



paigns were organised against consumption of sanitisers and their ill effects.

The special drive against consumption of sanitisers and enforcement work against ID manufacturing areas will be continued, according to SEB Commissioner Vinith Brijlal in a release issued here on Friday.

## HANDS-ON



Excise Minister V Srinivas Goud tries his hands on handloom weaver on the occasion of National Handloom Day on Friday

## Adivasi Day to be a low key affair

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Adivasi Day would be celebrated at all ITDA offices across the State on Sunday as per the information from the State Tribal Welfare Department on a low key note, said T Vijay Kumar Reddy, Ex-officio Secretary and Commissioner of Information and Public Relations Department.

He said in a statement here on Friday that the programme to distribute forest land rights to the Girijans would be held on October 2. The state-level Adivasi Day celebrations, which should have been held on Sunday, were postponed due to the pandemic. Officials are making arrangements to distribute forest rights pattas to the more number of Girijans on Sunday, he said.

## A unique temple for 'Bharat Mata'

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

There is unique temple for 'Bharat Mata' in Bichkunda mandal of Kamareddy district. Having a temple for Lord Rama or Ayyappa is quite common. But this rare temple draws devotees from neighbouring states too. In fact, Goddess Bharat Mata temple was founded in 1950 by a freedom fighter. He first set it up in a hut. However with the support from Nakka Ramanna and Burri Gangaram he built a pucca temple for the deity. Donors contributed land for building the temple.

As the temple construction is under progress, the local Padmasali Association came forward and lent a helping hand completing pending works. In 1982, the idols of



Nava Grahas and other deities have been installed. A priest has been appointed to perform the daily rituals at the temple. Annually, on Margasira Shukla Shahti the Bharatmata Jayanti celebrations are celebrated on a grand scale offering various pujas to the deity since morning.

Devotees from Maharashtra and Karnataka throng the temple and fulfil their vows to the

**Devotees from Maharashtra and Karnataka through the temple and fulfil their vows to the deity. The temple was founded to propagate the greatness of Goddess Bharata Mata**

deity. The temple was founded to propagate the greatness of Goddess Bharata Mata. The locals appeal to the government for release of funds to develop the temple further.



## Doctor dies of Covid-19

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A deputy medical and health officer in Telangana died of COVID-19 on Friday. He was working in Bhadradi-Kothagudem district and was undergoing treatment for the virus at a private hospital here. Naresh Kumar (35), in-charge of a quarantine centre, tested positive for COVID-19 on July 30, official sources said. State Health Minister Eatala Rajender, expressing grief over the death, said the doctor contracted the infection a week ago, according to an official press release. The government would extend help and support to the bereaved family, he added.

## Choutuppal co-option member elections postponed

PNS ■ YADADRI

Noisy scenes have been witnessed at the Choutuppal municipality co-option members' election on Friday. Mild lathi-charge and clashes marred the elections leading to the postponement of the elections. In the cooption elections, a TRS candidate supported the Congress and BJP alliance. The municipal chairman and councillors breathed fire on the councillor and prevented the election from taking place.

There ensued a clash between an MLA and municipal chairman leading to jostling. The municipal chairman announced postponement of election objecting to the high-handed

behaviour on him. But the MLA Rajagopal Reddy demanded conduct of election as the meeting enjoyed quorum. He staged a sit-in in the municipal office protesting against the postponement of elections. The BJP and Congress councillors lodged protest along with the MLA. Though the Congress led alliance has full quorum, the chair postponing the election would tantamount to butchering democracy, Rajagopal Reddy alleged. At a time the people are facing problems with Covid-19 pandemic, the TRS has been indulging in dirty politicking, he lamented. He exuded confidence of Congress-led alliance winning the co-option members election whenever the elections are held.

## CM Ramesh tests positive for Covid

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Rajya Sabha member CM Ramesh is the latest politician to test positive for Covid-19.

Ramesh, upon slight discomfort, got himself tested for Coronavirus and the result returned positive. He then took to social media to confirm the news and say that he was doing fine and there was nothing to worry. As he has no major symptoms, he has not been admitted to any hospital, but confined to home quarantine.

Ramesh tweeted, "I have tested positive for #COVID\_19.

Whilst I am doing fine, I am being under isolation on the recommendation of doctors."



SHORT READS



Jharkhand govt to encourage sports & sportspersons: CM

**RANCHI:** Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Friday said his government was committed to encourage sports and sportspersons and will bring a new sports policy soon. The chief minister said this after he received information in his twitter handle that international woman football player Sangita Soren was making leaf-plates for subsistence at Dhanbad's Baghmara area. Taking to Twitter, the chief minister asked the Dhanbad Deputy Commissioner, Uma Shankar Singh, to help her (Sangita) and her family with government aid. The chief minister said that his government will soon bring a sports policy to encourage sports and sportspersons. The CM was informed that the player was preparing paper plates for her livelihood.

Adhir questions Murmu's resignation as J&K LG

**KOLKATA:** Leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Friday sought to know why G C Murmu resigned as the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, and alleged the former IAS officer paid the price for 'venting his views'. The Election Commission had on July 28 taken exception to Murmu's reported remarks on the timing of polls in the union territory and said, in the constitutional scheme of things, only the poll panel is authorised to decide on such matters. Murmu, who quit as the Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, has been appointed as the new Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India. "The question is, why the 1st LG of UT J & K has tendered his resignation? Voluntary or instructed? Whether he has been failed to hoodwink the people that everything is going hunky-dory?" Chowdhury tweeted.

BJP leader questions Sushant's psychotherapist

**MUMBAI:** BJP leader Ashish Shelar on Friday accused Sushant Singh Rajput's psychotherapist Susan Walker Moffat of sharing details about the mental health of the late actor to the media in violation of law. Shelar also asked if Moffat, a foreign national, was practising in India illegally, and demanded that she be probed by various agencies. Rajput, 34, was found hanging in his suburban Bandra apartment on June 14, in what the police say was a case of suicide. "#Sushantsinghrajput Why Susan Walker Moffat illegally share Sushant's mental health details 2 media? 2 misguide police? Hide secrets? Her Practice illegal? Earning crores? Violated Mental health Act ! Police/CBI/ED/IT enquiry of Susan Walker MUST ! Justice Will b done!" Shelar tweeted.

Naidu asks young IAS to take lead in 'new India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Friday urged young IAS officers to treat their vocation as a mission to bridge the rich-poor, and urban-rural divides and be pro-active change agents in building a "new India".

Addressing the valedictory ceremony of the two-year training programme for IAS officers of 2018 batch at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration through video, he said the socio-economic upliftment of marginalised sections should be their main goal.

Reminding the officers that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel dreamt of a civil service that would work zealously to create a new nation by fighting poverty and discrimination, the vice president asked them to be honest, disciplined, simple, responsible, transparent and accountable.

Calling former prime minister late Lal Bahadur Shastri as a remarkable leader, Naidu said his hallmarks were integrity and humility, empathy and quiet efficiency, national pride and indomitable courage.



Urging the officer trainees to keep learning, thinking and innovating, Naidu said 'good governance is what we need today'.

He stressed that governance has to be lean but efficient with a system that is transparent and responds to people's needs and aspirations. It has to be a system that delivers and creates conditions for growth and development.

The vice president said legislature may make a number of policies and laws, but ultimately it is the actual implementation of those policies on ground that matters.

A government will be remembered by the delivery of the services, he underlined and said that it was the duty of

**He stressed that governance has to be lean but efficient with a system that is transparent and responds to people's needs and aspirations. It has to be a system that delivers and creates conditions for growth and development**

civil servants to ensure that people get their entitlements without delay. Whatever post you hold, you should create a record in good work so that people will remember you later, he told the young civil servants.

Nadda attacks Cong over SC observations on PIL for probe into China pact

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP president J P Nadda on Friday cited some observations of the Supreme Court on a PIL, which sought a probe into the alleged 2008 agreement between the Congress and the Communist Party of China, to seek explanation from Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party leader Rahul Gandhi.

"Even the SC is surprised at the MoU signed by the Congress party with the Chinese Gov.. Mrs Gandhi & her son, who led the signing, must explain. Does this explain donations to RGF and opening Indian market for the Chinese in return, which



affected Indian businesses?" Nadda tweeted.

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a PIL seeking NIA probe into the alleged 2008 agreement.

Won't attend mosque inauguration, says Adityanath; kicks up a row

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party on Friday sought an apology from Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath over his remark that he would not attend the inauguration of the mosque to be built in Ayodhya, replacing the demolished Babri Masjid.

After the bhoomi puja for a Ram temple in Ayodhya, Adityanath had said on television that "as a yogi and as a Hindu" he couldn't go for the inauguration of a mosque.

Reacting to the remark, the opposition SP said he should seek an apology from the people of the state. When contacted, a UP Congress spokesper-

Serum Institute to produce 100 mn Covid vaccine doses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Serum Institute of India (SII) on Friday said it has entered into a new partnership with international vaccine alliance Gavi and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to accelerate manufacturing and delivery of up to 100 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines for India as well as other low and middle-income countries (LMICs).

"The collaboration will provide upfront capital to SII to help them increase manufacturing capacity now so that, once a vaccine, or vaccines, gains regulatory approval and WHO pre-qualification, doses can be produced at scale for distribution to India and LMICs as part of the Gavi COVAX AMC mechanism as early as the first half of 2021," SII said in a statement.

The company has set an affordable ceiling price of USD 3 (around Rs 225) per dose, it added. The funding will support at-risk manufacturing by SII for candidate vaccines from AstraZeneca and Novavax, which will be available for procurement if they are successful



in attaining full licensure and WHO prequalification, the statement said. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, via its Strategic Investment Fund, will provide at-risk funding of USD 150 million to Gavi, which will be used to support the SII to manufacture the potential vaccine candidates and for future procurement of vaccines for low- and middle-income countries via Gavi's COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), the statement said.

"In an attempt to make our fight against COVID-19 stronger and all-embracing, SII has partnered with Gavi and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to advance the

manufacturing and delivery of up to 100 million doses of future COVID vaccines for India and low- and middle-income countries in 2021," Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla said.

Through this association, SII seeks to ramp up constant efforts to save the lives of millions of people from this dreadful disease, he added.

Serum Institute has a long history of partnerships with Gavi and pharmaceutical companies to manufacture vaccines that protect against meningitis, severe diarrhoea, pneumonia and measles, the statement said.

"We are very happy to see SII enter this global partnership to

**Through this association, SII seeks to ramp up constant efforts to save the lives of millions of people from this dreadful disease, he added**

responding to the global health crisis posed by COVID-19," Renu Swarup, secretary in the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India, said.

India has a proven track record of manufacturing safe and cost-effective vaccines not only for India, but for the world, she added. In a similar vein, Indian Council of Medical Research Director General Balram Bhargava said: "ICMR is deeply supportive of our cutting edge vaccine research and manufacturing prowess, of which SII is one prominent example. This partnership signifies yet another step in India's efforts to bolster the fight against this global pandemic."

PM to inaugurate Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Saturday inaugurate the 'Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra', an interactive experience centre on the Swachh Bharat Mission.

A tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, the Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra (RSK) was first announced by the prime minister on April 10 2017 on the occasion of the centenary celebrations of Gandhiji's Champaran 'satyagraha'.

After taking a tour of the RSK, located near Raj Ghat, Modi will interact with 36 school students from Delhi, representing the 36 states and union territories, at the amphitheatre of the RSK,



adhering to social distancing protocols, an official statement said.

This will be followed by his address. The installations at the RSK will introduce future generations to the successful journey of the world's largest behaviour change campaign, the Swachh Bharat (clean India) Mission, it said.

Flood-like situation, landslides continue to cause havoc in rain ravaged parts of K'taka

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Flood-like situation and landslides continue to cause havoc in several parts of Karnataka that has been battered by torrential rains.

Many places in Malnad, coastal and north interior regions of the state have been affected by deluge, putting life and properties at risk. While most of the rivers in these regions are swollen due to rising inflow because of showers continuing in the catchment areas, there are reports of landslips in hilly regions of Kodagu and Chikkamagaluru.

Flood like situation persists in the border regions of Belagavi district, with rising water levels in Krishna river and its tributaries due to rains in ghat areas of Maharashtra and water being released from the dams there.



Adding to this, the district too has been receiving rains, inundating low lying areas and crops.

In Uttara Kannada and Shivamogga districts also there is similar situation of swollen rivers and inundation of low lying areas. Water is being released from several dams in the state including Alamatti and Kabinini by opening the gates as inflow has increased.

Tungabhadra dam in Hosapete has reached the brim. There have been reports of mudslides near Botlappa and other places in Kodagu, also along Charamadi ghat near Chikkamagaluru and Dakshina Kannada.

District in-charge Minister V Somanna has rushed to Kodagu that has been ravaged by floods and landslides.

Delhi govt's job portal gets 8.64 lakh applications

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Employment Minister Gopal Rai said on Friday that 8.64 lakh job aspirants have registered with the government's 'Rozgar Bazaar' job portal which has set up a 'new model of employment' in the national capital. Addressing a press conference, Rai said there were currently nine lakh vacancies available on the portal, where 6,271 companies, including Flipkart, Amazon and HDFC Bank have made registrations. The minister said around 22 lakh vacancies had been posted by employers at the job portal so far, out of which 3.5 lakh were cancelled by the department during scrutiny due to doubling or other reasons.

CVC shortens reconsideration time on punishing corrupt govt officials

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has halved to one month the time for reconsideration of its advice against government officials accused of corruption in cases where the department concerned wants to have lenient or stricter view on the quantum of punishment recommended by it, according to an official order.

The move comes after it was noticed that such proposals were not received in the stipulated time period of two months, thus causing delay in processing of vigilance cases. The CVC is consulted by the government departments at two stages in vigilance cases -- advice is first obtained on investigation reports and second before a final decision is taken at conclusion of proceedings against



corrupt employees. Citing its earlier guidelines, the commission said government departments are required to approach the CVC for advice wherein a lenient or stricter view than that advised by it is proposed to be taken in the vigilance cases.

Further, it was also prescribed that such reconsideration proposals should be sent within two months from the date of receipt

of the commission's advice, said the order issued on Thursday. Considering the need for expeditious finalization of vigilance cases and to adhere to the timelines for its finalisations, the commission on review of the existing timelines, has decided that any proposal for reconsideration of its first stage advice should be made to it within one month of receipt of the first stage advice, it said.

Rhea Chakraborty appears before ED in money laundering case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai: Actor Rhea Chakraborty, accused of abetting suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here on Friday in connection with the money laundering case lodged by it. The ED has also summoned for questioning Shruti Modi, who is Chakraborty's business manager, and Rajput's friend and roommate Siddharth Pithani in connection with the money laundering probe stemming from a complaint filed by his father with the Bihar Police in connection with his death, officials said.

They said the two are accused in their case and their statements will be recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) once they appear on their scheduled dates for Friday and Saturday respectively.

Pithani is stated to be out of



Mumbai at present and he has said in various news channel interviews that he was present in the Bandra flat on June 14 when the 34-year-old actor hanged himself.

The IT professional, stated to be living with Rajput for about an year, had earlier recorded his statement with the Mumbai Police as part of their accidental death report (ADR) probe in the case.

Chakraborty (28), accused by Rajput's father of abetting

his son's suicide, appeared before the ED at the agency's office in Ballard Estate here on Friday after initially refusing to do so, citing her appeal pending before the Supreme Court.

"In view of the fact that the ED has informed the media that the request to postpone her attendance is rejected, Rhea has appeared before the ED office," her advocate Satish Maneshinde said.

She was accompanied by her brother Showik.

Air India allowing travel agents to sell seats only on select Vande Bharat flights: TAAI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Air India is allowing travel agents to sell seats only on select flights under the Vande Bharat Mission and "other inventories have been blocked", the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has alleged.

Asked about the matter, Air India told PTI it has received several complaints from passengers about overcharging by agents or their sub-agents, especially on sectors with a high demand, and consequently, it has been "compelled to restrict access of distribution" on such sectors. In a statement late on Thursday night, the TAAI alleged that at a juncture when economies are trying to revive and come back on their feet, Air India continues to play "monopolistic".

"After our repeated request to your good-selves, agents were permitted to book on the GDS (global distribution system), but now inventories have



been blocked and selective sectors are only being permitted. This is totally unfair and biased," it added.

The TAAI has over 2,500 travel agent companies as its members. "We once again request you (Civil Aviation Ministry and Air India) to ensure that accredited member travel agents are given due respect and permitted to promote and sell airline seats...on all sectors that are being operated by Air India under the Vande Bharat Mission," it said.

Moreover, Air India should

withdraw its statements asking the passengers to report any issue of overcharging by travel agents for flights under the Vande Bharat Mission, the TAAI demanded. "Such communications (of Air India) are demeaning to our member agents in the trade who you call 'Travel Partners'," it said.

The TAAI has written two letters on the matter -- one on July 30 and another on August 6 -- to the Civil Aviation Ministry and Air India.

Asked about the matter, Air India told PTI that it has been

**"We once again request you (Civil Aviation Ministry and Air India) to ensure that accredited member travel agents are given due respect and permitted to promote and sell airline seats...on all sectors that are being operated by Air India under the Vande Bharat Mission," it said**

operating the Vande Bharat Mission flights under directions from the government to evacuate Indian citizens stranded abroad due to the cessation of scheduled flight operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic. "This initiative is also serving Indians working/studying abroad to travel and rejoin

their companies/institutions from India," the national carrier said in a statement.

It added that it has also been keeping fares at a very reasonable level, in spite of the mounting costs due to several constraints in India and abroad during the pandemic.

"After opening sale of flights to travel agents, Air India received several complaints from passengers of overcharging by agents or their sub-agents, especially on sectors with high demand. To address the issue, Air India has been disseminating complete information on country-wise criteria and documents required for travel to make the exorbitant service charges unjustifiable.

"For this, Air India has been compelled to restrict access of distribution of high-demand sectors to agents with the sole purpose of safeguarding the interest of passengers in these trying times," it said.



## Big win for Mahinda

With the pro-China Rajapaksa clan in full control, India has to work on strategic engagement and economic alliances



The Sri Lankans have chosen stability over liberalism, performance over democracy in returning the Rajapaksa clan to power with a massive mandate in the nation's parliamentary elections. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's ruling party, the Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP), won 145 of the 150 seats, that would now allow him to amend the Constitution, expand his executive powers and ensure that his elder brother, Mahinda, continues as Prime Minister. In short, the dynastic hold on Sri Lanka's politics is now absolute. And the brothers could overturn any reformatory attempts that have been made by previous Governments to consolidate their position. Sri Lankans, much like other nations around the world, including India, have voted for nationalist pride and muscular leadership in tough times. The Government's smart COVID-19 management has scored big with the voter, the island nation reporting just 11 deaths and managing the elections without any cluster outbreaks during the polling process. The Rajapaksa brothers are seen as strongmen and deliverers and seem to have consolidated their hold among the Sinhalese Buddhist majority in the aftermath of the Easter bombings, which showed how scattered IS modules were choosing virgin targets. And no matter how militarist Gotabaya may seem, the Sinhalese trust him to tackle terrorism as he cleaned up the Tamil movement ruthlessly, an operation that had earned him the moniker of the "terminator." For India, though, the return of Mahinda Rajapaksa is worrying as he has a hardliner approach to Tamils and has welcomed Chinese strategic interests and investment at our expense. In the past, he accused New Delhi of intervening in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka, propping up his own protege Maithripala Sirisena against him and ensuring he lost the elections. Sirisena's SLFP and ally UNP, whose leader Ranil Wickremesinghe became Prime Minister, formed a coalition Government which was pro-India. The Indian establishment was also too overt rather than being covert about its interventions. So a hurt Mahinda never settled down, his party scoring on local elections till he forced a coup, subduing Sirisena, getting him to sack Wickremesinghe and becoming Prime Minister for 51 days. Gotabaya took charge of Defence and Security, kept the Tamil-majority areas under strict military vigil and put Indian diplomats under surveillance. It is this distrust that needs to be healed now for geo-strategic reasons if we don't want China to run ahead.

Little wonder then that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was one of the first dignitaries to wish Mahinda, with whom he has been in touch over regional COVID-19 management. India's diplomacy in the neighbourhood has to factor in the pragmatism by lesser neighbours, who have successfully played on its anxieties with China and are negotiating the best of both worlds given the competitive muscle-flexing by two Asian majors. Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are all happily walking the trajectory of "trade ties" with China and "historical linkage" with India to buttonhole both nations into giving concessions. Mahinda, too, seized the moment by calling India a "friend" with whom he had a "long-standing cooperation." The Modi Government is pushing proactive participation over historical assumptions in its Lanka policy. Yet, the Chinese are way ahead in Lanka. They have a 99-year lease on the Hambantota port after Sri Lanka's failure to repay loans and are using it to enhance their military arc in the Indian Ocean region all the way to east Africa. The Chinese have even created an island off Colombo, a new financial hotspot and a key conduit to East Africa, besides controlling the island nation's infrastructure sector, hospitality and supply chains. And while we may have halted Huawei's 5G technology, Sri Lanka has no security fears about the new-generation mobile telephony technology. India has, therefore, to do a very tightrope act with Sri Lanka if it wants to protect its strategic interests amid a Chinese swamp. That, too, without compromising too much on Tamil interests. We need to work on investment and project partnerships, encourage soft diplomacy via people-to-people contacts and strengthen an institution like BIMSTEC to ensure continuous communication. And we must take care to not appear exploitative or patronising.

## COVID spiral

As the virus spreads, India must ramp up its testing capacity, focus on the hinterland and come up with a standard protocol



The dreaded community spread has India well and truly in its grip because, from the time the pandemic began in the country, we had recorded 1.5 million cases till July 28 but have added a whopping 5,00,000 infections in just nine days. This is an average of 50,000 fresh cases recorded each day. India has breached the 20-lakh barrier and fatalities have touched the 41,000 mark. The country that has been fighting to rapidly ramp up its poor healthcare infrastructure is now snapping at the heels of Brazil, which has more than 2.8 million cases, and the US, which is leading the list of worst-hit countries with five million cases. And if experts are to be believed, the community spread has only just begun and the next million cases may take just a little over two weeks if infections continue to spread at the same rate at which they are now. Expert opinion has it that the country needs to shift its focus on the war against the pandemic to rural India, which has multiple challenges of a high population density, patchy administration and a tottering healthcare infrastructure.

Another area where the country needs to improve its performance is testing that has been dismally slow. Till August 5, the country had just tested 16,617 people per million, which is a paltry 1.66 per cent of the population. Compare this to other nations like the US, which has tested 18.8 per cent of its population, Russia 20 per cent, South Africa five per cent and the UK 25 per cent. The Government's excuses of overpopulation and being a poor country hold no water as even a country like Brazil, which has a much lesser GDP than ours, has tested 6.3 per cent of its population. Moreover, a small country like Iran has tested three per cent. If we are to beat the pandemic, we have to ramp up our testing and take it up to five per cent at least, which is around 32 million more people. Testing also helps us map the trajectory of the disease and prepare containment strategies or it would look like we are just flying blind as some Western experts are suggesting. Right now, while the urban centres are bending the curve, unexpected hotspots are emerging, which need to be contained lest they set off a ripple effect that can lead to a "viral" blast. Also, what is needed is a national protocol for a standardised response, better guidance and a balanced allocation of resources. The silver lining in the dark cloud is that the recovery rate in the country is continuously rising and the fatality rate has remained much below the global average. If the figures being bandied about by the Health Ministry are anything to go by, the recovery rate has risen from 51.08 per cent on June 15 to a record high of 67.98 per cent on August 7, while the fatality rate has gone down to 2.05 per cent. These two in tandem have enabled a higher and rising difference of more than 7.7 lakh between the number of recovered patients and active cases in the country, claims the Ministry. Of course, there is still a problem of unaccounted deaths and cases that may completely change the picture. Plus, we have come a long way from the time we faced a shortage of simple things like hand sanitisers to the more complex PPEs and ventilators. Now, after four months, we are actually exporting these to other nations. The two indigenous vaccines are showing promise and developers are preparing to begin simultaneous phase 2 trials that study immune response and additional safety in a large population. In some more good news, pharma major Lupin has launched its Favipiravir drug at a very reasonable price. So, while we may not yet be winning the COVID war, all is still not lost. India can live to fight another day. But we must stick to a mapping and tracking plan and not get complacent. More importantly, not let up. Given our population, we will have recurring waves.



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected human behaviour throughout the world, causing new focal points of irritation to emerge and the old ones to intensify, sometimes to levels where violence follows inevitably. This, in turn, is the result of the fear of catching the disease and boredom caused by prolonged confinement at home, either by choice or compulsion created by lockdowns. Moods marked by irritation and anger intensify old animosities and create new ones. An example is the resurgence of hatred towards stray dogs, who have been an integral part of India's urban and rural population centres since the time of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, if not earlier.

Directly or indirectly, animals and creatures that live in water or the sky feature prominently in the philosophy of the *Upanishads* and the narratives of the *Vedas*, *Brahma Sutra*, the *Puranas* and the epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Examples are many, but two well-known ones merit a mention. In *Mahabharata's Mahaprasthanika Parva* (The Chapter of the Great Departure), a small brown dog began to follow the five Pandavas and Draupadi as they began their final journey out of this world. One by one, Draupadi and four Pandavas fell dead as they climbed Mount Meru. Yudhishthir, the eldest Pandava, and the dog marched on. Suddenly Indra, the king of gods, appeared in his flying chariot and said that he had come to take Yudhishthir to heaven in his mortal body. Assured that Draupadi and his four brothers were already there and well, he asked whether the dog could come with him. On being told that heaven had no place for a dog, he refused to go without the latter. It was then that the dog appeared in his true self as Dharma, the God of Virtue, and said this was Yudhishthir's final test. He would not have been able to enter heaven alive if he had agreed to abandon the dog.

This account is widely known and cited. Another incident is found in the Bengali translation of the *Saptakanda Ramayana* (The *Ramayana* in Seven Parts) by Krittibas Ojha. It happened when Ram, after defeating Ravan and sending Sita to sage Valmiki's hermitage, was holding court in Ayodhya with Lakshman guarding the entrance. A white dog with red eyes, lame in one leg and limping, with thick patches of congealed

# opinion06

## Being humane

Following the pandemic, there has been a resurgence of hatred against stray dogs who are left to fend for themselves. Not many understand how their lives have turned upside down



blood on his head, indicating that it has hit with a stick, came and touched Lakshman's feet. Asked why he had come, he said he would relate the cause of his sorrow to Ram if the latter granted him an audience.

Told of the dog's request by Lakshman, Ram asked for the dog to be brought before him forthwith. Arriving in Ram's presence, he began to sing the former's praise with folded hands and head bowed. Asked about the reason for his coming, he said, "A *sanyasi* (a mendicant ascetic who has renounced the world) has hit me for no fault of mine. Distressed and hurt after being hit, I have come to your court after starving for three days. The court should please ask the *sanyasi* what was my fault that he should have hit me with a stick?" Ram said that the *sanyasi* should be brought immediately before him so that the court could judge. How could a *sanyasi* be cruel to an animal? (All quotations are from *Saptakanda Ramayana* translated from Bengali to English by this author).

The dog, who accompanied Ram's messenger, identified the *sanyasi* as he was brought before Ram, who asked, "Why have you abandoned your *dharma* and are cruel to animals? One who perpetrates *adharma* has to live in hell. What kind of renunciation is yours when your body is so full of anger? Castigation of others and malevolence towards others are grave sins. A terrible hell is the punishment for a cruel and malevolent *sanyasi*. A sage who has

given up greed, illusion and desire, is respected in this world. And, though a *sanyasi*, you suddenly burst into anger! What was the fault of the dog that you hit him with a stick?"

The ascetic replied, "I went to the town for alms after reciting prayers on the banks of the Ganga during the whole day. Begging for alms, the whole body burning with hunger, I found the dog lying in front occupying the whole road. I loudly asked him to go give way but he pretended not to hear. He was asleep with one eye closed and looked at me with the other. I became angry and hit him on the head with a stick. Now that I have said all this before the court, you decide what punishment to give me."

On being asked by Ram about the punishment, the courtiers said that the *sanyasi* should be barred from bathing in the Ganges. At this, the dog said that he should not be punished but made the ruler of the kingdom of Kalinjar. The courtiers laughed as Ram made the *sanyasi* the king of Kalinjar. Climbing onto the back of an elephant, his splendour enhanced by the royal sceptre, the *sanyasi* began travelling happily towards Kalinjar as people laughed at his attire — a loin-cloth — with the royal umbrella over his head.

Asked by the courtiers as to why was the kingdom given to the *sanyasi* when the idea was to punish him, Ram directed them to the dog, who said, "Under a curse by Lord Shiva, death does not alter the king's destiny to be

reborn as a dog... I was the king in the previous birth and now I have been reborn as a dog and suffered much. But having seen you, I will now escape from my torment." While everybody said that the *sanyasi's* worldly possessions have now increased, the dog said, "Have no doubt, whoever becomes the king of Kalinjar becomes a dog in his next birth." He then did *namaskar* to Ram and walked slowly to Varanasi where he fasted to death and attained heaven because he had seen Ram.

Ram's statement that a "terrible hell is the punishment for a cruel and malevolent *sanyasi*" has an echo in a passage in Skanda V, chapter 26 of *Srimad Bhagavata: The Holy Book of God*. It reads, "God has given different forms of livelihood to creatures. Some of these may go against the interests of man. But man should not retaliate against these creatures for two reasons. They are not endowed with the capacity to know that they are doing injury to man; and next, man knows that they will be injured if he retaliates. A person who injures lower creations for selfish purposes goes to a purgatory called *Andhakupa* and there he will have to live in a low type of body, attacked by the creatures he had injured. In darkness, without sleep, and restless, he will have to drag on a wretched existence." (Translated by Swami Tapasyananda).

The passage quoted from *The Srimad Bhagavata: The Holy Book of God* applies especially to those who inveigh ceaselessly

about the "menace" posed by stray dogs. They can neither see the role the latter play as sentinels, whose barking alerts people against the arrival of thieves, robbers and terrorists/insurgents. Precisely for this reason, terrorists in some areas of Jammu & Kashmir and Maoists in parts of central India have asked villagers to kill all dogs in their areas.

In the present situation, how many of India's stray dog haters have tried to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has turned the lives of these canines completely upside down? It has been said often enough to become common-place knowledge that the closure of hotels, *dhabas* and restaurants have deprived vast numbers of them of their food. It is not just the left-overs thrown into garbage bins that they miss. Many of them, who had been fed regularly by the staff and owners of these eating places, have now to fend for themselves — something to which they have grown unused.

Finally, how many haters of stray dogs have any idea of the love and loyalty that most dogs unconditionally lavish on people? Not surprisingly, Konrad Lorenz writes in *Man Meets Dog*, "The whole charm of the dog lies in the depth of friendship and the strength of spiritual ties with which he has tied himself to man." Author of the landmark book *On Aggression* and perhaps the best-known authority on animal behaviour, he should know.

(The writer is Consultant Editor, The Pioneer, and author)

## SOUNDBITE

I would have wanted more opportunities to play Test cricket. In those days, it was difficult to get a spot amid star players like Sachin and Rahul who started opening.



Former cricketer  
—Yuvraj Singh

From what I can tell you is that the equation of the industry has not changed. It's an equal playing field. You've to have a huge amount of luck and then things will fall in place.



Actor  
—Chunky Panday

What China did is a terrible thing. Whether it was incompetence or on purpose, it was a terrible thing that they did ... not only to the US, but to the world.



US President  
—Donald Trump

PM Modi congratulated 130 crore Indians during the *bhoomi puja* but India's population is over 138 crore. The omission of 8 crore people is worrying after CAA/NRC.



Congress leader  
—Shashi Tharoor

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Stand firm

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Now Pak in map war" (August 6). Close on the heels of Nepal's issuance of a map showing Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura under its territory, Pakistan has released a territorially misleading map that includes the former princely State of Junagadh (Gujarat) and Kashmir. This prompted a quick response from India's Ministry of External Affairs, which termed it "an exercise in political absurdity."

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan claimed that the map represented the aspirations of the whole nation and all its political parties. It is likely that Pakistan has China's blessings in producing the map given similar border claims by Nepal recently. Pakistan has expressed its frustration through a series of steps that coincided with the first anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370. It had announced that August 5 would be observed as "day of exploitation" even as the Khan Government again failed to persuade the UN Security Council to come up

### Gold smuggling gets murkier

It is common knowledge that gold is smuggled into the country by land, sea and air. The Department of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized 4,000 kilograms of gold worth ₹1,300 crore that was illegally brought into Gujarat. In February, DRI officials found about 15 kg of gold valued at over ₹6 crore on the sea bed at Mandapam off the Tamil Nadu coast. There are umpteen such instances. More recently, an influential gang smuggled nearly 230 kg of gold into Kerala, tucked stealthily in the diplomatic parcel bags couriered from Dubai to the Consulate General of the UAE in Thiruvananthapuram. On July 5, Customs officials intercepted the passage of a diplomatic bag, stated to be the 21st in line, which led to the seizure of 30 kg gold. The probe was assigned to the NIA as suspicion of illegal money being used for nefarious activities gained strength. However, the Opposition chose to focus on the association of M Sivasankar (IAS), the Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister of Kerala, with the accused. Swapna Suresh, and underplayed the issue through the diplomatic channel. In fact, it chose to hammer the Chief Minister. Even after days of interrogation by both the Customs officials and the NIA, it remains unclear if the officer was a victim of misjudg-



ment or had even the remotest role in the murky affair.

And the role of the consulate in the gold smuggling, particularly the attaché, is still shrouded in mystery. An argument doing the rounds is that the attaché is not bound to reveal his travel itinerary to the Government, he being a diplomat. The question here is: Can a diplomat aid terrorism and still leave the country quietly under the cover of diplomatic immunity from prosecution? Politically, the Opposition efforts to besmirch Vijayan's reputation have not registered much success. Meanwhile, the sleuths are preparing to travel abroad for investigations.

Haridasan Rajan  
Kozhikode

with a resolution on Kashmir despite having China on its side. The FATF has decided to keep Pakistan on the "grey" list as it failed to check the flow of money to terrorist groups. If it fails to fulfil the FATF's requirements, it

could be downgraded to the blacklist. India must firmly disprove the ridiculous claims made by its neighbours and reassert its territorial sovereignty.

Venu GS  
Kollam

### Tough questions

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "After Ayodhya" (August 6). The pomp and show displayed at a simple event such as the *bhoomi*

*mi puja* at Ayodhya was avoidable. The event has raised several questions. Was it correct for the PM to lay the foundation of the temple, one which remained embroiled in a long history of disputes? In a secular democracy, the PM is not expected to represent any particular religion or organisation. For a head of the state, religious affiliations should remain confined within the four walls of his home.

Sritama  
Via email

### Crisis within crisis

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Monumental apathy" (August 7). The massive explosion in Beirut, Lebanon couldn't have come at a worse time for Lebanon when the country has been battling one crisis after another. Nations across the world as well as international institutions must offer help to Lebanon so that it can overcome the catastrophe.

Prathna  
Via email

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

## Transparency is long overdue

The Centre has rolled out a robust and much-desired architecture for the online audit of Panchayati Raj Institutions



DEVENDER SINGH ASWAL

**T**ransparency and accountability in the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been hanging fire for long. After much reflection, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has launched an AuditOnline application for scrutinising the accounts of over 2.50 lakh gram panchayats (GPs). To begin with, the accounts of at least 20 per cent or 50,000 GPs would be audited online for 2019-20. This was long overdue as the GPs have been endowed with substantial powers, authority and responsibilities with the enactment of the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act. Following the recommendation of the 14th Finance Commission (FC), ₹2,00,292 crore was transferred to the PRIs during 2015-16 to 2019-20. The 14th FC, and many others before it, had underlined the need for auditing panchayat accounts as the wisdom, faithfulness and propriety of expenditure were a matter of nagging concern. Guidelines were issued by the Finance Ministry in 2015 to the effect that the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) would examine the release and transfer of the grants-in aid and expenditure in Panchayats and municipalities.

The 15th FC, while recommending allocation of ₹60,750 crore for 2020-21 to the three tiers of the PRIs, comprising the district panchayats, block panchayats and GPs, laid emphasis on ensuring timely availability of audited accounts online so as to strengthen their financial management. Hence, AuditOnline facilitates online and offline checking of accounts of the PRIs with a view to improving transparency and accountability in the utilisation of public money. The accounts of 20 per cent GPs would be audited on a pilot basis and scaled up to 100 per cent in the financial year 2021-22. Owing to the online digital payment mechanism, now integrated with eGramSwaraj, the GPs were able to make online payments out of the 14th FC grants. In fact, 1.52 lakh GPs were on the platform and 1.04 lakh GPs made online payments during 2019-20.

Notably, AuditOnline will ease up access to records which can be monitored at the district, State and Union level. It can enable uploading of photos of the work done and geo-tagging of projects to facilitate physical inspection and remote verification of the assets. This will help reduce costs, ensure quicker reviews and sound documentation and enhance environmental sustainability. The timely availability of records was a major issue in the offline system but in the online audit system, the auditors will be able to see all documents related to work approval and payments.

AuditOnline also facilitates online and offline scrutiny of accounts and maintains the past records of the auditee. Plus, the information would be available in public domain. Fully configurable, it is capable of depicting any type of workflow and mapping seamlessly the auditor/auditee engagement and interaction and audit observation tags. Further, its Dynamic Form Designer allows drawing of the forms for case record and fact sheet easily and generation and download of various graphical reports for analysis and monitoring, based on customisable report templates. Another and yet more significant advantage is the fact that the monitoring authorities would get notified instantaneously via e-mail/SMS/System-based alerts at various trigger points, enabling concurrent analysis, mid-course correction and better monitoring. A greater responsibility has been given to the State Accountant General (AG) under AuditOnline rules. The AG, representative of the CAG, shall identify the District Local Fund Auditor (DLFO) for each area. The entire audit process — starting with the identification of the DLFO, audit planning, recording of entry and exit meetings by the auditor, concurrence and approval of the meetings, communication of the draft audit to the auditee, generation of audit report, review of the response and action taken there on, by the auditee with clear timelines — are all unambiguously outlined. The audit report shall be provided to the GP by December 31 every year for consideration and corrective action.

Despite numerous accruable benefits, there are apparent hurdles and technical glitches. How will the online audit take off if the books of accounts are not complete, leaving aside the issue of high-speed internet and uninterrupted connectivity? It's only when the money is spent, brought on account and the accounts closed, a prerequisite for any audit, that the online audit can be undertaken.

However, the Union Government has rolled out a robust and much-desired architecture for the audit of PRIs. In fact, 11 States (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Telangana, Tripura, and Uttarakhand) have already provided their configuration details and others will follow suit. Extensive online training and hands-on sessions are being carried out with the States. With the successful operation of AuditOnline, hopefully, the image of PRIs will improve with the expanded arch of accountability, encompassing all the three tiers of India's multi-layered and now expanding digital democracy.

(The writer is former Additional Secretary Lok Sabha and an author)

MOBILE APPLICATIONS DEVELOPED AND OWNED BY COMPANIES IN CHINA CONTINUE TO THREATEN OUR NATIONAL SECURITY, FOREIGN POLICY AND ECONOMY.

—US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP



CHINA URGES THE US TO CORRECT ITS WRONGDOINGS, STOP POLITICISING ECONOMIC ISSUES AND CRACKING DOWN ON RELATED FIRMS.

—CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON WANG WENBIN

# Embrace the circular economy

As nations move towards a post-pandemic fiscal recovery, they must adopt strategies for long-term sustainable development and create resilient economies



SHILPI KAPUR BAKSHI



PRAHLAD TEWARI

**T**he pandemic and the response to it by various governments around the world have posed unprecedented challenges, the effect of which would be felt for decades to come. People and economies are suffering not only due to the huge loss of lives but also from the slowdown of economic activities during the lockdown. According to the Union Minister of Road Transport Nitin Gadkari, the contagion is expected to cause a loss of over ₹10 lakh crore to India's economy. The World Bank, too, estimates that 12 million people in India could be pushed into poverty. While initially, the most visible impact of the crisis was on the healthcare sector due to shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), ventilators, critical medical supplies and healthcare professionals trained in the handling of a contagion, its impact is now being felt on the free movement of people, goods and services, too.

A circular economy is based on the principles of reducing our waste and pollution throughout the lifecycle stages, keeping products and materials in use for long and regenerating natural systems. Circular economy-based concepts, such as cascaded reuse of resources to design reusable masks to substitute single-use masks, supported by Government-formulated guidelines and awareness about the same, are steps in the right direction.

The global market for refurbished medical devices is also predicted to witness significant growth. Recently, fuel cell manufacturer Bloom Energy started to refurbish ventilators to meet the supply gap in hospitals in the US. Due to COVID-19, organisations preferred work from home (WFH) and educational institutes preferred to learn from home using virtual platforms for meetings and online classes, which led to an unprecedented surge in demand for refurbished laptops. This cascaded use of refurbished laptops would also be critical in filling the void that has emerged in supporting online education to rural and urban poor students. Measures like these will create new market opportunities, increase the use of existing assets and reduce the pressure on the environment created by the demand for virgin raw materials.

Integrating circularity in various governments' recovery agenda and strategies thus assumes importance. In April, the City of Amsterdam launched its Circular 2020-2025 strategy, which outlines the actions it would take to cut down the use of new raw materials to half by 2030. The local government also considers this strategy to be the basis for economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19. Similarly, the European Union (EU) and South Korea have both adopted "Green Deals" as central pillars to their economic recoveries, both leveraging regenerative models and circular economy principles. The deployment of idle railway coaches by Indian Railways as isolation wards during the surge of Coronavirus infections is adapting the approach to use existing infrastructure to an extent possible. This provides an opportunity for other governments to integrate resilience, low carbon and sustainable growth thinking into their recoveries by avoiding short-term emission-intensive projects.

Rethinking the mostly linear global supply chain systems by adopting a circular economy as a mode of production can help economies withstand supply disruptions like those experienced in the current pandemic. This was particularly visible in the case of stressed food production and distribution, which was experienced during the hastily-implemented lockdowns. By creating new and shorter supply chain connections between producers and con-

“THE TIME IS RIPE FOR US TO RETHINK OUR CONSUMPTION PATTERNS, TO BUILD IN RESILIENCE, CIRCULARITY AND AN EFFICIENT RURAL-URBAN CONNECTION TO REDUCE THE VULNERABILITY OF OUR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND MOVE TOWARDS AN ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT”



sumers, we can ensure a continuous supply of essential goods in vital sectors and help improve resilience through stock availability and competitiveness while not giving up the commitment to achieving the UN-set Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In order to support the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, newer ecosystems need to be envisaged that are based on local, shorter and more distributed supply chains via localised material sourcing. At the start of the pandemic in India, the availability of PPEs was critically low, owing to non-availability of local manufacturers, long gestation period to import their machines and the high cost. In line with the spirit of Vocal for Local and with various Government initiatives, India is today the second-largest manufacturer of PPE body overalls within a short span of four months. There is also a need to engage in collaborative consumption to share resources by replacing traditional ownership of products with lending, borrowing and the availability of repair services to facilitate reuse. This would help reduce panic buying. For instance, the assurance of the Delhi Government to provide "Pulse Oximeters" for monitoring oxygen levels of patients undergoing home isolation is a positive step in this direction. Acceptance of such "pay for services" rather than "owning facility options" would gain momentum if hygiene is ensured. Local waste sites can be turned into resource centres that undertake recovery and recycling of plastics.

Circular innovations can address manufacturing and supply chain shortages within the healthcare sector, too, where circular knitted fabric (washable and reusable) can be used to produce non-medical protective face masks. The need for investment in technology for designing responsible packaging solutions that maintain food safety and quality standards and prevent contamination can enhance the sustainability of the home delivery ser-

vices that people are increasingly relying upon. Such solutions could also help continue efforts to reduce the usage of plastics and styrofoam. Several initiatives by various Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies and collaborations involving various stakeholders have been done across the globe to minimise single-use plastics.

In addition, enhancing material productivity also plays a significant role in addressing the diminishing cost competitiveness of industries (such as the Indian automobile sector in comparison to China, Singapore, Indonesia, and Bangladesh) due to high material cost. The circular economy emphasises reuse, and through this has the potential to generate not only environmental benefits but cost benefits, too, and create new revenue opportunities. For example, the focus on manufacturing durable goods would help them to generate income from rentals, repairs and refurbishment while reducing the environmental footprint.

In the COVID-19 crisis, digital solutions have promoted virtual workspaces, a mobile Government and a multitude of platforms to monitor and trace infections. Digitalisation has not only been limited to medical solutions or WFH set-ups but has been an instrument in supporting online education modes, too.

Digital technology can play a role in creating city and village systems that are regenerative and restorative by offering dematerialisation opportunities, increasing our knowledge and understanding of data on the lifecycle of materials, people and external conditions, allowing for more informed decisions based on accurate data. This would help close the loop of material cycles and contribute to keeping products/materials in use for a longer period of time.

For example, digital technology can help aggregate local marketplaces dealing in secondary and alternative materials and formalise the informal sector waste-pick-

ers. Real-time tracking technologies provide information on where a product ends up and how it will be reused or recycled.

However, despite the many opportunities that circular thinking presents, ongoing efforts in this direction have been hit due to the pandemic. For example, in the waste management sector where significant work was done to manage plastic waste, many efforts have been halted during the lockdown, particularly in the private recycling space.

Recycling plants are mostly shut or are operating at limited capacity with a lot of the informal sector workers, who played the role of aggregators (such as the junk collectors) leaving urban centres for their native places. Procurement of recyclable waste has also become a challenge. Among plastics, virgin plastic may become even cheaper than secondary raw material plastic due to falling prices of hydrocarbon fuels resulting from the current low demand. This will also affect the economic viability of many plastic recyclers. Efforts would be required to stimulate the demand for recycled materials and close the price gap between virgin and recycled plastics.

As countries step towards economic recovery after COVID-19, they should undertake circular economy strategies for long-term sustainable development and for creating resilient economies. The BRICS nations recently acknowledged the heightening of social vulnerabilities and job losses due to the pandemic and have emphasised on the need for improving the environment and promoting the circular economy in national plans as steps towards recovery. The time is ripe for us to rethink our consumption patterns, to build in resilience, circularity and an efficient rural-urban connection to reduce the vulnerability of our economic and social systems and move towards an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

(Bakshi is Senior Fellow and Tewari is Fellow and Area Convenor, TERI)

# Maintain a healthy digital diet

During this period of social distancing, we should use technology to increase our independence and harness our inner potential



PRAKRITI PODDAR

**T**he Coronavirus pandemic has made social distancing the new normal and the majority of us are becoming increasingly dependent on digital technology. Pushed into an uncertain future, we are spending more time to digitally connect with people, work, shop, keep ourselves informed and even entertained.

While a digitally-mediated daily life can keep us safe from the risk of infection, too much exposure to it can harm our mental health. There has been a lot of awareness raised about the impact of exposing oneself to negative influences on social media and the news. The more information we receive

the more insufferable the pandemic becomes. We have seen people feel hopeless and helpless as a result of all the information they absorb and unfortunately, sink into deeper mental health issues.

Fake news and conspiracy theories can induce fear and lead us to either fight, freeze or fold up. If you are one of the fighters, the information on digital feeds will help you take action in serving others, hence, limiting your online time.

You may also minimise the understanding of the situation and label all those people, who err at the side of precaution, as hysterical and not abide by the safety rules. Thus, putting yourself and others in danger. If you freeze, then you will lock yourself down and if you fold, you will need support to uplift your mental health.

At all costs, people must keep their digital activity healthy during the outbreak. Let us take a look at three evidence-based tips for a healthy digital diet during the outbreak.

**Take control:** It is natural to feel

powerless and scared in the face of a pandemic but people can use digital technology to regain control and give themselves a degree of autonomy over their life.

This is critical as having control promotes emotional well-being. So, people must think about ways in which they can use digital technology to help them do it. It can be something as simple as using the technology at their disposal to make plans, manage their schedule, organise activities with others and even do online shopping at websites where they get to exert greater choice.

The key is to use digital technology actively instead of letting themselves get passively guided by algorithms. People must think of digital technology as a tool that allows them to extend their autonomy and makes it possible for them to develop strategies to cope better. For instance, people can consider limiting passive screen time and balance passive viewing with more interactive screen time — playing educational games, making

YouTube videos, coding a website — where they are in control.

**Nurture relationships:** While social distancing is good for our physical health, isolation is not good for our mental health. So, we must use this opportunity to digitally connect with old friends, family members or acquaintances that we somehow lost touch with. We must also nurture our existing relationships by scheduling regular chats online and using digital devices to spread positive news, express gratitude to the people serving us and helping others.

For instance, people can order food and groceries online for friends, family members and neighbours who are not digitally-enabled. Helping others can give life more purpose and allay anxieties. Organise group chats and regular virtual meet-ups — seeing a familiar face, even on a phone screen, can be reassuring. People must use this time as an opportunity to rebuild affiliations with those who matter.

**Be smarter:** Our well-being is also influenced by our competence, ability

to rise above challenges, take smart decisions and experience a sense of achievement and degree of success. Hence, people must use this opportunity to take online courses, learn new skills and do things that engage them.

People must consider using digital technology to look after their body and mind during this period of confinement. They may not be able to hit the gym but they can use digital reminders and prompts to move and exercise more — even if they are confined inside a restricted environment. People can consider downloading a nutrition app, exercise, mindfulness or relaxation app. They must think about how they can use digital technology to improve exercise, sleep and diet regimes.

People can use digital technology to be smarter about their information diet, too. Use fact-checking services to counter conspiracy theories, unfounded rumours, urban legends and misinformation. Reduce information intake to one or two trustworthy sources. Most importantly, get infor-

mation from reputable sources instead of regurgitating what they read on social media.

**The way towards digital well-being:** Our increased digital dependency can be of benefit to our well-being instead of a hazard. We need to use our screens positively and promote greater autonomy, relatedness and competence. To be balanced, people must schedule their downtime, off-screen time, exercise time and fun time. This will form the core of their emotional well-being and hold them in good stead.

People must remember not to reach for their phone as soon as they wake up. They must give themselves the time to get ready, eat and then get to their device. We should use technology to increase our independence, further our well-being and harness our inner potential. Doing so will not only help us get through the pandemic but will also ensure that we emerge stronger from it.

(The writer is Director of a Wellness company and heads a foundation)



FOREIGN EYE



## YETI A BOON TO TOURISM

Taunting anthropologists and researchers, the elusive Yeti continues to confound science. Ecologist Daniel Taylor found a trail of footprints during a 1983 search of the Barun but eventually concluded that it is more likely to be a bear. Yetis still court controversy as we saw recently with the aborted Visit Nepal Year 2020 sculptures, but they also boost tourism. (Nepali Times editorial)



CAPSULE



Sobha Q1 profit plunges 93 pc at Rs 6.6 cr

**NEW DELHI:** Realty firm Sobha on Friday reported a 93 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit at Rs 6.6 crore for the quarter ended June as sales and construction activities were stalled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Its net profit stood at Rs 90.6 crore in the year-ago period. Total income fell to Rs 359.3 crore in the first quarter of this fiscal from Rs 1,193.1 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, the company said in a regulatory filing. Bengaluru-based Sobha is a leading real estate firm in the country. Shares of the company were trading at Rs 224.30 apiece, up 1.24 per cent from their previous close on BSE.



Gold futures rise on spot demand

**NEW DELHI:** Gold prices on Friday rose by Rs 75 to Rs 55,920 per 10 gram in futures trade as speculators created fresh positions on firm spot demand. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for October delivery traded higher by Rs 75, or 0.13 per cent, at Rs 55,920 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 16,468 lots. Fresh positions built up by participants led to the rise in gold prices, analysts said. Gold prices traded 0.14 per cent higher at USD 2,072.20 per ounce in New York.



DICV's BharatBenz Exchange for CV segment

**MUMBAI:** Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV) on Friday announced the launch of used vehicle business 'BharatBenz Exchange'. Under this, a customer can exchange used commercial vehicles (CVs) of any brand for used or new BharatBenz vehicles at dealerships across India. BharatBenz Exchange will provide buyers with a carefully-picked pool of used trucks that have undergone thorough quality checks, made available through its nationwide dealership network, the company said. "As the number of BharatBenz owners rapidly increases, we feel it is the right time to tap the massive potential presented by the used commercial vehicle segment. We look forward to delivering BharatBenz's superior quality, service and total cost of ownership (TCO) to an even larger customer base," said Satyakam Arya, managing director and chief executive officer (CEO), DICV. The used vehicle business will supplement the company's existing new vehicle sales model by offering an exchange platform, DICV said. The experts at BharatBenz will also support used vehicle buyers (both individuals and companies).

# Global shares skid amid virus woes, China-US trade tensions

PNS ■ TOKYO

Global shares were mostly lower on Friday in lackluster trading, as trade tensions between the US and China overshadowed optimism about more fiscal stimulus for the ailing US economy. Investors were also awaiting a US report on jobs later Friday for another gauge of the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. US shares have been rising as investors wait for Congress and the White House to reach a hoped-for deal on more aid for the American economy. France's CAC slipped 0.2% in early trading to 4,873.55, while Germany's DAX edged up nearly 0.2% to 12,611.50. Britain's FTSE 100 inched



down less than 0.1% to 6,025.79. US shares were set to drift lower with Dow futures down 0.4% at 27,116. S&P 500 futures were also lower, down 0.4%, at 3,331.62. Asian benchmarks appeared to be still steeped in worries

about the growing number of coronavirus cases in some areas, and the painful impact of lockdowns, especially in Southeast Asia. "The hope is for a smooth recovery as lockdowns ease, but the fear is that global 'second wave' risks and rising US-China tensions may

throw a spanner at ... recovery in the works," said Hayaki Narita at Mizuho Bank in Singapore. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 slipped 0.4% to finish at 22,329.94, while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 sank 0.6% to 6,004.80. South Korea's Kospi edged 0.4% higher to 2,351.67. Hong Kong's Hang Seng slipped 1.6% to 24,531.62, while the Shanghai Composite lost 1.0% to 3,354.04. Chinese technology shares were shaken by President Donald Trump's decision to issue executive orders banning the popular messaging app WeChat and short video app TikTok from the U.S. Shares in Tencent Holdings, owner of WeChat, plunged 10% but ended the day 5% lower.

# Sensex, Nifty end flat on muted global cues

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Domestic equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty ended flat on Friday as muted cues from global markets and spiking COVID-19 cases in the country kept investors on the edge. After touching a low of 37,787.38 during the day, the BSE Sensex settled just 15.12 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 38,040.57. Similarly, the NSE Nifty rose 13.90 points or 0.12 per cent to finish at 11,214.05. Asian Paints was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging over 4 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank and Maruti. On the other hand, Titan,



HCL Tech, Infosys, Sun Pharma and M&M were among the laggards. According to traders, market sentiment turned choppy tracking weak cues from global indices amid reports that the Trump administration was considering a proposal to crackdown on Chinese companies listed in the US. Spiking COVID-19 cases

too kept investors jittery, they said. Registering over 60,000 cases in 24 hours for the first time, India's COVID-19 tally galloped past 20 lakh on Friday. The number of cases around the world linked to the disease has crossed 1.9 crore. Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo ended in the red, while Seoul finished with gains. Stock exchanges in Europe were trading on a negative note in early deals. Global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.86 per cent lower at USD 44.70 per barrel. On the currency front, the rupee ended almost flat at 74.93 against the US dollar.

## NBU varsity to offer course on Tea Sciences

PNS ■ SILIGURI (WB)

North Bengal University (NBU) in Siliguri will introduce Tea Sciences as a full-time undergraduate course from this academic year, a senior official of the institute has said. No other university in the country, having general subjects in Arts and Science streams, has Tea Sciences as a subject and NBU is the trendsetter, Nupur Das, secretary of the varsity's undergraduate council, said. "The Tea Sciences course will help generate employment opportunities for students as several tea estates are located in north Bengal," she told reporters on Thursday. "This will set an example. We don't have any information about any other university in the country offering similar courses," she said.

## Coal India logs 22% growth in e-auction

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Coal India Ltd (CIL) on Friday said it logged a 21.5 per cent growth in coal allocation at 19.76 million tonnes (MT) under the four e-auction windows during the April-June quarter. In the corresponding quarter a year ago, the fuel allocation by the PSU under all the four windows of e-auction was 16.26 MT, a CIL statement said. The four categories of e-auction are spot e-auction of raw coal, special forward e-auction for power producers, exclusive e-auction for non-power sector and special spot auction. Booking by non-power sector, under an exclusive e-auction to it, witnessed a three-fold rise during April-June 2020 over the same period in 2019.



CIL has allocated a total of 6.66 MT during the referred period to this sector against 2.2 MT in the year-ago quarter, with a volume increase of 4.46 MT. Under spot e-auction, the maharatna coal miner had offered 24.4 MT during the first quarter of FY'21, up by 149 per cent from 9.8 MT in the comparable period of 2019. However, amid the COVID-19 led crimp in demand since March, the actual booking volume was marginally down at 6.9 MT as compared to 7.4 MT in the same quarter last year.

## Exim Bank extends \$250 mn to Mozambique

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) on Friday said it has extended a USD 250-million (about Rs 1,870 crore) line of credit (LOC) to Mozambique for improving power supply quality in the country. The agreement to this effect was signed on August 3 through exchange between Saroj Khuntia, general manager, Exim Bank, and Adriano Isaia Ubisse, national directorate of treasury, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Mozambique. Exim Bank has now in place 264 LOCs, covering 62 countries across regions including Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with credit commitments of around USD 25.98 billion, available for financing exports from India.

# Emami reports over 1 pc rise in Q1 profit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Homegrown FMCG firm Emami Ltd on Friday reported a 1.17 per cent increase in its consolidated profit-after-tax (PAT) to Rs 39.58 crore for the first quarter ended June. The company had posted a PAT of Rs 39.12 crore during the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal, Emami said in a regulatory filing. However, its revenue from operations during the quarter under review was down 25.79



per cent to Rs 481.34 crore as against Rs 648.64 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. "Emami posted a resilient

**The company had posted a PAT of Rs 39.12 crore during the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal, Emami said in a regulatory filing**

performance with improved margins in Q1FY21, defying the challenging times that the COVID-19 pandemic present-

ed," said Emami. According to the Kolkata-headquartered firm, supply chain, sales improved considerably in May and in June and revenues were even better with a high single-digit growth over the previous year. "During the quarter, Emami increased its gross margins by 230 bps at 66.5 per cent and EBIDTA margins by 490 bps at 25.5 per cent. Profit-after-tax increased by 1 per cent and PAT margins increased by 220 bps.

# Murugappa Group to invest Rs 700 cr in CG Power

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Murugappa Group firm Tube Investments of India Ltd (TIIL) has agreed to invest Rs 700 crore in CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd for a 51 per cent stake, the scam-hit company said on Friday. Tube Investments of India Ltd will be issued 64.25 crore shares at Rs 8.56 apiece aggregating to Rs 550 crore, CG Power said in a regulatory filing. Also, TIIL will also invest Rs 150 crore in the company over the next 18 months in the form of buying warrants that can be converted into equity shares. The Rs 36,900-crore Murugappa Group, which also



had an engineering arm, had made a non-binding offer to invest in CG Power. The board of CG Power at its meeting on Friday approved the investment, the filing said. The investment is, however, subject to TIIL being declared the winner of the Swiss challenge process to be undertaken by the lenders of CG Power by August 28. Under the Swiss challenge,

**Tube Investments of India Ltd will be issued 64.25 crore shares at Rs 8.56 apiece aggregating to Rs 550 crore, CG Power said in a regulatory filing**

other potential investors can make a counteroffer subject to the first investor (TIIL) have the right to match the counter offer. The investment is also subject to lenders accepting one-time settlement and restructuring of debt, the filing said.

## Netflix now available in Hindi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Netflix on Friday launched its user interface in Hindi, saying the move will enable members who prefer the language to easily access their choice of Indian and international films as well as series. The Hindi user interface is available across devices on mobile, TV and the web, it said in a statement. "Netflix members can switch to the Hindi user interface from the Language option in the 'Manage Profiles' section on their desktop, TV or mobile browsers. On Netflix, members can set up to five profiles in each account," it said.

# Rupee settles nearly flat at 74.93 against dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee ended almost flat at 74.93 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday due to a caution prevailing in the forex market in view of mounting coronavirus cases and US-China trade tensions. Starting off on a tepid note, the rupee fell to a low of 75.04, but recovered slightly thereafter and moved in a narrow band throughout the session. It finally settled at 74.93, gaining 1 paisa over its previous close. On Thursday too, the rupee had closed steady after the



Reserve Bank maintained a status quo in its policy rates. Meanwhile, the US dollar index rose 0.32 per cent to 93.08. Analysts said forex market sentiment was mainly guided by growing US-China trade tensions and mounting coronavirus cases in the country.



## M&M Q1 profit falls 94 pc at Rs 55 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Homegrown diversified group Mahindra & Mahindra on Friday reported 94 per cent decline in consolidated profit at Rs 54.64 crore for June quarter 2020, adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The company had posted a profit after tax of Rs 894.11 crore in the same period last fiscal, M&M said in a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations during the quarter under review stood at Rs 16,321.34 crore as against Rs 26,041.02 crore in the year-ago period, down 37 per cent, it added. The automotive segment posted a revenue of Rs 6,508.6 crore in the first quarter, down from Rs 13,547.84 crore in the same period a year ago, the company said. Farm equipment segment's revenue was Rs 4,906.92 crore as against Rs 6,077.9 crore in the same quarter last fiscal. Revenue from financial services stood at Rs 3,031.69 crore as compared to Rs 2,822.03 crore in first quarter last year.

# Franklin Templeton MF's schemes receive Rs 4,280-cr since closure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund's six shut schemes have received Rs 4,280 crore from maturities, pre-payments and coupon payments since the announcement of their closure in April. The amount has been received without the ability to efficiently monetise assets, Franklin Templeton Asset Management (India) President Sanjay Sapre said in a letter to investors on Wednesday. The schemes will endeavour to accelerate monetisation post



the successful completion of the e-voting exercise and the unit holder meets, he added. "From April 24 till July 31, 2020, the schemes have received Rs 4,280 crore from maturities, pre-payments, and

coupons," Sapre said. Franklin Templeton shut six debt mutual fund schemes on April 23, citing redemption pressure and lack of liquidity in the bond market. As on July 31, while two schemes were already cash positive, the borrowing levels in the other schemes continued to come down steadily, Sapre said. Franklin India Low Duration Fund and Franklin India Credit Risk Fund now have an outstanding borrowing of only 1 per cent and 4 per cent of their AUM respectively.

# India's first 'Kisan Rail' flagged off

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Union minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Friday flagged off the country's first 'Kisan Rail' train from Deolali in Nashik to Danapur in Bihar, through video-conferencing. Speaking on the occasion, the Union minister for agriculture and farmers welfare said Kisan Rail will help in transporting agricultural produce, especially perishable commodities, at cheaper rates and aid farmers in getting the right price for their crops. Tomar, who also holds Rural Development and Panchayati Raj portfolios, said the Indian



**The 'Kisan Rail' was flagged off from Deolali in Nashik to Danapur in Bihar**

Railways had operated 4,610 trains on 96 routes, ensuring supply of food items across the country amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, who presided over the

event, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had planned various measures to free farmers from years of bondage and these will make farmers of the country 'atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) and prosperous.

Minister of state for railways Suresh Angadi, Leader of Opposition in Maharashtra assembly Devendra Fadnis, Maharashtra Minister Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Chhagan Bhujbal were among the dignitaries who attended the virtual ceremony. 'Kisan Rail' is a weekly service that will depart from Deolali every Friday at 11 am and reach Danapur the next day at 6.45 pm. On the return journey, the train will depart from Danapur every Sunday at 12 pm and reach Deolali at 7.45 pm the next day.



# Hyderabad



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Saturday  
August 8, 2020

Y.S. Chowdhary, a people's representative originally born in Kanchikacherla Village of Andhra Pradesh has always advocated on issues of concern and urgency in the city of Hyderabad building his unique legitimacy and credibility. Also known for his entrepreneurship skills, he once headed the Sujana Group of Industries before retiring from business to step foot into politics. He's been an essential catalyst between the people he's been continually drawing attention towards him and his tremendous work across the city. Let's learn more from the man himself on his fondness for Hyderabad as he opens up with *The Pioneer's* SHIKHA DUGGAL

## ASSOCIATION WITH HYDERABAD

My family has a long association with the city of Hyderabad. Initially, my grandfather has worked as an IPS officer in the formative years of the city after our independence. Though I was born in coastal Andhra I had to complete my school education in Hyderabad as my father was a senior engineer back then. To finish my post-graduation in machine tool engineering, I moved to Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, and then in 1986, I found Sujana Group of Industries, which drove me to a change with innovations where I wanted to develop my identity in the market. I entered politics in 2010, representing the Telugu Desam Party and currently have been appointed as a second time Rajya Sabha member. Knowing politics helps us make an informed decision as a voter, leading to an effective pathway of citizenship.

## MOVING TO A NEW CITY

I do know people who have certain apprehensions about the city before they move over, but more often than not, they are short-lived. The fact that most of the non-local public and private employees opted to settle in this city after their retirement proves this. Many people who move to other cities expect things to be exactly how they were when they left their hometown. This, I can assure you, will not be the case. Your old friends will likely move away, you may miss the old spots or perhaps your neighbourhood. These feelings bring nostalgia with it but just make sure you make plenty

of memories after you move to the new city.

## HYDERABAD VS OTHER CITIES

I have also resided in Coimbatore. Although I have been travelling extensively within the country as well as abroad, I find that no city can be compared to Hyderabad because of its unique culture and moderate climate. Having a vibrant historical legacy the royalty is visible even today in the culture of Hyderabad, there are iconic architectural structures that stand as testaments to the city's glorious history. The culture is starkly visible in people's lifestyle. Hyderabad also experiences occasional downpours making the weather cool and breezy.

## ONE THING THAT COMES INTO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF HYDERABAD

This city has diverse people around with different ethnicities but all of us live together in peace having a friendly attitude. They work in different industries trying to shine the city's name both nationally and internationally, be it politics, entertainment, business, technology, fraternity, etc. Many natives still prefer traditional norms in order to promote south Indian culture. Also, the Hyderabad cuisine is a broad collection of rice and meat dishes with a continental touch and spices and herbs.

## FONDEST MEMORIES HERE

I remember going all the way to Charminar and Gulzar Houz area with friends to buy kites so we could participate in the kite festival. I am extremely fond of vintage cars, hence, have enjoyed driving those on city roads.

# HYD, BIZ, POLITICS & MORE WITH Y.S. CHOWDHARY

## POLITICAL CAREER IN HYDERABAD

My political tenure which I am thoroughly enjoying today, I owe it to Hyderabad. This city is socially, economically, and politically dynamic. I learnt a lot about business, social service, and the art of politics due to interaction with several entrepreneurs and leaders from different parties.

## DO YOU THINK LAND-MARK DECISIONS OF RAM MANDIR AND ABROGATION OF ARTICLE 370 HAS REDEFINED NATIONAL POLITICS? HOW IS YOUR POLITICAL PARTY HELPING IN MISSING THE COVID DANGERS ACROSS THE CITY?



Undoubtedly, the abrogation of Article 370 brought the people of Jammu and Kashmir into the mainstream of our country. Though the country spent several crores of rupees during the last 70 years on Kashmiris, they still remained poor and away from their motherland. It will pave the way for industrialisation and economic prosperity of Kashmiris and this will be realised soon by the country. We started celebrating our independence day celebrations over there by unfurling our Indian flag unlike hoisting two flags before abrogation. The Ram Mandir issue is a settled subject now and it will definitely bring the much-awaited religious harmony in the country.

The COVID problem is not specifically confined to our Telangana. It is a big problem across the world. Within the given resources and health facilities available in the city, it's being handled well under the leadership of our state government and beloved Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi Ji.

## LIKES AND DISLIKES ABOUT HYDERABAD?

I have nothing specific to dislike, but I love everything Hyderabadis showcase especially the language and 'chalta hai attitude'. The Hyderabad dialect is used extensively over here, they may not speak perfect Hindi, but there's a great blend of languages.

## LOVE FOR HYDERABADI FOOD AND SHOPPING

The dum cooking of Biryani, relatives love catering to their cravings for Biryani when in town. It's the best-selling variant of our city followed with garnishing of fried onions and coriander served with brinjal curry, raita, and khumani ka meetha.

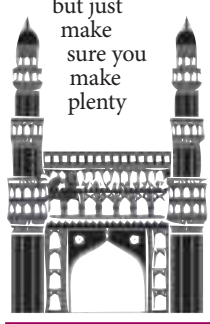
This city, which is also an extremely popular place for street shopping, you can shop to your heart's content and then shop a little more! Be it silver junk jewelry, dazzling footwear, bags, an array of women's clothing you will find it all here and are bound to find something that attracts you immensely.

## WHAT'S HYDERABAD TO YOU?

An amalgamation of vibrant Hyderabad culture, hard work, and a friendly way of life.

My political tenure which I am thoroughly enjoying today, I owe it to Hyderabad. This city is socially, economically, and politically dynamic. I learnt a lot about business, social service, and the art of politics due to interaction with several entrepreneurs and leaders from different parties.

Y.S. CHOWDHARY



# HYDERABOND

# Starting out and slaying, young

The lockdown has been a time of reflection, rest, or procrastination to some. To a few others, it has been a time of introspection, the discovery of hidden talents, honing old ones, and more. Here's the story of a teenager who made the most of the lockdown to do what he does best — write!

While talking to *The Pioneer's* RACHEL DAMMALA, he shares about his latest novel, which also happens to be the first one yet on COVID across the globe, his passion to speak to youngsters and more



When you hear about someone who's a TEDx, Josh Talk Speaker, International Youth Mentor, and an awarded author, you would picture a man to be middle-aged, with a family, leading a group of youngsters. You're wrong! All of 18, Yash Tiwari is all that and more. His most recent feat is his having authored the world's first novel on the ongoing Coronavirus outbreak titled *PANDEMIC 2020 - Rife Of The Virus*.

The narrative he presents through the novel — a tribute to the warriors of the COVID-19, along with a lot many other aspects deserves accolades not just because it's one of the world's first novel based on the pandemic or because he authored it at the age of 18, but more because of the story it tells. And the final nail is that he has written the novel within a record 30 days, while his first novel was written within 22 days!

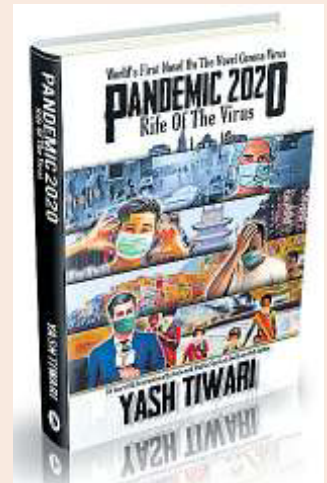
What exactly is the premise of the story? "The story is about an impoverished boy in China, a helpless doctor in the United States, a stranded traveler in Italy, and a blooming journalist in India," shares Yash Tiwari. *Pandemic 2020* is a harrowing look at how the pandemic

turned the lives of everyone around the world upside down. It presents an immersive perspective on the privations, atrocities, and horrors that the unanticipated global pandemic brought to the world. "The story is a globally-interconnecting tale, intriguingly blending majorly affected regions around the world through characters facing the severity of one common pandemic, COVID-19. It narrates the story of how important the platforms of media and news are in a time of the global pandemic, how medical workers sacrifice their lives in such horrendous situations, how the impoverished and poor ones suffer the most at the hands of such an ailment, and how the stranded travellers are unable to survive through the clutches of the outbreak right now," Yash adds.

Interestingly, the young author's first book, *A Celebration In Tribulation* was also based on a medical ailment — *The Creutzfeldt Jakob Disease*. For the same novel, Yash was awarded the 'Author of the Year award' by NE8x, '100 Inspiring Author Award' by T.I.A, was nominated for 'Best Debut Author' award by ICMR and was also bestowed with the coveted TCC REX 'Karamveer Chakra Award' and 'GYLF Fellowship' by iCongo in

association with United Nations.

What does the 18-year-old do when he is not writing stories? "I speak to young people. I have delivered four TEDx talks and Josh Talks, and frequently deliver International and National talks, sessions and workshops," Yash informs. As a young public speaker and youth mentor, he is frequently invited



to deliver talks and sessions in various schools, colleges, Literature Festivals, events, and seminars. He recently delivered an International webinar in Africa for the people of Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, and other

regions. He also delivered a web-based interview recently in New York City on his journey. He has delivered talks in various states all around the nation.

On the response his new book has been receiving, Yash says, "I've no words to describe my gratitude for the way people have been accepting my novel and me with open arms. Positive reviews have been flooding in for some time in quite a good number, and all readers have been appreciating the fact that they're able to connect with the story very well."

He is currently working at MyCaptain as a mentor, at TheClimbers and IIM Bangalore incubated and United Nations recognised company, where he teaches youngsters from all walks of life including civil engineers, medical students, academicians, professionals, etc.

*Pandemic 2020 - Rife Of The Virus* is available Internationally in paperback as well as e-book edition On Amazon, Kindle, Google Play, iBooks, and Kobo and hardcover in India. The acclaimed theatrical trailer of *Pandemic 2020* is available to be watched on his website. So what are you waiting for? Go grab a copy of yourself, as Yash says, "rush", because they're selling like hot-cakes!



- 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.



# The story idea itself is tricky: NAG ASHWIN ON HIS NEXT WITH PRABHAS

**F**ilmmaker Nag Ashwin, who got the nod of Prabhas for a pan-India project, says that he is really excited to take it in front of the cameras. "Without revealing the story or the genre, all I can say is that it's going to be really exciting because I've been waiting for this for a long time. It's (the film) very experimental in terms of story. Forget about the budget and technical side, just the story idea itself is tricky. To narrate it properly so that it reaches everyone is a challenge," the director said in a recent interview.

Earlier, speaking to *10 TV*, Ashwin said nobody other than

Prabhas could've featured in the story. "There is no other actor who can shoulder the story other than him presently. Not just budget-wise... I'm talking about someone headlining the story as it's filled with intense emotions," he had said.

Touted to be a futuristic scientific-thriller set against the backdrop of an imaginary third world war, the as-yet untitled film was supposed to roll towards the year-end but with Prabhas' *Radhe Shyam* delayed due to COVID-19 outbreak, Ashwin's film, a Vyjayanthi Movies production, will begin next year. Deepika Padukone has been signed on to romance Prabhas in the film.



## Paruchuri Venkateswara Rao bereaved

**S**tar writer and actor Paruchuri Venkateswara Rao's wife Vijayalakshmi passed away in Hyderabad on Friday morning following a heart attack. She was 74. "With grief I announce the death of Paruchuri Vijayalakshmi due to a heart attack today morning," team Paruchuri Gopalakrishna tweeted on Friday. Gopalakrishna is Venkateswara Rao's younger brother and one

half of the celebrated Paruchuri Brothers duo. Megastar Chiranjeevi, who shares a long-standing working relationship with Paruchuri Brothers, upon knowing the bad news immediately rang Venkateswara Rao and expressed his condolences to the writer and his family. "I share a good bond with Venkateswara Rao's family. I wish Vijayalakshmi *garu's* soul rests in peace," he said. MAA too expressed its grief on her death.

## MAHESH BABU APPEALS TO HIS FANS TO AVOID SOCIAL GATHERINGS ON HIS BIRTHDAY

**L**ike his colleagues Ram Charan and Jr NTR sometime back, superstar Mahesh Babu has appealed to his fans to steer clear of large-scale social gatherings as they celebrate his 45th birthday this Sunday. The actor, who commands a following second to none, took to Twitter and underscored the importance of safety in view of the present times. "I feel blessed and thankful to have all of you. I truly appreciate all the good deeds you

do to make my special day worth remembering. Since we are battling a global pandemic this year, safety is indispensable. I request all my fans to avoid any social gatherings on my birthday. Please stay safe (sic)," he wrote on Friday. He is likely to ring in his birthday with family and close relatives at his residence in Hyderabad.

On the work front, Mahesh will be next seen in Parasuram's *Sarkaru Vaari Paata*. Announced on his father Krishna's birthday on May 31 earlier this year, the project is a joint production venture between Mythri Movie Makers, 14 Reels Plus and GMB Entertainment. While story details regarding the film are under wraps, we've learnt that Parasuram drew inspiration from bank defaulters in the last five-six years and penned a fictional social drama peppered with action. "Obviously, the signature Parasuram humour will be in abundance. He's also presenting Mahesh in a romantic avatar," a source tells us.

There's no production date attached to the project yet.



## Teja Sajja in Prasanth Varma's film on corona pandemic

**S**o far, filmmaker Prasanth Varma has managed to keep the lead actor of his next, a film on coronavirus pandemic, under wraps. But the cat is out of the bag finally as we've reliably learnt that his good friend of years Teja Sajja is headlining the film, which is in the final stages of production. "It was intentional from Prasanth's end to refrain from revealing the lead actor's name. He wanted to use it as a promotional ploy and announce the lead actor's name with the first look. The idea was to attract more eyeballs towards the project," points out a source.

This is the second time that Prasanth and Teja are teaming up for a feature project. The latter has already spearheaded a whacky love-story written by the former. Directed by Naruda Donaruda fame Mallik Ram, its filming is almost over. Prasanth's film on coronavirus pandemic has a lot of day-to-day funny life incidents incorporated into the narrative, making it a hilarious entertainer. The title will be unveiled today.



## CHIRU IN VEDALAM REMAKE?

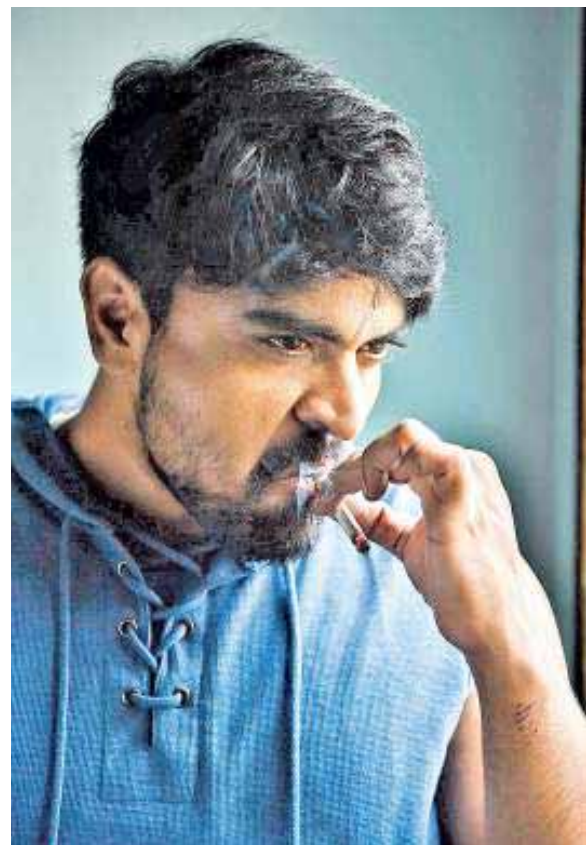
**S**ometime back Megastar Chiranjeevi has stated that he is in talks with Meher Ramesh for a film. To this end, the latest buzz is that the director is working on Tamil super hit *Vedalam* remake for Chiru. Word in the corridors of Tollywood is that the Megastar has shown interest towards the tweaks that Meher has made. With the status of *Lucifer* remake still hanging in balance, it is said that Chiru wants to go ahead with *Vedalam* remake sometime later next year. While an official confirmation is awaited, KS Ramarao and Anil Sunkara's names are attached to the project as producers. The original film, a popcorn entertainer directed by Siva, featured Ajith as Ganesh, a gangster-turned-cab driver, who secretly avenges the murders of his sworn sister's parents. It was set in Kolkatta. Interestingly, Chiru's younger brother Pawan Kalyan was supposed to feature in *Vedalam* Telugu remake and the film — under the direction of Tamil filmmaker RT Neeson — even had an official muhurat but as the actor got busy in politics, it has been put off.



## Sree and Shashank's film headed for a web release

**T**he makers of *Pranavam*, featuring Sree Mangam, Shashank, Avantika Hari Nalva and Gayatri Ayyar in the lead roles, are looking for a direct-to-digital release for the film. A romantic thriller which marks the directorial debut of G Kumar, the film's songs are already out. Expressing her happiness on the product, S Thanuja, who produced the film under Charitha and Goutham productions banner, believes that Sree will prove himself as a lead actor with the film once again. "Although it's the first film of Kumar, he packed it with elements that audiences would take a fancy for. It has been shot without compromising on the budget. The first copy is ready and we will release it on an OTT platform shortly," she said.

The likes of Gemini Suresh, Naveena, Jabardasth Baabi, Dorababu, Sameera among others have played supporting roles in the film, a Padma Rao Bharadwaj musical.





Most Read NEWS

## Automated drones to check social distancing

Singaporeans, beware if you are standing too close to each other. Drones could be keeping an eye on you from above and targeting social distancing rule-breakers. Singapore police are testing two automated drones to help enforce social distancing guidelines. The machines are developed by Israel's AiRobotics. "My name is Ran Krauss, CEO and co-founder of AiRobotics. In the past six years me and my team have invented, designed and manufactured the world's first automated drone." The eye-in-the-sky robots weigh 22 pounds and are programmed to track anomalies such as gatherings and congregations and stream footage to the police. AiRobotics says they can pinpoint locations and zoom into areas that might not be visible to police officers on foot or in vehicles. It's the first time automated commercial drones have been approved to fly over a major metropolis, according to the company. AiRobotics has raised \$120 million in funding and invested some \$100 million to develop the drones. It's leasing them to Singapore's Home Team Science & Technology Agency and also for business and industrial use in Israel and the United States. Krauss said the company is in talks with other cities to deploy the new technology.



## Labourer finds diamonds worth Rs 35 lakh

A labourer became a millionaire overnight when he unearthed three diamonds worth Rs 30 lakh to 35 lakh at a diamond mine in Panna district of Madhya Pradesh, a senior official said on Thursday. While digging a shallow mine, the labourer, identified only as Subal, found three diamonds with net weight of 7.5 carat, Panna district's diamond officer RK Pandey said. Experts have valued the precious stones at anywhere between Rs 30 lakh to 35 lakh. The labourer has deposited the stones at the district diamond office and they will be auctioned as per government rules, Pandey said. After deducting 12 per cent tax, Subal will get the remaining 88 per cent of the sale proceeds, the official said. A few days ago, another labourer had managed to find a 10.69 carat diamond from one of the mines in Panna in the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh. Panna, otherwise located in a backward region, is world famous for its diamond mines.



## UK foreign office Cat retires from service

The resident cat at the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in London, dubbed "Lord Palmerston the Chief Mouser" in reference to its mouse-catching duties, is to retire from diplomatic service, the FCO said on Friday. Lord Palmerston, famed for regular territorial tiffs with neighbouring Downing Street mouse-catcher Larry, will see out his retirement in the English countryside, where he has been spending lockdown already at the home of a member of Foreign Office staff. Both cats have their own social media profiles and are very popular with news photographers on Downing Street duties. "In April 2016, a cat called Palmerston arrived from Battersea (dogs and cat shelter in London). I thought I was employing a mouser. What I got was a social media phenomenon, with 105,000 Twitter followers," said Sir Simon McDonald, the Permanent Under-Secretary and Head of the Diplomatic Service at the FCO, announcing Palmerston's retirement. "After four happy years, @Diplomog (Palmerston's Twitter handle) will retire: he's enjoyed lockdown life in the countryside so much, he's accepted an invitation to stay. Everyone at the Foreign Office will miss him (our mice less so). We wish him a long & happy retirement," said McDonald in a Twitter statement.



## Miner earns millions after second rare find

A miner who had become a millionaire overnight in June just inducted more money into his wallet. Talk about a double victory! In June, the miner had sold two rough Tanzanite stones valued at \$3.4 million. The one he sold recently is valued at \$2 million. Saniniu Laizer's third discovery of precious gems weighed around 6.3 kgs. Tanzanite cannot be found elsewhere in the world, and is one of the rarest gemstones on Earth. Geologists believe that it may disappear over the next 20 years. The gem dons various hues across the colour spectrum, red, green, purple, and blue. The rarer it is, the higher it will be prized. Essentially, its price depends on how rare it is and how clearly the colour is visible. Laizer, while referring to his newly found riches urged small-scale miners to work in tandem with the government, claiming it was a good experience for him. "Selling to the government means there are no shortcuts... they are transparent," he said in a mine in northern Mirerani. In June, Laizer had sold two stones weighing 9.2 kgs and 5.8 kgs respectively. The man, who has 30 children promised to hold a party in the aftermath of receiving money.



# India to host 2021 T20 World Cup

## Australia gets 2022; Women's 50-over WC now in 2022

PTI ■ DUBAI

India on Friday retained the right to host the 2021 T20 World Cup while Australia will conduct this year's postponed edition in 2022, the ICC announced on Friday after its board meeting, straightening out a schedule that went topsy-turvy due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This year's edition had to be postponed because of the raging pandemic, which has severely impacted all sports calendars globally. "The International Cricket Council (ICC) today (on Friday)

confirmed that the T20 World Cup 2020 that was postponed due to Covid-19 will be held in Australia in 2022. India will host the T20 World Cup 2021 as planned," the ICC stated in a press release. The global body also confirmed that next year's women's ODI World Cup in New Zealand has been postponed until February-March 2022 because of the impact the pandemic has had on cricket globally. ICC Chief Executive Manu Sawhney said: "We now

have absolute clarity on the future of ICC events enabling all of our Members to focus on the rescheduling of lost international and domestic cricket. "We will now proceed as planned with the Men's T20 World Cup 2021 in India and host the 2022 edition in Australia." The format of the 2021 T20 World Cup will remain as it was for 2020 and all teams that qualified for that event will now participate in India in 2021. A new qualification process will be started for the 2022 edition in Australia. "BCCI were never keen to host the 2022 event which

would have meant that they had to host back to back ICC events including the 50-over World Cup in 2023. That wasn't a viable option," an ICC Board member told PTI. However, it was a big setback for the women's game with the much-awaited World Cup being pushed by a year. Sawhney said the decision would "give players from every competing nation, the best opportunity to be ready for the world's biggest stage and there is still a global qualifier to complete to decide the final three teams. An ICC Board member said



New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and ICC Chief Executive Manu Sawhney pose with the Women's World Cup trophy @cricketworldcup/Twitter

that due to various countries facing different situations with regards to the Covid case load, it would have been difficult to hold the qualifiers in time. The postponement also raises doubts about the future of India legends such as Mithali Raj and Jhulan Goswami, who probably would have played their last ICC tournament in 2021. The decisions were taken by the IBC (the commercial subsidiary of the ICC) following an extensive contingency planning exercise which took into account the health, cricket and commercial impact of Covid-19 around the world. The format of the postponed World Cup will remain as it was for 2021. Five teams have already qualified for the event and that will stand for 2022. The original global qualification event to determine the final three teams to contest the event was scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka in July this year, but was postponed due to Covid-19. The qualification event will now be held in 2021. "There has been no women's international cricket played since the conclusion of the women's T20 World Cup earlier this year and due to the varying impact of Covid-19 globally that is likely to

## Eng tour of India postponed until early 2021

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's white-ball series against England, scheduled at home in September-October, was on Friday postponed to early 2021 with both the boards citing the Covid-19 pandemic, which wrecked the international calendar and created space for the IPL during this window. Both teams were scheduled to play three ODIs and as many T20s and the matches could now be held after the Test series between the two in India early next year. The series was to be a preparatory one ahead of the T20 World Cup, which was originally scheduled from October 18 to November 5 in Australia, but has now been postponed. "BCCI and ECB are in consultation with a view to confirming the 2021 schedules for an all-formats England men's tour to India to run from late January to late March and for India's Test tour to England due in the summer of 2021," the BCCI said in a statement. BCCI secretary Jay Shah added: "The BCCI and ECB are working closely to finalise the day-wise schedule as we move towards the resumption of cricket. The five-Test series to be hosted by India could be trimmed to four to accommodate the white-ball games next year. remain the situation for a number of the teams," Sawhney spoke about the impact of the pandemic. "Moving the event by 12 months gives all competing teams the chance to play a sufficient level of cricket...So the integrity of the tournament is maintained."



Wolverhampton Wanderers' Conor Coady embraces Olympiakos' Omar Elabdellauui after the Europa League match AP

## Wolves send Olympiakos packing

AFP ■ WOLVERHAMPTON

Wolves battled into the quarter-finals of the Europa League on Thursday while Sevilla, Bayer Leverkusen and Basel enjoyed far more comfortable victories in the matches that brought the Europa League round of 16 to a belated close. Raul Jimenez scored the only goal from the penalty spot in the ninth minute and Wolves survived a series of scares to edge Olympiakos 1-0 at Molineux for a 2-1 aggregate win in a tie that began in Athens on March 13. At Molineux, Bobby Allain, the visitors' Franco-Scottish goalkeeper, failed to control a back pass in the seventh minute. Daniel Podence, who scored for Olympiakos at Tottenham in September but moved to Wolves in January, darted in and stole the ball. Allain clumsily bundled his former clubmate over and Jimenez converted the penalty. The Greek champions created a string of chances but were thwarted by good saves by Rui Patricio, a tight offside decision and their own inaccurate finishing. Wolves, who began their Europa League campaign on July 25 last year against Crusaders in the second qualifying round, will next face Sevilla at Duisburg on August 11. Sevilla were also in Duisburg on Thursday where they took the lead against Roma after 22 minutes. Captain and right back Jesus Navas switched play with a cross-field pass to left back Sergio Reguilón that caught Roma flat-footed. Reguilón surged past two defenders and into the box before sliding a low shot past Spanish goalkeeper Pau Lopez's foot. Sevilla added a second on the counter-attack in the 43rd minute. Lucas Ocampos burst down the right and after Lopez failed to cut out the low cross, Youssef En-Neyssi finished into an empty net from close range. Sevilla, coached by former Spain boss Julen Lopetegui, dominated as they stretched their unbeaten run to 18 games in all competitions and kept on course to add to their record five Europa League titles. In Basel, defender Fabien Frei scored the only goal in the 88th minute as the home team won 1-0 to complete an aggregate 4-0 victory over Eintracht Frankfurt. In Leverkusen, Moussa Diaby scored the only goal after 51 minutes to complete a comfortable victory for Bayer, who won 3-1 in Glasgow in March. In the quarter-finals, Bayer will make the short trip to Dusseldorf to face Inter Milan on August 10, Basel will play Shakhtar Donetsk in Gelsenkirchen the next night.

## Pak opens 127-run lead

AP ■ MANCHESTER

England was bowled out for 219, a 107-run first innings deficit, after losing six wickets to Pakistan's leg-spinners on the third day of the 1st Test at Old Trafford on Friday. At tea Pakistan stretched its lead by another 20 runs to take control despite Shan Masood's duck. Ollie Pope's 62 was as good as it got for the England batsmen, with the majority of those runs scored on day two, with Yasir Shah claiming 4-66 and Shadab Khan taking the last two wickets. England resumed the day on 92-4 with Pope and Jos Buttler hoping to continue the rescue mission they had started the previous evening. Pope had 46 to his name when he walked out but almost fell short of his half-century, deflecting Shaheen Afridi over the top of the stumps in an early scare. He got there soon after, off 81 balls, but the first hour was little more than a trial for the home side. Just nine runs came off the bat in that time, outscored by the 10 extras Pakistan contributed, with the three-pronged pace attack of Shaheen, Mohammad Abbas and Naseem Khan working up a head of steam. Buttler edged the third ball of Naseem's spell just short of second slip but after that it was a string of plays and misses. Somehow the duo reached the drinks break without any crucial nicks and when both hit their first boundaries of the day there was a small hope they had weathered the storm. Tentatively, the fifth-wick-



England batsman Chris Woakes, right, is bowled out by Pakistan's Yasir Shah during the third day of 1st Test at Old Trafford on Friday AP

et stand crept up to 65, every run hard-earned, before Naseem produced a memorable delivery to claim his deserved reward. Pope was hardly to blame, reeling back and fending to gully after the teenager got one to kick viciously off the surface. Barring an early blow to the helmet for new man Chris Woakes, the remainder of the session was better for England as they eased the score out to 159-5. Buttler had scrapped his way through to 38 but fell to his second ball after lunch, leaving a gap between bat and pad that allowed Yasir enough room to part the stumps. The experienced spinner was buoyed by the success and made short work of Dom Bess, producing the turn and bounce that left Asad Shafiq with a diving catch at slip. He claimed his

## Barca may need youth to get past Napoli

AP ■ BARCELONA

Barcelona coach Quique Setien says that he is ready to count on youngsters Ansu Fati and Riqui Puig to eliminate Napoli and advance to the Champions League final eight in Portugal. Barcelona will be without midfielders Sergio Busquets, Arturo Vidal and Arthur for Saturday's second leg of their round-of-16 tie. The match will be played five months after the Spanish side earned a 1-1 draw at Napoli before the pandemic brought most sports to a halt. "Both Rique and Ansu are ready to play," Setien said on Friday. "They have performed and played pretty well and could perfectly well start

(against Napoli). And if they do start, I am sure they will be guaranteed to play well." The 20-year-old Puig has a good chance to earn his debut in Europe's top-tier club competition and Setien values Puig's passing and ball-control skills, which remind some Barca fans of Xavi Hernandez and Andrés Iniesta, and rewarded him with a bigger role during the final stretch of the La Liga. Fati, 17, made a huge splash this season by becoming the youngest player to score in La Liga and the

Champions League, among other precocious scoring milestones. With Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez set to start in attack, Fati could get picked over fellow forward Antoine Griezmann, who was cleared to play by team doctors on Friday after having recovered from a right thigh injury last month. Clement Lenglet was also cleared by team doctors and will likely play with Gerard Pique in the center of the defence with Samuel Umtiti still injured. With only 13 first-team players available, Setien has called up seven members of Barcelona's youth squad, including American Konrad de la Fuente.



# Sindhu, Praneeth & Sikki resume training

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

World champion PV Sindhu, along with B Sai Praneeth and N Sikki Reddy, hit the courts for training on Friday under strict safety protocols at the SAI Pullula Gopichand Badminton Academy in Hyderabad, ending a four-month-long coronavirus-forced hiatus. This was after the Sports Authority of India (SAI) decided to resume the national badminton camp for the eight Olympic hopefuls following Telangana Government's approval on August 1. "I am very happy to have our elite shuttlers back for on-field training after this long break. We are fully equipped to resume training in a safe environment," Chief national coach



PV Sindhu poses for photograph after resuming practice at Pullula Gopichand Academy in Hyderabad on Friday Pullula Gopichand said.

The eight Olympic hopefuls also include London Bronze-winner Saina Nehwal, former world No 1 Srikanth Kidambi,

women's doubles player Ashwini Ponnappa and men's doubles pairing of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Saina, who is based in Hyderabad, didn't train on Friday, while the others, who had gone to their respective homes in March, and are yet to return to the city. On Friday, Sindhu was the first one to train with Gopi and foreign coach Park Tae-Sang separately. "Sindhu trained today from 6:30am to 8:30am. Gopi and Park were also present. She will be training everyday at the same time this week. In the evening, she will have her fitness training at Suchitra academy for agility and endurance," the Rio Olympics Silver-medallist's father, P V Ramana said. "She has been training at home so physically she is in

## Chirag-Satwik to wait for 2 weeks before deciding on attending camp

**NEW DELHI:** Wary of the Covid-19 threat, Olympic hopefuls Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy will wait for another couple of weeks before deciding on joining the national badminton camp, which resumed in Hyderabad on Friday. The men's doubles pair is currently apart with Shetty at his home in Mumbai and Rankireddy lodged at his base in Amalapuram in Andhra Pradesh. "It is great to hear that the good shape but there are no tournaments till October, so she can afford to go easy, no point exerting too much. We have to be careful."

After Sindhu, Praneeth and Sikki also trained at the academy from 8:30 to 10:30 am.