

ANALYSIS 7
THE LANGUAGE
OF THE HEART

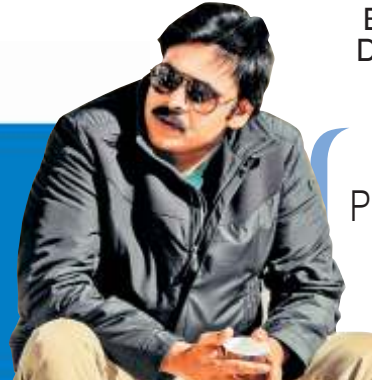
MONEY 8
TELECOM INDUSTRY REVENUE
EXPECTED TO RISE 14-15%

SPORTS 12
MORGAN STARS
IN ENG CHASE

HYDERABAD, MONDAY AUGUST 31, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



PK GIVES NOD TO
SURRENDER
REDDY?

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INDIA, RUSSIA ANNOUNCED JOINT WINNERS OF CHESS OLYMPIAD

India and Russia were declared as the joint winners of the 2020 Online Chess Olympiad after internet disconnection and server malfunction marred the final leading to India provisionally losing 1.5-4.5 to Russia in the second round and subsequently the entire match on Sunday. On board five and six both Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh's games saw disconnection which saw India drop points, while on board 3 Koneru Humpy also faced some internet issues as she lost vital seconds due to internet malfunction. Humpy completed her game but lost her advantageous position and eventually dropped a point.



HOSPITAL PRIME DUTY IS TO TAKE CARE OF PATIENT: NCDRC

A hospital has every right to insist on payment but it also has the prime duty to take care of a patient facing a health emergency, the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) has said while awarding a compensation of Rs 25 lakh for medical negligence to a woman whose husband died at the Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. A bench of presiding member S M Kantikar and Dinesh Singh awarded the compensation to the deceased patient's wife Yashumati Devi noting that there was an urgent need for the patient's brain CT scan but it was delayed for more than three hours as the hospital waited for a fresh receipt of Rs 1,850 towards charges for the procedure.



122 LAW STUDENTS URGE SC TO RECONSIDER PRASHANT JUDGEMENT

Over a hundred law students from across the country have written to Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA Bobde and other judges of the Supreme Court to reconsider the judgement on senior lawyer Prashant Bhusan in the contempt case. The Supreme Court had, earlier this month, held Mr Bhusan guilty of contempt of court over his tweets and reserved its order on the quantum of punishment. The top court is scheduled to pronounce the sentence on Monday. In the letter, around 122 law students made an emotional appeal to the CJI and other judges to reconsider the sentencing against Prashant Bhusan in the case.



DON'T LEVY CHARGES ON ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS

The Ministry of Finance has advised banks not to collect any charges on transactions or payments made through electronic mode, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement on Sunday. According to the CBDT, representations were made that some banks were imposing and collecting charges on transactions carried out through UPI. A certain number of transactions were allowed free by these banks beyond which every transaction bears a charge, the CBDT noted.



India, ASEAN trade ministers call for free trade agreement review

8

TS, AP UNHAPPY OVER CENTRE'S GST RELIEF PLAN

L VENKAT RAM REDDY
HYDERABAD

The Governments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are apparently sore at the GST shortfall relief plan announced recently by the Centre, though the respective Chief Ministers have not hit out at the untenable options given by the Union Finance Ministry.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and his AP counterpart YS Jagan-mohan Reddy are therefore watching other non-BJP ruled States to devise their individual strategy for addressing the GST payout issue, sources told The Pioneer. Finance Department officials in the Telugu states have thoroughly studied the 'two options' given by the Centre to meet GST shortfall.

The Centre has given two options to meet this year's GST compensation shortfall of



Rs 2.35 lakh crore to all States. Option 1 has a special window for states, coordinated by the Finance Ministry, to borrow the projected shortfall of Rs 97,000 crore only on account of GST implementation — and not the Covid-19 pandemic — and this amount can be fully repaid from the compensation cess fund, without being counted as states' debt.

Option 2 takes into account the impact of the pandemic and proposes that states could borrow the entire Rs 2.35 lakh crore and bear the interest burden, though principal could be repaid from the cess proceeds. The GST shortfall amount (Rs 97,000 crore) will not be counted as states' debt, while the rest of the amount of Rs 1.38 lakh crore will be counted in the books of the states.

Finance Department officials in the Telugu states have thoroughly studied the 'two options' given by the Centre to meet GST shortfall.

and Expenditure Secretary will hold a meeting with state finance secretaries on Tuesday to clarify issues relating to the two options.

However, on Sunday official sources said that, though some circles in both TS and AP feel that "Option 1" is better than "Option 2", KCR and Jagan are averse to both the options as they ask States to borrow. Both TS and AP have already run up huge debts in the first three months of this fiscal.



India can become world's toy hub, time to be vocal for local toys: PM

5

Census, National Population Register unlikely in 2020

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The first phase of the Census and the exercise to update the National Population Register (NPR), scheduled for this year but deferred due to the coronavirus outbreak, may be delayed by a year as there is no sign of slowdown of the pandemic.

The Indian census is one of the largest administrative and statistical exercises in the world, with the involvement of more than 30 lakh officials who would visit each household across the length and breadth of the country.

"Census is not an essential exercise for now. Even if it is delayed by a year, there would be no harm," a senior official told PTI.

The official said no final decision has been taken on when the first phase of the



Census 2021 and NPR update would take place, but it is almost certain that it would not be held in 2020 due to the rising cases of the coronavirus.

The house-listing phase of the Census and the exercise to update NPR were scheduled to be carried out across the country from April 1 to September 30, 2020, but were postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

"As the entire exercise needs the involvement of lakhs of officials and visit to each family, we can't undermine the health risk involved in it," the official said.

With a record single-day spike of 78,761 cases, the total coronavirus cases in India rose to 35,42,733, while the death toll climbed to 63,498 as on Sunday.

Centre ignores problems caused by Covid: Owaisi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has charged the NDA government with not showing enough concern to address the job losses and other adverse effects brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

He said 1.8 crore people all over the country were not receiving salaries and eight crore daily wage labourers were out of work.

Also, 10 crore school children who used to get mid-day meals have reportedly been deprived of it because of the lockdown, he said, addressing an online public meeting here on Saturday night.



Cabbies feel helpless with no aid from government

3

UG, PG final exams dilemma for TS students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Over 40 per cent of students have backlogs and for them taking the final semester examination in September amounts to a sterile exercise. For, even if they clear the final semester exams, they are unlikely to get the degree certificate because of their backlogs in previous semesters.

Across the state, such students constitute 42.50 per cent of the total students. As for Osmania University, 62 per cent of its students have backlogs. In Telangana University, more than 65% students have backlogs. As for degree courses like BA, B Com, B Sc and BBA, 68 per cent of the students have backlogs.

The authorities are preparing to conduct the last semester examinations for traditional degree courses as well as engineering courses from September 15.

The state council of higher education has decided to conduct backlog examinations and PG last semester examinations in October. Usually backlog examina-

tions are held in March/April annually, along with the last semester examinations. Because of Corona virus, the state council has decided to hold the last semester examinations in September.

There are over 3 lakh students preparing to take their last semester degree and PG examinations.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Bhadrapada & Shukla Paksha Panchangam

Tithi: Trayodashi: 08:48 am

Nakshatram: Shrivana: 03:04 pm

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

Rahukalam: 07:38 am - 09:10 am

Yamagandam: 10:43 am - 12:16 pm

Variyam: 07:19 pm - 09:02 pm

Gulika: 01:48 pm - 03:21 pm

Good Time: (to start any important work)

Amritakalam: 05:33 am - 07:15 am

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:51 am - 12:40 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 32/22

Humidity: 62%

Sunrise: 06:02 am

Sunset: 06:30 pm

Current Weather Conditions
Updated August 30, 2020 5:00 PM

TS prisoners produce goods worth nearly Rs 600 cr

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

What if our jails are not properly designed to reform and rehabilitate prisoners in right earnest? They are at least becoming highly productive from a business standpoint.

This is the impression many would get if they go by the sheer fact that in 2019 Telangana jail inmates produced goods worth of Rs 599.89 crore, which is the highest in value compared to that produced by prisoners in all other states in the country, according to latest data relating



to prisons released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

As a part of rehabilitation, a total of 1,972 prisoners underwent vocational training in

As a part of rehabilitation, a total of 1,972 prisoners underwent vocational training in areas like weaving, agriculture, carpentry and other crafts. Telangana provides computer course to 4,740 jail inmates, again topping the list of states.

areas like weaving, agriculture, carpentry and other crafts. Telangana provides computer course to 4,740 jail inmates, again topping the list of states.

Explaining the intention of the prison administration, the document said: "The reformation and rehabilitation of offenders is the ultimate objec-

Property registrations nosedive in Telangana

Outcome of lens on illegal properties

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Property registrations have come down drastically across Telangana, following the recent orders barring registration of unauthorised plots, flats, houses etc. Revenue earnings from property registrations declined significantly post August 27, when the orders were issued.

Prior to that, over 5,500 property documents used to be registered per day on an average in 141 sub-registrar offices across the state. Now, property registrations are witnessing a declining trend. On August 27, property registrations fell to 4,800 documents in state.

Prior to that, over 5,500 property documents used to be registered per day on an average in 141 sub-registrar offices across the state. Now, property registrations are witnessing a declining trend.

This came down further to 4,800 documents on August 28. Again on August 29, the property registrations slipped to 4,000.

This has impacted revenue earnings of the state government through the Stamps and Registration Department. The state government used to

earn Rs 27 crore per day on an average prior to issuance of orders barring registration of illegal properties.



No events in Tollywood without drugs: Madhavi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Creating a sensation, BJP leader Madhavi Latha claimed on Sunday that drugs are an essential part of parties attended by Tollywood celebrities.

She went on to aver that no party is ever held in Tollywood without the use of drugs. Hence, she wanted the Narcotics Control Bureau officials of Telangana to focus on substance abuse by Tollywood personalities.

Welcoming investigation into drug angle in the Sushant Rajput case in Bollywood, she



appealed to NCB officials to turn their attention to substance abuse in Tollywood as well. "Substance abuse is equally high in Tollywood," she observed.

Doctor 'rapes' nurse in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 30-year-old doctor working in the Government Area Hospital in Bhadrachalam has been booked for allegedly raping a 28-year-old staff nurse.

The Bhadrachalam police are investigation the case.

Inspector of police Bhadrachalam Vinod Kumar confirmed the incident. He told The Pioneer that the accused raped the woman on August 24 night, though the police received a complaint relating to it on Saturday. "We have booked a rape case. Investigation is on," he said.

PV govt successful in maintaining good ties with neighbours: Tharoor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The P V Narasimha Rao government was successful in maintaining good relations with neighbouring countries through reasonable, conciliatory and accommodative approach while the present BJP dispensation has "failed" in the area, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor claimed on Sunday.

Delivering a talk on "India's Foreign Policy--Former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao", organised by the Congress' Telangana unit, he also described the late leader as a 'true jewel of India' and pitched for conferring Bharat Ratna posthumously on him.

He was addressing through video conferencing the event held as part of the year-long



birth centenary celebrations of Rao, who hailed from Telangana, by the Congress.

"The reason things are so bad today is first -- a divisive, ideologically driven and arrogant politics which our neighbours pay attention to," Tharoor alleged, replying to a query on how he compared the

foreign policy handling of Rao and the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Second, huge difference in personality between the arrogance of the current leadership in our country and the quite, understated, humble approach of Narasimha Rao," he said.

Monday Mirchi

Newshounds worth their salt get their best, juicy and eyebrows-raising stuff from the corridors of power, where they are always unwelcome, because of the occupational hazards they pose to touchy babus. Information that is hidden and jealously guarded is priced out from motormouths and disgruntled elements to cater hot news to discerning readers who relish such material. At times, those who blurt out such 'inside' information, based on what happens in the anteroom, themselves may not know the value of what they are sharing with nosy parkers. That exactly is what makes it news of the highest order. Starting today, THE PIONEER will carry Monday mirchi, a piece that will shed light on hard-won information deemed to be lies until it is officially announced as truth. Since no dude gets such stuff on a platter, of course there could be masala about top officials and netas that would be red-hot for one who is provoked, spicy for another who pinches as well as cradles a baby, and delightful for yet another who has the last laugh in the pecking order. All of this is shared in good faith and with no motive to hurt or belittle anyone whatsoever. There lies the truth of this weekly piece. We advise you to enjoy it with a pinch of salt! -- PAGE 2

Monday Mirchi

Ajeja stars set for another shift

Principal advisor to the Andhra Pradesh government Ajeja Kallam is being (t) eased out of his position. A 1983 batch IAS officer who has held key positions in the previous government -- including Chief Secretary of the Government of AP, Chairman of Visakhapatnam Port Trust, and Executive Officer of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Ajeja was named as head of all advisors when the YSRC party came to power. But in less than one year, he was divested of many important duties, including managing the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). Grapevine has it that he is now tipped to be the Special Representative of Andhra Pradesh in New Delhi, a post presently held by Rajya Sabha member V Vijayasai Reddy. It is a truism in the corridors of power that, if somebody must go, they shall; somewhere or the other. In the present case, it does not matter if the name 'Ajeja' means one who cannot be conquered. So, in the event of any change of mind among the powers that be, the Plan B is to recommend Ajeja's name for Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) member post. Since this matter is well within the purview of the Central government, and since the saffron party has ties that are not unfriendly with YSRC, no one sees any hurdle for the principal advisor's elevation. Super advisors, aware of this development, vouch for this. Whatever it may be, it seems even the present configuration of stars point to a change of location for Ajeja Kallam from Vijayawada to New Delhi.

Yes Yes Rawat's dilemma

When buffeted by fund crunch, even seasoned bureaucrats will wilt. Andhra Principal Finance Secretary Shamsheer Singh Rawat is facing unprecedented challenges in managing the finances of the state. No wonder he landed in a tricky situation, which is projected to the outside world as one that takes away his entire time "clearing bills". Ostensibly to reduce his 'burden', during the recent administrative reshuffle, his hold on the expenditure side of finance was cut to size. The formidable task has been given to Dhanunjay Reddy, a secretary in the CMO. Now Dhanunjay will tell which bills to clear and when. Since Rawat is PFS, he has the final say in releasing funds, though it would be tempered by the recommendations of Dhanunjay Reddy who will look at the expenditure with a fine-toothed comb. Since there won't be any written correspondence while releasing or holding bills after a particular bill comes to CFMS (a finance release system), (God forbid, cry supporters of PFS) should any legal issue surface tomorrow, Rawat would be held responsible. Whatever happens, Rawat must defend his action, be it releasing or holding back payments. This reminds one of what happened in 2009, when the Telugu Desam Party raised the issue of non-payment of bills to contractors not in

the good books of YSR. The Election Commission then sent a special team and verified all payments to find out the veracity of the allegations. Shrewd YSR, anticipating such things, had taken precautions on the advice of senior officials and was saved from coming under the EC's scanner. Whether Rawat can handle such situation now?

E-GOs facing extinction

Gone are the days when government orders were available within minutes of their approval. Nowadays not many GOs are available in the public domain. People are going back to 'good' old days of lobbying for GO copies from the respective departments! These days, the Telangana government has restricted even the number of GOs to be released. There were days when the General Administration Department (GAD) used to release more than 20 GOs per day. It included every aspect of the government and nothing could escape from the public eye. Now many things are given exemptions. Besides, selectively and secretly information is censored to avoid any controversy. This has led to a fall in the numbers of GOs issued. No wonder, in August, the government released only 19 GOs for the entire month! Some departments do not churn out even a couple of GOs in the entire month, raising questions about their functioning. People are now worried that like in the case of RTI, which has been gradually diluted by successive governments, the e-GO platform too would end up without any significance in the coming days, if the present trend continues.

KTR is buzzword in Bizworld

National and international bizmen are full of praise for Telangana Industries Minister KT Ramarao. Despite Covid-19 restrictions and lack of enthusiasm in every sector, the Minister has been in constant touch with leading business associations like the Confederation of Indian Industry and foreign delegations through video conferencing. Last three weeks, KTR did not leave any chance to reach leading business groups and personalities. Infusing confidence among people, he toured many districts and participated in several government programs. Despite Covid threat, he carried himself so efficiently that none of his programs had to be postponed or deferred throughout the lockdown period. Trying to make the most of 'anti-China' sentiments prevailing across the globe, the Minister is leaving no stone unturned to woo foreign investments in Telangana state. He is personally monitoring the issues related to foreign investments and meeting honchos via VC to give a semblance of personal touch. These studied, consistent efforts have paid off well. According to excited business circles, many companies are now looking at Telangana as their next investment destination.

- yours truly

COVID-19, RAINS PUSH VEGETABLE PRICES UP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The double whammy of Covid-19 and the recent floods has increased the cost of vegetables across the state, burning a hole in the common man's pocket. This is the first time in several years that vegetable prices have increased in August, with many saying it costs as much as chicken.

In spite of heavy rains, availability of irrigation facility and tanks, rivers and reservoirs full up to the brim, the state has to import vegetables from other states.

The total area under various vegetable crops during Vanakalam would be at least 1.40-lakh acres. But, this year the area shrunk by at least 50,000 acres because of heavy slump in demand. Many hotels



are not yet fully resumed their business activity, marriages are far and few in between and people are not in a mood to celebrate family occasions because of Covid-19 threat. Because of these reasons, there has been a slump in demand

for vegetable crops.

According to horticulture director L Venkatram Reddy, many farmers have switched over to other crops from raising vegetable crops because of shortage of agriculture workers.

The state is importing carrots and onions from up, ivy gourd from West Bengal, tomatoes from Maharashtra, drum sticks from Tamil Nadu, some other varieties from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Chhattisgarh and MP. The increased cost of transportation and hamali charges have pushed up vegetable prices of late. On Saturday, a kg of spiny gourd was sold at Rs 105, while green chillies and beans are sold at Rs 60 a kg. In colonies, the spiny gourd is being sold at Rs 120 a kg, beans and chillies are being sold between Rs 80-Rs 100 a kg.

The common man complains that the retail traders have priced their vegetables at 50 per cent higher prices than the cost of the vegetables sold in Rythu Bazars.

Centre ignores problems caused by Covid: Owaisi

Continued from page 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had 'invited' all this on the country by imposing an unplanned, unconstitutional lockdown, he alleged.

He also alleged that there has been a 64 per cent dip in child immunisation and that 10 lakh children had not received their BCG vaccination during the lockdown.

Besides, six lakh children had missed getting their oral polio vaccine since the COVID-19 outbreak, he said.

The Prime Minister, he alleged, also was not worried about Chinese intrusions along the nation's borders.

Owaisi urged his supporters to help people during the COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of ones religion.

He said his party would contest the coming assembly polls in Bihar.

Census, National Population Register...

Continued from page 1

According to the earlier schedule, the census would have its reference date as March 1, 2021, and in the snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, it would be October 1, 2020. "The COVID-19 threat is still looming large. The census and NPR are not in the priority list of the government as of now," another official said.

In March, when the coronavirus-induced lockdown was announced, the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India was all set for the first phase of the census and update of the NPR that was scheduled to begin from April 1.

Even though some state governments opposed the NPR update, all offered full support to the census exercise.

The census is the largest single source of a variety of statistical information on people of India which helps the State to chalk out various policies.

With a history of more than 130 years, this reliable, time tested exercise has been bringing out a veritable wealth of

statistics every 10 years, including on the rich diversity of the people, and has become one of the tools to understand and study India. The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country. The database would contain demographic as well as biometric particulars.

The NPR is a register of the usual residents of the country. It is prepared at the local (village and sub-town), sub-district, district, state and national levels under provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.

The data for NPR was last collected in 2010 along with the house listing phase of the Census 2011. Updating of this data was done during 2015 by conducting a door-to-door survey.

While updating the register in 2015, the government had asked details like Aadhaar and the mobile number of people.

This time, the information related to their driving licence and voter ID card may also be gathered, the officials said.

Property registrations...

Continued from page 1

This amount has now dwindled to Rs 24 crore per day.

Most of the property buyers visiting sub-registrar offices for registration are being shown the door if they fail to submit documents to prove that their property is legal.

While the situation is bad in Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts, it is worse in other districts. This is because most of the layouts done under municipal corporations, municipalities and gram panchayats in the districts are illegal. They do not have approvals of urban or rural local bodies.

The ban on registration of illegal properties is being executed mainly at the level of document writers. Sub-registrars have directed document writers to draft documents and send them to sub-registrar offices only if the parties have valid documents to prove that their property is legal.

Due to this, document writers are refusing to draft documents of illegal properties at their level itself, which has led to a decrease in registrations in sub-registrar offices.

Global markets divergent

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Amidst acrimonious debates between the contenders in the light of fast-approaching Presidential elections in the US and the war preparedness forced by the unrelenting China, the global markets remained divergent during the week ended Saturday.

Consequently, New York gold showed an increase and finally closed at US \$ 1,964.30 (per ounce), while silver followed suit and closed at \$ 27.47 (per ounce). Platinum moved upward and closed at \$ 924 (per ounce) and Palladium too appreciated and closed at \$ 2,083 (per ounce).

Other economic parameters remained strong. Brent closed at US \$ 45.81 (per barrel) while Crude MCX oil was quoted at Rs.3,149 (per barrel).

Gold MCX stood at Rs.51,448 (per 10 gms), while MCX silver moved downward and closed at Rs.65,976 (per kg), Copper marched ahead and closed at Rs.530.35 (per kg).

Sensex and Nifty 50 closed at the higher levels of 39467.31 and 11647.60 points. Leading foreign currencies' exchange rates were: US \$: Rs.73.13, British Pound: Rs.97.63, Euro: Rs.87.07, Singapore \$: Rs.53.83, Swiss Franc: Rs.80.88, Australian \$: Rs.53.88, Saudi Riyal: Rs.19.50, New Zealand Dollar: Rs.49.31, Kuwaiti Dinar: Rs.239.43, Omani Rial: Rs.189.96 and UAE Dirham: Rs.19.91, Japanese Yen: Rs.0.69, Hong Kong Dollar: Rs.9.44.

In local markets, standard gold (24 carats) declined by Rs.1,720 and closed at Rs.53,730 (per 10 gms).

COMMODITIES

The sentiment in principal wholesale commodity markets in continuation

to remain strong. Rythu Bazars and commodity markets located in Begum Bazar, Kishangunj, Mukhyargunj, Mir AlamMandi, Dilukhknagar, Kukatpally, Bowenpally, General Bazar are gradually returning to normalcy.

WEEKLY MARKET REVIEW

TS, AP unhappy over Centre's...

Continued from page 1

The debt burden in both states is expected to touch new peaks at this rate. This being the present dismal position, the debt will be compounded if additional loans have to be secured to meet GST shortfall.

Some of the BJP-ruled states have indicated their willingness to back the first option. Opposition-ruled states want the Centre to take over the debt burden, arguing that they have much lower headroom to either borrow or service it. Besides, they argue that the Centre can raise funds at a cheaper interest rate.

The TS government had raised Rs 12,461 crore in the

very first quarter of this fiscal (April-June).

In July, the government raised an additional Rs 3,500 crore and in August another Rs 3,000 crore was raised till August 14.

With this, the total loans raised by state government through auction of bonds in this fiscal increased to Rs 19,000 crore.

Going by the current pace, the total market borrowings of Telangana State is expected to touch Rs 49,000 crore by the end of this fiscal 2020-21.

The neighbouring AP's financial condition is worse. It is already a 'revenue-deficit' since 2014, when AP was bifurcated.

Doctor 'rapes' nurse in TS

Continued from page 1

The accused, identified as Banoth Reddy, joined the hospital recently.

The victim, in her complaint, stated that Reddy used to harass her. On August 24, he went to the residence of the victim at Medical Colony and forced himself on her while she was alone.

Based on her complaint, the accused doctor was booked under Section 376 IPC (Punishment for rape) and other relevant sections, Vinod Kumar said. Efforts were being made to nab the accused doctor, he added.

PV govt successful in maintaining...

Continued from page 1

The Thiruvananthapuram MP said Narasimha Rao was pragmatic and wanted to "change things" without seeming to be changing any.

"Finally, Narasimha Rao was pragmatic...he wanted to change things without seeming to be changing any...you never hear a speech from him saying that all our previous foreign policies are bad and I am changing everything. He portrayed everything as continuation of the past but at the same time he brought about fundamental changes," he added. According to Tharoor, Narasimha Rao knew the art of how to relate to the neighbour-

hood in an asymmetrical fashion -- show these countries that India will give more than it takes as opposed to the present regime.

"For example in the confrontation with Nepal over the new Constitution (there) it looked like India was demanding more from Nepal than Nepal could feasibly give...that is not the approach by a big country to a small country.

"We have to go out of our way to be reasonable, conciliatory and accommodative. Sadly, this is where the present regime has failed and this is where Narasimha Rao succeeded," Tharoor said.

He further said in one of India's most difficult periods in

1991, India was blessed with an extraordinary statesman and a visionary leader in Rao, who according to him changed the country's fortunes in an exceptionally transformative way.

His skilful management of alliances and courage to introduce bold economic reforms with Manmohan Singh fundamentally changed India, he added. "He achieved this despite not being a popular mass leader, presiding over a minority government and as an accidental prime minister. Under him the foreign policy of India moved decisively away from pure Nehruvian idealism to more pragmatic pursuits of national self-interest," Tharoor added.

HC UPADHYAY ■ HYDERABAD

CRACKING HARD NUTS: GUJARAT HC SHOWS THE WAY!

Although the Apex Court is yet to determine the quantum of punishment to be awarded to senior lawyer Prashant Bhushan for contempt of court, the Gujarat High Court has come down heavily, in unequivocal terms, on a similar state-level heavyweight and head of the high court bar association, Yatin Oza and deflated the contemnor's ego. The kid-gloves approach adopted by the Apex Court for whatever reasons in the case of Prashant Bhushan was totally absent in case of Oza. That is why the High Court could arrive at a conclusion in that case.

Like Prashant Bhushan in the Supreme Court, Yatin Oza too was slapped with the contempt notice suo motu by the state High Court for his contemptuous statements regarding the functioning of the High Court and its Registry. Oza made an unsuccessful bid to stall the proceedings by approaching the

Apex Court, after which he tendered an unconditional apology. But the full court resolution of the High Court did not accept it as it lacked sincere remorse. A division bench comprising Justice Sonia Gokani and N V Anjaria, in its judgement dated 27th August, observed: "Mere apology may not be an answer to an act, utterance or publication of contempt which is grave in nature so as to scandalize the majesty, dignity and authority of the court. The school of thought of 'Give slap, say sorry and forget' was not endorsed by the Supreme Court in L.D.Jaikwal."

Indeed, the tough stand taken by the High Court will have a chilling effect over the

legal fraternity, but that is the need of the hour. One does not become a 'big lawyer' by using insulting language against judges and anybody concerned with the justice delivery mechanism. In the cases on hand, both lawyers are repeat offenders, having bitten the dust on earlier occasions.

Therefore, logical course for the Supreme Court was to inflict the maximum punishment prescribed under the law to Prashant Bhushan and stripping him of his 'Senior' designation. That could have reduced to zero one who had aspired to be hero by quoting Mahatma Gandhi. Unfortunately, a lobby with a singular agenda of demeaning judiciary and belittling the learned judges has been active. In the name of free-

Like Prashant Bhushan in the Supreme Court, Yatin Oza too was slapped with the contempt notice suo motu by the state High Court for his contemptuous statements regarding the functioning of the High Court and its Registry

dom of expression, this lobby has been indulging in indiscipline, abuse and name-calling games. Added to this, the lobby gets unwarranted support and sympathy from some retired judges and bar associations. Even the Attorney General in case of Prashant Bhushan tried to whitewash the entire suo motu exercise of the apex court by pleading for mercy to the contemnor which the latter never asked. Such strange conduct of the first lawyer of the country needs to be seriously

probed and pending an enquiry, the Attorney General should be suspended immediately. Last but not the least, the statement of Bhushan's lawyers made at a webinar on August 26 that the citizens should continue to show mirror to judges is nothing but highly contemptuous and inciting the people against the judges and thereby the judiciary of the country. Dave, too, needs to be taught a lesson or two in the matters like respecting the judges and the procedures of the court to

ensure justice to the people. It is high time Parliament took a holistic view of the Contempt of Court Act, 1971 and amends it suitably so as to instill the fear of law which alone can scare the unruly people from indulging in nonsensical tirades against the judiciary.

Wives beware

Here comes some cautionary news for the estranged wives, particularly those who are under the wrong impression that the laws of the land are blindly supporting them, irrespective of the bald allegations they might make against their husbands and his relatives. Delivering the judgement in an appeal filed by the wife, Anita Gaur against her husband Rajesh Gaur, the Uttarakhand High Court on August 24

affirmed the lower court's judgement granting the decree of divorce mainly on the ground of cruelty. The division bench comprising Justice Narayan Singh Dhank and Justice Ravi Malimath, while dismissing the appeal filed by the wife, noted that the wife, without informing her spouse, borrowed money on interest from many persons, made purchases on credit, used to steal ornaments and valuables from her own house and leveled so many allegations against her spouse which she failed to substantiate.

The High Court observed that the word 'cruelty' has not been defined under the law and that the same could be physical or mental. "In the matrimonial life, cruelty may be of unfounded

variety. But before the conduct could be called cruelty, it must touch the certain pitch of severity and conduct should be such that no reasonable person would tolerate it. It should be willful and unjustifiable conduct. The enquiry, therefore, must be whether the conduct charged as cruelty is of such a character or not."

New date for bar exam

The Bar Council of India has decided to hold the All India Bar Examination on November 8 and has extended the date for online applications till October 17. The date of examination was postponed due to the prevailing pandemic. The Bar Council has released the updated schedule of AIBE XV which can be viewed on <https://www.allindia-barcouncil.org>.

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'Open educational institutes with alternate day classes for batches'

NAMRATA SRIVASTAVA
HYDERABAD

With no income for several months, small educational institutions are in a financial crisis. Several institutions' managements opine that the government should open educational institutes from September 15, where students can attend classes in batches.

Talking about the state of financial affair, Syed Arif, Principal, Alliance International School, Golconda, says, "Understanding the pandemic situation, maybe we can let students study in batches at school. They can ask only the higher classes - VIII, IX and X - to attend the classes with only half attendance on each day. This way each student can attend the classes on alternate days. We are ready to maintain every Covid norm and social distancing for the students."

He adds, "Since the schools are closed, we have not been



receiving any around 70-75 per cent fees from students. This in turn is causing delay in payment of teachers, or no payment at all. Since, we have started taking online classes, the teachers have to work without much salary."

A Santhosh Kumar, President of Telangana State Technical Colleges Employees Association (TSTCEA), shares that despite the lockdown, the college managements were asked to pay the building rent, electricity bills and other

Some of the educationalists believe that the government should help small private institutes to make sure they do not pull the shutter down amid Covid-19 crisis

bills. "All the sectors including shopping malls and restaurants have been opened. However, the educational institutes are still closed. Several students do not have smart phones or access to network, for those students the best way to get education is to

attend physical classes. I feel, the government should open the educational institutes, with limited attendance each day and proper pandemic precautions."

With some of the educationalists do not agree that educational institutions should open, they believe that government should help small private institutes to make sure they do not pull the shutter down.

Srinivas Reddy, one of the leaders in schools' association says the current situation will leave a huge impact on the future of education. "Around 3,000 to 4,000 of the schools in Telangana are on the verge of shutting down. With over three lakh teachers working in the state, the government should at least pay their salaries to reduce the burden off private schools. If more schools decide to close doors, the future of education in the state will be in danger."

Cabbies feel helpless with no aid from government

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite several protests by drivers, the state government has not extended the tax and loan moratorium period for the vehicles beyond August 31. With the deadline here, several drivers feel helpless without any financial help from the authorities.

Many drivers are the solo bread winners for their family. A Mahesh, who bought a Dzire just before the pandemic hit, is clueless how he will manage the EMIs for the vehicle. "I bought the car thinking it will increase the income. But as the deadline to not pay the EMIs for the car is here, I am dreading how to manage my finances. I am the only one earning for a family of six and there was no business for four months. Now when the bank called me, they asked me to not only pay five months' EMI, but also the payment for September. I have to pay them Rs 50,000 immediately. No authority is helping us," he shares.



Owing to strict lockdown, many drivers didn't have any business for four months. Most of these people have scrapped through their savings and living on hand-to-mouth basis.

K Satish Kumar, who drives a school van, shares that although the vehicle quarterly tax for schools vehicles is very less, the current situation is such that he cannot even afford that. He shares, "The vehicle tax that I paid quarterly is only Rs 350 - that is my family's two time meal. I can't afford it at the moment. Soon

after the pandemic hit, I started selling sanitisers on road. Initially the business fared well, but now even that isn't getting me anything. I also have to arrange for a Rs 15,000 monthly EMI that I haven't paid for five months. The government has just abandoned us."

Incidentally, the drivers had asked the government for a waiver on the loan EMIs and vehicle tax till the end of the year, however government has not yet released any order pertaining to their request.



The body of an elderly woman found wrapped in a blanket on footpath in Banjara Hills

Woman's body wrapped in blanket found on footpath

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An elderly woman was found dead on the footpath wrapped in a blanket on the busy street in Banjara Hills on Sunday. Efforts are being made to trace the accused who left the body on footpath.

The police officials reached the spot and examined the body after receiving information about a dead body wrapped in blanket left on the footpath in front of Lumbini Mall in Road no 2

Banjara Hills Inspector of police N Kalinga Rao said,

"There are no external injuries on the body. The body surfaced on the footpath on the busy road during afternoon. We suspect someone might have left the body. We are analysing the CCTV camera footage in the surrounding areas to trace who left the body. Preliminary investigation indicates that she is a beggar."

Meanwhile, police officials recovered the body and shifted to Osmania General Hospital for autopsy. Efforts are being made to identify the woman.

Jail occupancy in TS below normal

DURGA PRASAD SUNKU
HYDERABAD

While the country grapples with overcrowded prisons, Telangana state claims to be below its maximum capacity based on results of an inquiry into the number of prisoners currently placed.

The Telangana prisons with less than 100 percent occupancy rate are far better compared to all other states prisons in the country.

Jails across India remained overcrowded in 2019 with these facilities lodging 4.78 lakh prisoners against the actual capacity of 4.03 lakh. However the picture of Telangana prisons is different. The state having 37 prisons including central, district, sub jails, and others has a capacity to accommodate around 7785 inmates. But in 2019 the number of inmates stands at 6717 inmates which equates to 86.3 percent.

"The prison population has increased tremendously which creates number of challenges before prison administration like security and safety in prison, hygiene issues, overcrowding and other issues" read the report published by NCRB. Most of the inmates lodged in Telangana prisons

are under trail prisoners (65.3 per cent) followed by convicts (31.1 per cent) and detunes (3.6 per cent) reveals the latest data by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

The educational profile the jail inmates including convicts under trail prisoners, detunes show that predominantly they are illiterates.

As many as 227 jail inmates are post graduates and 451 graduates are lodged in Telangana prisons.



TS prisoners produce goods...

Continued from Page 1

Telangana has reported the highest gross value of sale proceeds of ₹599.89 crore generated by jail inmates, followed by Tamil Nadu (72.96 crore) and Maharashtra (29.40 crore) during the year 2019, according to the NCRB document.

To achieve this, the inmates were given vocational training in Agriculture (32), Carpentry (1), Tailoring (179), Weaving (1,055), Making soap and pheyln(20) and others- 685. Convicts were divided into skilled,

semi-skilled and unskilled, and paid Rs 100, Rs 50, Rs 30 wages per day respectively.

Even with regard to the value of goods produced, TS topped (8,93,093.81), followed by TN (249,611.55) and Chandigarh (241,478.66) during the year 2019.

In addition, Telangana prisons administration helped the inmates to pursue their education. Around 13,633 inmates were enrolled in elementary education, 7,670 inmates in Adult education, 546 inmates in higher education and 4,740 inmates in Computer course in 2019.

CCS cops begin probe into sexual exploitation case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Sleuths of the Central Crime Station of Hyderabad Police have started a full-fledged investigation into the sexual exploitation case reported at Punjagutta.

The police raided the office of a social organisation named in the complaint by the victim and are making efforts to nab one person Dollar Boy alias Raju.

The victim told the police that Raju had blackmailed her all these years and sexually exploited her.

The Punjagutta police had booked a case on August 21 following the complaint made by the victim and later transferred it to the Central Crime Station.

The CCS official had recorded the statement of the victim and questioned a few persons who were named in the FIR.

The Central Crime Station teams are making efforts to nab Raju so that they can get a clear picture of the allegations made against him and the remaining 142 persons by the victim.

Hyd airport wins two CII national awards

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad International Airport has won the prestigious awards of CII "National Energy Leader" and "Excellent Energy Efficient Unit" at the 21st National Awards for Excellence in Energy Management organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) -GBC during the 19th edition of Energy Efficiency Summit, Virtual Conference and Exposition on Energy Efficiency held from August 6 to 28.

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Hyderabad has been recognised with "Excellent Energy Efficient Unit" and "National Energy Leader" accolades for the fourth and



second year in a row, respectively. The forum recognises the companies engaged in energy-efficiency initiatives that adopt best practices and technological advancement in their daily operations. The jury evaluated the participants on many parameters of energy efficiency and innovative thought process adopted. The jury, CII members and industry delegates appreciated the initiatives of RGIA.

State forest officials win two wildlife photography awards



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Forest officers of Telangana have won two national level awards for wildlife photography in a competition conducted by the Wildlife Conservation Society.

DFO, Adilabad, Chandra Sekhar Rao won second prize for his photograph of Bengal Tiger, DFO, Macherial, Madhav Rao Siripurapu won third prize for his photo of Crested Hawk Eagle.

The WCS organized the 'Best Wildlife Photograph 2020' contest on the occasion of World Photography Day last week.

Forest Minister Indrakaran Reddy and other senior officers of the department congratulated the winners.



ADDED ATTRACTION

Hyderabad's Durgam Cheruvu cable-stayed bridge, which will be opened soon, is undergoing final touches. The facility, built at a cost of Rs 184 crore, reduces the travel time between Madhapur and Jubilee Hills and connects the Hi-Tec City and financial district with the city

Niloufer staffer succumbs to Coronavirus

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

One more employee from Niloufer Hospital, this time from the hospital's non-clinical wing, has succumbed to Covid at TIMSVon Saturday night, taking the total number of Covid related deaths in the hospital to three.

The deceased office superintendent, Suresh was admitted to TIMS last Friday but failed to recover and breathed his last on Saturday. Earlier this week, two employees from the hospital including a sanitary worker and a radiology technician passed away while undergoing treatment.

New rules from fire department worry jr colleges

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rule requiring private junior colleges to submit No-objection Certificate (NoC) from fire department to renew their affiliation with the Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education is posing problems to the college managements.

Earlier, only those college buildings which are taller than 15 metres and more are required to submit the NoC. Now the government made it compulsory for the junior colleges which are six metres tall and more to submit the NoC from fire department.

In the 2,472 junior college in the state, 404 are government-run colleges and 300 are residential and government-



Fire department officials train students on fire safety equipment

aided junior colleges.

As per the latest rules, 1,450 junior colleges are required to

submit the NOCs.

Going by the existing structure and setback conditions,

these colleges are unlikely to get the NOCs. Accordingly, getting affiliation for the year 2020-21 academic year is difficult to get. The college managements are worried about the state government introducing the new rule.

The Intermediate II year classes are going to commence very shortly. If their college did not get affiliation for the current year, what would be their fate, question the students.

The Coronavirus has severely upset the academic schedule this year. If majority of the college did not get recognition it would affect the Intermediate education this year.

The college managements

are all set to begin classes online from September 1.

Over 5.3 lakh students passed SSC during this year. Another 70,000 have qualified in SSC through open school. Over six lakh students need seats in Intermediate.

If 50 per cent of the junior colleges did not get recognition, seats would be denied to at least 3 lakh students.

The state government should take an early decision on fire department's NOC to solve the problem.

The private colleges' management association president Gouri Satish says that the managements press for eliminating the need to submit the NOC up to a height of 6 metres.

UoH to hold international webinar on Global Peace

As part of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, University of Hyderabad (UoH) is organising a one-day international webinar on Peace from Within to Global Peace in Gandhian Perspective on Monday. The UoH is jointly hosting the webinar with Gandhi-King Global Initiative, Stanford University, USA & Gandhi-King Foundation, Hyderabad. There will be two sessions from 8 am to 11 am, and the other from 6 pm to 8 pm. The key speakers of the webinar include Prof Clayborne Carson, Director, The Martin Luther King Jr Research & Education Institute, Stanford University, USA, Prof Paul Bueno de Mesquita, Director, Centre for Peace & Nonviolence Studies, University of Rhode Island, Kingston RI, USA, Dr Sarada Purna Sonty, Chicago, Prof Isao Takagi, Faculty of Economics, Soka University, Japan.

Covid patient with bacterial infection in lung recovers

Surgeons from Medicover Hospitals, Madhapur, have successfully conducted a lung procedure to save the life of a 17-year-old Covid-19 positive youngster Prem Kumar, hailing from Rangareddy district. Apart from testing positive for Covid, Prem Kumar also developed a bacterial infection in the lungs and doctors had to conduct decortication, a surgical procedure involving removal of restrictive layer of fibrous tissue over the lungs, so that it can re-expand. "The patient who was admitted in the first week of August suffered further complications due to bacterial infection. Puss had formed around his left lung, which was causing breathlessness and chest pain. Following decortication, Prem was administered with antivirals for Covid and anti-bacterial drugs for lung infection," said hospital's senior CT surgeon, Dr. Pramod Reddy. Subsequent to the procedure, Prem gradually developed Covid-19 antibodies and was discharged. "Culture study of the puss recovered from the lungs turned out to be a regular form of Staphylococcus bacteria," added Dr. Pramod.



Kishan asks party cadre to gear up for GHMC polls

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister for State of Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy on Sunday called upon the party leaders to strive hard to sweep the GHMC elections. He asked the party leaders to work hard by preparing an action plan for Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar and Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal graduate constituencies MLC elections.

While participating in a video conference held under the leadership of Telangana BJP Chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday, Kishan Reddy alleged that the TRS leaders are indulging in a falsehood campaign by claiming that the Central schemes as their schemes in the state. He asked the BJP cadre to reveal the truth to the people. He also suggested the party leaders and cadre to take Prime Minister Narendra Modi's liberal help and cooperation to the development of Telangana state.

On the other hand, the Union Minister held a review meeting with the state agriculture officials at Dilkusha Guest House on Sunday. He asked the officials to provide adequate fertilizers in tune with the increased crop area in the state to see that the farmers do not face troubles. He inquired about the availability of urea to the farmers and the details of the crop area and told officials that



Union Minister for State of Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy with the officials of Agriculture Department, in Hyderabad on Sunday

Union Minister Kishan Reddy asked the agricultural officials to provide adequate fertilizers in tune with the increased crop area in the state to see that the farmers do not face troubles

he will talk to Union Fertilizers and Chemicals Department Minister Sadananda Gouda if need arises.

The officials informed the Union Minister that the Centre allocated 10.50 lakh tonnes of urea this year following the request of the state. Last year, the Centre allocated 3.50 lakh tonnes of urea by this time, the officials said and informed that the farmers already purchased 7 lakh tonnes of urea. The officials brought to the notice of the Union Minister that the state may need fertilizers additional-

ly though the department ensured the supply of fertilizers in tune with the farming in the state. Reacting on it the Minister said that the centre will extend all help and cooperation to the state.

Earlier, the Union Minister also held a review meeting with Metro Rail MD NVS Reddy and discussed the issues-extension of Metro rail up to Old City, the Metro faced troubles due to lock down and the security measures to be taken on the occasion of restart of Metro Rail service from September 7.

'Advanced tech helps in reaching out to people'

HYDERABAD: Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy on Sunday highlighted the importance of using advanced technology in creating awareness on welfare schemes of the Union Government so that the programmes can have mass appeal to attract the general public. While speaking with Information & Broadcasting Ministry officials in Hyderabad, he suggested using creatives, info-graphics which can easily attract the attention of common man and can give comprehensive information on all government scheme benefits. Stating that Hyderabad is a hub of many National Institutes like NPA, NISA, NSG, etc, Kishan Reddy suggested that special programmes on their activities may be broadcast in public interest to create more awareness. Kishan Reddy reviewed various activities of media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in Hyderabad on Sunday. The Minister released the September edition of Yojana, magazine of Publication Division on the occasion.

Telangana reports 2,924 new cases, 10 deaths

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana has reported 2,924 new Coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, taking the state's overall tally to 1,23,090, health officials said on Sunday. Meanwhile, 10 more new deaths have increased the total number of fatalities to 818. The health officials said the state's case fatality rate further dropped to 0.66 per cent against the national average of 1.79 per cent. Out of the total fatalities, 53.87 per cent had comorbidities.

Authorities have tested 61,148 samples during the last 24 hours ending 8 p.m. Saturday. The results of 1,801 samples are awaited. During the last seven days, over 4.30 lakh tests were conducted. This has taken the overall number of tests to 13,27,791. The authorities have added five laboratories including four private for conducting RT-PCR/CBNAAT/TRUENAT types of tests. Now a total of 17 government and 35 private laboratories are conducting these tests, while the state has 1,076 rapid antigen tests centres.

Unlike some other states, the authorities in Telangana have not provided a break-up of the type of tests conducted. During the last 24 hours, 27,516 primary contacts and 8,560 secondary contacts were tested. The officials claimed that with 35,763 samples tested per million population, the number of



According to the latest bulletin, out of total positive cases so far, 84,932 that is 69 per cent of the total cases were asymptomatic

tests conducted in the state is much higher than the daily testing target of 5,600 per day as per the World Health Organization's (WHO) benchmark of 140 per million per day. According to the latest bulletin, out of total positive cases so far, 84,932 that is 69 per cent of the total cases were asymptomatic while the remaining 31 per cent were symptomatic. The number of cases in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) increased to 461 from 432 the previous day.

Rangareddy and Medchal Malkajigiri districts abutting GHMC reported 153 and 213 cases respectively. Sangareddy, another district bordering the

state capital, recorded 44 new cases. Outside GHMC and surrounding districts, Khammam was the worst affected district with 181 new cases followed by Karimnagar 172, Nalgonda with 171, Nizamabad 140 and Suryapet 118 cases. Warangal Urban reported 102 cases, Siddipet 97 cases, Jagtial 92 and Mancherial 91. During the last 24 hours, 1,638 people recovered from COVID, taking the total number of recoveries to 90,988. The state's recovery rate stands at 73.9 per cent against the national average of 76.63 per cent. The number of active cases in the state stands at 31,284 including 24,176 in home/institutional isolation.



Observing silence to keep Covid at bay!

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

To prevent the spread of Coronavirus, the golden rule is observing silence rather than talking loudly and yelling. According to an article published in The BMJ journal conducted studies in UK, China and USA indicated that the risk is more in indoor work places and places of worship.

The higher will be the ventilation, the less would be the risk. In indoor places, people congregate at places where there is poor ventilation and speaking together, singing songs and yelling at the top of the voice are some of the factors that induce the virus.

In the USA, a singer taking part in a concert spread the virus among 52 persons. When the persons who tested positive for the virus, coughed up and sneezes the droplets will fly up to the distance of over nine metres without any change in quantity. Subsequently, even if their quantity changes, the smaller the droplet size the more severity would be the problem, the studies indicate. Observing a distance of 2-3 metres is of no use, it said.

Shun plastic, says Harish

PNS ■ SIDDIPEET

Finance Minister T Harish Rao called upon people of Siddipet to use only steel utensils to serve guests at functions instead of using plastic. The Minister, who inaugurated steel bank facilities in the 20th, 21st and 23rd wards of Siddipet Municipality on Sunday, appealed to people to put the steel banks to optimum utilisation to stay away from plastic.

He asked the resource persons of MEPMA to sensitise the people by visiting every day and bring awareness on the need of utilisation besides educating them on the importance of segregating wet and dry waste. Rao also laid the founda-



Finance Minister Harish Rao sensitising the people on the use of steel boxes in Siddipet on Sunday

tion stone for multiple CC roads in the town with an outlay of Rs 50 lakh.

Earlier, he sensitised the people on the need to empty all the utensils to counter the Mosquito menace besides disposing of the

waste. The Minister visited several houses in these three municipal wards and sensitised the people. Municipal Chairperson K Rajanarsu, Commissioner Srinivas Reddy and others were present.

'Centre keeping 'eagle eye' on KCR's corrupt practices'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Karimnagar MP and Telangana BJP Chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Sunday alleged that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has destroyed all the sectors, including Health and Agriculture in the state. The state government has been indulging in corruption, he alleged and said that the Centre put an 'eagle eye' on KCR's corrupt practices. "KCR and his team will definitely go to jail. The Centre is keeping an eye on the corrupt practices of the state government," he said and exuded confidence that the party will storm to power in 2023.

Speaking to the media on

Sunday, Bandi Sanjay alleged that the Telangana government has utterly failed in containing the spread of Coronavirus. "KCR remained as a mute spectator even though the corporate hospitals across the state are collecting huge money from the patients, who tested positive for the virus," he alleged. The Chief Minister left the real culprits and initiated steps on few private hospitals for name sake, he said. Bandi Sanjay observed that the hospital's issue is a good example for KCR's corrupt practices.

The Karimnagar MP alleged that KCR is extending his support to a particular religion and adopting anti-Hindu policies and it will be easily under-



stood while seeing the orders issued during various festivals. He alleged that the state government showed less number of Corona cases during Ramzan festival, however, the same state

government stated that the virus is spreading fast when Ganesh festival was round the corner.

"The TRS government has deceived all the sections of the people in the state. The government didn't even care about the farmers who faced losses due to heavy rains and neglected teachers and other employees. The Chief Minister left his assurance on PRC to the wind and KCR failed to stick to his word given to the coal mine workers during Singareni elections," he alleged. Sanjay demanded KCR to extend help to them at least now. He alleged the Chief Minister is speaking differently when he participates in the review meetings of the centre and speaks differently outside.

Participating in Webinar with BJP new state committee, Telangana chief also warned his own party leaders by stating that he will not tolerate the leaders from booth level to national level if they act against the party rules and regulations. The office bearers meeting was held under the leadership of Bandi Sanjay Kumar and party leaders-BJP national general secretary P Muralidhar Rao, Union Minister for State of Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy, BJP state in-charge PK Krishna Das, National Saha Sangatana general secretary Soudhan Singh, MLCN Ramchander Rao, MPs, presidents of various Morchas and special invitees participated in the video conference.

Expedite RoB works: Puvvada

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Transport Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar on Sunday visited the RoB at Damsalapuram under construction at a cost of Rs 74 crore and inspected the works and asked R and B executive engineer Shyam Prasad to complete the works as early as possible. He said that the approach road works should not be kept in pending.

The four-lane roads linking Khammam with Bonakal are almost complete and advised the district authorities to complete the remainder of works and get them inaugurated by Minister for Municipal Administration KT Rama Rao.



DIVINE TIME



Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and his family members performing Ganapati homam at Pragathi Bhavan on Sunday

KCR donates for temple in Andhra

PNS ■ NAYUDUPET

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and his spouse Sobha have lent support to build the Sri Venkateswara swamy temple at Swarnamukhi pilgrimage centre. The couple donated for building the Raja Gopuram of the temple and developing the East Mada Street.

On Saturday, installation of the deity's idol and Kumbhabhishekam and other rituals were conducted as per the traditions. In fact, the CM couple should have taken part in the event, but could not attend because of Covid-19 regulations. A plaque of the temple reads the names of the CM and his spouse in it.

Chief Minister, KTR denying appointment, alleges Swamy Goud

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Legislative Council Chairman Swamy Goud has alleged that the TRS is not giving preference to those who have taken part in the statehood movement. In an interview to a local TV channel on Sunday, he alleged that the TRS gives importance to those leaders who heckled him and his other fellow participants in the movement for Telangana.

Swamy Goud claimed that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao is not giving appointment to him even if he seeks to meet them. "If they could not give appointment to those who had put their best foot forward in the movement for Telangana whom else would they give the



appointment," he wondered. He ruled out changing the party and made it clear that he would continue in the TRS.

He said that he is not interested in power. He wants the party elders to speak to those who had taken part in the movement, weaker sections and the down trodden. KCR promised him Chevella Lok

The Legislative Council Chairman Swamy Goud said that the TRS party is not giving importance to the leaders who led the Telangana movement from the front

Sabha ticket, but could not keep his promise, he said expressing his inability to decipher what circumstances had prompted the CM to go back on his word to him.

Rly Board gives nod to run spl trains

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As Unlock 3.0 is nearing its end, the fourth phase of the 'Unlock' is about to begin from September 1 across the country. The guidelines of 'Unlock 4.0' were announced yesterday by the Ministry of Home Affairs, under which the ministry allowed metro services to resume across the country from September 7.

The Railway Board has granted permission to railway zones to run special trains in states upon consulting states under the limits of the railway zones. The final decision is left to the state government depending on severity of Covid-19 cases. The government Chief Secretaries are likely to write letters to the zones in a day or two.

If the state government gives



The Railway Board has granted permission to railway zones to run special trains in states upon consulting state govts

its nod to run special trains, the services will be run from state capital to various districts in the state. As part of unlock 4.0, the railway board discussed two days ago on running special trains in states. It decided to run special train services between various districts.

If the state governments

have no objection, the railway board has no objection to run special trains. Normally, employees, petty traders and people commute between Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda, Warangal, Janagan, Kamareddy and Hyderabad as frequently as possible.

There are many persons

who travel to districts from the city too. The train fare is economical, compared to bus fare. Therefore, many show inclination to rail travel. If the decision were to be implemented, passenger train services, MEMU, DEMU, push-pull trains will come into force soon.

All set for Ganesh immersion in GWMC limits

PNS ■ WARANGAL URBAN

All arrangements are in place for the smooth immersion of the Ganesh idols under Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation (GWMC) limits. The immersion will take place as a low-key affair on Monday as per the Covid-19 norms at six identified places.

They include Padmakshamma Gundam, Chinnawaddepally tank, Bandham Cheruvu, Hasanparthy pedd cheruvu, Ursu Katta cheruvu and Siddeshwara Gundam, said Incharge District Revenue Officer (DRO) Vasuchandra. "No processions will be allowed, people participating in the



immersion programme must wear the masks besides following other the Covid-19 norms," he added.

A total of 15 cranes and 15 trollies have been pressed for the immersion of the idols. Removal

of the bushes and weed were taken up on the roads that lead to the tanks. "CCTV cameras were also set up at the tanks," said ACP Jithender Reddy. Fire officials were asked to be ready with six fire tenders.

CID team to submit report on fire accident

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

The CID report on Srisailem Left Bank Power House fire accident that claimed lives of nine is ready for submission to the government. The CID officials questioned officials working in the Power House and personnel working in various departments there.

They observed the damaged electric panel boards due to short-circuit, cable wires, generators, switch boards and analysed the FIR lodged with the police and compared the aspects mentioned in it with their observation during investigation. On Saturday, the probe team with the help of engineers obtained a comprehensive sketch of the Power House.

SHORT READS



Stopping Rahul from leading party will destroy Cong: Sanjay

MUMBAI: Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday said stopping Rahul Gandhi from taking over leadership of Congress will lead to "extinction" of the grand old party. In his weekly column Rukhthok in the Sena mouthpiece Saamana, Raut also said Congress lacks a leader who can stand up to Prime Minister Narendra Modi with full might. Referring to the letter by 23 Congress leaders to Sonia Gandhi on having a "full time" leadership that is active in the field and "visible" in party offices, Raut wondered who is stopping these leaders from being active. "Activists to stop Rahul Gandhi will be instrumental in destroying the party and lead to its extinction," Raut said. Having a non-Gandhi as Congress president is a good idea, but no one in those 23 has that capability, said Raut whose party, along with Congress and NCP, is a constituent of the ruling alliance in Maharashtra.

Lata Mangeshkar's building gets sealed, singer and family safe

MUMBAI: Legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar's building has been sealed by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) as a precautionary measure amid the coronavirus pandemic. The 90-year-old singer resides in Prabhukunj building at Peddar Road in south Mumbai. The Mangeshkar family, in a statement, said the building was sealed as it houses many senior citizens. "We have been inundated by calls all evening enquiring whether Prabhukunj is sealed. The Building Society and the BMC have sealed it from the onset of the epidemic as we have senior citizens at home and in the building and it is mandatory to take these precautions. "Even our usual festive Ganesh celebrations was a simple familial one this time to co-operate and support social distancing," the statement read.

Army JCO killed in Pak firing along LoC in J-K's Rajouri

JAMMU: A Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) of the Army was killed on Sunday in firing by Pakistani troops along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, a defence spokesman said. The firing from across the border in the Nowshera sector was unprovoked and responded strongly by the Indian Army, the spokesman said. He said Naib Subedar Rajwinder Singh was critically injured in the "unprovoked ceasefire violation" by the Pakistan army. Singh later succumbed to injuries, the spokesman said. "Naib Subedar Singh was a brave, highly motivated and a sincere soldier. The nation will always remain indebted to him for his supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty," the spokesman said.

India can become world's toy hub, time to be vocal for local toys: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called upon startups and entrepreneurs to "team up for toys", as he noted India's minuscule share in the global toy market of over Rs 7 lakh crore and asserted that the country has talent and ability to become a hub for the industry.

In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' address, he said it was time for startups to be "vocal for local toys" and also asked them to develop computer games in and based on India, citing the nation's rich heritage and traditions that can drive innovations in the toy and gaming industry.

"Our country has so many ideas, so many concepts; our history has been very rich. Can we make games based on that? I call upon the young talent of the country - make games in India and make games based on India too. It is said that let the game begin! So, let us start the game," he said.

The prime minister had also recently chaired a meeting aimed at boosting India's share in the global toy trade in which China is one of the largest manufacturers and exporters.

Modi touched on a number of issues in the broadcast and lauded people for maintaining



unprecedented restraint and simplicity in celebrating festivals during the COVID pandemic and praised farmers for an increase in the sowing area for crops.

He also asked teachers to work to apprise students of local events and heroes of the freedom struggle as India approaches 75 years of Independence in 2022, saying it will bring to the fore stories of lakhs of "unsung heroes", who lived and died for the country but had faded into "oblivion".

Touching on his government's 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' campaign, he said in his address that the country has to be self-reliant in every area and added that a big opportunity lies in the toy and gaming sector.

"You will be surprised to know that the global toy industry is of

more than Rs 7 lakh crore. Such a big business but India's share is very little in this. Now, just spare a thought for a nation which has so much of heritage, tradition, variety, young population, will it feel good to have such little share in the toy market?" he asked.

The prime minister said India has had a rich tradition of local toys and has talented and skilled artisans with expertise in making good toys, noting that some parts of the country are developing as toy clusters.

"We can do two things through toys - bring back the glorious past in our lives and also spruce up our golden future. To my start-up friends, to our new entrepreneurs I say team up for toys. For everybody it is the time to get vocal for local toys," he said.

'Students wanted to hear Pariksha pe charcha not Khilone pe charcha'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said that the students wanted Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address the issue of NEET and JEE exams in his monthly radio programme, but he spoke on toys.

His remark came after Prime Minister Modi in his 'Mann Ki Baat' address said that the country has the talent and ability to become a hub for the toy industry and called upon startups and entrepreneurs to "team up for toys". Using the hashtag 'Mann_Ki_Nahi_Students_Ki_Baat', Rahul Gandhi tweeted, "JEE-NEET aspirants wanted the PM to do 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' but the PM did 'Khilone Pe Charcha'."

Rahul Gandhi and his Congress party have supported a demand by a section to postpone the NEET and JEE examinations, which are start-



ing from September 1, in view of the COVID pandemic.

Six state governments through their ministers have also moved the Supreme Court with a review petition seeking postponement of these exams.

In yet another push to his 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' campaign to make India self-reliant, PM Modi on Sunday urged the startups to develop computer games in and based on India, citing the nation's rich heritage and traditions that can drive innovations in the toy and gaming industry.



Record 10.5 lakh tests in a day takes India's total tests past 4.14 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With a record over 10.5 lakh tests conducted in a day for detection of COVID-19, the number of such tests performed in the country has crossed 4.14 crore, the Union health ministry said on Sunday. The exponential jump in the testing capacity and the number of tests has resulted in an upsurge in Tests Per Million to 30,044 as on date, it highlighted.

With a record 10,55,027 tests conducted on Saturday, the country has further strengthened the national diagnostic capacity of testing more than 10 lakh samples for COVID-19 daily. The total number of tests conducted in the country for detection of coronavirus currently stands at 4,14,61,636, the ministry said.

The Centre, keeping in view the evolving global context of

COVID-19, conceptualised and implemented the continuum of care strategy of "test, track and treat" in close coordination with the states and Union territories, it said.

Pivoted on the strong pillar of aggressive testing, the positive cases are identified early, which enables and ensures that their contacts are efficiently tracked in a timely manner, the ministry stated. This is followed up with prompt isolation at home or a facility setting for the mild and moderate cases, and hospitalisation for the severe and critical patients, it said.

The World Health Organization (WHO), in its guidance note on 'Public Health Criteria to Adjust Public Health and Social Measures in the Context of COVID-19', has advised comprehensive surveillance for suspected coronavirus cases.

Hope NEP will recapture India's past glory: Nishank

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Saturday expressed hope that the new education policy will help India recapture its past glory as a centre of learning.

Nishank was among a host of other eminent persons, including President Ram Nath Kovind and Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal, to speak on the occasion of the 12th foundation day of the Central University of Odisha, which was held through video conference. Kovind, who is the Visitor of central universities, emphasised the need for value based education for the growth and development of students and the youth.



In his address, Nishank said there was an era when foreign nations were "attracted" to India for its academic prowess.

"Now, it's time to achieve that type of education through the New Education Policy," the minister said, urging universities to focus more on research and development.

'Can't see heavens falling' for need of elected Cong president: Khurshid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that there was no urgency to have an elected Congress president, senior leader Salman Khurshid on Sunday said he "can't see the heavens falling" for the need of a party chief as Sonia Gandhi was still at the helm and should be the one to decide on the leadership issue.

Khurshid, a former Union minister and among the leaders considered close to the Gandhi family, told PTI in an interview that he would not have signed the letter even if he was approached by the group that wrote to Gandhi seeking urgent organisation-



al overhaul, including an active and full-time leadership.

On Ghulam Nabi Azad, the most vocal among the 23 letter writers, seeking organisational elections to ensure that the Congress does not remain out of power for decades, Khurshid said the senior leader from Jammu and Kashmir had been part of the top echelons of the party

for years when there has been no such elections and still the party prospered. He said probably Azad wanted a change now in what the party has been doing over the years and expressed confidence that the leadership will give a thought to what he is saying as he is a senior leader.

Khurshid said the leaders who have written to Sonia Gandhi always had access to her and could have approached her rather than writing to her.

Khurshid said no one had approached him for signing the letter and even if anyone had done so, he would not have signed because he does not agree with the letter.

We are not anyone's puppets: Farooq's retort to Pakistan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Reacting sharply to Pakistan hailing the recent Gupkar Declaration in which six political parties of Jammu and Kashmir vowed to fight collectively against the abrogation of Article 370, National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah on Sunday asserted that "we are not anyone's puppets".

"Pakistan has always abused mainstream political parties of Jammu and Kashmir but now suddenly they like us", the former chief minister said when asked about Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi's statement that the declaration issued by the NC, PDP, Congress and three other



parties was "not an ordinary occurrence but an important development".

"Let me make it clear that we are not anyone's puppets, neither New Delhi's nor of anyone across the border. We are answerable to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and will work for them," he said.

SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT CASE

Cong questions Centre over CBI probe, wants Singh's 'BJP-link' investigated

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress Sunday questioned the "alacrity" exhibited by the Centre in ordering a CBI probe in the Sushant Singh Rajput case and sought investigation into alleged BJP links of Sandeep Singh, the producer of a biopic on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is under the scanner in a related drugs case.

Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi asked who in the BJP is trying to "save" Ssingh, who produced "PM Narendra Modi", the posters of which were unveiled by the then Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis. Singhvi alleged the film



producer who claimed to be Rajput's close friend made 53 calls to the Maharashtra BJP office and who was his boss. "Who he was seeking security from," Singhvi asked.

He said political parties do not get into Bollywood mat-

ters. "But if a suspect is linked to the ruling party, the country wants to know who is he connected to and who in the BJP is trying to save Sandeep Ssingh."

"Was Sandeep Singh the reasons for showing alacrity in ordering a CBI probe? Why are such people linked to the BJP?" he asked.

Singhvi said Fadnavis and senior BJP leader Nitin Gadkari should answer as to why Ssingh made these many calls to the Maharashtra BJP office and who was his boss.

The Congress leader said Ssingh's closeness to the ruling party is evident from the fact that he made the biopic on PM Modi.

BJP has no connection with Sushant case: Union Minister

JALNA: In a veiled attack on the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra government over actor Sushant Singh Rajput death case, Union minister Raosaheb Danve on Sunday said some people had opposed the CBI probe to protect "someone" and they are now trying to drag the BJP in the matter. Responding to a query on certain allegations levelled by state Congress general secretary Sachin Sawant, Danve said the BJP had no connection with the case. "We had been demanding a CBI probe in Rajput case, as we wanted truth to come out. However, it seems those opposing such investigation knew that something is fishy in the case."

Rhea called for questioning by CBI for 3-day

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The CBI called actress Rhea Chakraborty for the third consecutive day on Sunday for questioning in the case of death of her boyfriend and filmstar Sushant Singh Rajput, a police official said.

The 28-year-old actress is accused of abetting Rajput's suicide. Her brother Showik Chakraborty was also called by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for the fourth day in a row for questioning in the case, the official said. Rhea Chakraborty and her brother reached the DRDO guest house at Kalina in Santacruz, where the probe team is stationed, around 10.30 am, he said.

A Mumbai Police vehicle escorted the car in which the two arrived at the guest house, he said. Rajput's man-



ager Samuel Miranda and domestic help Keshav also reached the guest house in the morning. Earlier, Rhea Chakraborty was questioned for nearly 10 hours on Friday and allowed to return home under police escort as a large number of media personnel were present outside her building. She was quizzed for around seven hours on Saturday.

Her brother is being ques-

tioned by the CBI since Thursday. On Saturday, the CBI also questioned Rajput's flatmate Siddharth Pithani, cook Neeraj Singh and accountant Rajat Mewati at the guest house.

Rhea Chakraborty had been earlier questioned by the Mumbai Police in the case. The Enforcement Directorate has also quizzed her in a related money laundering case.

Three LeT militants, ASI killed in J-K encounter

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Three Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militants and an assistant sub-inspector of Jammu and Kashmir Police were killed in a gunfight on the outskirts of the city here on Sunday, police said.

Militants fired on a joint 'naka' of police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Pantha Chowk area late on Saturday night, a police official said.

He said the joint parties of the forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation there.

During the searches in the area, the militants again fired on the search party of the forces, who retaliated, leading to an encounter, the official said.

A tight cordon was maintained throughout the night and the firing resumed this morning, he said.

He said three militants were killed in the gunfight.



An assistant sub-inspector of Jammu and Kashmir Police, Babu Ram, was also killed in the operation, the official added.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the wreath laying ceremony of the slain ASI, Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh said the three militants came on a bike and

fired at the joint party of the security forces.

"After firing upon the forces, they (militants) tried to snatch weapons, but it was foiled by alert troops, forcing the militants to flee, leaving behind their bike. The forces chased them and they took shelter in a nearby area known as Dhobi Mohalla, Pantha Chowk," he said.

New govt business rules for J&K aimed at undermining authority of legislature: NPP

PNS ■ JAMMU

Describing the new government business rules for Jammu and Kashmir as "repulsively bizarre", the National Panthers Party (NPP) on Sunday said the notification seemed to be a move on the part of BJP-led government to "undermine the authority" of J&K legislature.

"The new rules which provide for allocation of powers and government business between the legislators of J&K, Lt Governor and the union government will almost make the elected representatives redundant by snatching majority of the powers which are conferred upon them in a regular state," NPP chairman and former minister Harsh Dev Singh said in a statement here.

He said while majority of the powers of council of ministers have also been transferred to the Lt Governor, the Centre too



would wield huge influence over the administration as well as the day to day functioning of the J&K government.

On August 28, the Centre issued rules for a smooth functioning of the Jammu and Kashmir administration, specifying that the police, the all-India services and the anti-corruption bureau will be under the direct control of the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory.

The rules, notified by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, also made it clear that in case of a difference of opinion between the LG and the council of ministers (when it is formed) with regard to any matter, the former shall refer it to the Centre for the decision of the president and shall act accordingly to that decision.

"It is bizarre that under the

Majority of the powers of council of ministers have also been transferred to the Lt Governor, the Centre too would wield huge influence



Modi recalls sacrifice of Imam Hussain

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid homage to Imam Hussain on Sunday to mark Muharram, saying nothing was more important to him than the values of truth and justice. Imam Hussain's emphasis on equality as well as fairness is noteworthy and gives strength to many, the prime minister said. "We recall the sacrifice of Imam Hussain (AS). For him, there was nothing more important than the values of truth and justice. His emphasis on equality as well as fairness are noteworthy and give strength to many," Modi said in a tweet.

Common voters' list

A uniform database may be reformatory but as a build-up to simultaneous polls, there's a political agenda



In what could signal the first step towards changing the electoral apparatus of the country and holding simultaneous polls, top officials at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) have discussed drawing up a common voters' list. This means there would be a combined database that would be applicable to local body, Assembly and parliamentary elections. On the face of it, and taken in isolation, this is a favourable move. In fact, as far back as 1999, the Election Commission (EC) had argued for a uniform voters' list, saying a multiplicity of rolls not only created confusion among voters but led to manipulation by political parties as well.

Truth be told, there have been many cases where voters may have figured on the national rolls but not on the local list, simply because different mechanisms handle them. Often the inclusion of voters' names for local body polls is heavily dependent on volunteers of local parties and, therefore, prone to fudging. Besides, a single voters' list could also streamline processes and avoid duplication of effort and expenditure. But it is the political implications of the move that may well stall a consensus on what seems expedient. For the ruling BJP, it would mean ticking off another agenda it had promised in its manifesto and centralising control over voters' lists, and by extension the electoral process in each State. This would be seen as a maximalist move on federalism by regional parties. As of now, the State Election Commissions (SECs) are bound by State laws, are autonomous and empowered to prepare their own electoral rolls for local body elections without coordinating with the EC. If the EC becomes the superintending authority, State Governments wouldn't want to cede their territorial right to oversee local polls. They wouldn't want their SECs defanged or their own political stake in Assembly formation compromised by a big-brotherly overlordship. Even the minutest roll revision, factoring in local dynamics, would have to be done through Central intervention. Even if the Centre pushes a constitutional amendment to Articles 243K and 243ZA, that currently give the power of superintendence, direction and control of preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of local body elections to SECs, States wouldn't correspondingly change their own laws and could place hurdles in implementation. Besides, one cannot deny this as a run-up to the "one nation one poll" proposal.

This, too, needs careful deliberation and has to be fully compliant with Constitutional checks and balances than just being a talking point. The high-sounding argument is that with States in India's federal structure going to polls at varied points of time within the Central government's mandated period of governance, no visionary or decisive steps can be taken or implemented as they would be subservient to electoral politics, which in this country tends to be overly populist in nature. Besides, it would rid the country from being in a continuous poll mode and instead go in for a performance mode. But it is in the subtext of the Westminster system we have adopted that questions arise about whether a unitary system works best for our federal structure. And in the current political context, whether it threatens the very idea of regionalism itself, considering that in a single election, national issues tend to take centrestage and drown out or at least blur pertinent issues of localised interest, something that regional parties are usually in better command of and base their political relevance on. Although many argue that the Indian voter is evolved enough to make a distinction between the larger national interest and those of his periphery, there is always a possibility that the overarching aura of the former could swamp the judgment call of the voter at the State level, if the prevailing party seeking mandate happens to be of a centrist party. And as the Lok Sabha results have shown, the centrist surge helped the ruling NDA regain its footprint in States, where it had been hit badly in the Assembly elections. Of course, this, too, will require a substantive number of Constitutional amendments to the Representation of People's Act 1951, the anti-defection law and others relating to rules of procedure with two-thirds majority in both Houses. Besides, such a move does not factor in mid-term situations where a State government may choose to dissolve itself or fall because of a loss of majority. Would the Governor then not call fresh polls or hold on to a moribund Assembly till the dates of the next round of general elections are announced? What if the Central Government falls before the term of the Assemblies ends? As it is, though we call ourselves a federal state, in reality we are a more centralised union of states. The "One nation, one election" formula would further strengthen this idea of a monolithic State. And given the state of disarray the Opposition is in, the BJP is making a loaded move.

Wakanda forever

Boseman was not just another Black actor pushing diversity, he showed any man could be superman



Legends die young. And 2020 has not been a kind year, particularly to those in the entertainment industry, both in India and abroad. But the death of Hollywood actor Chadwick Boseman at a young age of 43 hurts that much more. Because he was the Black Panther, the avenger of wrongs, the challenger of a White world and a transitional perfection from man to superman. Because he was the king of Wakanda, upholding the spirit of tradition and embracing modernity with that rare combination of warmth and intelligence. He may have played Black icons like Jackie Robinson and James Brown but as

Black Panther, that lithe, smart and fearless warrior, he transcended barriers and made a place in everybody's hearts. *Black Panther* was the first superhero film to be nominated for a best picture Oscar and one of the highest-grossing films of all time, bringing in over \$1.3 billion. This despite the many icons emerging from the Marvel Cinematic Universe. In life, Boseman was no less a fighter. In between his fight with cancer, numerous surgeries and chemotherapy sessions, he gave us films like *Marshall*, *Da 5 Bloods*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and many more. A private man, he had kept the news of his fight with the disease to himself and married his long-time partner and singer Taylor Simon Ledward earlier this year, maybe because he knew the end was near. And he never forgot to wish his friend and Democrat Vice-Presidential candidate Kamala Harris a few days ago.

Black Panther will always represent a watershed moment in popular culture, particularly for African-Americans. A legacy that Boseman was clearly very proud of and for which he had travelled to Africa. The film was considered to be a positive force for social change in the US and at that time, activist Frederick T Joseph raised money through a GoFundMe campaign called "Help Children See *Black Panther*." He was quoted as saying that he was promoting "stories and content that's combatting the rhetoric and racism of the Trump Administration." In fact, the film made Marvel consider more inclusions. *Black Widow* and *Captain Marvel* are more than just about women empowerment, they are the carriers of the future. However, a realist, Boseman himself did not think that *Black Panther* had in any way solved Hollywood's much-touted diversity issues. He said that it came about as a result of a moment that had been building over years with works like the Martin Luther King drama *Selma*, the Disney fantasy-adventure *A Wrinkle in Time* and TV shows such as *Insecure*. He believed that quality film-making was needed for Hollywood to embrace diversity as the new normal rather than just doing movies with a Black cast and director. His own work he considered as "just another doorway into something else." Hopefully a perennial kingdom called Wakanda.

China must settle wisely

It is for Beijing to work out the cultural, economic and strategic damage of an Asian split. Or it could work for a larger Asian unity



PRAFULL GORADIA

The coming months are the time to tell Beijing that the occasion to settle our mutual issues and disputes is now. For its own sake. And it pays to work transactionally with India to stay relevant in a world that is rapidly turning against it. It must end lingering disputes or else sooner or later the American alliance would expand and tilt the scales for a unipolar world. On its part, India has been non-aligned and its leaders would prefer a multi-lateral world to continue. It should be a sad day if one Asian country drives another Asian nation into the arms of the West. It is for Beijing to balance the cultural, economic and strategic damage of an Asian split. Or it could work for a larger Asian unity. This is the time to act.

The external affairs situation is gearing itself into a remarkable opportunity for New Delhi to regain what we lost in 1962 and before. It is as if many a planet is positioning itself to assist India. It began with Chinese ruler Xi Jinping becoming highly ambitious, apparently wanting to make his Middle Kingdom the powerful pivot of the earth. Like Napoleon Bonaparte in 1804, Xi has crowned himself Emperor for life, although the world has changed a great deal over the last two centuries. Today any number of his colleagues would resent such a royal elevation and implicitly compel Xi to prove himself a great man every week. That pressure is hard to live up to.

The US has an unusually bold President; he has an election to win in less than three months from now. President Donald Trump has been waging a cold war with Beijing for quite a while. It has become colder of late and is likely to freeze further. He demonstrated in Texas earlier this year how much he likes Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Lately, he, along with his Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, has openly supported India in the context of Chinese border intrusions, although their main concern is Taiwan, a democratic island country off the southeast coast of China. It is an independent country but Beijing claims that China, Taiwan and Hong Kong-Macao are one country, three systems. The US has a defence treaty with



Taiwan and cannot possibly allow the island country to be grabbed by China. Nevertheless, it is a matter of a "do or die" prestige issue for Beijing, especially in Asia. It will, therefore, be interesting to see how the issue will unfold.

According to its President, the US is likely to jettison the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). This was an alliance to combat an invasion by the Soviet Union of western Europe. By 1991, the Soviet Union had broken up. So what is the rationale for NATO? Who should it defend and against whom? In any case, this should mainly be the responsibility of western Europe, not the US. If this were to happen, the US military budget would have a lot of money and troops to spare for Asia. Half the American troops stationed in Germany are already being transferred to Asia. After World War II ended in 1945, Germany and Japan were asked by the US and allies to scale down their military status. They were forbidden from letting their forces leave the shores of their countries for any military operations. In fact, for the first five years after WWII, these countries were not to have any military at all. They were to be protected by the US, with or without NATO. Germany remained conservative, saved money and

produced its economic miracle. Japan was militarily a little more restless and began developing its navy, airforce and strengthening its army, even though slowly. In these 70 years, it has quietly modernised its navy and airforce, has built a helicopter-carrier and makes modern submarines. The present Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, has worked hard to amend the Constitution and Japan can now send troops overseas. The more China developed, the greater was the Japanese intent to be militarily stronger; so also is the case with India over the last six years. Every action has a reaction.

Similarly, the people of Taiwan have been alerted, especially after trouble began in Hong Kong. Until the Xi Jinping regime passed a law that anyone arrested for wrongdoing in Hong Kong could be extradited to mainland China for being tried, these smaller places were relaxed. This new Chinese law, Hong Kongers rightly feel, is a violation of Beijing's commitment of 1997, when the British left, of "one country two systems" whereby the mainland would not interfere in island, which is also a big revenue earner. Popular protest spilled over to the streets where even American flags were flown, provoking great anger in Beijing. These continual agitations have further alerted the

Taiwanese and new President Tsai Ing Wen is committed to complete independence and a deeper cooperation in the neighbourhood, which infuriates Beijing no end. The US is defending Taiwan's freedom to demonstrate its seriousness; very recently a Secretary of the Trump government has visited Taipei as a show of support. India under Prime Minister Modi has appointed an envoy to Taiwan, following the Ladakh clashes.

More distant countries, whether in Europe or South America, have got resentful of China for suppressing facts about the Wuhan contagion. The international wind is blowing against the Dragon.

The Islamic countries may not speak up but are upset at how Beijing is treating Muslims in its country, especially those living in Xinjiang, which was once an independent East Turkestan. After the Red revolution and Mao Zedong coming to power in 1950, some 28 leading politicians of this country were invited to Beijing (then Peking). The stated purpose was to meet fraternal leaders and discuss issues of mutual interest. Since the Uyghurs had no means of travel, a special plane was sent to the capital Ürümqi. After the conference and get-together, the same aircraft that was taking the Turkish leaders back,

crashed. All Uyghur leaders were killed except two communists who had opted out at the last moment feigning sickness. They took over the government of East Turkestan and soon merged it with the rest of China.

The Sino-Japanese relations have an uneven history. For example, Manchuria was a colonial province of Japan between 1932 and 1945. As a result of World War II, it was ceded to China. Over the many decades, especially after its naval victory over Russia in 1905, Japan had considered the Pacific Ocean more as its own than anyone else's. Lately, China has been spreading its wings over the South China Sea, which is objected to by several powers, including Japan as well as the US. Beijing has built an island in its midst, provoking Australia, India, Japan and the US, which have deployed their navies to conduct exercises in the high seas. The current bone of contention happens to be the Senkaku Islands, a group of uninhabited islands. Except for the US administering them between 1945 and 1972, as part of the Ryukyu Islands, the archipelago has been controlled by Japan since 1895. The People's Republic of China (PRC) started talking of the sovereignty over the islands in the latter half of 1970 when evidence relating to the existence of oil reserves surfaced.

Additionally, after claiming large portions of the South China Sea as well as Mt Everest, two Chinese websites have been claiming that central Asian countries like Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have been parts of China and with the latter even eager to "return" to China. According to the latest Chinese territorial claims on others' territories, under the Khan dynasty, a total of 510,000 square kilometres of Kyrgyzstan, or the entire country, was part of China but was later overrun by the Russian empire.

It is well known that China is over populated and land-hungry. In the bargain, the People's Liberation Army had tried to cross the Ussuri river and into Russian territory in 1969. The vast area of Russian Asia has comparatively few people and is, therefore, a perpetual temptation for the Chinese to occupy. Beijing has few friends for fear of what it is and what it could desire. North Korea and Pakistan are the only obviously perceptible allies.

(The author is a senior journalist. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

Freedom of expression is under threat, democracy is being destroyed. They want India's people, women, youth to keep their mouths shut.

Congress president — Sonia Gandhi



(Practice) went much better than expected, to be honest. I was pretty scared. I hadn't picked up a bat for five months but yeah it came out better than I thought.

Cricketer — Virat Kohli



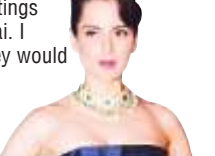
The BJP has been allowed to exercise control of WhatsApp's India operations in return for a possible licence for its payment operations.

Congress general secretary — KC Venugopal



During my struggling days, this person (character actor) would take me to meetings with people from Dubai. I started fearing that they would supply me to Dubai.

Actress — Kangana Ranaut



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No tears for the poor

Sir — The whole country seems to be obsessed with the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. While it is sad that a young and talented person like him died an unnatural and untimely death, and no one can make up the loss of his life for his parents, the fact remains that there have been many more suicides by actors during this pandemic. How come no one talks about those deaths? Is it because they were not so well-known people? Everyone knows that small-time film and television stars are desperate as they are either not being paid or are being given half of what is due to them. This has led to deep financial distress for a bevy of actors and some of them have committed suicide in the last few months since the pandemic swept the world. One wishes that someone would give a thought to such people too and speak up for the ones who died by suicide. Those entertainment companies that held back the payments and resulted in the desperate actors committing suicide should also be brought to book. They deserve justice too.

Cong must respect dissent

This refers to the editorial, 'Congress Vs Congress' (August 29). The arrogance and pride shown by the higher-ups in the Congress after the leak of a letter written by 23 senior Congress leaders, demanding a change in the party organisation, whether real or part of a strategy, have ultimately made a mockery of the party in public. Despite a resounding victory in three States in 2018, the party did not get as much coverage at the national level as it got from this controversy. The Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting was called to discuss the situation after the letter written by the veteran leaders to Sonia Gandhi was leaked in the media. The letter had the signatures of seniors like Ghulam Nabi Azad, Bhupendra Singh Hooda, Shashi Tharoor, Kapil Sibal, Prithviraj Chavan and Anand Sharma. All these leaders have held important positions in the party at one time or the other. However, the recent controversy over the well-meaning letter has given rise to many questions. Is there a possibility of a non-Gandhi leading the Congress? At the Congress Working Committee meeting on Monday, Sonia Gandhi was urged to hold the post till the next decision, which she also accepted. Chief Ministers and Congress MPs of different States were running similar campaigns. The MPs had expressed their solidarity by writing a letter to Sonia Gandhi. At the same time, they had urged that till Rahul Gandhi takes over as the president, she should continue.



It has been alleged that those who are talking about the change of leadership are playing into the hands of the BJP and weakening the party. It was evident from this campaign that the leaders and workers of the party were talking about strengthening the leadership of the Gandhi family. It is being speculated that time is being given to Rahul Gandhi to prepare his team. It seems that veteran Congress leaders think that the unity of the party is possible only with the Gandhi family at the helm. Despite this, there is no shortage of experienced and tall leaders in the party. Political pundits say that when a party is going through a difficult time, voices of contradiction are natural in the party. These voices must be respected at all cost as they mean well.

Abhijit Roy
Jamshedpur

SSR obsession

Or is justice in this country only reserved for the politically-connected and well-known people?
R Dikshit
Navi Mumbai

Sir — If one were to go by the media reports and news channels in the country, then there

is nothing else happening in our nation apart from the probe in the Sushant Singh Rajput suicide case. The real issues on the ground are being ignored. What

is being said about the resurgence of lynchings by cow vigilantes in the cow belt? Why is nothing being said about the continuing horrific injuries that elephants are suffering after eating fruits stuffed with pressure bombs in the South? What of the rapes in Uttar Pradesh (UP) that are taking place every other day? What of the rising cases of Coronavirus in UP and Karnataka and the fact that India is now the third-most affected country in the world? Are these, and many other issues plaguing the country, not worth discussing on national media? Obviously, real journalism has taken a backseat and scribes and news anchors are now just trying to print/show what sells. Circulation figures and TRP ratings have replaced all other considerations. Journalists seem to have lost their voice and are at the beck and call of media house owners who seem to measure everything in terms of bottomlines. Sadly, the fourth pillar of democracy has developed major cracks.

Ashmit Aaron
Noida, UP

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Be resilient in order to survive

The present times are unique in history because of the almost endless and all-pervading ambiguities the pandemic has generated



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

No matter how one adulates the ability to face ambiguity and no matter how this capability is seen as the fundamental characteristic of an innovative person, the truth is somewhat removed. Whereas dealing with uncertainty raises resilience, like in everything else, one could well say "thus far and no further." Equivocacy ensconced in certain clear-cut parameters works. Ambiguity as a constant and dominant feature of life can be corrosive. The present times are unique in human history because of the almost endless and all-pervading ambiguities the pandemic has generated. One does not know where the virus originated from or the logic of its transmutation. One does not know much about its antidote or how it could strike. It is true that much poetry has been woven around the theme of subtle, calculated or not so calculated ambiguity. That kind of romanticised writing is conspicuous by its absence in the present case.

By a rough estimate, there are about 250 million children worldwide who do not have access to schools. For them, staying away from formal education was a no-choice situation. Of the children who have access to schools, 1.6 billion students across 93 countries have faced disruption due to the outbreak. The sheer magnitude of these numbers cannot be comprehended in terms of the impact of an invisible virus that can be so disruptive.

As of now, there is no certitude regarding where it will resurface and how long the contagion will last. The limitations of science and technology stare human existence in the face. It cannot be a subject to be trifled with. Notwithstanding the gravity of the situation for those who understand and for those who try to understand, there is a general sense of gloom in the environment, if not a sense of tentative trepidation. This is bound to have a long-range effect on frames of reference, the ability to understand and interpret interpersonal dynamics and cope with adversity. The whole world is at different levels of lockdown or reopening.

News has just been filtering in of the Coronavirus having reached a remote tribe in Andaman and Nicobar islands. Of this tribe, only about 50 members survive today. Reportedly, nearly a dozen of them are affected. Obviously, there will be any number of hypotheses of how the virus got there. The more relevant part of the story is the enigmatic one: Where else will it travel and how?

In the meanwhile, the vaccine story has its own drama, thrills, hopes and reality checks. The bare truth is, as of now, nobody knows exactly how far away, in time, is this vaccine. If an election has to be won and if one can do it, one obviously invests public money in buying up stocks of a vaccine, the availability of which is an enigma in itself. The media is busy with claims and counter-claims. One particular country is also reported to have the vaccine and has been ostensibly using it for a month at least.

The Indian version of this pandemic has the typical stamp of the Indian way of problem-solving, as some quarters are known to practise. First the lockdown came in less than four hours. That it followed a voluntary curfew and beating of cymbals and so on, was also characteristic, in parts. Literally, an endless stream of people termed "migrants" started trudging back home. The first response was of disbelief, then bewilderment, then an attempt to contain, cope and finally reconcile to the processes. The hardships of this odyssey of wanting to return to the place of one's origin can only be believed by those who witnessed it. Then came the closing and opening of many kind of borders, picking up the sick from their homes and rushing them to hospitals. And finally, the inevitable clarion call, "Learn to live with COVID-19."

Characteristically, a few notables offered adulation to some nations for successful handling of the virus and how much Indians had to learn from foreigners. That many such places experienced a second and a third spike was forgotten. The crisis has its crests and troughs. India is in the top three affected regions. The politician and the public figure with glib logic now peddle "cautious normalcy" with masks, sanitisers and, of course, social distancing. One would like to believe this would be a panacea.

In the meanwhile, the Government has rolled out an education policy of unprecedented dimensions, complete with slogans of digitisation, online learning, hybrid education, academic credit banks, digital citizenship and, of course, a 'New India' will be born. Maybe it will! In the meanwhile, the institutions, which will deliver this education policy, are yet to be fashioned. This will be the most critical of all "unlocking" efforts. Resilience would be needed.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

PLEASE JOIN THE BJP'S MASS MOVEMENT AGAINST THE KEJRIWAL GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS THE NEW NAME OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CORRUPTION.
 —DELHI BJP CHIEF
 ADESH GUPTA



MODI//SAYS THAT THE CENTRE HAS TAKEN STEPS TO ERADICATE GRAFT. WHY DOES HE NOT TAKE LEGAL STEPS IF THE DELHI GOVERNMENT IS CORRUPT?
 —SOCIAL ACTIVIST
 ANNA HAZARE

The language of the heart

The reason that Urdu proliferated and got promoted was owing to its secular character and a universal base in India and abroad. Today it happens to be one of the most popular of all international languages



FIROZ BAKHT AHMED

Badi ashrafiat hei zabaan mein. Nawabi ka maza deti hai Urdu faqiri mein (The Urdu language is so aristocratic that it makes even a pauper feel like a king).

Urdu, an Indo-Aryan language, is renowned for its candour and timelessness. It goes without saying that since time immemorial, Urdu had been the *lingua franca* of Sindh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, undivided Bengal, Punjab, Doaba and so on, besides being the language of the heart and soul, as emphasised by the Hindi *littérateur*-cum-Education Minister of India, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', at the inauguration of a two-day webinar titled, *The role and responsibility of Urdu writers in the age of electronic and social media*.

Speaking during the webinar organised by the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL), Pokhriyal emphasised that Urdu is a language of not only a composite culture, syncretism and interfaith bonds but also of humaneness.

Thankfully, Urdu has kept up with the times and become a techno-savvy language with soft copies of hundreds of books being available on apps. However, as social and electronic media is the biggest platform for the dissemination of information these days, it is the responsibility of all connoisseurs and *littérateurs* to ensure that Urdu makes its presence felt there.

According to eminent Urdu professor Zaman Azurdah, writers, poets and authors are the eyes of the entire social, religious and political system and they have a huge responsibility towards lovers of language and literature. Hence, they have to be positive and shed all negativity. And as the most powerful source of information is the social and electronic media, like the authors, poets and journalists of other languages, Urdu writers, too, must toe the line of the internet. Fortunately, many of them are already connecting globally via smartphones and computers and taking the language to the masses.

Even before the advent of Muslims in India, the country was connected historically, culturally, politically and commercially via Arabic, Persian and Turkish influences to the Middle East and other countries, including Iran, Sudan and Turkey. After Muslims settled in India, the conglomeration of people of various cultures speaking a variety of languages like *Rekhta*, *Hindavi* and ultimately, Urdu, came into being.

This intermingling was also known as *lashkar* (group). The purpose of all the Indian and international languages is to achieve the fraternal spirit. Urdu is a beautiful language born out of the conglomeration of Hindu, Muslim and even English cultural backgrounds.

Dr Humra Parveen, Department of Mass Communication, AMU, says that Urdu happens to be the language of the conglomerate tradition and culture of India that, after being acquired by the Khanqahs, educational institutions and the official world, also became the language of commerce. During the times of Mohammed Shah and Quli Qutub Shah, it became the Government's language. At that time, it was, in fact, the most

“ALL LANGUAGES ARE BEAUTIFUL AND HAVE THEIR OWN CHARM AND DISTINCT PERSONA BUT URDU, IN PARTICULAR, IS SWEET AND POETIC AND AT THE SAME TIME, VERY ADAPTABLE. IF A LANGUAGE CAN BE DEVELOPED THROUGH A COMBINATION OF SEVEN LANGUAGES, WHAT CAN BE MORE FLEXIBLE AND WELCOMING?”



popular language and owing to its poetic exuberance and ease of learning (which it is even today), Urdu replaced Persian.

The cultural and artistic tone and tenor of Urdu has been depicted generously in multifarious forms, including the *Mushaira* (poetic gathering), *Marsiakhwani* (elegy) *Ghazal* (poetry recitation), *Qawwali* (chorus), *Dastangoi* (storytelling), *Chahar Bait* (poetry competition) and so on, besides other art forms like drama.

The reason that Urdu proliferated and got promoted was owing to its secular character and a universal base in India and abroad. Today it happens to be one of the most popular of all international languages. Not only that, Urdu is the voice of the sub-continent and has become an important link language for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

In India alone, as per Government records, Urdu is the mother tongue of more than 70 million people. However, an equal number of Urdu-knowing people are spread all over the nation. In the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, Urdu is the first language while in other States like Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, it has been recognised as the second language.

Nevertheless, there are some other areas where people have recorded Urdu to be their mother tongue, like Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Jharkhand and Rajasthan. So far as the linguistic link of Urdu is concerned, its

family includes Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and Dravidian languages like Telugu and Kannada.

Owing to its historicity, linguistic appeal, cultural multiplicity and literary taste, it doesn't have any religion or region. Connoisseurs of Urdu are found around the world. Besides, another salient feature of Urdu has been its linkage to the dialects. Writers, especially from Punjab, Kashmir, Maharashtra, Telangana and Karnataka, have also glorified the language globally.

All languages are beautiful and have their own charm and distinct persona, but Urdu, in particular, is sweet and poetic and at the same time, very adaptable. If a language can be developed through a combination of seven languages, what can be more flexible and welcoming? Many foreigners ask to hear Urdu, and when they do, their first reaction is: It is so soft and easy on the ears.

Phonologically, Urdu sounds are the same as those of Hindi except for slight variations in short vowel allophones. Urdu also retains a complete set of aspirated stops (sounds pronounced with a sudden release with an audible breath), a characteristic of Indo-Aryan, as well as retroflex stops.

It does not retain the complete range of Perso-Arabic consonants, despite its heavy borrowing from that tradition. From the grammatical point of view, there is not much difference between Hindi and Urdu. One distinction is that Urdu uses more Perso-

Arabic prefixes and suffixes than Hindi.

Another interesting aspect of Urdu is that it has incorporated in itself the idioms and clichés of other Indian languages like Punjabi, Hindi, Marathi, Sindhi, Hindi, Sanskrit, Gujarati, Pushto, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Kashmiri, Telugu and Kannada. In fact, the inner spirit of Urdu is Sanskrit and it has been connected to it. Same is the case with many foreign languages, like Arabic, Persian, Turkish, English, Uzbek and Nepali that have gelled quite well with Urdu. It is assured that if a language has viable connects with the other tongues, the result is a very pleasant one, basically indicating an intermingling of and respect for cultures. In this regard, it is pertinent to mention that Urdu is a window to the cultural heritage of India. It makes us introspect as it is a language of a composite culture and joins broken hearts.

The NCPUL has been promoting Urdu on a pan-India basis by conducting seminars, workshops on calligraphy, graphic designing, e-books, Urdu media and other topics, besides teaching of Urdu, Persian and Arabic to people from all cross-sections of society and bringing out of Urdu magazines. Till such organisations are there and the language uses technology to propagate itself on social and electronic media, Urdu will live on in the hearts and minds of people.

(The writer is the Chancellor of Maulana Azad National Urdu University and grandnephew of Bharat Ratna Maulana Azad)

Who is the leader of the Muslim world?

Challenged by Turkey's 'neo-Ottomanism', Saudi Arabia is trying to revive King Faisal's reformist ideas. The goal, as before, is the leadership of the Sunni world



NADEEM PARACHA

In 1924, a year after declaring Turkey a republic and becoming its President, the former commander in the army of the shrinking Ottoman Empire, and a hero of World War-I, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, abolished the centuries-old office of the caliphate and drove the last Ottoman Caliph into exile.

With this act, not only did Kemal launch his ambitious republican and secularisation project in Turkey, but he also triggered a race between Muslim leaders and monarchs to become recognised as the new leaders of the Muslim world.

Various Muslim groups around the world had agitated against European powers, who were at war with the Ottomans during World War-I. But after the defeat of the Ottomans, many Muslim political leaders and intellectuals hailed Kemal's coming into power and saw him as a modern redeemer of Islam. The British historian, E

Kedourie, in a 1963 essay for the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain*, writes that Kemal was conscious of the fact that the idea of the caliphate was deeply embedded in the minds of Muslims. According to Kedourie, at one point, Kemal actually wanted to name himself as the new Caliph. But since this would have contradicted and complicated his secularisation and republican project, he didn't.

However, Kedourie adds that Kemal then offered a much-weakened version of the caliphate to Shaikh Ahmad al-Sanusi, an Arab head of a Sufi order, as long as he would remain outside Turkey.

This suggests that, despite launching an aggressive project to secularise Turkey, Kemal was still interested in retaining the country's role as the "spiritual and political leader of the Muslim world." But after the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate, two contenders rushed in to claim the title. King Fuad of Egypt (that was still being ruled by the British) and the Wahabi Arab tribal leader, Ibn Saud, who, with the help of the British, had conquered former Ottoman territories in what would become Saudi Arabia in 1932. In 1926, Fuad organised an international Muslim conference in Cairo. It was not attended by

Saud. Weeks later, Saud held a similar conference in Mecca. Turkey did not attend any of the two events and neither did the Shia-majority Iran.

In 1947, a much smaller player emerged in this race. It called itself Pakistan. It was founded in August 1947 by Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Muslim League. The party's roots lay in an evolving idea which emerged in the 19th century. It took a modernist approach to understanding Islam. This then progressed as a Muslim nationalism, which was remodelled as Pakistani nationalism. According to the French political scientist, Christophe Jaffrelot, this approach relegated Islamic rituals to the private sphere and brought into public space Islam as a political-cultural identity marker.

Inspired by the writings of Muslim reformers such as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal, Jinnah and his party imagined a sovereign Muslim-majority country unshackled by what Iqbal had lamented, tribalism inherent in Arabian polities. Iqbal pleaded for a faith understood and articulated according to the needs of modern times.

Jinnah and his colleagues needed to greatly trim the pan-Islamic aspects of Muslim nationalism to root it more in the realities of



South-Asian Muslims.

But this did not deter Pakistan's first Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, from declaring that Pakistan was a lot more than just another Muslim country. According to M Razvi, in the 1981 issue of the *Journal of Pakistan Institute of*

International Affairs, Pakistan held a World Muslim Conference in 1951 in Karachi. During the event, Liaquat highlighted the importance of retaining pan-Islamic ideas.

This did not please Saudi Arabia, which suspected that Pakistan was trying to undermine the kingdom's (self-appointed) role as the leader of the post-Colonial Muslim world. But this role was dramatically snatched away by Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Egyptian President who came to power through a coup in 1952. Charismatic and articulate, Nasser was hailed as a hero by Muslims around the world when, in 1956, he managed to keep at bay an attack by British and Israeli forces on Egypt.

With his displays of Arab socialism and a modernity suited to the needs of the evolving Muslim polities, Nasser mocked Saudi Arabia of being retrogressive and rigid. For a decade after 1956, Nasser's Egypt was the undisputed leader of the Muslim world, inspiring large numbers of Muslims in Arab and non-Arab regions alike.

Stung by Nasser's status in this context, and also by his criticism of Saudi Arabia, the Saudi monarch King Faisal (who came to the throne in 1964) unfolded a hectic modernisation process in Saudi Arabia.

However, Nasser's mystique and influence began to rapidly recede when Egyptian and Syrian forces were decimated by their Israeli counterparts in 1967.

In 1970, Nasser passed away, and Saudi Arabia once again rushed in to pick up the status of the leader of the Muslim world. A windfall of profits made during (and because of) the 1973 oil crisis enhanced the influence of what became known as the "petro-dollar." And Saudi Arabia had the most.

Faisal cleverly used these to subdue (and win over) Nasser's successor Anwar Sadat. Faisal was also aware of the ambitions of Pakistani Prime Minister Z.A. Bhutto, who fancied himself as a champion of the modern Muslim world. But since Pakistan had lost a war in 1971 and its economy was weak, Faisal brought Pakistan fully into the ever-expanding Saudi orbit.

By the 1980s, flush with petrodollars and with a surge in the popularity of "political Islam" in Muslim countries, Saudi political and religious influence witnessed a manifold increase. It was only challenged by the radical Shia theocracy in Iran. Both countries fought a brutal war of influence through sectarian proxies in countries such as Pakistan and Lebanon.

However, in the new century, events such as the Arab Spring, the fall of dictatorships in Libya, Iraq and Tunisia, civil wars in Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen, the emergence of multiple violent anti-State Islamist outfits in most Muslim countries, along with the retreat of the US and the rise of China, began to make various Muslim countries reconsider their strategic priorities and even reinvent their ideological character to strike new alliances. Turkey, which had dropped out of the game of Muslim leadership decades ago, entered the fray again and is trying to lure non-Arab Muslim regions to break away from the Saudi orbit. It is an orbit that had already begun to decay.

This is one reason why the new Saudi monarchs are trying to revive King Faisal's initial reformist ideas. Whereas the conservative aspect of Saudi ideology was castigated by Nasser's Egypt in the past, this time it is being challenged by Erdogan's "neo-Ottomanism", which is critical of Saudi Arabia for squandering the influence it had enjoyed for decades as the leader of the Muslim world.

Turkey sees itself as a more natural candidate for this role. This title once again is up for grabs. (Courtesy: Dawn)

CAPSULE



Boat Lifestyle eyes Rs 1,000 cr revenue in FY24

NEW DELHI: Consumer tech products maker Boat Lifestyle registered gross revenue of over Rs 500 crore in FY2019-20 and aims to double the topline by FY24 on the back of strong demand for products like audio devices and accessories in the country, a top company executive said. "We had a target of Rs 500 crore revenue in FY21-22, we have already crossed that, we had an outstanding year in FY20. We have grown 2.5X from the previous year... Since inception, our financial performance has been strong and have been EBITDA positive," Boat Lifestyle co-founder Aman Gupta said. He added that the company has a sustainable approach to growth, is not burning money like many start-ups.



Smaller Dunkin' Donuts outlets to be scaled up

NEW DELHI: Jubilant FoodWorks, which operates Dunkin' Donuts chain in India, has piloted a smaller sized kiosk model for the coffee and baked goods chain in the country and is evaluating opportunities to scale up through the new format. "Dunkin' Donuts India is using a calibrated pilot to test the new format of restaurants. The company is now evaluating opportunities of growth to build this model. There is continued focus on optimising cost and bringing efficiencies," Jubilant FoodWorks said in its annual report for financial year 2019-20. Jubilant FoodWorks, which also operates Domino's Pizza chain in India, said for Dunkin' Donuts, it opened 4 restaurants with a smaller format to pilot and test the effectiveness of the format.



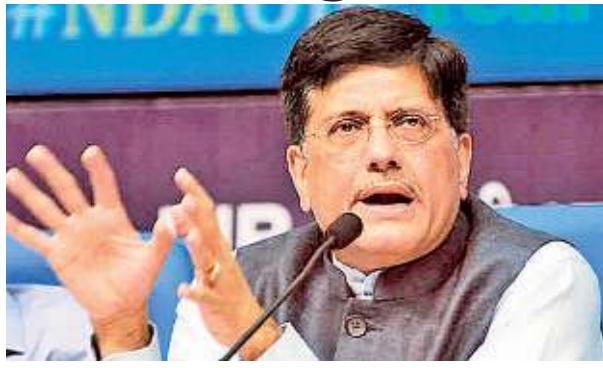
Toy cluster at Koppala can generate 40K jobs

BENGALURU: India's first toy manufacturing cluster to come up at Koppala has the potential to create 40,000 jobs in five years and attract over Rs 5,000 crore investment, Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said here on Sunday. "In line with PM @narendramodi's vision of #VocalForLocal & boosting toy manufacturing, Koppala will have India's first toy manufacturing cluster. With the eco-system to support toy cluster in place, this 400 acres SEZ will have top-class infra & generate 40,000 jobs in 5 years," Yediyurappa tweeted. The tweet by the Chief Minister came following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address in his 'Mann Ki Baat'.

India, ASEAN trade ministers call for free trade agreement review

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Trade ministers of India and 10-member ASEAN countries have instructed their officials to start discussions for determining the scope of review of free trade agreement (FTA) at the earliest with a view to make the pact more user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative for businesses. The issue was discussed during the 17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Consultations meet held virtually on August 29, an official statement said on Sunday. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal stated



that the review of FTA in goods has been "inordinately delayed", and requested to start the full review before the end of this year. "The ministers from India and ASEAN countries instructed the senior officials to start

the discussions to determine the scope of the review at the earliest to, inter-alia, make the free trade agreement more user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative for businesses," the statement said. The review will make the agreement modern with contemporary trade facilitative practices, and streamlined customs and regulatory procedures, it added. Goyal highlighted that the pact has to be mutually beneficial and a win-win for all sides. He also expressed the need to strengthen rules of origin provisions, work towards

removal of non-tariff barriers and provide better market access to Indian businesses. Goyal and Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam, co-chaired the consultations.

It was attended by trade ministers of all 10 ASEAN countries — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India trade in goods agreement was signed on August 13, 2009 and came into force on January 1, 2010.

Fiscal deficit to touch 7 per cent in FY21

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's fiscal deficit is expected to touch 7 per cent of GDP in 2020-21 fiscal as against budget estimate of 3.5 per cent, with revenue collections being hit amid disruptions in economic activities due to lockdowns, according to Brickwork Ratings.



"The impact of the lockdown on economic activity shows up starkly in the trends in the central government revenue collection during the first three months of fiscal 2020-21," the agency said in a report. As per data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), the central government's revenue in Q1 (April-June) of the current fiscal year is much lower than collections for the corresponding period last year. Revenue from income taxes (personal income tax and corporate income taxes) was lower by 30.5 per cent, and the GST by almost 34 per cent during the period.

On the other hand, there is a sharp increase in expenditure (by 13.1 per cent) due to additional spending incurred to save lives and livelihoods and to provide stimulus under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' programme. "This has resulted in the fiscal deficit widening to 83.2 per cent of the budgeted target in the first quarter itself," the agency said. Brickwork Ratings expects the economy to gradually pick up from the third quarter of this fiscal. "Given early signs of resumption in business activity, we expect revenue collections to reach pre-Covid levels towards the end of the third quarter, hoping that festive season demand induces consumption and spending.

Telecom industry revenue expected to rise 14-15%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom industry's revenues are expected to rise 14-15 per cent in the current financial year led by some uptick in average revenue per user, though the subscriber base may remain flat with rural growth offsetting SIM consolidation in urban locations, apex association COAI estimates.



The newly appointed Director General of Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) S P Kochhar told PTI that any duopoly situation in the current three-player private telcos market can "never be a good thing" and asserted that sufficient competition among the operators is required for ensuring that subscribers get good services at better prices. The COAI will continue to be a neutral body that believes in consensus building and unanimity of views, Kochhar said when asked about past differences amongst the telecom companies, who are members of the association, on various issues. "COAI tries to get the point

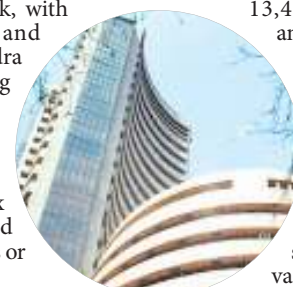
of view of all members unanimously and we make sure whenever we project to any authority whether in government or regulatory, we do it as unanimous voice, we are not partisan...," he said. Kochhar said that industry's financial distress is "evident" and that the COAI will continue to push for relief including reduction in spectrum usage charges (SUC) and licence fee; and exemption of GST on licence fee and SUC, as well as on payment of spectrum acquired in auctions. On whether, the telecom

industry is headed towards a duopoly, Kochhar spoke in favour of competition saying, "at the end of the day, general public should get benefits of telecom and that will not happen in case of a duopoly". It is in the interest of the country that duopoly does not come in and "we have more competition, so better services at better prices can be offered to subscribers", he said. The industry's revenue, Kochhar said, will grow at 14-15 per cent in FY21, led by some improvement in average revenue per user (ARPU).

6 of top 10 most valued firms together add over Rs 1 lakh cr in m-cap

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The market valuation of six of the top 10 most valued firms zoomed by Rs 1,06,523.84 crore last week, with ICICI Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank leading the pack. During the last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex had gained 1,032.59 points or 2.68 per cent. Of these 10 most valued companies in terms of market capitalisation (m-cap), Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), HDFC Bank, HDFC, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bharti Airtel and ICICI Bank emerged as gainers.



On the other hand, four firms Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL), Infosys and ITC ended the week with losses. The market valuation of ICICI Bank jumped by Rs 26,620.32 crore to Rs 2,82,550.05 crore, becoming the biggest gainer.

Kotak Mahindra Bank's m-cap rose by Rs 25,360.91 crore to Rs 2,90,458.09 crore, RIL's valuation was up by Rs 21,458.89 crore at Rs 13,41,164.42 crore and HDFC Bank's worth increased by Rs 16,547.52 crore to Rs 6,13,598.67 crore. Among other two gainers, HDFC saw its market valuation rise by Rs 14,599.47 crore to Rs 3,37,472.45 crore and Bharti Airtel added Rs 1,936.73 crore to Rs 2,85,625.71 crore. In contrast, the market cap of HUL plunged by Rs 11,982.71 crore to Rs 5,05,658.41 crore. Infosys witnessed an erosion of Rs 5,963.14 crore to Rs 3,98,188.66 crore from its valuation and TCS took a hit of Rs 4,165.15 crore to see its market cap at Rs 8,39,445.98 crore. The valuation of ITC also declined by Rs 1,661.13 crore to Rs 2,40,619 crore.

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ESAF Small Finance Bank to take call on Rs 976-cr IPO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kerala-based ESAF Small Finance Bank has said it will take a call on Rs 976-crore initial public offering (IPO) after September. As part of its commitment for going public by listing its stock in line with requisite guidelines, the bank had filed draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) in January and subsequently got approval from the market regulator Sebi in the last week of March. However, the bank could

not go to market due to lockdown imposed in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak. "We have Sebi approval but we have not yet decided about the right time. After September, we will take a call about the IPO in consultation with merchant bankers," its managing director K Paul Thomas told PTI. The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue worth Rs 800 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) aggregating up to Rs 176.2 crore.

Pradhan, Nishank lay foundation stones of new facilities at Odisha university

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan along with Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Saturday laid down the foundation stone for new projects at Central University of Odisha (CUO) in Koraput town of the state, an official statement said. Pradhan and Nishank laid the foundation stone for the academic block, library and staff quarters at the CUO through video conferencing, the Ministry of Steel said in a media statement. Pradhan said the CUO has established itself as a premier

centre for higher learning in the state. Modi has always given a special focus on higher education in Odisha. Under his leadership several premier institutes of learning like IIM, IIT, IISER, CIPEP, NISER, ICT-IOCL have been established in Odisha, the minister said. He further said, "The NEP will enable regionally rooted industry-academia-govt partnership for the holistic develop-

ment of the region. Koraput is rich in tribal diversity and NEP 2020 focusing on a broad-based and creative curricula will enable CUO to provide more opportunities for disadvantaged students and also promote research-based tribal and anthropological studies in Odisha." Pradhan also has urged the students and faculty of CUO to undertake innovative efforts to find better and bigger markets

for organic products grown in Koraput such as the world-famous Koraput ginger. Nishank said, "I am delighted to see the progress made by the institution in tuning its objectives and processes in accordance with the National Education Policy 2020. I am sure that the introduction of core science and new social science courses will add further quality dimensions to the existing faculties of CU Odisha."

Nishank has also expressed happiness over the university's massive skill development programme which the institution has started in 12 districts of Odisha. Under review, data with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) showed. REITs and InvITs are relatively new investment instruments in the Indian context but are extremely popular in global markets. While an REIT comprises a portfolio of commercial real assets, a major portion of which are already leased out, InvITs comprise a portfolio of infrastructure assets such as highways, power transmission assets.

MF investment in REITs jumps 3-fold to Rs 735 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Emerging investment instrument REIT seems to be finally catching investors' fancy, with mutual funds investing a whopping Rs 735 crore in such units in the first six months of 2020, nearly three-fold jump from the year-ago period. However, mutual funds' investment in infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) dropped by 8 per cent to Rs 4,968 crore in the period

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Overdue replacement cycle to drive recovery

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Overdue replacement cycle of commercial vehicles will drive recovery in the market, while demand for trucks is expected to start coming back from October-November onwards, according to a top official of VE Commercial Vehicles (VECV). Despite the challenging market situation currently, the company, a joint venture between the Volvo Group and Eicher Motors Ltd, expects that truck makers may find it difficult to supply when demand starts coming back, especially when large fleet operators opt for efficiency and productivity to drive down operating costs. "Even though the current market situation is very tough, I am very optimistic because of a few reasons," VECV Managing Director and CEO Vinod Aggarwal said. In the CV market, trucks are replaced by big fleet operators in five to six years, but the CV market dropped by 40 per cent in 2019-20," he said.

'Continuing with certain provisions of MMDR Act to cause loss'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing with certain provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act will cause huge financial loss to state exchequer, the Mines Ministry has observed while proposing amendments to the law. The amendments will pave way for unlocking of large

number of potential mineral bearing areas which are blocked as of now due to various reasons, including absence of sun set clause in the Act, the ministry said on its website. The ministry said it proposes to amend provisions related to grant of prospecting licence and mining leases, and allocate such mineral blocks through transparent method of auction.

Section 10A(2)(b) pertains to the leases where reconnaissance permit or prospecting licence were granted and 10A(2)(c) relates to grant of mining leases (ML). "Since continuing with existing provisions of 10 A 2(b) and 10 A (2) (c) will also cause huge financial loss to the state exchequer, the Amendment bill seeks to amend the existing provision

of 10 A 2(b) and 10 A (2) (c) and reallocation of such mineral blocks through transparent method of auction," the mines ministry said. At present, a large number of potential leases are blocked in legacy cases. These cases can neither be granted because of the time period to grant them is already over, nor can they be brought to auction because of

legal impasse, the ministry said. "The cases coming under section 10A(2) (c) of the Act which stood extinguished on January 12, 2017, as per law, but are still litigated or pursued unnecessarily at various levels, need to be brought to a closure to end the policy stalemate," it said. The cases coming under section 10A (2) (b) of the Act are still disputed in the absence

of specific sun set clause in the Act, and they have not reached closure till date, it said. Section 7 of the MMDR Act provides for maximum period of five years for completing the prospecting operations. These amendments came in effect on January 12, 2015, and the maximum period of five year for prospecting has also lapsed on January 12.

'GDP numbers fresh triggers for stock market this week'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic equity bourses in the coming week will be guided by Q1 GDP print, infrastructure output data for July and monthly auto sales numbers, which together will give an indication about the health of the economy, analysts said. During this data heavy week, the investor focus will also remain on global market trends and COVID-19 updates like the number of infection cases and news related to the progress of vaccines. "This week, participants will be closely eyeing auto sales number and GDP data for cues on how the economy is progressing. Besides, monsoon progress and news updates



related to COVID-19 would also be on their radar," said Ajit Mishra, VP-Research, Religare Broking Ltd. The Indian market last week, ended August 28, showed a stellar performance, with the

BSE Sensex gaining 1,032 points and the NSE Nifty adding 276 points — both indices rising 2 per cent each. The National Statistical Office (NSO) will release the infrastructure output data for

July and the GDP number for the April-June quarter on Monday. Various rating agencies and industry experts have been forecasting GDP contraction for the first quarter as the economy came under a severe pressure in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak and ensuing lockdowns during this period. As other macro data are concerned, auto companies will announce their monthly sales data for August this week and PMI data for manufacturing and services sector are also due. "Market is expected to continue the momentum. There could be a slight consolidation in the markets, when profit-

booking emerges, but it is not likely to be a long drawn out correction," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. Samco Securities Senior Research Analyst Nirali Shah said, "For the week ahead, markets may watch out for August auto sales numbers from India Inc which might broadly act as a proxy for the health of our ailing economy, to an extent." Experts are of the view that movement in rupee/USD, trend in foreign fund and crude oil would also be monitored by market participants. Meanwhile, India's COVID-19 case tally crossed 35 lakh mark with a spike of nearly 79,000 new cases in a day.

Shipping Corp outclasses rival Indian fleet owners in recruiting women

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic liner Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) has emerged as a pioneer among top Indian fleet owners when it comes to hiring women in key roles on ships with over 20 per cent women workforce and a robust gender-neutral hiring policy in place. Incidentally, SCI — which owns and operates around one-third of the Indian tonnage and has operating interests in practically all areas of the shipping business, serv-



ing both national and international trades -- has at its helm a woman as the chairperson and managing director, H K Joshi. Of the total 646 employees, 135 are women. "SCI has been the pioneer in India with regards to recruiting women for jobs on board

its fleet. Presently, two masters, five chief officers, two second engineers, 31 second/third officers and two nurses are women serving on various types of ships," as per the annual report of the Navratna public sector enterprise. In addition, there are 13 women trainee nautical officers, four woman trainee marine engineers and seven woman trainee electrical engineers. The company is committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity and strives to provide employees with a workplace free of discrimination, the report said.

A 'MISSING GUIDE' TO APPLYING FOR A FOREIGN EDUCATION

For debut author Soundarya Balasubramani, her book did not begin as that, a book, but as a missing link for students wanting to study abroad. In her own words, she wanted to create a short, 10-page guide to help students who wanted to study abroad. As she began researching through, she soon found out the lack of — and need of — a comprehensive guide on this topic.

"But instead of writing a

book that instructed the reader on exactly what to do, my team and I took a different approach. We used the virtue of graphic design, mental models from other domains, testimonials from past graduates, and my own stories to write and design a book that teaches the reader how to think instead. 'Admitted' is not just about helping you get your dream admit. It's also about preparing you for the next phase in your life," says Balasubramani, who holds a master's degree from

Columbia University, New York and a Gold Medal from NIT Trichy up her sleeve.

Her debut book, 'Admitted: The Missing Guide to Craft a Winning Application & Study Abroad' is an all-encompassing book that covers the end-to-end process of getting an admit and preparing to study in a foreign country.

"The pandemic certainly put a dent on many students' dreams. But once things stabilise, universities abroad will be even more welcom-

ing to receiving international students, given how important they are to the universities' lifeline and country's economy. Hence, I urge students to treat this time as more runway to prepare; to take up online courses, gain more certifications, intern at startups, and work on side-projects. Make yourself more valuable and interesting. There is no reason for you to stop, because the world did so," says the author.

The book provides critical information on every part of the journey: crafting a

resume, writing a statement of purpose, preparing for competitive exams (GRE, IELTS, TOEFL), picking the right university, preparing for interviews, applying for scholarships, and more. It also lays bare lesser-known information about student loans and visas, post getting an admit.

The author added that 100 percent of profits from the sales will go towards helping the underprivileged get access to education. The book is available at: admittedthebook.com.

ADMITTED: THE MISSING GUIDE TO CRAFT A WINNING APPLICATION & STUDY ABROAD' IS AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING BOOK THAT COVERS THE END-TO-END PROCESS OF GETTING AN ADMIT AND PREPARING TO STUDY IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY.



Rambo circus back on its feet, but online this time



FROM DARING TRAPEZE ACTS TO MESMERIZING ACROBATIC STUNTS, THE VIRTUAL SHOW PROMISES TO BE COMPLETE FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT.

Rambo Circus, one of the biggest and oldest circus in the country which has been badly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis with shows coming to a standstill, has come up with a unique idea: For the first time the circus will be going online its digitally produced show, 'Life is a circus' — An ode to the greatest showmanship. The show will be a virtual fundraiser that aims to raise awareness for the cause and benefit the Rambo Circus artists and their families to come back stronger from the difficult situation.

From daring trapeze acts to mesmerizing acrobatic stunts, the virtual show promises to be complete family entertainment. The show will be a ticketed event hosted on a virtual platform with the audience watch-

ing it from remote locations. The funds raised from this initiative will be donated directly to the crew for their welfare and wellbeing.

"The circus was one of the most preferred outings for kids and the entire family a few decades back. Every kid born in the 80s' and 90s' will have some nostalgic memories attached to it. With isolation becoming the new norm, we're now trying to reinvent the whole experience of watching a circus online. People can buy tickets online from BookMyShow and watch the show from their homes. We are hopeful that the digital revolution will bring lost visibility and respect to the art form," said Sujit Dilip, owner of Rambo Circus owner.

Brought to the audience by the narrator, the show structure and format will weave in a story in the form of a narrative. The narrative would harp on the journey of Rambo Circus itself. It will unravel the acts while highlighting the

achievements, struggles, global presence, and the never-ending enthusiasm of the artists that have kept it alive through thick and thin. The grand finale act will culminate into the best of all acts dedicated to the COVID Warriors for their constant effort to combat the pandemic with a special message from the Rambo Circus artists.

One can make donations online through the payment gateway page link provided at Bookmyshow or this link: <https://secure-payments.payu.in/bmsdonate4> and donate even if they don't buy a ticket.

A friend to bank upon during troubled times

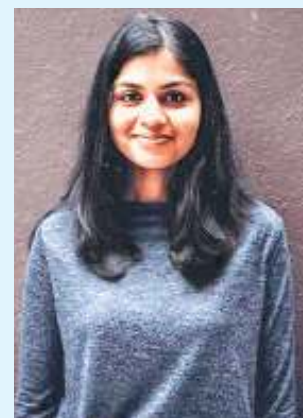
Blue and grey-colored Indians, caught in the grip of COVID-19, and in desperate need for money, had a saviour, who stood by them and continues to even as the world is struggling to stay afloat and survive the impact of the pandemic.

Most of the distraught have been sounding NIRA with their SOS, a lending App that promises to provide customer-friendly loans. Launched in 2018 by Rohit Sen and Nupur Gupta, who quit high-paying jobs at Goldman Sachs, NIRA has been at the forefront of helping the needy. Incidentally, their largest customer base outside of Bangalore is Hyderabad and the maximum beneficiaries are from Telangana.

A majority of that availing the three-12 month loans (ranging from Rs 2,500 to Rs One lakh) are vegetable vendors, auto-rickshaw drivers, newspaper hawkers, barbers, domestic



ROHIT SEN, CEO & Co-Founder, NIRA



NUPUR GUPTA, CO-FOUNDER, NIRA

helps, Class IV employees, tea joints, and paan shop owners, among several others.

The fintech business venture has helped fetch seed funding of one million dollars in October 2018 from angel investors based in the United Kingdom and India. Rohit Sen says, "As most

fintechs pursue tech-savvy millennials to fund their aspirational purchases, NIRA was conceptualised to assist the middle and lower-middle-class customers."

On the existence of several Telangana-based lending apps and their own survival robust-

ness, Nupur Gupta says, "Many lending apps have stopped disbursing loans to new customers since the onset of Covid-19 but NIRA has remained open and we are actually giving loans to people during the troubled times that continue to adversely impact millions of distraught families."

Elaborating further, the co-founders state that they have noticed that in Hyderabad, for instance, demand for discretionary spending like buying a new smartphone has dropped significantly while it has shot up substantially for meeting non-discretionary expenditure on medical costs, school fees, Ramzan and other festivities.

"We are being extra vigilant with risk management and collections during the pandemic because the situation can change quickly and the crisis remains, although most small-time vendors have resumed full operations and students are hooked onto online classes," the promoters explain.



what's brewing?

MADHURI DIXIT 'instantly decided' to be part of 'Saajan'

Actress Madhuri Dixit Nene says that after reading the script of *Saajan*, which released 29 years ago on this day, she instantly decided to be a part of it. Madhuri took to Instagram, where she shared a still from the film, which also stars Sanjay Dutt and

Salman Khan. She captioned the picture, "#29YearsOfSaajan. After reading the script of this film, I instantly decided to be a part of it. The story was romantic, the dialogues were poetic and the music was brilliant!" Directed by Lawrence D'Souza, *Saajan* was released in 1991.

The film tells the tale of two best friends Amar and Akash who fall in love with the same girl named Pooja. Madhuri was last seen on screen in the 2019 film *Kalank*, which also starred Alia Bhatt, Sonakshi Sinha, Aditya Roy Kapur, Varun Dhawan and Sanjay Dutt.



MY STYLE HAS EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS: DEEPIKA PADUKONE

Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone says fashion for her is being able to effortlessly blend what is in trend with her individual authentic style. In an interview with *IANSlife*, Deepika, who has been roped in as the brand ambassador of ethnic brand Melange by Lifestyle, shares more about her fashion preferences, her style and more.

EXCERPTS:

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE YOUR STYLE?

My personal style has certainly evolved over the years but inherently I believe my personal style is Classic and Elegant. I absolutely love traditional wear and the saree is my most favourite garment!

WHAT IS FASHION FOR YOU?

Fashion for me is being able to effortlessly blend what is in trend with my individual authentic style.

WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL WORK-FROM-HOME OUTFIT?

Fabrics and silhouettes that allow me to feel comfortable.

IS IT TOUGH AT TIMES FOR YOU AND YOUR STYLIST TO FINALISE A RED CARPET LOOK?

We've never thought of it as tough. The most important criteria for us is to have fun and enjoy the process!

ORDINARILY HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR YOU TO GET READY FOR THE DAY?

Not more than 10-15 minutes.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COLLABORATION WITH MELANGE?

Melange by Lifestyle is a brand that effortlessly combines modernity with traditionalism; attributes that resonate very strongly with my core values.

Whether you are looking for something festive or a casual day out, there is something for everybody. For years we've been conditioned to think of ethnic wear as something that one can only wear in the evenings or during celebrations, but Melange encourages you to rethink ethnic wear.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE THE MOST OF IT?

With this collection in particular, I'm excited about the fact that we have been able to marry ethnicity and modernity and believe that the linen kurtas, the Chikankari kurtas and the contemporary shirt kurtas in particular will be very well received.

There's a different level of satisfaction in playing a hero: ISHAAN KHATTER

Ishaan Khatter chose an unconventional route to make foray in films with celebrated Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi's drama *Beyond the Clouds*, but the actor is now set to play a quintessential Bollywood hero in *Khaali Peeli*, an opportunity which he says has been both fun and satisfying.

In 2017's *Beyond the Clouds*, Ishaan played a drug dealer and followed it up with *Dhadak*, a romantic-drama opposite actor Janhvi Kapoor. His latest project is Mira Nair's *A Suitable Boy* series for BBC, in which he essays the role of



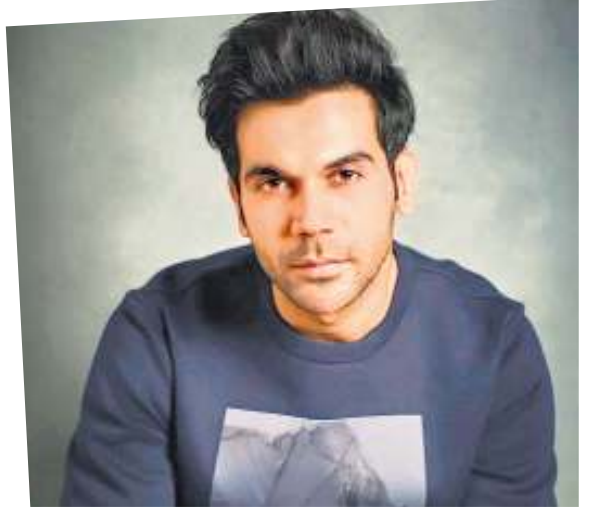
Kaif and Siddhant Chaturvedi.

"*Khaali Peeli* is a stylish caper. It is a thrilling ride. It is my first hero role. Every character that I have played before this, be it *Beyond the Clouds* or *Dhadak*, I have been aware they are not hero roles and to play them like that would have been going against the story. So there is a different level of fun and satisfaction in playing a role like in *Khaali Peeli*, Ishaan told *PTI*.

Maan Kapoor, a rebellious son of a politician.

The 24-year-old actor is now looking forward to his first two Bollywood entertainers *Khaali Peeli*, opposite Ananya Panday, and horror comedy *Phone Booth* with Katrina

The teaser of the film, directed by debutant Maqbool Khan, was released recently and received positive reviews.



Rajkumar Rao: Life is all about creating wonderful memories

Actor Rajkumar Rao says life is all about creating wonderful memories.

He took to Instagram, where he shared two pictures. In the first image, he is seen enjoying himself in the swimming pool. The second picture has the actor posing with his actress girlfriend Patralekhaa and some friends.

As the caption, Rajkumar wrote, "Life is all about creating wonderful memories." Speaking about his work, the actor will be seen sharing screen space with Priyanka Chopra Jonas in an OTT adaptation of the Man Booker Prize winning novel *The White Tiger*.

He will also be seen opposite Nushratt Bharuccha in Hansal Mehta's comedy drama *Chhalaang*. He is also a part of *Ludo*, *Roohi Afzana* and *Badhaai Do*.

FUN

ARCHIE



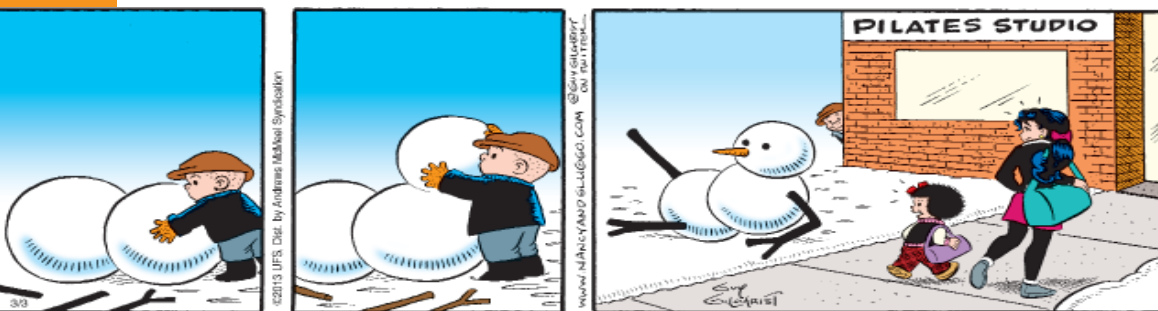
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



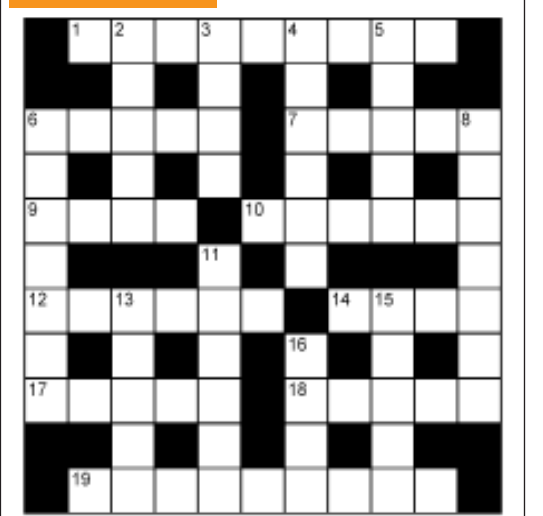
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Large printed words on a newspaper's front page
- One of the five senses
- Brush hard to clean
- Catch fish with these
- Opposite of youngest
- A cricket referee
- Clean with water
- The sound a horse makes
- A smell
- These are carried in rain

DOWN

- What you get if you stay out in the sun too long
- Someone who sells meat
- A shooter of arrows
- A piece of glass that can make a rainbow
- A greeting in Hawaii
- This covers a sheep



SUDOKU

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Yesterday's solution

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

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

READY TO PLAY A NEGATIVE ROLE: NIVETHA THOMAS

The actress speaks to NAGARAJ GOUD about her next, *V*, the bond she shares with actor Nani offscreen, shooting for Pawan Kalyan-starrer *Vakeel Saab* and more



Although she isn't paired opposite Nani in his landmark 25th film *V*, this is the third time that Nivetha Thomas will be seen in a Nani-starrer, playing a central role. She was his romantic interest in box-office smashes like *Gentleman* and *Ninnu Kori*. She admits that she forged a bond beyond films with Nani. "He is like a family member to me now. I discuss the stories I like with him. It is vice-versa with him as well. If he accepts to do a role, he would put in the hard yards to bring it alive. He is an inspiration to me in many aspects," she told the media contingent during the promotions

of *V* over a zoom session. *V* is an action thriller about a cop (played by Sudheer Babu) falling in love with a crime writer (Nivetha). When everything is going great, his life turns upside down when a killer (Nani) challenges him with a puzzle to solve, leading to a good-versus-evil showdown. "I could connect to the story the moment Mohan sir (director Indraganti) narrated it to me. My part Apurva comes across as a woman who is daring and confident," she points out.

V was initially planned to hit the big screens around Ugadi earlier this year but the lockdown triggered by the pandemic ensured that its release was kept on hold. Rapidly escalating interest rates meant that producer Dil Raju, who for long considered releasing it in theatres, inked a deal with Amazon Prime recently, making it the first big film from

Telugu to get a direct web release. "The unit worked hard to release the film for cinema halls but the present circumstances pushed us to opt for an OTT release. Watching *V* on the big screen would've been a whole together different experience. As actors, we want our films for the silver screen but everyone knows what's happening around us. However, the excitement surrounding the OTT release is palpable," she informs.

The actress was shooting for Pawan Kalyan-starrer *Vakeel Saab* when the lockdown was enforced earlier this summer. Ever since, she confined herself to her home in Chennai. Commenting on her lockdown routine, she says lockdown or otherwise, she believes in learning new things like reading a book or learning about a new software related to her studies. Also, the actress, who has a degree in architecture shares, "I

prefer to stay alone but for the first time after several years I spent a lot of time at my home. My dad has been working in Dubai for the past 17 years and his stays at home have been brief. Due to lockdown, he has been with us for the past six months and I had the best time with my family. I've also participated in the script development sessions of the projects I've signed and that are in discussions."

Nivetha's script selection has earned her much praise over years and giving a peek into her thought process, she maintains that she listens to all kinds of scripts that come her way. "During the narrations itself, I ponder whether I would do justice to the role and my final decision (on signing it or not) hinges on it," she says, adding that she never thinks about stardom, but is enjoying her present position. "I just want to earn the tag of a good actress."

With *V* going the streaming way, is she getting any offers from digital platforms? She responds, "I haven't been approached for content on OTT yet. If I do, I'd give it a thought. I've listened to three Telugu scripts in the past five months and they are in different stages of development. Also, I'm ready to play a villain role. Such roles have a wide range for an actor to explore. It's not necessary to beat up one to play a villain. You can play it strategically."

In a recent interview, she said that it's her dream to sit in the director's saddle. Speaking about it, she says, "As of now, my focus remains acting. Nobody will offer me a direction chance just because I want to direct; I have to bag it. I won't be directing straightaway though. I would cut my teeth by making short films first and later graduate to feature films."

PK GIVES NOD TO SURENDER REDDY?



Did Pawan Kalyan agree to headline another film? Reports doing the rounds say so, pointing out that he is set to honour the commitment he made to his friend Ram Talluri sometime back. According to reports, Surender Reddy has pipped Dolly to bag the project to be made under Talluri's SRT Entertainments and the announcement is likely to be made to coincide with Pawan's birthday on September 2. Reports further say that Reddy will be directing from a script

of Vakkantham Vamsi, who has written the story of former's popcorn entertainers like *Oosaravelli*, *Kick* and *Race Gurram*. It will be a commercial entertainer with a difference, it is being said. The project is likely to go in front of the cameras towards the end of next year.

Meanwhile, Pawan still needs to complete some portions of *Vakeel Saab* before he dives into the filming of Krish's period drama and Harish Shankar's commercial entertainer. Reddy also has a film lined-up with Akhil Akkineni up next.



Naveen Chandra in a political drama

Director Kaaranam Babji, who made films like *Mental Police* and *Operation 2019* earlier, has wrapped up the shooting of his next, *Mission 2020*, on Saturday. Like his earlier films, this new film too is set in a contemporary political backdrop, with Naveen

Chandra playing the lead role. K Venkatesh and KVSSL Ramesh Raju have jointly produced it.

The film's first look was unveiled by Srikanth on Sunday. "Mental Police and Operation 2019 have earned me a good name as an actor. Operation 2019 has done good business in Hindi as well. Mission 2020 has a strong story. The year hasn't been a pleasant one for the industry but I hope this film's success will be a silver lining," Srikanth hoped.

Babji said the film's story is the real hero and that Naveen, Naga Babu and Jayaprakash have aced their roles. "We went to floors earlier this January and wrapped up the shooting formalities before the lockdown came into effect. Naveen has shown a lot of dedication to complete it. We've shot an item song with Sri Rapaka on Saturday and it has come out well," the director noted.

Great things come in small packages: Sam



Participating in an Ask Me Anything session on her popular Instagram page over the weekend, Samantha Akkineni dismissed rumours surrounding her pregnancy. "I have been pregnant since 2017, I think. This baby doesn't want to come out," she chuckled. Up next, Samantha is set for her digital and Hindi debut with Raj and DK's *The Family Man 2*. Speaking about it, she said, "This is the most excitement you will see on my face. I completed dubbing of the series. Oh my god! It is so kicka**!"

Besides the web debut, she also hinted at something special from her end, which she would be making public. "In this time, I got to work on something special. I cannot wait to share with all you guys," she replied to a follower.

When a fan wanted to know about her height, she cheekily replied, "I am barely 5'3. Great things come in small packages. So, woohoo!" Samantha also shared the "special" thing she shares with her husband, actor Naga Chaitanya. She told fans, "My tattoo means - create your own reality. Chay and I got this together. It is really special for both of us."

Orey... Bujjigaa heads for a digital release

Filmmaker Vijay Konda's *Orey... Bujjigaa*, starring Raj Tarun and Malavika Nair, was one of the first summer releases that had to skip a theatrical rollout due to the outbreak of novel COVID-19. While the film did attract OTT offers initially, the makers didn't oblige as they firmly believed that it was meant for the big screen experi-

ence. But now we hear that it will join the likes of other Telugu films like *V*, *Miss India*, *Solo Brathuke So Better* and *Good Luck Sakhi* in going straight to digital.

A source close to the development tells us that the makers have struck a neat deal with an OTT player. According to the deal, the film's digital rights were sold for Rs 3.5 crore, while the satellite rights got the makers Rs 1.5 crore. The film

will land on a popular GEC more than a month after its digital debut.

A Hyderabad-set drama on the lines of Konda's *Gundejaari Gallanthayinde* but with an interesting love story thrown into the mix, *Orey... Bujjigaa* sees Vani Viswanath, Nares, Posani Krishna Murali, Sapthagiri, Raja Raveendra, Ajay Ghosh, Annapurna, Sathya and Madhundanand in supporting roles.



Most Read NEWS

This couple is world's 'oldest married couple'

Julio Mora slipped away from his parents to secretly marry Waldramina Quinteros one February day. Both families disapproved. Seventy-nine years later, they're still together - he is 110 years of age, and she is 104, both lucid and both in good health, though relatives say they're a little depressed because they miss their big family get-togethers due to the pandemic. There are longer marriages, but at the moment no other between people so old, according to Guinness World Records - just short of a combined 215 years. Mora was born on 10 March 1910, and Quinteros on 16 October 1915. They wed on 7 February 1941, in the first church built by the Spanish in Quito: La Iglesia de El Belén. The two retired teachers live in Ecuador's capital of Quito, where in mid-August they received the Guinness certification. Their daughter Cecilia says they are both lucid and active, although they no longer have the agility they had before. But "for a month they have been different, more downcast because they miss large family gatherings". And they can gather quite a crowd: four surviving children, 11 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. "Since March, we have not had any of that," Cecilia said. "My parents need family contact." She said her father enjoys watching television and drinking milk and that her mother, who enjoys desserts, likes to read the newspaper every morning.



Alia Bhatt's Sadak 2 is the worst-rated film on IMDb



Sadak 2 continues to be a victim of vote-brigading. The recently released film stands at a 1.1 rating on the website IMDb, weeks after a concentrated effort was made to downvote its trailer. Based on over 10000 votes, the film is currently the worst-rated title on IMDb. It's closest rival is a 2015 Turkish film called Code Name: K.O.Z., which has a rating of 1.3. Sadak 2 has been panned by critics. The Hindustan Times review called it "one of 2020's worst films." There are, however, just 15 registered user reviews of the film on IMDb. "Absolute trash," one review was headlined. "Is this movie a Joke or what!!!" another user demanded to know. "Intolerable," and "unspeakable," were other adjectives used to describe the film, directed by Mahesh Bhatt and starring his daughter Alia Bhatt, Sanjay Dutt and Aditya Roy Kapoor. Previously, a campaign to make the film's trailer the most disliked video on YouTube was initiated in the days leading up to its unveiling, by fans of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, who died by suicide in June. Sushant's fans have turned against certain members of the film industry, most notably by 'insiders', based on the theory that Sushant was ostracised for being an 'outsider'.

Man has live 5-inch worm inside his brain for 17 yrs!

Doctors in China removed a 5-inch-long live worm from a man's brain. He had the parasite living inside his head for 17 years, according to reports. The 23-year-old patient, who is only known as Chen, felt numbness in his hands and his feet from the tender age of 6. Although suffered numbness and headaches for 17 years, he ignored all the symptoms by thinking they were genetic as his parents have always had difficulty in moving their limbs. But in 2015, Chen decided to sought medical support after he lost all sensation in the right half of his upper body. Doctors at the First Affiliated Hospital of Wuchang University, initially believed Chen suffered an infection due to the consumption of raw or poorly cooked exotic meats. For a while, Chen's doctors were confused about the cause of the problem. But when they performed a CT scan of Chen's brain, they were shocked by the results. The scan revealed a long and twisted parasite inside Chen's brain, following which he was diagnosed with sparganosis mansoni, a rare parasitic disease. Although the diagnosis was done in 2015, the surgery for the removal of the worm was performed on August 25. The procedure was delayed for five years as the worm was not in a suitable position for the doctors to safely remove it from Chen's brain.



Rare flat rainbow spotted in UK after storm Francis

Some phenomenon just leaves us spellbound, with no words to describe their beauty and rainbows are one of them. The band of seven colors can bring a smile to anyone's face. However, what was recently seen in Torbay is incredibly beautiful. As Britain faces a 700-mile wide storm, along with 80mph winds, heavy downpours and some of the worst summer weather for 50 years caused due to Storm Francis, people saw a beautiful flat rainbow in the coastal town. The images of the beautiful rainbow in sight were captured from the nearby Paignton beach. The flat rainbow is said to be the result of sun rays through spray whipped off the surface of the sea. The Facebook account Torbay in Pictures posted the incredible images, with the caption, "Unusual rainbow effect at Torquay, seen from Paignton beach. I believe it's caused by the effect of the sun shining through spray whipped up from the sea by the wind. 25.8.2020. 3.36 pm". The account also shared a close-up view of the flat rainbow, writing, "Another shot of the 'seabow' at Torquay. Netizens couldn't stop praising the rather unusual effect. However, as quoted by The Sun, the Met Office officials said, "This looks like spray being blown up from the sea by the strong gusty winds due to Storm Francis".



Anderson keenly waiting to challenge Kohli

PTI ■ LONDON

Record-setting England pacer James Anderson relishes the challenge of getting the best batsmen out and is looking forward to a tough contest against Virat Kohli when his side travels India next year.

Anderson, who recently became the highest Test wicket taker among pacers with 600 scalps during the home series against Pakistan, and Kohli have had some intriguing battles over the years. "It's always tough bowling at batsmen of that quality. It will be a tough battle but that's something I do enjoy. You want to get the best players out," Anderson told the 'Test Match Special' podcast.

When India toured England in 2014, Anderson was Kohli's nemesis with the right-arm pacer dismissing the India skipper on four occasions. Kohli could score just 134 runs in his 10 innings.

But Kohli came back to England an altogether different batsman in 2018 as he finished the Test series as the top run-scorer with an impressive 593-run tally with two centuries and three fifties to his name. "I had some success against him in 2014 and then he came back a completely different player in 2018 and was incredible," the 38-year-old Anderson, who is currently in the fourth place among all-time highest Test wicket-takers, said.

Asked what changes he saw in Kohli's batting in 2018, Anderson said, "He left the ball really well in 2018. The first time he came over (in 2014), when I was bowling out-swingers he might chase it early on and that brought the edge and the slips into play.

Morgan stars in Eng chase

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Mohammad Hafeez and Babar Azam both half centuries as Pakistan piled up an imposing 195-4 against England in the second Twenty20 international at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Hafeez top-scored with 69 after Pakistan captain and opener Babar, the world's number one-ranked T20 batsman, launched the innings with 56.

Leg-spinner Adil Rashid briefly checked Pakistan's progress with 2-32 from his maximum four overs.

But the rest of 50-over world champions England's attack lacked penetration, with seamer Tom Curran conceding 46 runs - including 23 off one over.

In a fixture where both sides were unchanged after Friday's opener in a three-match series ended as a no result washout, the tourists were sent into bat by Eoin Morgan, the England captain.

But Babar, who pulled the first ball of the match from fast bowler Saqib Mahmood for four, was unconcerned as he struck boundaries off spinners and seamers alike.

Fellow opener Fakhar Zaman saw his brisk 36 end when he skied Rashid to long-on to leave his side 72.

Babar completed a fine fifty with a superb extra-cover drive off Rashid - his seventh four in 37 balls faced.



But Rashid had his revenge when Babar miscued a pull to deep mid-wicket.

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when he pulled a careless Curran no-ball, an above waist-high full toss, for six.

Hafeez's scooped four off Mahmood to long leg which saw him

to a 26-ball fifty including four fours and three sixes before he was dismissed off the penultimate ball of the innings when he drove Curran to Morgan at extra-cover.

Was pretty scared to hit nets for first time says Kohli



PTI ■ DUBAI

Indian captain Virat Kohli admitted he was "pretty scared" to hit the nets for the first time in five months but said his first training session ahead of the IPL went "better than expected".

The Royal Challengers Bangalore captain resumed training after a five-month coronavirus-forced hiatus. The net session was also attended by South African pace legend Dale Steyn and RCB

team director Mike Hesson. "(It went) much better than expected, to be honest. I was pretty scared. I hadn't picked up a bat for five months, but yeah it came out better than I thought, to be honest," Kohli was quoted as saying by the franchise's website.

The 31-year-old, who was RCB's highest run-getter last year, said staying fit during the lockdown helped him to react better during the net session even though he was training

after a long break. "I've trained quite a bit during the lockdown, so I'm feeling quite fit and that helps. Because the body is light and you react better, I feel like I have more time on the ball. That's a big plus," he said.

"Otherwise you come heavier into the season, the body isn't moving as much, and it starts playing on mind, but yeah, as I said it went much better than I expected." RCB arrived in Dubai last week ahead of the

13th IPL which is scheduled to begin on September 19. The cash-rich T20 event was moved out of India due to the rising COVID-19 cases in the country. The team hit the nets on Saturday after successfully ending its quarantine period. Besides Kohli, spin trio of Chahal, Washington and Shabbaz Nadeem and a few pacers also trained and Kohli was pleased with the way they went about their business in the first session.

Having many consistent performers will be key: Iyer

PTI ■ DUBAI

Terming the upcoming IPL one of his "most important assignments" as captain, Delhi Capitals' Shreyas Iyer has demanded consistency from all his teammates.

In the last edition, Delhi Capitals reached the IPL playoffs for the first time in seven years, and they are hoping to better that result this time.

"It's certainly very different from last season, but challenges excite me," Iyer told IPL20.Com.

"As a captain, this is going to be certainly one of my most important assignments just because of how different the setting is. It is going to be very different, the key is to take it one day at a time.

"We're being briefed about the do's and don'ts at every step, it's crucial that everyone who is part of our team bubble follows that."

Moved out of India due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 13th edition of the world's biggest T20 league will be played across three venues in the UAE from September 19 to November 10.

"All pieces of the puzzle need to fall in the right place to be a champion team," he said.

"But the IPL is a long tournament and results keep going up and down invariably.

"The one thing that worked for us last season for how in each and every match, different players stepped up to the occasion and that was crucial to our success and will be key this year too. Having not just one consistent performer but many of them."

Iyer welcomed the new additions in the form of experienced India players Ravichandran Ashwin and Ajinkya Rahane.

"Ashwin and Rahane add tremendous depth to our side



and give Ricky and me options to be flexible with our playing XI depending on where we're playing, who our opposition is and where we are placed in the tournament at a particular time," Iyer said.

"Also these are two individuals who are highly knowledgeable about the game and have captained IPL teams, so for me as captain, this is an opportunity to use all experience and reach out to them whenever I want to share or discuss anything at all."

He said he is blessed to be working alongside Australian legend Ricky Ponting, who is the chief coach of the Delhi franchise.

"He's such a legend and makes everyone, from the senior-most to the newest guy feel at home and as a part of this unit. As a captain, he gives me freedom and that has helped me grow as a cricketer."

Cornwall wants to nail down his Test career

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when most of the young cricketers are lured by "easy money" in thriving T20 leagues, West Indian Rahkeem Cornwall, the heaviest ever to play the five-day format at more than 140kg, has got his priorities straight.

The 27-year-old spinner wants to "nail down" his Test career, which is only three games old, and if leagues like the IPL happen along the way, it would be a "bonus".

Speaking to PTI from Trinidad, where he is making an impact with both bat and ball for St Lucia Zouks in the CPL, Cornwall expressed his devotion to Test cricket.

"If I can play the T20 format and travel the world and play leagues it would be good but my aim is to be one of the most successful Test players out there.

"Playing Test cricket is the art of cricket, everyone wants to play Test cricket and do well. I have already played the format, I just want to make sure I get what I am



really looking for in Test cricket and when my times comes to retire, I don't have any regrets," said Cornwall. West Indies cricket has

enjoyed most success in the shortest format over the past 10 years with a chunk of its players going on to make a name and some handsome amount of money in T20 leagues around the world.

Cornwall too is open to becoming a T20 globetrotter but not before he achieves his goals in Test cricket. "If I get to play different leagues around the world, it would be a bonus for me but the main focus is to keep pushing my Test career," said the offie who made his Test debut against India

in Jamaica last year when he took three wickets including Cheteshwar Pujara's.

He had also dismissed India skipper Virat Kohli in a tour game in 2016. "Pujara is a quality player, a good player of spin. To get him was a joy, more so as it was my first Test wicket," recalled Cornwall, who is yet to make his limited overs debut for West Indies but is confident of doing so with a successful outing the ongoing CPL.

At the moment, he likes to be known as the off-spinner who

can "drastically" improve with the bat. The constant chatter around his size doesn't bother him but he would want to be fitter and leaner to the point where he is able to perform at his best in all formats.

"Size does not matter to me. I already know who I am and what my size is. I just try to be fit as possible so that can perform for my team," said the 6'6" tall cricketer when asked if needs to be fitter for the shorter formats where one is required to be more agile on the field.

Novak matches Rafa's Masters record

AP ■ NEW YORK

For all that's been on Novak Djokovic's plate of late - including a painful neck and his efforts to start a new players' association in men's tennis - he just keeps winning.

He's perfect in 2020, an ideal way to head into the U.S. Open.

Djokovic tied Rafael Nadal's record by earning his 35th title at a Masters 1000 tournament, overcoming a sluggish start to beat Milos Raonic 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 in the Western & Southern Open final Saturday and improve to 23-0 this season.

"Has been challenging mentally and emotionally for me to stay sane and be able to compete on the highest level and win this title," Djokovic said.

"Going on an unbeaten run so far this year obviously brings even more confidence each match."



Djokovic, 11-0 head-to-head against 2016 Wimbledon runner-up Raonic, goes into the U.S. Open as the No. 1 seed and a big favorite. The Grand Slam tournament begins Monday.

"What is that, 23-0?" Raonic said fully during the trophy ceremony. "Honestly, if I start the year off 3-0, I'm pretty happy."

Earlier Saturday, Victoria Azarenka won her first tour title since 2016 when Naomi Osaka pulled out of the women's final because of a left hamstring injury.

"I just hope I'm giving myself, you know, the opportunity and the chance to have enough time" to recover ahead of the U.S. Open, Osaka said.

The Western & Southern Open normally is held in Ohio but was moved to Flushing Meadows this year because of the coronavirus pandemic as part of a two-tournament "controlled environment."

Djokovic will be seeking his 18th Grand Slam title, which would move him one behind Nadal and two behind Roger Federer's men's record of 20. Neither of those rivals is entered in the U.S. Open -

although both spoke out via Twitter on Saturday against Djokovic's bid to start a new group to represent men's players.

"We want to have our own organization and association that is 100% ours," Djokovic said.

On court, Djokovic was listless in the first set, looking exactly the way one might have expected given that he labored through a three-hour semifinal a day earlier, when he repeatedly grabbed his stomach and twice had his neck massaged by a trainer.

It took all of 30 minutes for Raonic, a Canadian ranked No. 30, to take that set. But Djokovic asserted himself in the second set, breaking to lead 3-2 with a backhand passing shot and raising his right fist.

In the third, Djokovic broke twice more, and eventually the 33-year-old from Serbia was raising his arms to mark

his 80th career title and 61st on hard courts. Jimmy Connors holds the men's record of 109 titles; the only others ahead of Djokovic are Federer, Ivan Lendl and Nadal.

Djokovic also won the Western & Southern Open in 2018 and is now the first man to win each Masters 1000 event - one level below the Grand Slams - at least twice.

Osaka initially felt a problem with her leg in her first match of the Western & Southern Open and said she pulled the hamstring in the second-set tiebreaker of her semifinal Friday.

She called this an "emotional week." The 22-year-old Osaka brought the push for racial justice to the tennis tour by saying she was not going to play in her semifinal, joining athletes in other sports sitting out in reaction to the shooting by a Wisconsin police officer of a Black man, Jacob Blake.

India share Chess Olympiad Gold with Russia

PTI ■ CHENNAI

India and Russia were on Sunday declared joint winners of the 2020 Online Chess Olympiad after the final was marred by internet disconnection and server malfunction.

Russia were initially declared winners after two Indian players - Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh - lost out on time in the final after suffering a disconnection with the server.

India lodged a protest against the controversial decision which was reviewed.

This was the first time FIDE, the international chess federation, was holding the Olympiad in an online format, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich made a decision to give gold medals of FIDE Online #ChessOlympiad to both teams - India and Russia," the world chess body tweeted.

"We are the champions!! Congrats Russia!!," the legendary Viswanathan Anand wrote on his twitter handle after the final.

The first round of the final ended in a 3-3 draw with all the six games finishing in stalemate. Russia won the second round 4.5-1.5 with wins for Andrey Espenko over Sarin and Polina Shuvalova over Deshmukh, leading to a controversy as the Indians claimed the losses were due to connection issues.

In the second round, Anand, coming in for P Harikrishna, had drawn with Ian Nepomniachtchi while captain Vidit Gujrathi drew with Daniil Dubov.

Koneru Humpy, the world rapid champion, was bumped by Alexandra Goryachkina and D Harika drew with Alexandra Kosteniuk.

Most Read NEWS

This couple is world's 'oldest married couple'

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AFP ■ MANCHESTER

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team director Mike Hesson. ("It went) much better than expected, to be honest. I was pretty scared. I hadn't picked up a bat for five months, but yeah it came out better than I thought, to be honest," Kohli was quoted as saying by the franchise's website.

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after a long break. "I've trained quite a bit during the lockdown, so I'm feeling quite fit and that helps. Because the body is light and you react better, I feel like I have more time on the ball. That's a big plus," he said.

"Otherwise you come heavier into the season, the body isn't moving as much, and it starts playing on mind, but yeah, as I said it went much better than I expected." RCB arrived in Dubai last week ahead of the

13th IPL which is scheduled to begin on September 19. The cash-rich T20 event was moved out of India due to the rising COVID-19 cases in the country. The team hit the nets on Saturday after successfully ending its quarantine period. Besides Kohli, spin trio of Chahal, Washington and Shabbaz Nadeem and a few pacers also trained and Kohli was pleased with the way they went about their business in the first session.

Having many consistent performers will be key: Iyer

PTI ■ DUBAI

Terming the upcoming IPL one of his "most important assignments" as captain, Delhi Capitals' Shreyas Iyer has demanded consistency from all his teammates.

In the last edition, Delhi Capitals reached the IPL play-offs for the first time in seven years, and they are hoping to better that result this time.

"It's certainly very different from last season, but challenges excite me," Iyer told IPL20.Com.

"As a captain, this is going to be certainly one of my most important assignments just because of how different the setting is. It is going to be very different, the key is to take it one day at a time.

"We're being briefed about the do's and don'ts at every step, it's crucial that everyone who is part of our team bubble follows that."

Moved out of India due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 13th edition of the world's biggest T20 league will be played across three venues in the UAE from September 19 to November 10.

"All pieces of the puzzle need to fall in the right place to be a champion team," he said.

"But the IPL is a long tournament and results keep going up and down invariably.

"The one thing that worked for us last season for how in each and every match, different players stepped up to the occasion and that was crucial to our success and will be key this year too. Having not just one consistent performer but many of them."

Iyer welcomed the new additions in the form of experienced India players Ravichandran Ashwin and Ajinkya Rahane.

"Ashwin and Rahane add tremendous depth to our side



and give Ricky and me options to be flexible with our playing XI depending on where we're playing, who our opposition is and where we are placed in the tournament at a particular time," Iyer said.

"Also these are two individuals who are highly knowledgeable about the game and have captained IPL teams, so for me as captain, this is an opportunity to use all experience and reach out to them whenever I want to share or discuss anything at all."

He said he is blessed to be working alongside Australian legend Ricky Ponting, who is the chief coach of the Delhi franchise.

"He's such a legend and makes everyone, from the senior-most to the newest guy feel at home and as a part of this unit. As a captain, he gives me freedom and that has helped me grow as a cricketer."

Cornwall wants to nail down his Test career

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when most of the young cricketers are lured by "easy money" in thriving T20 leagues, West Indian Rahkeem Cornwall, the heaviest ever to play the five-day format at more than 140kg, has got his priorities straight.

The 27-year-old spinner wants to "nail down" his Test career, which is only three games old, and if leagues like the IPL happen along the way, it would be a "bonus".

Speaking to PTI from Trinidad, where he is making an impact with both bat and ball for St Lucia Zouks in the CPL, Cornwall expressed his devotion to Test cricket.

"If I can play the T20 format and travel the world and play leagues it would be good but my aim is to be one of the most successful Test players out there.

"Playing Test cricket is the art of cricket, everyone wants to play Test cricket and do well. I have already played the format, I just want to make sure I get what I am



really looking for in Test cricket and when my times comes to retire, I don't have any regrets," said Cornwall. West Indies cricket has

enjoyed most success in the shortest format over the past 10 years with a chunk of its players going on to make a name and some handsome amount of money in T20 leagues around the world.

Cornwall too is open to becoming a T20 globetrotter but not before he achieves his goals in Test cricket. "If I get to play different leagues around the world, it would be a bonus for me but the main focus is to keep pushing my Test career," said the offie who made his Test debut against India

in Jamaica last year when he took three wickets including Cheteshwar Pujara's.

He had also dismissed India skipper Virat Kohli in a tour game in 2016. "Pujara is a quality player, a good player of spin. To get him was a joy, more so as it was my first Test wicket," recalled Cornwall, who is yet to make his limited overs debut for West Indies but is confident of doing so with a successful outing the ongoing CPL.

At the moment, he likes to be known as the off-spinner who

can "drastically" improve with the bat. The constant chatter around his size doesn't bother him but he would want to be fitter and leaner to the point where he is able to perform at his best in all formats.

"Size does not matter to me. I already know who I am and what my size is. I just try to be fit as possible so that can perform for my team," said the 6'6" tall cricketer when asked if needs to be fitter for the shorter formats where one is required to be more agile on the field.

Novak matches Rafa's Masters record

AP ■ NEW YORK

For all that's been on Novak Djokovic's plate of late - including a painful neck and his efforts to start a new players' association in men's tennis - he just keeps winning.

He's perfect in 2020, an ideal way to head into the U.S. Open.

Djokovic tied Rafael Nadal's record by earning his 35th title at a Masters 1000 tournament, overcoming a sluggish start to beat Milos Raonic 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 in the Western & Southern Open final Saturday and improve to 23-0 this season.

"Has been challenging mentally and emotionally for me to stay sane and be able to compete on the highest level and win this title," Djokovic said.

"Going on an unbeaten run so far this year obviously brings even more confidence each match."



Djokovic, 11-0 head-to-head against 2016 Wimbledon runner-up Raonic, goes into the U.S. Open as the No. 1 seed and a big favorite. The Grand Slam tournament begins Monday.

"What is that, 23-0?" Raonic said fully during the trophy ceremony.

"Honestly, if I start the year off 3-0, I'm pretty happy."

Earlier Saturday, Victoria Azarenka won her first tour title since 2016 when Naomi Osaka pulled out of the women's final because of a left hamstring injury.

"I just hope I'm giving myself, you know, the opportunity and the chance to have enough time" to recover ahead of the U.S. Open, Osaka said.

The Western & Southern Open normally is held in Ohio but was moved to Flushing Meadows this year because of the coronavirus pandemic as part of a two-tournament "controlled environment."

Djokovic will be seeking his 18th Grand Slam title, which would move him one behind Nadal and two behind Roger Federer's men's record of 20. Neither of those rivals is entered in the U.S. Open -

although both spoke out via Twitter on Saturday against Djokovic's bid to start a new group to represent men's players.

"We want to have our own organization and association that is 100% ours," Djokovic said.

On court, Djokovic was listless in the first set, looking exactly the way one might have expected given that he labored through a three-hour semifinal a day earlier, when he repeatedly grabbed his stomach and twice had his neck massaged by a trainer.

It took all of 30 minutes for Raonic, a Canadian ranked No. 30, to take that set. But Djokovic asserted himself in the second set, breaking to lead 3-2 with a backhand passing shot and raising his right fist.

In the third, Djokovic broke twice more, and eventually the 33-year-old from Serbia was raising his arms to mark

his 80th career title and 61st on hard courts. Jimmy Connors holds the men's record of 109 titles; the only others ahead of Djokovic are Federer, Ivan Lendl and Nadal.

Djokovic also won the Western & Southern Open in 2018 and is now the first man to win each Masters 1000 event - one level below the Grand Slams - at least twice.

Osaka initially felt a problem with her leg in her first match of the Western & Southern Open and said she pulled the hamstring in the second-set tiebreaker of her semifinal Friday.

She called this an "emotional week." The 22-year-old Osaka brought the push for racial justice to the tennis tour by saying she was not going to play in her semifinal, joining athletes in other sports sitting out in reaction to the shooting by a Wisconsin police officer of a Black man, Jacob Blake.

India share Chess Olympiad Gold with Russia

PTI ■ CHENNAI

India and Russia were on Sunday declared joint winners of the 2020 Online Chess Olympiad after the final was marred by internet disconnection and server malfunction.

Russia were initially declared winners after two Indian players - Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh - lost out on time in the final after suffering a disconnection with the server.

India lodged a protest against the controversial decision which was reviewed.

This was the first time FIDE, the international chess federation, was holding the Olympiad in an online format, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich made a decision to give gold medals of FIDE Online #ChessOlympiad to both teams - India and Russia," the world chess body tweeted.

"We are the champions!! Congrats Russia!!," the legendary Viswanathan Anand wrote on his twitter handle after the final.

The first round of the final ended in a 3-3 draw with all the six games finishing in stalemate. Russia won the second round 4.5-1.5 with wins for Andrey Espenko over Sarin and Polina Shuvalova over Deshmukh, leading to a controversy as the Indians claimed the losses were due to connection issues.

In the second round, Anand, coming in for P Harikrishna, had drawn with Ian Nepomniachtchi while captain Vidit Gujrathi drew with Daniil Dubov.

Koneru Humpy, the world rapid champion, was beaten by Alexandra Goryachkina and D Harika drew with Alexandra Kosteniuk.